Reconstructing Israel: Restoration Eschatology in Early Judaism and Paul’s Gentile Mission

Jason Andrew Staples

A dissertation submitted to the faculty of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of Religious Studies (Ancient Mediterranean Religions).

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Approved by:
Bart D. Ehrman
David A. Lambert
Zlatko Pleše
Anathea Portier-Young
J. Ross Wagner
ABSTRACT

Jason Andrew Staples: Reconstructing Israel: Restoration Eschatology in Early Judaism and Paul’s Gentile Mission  
(Under the direction of Bart D. Ehrman)

This study examines how the concept of “Israel” was constructed and contested among Jews, Samaritans, and (eventually) Christians in the Second Temple period. It explores how varying understandings of Israelite identity and expectations of Israel’s glorious eschatological restoration set the boundaries between Jews and Samaritans, various Jewish sects, and eventually Jews and Christians. Beyond that, the study demonstrates that hopes for Israel’s restoration were not only central to the origins of Christianity but were also paradoxically instrumental to the inclusion of gentiles in the primitive church as evidenced in the letters of the apostle Paul.

The first part of the study demonstrates that, contrary to the assumptions of most modern scholarship, the terms “Israelite” and “Jew” were not synonymous in most Jewish literature from the Second Temple Period. Rather, the most common view reflected in these sources is that the Jews are only a subset of the larger body of Israel, namely the descendants of the southern kingdom of Judah. Samaritans, by contrast, were not Jews but considered themselves Israelites, with different Jewish groups having varying responses to this claim. Moreover, in many instances, the continued distinction between “Jews” and “Israelites” seems to reflect continuing hopes for a future restoration of reconstituted twelve-tribe Israel including the northern tribes of Israel scattered by the Assyrians in the eighth century BCE.

The second part of the study examines how Paul participates in this discourse concerning Israelite identity, arguing that Paul similarly understands “Israel” to denote a group larger than
“the Jews” and expects the restoration of all twelve tribes of Israel. Specifically, Paul appears to believe that many from the northern tribes intermarried among the gentiles, thus becoming “not my people” (=gentiles; Rom 9:25–26). In consequence, Paul claims that the incorporation of gentiles into the eschatological assembly through his gospel is the only proper means for the restoration of “all Israel” (Rom 11:26), including not only the Jews (=Judah) but all twelve tribes of Israel.
To my parents, Mark and Brenda
מתנהל לבמות עדי
אסרי בניו אחורי
(Prov 20:7)

And to Kari
רוחמ תמימים מכרה
בנה המ בל עשה
(Prov 31:10b–11a)
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Qohelet assures us that there is a time for everything under heaven—even finishing a dissertation. Now that this time has come, I owe thanks to many whose generosity, support, and assistance enabled the completion of this study.

First, I would like to express my deep gratitude to my director, Bart D. Ehrman, who was not only willing to oversee such a massive study but was extremely supportive throughout, even when it was evident that the project was outgrowing its initial scope. His insatiable curiosity, incisive mind, passion for clear writing and communication, and especially his generosity and good humor have exemplified what it means to be an exemplary advisor, educator, and scholar.

Many thanks are also due to the other members of my dissertation committee, David Lambert, Zlatko Pleše, Anathea Portier-Young, and Ross Wagner. Each provided invaluable constructive criticism and support. I am especially indebted to Anathea Portier-Young, who provided exceptionally detailed comments and corrections, many of which rescued me from potentially embarrassing gaffes.

Jodi Magness and Douglas Campbell also deserve special thanks, as each read and critiqued early chapter drafts and were valuable conversation partners throughout the process. Paula Fredriksen and Robert Jewett also provided especially helpful feedback on early material; their enthusiasm for the project and constructive criticisms were instrumental in pushing this study forward. The many deficiencies that remain in this work are of course my own.
This study owes its inception to insights first gained in Bill Lyons’ Hebrew Bible Prophets class at Florida State University in the spring of 2003, and I continue to owe Bill—a dear friend—a great debt for his example and encouragement.

I am deeply grateful to David B. Levenson for his tireless training and mentorship while I was at Florida State, without which I would have been unlikely to pursue this path, and for his continued friendship and assistance on numerous occasions.

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I owe gratitude to many others for their generosity, feedback, constructive criticism, encouragement, and general willingness to tolerate me as I have chattered on about a seemingly unending project. I am especially indebted to Stephen Carlson, Benjamin L. White, Sonya Cronin, Jason Combs, T.J. Lang, Nathan Eubank, Mark Goodacre, Matthew Grey, Mark Nanos, Scott Hahn, Tim Cupery, Lauren Leve, Ilyse Morgenstein-Fuerst, Andrew Aghapour, Leif Tornquist, Michael Barber, and Fr. Gregory (Joshua) Edwards and Jim Hayes.

This long and tortuous journey has only been possible thanks to the support and many sacrifices of my family. The constant encouragement and generosity of my sister and brother-in-law, Stephanie and Erik Rostad, has been appreciated more than they could know. They have truly strengthened feeble knees. Thanks also to Alan, Debbie, Natalie, Holly, Dillon, and Carly Brown for welcoming me into their family and for all their encouragement through this project.
I owe everything to my parents, Mark and Brenda Staples, who instilled in me a deep love and respect for the Bible while also training me to turn over every stone in the quest for truth and to question everything, no matter how firmly established or widely believed. They have been unwaveringly supportive as they watched their son stay in school far longer than they could have imagined. This project was possible only because I am standing on their shoulders.

Finally, words cannot express how indebted and grateful I am to Kari, μυγνήσιος σύζυγος, whose love and devotion have been a constant source of strength as we have endured flood, fire, multiple surgeries, and a dissertation over the past six years. Kari has been patient beyond measure when my work has been all-consuming and has selflessly lifted me up when my spirits were low. The making of many books is endless, and excessive study is exhausting, but her love is more precious than the world itself. May I one day be worthy of it.
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<td>AB</td>
<td>Anchor Bible</td>
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<td><em>ABD</em></td>
<td><em>Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary</em>. Edited by David Noel Freedman. 6 vols. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992</td>
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<td>ABG</td>
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<td><em>AJSR</em></td>
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<td>Analecta Biblica</td>
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<td>Ancient Near East Monographs</td>
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<td>AOAT</td>
<td>Alter Orient und Altes Testamentum</td>
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<td>AOS</td>
<td>American Oriental Series</td>
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<td>ASR</td>
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<td>Abhandlungen zur Theologie des Alten und Neuen Testaments</td>
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<td>Atiqot</td>
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<td>ATJ</td>
<td>Ashland Theological Journal</td>
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<td>ATLAB</td>
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<td>AUSS</td>
<td>Andrews University Seminary Studies</td>
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<td>BA</td>
<td>Biblical Archaeologist</td>
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<td>BAR</td>
<td>Biblical Archaeology Review</td>
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<td>BASOR</td>
<td>Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research</td>
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<td>BBET</td>
<td>Beiträge zur biblischen Exegese und Theologie</td>
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<td>Bulletin for Biblical Research</td>
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<td>Bulletin de correspondance hellénique</td>
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<td>Beiträge zur Erforschung des Alten Testaments und des Antiken Judentums</td>
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<td>BECNT</td>
<td>Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament</td>
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<td>BETL</td>
<td>Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium</td>
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<td>Beitrag zur evangelischen Theologie</td>
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<td>Bib</td>
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<td>BibEn</td>
<td>Biblische Enzyklopädie</td>
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BibInt Biblical Interpretation
Bijdr Bijdragen: Tijdschrift voor filosofie en theologie
BJRL Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester
BJS Brown Judaic Studies
BK Bibel und Kirche
BLS Bible and Literature Series
BN Biblische Notizen
BNTC Black’s New Testament Series
BO Biblica et orientalia
BR Biblical Research
BRev Bible Review
BTB Biblical Theology Bulletin
BThSt Biblisch-theologische Studien
BWANT Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament
BZ Biblische Zeitschrift
BZAW Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
CA Classical Antiquity
CAJ Cambridge Archaeological Journal
CBC Cambridge Bible Commentary
CBET Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology
CBQMS Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series
CCWJJCW Cambridge Commentaries on the Writings of the Jewish and Christian World 200 BC to AD 200
CEJL Commentaries on Early Jewish Literature
CH Church History
CHANE Culture and History of the Ancient Near East
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<td><strong>DSD</strong></td>
<td>Dead Sea Discoveries</td>
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<td>Deutsche Theologie</td>
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<td><strong>EC</strong></td>
<td>Early Christianity</td>
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<td><strong>EH</strong></td>
<td>Europäische Hochschulschriften</td>
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<td><strong>EI</strong></td>
<td>Edition Israelogie</td>
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<td><strong>EJJS</strong></td>
<td>European Journal of Jewish Studies</td>
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<td><strong>EJL</strong></td>
<td>Early Judaism and Its Literature</td>
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<td><strong>EJS</strong></td>
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<td><strong>EKKNT</strong></td>
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<td>FBE</td>
<td>Forum for Bibelsk Eksegese</td>
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<td>FC</td>
<td>The Fathers of the Church</td>
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<td>Feminist Companion to the Bible</td>
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<td>Guides to the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha</td>
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<td>Handbook of Oriental Studies</td>
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<td>HR</td>
<td>History of Religions</td>
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<td>JAJSup</td>
<td>Journal of Ancient Judaism Supplement</td>
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<td>JAL</td>
<td>Jewish Apocryphal Literature</td>
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xxiv
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<td>PS</td>
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<td>PSB</td>
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<td>PSC</td>
<td>Protocol Series of the Colloquia</td>
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<td>PT</td>
<td>Playing the Texts</td>
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<td>Pittsburgh Theological Monograph Series</td>
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<td>PTSDSSP</td>
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<td>PVTG</td>
<td>Pseudepigrapha Veteries Testamenti Graece</td>
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<tr>
<td>RB</td>
<td><em>Revue biblique</em></td>
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<td>RBén</td>
<td><em>Revue bénédictine</em></td>
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RBL Review of Biblical Literature
REJ Revue des études juives
RelSRev Religious Studies Review
RevQ Revue de Qumran
RFTP Recherches: Facultés de Théologie et de Philosophie de la Compagnie de Jésus
RHPR Revue d’histoire et de philosophie religieuses
RivB Rivista biblica italiana
RNT Regensburger Neues Testament
RSR Recherches de science religieuse
RTHC Romans Through History and Cultures
RTR Reformed Theological Review
SAAB State Archives of Assyria Bulletin
SAAS State Archives of Assyria Studies
SBB Stuttgarter biblische Beiträge
SBEC Studies in Bible and Early Christianity
SBET Scottish Bulletin of Evangelical Theology
SBLDS Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLMS Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series
SBLSP Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers
SBLStBL Society of Biblical Literature Studies in Biblical Literature
SBLTT Society of Biblical Literature Texts and Translations
SBT Studies in Biblical Theology
SBTS Sources for Biblical and Theological Studies
SchwLect The Schweich Lectures of the British Academy
SCJ Studies in Christianity and Judaism

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<table>
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<td>Septuagint Commentary Series</td>
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<td>Studies in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Literature</td>
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<td>Semeia Studies</td>
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<td>SH</td>
<td>Scripture and Hermeneutics</td>
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<td>Studies in Hellenistic Civilization</td>
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<td>SHIELD</td>
<td>Strategic Hazard Intervention Espionage Logistics Directorate</td>
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<td>Schriften des Institutum Judaicum Delitzchianum</td>
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<td>Studies in Intermediality</td>
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PART I: PAUL, ISRAELITES, JEWS, AND HEBREWS
INTRODUCTION: PAUL, ISRAEL, AND GENTILES

A little over a century ago, Albert Schweitzer called finding a coherent explanation for the nascent Jesus movement’s transition from a small Jewish sect to a primarily gentile church “the great and still undischarged task which confronts those engaged in the historical study of primitive Christianity,” continuing:

The system of the Apostle to the Gentiles stands over against the teaching of Jesus as something of an entirely different character, and does not create the impression of having arisen out of it. But how is such a new creation of Christian ideas—and that within a bare two or three decades after the death of Jesus—at all conceivable? ... This want of connection must have some explanation.... The primary task is to define the position of Paul.2

Since Schweitzer penned these words, the position of Paul—specifically Paul’s vision of God’s plan for Israel and how that relates to faithful gentiles—has remained difficult to define and has been the subject of significant scholarly reappraisal in recent decades. Paul’s distinctive insistence on the equal incorporation of gentiles in communities following the Jewish messiah served as a key pivot point in the transition from a small Jewish sect to the primarily gentile church a generation later. But the rationale for that incorporation—and how it fits with God’s plan for Israel as Paul understands it—continues to engender considerable inquiry and debate.3

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2 Schweitzer, Paul and His Interpreters, vii.

Until fairly recently, a traditional (mostly Protestant) view could be assumed, namely that Paul understood Jesus to have abrogated the Jewish Torah and preached the universal message of “justification by faith” as opposed to Jewish legalism or “works-righteousness,” understood as the idea that one must observe the Torah to achieve salvation through one’s righteous works—a task Paul allegedly found onerous and impossible before his conversion to Christianity. The inclusion of gentiles in the Christian community is therefore a natural outgrowth of Paul’s realization that salvation could not be achieved through obedience to the Torah (which would require one to be a Jew) but is rather available to anyone who has faith in Christ without regard for works, meaning gentiles now have the same access to salvation as Jews. Thus the new “Christian religion” has now superseded “Judaism,” and the church has become the “true

4 The terms “gentiles” and “Jews” are both problematic. “Gentile” commonly translates the Hebrew word גוי and the Greek term ἐθνός, each of which properly mean “nation.” But the plural of each (particularly the Greek articular plural τὰ ἔθνη) often represents “the nations” other than Israel (that is, “the gentiles”), and the singular can represent either an individual non-Jew or a nation. Thus ἐθνός often denotes individuals from non-Israelite or non-Jewish nations but can also mean the nations in a collective sense. This study will use both “nation(s)” and “gentile(s)” to translate these terms, as dictated by the context (and the established scholarly discourse). For a fuller discussion of ἐθνός and Paul’s use of it, see James M. Scott, Paul and the Nations: The Old Testament and Jewish Background of Paul’s Mission to the Nations with Special Reference to the Destination of Galatians, WUNT 84 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1995), 57–134. See also Ishay Rosen-Zvi and Adi Ophir, “Paul and the Invention of the Gentiles,” JQR 105, no. 1 (2015): 1–41, though I am unpersuaded by their thesis that Paul himself was responsible for the final development of the category as denoting “non-Jews. For more discussion of the term “Jew,” see the section on “Jews or Judaeans” below.

5 “Judaism” is another problematic term, in part because of centuries of baggage in which it has served to describe the (alleged) religious or cultural characteristics of the Jews over and against Christianity. But the term is also difficult because it is an abstract category describing the customs, culture, and boundaries of a particular social group (or set of groups) and because the characteristics of “Judaism” are variegated and encompass both what would typically be called “ethnic” and “religious” categories today. Where I use the term in this study, I am referring to customs, practices, and theological perspectives common among those who could be identified as Ἰουδαῖοι in the Second Temple period. On the difficulties inherent in the term, see Michael L. Satlow, “Defining Judaism: Accounting for ‘Religions’ in the Study of Religion,” JAAR 74, no. 4 (2006): 837–860; “A History of the Jews or Judaism? On Seth Schwartz’s Imperialism and Jewish Society, 200 BCE to 640 CE,” JQR 95, no. 1 (2005): 151–162; Seth Schwartz, “How Many Judaisms Were There? A Critique of Neusner and Smith on Definition and Mason and Boyarin on Categorization,” JAJ 2, no. 2 (2011): 208–238. See also the sections on Judaean/Jew terminology and unity/diversity in Judaism below.
Israel,” the rightful heir to the scriptural promises to historical Israel. But despite its historical popularity and internal coherence, this reading can no longer be taken for granted.

First, the idea that the core of Paul’s gospel is to be found in its opposition to “Jewish legalism”—the very core of the traditional reading—has been shown to be problematic to say the least. Krister Stendahl’s seminal 1961 lecture, “Paul and the Introspective Conscience of the West,” demonstrated that Paul’s emphasis on justification by faith had nothing to do with a supposed struggle to keep the law and deal with a guilty conscience (a view Stendahl identified as deriving from Augustine). On the contrary, Paul had a “rather ‘robust’ conscience” and continued to emphasize the importance of obedience. Instead of openness to gentiles being the result of the doctrine of justification by faith, Stendahl argued that the process moved in the other direction—the doctrine of justification by faith was specifically concerned with the union of Jews and gentiles.

Then, even more significantly, E. P. Sanders showed that the traditional legalistic foil for Paul’s gospel does not resemble what can be reconstructed of actual Jewish belief and practice in Paul’s day, indicating Paul’s critiques must have either been misguided or based on some other

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Nevertheless, most proponents of the so-called New Perspective, building on this new (for Pauline studies) understanding of early Judaism, still operate from the assumption that Paul must have found something wrong with Judaism, with “Paul and Judaism” still understood as representing two distinct “patterns of religion.”

With “Jewish legalism” off the table as a foil, many have relocated Paul’s objection to Judaism from the supposed rationale for the equal incorporation of gentiles (i.e., “justification by faith” versus “works-righteousness”) to the fact of the inclusion of gentiles. That is, what Paul found wrong with Judaism was Jewish insistence on ethnic identity as a necessary component of membership among God’s people, which Paul rejected in favor of a racially inclusive Christianity exemplified in his declaration that “in Christ, there is neither Jew nor Greek” (Gal 3:28). James Dunn, for example, explains the separation of Pauline Christianity from Judaism this way:

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10 The phrase is from Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*. Sanders concludes that “Paul’s break [with Judaism] is clearly perceptible,” since Paul “denies two pillars common to all forms of Judaism: the election of Israel and faithfulness to the Mosaic law” (*Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 1983], 207–08).

For the Judaism which focused its identity most fully in the Torah, and which found itself unable to separate ethnic identity from religious identity, Paul and the Gentile mission involved an irreparable breach.12

At its historic heart Christianity is a protest against any and every attempt to claim that God is our God and not yours, God of our way of life and not yours, God of our “civilization” and not yours ... against any and every attempt to mark off some of God’s people as more holy than others, as exclusive channels of divine grace.13

Paul’s enlightened and inclusive “Christianity” is thus contrasted with a regressive and ethnocentric “Judaism,” with the core of Paul’s gospel found in his embrace of “inclusiveness” and rejection of “Jewish particularism.”14 This model has the advantage of not setting Paul against an imaginary bogeyman (legalism), but it lacks the traditional reading’s strength: an explanation of Paul’s rationale for such a sudden objection to ethnocentrism. Instead, it is merely assumed that Paul shared the modern liberal values of his interpreters such that openness and inclusiveness are *prima facie* superior to exclusivity and particularity, which seems an unlikely conclusion for a Jew living in the first-century Roman Empire.15 Nevertheless, in this respect, the

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14 Jacob Neusner, “The Premise of Paul’s Ethnic Israel,” in *Children of the Flesh, Children of the Promise: A Rabbi Talks with Paul* (Cleveland: Pilgrim, 1995), 1–20 (2): “Most scholarship takes as its starting point the position that Israel in the Judaism of that time is ethnic, but the Gospel, universal. Christianity improved on Judaism by bringing to all the peoples of the world what had originally been kept for one people alone.... The contrast between the ethnic Judaism and the universalist Christianity derives from the presentation of Israel by the apostle Paul.” Cf. also Neusner, “Was Rabbinic Judaism Really 'Ethnic'? A Theological Comparison between Christianity and the So-Called Particularist Religion of Israel,” *CBQ* 57, no. 2 (1995): 281–305.

15 David I. Starling notes that this approach “exchanges the (sixteenth-century-sounding) antithesis between grace and merit for an alternative (and strikingly twentieth-century-sounding!) antithesis between grace and ‘race’” (*Not My People: Gentiles as Exiles in Pauline Hermeneutics*, BZNW 184 [Berlin: de Gruyter, 2011], 214). It is hardly a coincidence that “inclusion” and “inclusiveness” is perhaps the hottest concept in postmodern Western culture, so it should be no surprise that Paul’s gospel is portrayed as the gospel of inclusiveness. See, for example, Brendan Byrne, *Romans*, SP 6 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1996), 283. This approach is not only anachronistic, by exchanging “legalism” for “ethnocentrism,” still manages to portray Judaism as a regressive foil for a Pauline Christianity that corresponds remarkably well to modern Western concerns. See the critiques in Mark D. Nanos, “Introduction,” in Nanos and Zetterholm, *Paul Within Judaism*, 1–32 (6–7) and Neusner, "Was Rabbinic Judaism Really 'Ethnic'?"
New Perspective represents a retreat to pre-Schweitzer scholarship portraying Paul as the apostle of modern liberalism, embracing universalistic Hellenistic ideals over and against Jewish particularism.16 But as Mark Nanos observes, the idea that Paul’s gospel amounts to a rejection of particularism is self-refuting:

To be consistent, New Perspective proponents would have to admit that Paul found something inherently wrong with the essence of group identity itself. But how could that be maintained logically, since Paul was involved in creating a group that claimed to be set apart by and to a god in distinction from all other groups? How could it be claimed that Paul was against ethnocentrism or badges of identity if Paul’s gospel is proclaimed to the nations in order to create groups gathering together (ἐκκλησίαι) … who are set apart by and to God by way of faith in/of Christ?17

Paul does not reject exclusivity in principle; the dispute between Paul and his opponents is not over whether there should be boundaries but over what constitutes proper boundaries for the exclusive community of God’s people. Moreover, while Paul definitely fights for equal inclusion of non-Jews in Christ-following communities, he just as vigorously defends Israel’s special status, most notably in Romans 9–11, where he concludes, “thus all Israel will be saved”

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(Rom 11:26).\textsuperscript{18} It is difficult to imagine a more ethnocentric statement than this dictum, which closely parallels the sentiment found in m. Sanh. 10:1, “All Israel has a part in the world to come,” seemingly at home on lips of any Jew of this period \textit{except} the self-proclaimed apostle of nations/gentiles (Rom 11:13; cf. Gal 2:8–9; Rom 15:16, 18).\textsuperscript{19}

Some have found this statement so foreign to Paul’s thought as to suggest—despite the lack of any text-critical basis—that it must be an interpolation,\textsuperscript{20} while others have concluded that Paul here shows a “startling lack of logical consistency,”\textsuperscript{21} understanding Romans 9–11 as “a desperate expedient” to resolve “a problem of conflicting convictions”\textsuperscript{22} or as Paul backtracking on his prior claims about the equality of all before God.\textsuperscript{23} Still others have suggested that Paul, aware his arguments could be taken too far, suddenly makes a defense for the very thing against

\textsuperscript{18} All translations throughout are mine unless otherwise noted.


\textsuperscript{22} Sanders, \textit{Paul, the Law and the Jewish People}, 198.

\textsuperscript{23} E.g., Räisänen, “Paul, God, and Israel,” 182, 192–96; \textit{Paul and the Law}, 2nd ed., WUNT 29 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1987), xxiii; Peter Richardson, \textit{Israel in the Apostolic Church}, SNTSMS 10 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 126–27; W. D. Davies, “Paul and the People of Israel,” \textit{NTS} 24, no. 1 (1977): 4–39 (33); Francis Watson, \textit{Paul, Judaism, and the Gentiles: Beyond the New Perspective}, revised and expanded ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 334. William S. Campbell, “Divergent Images of Paul and His Mission,” in \textit{Reading Israel in Romans}, eds. Cristina Greenholm and Daniel Patte (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2000), 187–211 (189), also points out that Paul was neither a post-Kantian Western thinker nor a systematic theologian and should not necessarily be held to our standards of consistency and logic. Nevertheless, although it is possible that Paul’s arguments are contradictory or incoherent and that he merely grasped at whatever arguments suited the contingent circumstances without regard to any sort of consistency, such a conclusion should only be a last resort. This study will show that interpreters have given up on Paul’s logic far too easily in Rom 9–11, mostly because these interpreters have been unwilling to follow Paul’s logic to its full extent.
which he has been arguing in order to prevent such abuse. In any case, how Paul’s insistence on the ultimate salvation of “all Israel” interfaces with his parallel arguments for gentile incorporation continues to be a *crux interpretum*, requiring a more thorough reevaluation of Paul’s relationship to Judaism and of the role of Israel in Paul’s thought.

Some recent scholarship has therefore taken an entirely different approach, starting from Paul’s statements about Israel rather than his emphasis on gentiles and questioning the traditional narrative of Paul’s *conversion* from “Judaism” to “Christianity,” noting that this is an anachronistic binary. Instead, Paul himself seems to have regarded his transition as a *call* rather than a *conversion*, and a growing chorus of “radical” scholars are now suggesting that rather than “Paul and Judaism,” we should speak instead of “Paul within Judaism.” In this model, Paul’s gospel is not seen as a departure from Judaism (at least as he understood it), and rather than Judaism serving as a “background” or a foil for Paul’s creation of something entirely new, Paul is understood as remaining part of a larger Jewish discourse and his gospel studied as one among other Jewish perspectives in the first century CE.

As a result, whereas more traditional “Paul and Judaism” approaches have tended to portray a Paul too at odds with his “Jewish context,” a “Paul within Judaism” approach runs the

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opposite risk of arriving at a Paul insufficiently discontinuous with his peers. While traditional models struggle to explain Paul’s continued commitment to Israel’s special status as the people of God, the newer “radical perspective” struggles to explain Paul’s insistence on the equal inclusion of the uncircumcised among the elect people following the Jewish messiah without first being required to become Jews (that is, Ἰουδαῖοι),\textsuperscript{28} which is strikingly discontinuous with traditional Jewish praxis.

In this respect, the New Perspective’s attention to ethnicity and identity is on the right track, as Paul’s disputes with his opponents concern community boundaries: that is, who should be “in” and who is “out.” And whether within or in conflict with “Judaism,” Paul’s declaration that non-Jews should be included as equal members among the elect is a radical move that begs explanation. On what basis does Paul so ardently fight for equal incorporation of non-Jews, a move that provided the pivot point for the development of a primarily gentile Christianity a generation later? How does Paul understand the status of these uncircumcised Christ-followers?

Who are Paul’s (Former) Gentiles?

The answer to this question continues to prove elusive, as Caroline Johnson Hodge explains,

I have long puzzled over how to understand the [faithful] gentiles in Paul, both from his perspective and their own perspective…. They are not Jews, and, in my view, they are not Christians; and they are not really gentiles any longer either.\textsuperscript{29}

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\textsuperscript{28} Whether Ἰουδαῖος should be translated “Jew” or “Judaean” has itself been a point of significant debate in recent years and will be discussed more thoroughly below.

The problem is often sidestepped by simply referring to these faithful uncircumcised as “Christians,” but this does not solve the problem so much as it misses the very point, masking the ambiguities Paul is manipulating in his own arguments. Paul himself nowhere uses the term “Christian,” but he does regularly apply Israelite language and ethnic markers to these uncircumcised faithful while simultaneously objecting to making them Jews. Johnson Hodge summarizes the seemingly in-between status of these non-Jewish Christ followers:

To be in Christ, gentiles give up their gods and religious practices, profess loyalty to the God of Israel, accept Israel’s messiah, Scriptures, and ancestry. All of these are Jewish ethnic markers, yet the gentiles do not become Jews. They are tucked into the seed of Abraham as gentiles and they remain gentiles, of a special sort, after they are made holy through baptism. This complex and mixed status for gentiles-in-Christ is crucial to Paul’s argument: their separateness is necessary for God’s plan for Israel, as Paul sees it. It is striking that with all of Paul’s talk of transformation and being made new (e.g., in 2 Cor 5:17 and Gal 6:15), he does not clearly define what gentiles have become.

But even this summary is problematic, as Johnson Hodge herself acknowledges that Paul refers to these people as former gentiles (1 Cor 12:2) and includes them as descendants of Abraham and biblical Israel (e.g., Gal 3:29; 1 Cor 10:1), which complicates the claim that they “remain gentiles, of a special sort.” Indeed, the problem is that Paul seems to regard this group of uncircumcised Christ-followers as neither Jews nor gentiles, and since they are neither, they certainly cannot be both, though they are nevertheless heirs to Abraham’s promises in the same way Israel is.

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32 Pace Joshua D. Garroway, Paul’s Gentile-Jews: Neither Jew nor Gentile, but Both (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), who is very close to Johnson Hodge’s view but rather than suggesting two linked but discrete peoples of God as does Johnson Hodge, he (rightly) argues that “Paul sees but one people of God, which is Israel” (207 n. 50) and “insists upon the Abrahamic origins of baptized Gentiles because he believes that they have become a part of the genuine people of Israel” (5). Nevertheless, Garroway’s model of gentiles as hybrid “mimic men” status, able “to become like Jews, but not quite Jews” (156), is still problematic for two reasons. First, it places these non-Jewish Jesus followers in exactly the sort of secondary status within the people of God that Paul seems to
We can say with confidence that these uncircumcised individuals were non-Jews. But does that by default put them in the category of “gentile” or “non-Israelite,” whether of a special sort or otherwise? For Paul, that seems not to be the case.\(^{33}\) In a framework where a person must be either one or the other, this is obviously impossible. But why should we assume that these were the only two options available for Paul? Paul does not operate within a “third race” paradigm like some later patristic writers,\(^{34}\) but he seems able to identify these former gentiles in at least a quasi-Israelite terms, showing a particular tendency toward applying to the gentiles prophecies directed toward the northern house of Israel.\(^{35}\) Nevertheless, they are definitely not Jews, and as Johnson Hodge notes, although they are on equal footing with Jews, “their separateness is necessary for God’s plan for Israel, as God sees it.”\(^{36}\) The question remains: how can Paul proclaim that all stand on equal footing before God and then declare that Israel continues to have special status such that “all Israel will be saved”? Remarkably, Paul himself puts these two elements together in the conclusion of Romans 9–11, asserting that all Israel will be saved only once the “fullness of the nations has entered” (Rom 11:25).


\(^{34}\) Zoccali, *Whom God Has Called*, 7 n.12: “The church is for him emphatically not a ‘third race’ that is *neither* Jewish nor gentile, nor even less an entity altogether void of ethnic ascription. Rather, the church is in one sense *entirely* ‘Jewish,’ and yet in another sense *both* Jewish and gentile.” For more on the “third race” concept in early Christianity, see Denise Kimber Buell and Caroline Johnson Hodge, “The Politics of Interpretation: The Rhetoric of Race and Ethnicity in Paul,” *JBL* 123, no. 2 (2004): 235–251 (1–5, 35–62).


\(^{36}\) Johnson Hodge, “The Question of Identity,” 172.
Who is Paul’s Israel?

Thus the other side of the coin must also be considered: to grasp how Paul understands the identity of his uncircumcised converts, the first task is to define what exactly Paul means when he says, “Israel” and how he understands God’s plan for Israel. But that question has remained perhaps even more muddled in scholarship, despite a massive number of studies on the subject. Nevertheless, it is impossible to understand Paul’s theology and mission (including the inclusion of gentiles) without first understanding his view of Israel and vision of God’s plan for Israel, meaning the interpretation of Romans 9–11 inescapably colors the interpretation of everything else in the Pauline corpus. The central difficulty is holding together two distinct strands of Pauline thought: (1) As just noted, Paul applies Israelite terms to his churches and even includes his former gentiles among the descendants of the patriarchs and biblical Israel, which seems to suggest that Paul identified the Christ-following ἐκκλησία (including gentiles) with Israel in some way; (2) Paul vigorously argues against the idea that Israel has been rejected (Rom 11:1) but rather continues to uphold the elect status of Israel despite unbelief (e.g., Rom 11:25–29).

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39 For more discussion of the term ἐκκλησία and its significance in Paul and the early Christ-movement, see Chapter 14 below.

40 Sanders, Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People, 198, summarizes these two apparently “conflicting convictions” thus: “salvation is by faith; God’s promise to Israel is irrevocable.” Similarly, Zoccali, Whom God Has Called, 44: “Could Paul have viewed the church outside of the category of ‘Israel,’ the historic title for the people of God? On
**Option 1: Israel = the Church**

As mentioned above, mainstream Christian interpretation of Paul long identified the church (ἐκκλησία) as the “true” Israel, with the church having effectively replaced the historic, ethnic entity as the rightful heir to the scriptural promises made to the patriarchs. This view is first made explicit in Justin Martyr’s *Dialogue with Trypho* in approximately 160 CE, but another early Christian writer half a century earlier already suggests as much, proclaiming that the Israelite covenant “is ours [Christians’], but they [Jews] lost it forever” (Barn. 4:7), having been “perfected in their sins” just in time for the church to swoop in and receive the covenant in their place (Barn. 14:5). Thus in this view when Paul says, “all Israel will be saved” (Rom 11:26), he does not mean what one might expect a typical first-century Jew to mean by this term but instead has radically redefined that term to mean the Christian church.

One obvious strength of this interpretation is that there is no tension between Paul’s campaign for the equality of all before God and his statements concerning Israel’s salvation since the latter has simply been redefined. N. T. Wright, for example, argues that other interpretations “fit very badly with Romans 9–10, where … there is no covenant membership, and consequently no salvation, for those who simply rest on their ancestral privilege.” Nevertheless, inasmuch as this view depends on Paul having opposed either Jewish legalism or ethnocentrism (or both),

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41 *Dial.* 11.5.

42 See Michael Kok, “The True Covenant People: Ethnic Reasoning in the Epistle of Barnabas,” *SR* 40, no. 1 (September 10, 2010): 81–97. Even earlier, 1 Clement and 1 Peter similarly suggest an association of the church with Israel (e.g., 1 Pet 2:9–12; 1 Clem 29:2–30:1. Cf. Zoccali, *Whom God Has Called*, 86, who also points to Rev 5:9–10 in which “the vocation assigned to Israel in Exod. 9.6 (cf. Isa. 61.6) is here applied to the church of Christ.”

with the end result being a more universal church having taken over the promises to Israel, the problems demonstrated with those views of the Pauline gospel must be taken into account here. If Paul did not oppose legalism or ethnocentrism in principle, it is difficult to explain how Paul could make such a dramatic leap from the message of Jesus to conclude that Israel should be entirely redefined, with gentiles suddenly considered Israelites and equal heirs of the promises to Israel.\(^{44}\)

**Option 2: Israel = the Jews**

The identification of Paul’s “all Israel” with the church has grown increasingly unpopular in recent decades, not least because of its anti-Jewish potential in a post-Holocaust world.\(^{45}\) Beyond concerns about modern impact, most modern interpreters have found such a radical redefinition of Israel implausible and anachronistic in a context in which Christian communities

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\(^{44}\) Garroway’s proposal that Jewish or gentile identity was not binary but rather admitted some hybridity still does not solve the problem with respect to Paul, particularly since Paul is so adamant that his non-Jewish converts are *not* in fact Jews. I am also unconvinced that the dividing line between Jews and gentiles before the Jesus-movement was quite as blurry as Garroway suggests. There would of course be some difference of opinion among Jewish groups with respect to who was “in” and who was “out,” but this does not imply that for any group or individual there would have been a category of “Gentile-Jews,” proselytes and *gerim* notwithstanding (plus Paul does not apply either of the latter categories to his former gentiles). See Garroway, *Paul's Gentile-Jews*, 15–43. The problem is applying a population-level insight (that different subgroups often have differing ideas of what constitutes group membership) to an individual question (is this person a Jew or not?) that would be answered by a specific subcommunity. As scholars studying rather than participating in the phenomena, we must avoid essentialism, and from our vantage point we can see the categories get fuzzy as the picture zooms out. But individual communities and subgroups tend to apply these categories in exactly the essentializing manner that must be avoided on a disinterested scholarly level. Conflating the first-order (created by communities themselves) and second-order (analytical) definitions of such categories can be misleading, suggesting a hybridity or blurriness that would not in fact have existed at a community (first-order) level. On the problems caused by the differences between first-order and second-order definitions in the study of Judaism, see Satlow, “Defining Judaism.”

\(^{45}\) “Scholarship and the enterprise of biblical interpretation in particular are contextual, ‘conducted by real people who are concretely located in the historical process’ [Brueggemann 1997:734]. Therefore, we cannot ignore the fact that this enterprise is undertaken in a post-Shoah situation. Since theological supersessionism and practical Christian teaching of contempt for Jews contributed to the emergence of political anti-Semitism and its unthinkably brutal realization in the Third Reich, Christian theology has lost its innocence and cannot go on doing business as usual.” Kathy Ehrensperger, *That We May Be Mutually Encouraged: Feminism and the New Perspective in Pauline Studies* (New York: T&T Clark, 2004), 16; citing Walter Brueggemann, *Theology of the Old Testament: Testimony, Dispute, Advocacy* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1997).
were still so indistinct from Jewish communities that circumcision of non-Jews remained a contentious point of debate. Interpreters have also pointed out the absence of any direct statement in Romans 9–11 identifying gentiles as Israelites, the positive emphasis Paul places on Israelite heritage in Rom 9:2–5, and how consistently the term refers to historical Israel throughout these chapters, as Douglas Moo explains:

Paul has used the term ‘Israel’ ten times so far in Rom. 9–11, and each refers to ethnic Israel…. a shift from the ethnic denotation [v. 25] to a purely religious one in v. 26a—despite the all—is unlikely.  

Moreover, this interpretation has been criticized as upholding the very “gentile supersessionism” against which Paul is fighting in Romans 9–11, particularly when he warns gentiles who have been “grafted in” against arrogance (e.g. 11:25, “lest you become wise in your own eyes”). Romans 9–11 must therefore be understood as an argument that God has not in fact forsaken ethnic Israel, for any other meaning “would be to fuel the fire of the gentiles’ arrogance by giving them grounds to brag that ‘we are the true Israel.’”

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46 E.g., Watson, *Paul, Judaism, and the Gentiles*, 311: “Nowhere in Romans 9–11 is ‘Israel’ said to include Gentiles.”


48 Moo, *Romans*, 721. This reasoning here is circular—the aim of this passage is to undermine gentile arrogance against ethnic Israel (because that’s how the term must be read), therefore the term must mean ethnic Israel. Remarkably, Moo concedes that Paul is indeed willing to apply such terminology to the gentiles elsewhere but argues he would not do so here, where “the rhetorical situation is entirely different” (721).
A majority of modern scholars therefore understand Paul’s “Israel” as denoting “empirical” or “ethnic” Israel, though whether the ἐκκλησία is also to be identified in some way with Israel continues to be debated. Some interpreters, for example, have argued that Paul presents two Israels (or a bifurcated Israel), with the church having claim to Israelite identity not supplanting but rather parallel to historical Israel’s continued status as the elect people of God.

Christopher Zoccali summarizes this position as follows:

While in the present time historical Israel as a corporate whole has rejected the gospel, many—Jews as well as gentiles—have come to Christ faith. As representing God’s elect people, the identity of “Israel” belongs to them. But despite this development in the course of salvation history, the historical nation—irrespective of Christ faith—cannot be severed from its historic status as God’s elect people. They can, neither, therefore be properly understood as anything other than Israel.

Others have objected to any identification of the church with Israel, emphasizing that although related to Israel, the church is a wholly “new entity of Jews and gentiles together

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50 It is worth noting that the term ἐκκλησία is itself only used with reference to ethnic Israel in the LXX.

51 E.g., Dunn, Romans 9–16, 526–27; The Theology of Paul the Apostle (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 519–525; Terence L. Donaldson, Paul and the Gentiles: Remapping the Apostle’s Convictional World (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1997), 216–248. Wright, Climax, 238, also argues for a “two-Israel” position based on Rom 9:6, arguing that this verse establishes a “double ‘Israel,’” one of flesh and the other a “true Israel,” but unlike most modern interpreters, Wright does not argue that the fleshly Israel is included among the “all Israel” that will be saved according to Rom 11:26.

52 Zoccali, Whom God Has Called, 33, summarizing the position of Dunn.
coming together in Christ equally.”53 William Campbell further emphasizes, “However related to Israel, the church is not Israel; Israel’s identity is unique and cannot be taken over by gentile Christ-followers, or even completely shared by them.”54

In any case, although the exact relationship of the church and gentile Christ-followers to Israel continues to be disputed, Paul’s continued commitment to historical, ethnic Israel is now widely agreed. Thus Romans 9–11 is typically read as Paul’s reflections on the “question of the Jews” in light of Jewish unbelief, with his concluding statements in 11:25–27 specifically addressing the ultimate fate of the Jews (="all Israel").55 Most of the debate now tends to concern the nature, timing, and extent of empirical Israel’s salvation. That is, when Paul says “all” Israel will be saved, does he allow for individual exceptions? Should the “all” be taken synchronically or diachronically? Is this salvation the result of a miraculous eschatological conversion of all Jews alive at that time or does he suggest that all Jews throughout time will be saved through the separate path (Sonderweg) of membership in the Jewish covenant? Or does Paul simply mean that all “elect” Jews will be saved through the same process as gentiles, thereby excluding those who never come to faith in Christ? Or has the entire letter been misunderstood as addressing universal concerns when it is in fact directed at a division between Christ-following and unbelieving Jews in Rome and refers to the eventual conversion of the latter through Paul’s preaching?56


55 E.g., Cranfield, Romans, 446; Dunn, Romans 9–16, 681. Cf. Chapter 13 below.

56 For a detailed analysis of the various options, see Zoccali, Whom God Has Called. See also the section on this passage in Chapter 13 below for more details. It is worth noting that these discussions typically include little to no analysis of what Paul actually means by “saved” here. Rather, most interpreters assume a more or less Protestant
These debates have been passionate and robust, but the participants all share the conviction that Paul’s “Israel” must denote “ethnic” Israel. The truly significant leap, however, so pervasive as to be granted without a second thought (such that the reader likely did not notice the shifts between the two terms in the previous paragraph) is the assumption that for Paul or anyone else in antiquity “ethnic Israel” is synonymous to and coextensive with “the Jews” (that is, οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι). Nevertheless, given their apparent equivalence, Paul’s preference for Ἰουδαίος everywhere except Romans 9–11, where he only uses that term twice but uses “Israel” language thirteen times versus six times elsewhere in the Pauline corpus, is curious—especially since this shift coincides with the paradoxical statement of Rom 9:6, “not all who are from Israel are Israel.” Most interpreters have simply assumed that Paul obviously means “empirical Jews,” though he alters his terminology to use the “insider” term of honor for that people. Nevertheless, despite its contemporary ubiquity, this equation of ethnic Israel with the Jews (or, more problematically, with “Judaism”) has been more assumed than argued and deserves a more thorough analysis.

view of “salvation”—that is, that Paul’s driving concern here is whether “all Israel” will go to heaven when they die. But this is more assumed than established, and there is some reason to suspect it is anachronistic.


58 For a fuller discussion of Paul’s terminology, see the beginning of Chapter Eleven.

59 E.g., Ulrich Wilckens, Der Brief an der Römer, EKKNT 6/2 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1980), 187–88: “Paulus meint die Juden, vermeidet aber nahezu durchweg in Kapitel 9–11 das bisher verwendete Wort Ἰουδαίοι ... Ihnen kommt der Ehrenname ‘Israeliten’ als bekennnischafe Selbstbezeichnung zu.” For more on this supposed distinction between these two allegedly synonymous terms, see Chapter One below.

60 Martina Böhm observes, “Diese häufig gar nicht explizierte, sondern unausgesprochen vorausgesetzte Gleichung “empirisches Israel = Judentum” fußt auf der Übernahme bestimmter Teile der biblischen Historiographie, vor allem des so genannten dtr Geschichtswerks” (“Wer gehörte in hellenistisch-römischer Zeit zu 'Israel'? Historische
Empirical Ethnicity?

Despite its near-ubiquitous use, the language of “ethnic” or “empirical” Israel presents a problem that seems to have gone unnoticed by the many scholars using this terminology. Functionally, both terms serve as a sort of shorthand to connect Paul’s “Israel” terminology, the definition of which has historically been disputed, with the presumably less-disputed category of the Jews. But to put it bluntly, rather than providing a solution, this terminology begs the question. That is, the appeal to “ethnic Israel” still runs into exactly the same identity-definition problem Paul and his interlocutors are themselves debating: Who counts as “in,” who counts as “out,” and who gets to determine the “empirical” boundaries for the group?61

Reference to “empirical” or “ethnic” Israel implies a category that is scientifically verifiable or at least easily identifiable (with “empirical” sidestepping the potentially problematic racial connotations of “ethnicity” but having the same functional definition), such that it is clear who counts as Israel and who does not. But the reality is not so simple. For one, Gary Knoppers points out that even in the biblical genealogies, “Judah, much less the Israel of which Judah is but one part, is ethnically diverse.”62 Who counts as a Jew continues to be a thorny matter even

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61 Notger Slenczka, “Römer 9–11 und die Frage nach der Identität Israels,” in Wilk et al., Between Gospel and Election, 463–478 (475): “[D]ie Auseinandersetzung erst recht kein Streit zwischen zwei Religionsgemeinschaften ist. Vielmehr dreht sich die Auseinandersetzung um die Frage danach, was das Judentum [sic] bzw. was die Zugehörigkeit zu Israel konstituiert.”

today, as attested by the controversies over the decisions of the Israeli government denying aliyah (immigration to Israel) to self-identified Jews, many of whom have also been approved as Jews by other Jewish groups.  

Are those rejected as Jews by the nation of Israel but received as Jews by Orthodox leaders in the diaspora still not Jews? 

Moreover, the language of “ethnic” Israel (=Jews) continues to frame the discussion with the presumption of an underlying contrast between Paul’s Christian “religion” and Jewish “ethnicity.” But this is highly problematic, as religion and ethnicity are modern categories that were not disembedded from one another in antiquity; to be a part of an ethnos meant observing cultural and cultic practices. To make matters worse, both categories are inconsistently defined and often nebulous in scholarly literature; what one scholar means by “ethnic” may differ from how another construes the term, with each talking past the other. 

Shaye Cohen, for example, describes ethnicity as “closed, immutable, an ascribed characteristic based on birth.” Similarly, most Pauline interpreters use the term “ethnic” to refer

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65 In Neusner’s words, “distinguishing the ethnic from the religious aspect of Israel for the Judaism [of Paul’s day] … simply defies the evidence in hand. There is no ethnic Israel that is distinct from a religious Israel at all, not in the sources that attest to the Judaism of which Dunn speaks” (Neusner, "Was Rabbinic Judaism Really 'Ethnic'?,," doi:220232338). “This distinction, however, is a retrojection of contemporary sociology and politics … into a theology of a Judaism of ancient times.” (“Paul's Ethnic Israel,” 4–5). “Israel in Judaism forms the counterpart to the church or the nation of Islam, in Christianity and Islam, respectively, but not to the Albanians or the Italians or the Algerians or the Swedes” (“Paul's Ethnic Israel,” 6).


mostly to physical descent, but since that would rule out any Jewish proselytes while including those who have apostatized, most interpreters acknowledge additional criteria (such as Torah keeping) beyond physical descent, though descent remains the primary criterion. Others, however, rightly emphasize that ethnicity is a socially constructed category with elastic boundaries that are constantly in the process of negotiation. Those boundaries may seem simple enough when limited to physical descent alone (though even that can be complicated by adoption and more overtly fictive kinship), but as soon as cultural elements of ethnicity like Torah observance come into play, the natural and immediate question is who or what defines proper Torah observance. Is Torah observance to be defined according to the standards and definition of the Pharisees? Sadducees? Essenes? Orthodox? Reform? Conservative? Who gets to define what counts as proper Torah observance?

Really 'Ethnic'?" David M. Miller, “Ethnicity Comes of Age: An Overview of Twentieth-Century Terms for Ioudaios,” CurBR 10 (2012): 293–311 (293–96), observes that the term has often functioned as a euphemism for the simplistic and discredited concept of “race” as a biological category, which is surely a factor in why it is often assumed to be a rigid or immutable category. See also Buell, Why This New Race, 12–20, who embraces the term “race” despite its baggage in part to emphasize this point.

E.g., Craig A. Blaising, “The Future of Israel as a Theological Question,” JETS 44, no. 3 (2001): 435–450: “I am using the term Israel in its primary sense, which designates the descendants of Jacob as an ethnic, cultural, and national entity.”


On “observance of Jewish practices” as key to Jewish identity in antiquity and the difficulty of understanding exactly what this might entail, see especially Shaye J. D. Cohen, “Those Who Say They Are Jews and Are Not”: How Do You Know a Jew in Antiquity When You See One,” in Diasporas in Antiquity, eds. Shaye J. D. Cohen and Ernst S. Frerichs (1993), 1–45 (31–35).
At this point we find ourselves right back in the middle of the debate in which Paul himself is participating. Paul claims that his message in no way opposes the Torah but rather establishes it (Rom 3:31), even claiming that to properly fulfill the requirements of the Torah, one must receive the spirit in accordance with his gospel (Rom 2:29; 8:4).71 Those who reject his gospel are therefore on the outside, as they are not properly fulfilling the Torah. How is this argument any different from what might have been said by any Pharisee (or Essene, etc.) about those who refused to keep the Torah in accordance with their own halakhic interpretations?

In fact, if there was one thing all the participants in the debate seem to have agreed upon, it’s that being born an Israelite is not sufficient to retain membership in the covenant if one refuses to live according to the Torah.72 But various groups disagreed about what living according to the Torah entails, and inasmuch as ethnic boundaries are negotiated and socially constructed phenomena, those who might be “in” (that is, considered Jews or Israelites) in the eyes of one group, sect, or person, might be considered out in the eyes of another. Whose interpretation of the Torah should be followed is always under debate—and again, that is precisely the question in view in Romans. This is a problem that most modern New Testament scholars seem not to have not considered, instead just skirting the problem by referencing “empirical” or “ethnic” Israel without any discussion of how the boundaries for that group should be defined. Thus even if by “Israel” Paul means “ethnic” Israel, we must still address how Paul defines ethnic Israel.

71 The similarities between Paul’s statements here and those of Jesus in Matt 5:17–20 are significant but only rarely noted by commentators.

An Additional Complication: “Jews” or “Judaens”?

The category of “the Jews” is hardly less complex than that of “Israel,” especially given the recent trend away from the traditional translation of Ιουδαῖος as “Jew” (and other modern equivalents such as Juden or Juif), with some arguing that because “Jew” can refer to adherents to the modern religion of Judaism while the ancient term was solely ethnic in its connotation, the term is anachronistic when applied to antiquity.\(^73\) That is, since religion was not yet differentiated from other cultural elements in antiquity,\(^74\) some argue Ιουδαῖος should typically be translated with another term, such as the less familiar and more geographically oriented English word “Judaean” to signal the difference between the ancient ethnic group and the modern religious adherents, with the timing and context of when “Jew” becomes preferable variously defined. Paradoxically, such a proposal results in a situation in which we cannot speak of Paul’s view of “the Jews” at all. It also again problematically imposes the modern distinction between religion and ethnicity on antiquity. Nevertheless, because of its importance to Paul’s view of Israel and the Jews, it is necessary to address this discussion before continuing.

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Ἰουδαῖος: Not Strictly Geographic

Interestingly, Josephus specifically argues against the idea that Ἰουδαῖος was originally or primarily a geographic term, explaining that Judaea got its name from the Ἰουδαῖοι rather than the Ἰουδαῖοι getting their name from the geographical region of Judaea (A.J. 11.173). In fact, Josephus provides this explanation of the term’s origin at least in part to correct outsider conceptions the origins of the Ἰουδαῖοι and their ethnonym, as he is combating gentile charges that “the Ἰουδαῖοι were certain Egyptians or Indians who had obtained their current name by emigrating to the already existing country of Judea.” Josephus reports and rebuts stories that the Ἰουδαῖοι were the worst of the Egyptians driven out of their own land into Judaea before taking the name of that land (Ag. Ap. 1.227–303) and Aristotle’s belief (through Clearchus) that

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75 The term Ἰουδαῖος itself is a loanword derived from the Hebrew יהודים and Aramaic יְיהוֹדָאִים; since Greek does not have a consonant equivalent to י, the first two vowel sounds are joined at the beginning of the word without an intervening consonant, but the occasional appearance of the form Εἰουδαῖος suggests the word was pronounced with the initial vowel distinct from the following diphthong (y-oo-DAI-os), rather than as typically pronounced by most modern native English speaking readers today (yoo-DAI-os). See Walter Gutbrod, “Ἰουδαῖος, Ἰσραήλ, Ἑβραῖος in the New Testament,” TDNT 3:375–391 (369 n. 81). Given that Ἰουδαῖος is a loanword, it is peculiar that Esler, Conflict and Identity, 58–60, spends so much time on “The Territorial Dimension to Greek Names for Ethnic Groups,” and bases his arguments for translating the term with “Judeans” in large part on the fact that “among the Greeks it was the practice to name ethnic groups in relation to the territory in which they originated” (63). Morphologically, the form is not a noun but rather a derivative adjective, as indicated by the -αιος ending that marks an adjective formed from a proper name, a common phenomenon with gentilics (e.g., Ἀθηναῖος; see Hubert Weir Smyth, Greek Grammar [Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1920], §844.3). As such, Ἰουδαῖος is typically used as a substantive, denoting a “Jewish/Judaean [person]” or “[person] of Judah.” On substantive adjectives in such cases, cf. Smyth, Greek Grammar, §1021–1022. Another adjectival form, Ἰουδαϊκός (adv. Ἰουδαϊκῶς), appears less frequently but tends to function more properly as an adjective describing rites, writings, etc. The same basic distinctions apply to the Latin Iudaeus (used more frequently as a substantive referring to persons) and Iudaicus, respectively.


the Ἰουδαῖοι were Indian philosophers “called Calami by the Indians and Ἰουδαῖοι by the
Syrians, for they took their name from Judaea, the place they inhabit” (Ag. Ap. 1.179).78

Despite Josephus’ objections, the scholarly trend has been to understand the term in
exactly the same fashion as these gentile outsiders, as a geographical term that grew into an
ethnic label over time. Malcolm Lowe’s seminal article, for example, remarkably uses these very
gentile reports as evidence “that the geographical senses of Ἰουδαῖοι … formed the primary
meaning of the term in New Testament times.”79 Likewise, Esler spends several pages on “The
Territorial Dimension to Greek Names for Ethnic Groups,”80 followed by “a sample of Greco-
Roman authors” showing that several pagan authors understood the term Ἰουδαῖος as having
derived from the land of Ἰουδαία, most notably those pagans cited by Josephus himself.81 Esler
ignores that these pagan reports appear to be operating on secondhand (and somewhat garbled)
knowledge of the Exodus and Moses traditions. He also dismisses Pompeius Trogus’ assertion
(Hist. Phil. 36.2.1–5) that the Iudaei were named after Judah the son of Israel as reflecting “the
common practice of generating an eponymous ancestor as the basis for a name that is actually
territorial,” despite that explanation clearly deriving from secondhand knowledge of biblical
traditions.82 Nevertheless, Josephus is at pains to correct the gentile views cited by Lowe and

78 For similar pagan polemical claims regarding the origin of the Jews, see Strabo, Geography 16.34–6 and Origen’s
report of Celsus’ views in Contra Celsus 3.5.

79 Lowe, “Who Were the ΙΟΥΔΑΙΟΙ?,” 105–06.

80 Esler, Conflict and Identity, 58–60.

81 Esler, Conflict and Identity, 63–64. Esler remarkably comments that Josephus cites Aristotle’s view “with evident
approval” in Ag. Ap. 1.179, despite Josephus’ arguments against such a view elsewhere (“Judean Ethnic Identity in
Josephus’ Against Apion,” in A Wandering Galilean: Essays in Honour of Seán Freyne, eds. Zuleika Rodgers,
Margaret Daly-Denton, and Anne Fitzpatrick-McKinley [Leiden: Brill, 2009], 73–91 [74]). On the contrary,
Josephus does not approve Aristotle’s explanation but only cites Aristotle among a series of older writings as proof
of the Jews’ antiquity.

82 Esler, Conflict and Identity, 64.
Esler, explaining that the Ἰουδαῖοι did not in fact receive their name from the land and that geography is not a necessary or inherent component of what it meant to be a Ἰουδαῖος—an important distinction for Ἰουδαῖοι in the diaspora who sought to retain their own customs rather than adopting those of their present lands. John Ashton argues that this is how ethnonyms tend to work for those no longer living in their ancestral lands even today:

The whole point of continuing to identify the customs of a particular group of immigrants or their descendants by the name of their nation of origin (whether one uses the adjective ‘Polish’ or the noun ‘Poland’) is that their practices have not changed: however long the group may have lived in their host country they can still be singled out by the customs which they share with ‘the folks back home’—the Poles of Poland or the Pakistanis of Pakistan.

Josephus reports that when Caesar made decrees in favor of the Ἰουδαῖοι, he ordered that they “be sent everywhere” (A.J. 14.190–98), including publication in Tyre and Sidon. As Sean Freyne observes, Ἰουδαῖοι could hardly mean merely “Judaeans” in a regional sense here; rather, the decrees refer to “all who lived according to the ancestral laws, irrespective of if they lived in Palestine or abroad.” Similarly, Margaret Williams has persuasively demonstrated that there are “no hard epigraphic examples of Ioudaios meaning ‘person (not necessarily Jewish) from

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83 To his credit, Lowe recognizes Josephus’ efforts to combat these Gentile opinions and that he is “trying to combat misconceptions” in A.J. 11:173. Nevertheless, Lowe discounts Josephus’ explanation as not in keeping with the “general picture for the New Testament period,” persisting in a geographical understanding of the term in the Gospel of John (“Who Were the IOYΔAIOI?,” 106). Tomson, on the other hand gets it right here, recognizing that Josephus says the name came from the tribe, with the land then deriving its name from the tribe (“Names,” 124).


85 For more on Caesar’s decree and Josephus’ reporting of said decree, see Miriam Pucci Ben Zeev, Jewish Rights in the Roman World: The Greek and Roman Documents Quoted by Josephus Flavius, TSAJ 74 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998), 25–106.

86 Freyne, “Behind the Names,” 396.
Judaea”; instead, when it occurs in ancient Mediterranean inscriptions, Ἰουδαῖος “simply refers to Jews wherever found and whatever their geographical origin.”

**Modern Concerns and Antisemitism**

The trend toward interpreting Ἰουδαῖος as a geographic label is tied to concerns about anti-Semitism and the need to distance from pre-Holocaust anti-Jewish readings, as is especially evident in the post-World War II proliferation of literature on the Ἰουδαῖοι in the Gospel of John, which shows significant concern with keeping John’s generally negative portrayal of the Ἰουδαῖοι from being associated with modern Jews. The trend towards

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88 For example, Sonya Cronin has persuasively demonstrated how theological concerns influenced the work of Raymond Brown in this area. See Sonya S. Cronin, *Raymond Brown, 'The Jews', and the Gospel of John: From Apologia to Apology*, LNTS 504 (London: T&T Clark, 2015), 23–38, 154–86. That is not to say, however, that studies motivated by theological or ethical concerns are necessarily or inherently wrong. A study done with ulterior motives may produce correct results. But we must be especially careful to double check the work for taint in such cases. For further discussion of modern apologetic concerns motivating much of the study in this area, see also Graham Harvey, *The True Israel: Uses of the Names Jew, Hebrew, and Israel in Ancient Jewish and Early Christian Literature*, AGJU 35 (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 7 and the sources cited there.


“Judaeans” has now extended well beyond Johannine scholarship, but the entanglement with modern concerns has remained such that it is often difficult to know whether a given argument is rooted in historical investigation or primarily an attempt to rescue precious ancient texts and modern readers from anti-Judaism or anti-Semitism. Frederick Danker’s prescriptive comment in the entry on Ἰουδαῖος in the standard lexicon in the field (BDAG) is a signal example of how much modern concerns influence translation decisions in this regard:

Incalculable harm has been caused by simply glossing [Ἰουδαῖος] with “Jew,” for many readers or auditors of the Bible translations do not practice the historical judgment necessary to distinguish between circumstances and events of an ancient time and contemporary ethnic-religious-social realities, with the result that anti-Judaism in the modern sense of the term is needlessly fostered through biblical texts.91

Philip Esler echoes Danker in even stronger terms,

It is arguable that translating Ἰουδαῖοι as “Jews” is not only intellectually indefensible … but also morally questionable. To honor the memory of these first-century people it is necessary to call them by a name that accords with their own sense of identity. “Jews” does not suit this purpose, both because it fails to communicate the territorial relationship they had with the land of Judea and its temple and because it inevitably imposes on them associations derived from the troubled, indeed, often terrible history of the Jews. As long as the temple—the sacred heart of the land and its chief attraction—stood, and even between 70 CE and 135 CE when there was a hope that it might be rebuilt, “Judeans” is the only apt rendering in English of Ἰουδαῖοι.92

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91 BDAG, “Ἰουδαῖος,” 478–79 (478). That Danker was a professor at a Lutheran seminary presumably contributed to his concern on this point.

92 Esler, Conflict and Identity, 68.
As with Danker, Esler makes it clear that modern concerns are at the forefront, wanting to ensure that associations with modern Jews not be imposed upon ancient Ἰουδαῖοι. For Danker and Esler, to translate Ἰουδαῖος with “Jew” borders on a moral violation.

Other scholars, however, have expressed their concerns in exactly the opposite direction. Amy-Jill Levine, for example, observes that good intentions could in this case produce unexpectedly negative consequences:

The Jew is replaced with the Judean, and thus we have a Judenrein (‘Jew free’) text, a text purified of Jews. Complementing this erasure, scholars then proclaim that Jesus is neither Jew nor even Judean, but Galilean…. Once Jesus is not a Jew or a Judean, but a Galilean, it is also an easy step to make him an Aryan. So much for the elimination of anti-Semitism by means of changing vocabulary."93

Levine’s concerns are well founded, as illustrated by the work of Walter Grundmann, a Nazi party member and leader of “The Institute for the Study and Eradication of Jewish Influence from German Church Life,”94 who argued that Jesus was not a Jew because “Judaism” (Judentum) had been confined to Judaea, the region around Jerusalem, while Galilee was not populated by Jews but by Aryans who had been transplanted to the land by the Assyrians and were only later forcibly converted to Judaism under the Hasmoneans.95 Thus Grundmann’s

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argument for disconnecting Jesus from Jews and Judaism was based upon a geographical
distinction between the Ἰουδαῖοι and Galileans, and even the rendering pushed by Danker and
others as a safeguard against anti-Judaism has a dangerous anti-Semitic past.

Remarkably, similar distinctions between Galileans and Ἰουδαῖοι have once again gained
currency in recent years. Richard Horsley, for example, argues that the Galileans were not
Ἰουδαίοι, which he consistently renders as “Judeans,” opting for a geographical sense of the
term, but rather “Israelites,” having been descended from the remnants of the northern tribes
remaining after the Assyrian campaigns of the eighth century BCE and forcibly brought under
Judaean rule only in the Hasmonean period. Similarly, in his effort to explain John’s use of
Ἰουδαῖος, Daniel Boyarin distinguishes between the Galileans who were only ambivalently
connected to the Judaean temple-state based in Jerusalem, and the Ἰουδαῖοι, who were “an
originally geographically based group maintaining a certain pietistic version of Israelite
religion.”

But such efforts to distinguish between Galileans and Ἰουδαίοι run aground on the fact
that Galileans are repeatedly called Ἰουδαίοι throughout the relevant literature of the period,
including the Gospel of John (e.g., 6:41, 52),\(^9\) which also labels Jesus himself a Ἰουδαῖος (e.g., John 4:9). Similarly, Freyne observes that although Josephus is “careful never to call the Samaritans Ioudaioi,” he “repeatedly does not hesitate to designate Galileans as Ioudaioi, especially in conjunction with the Jerusalem Temple.”\(^{10}\) Galileans are Ἰουδαῖοι from a specific locale outside Judaea, but they are nonetheless Ἰουδαῖοι, demonstrating that a rigid geographical definition of Ἰουδαῖος cannot be upheld.

Horsley overtly explains that his project aims to undermine the idea that Jesus opposed “Judaism,” which he explains did not yet exist in Jesus’ day, with a supposedly more robust idea of Jesus the Galilean opposing the southern Judaeans who had imposed their hegemony upon the Galileans.\(^{101}\) April Deconick, however, protests such seemingly noble aims:

> The Galilean-Judean distinction … appears to me to be a contemporary way for some scholars to call Jesus something other than “Jew” and to soften or deny the anti-semitism that was part of the Christian movement and is found in first-century Christian texts. If Jesus was only against Judeans in the south, then that lessens the anti-semitic nature of the gospels, especially John. Yes, I continue to have major concerns that scholarship on Jesus is largely about how unlike other Jews Jesus was.\(^{102}\)

There is no question that the tragedy of the Holocaust will forever cast its terrible shadow on biblical scholarship and studies of Judaism, but as Levine suggests, a mere change of translation is no quick fix and will not solve the problem. Daniel Schwartz echoes this sentiment, further noting that such prescriptions although “very nice” are “not the study of ancient

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\(^9\) As pointed out by Ashton, *Understanding the Fourth Gospel*, 133.


history.”103 As Schwartz suggests, it is preferable to bracket our modern concerns as much as possible in historical studies, treating the historical data as fairly as possible without pre-formed notions of what we should conclude for moral or other reasons. E. P. Sanders provides a good example of such a distinction when he concludes that Paul’s opinion about the fate of unbelieving Jews were he alive today might be different than it was in his own day, distinguishing between the historical question and what modern interpreters would prefer the text to say.104

**Ethnicity and Religion**

Although the idea that the term is primarily geographic can no longer be sustained, the question of how Ἰουδαῖος should be understood remains a live question, with some pushing for the less-familiar rendering “Judaean” not as a solely geographic term but as a way to differentiate the “ethnic” Jews of antiquity from “religious” Jews of more modern times. Cohen, for example, argues that since ethnicity is immutable and based on birth,105 Ἰουδαῖος had an “ethnic-geographic” sense and should therefore be translated as “Judaean” until “the Judaeans of Judaea in the second century BCE began to redefine their community in terms of ‘religion.’”106 Cohen


104 Sanders, Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People, 197; E. P. Sanders, “Paul's Attitude Toward the Jewish People,” USQR 33, no. 3 (1978): 175–187 (185)). Similarly, Slenczka, “Frage nach der Identität Israels,” 471.

105 Cohen, Beginnings of Jewishness, 136.

106 Cohen, Beginnings of Jewishness, 71–81 (quote 80–81). Cohen’s argument further develops his teacher Morton Smith’s argument, which attempts to explain the expansion of the use of the term in the late second and early first century BCE by asserting it to have taken on a political sense in addition to its older tribal, regional, and religious meanings. Cf. also Cohen, “Ἰουδαῖος τὸ γένος and Related Expressions in Josephus,” in Josephus and the History of the Greco-Roman Period: Essays in Memory of Morton Smith, eds. Fausto Parente and Joseph Sievers, StPB 41 (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 23–38.
sees this shift in parallel with the process of Hellenization, as “‘Hellene’ changed from an ethnic or ethnic-geographic term to a cultural term,”107 citing Isocrates’ statement:

Our city (Athens) has so much surpassed other men in thought and speech that her students have become the teachers of others, and she has made the name of Greeks to seem to be no more of race/birth (genos) but thought, so that those who share our education, more than those who share a common nature (physis), are to be called Hellenes. (Panegyricus, 50)

Although acknowledging that “the ancients had a much more organic conception of these matters than do we,”108 Cohen proposes that as “Greekness” became a cultural rather than ethnic term, the meaning of Ἰουδαῖος likewise began to change to a religious/cultural term rather than a term of descent, pointing to stories of conversion in later literature as evidence.109 Thus Cohen argues that although unsuitable in pre-Hasmonean times, the term is best understood as “Jew” by the turn of the eras. Esler, however, objects to Cohen’s assertion that ethnicity is rigidly tied to genealogy and that once conversion is a possibility, one has passed to something other than ethnicity:

“[W]hen [Cohen] is faced with instances where the full panoply of ethnic features is not present, rather than simply appealing to the elasticity of ethnic indicia, he dumps ethnicity altogether and invents a new type of affiliation that is solely religious.”110

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107 Cohen, Beginnings of Jewishness, 132. It is worth noting that Cohen and others tend to disregard the tribal sense of the term and its Semitic precursors (that is, denoting “a member of the tribe of Judah”), asserting that “this meaning seems to have disappeared from common usage by the Hellenistic period” (70). But Cohen’s citation of Josephus does not support his point, nor does Cohen adequately demonstrate from any other primary source how this meaning was replaced by the three categories of meaning he suggests became standard afterwards. As was shown above, Josephus himself begins his explanation by citing the tribal sense of the term, and other evidence from the Second Temple period suggests that the tribal meaning did not entirely disappear, though the larger sense of the term as distinguishing from Gentiles did become primary.


110 Esler, Conflict and Identity, 73. See also Johnson Hodge, If Sons, Then Heirs, 54.
Esler is correct that ancient notions of membership in an ἔθνος were not as fixed as Cohen’s thesis suggests. Even genealogical relationships could be acquired through adoption, and alliance between cities nations was often accompanied by the “discovery” of fictive kinship between the peoples.\(^{111}\) Although fixed in some respects in that it was based on kinship, a person’s ethnicity could change in the ancient world, as that kinship need not be a biological fact but could also be fictive.\(^{112}\) Conversion therefore does necessarily not mark a departure from ethnicity—it may simply indicate that ethnicity is not understood as immutable or strictly genealogical.\(^{113}\)

Other scholars have criticized Cohen for talking about religion in antiquity at all.\(^{114}\) Steve Mason, for example, is especially adamant in his rejection of the category of religion as an option for Ἰουδαῖος in antiquity, highlighting the ethnic implications of conversions such as like that of King Izates of Adiabene in Ant. 20.38–39 and pushing the emergence of a religious sense for Ἰουδαῖος into the third century CE.\(^{115}\) But ethnicity (as distinct from religion) is every bit as modern a category as religion. It is not that the ancients had ethnicity but not religion (supposedly “invented” later) but rather that what we now distinguish into separate categories


\(^{113}\) That said, it appears that some Jews (such as the author of Jubilees) did take a strictly genealogical conception of Jewish or Israelite identity. See Matthew Thiessen, *Contesting Conversion: Genealogy, Circumcision, and Identity in Ancient Judaism and Christianity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011). That different groups of Jews held different views on this point further reinforces the negotiated dimension of ethnicity and also (as Thiessen demonstrates) sheds light on the debates in which Paul and the earliest Christ-followers were engaged.


was mostly undifferentiated in antiquity. Thus Mason’s hard distinction between religion and ethnicity ironically forces exactly the sort of anachronistic post-Enlightenment categories onto the ancient world that he seeks to avoid.116 Thus DeConick argues that the increasingly popular adoption of “ethnic” as the (sole) operative category for ancient Jews is problematic:

Ethnic Judaism is largely the consequence of secularism and WWII when agnosticism and atheism became real options for Jews. In the ancient world, to be Jewish involved the religious dimension: to be devotee of [YHWH], to be part of his covenant, to be recipients of his promises, to be observers of his law. So to use “ethnic” Judaism as a descriptor of the Second Temple Period runs amok because of its association with secularism.117

Moreover, David Miller has observed that many of these studies have made the mistake of conflating “the translation question with the more important and logically prior question of the meaning of Ioudaios in the Greco-Roman world.”118 That is, since Greek had no simple way of conveying the English distinction between “Jew” and “Judaean,” a Greek speaker would have been unlikely (or unable) to differentiate between the various ethnic, regional, cultural, or religious senses of Ιουδαίος when using that term. Moreover, the translation question is further complicated by scholars’ inability to agree even on the definitions of the modern terms, inevitably leading to further misunderstandings and disagreements.

Daniel Schwartz, for example, tells a humorous story about his struggles to put together a reasonable paper on “Judaeans in Rome” after Mason had invited him to present on the subject for a conference on Josephus. In preparing his paper, Schwartz encountered a dearth of data on “Judaean immigrants, exiles, tourists, diplomats, and the like” in Josephus. “Only later,”

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Schwartz explains, “did I learn that when Mason says ‘Judaean’ he means what I mean when I say ‘Jews.’” Schwartz protests that, regardless of what Ἰουδαῖος means in Greek, the English word “Judaean … refers to a person according to his or her residence or origin in a particular land, Judaea,” thus limiting the range of meaning possible in the Greek term to one particular meaning. Mason, on the other hand, protests that such a geographical restriction on the meaning of “Judaean” only arises “in our minds … so that when we hear the word we think first of an ancient place and not of the people.” But this is precisely the problem — when translating an ancient concept into modern terminology one must consider both the source and the receptor, and the modern sense of “Judaean” (which of course only exists in our minds) lacks the ambiguity of the ancient word Ἰουδαῖος. There is, however, an English term pregnant with similar ambiguity, as the term “Jew” refers with equal accuracy to Jerry Seinfeld, a Hasidic rabbi, Benjamin Netanyahu, and a first-generation convert to the Jewish religion — but not, as Adam Sandler emphatically reminds us, to O. J. Simpson. As Schwartz explains, much like


120 Schwartz, “Judaean,” 7. Schwartz points to the dictionary definition of “Judaean” in Webster’s Dictionary and the Oxford English Dictionary, concluding that the English meaning of “Judaean” is “clearly geographical.” He concludes, “Historians, or translators, should not presume to revise the English language, so if that’s what ‘Judaean’ means, it follows that when we use such a term to render Ioudaios we imply … that refers to a person according to his or her residence or origin in a particular land, Judaea. The question is, then, whether that is what the ancient Greek or Roman heard, or, what an author such as Josephus meant when he used the term” (7).


122 Cf. Lionel J. Windsor, Paul and the Vocation of Israel: How Paul’s Jewish Identity Informs His Apostolic Ministry, with Special Reference to Romans, BZNW 205 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2014), 64 n. 70.

123 Adam Sandler, “The Chanukah Song,” performed on Saturday Night Live (Studio City, CA: NBC, 1994).
Ἰουδαῖος, “being a Jew may have to do with one’s descent, or with one’s religion, or with both.”

Aware of this ambiguity not only with respect to the ancient term but the modern ones, some have therefore resisted the urge toward a binary approach to these questions and the impulse to locate the origin of a religious meaning rather than an ethnic one. Paula Fredriksen, for example, emphasizes the connection between cultus and ethnicity, “For ancient people, gods really did run in the blood. Put differently: cult, as enacted and as imagined, defined ethnicity.”

To worship a nation’s god was to participate in that ethnicity, and to protect and preserve one’s particular “religious” identity was to protect and preserve one’s ethnic/cultural identity. Boyarin likewise sees the term as encompassing both ethnic and religious factors, arguing that Ἰουδαῖος was “from the very beginning a geo-religious term,” marking the “citizens of the Temple-State founded by the returnees from Exile … always differentiated religiously from the

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126 As Lowe explains, “in the ancient Mediterranean world almost every people had its own national religion, so that to be a member of that religion was in a sense to have that nationality” (Lowe, "Who Were the ΙΟΥΔΑΙΟΙ?,” 107). On the other hand, Schwartz, "How Many Judaisms,” 234, notes that not all adoption of foreign gods necessarily implied a shift of ethnicity or nationality. This link between religion and ethnicity is not entirely absent from the modern world, as some have concluded that religious missionary work is a fundamentally colonial enterprise, even potentially genocidal. See, for example, George E. Tinker, Missionary Conquest: The Gospel and Native American Cultural Genocide (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993). Such colonial implications of proselytism and missionary work are a major foundation of the modern People’s Republic of China’s prohibition of such activities, for example, as discussed in Christina Stoltz, “Opposition to Evangelism in India, China, and Tibet,” (MA thesis, Florida State University, 2007), 29–48. The connection of worship with ethnicity and even location in antiquity is further demonstrated by Naaman’s request for Israelite earth on which he can worship YHWH in 2 Kings 5:17, as also with prayers said towards a particular locus (such as the Jerusalem temple).

other Israelites” by their particular Jerusalem-based piety.128 Similarly, although he agrees with Cohen that conversion is evidence of a shift toward a concept of what we would call religion and with Mason that the Graeco-Roman world had no such category, Schwartz argues that the distinctive theology of ancient Ἰουδαῖοι is precisely what made them distinct from other ethnic groups.129

The Romans themselves included observance of the ancestral laws of the Ἰουδαῖοι as central to what it was to be a Ἰουδαῖος, as illustrated by Dio Cassius’ explanation of the term: “I do not know the origin of this name [Ἰουδαῖος], but it is applied to all men, even foreigners, who follow their customs. This race is found even among Romans.”130 Similarly, Josephus reports that the Roman proconsul Lucius Lentulus granted special privileges to Roman citizens in Ephesus who were Ἰουδαῖοι, defining that group as “those who appear to me to have and do the sacred things of the Jews” (A.J. 14.234; cf. 14.228, 237, 240).131 Thus Cohen explains that at least in the Roman period, “What makes Jews distinctive, and consequently what makes

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130 Dio Cassius 37.17.1: ἡ τε γὰρ χώρα Ἰουδαία καὶ οὐτοὶ Ἰουδαῖοι ὀνομάζονται. ἡ δὲ ἐπίκλησις αὐτή εκείνοις μὲν οὐκ οἷα ὃθεν ἦρξατο γενέσθαι φέρει δὲ καὶ ἐπὶ τοὺς ἄλλους ἀνθρώπους δοσὶ τὰ νόμιμα αὐτῶν καίπερ ἀλλοεθνεῖς ὄντες ζηλοῦσι καὶ ἔστι καὶ παρὰ τοῖς Ῥωμαίοις τὸ γένος τοῦτο. See Menahem Stern, Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism, Vol 2: From Tacitus to Simplicius (Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1980) #406. Solomon Zeitlin, “The Names Hebrew, Jew and Israel: A Historical Study,” JQR 43, no. 4 (1953): 365–379 (373–74), argues on the basis of this quote that the term serves “not as signifying a racial characteristic of the people, but as a distinctive term for a particular religion.” The conclusion of Daniel Boyarin and Jonathan Boyarin, “Diaspora: Generation and the Ground of Jewish Identity,” Crit Inq 19 (1993): 693–725 (694 n. 2), is better: “We see from this quotation that race once had much suppler and more complex connections with genealogy, cultural praxis, and identity than it has in our parlance.”
‘Judaizers’ distinctive, is the observance of the ancestral laws of the Jews.”¹³² Indeed, the corporate identity of ὁι Ἰουδαῖοι, says Schwartz,

was much more conspicuously and obviously religious in nature … than that of any other national or ethnic group in the Mediterranean world and the Near East’ and … —unlike early Christians—they never abandoned an ethnic self-conception.¹³³

This last point is especially noteworthy, as Jews remain both a religious and an ethnic group even today, meaning the supposed transition from an ethnicity to a religion never entirely happened.¹³⁴ Thus Schwartz explains that, although the ancient world did not have the vocabulary for it (Latin religio notwithstanding),¹³⁵ the ἔθνος Ἰουδαίων were distinguished by their unique cultic/religious character and covenantal theology, and that fact made them no less an ἔθνος for that fact.¹³⁶ In support of this idea, Miller notes that the term ἔθνος possessed a broader semantic range than Mason allows, being used also for such things as “groups of birds and bees, or for the male and female genders.”¹³⁷ Jeremy McInerney similarly observes the broad range of the term’s


¹³⁶ For the uniquely religious character of Ἰουδαῖοι among their ancient peers, see e.g., Miller, "Ethnicity, Religion," 250–52; Cohen, Beginnings of Jewishness, 92.

¹³⁷ Miller, "Ethnicity, Religion," 240.
meaning in early Greece, observing, “there is nothing essential to the definition of the ethnos other than that an ethnos should be a group that thinks of itself as a people.”

In this light, this project will follow Miller and Seth Schwartz (in the footsteps of J. Z. Smith) in treating “ethnicity” as a blanket term for those national, cultural, and religious factors that differentiate one group from another. Such a definition allows for slippage and is polythetic, as there is no single sine qua non and some members of an ethnicity may not have every defining element (e.g., some might share culture and religious aspects but not birth).

Ancient Jews

In summary, the term Ἰουδαῖος is an ethnonym that includes what would today be considered cultural, geographical, and religious senses in its meaning. The strident insistence of Mason, Esler, Elliot, and others that Ἰουδαῖος should be translated “Judaean” is therefore problematic inasmuch as this translation artificially distinguishes categories that remained intertwined in antiquity while also overemphasizing the geographical sense of the term. Perhaps even more significantly, such a move downplays the single most distinctive aspect of ancient Ἰουδαῖοι—their monolatrous covenantal theology and practices related to that theology. As Miller observes, “when we do consider what ancient people regarded as distinct about Ioudaioi we discover remarkable overlap with what is conventionally regarded as religion.”


140 Miller, "Ethnicity, Religion,” 255.
I therefore find “Judaean” more problematic than “Jew” as a translation for Ἰουδαῖος in that it translates a richly polyvalent Greek word with a much more limited English word, leading to a loss of meaning and nuance and potentially to misunderstanding, especially since “Judaean” is a primarily geographical term in English. In contrast, the modern term “Jew” is comparably ambiguous to the ancient term, including ethnicity, culture, and religious elements in its range of meaning without inherently favoring one over the others. Where possible, ambiguity is best translated with analogous ambiguity, so despite the potential problems inherent in using such a familiar modern term for an ancient one, “Jew” (or “Jewish person,” given the adjectival form of Ἰουδαῖος) remains in my view the most natural translation for Ἰουδαῖοι and should be preferred over “Judaean.”

If, however, a less-familiar alternative to the term “Jew” must be used in lay translations to ensure that the ancient people is not identified with modern Jews, I prefer an option such as “Judahites” over “Judeans,” as the former term retains the historical connection to the tribe/kingdom of Judah while also connecting with both the modern term Jew and to the geographic sense of “Judaean” while avoiding the completely geographic that term has to a modern ear. Unfortunately, “Judahites” has long been used to distinguish the preexilic inhabitants of Judah from the Jews who lived after the exile. That said, this hard distinction between pre- and postexilic descendants of Judah has also proven problematic, as many scholars seem to have forgotten that “Jews” are essentially postexilic “Judahites.” One other possibility is to use an even less familiar option such as “Judahists” or “Juda-ists” which connects with “Judahites” and

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141 For a discussion of the morphology of Ἰουδαῖος and its typical use as a substantive, see p. 26 n. 75 above.

142 See Chapter 3 below.
“Jews” and does not carry the baggage of either term. Its unfamiliarity, however, also eliminates most of the benefits of other terms, tipping the balance back to the more familiar option, “Jew.” As a result, in this project, I will often retain the untranslated term or transliterate but will use the term “Jew” where an English equivalent is more suitable.

Remarkably, some recent scholarship has attempted to draw a distinction between ancient “Jews” and “Judaeans” in the effort to explain the complicated relationships represented in ancient sources. But this is untenable, as both English terms render the same Greek word. The impetus behind this attempted distinction, however, is based on an important realization that Ἰουδαῖος is not coextensive with “Israelite.” The underlying flaw is that even those who have noticed this fact nevertheless assume the ancient term “Israelite” to be equivalent to the modern term “Jew,” which then leads to misguided efforts to differentiate between “Jews” and “Judaeans” rather than between the different ancient terms themselves. What is needed instead is a closer look at both ancient terms and their relationship both with each other and with the more familiar modern terminology.

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144 E.g., the argument of Boyarin, “The IOUDAIOI in John,” 232, that the Galileans are “‘Jews’ but not Ioudaioi.” See also Lowe, "Who Were the IOYΔΑΙΟΙ?," 130.

145 Ashton, "Identity and Function," 55: “Such a usage, if established, would indeed be singular: it would be like using the word ‘Poles’ to distinguish the inhabitants of Poland from Poles living abroad…. One would need, surely, separate words (poles apart) for natives and expatriates, which is what we do not have.”

146 E.g., Boyarin, “The IOUDAIOI in John,” 221: “Ioudaios is not co-extensive with modern ‘Jew’ or ancient ‘Israelite.’”
Objective and Approach

It quickly became clear after beginning this project that no amount of detailed exegesis, rhetorical criticism, or analysis of Paul’s use of scripture could sufficiently adjudicate between the competing accounts of Paul’s view of Israel and the gentiles. The primary obstacle is that, like any other author, Paul presupposes rather than makes explicit his language, so Paul can be read very differently depending on which definitions are assumed by the interpreter. Consequently, it is difficult or impossible to weigh these rival interpretations against one another based on internal evidence because they are built on fundamentally incompatible presuppositions. Theoretically, competing paradigms can be internally coherent but irreconcilably at odds with each other. One may as well debate the meaning of the same sounds based on different languages. In some respects, that is precisely what has been happening in many recent debates about Paul, Israel, and the gentiles.

One option is of course to abandon any hope of reconstructing Paul’s own views and instead claim the “right to fashion and in effect invent the text anew as one pleases.” To some degree it is true that we cannot become people of the past and that we inevitably see δι’ ἐσόπτρου ἐν αἰνίγµατι (1 Cor 13:12), but to thereby abandon the hope of seeing throws the baby out with the bathwater. The key is context; as Sternberg notes, it is true that a “text has no meaning, or may assume every kind of meaning, outside those coordinates of discourse that we


148 For an incisive critique of how Paul has been read differently based on the assumptions and needs of his interpreters, see Benjamin L. White, Remembering Paul: Ancient and Modern Contests over the Image of the Apostle (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

149 Sternberg, Poetics, 10.
usually bundle into the term ‘context.’” But once located within a given context, a text can and usually does have a specific meaning, it just takes work to acquire sufficient knowledge of context to be able to approximate a text’s specific meaning.

Thus the second option is to do rigorous historical and theoretical work in the effort to bridge the contextual gap between us and Paul and his readers. To determine what is meant within specific Pauline texts, including the meaning of any term or concept (such as “Israel” or “the Jews”), one must first conduct an analysis of the underlying systems assumed by Paul, engaging in what Sternberg calls “a historical reconstruction that delimits what the writer could have meant against the background of the linguistic knowledge that, even in artful manipulation, he must have taken for granted.” Such analysis is especially necessary in this case given that the Pauline corpus is comprised not of self-contained literary products but of contingent and occasional letters, only pieces of one side of an inside conversation that begins and ends outside our field of vision.

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150 Sternberg, Poetics, 11; cf. the “Global Semantic Universe” and “encyclopedia” semantic model of Umberto Eco, The Limits of Interpretation (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 142–47.

151 Sternberg, Poetics, 10: “From the premise that we cannot become people of the past, it does not follow that we cannot approximate to this state by imagination and training—just as we learn the rules of any other cultural game—still less that we must not or do not make the effort. Indeed, the antihistorical argument never goes all the way, usually balking as early as the hurdle of language. Nobody, to the best of my knowledge, has proposed that we each invent our own biblical Hebrew. But is the language any more or less of a historical datum to be reconstructed than the artistic conventions, the reality-model, the value system? Given their interpenetration, moreover, where does the linguistic component end and the nonlinguistic begin?” In Eco’s terminology, one must endeavor to approximate the “Model Reader” postulated and constructed (via linguistic and other signals found within the text) by the text itself. See Umberto Eco, The Role of the Reader: Explorations in the Semiotics of Texts (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1979), 7–11; cf. also Paul Ricoeur, Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning (Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1976), 31–34.

152 Sternberg, Poetics, 11–12.

153 On the contingency of Paul’s letters and the consequent difficulty of reconstructing a “coherent core” in Paul’s thought, see Johan Christiaan Beker, Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980).
Paul’s letters are but one small part of a much larger and venerable discourse about Israelite identity and the negotiation thereof, and Paul’s perspective was shaped by and responded to concepts of Israel that had already been in play for centuries. Moreover, because this discourse concerns individual and corporate identity, it necessarily involves foundational, socially mediated concepts and vocabulary that could be assumed by those sharing the insider discourse of the group and easily misconstrued by those attempting to understand from the outside. As a result, to understand Paul’s definition of Israel, one must first establish the various ways Israel was constructed and understood in the larger discourse of which Paul was both a product and a participant.

At first glance, it would seem to be a simple matter of looking for the consensus on this question in the fields of New Testament and early Judaism and applying that to Paul, but recent scholarship and new evidence have prompted a reevaluation of old consensus positions regarding the larger discourse about Israelite identity outside Paul as well, with Steve Mason declaring Israel “a term that merits further exploration across the board.” Similarly, after noting that recent research and archaeological discoveries related to the Samaritans and better understandings of biblical historiography have complicated the picture concerning Israelite identity in the Graeco-Roman period, Martina Böhm has recently concluded that it is time for

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154 E.g., Gary N. Knoppers, Jews and Samaritans: The Origins and History of Their Early Relations (New York: Oxford University press, 2013), 12: “the struggles depicted in Ezra-Nehemiah testify to internal Judean debates about identity, ethnicity, and nationality. The very definition of ‘Israel’ becomes a contested topic in a world in which a number of communities, whether more narrowly or broadly defined, claim to continue the legacy of the descendants of Jacob.”

155 Donaldson, "Riches for the Gentiles," 90: “At the surface level, Paul's letters represent various attempts through rhetorical device and theological argumentation to deal with practical problems that have emerged in his congregations. But underlying these contingent and conceptual levels in the text is a set of basic convictions (about Christ, Israel, the Torah, the Gentiles, etc.) that seldom emerge explicitly but nevertheless provide the tacit "semantic universe" in which the text in all its aspects has its being.”

scholars of the New Testament and early Judaism to reevaluate what “Israel” means in the texts from this period:


A much larger task must therefore be accomplished before we can adequately evaluate Paul’s conception of Israel. This study—already well underway when Böhm’s article was published—aims to undertake the larger task of reevaluating how Israel is defined in the various sources of the Second Temple period before reconsidering Paul’s own position in light of that evidence.

Social Memory, Interpretation, and Identity Formation

By taking this approach, this study operates from the assumption that Paul’s views and terminology did not arise ex nihilo but rather arose in a larger social context.158 Moreover, that social context was mediated through a shared mythos or narrative framework that provided the assumed substance from which Paul’s perspective was shaped. That is, human beings “not only continue to be animals who make stories but also animals who are made by our stories. We tell

and retell narratives that themselves come fundamentally to constitute and direct our lives.”

Shared foundational narratives not only shape community and individual identity but also provide the conceptual framework and vocabulary for any discourse among those who share that common mythos, specifying cause-and-effect relationships and defining what is significant and what is not.

That narrative context can be understood as a form of social memory which, transmitted through authoritative texts and commemorative rituals, provides the frame or background against which present events are seen and the lens through which they are interpreted. In addition, this


process does not operate without bounds but always applies and appropriates inherited cultural capital, which provides the primordial substance from which present community and individual identity can be shaped. Although collective memory and foundational myths can be altered and shaped in various ways, the “earliest construction of a historical object limits the range of things subsequent generations can do with it.” In this way, the present is always constrained and defined by the remembered past as it fits within a given socially mediated narrative framework, even (or perhaps especially) when individuals are not “fully aware of or articulate about the details and variants of the historical narratives that shape their lives.”

In this case, the varying definitions of Israel represented in Paul and his contemporaries are so dependent on the idea(s) of Israel mediated through biblical narratives and their accompanying interpretive traditions that this earlier material—which provides their “narrative substructure”—must be examined first. Only after immersing in this shared narrative world and rhetorical framework can one begin to understand the discourse of those who later

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constructed their own identities using that common capital. As Joseph Blenkinsopp rightly notes, even going back to the Hasmonean period is insufficient:

For anyone wishing to understand early Christianity in relation to the varieties of Judaism in which it arose, it is not enough to study contemporary Jewish ‘backgrounds’, or even the broader period between the Hasmonean principate and the Mishnah. Most of the issues being debated and the battles being fought then must be traced back to the formative period of the two centuries of Persian rule; issues focusing on conflicting legal interpretations, the confessional status of certain beliefs and practices, relation to the outside world, proselytism, acceptance or nonacceptance of the political status quo, tension between assimilationist and anti-assimilationist tendencies.\(^{166}\)

This study therefore takes a different approach from most previous attempts to understand Paul’s view of Israel in that the bulk of the study is not spent in the Pauline letters or even the New Testament. Instead, this study focuses primarily on establishing an understanding of the various perspectives and constructions of Israel in the larger discourse of early Judaism and only then attempts to place Paul within this larger conversation. Daniel Boyarin has previously suggested that this problem requires going “back to the very beginnings of the history of Israel after the return from the Babylonian Exile as narrated, in particular, in the book of Ezra,”\(^{167}\) but I maintain that starting after the return of a few Judahites from the Babylonian Exile is still too late, since Ezra-Nehemiah already presupposes a dominant conceptual framework and vocabulary of Israelite identity as it participates in the discourse about that identity.\(^{168}\) To understand that framework, we must go back even further to the narratives of


\(^{167}\) Boyarin, “The IOUDAIOI in John,” 222–23. Boyarin also draws an important distinction between “looking for the degrees of separation backward and not forward,” that is, looking to understand debates and negotiations concerning Israelite identity as they already existed before the rise of Christianity “and not forward towards a split between church and ‘synagogue’”—or, for the purposes of this study, between the church and “the Jews” (Boyarin, “The IOUDAIOI in John,” 228).

biblical Israel. These biblical stories, particularly the Primary History of Genesis–2 Kings, served as a sort of “ethnic charter” for communities for which they became foundational.\(^{169}\) That is, by constructing a “biblical Israel,” the biblical authors, editors, and compilers were able to create a mythic common past for a present people upon which which later communities could build their own identities in continuity with that storied past.\(^{170}\)

These were the foundational stories (or “myths”) that established concepts of Israel that could be assumed or contested by Jews of later periods like Paul. The multigenerational discourse concerning Israelite identity is rooted in these biblical texts, which provide the cultural, rhetorical, and idiomatic grammar for the controversies of later periods.\(^{171}\) Just as the concept of covenant was so fundamental that it was rarely discussed in early Jewish and rabbinic

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\(^{170}\) This use of the term “biblical Israel” borrows from Philip R. Davies, *In Search of ‘Ancient Israel,’* 2nd ed., JSOTSup 148 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1992), which distinguishes between “historical Israel” (the ancient confederacy/kingdom of that name), “biblical Israel” (the Israel of the biblical texts, shaped as it was by authors and redactors), and “ancient Israel” (a modern scholarly construct variously combining the prior two).

literature, the biblical historical accounts could be assumed by later communities, providing the framework for the more frequently cited prophetic and legal material. Indeed, even the covenantal framework itself is derived in large measure from the biblical narratives, which establish Israel as the chosen people of YHWH and heirs to the promises to Abraham. The concepts and discourses delivered through these stories were ever in the air for those socialized into this environment. It is therefore imperative first to reconstruct the biblical construction(s) of Israel as would be understood by an ancient reader before examining what later figures and communities did with that concept.

**On Reconstructing “Biblical Israel”**

Some may object to the very possibility of reconstructing such a “biblical Israel” given the inherent subjectivity of interpretation and even more to the possibility of imitating how ancient readers understood “biblical Israel.” But foundational myths must be both adaptable and simple enough to create a sense of collective identity. The details may vary or even be nebulous, but the power of these narratives rests in their ability to sweep believing actors into their grand historical drama. Consider that what it is to be an American can be variously defined, but all of those ways in some sense rely upon—whether through agreement, manipulation, or resistance—a still-deeper foundational myth of American exceptionalism. Likewise, although biblical

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172 Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 420–21: “It is the fundamental nature of the covenant conception which largely accounts for the relative scarcity of appearances of the term ‘covenant’ in Rabbinic literature.”


175 Smith, “Living Narratives,” 67–68, summarizes what he labels the “American Experiment narrative” as follows: “Once upon a time, our ancestors lived in an Old World where they were persecuted for religious beliefs and oppressed by established aristocracies. Land was scarce, freedoms denied, and futures bleak. But then brave and visionary men like Columbus opened up a New World, and our freedom-loving forefathers crossed the ocean to
literature is certainly not univocal, the biblical editors nevertheless managed to “impose order and new meaning on the whole” upon the traditions and stories they themselves received, constructing an overarching story of Israel “to communicate through this story of the people’s past a sense of their [present] identity.” This order is imposed on the various collected traditions by the use of what Meir Sternberg calls “foolproof composition,” explaining,

By foolproof composition I mean that [so long as it is read in an integrated fashion] the Bible is difficult to read, easy to underread and overread and even misread, but virtually impossible to, so to speak, counterread. Here as elsewhere, of course, ignorance, preconception, tendentiousness—all amply manifested throughout history, in the religious and other approaches—may perform wonders of distortion. No text can withstand the kind of methodological license indulged in by the rabbis in contexts other than legal, or by critics who mix up their quest for the source with the need to fabricate a new discourse. … Short of such extremes, biblical narrative is virtually impossible to counterread. The essentials are made transparent to all comers: the story line, the world order, the value system.

Sternberg argues that individual biblical stories (not, it should be noted, the biblical corpus as a supposedly unified whole) include a great deal of ambiguity but not at the level of the drama itself, which includes rhetorical devices such as retrospective clarification, which “corrects possible variations from the desired attitude by way of univocal utterance, counteract, carve out of a wilderness a new civilization. Through bravery, ingenuity, determination, and goodwill, our forebears forged a way of life where men govern themselves, believers worship in freedom, and where anyone can grow rich and become president. This America is genuinely new, a clean break from the past, a historic experiment in freedom and democracy standing as a city on a hill shining a beacon of hope to guide a dark world into a future of prosperity and liberty. It deserves our honor, our devotion, and possibly the commitment of our very lives for its defense.”


177 John Van Seters, In Search of History: Historiography in the Ancient World and the Origins of Biblical History (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), 359. That is not to say that these narratives should be understood as fictional rather than historical. On the contrary, the claim of truth-telling by the narrators is critical to the rhetorical position—and indeed the genre—of these texts. Cf. Sternberg, Poetics, 32–33.

178 Sternberg, Poetics, 50.
or disclosure.”

It would be highly improbable, for example, for a reader of 1 Kings 17–22 to conclude that Ahab is the praiseworthy hero and Elijah the villain. Sophisticated literature is often anything but foolproof at the level of the drama, but foolproof construction is a necessary feature of foundational narratives, which cannot afford the sort of dramatic ambiguity of literature lacking such ideological and social commitments. Since the success of foundational myths depends on their ability to create a collective identity, there is obviously a high premium on perspicuity, predisposing such stories towards foolproof composition.

In addition, foundational myths are usually transmitted in combination with social rituals such as holidays and other socially-mediated interpretive and commemorative traditions as safeguards, consistently reproducing a relatively unified—though also influenced by changing circumstances—understanding of “the story” in each successive generation. For example, many young children in the USA have long been socialized to identify with the plight of the early Pilgrims through commemorative Thanksgiving feasts and the crafting of paper turkeys and cornucopiae in support of a particular narrative of American identity as participation in a new world of freedom and opportunity. This is also true of the biblical narratives, which were passed down together with rituals (e.g., Passover) and carefully protected and negotiated hermeneutical traditions. Even the oft-contentious disagreements throughout the tradition assumed

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179 Sternberg, *Poetics*, 55. Tobolowsky, “Biblical History as Ethnic History,” 11, notes “that the series of edits and framing effects” (as noted by Sternberg) are “instrumentalism-related modifications” that “make biblical literature, imposing truly new readings on what has been received [by the biblical editors].”

180 Of course, Sternberg’s point applies only to specific narratives and coherent works (e.g., the book of Judges or the Joseph Novella) rather than to the biblical corpus as a whole, as the Bible contains a wide variety of perspectives and disagreements—many of which will be highlighted in this study. Nevertheless, these varied perspectives were edited and collected together into a chorus of voices that have provided the symbolic grammar and vocabulary governing the various constructions of Israelite identity and conflicts over the legacy of Israel ever since, and we must not allow the disagreements within and among the biblical texts to blind us to the fundamental agreements they establish within the discourse.
commonalities with respect to the larger narrative; whether Yom Kippur should be set by one calendrical system or another, there was no disagreement that the ritual must be completed.\footnote{Jacob Neusner, \textit{In the Aftermath of Catastrophe: Founding Judaism 70 to 640}, MQSHR 2/51 (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2009), 10, notes that the “superficial contentiousness” of Rabbinic materials, for example, “convey[s] something quite different: one mind on most things, beginning to end,” with the “range of permissible disagreement … [defining] a vast area of consensus on all basic matters.”}

Sternberg’s qualification that for a “foolproof construction” to work a narrative must be read in an integrated fashion is especially important, accounting for how such narratives can in fact be counterread by those who abandon integrated readings, such as modern scholars who, through granular analysis of specific traditions or sources underlying the biblical texts, can from these pieces construct their own narratives, neither biblical nor historical.\footnote{For a critique of the tendency to create a wholly new narrative neither historical nor biblical, see, in addition to Sternberg, Davies, \textit{In Search of ‘Ancient Israel.’} Ironically, Davies’ own efforts to find the social situations behind the texts also provide examples of the sort of non-integrative readings capable of overcoming otherwise foolproof failsafes. That is not to say that such projects or that source or redaction critical approaches are inferior to integrative readings, only that they have different aims than efforts to understand texts or narratives as they stand. That such different projects and tasks can be performed with these texts does not, however, suggest that the basic point of the narratives as they stand is unknowable. See also the related critique of folklore scholars in Wendy Doniger, \textit{The Implied Spider: Politics and Theology in Myth} (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), 105, “The nonexistent, uninflected micromyth that the scholar constructs of the actually occurring, inflected myth constructed in any analysis of a text is like a condensed soup cube: the scholar confronts the soup (a particular variant of the myth) and boils it down to the soup cube, the basic stock (the micromyth), only to cook it up again into all sorts of soups.” In this case, the scholarly reconstructions are “nonexistent” and devoid of the meaning that the contextually-situated narrative in its totality can carry. See also Tobolowsky, “Biblical History as Ethnic History,” 17–18.} Ironically, it takes a great deal of intelligence and education to counterread a foolproof text. Early Jewish (and Christian) readers, however, did not read like modern critical scholars but instead read these texts as a unified narrative reporting the truth about the past, looking to the biblical narratives to understand their identity and connection to the past. Thus, as always, the constructed past, the \textit{remembered} past, is more important for shaping the present than the \textit{actual historical events} of the past. This project therefore undertakes to read these biblical narratives in a unified fashion, not aiming to reconstruct the empirical history underlying the biblical texts but rather how
ancient readers would have understood the biblical construction of Israel, since that biblical concept provided the foundation for later communities that drew from a biblical framework and depended upon and were limited by the rhetorical conventions and descriptive lexicon bestowed by that framework.

Inasmuch as participants in a tradition share the same normative body of tradition, the shared rhetorical conventions and descriptive lexicon in that received corpus allows for a high degree of intertextuality that may be incoherent to outsiders. Contemporary Internet and media culture, for example, is notoriously intertextual and metareferential, constantly and self-consciously echoing and alluding to “canonical” or normative material, the knowledge of which is expected to be shared by at least some fellow insiders in the audience. But if one does not share the knowledge of the source material, much of what is being said between the lines is easily missed. The communicative patterns of Paul and others like him in antiquity are similarly

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183 Cf. Francis Watson, *Paul and the Hermeneutics of Faith* (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 5, 514. The term “intertextuality” is alternately defined. In a poststructuralist context, “intertextuality” is used to denote the notion of text as infinite and never objective or singular, as in Julia Kristeva, *Revolution in Poetic Language* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984), 60. But the term is also used to denote “the notion of a strong form of intertextuality to denote instances … of a reference, implicit or explicit, to another distinct text or body of texts.” Wolfgang Funk, *The Literature of Reconstruction: Authentic Fiction in the New Millennium* (London: Bloomsbury, 2015), 103. This is the sense in which the term tends to be used in biblical studies and is the sense in which it is used in this study. See also Graham Allen, *Intertextuality*, 2nd ed., NCI (London: Routledge, 2011).

184 “Metareference” has been defined as “a special, transmedial form of usually non-accidental self-reference produced by signs or sign configurations which are (felt to be) located on a logically higher level, a ‘metalevel,’ within an artifact or performance; this self-reference, which can extend from this artefact to the entire system of the media, forms or implies a statement about an object-level, namely on (aspects of) the medium/system referred to” (Werner Wolf, “Metareference across Media: The Concept, its Transmedial Potentials and Problems, Main Forms and Functions,” in *Metareference across Media: Theory and Case Studies*, ed. Werner Wolf, SIM 4 [Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2009], 1–85 [31]). This works both at a macro level, such as with Internet memes and allusions to or reapplications of classic lines or scenes of cinema or television in other works, and on a subcultural level, as in the numerous “Easter eggs” scattered throughout notoriously self-referential contemporary cinematic “comic book universes.” See Werner Wolf, ed., *The Metareferential Turn in Contemporary Arts and Media: Forms, Functions, Attempts at Explanation*, SIM 5 (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2011). Cf. also Kevin Flynn, *The Digital Frontier: Mapping the Other Universe* (Los Angeles: Quotable Publishing, 1985). For Paul and other early Jews, biblical or prophetic material is understood to be located on a logically higher “metalevel,” so self-referential use of such material falls under the category of metareference.
interertextual, fluently appropriating and reshaping phrases, concepts, and narrative elements from the (bibically-dominated) narrative world in which they lived and argued. 185 Wolfgang Funk has noted how such metareferential practice serves a “reconstructive” function, as the new participants in the discourse renegotiate and reshape their discourse and their narrative world. 186 In the same way, the later appropriations of biblical and other inherited Jewish traditions by Paul and his contemporaries serve the same reconstructive function, applying inherited capital to reconstruct new, renegotiated boundaries.

In other words, a received narrative substructure and the rhetorical and descriptive lexicon encoded within it serves as the inherited *habitus* that shapes the culture and individuals, but the participants in that culture reshape and modify that *habitus* to serve new purposes. 187 As Stephen Grosby explains,

> There are consequences to the action of the acceptance of tradition. One is that, though acceptance, traditions are consequently subject to constant change—this much is obvious from the history of ancient Israel, e.g., the reinterpretation of the previously local traditions of the different Judges within the framework of “all Israel,” and the relatively late amalgamation of local ancestors into a common genealogy of “all Israel.” However beliefs which make up traditions not only


186 See Funk, *The Literature of Reconstruction*. Funk’s language of reconstruction is a play on Derrida’s notion of “deconstruction” or *différance* (cf. Funk, *The Literature of Reconstruction*, 4–6).


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change, they also generate change; they actively transform the present, e.g., the
development of the belief in a “people” of “all Israel” to whom and only to whom
the law applies, or the messianic restoration of the Davidic kingdom. 188

The impact of the stories’ rhetoric is, for those to whom they are foundational,
inescapable, but these stories also provide the substance for new social and cultural construction
in each generation. Later figures like Paul constructed their own interpretations of Israel’s
narrative, but they were themselves unavoidably shaped—and their interpretations limited—by
this narrative as they had received it from prior generations, largely mediated through the Jewish
Scriptures and prior interpretations thereof. 189 This process is therefore inherently recursive,
meaning this study must engage in a similarly recursive process. That is, the views of Paul and
his contemporaries can only be understood after gaining significant familiarity with earlier
traditions going back to the very beginning of the discourse, but our reconstructions of these
eyearly texts must be verified by examining how later ancient readers interact and interpret these
traditions. 190

Outline and Thesis

This study is divided into four parts. The first three parts address the foundational
questions that must be answered before returning to Paul, establishing how Israel was understood
by Paul’s early Jewish predecessors and contemporaries. Part I (chapters 1–2) focuses on the
related terms “Israel,” “Jews” (Ἰουδαῖοι), and “Hebrews,” demonstrating that these terms were

188 Steven Elliott Grosby, Biblical Ideas of Nationality: Ancient and Modern (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2002),
45.
189 Cf. the observation of Neusner, In the Aftermath of Catastrophe, 121, that the early rabbis “created, but they were
also created by, Rabbi Jeremiah, among other prophets.”
190 Thus Ricoeur explains that once around the circle is insufficient; rather, the circle must be traversed repeatedly,
allowing the text an active role in refiguring our understanding for the next trip around the circle. See Ricoeur,
not, as is usually assumed, functionally synonymous in the Second Temple period (approximately the sixth century BCE to the end of the first century CE). In the first chapter, I propose that the relationship between the terms “Israel” and “Jews” (Ἰουδαιοί) is best understood not as an insider/outsider distinction but as *partitive*, with “Israel” consistently represented as a larger entity of which the Jews are a *subset* derived from the biblical southern kingdom of Judah, with the definition of “Israel” a contested matter among various Jewish and Samaritan communities.\(^{191}\) In the second chapter, I show that “Hebrews” appears to have had a primarily ethno-linguistic sense when used of contemporary persons, denoting Semitic (mostly Aramaic) speakers. Thus throughout this period, one can properly speak of “Israelites” or “Hebrews” who are not “Jews,” that is, not descended from the southern kingdom of Judah, as well as “Jews” who are not “Hebrews.”

Part II (chapters 3–5) returns to the Jewish Scriptures, arguing that this partitive relationship between “Israel” and “the Jews” is tied to a distinct eschatological perspective put forth in the Hebrew Bible/LXX and central to the construction of Judaism in the wake of exile and foreign domination. Chapter Three argues that the prophetic promises and framing of the Jewish Scriptures establish a perspective of “Israelite restoration eschatology” in which the present community is derived from biblical Israel yet still incomplete, awaiting the fulfillment of the promises of the Hebrew prophets that all Israel will be restored.\(^{192}\) The fourth and fifth

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\(^{191}\) I am not the first to suggest a partitive model for the relationship between these terms, but my model is more comprehensive and differs in several important respects from previous suggestions. See, for example, Boyarin, “The IOUDAIOI in John,” 221; Lester L. Grabbe, “Israel’s Historical Reality after the Exile,” in *The Crisis of Israelite Religion: Transformation of Religious Tradition in Exilic and Post-exilic Times*, eds. Bob Becking and Marjo Christina Annette Korpel, OS 42 (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 9–32 (13–14).

\(^{192}\) I have borrowed the term “restoration eschatology” from E. P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1985), 90. See pp. 128–33 below for more discussion.
chapters show how this vision of Israel is adopted throughout the biblical historical material, focusing specifically on the Primary History (Genesis–2 Kings), Chronicles, Ezra-Nehemiah, and 1 and 2 Maccabees, identifying how these passages connect past Israel to the present of the reader. I argue that these biblical narratives consistently situate the reader in a liminal space between past biblical Israel and a future restored Israel, awaiting the renewal of YHWH’s favor toward his whole people, which must include both Jews (those from Judah) and non-Judahite Israelites from the northern kingdom.

Part III (chapters 6–10) builds upon and tests the conclusions of Part II and evaluates how a wide variety of other early Jewish literature interacts with biblical restoration eschatology. After first demonstrating the continuing currency of restoration eschatology throughout the Jewish diaspora (Chapter Six), I undertake a thorough reexamination of the various ways Israel is constructed throughout early Jewish literature, including Josephus and Philo (Chapter Seven), Jewish apocrypha and pseudepigrapha (Chapter Eight), and the Dead Sea Scrolls (Chapter Nine). Chapter Ten then summarizes the conclusions of the first three parts of the study, namely that throughout the Second Temple period (with a few instructive exceptions), “Israel” tends to be used of past, biblical Israel or of a future, restored entity but not of the Jews in a contemporary sense. Indeed, although variously defined in many other respects throughout the discourse, “Israel” is consistently understood to be a larger entity than “the Jews,” who are a subset of larger Israel still awaiting a reversal of the covenantal curses and a renewal of God’s favor

193 Although Daniel or 1 and 2 Maccabees come from the Second Temple period, they are treated together in Part II with the other biblical material that had come to be especially authoritative by the first century CE.

toward the full people of Israel. \footnote{I should note here, in distinction from some who focus more exclusively on “exile,” that the covenantal curses entail much more than exile and a full redemption from the covenantal curses involves more than just a return from exile. This point should become clearer as the study progresses.} That renewal is consistently expected to involve not only the establishment of an independent Jewish state but a restored and reconstituted Israel including the restoration of the northern tribes of Israel that (according to the biblical stories) had never returned after being scattered by the Assyrians in the eighth century BCE.

Part IV (chapters 11–14) finally returns to Paul, focusing on a close exegesis of key sections of Romans 2, 9, and 11 to assess Paul’s arguments about Israelite identity and salvation in light of the insights acquired in the first three parts of the study. I argue that Paul’s understanding of Israel matches closely with the restoration-eschatological perspective seen throughout Parts 1–3. Indeed, Paul believes the eschatological restoration of this larger “Israel” is already underway in the wake of the death and resurrection of Israel’s messiah. Moreover, Paul’s insistence on equal gentile incorporation is closely tied to his hopes for Israel’s restoration. Specifically, Paul identifies the incorporation of ethically transformed, faithful gentiles as fulfilling the promises of northern Israel’s redemption to union with Judah to form a restored “all Israel.” Since Israel’s restoration must include not only the Jews but all twelve tribes, Paul claims that the incorporation of gentiles into the eschatological assembly is the necessary means for the reconstitution and restoration of “all Israel,” an entity not only including Jews but also Israelites who had been scattered among and intermarried with the gentiles. The destinies of both Israel and the nations are therefore interdependent, and the ethical transformation afforded by the spirit in Christ serves to redeem Israel through the redemption of all nations.

This project therefore demonstrates that Paul’s gospel was by no means a rejection of supposed “Jewish ethnocentrism”—or Judaism in general—in favor of a different system.
Instead, Paul’s emphasis on gentile ingathering was inextricably tied to his concern with Israel’s restoration. Indeed, Paul’s proclamation was thoroughly rooted in the “restoration eschatology” familiar in much first-century apocalyptic Judaism and the early Jesus movement. For Paul, the equal incorporation of gentiles in the community was not in tension with Israel’s anticipated salvation but rather was the very means by which a necessary part of Israel was being restored. Indeed, the ethical transformation of Paul’s gentiles was also an *ethnic* transformation, restoring Israel through the process of gentile adoption into the eschatological people of God.

As a result, this study shows Paul’s thinking to be much more in line with that of other first century apocalyptic Jews expecting the restoration of Israel than previously understood, and although his move to the full inclusion of gentiles *qua* gentiles marked a radical departure from his contemporaries, it is fully in keeping with the eschatological framework evident through a broad swath of Jewish literature throughout the Second Temple period. Finally, by explaining Paul’s proclamation to gentiles as an integral part of Israel’s restoration, this project also provides a plausible explanation for how Jesus’ apocalyptic Jewish movement ultimately transitioned into a largely gentile movement.
CHAPTER 1: JEWS AND ISRAELITES: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ΙΣΡΑΗΛ AND ΟΙ ΙΟΥΔΑΙΟΙ

Scholars in biblical studies and related disciplines have long taken for granted that “Israel” is synonymous with “the Jews” (that is, οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι and cognates), denoting the same people in the Second Temple period. Peter Tomson, for example, opens his article on the two terms by calling them “alternative appellations,” as though their equivalence were an established fact. This assumption is so strong as to be taken for granted even in a large-scale study of the three terms like Graham Harvey’s *The True Israel*, an example of the principle that one does

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197 Tomson, "Names," 120.

198 “Ἐβραῖος was already an accepted gentilic synonymous with ἴσραήλ or Ἰουδαῖος” (Harvey, *True Israel*, 117, cf. also p. 40).
not get answers to questions one does not ask. For most scholars, the specific nuances of each term and their relationship to one another has been defined by Karl Kuhn’s seminal 1938 article in Gerhard Kittel’s *Theologisches Wörterbuch*, which became especially influential after its English publication in 1966. After first explaining that after the collapse of the northern kingdom of Israel in 722 BCE the two terms are essentially coextensive and describe the same people, Kuhn states,

> ישראל is the name which the people uses for itself, whereas Ἰουδαῖοι is the non-Jewish name for it. Thus ישראל always emphasises the religious aspect, namely, that ‘we are God’s chosen people,’ whereas Ἰουδαῖος may acquire on the lips of non-Jews a disrespectful and even contemptuous sound, though this is not usual, since Ἰουδαῖος is used quite freely without any disparagement. This is shown by the fact that the Judaism of the diaspora, especially Hellenistic Judaism, finds no difficulty in adopting this non-Jewish usage, employing οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι of itself and reserving Ἰσραήλ for special religious use, primarily in prayers and biblical or liturgical expressions.

Thus for Kuhn, the primary distinction between the terms is that “Israel” is an “insider term” preferred by the people themselves and refers refers to the Ἰουδαῖοι in their religious aspect, while Ἰουδαῖος is a political term for the people typically used by outsiders (“non-Israelites”) and sometimes carries a nuance of disrespect or contempt.

The distinction between the usage of “Palestinian Judaism,” and “Hellenistic Judaism” was fundamental to Kuhn’s reconstruction. On the basis of 1 Maccabees and Rabbinic literature,

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199 Harvey’s study seeks to “understand the different appreciations of the nature of ‘Israel’ [in ancient Judaism and early Christianity]” (*True Israel*, 2) and explore competing claims to the title of “true Israel,” not establish a clear sense of the interrelationship between the three terms.


201 Kuhn, *TDNT* 3:359.

202 Kuhn, *TDNT* 3:360, 360. Although he here concedes such a use is “not usual,” he later refers to “the common Ἰουδαῖος, which may often be used in a derogatory or even contemptuous sense … the depreciatory element that clings so easily to Ἰουδαῖος” (367–68).
Kuhn argues that “Palestinian Judaism” prefers the term “Israel” and uses Ἰουδαῖος only when reporting the speech of “non-Jews,” in diplomatic or official documents, or as an accommodation to outsider or diaspora usage of the term. Walter Gutbrod’s companion article on the use of the terms in the New Testament likewise argues that the Synoptic Gospels conform to this allegedly Palestinian pattern, explaining the exceptions as copyist glosses or as addressed to the non-Jewish audience of the Gospels.

In contrast, Kuhn and Gutbrod see Ἰουδαῖος as the default self-referential label in the diaspora as “Hellenistic Jews” accommodated to the outsider nomenclature used by their neighbors. Thus Philo’s preference for Ἰουδαῖος is a reflection of his status as a diaspora Jew, while Josephus (as well as John and Acts) can be explained as accommodating to “a usage which is fitting when addressing non-Jews.” Diaspora Jews did, however, still use Israel “in prayers and biblical or liturgical expressions” due to that term’s connections to Scripture and the covenant. Such a divide between Palestinian and Hellenistic Judaism is no longer feasible in post-Hengel scholarship, however, as “Palestinian Judaism” is now understood to have been

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203 Kuhn is followed here by a host of others, most notably Malcolm F. Lowe, “ἸΟΥΔΑΙΟΙ of the Apocrypha: A Fresh Approach to the Gospels of James, Pseudo-Thomas, Peter, and Nicodemus,” NovT 23, no. 1 (1981): 56–90 (56); "Who Were the ἸΟΥΔΑΙΟΙ?", 104–07. See also Horst Kuhli, “Ἰουδαῖος,” EDNT 2:193–97 (194). Remarkably, Zeitlin, "Hebrew, Jew and Israel," 368–371, comes to exactly the opposite conclusion, arguing that Judaean/Jew was the typical term used by inhabitants of Judaea, while “the Jews in other countries, Babylonia, Syria, and Antioch, however, did not call themselves Jews. They were called Israelis and Hebrews” (370). Zeitlin argues that Jew/Judaean/Judaism take on a religious sense, while “the name Israel or Hebrew never became associated with the religion” (376), thus making “Israel” the best option for the name of the modern state (377–79). Zeitlin’s argument is obviously influenced by modern terminology and concerns, but the same was true of Kuhn, as will be demonstrated below. In any case, Zeitlin’s argument, which features several salient points despite his modern concerns, have been largely ignored while Kuhn’s paradigm has dominated the field.

204 Gutbrod, TDNT 3:376–78. Lowe, "ἸΟΥΔΑΙΟΙ of the Apocrypha," 59, similarly argues that the earliest apocryphal gospels’ use of Israel is suggestive of especially early dates before this “Palestinian” usage had died out.


206 Kuhn, TDNT 3:360.
Hellenized from a very early period. Nevertheless, despite the fact that such a key foundation stone of Kuhn and Gutbrod’s hypothesis is no longer tenable, the TWNT insider/outsider model has proved so influential as to be baldly repeated, often without citation, in numerous subsequent studies.

Tomson, for example, presupposes Kuhn’s model but drops the divide between Palestinian and Hellenistic Judaism initially fundamental to Kuhn’s theory. Thus for Tomson, Ἰουδαῖος always refers to the Jews in relation to outside groups, occurring more frequently in “Hellenistic” Jewish texts because those texts tend to have an “outsider” Sitz im Leben and are written with an outsider context in mind. In contrast, whenever Israel is used, it “continues the concept of biblical Covenant history” in an insider context. Tomson is unclear as to why a second term to distinguish Jews from outsiders was necessary—that is, why the term Israel apparently could not adequately distinguish Jews from outsiders. Nevertheless, Tomson rigorously applies the insider/outside distinction between the two terms to the point of

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210 Tomson, "Names," 278. Cf. the critique of this distinction in Miller, "Meaning of Ioudaioi," 103–06.
distinguishing sources within the Gospels based on whether they use “Israel” (inner-Jewish tradition) or Ἰουδαῖος (non- or anti-Jewish redaction).\textsuperscript{211}

John Elliot agrees with Tomson in applying the insider/outsider hypothesis to the terminology of the earliest Jesus-movement (but with a few differences), pushing for an even more robust application of this insider/outsider distinction, insisting that scholars should no longer refer to “Jews” in this period but “Israelites,” as this was the preferred insider term. (As discussed above, Elliot also differs with Tomson in arguing that Ἰουδαῖος was a regional term denoting an “explicit or implied connection with Judaea,” and should thereby be translated with “Judaean” rather than “Jew.”)\textsuperscript{212} Elliot explains:

\begin{quote}
Incontrovertible evidence shows that ‘Israel’ and ‘Israelite’ were the self-designations preferred by compatriots of Jesus in the first century when addressing other ingroup members…. In the Diaspora, Israelites were called Ἰουδαῖοι by outsiders based on the outsiders’ associating them with the land of Ἰουδαία, Jerusalem and the Temple. Diaspora Israelites eventually accommodated to the nomenclature of the dominant culture in accepting and employing the name as self-designation when addressing outsiders and occasionally also fellow insiders. Often, however, even in the Diaspora, as Paul demonstrates, preference for ‘Israel’ and ‘Israelite’ remained strong. The ingroup Israel, on its part, lumped together all non-Israelites as ἐθνῆ or Ἑλληνες.
\end{quote}

Tomson suggests that Paul uses “Israel” in his letters to invite his Gentile converts “to call the Jews by the cherished, inner-Jewish name of the Covenant People: Israel” and even to adopt this special name as their own.\textsuperscript{213} Elliot differs with Tomson on this point, suggesting that where Paul uses “Israel,” he is “Paul the insider addressing fellow Israelite insiders” rather than

\begin{footnotes}
\item[211] Tomson, "Names," 280–82.
\item[212] Elliot, "Jesus the Israelite," 149.
\item[213] Tomson, "Names," 288; cf. also Dunn, Romans 9–16, 526.
\end{footnotes}
trying to get outsiders to take his own inner-Jewish perspective.\textsuperscript{214} For example, in Romans 9, Paul is no longer addressing Gentiles but rather “aims at persuading Israelite [=Jewish] Christ followers to share his perspective and follow his lead.”\textsuperscript{215}

David Miller rightly criticizes these suggestions,

Both explanations presuppose the insider–outsider distinction rather than providing independent support for it; neither explanation has much to commend it on other grounds. Against Tomson, Paul’s claim to be ‘of the people of Israel’ (Phil. 3.5) and an ‘Israelite’ (2 Cor. 11.22) is a reason for boasting about his own status, not an observation about the covenant status of, or correct nomenclature for, Paul’s fellow Jews. Against Elliott, there is nothing in the context of Romans 9 that suggests Paul is now addressing fellow ‘Israelites’ instead of a mixed audience of Jews and non-Jews. And there are alternatives that do not require complex decisions about shifting perspectives and audiences. Perhaps, for example, ‘Israel’ is used in some contexts simply because of its covenantal connotations.\textsuperscript{216}

David Goodblatt similarly recognizes that Kuhn’s distinction between Palestinian and Hellenistic Judaism no longer holds, but he nevertheless believes Kuhn’s model can be salvaged by replacing geographic categories with linguistic ones, explaining “I take [Kuhn] to mean that authors writing in Hebrew evidenced a clear preference for the ethnonym ‘Israel,’ while Jews writing in Greek tended to use \textit{Ioudaioi}.”\textsuperscript{217} That is, those writing in “outsider” tongues (including both Aramaic and Greek) prefer the “outsider” term \textit{Ἰουδαῖος} while those writing in

\begin{footnotes}
\item[214] Elliot, “Jesus the Israelite,” 144.
\item[215] Elliot, “Jesus the Israelite,” 145. Elliot does not explain how to make sense of the second-person address to Gentiles in Rom 11:17–25 in light of this claim.
\item[216] Miller, “Meaning of \textit{Ioudaios},” 105.
\item[217] David Goodblatt, “‘The Israelites who Reside in Judah’ (Judith 4:1): On the Conflicted Identities of the Hasmonean State,” in \textit{Jewish Identities in Antiquity: Studies in Memory of Menahem Stern}, eds. Lee I. Levine and Daniel R. Schwartz, TSAJ 130 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 74–89 (75). Goodblatt here reports the raw numbers, which initially appear to favor his case, but the numbers are not clean enough to speak for themselves (especially in texts that use both terms like 1 Maccabees and Ezra-Nehemiah). To get better explanations for how these terms are used, a closer look at each case is necessary—hence the need for the present project to clarify the relationship between these terms before examining Paul’s view of Israel.
\end{footnotes}
the “insider” tongue of Hebrew use the insider term “Israel.”

Goodblatt acknowledges that the Hebrew sections of Daniel, Ezra-Nehemiah, and Esther all serve as counter-examples for this model, but he argues that these (despite their composition in Hebrew) can be explained as accommodating to “outsider” official Persian designations rather than the insider language that would otherwise be expected of Hebrew documents.

But an even bigger problem for this argument is presented by an “anomaly” that Kuhn himself noted: official Hasmonean documents (as reported in 1 Maccabees) and coinage indicate that the Hasmonean state was officially called “Judah” and its people “Jews” (יהודים). This contrasts sharply with the first and second Jewish revolts against the Romans, each of which adopted “Israel” terminology. Goodblatt confesses his puzzlement on this point:

Whatever the reason, the Hasmoneans did not restore the state called “Israel.” Instead they created a “Greater Judah.” … Unfortunately, a convincing explanation of Hasmonean usage still eludes me. Perhaps this reaffirmation of the anomaly’s existence will encourage others to investigate it further.


219 Goodblatt, “Israelites who Reside in Judah,” 77. But as he later observes, “Certainly anything in Hebrew was written by, and only accessible to, insiders. Who else knew Hebrew?” (Goodblatt, “Israelites who Reside in Judah,” 87). That being the case, the existence of Hebrew texts (such as Daniel or Esther) that prefer Judah/Jewish language is a serious blow to the insider/outsider paradigm. This is a bigger problem than Goodblatt or others seem to recognize.


222 Goodblatt, “Israelites who Reside in Judah,” 84, 86. For further discussion and explanation of this anomaly, see the section on 1 Maccabees in Chapter 5 below.
The most convincing explanation, as the present study will demonstrate, requires abandoning the insider/outsider hypothesis, which not only cannot explain this anomaly but also requires marginalizing Jewish literature written in Greek or Aramaic. As Miller observes, the linguistic division between insiders and outsiders has difficulty accounting for multilingual Jews, who would presumably have had recourse to use both terms in either language, especially since Jews speaking any language would presumably be influenced by biblical language—a point to which we will return in Part II.\[223\] The insider/outsider model also relies on several problematic methodological presuppositions, as noted by Graham Harvey:

This theory presupposes that the literature was interested in the accurate historical reporting of, for example, the words spoken by hostile Philistines.\[224\] This is a dubious assumption which will not be followed here. These are not records by ‘outsiders’ of what real Philistines actually said. All that is available to us is the words of “insiders” to other ‘insiders’. The words attributed to “outsiders” must not be taken to be evidence of actual usage.… The majority of the literature discussed here (the majority of surviving ancient Jewish literature) is that of ‘insiders’ addressed to ‘insiders’. ‘Spectators’ in the literature and the intended audience of the literature are ‘insiders’. Neither the etymological nor the ‘insiders versus outsiders’ approach adequately explains why writers used one name rather than another. Nor do they properly explain the actual range of uses of each name and its different associations and referents.\[225\]

These ancient texts are not transcripts, and the insider/outsider theory requires a great many caveats and exceptions—exceptions that more ingenious interpreters such as Tomson and Lowe have managed to make into source-critical tools.\[226\] Ἰουδαῖος indeed occurs more frequently than Ἰσραήλ in what might be considered “outsider” contexts, but correlation does not

\[223\] Miller, "Meaning of Ioudaios," 108.

\[224\] Harvey here points to the assertion of Tomson, "Names," 123, that “there is a significant difference between speech of the writer or redactor to his readers and speech of his dramatis personae between themselves."

\[225\] Harvey, True Israel, 7.

\[226\] Tomson, "Names," 280–82; Lowe, "ἸΟΥΔΑΙΟΙ of the Apocrypha."
equal causation—it is a significant leap to conclude that the outsider context is what caused the preference for that term. Instead, it appears that Ἰουδαῖος was simply the standard gentilic (in both insider and outsider contexts) for the people group irrespective of insider/outsider contexts. Since ethnic markers are most typically used to differentiate one group from another (and thus rarely needed in “insider” contexts), it is rather natural that the standard ethnic term occurs frequently in outsider contexts. In any case, upon a closer examination, Kuhn’s paradigm was itself rooted in far less benign assumptions about the subject matter.

The Insider/Outsider Model and the Influence of Nazi Germany

Paradoxically, the very familiarity of these terms and presumed familiarity with the subject matter is precisely what makes historical investigation into their meaning and relationship especially difficult, as interpreters too easily assume that the ancient cognates have the same meaning as the modern terms. Indeed, just such a conflation of the modern and the ancient terms underlies Kuhn’s insider/outsider model; Tomson is quite right in noting the striking similarities between Kuhn’s model and modern usage:

A fascinating study could be made of Jewish self-appellations in the modern period. It would show that “Israel” has remained an ‘inside’ appellation of Jews, even though the existence of “Israeli Arabs” is indicative of the complexities of Jewish identity in recent history, not unlike “Palestinian Jews” some decades ago.

Such similarity, however, should be cause for suspicion rather than mere fascination, especially because both Kuhn and his mentor and Doktorvater Gerhard Kittel, the general editor

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227 Zeitlin, "Hebrew, Jew and Israel," 369; Boyarin, “The IOUDAIOI in John," 227. Williams, "Meaning," 249, also shows that in the extant epigraphic evidence, Ἰουδαῖος “does not function as a term of ‘outside identity,’” as Tomson has argued.”

228 Tomson, "Names," 121.
of the early volumes of the *TWNT*, were Nazi parti members and anti-Semites themselves.

Kittel’s Nazi allegiances and anti-Semitic opinions are well documented, as he joined the Nazi party and published an anti-Semitic tractate, *Die Judenfrage*, in 1933—the same year the first volume of the *TWNT* was published.\(^{229}\)

More relevant for our purposes, however, are Kuhn’s own Nazi party membership and virulent anti-Semitism.\(^{230}\) Kuhn joined the Nazi party in 1932\(^{231}\) (even before his mentor) and soon lent his authority as a scholar of ancient Judaism and Jewish texts to the cause, delivering a speech on April 1, 1933 at an event in the Tübingen marketplace advocating the boycott of


\(^{231}\) Kuhn requested NSDAP membership on March 19, 1932 and became a member on September 1 of that year (Nr. 1340672). Cf. Bundesarchiv Berlin, ehemaliges BDC, NSDAP-Mitgliederkartei; cited in Lindemann, "Theological Research about Judaism," 331 n. 2. Kuhn later claimed that he joined the party as a reaction to the breakup of his engagement after his former fiancée had joined the Communist party, an apologetic also put forward by Kuhn’s student Jeremias in his posthumous biography of his teacher in Jeremias, “Karl Georg Kuhn,” 301. See also Steinweis, *Studying the Jew*, 88; and the more extensive discussion in Theissen, *Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft vor und nach 1945: Karl Georg Kuhn und Günther Bornkamm*, 19–21. Given the extent of his pre-1945 anti-Semitic scholarship, Kuhn’s explanation seems disingenuous to say the least.
Jewish businesses.232 A year later he was appointed a lecturer in oriental languages and history at Tübingen, delivering his inaugural lecture on “The spread of Jewry in the ancient world,” a subject to which he would frequently return.233 While at Tübingen, Kuhn further indicated his enthusiasm for the NSDAP by delivering his lectures wearing an SA uniform and Ehrendolch (honorary dagger), which he received for being one of the first thousand members of the Nazi paramilitary Sturmabteilung.234 Together with Kittel, Kuhn was one of fifteen appointees to the Forschungsabteilung Judenfrage established by the Nazis in the spring of 1936 under the auspices of staunch anti-Semite Walter Frank’s Reichsinstitut für Geschichte des neuen Deutschlands,235 which published the journal Forschungen zur Judenfrage, advertised with the slogan, “Deutsche Wissenschaft im Kampf gegen das Weltjudentum!”236

Kuhn contributed several scholarly articles on the so-called Judenfrage in the service of the ideology of the Reichsinstitut, with his work characterized by a subtlety and scholarly


234 See Beek, M. A., review of Achtzehn Gebet und Vaterunser und der Reim, by K. G. Kuhn, VoxTh 21 (1950–51): 21–22, who recalls “de idyllische tijd toen Dr Kuhn nog privaat-docent was aan de Universiteit van Tübingen in het zomersemester van 1934. Hij droeg toen een S.A. uniform en aan zijn zijde rinkelde een ‘Ehrendolch mit Widmung’ omdat hij behoorende tot de eerste duizend S.A. lieden.” Beek nevertheless asserts, “Der Dolch und die Uniform haben Dr. Kuhn nie gehindert bei der Lektüre rabbinischer Texte. Zijn wetenschappelijke zuiverheid heb ik op dit punt nooit in twijfel kunnen trekken.” Beek, Jeremias, and others of Kuhn’s students claimed that Kuhn’s courses had not been anti-Semitic but rather emphasized politically neutral and objective scholarship, but as Steinweis points out, this claim “is very difficult to believe in light of the pronounced antisemitic content of Kuhn’s contemporaneously published articles on the same subjects.” (Studying the Jew, 79).


sophistication often lacking among many of his predecessors and contemporaries. Steinweis explains:

Kuhn’s antisemitic writings of the Nazi era tapped into the basic methodology of earlier anti-Talmudists…. But Kuhn was very conscious of his academic credentials and did what he could to distance himself from the more vulgar anti-Talmudic polemics. Never once did he cite Eisenmenger, Rohling, or Fritsch. He relied instead on academically respected sources, such as the Strack-Billerbeck commentary, and on Jewish texts themselves. Kuhn’s assault on the Talmud was a good deal more complex and sophisticated than that of his more popularly oriented predecessors…. Its antisemitism lay mainly in its skewed, caricatured representation of rabbinc Judaism.

Kuhn’s commitment to sophisticated scholarship can be seen in his review of Hermann Schroer’s *Blut und Geld im Judentum*, which he attacks not for its anti-Semitism (which he acknowledges but does not condemn) but for being amateurish and thereby discrediting “unsere Wissenschaft im neuen Deutschland,” recommending another work on the subject for its “klare weltanschauliche Frontstellung gegen jüdische Verschleierung.”

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240 Kuhn, Karl Georg, review of *Blut und Geld im Judentum*, by Hermann Schroer, *Historische Zeitschrift* 156 (1937): 313–16 (315). As noted by Steinweis, *Studying the Jew*, 89, “When Kuhn had published this review in 1937, his main purpose had been to protect the intellectual respectability of scholarly antisemitism…. [O]ver a decade later, Kuhn and his defenders disingenuously, and successfully, invoked the review as evidence of his lack of antisemitism altogether.”

241 Kuhn, review of *Blut und Geld im Judentum* (by Schroer), 316.
Kuhn’s TWNT article on the terms Ἰσραήλ, Ἰουδαῖος, and Ἑβραῖος was published in 1938. That same year, less than a month after the November 9, 1938 “Kristallnacht” pogrom, Kuhn gave an address at the fourth annual conference of the Reichsinstitut in Berlin and then delivered the same lecture before an overflow audience of an estimated 2,500 at the University of Berlin shortly after that. These lectures were quickly revised and published as a booklet for a popular audience, entitled Die Judenfrage als weltgeschichtliches Problem. After first emphasizing the importance of Semitistik as a discipline for the careful study of the Judenfrage, Kuhn describes what an awful problem the Judenfrage has been for the world, claiming that all Jews have been engaged in a völkisch struggle against other peoples. The booklet then triumphantly concludes that Judaism is “reaping what it has sown for almost 150 years,” praising the Führer for finally creating the conditions for a solution (Lösung) for the Judenfrage.

242 Frey, “Qumran Research,” 543.
244 Karl Georg Kuhn, Die Judenfrage als weltgeschichtliches Problem, Schriften des Reichsinstituts für Geschichte des neuen Deutschlands (Hamburg: Hanseatische Verlaganstalt, 1939).
245 Kuhn, Die Judenfrage, 46: “Was das Judentum seit einigen Jahren erlebt — nicht nur in Deutschland, sondern weithin in der Welt —, ist nichts anderes, als daß es jetzt erntet, was es in seiner großen Mehrheit nun bald 150 Jahre hindurch gesät hat.”
246 Kuhn, Die Judenfrage, 47; For additional quotations from the booklet in English translation, see Lindemann, "Theological Research about Judaism," 335–37. Cf. also Steinweis, Studying the Jew, 85–86; Casey, "Anti-Semitic Assumptions," 285. This was the only anti-Semitic publication Kuhn later renounced in Karl Georg Kuhn, “Die Schriftrollen vom Toten Meer: Zum heutigen Stand ihrer Veröffentlichung,” EvT 11, no. 1–6 (1951): 72–75 (73 n. 4): “Ich für meine Person sage in diesem Zusammenhang, daß ich es bedaure, die Schrift: Die Judenfrage als weltgeschichtliches Problem. Hanseatische Verlaganstalt Hamburg 1939, 51 Seiten, geschrieben zu haben und daß ich sie in aller Form widerrufe. Ich bedaure, daß ich damals so blind war, nicht zu sehen, daß der Weg der Hitlerschen Judenpolitik in den Abgrund des Grauens ging und daß er unaufhaltsam war. Nur solche Blindheit machte es möglich, daß ich die Schrift damals schrieb.” Kuhn remarkably continued to defend his other prewar work on Weltjudentum and the Judenfrage, including his Forschungen articles, as historically accurate and academically legitimate in a letter written in the late 1960s. See Theissen, Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft vor und nach 1945.
Remarkably, Kuhn’s reputation was rapidly rehabilitated after the war, owing in part to the supposed “purely objective-scientific attitude” and his “solid study of the sources” evident in his publications.247 “In comparison to the vulgar antisemitism that was so common in the Third Reich,” Steinweis explains, “Kuhn’s writings seemed moderate and reasonable…”248 J. S. Vos similarly declares Kuhn’s TWNT articles are free from the taint of anti-Semitism:


But Kuhn’s objective tone and capacity to work carefully with the sources are precisely what suggest a closer look at his TWNT articles is warranted, as unlike the vulgar propagandists of the period, any anti-Semitism in Kuhn’s work is bound to be couched in careful scholarly analysis, less obvious on a cursory reading. Tomson’s casual reassurance, “The anti-Semitism inherent in the Nazi sympathies of Kuhn and especially of the main editor, G. Kittel … is not reflected here,”250 seems naïve at best. And indeed, after a closer look at the language, David Miller concludes, “it is hard to avoid the conclusion that Kuhn and Gutbrod’s discussion was influenced by the racially-charged ideology of Nazi Germany.”251 Jörg Frey similarly recognizes a hint of anti-Semitism:

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247 See Steinweis, Studying the Jew, 89.
248 Steinweis, Studying the Jew, 89.
249 Vos, "Antijudaismus/Antisemitismus," 94.
250 Tomson, "Names," 121. See also the denial that Kuhn’s background impacted his conclusions in Goodblatt, “Israelites who Reside in Judah," 86–89.
251 Miller, "Ethnicity," 297.
Although the language in some [of Kuhn’s] articles (e.g. in *TWNT* 3:360 on Ἰσραήλ and Ἰουδαῖος) is similar to that of contemporary anti-Semitic writings, there is only a very subtle devaluation of Judaism, in marked contrast with Kuhn’s writings in the context of his research on the “Jewish Question.”

A very subtle devaluation is nevertheless a devaluation, and such subtlety is precisely what should be expected from such a careful scholar as Kuhn, who emphasized the importance of relying on original source material to make one’s anti-Semitic arguments or insinuations. But it is not the shared language of contemporary anti-Semitic writings or even the subtle devaluation of Judaism that concerns us here but rather the underlying assumptions governing Kuhn’s entire analysis.

The fundamental problem is found in Kuhn’s claim that Ἰουδαῖος carried a “derogatory or contemptuous sense” in antiquity, a sentiment that has been repeated often since the publication of the *TWNT*. The entire insider/outside paradigm largely rests upon this assumption, since “outsider” nomenclature by definition involves calling a group something other than its own preferred label. The problem is that this supposed negative nuance of Ἰουδαῖος (for which Kuhn himself does not list an example) is entirely unattested in this period. This nuance was, however, quite common in the 1930s-era Germany in which Kuhn carried out his research, where Juden (in contrast to Ἰουδαῖος in antiquity) was often pejorative, while those

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252 Frey, “Qumran Research,” 542 n. 65.


255 E.g., Tomson, “Names,” 121, “[T]he Church reserved for itself the ‘inside’ name of Israel, leaving the Jews their ‘outside’ name as a dishonour. This development reveals the intriguing dynamic inherent in the two names, which did not fail to attract the attention of New Testament scholars.”

256 Cohen, *Beginnings of Jewishness*, 71, “[T]his assertion reflects the valence of Jew, juif, and Jude in modern times, which in turn was influenced by Christianity’s assessment of Judaism. A negative valence is nowhere in evidence in any of the texts surveyed here.” Pace Kuhn, who anticipates this objection and asserts, “But it is plainly attested already in Jewish lit,” again citing no examples.
wanting to be respectful preferred *Israeliten*, the word associated with the biblical “chosen people.” By contrast, the most familiar biblical references to *Juden* are to Jesus’ opponents in the Gospel of John—from which it naturally took a more hostile association, especially given the history of European anti-Judaism. German Jews themselves therefore understandably preferred the term associated with greater respect, with German Jewish communities often calling themselves the *israelitische Gemeinde* of a given area. As Casey explains,

> It is this cultural context in which Kuhn produced his interpretation of the fact that the word “Jew” is missing from some Jewish documents of our period which use the term “Israel.” It is, and this fact does require explanation, but taking over Kuhn’s anachronistic and menacing life-stance will not help us…. It should also have been obvious that nothing justifies retrojecting Kuhn’s anti-semitic convictions. When the term “Jew” is used in Jewish documents of our period, it is used favourably, or neutrally, and some of the favourable uses indicate that the authors of some documents were very happy with it. Conjectures about its absence from other documents may not override this evidence. There are no documents extant in which Jewish people reject the term “Jew” or regard “the Jews” as an external and hostile group.

In his construction of the insider/outsider model, Kuhn assumes that the ancient term Ἰουδαῖος shared the derogatory nuance of *Juden* in prewar Germany and thus explains the difference between Ἰσραήλ and Ἰουδαῖος by superimposing the idiom of Nazi Germany upon antiquity. Such blurring of ancient and modern categories is in keeping with Kuhn’s scholarly tendenz elsewhere, as Reinhart Markner judges that in Kuhn’s work on *Weltjudentum* for the *Forschungen*, “Kuhn was deliberately blurring the dividing lines between the ancient and the

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259 Casey, "Anti-Semitic Assumptions," 285–86. Goodblatt complains that Casey has “set up something of a straw man here,” ignoring Kuhn’s nuance on this point (Goodblatt, “Israelites who Reside in Judah,” 88). But the qualifications Kuhn puts on his statement and his willingness to acknowledge that Jews were nevertheless willing to use the term are irrelevant inasmuch as the initial claim of a derogatory sense is entirely unmerited. And as the above citation from Tomsen in which this principle is applied to Jewish-Christian relations, Casey’s concern is fully warranted.
modern world.” Unfortunately, Kuhn’s thorough and careful treatment of the data makes his TWNT article and its insider/outsider paradigm all the more pernicious, as the error lies below the surface, assumed and not argued. Remarkably, perhaps owing to what Casey calls “the widespread and unfortunate habit of repeating the words of dead professors, regardless of truth or falsehood,” Kuhn’s paradigm, based as it is upon extrapolating the perspective of Nazi Germany into antiquity, has remained default explanation for the use of these terms in antiquity.

The same influence of prewar German Zeitgeist can be seen in the effort (most notably by Grundmann, as discussed above) to dissociate Jesus from any connection with Juden—an effort unfortunately anticipating Elliot’s conclusion that “Jesus was not a Jew” by over half a century. Thus despite having the best of intentions, those building on Kuhn’s insider/outsider paradigm continue to read the anti-Semitic assumptions of Nazi Germany back into antiquity in ways unsupported by the ancient evidence itself. It is therefore necessary to reevaluate this evidence and move to better models of Jewish and Israelite identity.

Ἰσραηλίτης vs. οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι in Josephus

Nazi origins aside, the current model falls apart when applied to the ancient texts it aims to explain, as already illustrated by the supposedly anomalous retention of Judah/Judaea as the

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261 Casey, "Anti-Semitic Assumptions," 291: “What is dangerous about [the TDNT] is the frames of reference from which its contributors came in: they were learned men who did not make factual errors which we can all spot. The mildest contributors to the early volumes had German Christian prejudices: the most menacing were Nazis…. It follows that this dictionary should be used only with the utmost care. Students should be warned of this hidden menace, and all readers should consult it only with their critical wits sharpened to the highest degree.”


263 Elliot, "Jesus the Israelite"; Cf. also Boyarin, “The IOUDAIOI in John,” 235–36. See also pp. 31–34 above.
Thanks to the breadth and extent of his literary output in the first century CE—and the helpful fact that he explains his use of the terms in question—Flavius Josephus offers an excellent starting point for further investigation.265

Rather than treating Ἰσραήλ and οἱ ᾿Ιουδαῖος as equivalent terms with different audiences, Josephus instead corrects a Gentile historian’s conflation of the two terms in book seven of his

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264 A recent article by Nathan Thiel also challenges the insider/outsider hypothesis on the basis of far too many exceptions to the rule, but that article was released after this chapter (and most of this project) was complete and thus will not be significantly incorporated, though it is worthy of mention. See Thiel, “‘Israel’ and ‘Jew’ as Markers of Jewish Identity in Antiquity: The Problems of Insider/Outsider Classification,” JSJ 45, no. 1 (2014): 80–99.

Antiquities, where he reports an account from Nicolaus of Damascus about ancient wars between οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι and the Syrians:

But the third [Hadad] was the most powerful of them all and was willing to avenge the defeat his forefather had received; so he made an expedition against the Jews (οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι), and laid waste the city which is now called Samaria.” (A.J. 7.102)

An outsider to the complicated history of Israel, Nicolaus—like many modern scholars—applies the national and ethnic labels of his own day to the distant past, calling David “king of Judaea” and referencing Hadad’s conquest of Samaria as “an expedition against οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι.” That a first-century Gentile historian would commit such anachronisms is not especially surprising, but Josephus’ next statement is what makes this passage especially noteworthy. Rather than retaining Nicolaus’ anachronism, he promptly corrects Nicolaus’ nomenclature, explaining that the latter Hadad’s expedition had been against “Ahab, king of Israel”:

This is that Hadad who made the expedition against Samaria in the reign of Ahab, king of Israel, concerning whom we will speak in due place after this” [my emphasis]. (A.J. 7.103)

In contrast to the uninformed pagan Nicolaus, Josephus is remarkably consistent in how he uses these terms, using the terms Ἰσραηλίτης and Ἰσραήλος 188 times in the first eleven books of the Antiquities and nowhere else in the Josephan corpus.266 Ἰουδαῖος, on the other hand, occurs 1188 times in the Josephan corpus but only twenty-six times (on twenty-five occasions) in the first ten books of the Antiquities.267 A graphical representation of the data is striking (see Fig 1):

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266 Of these, Ἰσραήλος occurs only twice, in the first and fourth books. All word searches were made with Accordance Bible Software 11 (Altamonte Springs, FL: Oak Tree Software, Inc., 2015) and verified by hand.

267 Josephus’ preference for Ἰουδαῖοι when referring to contemporary history has been noted previously; e.g., Horst Kuhli, “Ἰσραηλίτης,” EDNT 2:204–05 (205). Of the twenty-five occasions in the first ten books, four refer to the Jews of Josephus’ day (1.4; 1.6; 1.214; 9.291 [x2]), seven refer specifically to the southern kingdom (9.245; 10.87; 10.169; 10.182; 10.186; 10.222; 10.265), one explains why the Jews were originally called Hebrews (1.146), and
three are quotations from other historians (1.95; 1.240; 7.103). Four are ambiguous, though they seem to represent those from Judah: 6.30 (land belonging to “the Jews” in the territory of Judah); 6.324 (“south of the Jews”); 7.72 (“David, king of the Jews”); 8.163 (Ezion-Geber once belonged to the Jews). Only six times does Josephus use it in a sense akin to “Israelites” (4.11; 6.26; 6.40; 6.68; 6.96; 6.97; the concentration of these instances in Book Six is intriguing but cannot be explored here). Niese’s text includes two additional instances that are likely secondary. In 6.98 the τῶν Ἰουδαίων reading preferred by Niese only occurs in MS O and is likely secondary to the τῶν Ἑβραίων reading (cf. 6.327, 344) occurring in other Greek MSS and the Latin translations. Similarly, in 8.25, the τοὺς Ἰουδαίους reading is found only in RO, likely secondary to the τοὺς ἰδίους found in the other Greek codices. MS M also has Ἰουδαίων in 10.155, though the other MSS and Niese have Ἑβραίων. Two instances of Ἰουδαϊκός also appear in the first ten books, at 1.203 (Ἰουδαϊκὸν πόλεμον) and 5.271 (φύλης ὀν Ἰουδαϊκῆς, referring specifically to the tribe of Judah). (Thanks to David Levenson for his help with the textual evidence in Josephus.) Paul Spilsbury, *The Image of the Jew in Flavius Josephus’ Paraphrase of the Bible*, TSAJ 69 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998), 37, notes (before arguing for the contrary), “On the strength of this evidence it might be argued that the first five books of the Antiquities are not dealing with the “Jews” at all (the reference in Book 4 is obviously an anachronism), and that even in the next five books the word is evidence of the author’s terminological inexactitude …. Only in the post-exilic period is the term properly used ….” Although Ἰουδαῖος is anachronistic when applied to ancient Israel, it is not entirely incorrect (especially when one intends, as does Josephus, to emphasize the continuity of ancient Israel with modern Jews), since Judah was part of Israel. For the purpose of this study, what matters is that Josephus consistently refrains from equating postexilic “Jews” with “Israel,” reserving that moniker for the northern tribes or all twelve tribes as a collective.

268 Graph made using Accordance Bible Software 11.
It would be absurd to conclude from this (as the insider/outside model might suggest) that the first eleven books of Josephus’ *Antiquities* were written to a different audience from the rest of the Josephan corpus, reserving “insider terminology” for these sections while the rest of his work was written for outsiders. Josephus did not imagine a wholly new audience would pick up the *Antiquities* starting in Book 12. Rather, Josephus shifts from Ἰσραηλίτης to Ἰουδαῖος *at a specific point in his history*—the return from Babylonian exile—explaining that the latter term became the standard label for his people at that time.269

From the time they went up from Babylon they were called by this name [Ἰουδαῖος] after the tribe of Judah. As the tribe was the prominent one to come from those parts, both the people themselves and the country have taken their name from it.270 (*A.J.* 11.173)

Josephus thus explains precisely why he shifts from Ἰσραηλίτης to Ἰουδαῖος, saying nothing of “religious” and insider/outside contexts, instead referencing a specific historical point and cause for the shift in nomenclature: the return from Babylonian Exile, which (according to Josephus) primarily involved those from the tribe of Judah. Josephus’ explanation is straightforward: Judah/Judaea was the homeland of the southern kingdom of Judah, and that name becomes prominent after the exile because the only returnees from exile were from the kingdom of Judah, returning to their land of *Judah*, while the rest (i.e., the northern part) of Israel

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269 *Pace* Goodblatt, “Israelites who Reside in Judah,” 82–2, who notes that “Josephus consistently uses the ethnynom ‘Israel’ when covering what for him was the biblical period (that is, up until the fall of the Persian Empire to Alexander of Macedonia),” Josephus actually discontinues the use of Israel well before the fall of Persia, with the shift coinciding instead with the return from Babylon, which, as he explains, did not include the whole of Israel.

270 *Pace* Lowe, “Who Were the ΙΟΥΔΑΙΟΙ?,” 106, who reads “Judah was the first tribe to return from exile,” and Marcus, LCL 489, 399, “the first to come to those parts,” πρώτος is best taken in the sense of “most important” here rather than “first” in a temporal sense. Neither the biblical accounts nor Josephus’ account give any indication that the tribe of Judah preceded the other tribes in returning to the land; rather, it was the dominant, prominent tribe of those that returned. As is often the case in translation, the problem here is not so much with the Greek, but with the English distinction between “first [in importance],” for which we typically use another term, and “first [in a series].” Cf. Stephen C. Carlson, “Luke 2:2 and the Census,” *Luke 2:2 and the Census*, 24 December 2004, http://hypotyposeis.org/weblog/2004/12/luke-22-and-the-census.html.
did not return, with that territory still in the control of those who had lived there during the exile. Remarkably, Josephus’ lucid explanation of this shift in terminology typically receives only passing attention from those attempting to explain the relationship between Ἰουδαῖος and Ἰσραηλίτης, and even those who have recognized its importance have tended either to misconstrue or ignore its meaning.271

For example, Esler recognizes the change in nomenclature at this point but somehow concludes it is the result of the “link between the name of the people and its homeland containing the capital city and the temple of their God,” apparently forgetting that “Israel” was also the name of the traditional homeland, and he does not offer an explanation for why that name for the land was not adopted after the return from Babylon.272 Tomson, on the other hand, notes the importance of Josephus’ explanation and observes, “Roughly, Josephus is right.”273 Nevertheless, he proceeds to ignore Josephus’ distinction between the terms, promptly asserting that Israelite and Ἰουδαῖος are “two synonymous names which indicate the same people,” missing the larger

271 This Josephan passage and explanation is completely ignored, for example in Goodblatt, “Judeans to Israel”; “Israelites who Reside in Judah”; Stephen G. Wilson, “‘Jew’ and Related Terms in the Ancient World,” SR 33 (2004): 157–171; and (remarkably, given Mason’s expertise in Josephus) in Mason, “Jews, Judeans.” Others cite or quote the passage but do not seem to recognize its full significance. For example, Lowe, “Who Were the ΙΟΥΔΑΙΟΙ?,” 106, mentions it briefly in a summary of how Josephus uses the term but does not explore its significance. Robert Murray mentions it “as a starting point” but then never returns to it in Robert Murray, “Jews, Hebrews, and Christians: Some Needed Distinctions,” NovT 24, no. 3 (1982): 194–208 (198). Elliot likewise briefly mentions the passage but only in passing, on the way to explaining that Ἰουδαῖος was in fact a geographical label (Elliot, "Jesus the Israelite," 130). One exception who does recognize Josephus’ basic point here is Zeitlin, “Hebrew, Jew and Israel,” 368. Interestingly, this passage receives significantly more attention from scholars of the Hebrew Bible, who tend to be more careful to distinguish between “ancient Israel” and “Judaism,” the latter of which is considered to have arisen after the return from Babylon. Unfortunately, however, this distinction has been too often used to distinguish between the “living” religion of ancient Israel and postexilic Judaism’s supposed focus on the “dead letter.” The full implication of the continued distinction between “Israel” and “the Jews” in the postexilic period is nevertheless usually missed even by scholars of the Hebrew Bible, who typically regard the Yehudim simply to have appropriated the other term. These points will be addressed more fully in Chapter 3.

272 Esler, Conflict and Identity, 64.

point of Josephus’ explanation and the significance of Josephus’ shift in terminology. Spilsbury similarly notes Josephus’ distinction and explanation before dismissing them in practice, concluding, “Close examination of how these three terms are used reveals that they are, to a large degree, interchangeable for Josephus,” despite the fact that “Israelites” never occurs after Book 11, as one would expect if the terms were truly interchangeable.

To his credit, Miller rightly points to A.J. 11.173 as the key to understanding the shift in nomenclature, but he mistakes Josephus’ explanation as an “insistence that the name for the people changed,” not recognizing that the reason for the shift in nomenclature was that the two terms refer to different entities, only one of which returned from exile. Part of the problem is that even those recognizing the importance of 11.173 have tended to overlook its connection with two earlier statements that set up the transition and further clarify the reason for the shift in terminology. First, Josephus explains that the return from exile had been limited to the southern tribes: “After Cyrus announced this to the Israelites, the rulers of the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, with the Levites and priests, went in haste to Jerusalem” (A.J. 11.8)

This passage marks a key transition in Josephus’ account, as Cyrus addresses the “Israelites,” but only those from Judah, Benjamin, and Levi return. A reader of Josephus’ account of Israel to this point should be asking why only three tribes responded to Cyrus’ decree,
yet scholars have missed the subtle transition here with remarkable consistency, likely owing to the assumption that “Israelites” is synonymous with “Jews.” Spilsbury, for example, points to this passage as evidence that the terms are interchangeable, claiming, “Here this term refers specifically to the two tribes who returned from exile.”

But a more careful reading shows that Josephus here distinguishes between those to whom Cyrus made his decree (the Israelites, a term referring only to the ten tribes or the twelve tribe totality to this point in the Antiquities) and those who actually heeded his words—only those from the tribes of Judah, Benjamin, and Levi. Lest one object that this is too subtle a reading of the passage, Josephus clarifies his meaning only a few paragraphs later, answering the question of what happened to the other tribes:

“...when these Ἰουδαῖοι learned of the king’s piety towards God, and his kindness towards Ezra, they loved [him] most dearly, and many took up their possessions and went to Babylon, desiring to go down to Jerusalem. But the whole [ὁ πᾶς] people of Israel remained in that land; so it came about that only two tribes came to Asia and Europe and are subject to the Romans. But the ten tribes are beyond Euphrates until now and are a boundless multitude, not to be estimated by numbers. (A.J. 11.132–33)

So, according to Josephus, the reason they came to be called Ἰουδαῖοι was that they were the part associated with the southern kingdom of Judah, while the bulk of Israel (πᾶς λαὸς τῶν Ἰσραηλιτῶν) remained in exile in immense numbers. Thus it is not that “the name for the

278 Spilsbury, Image of the Jew, 40 n. 129.

279 Remarkably, even this passage seems to have been too subtle for most modern interpreters. For example, Barmash, "Nexus," 233, despite the focus of her article on the northern tribes, somehow misses the clear distinction Josephus makes between Ἰουδαῖοι and Israelites here, saying, “Josephus explains the existence of two populations of Jews [sic], one under Roman rule and the other under Parthian rule, by telling that the Babylonian Jews returned with Ezra while only some of the Jews [sic] in Media returned at that time (Antiquities, xi, 131–33). He describes the Jews [sic] ‘beyond the Euphrates’ as numbering countless multitudes.” In fairness, Barmash does acknowledge that “Josephus assumes that the population of Jews [sic] ‘beyond the Euphrates’ consists of the descendents of the northerners” (233) but nevertheless misses the larger point in this passage. Note also the similar mistake by James M. Scott, “Philo and the Restoration of Israel,” in Society of Biblical Literature 1995 Seminar Papers, ed. Eugene H.
people changed," as Miller and others have suggested, but that the people in view changed, with the scope narrowing from the larger twelve-tribe body of Israelites to a more limited group identified with the dominant southern tribe of Judah. That is, Josephus uses a different name because the group in view is different. This fully explains why Josephus completely drops the term “Israelites” shortly after this passage: for Josephus, the Ἰουδαῖοι are only a subset of Israel, and until the rest of Israel is again in view, “Israelites” is the wrong term for the limited portion of Israel represented by the more precise term Ἰουδαῖοι.

The distinction between the terms therefore goes back to the division between the northern and southern Israelite kingdoms and their respective exiles. This accounts for the full pattern of Josephus’ use of these terms, even the few cases where they appear (unidirectionally) interchangeable as observed by Spilsbury.281 When the full people are in view (i.e., before the divided kingdoms), Josephus can be more flexible with his terminology, especially where he wishes to emphasize the connection between ancient Israel and contemporary Ἰουδαῖοι.282 But after the division of the kingdoms, Josephus is strikingly consistent in how he uses the term “Israelites,” as Spilsbury notes,

Before the division into two kingdoms, it refers to the whole people made up of tribal groupings. During the period of the divided monarchy Josephus is careful to

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Lovering, Jr. (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996), 553–575 (561 n. 47), who refers to this passage as about “the Jewish nation,” again neglecting the distinction in terminology Josephus makes.

280 Miller, "Meaning of Ιουδαίος," 102–03.

281 Spilsbury, Image of the Jew, 38–40. By “unidirectional,” I mean that Ἰουδαῖοι is used in place of “Israelites” (though always referring to activity in the southern territory) but the latter is never the case.

282 Spilsbury is right to point out that Josephus’ concern is to show the origins of the Ἰουδαῖοι and that “he regarded his description of these ancient people as fully relevant to the ‘Jews’ of his own day” (Spilsbury, Image of the Jew, 37–40, quote from 40). But continuity between ancient Hebrews/Israelites and contemporary Jews does not equate all three terms or groups. In this case, Josephus explains that the Ἰουδαῖοι descended from the Hebrews/Israelites (thus Jewish history includes the history of ancient Israel), but the Jews are only a portion of those descended from Israel, which remains a larger group.
use it only for the northern tribes. However, after the deportation of both the North and the South it refers once more to the whole people.\(^{283}\)

After the return from Babylon, that term is therefore no longer appropriate, since Josephus regards the northern tribes as not having returned with the three southern tribes, which is why he transitions to Ἰουδαῖος at this point in his narrative. Josephus not only carefully manages his use of “Israelites” in connection to the division between the kingdoms and their respective exiles, he explicitly explains the centrality of these events to his history:

Such was the end of the nation of the Hebrews, as it has been passed down to us, having twice gone beyond the Euphrates, for the people of the ten tribes were carried out of Samaria by the Assyrians in the days of king Hoshea, after which the people of the two tribes that remained after Jerusalem was taken were deported by Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon and Chaldea. Shalmaneser deported the Israelites out of their country, and replaced them with the nation of the Cutheans, who had formerly belonged to the inner parts of Persia and Media, but were then called Samaritans, taking the name of the country to which they were deported. But the king of Babylon, who brought out the two tribes [Judah and Benjamin], placed no other nation in their country, so all Judaea and Jerusalem—and the temple—was a wilderness for seventy years. But the entire time from the captivity of the Israelites to the carrying away of the two tribes came to one hundred and thirty years, six months, and ten days. (A.J. 10.183–85)

Josephus here summarizes the “end of the nation of the Hebrews,” which includes both the “end that overtook the Israelites” (A.J. 9.281) and the subsequent exile of “the two tribes” by the king of Babylon.\(^{284}\) Josephus’ use of the term “Hebrews” here appears to be a way to represent both kingdoms as a whole while using “Israelites” to refer specifically to those from the northern kingdom.\(^{285}\) It is also noteworthy that Josephus explicitly connects the first exile


\(^{284}\) See Chapter 7 below for more analysis of Josephus’ account of the destruction and deportation of the northern kingdom in A.J. 9.277–282.

\(^{285}\) See D. R. G. Beattie and Philip R. Davies, “What Does Hebrew Mean?” *JS 56*, no. 1 (2011): 71–83 (77), “It is perhaps worth considering that the term was used at a certain period to designate a community or population that included both Israelites and Judaean, who to outsiders did not form a single identifiable people, a term that Israelites or Jews could apply to themselves, but also apply to others.”
with the origins of the Samaritans, a subject of special importance for a first-century Ἰουδαῖος like Josephus and a matter that will receive more attention below.

**Conclusion: A Partitive Model for “Jews” and “Israelites”**

We can therefore conclude that for Josephus, Ἰουδαῖος is a term denoting a person descended from (or ethnically incorporated into) the southern kingdom of Judah. The term originally derived from the tribe of Judah but in its broader sense includes at least Levites and Benjaminites, as these tribes were included among the returnees from the southern kingdom of Judah after the Babylonian exile. As with all ethnic terms in antiquity, Josephus presumes that to be a Ἰουδαῖος also includes cultural and social practices, many of which we would understand as “religious” today. By contrast, Ἰσραηλίτης is a more comprehensive term for Josephus, with the majority of Israel having been deported by the Assyrians and remaining “beyond the Euphrates,” not falling under the power of Rome. Since he believes that the bulk of Israel never returned from Assyria and Babylon, Josephus transitions to the term Ἰουδαῖος rather than Ἰσραηλίτης in the Persian period, reserving the latter term for the northern tribes or for the twelve-tribe people as a whole. For Josephus, Israel/Israelite language is therefore limited either to the past people or to the future time when “the two tribes” (τὰς δύο φυλὰς) are reunited with the entire people of Israel (ὁ πᾶς λαός τῶν Ἰσραηλιτῶν).286

It is thus clear that at least for Josephus, Ἰσραηλίται and Ἰουδαῖοι are not synonymous, as many Israelites cannot rightly be called Ἰουδαῖοι. Instead, Josephus presumes a partitive relationship between these terms more like that represented in Fig. 2:

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286 See Chapter 7 below for more on this eschatological element in Josephus.
After a brief examination of the related term Ἑβραῖος in the next chapter, the second and third parts of this study will demonstrate that Josephus was by no means idiosyncratic in this regard but instead represents a typical first-century Jewish understanding of the Jews as part of Israel but not the whole,²⁸⁷ a perspective further developed by Paul, as will be seen in Part IV.

²⁸⁷ Boyarin, “The IOUDAIOI in John,” 221, has similarly suggested a partitive relationship between “Israelite” and Ἰουδαίοι in the Gospel of John, explaining, “The key, in my view, is to understand that the Ioudaioi in John does not mean what we mean by ‘Jews’ today, that is to say, it is not co-extensive with ‘Israelite’ in its extension, but some subset of the Israelites”; “the hypothesis of non-Ioudaic Israelites might help explain some of the Samaritan connections and sympathies that the Fourth Gospel has as well” (231). Gadenz, Called from Jews and Gentiles, 74 n. 271, however, notes that in private conversation Boyarin “expressed skepticism that this idea is applicable to Paul’s use of the terms.” Unfortunately, as the above quote demonstrates, Boyarin also remarkably still assumes “Israelite” is equivalent to the modern term “Jew.” so when he refers to a “subset of the Israelites,” he means a subset of Jews, specifically the subset who are “members of the particularist and purity-oriented community in and around Jerusalem, with which the Israelites [=Jews] of the north and east partly identified and partly did not” (235). He therefore concludes that the Galileans are “obviously ‘Jews’ (=Israelites), but not Ioudaioi” (236), a conclusion that overlooks John 4:9 (a verse Boyarin conveniently omits in his analysis), in which Jesus is explicitly called a Ἰουδαῖος. On the contrary, Galilean Jews are indeed Ἰουδαῖοι inasmuch as they are Jews. Boyarin thus recognizes the subset relationship between the terms Israel and Ἰουδαῖος but does not recognize the root of the interpretive problem: the modern scholarly assumption that “Israelite” = “Jew.” He therefore attempts to divide Ἰουδαῖος (=Jews) from Ἰουδαίοι (=pietistic, Jerusalem-centered Jews) in a way that would have been incoherent to an ancient reader and thus arrives at the same flawed result as Elliot, “Jesus the Israelite” and Grundmann, Jesus der Galiläer, differentiating between Galilean “Israelites” and Judeans around Jerusalem in the south and thus resulting in a Jesus who is not a Ἰουδαῖος, though repeatedly identified as one in the Gospels, including at his crucifixion. In addition to its problematic past and Jesus being called a Ἰουδαῖος in the Gospels, this interpretation also struggles to explain the centrality of Jerusalem to the earliest Jesus-movement. Boyarin is therefore correct that his particular solution for John does not apply to Paul, but it also does not apply to the Gospel of John. The partitive relationship between Israel and the Ἰουδαῖοι (=Jews), however, applies not only in John (and Josephus) but through a wide range of early Jewish and Christian literature. Note also the similar mistake in Lowe, “IOYΔΑΙΟΙ of the Apocrypha,” 89–90, where Lowe suggests that one particular instance of the word “Galileans” in Julian’s “Against the Galileans”—although obviously referring to Christians elsewhere—refers to “‘real’ Galileans, i.e. Jews who, living in Galilee, were careful to distinguish between themselves and Judeans.”
CHAPTER 2: HEBREW: NEITHER JEW NOR ISRAELITE

In the last chapter, we saw that Josephus used the additional term Ἑβραῖος in A.J. 10.183 to refer to both kingdoms of Israel and Judah, avoiding the potential ambiguity of “Israel” given that term’s application to the northern kingdom. This term, which is used of Israelites and Ἰουδαῖοι in Josephus and elsewhere, warrants further discussion. Most previous studies of this appellation in this period have been negatively influenced by the genetic fallacy, with most discussions attempting to establish the earliest meaning of the term. For the purposes of this

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288 As noted by Harvey, True Israel, 5. There is significant debate on this point, with some identifying the term as deriving from the cognate ‘apirû or ḥabiru appearing in the fourteenth-century BCE Amarna Letters. From that connection, “Hebrew” is supposed to have been a term denoting a specific legal-social status (an auxiliary or servant class of some sort) rather than an ethnic group. Miller, “Ethnicity,” 299, summarizes Gerhard Von Rad’s influential conclusion to this effect in the TDNT: “According to Von Rad, the term ‘Hebrew’ is completely different from ‘Israel’ and ‘Judah’ because Habiru (חַבִירֻ) was originally a designation for a legal-social status; the peoples the term encompassed were not an ethnic unity (ethnische Einheit) like the Mesopotamians and Egyptians. Von Rad maintained that ‘Hebrew’ eventually took on a broader meaning as a more-or-less derogatory term for Israel, and that late biblical usage at least prepares for the use of ‘Hebrew’ as a designation for ethnicity (eine ethnische Zugehörigkeit).” Cf. Gerhard von Rad, “Israel, Judah, and Hebrews in the Old Testament,” TDNT 3:357–59. This has remained a widely-held view; cf. Norman Gottwald, Tribes of Yahweh: A Sociology of the Religion of Liberated Israel, 1250–1050 BCE (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1979), 423; Niels Peter Lemche, “Habiru, Hapiru,” ABD 3 (1992): 6–10; Niels Peter Lemche, “Hebrew,” ABD 3 (1992): 95; “The Hebrew and the Seven Year Cycle,” BN 25 (1984): 65–75; “‘Hebrew’ As a National Name for Israel,” ST 33, no. 1 (1979): 1–23; Jean Bottéro, Le Probleme des Habiru a la 4e Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale, Cahiers de la Société Asiatique 12 (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1954); Moshe Greenberg, The Hab/piru, AOS 39 (New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1955); O. Loretz, Habiru-Hebräer. Eine soziolinguistische Studie über die Herkunft des Gentiliziums ‘ibri vom Appellativum ḥabira, BZA 160 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1984); John Van Seters, “The Law of the Hebrew Slave,” ZAW 108, no. 4 (1996): 534–546; Nadav Na’aman, “Habiru and Hebrews: The Transfer of a Social Term to the Literary Sphere,” JNES 45, no. 4 (1986): 271–288. More recently, however, this view has begun to lose support for a variety of reasons. Daniel E. Fleming, The Legacy of Israel in Judah's Bible: History, Politics, and the Reinscribing of Tradition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 258–271, has suggested the early apirû were broad range herders with limited ties to specific towns or cities. Beattie and Davies, "What Does Hebrew Mean?," 82, offer the intriguing suggestion that the term arose as “an abbreviated name for someone from ‘Beyond the River’ or ‘Trans-Euphrates’, a ‘Transite’—in Aramaic עבריא.” In much of their article, Beattie and Davies largely anticipate the argument of this chapter in advocating a linguistic meaning for “Hebrew” (meaning Aramaic) in the Second Temple Period, but their conclusions and mine were arrived at independently (this chapter had already gone through multiple drafts before I became aware of their article) and using a different angle of investigation.
study, however, the origins of the term and its ties to social or legal status are not relevant, as the literature in and around the Second Temple period is either unaware of or uninterested in this history. I will therefore focus solely on the term’s use in this later period.

Several different explanations have been offered for the meaning of Ἑβραῖος in the Second Temple period, with most of the discussion concerning whether or not the term should be understood as primarily a linguistic marker—that is, as a term referring to Hebrew or Aramaic speakers. According to Kuhn, Ἑβραῖος becomes the more dignified, select and polite term as compared with the common Ἰουδαῖος, which may often be used in a derogatory or even contemptuous sense. Ἑβραῖος is thus used to denote Jewish nationality or religion in passages which wish to avoid the depreciatory element that clings so easily to Ἰουδαῖος. It is supposed to carry with it the very opposite nuance of high esteem and respect.289

Kuhn credits this supposed nuance to the archaic and biblical flavor of Ἑβραῖος as opposed to its (allegedly) so easily deprecatory counterpart.290 Kuhn does, however, acknowledge that “Hebrew” often has a linguistic sense,291 and Gutbrod’s companion essay on the term in pagan or Hellenistic Jewish contexts concludes,

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290 Kuhn, *TDNT* 3:367–69, 367–69. As with his distinction between Ἰουδαῖος and Ἰσραήλ, this view of Ἑβραῖος corresponds with the contemporary German view of “Hebraism” (i.e., biblical Israel) as a living precursor of Christianity while “Judaism” was but a postexilic husk of this previously living religion. See James S. Pasto, “H. M. L. De Wette and the Invention of Post-Exilic Judaism: Political Historiography and Christian Allegory in Nineteenth-Century German Biblical Scholarship,” in *Jews, Antiquity, and the Nineteenth-century Imagination*, eds. Hayim Lapin and Dale B. Martin, STJHC 12 (College Park, MD: University Press of Maryland, 2003), 33–52 (49–51); “Who Owns the Jewish past?: Judaism, Judaisms, and the writing of Jewish History,” (PhD diss., Cornell University, 1999), 53–57; and the beginning of chapter 3 below.
291 Kuhn, *TDNT* 3:365–67. Although suggesting they may have been attempting to avoid the allegedly contemptuous connotation of Ἰουδαῖος, Kuhn even concedes that the inscriptions that use Ἑβραῖος more likely refer to Semitic speakers or those otherwise closely connected with “Palestinian traits” (369–70).
We may thus conclude that Ἑβραῖος is either used historically or to denote Palestinian nationality or language, especially when Jews are called Ἑβραῖοι in contradistinction from other Jews.²⁹²

Had Gutbrod stopped there, this chapter may well have been unnecessary. Remarkably, however, Gutbrod then asserts in his entry on Ἑβραῖος in the New Testament, “we cannot be primarily guided by a linguistic understanding of Ἑβραῖος,” citing Cadbury’s claim, “The word (Ἑβραῖος) is not commonly used elsewhere in a linguistic sense.”²⁹³ Similarly, although listing a second meaning as a “Hebrew-/Aramaic-speaking Israelite in contrast to a Gk.-speaking Israelite,” the primary meaning listed in BDAG is simply an “ethnic name for an Israelite,”²⁹⁴ which others (particularly interpreters of Paul’s claims to be a “Hebrew”) have then interpreted as indicating a “pure-blood Jew.”²⁹⁵

_Pace_ Cadbury and others who have argued against the linguistic meaning as primary, this chapter will show that a thorough review of Hellenistic literature before the second century CE—including the New Testament—shows that the primary meaning of Ἑβραῖος is very plainly linguistic throughout the period. Indeed, almost without exception, the term either refers to ancient, biblical Hebrews (who could be assumed to have spoken Hebrew or Aramaic) or to modern speakers of a Semitic tongue.

²⁹² Walter Gutbrod, _TDNT_ 3:369–375 (375).


²⁹⁴ BDAG, 269–270.

²⁹⁵ C. K. Barrett, _The Second Epistle to the Corinthians_, BNCT 8 (London: Black, 1973), 293, citing Bauer and the _TWNT_, asserts, “[Hebrew] is used in two senses. The primary one (clearly used in Phil. iii. 5), is that of pure-blooded Jew; only secondarily (as at Acts vi. 1), do considerations such as language (Hebrew-speaking over against Greek-speaking) arise.” See the discussion of Paul’s use of the term below.
Ἑβραῖος in Josephus

In contrast to Ἰουδαῖος, Josephus regularly uses the term Ἑβραῖος when speaking of the preexilic period. Unlike Ἰσραηλίτης, however, Josephus applies the term not only to “biblical” Israelites but to his contemporaries and others from the postexilic period, albeit rarely. Josephus follows Genesis in tying the origin of the word to the primordial patriarch Heber, from whom Abraham was descended, saying, “Sala was the son of Arphaxad, and his son was Heber, from whom they originally called οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι Hebrews (Ἑβραῖοι)” (A.J. 1.146).

Josephus therefore clearly identifies the Ἑβραῖοι with the Ἰουδαῖοι, although as with “Israel” the equation only moves in one direction: Ἰουδαῖοι are descended from the Ἑβραῖοι, but Josephus does not say all Ἑβραῖοι are Ἰουδαῖοι. It may seem pedantic to make such distinctions, but these fine differences aid in determining the nuance of each term. Ἑβραῖος is Josephus’ favored term for the biblical ancestors of the Ἰουδαῖοι, occurring 258 times with reference to these ancient ancestors. Over half (143) of these uses occur in the first four books of Antiquities, which focus on the period prior to the conquest of Canaan, with Ἰσραηλίτης occurring twenty-two times and Ἰουδαῖος only seven in these sections. Ἰσραηλίτης begins to occur more frequently after the conquest of Canaan, with the terms mostly treated interchangeably, though Ἑβραῖος refers to the whole people (e.g., A.J. 9.182; 10.72, 183) while Ἰσραηλίτης is sometimes limited to those of the northern kingdom (e.g., 7.103; 8.224, 286, 298, 306, 311, 314). Ἰσραηλίτης finally eclipses Ἑβραῖος in frequency as the kingdom of Israel comes onto the scene in Books 5, 9, 10, and 11, after which Ἰσραηλίτης no longer appears. Thus

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296 Spilsbury, Image of the Jew, 37, “Here the concern is clearly to show who the Ἰουδαῖοι originally were, namely, the Hebrews,” misses the distinction here. As with “Israel,” it is not merely that the name for the people has changed; the people who can be called by each term are not identical.

297 The terms occur the same number of times in Book 8.
Josephus prefers Ἰσραήλ terminology in the period of the nation-state of Israel but not before or after that time.

Unlike Ἰσραηλίτης, Josephus does not restrict Ἑβραῖος to the ancient biblical people. These non-ancient references do, however, show a clear pattern: of the forty-four cases where Josephus uses the term not in reference to the ancient biblical people, twenty-nine have a clear linguistic sense (e.g. “called by the Hebrews,” “in the Hebrew tongue,” “a measure of the Hebrews”), with the other six uses occurring in an ambiguous context where the clear nuance is more difficult to pin down. One of these six is especially helpful for our purposes, as it occurs in conjunction with Ἰουδαῖος, affording an opportunity to examine the relationship between the terms:

The Samaritans, whose capital city was then at Shechem (a city located at Mount Gerizim, and inhabited by apostates of the nation of the Ἰουδαῖοι), seeing that Alexander had greatly honored the Ἰουδαῖοι in this way, determined to profess themselves Ἰουδαῖοι; for such is the disposition of the Samaritans, as we have already elsewhere stated, that when the Ἰουδαῖοι are in adversity they deny they are related to them—and then they confess the truth—but when they perceive that some good fortune has befallen them, they immediately pretend to have communion with them, saying that they belong to them and derive their genealogy from the posterity of Joseph, Ephraim, and Manasseh. (A.J. 11.340–341, my emphasis)

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298 One additional use occurs in a variant to B.J. 1.3, where Josephus refers to himself as γένει Ἑβραῖος. Since Josephus was himself a Semitic speaker, this variant is not especially relevant for the thesis of this chapter. Josephus also once uses the verb ἐβραίζω (B.J. 6.96), meaning to speak Hebrew, and Ἑβραῖδες (A.J. 2.226), referring to Hebrew women in the time of the Exodus.

299 A.J. 1.80. See also A.J. 1.117, 128, 204, 258; 2.3, 311; 3.32, 138, 144, 201, 252, 282; 4.84; 8.61; 11.148, 286.


301 A.J. 3.142, 234; cf. also 3.195.

302 A.J. 3.247, 317; 4.308; 11.343; B.J. 4.159; 5.443.
On first glance, it appears that Josephus identifies the Samaritans as (apostate) Ἰουδαῖοι, and suggests that they “claimed to be Jews,” which some scholars have seen as “obviously [introducing] tension and complication into the sense of ‘Jew.’” Goodblatt similarly notes the oddity, explaining, “this seems like a polemical exaggeration. Presumably the Samaritans simply noted that both they and the Judeans were of Israelite origin.” This can not only be presumed, it is precisely what happens in the passage itself, wherein the Samaritans deny that they are Ἰουδαῖοι at all but claim common descent with the Ἰουδαῖοι, calling themselves Ἑβραῖοι instead:

And when they petitioned for him to remit the tribute of the seventh year to them, because they did not now sow then, he inquired who they were to make such a petition. When they said that they were Hebrews but were called Sidonians, living at Shechem, he asked them again whether they were Ἰουδαῖοι. When they said they were not Ἰουδαῖοι, he said, “It was to the Ἰουδαῖοι that I granted that privilege. Nevertheless, when I return, and have been thoroughly instructed by you of this matter, I will do what seems right.” And in this manner he took leave of the Shechemites.

Now when Alexander was dead, the government was parted among his successors; but the temple upon Mount Gerizim remained; and if anyone were accused by those of Jerusalem of having eaten things common, or of having broken the Sabbath, or of any other crime of the like nature, he fled away to the Shechemites, and said that he was accused unjustly. (A.J. 11.343–344, 346–347, my emphasis)

Thus, in the words of Louis Feldman, the Samaritans, “apparently drawing a distinction between Hebrews (presumably the descendants of Abraham) and Jews (the descendants of Jews in particular), they denied that they were Jews.” These passages also allude to and rely upon the reader’s familiarity with Josephus’ earlier explanation of Samaritan origins:

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303 Murray, "Jews, Hebrews," 189. See also Harvey, True Israel, 110.
But now the Cutheans, who were deported into Samaria (for that is the name they have been called by till now, because they were brought out of the country called Chouthos, which is a country of Persia, where there is a river of this name), each of their nations—there were five of them—brought their own gods into Samaria, and by worshiping them, as was the custom of their own countries, they provoked Almighty God to be angry and annoyed at them, for a plague came upon them by which they were afflicted.

When they found no cure for their miseries, they learned by the oracle that they should worship the Almighty God as the means of their deliverance. So they sent ambassadors to the king of Assyria, and desired him to send them some of those priests of the Israelites whom he had taken captive. And when he had sent them and they taught the people the laws and the holy worship of God, they worshiped him in a respectful manner, and the plague ceased immediately. And indeed they continue to make use of the very same customs to this very day and are called Cutheans in the Hebrew tongue but in the Greek Samaritans.

And when they see the Ἰουδαῖοι well off, they call themselves their relatives, as though descended from Joseph, and have family ties with them by that means. But whenever they see them falling into bad circumstances, they say they owe nothing to them, and that [the Ἰουδαῖοι] have no right to their kindness or kindred relations. Rather, they declare that they are sojourners from other countries. But of these we shall have a more seasonable opportunity to discourse hereafter. (A.J. 9.288–91)

By the time he narrates the Samaritans’ interview with Alexander, Josephus has already made it clear that the Samaritans are not Ἰουδαῖοι, nor are they descended in any way from the Ἰουδαῖοι. Instead, even when the Ἰουδαῖοι are well off, they do not claim to be Ἰουδαῖοι but rather Israelites descended from Joseph. Of course, scholars assuming Israelites and Ἰουδαῖοι are synonymous would naturally miss the distinction between the Samaritans claiming to be descended from Joseph and identity as Ἰουδαῖοι, who were not putatively descended from Joseph that the Samaritans are Jews but rebellious in their views ....” Feldman thus manages to recognize the distinction—even the Josephan limitation of “Jew” to those from Judah—only to ignore it. For more on Alexander and the Samaritans, see Reinhard Pummer, “Alexander und die Samaritaner nach Josephus und nach samaritanischen Quellen,” in Frey et al., Die Samaritaner und die Bibel, 157–180.

306 Josephus’ account of a debate between Ἰουδαῖοι and Samaritans in Alexandria in A.J. 13.74–79 is also of interest to this discussion and further reinforces the distinctions made here.
but Judah.\textsuperscript{307} Given Josephus’ explanation that Samaritans are not in any way Ἰουδαῖοι, how then do we reconcile the association of “apostates from the nation of the Ἰουδαῖοι” with Shechem?

The answer is provided at the end of the passage, where Josephus clarifies his first comment:

> If anyone were accused by those of Jerusalem of having eaten things common, or of having broken the Sabbath, or of any other crime of the like nature, he fled away to the Shechemites and said that he was accused unjustly. (A.J. 11.346–47)

Josephus clarifies that the “apostates from the nation of the Ἰουδαῖοι” flee to and live among the Shechemites, who are distinguished from the Ἰουδαῖοι fleeing to them. Josephus thus does not say (as some scholars assert) that Samaritans are “apostate Ἰουδαῖοι” or that they abandoned “true Judaism” for another type of Judaism.\textsuperscript{308} He regards them as apostates or impostors (or some combination of both),\textsuperscript{309} but of Israel, not of the Ἰουδαῖοι—rather, Josephus takes great pains to clarify that neither the Ἰουδαῖοι nor the Samaritans themselves identify the

\textsuperscript{307} E.g., Spilsbury, \textit{Image of the Jew}, 39 n. 126, “It should be noted, however, that the distinction [between ‘Hebrews’ and ‘Jews’] is one which Josephus himself categorically rejects (through the narrative agency of Alexander). He also nowhere else betrays any knowledge of such a distinction.” \textit{Pace} Spilsbury, Alexander upholds rather than rejects the Samaritans’ distinction between “Hebrews” and “Jews”; what he rejects is their request to receive the benefits of the Ἰουδαῖοι despite not being Ἰουδαῖοι. In addition, as the remainder of this section demonstrates, Josephus upholds the distinction between Samaritan Ἑβραῖοι and Ἰουδαῖοι (who may or may not be Ἑβραῖοι) throughout his literary corpus. Spilsbury is correct in protesting a strong distinction between Ἰουδαῖοι and Ἑβραῖοι as though they were antagonistic terms, but he is mistaken in treating them as fundamentally synonymous.


\textsuperscript{309} This does not, however, support the argument of Murray, "Jews, Hebrews," 199, that “Hebrews” should be understood in opposition to “Jews,” with the former group understood as “those who were hostile to Jerusalem and the temple might appropriately be called ‘Hebrews’, though a qualifier such as ‘dissenting’ is probably needed.” Murray suggests that the Samaritans, the Dead Sea Scroll sect, and the community behind the New Testament book of Hebrews could all fit in this category but provides no real evidence for such an application of the term. Instead, an understanding of the term as essentially linguistic, which he refers to as a “disadvantage” (199) for his theory, explains the data fully without having to ignore the sundry times in which the term is applied to Jerusalem-supporting Ἰουδαῖοι.
Samaritans as Ἰουδαῖοι. One additional example further illustrates this point. In recounting Hyrcanus’ conquest of the Samaritans and Idumaeans, Josephus says that Hyrcanus, “permitted the Idumaeans to stay in their country if they would be circumcised and consent to use the laws of the Ἰουδαῖοι…. And they have been Ἰουδαῖοι ever since” (A.J. 13.257–258). But of the Samaritans he makes no such statement; in contrast to the Idumaeans, they did not become Ἰουδαῖοι but rather remained “the nation of the Cutheans” (13.255). For all his anti-Samaritan biases and inaccuracies, Josephus does appear to be correct that Samaritans were not regarded as Ἰουδαῖοι, though they did identify themselves as Israelites, as will be discussed more fully in the next chapter. Samaritans can, however, be properly called Ἑβραῖοι, despite not being Ἰουδαῖοι, illustrating the subtle difference between the terms.

The other five ambiguous uses of Ἑβραῖος in Josephus appear to refer to Ἰουδαῖοι, with three of the five referring to Ἰουδαῖοι living in Judaea. So, in Josephus, when its meaning can be clearly discerned, Ἑβραῖος has three possible referents: 1) ancient (biblical) ancestors of the

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310 Ernest Boyd Whaley, “Samaria and the Samaritans in Josephus’s ‘Antiquities’ 1–11,” (PhD diss., Emory University, 1989), ii: “They were viewed by him as faithful Hebrews and yet as non-Judean. Thus, they were not viewed as a sect of the Jews in the same sense that Pharisees were, but were placed by Josephus under the more inclusive label Hebrews.”


Ἰουδαῖοι, 2) Samaritans, 3) Ἱουδαῖοι (from the “Hebrew nation” or living in Judaea/Syria). The one thing these groups have in common is language; they are all Semitic (Hebrew/Aramaic) speakers or readers as opposed to Greek speakers/readers.313 Based on these data, it appears that, at least in Josephus, Ἑβραῖος functions as a national linguistic term akin to Ἑλληνη, referencing the native tongue of the “Hebrew nation” and those associated with it, and when used of contemporary people(s), the term tends to refer to those Ἱουδαῖοι (or Samaritans) still living in Palestine and thus Semitic speakers or readers.

Ἑβραῖος in Other Early Jewish Sources

The data outside Josephus also support this conclusion. Philo, for example, uses Ἑβραῖος fifty-nine times, of which thirty-six refer to biblical people group (nearly all from the Exodus story),314 twenty-two have a linguistic referent (e.g. “in the native language of the Hebrews”),315 and one provides an etymological meaning of the word “Hebrew” itself.316 The only people Philo calls Ἑβραῖοι after the Conquest are the Hebrews who came from Jerusalem to translate the Torah into Greek for Ptolemy Philadelphus (Mos. 2.32), which “probably indicates that they


314 Migr. 20; Heir. 128; Fug. 168; Mut. 117; Abr. 251; Ios. 42, 50, 104, 203; Mos. 1.15, 105, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 179, 180, 216, 218, 243, 252, 263, 276, 278, 284, 288, 289, 295, 305, 311; 2.32; Virt. 34, 35; QE 1, 2.2.  

315 Plant. 169; Sobr. 45; Conf. 68, 129, 130; Migr. 13; Congr. 37, 40, 42; Mut. 71, Somn. 1.58; 2.250; Abr. 17, 27, 28, 57; Ios. 28; Decal. 159; Spec. 2.41, 86, 145; Virt. 34.  

316 Migr. 20.
were speakers of Hebrew.\textsuperscript{317} Philo also twice uses Ἑβραϊκός, each time referring to the Hebrew language.\textsuperscript{318} Notably, Philo—who was a Greek speaker apparently lacking facility with Hebrew or Aramaic—never refers to himself as a Ἑβραῖος.\textsuperscript{319} To summarize, in Philo, the word Ἑβραῖος refers exclusively to Hebrew (or Aramaic) speakers or readers.\textsuperscript{320}

Likewise, the three occurrences of the word in 2 Maccabees (7:31; 11:13; 15:37) are in contexts differentiating Ἑβραῖοι from Greek-speaking foreigners, while the eight occasions of the term (and cognates) in 4 Maccabees likewise refer either directly to the language (Ἑβραῖοι, 12:7; 16:15) or to faithful Ἰουδαῖοι being persecuted for continuing to embrace “the Hebrew way of life” (τὴν Ἑβραΐδιν πολιτείαν, 17:9; cf. 4:11; 5:2; 8:2; 9:6; 9:18), as opposed to the Hellenism being forced upon them by Antiochus. Again, the connection with the language (and its ties to the ancient tradition) is central to the context in which the term is being used. The single use of Ἑβραϊστι in Ben Sira (1:20) likewise refers to the language.

In the pseudepigrapha, the term again refers to the language or the people who speak or read the language (typically in the patriarchal period).\textsuperscript{321} A Hebrew fragment of T. Naphtali refers to “seventy languages” being taught to the “seventy families,” while “the holy language,

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{318} \textit{Mos}. 1.218, 285.
\item \textsuperscript{319} Harvey, \textit{True Israel}, 124; cf. also Runia, "Philonic Nomenclature," 15. For an overview of the debate over whether Philo knew Hebrew, see Valentin Nikiprowetzky, \textit{Le commentaire de l'Écriture chez Philon d'Alexandrie: Son caractère et sa portée; Observations philologiques}, ALGHJ 11 (Leiden: Brill, 1977), 50–96.
\item \textsuperscript{320} Cf. Harvey, \textit{True Israel}, 124.
\item \textsuperscript{321} Space will not permit addressing the totality of the evidence pertaining to this question within early Jewish pseudepigrapha, which is significantly complicated by the uncertain dating and provenance of so much of that body of literature. For a fuller discussion of those issues and the terms Ἰσραήλ and Ἰουδαῖοι in the pseudepigrapha, see chapter 8 below.
\end{itemize}
the Hebrew language” is passed down from Shem and Eber to Abraham (8:6). The Testament of Joseph uses the term four times, all in reference to the patriarch, his land, or his God. The Testament of Solomon uses Ἑβραῖος twice, each of “the language of the Hebrews” (T. Sol. A 6:8; 14:7). The Letter of Aristeas talks of Ἰουδαῖοι translating the Torah from the Ἑβραῖκός language into Greek—again cognates of “Hebrew” specifically refer to language.

The book of Jubilees uses the term five times, including the core statement, “The angel that speaks to Moses, said to him: ‘I taught Abraham the Hebrew tongue, which from the beginning of creation all lands spoke’” (Jub. 12:26), after which Abraham spends six months studying books in Hebrew. Again the meaning of the word throughout Jubilees centers on the language—perhaps even suggesting that the patriarchs were Ἑβραῖος because they spoke Hebrew, the primeval language, the language of the Torah, as suggested by Harvey: “If the idea that Abram and Joseph spoke ‘Hebrew’ depends on the passages where they are named Ἑβραῖοι then the identification of name and language was well established before the writing of Jubilees.”

Harvey rightly rejects Mary Gray’s suggestion that “writers in the last two centuries B.C. may have adopted the name “Hebrews” for the Jews and their language because of an archaizing tendency and the desire to be called by the title of the first patriarch.” If anything, Gray gets it


323 T. Joseph, 12:2, 3; 13:1, 3.

324 Cf. Harvey, True Israel, 116.

325 Harvey, True Israel, 116.

backwards, as Ἑβραῖοι is likely the more ancient term, associated with the language of the people, while Ἰουδαῖοι is the relative latecomer on the scene, used after the Babylonian Exile to refer to those from the kingdom of Judah. This connection of the language with the Torah and the ancestral traditions of the Ἰουδαῖοι suggests that those who continued to speak Hebrew—especially in the diaspora—did so because they were especially traditional or conservative towards their heritage.327

If Ἑβραῖος refers to Hebrew (or Aramaic) speakers/readers, one would expect to find the term only rarely used in contexts exclusively involving Hebrew/Aramaic speakers, since it would not function to differentiate parties. As it turns out, this is precisely what we find among the Dead Sea Scrolls, where the term is completely absent. The absence may be due to the fragmentary nature of the texts, but given the extent of the corpus, the complete lack of the term in the scrolls is significant and, as Harvey observes, “cannot be dismissed as accidental loss.”328 One letter from Soumaios (possibly Bar Kochba) found at Nahal Hever, however, mentions that it is written ελληνιστι (in Greek) because “a [des]ire has not be[en] found to w[ri]te in Hebrew” (εβραιστι),329 with cognates of “Hebrew” again referring to the language. Tomson recognizes the same pattern in rabbinic literature also, concluding, “In rabbinic literature, it has a linguistic sense only.”330

327 Cf. n. 346 and n. 347 below; Harvey, True Israel, 146, 270–71.
328 Harvey, True Israel, 120.
Ἑβραῖος in the New Testament

This sense continues in the New Testament as well. The one time Acts uses Ἑβραῖος (6:1), it occurs in parallel with Ἑλληνιστής, distinguishing between the Hebrew (Aramaic?) speaking members of the church and the Greek-speaking members lacking facility in a Semitic tongue. Acts 9:29 intimates that this distinction between “Hebrews” and “Hellenists” existed not only within the Jewish Christian community of Palestine, but also among the Jews themselves. Acts also uses the adjective ἑβραῖς three times (21:40; 22:2; 26:14), each referencing someone speaking “in the Hebrew [Aramaic?] dialect.” Similarly, Ἑβραῖστι appears in five times in the Gospel of John (5:2; 19:13, 17, 20; 20:16) and Revelation twice (9:11; 16:16), each with reference to the language. This accords with the conclusion of D. Beatty and Philip Davies:

[Hebrew] is clearly not the same as Israelite…. Hebrew in the New Testament mostly designates a language … it designates a member of a linguistic community or population. A Hebrew, we maintain, is a speaker of the language that is called Hebrew in the New Testament, namely Aramaic.

Finally, Paul uses Ἑβραῖος on two occasions (2 Cor 11:22; Phil 3:5), each time as a way of establishing his authority relative to competing teachers and apostles. What Paul means in these cases has long been a matter of dispute, but on the basis of the data from the other literature under consideration, the most natural interpretation of Paul’s statements is that he is claiming facility in Aramaic/Hebrew. In this context, Paul’s claim to be Ἑβραῖος ἐξ Ἑβραίων is

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331 In addition to the uses of Ἑβραῖος addressed here,
333 Beattie and Davies, "What Does Hebrew Mean?," 73.
especially intriguing, Paul claims not only to be a Semitic speaker, but a native speaker born to parents who spoke a Semitic language.\(^{335}\) Beattie and Davies agree, “There is no reason to suppose [Hebrew] has a different meaning in Paul’s words than in any other New Testament passage. He is therefore designating himself to the Philippians as an Aramaic speaker from an Aramaic-speaking family.”\(^ {336}\)

Because of confusion on this point, many interpreters have misinterpreted “Hebrew of Hebrews” as a superlative, as though the phrase indicated “that there was no non-Jewish blood in his veins,”\(^ {337}\) that he was somehow connected to Palestine,\(^ {338}\) or that he was in some other way among the “elite of his race,”\(^ {339}\) “a Jew’s Jew.”\(^ {340}\) On the contrary, in both passages, Paul indicates his ancestry and birth heritage through other terms. But by claiming to be a Hebrew, Paul claims that he can read the Torah in its original language (and converse in Jesus’ native tongue) just like his opponents, giving him no less authority as an interpreter of Torah than they possessed.


\(^ {336}\) Beattie and Davies, "What Does Hebrew Mean?," 73.

\(^ {337}\) Hawthorne and Martin, Philippians, 185.

\(^ {338}\) E.g., Willem Cornelis van Unnik, Tarsus or Jerusalem? The City of Paul's Youth, trans. G. Ogg (London: Epworth, 1962), 46–47.

\(^ {339}\) Hawthorne and Martin, Philippians, 185.

Some previous arguments against understanding Paul’s Ἑβραῖος as a claim about the language have pointed to epigraphic data to argue that Ἑβραῖος must be a synonym with Ἰουδαῖος without reference to language.341 Harvey, for example, argues that since “other synagogue inscriptions have the names of geographical regions, family groups, and sectarian or political groups,” those inscriptions (like at Corinth and Rome) that witness a “synagogue of the Hebrews” are unlikely to refer to language.342 But this gets things precisely backwards. First of all, inasmuch as the inscriptions themselves do not clearly define the term, it is methodologically backwards to use them to judge the meaning of the term in literary texts that provide more context from which to construe meaning than do the inscriptions. That is, these inscriptions should be read in light of the combined witness of the other, less ambiguous textual evidence of the period, which suggest that the term Ἑβραῖος was consistently used of Semitic speakers.343

Secondly, even without recourse to literary evidence, given that the other synagogues used whatever label most distinguished them from other Ἰουδαῖοι, it is hard to imagine that the inscriptions referencing “Hebrews” were not also referencing the distinctive aspect of the synagogue, and it is difficult to imagine what that would be if not language—especially given the

341 Moule, "Who Were the Hellenists," 100, notes that another common objection to a linguistic sense is that Paul was clearly a Greek speaker, an argument that he notes oddly ignores the probability that Paul was claiming multilingual facility. See, for example, Marcel Simon, St. Stephen and the Hellenists in the Primitive Church (London: Longmans, Green, 1958), 10.


343 As properly done in this case by Gutbrod, TDNT 3:274.
literary evidence of how the word tended to have precisely that function in the literature of this period. ³⁴⁴ It therefore appears most probable that these “synagogues of the Hebrews” were indeed distinguished by the fact that they remained synagogues of Semitic speakers/readers, with the scriptures read in Hebrew rather than Greek. These inscriptions are not evidence against the possibility that Paul claims facility in Hebrew; on the contrary, they are evidence that some conservative Ἰουδαῖοι continued to use Hebrew in the diaspora, a fact that should surprise no one.³⁴⁵

**Conclusions: Ἑβραῖος**

On the basis of the textual evidence that for Greek speakers of the Second Temple period, it can thus be concluded that Ἑβραῖος, while largely co-extensive with Ἰουδαῖος or Ἰσραηλίτης, is not synonymous with either term but rather serves as a descriptor for those associated with the traditional tongue of the “Hebrew nation.”³⁴⁶ When not referring to biblical figures, this term was

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³⁴⁵ This of course does not prove that Paul actually had facility in Hebrew (or Aramaic), only that he claimed to have such facility. I see little reason to question the veracity of his claim, but absent other evidence, it remains just that—a claim. For an argument that Paul’s language betrays a “trend of thought [that] is sometimes Aramaic,” see Willem Cornelis van Unnik, “Aramaisms in Paul,” in Sparsa Collecta: The Collected Essays of W. C. van Unnik: Part One: Evangelia, Paulina, Acta, eds. William Foxwell Albright and C. S. Mann, NovTSup 29 (Leiden: Brill, 1973), 129–143 (142).

³⁴⁶ Beattie and Davies, “What Does Hebrew Mean?,” 81. It is worth noting that some slippage would be expected with such a term in much the same way a modern term like “Hispanic,” which more properly refers to a Spanish speaker, is sometimes used to refer to someone who (whether due to appearance, ancestry, or some other factor) is associated with a Spanish-speaking community, though not a Spanish speaker him/herself. A second-generation individual in a new country, for example, may not be much of a Spanish speaker but would still often be identified as a “Hispanic.” Similarly, “Hebrew” appears to serve the purpose of distinguishing Semitic speakers but was almost certainly used in some cases to mark those associated with Semitic speakers, even if the figures being labeled did not themselves speak a Semitic tongue. Eventually, as noted by Beattie and Davies, “the adjective Hebrew became, in European languages, a surrogate for Jewish,” likely because Jewish communities typically retained their Semitic-speaking and reading roots (“What Does Hebrew Mean?,” 73–74). But this was not until after our period, “Nevertheless, Hebrew did not become synonymous with Jew until later and then, as we have argued, through the agency of Greek speakers, predominantly if not exclusively Christian” (“What Does Hebrew Mean?,” 81).
most typically used of those Ἰουδαίοι who remained Semitic speakers, typically but not limited to those living in Palestine. Not all Ἰουδαίοι were Ἑβραῖοι, as most Ἰουδαίοι in the diaspora were Hellenes rather than Ἑβραῖοι. Likewise, not all Ἑβραῖοι were Ἰουδαίοι, as the Samaritans are an example of the former but not the latter.

Since it required effort to retain one’s ancestral language where Greek was the lingua franca, Ἑβραῖοι in the diaspora would typically have been cultural conservatives, that is, especially pious and less assimilated Ἰουδαίοι (or Samaritans), holding more tightly to all aspects of their ancestral identity than Hellenic Ἰουδαίοι and marking themselves by continued adherence to the “holy tongue” (cf. Jubilees 12:26) of their ancestors. Some indications of the importance pious Yehudim placed on retaining faculty in Hebrew (or, as it is called in this case “Judaean”) can be seen as early as Ezra-Nehemiah (esp. Neh 13:24), and the fact that the bulk of the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Mishnah were written in Hebrew further supports the connection between continued use of the sacred tongue and cultural/religious traditionalists.

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347 Pace Harvey, True Israel, 270.

348 Harvey is therefore correct in his observation that “‘Hebrew’ was conventionally associated with traditionalism or conservatism” (True Israel, 146), although he does not seem to recognize the mechanism for this association in the word’s consistent meaning of Hebrew/Aramaic speaker.

349 John Barclay is of course correct that the level of acculturation with respect to Jews knowing Greek does not necessarily match levels of assimilation to Greek culture (Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora, 92–102, esp. 96). But when the question is turned the other way around—whether or not Hellenistic Jews retain and continue to use their own distinctive language—there can be little doubt that continued use of the “holy tongue” certainly suggests a higher level of identification with the group and less assimilation to the wider Greek culture.


351 Interestingly, although Ἑβραῖος is a linguistic term in the Second Temple period, it is never a linguistic term in the Hebrew Bible, instead serving as an ethnonym or in the laws pertaining to slaves. For what we now call the Hebrew language, the Hebrew Bible uses יהודית. See Beattie and Davies, "What Does Hebrew Mean?,” 75–77.
Moving beyond the period under discussion, this linguistic meaning seems to have persisted among Rabbinic writings, though later gentile Christians appear to have begun using the term as a synonym for Jew, even when the person in question (such as Philo or Stephen) had not been a Semitic speaker.\textsuperscript{352} This does not, however, invalidate the linguistic sense the term had previously carried; indeed, it is more likely that Eusebius and his contemporaries identified Hebrew speakers with Jews and imagined these Jews of the past as having been Semitic speakers.\textsuperscript{353}

\textsuperscript{352} E.g., Eusebius, \textit{H. E.} 2.4.2.

\textsuperscript{353} Beattie and Davies, "What Does Hebrew Mean?," 82, "While Semitic speakers were aware that Hebrew and Jewish were not synonymous (rather, they were largely co-extensive), [later] Greek-speakers, and especially Christians for whom Judaism was of especial significance, equated Jews with Hebrews and the Jewish language with Hebrew."
PART II: THE CONSTRUCTION OF ISRAEL AND RESTORATION ESCHATOLOGY
CHAPTER 3: ISRAEL, JUDAH, AND RESTORATION ESCHATOLOGY

The first chapter showed that Josephus distinguishes between the terms Ἰσραήλ and Ἰουδαῖος in a manner not often followed in modern scholarship. That is not to say, however, that Josephus’ explanation of the transition from Israel to “the Jews” has been entirely ignored in the history of scholarship. On the contrary, Josephus’ explanation about the origins of the term Ἰουδαῖος was among the primary reasons Wilhelm de Wette began two centuries ago to distinguish postexilic Judentum from the preexilic Hebraismus, a distinction preserved by Julius Wellhausen and thereby retaining significant influence in studies of Judaism and the Hebrew Bible.354

Unfortunately, this distinction was tied to a pejorative picture in which the “Hebraic” religion and people of ancient Israel were depicted as vital, cultic, and prophetic, whereas postexilic (that is, post-Ezra) Judentum was seen as having devolved into a dead, rigid legalism in a community lacking the völkisch ties of ethnic and political unity,355 which were especially


emphasized in increasingly nationalistic pre-World War II German theology. Wellhausen further distinguished between the *Judentum* of the early post-exilic period and the *Judaismus* of the last two centuries BCE, giving rise to the problematic terms *Spätjudentum* and “Late Judaism,” implying that legitimate Judaism as an heir to ancient Israel ended with the birth of Christianity. Mainstream scholarship has thankfully moved away from such anti-Jewish perspectives, though there is no denying that there were many significant differences between the communities and institutions of ancient Israel and those of the Jews in the Persian and Graeco-Roman periods.

Nevertheless, even the typical distinction between pre- and postexilic periods leaves aside the fact that although the Babylonian exile of Jerusalem and its immediate surroundings tends to

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356 For example, note the centrality of commitment to one’s *Völk* in the theology of Adolf Schlatter, as shown in James E. McNutt, “A Very Damning Truth: Walter Grundmann, Adolf Schlatter, and Susannah Heschel’s The Aryan Jesus,” *HTR* 105, no. 3 (2012): 280–301 (8).

357 Julius Wellhausen, “Israel und das Judentum,” in *Prolegomena zur Geschichte Israels*, 3rd ed. (Berlin: Reimer, 1886), 370–431; “Das Gesetz,” in *Israelitische und jüdische Geschichte* (Berlin: Reimer, 1958), 177–187. There have been other attempts to further subdivide the transition from “Hebraism” and “Judaism,” such as the idea of Lothar Perlitt, *Deuteronomium-Studien* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1994), 247–260 that “Deuteronomism” was a transitional stage between the two.

358 For more on these problematic terms and the somewhat less problematic replacement “early Judaism” see Nickelsburg, and Kraft, “Early Judaism,” 1–26 and the material cited there. For the importance of the division between early *Hebraismus* from *Spätjudentum* within German anti-Semitic theology, see Anders Gerdmar, *Roots of Theological Anti-Semitism: German Biblical Interpretation and the Jews, from Herder and Semler to Kittel and Bultmann*, SJHC 20 (Leiden: Brill, 2009), esp. 147–160, 183–88.

get the vast majority of scholarly attention, the period of transformation between ancient Israel and “postexilic” communities was not a single massive event (“the exile”) but a multi-century period involving numerous deportations and migrations, as Ingrid Hjelm explains:

While several exiles and population displacements occurred in Palestine since the Assyrian encroachments in the region from the mid eighth century BCE and reiterated by Babylonian and Persian as well as Ptolemaic rulers, only one exile has aroused scholarly interest, namely that from Jerusalem in 587 BCE. While several returns occurred throughout these centuries, the return to Jerusalem under Cyrus has been the subject of investigation. In this picture, the Babylonian exile was the interim, from which Jerusalem rose to take on leadership anew and supplant the people who had remained in the land(s).

Accordingly, the Assyrian exile is widely ignored in studies of early Judaism, New Testament, or Christian origins, owing largely to a prevailing presumption that northern Israel

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360 Thus the terms “preexilic” and “postexilic” (and the periodization of history they represent) are imprecise at best and inaccurate at worst, implying a much cleaner and more distinct transition than the historical reality. See the critiques of Robert P. Carroll, “Exile! What Exile? Deportation and the Discourses of Diaspora,” in Leading Captivity Captive: "The Exile" as History and Ideology, ed. Lester Grabbe (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1998), 62–79 (69–79); Philip R. Davies, “Exile? What Exile? Whose Exile?” in Grabbe, Leading Captivity Captive, 128–138 (132–38), to the effect that to use such terminology is to privilege the mythical world created by the biblical writers for whom the Babylonian exile takes special importance. For further criticism of the use of the term “exile” and the related term “diaspora,” see Jörn Kiefer, Exil und Diaspora: Begrifflichkeit und Deutungen im antiken Judentum und in der hebräischen Bibel, ABG 19 (Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2005), 25–106, esp. 42–47. Although Kiefer is correct that these terms are problematic, the paradigms they represent are unavoidable in the literature, so this study will not avoid their use.


was so thoroughly destroyed and scattered by the Assyrians that Judah was the sole remnant of Israel.363 The primary lasting consequence of the Assyrian deportations is typically understood to be the narrowing of “Israel” to the southern Judahites, with the terms “Israelite” and “Jew” thereby becoming synonymous in the postexilic period, a consensus view summarized by John Collins as follows:

In biblical tradition, “Israel” is the union of tribes descended from the twelve sons of Jacob. For a period of some two hundred years it had a narrower connotation, referring to the northern kingdom of Israel as opposed to the southern kingdom of Judah. After the fall of the Northern Kingdom, however, the Judeans laid claim to the heritage of all Israel.364

This narrative has been widely assumed despite the fact that, as Philip Davies notes, “There is practically no non-biblical evidence before the Greco-Roman period that Judaeans did call themselves ‘Israel.’”365 But even Davies takes it for granted that the Judaeans/Jews called themselves Israel during the Graeco-Roman period and reads the biblical sources as evidence that exilic and postexilic Yehudim penned these biblical documents to stake their claim as the exclusive heirs of the heritage and title of Israel. But this conclusion rests on the presumption that the northern Israelites were no longer in view for the biblical writers, who therefore

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364 John J. Collins, “The Construction of Israel in the Sectarian Rule Books,” in Theory of Israel, vol. 1 of Judaism in Late Antiquity Part Five: The Judaism of Qumran: A Systematic Reading of the Dead Sea Scrolls, eds. Alan J. Avery-Peck, Jacob Neusner, and Bruce Chilton (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 25–42 (25); cf. also Philip R. Davies, The Origins of Biblical Israel, LHBOTS 485 (London: T&T Clark, 2007), 100; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, Romans, AB 33 (New York: Doubleday, 1993), 545; Bloch, “Israelite, juif, hébreu,” 16. Similarly, Moo, Romans, 561 n. 30: “Ἰουδαῖος (Heb. ייִדְוָי) originally denoted a person of the tribe of Judah, or of the southern kingdom generally. But after the Exile, when Judah was all that was left of historical Israel, the name was applied to any member of the Israelite nation.” See also the discussions in Grabbe, “Israel's Historical Reality,” esp. 12–14, 30–31.

365 Davies, Origins, 1. Grabbe, “Israel's Historical Reality,” 11–13, observes that there is no evidence that “Israel” ever refers to Jews in Graeco-Roman sources until at least the turn of the Common Era.
appropriated the term “Israel,” applying it to the Judahites/Jews. But this presumption is problematic on two counts, first that no northerners remained to lay claim to the heritage of Israel themselves and second that northern Israel had passed out of the frame of consciousness of the Judahite writers and editors such that the term “Israel” could be transferred exclusively to the Yehudim. Instead, the concepts of Israel and Israelite identity were in flux and the subject of competition far longer than most seem to appreciate.

Samarians/Samaritans: The Other Israelites

The first problem is that a competing Israel claiming descent from the northern tribes of Joseph (Ephraim and Manasseh) remained a significant presence throughout the Second Temple period: the Samarians/Samaritans, who worshiped YHWH and had their cultic center on Mt. Gerizim. The significance of these rival Israelites has typically been overlooked due to the

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367 A note on nomenclature is in order at this point, as “Samaritan” is a term largely shunned by the Samaritans themselves, who prefer to call themselves Israelites, Samaritans, or שָמָרִים (“guardians” [of the Torah]). See Knoppers, Jews and Samaritans, 15–16. Moreover, as pointed out by Jan Dušek, Aramaic and Hebrew Inscriptions from Mt. Gerizim and Samaria between Antiochus III and Antiochus IV Epiphanes, CHANE 54 (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 71, “Samaritan” technically refers to a citizen of the third-century BCE Seleucid province of Σαμαρία without regard to whether those citizens were Yahwists. There is also the danger of anachronism since the term “Samaritan” also refers to a modern people embracing the Samaritan Pentateuch and the special sanctity and centrality of Mt. Gerizim, while much of the period under investigation in this study predate the full development of what might be called classical Samaritanism. In this respect, the term shares similar problems with “Christian” or “Jew.” As a result, when I refer to this people in the pre-Roman period, I will use the term “Samarian,” avoiding “proto-Samaritan” or “pre-Samaritan” partly to circumvent “the erroneous assumption that Yhwh worship was a relatively late development or arrival in Samaria” (Knoppers, Jews and Samaritans, 17). But when referring to the more developed and familiar community of the Roman period, I will use the term “Samaritan,” in keeping with the typical use of this term for the Roman-era people in the New Testament and secondary literature. Note, however, the objection of Etienne Nodet, “Israelites, Samaritans, Temples, Jews,” in Zsengellér, Samaria, Samaritans, Samaritans, 121–171 (123), that “if the Samaritans were [derived from] ancient Israelites, such a distinction [between Samarian and Samaritan] becomes useless.”

presumption that “Israelite” is synonymous with “Jew” (assuming the conclusion) and a widespread scholarly acceptance of Jewish polemics dismissing Samaritan claims to be heirs of the northern Israelites. Thus most scholars have regarded the Samaritans not as a distinct people but rather as a derivative of Judaism having arisen sometime between the fifth and first centuries BCE. Frank Moore Cross, for example, concludes, “Samaritanism in the form that we find it in the Roman Age and later is not a survival of old Israelite religion, pure or syncretistic, but rather is essentially a sectarian form of Judaism.”

The question of Samaritan origins has been reopened in recent years, however, as scholarship has increasingly moved away from the supposition (based on a particular reading of the polemic in 2 Kgs 17) that the Samaritans were not descended from Israelites but rather from

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foreign transplants who eventually came to worship YHWH. Instead, it is now widely recognized that the northern Israelites did not simply vanish as was long assumed. Both the biblical record and the material evidence suggest that although many Israelites were deported (particularly in the northern Transjordan and Galilee) and others seem to have fled south to Judah, many northerners survived the Assyrian onslaught and remained in the land, particularly in the central regions of the hill country of Ephraim and Manasseh. And although


372 See Israel Finkelstein, The Forgotten Kingdom: The Archaeology and History of Northern Israel, ANEM 5 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2013), 153–55; Israel Finkelstein and Neil Asher Silberman, “Temple and Dynasty: Hezekiah, the Remaking of Judah and the Rise of the Pan-Israelite Ideology,” JSOT 30, no. 3 (2006): 259–285; Davies, In Search of ‘Ancient Israel,’ 69–70; Barmash, “Nexus.” On the other hand, Nadav Na'aman, “When and How Did Jerusalem Become a Great City? The Rise of Jerusalem as Judah's Premier City in the Eighth-Seventh Centuries BCE,” BASOR 347 (2007): 21–56, cautions that the number of northern refugees fleeing to Judah was likely not as large as often assumed. Moreover, Sennacherib’s later invasion of Judah would surely have had a significant impact on those who did flee south. On Sennacherib’s invasions of Judah, see Kiefer, Exil und Diaspora, 64–67, though he does not mention the impact this process would have had on any northern refugees. The settlement of Israelite groups in Judah in the wake of the northern kingdom’s destruction may have brought much of the northern biblical material with it, engendering a pan-Israelite sentiment in Judah (Finkelstein, Forgotten Kingdom, 155).

the Assyrians did import other peoples into the region, there is no indication of a dramatic shift in material culture in the Samarian hill country, suggesting that “of those who resided in the district of Samerina and Magiddu … the clear majority were [still] Israelites.”374 Perhaps as a result, the region around Samaria seems to have recovered more quickly from the Assyrian campaigns than Judah did from either the Assyrian or Babylonian invasions, and whereas much of Judah experienced massive destruction and depopulation during the Babylonian conquests of 598 and 587/86 BCE,375 the northern region seems not to have undergone significant destruction in this period.376 Instead, Samaria continued to grow, becoming “a force to be reckoned with in the southern Levant … larger, more populous, and wealthier than its neighbor to the immediate south.”377

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374 Knoppers, Jews and Samaritans, 42.


377 Knoppers, Jews and Samaritans, 2. See also Ingrid Hjelm, Jerusalem's Rise to Sovereignty: Zion and Gerizim in Competition, JSOTSup 404 (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 165–66; “Samaritans: History and Tradition in
The best conclusion therefore seems to be that the postexilic Samarians/Samaritans were derived from the remnant of the Israelites, Canaanites, and others remaining in the land after the Assyrian conquests of the eighth century BCE, though the peoples imported by the Assyrians were almost certainly incorporated among the natives over time as well. Moreover, epigraphic and iconographic evidence and the prevalence of names featuring the theophoric Yah/Yahu attest to Yahwism in the region of Samaria/Shechem from the ninth through the fifth century BCE, and archaeological evidence from Mt. Gerizim has indicated that a Yahwistic cult center existed in that place at least as early as the mid-fifth century BCE. Thus although the Samaritan cultus was surely influenced by that of Judah to the south, Samarian/Samaritan Yahwism was not merely a derivative of Judaism but was itself a continuation of an earlier Israelite legacy and surely exercised its own influence on Jewish tradition and cultus. Upon the return of Jews

378 Yitzhak Magen, “The Dating of the First Phase of the Samaritan Temple on Mount Gerizim in Light of the Archaeological Evidence,” in Judah and the Judeans in the Fourth Century B.C.E., eds. Oded Lipschits, Gary N. Knoppers, and Rainer Albertz (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2007), 157–211 (187): “During the Persian period, there were two provinces in these areas: Samaria and Judea. The former was composed of the Israelite remnant and the peoples brought by the Assyrians. The majority of Benjamin and Judah, on the other hand, were sent into exile in Babylonia.” Although it is likely that the Assyrians initially settled outsiders in the land in separate enclaves to serve as Assyrian outposts on the frontier, as suggested by Mario Liverani, “The Ideology of the Assyrian Empire,” in Power and Propaganda: A Symposium on Ancient Empires, ed. Mogens Trolle Larsen (Copenhagen: Akademisk, 1979), 297–317; “The Growth of the Assyrian Empire in the Habur/Middle Euphrates Area: A New Paradigm,” SAAB 2, no. 2 (1988): 81–98; and Zertal, “The Province of Samaria,” 404, I find it implausible that these newcomers were not eventually absorbed by the natives of the land.

379 See the discussion in Hjelm, Jerusalem's Rise, 169–171.


381 Hjelm, “Samaritans: History and Tradition,” 181: “We simply have to look for other scenarios and most likely for models of cooperation between Samaritans and Jews.” On the difficulties of Nehemiah with respect to the ties and divisions between the Yehudim and others claiming Israelite heritage, see Gary N. Knoppers, “Nehemiah and
from Babylon, there appear to have been some pan-Israelite attempts to unite this northern remnant with the Jewish returnees, leading to a common Torah, very similar cultic practices, and perhaps to the inclusion of so many northern traditions in the Jewish Bible. But such union ultimately proved unsustainable, especially after the destruction of the temple on Mt. Gerizim by John Hyrcanus I, and the distinction between Jews and Samaritans persisted and indeed deepened with the advent of the Common Era. The Samaritans were thus distinct from but closely related to the Jews, with both groups claiming Israelite identity.

Nevertheless, although their descent (largely) from ancient Israel is now widely acknowledged, the fact that the Samaritans claimed Israelite identity and shared common traditions with their neighbors to the south (not to mention Jews of the diaspora) has led many scholars still to regard the Samaritans as a derivative of “Judaism,” assuming that the Samaritans had effectively been Jews before breaking away from the Jewish mainstream. The debate therefore still tends to center on when that final schism, after which one can speak of “Samaritans” and “Jews” as distinct groups, took place. Stefan Schorch, for example, explains:

> Up to a certain point, the pre-Samaritans referred to and were regarded as part of a social, religious and ethnic framework that was common to Second Temple Judaism in general. From that point onward, however, the Samaritans became an independent group, and not just the population of Samaria but Samaritans proper, insofar as they defined themselves apart from Judaism in general within the boundaries of their own framework.

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382 The movement led by Ezra may have been one example; see Chapter 5 below.


Thus although the Samarian population derived to a significant degree from preexilic Israel, this population should be regarded as Jews prior to a particular moment of schism, after which the two distinct communities formed. But this view is essentially based on the presumption that any Yahwist or Torah-based community in the postexilic period is properly called “Jewish,” a presumption that as, Hjelm points out, relies on a “misleading application of the term ‘Jewish’” and prima facie favors Jewish perspectives and Jewish primacy.385 The problem is even more evident in Alan David Crown’s warning that we should be “wary of using the terms ‘Samaritans’ and ‘Jews’; rather we should speak of Samaritans and Judaeans, inasmuch as others saw the Samaritans as a variety of Jews, hence a Jewish sect.”386 On this basis, Crown argues that before the third century CE, “especially [in] the first century, the Samaritans were Jews.”387

But there is in fact no evidence that anyone—whether the Samaritans or others—saw the Samaritans or Samarians/pre-Samaritans as a variety of Jews. Indeed, Crown assumes what he aims to prove, as the evidence he cites does not call the Samaritans “Jews” but rather refers to them as “Israelites.” Yet again, the root of the problem is the equation of “Israelites” and “Jews,” which then forces Crown to locate the difference between Samaritans and Jews in an alleged distinction between Judaeans and Jews, understanding the latter as a religious term roughly equivalent to “Yahwist.” But this latter distinction is anachronistic, as there could be no ancient

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385 Hjelm, "Samaritans and Jews," 25 (cf. also 46). Ironically, Hjelm herself could be said to have fallen prey to similarly imprecise language in her analysis of Josephus’ perspective in Samaritans and Early Judaism, 226–230.

386 Crown, "Redating the Schism," 19.

387 Crown, "Redating the Schism," 50. Similarly, Dexinger, "Samaritan Origins," 237: “The structure of the Samaritan Pentateuch is, generally speaking, represented in Qumran textually as well as graphically. This clearly identifies the Samaritans simply as a Jewish group of the pluriform Judaism of that age. As long as this unity was felt and was ideologically possible we should call this specific Jewish group Proto-Samaritans, and only after the overstressing of separating doctrines such as the exclusivity of the Garizim should we call them Samaritans.” Cf. also Rappaport, “Reflections,” 16–17.
distinction between “Judaean” and “Jew” since both words translate the same term, and such divisions between religious and ethnic identity would have been incoherent in a world in which the two were so closely intertwined.

Samaritan identification with “Israel” language is nevertheless regularly presumed to equal identification as “Jews” throughout scholarly literature. Feldman, for example, even claims, “The Samaritans themselves, according to their Sefer Ha-Yamim, insist that they are the direct descendants of the Joseph tribes, Ephraim and Menasseh, and that they are, in fact, the true Jews.” But neither the Sefer Ha-Yamim nor any other Samaritan literature claims that the Samaritans are “the true Jews” but rather that they are the true Israelites. Feldman simply presumes that the latter claim is equivalent to the former, as he does when addressing evidence from the Jewish side in the same article, even making the remarkable statement that, “the fact that, according to the latter [Judah Ha-Nasi], a Samaritan is like a non-Jew indicates that he is really a Jew.” But the passage in question (t. Ter. 4:12, 14) does not say “Jew” (יהודי) or “non-Jew” at all but rather “like a [member of] Israel” (כישראל) and “like a foreigner” (כנכרי); Feldman has once again glossed over the language of the passage, presuming the equivalence of the terms. Moreover, Feldman’s logic does not follow, as the debate in this passage rests on the premise that Samaritans are neither Israelites nor foreigners but an ambiguous other requiring special consideration. Such imprecision is typical throughout the literature, with repeated proofs of the Samaritans’ “Jewish” status consistently based on glossing “Israelite” as “Jew.”


390 As for other supposed evidence to the contrary, Hjelm, “Samaritans and Jews,” 25, notes that several commentators incorrectly assume “that the Samaritan authorities had been approached by the Jews in Elephantine as Jews,” whereas they nowhere refer to those of Samaria by this term. On the appeal of those at Elephantine to the Jerusalem and Samaritan authorities, see Bezalel Porten and Ada Yardeni, eds., Textbook of Aramaic Documents.
The evidence is overwhelming that despite sharing a common heritage, the same national
deity, and a cultus closely related to that of the Jews, neither the Jews nor the Samaritans
themselves regarded the Samaritans as Jews (that is, Ἰουδαίοι or יהודים). Rather, as Lester
Grabbe, explains, “[T]hey appear to have kept their own identity. They were not “Jews” but
‘Israelites.’” This distinction is perhaps best illustrated by John 4:9, which explains, “For
Ἰουδαίοι have no dealings with Samaritans,” a statement that would be incoherent if
Samaritans were considered Jews or a subset of Ἰουδαίοι. Nor is the Gospel writer’s

from Ancient Egypt, 4 vols. (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1986), 4.5–4.10; Bezalel Porten, Archives from
Elephantine (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), 278–298. Morton Smith, Palestinian Parties and
had no name for the Shechemites, who he hated (Sir 50:26), but he certainly does not call them Jews, instead
asserting that they are “not even a people.” Contra Schorch, “Construction of Samari(t)an Identity,” 137, the Greek
version of the passage does not say the Shechemites are “a subgroup of the Samarian people,” though it does
substitute the Samaritans for the Idumaeans, nor does the change imply that the Shechemites were once regarded
as part of the Jewish people, as the assertion that they are “not even a people” strongly indicates otherwise. See also
Palestinian Parties and Politics, 189–190, further argues that 2 Maccabees 5:22–23 and 6:1–2 indicate that
“Antiochus Epiphanes evidently considered the Shechemites and the Jews to be one religious group, and this
opinion was shared by Jason of Cyrene,” but each passage clearly distinguishes between the Jews and Samaritans.
Smith also cites Theodotus’ “Concerning Jews” and the Fayyum papyri as possible evidence that Samaritans may
have been called “Jews” (189), but it is doubtful that the latter actually refer to Samaritans as such, and the former is
better understood as reflecting a later gentile Christian inability to distinguish between the two than evidence that
Samaritans were called Jews. The closest thing to an exception is found in 4 Bar. 8, which says Samaria was built by
those who had intermarried with the Babylonians and were therefore barred from Jerusalem. But even this does not
suggest the Samaritans are Jews but rather the result of the intermarriage of “the people” and the Babylonians.

Grabbe, “Israel's Historical Reality,” 12. Inasmuch as the Roman province of Judea included Samaria and
Idumea (Josephus, A. J. 17.317), it is uncertain whether the Romans would have always carefully distinguished
between Samaritans and Jews, as Samaritans living in the province of Judea could presumably have been regarded
as Ἰουδαίοι by the Romans at least in the provincial. Thus the official texts that refer to taxes being levied from Ἰουδαίοι
in Judaea would presumably include all the various people groups in the province of Judaea, including
Samaritans. Nevertheless, at least one contemporary Roman shows awareness of the difference between the two, as
Tacitus explains that the local Roman authorities in the first century CE used the enmity between the Jews and
Samaritans for their own ends (Tacitus, Ann. 12.54).

and Coggins, Samaritans and Jews, 139 render συγχράομαι “use together,” meaning Jews and Samaritans do not
share common vessels.

Roman Period, eds. William Horbury, W. D. Davies, and John Sturdy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,
1999), 192–249 (246). For more analysis of Samaritan terminology and topography in the New Testament, see
Böhm, Samarien und die Samaritai; Jürgen Zangenberg, Frühes Christentum in Samarien: topographische und
traditionsgeschichtliche Studien zu den Samarientexten im Johannesevangelium, TANZ 27 (Tübingen: Francke,
explanation a late development or an idiosyncratic distinction between the two groups. On the contrary, two inscriptions from Delos dating to the last two or three centuries BCE, each of which references “the Israelites in Delos who make offerings to holy Argarizim,” further demonstrate that the Samaritans (who also had their own separate synagogue at Delos) identified as “Israelites” rather than Ἰουδαῖοι well before the Common Era.\(^{394}\) Just as striking is the fact that, as Grabbe explains,

\[\text{In the external references to peoples and kingdoms of Palestine, there is no evidence that 'Israel' ever refers to Judah or the Judahites; rather 'Judah', 'Jews', and similar designations are always used, at least until the Christian era. The only group referred to as 'Israelite' in Greco-Roman sources in the pre-Christian period is the Samaritan community associated with Mt Gerizim.}\(^{395}\)

That is, although the Jews clearly regarded themselves as part of the larger people of Israel, they were distinct from the Israelites associated with Mt. Gerizim, who seem to have been more closely identified with that term at least in an international context. Unfortunately, the scholarly habit of treating “Judaism” as synonymous with “Yahwism” and assuming on that basis that “Israelite” is coextensive with “Jew” has obscured a more complex picture in which the Jews are not the only Yahwistic group claiming a share in the heritage of ancient Israel.

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\(^{395}\) Grabbe, “Israel's Historical Reality,” 13. Similarly, Zeitlin, "Hebrew, Jew and Israel," 369: “We never find the term Israel denoting the people of Judaea, in the entire tannaitic literature of the time of the Second Commonwealth. The term Israel was used only in contrast to the priests and Levites.”
The question of whether the Samaritans comprised a sect of Judaism has therefore been a non-sequitur all along, akin to asking whether Ireland should be regarded as a subset of England or Lutheranism should be regarded as a sect of the Anglican church. To put it another way, “Judaism” is not the proper term for “Yahwism,” nor is “Jew” interchangeable with “Israelite” in this period because not all Yahwists or Israelites in this period were Ἰουδαῖοι or יהודים. Blindness to this fact has led to great difficulties categorizing the Samaritans and understanding how they fit in the world of early Judaism. The solution is surprisingly simple: rather than presuming that all Yahwists who claim Israelite identity in the postexilic period fall under the umbrella of “Judaism,” both Judaism and Samaritanism should be regarded as sects of a more broadly imagined “Israelism,” each competing over the legacy of biblical Israel.

Post-exilic Yehud, Biblical Israel, and Restoration Eschatology

Not only does the continued presence of the Samaritans demonstrate that the northern Israelites could not be simply have been ignored in the wake of the Assyrian campaigns, the biblical evidence itself attests that the northern Israelites were by no means forgotten. Rather, the

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biblical texts both incorporate a surprising amount of northern Israelite material and continue to distinguish between “Jews” and the concept of “Israel,” considering the Yehudim only a part of Israel, not the whole.397

This is a critically important point: through the collection and redaction of prophetic literature and authoritative historical narratives of Israel that ultimately comprised the Hebrew Bible, exilic and postexilic Jews established a continual reminder of the broken circumstances of the present, constructing an Israel not realized in the present. These early Jews thereby consistently situated themselves in a liminal space between the memory of a past “biblical” Israel and the hope for a future restored Israel.398 Put another way, at the root of exilic and postexilic Judaism we find not a redefinition of Israel limited to Jews/Judahites but restoration eschatology—a theology looking backward to biblical Israel and forward to a divinely orchestrated future restoration of Israel far exceeding the small return of Yehudim in the Persian period.399


399 Sanders, Jesus and Judaism, 97: “In general terms it may be said that ‘Jewish eschatology’ and ‘the restoration of Israel’ are synonymous.”
Israelite Restoration Eschatology

Before continuing, a brief note on terminology is in order. In discussing the theological perspective that looks backwards to biblical Israel and forwards toward a restored Israel following a Sin-Curse-Restoration pattern, I have borrowed and slightly amended E. P. Sanders’ term “[Israelite] restoration eschatology.” I prefer this term because it sidesteps scholarly squabbles about prophetic eschatology and apocalypticism/apocalyptic eschatology while focusing on what matters for the purpose of this study: the hope for Israel’s future restoration that was central to a great deal of early Jewish literature including the Pauline letters. As Sanders


401 There has been no shortage of recent work on the concepts of exile and restoration eschatology in early Jewish literature and its impact on Paul and nascent Christianity, with many interpreters recognizing that many texts “presuppose that ‘exile’ is ongoing” (Watson, Hermeneutics of Faith, 455 n. 70). See especially the essays in James M. Scott, ed., Exile: Old Testament, Jewish, and Christian Conceptions, JSJSup 56 (Leiden: Brill, 1997); Scott, ed., Restoration: Old Testament, Jewish and Christian Perspectives, JSJSup 72 (Leiden: Brill, 2001). Scott has been especially influential in pushing the importance of the themes of exile and restoration in the English-speaking world. See Scott, "Exile and Restoration"; “Restoration of Israel,” DPL (1993): 796-805; “Exile and the Self-Understanding of Diaspora Jews in the Greco-Roman Period,” in Scott, Exile, 173–218; "Paul's Use"; “The Use of Scripture in 2 Corinthians 6:16c–18 and Paul's Restoration Theology,” JSNT 56 (1994): 73–79; On Earth as in Heaven: The Restoration of Sacred Time and Sacred Space in the Book of Jubilees, JSJSup 91 (Leiden: Brill, 2005); Paul and the Nations; “For as many as are of works of the Law are under a curse” (Galatians 3.10),” in Paul and the Scriptures of Israel, eds. Craig A. Evans and James A. Sanders, JSNTSup 83 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1993), 187–221; “Philo and the Restoration of Israel.” Scott’s work builds on Odil H. Steck’s idea of the pervasive influence of a deuteronomische Geschichtsbild particularly in so-called “palästinensischen Spätjudentum” between 200 BCE–100 CE. See Steck, Israel und das gewaltsame Geschick der Propheten: Untersuchung zur Überlieferung des deuteronomistischen Geschichtsbildes im Alten Testament, Spätjudentum und Urchristentum, WMANT 23 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1967), 184–89, and a later work, Das Problem theologischer Strömungen in nachexilischer Zeit, EvT 28 (1968): 445-458. Scott has brought Steck’s thesis into the Anglophone world, albeit mostly dropping Steck’s three-stage model for the development of the so-called Deuteronomic worldview. See, however, the criticisms of Steck and Scott in Guy Prentiss Waters, The End of Deuteronomy in the Epistles of Paul, WUNT 221 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 29–42, though Waters also concludes that the concepts of exile and restoration are important in early Judaism and for Paul’s use of Deut 32 in Rom 9–11. See also the trenchant critiques of Waters’ position in Lincicum, “Paul’s Engagement with Deuteronomy,” 50–53. With respect to Steck, this study is not interested in the various stages of development of a so-called deuteronomische Geschichtsbild (which are not relevant to readers in the first century CE), and I am skeptical of our ability to reconstruct those stages (if they existed) with any sort of precision. Also, unlike Scott, I do not see any evidence of a dichotomy between a visionary “eschatological stream” and a temple-centered “theocratic stream” in early Jewish literature (Scott, "Restoration of Israel,” 797-98); rather, concerns for restoration and the temple tend to occur in the same texts and discussions, suggesting these streams ran together. As noted by Wayne O. McCready, „The ‘Day of Small Things’ vs. the Latter Days,” in Israel’s Apostasy and Restoration: Essays in Honor of Roland K. Harrison, ed. Avraham Gileadi (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1988), 223–236 (232), “the second temple was not an end in itself; it was built with the anticipation of a better day.” Cf. also Waters, End of Deuteronomy, 37–41, on this point. Labeling
all covenantal or restoration-eschatological theology as “Deuteronomic” is also problematic, as the Deuteronomists did not invent the ideas of covenant or restoration, as noted by John Day, “Pre-Deuteronomic Allusions to the Covenant in Hosea and Psalm LXXVIII,” VT 36, no. 1 (1986): 1–12. For this reason, I prefer to talk of “covenantal theology” and “restoration eschatology” rather than a “Deuteronomic” theology or worldview. Peter R. Ackroyd, Exile and Restoration: A Study of Hebrew Thought of the Sixth Century B.C (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1968), which especially focuses on these themes in the prophets (taking a very different approach from that of Steck), also bears mention as a seminal work. Perhaps the most prominent advocate of the importance of the concept of “exile” in the earliest Jesus movement and Pauline theology is N.T. Wright, who has built on the foundation of Scott and Steck but has also redefined exile into more typological terms. See The New Testament and the People of God (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), 268–272 (esp. 270 n. 108); Climax, 140–156; Jesus and the Victory of God, Christian Origins and the Question of God 2 (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996), xvii–xviii, 126–27, 203–204, 248–50; “In Grateful Dialogue: A Response,” in Newman, Jesus & the Restoration of Israel, 244–277. Richard Hays, recognizing that the Babylonian Exile had indeed ended, similarly sees the ongoing exile as metaphorical (Echoes, 46). By contrast, Mark A. Seifrid, “Blind Alleys in the Controversy over the Paul of History,” TynBul 45, no. 1 (1994): 73–95, objects to Wright’s application of the concept of “continuing exile,” rightly cautioning that the theme of exile is more complicated across early Jewish literature than Wright (and Scott) imply, a judgment shared by many critics of Wright’s work. Scott J. Hafemann, “Paul and the Exile of Israel in Galatians 3–4,” in Scott, Exile, 329–371 (368–69), effectively responds to some of Seifrid’s objections, though acknowledging that Seifrid’s caution about oversimplifying the picture is warranted. The critiques of Maurice Casey, “Where Wright is Wrong: A Critical Review of NT Wright's Jesus and the Victory of God,” JSNT 69 (1998): 95–103 (99), are perhaps more damaging: “At the time of Jesus, many Jews lived in Israel. Some lived permanently in Jerusalem. We would need stunningly strong arguments to convince us that these Jews really believed they were in exile when they were in Israel. All Wright’s arguments for this view, however, seem to me to be quite spurious.” Martien Halvorson-Taylor, Enduring Exile: The MetaphORIZATION of Exile in the Hebrew Bible, VTSup 141 (Leiden: Brill, 2010), however, argues that such a metaphorical “extension of exile’s meaning” (8) is already rooted in the prophetic texts themselves. Similarly, others have pointed out that since exile is just one of the covenantal curses, it is more accurate to speak of Israel continuing under the curses of the covenant, with the promises of redemption still unfulfilled. On this point, see Steven M. Bryan, Jesus and Israel's Traditions of Judgement and Restoration, SNTSMS 117 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 12–20; Thomas Richard Wood, “The Regathering of the People of God: An Investigation into the New Testament’s Appropriation of the Old Testament Prophecies Concerning the Regathering of Israel,” (PhD diss., Trinity International University, 2006), 55, 172–73; Gadenz, Called from Jews and Gentiles, 49–50. On the other hand, Brant Pitre, Jesus, the Tribulation, and the End of the Exile: Restoration Eschatology and the Origin of the Atonement (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 35, argues that the continuing exile is precisely the evidence that the curse remains in force, objecting that “Wright has the right insight but the wrong exile,” explaining that “Wright’s alteration of the meaning of ‘exile’ is ultimately unnecessary, for it overlooks the significant fact that even during the Second Temple period, the greater portion of Israel remained in exile” (34), an insight this study will explore more fully as it assesses the various ways “Israel” was understood in the Second Temple period. As we proceed through this study, it is also important to distinguish between individual Jews believing themselves to be in exile versus understanding Israel, either as a whole or in part to still be in exile. As will become clear later, some Jews may have regarded themselves or their limited group as no longer in exile while the bulk of Israel remains so. For further discussion of the “continuing exile” question, see, in addition to the essays in the volumes edited by Scott referenced above, Pitre, Jesus, 1–130; Carroll, “Exile! What Exile?”; “Exile, Restoration, and Colony: Judah in the Persian Empire,” in The Blackwell Companion to the Hebrew Bible, ed. Leo G. Perdue (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), 102–116; Michael A. Knibb, “Exile in the Damascus Document,” JSOT 25 (1983): 99–117; “The Exile in the Literature of the Intertestamental Period”; “A Note on 4Q372 and 4Q390,” in The Scriptures and the Scrolls: Studies in Honor of A. S. van der Woude on the Occasion of his 65th Birthday, eds. Florentino Garcia Martinez, Anthony Hillhorst, and C. J. Labuschagne (Leiden: Brill, 1992), 164–170; Shemaryahu Talmon, “Exile and ‘Restoration’ in the Conceptual World of Ancient Judaism,” in Scott, Restoration, 107–146; “Waiting for the Messiah: The Spiritual Universal of the Qumran Covenanters,” in Neusner et al., Judaism and their Messiahs, 111–137; Knoppers et al., Exile and Restoration Revisited; Rainer Albertz, Israel in Exile: The History and Literature of the Sixth Century B.C.E., SBLStBL 3 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2003); Michael E. Fuller, The Restoration of Israel: Israel’s Re-Gathering and the Fate of the Nations in Early Jewish Literature and Luke-Acts, BZNW 138 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2006); John A. Dennis, Jesus’ Death and the Gathering of True Israel: The
himself explains, “it might be said that ‘Jewish eschatology’ and ‘the restoration of Israel’ are almost synonymous.”

The concepts of “prophetic eschatology” and “apocalyptic eschatology,” on the other hand, are often contrasted, with the former expecting an intervention of God in the history of this world and the latter purportedly looking forward to a definite end of history through the extrahistorical, otherworldly activity of God resulting in the transcendence of death for the faithful. The boundaries between these supposedly separate eschatologies, however, are indistinct, and the historical relationship between them remains uncertain. In addition,
apocalypticism and apocalyptic literature are inconsistently defined across scholarly literature, with the “apocalyptic” of New Testament (particularly Pauline) scholars a very different thing than that of most scholars of Hebrew Bible/early Judaism. Many New Testament scholars influenced significantly Ernst Käsemann (and, paradoxically, Rudolph Bultmann) through J. Louis Martyn tend to use “apocalyptic” as shorthand for a theological model focused on the Christ-moment as a fundamental break with the past (or present). In this model, heaven has


already invaded earth in the Christ-event, which vanquished the powers of sin and death and established a new way of living in a new, eschatological age completely discontinuous with the old (or present) age. This perspective is often presented as fundamentally at odds or in tension with a *heilsgeschichtlich* perspective, since the Christ-event has completely and unexpectedly shattered any continuity with the past age.⁴⁰⁸

Others, however, including most scholars of Hebrew Bible or early Judaism, typically understand apocalypticism as referring to “revelation” distinct from eschatology, though the two often overlap inasmuch as such revelation may be eschatological. In the interest of clarity, I will follow Sanders in using the term “restoration eschatology” when discussing the future hopes of many early Jews, reserving the term “apocalyptic” for references to revelatory material and motifs, “apocalypticism” for the related philosophical worldview(s) centered on divine revelation and future expectation, and “apocalypse” for a genre of revelatory literature.⁴⁰⁹

The term “eschatology” carries its own difficulties, as some scholars limit its meaning to that which involves the end of the world,⁴¹⁰ while others allow for a looser understanding of the term.⁴¹¹ For this project, “eschatology” does not necessarily imply the end of the world but the end of the present age and the dawn of a new one. Thus throughout this study, “Israelite

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⁴⁰⁸ See the discussions in Dunn, “How New Was Paul’s Gospel”; Campbell, *Quest*, 56–68.

⁴⁰⁹ For a discussion of the characteristics of the genre of apocalypse, see Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 1–42.


restoration eschatology” will refer specifically to the **theological conviction that Israel has fallen under the curses of YHWH’s covenant and currently awaits a time of glorious redemption and restoration.** This may or may not be envisioned in cosmic or otherworldly terms, but the basic expectation of Israel’s restoration is the essential focus.

**The Paradox of the Yehudim and Israel’s Scriptures**

This “in-between” perspective of restoration eschatology is foundational to the very earliest Jewish literature, which helped form, preserve, and give shape to those communities of Yehudim that survived and grew out of the Babylonian exile. That literature is without question the result of substantial reflection, negotiation, and reconstruction of Israelite identity. As Davies has observed, “If the Hebrew Bible is about anything, it is about ‘Israel’: its history, culture, cult, ethics.” During and after the exile(s), some Yehudim looked back at the warnings of the prophets, editing, compiling, and composing what became a collection of authoritative literature bearing witness to Israel’s unfaithfulness and looking forward to its promised restoration. The collection and redaction of the legal, prophetic, and historical literature eventually comprising

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412 Sanders, *Judaism*, 289–298, discusses four main themes of restoration eschatology: the restoration of the twelve tribes, the subjugation or conversion of the nations, the purification of the Temple and Jerusalem, and the transformation of Israel into a pure and righteous people. As Sanders notes, these themes were also often accompanied by the messianic expectations. See also David E. Aune and Eric Stewart, “From the Idealized Past to the Imaginary Future: Eschatological Restoration in Jewish Apocalyptic Literature,” in Scott, *Restoration*, 147–177, which discusses the same four basic themes along with the additional apocalyptic themes of the restoration of the creation and paradise regained.

413 Robert P. Carroll, “Deportation and Diasporic Discourses in the Prophetic Literature,” in Scott, *Exile*, 63–88 (64): “Deportation and diaspora are constitutive of the Jewish identity as it begins to emerge and evolve in the biblical narratives.”


415 On exile and its role in the formation of Jewish and Christian scripture, see James A. Sanders, “The Exile and Canon Formation,” in Scott, *Exile*, 7–37,
the Hebrew Bible (and related literature) defined and shaped the idea of Israel—in the past and beyond—for those after them.

Nevertheless, it is an oft-overlooked paradox that the scriptures of Israel were collected, finalized, and sacralized by southern Yehudim (Ἰουδαίοι) living after the exile, as noted by Daniel Fleming:

Here, we confront an underappreciated oddity. Historically, the Bible is Judah’s book, the collected lore of Judah’s survivors after defeat by Babylon in the early sixth century…. Nevertheless, the story of origins and early life, including the founding of monarchy, is the story of Israel, the other kingdom…. To explain its past, the people of Judah tell the story of Israel, only making sure that we know Judah was one part of a larger group.416

That is, rather than appropriating the title and heritage of all Israel solely for the Jews, the biblical texts consistently present Judah as but one part of the larger whole of Israel, constructing a biblical Israel that is larger than the Jews alone. Indeed, one of the most striking things about the Jewish Scriptures is how these texts grapple with and construct not Jewish identity but Israelite identity.417 The narrative and prophetic material that eventually came to comprise the Bible by no means dispenses with northern Israel or suggests that those from Judah are the sole inheritors of Israel’s heritage but rather integrates the northern Israelites into a biblical genealogical scheme, historical framework, and prophetic expectation in which Judah is presented as only a subset of a larger twelve-tribe body of Israel descended from common

416 Fleming, Legacy of Israel, xii. This fact raises many questions for those aiming to reconstruct the history of ancient Israel and Judah, though that is not our concern in this study, which focuses instead on the reception of the biblical traditions long after any independent memory of the historical events had faded. See also Davies, Origins, 127–158; Harold Louis Ginsberg, The Israelian Heritage of Judaism, TSJTSA 24 (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1982); Alexander Rofé, “Ephraimite versus Deuteronomistic History,” in Reconsidering Israel and Judah: Recent Studies on the Deuteronomistic History, eds. Gary N. Knoppers and J. Gordon McConville, SBTS 8 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2000), 462–474.

417 Linville, Israel, 93: “The question must be asked, however, why did the dialogue that this new elite in the Persian province of Judah engage in centre on an 'Israelite' heritage, in the first place, and not simply a 'Judaean' one?”
patriarchs and members of the same covenant with YHWH as their northern counterparts. To be sure, those (such as Samaritans) who claimed Israelite heritage in opposition to the Jerusalem-centric vision presented in the Jewish Bible were marginalized, but the biblical texts nevertheless establish that Israel is comprised of more than Judah and continue to show a surprising concern for northern Israel even after the Babylonian exile.

That such attention to a pan-Israelite vision persists and is even emphasized in the exilic and postexilic context of the redaction and collection of what became the Hebrew Bible provides important insight about the nature of early Judaism (and “Israel-ism”), as the scriptures look backward to Israelite history and forward to the promised restoration of Israel. It must not be forgotten that the Hebrew Bible is scripture collected and edited by Jews, for Jews, about Israel. And whereas ancient Israelite theology seems to have centered on the concept of a present covenant between Israel and YHWH, postexilic Judaism was founded on the prophetic promises of a future restored, regathered, and reunified Israel, re-chosen for special covenant with the God of Israel, having been called out from the midst of the nations among which Israel had been scattered. In the words of Robert Carroll, “The Bible is the great metanarrative of deportation, exile, and potential return.”

Between Disaster and Restoration: Prophetic Restoration Eschatology

Early Jewish identity therefore developed in continuity with ancient Israelite ethno-religion but was also an outgrowth of multiple deportations and the experience of exile, fundamentally discontinuous with its ancestor due to its different socio-political situation and

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418 See Tobolowsky, “The Sons of Jacob”; Fleming, Legacy of Israel.

419 Carroll, “Deportation,” 64.
foundation upon a forward-looking (as opposed to present-focused) theology of restoration eschatology. As George Nickelsburg puts it,

The events of the sixth century spawned a literature that, along with the Torah, would deeply influence the shape of postbiblical Jewish religion and theology…. The destruction of Jerusalem and the Exile meant the disruption of life and the breaking up of institutions whose original form was never fully restored. Much of post-biblical Jewish theology and literature was influenced and sometimes governed by a hope for such a restoration: a return of the dispersed; the appearance of a Davidic heir to throw off the shackles of foreign domination and restore Israel’s sovereignty; the gathering of one people around a new and glorified Temple.420

Restoration eschatology, with its dual foci of the past covenant and a restored future, is nowhere clearer than in the Hebrew prophets, whose writings were collected and redacted during and after the deportation to Babylon.421 The prophets continually warn of the consequences of disobedience (exile), declare the covenant broken, and then promise a glorious future restoration:

You are not my people422 and I am not your God.423 Yet the number of the children of Israel will be like the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured or numbered. And in the place where it is said to them, “You are not my people,” it will be said to them, “You are the children of the living God.”424 (Hos 1:9b–2:1 [ET 1:9b–1:10])


421 See especially Ackroyd, Exile and Restoration.

422 Alternately, this may be rendered “my non-people” (alluding to Deut 32:21 or its prototype), still asserting ownership but declaring Israel to be no better than (or indistinct from) the outside nations. See Francis I. Andersen and David Noel Freedman, Hosea, AB 24 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1980), 198.

423 “Hosea is more radical still in his judgment, because he was convinced that Israel had ceased to be [YHWH’s] people.” Klaus Baltzer, Deutero-Isaiah: A Commentary on Isaiah 40–55, Accordance electronic ed., Hermeneia 23C (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2000), 179. Andersen and Freedman suggest that both kingdoms are renounced here as “the title ‘my people’ applies to Israel as a whole, the twelve tribes,” but it does not appear that Hosea was read this way in antiquity, as Jeremiah (alluding to Hosea) regards only the north as previously having been given her certificate of divorce (Jer 3:8), declaring that Judah will (in his own day) receive a similar fate. Andersen and Freedman, Hosea, 198.

424 Here and elsewhere in this chapter, biblical translations are from the Masoretic Text except where noted.
“I will scatter them among the nations, whom neither they nor their fathers have known; and I will send the sword after them until I have exterminated them.” (Jer 9:16)

“See, days are coming,” declares YHWH, when I will restore my people Israel and Judah from captivity.” YHWH says, “I will also bring them back to the land that I gave to their forefathers and they will possess it.” (Jer 30:3)

What is surprising, given the collection and codification of the Jewish Scriptures by Yehudim, is the amount of attention paid to the northern tribes both in the Bible as a whole and especially in these prophecies of restoration.425 Those prophecies cited above illustrate this point, as Hosea’s prophecy was specifically to the northern kingdom, while Jeremiah’s promise is to Israel and Judah—that is, to both the northern and southern tribes. This is a consistent pattern throughout the prophetic corpus and is worth a closer look.426

**Book of the Twelve: From Not My People to My People**

Within the Book of the Twelve, concern not only for Judah but also for the northern kingdom of Israel and its fate in the wake of its dissolution at the hands of Assyria is not only present but prominent.427 Hosea, the first of the Twelve and the earliest of the writing prophets, was a prophet to the North, declaring that YHWH had divorced Israel (=northern kingdom) due...
to its idolatry—they are now “not my people” (אֲלֵיָּם לֹא לֵו של יד וּלְאָדָם מְעַו; Hos 1:9–2:1 [ET 1:10]), a phrase alluding to and negating the covenantal language of “I will be your God and you will be my people” (Lev 26:12; cf. also 2 Sam 7:14). That is, Israel (=the north) is no longer YHWH’s covenantal people and will be removed from YHWH’s land and intermingled with the other nations, no longer a separate and distinct people, holy to YHWH. Hosea further declares,

Ephraim was mixed with the peoples; Ephraim became an unturned cake. …
Israel is swallowed up.
They are now among the nations like a worthless vessel. (Hos 7:8, 8:8 LXX)

The covenant has been broken; northern Israel is no longer YHWH’s people.

Nevertheless, Hosea proclaims that the impending judgments will one day be reversed, when YHWH will again have mercy and call out to not-my-people, making them his people once again (Hos 2:1–3 [ET 1:10–2:1]; 2:23). Many modern commentators have argued that such hopeful prophecies of restoration reflect later redaction of Hosea, but such redactional activity would

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428 Alternately, this may be rendered “my non-people” (alluding to Deut 32:21 or its prototype), still asserting ownership but declaring Israel to be no better than (or indistinct from) the outside nations. See Andersen and Freedman, Hosea, 198.

429 Andersen and Freedman suggest that both kingdoms are renounced here as “the title ‘my people’ applies to Israel as a whole, the twelve tribes,” but it does not appear that Hosea was read this way in antiquity, as Jeremiah (alluding to Hosea) regards only the north as previously having been given her certificate of divorce (Jer 3:8), declaring that Judah will (in his own day) receive a similar fate. Andersen and Freedman, Hosea, 198.

430 Heb. פָּהָה, a word denoting dispersion, separation, and confusion. In the LXX, the word is συναναμίγνυμι, a word both carrying a sexual connotation (cf. Hdt. 2.64; Iliad 21.143; Odyssey 1.73) and meaning, “become included among”; see LSJ, μείγνυμι,” 1092; “μείγνυμι,” 112; “συναναμίγνυμι,” 1695b. The idea is that Ephraim has become ethically mixed with non-Israelites through the exile. In contrast, the Ἰουδαῖοι remain ἄμικτον (“unmingled”), which becomes a point of contention and accusation by their enemies (cf. A.J. 11.212).

431 “Hosea is more radical still in his judgment, because he was convinced that Israel had ceased to be [YHWH’s] people.” Baltzer, Deutero-Isaiah, 179.

432 “Hosea, as a prophet to the Northern Kingdom, stands out in his vision of future divine reconciliation with Ephraim. The prophets generally anticipate the ultimate salvation of Israel in a unified nation led by a Davidic monarch, i.e., one descended from Judah.” Shani L. Berrin, The Pesher Nahum Scroll from Qumran: an Exegetical Study of 4Q169 (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 110; cf. also Andersen and Freedman, Hosea, 200, 202.
only underscore the oddity of Jewish editors inserting prophecies of northern Israel’s restoration. In any case, they were not read as later additions in antiquity, with ancient readers still looking forward to the fulfillment of these restoration promises. Hosea is especially important since Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Second Isaiah knew and were influenced by his preaching—the material of the first two chapters in particular.433

Like Hosea, Amos warns of impending judgment upon Israel (=the North) for their abandonment of the covenant and breaches of social justice (Amos 1:1; 7:10–17). Amos hints of a similar future fate for Judah (2:4–5), but this does not detract from Amos’ focus on the North. Israel will be destroyed, and the people will be taken “beyond Damascus” (5:27). Like Hosea, Amos startlingly asserts that Israel has no special status as God’s holy covenantal people (anymore?):

Are you not like the sons of Ethiopia to me, sons of Israel? ... Have I not brought up Israel from the land of Egypt, and the Philistines from Caphtor, and the Arameans from Kir?” (Amos 9:7)

But again like Hosea, the book of Amos concludes with the promise of future restoration and reconciliation, as YHWH promises to consume the sinners from among his people but ultimately to restore the “fallen booth of David” and “restore the fortunes of my people Israel”

Far from remaining abandoned in exile and apart from YHWH’s favor, YHWH will in fact restore (northern) Israel after it has been punished.

The full ironic force of Jonah depends on understanding Jonah’s connection to the northern kingdom, with the reader, knowing that the Assyrians will later destroy Israel, expected to identify with Jonah’s attitude. Nahum, which immediately follows Jonah in the LXX, rejoices in the destruction of Assyria, proclaiming the restoration not only of Judah (2:1 [ET 1:15]) but also of Jacob/Israel (2:3 [ET 2:2]). Micah, a southern prophet roughly contemporary with Hosea, Amos, and Isaiah of Jerusalem around the fall of the northern kingdom to Assyria, similarly prophesies “concerning Samaria and Jerusalem” (Mic 1:1), castigating their breaches of covenant and social justice and declaring YHWH’s judgment. Yet in the midst of declaring ruin

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435 “The restoration [envisioned in the epilogue of Amos] requires a united Israel under the rule of its long-standing dynasty (that of David). The returned people is called Israel, and the land includes not only the traditional territory of Israel but areas that belonged to Israel in the days of the united monarchy (the remnant of Edom and all of the other nations”). Andersen and Freedman, *Amos*, 893.


437 Commentators have predictably identified the latter reference as referring to Judah with the title for the whole of Israel: “[T]he words Jacob and Israel here are both honorific titles for Judah as the whole of Israel …. It would make little sense to say that Judah would be restored ‘as’ the pride of Israel if one were referring to the northern kingdom of Israel in the middle of the seventh century BCE. The former kingdom of Israel was no longer in existence.” Duane L. Christensen, *Nahum: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, Accordance electronic ed., AB (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 264. Of course, if the questionable assumption that the northern kingdom was out of view by this point is dropped, the passage serves as a promise of the restoration of both houses of Israel, as argued by Adam S. van der Woude, *Jona, Nahum*, POUt (Nijkerk: Callenbach, 1978), 118–19; Bob Becking, “Is het boek Nahum een litteraire eenheid?” *NedTT* 32 (1978): 111–14.
for the northern kingdom, Micah agrees with the restoration promises found in Hosea and Amos, declaring, “I will surely assemble all of you, Jacob; I will surely gather the remnant of Israel and put them together like sheep in the fold, like a flock in the midst of its pasture” (Mic 2:12).

Likewise, significant passages in the post-exilic prophet Zechariah concern not only the restoration of Judah and Jerusalem but of Ephraim (Zech 9:13), the house of Israel (Zech 8:13). Zechariah promises,

I will strengthen the house of Judah, 
and I will save the house of Joseph 
and will bring them back because I have compassion on them. 
They will be as though I had not rejected them [cf. Hosea/Amos],
for I am YHWH their God and I will answer them. 
Ephraim will be like a mighty man…. 
I will whistle for them to gather them together, 
for I have redeemed them, 
and they will be as numerous as they were before, 
when I sowed them among the peoples.439 … 
I will bring them back from the land of Egypt 
and gather them from Assyria 
and will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon. (Zech 10:6–10)440

Similarly, the enigmatic prophecy of Zech 11 features the prophet cutting his second shepherd’s staff, called “Union,” symbolizing the broken brotherhood between Israel and Judah

438 The mention of the “house of Israel” in 8:13 is striking enough to have given some interpreters pause, with some have suggesting that this verse is a gloss. E.g., Willem A. M. Beuken, Haggai-Sacharja 1–8, SUFP (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1967), 168. Douglas R. Jones, “A Fresh Interpretation of Zechariah IX-XI,” VT 12, no. 3 (1962): 241–259 (109), rightly objects, “This is no interpolation. The restoration of the scattered northern people is an integral part of Zechariah’s hope of salvation.” Cf. also Ackroyd, Exile and Restoration, 215 n. 144. In any case, a Second Temple period reader certainly would understand this as promising the restoration of the north and its reunion with Judah. For more on Zech 1–8 as emphasizing the estrangement of the people from YHWH and looking forward to reconciliation, see Halvorson-Taylor, Enduring Exile, 151–198. For more on Zech 9–14 and its reception, see Kelly D. Liebengood, “Zechariah 9–14 as the Substructure of 1 Peter’s Eschatological Program,” (PhD diss., University of St. Andrews, 2011), 22–73.

439 It is unclear whether אזרעם here refers to a future sowing or the past; I have translated it as referring to a past (but still incomplete) action, though a future reading is entirely plausible given the imperfect form. Cf. Ralph Lee Smith, Micah–Malachi, Accordance/Thomas Nelson electronic ed., WBC 32 (Nashville: Nelson, 1984), 263, which renders it as future. Either way, as Smith comments, “the results are the same. The emphasis is on the return” (266).

440 For a fuller look at this passage and its restoration implications, see Smith, Micah–Malachi, 265–66.
(Zech 11:14), yet another reminder of the prophet’s concern with the totality of Israel, not just the southern kingdom.\textsuperscript{441} Finally, the superscription in Malachi, the final book of the Twelve, says that the prophecy is “the word of YHWH to Israel through Malachi,” which has been understood as reflecting an “emphasis in Malachi on the New Israel, \textit{made up of all the tribes}.”\textsuperscript{442} The Book of the Twelve is not alone in this emphasis; the major prophetic books of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel similarly construct a future, restored Israel comprised not only of those descended from the deportees to Babylon but of the “whole house of Israel,” that is, all twelve tribes.

\textit{Isaiah: Destruction, Return, Reunion}

The book of Isaiah has long been viewed as a prime witness to the transformation of the name Israel both in the history of Israel and in the literary history of Isaiah.\textsuperscript{443} That is, the concept of Israel is understood in increasingly narrow terms as one moves forward in the book, from a broader vision in First Isaiah to much more restrictive definitions in Second and especially Third Isaiah.\textsuperscript{444} Thus,

When the writers of Deutero-Isaiah speak of Israel, the remnant of Israel, or of Israel’s return from exile, the assumption is that Israel designates Judah, the

\textsuperscript{441} This difficult passage has led to differing interpretations, including the idea that the breaking of the staff is envisioned as a \textit{future} event, though it is unclear what this would entail. See Smith, \textit{Micah–Malachi}, 268–272.


\textsuperscript{444} On the tripartite division of Isaiah, which is not as firmly established in scholarship as it once was, see Christopher R. Seitz, \textit{Zion's Final Destiny: The Development of the Book of Isaiah: A Reassessment of Isaiah 36–39} (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991). Since the ancient audience read the entire book of Isaiah as a unity from Isaiah of Jerusalem, the book will largely be treated as a unity here, despite modern scholarship’s recognition two or three “Isiahs”—though the tripartite division of Isaiah (chaps. 1–39; 40–55; 56–66) is no longer as firmly established in scholarship as it once was. See Seitz, \textit{Zion's Final Destiny}. 
Babylonian Judean exiles, or some subset thereof. With respect to Trito-Isaiah, a further set of distinctions comes into view. If the title Israel is applied to the Babylonian exiles in Deutero-Isaiah, it can be further restricted in Trito-Isaiah ‘to a faithful individual or group within the community.”\(^4^{45}\)

Knoppers, however, has rightly questioned this old consensus as “problematic on a number of different counts,”\(^4^{46}\) complaining that there is no evidence outside Isaiah itself for such shifts of meaning, as evidenced by the fact that the suggested dates for such transformations differ by hundreds of years in various scholarly reconstructions.\(^4^{47}\)

More relevant to this study is the fact that it seems unlikely that a premodern reader operating under the assumption of unified authorship of Isaiah would read these passages as anything but indications of broader Israelite identity. After all, Isaiah of Jerusalem lived and prophesied during the Assyrian onslaught (cf. 2 Kgs 19–20 // 2 Chr 32), which Judah was the only kingdom among its neighbors to survive. As a result, although Isaiah was a southern prophet, over the first half of the book (that is, First Isaiah) is concerned with the Assyrian threat, the destruction of the northern kingdom, and the future restoration of (a remnant of) the north along with the salvation of Judah.\(^4^{48}\) As Knoppers notes, it is “quite important” that the opening

\(^{445}\) Knoppers, “Did Jacob Become Judah,” 48. The quote is from Hugh G. M. Williamson, “The Concept of Israel in Transition,” in The World of Ancient Israel. Sociological, Anthropological and Political Perspectives (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 141–161 (147), who further argues, “the author of Isaiah 40–55 … was far less of a visionary than Ezekiel [!], addressing himself directly to the situation of his own community, whom he calls Jacob/Israel. Their lack of response, however, led to a shift in his aspirations and he seems to have experienced the need to narrow the meaning of Israel quite sharply.”

\(^{446}\) Knoppers, “Did Jacob Become Judah,” 51.

\(^{447}\) Knoppers, “Did Jacob Become Judah,” 49.

\(^{448}\) Kratz, “Israel,” 127–28: “The texts surrounding the Denkschrift in Isaiah 5 and Isaiah 9 express this point more clearly and unite both kingdoms, the ‘two houses of Israel’, into ‘Israel’ as the one people of God, consisting of Ephraim (Samaria) and Judah (Jerusalem).”
lines of the book use the term Israel to denote a broad concept not limited to those from Judah.\textsuperscript{449} The operational definition of Israel in the first chapters of Isaiah, setting the tone for the rest of the work, therefore includes and indeed focuses on the northern kingdom of Israel rather than Judah.

Isaiah 7–12 in particular addresses the Syro-Ephraimite conflict and its consequences, the Assyrian invasion and deportation of both Aram (Damascus) and Ephraim (Samaria). But the prophet by no means suggests that Israel will be entirely extirpated, nor does the book hint at a forthcoming terminological transition. Rather, in the midst of proclaiming the destruction of the disobedient north, the prophet declares that a remnant will remain and return, adding that the rivalry between Israel and Judah will be what passes away:

Then on that day, root of Jesse will stand as a signal to the peoples, nations will seek him (OG/LXX: καὶ ὁ ἀνιστάμενος ἄρχειν ἐθνῶν), and his dwelling place will be glorious. And on that day YHWH will with his hand a second time recover the remaining remnant of his people—from Assyria, Egypt, Pathros, Cush, Elam, Shinar, Hamath, and from the islands of the sea.

And he will lift a standard for the nations
and assemble the banished (OG/LXX: ἀπολομένους) ones of Israel.
And he will gather the dispersed of Judah
from the four corners of the earth.
Then the jealousy of Ephraim will depart,
and the hostility of Judah will be cut off.
Ephraim will not be jealous of Judah,
and Judah will not be hostile towards Ephraim.
And there will be a highway from Assyria
for the remnant of his people who will be left,
Just as there was for Israel
in the day that they came out of Egypt. (11:10–13, 16)

The Old Greek version revises the prophecy of return in verse 16, placing the focus on those remaining in Egypt (where the translation originated), with the highway (δίοδος) made not for the remnant in Assyria but for “my people left in Egypt”—that is the community of the translators. The reference to the root of Jesse is also strengthened in the Greek, with the one who arises “ruling over the nations.” As James Scott notes, this passage “will have reflected and fueled the expectation of the return among the Egyptian Diaspora (cf. Also Isa 27:12–13; Zech 10:9–10).” The translators did not, however, eliminate the earlier references to Assyria in vv. 11–13, only focusing the attention on their own community’s part in the restoration in v. 16.

This focus on Israel as a whole remains constant throughout First Isaiah, as Isa 17:4–11 and chapter 28 likewise focus on the impending destruction of Israel/Ephraim by Assyria, much of chapters 14–23 deals with the fate of the surrounding nations in the face of Assyrian (and Babylonian) power, and chapters 36–37 deal with the final Assyrian threat to Jerusalem after the destruction of Samaria.

That the book continues to focus on “Israel” after the transition to a new context in Deutero-Isaiah is problematic in light of the events of the previous centuries, as McConville observes,

In Isa. 41:8 the prophet addresses ‘Israel’. Historically, however, Israel no longer existed, since the largest part of it was destroyed for ever in 722 BC[E], and the

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Jewish exiles in Babylon had come from Judah. Why then does the prophet use this term (and its parallel, Jacob)?

Williamson expresses similar puzzlement, asking, “What now is Israel?” Given the presumed impossibility that Israel could here refer to more than those from Judah, the usual conclusion has been that the book here witnesses to a transition in Israel’s meaning. No longer does Israel mean Israel; rather, when the prophet says Israel, he must mean specific people from Judah, demonstrating a narrowing of scope in salvation history. This interpretation is, however, an assumption rather than a conclusion. There is no clear indication in the text that Israel has come to mean Judah (or a specific group within Judah), nor would an ancient reader be predisposed to such a transition after having read the first thirty-nine chapters. As Knoppers explains, the situation is more complex:

In dealing with texts in Second Isaiah, one should not presume that because these texts often speak of Jerusalem, Judah, the towns of Judah, the aftermath of the Babylonian exile, and Cyrus as Yhwh’s designated messiah, the references to Jacob and Israel in these texts must all some-how refer to Judah, the Babylonian Judean expatriates, or to some group among the Babylonian Judean expatriates. The older theory assumes what it needs to prove…. [Rather,] indications of broader notions of Israelite identity may be found in certain portions of this work. Some texts may reapply the term Israel to Judah (or to a certain group within Judah), but others affirm a larger and more complex understanding of Israel.


453 Williamson, “Concept of Israel,” 142.

454 Thus John D. W. Watts, Isaiah 34–66, Accordance/Thomas Nelson electronic ed., WBC 25 (Waco, TX: Word, 2005), 508, simply declares “Israel” to be “the exiles from Babylon” or “the Babylonian diaspora” (511), seemingly without any thought about the implications of such a terminological shift. Instead, Watts simply declares without argument, “While Israel was understood first to have a political role as the northern kingdom (1:2–7; chaps. 5, 10), in chaps. 40–48 the role has evolved so she here becomes simply YHWH’s servant people in exile” (505), again ignoring the problem of the north’s fate entirely. Baltzer entirely ignores the problem in his discussions of Second Isaiah, e.g., Baltzer, Deutero-Isaiah, 82–83, 95–102.

455 Knoppers, “Did Jacob Become Judah,” 52.
Without question, Deutero-Isaiah is centrally concerned with Zion/Jerusalem/Judah, but that concern does not mean that any mention of Israel in these sections must *only* refer to these more limited reference points. As Knoppers observes, the very choice of the broader term “points to the people as a whole, rather than some part thereof.”\(^{456}\) By ignoring the distinctive use of the broader term in this context and treating it as though the prophet actually means the narrower group, one misses the very force of Deutero-Isaiah’s proclamation, that not only Judah but the whole people of Israel will be miraculously restored by the divine action of YHWH. This interpretive move has the helpful effect of limiting the prophet’s scope to what actually happened historically with the return from Babylon, thus protecting the prophet against overstatement. But the very point of these passages is that Judah’s present restoration is only the tip of the iceberg, that YHWH will in fact redeem and restore his whole people as he had promised in the past. This is certainly how ancient readers understood Isaiah, as evident by the interpretive alterations to Isa 40:1–4 in the Isaiah Targum, which adds that Jerusalem “is about to be filled with people of her exiles” along with several other alterations clearly placing the fulfillment of the passage in the future.\(^ {457}\)

Far from being satisfied with and glorying in the present state of affairs, the prophet vividly proclaims the expectations of far more through the direct intervention of YHWH himself, holding out much larger hopes than merely a return of *Yehudim* from Babylon. Rather than limiting himself to Judah’s restoration from Babylon, the prophet proclaims the regathering of

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Israel from all four directions of the compass (Isa 43:5–7)—again signaling the comprehensive nature of the envisioned salvation. Another example is even more telling:

Listen to me, house of Jacob,
   All the remnant of the house of Israel,\textsuperscript{458}
Those who have been carried since birth,
   To those borne since leaving the womb.
To old age, I am he,
   To declining years I will carry.
I have acted and I will bear,
   I will carry and I will bring to safety. (Isa 46:3–4)

That the prophet would refer to the Judahite returnees from Babylon as “all the remnant of the house of Israel” seems implausible. If this is indeed code for a small Judaean group, “it must be conceded that the language used is remarkably open-ended. It seems more plausible to hold that the suggestive and open-ended frame of reference is deliberate.”\textsuperscript{459}

Although there can be no doubt of Zion and Jerusalem’s central place in Deutero-Isaiah, the larger frame clearly includes—indeed focuses upon—the whole of Israel, highlighting Israel’s status as “my [=YHWH’s] servant” (41:8; 44:21; 49:3; etc.). The salvation envisioned is expressly comprehensive:

And now, says YHWH,
   the one who formed me from the womb to be his servant,
To restore Jacob to himself,
   so that Israel might be gathered to him,
And I have been honored in the eyes of YHWH,
   my God has been my strength.
He said to me,
   “It is too small for you to be my servant,
To establish the tribes of Jacob,
   and to restore the survivors of Israel.
I will make you a light of the nations,
   to be my salvation to the ends of the earth.” (Isa 49:5–6)

\textsuperscript{458} MT: בִּלַּיָּשָׁרַיה בִּתֶּׁי יְשָׁרַעַל; OG/LXX: πᾶν τὸ κατάλοιπον τοῦ Ισραήλ.

\textsuperscript{459} Knoppers, “Did Jacob Become Judah,” 58.
It is unclear why we should imagine that a prophet whose vision is so expansive as to make the servant a “light to the nations” (42:6) would limit the scope of Israel to a small group of Judahite returnees from Babylon. This passage makes that comprehensive scope all the more explicit with its reference to “the tribes of Jacob,” a phrase that “by definition includes more than the Judeans or the Judean exiles. If the writer had a very limited perspective, it would be odd to leap from that highly restrictive charge to an international mandate.”

That international mandate in this passage is especially striking, as it “closely aligns the restoration of the scattered tribes of Israel with the redemption of the nations.” Thus the fulfillment of the promise to Abraham that all nations would be blessed (Gen 22:18; 26:4) here coincides with the regathering of all Israel, with the servant fulfilling the mission for which Israel was chosen (cf. Exod 19:5–6).

The famous passage in Isa 52 likewise rather strikingly references oppression not by the Babylonians but the Assyrians, comparing the present situation to Israel’s oppression in Egypt before the exodus:

Thus says YHWH: “You were sold without money and you will be redeemed without money.” For thus says the Lord YHWH: “My people went down at first into Egypt to reside there. Then the Assyrian oppressed them without cause. Now then,” declares YHWH, “What do I have here, since my people have been taken away without cause?” YHWH declares, “Those who rule over them howl, and my name is continually blasphemed all day long. My people will therefore know my name; thus in that day I am the one who is speaking, ‘Here I am.’” How lovely on the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news! (Isa 52:3–7a)

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461 Rafael Rodríguez, If You Call Yourself a Jew: Reappraising Paul’s Letter to the Romans (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2014), 5.
463 Baltzer, Deutero-Isaiah, 371–75, suggests that this section is consciously connected with the account of Sennacherib’s campaign in Isa 36–37 while also reminding of the Assyrian destruction of Israel. Watts, Isaiah 34–
A first-century reader of Isaiah reading this prophetic book as a unity would thus be continually reminded not only of the Babylonian exile but of Assyria’s destruction of Israel and the promise of a grand and complete restoration not only of the Judahite returnees from Babylon but also of the Israelites scattered in the first half of the book. This miraculous event had not yet come to pass but would happen some time in the future. In addition, not only will Israel be regathered and restored (56:8, etc.) but this restoration will have global implications. The poet’s vision is by no means limited to those from Judah, nor should it be assumed that “Israel” transitions to mean something much less broad as the book goes on. Rather, the book of Isaiah uses such inclusive and comprehensive terminology where it intends to be comprehensive. If anything, rather than moving toward an increasingly limited definition of Israel, by the end of the book, the emphasis is that “[YHWH’s] salvific intentions have the potential to include an international body of persons while excluding members of the intranational community that fails to observe certain requisite behaviors.”

Moreover, with such utopian language anticipating the end of exile and the reversal of the covenantal curses, the final chapters implicitly extend the exile into the present.

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66, 775, observes that “two earlier exiles [Egypt and Assyria] are cited,” but presumes that the Babylonian captivity is actually the topic here (apparently because the Assyrian captivity had ended?), despite the absence of Babylon from the passage.


**Jeremiah: A New Covenant with Israel and Judah**

By the time of Jeremiah, the Assyrian destruction and deportation of the house of Israel was long past, with the north now populated by an amalgamation of those left behind and those resettled in the land from elsewhere by the Assyrians (2 Kgs 17:24–41). Ephraim had been mixed among the nations and swallowed up as Hosea had promised (Hos 7:8; 8:8). Jeremiah is fully aware of Hosea’s proclamations and uses the fate of the north as an object lesson for Judah, who has followed in her sister’s footsteps (Jer 3:6–10).

But Jeremiah does not stop there, in fact claiming that Judah’s rebellion was in fact the very thing that would lead to Israel’s restoration since Judah had made Israel look good by comparison:

> And YHWH said to me, “Faithless Israel has proved herself more righteous than treacherous Judah. Go and proclaim these words toward the north and say, ‘Return, faithless Israel,’ declares YHWH. ‘I will not look upon you in anger. For I am gracious,’ declares YHWH. ‘I will not be angry forever.’” (Jer 3:11–12)

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466 On the impact of Amos and especially Hosea on Jeremiah, see Jeremiah Unterman, *From Repentance to Redemption: Jeremiah’s Thought in Transition*, JSOTSup 54 (London: Continuum, 1987), 151–166.


468 Some have proposed that Jeremiah’s early ministry was preoccupied with the reunification ofnortherners with the Josianic kingdom and the Jerusalem cultus, which provided the background for Jeremiah’s concern with the north. See especially Holladay, *Jeremiah I*, 130–31 and the similar argument of Marvin A. Sweeney, “Jeremiah 30–31 and King Josiah’s Program of National Restoration and Religious Reform,” ZAW 108, no. 4 (1996): 569–583. For later readers (and perhaps for Jeremiah himself and his editors after Jerusalem’s fall), however, these calls to the north would have taken an entirely different and more eschatological character. See the discussions of this passage in Peter C. Craigie, Page H. Kelley, and Joel F. Drinkard, *Jeremiah 1–25*, Accordance electronic ed., WBC 26 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1991), 53–58; Holladay, *Jeremiah I*, 118–120; Jack R. Lundbom, *Jeremiah 1–20: A
Like (Second) Isaiah, Jeremiah depicts this return in glorious language recalling the exodus from Egypt, proclaiming that Israel’s return would be even more miraculous than the deliverance from Egypt, a theme that carries throughout the rest of the book, as Jeremiah even more than Isaiah promises a full-scale Israelite restoration with language that became foundational to the early Jesus-movement:

“Therefore days are coming,” declares YHWH, “when it will no longer be said, ‘As YHWH lives, who brought the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt,’ but, ‘As YHWH lives, who brought the children of Israel from the land of the north and from all the countries where He had banished them.’ For I will restore them to their own land which I gave to their fathers.”\(^469\) (Jer 16:14–15)

The later chapters of LXX Jeremiah also use Ἰουδαῖος language on six occasions,\(^470\) each of which specifically refers to the citizens of Judah at or around the time of Jerusalem’s fall. This is in contrast to the approximately 88 uses of Ἰσραήλ, which is typically paired with “Judah” or refers to the larger totality (e.g., 38:35–37 [31:35–37 MT]).

Interestingly, when Jeremiah contrasts those Judahites already living in exile with those remaining in the land, he says those in exile are in fact the “good figs” (Jer 24:5–7), the remnant God will preserve, while those remaining in the land are the “bad figs, which are rotten and inedible” (24:8–10) and will be swept away. Jeremiah advises those in exile to settle down and prosper in the land of captivity (36:5–6 [MT 29:5–6]) and to “seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile … for in its welfare you will find your welfare” (36:7; [29:7 MT]). The

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\(^{469}\) The next verse proclaims that YHWH will send for many fishermen who will fish for “them” (ז; αὐτούς). This reference to “fishers” seems to be a proclamation of judgment rather than a continuation of the restoration promises in the preceding verse, but it nevertheless seems to have been read as part of the restoration promise (i.e., the fishers retrieve those returning) by some, since it likely underlies the “fishers of humans” invitation in Mk 1:17 (=Matt 4:19). On Jer 16:16–18 as a message of judgment rather than restoration, see Holladay, Jeremiah I, 477–79.

\(^{470}\) LXX Jer 33:2 (26:2 MT); 39:12 (32:12); 45:19 (38:19); 47:11 (40:11); 48:3 (40:3); and 51:1 (44:1).
community of exiles is also enjoined to heed the word of YHWH unlike those remaining in the land (29:16–20 MT).\(^{471}\) Jeremiah thus provides the beginnings of an ethic for living and serving YHWH as a minority group outside the land, with those outside the land understood as in no way inferior to those in the land.\(^{472}\)

The climax of Jeremiah, the so-called “Book of Consolation” (Jer 30–33 MT), promises restoration not only to those from Judah but also to “the house of Judah and the house of Israel” (Jer 31:27, 31:31, 33:14 MT).\(^{473}\) Ephraim’s fate receives special attention in the Book of Consolation, with the famous “new covenant” passage actually concluding an extended prophecy of Ephraim’s return.\(^{474}\)

> “See, days are coming,” declares YHWH, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah…. This is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days: I will put my law within them and will write it on their hearts, and I will be their God and they will be my people.”\(^{475}\) (Jer 31:31, 33)

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472 Cf. also the importance of the Sabbath in Jer 17:19–27, a practice that became especially important in the diaspora.


At the time of Ephraim’s return, Jeremiah promises, YHWH will reunite both houses of Israel restoring his covenant with them and making them again “my people” (Jer 31:31–34; cf. Hos 1:9–2:1, 2:23). The book of Jeremiah is fully conversant with the message of prior prophets (cf. the allusion to Hosea in Jer 3:8), that Israel had been “divorced” and was scattered, intermingled, and “not my people” any longer.476 Yet Jeremiah continues to put a remarkably strong emphasis on the restoration not only of Judah but also of Israel—with Judah’s rebellion and punishment in fact the guarantee of Israel’s subsequent restoration. The promised new covenant will not take place until Ephraim’s return; the complete restoration of the descendants of the south will not precede the return of those from the northern kingdom but is inextricably linked with YHWH’s restoration of Ephraim. Restoration from Babylon is insufficient; Ephraim must also be restored from the destruction wrought by Assyria. Even if that restoration is limited to “one from a city and two from a family” (3:14), Israel must be—will be—complete and reunified once again. Until then, the grand new covenant promise has not been and cannot be fulfilled.

Ezekiel: Can These Bones Live?

Like Jeremiah, the book of Ezekiel begins by calling attention to the twofold exile of Israel and Judah, with Ezekiel lying on his left side 390 days to represent Israel’s “years of iniquity” (Ezek 4:4–5) and his right 40 days for Judah’s iniquity (4:6).477 Many commentators


477 As William H. Brownlee, Ezekiel I–19, Accordance/Thomas Nelson electronic ed., WBC 28 (Waco, TX: Word, 1986), 66, notes, these numbers suggest “a tradition close to that of the Deuteronomic History was being followed…. In the light of the specific accusation of defiling [YHWH’s] sanctuary in 5:11 (cf. chap. 8; 43:7–9; 44:6–8), the number is best understood as a general reference to the existence of the first temple. Alternatively, it may relate to the period of disunity of the covenant nation.” Cf. also Zimmerli, Ezekiel I, 163–68. The differing
have found the fact that Israel and Judah are addressed separately jarring, and further evidence of Ezekiel’s maintenance of the distinction is provided by the parable of Oholah (representing the northern kingdom) and Oholibah (Judah) in Ezek 23.\(^\text{478}\) Nevertheless, as with Jeremiah, Ezekiel’s prophecies of Jerusalem’s impending destruction are mixed with promises that YHWH would reunite both Israel and Judah under one shepherd (Ezek 34–36).\(^\text{479}\) In that day, proclaims the prophet, Israel will be cleansed and restored, in proper covenantal relationship to YHWH once again (Ezek 36:24–28).

Also like Jeremiah, Ezekiel argues against those remaining in Jerusalem who claimed that the wicked had already been removed from the land, leaving them as the “meat in the pot” (11:3), the true inheritors of the land (11:5). Ezekiel responds by declaring exactly the opposite, declaring that those in exile—though certainly not obedient or virtuous—are in fact the preserved remnant (11:16–20), even going so far as to depict the presence of YHWH leaving the Temple and Jerusalem and heading east, as though YHWH was joining his people in exile (Ezek 11:22–24), where he will himself be “a little sanctuary” (מַעְטִיקָם µακρόν; 11:16) for numbers reflected in the LXX reflect a continuing interpretation of “Israel” and “Judah” in this case as specifically denoting the northern and southern kingdoms respectively and an effort to harmonize the text with the known dates of each respective exile. The LXX translator(s) may also have understood “right” and “left” in the passage as references to south and north, again reflecting this continuing concern. Cf. Brownlee, *Ezekiel I–19*, 68; Zimmerli, *Ezekiel I*, 167–68; Kelvin G. Friel, *Jeremiah’s and Ezekiel’s Sign-Acts: Rhetorical Nonverbal Communication*, JSOTSup 283 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999), 535.

\(^\text{478}\) Zimmerli, *Ezekiel I*, 163, argues that “house of Israel” typically means “all Israel” rather than specifically denoting the northern house and thus regards the reference to Judah as a later alteration such that “Israel” has taken on a quite different and unexpected meaning.” Cf. also Walther Zimmerli, “Israel im Buche Ezechiel,” *VT* 8, no. 1 (1958): 75–90. Ancient readers certainly did not read this phrase as a late addition, but Zimmerli’s observation about the general scope of “Israel” in Ezekiel holds true. “Israel” is certainly not limited to or redefined as those from Judah in Ezekiel, as the examples of Oholah and Oholibah and the emphasis on reunification in Ezek 37 demonstrate.

\(^\text{479}\) Ezekiel’s concerns with the house of Israel are so emphatic that some earlier interpreters thought Ezekiel must have been a northerner. E.g., Moses Gaster, *The Samaritans: Their History, Doctrines and Literature*, SchwLect 16 (London: Oxford University Press, 1925), 11–15, 138–40; James Smith, *The Book of the Prophet Ezekiel: A New Interpretation* (London: SPCK, 1931), 55–71.
the exiles.\textsuperscript{480} Although reduced in comparison to the presence in the Temple, YHWH remains present among the exiles; as Dalit Rom-Shiloni notes, “exile does not [for Ezekiel] bring separation from God.”\textsuperscript{481} Rather, in Ezekiel’s theological construction, in Rom-Shiloni’s words, “The exilic arena is in fact an advantageous context for future restoration of the covenant (Ezek 20:1–38).”\textsuperscript{482} Much like the Israelites in Egyptian captivity, those in exile are positioned to see the deliverance of YHWH, while those in the land remain in the space of judgment.\textsuperscript{483}

The famous Valley of Dry Bones Vision (Ezek 37) addresses the restoration with vivid imagery—but Ezekiel is not proclaiming only the restoration of Judah, which had experienced a relatively short period of exile to that point. Rather, the vision addresses the fate of the “whole house of Israel”—including the northern kingdom, which the prophet equates with dry bones, on which there was no longer any hint of life.\textsuperscript{484}

Then he said to me, “Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, ‘Our bones are dried up and our hope is lost. We are completely cut off.’ Therefore prophesy and say to them, ‘Thus says Lord YHWH, “Look! I will open your graves and bring you up from your graves, my people [cf. Hos 1:9–2:1], and I will bring you into the land of Israel.… I will put my spirit in you and you will


\textsuperscript{481} Rom-Shiloni, "Voice of the Exiles," 17.

\textsuperscript{482} Rom-Shiloni, "Voice of the Exiles," 43–44; cf. also Joyce, “Dislocation and Adaptation.”

\textsuperscript{483} Rom-Shiloni, "Voice of the Exiles," 44. As Rom-Shiloni notes, this perspective of the exiles as the righteous remnant paves the way for the antipathy for the “people of the land” found in Ezra-Nehemiah. For further development of the latter point, see Rom-Shiloni, “From Ezekiel to Ezra-Nehemiah.” Recall also the metaphor of good and bad figs in Jer 24:8–10, which expresses a similar sentiment.

\textsuperscript{484} Walther Zimmerli, \textit{Ezekiel II: A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel, Chapters 25–48}, Accordance electronic ed., Hermeneia 26B (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979), 264, rightly observes that this vision “expresses the event of the restoration and regathering of the politically defeated all-Israel” and is not limited solely to the northern tribes. Neither, it should be added, is it limited to the southern tribes. A tradition ascribed to Rab in b. San. 92b associates the bones of Ezek 37 with Ephraimites.
come to life, and I will place you on your own land, then you will know that I, YHWH have spoken and done it."’ (Ezek 37:11–12, 14)

As if to ensure no ambiguity on this point, the next image highlights the division between the two houses of Israel and promises their reunion:

“And you, son of man, take one stick and write on it, ‘For Judah and for the sons of Israel associated with it.’ Then take another stick and write on it, ‘For Joseph (the stick of Ephraim) and all the house of Israel associated with him.’ Then join them together into one stick so that they become one in your hand.” (Ezek 37:11–12, 14, 16–17)⁴⁸⁵

The question, “Son of man, can these dry bones live?” (Ezek 37:3) confronts skepticism over whether the seemingly long-dead house of Israel could ever be restored again. That is, is it beyond YHWH to be able to restore not only Judah, but northern Israel also? Ezekiel’s vision depicts this miraculous salvation in dramatic fashion, as YHWH effectively raises Israel from the dead (this appears to be the first reference to resurrection in Israelite literature) to fulfill his promises. YHWH’s power extends even beyond the grave, and he will indeed restore the house of Israel as promised. Much like Jeremiah, Ezekiel’s restoration depends on an internal, spiritual change—in each case, those restored are given a new heart and a new spirit by which they can and will remain faithful to YHWH. Ezekiel closes with a vision of a magnificent new temple and a restored Israel comprised of all twelve tribes with expanded territorial borders (40–48), with Israel also remarkably instructed to divide the land also “among the aliens who stay among you, who bring forth children in your midst. And they will be to you as the native-born among the children of Israel and will be allotted an inheritance with you among the tribes of Israel” (47:22).⁴⁸⁶

⁴⁸⁵ Notably, the two sticks are not divided into “Israel” and “Judah” but rather include both Joseph and Judah within Israel. See Zimmerli, Ezekiel II, 279–280 and Brownlee, Ezekiel 1–19, 192–97.

⁴⁸⁶ Zimmerli notes that this ruling addresses a problem in the monarchy in which gerim were not permitted to own land, opening them to oppression. In the restored Israel, however, the ger “is to receive a share in the land allocation
The Perpetual Hope of Eschatological Israel

Through its grounding in historical Israel and Judah and focus on the future, the prophetic corpus puts the reader in the liminal space between the tragedy of divine wrath and reconciliation through divine mercy, reinforcing hopes for the restoration and reunification of all twelve tribes scattered by Assyria and Babylon. Moreover, the prophets (particularly Jeremiah and Ezekiel) emphasize that Israel’s return requires the correction of the cause of Israel’s plight—Israel must be ethically transformed and made righteous in order to return and receive the blessings of the renewed covenant. Restated in language more typically associated with the apostle Paul, Israel’s restoration requires Israel’s justification. The fact that the twelve tribes have not returned in unity is evidence that Israel’s rebellion has not yet been corrected and vice-versa. But the prophets look forward to a new era of YHWH’s favor and Israel’s obedience, a time marked by the return and reunification of all Israel. The hope of the prophets is unparalleled, their visions of the future idyllic.

This permanent outlook of hope for the future established in the prophets helps account for the enduring power of Judaism and its children. But this power is rooted in yet another

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487 To borrow from David Lambert’s “three stage” model for the relationship between God and Israel, the prophetic corpus consistently portrays Israel (and the reader) in stage two, in which “effective communication between the people and their God ceases…. God is now at war with his own people.” David A. Lambert, How Repentance Became Biblical: Judaism, Christianity, and the Interpretation of Scripture (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 97. The first stage is that of an active, unbroken covenant, what Lambert calls “a reasonably functional relationship.” Stage three involves “anticipated return to a normal relationship.” Lambert similarly concludes, “Much of prophetic literature, I would suggest, is framed within this dysfunctional stage [stage two] of the relationship” (97).

paradox: the establishment of perpetual hope in the face of present disappointment. The situation in the Second Temple period fell far short of the triumphant declarations of Israel’s future found throughout the prophets, most obviously the promised restoration of all twelve tribes under a renewed covenant, free from the oppression of outside nations or empires. It is for this reason that David Greenwood has called these pervasive predictions regarding a restored northern kingdom, “perhaps the most conspicuous example in the Tanak of patently false prophecy.”

Nevertheless, as is often the case with unfulfilled prophecy, the long delay did not quench the hope of fulfillment. Indeed, as Jonathan Goldstein has observed, it was not fulfilled prophetic proclamations but the unfulfilled prophecies of restoration that were most formative in the Second Temple period, as circumstances continually fell far short of prophetic

489 Jacob Neusner, Judaism when Christianity Began: A Survey of Belief and Practice (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002), 63–64, observes that the paradigm of exile and return “retained its power of self-evidence because that system in its basic structure addressed but also created a continuing and chronic social fact …. It represents a self-sustaining system, which solves the very problem that to begin with precipitates: a self-fulfilling prophecy.” That is, by highlighting present alienation and promising future blessing if only the community should behave in a particular way, this paradigm easily adapts to the new circumstances of each generation.


expectations. The returnees from Babylon (and many continuing to live in the diaspora), continued to look to the prophets for direction, still expecting the eventual fulfillment of their pronouncements. Some went even farther, making significant efforts to bring about the fulfillment of the prophets’ proclamations of Israel’s restoration and the end of the age of wrath. But these efforts all failed, only serving to reinforce the fact that Israel had not been restored, with the prophets’ proclamations still awaiting fulfillment.

The theological perspective constructed during and after the exile thus involves both a continuity with the past covenantal relationship with Israel’s God and a hopeful expectation of the ultimate restoration of Israel to the benefits of that covenantal status as promised by the Hebrew prophets. Those who looked to the prophets and the biblical narratives as their own authoritative history were therein consistently confronted with constant reminders of the present incompleteness of Israel and instilled with future hopes of a full restoration. The Judaism(s) established through these foundational texts is thus founded on God of Israel’s promises to restore Israel, regathering, reunifying, and re-choosing his people for special relationship, calling them out from the midst of the nations among which they had been scattered, or in Neusner’s words:

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492 Goldstein, “Messianic Promises,” 69–70. For a contrasting view, see Michael H. Floyd, “Was Prophetic Hope Born of Disappointment? The Case of Zechariah,” in Utopia and Dystopia in Prophetic Literature, ed. Ehud Ben Zvi, PFES 92 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006), 268–296, which argues that such a view too closely resembles the early Christian adversos Judaeos interpretations of the prophets. Floyd’s warning is important, but the current study suggests that the interpretation that the restoration prophecies remained unfulfilled is not a Christian innovation but was rather (as Goldstein suggests) the dominant Jewish interpretation before the Common Era.

[T]hat story of exile and return, alienation and remission … the paradigmatic statement in which every Judaism, from then to now, found its structure and deep syntax of social existence, the grammar of its intelligible message. 494

Indeed, the Jewish scriptures, redacted during and after the exile, are held together by the restoration eschatology derived from these grand prophetic promises in the wake of destruction.

**Excursus: Unity and Diversity in Early Judaism**

To suggest that restoration eschatology was foundational to early Jewish discourse is not to suggest a homogenous or monolithic Judaism or that all Jews believed the same things. Rather, in the words of Laurence Kant, “a great diversity of expression and self-understanding was open to Jews in the Greco-Roman world.” 495 Jews living in different times and places surely exhibited a range of practices and beliefs, and we should not, as James Scott warns, “slip into a harmonizing, ideal picture of an unchanging ‘common Judaism.’” 496 What we now somewhat anachronistically call “Judaism” was internally diversified, often featuring harsh polemical tensions between competing factions.

Nevertheless, to speak of multiple Judaisms “solves one problem only to create another, more fundamental problem, namely, exactly what makes any Judaism a Judaism?” 497 Seth Schwartz rightly points out that such diversity should not be taken as an indication that no

494 Neusner, *Judaism when Christianity Began*, 61.

495 Laurence H. Kant, “Jewish inscriptions in Greek and Latin,” *ANRW 20.2*: 671–713 (686). Cf. also Kraabel, "Roman Diaspora," 457, “The most striking impression from these new data is of the great diversity of Diaspora Jewry.”

496 Scott, “Self-Understanding,” 182.

A foundational common ground existed among ancient Jews since “as far as we can tell most ancient Jews regarded themselves as members of a single group and furthermore were so regarded by their neighbors, rulers, and others.” Schwartz emphasizes that disagreements and discussions often illustrate “not the absence of a normative center … but precisely the typical functioning … within a normative religious system.” Despite significant diversity, there remains enough of a common core to speak coherently of an identifiable group, though who was “in” or “out” on a granular level becomes difficult. That is, the diversity of Judaism involves a shared discourse tracing back to and limited by the scriptures, the Torah in particular. Thus although various communities and individuals had unique perspectives and varied practices, we also observe a significant commonality at the level of a shared discourse shaped by these foundational narratives.

As John Collins explains,

Exactly which beliefs and practices were essential to the [Jewish] way of life were not clearly defined, however, and so people might define their Jewish identity in various ways. There was, however, an authoritative body of scriptures which

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501 Cf. Scott, “Self-Understanding,” 181–82. Collins, Between Athens and Jerusalem, 23, notes that wisdom traditions and apocalypticism “reflect different understandings of Judaism, each distinct from the traditional covenantal pattern” as defined by an emphasis on the history of the people, responsibility to keep the Torah, and ties to the land (cf. George E. Mendenhall, Law and Covenant in Israel and the Ancient Near East [Pittsburgh: Presbyterian Board of Colportage, 1954]; Klaus Baltzer, The Covenant Formulary in Old Testament, Jewish and Early Christian Writings [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971]; Delbert R. Hillers, Covenant: The History of a Biblical Idea [Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1969]). See also John J. Collins, “Cosmos and Salvation: Jewish Wisdom and Apocalyptic in the Hellenistic Age,” HR 17, no. 2 (1977): 121–142. But Collins nevertheless acknowledges that even those forms of Judaism that do not focus on the central role of the covenant law still remain tied in some way to Torah and covenant, despite the different perspectives they offer. In this sense, the larger point of Sanders, Paul and Palestinian Judaism, 420–21, about the centrality of the covenant even when it is not overtly in view seems to hold. It is not that Judaism was uniform but rather that there was a central grammar of discourse—covenant and restoration eschatology—that is shared across the various forms of Judaism in this period. Wisdom and apocalyptic literature need not focus on the basics of the covenant precisely because they can assume a shared covenantal outlook among their communities. Despite the tremendous diversity in early Judaism both in theology and practice, there remains no known Judaism in this period—apocalyptic, wisdom, or any other form—outside a covenantal (or restoration-eschatological) framework.
provided a frame of reference, especially for the formulation of Jewish identity in literary texts.502

This conception was “reinforced and actualized as a continuing reality by the regular reading of Scripture in the synagogue, including such passages as Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28, 30.”503 Even Jacob Neusner, who coined the term “Judaisms” to sidestep “the problem of how to define a single ‘Judaism’ out of all the diverse data,”504 ultimately argues that the various “Judaisms” are all tied together by a “formative Judaism” centered on the generative myth (and self-fulfilling prophecy) of exile and return.505 Neusner argues that formative Judaism developed through the Babylonian exile and return to the land and made that experience normative for all subsequent “Judaisms,” which have shared the “conception that the Jews are in exile but have the hope of coming home”506 as Jews have flourished in a perpetual diaspora.507 This is, Neusner, argues, a narrative that each Judaism “retells in its own way and with its distinctive emphases.”508 Granted the correction that this exile/restoration motif cuts deeper than the Babylonian Exile but extends through the Assyrian deportations and that it is not only “the Jews” who are understood to be in exile but the rest of “Israel” as well, Neusner’s “generative narrative” is essentially what I am calling restoration eschatology.

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502 Collins, Between Athens and Jerusalem, 19. Cf. also Satlow, "Defining Judaism," 845. For examples of variation in how Jewish identity was defined, see Barclay, Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora, 402–418.


506 Neusner, Way of Torah, 14.

507 Neusner, Self-Fulfilling Prophecy. For the diaspora as formative and central to Jewish identity, see Boyarin and Boyarin, "Diaspora."

508 Neusner, Way of Torah, 15.
CHAPTER 4: THE CONSTRUCTION OF BIBLICAL ISRAEL AND EARLY JEWISH IDENTITY: CONNECTING PRESENT TO PAST

Although the centrality of the exile/restoration motif and restoration eschatology in prophetic biblical literature is widely acknowledged, modern scholarship has nevertheless generally dismissed the idea that Israel was regarded as still in a liminal state awaiting restoration in the Second Temple period, instead understanding the biblical narratives to have reframed the prophetic material in such a way as to claim the heritage of past Israel for the Yehudim, understood as the sole remnant of Israel since the return from exile in the Persian period. John Collins summarizes the present consensus:

After the fall of the Northern Kingdom, however, the Judeans laid claim to the heritage of all Israel. The Book of Deuteronomy is addressed simply to “Israel,” ostensibly to Israel in the Mosaic period but actually to the community that survived the Assyrian invasions. In 2 Chr. 30, Hezekiah summoned both Israel and Judah to celebrate the Passover in Jerusalem, thereby restoring the unity of Israel.509

Collins is, of course, correct that the context of Deuteronomy’s actual readers is indeed different from that of its implied audience and that Hezekiah does invite the survivors of Israel to celebrate the Passover in 2 Chronicles, indicating an attempt to restore Israelite unity.510 But it does not follow from these facts that the Yehudim thereby identified themselves as the whole of Israel. These biblical texts do tell of “Israel,” but in each case, the Israel in view is, as Linville


explains, “not a ‘photograph’ or a map of the writers’ ‘real’ world” but is rather set in the past of both the actual and implied audience, which is not explicitly identified as Israel.\textsuperscript{511} As Fleming points out, the very “Israelite” terminology used in the biblical narratives puts distance between the present and the past:

Where the southern name [Judah] is contemporary or close to it in use by one of Judah’s own, the northern name evokes antiquity in use that is in some sense foreign to the Judahite writers who selected it.\textsuperscript{512}

Without question, any recounting of the past also by its very nature explains, interprets, and gives meaning to the present situation,\textsuperscript{513} but we must not be too quick to identify the circumstances and people of the texts with their authors and audiences. Instead, it is the means of connecting past to present that gives shape to the present community. That is, how the past is constructed impacts present self-identification, but present identities need not be identical with those represented in narratives of the past. Moreover, because the past can be interpreted differently, later groups often come into conflict over how they interpret and apply a shared past—precisely what happened among those later groups claiming the legacy of biblical Israel. In any case, for early Jews and Christians, the scriptures were read holistically as the story of Israel, as a single unified narrative culminating in their own present situation. In the words of David Noel Freedman,

The story is that of repeated violations of the covenant terms and persistent rebellion against the Lord of the covenant until the inevitable final punishment

\textsuperscript{511} Linville, \textit{Israel}, 34; cf. Gary N. Knoppers, “History and Historiography: The Royal Reforms,” in \textit{The Chronicler as Historian}, eds. M. Patrick Graham, Kenneth G. Hoglund, and Steven L. McKenzie, JSOTS\textsuperscript{Sup} 238 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1997), 178–203. Linville also rightly observes that there is “no evidence that Kings was intended to be an up-to-date history” and that the “exile” may not have regarded by the Deuteronomists “as an event of bounded duration” to that point (70).

\textsuperscript{512} Fleming, \textit{Legacy of Israel}, 291.

was inflicted on the people of the covenant and the national enterprise was terminated violently by the capture of the city of Jerusalem, the razing of the Temple, and the exile of the leading citizens. All of this may be self-evident as the narrative unfolds itself through the nine books of the Torah and the Former Prophets (the Primary History) of the Hebrew Bible.  

The implied circumstances occupied by the reader with which the biblical narrative culminates looks nothing like those of biblical Israel occupying the land of promise—though the biblical past and prophecies provide the substance for the aspirations of the present community.  

Rather, as Carroll explains,

> In the narratives between Genesis and Chronicles, there may be discerned a metanarrative of a “homeland” occupied by the people, but the grand narrative of the Hebrew Bible (especially as constituted by Genesis–2 Kings) seems to reflect and to testify to a subtext of deported existence.

Put another way, the biblical narratives consistently place the reader in the assumed context of exile, in a place of alienation awaiting reconciliation. This perspective runs from the beginning of the story through its end. Jonathan Huddleston, for example, has persuasively argued that the narratives of Genesis tell of Israel’s origins to provide the foundations for Jewish eschatological hopes, dovetailing with the expectations attested in the prophetic corpus.  

The Eden story typologically establishes the themes of restoration eschatology at the very beginning of biblical narrative. Borrowing from Genesis Rabbah 19:9.1–2, Neusner explains,

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515 According to Katherine M. Stott, “A Comparative Study of the Exilic Gap in Ancient Israelite, Messenian and Zionist Collective Memory,” in *Community Identity in Judean Historiography: Biblical and Comparative Perspectives*, eds. Gary N. Knoppers and Kenneth A. Ristau (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2009), 41–58 (54–55), the biblical past is “represented as a golden age to which the present community aspires and in relation to which it imagines its future.” But there is an inherent discontinuity between the present and both the biblical past and the imagined future, as the prophecies of Israel’s restoration have not yet been fulfilled.

516 Carroll, “Deportation,” 64.

The stories told by Judaisms through the ages rework the theme of exile from God and return to God and the condition God had in mind at the creation, which is to say, paradise…. The stories of Adam and Eve and Israel are compared, and that yields the task of Israel, which is, to return to Eden by regaining the land of Israel.518

Yet far from appropriating the full heritage of Israel or constructing a postexilic Israel comprised of the remnant from Judah as is generally assumed, these stories emphasize and idealize the twelve-tribe unity of Israel and lament its broken present state, regularly depicting Judah as incomplete without its northern counterpart. It is surely no accident that a quarter of Genesis, which provides Israel’s primary origin myth, focuses on the primary northern patriarch Joseph rather than the southern fathers Judah or Benjamin. The Joseph Novella (Gen 37–50) even culminates in an explanation of the prominence of Ephraim within Israel (Gen 48). Judah, by contrast, is a minor player in Genesis, with the only chapter devoted to him (Gen 38) involving a rather ribald story of sexual and familial irregularity between Judah and his daughter-in-law Tamar. The wanderings of Abraham and Jacob are likewise more typically situated in northern sites like Shechem (e.g. Gen 12:6; 33:18–19; 34), which eventually became the chief city not of the Jews but of the Samaritans.

In a postexilic context, however, a narrative in which Joseph is seemingly lost or dead in an exilic situation resulting from his brothers selling him into slavery is especially relevant, given the context of the Syro-Ephraimite conflict and scattering of the Israelite house.519 Ultimately, it is Joseph—who had been reckoned permanently lost—who leads to the salvation


519 The biblical Joseph narrative is not strictly limited to Genesis; the recapitulation of Psalm 105:17–22 (which says Joseph underwent physical “affliction” and was bound with iron while imprisoned in Egypt) is also important.
of all Israel when he is reunited with his brothers, the culmination of an unseen divine plan.\textsuperscript{520} As will be shown below, some in the Second Temple period read the Joseph story in precisely this typological manner, paralleling Joseph’s enslavement in Egypt with the present fate of the northern tribes scattered among the nations.\textsuperscript{521} In much the same way Israel/Jacob thought Joseph had died in the patriarchal story, the northern tribes appear to be “dead,” but they will be revealed and restored just at the right moment—at the salvation and reconstitution of all Israel. In any case, the prominence of Joseph in the last quarter of Genesis provides an early hint of significant continuing concern about the northern house of Israel among the postexilic Jewish community.\textsuperscript{522}

Exodus carries this concern for all twelve tribes forward, as now all of Israel is enslaved and separated from the promised land, only to have YHWH miraculously free the nation from slavery in Egypt and lead them into the land by the hand of a deliverer, Moses. Along the way, YHWH renews his covenant with his people and—in the face of Israelite disobedience and unfaithfulness—postpones the restoration to the land, causing Israel to wander in the wilderness until the unfaithful generation has died out. Although on first glance this narrative serves as merely another foundation myth, the exodus was understood even in other biblical literature as typologically foreshadowing a future Israelite restoration from exile (e.g., Jer 16:14–15 MT; 520  As observed by Graham I. Davies, “Apocalyptic and Historiography,” \textit{JSOT} 5 (1978): 15–28 (24), “Such a pattern provided the perfect model for those who wished to maintain that after the long period of post-exilic history, in which Yahweh’s activity on behalf of his people might appear even to have been suspended, a divine deliverance was yet to be expected.”

\textsuperscript{521} See the discussions on 4Q372 1 and the \textit{Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs} below.

23:7–8 MT; Isa 40–55) that would be a second exodus even greater than the first, a sentiment that by no means disappeared in the Second Temple period.

The covenant renewal and wilderness wanderings are by no means irrelevant, either, as many Jews (as will be shown below) regarded the initial restoration from exile as disappointing and incomplete, looking to the wilderness wanderings as typologically prototypical of the current situation in which Israel remains wandering in the “wilderness of the peoples.” It goes without saying that the Torah contains these patriarchal and early Israelite narratives not out of an antiquarian interest but because of their rhetorical and typological application to the postexilic situation. These historical narratives provided the framework through which later readers would interpret the grand unfulfilled promises of the Israelite prophets, these stories provided the record of the covenant between YHWH and Israel, culminating in Israel’s unfaithfulness and exile and YHWH’s promises to renew his covenant with Israel in spite of their past rebellion.

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525 See chapter 9 below.

Deuteronomy and Restoration Eschatology

The emphasis on the present incompleteness of Israel and promises of future restoration are especially apparent in Deuteronomy as read from a late Second Temple Period perspective. Although Deuteronomy may indeed have originated, as Collins notes, as part of an effort to reconstruct a unified Israel after the Assyrian campaigns, the Israel established in the text looks nothing like the post-Assyrian kingdom of Judah or the weak Judaean state in the Persian period. The book is indeed a constitution of sorts, but it is not presented as a constitution of the present people of Judah but instead rhetorically situated as the constitution of a past people—the

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528 That an early form of what became Deuteronomy was composed in the seventh century BCE has been the prevailing scholarly opinion since de Wette’s 1805 dissertation identified Deuteronomy as “the book of the law” which Josiah’s priests found in the temple (2 Kgs 22–23). Though there have been many other proposals over the past three centuries, the general anchoring of Deuteronomy in the seventh century remains the consensus view. Cf. W. M. L. de Wette, “Dissertatio critica qua Deuteronomium a prioribus Pentateuchi libris diversum alius cuiusdam auctoris opus esse monstratur,” (PhD diss., Jena, 1805); Duane L. Christensen, *Deuteronomy 1:1–21:9*, Accordance/Thomas Nelson electronic ed., WBC 6A (Waco, TX: Word, 2001), lxviii. It should also be noted that if Deuteronomy was originally composed to appropriate Israel’s heritage for those from Judah, it was a failure, as even the Samaritans—who traced their descent back to the North—claimed Deuteronomy as their own, a critical datum for any inquiry into the relationship between the Samaritans and Jews and when exactly the schism between the two groups happened, as discussed in Schorch, “Samaritan Version of Deuteronomy”; Nodet, *A Search for the Origins of Judaism*; Frank Moore Cross, “Aspects of Samaritan and Jewish History in Late Persian and Hellenistic Times,” *HTR* 59, no. 3 (1966): 201–211. Cf. also Pummer, “Samaritanism”; Hjelm, “Mt. Gerizim”; "Samaritans and Jews"; *Samaritans and Early Judaism*; Becking, “Earliest Samaritan Inscriptions”; Macchi, *Les Samaritains*; Knoppers, "What has Mt. Zion"; "Cutheans or Children of Jacob"; "Mt. Gerizim and Mt. Zion"; Crown, "Redating the Schism"; *The Samaritans*; Coggins, *Samaritans and Jews*; James D. Purvis, *The Samaritan Pentateuch and the Origin of the Samaritan Sect*, HSM 2 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968). See also the discussion of Samaritan origins and the relationship between Jews and Samaritans in chapter 3 above.

529 Mullen, *Narrative History*, 83: “Yet the national identity constructed by the boundaries erected in Deuteronomy included the defunct nation of Israel.”
unified twelve-tribe entity of Israel—from which the readers (whether in post-Assyrian Judah or the late Second Temple Period) can work only by analogy.\textsuperscript{530} Theodore Mullen explains:

The “Israel” addressed by Moses is ideal, one that will exist in real terms only at a later time. This “Israel,” too, will find itself outside the land as a result of exile. It has only the hope of [YHWH’s] forgiveness and acceptance of its repentance to cling to in the attempt to regain this ideal time that had now been lost…. The symbolic nature of the designation “Israel,” [is] applied now to a nonexistent entity with the intention of recreating that very object.\textsuperscript{531}

Put another way, as it stands in its final form, Deuteronomy does not so much construct a present Israelite polity as it establishes a system of covenantal nomism and restoration eschatology that has dominated Jewish theological thought for millennia since.\textsuperscript{532} Deuteronomy’s pattern of obedience and blessing, disobedience and chastening, return and mercy, exile and restoration—together with an overarching theology of YHWH’s grace—sows the seeds of restoration eschatology that come into full flower within the theological retellings of Israel’s history, particularly in the Former Prophets, where Israel is shown to have repeatedly strayed from YHWH, received chastening, repented, and then experienced divine favor. Far from establishing a new Israel limited to the \textit{Yehudim}, Deuteronomy emphasizes the essential unity of


\textsuperscript{531} Mullen, \textit{Narrative History}, 57–58.

\textsuperscript{532} On covenantal nomism as foundational to Judaism, see Sanders, ”Patterns”; Sanders, \textit{Paul and Palestinian Judaism}; and Sanders, \textit{Judaism}. On Deuteronomy as eschatological, see McConville, “Restoration in Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomic Literature,” 39–40.
all twelve tribes of Israel and—as with the Prophets—climaxes with the prediction that Israel will rebel, break covenant, and be scattered in exile as punishment.533

Then they will say, “Because they forsook the covenant of YHWH … YHWH uprooted them from their land in anger, fury and great wrath, and cast them into another land (as it is this day).”534 (Deut 29:25, 28)

Moreover, YHWH will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other end of the earth; and there you will serve other gods, wood and stone, which you or your fathers have not known. (Deut 28:64)

Nevertheless, as with the Prophets, Deuteronomy does not conclude with failure and abandonment but rather promises that YHWH would not allow the covenant to remain broken. Instead, YHWH will ultimately regather his people, yet again showing them mercy and ending the cycle of disobedience and return once and for all:

Thus when all of these things have come upon you, the blessing and the curse which I have set before you, and you remember them in all nations where YHWH your God has banished you, and you return to YHWH your God and obey Him with all your heart and soul according to all that I command you and your children today, then YHWH your God will restore you from captivity. …

Moreover, YHWH your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love YHWH your God with all your heart and with all your soul, so that you may live. YHWH your God will inflict all these curses on your enemies and on those who hate you, those who persecuted you. And you shall again obey YHWH, and observe all his commands that I command you today. (Deut 30:1–3a, 6–8)

533 Deuteronomy’s pessimism about the inevitability of impending exile matches Linville’s reading of the Josianic reforms in 2 Kings, which he sees as preparing the people for the inescapably imminent exile by accepting responsibility for the sins that will soon result in Judah joining the rest of Israel in exile (Linville, Israel, 226–253). Linville points out that the captivity paradoxically results in the reunification of Israel inasmuch as each of the rival monarchies has been shattered. On exile and restoration and the ending of Deuteronomy, cf. Thiessen, "Song of Moses."

534 The “as it is this day” appears to be an aside referencing the fulfillment of this passage from the perspective of the present state of the editor/reader. The LXX strengthens this connection by translating this portion ὡσεὶ νῦν, “as now.” According to m. Sanh. 10:3 and b. Sanh. 110b, R. Aqiba interpreted “as it is this day” here to mean the ten tribes would never return to the land. Cf. Scott, “Self-Understanding,” 186–87. See also Chapter 10 below.
In these passages, Deuteronomy promises the restoration and return of an Israel significantly larger in scope than that of the Jewish refugees from Babylon. Thus, in sharp contrast to Collins’ assertion that Deuteronomy reflects Judaean appropriation of the heritage of Israel, Deuteronomy looks forward to a grand restoration of scattered Israel, a hope all the more prominent when read from the perspective of the late Second Temple period. In the context of the late Judahite kingdom, this suggests a hope for the return of the (mostly northern) Israelites scattered by Assyria and their reconciliation and reunion with Judah—an expectation that would ultimately broaden to include the exiles from Judah after the deportation to Babylon. Indeed, as Francis Watson explains, the narrative framing of the book rhetorically situates the reader in a liminal space awaiting the promised inheritance with the rest of Israel:

[T]he deuteronomic narrator develops … a hermeneutical framework for the whole book. For the narrator, Israel in the land of Moab is not an object of purely historical interest but represents the situation of the Israel of his own day—in dispersion, outside the land, awaiting the realization of the promise. That is the clear implication of Deuteronomy 27–30, chapters which shed retrospective light on the book in its entirety…. In its final form, the implied setting of the book is one of exile and dispersion: the narrator uses Moses’ speeches to address his own contemporaries, whose situation is analogous to that of Israel “in the land of Moab.”

Readers of Deuteronomy find themselves near the end of the “slavery/promise” stage, awaiting the great theophany (“promised presence”) and subsequent “freedom/fulfillment,” this time not from Egypt but from “the ends of the earth” (Deut 30:4). This understanding of Deuteronomy was prevalent throughout the Second Temple period, with the Song of Moses in

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Deut 32 and, to a lesser extent, Moses’ blessing of Israel in Deut 33, taking special importance, as Richard Bauckham explains,

“In Second Temple Judaism the Song of Moses was often read as a prophecy of Israel’s future, predicting Israel’s subjection to the nations and subsequent deliverance and restoration by YHWH…. The Song of Moses was widely understood as itself predicting Israel’s restoration after exile.”

Thus Deuteronomy and the Song of Moses in particular—the “end of the Torah,” as it were—was understood as concluding with promises of restoration that remain unfulfilled throughout the Second Temple period, wrapping up the Pentateuch by establishing a permanent paradigm of restoration eschatology at the very core of Judaism. That restoration-eschatological paradigm—and the implied location of Israel as on the cusp of restoration established in Deuteronomy—remained prevalent in early Judaism as will be attested throughout the remainder of this study.

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538 McConville, “Restoration in Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomic Literature,” 39–40. The perspective of Deuteronomy and particularly the Song of Moses are so strong that one scholar has remarked, “Deuteronomy 32 was a major source, the ‘bible’ so to speak, of the prophetic movement … [it] has extremely close ties with especially the 7th–6th century prophecy. Virtually all the major themes of those prophets (including even the ‘remnant’) have their antecedents in Deuteronomy 32.” George E. Mendenhall, “Samuel’s 'Broken Rib': Deuteronomy 32,” in A Song of Power and the Power of Song: Essays on the Book of Deuteronomy, ed. Duane L. Christensen (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1993), 169–180. The influence may of course have gone the other direction, but that is irrelevant with respect to the influence of the Song of Moses whenever the Torah began to be authoritative and certainly would not have mattered to an ancient reader.

539 For the concept of exile and return—that is restoration eschatology—as fundamental to the construction of all forms of Judaism, see Neusner, “Exile and Return” and Neusner, Judaism when Christianity Began, 55–66.
Former Prophets: Loss of Identity

Both the Former Prophets and Chronicles carry the restoration-eschatological theology of Deuteronomy forward, embedded in historical narratives that ostensibly explain the present (exilic) state of affairs.⁵⁴⁰ Significantly, neither gives any support to the idea that the name “Israel” was appropriated by the southern “Judaeans” as is so often asserted. Rather, despite the

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narrator’s condemnation of the northern kingdom’s idolatry and its ultimate fate, the north retains that moniker in Kings, as Knoppers notes:

Nevertheless, the authors of Kings do not speak of Judah, the southern kingdom, as Israel. In Kings Israel may refer to a multi-tribal entity, the united kingdom, the northern region of the nation, the northern kingdom, or exiled northerners (2 Kgs 17:6; 18:11), but the term Israel is never used to refer to either the southern kingdom or the Judahite exiles. The writers of Kings, as well as the writers of the other books in the Deuteronomistic History (or the Former Prophets), embrace a comprehensive understanding of the Israelite people.

YHWH is the “God of Israel” and never “the God of Judah,” highlighting the broader corporate entity of which Judah is only a part—and this even after the fall of the northern kingdom. It is striking that by the end of both Kings and Chronicles—that is, where the reader’s present meets the past—Israel is no more. That is, “Israel” has long faded from the scene, while Judah remains in exile, the two parts of greater Israel having first split into rival kingdoms, the northern kingdom retaining the appellative “Israel” and the weaker but more stable southern kingdom labeled “Judah,” before being scattered by the Assyrians and exiled by the Babylonians, respectively. The historical books thus establish a perpetual look backwards and permanent hope forward at a time when Israel is no more, with only Judah having returned in weakness, still under the thumb of powerful foreign empires.

541 For convenience I have chosen to use the usual English names (1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings) for these books rather than 1–4 Kingdoms as in the LXX.


543 Zeitlin, “Hebrew, Jew and Israel,” 367. Linville, Israel, 28, notes the peculiarity of this fact: “If the origins of the literature now contained in the Hebrew Bible lie within Judah-ism, then why is there absolutely no reference in this literature to Yahweh as the ‘God of Judah’?”

The tragic ending of Kings is a natural conclusion since these books are, in the words of Gordon McConville, “arguably all about a loss of identity,”\textsuperscript{545} centering on Israel’s rebellion against YHWH’s covenant and consequent forfeiture of status, identity, and ultimately land.\textsuperscript{546} This theme is accentuated by the constant tension between the image of an ideal Israel and actual Israel. On the one hand, the Deuteronomic covenant constructs Israel in ideal terms as a twelve-tribe unity fully obedient to YHWH’s covenant and enjoying the blessing of YHWH’s favor. On the other hand, actual Israel never comes close to matching this description.\textsuperscript{547} On the contrary, as the narrator regularly points out, Israel consistently falls short of her covenantal obligations, setting up an expectation of punishment. This contrast between the ideal Israel and actual Israel leads to a persistent sense of foreboding throughout the narrative, which the reader naturally expects to end in exile:

The early books of the Former Prophets are permeated with an air of entropy, despite the fact that Israel slowly builds itself an empire. Ultimately the empire itself succumbs to the forces of decay which had plagued Israel from the beginning. It is the play between social and political entropy and revival that carries the reader to the ultimate destruction of Judah and Israel.\textsuperscript{548}

Much like a modern film about the sinking of the \textit{Titanic}, the reader of these stories would be expected to know about the exile, so the author could count on his audience to make such connections and recognize foreshadowing far more readily than in a story where the ending

\textsuperscript{545} McConville, "Narrative and Meaning in the Books of Kings," 34, emphasis his. McConville argues that this theme in Kings and “the question Who is Israel [that] hangs over these books” (34) carries forward and builds upon the perspective of “the preceding books of DtH” (34).

\textsuperscript{546} For more on the tragic character of the Former Prophets, see Flemming A. J. Nielsen, \textit{The Tragedy in History: Herodotus and the Deuteronomistic history}, JSOTSup 251 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1997), esp. 154–160.

\textsuperscript{547} Mullen, \textit{Narrative History}, 56–57, observes that the deuteronomistic presentation of “Israel” relies on the paradox of Israel’s election and obligations, the various resolutions of which construct “Israel” throughout.

\textsuperscript{548} Linville, \textit{Israel}, 91.
is unknown at the start. Much of the narrative thus makes use of the ironic disconnect between
Israel’s chronic disobedience and her political fate. That is, despite her unfaithfulness and the
stated covenantal penalties for disobedience, Israel’s political fortunes continue to improve until
the division of the kingdoms marks the beginning of the inevitable decline. But even then, the
(more) wicked North actually enjoys greater power and prosperity until its destruction by
Assyria, at which point the consequences of Israel’s disobedience come to full fruition, only to
be followed by Judah’s inevitable destruction a century later.

**Joshua-Judges**

The theme of Israel’s loss of identity and status is pervasive throughout the Former
Prophets, which begins with a unified, victorious Israel entering the promised land and concludes
with a divided and ultimately broken people removed from the land. (It bears repeating that for
an ancient audience, Joshua and Judges were part of the larger corpus of the Former Prophets
rather than being read more independently in the fashion of modern scholarship, so the end of
this larger work is highly relevant to its beginning and vice-versa.) The definition of Israel is
firmly established in Joshua as a collective entity of twelve tribes, “In fact, the term ‘all Israel,
signifying an entity comprising the entire twelve tribes, appears repeatedly [17 times] throughout
the book of Joshua.” Joshua thereby constructs an image of a unified Israel obediently serving
YHWH and receiving the benefits of this obedience, with several proleptic warnings like the
Achan incident (Jos 7) along the way.

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549 McConville, "Narrative and Meaning in the Books of Kings," 32–33; Robert Polzin, Moses and the
Deuteronomist: A Literary Study of the Deuteronomic History. I: Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges (Bloomington:
Indiana University Press, 1980).

550 Grosby, Biblical Ideas of Nationality, 16.
The rest of the Former Prophets tells the story of this people Israel’s decline and destruction. Barry Webb, for example, argues that in Judges the non-fulfillment of YHWH’s promise of land is “the fundamental issue which the book as a whole addresses,”\(^{551}\) highlighting the dramatic tension between Israel’s election and weakness depicted throughout the narrative. In the face of Israel’s chronic disobedience, YHWH decides “at the end of the Judges era not to give them the whole land originally promised.”\(^{552}\) By the end of Judges, Israel remains in the land, but its covenantal right to the land is tenuous at best due to repeated unfaithfulness. Inevitable judgment looms, since “in those days, there was no king in Israel, and everyone did what was right in his own eyes” (Judg 17:6; 19:1; 21:25).\(^{553}\)

**Samuel and Kings (1–4 Kingdoms)**

Unfortunately, the rise of the monarchy does not rectify this problem but is itself a further rejection of YHWH (1 Sam 8:7), ultimately leading to even greater wickedness, just as Samuel warns.\(^{554}\) Moreover, the account of Gideon and Abimelech (Judg 6–9) has already established a pessimistic perspective on kingship that serves proleptically to reinforce the ambivalence (at best) of 1 Samuel towards the institution of the monarchy.\(^{555}\) Again, although modern scholarship tends to distinguish pro- and anti-monarchical redactors of the Former Prophets, ancient readers


\(^{553}\) On this phrase in Judges, see Shemaryahu Talmon, “‘In Those Days There Was No King in Israel,’” *Imm* 5 (1974): 27–36.


did not draw such distinctions but rather grappled with the ambiguous picture presented in the final form, where the move towards monarchy continues the trend of unfaithfulness.\footnote{On anti-monarchical traditions among (particularly northern) Israelites and the decentralized nature of the northern kingdom reflected in the final biblical documents, see Fleming, Legacy of Israel, esp. 295–98.} Linville explains, “The realization that the [final] work contains paradox, and not merely incompletely reconciled sources, or layering of different editorial additions, is certainly an observation which can lead to further insights.”\footnote{Linville, Israel, 85.} In the final form, the rise of the monarchy is both a temporary respite with respect to Israel’s political weakness and a continuation of this pattern of unfaithfulness, or in Klein’s words:

\begin{quote}
Israel’s rejection of [YHWH] continued a pattern of behavior practiced ever since the Exodus (cf. 1 Sam 10:18–19). In noting that Israel’s misdeeds lasted until “this day,” the redactor wants to express not only an indictment of the people at Samuel’s time, but an indictment of Israel extending to the time of the book’s composition. That is, Israel’s sin continued from the Exodus to the exile.\footnote{Klein, 1 Samuel, 75–76.}
\end{quote}

As might be expected given this trajectory, the story of Saul’s rise and kingship is highly ironic, even tragic in character, “the story of a man not fitted for a job that should not have been opened.”\footnote{Good, Irony, 58; cf. Nielsen, The Tragedy in History, 124–135; Robert P. Gordon, 1 & 2 Samuel (London: Continuum, 1984), 30–35.} But the dire warnings about the nature of monarchy in 1 Sam 8:7–18 are certainly not limited to the disaster of Saul’s kingship. On the contrary, even David’s model kingship is marred right its high point by adultery, murder, and a military coup by his eldest son in 2 Sam 9–20, only reinforcing the sense of Israel’s instability.\footnote{Cf. Linville, Israel, 90; J. Gordon McConville, “Narrative and Meaning in the Books of Kings,” Bib 70 (1989): 31–49 (33–34).}
Solomon’s kingship marks the center of Israel’s history as recounted in Kings, the high point of the monarchy, and a political golden age. But, as Linville explains, “Even Solomon’s reign in Kings seems undermined at an early stage.” Solomon brings the kingdom to its zenith but is also, in the words of Antti Laato, the “destroyer of the Israelite empire.” It is Solomon who breaks the Deuteronomic prohibitions for the king (Deut 17:16–17) by acquiring numerous horses for himself, sending to Egypt for horses, and marrying many foreign wives. The narrator makes these violations quite clear by recounting these deeds together (ironically at the end of a summary of Solomon’s glorious tenure) in the same order as the prohibitions in Deuteronomy and immediately following with the declaration of Deuteronomic punishment (1 Kgs 10:26–11:13). Solomon also introduces new administrative districts, circumventing the traditional tribal-territorial boundaries established by YHWH (1 Kgs 4:7–19). Moreover, of all the kings of Israel, Solomon’s high taxes and conscription of labor best fulfill Samuel’s warnings about the nature of monarchy in 1 Sam 8, warnings that conclude with Samuel’s solemn

561 Kings, however, hints that this “golden age” was in fact quite limited, as illustrated by the fact that Solomon had to receive part of his own land as a marriage bounty from the king of Egypt (1 Kgs 9:16). Cf. McConville, "Narrative and Meaning in the Books of Kings,” 36–37.

562 Linville, Israel, 90. See also Eric A. Seibert, Subversive Scribes and the Solomonic Narrative a Rereading of 1 Kings 1–11, LHBOTS 436 (New York: T&T Clark, 2006).


564 Laato, A Star is Rising, 79–80.

declaration that YHWH will not listen to Israel’s cries when this happens.\textsuperscript{566} Even the Solomonic
temple is itself ambiguous in character.\textsuperscript{567} Nathan’s prophecy shows its insignificance to YHWH
(2 Sam 7:5–7), its location is connected with judgment (2 Sam 24:15–25), and Solomon’s grand
dedicatory prayer concedes both its insufficiency as a house for YHWH (1 Kgs 8:27) and its
inability to restrain Israel’s sin, which will inevitably result in exile (1 Kgs 8:46–48).

The high point of the unified Israelite monarchy under Solomon is short-lived, as Israel’s
decline begins with the secession of the northern tribes from the monarchy governed by David’s
heirs behind a competing king, the Ephraimite Jeroboam I. Solomon’s reign thus ironically
marks both the political high point of Israel and a new low in the Former Prophets’ narrative of
Israel’s continued decline, the result of Solomon’s spiritual unfaithfulness and heavy-handed
government.

Solomon’s forfeiture of ten tribes and retention of one is obviously central to the
evaluation of his reign, and to the message of Kings (1 Kgs 11,13, cf. 11,36; 15,4;
2 Kgs 8,19). It heightens the tension between the promise, which has no explicit
conditions attached in 2 Sam 7, and its vulnerability because of Israel’s
unfaithfulness.\textsuperscript{568}

This division into two kingdoms—and Israel’s accompanying adoption of golden calves
at Dan and Bethel to compete with the Jerusalem cult, itself an echo of the golden calf episode in
Exod 32—marks the end of Israel’s political ascent and the beginning of the decline culminating

\textsuperscript{566} For more detail on the ambivalent portrayal of Solomon’s reign, see McConville, "Narrative and Meaning in the

\textsuperscript{567} Lyle M. Eslinger, Into the Hands of the Living God, JSOTSup 24 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1989), 145–47,
highlights other flaws of Solomon within the narrative, arguing that the temple-building narratives suggest a
Solomonic attempt to coerce unconditional sanction from YHWH, which the repetitions of the conditions in 1 Kgs
6:11–13 and 1 Kgs 9:3–9 demonstrate to be a failure.

\textsuperscript{568} McConville, "Narrative and Meaning in the Books of Kings," 37.
in exile.569 Both Kings and Chronicles emphasize this point and lament the continuation of this situation into the present, “Thus Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David to this day” (1 Kgs 12:19 // 2 Chr 10:19, my emphasis). With the significant words “to this day,” the story constructs a present Israel that cannot solely be identified with the descendants of the southern kingdom. Rather, Israel remains divided and broken, with the bulk of Israel continuing in rebellion “to this day.”570

From this point forward (to the confusion of many an unfortunate undergraduate), “Israel” refers not only to the twelve-tribes descended from the eponymous patriarch but also to the northern kingdom, the “house of Israel” (ישראל בית), in contrast to southern “the house of Judah” (יהודיה בית).571 Read in an exilic or postexilic context, it is striking that Kings focuses not on Judah but on the northern house of Israel until its destruction by Assyria, with sixteen chapters from 1 Kings 17–2 Kings 10, including the iconic ministries of Elijah and Elisha, focusing almost exclusively on the dominant, corrupt (according to the narrator), and doomed


570 The “to this day” statements in the Deuteronomistic History have been an important part of the discussion of the date(s) of authorship/redaction, as evidenced in Geoghegan, “Until This Day” and Jeffrey C. Geoghegan, The Time, Place, and Purpose of the Deuteronomistic History: The Evidence of “until this Day,” BJS 347 (Providence: Brown Judaic Studies, 2006). What matters for this study, however, is that from the perspective of the reader (both real and implied), such statements in an anonymous, undated, and authoritative text featuring an omniscient narrator imply the continuation of such circumstances into the present not only of the author but of the reader. For more on “to this day” statements and their rhetorical role in constituting the audience in light of the stories being told (though focusing on their use in Genesis), see also Huddleston, Eschatology in Genesis, 35–40, 64–63.

571 E.g. 1 Kgs 12:21; Jer 3:18; 11:17. These separate groups are never portrayed as completely unified even in the accounts of the monarchy (e.g. 2 Sam 2:4–11; 2 Sam 5:5), and the tenuous connection forged between them under David finally broke after Solomon’s death. Cf. Yigal Levin, “Joseph, Judah and the Benjamin Conundrum,” ZAW 116, no. 2 (January, 2006): 223–241 (esp. 225–226). As shown in Chapter 1, this division between the kingdoms is the source of Josephus’ continued distinction between the terms “Israel” and “the Jews.”
northern kingdom. This shift highlights the ambiguity of the term “Israel” throughout the Hebrew Bible, an ambiguity that in fact renders the term all the more powerful as a transformative symbol. McConville rightly observes the irony inherent in the apostate northern kingdom retaining the title “Israel,” yet another illustration of the larger theme of Israel’s loss of status:

Kings is arguably all about a loss of identity, of which loss of land is finally a function. The division of the kingdom is a first manifestation of this. It is no mere “casting off” of the north. On the contrary, the king of the northern kingdom is regularly styled “the King of Israel,” even though it is here that the most profound apostasy, even though he is not Davidic, and even though succession is largely by main force. Rather, separation is part of the problematic of being Israel. The question Who is Israel? hangs over these books.

The tension between Israel’s disobedience and its identity as YHWH’s elect people is thus all the more prominent after the division of the kingdoms. After a period of sustained idolatry in the north, conflict between the two kingdoms ultimately leads to the Syro-Ephraimite conflict (2 Kgs 16; 2 Chr 28; Isa 7–12), in which Judah calls upon Assyria for assistance against Israel, Syria/Aram, and their allies. The north is subsequently destroyed by the Assyrians in several major campaigns, most notably under Tiglath-Pileser III (2 Kgs 15:29, 16:9) and Shalmaneser (2 Kgs 17:3–6). Each campaign ends with significant deportations, with Israelites scattered across the Assyrian empire and new inhabitants brought from outside the land.

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572 Knoppers both highlights this fact and seeks to explain it in his two-volume work, Two Nations Under God (n.b. the discussion at I, 9). In spite of their presence in the north, both Elijah and Elisha are subversive figures who subtly protest the division between the kingdoms and the illegitimacy of Omride rule in the north (e.g. 1 Kgs 18:31–32; 2 Kgs 3:14), again highlighting this concern of the narrator.

573 Mullen, Narrative History, 57.


to resettle Samaria—Kings’ polemical explanation of the origins of those later identified with the Samaritans. The narrator—typically scarce in his evaluation and terse in his judgments—at this point finally breaks into an extended and unusually emotional soliloquy explaining the situation and its causes in one of the most glaring examples of “retrospective or last-minute clarification” in the biblical narrative:

The king of Assyria captured Samaria and carried Israel away into exile …. This happened because the children of Israel had sinned against YHWH their God…. They served idols, concerning which YHWH had said to them, “You must not do this thing.” … They spurned his statutes and his covenant, the one he made with their ancestors, and his testimonies, which he testified against them. And they walked after the Nothing (הָהֵזב) and they became nothing (ויהֵזב); they walked after the nations that surrounded them, concerning whom YHWH had commanded them not to behave as they did. And they abandoned all the commands of YHWH their God. So YHWH was very angry with Israel and removed them from his face; none was left except the tribe of Judah…. So Israel was carried away into exile from their own land to Assyria until this day. (2 Kgs 17:6–7a, 12, 15–16a, 18, 23b)

Yet again, the exile of Israel—specifically that of the northern house—is depicted as continuing “to this day.” By adopting the practices of the surrounding nations, Israel “became nothing,” undifferentiated from the nations. For Jewish readers in the Second Temple period,

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577 Sternberg, Poetics, 54–55, observes that the biblical narrator is typically laconic and scarce with evaluation but preserves “foolproof judgment” through “retrospective or last-minute judgment,” by which “the narrative will often enlighten the naive or superficial toward the end.” Mullen, Narrative History, 43, similarly notes the unusual display of emotion in this passage.

578 After the prior equation of “walked after the Nothing … became nothing,” this clause implies that by walking after the surrounding nations, they became the surrounding nations.

579 Cf. Mullen, Narrative History, 78. This notion of becoming nothing may allude to neo-Assyrian policies of deportation designed to produce ethnically mixed populations, thereby effectively eliminating rebellious peoples, a
this continued to stand in distinction to the return of Jews from Babylon since Jewish sources give no indication of Israelites who were resettled among the various regions of the Assyrian Empire ever returning to their homeland in any significant numbers. Later biblical authors and, as will be seen below, many Jews around the turn of the era were conscious of this difference, with Israel’s absence still keenly felt (despite or even exacerbated by the presence of the Samaritans).

Not to be outdone, Judah is similarly condemned for adopting the idolatrous “statutes which Israel had introduced” (2 Kgs 17:19), leading to its own series of deportations and destruction just over a century later. Thus, “YHWH rejected all the seed of Israel and afflicted them and gave them into the hand of plunderers until he had cast them from before his face” (2 Kgs 17:20). That the narrator declares this judgment upon the south even before it happens in the story serves to cast the gloom of inevitable judgment upon the later reform efforts of Hezekiah and Josiah, which are undertaken in the shadow of impending destruction. Far from laying claim to the full heritage of Israel after the north’s Assyrian destruction as suggested by Collins, Hezekiah’s reforms are a dismal failure, all the more in that Hezekiah’s just reign is followed by Manasseh’s exceedingly wicked rule. Rather, Josiah’s reform in particular—undertaken with the knowledge that future destruction was assured (2 Kgs 22:13–20)— prepares Judah for its

policy to which the importation of those from other nations to the region of Samaria also alludes. On neo-Assyrian policies of deportation and its application to the Israelite deportations, see Oded, Mass Deportations; "Assyrian Rule"; Na’aman, "Population Changes"; Na’aman, and Zadok, "Assyrian Deportations"; Younger, "Deportations"; Galil, "Israelite Exiles in Media."

580 Cf. the discussion on the Samaritans on pp. 116–26 (esp. 117–20) above.


transformation into an exilic people. That is, Josiah sets the example for the narrator and reader to emulate as YHWH’s people in exile. As Linville explains,

> What is accomplished, therefore, is not so much the disregarding of previous sins as the acceptance that their commission has brought dire consequences upon the nation. The renewed covenant looks not only to the future, but also to the past, linking both in a single continuum. The nation may be judged, but there is not an outright rejection of [YHWH’s] people. The covenant renewal and following purge, rather than interrupt the slide into exile, are integral parts of this historical trajectory. They never deny its outcome, but still reassert the fundamental link between YHWH and Israel. Set on the very eve of exile, Josiah’s ‘failed’ purge bridges the gap between a historian’s condemnation of his people and a visionary’s hope of reconciliation, even if it is not a bridge that the book leads its readers across.

The narrative thus establishes a clear continuity between the implied audience and biblical Israel but rhetorically situates the reader in the liminal space between the Israels of the past and future—between punishment and restoration—at a time when both the ideal and the polity of Israel remain unrealized. That is, the present community of the reader is rhetorically placed in continuity with biblical Israel and the restored Israel of the future but synonymous with neither. As Mullen explains, “the deuteronomistic history constitutes a two-way vision: it looks to the past to understand the present and to the future to restore the ideals that have been described as part of that past.”

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583 Linville, *Israel*, 226–253


585 This ending on the threshold is similar to the ending of the New Testament book of Acts, which concludes with Paul still living and the reader effectively enjoined to continue Paul’s work.

586 Mullen, *Narrative History*, 284.
currently in the second phase of the recurring cycle of apostasy, judgment, repentance, and salvation.587

The readers in the post-monarchic world are transported into a narrative realm in which they are in a spiritually liminal, and so potentially transformative state. Somewhere betwixt and between the two ideals of retribution and salvation, they might reaffirm the covenant yet again and so have communion with the ancient god of Israel …. There seems to me to be a deliberate paradox.588

By concluding on the threshold of restoration with Jehoiachin’s release from prison, Kings further reinforces this paradox, as the reader remains in exile, looking back to Israel’s destruction and forward towards its imminent restoration.589 This story thus serves not as literature of appropriation and legitimation but as a permanent reminder of the incompleteness of Israel in the present and standardizes and sacralizes Jewish expectations of a restored Israel in the future, constructing an Israel that once was, now is not, and is to come.

Chronicles: On the Threshold of Restoration

Despite its relatively late authorship,590 Chronicles exhibits the same sort of deliberate paradox, conspicuously summarizing the seventy years of Babylonian captivity in one sentence

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588 Linville, Israel, 251.
590 A wide range of dates for Chronicles have been proposed, from the late sixth century to the Maccabean era (ca. 160 bce), but a date sometime in the fourth century, around the end of the Persian period and beginning of the Hellenistic period, enjoys a growing majority at present. Cf. Ralph W. Klein, 1 Chronicles: A Commentary on 1 Chronicles, Accordance electronic ed., Hermeneia 13 (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2006), 13–16; Kai Peltonen, “A Jigsaw without a Model? The Date of Chronicles,” in Did Moses Speak Attic? Jewish History and Historiography in the Hellenistic Period, ed. Lester L. Grabbe, JSOTSup 37 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2001), 225–273; Isaac Kalimi, “Die Abfassungszeit der Chronik—Forschungsstand und Perspektiven,” ZAW 105, no. 2 (1993): 223–233. At any rate, that Chronicles was written later than and knew the Former Prophets as a source is a long-standing consensus. For other views, however, cf. A. Graeme Auld, Kings without Privilege: David and Moses in the Story of the Bible’s Kings (London: Burns & Oates, 1994); “What Was the Main Source of the Books of Chronicles?” in The Chronicler as Author: Studies in Text and Texture, eds. M. Patrick Graham and Steven L. McKenzie, JSOTSup 263
(2 Chr 36:20–21) and omitting the restoration, instead concluding with Cyrus’ decree that every one of YHWH’s people should return. Thus, like Kings, Chronicles situates the reader in the space between retribution and salvation and on the cusp of restoration, looking back to Israel’s heritage and destruction but with hope for the future. Sara Japhet explains,

> For the Chronicler, the restoration of Israel’s destiny is not a matter of the past but a programme for the future—it has not yet occurred, but is to be expected and awaited. With this, the Chronicler’s opposition to the facts and ideology of the book of Ezra-Nehemiah has reached its climax: it is not a matter of measure or degree but one of total rejection…. The Chronicler places himself and his generation in the time of Cyrus. Restoration lies ahead and is about to begin.

In contrast to the Former Prophets, which trace Israel’s decline back to an ideal established in Moses’ time, Chronicles’ sets up the Davidic/Solomonic kingdom as the standard, the time when a united Israel was at its political high point, and focuses specifically on the fate of the Davidic (Judahite) monarchy, an emphasis signaled by the careful language at the end of the genealogy, “Thus all Israel was enrolled by genealogies, and these are written in the book of the kings of Israel. And Judah was taken into exile in Babylon because of their unfaithfulness” (1 Chr. 9:1). Yet again, “all Israel” is distinguished from the subset Judah, the only group of Israelites deported to Babylon. Japhet has recognized the importance of the distinction between “all Israel” and “Judah” here, arguing that the Chronicler thus believes that “all Israel” had never

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591 As noted by Sara Japhet, “Exile and Restoration in the Book of Chronicles,” in Becking and Korpel, *The Crisis of Israelite Religion*, 33–44 (36), “[Chronicles] ends on a positive note rather than with a catastrophe—be it the destruction, the exile, or the death of Gedaliahu. This ending looks to the future.”

592 Japhet, “Exile and Restoration,” 43. As will be shown below, this turns out not to be such a clear opposition, as Ezra-Nehemiah similarly indicates that Israel’s restoration has not yet taken place.
in fact left the land. The passage itself, however, does not suggest that “all Israel” was never exiled or that only Judah was exiled but that only Judah was exiled to Babylon. The other Israelites, as the reader of Chronicles is already aware, were taken into exile but not to Babylon. Rather, this verse accounts for the book’s focus upon Judah as the frame begins to narrow. Nevertheless, for the purpose of understanding the distinction between the terms “Israel” and “the Jews” in later periods, such passages with their distinct language remain instructive.

Chronicles’ nearly exclusive focus on the southern kingdom of Judah might at first glance seem to suggest either an anti-northern bias or that the Chronicler inclusively regards his own contemporary community as the heir to the heritage of all Israel. Recent research, however, has demonstrated that Chronicles—along with its rejection of the idea that the restoration had already occurred—retains an open perspective towards the North and shows special concern for their plight, continuing to uphold the ideal of a restored, (re)united twelve-tribe Israel. For

593 Japhet, “Exile and Restoration,” 42.

594 Japhet points to the presence of Israelites in the land in 2 Chron 30:5, but the Chronicler places that event before the final Assyrian deportation, not after (see below).

595 Knoppers, “Did Jacob Become Judah,” 42, observes, “Indeed, the work plays on the different nuances of the name Israel - the patriarch Israel, the united kingdom of Saul, David, and Solomon, the northern kingdom, the southern kingdom, the people of God, the future community of God’s people, and so forth.”

596 The view that Chronicles is written with a sharp anti-northern bias was once standard, as can be seen in such works as Gerhard von Rad, Das Geschichtsbild des chronistischen Werkes, BWANT 3/4 (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1930), 31; Otto Eissfeldt, The Old Testament: An Introduction (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), 531; Otto Plöger, Theocracy and Eschatology, trans. Stanley Rudman (Oxford: Blackwell, 1968), 38–41; and the summaries in Jacob M. Myers, 1 Chronicles, AB 12 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1965), xxxii–iv. For more details on the idea that only the descendants of the kingdom of Judah would make up “Israel” in the future envisioned by the Chronicler, see the discussion in Williamson, Israel, 97–98.

example, despite his general focus on Judah, the Chronicler goes out of his way to declare, “although Judah prevailed over his brothers and the leader came from him, the birthright belonged to Joseph” (1 Chr 5:2). The Chronicler also does not ignore the conquest and deportation of Israel (=the North), mentioning it four distinct times. The genealogy, for example, declares that the Transjordan tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half of Manasseh (conspicuously referenced by their tribal names rather than geography, as in 2 Kgs 15:29) were deported by Assyria and remain in exile “to this day” (5:26). Unlike Kings, Chronicles spends extra time blaming the rebellious northern tribes and Jeroboam I (rather than Solomon’s heavy hand) for the division of the kingdom and loss of unity. Nevertheless, the North remains an essential part of Israel and is not to be marginalized:

While the Northern Kingdom is considered politically and religiously illegitimate by the Chronicler, the residents of that territory are considered part of Israel. The genealogy of the tribes in chaps. 2–8 includes the northern tribes, all of whom are descendants of “Israel,” the Chronicler’s consistent way of designating the patriarch Jacob. While prominence is given to the tribes of Judah, Levi, and Benjamin in these genealogies, all of whom were members of the Chronicler’s community, they only form a framework that includes the other tribes.

Chronicles’ report of Hezekiah’s invitation for northerners to participate in the Passover celebration in Jerusalem likely implies an attempt to reintegrate the remnant of the North under

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598 For a look at all four instances, see Japhet, “Exile and Restoration,” 39.

599 Note the use of “to this day” already familiar from the Former Prophets. The Chronicler does assert that a few from Ephraim and Manasseh returned and lived in Jerusalem, however, suggesting that at least some northerners returned with Judah (9:3), though the northern tribes as a whole remained in exile. As Gary N. Knoppers, I Chronicles 1–9: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary, AB 12A (New York: Doubleday, 2003), 501, explains, the reference to Ephraim and Manasseh in 9:3 “should not be pressed too far. The succeeding verses, which deal only with Judah, Benjamin, and Levi, neglect Ephraim and Manasseh entirely.”


601 Klein, I Chronicles, 46. Cf. also Knoppers, "Rehoboam in Chronicles."
the Davidic dynasty in the wake of Assyrian invasions.602 This is part of a larger pattern; the kings of Judah most highly evaluated in Chronicles—Asa, Jehosaphat, Hezekiah, and Josiah—are all lauded for their efforts to unify with the “remnant” from the North (e.g. 2 Chr 34:9). But the Chronicler makes it clear that Hezekiah’s efforts failed, with his envoys unsuccessful in their attempts to gain northern allegiance, instead being “scorned and mocked” (2 Chr 30:10) by those to whom they were sent. It is also surely no accident that, in the Chronicler’s time scheme, Hezekiah’s invitation precedes the final destruction of Samaria and consequent deportation by five years, implying that had the northerners only returned to the Davidic kingdom, they might have managed to avoid such a devastating fate.603

Instead, Assyria returned a short time later under Sennacherib, devastating Judah and isolating Jerusalem, exiling and scattering many Judahites and Israelite refugees who had fled from the North during the prior Assyrian campaigns.604 The efforts of the other kings of Judah meet with similar failures, and the northerners who reject their overtures similarly receive due recompense for their continued rebellion.605 The Chronicler therefore does not—as Collins

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603 Japhet, “Exile and Restoration,” 40 n. 19, observes that 2 Kgs 18:10 places the fall of Samaria in the sixth year of Hezekiah while Chronicles puts Hezekiah’s invitation to celebrate the Passover in his first year (2 Chr 29:37; 30:2), commenting, “One wonders whether this blurring of the historical sequence was not done on purpose.” Despite her observation, Japhet still assumes that Chronicles regards the destruction of Samaria as “already a matter of the past” at this point, but there is nothing in Chronicles to suggest that.

604 2 Chr 32 // 2 Kings 18–19 (esp. 18:13–25). Chronicles’ account deemphasizes Sennacherib’s destructive work in Judah, focusing instead on Jerusalem’s survival, but even in Chronicles it is clear Israel is still not united and that Judah itself did not fare especially well. An Assyrian source records that Sennacherib took 200,150 captives from the Southern Kingdom, a number that was surely inflated but still reflects significant destruction. See Barmash, "Nexus," 220–25; cf. Marco de Odorico, The Use of Numbers and Quantifications in the Assyrian Royal Inscriptions, SAAS 3 (Helsinki: Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, 1995) (esp. 171–87); J. B. Pritchard, ed., Ancient Near Eastern Texts, 3rd ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), 287–89. Inasmuch as northerners had fled south during earlier Assyrian campaigns, many were likely caught in the Assyrian net a second time.

suggests from the Hezekiah passover narrative—declare surviving Judah to be all of Israel but rather highlights the continued incompleteness of Israel. The Septuagint further emphasizes this negative present state with an addition at the end of Hezekiah’s statement to the priests and Levites, “And your sons and your daughters and wives are captives in a land that is not theirs—as it is even now (ὁ καὶ νῦν ἐστὶν)” (2 Chr 29:9). Nevertheless, despite these past failures, the Chronicler continues to look forward to a future far better than that known in his present community, to a restoration of the unity and majesty of all Israel as known in the time of David and Solomon.

This hope for restoration fits closely together with Chronicles’ replacement of Kings’ model of accumulated sin or merit and inevitable decline with a more immediate system of reward and punishment, repentance and restoration, a model consistent with the concept of individual (rather than intergenerational) responsibility advocated in Ezekiel 18 (cf. also Jer 31:29–30). This shift has led some to see Chronicles as promoting a rather mechanistic principle of absolute divine justice. Others, however, have observed that although Chronicles clearly emphasizes the connection between conduct and recompense, the prominent theme of repentance and consequent mercy serves to emphasize YHWH’s benevolence and covenant

606 See below for more on the construction of Israel in Chronicles.


609 See Japhet, Ideology, 161–176; Klein, 1 Chronicles, 46. One result of this decision is that Chronicles lacks Kings’ persistent sense of entropy and thereby some of the tension between ideal and past Israel, as the ideal is always in reach but never achieved after Solomon.

610 See the discussion in Japhet, Ideology, 150–165.
mercy over and against deserved retribution. Those who repent are restored straightaway, as changed behavior is swiftly followed by divine mercy that overcomes even the severest of divine punishments.

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611 This is the basic argument of Brian E. Kelly, *Retribution and Eschatology in Chronicles*, JSOTSup 211 (London: T&T Clark, 1996).

612 David Lambert has recently challenged the idea that “repentance” is a biblical concept at all, suggesting that it postdates the Second Temple Period, largely on the grounds that for earlier periods the world was understood as determined by divine fiat rather than human choice. See David A. Lambert, “Did Israel Believe that Redemption Awaited its Repentance? The Case of Jubilees 1,” *CBQ* 68, no. 4 (2006): 631–650; “Topics in the History of Repentance: From the Hebrew Bible to Early Judaism and Christianity,” (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2004); and now especially *How Repentance Became Biblical*, which refines some of the ideas presented in his earlier articles. On the strength of especially important “deterministic” passages including Deut 30:6, Jer 30:30–32, and Ezek 36:26–27, all of which suggest divine intervention and new hearts/changed volition preceding Israel’s return, Lambert argues that later interpreters who see a biblical imperative for Israel (or the reader in general) to repent have imposed a notion of human agency not native to the texts. But I am less inclined to draw such a strong dichotomy between divine and human agency in these texts, as the very concept of divine wrath presumes human resistance to divine authority (that is, anthropopathism presumes pathos). While I agree with Lambert that once Israel is under the curse of the covenant (what Lambert calls “stage two”; *How Repentance Became Biblical*, 96–97), God is the primary actor with regard to both punishment and restoration/transformation, stage two is a response to Israel’s actions in stage one, implying a tension between divine and human agency that must be resolved in order to arrive at stage three, in which Israel will act in accord with YHWH’s wishes. Lambert notes, “few [interpreters through history have] perceive[d] an opposition between human and divine initiative,” instead regarding them as synergistic (“Did Israel Believe,” 634). While this is true, this synergistic or paradoxical perspective seems (whether by intention or accident) to be intrinsic to the biblical texts themselves, which regularly place passages about human volition alongside those reflecting divine intervention with seemingly little consideration of the question of agency at all; Lambert himself acknowledges that unlike many modern interpreters, Jubilees, for example, “shows no signs of needing to work out the place of agency in these passages” (*How Repentance Became Biblical*, 126). The prophets in particular do not establish a one-sided solution to questions of predetermination or free will but rather establish a model of pathos, interaction, and synergism (cf. Jer 18; see pp. 510–13 below), though Israel’s moral incompetence must be fixed through divine transformation to end “stage two.” With respect to the question of repentance, transformation, and Israel’s restoration, biblical literature includes passages that emphasize prevenient divine transformation and passages that emphasize repentance (the change of behavior) itself as the prerequisite for restoration. As Lincicum, *Paul and the Early Jewish Encounter*, 98, explains, “Perhaps it would be possible to claim that one can detect a different use of the Deuteronomic pattern: as diagnosis or as prognosis. The common element is a recognition of a failure to walk in fidelity to the law (diagnosis), but the way forward ranges from renewed nomism (a Deuteronomic prognosis) to an apocalyptic theology of restoration (which can also claim a pedigree in Deut 32)—or some mixture of the two.” To some degree, the difference here is a semantic one, as Lambert conflates repentance with contrition or an inward sense of regret, sorrow, or remorse akin to what Stendahl calls the “introspective conscience” (*How Repentance Became Biblical*, 1; cf. Stendahl, “Introspective Conscience”). Lambert rightly objects to the importation of such introspective contrition to the biblical texts, but a concept of repentance understood as a change of behavior (sometimes including a rite of self-affliction, which again need not indicate inner contrition, as explained in *How Repentance Became Biblical*, 13–31) is a theme that appears throughout biblical literature, as Lambert himself acknowledges, though he distinguishes this from the term “repentance” (cf. *How Repentance Became Biblical*, 71–90), which is precisely the term I would use for such change of behavior. Thus, when I use the language of repentance in this study, I refer to this latter concept, that of a change in behavior, not to a psychological state of sorrow or contrition. That is, when I use the term “repentance” or “repent,” I mean exactly what Lambert suggests for the term סנה (often translated “return”): “a dramatic change in direction, motion that is opposite in some fashion, a turning away/aside/around/back/ off” (*How Repentance Became Biblical*).
This principle is perhaps best illustrated by Chronicles’ dramatically different (from Kings) portrayal of Manasseh’s repentance and restoration. In the midst of his own personal exile—a punishment for his severe rebellion against YHWH—Manasseh repents and is astonishingly and swiftly restored to his throne over Judah. Likewise, Chronicles’ own generation, who themselves continue to suffer the consequences of Israel’s rebellion, will be restored if only they “humble themselves and pray and seek [YHWH’s] face and turn from their wicked ways” (2 Chr 7:14). Thus, although the North is clearly depicted as “in rebellion against the house of David to this day” (2 Chr 10:19 // 1 Kgs 12:19), those from the North are still but one act of repentance away from a full restoration. Even better, if those in the land “return to YHWH” wholeheartedly, even those who have been scattered in exile will be restored to the land (2 Chr 30:6–9) as a result.

This close connection between repentance and restoration established throughout Chronicles only puts additional emphasis on the way the book ends—with a call to all YHWH’s people to return, spurring the merciful YHWH to restore Israel as promised. The Chronicler thus contemporizes the promises and original traditions of his Vorlage not by applying them to his

_Biblical, 73._ In addition, the use of “repentance” language does not presume that human agency precedes divine transformation, which (as Lambert notes) restoration passages often characterize as a prerequisite to repentance leading to restoration. Rather than regarding repentance as inherently based in human agency, it is possible to speak of divinely-initiated repentance, which I suggest most closely approximates the perspective of many biblical passages. The point is that Israel changes behavior (repents) through a divinely-granted transformation/repentance, leading to Israel’s restoration. Regardless of how one ultimately understands the “original sense” of these biblical passages, there is little doubt that the earliest Jesus movement interpreted the oracles of restoration as promising divine transformative and restorative work _that leads to repentance_ (e.g., Rom 2:4), a perspective representing both parts of the equation as happening concurrently and interdependently. Israel requires divine transformation, and divine transformation implies concurrent repentance. Moreover, once stage two has ended, stage three must be maintained with continued obedience.

613 On 2 Chron 7 as the utopian era of foundations both anticipating the future decline and desolation and providing the key to its revival, see Donald F. Murray, “Retribution and Revival: Theological Theory, Religious Praxis, and the Future in Chronicles,” _JSOT_ 88 (2000): 77–99 (92–96).

614 Klein, _1 Chronicles_, 48.
own “restored” community but by transforming them into “a challenge that is presented afresh to each generation.” Thus Solomon prays that YHWH would “bring [the exiles] back again to the land which you gave to them and to your fathers” (2 Chr 6:25, my emphasis), a reminder to contemporary readers “that they too had been ‘given’ the land,” if only they would return in faithfulness to YHWH. The restoration has not yet happened, but it is ever within reach. In this manner, “the Chronicler indicates how Israel may continue to possess its inheritance … and he holds out the possibility of a more extensive fulfilment.” This is all the more true in light of the fact that the allotted time of punishment (the seventy years predicted by Jeremiah) has long passed (2 Chron 36:20–21), though the promised restoration has not yet been fulfilled. In his concluding statement, the Chronicler thus enjoins the reader to emulate model penitents such as David, thereby participating in Israel’s restoration and return to YHWH. As observed by Tucker Ferda, this conclusion would have been even more significant “if a proto-canon was in place in the first century CE that ended with 2 Chronicles (cf. Mt. 23:35).”

**Conclusion: Between Biblical Israel and the Restoration**

The Torah, Former Prophets, and Chronicles thus position their readers, their communities, in a liminal position awaiting Israel’s restoration. Each (though in different ways)


displays a relative negativity or ambivalence toward the present conditions and looks hopefully
towards the future. In this sense, the Former Prophets and Chronicles are not, as traditional
scholarship has often assumed, works of legitimation, written to reinforce contemporary
practices and community norms, but are instead, in Steven Schweitzer’s words, “revolutionary
texts designed to challenge the status quo and question the way things presently are being
done.”620 In much the same manner as utopias, these stories “seek to re-describe ‘what is’ in a
way that disrupts the present order,”621 critiques the present situation, and imagines alternative
futures for the community, providing a powerful system of meaning that can serve to bind the
community together moving forward.622 Rather than doing this “from nowhere” (οὐ-τοπος),
however, these authors instead appropriate narratives of the past. Far from legislating or

620 Schweitzer, Reading Utopia in Chronicles, 18, emphasis his. Schweitzer applies utopian literary theory to
Chronicles, arguing that Chronicles reframes Israelite history to critique the present situation and imagine better
alternatives for the future. It should be noted that scholarly assumptions about these texts as works of legitimation do
not amount to counterreadings in Sternberg’s terms (cf. pp. 54–57 above); the basic stories lines and their world
order (that is, the first-level interpretations of the texts) are the same regardless of whether they were written to
legitimate or critique the contemporary circumstances of the authors.

621 Grassie, ”Entangled Narratives,” 152.

622 These are the second and third stages of Paul Ricoeur’s three-stage model for the functions of utopia vis-à-vis
ideological legitimation. See Paul Ricoeur, Lectures on Ideology and Utopia (New York: Columbia University
Press, 1986), xxi–xxiii, 16–17, 179–80. For more on utopian or idealistic literature and utopian literary theory in
general, see in addition Steven J. Schweitzer, “Utopia and Utopian Literary Theory: Some Preliminary
Observations,” in Utopia and Dystopia in Prophetic Literature, ed. Ehud Ben Zvi, PFES 92 (Göttingen:
Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006), 13–26; Lyman Tower Sargent, “The Three Faces of Utopianism,” Minnesota
37; and especially Steven J. Schweitzer, “Reading Utopia in Chronicles,” (PhD diss., University of Notre Dame,
2005), 31–35 and the many sources cited there. For more specific applications of utopian literary theory to biblical
criticism, see Schweitzer, Reading Utopia in Chronicles; Ehud Ben Zvi, ed., Utopia and Dystopia in Prophetic
Literature, PFES 92 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006); Roland Boer, Novel Histories: The Fiction of
Biblical Criticism, PT 2 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1997); John J. Collins, “Models of Utopia in the Biblical
Tradition,” in A Wise and Discerning Mind: Essays in Honor of Burke O. Long, eds. Burke O. Long, Saul M. Olyan,
legitimating the present state of affairs, this literature reframes and retells the past to imagine a
“better alternative reality” for the present community.  

Just what kind of future is imagined by the authors of these texts has generally been an
open question, but it is evident that these texts envision a better future in line with the
covenantal heritage of Israel as constructed and understood within the texts themselves.
Although the Former Prophets and Chronicles do have distinctive emphases and differences, it
seems safe to suggest that both look forward to a fulfillment of the prophets’ predictions of a
renewed covenant with all Israel, including a return of both the northern and southern tribes to
serve YHWH in unity. The details of this expected future are necessarily fuzzy—especially since
this expectation is refracted through retellings of the past—and not always in agreement, but that
much seems clear. For these books, the present community does not even approximate “Israel,”
though it is in continuity with Israel. Instead, the present situation and community is consistently
constructed as situated in the liminal space between punishment and restoration, between the
curses of the covenant and the promised reconciliation of Israel and YHWH.

The “better alternative reality” envisioned throughout this literature consistently involves
a restored Israel including all twelve tribes and featuring perfect covenantal obedience and cultic
practice. There seems to have been less certainty or agreement about the restoration of the
Davidic kingship, but a restoration of a unified monarchy under covenantally-obedient Davidic

623 Cf. Schweitzer, Reading Utopia in Chronicles, 175.

624 Cf. Roland Boer’s observations in his response to Schweitzer in Mark J. Boda et al., “In Conversation with
rulers seems to be a part of the ideal future more often than not.\(^\text{625}\) Yet it is clear that specific attempts to bring about a specific utopian vision are bound to fail—as repeatedly demonstrated in the past. As Jonathan Campbell has observed,

> While the narratives in such works are set in the past, varying in how far forward they bring the reader, they address a later Second-Temple situation interpreted as a prolongation of the exile. As a result, the sixth- and fifth-century returns may be mentioned either half-heartedly or else not at all [in Second Temple literature].\(^\text{626}\)

Thus the only proper recourse for the reader of these texts, stuck between retribution and reconciliation, is to return to YHWH, in whose hands Israel’s future rests.\(^\text{627}\) In the present reflected in these narratives, however, Israel—having been destroyed but not yet restored—is no more, still awaiting redemption. The expectations of redemption reflected in these historical narratives are, of course, drawn from the historical Hebrew prophets, whose glorious prophecies of restoration undergirded the construction of Judaism itself. Indeed, that these works have provided the framework for later interpretations of the prophets—indeed as the “former” part of the prophetic corpus—has only served to reinforce the influence of the prophets’ predictions of punishment followed by miraculous restoration.

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\(^\text{625}\) As suggested by 1 Chr 13:4–8; 2 Kgs 25:27–30, etc. For a strong argument that Chronicles still expects a restoration of the Davidic line, cf. Williamson, "Eschatology," 133–154.


Whereas the biblical accounts of the preexilic period portray Israel as awaiting restoration, most modern scholarship has presumed that the returns portrayed in Ezra-Nehemiah and the rebuilding of the Second Temple effectively reverse this condition, suggesting that Israel has in fact been restored as promised, with early Jews simply appropriating the name and heritage of all Israel. Collins, for example, argues that although the term “Israel” had traditionally referred to the descendants of the Israelites as a whole or to the inhabitants of the traditional land of Israel, that term came to refer to an intentional Jewish community in the postexilic period:

Again, the Babylonian exile effected a rather drastic reduction of empirical Israel. Nonetheless, the books of Ezra and Nehemiah speak of the returned exilic community as “Israel,” whereas “the people of the land” are categorized as “foreigners” with whom the returned exiles are forbidden to intermarry. In Second Temple Judaism, and also in ostensibly older works such as Deuteronomy, the name “Israel” bespeaks an ideological religious claim to be “the people of the Lord.” This people had a definite social and political extension, but, at least in the Second Temple period, it was not co-terminous with the traditional land of Israel or with the descendants of the people who had inhabited that land in the pre-exilic period. In the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, the returned exiles form an intentional community by entering into a covenant with its own strict provisions. It is not apparent that this strict definition of “Israel” prevailed throughout the Second Temple period. The periodic snapshots provided by our historical sources suggest that definitions of Judaism were often lax, even among the priesthood. But the books of Ezra and Nehemiah are important for our present inquiry because they establish a precedent for viewing “Israel” as an intentional community that was not identical with “the people of the land.”


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The first problem with this explanation is that it is by no means clear that “Israel” was ever “identical with the ‘people of the land,’” as Collins implies, apparently assuming something akin to modern birthright citizenship, in which any person born in the land is a citizen, was the norm in preexilic Israel. On the contrary, even the earliest biblical sources indicate non-Israelites (various Canaanites, foreign sojourners, non-Israelite Hebrews/Habiru) had always been present in the land, with “Israel” better understood as a “status community” requiring more than being born or living in the land.

Indeed, citizenship in the ancient world tended to involve class and lineage rather than birthplace or dwelling place. Most born in Ancient Rome (or Roman territories) were not Roman citizens, for example, as such citizenship was passed down from the father. Imperial Rome later changed the criteria for citizenship, but most free inhabitants of the Empire still remained non-citizens until citizenship was extended to all free inhabitants of the empire in 212 C. E.

Citizenship in ancient Athens or Sparta was likewise restrictive and not simply based upon being an inhabitant of the land or city.


631 That is not to say that Greek or Roman social structures exactly matched those of preexilic Israel, but they do attest to the varied restrictions on citizenship in the ancient Mediterranean world and are certainly better analogues than the anachronistic assumption that seems to underlie Collins’ statement. Greece offers some especially intriguing parallels to ancient Israel, especially the twelve-tribe Amphictyonic League and the tribal structure of Athens, which Cleisthenes reconfigured from the traditional four birth-based tribes into ten regional tribes. For more on Roman citizenship, see A. N. Sherwin-White, The Roman Citizenship (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980). For more on citizenship in ancient Greece, see Derek Benjamin Heater, A Brief History of Citizenship (New York: New York University Press, 2004), 6–29; Brook Manville, The Origins of Citizenship in Ancient Athens (Princeton:
The notion of a constructed people of Israel distinct from “the people of the land” thus probably predates Ezra and Nehemiah by centuries, while the notion of Israelite status based solely on being an inhabitant of the land is anachronistic. Moreover, as noted in Chapter Three, both Jeremiah and Ezekiel argue that those having gone into exile are the remnant to be preserved over and against those remaining in the land, suggesting that Ezra and Nehemiah, though innovators in their own right as they attempted to apply tradition to their new circumstances, were attempting to restore and uphold social and class distinctions derived from before the exile. After all, those taken into Babylonian captivity were from the royal house, temple service, and upper classes, while those left in the land were from poorer classes.

Nevertheless, Ezra does appear to have envisioned his own ministry as tied to Israel’s restoration, but Collins appears not to notice that the narrative of Ezra-Nehemiah indicates that Ezra’s efforts failed. Indeed, Ezra’s was only one of several attempts to restore and renew Israel in the wake of the exile(s), but the accounts of these episodes consistently demonstrate that these efforts never succeeded. All the while, the glorious restoration promises of the prophets (and Deuteronomy) loomed unfulfilled, cementing restoration eschatology as the foundation stone for postexilic Judaism. In other words, although Ezra-Nehemiah and other early Jewish texts record

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various attempts to restore Israel (or appropriate that title), for a first century reader these very accounts confirmed that Israel had not been restored as promised.

**Ezra-Nehemiah: Shouts of Joy Mixed with Weeping**

Cyrus’ decree permitting the return to Judah (known to the Persians as *Yehud*) and rebuild Jerusalem and the temple stirred up hopes that the glorious restoration of Israel promised by the prophets had begun. The temple would soon be rebuilt in glory, Israel would return and reunite with Judah in perfect obedience to YHWH, and the nations would flock to Jerusalem to pay homage to YHWH and his people Israel. Written in the wake of Judahite return to the land, Ezra-Nehemiah (treated as one unified work in this period) reflects the optimism surrounding the initial return(s) to the land, the disappointment that the return and restoration (and the rebuilt temple itself) were less than had been hoped and promised, and continued hope for the fullness of the promised renewal in the future.

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This understanding of Ezra-Nehemiah contrasts with that of Wellhausen and his successors, for whom Ezra was to be the de facto founder of “Judaism,” understood as a routinization of previously lively ancient Israelite religion. For this school of thought, Ezra is the figure who took the prophetic, living Israelite cultus and subjected it to rote legalism and exclusivism, setting the direction for a “Jewish religion” no longer tied to ethnic or political unity but rather centering on individual acceptance and observance of the written Torah. In keeping with this perspective on Ezra, until fairly recently it could be taken as a given that, for Ezra-Nehemiah, the “prophetic hopes for Israel are now fulfilled in the rump consisting of Judah, Benjamin, and Levi,” a view put forward from an “exclusivist … anti-eschatological, and pro-Persian” perspective.

This old consensus has come under increasing challenge, first by Klaus Koch, who argues that Ezra, motivated by the messages of the exilic prophets, aimed to rebuild a twelve-tribe Israel and that Ezra’s actions are “in no way exhaustive and conclusive, but are only a pre-eschatological step towards a future eschatological fulfillment.” Building upon Koch’s

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636 See chapter 3 above.


638 Koch, “Ezra,” 196. Koch’s article focuses on the material of the so-called “Ezra memoir,” which he argues comes from a distinct source, perhaps deriving from some material from Ezra himself (“Ezra,” 176–78). The existence of a separate Ezra memoir—let alone one from Ezra’s own pen—is questionable (cf. the discussion in Williamson, *Ezra-Nehemiah*, xxvii–xxiii and the arguments against such a source in Lester L. Grabbe, *Ezra-Nehemiah* [London: Routledge, 1998], 133–153). Whether such a source exists or not is moot for our purposes, however, as we are
insights, McConville has similarly shown Ezra-Nehemiah to be less pro-Persia, less satisfied with the restoration and reforms of Ezra and Nehemiah, and far more concerned with future restoration than previously appreciated. In Philip Davies’ words, “the ‘restoration’ of Judah under the Persians is really a scholarly rather than a biblical concept.” Indeed, the scholarly concept to which Davies refers rests on the assumption that the book straightforwardly upholds the perspective of its protagonists. A more careful reading, however, suggests that more is afoot.

Ezra-Nehemiah’s account of the people’s response to the laying of the foundation of the temple is a fitting summary of the combination of optimism and disappointment found throughout the book:

But many of the priests and Levites and heads of fathers’ households and elders who had seen the first house wept with a loud voice when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, while many shouted aloud for joy, so that the people could not distinguish the sound of the shout of joy from the sound of the weeping of the people. (Ezra 3:12–13a; cf. Hag 2:3; Zech 4:10)

This passage makes it clear that, although the return to the land and the rebuilding of the city and the temple are indeed major events directed by YHWH, the present state of affairs leaves much to be desired, falling short of the new golden age promised by the prophets.

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639 McConville, "Ezra-Nehemiah," 205–224; see also Laato, A Star is Rising, 221–230, on the continued eschatological hopes of Ezra-Nehemiah; and Japhet, “Periodization between History and Ideology II,” 426–28, on the parallels between Ezra-Nehemiah and the Exodus story.


641 McConville, "Ezra-Nehemiah," 210, explains, “The joy of the people is undoubtedly portrayed as a genuine response to the exciting step forward for the community. Yet the curious mingling of joy and weeping described in v. 13—such that the two sounds could not be distinguished from each other—seems to have been deliberately presented thus to suggest once again a situation that is good as far as it goes, but might be better.”

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The narrator further emphasizes this sentiment by with a remarkable anachronism, referring to the Persian king as “the king of Assyria” in Ezra 6:22 (surely not an accident, given the correct reference to the “king of Persia” immediately above in 6:14), implying that Israel still remains under Assyrian oppression. 642 That the people are still called “exiles” (יִהְיֶהוּ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל; Ezra 4:1; 6:16, 19, 20, 8:35; 9:4; etc.) likewise makes plain this negative view of the present state of affairs. The people, though some have returned to the land, remain exiles, and as the extended prayer in Nehemiah explains, “the rich yield of the land goes to kings whom God has set over them because of their sins … so we are in great distress” (Neh 9:37). 643

The account of the rebuilding of the temple echoes the Chronicler’s account of Solomon’s building efforts, 644 but these echoes only further highlight the deficiency of the Second Temple when compared to the first. 645 Whereas Solomon’s Temple had been dedicated with a massive sacrificial feast of 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep (2 Chr 7:4) and glorious speech, the Second Temple is dedicated with relatively few sacrifices (100 bulls, 200 rams, 400 lambs), 646 and the concluding statement that they offered, in addition to these dedicatory sacrifices, “a sin offering of twelve male goats, corresponding to the number of the tribes of Israel” (Ezra 6:17), sounds an especially somber note in contrast to Solomon’s dedication, which did not feature sin offerings.

642 Nodet, “Building of the Samaritan Temple,” 125, misses the inference that the exile had not ended but correctly points out that “Assyria’ should not be viewed as a sloppy mistake, but as a coded message that now the Jerusalem temple is the only one for all of Israel, including any ancient returnees. In other words, the new temple is akin to Solomon’s.”

643 Davies, “Old and New Israel,” 35, “there is implied hope that the slavery will one day be averted when the sins are finally forgiven”; cf. Klein, 1 Chronicles, 47.


646 Blenkinsopp, Ezra-Nehemiah, 130.
The reminder of the number of the tribes of Israel in conjunction with the sin offering also suggests connection with hopes of a fuller (twelve tribe) restoration through the atonement represented in these sin offerings.\textsuperscript{647} Most significant, however, is the absence of the tangible presence of God that characterized Solomon’s dedication with fire from heaven and a cloud of glory. The dedication of “this house” lacks the signs of divine approval and presence that had distinguished the one built by Solomon, further emphasizing the incomplete state of the restoration. Rather than marking the fulfillment of the prophecies of restoration, “the rebuilding of the temple is the necessary step toward something better.”\textsuperscript{648}

That the celebration of the Passover immediately follows the dedication of the temple in the narrative likewise emphasizes this point, as Passover both celebrates the exodus from Egypt and looks forward to the future restoration (cf. Jer 6:14–21).\textsuperscript{649} That the Ezra procession immediately following the celebration of the Passover at the rebuilt temple further emphasizes the “new Exodus” implications of this event and the hopes that it served as the inauguration of Israel’s restoration (the procession is depicted as concurrent with the Passover celebration in Jerusalem; cf. Ezra 7:9).\textsuperscript{650} The hopes reflected in Ezra’s procession are clearly for much more than just a restoration of the three southern tribes, as Koch observes,

The astonishing preference for the number twelve for the lay representatives can be observed in the order of march of the returning exiles (Ezra viii. 1–14, cf. viii. 24), again in the twelve men who stand with Ezra when he reads the Law on New


\textsuperscript{648} McCready, “Day of Small Things,” 230.

\textsuperscript{649} See Barry Douglas Smith, \textit{Jesus' Last Passover Meal} (Lewiston, NY: Mellen, 1993), 40–50. Cf. also Federico M. Colautti, \textit{Passover in the Works of Josephus}, JSJSup 75 (Leiden: Brill, 2002); Pitre, \textit{Jesus}, 447, “it should go without saying that to a first-century Jew there would have been no more evocative image of return from Exile than that of the Passover.”

\textsuperscript{650} Ezra’s mission took place half a century after the temple was completed, but the narrative identifies the events more closely than the actual chronology might suggest.
Year’s day (Neh. viii. 4),’ and also in the symbolic numbers of the animals sacrificed at Ezra viii. 3 5. What prevents us from supposing that Ezra intended to re-establish a united people of southern and northern Israelites?651

Koch rightly points out that the account of Ezra’s procession to the land suggests a self-conscious attempt at the fulfillment of restoration prophecies, echoing numerous prophetic passages, most notably Jeremiah 31 (MT; 38 LXX) and sections of Second Isaiah.652 The echoes are strong enough that McConville states, “The similarity of theme and vocabulary strongly suggests that the Ezra material is deliberately modelled on the prophecy in Jer. xxxi.”653 Many of these echoes account for what Grabbe calls “fairy tale features” of the story,654 such as Ezra’s rejection of an armed escort despite purportedly transporting more than twenty-five tons of gold (100 talents) and silver (750) talents from Babylon to Jerusalem, a detail Koch and McConville

651 Koch, "Ezra," 194. Koch continues by hypothesizing that Ezra in fact planned to reconstitute a twelve-tribe people by unifying the Samarians and Judahites. “One might assume that he knew that a great portion of the tribes of former times had disappeared. He would attempt to establish new tribes out of the contemporary clans.” Whether or not Koch’s larger Samaritan hypothesis is correct, he is surely right that Ezra’s return is portrayed in a manner consistent with the expectation of a twelve-tribe restoration of Israel, whether by a miraculous return of northern Israelites or unification with Samarians. Koch rightly notes that the Samarians/Cutheans are not mentioned in the passages listing forbidden marriages ("Ezra," 193–94), but I am less certain that Ezra (or especially the narrator), given his prejudice against the “people of the land,” would be so accepting of Samaritan intermarriage. I think it more likely that the list of forbidden nations in Ezra 9:1, which Koch rightly notes includes four historical peoples “who have died out a long time before” ("Ezra," 193), should be understood as referring to all the “people of the land,” who would be seen as having intermingled with those unacceptable nations (thus being identified with them). The later reference (Neh 13:28) to the daughter of Sanballat the Horonite (a Samaritan) as an unacceptable marriage for a high priest’s son only makes such a conclusion more likely. It is more likely that Ezra-Nehemiah considers marriages among the returnees as the only acceptable options, with no intermarriage with those who had been left behind in the land, whether of Samarian or Judahite in background. Cf. Grabbe, “Mind the Gaps,” 100; Grabbe, Ezra-Nehemiah, 125–153; Barstad, Myth of the Empty Land.

652 “All these details of the Ezra record are understandable only if the historical Ezra intended to fulfil the promises or, better, to be the instrument of fulfilment of the promises of the exilic prophets about a marvellous return of the exiles, which will be the foundation of a second Israel and the opening of a new Heilsgeschichte. He must have understood the P programme of an ideal Israel not only as a record of the Mosaic past but also as the constitution of the future Israel. Thus the Torah itself was primarily not law but promise” (Koch, "Ezra," 188). McConville, "Ezra-Nehemiah," persuasively demonstrates numerous verbal and thematic parallels to Jer 31 (214–18; see esp. the parallel list on 215) and echoes of Isaiah (218–22). See also Williamson, Ezra-Nehemiah, 93.


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connect with prophecies of YHWH’s divine provision of a “straight path” (ירדה דרך; i.e., safe journey) upon Israel’s restoration (cf. Jer 31:9; Isa 40:3), for which Ezra prays in Ezra 8:21.655

Koch also points out the unusual frequency of Israel language in the Ezra sections, observing,

There is an important difference between Ezra and Nehemiah in linguistic usage. The Ezra portions speak about 24 times of Israel and only 4 times of Judah, whereas the Nehemiah memoirs speak about 28 times of Judah and of Israel only 6 times in the prayer (ch. i) and [with reference to Solomon] in ch. xiii. The predominance of the term “Israel” in the edict, as well as in the Ezra narratives, is astonishing.656

Nevertheless, despite all the hope surrounding Ezra’s return in the narrative, Koch rightly stresses that it is not portrayed as:

the perfection of the eschaton, but only one pre-eschatological step, a sign of a coming fulfillment and not the eschatological fulfilment itself. It seems to me that Ezra was thinking of just this stage between the abandoned past and the outstanding salvation in the future when he prayed (Ezra ix. 8 f.): “Our God ... has given us a little renewal …. For slaves we are.”657 The little renewal presupposed ... a great renewal in the future.

The followers of Wellhausen look on Ezra as the man who established theocracy and who in fact buried prophetic hopes and eschatological expectations. I do not think that the Ezra texts confirm such a theory. On the contrary, it seems possible that no other man of post-exilic times attempted so eagerly to realize certain prophetic promises.658

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655 “Indeed, the use of [ירדה דרך] in Ezra viii 21, in the sense of a safe journey, gives a meaning to [ישר] which is unique and which is probably explicable only in terms of the desire in Ezra to relate the return to the prophecy. Ezra’s prayer is not simply that the returned exiles should have a safe journey, but that their return should in fact be that “making straight a highway” of which the prophet speaks” (McConville, "Ezra-Nehemiah," 219).

656 Koch, "Ezra," 193. Koch goes on to point out that “Israel” appears not to be limited to Yehud in these passages, as it is “connected with Ezra’s people … in the satrapy ‘Beyond the River’ ... as vii. 25 rightly explains” (193).


In spite of all the hope and optimism in the beginning, Ezra still acknowledges that the people are still “slaves,” and Ezra’s efforts at restoration end “on a rather dissonant note—in fact, a quite sour one,” as the sinful situation in Yehud further indicates that the days of prophetic fulfillment have not in fact been reached. In fact, the people’s propensity for intermarriage is so disastrous precisely because it illustrates (in the view of Ezra, Nehemiah, and the editor) the lack of repentance and purity among the returnees, without which the promised total restoration will never happen (cf. Ezra 9:13–14; Neh 13:23–29; cf. Neh 13:17–18).

If this was not clear enough in the narrative itself, Nehemiah 1:3 reminds the reader that even those who had returned to the land remained in captivity, referring to the distress of “the remnant in the province who remain from the captivity” (הנשארים אשר נשארו מ杞יתיים), a phrase that calls attention to the fact that those in the land remained under foreign domination (hence מדינה) and were not truly free from the captivity (השבי, αἰχμαλωσία). They were rather the part from the captivity who were at present in the province—the captivity had not yet come to its end.

Even more significantly, Nehemiah’s very mission to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem signals that the prophetic promises have not yet come to pass, as Zechariah (whose prophetic activity is mentioned in Ezra 5:1 and 6:14) had prophesied that Jerusalem would no longer need

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660 Cf. McConville, "Ezra-Nehemiah," 216–17, 222–24. On the other hand, it may well be that the people began to intermarry with those within the land precisely because they believed the new age to have already begun—if Israel had already been restored, such precautions against intermarriage may no longer have been considered necessary. Either way, Ezra and Nehemiah are among those insisting that a more significant future restoration contingent upon adequate repentance and purity awaits.

661 See especially Grol, “Indeed, Servants We Are," 219.
walls: “‘Jerusalem will be inhabited without walls … because I will be for her a wall of fire around her and the glory in her midst,’ declares YHWH” (Zech 2:8–9 [ET 2:4–5]). Walls were very much needed in the time of Nehemiah, however, and any reader familiar with Zechariah’s prophecy (and that of Ezek 38:11) would obviously note this disconnect between promise and reality. This would obviously push any sense of fulfillment for Zechariah’s prophecy into the future and away from the return depicted in Ezra-Nehemiah. Nehemiah’s victories—rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, resettling Jerusalem via lottery, and fighting to keep the priesthood pure—are indeed important. But they also serve as reminders that the prophets’ promises remain unfulfilled. And as with Ezra, Nehemiah once again ends on a low note, with the problem of intermarriage again (!) rearing its head.

In its final form, Ezra-Nehemiah thus starts off on a very high note suggestive of the promised Israeliite restoration but spirals steadily downward as it tells of the actual situation of the returnees to the land, ending both the Ezra and Nehemiah sections with the disappointment and distress surrounding the problem of mixed marriages and (in Nehemiah) broken Sabbaths.662 The return in Ezra-Nehemiah, although including moments of victory, in the end serves as a sad contrast to the glorious restoration promised by the prophets.663 That each narrative of Ezra-

662 McConville, "Ezra-Nehemiah," 212 n. 22: “Many scholars have found it improbable that the joyful ceremony of Neh. viii should lead so abruptly into the sombre act of confession in Neh. ix, x. Partly for this reason, therefore, critical reconstructions have tended to place Neh. viii directly after Ezra viii, and the confession and renewal in Neh. ix, x directly after Ezra’s measures regarding marriage-abuse, i.e. following immediately upon the book of Ezra…. This re-ordering of the material, however, also assumes a view on the part of the compiler that abuses could be purged, and a satisfactory status quo re-established through reforms. Such a reconstruction suffers from the difficulty that the books still end with Neh. xi–xiii, and therefore a jarring note. On my hypothesis, furthermore, namely that the books of Ezra-Nehemiah are characterized by celebration yet with reservations, a rationale exists for the transition from the joy of Neh. viii to the deliberately postponed (Neh. viii 9) lamentation of chs ix–x."

663 Pace Japhet, “Postexilic Historiography,” 151.
Nehemiah ends on a negative note only emphasizes this bittersweet conclusion. The Persian period indeed witnessed “a little renewal” (Ezra 9:8), by no means the fulfillment of Israel’s restoration but rather anticipating it.

“Israel” in Ezra-Nehemiah

As Koch points out, Ezra-Nehemiah uses Israel language with unusual frequency for postexilic works, the Ezra passages in particular. Where Ezra-Nehemiah does use terms like “sons of Israel,” these terms tend to distinguish between “lay” returnees and priests/Levites (Ezra 3:1; 6:16, 21; 7:7, etc.) on the one hand and the “people of the land” on the other. Although the “people of the land” might be called Yehudim inasmuch as they are inhabitants of Judah/Yehud and may in fact be a remnant of those left behind, Ezra-Nehemiah does not consider them part of “Israel.” Ezra-Nehemiah appears to limit “Israel” to those who were exiled by Assyria or Babylon and thus can prove they have retained a pure genealogy, while those who remained in the land are regarded as having intermarried with forbidden nations and no longer a part of the people. This hostility to the “people of the land” may also stem from Jeremiah/Ezekiel traditions that those who went into exile (in particular those from the deportation of 598 BCE) were in fact the righteous remnant, while those who remained behind were rejected. Nevertheless, the

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664 As noted by McConville, "Ezra-Nehemiah," 211–12, “[There is a] possibility that the compiler of Ezra-Nehemiah intended to end his work with the rather depressing re-emergence of problems which had beset the community, marital abuse in the centre. It is evident that Neh. xiii represents a low note … The clear implication is that, were the story of post-exilic community to be protracted, it would continue to follow the same chequered course that it has throughout our books. More important than the question of order, however, is the fact that mixed marriage is closely associated with the idea of slavery…. It follows from this association of the mixed-marriage phenomenon with bondage to Persia that the problem which Ezra and Nehemiah face is actually complex, and will cease to exist only when bondage to Persia is a thing of the past.” See also Grabbe, “Mind the Gaps,” 97, 100–01.

665 See Grol, “Indeed, Servants We Are.”

666 This is reminiscent of Ezekiel’s promise that YHWH would be “a little sanctuary” for the Exiles (Ezek 11:16).

667 E.g., Jer 24, Ezek 11. See the sections on Jeremiah and Ezekiel above.
returnees are indeed “sons of Israel,” although limited to three of the tribes of Israel, and YHWH, as always, is “the God of Israel” (13 times) rather than “the God of Judah.”

Ezra-Nehemiah’s use of Israel terminology—in particular the apparent limitation of Israel to the exiles as opposed to the “people of the land”—is one of the primary reasons interpreters have often understood Ezra-Nehemiah to be the first example of Judahite returnees staking their claim to the whole heritage of Israel.668 As discussed above, however, a closer reading suggests that the returnees were painfully aware of the incomplete nature of the restoration, and the book goes out of its way to make this point. A few examples are especially instructive:

Then the heads of fathers’ houses of Judah and Benjamin and the priests and Levites arose—that is, everyone whose spirit God had stirred to go up and rebuild the house of YHWH, which is in Jerusalem. (Ezra 1:5)

Now when the enemies of Judah and Benjamin heard that the sons of the exile were building a temple to YHWH the God of Israel, they approached Zerubbabel and the heads of fathers’ houses and said to them, “Let us build with you, for we seek your God like you and have been sacrificing to Him since the days of Esarhaddon king of Assyria, who brought us up here.” (Ezra 4:1–2)

So all the men of Judah and Benjamin assembled at Jerusalem within the three days. (Ezra 10:9)

Some of the sons of Judah and some of the sons of Benjamin lived in Jerusalem. (Neh 11:4)

The descriptions of the returnees are consistently limited to the three tribes of Judah, Benjamin, and Levi.669 It is representatives from these three tribes who sacrifice twelve goats “according to the number of the tribes of Israel” (Ezra 6:17; cf. 6:14 “elders of Judah”)—both a sad reminder of Israel’s current incompleteness and an effort to atone for Israel’s sin in the midst of exile, opening the way for Israel’s restoration and reunification. By the time the reader reaches

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669 For another telling example, see Neh 11–12, which lists where the returnees settled and only addresses the “sons of Judah” (Neh 11:25–30), “sons of Benjamin” (11:31–36), and the priests and Levites (12:1–26).
the Nehemiah materials, particularly the so-called Nehemiah memoir, the hopeful focus on Israel so evident in the early chapters of Ezra has been pared back to a focus on יהודים and the land of Judah. As Knoppers points out, “The focus upon the territory of Judah, as opposed to a larger territory of Israel, is telling.”670 Thus, although Ezra-Nehemiah indeed uses the term “sons of Israel” rather frequently (14 times), these uses are contextually limited by the book’s frequent reminders from the very start that these “sons of Israel” are limited to the three tribes that returned (e.g., Ezra 2:1; Neh 7:6), as well as the pessimistic narrative progression and transition to Jew/Judah terminology observed in Nehemiah.

Pamela Barmash points to a few passages (primarily in the genealogies) that suggest some Israelites may have indeed returned with the Judahites but also concedes that the editor minimizes their presence, as “Ezra 2:1 and Neh 7:6 enumerate only the Judeans as returning” at the head of the very genealogies in which Barmash finds potential evidence of a few northern Israelite returnees.671 Even if some from the north did return (which almost certainly must have been the case), the biblical editors appear to consider their return insufficient to regard their tribes as having returned. Again, the stories themselves—and how they were read—are more important for our purposes than the actual events they recount or the circumstances of their composition, all the more as these events recede further into the past. And regardless of “what really happened,” the dominant narrative—which shaped the world of the late Second Temple period—was one in which the full restoration of the northern tribes has not yet taken place.672

671 Barmash, ”Nexus,” 230.
672 Barmash, ”Nexus,” 230–31, argues that the reality on the ground may have included more northerners than the dominant Jewish narrative allowed. See, however, Z. Kallai, “Nov, Noveh,” in Enziklopediya Mikra’it, vol. 5 (Jerusalem: Bialik, 1968), 684. In any case, what matters for understanding Christian origins and Paul’s perspective...
In sum, the combination of Israel language with more limited and precise nomenclature found in Ezra-Nehemiah is suggestive of what we have concluded on other grounds: the book narrates a time of strong hopes for Israel’s full restoration, particularly in the actions of Ezra, but comes to the bittersweet conclusion that although a return has taken place and a temple rebuilt, the restoration remains unfulfilled, and the rebuilt temple is but an inferior shadow of its glorious predecessor. The book’s final form “ends on a strangely negative note,” with the returnees continuing in the behavior of their predecessors that led to the exile in the first place and the repentance that must accompany the restoration still absent in the community of returnees. For all the hopes of Israel’s restoration reflected in the Ezra material and the reality that some Israelites indeed returned to the land of Judah, Ezra-Nehemiah depicts merely “a little reviving” (Ezra 9:8), not the promised restoration. In the end, despite the rebuilding of the temple and the return of many Israelites, primarily from the southern tribes, Israel remains under Assyria (!) in these narratives (cf. Ezra 6:22, Neh 9:32), with its promised restoration still in the future. As will be shown in Part Three, this reading of Ezra-Nehemiah is in keeping with how the book was read by most early Jewish interpreters, who (unlike many of their modern counterparts) seem not to have regarded the return(s) narrated in Ezra-Nehemiah as the promised restoration.

**Daniel: Israel’s Restoration Delayed Sevenfold**

As is evident from Ezra-Nehemiah, the excitement of the initial return from Babylon ultimately faded into disappointment as it became clear that the return had fallen far short of the

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673 Pace the assertion of Japhet, “Exile and Restoration,” 43, it is not the case that Chronicles opposes the “realized” perspective of Ezra-Nehemiah, since Ezra-Nehemiah in fact takes a similar view that the true restoration is still in the future.

674 Grabbe, “Mind the Gaps,” 84.
glorious restoration promised by the prophets. As is often the case with failed predictions, those promises were not forgotten or abandoned but instead pushed into the future. The book of Daniel, with its apocalyptic periodizations of history and explanations of the present state of affairs dominated by imperial powers, provides an excellent example of how that dissonance between expectations and reality pushed the expectations of Israelite restoration into the future—an example that was highly influential in the first century CE.\textsuperscript{675} As Koch explains, by the first century, “Daniel spread his light over all the prophets … all the prophets were interpreted along the lines set out in Daniel.”\textsuperscript{676} Amid the court stories and apocalyptic visions, a central portion of Daniel answers the question of why, despite Jeremiah’s prophecy of a seventy-year exile, the promised restoration of Israel had not yet happened:

> In the first year of [Darius’] reign, I, Daniel, understood in the books the number of years that, according to the word of YHWH to Jeremiah the prophet, must be fulfilled for the devastation of Jerusalem: seventy years. Then I turned to YHWH God to seek an answer [why this had not happened] by prayer and supplication with fasting and sackcloth and ashes.

In response to the lack of fulfillment of Jeremiah’s promise, Daniel attempts to intercede on behalf of the people,\textsuperscript{677} offering a prayer of confession prominently featuring the schema of sin, exile, repentance, and restoration.\textsuperscript{678} Significantly, Daniel specifies those remaining in need


\textsuperscript{676} Koch, "Is Daniel Also Among the Prophets?,” 126.


\textsuperscript{678} “The theology of the prayer is strongly Deuteronomic” (Collins, \textit{Daniel}, 359). Collins, however, argues that the vision of vv. 24–27 does not reflect the Deuteronomic worldview reflected in the prayer and that the book of Daniel instead blames the Gentile “beasts” (empires) and divine decree rather than Israel’s sin for Israel’s downtrodden situation (John J. Collins, \textit{The Apocalyptic Vision of the Book of Daniel}, HSM 16 [Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1977], 95–96; \textit{Daniel}, 360). This interpretation, however, is at odds with the fact that the decree amounts to a
of restoration, mentioning “Judah [and] the inhabitants of Jerusalem” plus “all Israel, those who are nearby and those who are far away, in all the lands to which you have driven them” (Dan 9:7; cf. 2 Chr 6:36; Isa 33:13; 57:19). Judah is again distinguished as but a part of the totality of Israel, which includes exiles near and far from both Judah and the non-Judahite portions of Israel. In this case, Daniel receives an explanation from a heavenly messenger, Gabriel:

Seven sevens have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to complete the transgression, end sin, atone for iniquity, bring in everlasting righteousness, seal up vision and prophecy, and anoint the most holy. (Dan 9:24)

That is, since the people have not met the conditions of repentance stated in Jer 29:12–14, Israel’s punishment had been multiplied sevenfold. The desolation was now to last not seventy years but “seventy sevens” (Dan 9:24; that is, seventy sabbatical years), applying Leviticus 26:18, “If you do not obey me even after all these things, I will punish you seven times more for your sins” to Jeremiah’s prophecy. Despite the delay, Jerusalem would itself be rebuilt long before the restoration, “[your holy city] will be rebuilt, with streets and moat and in times of sevenfold multiplication of the original punishment, which assumes a Deuteronomic scheme of sin and punishment. The apocalyptic and Deuteronomic perspectives reflected in the chapter are therefore not at odds, upholding “apocalyptic determinism” (e.g. Bruce William Jones, “The Prayer in Daniel IX,” VT 18, no. 4 [1968]: 488–493 [493]) over and against Deuteronomic theology, but rather in concert, with the divine decree a response to Israel’s violation of covenant. The Gentile “beasts” have been given power only until Israel is restored, with Deuteronomic theology providing a necessary underpinning for the larger apocalyptic framework. Unfortunately, space does not permit a fuller exposition on this point, but it should suffice to say that the book of Daniel reflects continued concern with the incomplete restoration of Israel in the Hellenistic period. Some, such as Louis Francis Hartman and Alexander A. Di Lella, The Book of Daniel, Accordance electronic ed., AB 23 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1978), 245–46, have argued the prayer is a later addition to the apocalyptic portion of the chapter, but this is irrelevant when considering how it might have been understood by a first-century Jew or Christian.

Pitre, Jesus, 59, “i.e., not just in Babylon. Here Daniel is using a distinct Hebrew phrase from the book of Jeremiah for describing both the Assyrian and Judean exiles” (his emphasis).


oppression” (9:25), an obvious reference to the rebuilding of Jerusalem’s walls under Nehemiah. The passage thus makes it clear that the events of Ezra-Nehemiah were not the promised restoration; rather, another sixty-three “sevens” stood between those events and the promised redemption, the grand-jubilee announced by Gabriel. That restoration and atonement for Israel’s sin would come at the end of this extended period, at which point the “anointed one, the prince” (Dan 9:25–26) would be “cut off” (cf. Isa 53:8), setting in motion the final restoration and the end of the age of wrath. After this, Jerusalem and the sanctuary were to be “ruined” (שחת; LXX: [διαφθείρω]) yet again after this, an event both Josephus and early Christians connected with the Roman destruction of Jerusalem.

Daniel thus provides the earliest extant overt interpretation of the events of Ezra-Nehemiah and does not interpret the events of that book—important though they were—as fulfilling the promises of Israel’s restoration. Rather, Daniel demonstrates that the expectation for a fuller restoration than that of Ezra-Nehemiah remained fervent well into the Hellenistic period,


684 For the links between the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 52:13–53:12 and this anointed one that is “cut off,” see William H. Brownlee, “The Servant of the Lord in the Qumran Scrolls I,” BASOR 132 (1953): 8–15 (12–15); cf. also Harold Louis Ginsberg, “The Oldest Interpretation of the Suffering Servant,” VT 3, no. 4 (1953): 400–04; Goldingay, Daniel, 300; and Portier-Young, Apocalypse Against Empire, 272–76. The oft-repeated dictum that there is no evidence for the concept of a suffering and dying Messiah or “anointed one” or of a messianic interpretation of the Suffering Servant within pre-Christian Judaism is therefore mistaken.


686 Such at least appears to have been a dominant interpretation of the passage in our period, attested by Josephus, A.J. 10.276. Most modern scholars, of course, interpret these verses as ex eventu references to Antiochus’ desolation of Jerusalem “by corruption of the cult” (Collins, Daniel, 357; cf. Hartman and Di Lella, Daniel, 252–54). That Josephus would take these verses as referring to the Roman destruction is somewhat puzzling, as it is hard to imagine that he (unlike the early Christians) would have understood the earlier, Messianic, parts of the prophecy as having been fulfilled prior to the Roman destruction of Jerusalem.
a period that featured its own attempts to fulfill the prophecies of restoration. Michael Knibb aptly summarizes Daniel’s position:

The exile was now, and only now, to have its proper end, and in the author’s view everything that has happened between the carrying away into captivity of [Israel and Judah] and the time of Antiochus was of little importance. Rather, this period is seen as a unity whose characteristic is sin. We are in a situation where the exile is understood as a state that is to be ended only by the intervention of God and the inauguration of the eschatological era.

Moreover, as Pitre notes, “the messianic tribulation described by Gabriel, when read in context, is nothing less than the answer to Daniel’s prayer for God to restore his scattered people from exile—including the Assyrian exiles.” Given its importance in the first century as the interpretive key to the other prophets and prophecies of the Bible, Daniel’s treatment of the return from Babylon as an intermediate stage at best and emphatic expectations for a future restoration including both Israel and Judah is especially important for an understanding of early Jewish understandings of Israel and attitudes about the present. Like Deuteronomy and the biblical tradition preceding it, the book of Daniel places the reader in a liminal space, a time in which Israel remains scattered and indistinct but on the cusp of restoration.

### 1 Maccabees: An Exception Proving the Rule

About three centuries after Ezra and Nehemiah, another effort was made to initiate Israel’s restoration, this time through the military campaigns of the Maccabean Revolt and the

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687 Bergsma, “Persian Period as Penitential Era,” 60–62. Goodblatt, “Israelites who Reside in Judah,” 76–77, also notes that Daniel serves as “the major exception to the preference for ‘Israel’” observed in books composed in Hebrew, positing that such “non-Jewish usage” followed Persian/Aramaic influence. Such an improbable explanation is unnecessary if we recognize the partitive relationship between the terms.


689 Pitre, Jesus, 60.
establishment of the Hasmonean Dynasty. The accounts of these events are especially important for this study, as 1 Maccabees in fact serves as the primary basis (along with later rabinic literature) for Kuhn’s insider/outsider paradigm for the relationship between the terms Israel and the Jews:

The usage of Palestinian Jews is best seen in 1 Macc. In the true historical presentation of this book, where the author himself speaks, there is a consistent use of Ἰσραήλ. But there is also a consistent and exclusive use of Ἰουδαίοι...

(1) when non-Jews are speaking ....

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In diplomatic correspondence, letters and treaties with non-Jewish states and rulers,…

Ἰουδαῖος, not Ἰσραήλ is also used by the Jews themselves in diplomatic communications with non-Jewish states.…

Not merely in external affairs, but also in official domestic documents Ἰουδαῖοι is always used for the people, not Israel.⁶⁹¹

Sometimes the exceptions to a trend further illustrate the logic underlying the trend, and in the case of the link between restoration eschatology and Israel/Ἰουδαῖοι terminology, the Maccabean literature provides just that.⁶⁹² Unlike the other texts we have examined so far, 1 Maccabees uses “Israel” and “Israelites” (apparently) interchangeably with “Judaea” and Ἰουδαῖοι, using Ἰσραήλ and cognates 63 times (3.12 per 1000 words) versus 37 uses of Ἰουδαῖος (1.83/1000) and 27 of Ἱουδα/Ἰουδαία (1.34/100), combining for 64 uses (3.17/1000). On the surface, Kuhn’s reading of the data appears safe,⁶⁹³ but a closer examination shows cracks in the foundation of Kuhn’s insider/outside paradigm.

Although Kuhn is correct in that the narrator’s voice prefers “Israel” in 1 Maccabees, the narrator by no means avoids Ἰουδαῖος when speaking in his own voice (cf. 1 Macc 1:29; 2:23; 4:2; 11:47; 11:49; 14:33, 34, 37, 40, 47, 51). Rather, it appears the narrator actually prefers Ἰουδαῖος when speaking of the specific political entity and people of Judaea, tending toward “Israel(ites)” only when speaking on a grander, more cosmic, “biblical” scale. Consider the differences among the following narrative statements:

⁶⁹¹ Kuhn, TDNT 3:360–61.

⁶⁹² 1 Maccabees is the lynchpin of Kuhn’s insider/outside model because of its preference for “Israel” language. Although only preserved in Greek, nearly all commentators assume there was a Hebrew original, so Goodblatt’s (linguistic divide) version of Kuhn’s model likewise depends on 1 Maccabees (Goodblatt, “Israelites who Reside in Judah”). On 1 Maccabees as deriving from an original Hebrew document, see Uriel Rappaport, The First Book of Maccabees—Introduction, Hebrew Translation and Commentary (Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi, 2004), 9–10 and the sources cited there.

⁶⁹³ Thus as recently as Goodblatt, “Israelites who Reside in Judah,” 74–79.
Very great wrath came upon Israel. (1 Macc 1:64)

When he had finished speaking these words, a Ἰουδαῖος came forward in the sight of all to offer sacrifice on the altar in Modein, according to the king’s command. (1 Macc 2:23)

All his brothers and all who had joined his father helped him; they gladly fought for Israel. (1 Macc 3:2 NRSV)

This division moved out by night to fall upon the camp of the Ἰουδαῖοι and attack them suddenly. (1 Macc 4:1b–2)

Thus Israel had a great deliverance that day. (1 Macc 4:25 NRSV)

They gained control of the land of Judah and did great damage in Israel. (1 Macc 7:22)

And he placed garrisons in [those cities] to harass Israel. (1 Macc 9:51 NRSV)

So the king called the Ἰουδαῖοι to his aid, and they all rallied around him and then spread out through the city; and they killed on that day about one hundred thousand. (1 Macc 11:47)

Thus the sword ceased from Israel. Jonathan settled in Michmash and began to judge the people; and he destroyed the godless out of Israel. (1 Macc 9:73 NRSV)

And they threw down their arms and made peace. So the Ἰουδαῖοι gained glory in the sight of the king and of all the people in his kingdom, and they returned to Jerusalem with a large amount of spoil. (1 Macc 11:51)

He established peace in the land, and Israel rejoiced with great joy. (1 Macc 14:11)

An insider/outsider distinction between the terms cannot account for the variation shown in these narrative statements, leaving the need for a better explanation of the data even in the primary source for Kuhn’s model. A better explanation is provided by understanding the propagandistic aim of 1 Maccabees in light of Jewish expectations of restoration. In Goldstein’s words, “1 Maccabees is a history written to demonstrate the right of the Hasmonean dynasty … to be hereditary high priests and princes ruling the Jews.”694 As already observed in Daniel, the

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694 Goldstein, “Messianic Promises,” 73. Following Goldstein, I will refer to the author of 1 Maccabees as the “Hasmonean propagandist.” Cf. also Schwartz, “The Other,” 31–32.
events surrounding the Maccabean Revolt were clearly seen by some Ἰουδαῖοι as “the end of days,” the final period of tribulation before the “age of wrath” ended, ushering in the restoration of Israel. But the events following the mostly-victorious resistance against the Seleucids were not ultimately accompanied by a miraculous restoration of Israel and a messianic rule. In this environment, 1 Maccabees constructs its narrative in such a way as to argue that the newly independent state of Judah/Judaea under Hasmonean rule is in fact the fulfillment (or at least the beginning of the fulfillment) of the promises of Israel’s restoration. Goldstein explains:

The predictions of how God after the end of the Babylonian exile would bring about a great restored Israel in a perfected world can be divided into two classes: those that could conceivably be fulfilled by Jewish mortals (e.g., conquest of Moab, Ammon, and Philistia; military security for Judaea), and those that could be fulfilled only by a supernatural power (e.g., creation of new heavens and a new earth, resurrection of the dead, streaming of the gentiles of their own free will to Jerusalem to learn the ways of the God of Jacob). The Hasmonaean propagandist does not touch the predictions that could be fulfilled only by a supernatural power, but he exploits some of his opportunities to suggest that Hasmonaeans fulfilled those possible for mortals, as we shall see, and one could go on to trace the efforts of Hasmonaeans to fulfill them after the times narrated in 1 Maccabees.

The military successes of the Hasmonaeans against Gentile oppressors “proved that the Age of Wrath was at last approaching its end,” and 1 Maccabees goes out of its way to show how the Hasmonaeans were in fact fulfilling the promises to Israel. The propagandist’s use of

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695 “Indeed, though, most believing Jews facing the persecution under Antiochus IV probably thought they were living in the prophesied time of troubles immediately before the final Great Redemption, the Hasmonaean propagandist regarded that response to the dreadful challenge as disastrously wrong.” Goldstein, “Messianic Promises,” 78. Goldstein elsewhere observes that the author of 1 Macc repeatedly “took delight in exposing what he saw as the falsity of Daniel 7–12” (I Maccabees, 560, cf. also 42–54), whereas Jason of Cyrene, the author of the work abridged in 2 Maccabees, preferred Daniel over 1 Macc (I Maccabees, 48–49).

696 Goldstein, “Messianic Promises,” 78: “More than one generation had elapsed by the time he wrote. It was therefore obvious to the Hasmonaean propagandist that the troubles had not been the prophesied prelude to the Last Days.”

697 Goldstein, “Messianic Promises,” 75–76.

698 Goldstein, “Messianic Promises,” 76.
“Israel(ite)” language is therefore a result of his attempt to connect the acts of the Hasmoneans to Israel’s restoration. He applies the term Israel precisely because he is making a case about Israeliite restoration. His characters, on the other hand, do not tend to utilize this terminology, as it was not the language typically used by Judahites, most of whom were still using the default term Ἰουδαῖος, since the eschatological restoration of Israel had not yet taken place. The few times Israel is heard on the lips of a character within the story are in theological or covenantal contexts like prayer (4:11, 30–31; 13:4), in which the term would be expected not because of an “insider/outsider” distinction but because it is the proper covenantal term—YHWH is the God of Israel, the full people of the covenant, not just the God of Judah. Again, recall that the Hasmonean state was called “Judah” and its people “Jews” (יהודים/Iουδαῖοι), as Kuhn himself recognizes:

Hasmonean coins bear out this conclusion. Here היהודים is consistently used, since the reference is to official titles. It is of interest to compare the shekel which was probably minted during the great revolt of 66–70 A.D. This bears the inscription ישראל, Cf. also the coins minted under Bar Cochba in 132–135 A.D., which carry the inscriptions יהודים, ל口头 של ישראל ל口头 של ישראל on Hasmonean coins is the correct official inscription; the熟悉 of the rebellions proclaims a religio-political programme, namely, that we, the people of God, now throw off the yoke of the Gentiles, that the Messianic age is dawning, and that it brings with it the redemption (גלאלה) and freedom (חרות), the dominion and glory, of the people of God.

Goodblatt has further confirmed this conclusion, finding it “somewhat surprising,” since it seems at odds with Kuhn’s insider/outsider paradigm, which “would lead us to expect the use of the term ‘Israel’ as the preferred self-designation.” Tomson is likewise at a loss at how

699 Kuhn, TDNT 3:361.


701 Goodblatt, "Judeans to Israel," 16. “Kuhn felt obliged to explain the use of "Israel" by the rebels. However, based on the evidence he himself adduced, the latter term is what we would have expected in any event. It is not so much
to deal with this “witness to the striking phenomenon of ‘outside speech,’ in Hebrew, by Jewish officials.” Tomson concludes that—by using Yehudim—“the Hasmonean leaders portray themselves in a non-Jewish perspective.” Goodblatt sees this as an indicator of “the conflicted identity of the Hasmoneans” but confesses in the next breath that “a convincing explanation of Hasmonean usage still eludes me.” No such interpretive gymnastics or confusion is necessary once it is acknowledged that such usage as witnessed in 1 Maccabees is not “outside speech” at all but an application of the usual and proper ethnonym; it was simply the standard way Yehudim/Ἰουδαῖοι of the period referred to themselves and their state, particularly in light of the “Israel” located in the region around Samaria. The reader in the Hasmonean period would thus be accustomed to Ἰουδαῖος or Ἰουδαῖοι in common speech for the people and nation.

In other words, Kuhn and those following his model have been asking exactly the wrong question. Instead of asking why 1 Maccabees (and the Hasmoneans) would use Jew/Judaean/Judah terminology and regarding that as anomalous, the better question is why 1 Maccabees so frequently (and anomalously) uses “Israel” language. The answer to that question is more straightforward. By using heightened biblical terminology, the propagandist associates the Hasmonean kingdom with the more historically and rhetorically powerful covenantal term Ἰσραήλ. The author is at pains to convince the reader, for whom “Judahite” terminology was

the shift to "Israel" that requires explanation, but rather the use of ‘Judeans” by the Hasmonean state” ("Judeans to Israel,” 35). Goodblatt further puzzles over this “anomaly” in Goodblatt, “Israelites who Reside in Judah.”

702 Tomson, "Names," 129.
703 Tomson, "Names," 132.
704 Goodblatt, “Israelites who Reside in Judah,” 86.
705 As Boyarin, “The IOUDAIOI in John,” 227: “Now the natural name for the citizens of this tiny Temple-State would be ‘children of Judah’ (בני יהודה) or ‘Yahudim’ (יוודים; Ἰουδαῖοι).”
normative, that Hasmonean Judah/Judaea should be understood as fulfilling God’s promises about the restoration of Israel. As can be seen from the statements above, the Hasmonean propagandist does not in fact treat “Israel(ites)” and Judah/Ἰουδαίοι as synonymous but instead restricts each term to its appropriate sphere. “Judah” language continues as the default when speaking in a more mundane register—even Simon’s response to Antiochus only claims “the legal rights of the Judeans over Judea’s territory”\(^{706}\) rather than the full territory of biblical Israel (1 Macc 15:28–36)—but “Israel” language is preferred when rhetorically connecting the actions of Judas the Maccabee and the Hasmoneans with the eschatological promises to Israel.

The propagandist is thoroughgoing in his efforts to connect the Judah/Judaea of the Hasmoneans with a restored Israel, also applying biblical language to “Israel’s” enemies, speaking of such foes and locations as the “children of Esau” (5:3) and “the land of the Philistines” (3:41). Not only do these anachronisms provide continuity with historical Israel, they connect the deeds of the Hasmoneans with the promised conquests of these entities at the restoration of Israel (cf. Isa 11:14).\(^{707}\) More importantly, the propagandist uses these details to connect the deeds of the Hasmonean rulers with Israelite heroes of the past.\(^{708}\)

Throughout the rest of his book, the Hasmonaean propagandist echoes the language of biblical stories of heroes, from Judges, 1–2 Samuel, and 1–2 Kings, in order to base the dynastic claims of the Hasmonaeans on the fact that their accomplishments equaled those that earned such rewards for those heroes. At 1


\(^{707}\) The Hasmonaean annexation of Samaria (1 Macc 11:28–34) and campaigns of forced conversion also make additional sense in the context of an effort to restore Israel, though in this case the restoration would not be happening through the miraculous regathering of Israelites from the nations but through the conversion of those in the land and their subjection to Judah. On the conversions under the Hasmoneans, see Cohen, \textit{Beginnings of Jewishness}, 16–24, 109–39; “Religion, Ethnicity, and ‘Hellenism’ in the Emergence of Jewish Identity in Maccabean Palestine,” in \textit{Religion and Religious Practice in the Seleucid Kingdom}, eds. Per Bilde et al. (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 1990), 204–223.

\(^{708}\) E.g. the examples mentioned in Goldstein, \textit{I Maccabees}, 6–8 and Goldstein, “Messianic Promises,” 76–81.
Maccabees 5:62 the author is at his most audacious in asserting for the Hasmonaeans the prerogatives reserved for David’s line in earlier Jewish tradition. …

The Hasmonaean propagandist did not wish to give up completely the possibility of leading his readers to believe that Mattathias’ sons fulfilled the words of the prophets. Without echoing the words of the prophecies, he could tell of the deeds of his heroes that looked as if they were fulfillments and he could then leave it to Jewish Bible-readers to infer the point. He seems to have done so repeatedly. 709

The anachronistic and biblical nature of these terms for “Israel’s” enemies only reinforces the equally anachronistic and biblical nature of the author’s use of Israel. In the same way that the Hasmoneans were not in fact fighting against Philistia or Moab, the Jewish state of the second century BCE was also not the same as Israel, either the historical entity or the promised future entity. Nevertheless, the propagandist’s use of these terms is rhetorically powerful, identifying the Hasmonean house as the rightful rulers of Israel-being-restored, suggesting that the age of wrath was coming to an end through the Hasmoneans’ reconquest of the land. 710 Thus, even in a book that uses it as frequently as 1 Maccabees, the title “Israel” is not used lightly but denotes a strong rhetorical claim about the present work of God to restore his people.

This also makes more sense of the choice of the revolutionaries in the revolts of 66–70 and 132–135 in adopting the term “Israel”—unlike the Hasmonean kingdom, the rebels overtly lay claim to the promises of Israel’s restoration. 711 Again, it is not the Hasmoneans who were anomalous in this regard but the rebels, who saw themselves as ushering in the final kingdom. 712


710 The age of wrath has not fully come to an end even for the propagandist, since only the actions of human beings associated with the end—and not yet the promised actions of God himself—have transpired. Nevertheless, “For the Hasmoneans and their propagandist, these facts proved that the Age of Wrath was at last approaching its full end” (Goldstein, “Messianic Promises,” 76).

711 On these rebel governments, see Goodblatt, Elements, 124–134; Goodblatt, "Judeans to Israel," 23–36.

712 This is one conclusion Kuhn got right, as this “Israel” language marks the rebellions as messianic religious-political programs. Cf. Kuhn, TDNT 3:361.
The principle is clear: When Ιουδαῖοι adopted “Israelite” language in this period, they were identifying with the historical covenant with Israel and the eschatological promises of Israelite restoration.

Such calculated rhetorical use of the term Israel shows that some early Jewish groups and factions did indeed constructively appropriate “Israel” terminology as a means of intentional community formation in continuity with historical Israel. But this is not the same as the straightforward appropriation of that title as though οἱ Ιουδαῖοι were now the sole heirs of the heritage of Israel,713 nor does 1 Maccabees “equate Israelite with Judean.”714 Instead, these appropriations of the term “Israel” serve as rhetorical claims that the promised restoration of Israel was underway. In this way, although the “raw data” give the “general impression” that 1 Maccabees conflated these terms and in fact preferred Israel when referring to the present people, a fuller investigation shows the same basic principles we have observed so far. The difference is not between groups insistent on “living in the biblical world,” using these terms with the precision of the older biblical texts,715 and those groups who more liberally collapsed the difference between the terms. Rather, the difference concerns the present position in the eschatological timetable. For the hopeful returnees in Ezra’s day and the Hasmonean propagandist, the age of wrath was coming to an end, and God had begun the process of restoring Israel. Thus we see a revival of Israel language in each case. But even these authors do

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714 Pace John S. Bergsma, “Qumran Self-Identity: ‘Israel’ or ‘Judah’?” DSD 15 (2008): 172–189 (172), who uses 1–2 Maccabees and Josephus as foils for the Dead Sea Scrolls’ preservation of the distinction between these terms. As we have seen, Josephus and 1 Maccabees actually continue to distinguish between the terms as well. See below for evidence that 2 Maccabees does the same.

not use “Israel” as if it were now synonymous with “οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι”; rather, even those who appropriated the term (such as the Hasmonean propagandist) did so under the heavy influence of restoration eschatology and made use of the rhetorical weight of the term “Israel.”

2 Maccabees: Still Awaiting Israel

The relationship between Israel terminology and restoration eschatology—and the rhetorical punch of 1 Maccabees’ use of this terminology—is further demonstrated by the lack of such language within 2 Maccabees, which is far less optimistic about the Hasmonean period.716 In noting the difference between these books, Kuhn regarded 2 Maccabees as the signal example of supposed outsider accommodation, “If 1 Macc. is the best example of Palestinian Judaism, 2 Macc. is the best example of Hellenistic.”717

2 Maccabees is composite, beginning with two letters purportedly written to the Ἰουδαίοι of Egypt to convince them to celebrate the feast commemorating the purification of the Second Temple in 164 BCE, followed by an anonymous abridgement of Jason of Cyrene’s history of the

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717 Kuhn, TDNT 3:363.
wars of Judas Maccabeus and his brothers, which is no longer extant. In contrast to the pro-

Hasmonean propaganda of 1 Maccabees,

One purpose of the Abridged History is to oppose the dynastic claims of the
Hasmonaeans. Another is to demonstrate that although the Second Temple is not
yet the exclusive location for sacrificial worship demanded by Deuteronomy
12:5–14, there are important senses in which it is now God’s Chosen Place.

This antipathy towards Hasmonean claims manifests itself in the way 2 Maccabees
handles Israel and Ἰουδαῖος terminology. In contrast to 1 Maccabees’ frequent narrative use of
“Israel,” 2 Maccabees avoids such use of Israel language entirely. The contrast between the two
books is stark, as can be seen in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Israel and Judah Language in 1 & 2 Maccabees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Ἰσραήλ (cognates)</th>
<th>Ἰουδαῖος</th>
<th>Ἰουδᾶ/Ἰουδαία</th>
<th>Ἰουδαϊσμός / Ἰουδαϊκός</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Maccabees</td>
<td>63 (3.12/1000 words)</td>
<td>37 (1.83/1000)</td>
<td>27 (1.34/1000)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Maccabees</td>
<td>5 (0.38/1000)</td>
<td>59 (4.54/1000)</td>
<td>8 (0.77/1000)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While 1 Maccabees uses “Israel” and cognates 63 times, 2 Maccabees uses the term only
five times, restricted to prayer (1:25, 26), third-person reports of prayer (10:38; 11:6), a reference
to “the God of Israel” (9:5), and a reference (in a vision) to Jeremiah the prophet’s love for “the
family of Israel” (15:14)—in Kuhn’s words, “always in strongly religious contexts.”

Proportionally with respect to the length of the books, 1 Maccabees uses Israel language 8.2

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718 For more on the authorship and composite nature of 2 Maccabees, see Goldstein, *II Maccabees*, 1–54.

719 Goldstein, “Messianic Promises,” 85. See also Goldstein, *II Maccabees*, 17: “Where First Maccabees was written
to prove the legitimacy of the Hasmonean dynasty of high priests and princes descended from the zealouss priest
Mattathias, our writer does not deign to mention Mattathias and pointedly makes every effort to show that Judas’
brothers were at best ineffective and at worst tainted by treason and sin.”

720 Kuhn, *TDNT* 3:363.
times more often than 2 Maccabees, which avoids it in the narrator’s voice. On the flip side, because of its avoidance of Israel terminology, 2 Maccabees uses Ἰουδαῖος nearly 2.5 times as often per thousand words as 1 Maccabees.

Although 1 and 2 Maccabees do not have a literary relationship comparable to that of the Synoptic Gospels, this sort of consistent difference in language suggests the epitomist of 2 Maccabees disagreed with the restoration associations implied by the Hasmonean propagandist’s application of “Israel” terminology to Hasmonean Judah. In fact, 2 Maccabees makes it clear from the very start that Israel’s restoration remains incomplete, with Jonathan’s prayer in 1:24–29 asking God to “gather together our scattered people, [and] set free those who are slaves among the Gentiles …. Plant your people in your holy place, as Moses promised” (2 Macc 1:27–29 NRSV). Goldstein explains,

Obviously, the author believed that Age [of Wrath] had not yet completely ended…. This prayer, in alluding to still unfulfilled promises and to continuing aspects of the Age of Wrath, does echo words of the Writing Prophets. Though the great prophetic forecasts for the postexilic era had predicted a prompt ingathering of the exiled Jews [sic.] and a prompt punishment of their oppressors, the author of Epistle 2 concedes the obvious truth, that those promises were still unfulfilled in 164 and even in 103 BCE…. Nevertheless, the author of Epistle 2 ends with the hope that the last remnants of the Age of Wrath will speedily pass away, with the renewed fulfilment of Exodus 15:17, i.e., a new Exodus by which the exiles will return to be planted again in God’s Holy Place.

It is surely no accident that this prayer contains two of 2 Maccabees’ five uses of “Israel” but does not use Ἰουδαῖος. Contrary to Goldstein’s above summary, Jonathan prays not for “the ingathering of the exiled Jews” but rather for the restoration of Israel, while the epitome

721 “Unlike the Hasmonaean propagandist, our writer defined the conditions of the Present Age as falling far short of the predicted period of Israel’s unending bliss” (Goldstein, “Messianic Promises,” 85).

722 Goldstein, “Messianic Promises,” 74, 84. Note that Goldstein reads the term “Jews” into Jonathan’s prayer, which refers to “Israel” and “your people” but never Ἰουδαῖοι, yet another example of assuming these terms to be synonymous.
following the letters tells of the struggle for Judah’s (that is, the Ἰουδαῖοι) independence under Hasmonean leadership, which the epitomist—in contrast to 1 Maccabees—is careful not to equate with Israel’s restoration and independence.

The second letter does, however, defend the validity of the Second Temple against suggestions that it was invalid because it lacked the glorious presence of the Lord manifested through the miraculous heavenly fire accompanying God’s election of Moses’ tabernacle (Lev 9:24) and Solomon’s temple (2 Chron 7:1–3). In response, the second letter suggests that the fire of the Second Temple was in fact the fire of the First Temple, miraculously preserved during the exile (2 Macc 1:19–36). The letter also grapples with the absence of the ark of the covenant and other temple implements by fabricating a tradition about Jeremiah hiding the ark of the covenant in the wake of the Babylonian Exile, sealing it in a cave on the mountain from which Moses had looked upon the promised land, and declaring,

The place shall remain unknown until God gathers his people again and shows his mercy. Then the Lord will disclose these things, and the glory of the Lord and the cloud will appear, as they were shown in the case of Moses, and as Solomon asked that the place should be specially consecrated. (2 Macc 2:7–8)\textsuperscript{723}

So 2 Maccabees begins by asserting that the absence of the ark of the covenant and the glory of the Lord are evidence of the continued absence of the fullness of Israel.\textsuperscript{724} At the restoration of Israel, the Lord’s presence would again be known as it had been in prior days. The present temple, although valid as a place of atonement and prayer, bears witness to Israel’s continued exile through the absence of the ark and the cloud of glory. Similarly, the second letter expresses hopes for the return of those who have been scattered “from everywhere under

\textsuperscript{723} This tradition is in opposition to Jer 3:16, which declares that at the restoration, Israel will no longer remember or miss the ark of the covenant.

\textsuperscript{724} Doubts about the presence of God in the Second Temple are evident as late as Pesiq. R. 160a.
heaven” (2:18) and for a restoration of “the kingship and the priesthood and the consecration” (2:17), further illustrating the present lack and hopes for a full restoration. Goldstein rightly sums up the situation:

The bulk of the [second] letter (1:18–2:18) serves to prove that important aspects of the Age of Wrath have ended forever, especially some which had cast doubt on God’s election of the second temple. The letter concludes with a vigorous expression (2:17–18) of confidence in the present situation of the Chosen People and of hope that God will speedily fulfill his promises and put an end to all aspects of the Age of Wrath. It also contains a prayer for the end of the Age of Wrath (1:24–29). Obviously, the author believed that Age had not yet completely ended.

The Abridged History continues along the same trajectory, avoiding any identification of Hasmonean Judaea with “Israel,” in fact seeking “to discredit the Hasmonaean dynasty, which by his time had ‘usurped’ the high priesthood and the kingship.” Rather, the epitomist hopes for a true restoration of all of Israel in the future—seemingly accompanied by the resurrection of Dan 12:2 (cf. 2 Macc 7:9, 14).

Conclusion: The Enduring Roots of Restoration Eschatology

The contrast between 1 and 2 Maccabees thus further illuminates the tie between Israel terminology and restoration eschatology. For 2 Maccabees, although Ιουδαῖοι are indeed

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725 Following the textual emendation of Goldstein, *II Maccabees*, 187; Goldstein, “Messianic Promises,” 83.

726 This does not, however, preclude the contemporary faithful from sharing in YHWH’s compassion in the midst of the age of wrath (7:6) and receiving the blessings of the covenant after enduring the suffering of this age (7:36). *Pace* Waters, *End of Deuteronomy*, 42 n. 78, these verses are by no means evidence “that some Jews were explicitly not regarded as existing under either Deuteronomic curse or Deuteronomic exile.” A look at the immediate context in which the seven brothers are being brutally slaughtered is sufficient to demonstrate that the age of wrath is in full effect. Indeed, the brothers drink from the “ever-flowing life under God’s covenant” only “after enduring a brief suffering” (7:36), which further accentuates the nature of the present age.

727 Goldstein, “Messianic Promises,” 74.

728 Goldstein, “Messianic Promises,” 87, continuing: “Our writer admired Judas Maccabaeus and strove to discredit all other Hasmonaeans”
“Israelites,” the larger body of Israel remains scattered in exile, and the Ἰουδαῖοι and the kingdom of Judah/Judaea are not synonymous with Israel, which will be restored in full sometime in the future.\(^{729}\) On the other hand, in contrast to the other early Jewish literature examined so far, 1 Maccabees readily uses Ἰσραήλ language of the present people, a fact that helped provide the basis for Kuhn’s insider/outsider paradigm. But a closer look at 1 Maccabees, especially once placed alongside 2 Maccabees, shows that Israel language is yet again closely tied to restoration hopes, rhetorically identifying the exploits of the Hasmoneans with Israel’s restoration and the end of the age of wrath. As with the returnees in Ezra/Nehemiah,\(^{730}\) the Hasmonean propagandist thus constructively appropriates “Israel” in the belief that the promised restoration is already taking place, although not complete. This conclusion accords with the general construction of Israel (and Judah/οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι) throughout the foundational biblical literature of early Judaism, which largely amounts to a record of the events leading to the two exiles (aiming to explain why they happened) along with promises of Israel’s subsequent return and large-scale restoration.

But these grand prophecies were not fulfilled during the Hasmonean or any other period. Israel was not restored as promised. The Davidic dynasty was not renewed. The promises remained unfulfilled centuries after the return from Babylon. Of course, for a people committed to these promises, that day still lay in the future. The prophets had not been mistaken, nor had they prophesied falsely—far from it! Instead, the day of eschatological salvation lay still further

\(^{729}\) That 2 Macc also seems to have held some respect for the Samaritan temple at Mount Gerizim may also connect to this larger point, as a way of recognizing their claim to Israelite heritage even if they are not at present united with/under Judah as they should be. See Goldstein, \textit{II Maccabees}, 13.

\(^{730}\) Again, recall the difference between the hopes of the early returnees reflected in the Israel language found in the book and the conclusion of Ezra-Nehemiah itself that the restoration had \textit{not} in fact taken place.
in the future, when the prophets’ words would be fulfilled. E. P. Sanders aptly summarizes the state of affairs in the first century:

“Jacob” (the twelve tribes) was not brought together again. The restoration of Jerusalem did not cause the walls to be built with jewels; the wealth of nations and kings did not pour in to adorn Jerusalem and the temple; the Davidic boundaries were not, until the Hasmoneans, recovered; and then not for long. Phrases such as “new heavens and new earth” (Isa. 66.22), coupled with the degree to which reality fell short of more modest predictions, could easily lead to the view that those prophecies were about a still more distant time. It would be comprehensible as a first-century view that the time would yet come when the dispersed of Israel would be restored, when a Davidic king would arise, when Jerusalem would be rebuilt, when the temple would be beautified, and when the nations would submit to Israel’s God.731

The very preservation of the distinction between the Ἰουδαῖοι and Ἰσραὴλ in the biblical texts thus serves as a continued witness of the incompleteness of Israel in the present and keeps restoration eschatology at the very center of the consciousness of οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι awaiting the fulfillment of the Hebrew prophets’ promises. Those Ἰουδαῖοι who assigned authority to the Prophets and the Writings would regularly read of “Israel,” painfully aware that the polity of Israel so frequently mentioned in the scriptures no longer existed but also expecting that Israel would one day be restored as promised.

In light of this overarching restoration eschatology, we must therefore be alerted to the rhetorical power of “Israel” language in early Judaism and the claims inherent in its use. If the construction of Israel in these texts shaped the understanding of early Jewish groups, we should expect that, for the majority of Ἰουδαῖοι in our period, “Israel” is the covenantal term for the people of YHWH as a whole but is also an entity in an incomplete and liminal state at present, still awaiting the time when YHWH will fully restore not only the Ἰουδαῖοι but reunify and restore all of his covenantal people, including the northern Israelites still scattered among the

731 Sanders, Jesus and Judaism, 80.
nations. Inasmuch as the narrative framework established in these biblical texts supplied a
descriptive lexicon and grammar for identity formation (and the discourses and debates
concerning Israelite identity) for those coming afterwards, when we do hear the use of “Israel” in
the literature of the Second Temple period, our ears should therefore always be primed for
eschatological, messianic, or political claims.\footnote{To his credit, although following Kuhn (without citation) elsewhere in his analysis Bloch, "Israélite, juif, hébreu," 17, recognizes, “À partir d’Esdras, une préférence marquée se manifestera pour le nom Israël qui, tout en rappelant les souvenirs glorieux du passé, se trouve fortement lié à l’espérance théocratique, messianique et eschatologique.”}
PART III: ISRAEL AND RESTORATION ESCHATOLOGY IN THE SECOND TEMPLE PERIOD
CHAPTER 6: A POSITIVE VIEW OF THE EXILE IN THE DIASPORA?

The previous chapters argued that “Israel” terminology is consistently connected with restoration eschatology in biblical literature, suggesting that we should be alert for similar resonances in other Jewish literature of the Second Temple period. Nevertheless, the prevalence of restoration eschatology in the Jewish diaspora has long been questioned, despite its biblical pedigree and the fact that texts that eventually became the Bible were, in Isaiah Gafni’s words, “the logical point of departure for most Jews addressing the phenomenon of their dispersion.” Indeed, it is now generally assumed that most Jews in the diaspora no longer hoped for any sort of restoration, having abandoned the restoration eschatology of the Bible. A. T. Kraabel poignantly expresses this sentiment, “The Diaspora was not Exile; in some sense it became a Holy Land, too.”

Louis Feldman, for example, begins his study on Josephus’ perspective on exile with the curious assertion, “One would expect that Josephus would have a positive attitude toward the concept of exile.” Feldman offers no explanation as to why one would expect such an odd

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733 Isaiah Gafni, *Land, Center and Diaspora: Jewish Constructs in Late Antiquity*, JSPSup 21 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1997), 21.

734 This fact is perhaps most evident in several recent reference materials on diaspora Judaism. See, for example, Erich S. Gruen, “Judaism in the Diaspora,” *EDEJ* (2010): 77-97, which consistently asserts that diaspora Jews no longer held hopes for restoration.


thing, but this statement reflects the increasingly widespread belief that most diaspora Jews took
a positive view of the dispersion, a view popularized by Karl Schmidt’s 1935 *TWNT* article on
διασπορά.737 Schmidt argued that as the passage of time “healed the severe wounds of the
various deportations” and voluntary emigration and proselytism extended the diaspora, the
prophetic understanding of exile as a curse had been replaced by a *Hochgefühl*, a feeling of pride
in Jewish expansion across the world.738 As proof, Schmidt cites Rolf Rendtorff’s assessment
that the Septuagint had coined the milder Greek term διασπορά to translate a variety of more
severe Hebrew words related to exile to soften or conceal the negative prophetic assessment of
exile:

Die jüdische Diaspora erscheint im Lichte des prophetischen Urteils (Jes. 35:8; Jer. 23:24; Ezech. 22:15) als Auswirkung göttlicher Strafgerichte und darum als Fluch, und erst hellenistischer Optimismus beurteilt die D. anders …. So hat auch die Septuaginta … den furchtbaren Ernst aller jener hebräischen Ausdrücke, die das göttliche Zerstreuungsgericht über Israel schonungslos aufdecken, mit dem Schleier des Wortes διασπορά verhüllt.739

This argument rests upon two basic pillars: 1) evidence that the Septuagint weakens the
negative prophetic verdict on the exile in favor of a new “Hellenistic optimism” and 2) the idea
that the passage of time and changing circumstances eventually changed the perspectives of
those who (for the most part) voluntarily remained outside the land, such that most Jews felt at

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737 Karl Ludwig Schmidt, “διασπορά,” *TDNT* 2:98–104. See also the same basic argument in Rudolf
Schnackenburg, “Gottes Volk in der Zerstreuung. Diaspora im Zeugnis der Bibel,” in *Schriften zum Neuen
paradigm is also cited with approval by W. D. Davies, *The Territorial Dimension of Judaism* (Berkeley: University
of California Press, 1982), 116–17, though he also calls attention to the need for more research on the question.

738 Schmidt, *TDNT* 2:100.

739 F. M. Rendtorff, “Diaspora II. Evangelische,” in *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart (RGG)*, vol. 1, eds.
home in the diaspora and no longer looked forward to a return, an argument more recently augmented by appeal to material evidence from the diaspora. We will now address each in turn before returning to specific texts and authors from our period.

Exile, Diaspora, and Emigration in the LXX

Rendtorff’s assertion that the Septuagint softened or concealed the negative prophetic judgment by introducing a more positive term διασπορά has been oft-repeated and continues to be an especially popular notion in the field of diaspora studies. The idea is that while גילה and גלות and other Hebrew terms translated by διασπορά are entirely negative, the Septuagint translators chose a term that did not mean “banishment” or “horror” but rather merely being “sown” (σπείρω) or “scattered,” either of which could presumably be neutral or even positive, depending on the context. Sociologist Robin Cohen has even repeatedly asserted that διασπορά was used prior to the LXX to describe Greek colonization in the Mediterranean, despite the fact that not one occurrence of διασπορά in the TLG refers to colonization.

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740 For a discussion of this idea, see Gañi, Land, Center, and Diaspora, 27–30.


742 The term גילה occurs three times in the Torah, each meaning “uncover” in a sexual sense, and the LXX uses ἀποκαλυπτική in these cases. Cf. Kiefer, Exil und Diaspora, 144–47, 484–95.

Διασπορά in the LXX

Cohen may have been misled on this point by conflating διασπορά with the term that most often renders נָלַג in the LXX: ἀποικία (or ἀποικεσία; 30x and 8x, respectively), a term meaning “away from home” and often applied to various Greek emigrations in the classical period.744 That the LXX prefers the term also used for these classical Greek emigrations has been understood as further evidence that “the Alexandrian translators refused to face [the] reality” of the differences between the glorious history of Greek colonization and their own history of captivity and deportation, instead apologetically and “retrospectively align[ing] the Jewish past with the Greek past.”745

Before Schmidt popularized the idea that the LXX softened the Hebrew Bible’s negativity about exile, James Hardy Ropes had already shown through a brief but incisive analysis of διασπείρω, διασπορά, and a comparison with other synonyms (chiefly διασκορπίζω, αἰχµαλωσία, and ἀποικία) in the LXX, concluding, “διασπορά, always standing in contrast with the idea of a visible unity of the nation, calls attention, usually with a certain pathos, to the absence of that unity.”746 Ropes’ observations were buried in the middle of a commentary on the Epistle of James, however, and did not receive significant attention, easily overshadowed by the greater influence of the TDNT a few years later. The TDNT still did not go entirely unchallenged,

744 Cf. Joseph Mélèze Modrzejewski, “How to Be a Jew in Hellenistic Egypt,” in Cohen and Frerichs, Diasporas in Antiquity, 65–91 (67–70). Modrzejewski rightly notes that “colony” or “colonization” are problematic terms in these contexts because of their loaded modern connotations. Nevertheless, most Greek ἀποικία were of the voluntary variety and involved leaving one’s home city to establish a foothold in a new territory. On Greek colonization, see David William Robertson Ridgway, “Colonization, Greek,” OCD (1996): 362-63.

745 E.g., Modrzejewski, “How to Be a Jew,” 70. As will be shown below, Philo’s frequent use of the word (and Josephus’ few examples) have been seen as particular evidence of an attempt to domesticate the exile and put a positive spin on the diaspora.

however, as Isac Leo Seeligmann, after previously having offhandedly approved Schmidt's and
Rendtorff’s arguments, called their conclusions into question as early as 1948,

[LXX] Texts … do express a complaint about the afflictions caused by exile,
making us doubt the truth in the saying according to which the Alexandrian Jewry
of the Septuagint [changed the traditional negative view for a more positive
perspective]. Such a formulation of the situation does not do enough justice to the
factor that translators use the term diaspora, amidst and as a synonym to many
expressions denoting horror, abuse, and shame.

The idea that the LXX substituted a positive diaspora perspective for the traditional
negative perspective on the exile nevertheless remained the default until Willem C. van Unnik’s
posthumously-published study persuasively demonstrated that neither the Septuagint nor later
Hellenistic Jewish literature weakens the dire prophetic verdict but instead consistently present
the diaspora as a continuing condition of judgment based on the curse of the Law. Van Unnik’s
thorough philological study first demonstrates that διασπορά was not a *terminus technicus* for
emigration, colonization, or the dispersion of a people prior to its use in the LXX, instead serving
as a term signifying a destructive scattering of something that was once a unified entity. He
then argues that, far from trying to conceal the negative judgments of exile in the Hebrew Bible,
this previous negative connotation was precisely the reason the Septuagint translators chose the

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747 Isac Leo Seeligmann, “Problemen en perspectieven in het moderne Septuagintaonderzoek,” *JEOL* 7 (1940): 359–390 (75). Seeligmann here also comments about an “awareness of mission” among “diaspora Jewry,” suggesting that many diaspora Jews regarded their current status as continuing Israel’s role as “light to the nations,” a view he appears to retain in later work, although rejecting the Rendtorff/Schmidt conclusion preceding it.

748 Seeligmann, *Septuagint Version of Isaiah*, 100. He notes that he had previously agreed with this perspective (see above) before further study convinced him of its error.


750 Van Unnik, *Das Selbstverständnis*, 74–76. Cf. Plutarch’s citation of Epicurus in *Non posse* 27 (Moralia 1105A) and the use of διασπορά in *Adv. Coloten* 6 (1109F).
term, as it matched the negative tone of these passages, a conclusion that has since been further strengthened by David Reiner’s observation that in the Hebrew Bible, the language of “scattering” (e.g., רוּחַ, פֹּשָׁ, זֵרֶת) is considerably more negative than that of “exile” (גֵּלֵת)752.

From there, van Unnik proceeds to demonstrate that in the overwhelming majority of biblical passages in the Septuagint, both the noun διασπορά and the verb διασπορεῖν carry a distinctly—often harshly—negative tone. He further reinforces this point by observing that the use of the term in later Jewish literature from the Second Temple period corresponds with this negative view, consistently presenting the diaspora as a misfortune and punishment for Israel’s sins.754 That Philo and Josephus tend to avoid the term διασπορά further confirms the negative connotation of the term, as their apologetic context is unsuited for outright negative judgments on the diaspora—though he also observes (as we will see more fully below) that neither abandons the prophetic picture of punishment and ultimate restoration.755 Philo actually goes a step further, directly stating, “to sow (σπείρειν) is the cause of good, but to disperse (διασπείρειν) is the cause of evil” (Conf. 196), removing any doubt that the term has a negative sense at least for him.756


753 Van Unnik, Das Selbstverständnis, 89–107.

754 Van Unnik, Das Selbstverständnis, 108–147.

755 Van Unnik, Das Selbstverständnis, 127–145. These authors and their perspectives on exile/diaspora/restoration will be more thoroughly addressed below.

756 Surprisingly, neither Kiefer nor van Unnik addresses this passage, where Philo defines the verbal form and emphasizes its negative sense, though van Unnik does reference the following paragraph’s promise of restoration (Das Selbstverständnis, 132). See the section on Philo below for more detailed interaction with this passage.
In the wake of van Unnik’s philological tour de force, it is no longer tenable to argue that the Greek translators’ choice of διασπορά lessens the negative prophetic judgment in favor of a more optimistic perspective.\footnote{That is not to say that van Unnik is correct in regarding διασπορά as worse than exile. It should instead be regarded as roughly equivalent in charge to the words it translates. Cf. Scott, “Self-Understanding,” 180–85.} It is rather more likely that the translators chose διασπορά in part because of its negative connotation (as van Unnik suggests), and in part to echo several key prophetic passages that speak of the people being “sown,” with a harvest to be reaped at the restoration (Hos 2:23; Jer 31:27 [38:27 LXX]). Thus the choice of διασπορά serves as a way to actualize those prophecies—the people have not only been “scattered” nearly to dissolution, they are being “sown” in the expectation of a future harvest.\footnote{This interpretation is found as late as the Rabbinic period, as evidenced in b. Pes. 87b. See Gafni, Land, Center, and Diaspora, 36 for further discussion.} Thus this translation brings out both the punishment aspect of the curse of exile and the hope of restoration and harvest from among the nations.

Φυγή, Ἀποικία, and Colonization

Although he addresses the term διασπορά, van Unnik does not significantly discuss the use of ἀποικία and cognates, and many now point to the Septuagint’s use of these terms as evidence of a more positive perspective on exile, despite the evidence to the contrary with respect to διασπορά.\footnote{The LXX regularly translates גולה (“exile”) with ἀποικία, with that term occurring nine times in Ezra-Nehemiah, once in 3 Maccabees, seventeen times in Jeremiah, and twice in Baruch. The related word ἀποικεσία (“going away from home”) is likewise used in LXX 4 Kgs 24:15 (=2 Kgs 24:15). Cf. Kiefer, Exil und Diaspora, 217–18.} Feldman, for example, observes that although classical Greek has a

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\footnote{That  is  not  to  say  that  van  Unnik  is  correct  in  regarding  διασπορά  as  worse  than  exile. It should instead be regarded as roughly equivalent in charge to the words it translates. Cf. Scott, “Self-Understanding,” 180–85.}

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“standard word, namely φυγή” for the concept of exile, “when the Septuagint deals with exile (גולה), it uses the language of emigration or colonization,” further asserting,

The picture one gets [in the LXX] is of the founding of a colony, since this, or the verb ἀποικίζω derived from the same stem, is the word used by Herodotus in referring to the colonies established by the Athenians in Ionia (1.146) and by the Therans in Cyrene (4.155) and the colony which Aristagoras the Milesian is thinking of founding (5.124). The word ἀποικία is likewise used by Hecataeus of Abdera (ap. Diodorus, Bibliotheca Historica 40.3.3) is referring to the “colony” in Jerusalem and other cities established by Moses and his followers when they are allegedly driven by the Egyptians during a pestilence.

To further his point, Feldman points to Philo’s awareness of “the term φυγή as referring to exile,” highlighting Philo’s use of this term when speaking of the expulsion of Adam from the garden, the expulsion of Hagar by Abraham, the banishment of Cain, and banishment for homicide. Feldman notes that although Philo is aware of this term, neither he nor the LXX, New Testament, or Josephus use this term with reference to the exile of the Israelites or the diaspora, instead preferring ἀποικία and cognates, which, he argues, “connotes those who have emigrated, who have settled in a far land, and who have been sent to colonize it, and has not the connotation of having been punished.” Based on this preference for ἀποικία rather than φυγή, Feldman argues that these various Hellenistic authors and translators obviously did not believe themselves to be in exile but rather envisioned themselves “colonists,” a positive perspective lacking the connotation of divine punishment.

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But Feldman’s argument assumes its conclusion, namely that φυγή would have been the term of choice if the authors or translators had wished to communicate divine judgment. Given that the LXX does not minimize the sense of punishment or judgment in its choice of διασπορά, the very fact that the Septuagint so often prefers ἀποικία when translating ענבל or דגלת more likely indicates that the translators did not regard the term as inherently positive rather than suggesting that they were avoiding a negative connotation. In any case, what is clear is that they did not regard φυγή as the appropriate translation, and Feldman’s examples from Philo may actually shed light on the reason: each of these examples was not just an exile but a permanent banishment with no hope of return. And indeed, φυγή/φεύγων had a connotation of permanence in at least some earlier Greek literature, as Timothy Perry explains:

The third stock element of the exile [φυγή] motif is the idea of permanence—the exiles of the Iliad and the Odyssey, whether they go into exile as the result of an act of homicide or as the result of a dispute, are all sundered permanently from their original communities. In other words, the exile loses his νόστος (‘homecoming’ or ‘return home’), and even his desire for νόστος.765

True to form, every example of φυγή in Philo, Josephus, or the New Testament involves either fleeing from danger (the more common meaning of the word) or the sense of an individual banishment for a crime. The ambiguity between these two aspects of φυγή is also noteworthy in understanding why the LXX translators chose not to use it, as the connotation of “flight” does not disappear even when the word refers to banishment.766 Rather, the term eventually came to

764 Scott, “Philo and the Restoration of Israel,” 563.

765 Timothy Peter John Perry, “Exile in Homeric Epic,” (PhD diss., University of Toronto, 2010), 18, discussing the concept of φυγή in Classical Greek literature. For more on the concept of nostoi and its relation to colonization, see Irad Malkin, Returns of Odysseus: Colonization and Ethnicity (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).

766 E.g., Demosthenes, Against Aristocrates 23.72, “What does the law order? That the one convicted of involuntary homicide must leave (ἀπηλθεῖν) the country on certain appointed days by a prescribed route and flee (φεύγειν) until he is forgiven by one of the relatives of the deceased.” The term clearly denotes an exile of sorts in this case but also clearly echoes the concept of flight from blood vengeance—the “flight” must continue until reconciliation with the
denote banishment (which often followed rather than preceded the flight proper) precisely because those receiving this sentence were thereby compelled to flee (φεύγειν) the country to avoid being killed.\footnote{E.g., the archaic judgment of ἀτιμία, which denoted a formal “loss of honor,” meaning a person (sometimes the person’s family as well) receiving this sentence was rendered an “outlaw” and could be killed with impunity and without pollution by any member of the community. By the later fifth century, ἀτιμία had come to denote the loss of some or all citizenship rights but was no longer necessarily equivalent to a death penalty. See Adele C. Scafuro, “Atimia,” \textit{The Encyclopedia of Ancient History} (2013): 923; Sara Forsdyke, \textit{Exile, Ostracism, and Democracy: The Politics of Expulsion in Ancient Greece} (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 10–11; Serge Vleminck, “La valeur de ἀτιμία dans le droit grec ancien,” \textit{LEC} 49 (1981): 251–265; A. R. W. Harrison, \textit{The Law of Athens: Procedure, Volume 2}, 2nd ed. (London: Duckworth, 1998), 169–176; Douglas M. MacDowell, \textit{Spartan Law}, ScotCS 1 (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic, 1986), 73–75.} “Thus there was,” Sara Forsdyke explains, “an equivalency between sentences of death and sentences of exile.”\footnote{Forsdyke, \textit{Exile, Ostracism, and Democracy}, 11.} Contrary to Feldman’s assertion that φυγή is the “clearly the standard word” for exile, φυγή was not a technical term for the exile of a people. Instead, there was considerable slippage in the language of ancient authors, who lacked a technical vocabulary for these concepts and thus frequently lumped concepts like exile and emigration together:

Ancient authors often do not distinguish between exile and other forms of displacement: ancient consolatory treatises on exile, for example, often mix mythical and historical exiles with characters that today would be called fugitives (such as Patroclus) or voluntary exiles (such as Metellus Numidicus), and Seneca compares the loss of his patria in exile to the condition of the many immigrants in the Rome of his day. (\textit{Helv.} 6.2–3).\footnote{Jan Felix Gaertner, “The Discourse of Displacement in Greco-Roman Antiquity,” in \textit{Writing Exile: The Discourse of Displacement in Greco-Roman Antiquity and Beyond}, ed. Jan Felix Gaertner, MnemosyneSup 283 (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 1–20 (3).}
It should therefore be no surprise that the LXX uses a different term, avoiding the connotations of “flight” and permanence that could be associated with φυγή and preferring a more neutral term for displacement from one’s homeland while leaving room for the hope of return.  

The Septuagint’s chosen term, ἀπιοικία, serves this purpose quite well, as it is itself not a terminus technicus for colonization or emigration but rather denotes being “away from home” in a neutral sense, taking on the charge of its surrounding context. Thus it can have a negative sense, as in Bar 3:8, Hecataeus of Abdera (see above), Josephus’ reference to the expulsion of Abraham’s sons by Hagar and Keturah (Ant. 1:216, 239, 255), or indeed the Septuagint, as well as a grander, more positive meaning, such as when referring to Greek colonization. As will be noted in our discussion of Philo, this flexibility had apologetic benefits while not eliminating the sense of prophetic judgment in these texts. Rather than an

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770 See, for example, Philo’s acknowledgement that those abroad continue to longing for a return home Conf. Ling. 78. Cf. Scott, “Philo and the Restoration of Israel,” 563 but note the objections of Sarah J. K. Pearce, “Jerusalem as 'Mother-City' in the Writings of Philo of Alexandria,” in Negotiating Diaspora: Jewish Strategies in the Roman Empire, ed. John M. G. Barclay (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 19–37 (25–27). See the section on Philo in Chapter 7 below for more discussion of this passage. Cf. also Modrzejewski, “How to Be a Jew,” 70, on the influence of restoration hopes on the LXX’s choice of vocabulary.


773 Pace Erich S. Gruen, “Diaspora and Homeland,” in Diasporas and Exiles: Varieties of Jewish Identity, ed. Howard Wettstein (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 18–46 (26–27), who argues the implications of the term when used by Jewish writers were “decidedly positive” (26), though the examples he cites are mixed at best rather than universally positive.
attempt to spin the Jewish diaspora as a positive along the lines of Greek colonization, the Septuagint translators were more likely, as Scott argues,

[T]rying to actualize the text and to apply it to their own situation in Egypt. The Septuagint translators were apparently expressing the conviction that their own experience of forced colonization under the Ptolemies was nothing more than a continuation of the exile existence to which Scripture bears such abundant witness.

This tendency to apply the biblical text to their own community is visible in other key alterations to prophetic passages, such as the aforementioned Isa 11:15–16, where the highway from Assyria in the Hebrew version is altered to a highway for those remaining in Egypt—that is, for the community of the Greek translators. Scott observes that most of the LXX occurrences of ἀποικία can be found in Jeremiah, where there is no attempt to obscure the exilic undertones of these passages. A number of these passages are also translated in such a way as to apply more easily to a reader in Egypt. For example, Jer 29:4–7 (36:4–7 LXX) talks of an exile “to Babylon,” but the Greek version leaves that qualifier out, giving an Alexandrian reader more of an opportunity to read the text as speaking more to his own situation (cf. also Jer 35:4 [28:4 LXX]). Where Jeremiah encourages those “in Babylon” to settle down and seek the good of the city where they are exiled, the Greek passage is easily applicable not only to the community in Babylon but anywhere. Nevertheless, despite this admonition to make the best of the circumstances and settle down in τὴν ἀποικίαν, this passage does not present those

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775 See the section on Isaiah in chapter 5 above. Seeligmann, Septuagint Version of Isaiah, 99, goes so far as to argue that Greek Isaiah transforms the king of Assyria into “the disguised, but not quite masked, figure of Antiochus Epiphanes.”


circumstances as a positive nor does it repudiate the hope of return when YHWH chooses to restore his people—quite the opposite.\footnote{Cf. Jer 30:18 (37:18 LXX), where ἀποικία and αἰχμαλωσία stand in parallel, further} That ἀποικία and αἰχμαλωσία stand in parallel in LXX Jer 37:18 (30:18 MT) is further evidence that the translator at least in this instance did not envision ἀποικία as something distinct from exile as is often suggested. Scott’s conclusion is therefore most likely correct,

> By their choice of the term ἀποικία for הָגִּלָּה, the Ptolemaic Jews affirm the history of their people and, more importantly, their own place within that history as a continuation of exile “to this day.” Moreover, the term occurs in many passages which speak of the return of the “colony” from exile, even as a future hope.\footnote{Scott, “Self-Understanding,” 191–92.}

Although he correctly argues that the LXX takes a largely negative view of the diaspora, Seeligmann nevertheless agrees with Schmidt and others that the Greek translators no longer embrace the Hebrew Bible’s prophetic idea of exile as divine judgment for sin. Instead, Seeligmann contends that the translators replaced this concept with the more pessimistic and negative idea of injustice (ἀδικία) inflicted by the nations upon Israel,\footnote{Seeligmann, Septuagint Version of Isaiah, 99.} a shift scholars often observe in the transition from prophetic to apocalyptic literature.\footnote{For more on the relationship between prophetic and apocalyptic literature, see Grabbe and Haak, Knowing the End from the Beginning; DiTommaso, "History and Apocalyptic Eschatology"; Jindo, "On Myth and History."}

> [T]he adikia concept [was introduced] into the Greek translation, in particular of Isaiah where we find this concept in many instances without any support in the Hebrew text…. One can hardly escape the impression that the actual content of the historical consciousness is fashioned by the novel notion of the injustice committed by the foreign nations, whereas the ancient biblical orientation—that of the rightful punishment meted out by God—has now become an esteemed tradition, no longer deeply felt or experienced.\footnote{Seeligmann, Septuagint Version of Isaiah, 100.}
That the Septuagint amplifies the concept of the injustice of the nations toward Israel and Judah cannot be denied, but Seeligmann’s contention that this is a novel concept first introduced in the Greek versions is mistaken. The (Hebrew) book of Habakkuk, for example, prominently features this theme of injustice, complaining to YHWH that the nations he has used as instruments of his justice toward Israel are more wicked than those against whom they are being used,783

Your eyes are too pure to look at evil
And you cannot look upon wickedness
Why do you look with favor on those who deal treacherously?
Why are you silent when the wicked swallow up
Those more righteous than they? (Hab 1:13)
Will [the Chaldeans] thus empty their net
And continually slaughter nations without sparing? (Hab 1:17)

Zechariah echoes a similar sentiment, putting together the two notions Seeligmann finds so incompatible, “I [YHWH] am very angry with the carefree nations, for while I was only a little angry [at Jerusalem/Zion], they multiplied the disaster” (Zech 1:15). That is, although YHWH intended to use the nations in judgment against his people, the nations’ treatment far exceeded justice and therefore demands its own retribution.784 It should be emphasized that the LXX does not soften or eliminate the prophetic passages that declare exile to be a divine punishment; rather, like Zechariah, the Greek version holds these two things together as complementary rather than incompatible.

With respect to the terminology for exile in the LXX, Ropes’ overview remains generally correct (notwithstanding his imprecise use of “Jews”):

783 Smith, Micah–Malachi, 103–04
784 Smith, Micah–Malachi, 188; cf. Ackroyd, Exile and Restoration, 176.
Of the words here considered, αἰχµαλωσία is obviously the most limited in application, referring to the captivity proper; ἀποικία and µετοικία are applicable to any portion, as well as to the whole, of the body of Jews residing in foreign parts; διασπορά can only be used with reference to the general scattering of Jews [sic.]. Thus the αἰχµαλωσία was (e.g.) in Babylon; the Jews in any one place could be called ἀποικία (Jer 21:1, etc.); while ἡ διασπορά means the scattered state, or the scattered section, of the Jewish [sic.] nation.785

The Septuagint thus does not introduce but indeed amplifies the already present theme of unjust oppression at the hand of the nations, hardly something one would expect if, as those following Schmidt and Rendtorff suggest, the Greek Bible softened the negative view of exile, preferring a more positive diaspora theology. In contrast to Schmidt/Rendtorff on the one hand and van Unnik/Seeligmann on the other, the Septuagint neither substantially softens nor hardens the prophetic perspective on the exile/diaspora. On the contrary, the LXX reinforces the restoration eschatology of its Vorlage, updating and expanding that perspective for a new context—and serving as a constant reminder of the nature of the present state and of the prophetic promises of restoration to the communities for which it served as authoritative literature.

Restoration Eschatology in the Diaspora: A Complex Reality

Psychological and Material Factors

That the Septuagint preserves and indeed sometimes amplifies traditional exilic theology (that is, restoration eschatology) does not, however, in itself disprove Schmidt’s larger argument that Jewish attitudes toward exile became more positive as time passed and circumstances changed. The basic idea underlying this larger case is that since the conditions of the diaspora were different from the forced captivity under Babylon, with most diaspora Jews voluntarily

785 Ropes, James, 121–22
living outside the Land, the traditional negative view of exile or diaspora was unsustainable.\textsuperscript{786}

The dissonance between freely choosing to live outside the Land and the prophetic perspective of exile as a curse therefore must have been reconciled by altering the negative judgment to a more positive one.

It is not easy to imagine that millions of ancient Jews dwelled in foreign parts for generations mired in misery and obsessed with a longing for Jerusalem that had little chance of fulfillment.… To imagine that they repeatedly lamented their fate and pinned their hopes on the recovery of the homeland is quite preposterous.… It seems only logical that Jews sought out means whereby to legitimize a diaspora existence that most of them had inherited from their parents and would bequeath to their descendants.\textsuperscript{787}

This perspective is typically set against the “grim sense of diaspora and a correspondingly gloomy attitude … conventionally ascribed to Jews of the Second Temple,”\textsuperscript{788} and much recent scholarship has shifted the attention from the center to to the periphery, observing that diaspora Jews did not in fact live a miserable, anxious, insular existence but were often active and prosperous participants in the non-Jewish societies among which they lived.

More Jews lived outside the Land than lived in the land, and numerous large and stable Jewish communities thrived throughout the Mediterranean, complete with “opportunities for economic


\textsuperscript{788} Gruen, “Diaspora and Homeland,” 21. For an example, see Simon, \textit{Verus Israel}, 132.
advancement, social status, and even political responsibilities. Thomas Kraabel, for example, argues that these material conditions demonstrate that diaspora Jews did not take a gloomy view of their circumstances but in fact felt completely at home in their non-Jewish settings, having rendered a geographical center for Judaism unnecessary.

These individuals did not understand themselves to be in exile, but rather welcomed and desired immigration as part of a new situation that was also under the control of Providence.... They had made the main elements of Judaism portable: the Scriptures, the symbols, and the synagogue community itself. The Diaspora was not Exile; in some sense it became a Holy Land, too.

The influence of cosmopolitan Hellenism supposedly reinforced this shift, aiding in the “development of a Judaism which undercut the security of establishments of place and pedigree,” with those Jews choosing to dwell outside the Land developing a “diaspora theology” that deemphasized the centrality of the Land and minimized the idea of scattering or exile as divine punishment. Some, such as Haim Hillel Ben-Sasson, have even suggested that the concept of exile does not apply to the Second Temple period so long as the Temple stood and Jews possessed the Land (albeit typically under the control of an empire):

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The Hebrew term *galut* expresses the Jewish conception of the condition and feelings of a nation uprooted from its homeland and subject to alien rule. The term is essentially applied to the history and the historical consciousness of the Jewish people from the destruction of the Second Temple to the creation of the State of Israel. The residence of a great number of members of a nation, even the majority, outside their homeland is not definable as *galut* so long as the homeland remains in that nation’s possession.794

Once the Second Temple had been built and Jews could at least theoretically return to the Land if they chose, the exile must have transitioned into something else, with those preferring more decentralized and portable ways of being Jewish voluntarily remaining in the diaspora. The assumption that the promised return was regarded to have already happened in the time of Ezra and Nehemiah—itself called into question above—thereby overshadows much of this scholarship. Since the return had already taken place, how and why would Jews voluntarily remaining in the diaspora continue to hold to traditional perspectives on exile rather than find ways to legitimize this new diaspora state of existence?795 On these grounds, Erich Gruen dismisses the restoration eschatology of the scriptures and most Hellenistic Jewish literature as irrelevant to the Second Temple period,

A consistency holds amidst these texts. Dismal memories of misery and exile recall the biblical era, sufferings under Assyrians and Babylonians. But redemption came, the promise of a new Temple was kept. The lamentations do not apply to current conditions.796


Ronald Charles likewise summarizes this increasingly popular perspective:

It is important to note that many Diaspora Judeans did not see the condition of being away from the ancestral homeland as divine punishment, as described in some passages in the Jewish Scriptures—Ps. 137:1–6 being a common and lingering refrain to describe such a condition. Rather, many saw the Diaspora in a far more positive way (e.g., Jer. 27:4–7; Tob. 13:3–13; Philo, Mos. 2.232). By the fourth century BCE, there were many Jewish diasporic settlements in Egypt and Greece. In fact, more Jews were living outside the region of Jerusalem than in it. The social contacts between the Judeans in the Diaspora and their societies of settlement were considerable and open, which indicates that many or most Judeans in antiquity did not think of themselves as away from home. They were entirely “at home” while living abroad in their diasporic cities.\(^797\)

Although he agrees with Kraabel that Jews generally had “a singular pride in the accomplishments of the diaspora,” Gruen cautions against the idea that such positive attitudes were at odds with a devotion to Jerusalem and the Temple, the “symbolic heart of Judaism.”\(^798\) Nevertheless, pride in the extent of the diaspora and allegiance to their new fatherlands had “eradicate[d] any idea of the ‘doctrine of return.’”\(^799\) Rather, they felt entirely at home and remained committed to their local communities while simultaneously paying reverence and allegiance to Jerusalem. Such dual allegiance was not always seamless, however, as Charles observes that these dual loyalties actually sometimes put Jews in awkward positions with their non-Jewish neighbors.

However, the concern for Jerusalem as an important symbolic center in the consciousness of most Hellenistic Jews was a clear and real indication of Jewish identity in the Mediterranean world in antiquity. This interest was made manifest through the annual contributions that members of the Diaspora communities sent for the maintenance of the Jewish ancestral homeland in the form of the two-drachma temple tax. The attachment to Jerusalem meant that Judeans afar and “at home” in the Diaspora still had a sense of empathy and social responsibility vis-à-vis Jerusalem. At times, there seems to have existed some conflicts of identity in

\(^797\) Charles, *Paul and the Politics of Diaspora*, 6–7

\(^798\) Gruen, “Diaspora and Homeland,” 36.

terms of where one’s economic help should go (to home “here,” or to the ancestral home “there”?)), but sending the annual temple tax funds to Jerusalem seems to have always taken precedence over local economic situations. The preference for Jerusalem resulted in the development of strained relationships between those Diaspora groups and the inhabitants of their local towns, who were upset that economic resources urgently needed for local festivals and the repair of public buildings were sent away to the “homeland” of the Judeans.  

Gruen argues that while the two drachma (half-shekel) payment (which he mislabels a “tithe”) served as a repeated display of affection and allegiance from the diaspora, it also “signaled that the return was unnecessary,” since YHWH and his Temple could thus be served satisfactorily without living in the land. He observes that diaspora Jews did not view themselves as cut off from the center or somehow disconnected from their kinsfolk living in the land as one might expect of an “exilic” mentality; rather, they were fellow compatriots who had simply spilled over the borders of the territory but retained their fundamental identity and allegiance to Jerusalem. This again he regards as evidence that Jews in the diaspora had ceased expectation of restoration and no longer regarded their current state as inferior to what might be expected in the future.

Gruen also observes that the literature of the period indicates that those Jews who have settled abroad “nowhere define themselves as part of a diaspora” and give no indication that


801 Gruen, “Diaspora and Homeland,” 30–31; Schwartz, “Temple or City,” 125–26, notes that this payment was not so much in support of the Temple as it seems to have been a tax to Jerusalem for those who considered themselves citizens of that city. Shmuel Safrai, “Relations between the Diaspora and the Land of Israel,” in Stern and Safrai, *The Jewish People in the First Century*, vol. 1, 184–215 (188–192), discusses the half-shekel tax at some length, also connecting it with the perceived bond between Jews and their capitol city.

802 Gruen, “Diaspora and Homeland,” 33.


804 Gruen, *Diaspora*, 11.
their status was somehow less than those living in the land, as those settling in the diaspora have 
“committed no wrongs [in doing so] and cannot be denied equal privileges [with those dwelling 
in the land].” Gruen thereby concludes that those in the diaspora did not regard themselves as 
in exile. This argument, however, begs the question, assuming that those dwelling in the land 
could not be a part of the diaspora or exile, and that any equation between diaspora Jews and 
those in the land must therefore imply that they too did not understand themselves as in exile. 
Sean Freyne, by contrast, has wondered aloud whether living in Galilee—despite being in the 
land proper—was “a form of Diaspora existence for a Jew.” Hengel long ago showed that 
Palestinian Judaism was itself Hellenized, and the diversity of Jewish expression within and 
without Palestine has undermined the idea of a “pure” Palestinian Jewish expression as opposed 
to a more Hellenized (that is, syncretistic) Judaism in the diaspora. Rajak further highlights the 
fluidity between the homeland and diaspora, observing that life in the land was not appreciably 
different than that outside it:

The relationship between homeland and those outside it was fluid and had been 
evolving since the first [Babylonian] exile. There was always extensive contact. 
Judaea and Galilee were ringed by Greek cities some of which, like Scythopolis 
or Joppa (Jaffa), had substantial Jewish populations. The Jews were in fact always 
a minority in much of Palestine, subject to the same circumstances and the same 
rulers as Jews further afield; after the loss of Jerusalem, their situation became 
even more closely comparable to that of diaspora Jews. The Greek language was

806 Gruen, Diaspora, 1–11; Gruen, “Diaspora and Homeland,” 33–34; cf. Charles, Paul and the Politics of Diaspora, 
6–7.
808 See Hengel, Judaism and Hellenism; Jews, Greeks, and Barbarians: Aspects of the Hellenization of Judaism in 
the Pre-Christian Period, trans. John Bowden (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1980); The Zealots: Investigations into the 
For more on the problems involved in distinguishing “diaspora” from “Palestinian” Judaism, see: Barclay, Jews in 
the Mediterranean Diaspora, 6–9, 82–102.
throughout the period familiar in some degree to many of the Jewish inhabitants of the region, especially those of the upper classes, and even among Jerusalemites. But in the use of the Greek language, what we may still usefully call “the diaspora” led the way.809

We have already observed that Ezra-Nehemiah and the Maccabean literature undermine the idea that the restoration was a past event, and the conditions of life in the land continued to fall far short of prophetic promises in the succeeding centuries. Israel had not been restored, and the nations were obviously not subject to her. There is little evidence or indication that even those living in the land believed the promised restoration had already taken place. It is instead more probable that the equality of those inside and outside the land does not mean that most diaspora Jews regarded the restoration as already past or unnecessary as Gruen suggests but instead provides further evidence for the continued belief—at least among Jews who left us any records—that the restoration had yet to occur even for those dwelling in the land.810 All were on equal footing not because everything was right with the world but because all, both those living in the land and outside it, still awaited YHWH’s redemptive action.

**Good Figs in Exile**

The presumption that diaspora Jews holding to a biblical/prophetic perspective of exile would regard themselves or their situation as inferior to those living in the land is also problematic. Kraabel, for example, asserts that the Bible has nothing positive to say about life outside Palestine:

> [F]or biblical thought before the Common Era there was no positive theological symbol for life outside Palestine. The only two kinds of biblical “space” were


810 The sect behind the Dead Sea Scrolls certainly regarded itself as in exile despite living in the land. See Chapter 10 below.
Promised (or Holy) Land and Exile. Diaspora could only be Exile; and no one who read the Hebrew Scriptures carefully could come to any other conclusion than that Exile was punishment. On this point Christians and Jews saw the Old Testament in the same way; on a “biblical” basis, each group could view Jewish life in the western Diaspora only as flawed, and inferior to life in the Holy Land.\(^{811}\)

But we have already seen that Jeremiah and Ezekiel depict the exiles as better positioned for redemption than those who remained in the land.\(^{812}\) Exile is indeed consistently presented throughout the Bible as punishment for the disobedience of the people, but it is not presented as a specific punishment of the individuals living in exile. In contrast, Jeremiah advises those going into exile to settle down, marry, and prosper, awaiting YHWH’s restoration (Jer 29:4–7), since they are the “good figs” (24:5) in contrast to the rotten, split-open figs remaining in the land and awaiting destruction (29:17; 24:8–10).

There is therefore no indication in the prophets that those living outside the land should regard themselves as inferior to those living in the land—if anything, one could argue for the opposite. Gruen, Kraabel, Feldman, and others following their line of argument nevertheless assume that those outside the land would understand themselves as remaining under the punishment of exile in contrast to those living in the land, for whom (presumably) the promised return and restoration had already come to pass. Given such an assumption, life outside the land (exile) would of course be understood as inherently inferior to (restored) life in the land. But this argument begs the question; the presumption that the restoration has already taken place (presumably at the beginning of the Persian period) assumes the conclusion.


\(^{812}\) Cf. Jer 24; Ezek 11. See the sections on Jeremiah and Ezekiel above for more discussion on this point.
But if, as argued above, the default understanding even for those living in the land was that the restoration promises had not yet been fulfilled, then there would be no fundamental distinction between those living in the diaspora and those in the land—all remain under the curses of the Torah until YHWH’s eschatological intervention. Until Israel has been reconstituted and YHWH’s manifest presence renewed among his people, life in the land is not qualitatively different than diaspora existence,\(^\text{813}\) not because the diaspora is no longer to be regarded as a negative thing but because the ultimate positive of eschatological restoration has not yet taken place.\(^\text{814}\) In this context, it is not location in the land that should be regarded as superior but life after Israel’s restoration that will be superior to the inferior existence of all those living prior to the fulfillment of the promises.\(^\text{815}\)

**Thriving in the Present with Eschatological Hopes**

At any rate, the apparent choice between a wretched, insular diaspora Judaism awaiting redemption and active, thriving Jewish communities fully at home in the diaspora presents a false dichotomy.\(^\text{816}\) That Jews not only thrived in the diaspora but participated in non-Jewish society and interacted with their neighbors is evident in the archaeological and epigraphical record and is no longer in dispute. But this does not mean that most Jews felt entirely at home in

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\(^{813}\) E.g., Ezra 6:22; Neh 9:32.

\(^{814}\) Gruen’s observation that “Jews seem to have felt no need to fashion a theory of Diaspora” ("Judaism in the Diaspora," 79; cf. “Diaspora and Homeland," 28) is correct, but this seems to have been due largely to the idea that the return had not yet taken place, meaning there was nothing new to explain.

\(^{815}\) Gafni, *Land, Center, and Diaspora*, 58–78, notes that enhanced calls for loyalty to the land only emerged after active messianism was rendered taboo in the wake of the Bar Kokhba disaster, observing that this contrasts with modern assumptions that the two would have inherently gone together. Prior to that time, location in the land was not the priority—restoration of the people was more central.

the diaspora or had replaced traditional restoration-eschatological theology with a positive, universalist, portable theology. Material evidence of prosperity and positive relations with non-Jewish neighbors is insufficient to come to such a sweeping conclusion.817 There are indeed good reasons to reject the old consensus that portrayed diaspora Jewish life in overly negative terms, but we must be careful lest the pendulum swing so far as to suggest that diaspora Jews had dispensed with the restoration eschatology previously so central to Jewish identity.818

Adherence to a theology of restoration eschatology does not imply an unhappy or nervous daily existence, and thriving diaspora communities could and did hold to hopes of a future redemption far superior to their present state.819 One need only look at Christian hopes for the parousia for an instructive example. Many modern Christians continue to hope for Jesus’ eschatological appearance while living otherwise happy and prosperous lives integrated in their surrounding secular societies. Some Christian communities emphasize the importance of these eschatological hopes more than others who may allegorize them, minimize their importance, or push them into the mythologically distant future, but the hope of the parousia nevertheless remains on the books as an important element in the theology of most Christian communities. Many modern Evangelical Christians in the United States, for example, hold to an apocalyptic eschatology that emphasizes that the present world is evil while simultaneously being extremely patriotic, proud Americans and politically active citizens. These comfortable residents of

817 Rutgers, *Hidden Heritage*, 21–22, demonstrates that a similar attention to material evidence among modern German Jews might be taken to suggest that they feel at home, but the survey data shows otherwise. In contrast to Kraabel’s conclusions, Rutgers observes that the impressive architecture and centralized locations of diaspora synagogues may not always have been the result of acquired status but rather an attempt to acquire status.


819 Talmon, “‘Exile’ and ‘Restoration,’” 112.
suburbia are not going to uproot and move to Israel, but many of them signal their belief in a particular eschatological narrative through their staunch political and financial support of Israel, behavior remarkably analogous to those diaspora Jews who continued to send money to the Jerusalem Temple. In each case, the donors have no intention of giving up their present comfortable position to relocate to Israel, but they continue to await the time of God’s eschatological intervention, which will radically alter the status quo and make their present situation moot. (In the case of the modern Dispensationalist supporters of Israel, much of that support of Israel is consciously for the purpose of accelerating the eschatological timetable, even if that requires another world war.) As Barclay has shown, it is important to distinguish between assimilation, acculturation, and accommodation; it is therefore important to distinguish between the material circumstances, acculturation, and everyday psychology of group members on the one hand and participation in a traditional group narrative theology on the other.

To imagine that diaspora Jews—many of whom remained in the diaspora voluntarily—went through their everyday lives in misery, longing for return to the land, is as absurd as the suggestion that modern Christian believers in the Parousia live a miserable daily existence, unable to integrate with larger society as they await the eschaton. But it is equally misguided to suggest that social integration necessarily indicates abandonment of traditional eschatological

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820 Thanks to Sonya Cronin for reminding me of this point.


822 See Barclay, Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora, 82–98. As Barclay explains, high levels of acculturation (e.g., scholarly expertise in Greek traditions) or assimilation (e.g., participation in local civic government) do not necessarily indicate accommodation or abandonment of traditional Jewish theology.
hopes—hopes that resurfaced as recently as Shabbetai Zevi in the seventeenth century CE.\textsuperscript{823} That tension between integration and restoration/eschatological hopes goes back at least to Jeremiah, who advised those deported by Babylon to “seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to YHWH on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare” (Jer 29:7 MT). But those exiles were no less exhorted to look forward to the time of restoration when YHWH would restore Israel and subjugate the nations to his chastened, chosen people. That future hope is, in fact, the very explanation Jeremiah provides for his counsel (Jer 29:10–14 MT). Because YHWH would ultimately restore them, they should not seek to rebel or return of their own accord before the appointed time. Those who refused to accept this judgment would be destroyed (Jer 29:15–20 MT). This is what Goldstein refers to as “the requirement of the full Age of Wrath, that Jews be loyal even to oppressors.”\textsuperscript{824}

This is relevant to the lack of any significant movement of return to Jerusalem in the diaspora until after the destruction of 70 CE, sometimes cited as further evidence for the absence of traditional exilic theology or restoration eschatology in the diaspora.\textsuperscript{825} But the prophets did not enjoin the people to attempt to return on their own but rather promised a restoration that would happen through divine action. In the meantime, the people are encouraged to make the best of their circumstances while hoping for better things from the future and are assured that even YHWH’s punishments are for their ultimate benefit, that they remain under his ultimate


\textsuperscript{824} Goldstein, “Messianic Promises,” 83.

\textsuperscript{825} E.g., Charles, \textit{Paul and the Politics of Diaspora}, 9.
protection even in exile (cf. Ezek 11:16).\footnote{Gruen, "Judaism in the Diaspora," 91, observes that diaspora “authors who speak with reverence [about the land] do not demand the ‘Return.’ Commitment to one’s local or regional community was entirely compatible with devotion to Jerusalem. The two concepts in no way represented mutually exclusive alternatives.” Gruen implies that this is somehow different from the traditional prophetic perspective, but this is precisely what one should expect since the prophets do not “demand” a return, either. They promise that YHWH will intervene and bring about a return.} There is therefore little reason to expect diaspora Jews to have clamored for return unless they believed that divine action had begun.\footnote{Davies, Territorial Dimension, 120: “If the return were an act of divine intervention, it could not be engineered or forced by political or any other human means: to do so would be impious. That coming was best served by waiting in obedience for it: men of violence would not avail to bring it in.” Cf. also Boyarin and Boyarin, “Diaspora,” 721–23.} We do have evidence, however, of such movements after the destruction of 70 CE, most notably in the Diaspora Revolt of 116–117 CE.\footnote{On the Diaspora Revolt, see Miriam Pucci Ben Zeev, “The Uprisings in the Jewish Diaspora (116–117 CE),” in The Late Roman-Rabbinic Period, vol. 4 of The Cambridge History of Judaism, ed. Stephen T. Katz (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 93–104; Diaspora Judaism in Turmoil, 116/117 CE: Ancient Sources and Modern Insights, ISACR 6 (Leuven: Peeters, 2005).} That we do eventually see revolts and messianic movements more likely indicates that previous inaction was not due to a lack of restoration theology (which surely did not suddenly arise \emph{ex nihilo}) but rather to a conviction that the time of restoration had not yet come.

The generally positive relations between Jews and their non-Jewish neighbors and governments in the diaspora have also been cited as further reason for a positive view of exile or diaspora for those in the dispersion. Robin Cohen, for example, states, “Despite occasional outbursts of hostility, philo-Semitism was the normal experience of the many Jewish communities scattered around the Greco-Roman world.”\footnote{Robin Cohen, Global Diasporas: An Introduction, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2008), 24.} But this overstates the case, as those “occasional outbursts” served as periodic reminders of the insecurity of diaspora existence, which had both ups and downs as Jewish experience varied across time and region.\footnote{Cf. van Unnik, Das Selbstverständnis, 143.} Regardless
of the prosperity of a given Jewish community at a specific point in time, that Israel remained under foreign domination remains an inescapable truth, and as long as they remained under foreign domination, Jews were subject to the capriciousness of their gentile rulers and neighbors, a theme that, as Rajak points out, persists in the Jewish literature of the period.

What the post-exilic condition brought out, the circumstances of the Greek and then the Roman worlds greatly emphasized. While diaspora communities were minorities dependent most immediately on the goodwill of their neighbors, behind that lay the ruling power with whom lay the ability to safeguard their position—or not. Imperial rule was epitomized in the traditional literature by heathen kings, whose godlessness was expressed in their arbitrary and arrogant behavior.831

Secure and prosperous circumstances thus do not by their mere existence negate the narrative of Jewish identity established in and reinforced through the sacred Jewish texts, which assert that the present circumstances, regardless of how good they may be, still fall short of the promises to Israel.832 Even today, one can still defensibly assert, “Traditional Jewish texts always figured (and continue to figure) a mythic Zion as the eternal Jewish home, the place to which the Messiah would return Jews.”833 That concept has mostly transitioned into a more distant, otherworldly “age to come” concept, but the hope of restoration has not entirely disappeared even in modern times. Regardless of how positive the present-day experiences of Jews and how integrated into surrounding non-Jewish communities, the foundational narrative of exile and restoration was ever present for Jews of the Second Temple period, promising a future time of

831 Rajak, Translation and Survival, 194.

832 Philo, for example, says that after the restoration, “the good fortune of their fathers and ancestors will be considered as a small thing because of the bountiful abundance which they will have” (Praem. 168). The Letter of Aristeas 249 also asserts that life abroad is a “reproach” even to the wealthy, a reminder that material prosperity does not prima facie eliminate hopes for restoration and return.

833 Aviv and Shneer, New Jews, 4.
restoration in which they would rule the nations rather than being subject to the various governments and nations among which they dwelt.\textsuperscript{834} In Gruen’s words,

We can therefore abandon simplistic dichotomies. Diaspora Jews did not huddle in enclaves, isolated and oppressed, clinging to a heritage under threat. Nor did they assimilate to the broader cultural and political world, compromising their past, ignoring the homeland, and reckoning the Book (in Greek) as surrogate for the Temple. The stark alternatives obscure understanding. A complex set of circumstances, diverse and dependent on local conditions, produced a mixed, ambiguous, and varied picture.\textsuperscript{835}

To this we may add that although it was surely interpreted and actualized in various ways, restoration eschatology remained near the center of Jewish theological expression throughout this period, whether in the diaspora or (however defined) in the homeland. Neither the Septuagint nor the often (but not always) pleasant and prosperous circumstances of Jewish life in the diaspora give evidence that diaspora Jews had dropped traditional restoration eschatology in favor of a more positive perspective on the dispersion.

\textit{Good From Evil: Planting and Harvest}

What then should be made of the positive sentiments about the spread of the Jews across the world in Philo, Josephus, and even in texts such as the \textit{Sibyline Oracles} or later Rabbinic literature? If, as Daniel Schwartz explains, the diaspora “itself is an expression of divine grace,”\textsuperscript{836} how could this not be understood as a positive perspective on exile in sharp contrast to traditional restoration eschatology that sees the exile/diaspora as a negative to be overcome? We will of necessity address these specific statements more in depth as we examine the authors in

\textsuperscript{834} Carroll, “Deportation,” 84, notes, “for many generations it must have represented no more than a conventional trope,” but the point is that it nevertheless remained, waiting on just the right moment for the flame to be rekindled.

\textsuperscript{835} Gruen, \textit{Diaspora}, 6.

\textsuperscript{836} Schwartz, “Punishment to Program,” 213.
question, but the short answer is found in the distinction between something being a positive in itself versus yielding positive results. Joseph, for example, declares to his brothers that God took what was meant for evil and brought good from it (Gen 50:20). Similarly, the prophets often declare that YHWH’s chastisements of Israel culminate in Israel’s ultimate redemption. Thus YHWH in his faithfulness brings good from evil—positive results from negative circumstances. Philo makes the same basic point in Conf. 171, explaining, “Even punishment is not entirely disadvantageous (ἐπιζήμιον), since it is a hindrance of doing wrong and a correction/restoration (ἐπανόρθωσις).” Even more relevant is Philo’s assertion that “many have been trained (ἐσωφρονίσθησαν) by going abroad (ἀποδημίας),” since they have been separated from “the idols (εἴδωλα) of pleasure” and the things that had previously inflamed their passions (Praem. 19). Thus exile and diaspora simultaneously serve as punishment for sin and the means for redemption, the greater good brought out of redemptive chastisement.

Israel had been appointed as a kingdom of priests through which all nations would be blessed (Gen 22:18, 26:4; Exod 19:5–6) but instead exceeded the other nations in wickedness, thus becoming a curse (e.g., Ezek 5:5–9; Zech 8:13). YHWH has therefore sown Israel (Hos 2:23) among the nations (cf. 7:8), where the prophet promises in the wake of exile that Israel will become a “light to the nations” (Isa 49:6, 9). Those “not my people” scattered among the nations will multiply into an immeasurable number to be harvested at the time of redemption and vindication (Hos 2:1–2 [ET 1:10–11]). The means of punishment thus provides the avenue for

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838 See also Philo’s appeal to the metaphor of surgery in Praem. 33–34. The same basic understanding of divine punishment as corrective and redemptive can be seen in Heb 12:5–11 and Rev 3:19, each of which connects unpleasant discipline (παιδεία) with divine love and concern and the need for repentance.
even greater redemption.\textsuperscript{839} Whereas at the exodus YHWH displayed his power in Egypt, this time, thanks to the dispersion, YHWH’s wisdom will be displayed among all the nations (Jer 16:14–15). Thus for these later interpreters, the fact that the Jews have spread so widely only further attests to continued divine protection even in the midst of diaspora. It is not the diaspora that is the source of pride but the continued relationship with YHWH.\textsuperscript{840}

The supposed development of an idea that the scattering of the diaspora would ultimately turn out for the best is therefore neither a new development nor should it be understood as contradicting the disciplinary nature of the diaspora. Rather, both elements regularly appear together in the tradition: the exile is indeed punishment, but YHWH nevertheless will bring about redemptive results for his people.\textsuperscript{841} The prophets (at least in the final form of their books) proclaim that Israel is ultimately ordained to rule over the nations but must first endure the purification of exile. In YHWH’s wisdom, the exile/diaspora sets the stage for all of his promises to be accomplished at once. Thus negative circumstances can (and will) ultimately give way to positive results, as YHWH continues in his faithfulness to bring good out of disobedience and redemption from evil circumstances, even using evil itself to produce good results for Israel. As will be further demonstrated below, the pride shown in the spread of the Jews across the world should not be confused with the idea that the diaspora is a good in itself, nor does such pride negate hopes for future redemption. Rather, the diaspora is more typically understood as part of YHWH’s good plan to preserve and protect his people as they await their promised destiny.

\textsuperscript{839} Cf. \textit{b. Pesachim} 87b; Origen, \textit{Contra Celsum} 1.55.

\textsuperscript{840} We will address this point more thoroughly below, as many of the passages that are seen as rejoicing in the diaspora itself are better understood as rejoicing in something else that the diaspora has brought into relief.

\textsuperscript{841} It should be noted, however, that such optimism, although typical, is not universal in the Hebrew Bible, as illustrated by the uncertainty of Lamentations, the discourses of Job, etc. But we nevertheless do not find the idea that the scattering of exile (or diaspora) is an unmitigated positive anywhere in the biblical tradition.
Conclusion: Restoration Eschatology in the Diaspora

We can therefore conclude that there is no evidence that diaspora Jews transitioned away from traditional exile theology and adopted a positive “diaspora theology” in its place. Instead, as will be shown more clearly in the following chapters, the traditional perspective of restoration eschatology mediated through the scriptures remained influential, though everyday diaspora life was often prosperous and pleasant. This conclusion runs counter to those who have attributed the idea of diaspora as divine punishment to Christian anti-Judaism. Rather, as Harry Attridge summarizes,

It was not Christians, but Jews of the Hellenistic period themselves who viewed the fact of the diaspora in negative terms. They did so not because of the social and economic facts of life in the diaspora, but because scripture itself indicated that dispersion was an act of God designed to punish transgression of the covenant and to call the people of Israel to repentance.

And, we may add: to lead to subsequent redemption and exaltation above the nations, who also would ultimately benefit from Israel’s chastisement. To be sure, later Christian apologists appropriated this theological perspective on the diaspora, but the negative theology of diaspora long preceded Christianity. The Christian innovation was to argue for the crucifixion of Jesus as the prime cause for the destruction of the Second Temple and (by the time of Chrysostom at least) that the diaspora following that event would be perpetual. Those arguing that such negativity about the diaspora must have arisen from Christians have not fully

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842 Grabbe, “Israel's Historical Reality,” 22–23.


appreciated either the level of present pessimism or the future-oriented hopeful aspects of restoration eschatology embedded in early Jewish theology.

One additional point remains to be addressed. Although he agrees that “[diaspora Jews] nowhere developed a theory or philosophy of diaspora”\(^{845}\) and rightly objects to the dichotomy between an isolated, threatened minority longing for the homeland and a thriving, assimilated group no longer retaining any connection to the homeland, Gruen comes to a different conclusion, arguing that diaspora Jews retained a connection to the center (Jerusalem) but no longer looked forward to a restoration from exile, instead taking an overwhelmingly positive view of the dispersion, which they saw as permanent. He does, however, acknowledge that many texts from this period suggest a different perspective:

Hellenistic texts, upon initial examination, would appear to support a solemn conclusion: life in foreign parts came as consequence of divine favor, a banishment from the homeland. The characterization of diaspora as exile occurs with some frequency in the works of Hellenistic Jewish writers.\(^{846}\)

Nevertheless, he argues that this characterization of the diaspora in these texts is misleading because they so frequently deal with historical, rather than present, contexts.

A caveat has to be issued from the start. The majority of these grim pronouncements [about exile] refer to the biblical misfortunes of the Israelites, expulsion by the Assyrians, the destruction of the Temple, and the Babylonian Captivity. Were they all metaphors for the Hellenistic diaspora? The inference would be hasty, and it begs the question.\(^{847}\)

Gruen thus dismisses the numerous examples that run counter to his case because they observe such distant historical events as the Assyrian exile. In so doing, Gruen prima facie assumes that the “Hellenistic diaspora” was understood as something distinct from these

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\(^{845}\) Gruen, “Diaspora and Homeland,” 20.


historical misfortunes and that any application to the present it would necessarily only be in a metaphorical sense. But we have already observed that such a distinction is not observable in texts like Daniel or 2 Maccabees, nor does Ezra-Nehemiah suggest that the period of the exile has ended. On the contrary, this continued attention to the biblical misfortunes, particularly the expulsion by the Assyrians, should be no surprise. Those misfortunes marked the beginning of the present period of wrath, a period that would continue until the promises of the prophets would be fulfilled. The continued attention to these misfortunes served as a continued reminder of the theological history underlying the present circumstances—no matter how good or bad—continuing to set the narrative framework for the people.

Rather than dismissing these texts and passages as inapplicable to the periods in which they were written (which truly begs the question), one should first consider what the continued attention on these events suggests about whether the exile of which they speak ever ended. As the succeeding chapters will show, although Gruen is correct that these misfortunes were not metaphors for the Hellenistic diaspora, he is mistaken in dismissing their relevance. Instead, the misfortunes recounted in this literature were widely regarded as the beginning of a period of Israelite history that had not yet ended. The continued distinction between “Israel” and Ἰουδαῖος terminology throughout the diaspora is itself evidence of restoration eschatology in the diaspora, as this distinction continues to underscore the incomplete present and hopes for Israel’s future restoration. The next chapters will demonstrate both that this distinction continued to be made throughout Hellenistic Jewish literature and that the eschatological, messianic, or political undertones established in the biblical use of “Israel” persisted throughout the Second Temple period.
CHAPTER 7: ISRAEL AND RESTORATION ESCHATOLOGY IN JOSEPHUS AND PHILO

Restoration Eschatology in Josephus

So far we have established that biblical literature is consistently characterized by restoration eschatology and that there is no prima facie reason to conclude that diaspora Jews in general had abandoned this theological perspective. But the relative prevalence of restoration eschatology and the Ιουδαίοι/Israel distinction in the Second Temple period remains to be shown. Thanks to his broad literary output in the first century, Josephus again serves as an excellent starting point, this time to test for the persistence of Israelite restoration eschatology among diaspora Jews. The first chapter already showed that Josephus transitions away from Israel terminology after the exile, preferring the term 'Ιουδαῖος when talking about his contemporaries and even explaining his shift in terminology by calling attention to the difference between the preexilic and postexilic peoples. This shift—and Josephus’ explanation for it—corresponds nicely with the restoration eschatology established in the biblical texts, in which Israel tends to refer either to the biblical entity or to an eschatological restoration of that people including but not limited to the Jews, that portion of Israel derived from the southern kingdom of Judah. In so doing, Josephus serves as a prime witness for the distinction between these terms and the groups they represent into the late first century regardless of whether he held to the restoration-eschatological hopes associated with that distinction himself. It now remains to demonstrate that this distinction is closely tied to restoration eschatology in Josephus as well.

At present, Josephus’ affinity for such a paradigm is widely doubted, with many interpreters concluding that rather than taking a negative view of exile, Josephus was positive
about—even proud of—the diaspora. As mentioned above, Feldman even begins his lengthy survey on Josephus’ view of exile by asserting, “One would expect that Josephus would have a positive attitude toward the concept of exile.” This is an especially odd thing to expect from an upper-class priest who had fought against Rome before witnessing the fall of his beloved city and Temple (suggesting he had himself held restorationist hopes at least at that time), but Feldman appears to assume that widespread exile-positive diaspora theology (itself called into question in the last chapter) was powerful enough to overcome such prior commitments and experiences.

To his credit, Daniel Schwartz recognizes the disconnect between Josephus’ earlier revolutionary actions and the idea that he took a positive view of the exile, observing that this positive perspective “is not to be found in Josephus’ earlier work, the Jewish War, which he wrote a few years after he got off the boat from Judaea.” Instead, Schwartz notes,

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848 E.g., Betsy Halpern-Amaru, “Land Theology in Josephus’ ‘Jewish Antiquities,’” JQR 71, no. 4 (1981): 201–229 (227–28); Feldman, “Exile in Josephus,” 148–161; Schwartz, “Punishment to Program”; Adolf von Schlatter, Die Theologie des Judentums nach dem Bericht des Josefus, BFCT 2/26 (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, 1932), 87. Much of the momentum in this direction derives from the later work of Abraham Schalit, who had characterized Josephus as a “reptile” in the 1930s (cf. Daniel R. Schwartz, “On Abraham Schalit, Herod, Josephus, the Holocaust, Horst R. Moehring, and the Study of Ancient Jewish history,” JH 2, no. 2 [1987]: 9–28 [10]) but dramatically shifted his views after (and as Schwartz notes, likely in reaction to) the Holocaust. Beginning with the introduction to his Hebrew translation of the Antiquities, “cast Josephus as the first Jew to make a political program out of existence in the Diaspora, because he realized that in this way only would the future of the Jewish people be assured. This, according to the new Schalit, is the point of much of Josephus’ politics, and is a praiseworthy one” (Schwartz, “On Abraham Schalit,” 11). Schwartz here alludes to Abraham Schalit, ed., Josephus, Jewish Antiquities [in Hebrew], vol. 1 (Jerusalem: Bialik, 1944), lxxxi. In any case, Schalit’s shift toward a diaspora-positive and conciliatory Josephus was deeply influenced by his own political concerns—as we’ll see, to the point of misreading Josephus—and stand, as Schwartz notes, as yet another reminder of how modern events so often have an impact on the historiography of Antiquity, a factor we have already noted several times above. We should also be reminded that Josephus and other ancients were no less vulnerable to this tendency than are we moderns.


850 Cf. Feldman, “Exile in Josephus,” 169, “It would seem likely that Josephus shared one of the major and distinctive tenets of the Pharisees, namely their apocalyptic hopes.”

851 Note, for example, the distinction between “Josephus the Priest” and “Josephus, the Jew who had spent the last three decades of his life living in luxurious exile in Rome” made by Louis H. Feldman, “Restoration in Josephus,” in Scott, Restoration, 223–261 (229).

852 Schwartz, “Punishment to Program,” 207.
Josephus’ view of exile in the Jewish War is the plain and simple negative view expressed in the Bible…. So Josephus, in his Jewish War, although in Rome, was as far as exile is concerned right at home in Palestinian historiography. Which is only to be expected; what else should a priest from Jerusalem think about exile?\textsuperscript{853}

Remarkably, Schwartz nevertheless concludes that Josephus eventually came to the positive view of exile:

Twenty years later, in contrast, he seems to have become reconciled with exile, viewing it as a “positive political program.”\textsuperscript{854}

We have seen that the early Josephus, who was a Judaean, considered exile like Judeans did, and that the later Josephus, who had become a diasporan Jew, preferred to view exile positively…. Apart from some philological niceties, all we have done is show that Josephus exemplifies a familiar aspect of human nature, namely, that people come to posit situations they cannot change. Psychologists call it dissonance reduction, plain folks call it “if you can’t beat’m, join’m.”\textsuperscript{855}

In this picture, Josephus represents the Roman diaspora Jew \textit{par excellence}, having eventually adjusted to his diaspora circumstances and exchanged any eschatological or restorationist hopes for a positive view of the dispersion. More than that, he serves as an individual illustration of the transition from a traditional view of exile to the more satisfied (enlightened?) perspective allegedly characteristic of diaspora Jews.\textsuperscript{856} These sentiments about Josephus’ allegedly positive view are obviously intertwined with larger view of the diaspora challenged in in the last chapter. The argument is notoriously circular, generally starting with the

\textsuperscript{853} Schwartz, “Punishment to Program,” 208–09.

\textsuperscript{854} Schwartz, “Punishment to Program,” 209.

\textsuperscript{855} Schwartz, “Punishment to Program,” 213. Dissonance reduction or not, it is difficult to believe Josephus so thoroughly abandoned his prior theological perspective. Given the usual mechanisms of cognitive dissonance, it is far more likely that he revised rather than wholly abandoned his cosmology in the wake of Rome’s victory. Cf. Harold W. Attridge, \textit{The Interpretation of Biblical History in the Antiquitates Judaicae of Flavius Josephus}, HDR 7 (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1976), 183, cf. 149, 169.

\textsuperscript{856} It is difficult to escape the sense through much of this literature that Josephus’ positive views of the exile reflect more mature, enlightened sensibilities—that is, his views look more like those of his modern interpreters—than the crude eschatological hopes of his predecessors. For a clear example of this, see the discussion of Schalit in n. 845 above.

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assumption (often left unstated, as with Feldman’s initial comment) that since most diaspora Jews (and the LXX) took a positive view of the exile, Josephus most likely came over to that perspective after becoming a diaspora Jew himself. Josephus’ positive view of the exile is in turn offered as proof that diaspora Jews would have taken a similarly positive perspective, meaning Josephus himself most likely came over to a positive view. So the argument returns to its origin. But if, as the previous chapter suggests, most diaspora Jews (and the LXX) did not substitute a positive view of exile for the more traditional perspective, the supposed prevalence of a positive view of exile in the diaspora can no longer serve to undergird Josephus as such, though Josephus himself would not necessarily be precluded from taking a positive view.

Indeed, an understanding of Josephus’ theological and philosophical development as he transitioned into his new diaspora setting does not necessarily imply a shift toward a positive view of exile and an abandonment of eschatological hopes, as shown in a recent monograph by Michael Tuval.857 Tuval demonstrates many differences between Josephus’ Temple-focused “Judaean” perspective as a Jerusalem priest as reflected in War and the more diaspora-oriented Torah-focused perspective evidenced in the Antiquities, concluding that Josephus “began his career as a Temple Judean, but in course of time became a Diaspora Jew.”858 In the process, Tuval notes that the view of eschatology reflected in the two works does exhibit a significant

857 Michael Tuval, *From Jerusalem Priest to Roman Jew: On Josephus and the Paradigms of Ancient Judaism*, WUNT 2/357 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), which demonstrates many differences between Josephus’ perspective in the earlier War versus that of the Antiquities, particularly pertaining to his attitudes toward the Jerusalem Temple, concluding that Josephus “began his career as a Temple Judean, but in course of time became a Diaspora Jew” (276). Tuval, however, rightly observes that Josephus’ eschatology undergoes a shift from the “dead-endedness characteristic of B.J” (188) toward a much more robust and coherent restoration eschatology in the later Antiquities—exactly the opposite development from that suggested by Feldman and Schwartz.

858 Tuval, *From Jerusalem Priest to Roman Jew*, 276.
shift—but in exactly the opposite direction of that suggested by Feldman and Schwartz. 859

Whereas *War* had been characterized by a certain “dead-endedness,” Tuval notes that the later *Antiquities* contains a much more robust and coherent eschatology, including the end of Roman domination and the ultimate triumph of Israel. 861

Reconstructing Josephus’ view of exile and potential restoration eschatology is complicated not only by the passage of time between *War* and his other works but also his Roman patronage and apologetic purposes. Feldman, for example, is far too credulous in regarding Josephus’ effusive praise for his patrons’ beneficence toward him—and the “striking” absence of any expression of “pain at being exiled”—in Josephus’ *Life* as an indication that he took a positive view of the concept of exile. 862 The absence of a direct expression of a hope or prayer to return to Jerusalem from those passages should not be understood (as by Feldman) as evidence that Josephus took a positive view of the present circumstances or had abandoned restoration hopes. 863 On the contrary, open declaration of restoration hopes or dissatisfaction with his situation while under the patronage of the Flavian emperors would be imprudent, so we should expect that if Josephus gives any evidence of such hopes, it will be muted and indirect. 864

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860 Tuval, *From Jerusalem Priest to Roman Jew*, 188.
But whether limited to the *Antiquities* or not, the idea that Josephus took a positive view of the exile is as flawed as the same arguments about diaspora Judaism as a whole. Instead, as a Jewish apologist under Roman patronage, Josephus simultaneously defends the misfortunes of his people and upholds the legitimacy of Roman rule by presenting the latter through the lens of the providence of God and the former through the lens of God’s justice in response to disobedience. In so doing, he is able to argue that the Jews are neither weak nor are they a hateful people who should be feared by the Romans, nor should the Jews resist Roman rule. Rather, the Romans rule providentially, and the disasters that have befallen the Jews are the result of their disobedience to the divine dictates, with Rome as the latest tool of divine punishment.

Josephus’ solution does not depart from traditional restoration eschatology but rather embraces it, advocating that the Jews quietly serve their Roman masters while subtly encouraging his Jewish readers to wait “patiently for the ‘rod of empire’ to move away from the Romans … [and] devote themselves to re-establishing themselves as God’s favored clients by scrupulous observance of the laws of Moses.” In so doing, Josephus is able simultaneously to pacify his Roman patrons and defend the justice of God while preserving an undercurrent of

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865 Martin Braun, “The Prophet Who Became a Historian,” *The Listener* 56 (1956): 53–57; Paul Spilsbury, “Flavius Josephus on the Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire,” *JTS* 54, no. 1 (2003): 1–24. In this sense, Schwartz, “Punishment to Program,” 213, is right in observing that for Josephus, “the Diaspora is not something which will hopefully soon be overcome by divine grace; it itself is an expression of divine grace,” but the idea that every expression of grace is positive in itself is mistaken. Rather, in *Antiquities*, Josephus presents *everything*, positive or negative, as an expression of providence (e.g., *A.J.* 10.277–80), including the calamities brought in response to disobedience, which are providentially provided to train and discipline Israel for its ultimate dominion.


hope for the future restoration and dominion of Israel—which, as we have already observed, is not identical οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι in Josephus.

**Josephus’ View of Exile**

In addition to assuming that diaspora Jews had generally abandoned restoration eschatology, many interpreters cite passages in which Josephus allegedly expresses his pride in the diaspora as proof to prove that he took a positive view of exile rather than retaining restoration hopes. For example, Betsy Halpern-Amaru claims, “The dispersion of the Jews in his own day is favorably commented upon by Josephus both in the *War* (II, 399 [sic., 2:398]) and in *Against Apion* (II, 282).” A closer look at these passages, however, shows that although each passage references the wide geographical spread of the Jewish people, neither actually presents the dispersion in favorable terms. The former occurs in the midst of Agrippa’s warning about rebelling against Rome, observing that such actions would not only imperil the rebels but that:

> [I]n deed the danger concerns not only those Jews who dwell here but also those who dwell in other cities, for there is no people upon the habitable world among which there is not some portion of you, whom your enemies will strike down … on account of the ill-advised actions of a few men. (*War* 2:398–399a)

As van Unnik observes, “Damit ist eine sehr heikle Lage, nicht ein Grund zum Stolz beschrieben!” The second passage is no different, exhibiting pride not in the conditions of diaspora but in the recognition of the superior nature of the Jews’ customs across the world:


Not only that but also the multitude have long had a great zeal to follow our piety, for there is no city of the Greeks, nor any barbarians or nation whatsoever where our custom of rest on the seventh day has not yet come or where our fasts and lighting of lamps and many of our food prohibitions are not observed. They also try to imitate our harmony with one another, our distribution of substance, our diligence in our trades, and our endurance in our calamities \([\text{ἀνάγκαις}]\) on account of our laws. For most amazingly, our law prevails by its own strength, lacking the bait of pleasure for attraction, and just as God pervades the whole world, our Law has passed through the whole world also. (Ap. 2:282–84)

Far from taking pride in the diaspora, Josephus takes pride in the superiority of his people’s laws and customs that have given them such fortitude in spite of their calamities—the difficult conditions themselves are not worthy of pride but rather require καρτερικός. These examples are not anomalous, either, as a closer look at other passages often cited as evidence of Josephus’ pride in the conditions of diaspora demonstrates that, in van Unnik’s words, “Das Material, das man anführt, ist eben nicht so beweiskräftig, wie man oft denkt.”

For example, in addition to the above, Feldman cites War 6:442 and 7:43 as evidence of “the pride with which Josephus refers to the spread of the Jews throughout the inhabited world,” indicating “that he did not regard the exile in pejorative terms.” But these passages no more celebrate the diaspora than those we have already examined. The first of these occurs in perhaps

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871 I am here reminded of how some modern music lyrics emphasize the difficult environment(s) in which the artist was raised. As with Josephus, such adversity is not a good thing in itself but is rather cited as a badge of honor, as illustrating the artist’s strength and resilience through hardship (as well as his/her authenticity in representing others from such difficult circumstances). For examples, see (or rather, listen to) the lyrics of Grandmaster Flash and the Furious 5, “The Message” (1982); Wu Tang Clan, “C.R.E.A.M.” (1993); Gospel Gangstaz, “Testimony” (1994); Prime Minister feat. Antonious, “So Low” (1999), the last two of which combine this trope with the common Evangelical Christian phenomenon of giving one’s “testimony,” or telling one’s conversion story. For a satirical example that highlights the trope of playing up adverse living conditions as evidence of the artist’s superiority, see Ben Hays and Ryan Darrow’s “Freestyle Rap Battle: Translated,” \[http://youtu.be/R6H0i1RAdHk.\]

872 Van Unnik, Das Selbstverständnis, 142.

873 Feldman, “Exile in Josephus,” 149. Feldman also cites A.J. 14.114, in which he cites Strabo’s comments about the widespread nature of the Jews to explain how the Jerusalem Temple managed to acquire so much wealth. Like the others, this passage lacks the supposed pride in the spread of the Jews Josephus is supposed to exhibit.
the most negative context possible for Josephus: right at the end of his account of the fall of Jerusalem, where he does not glorify the spread of the Jews but rather laments,

Neither [Jerusalem’s] great antiquity, nor its vast riches, nor the wandering διαπεφοιτηκὸς of its nation throughout the whole civilized world, nor the greatness of the veneration paid to it on a religious account, have been sufficient to preserve it from being destroyed. And thus the siege of Jerusalem ended. (War 6:442)

The mention of the Jews’ spread in War 7:43 occurs in a similar context, at the beginning of Josephus’ explanation of why a pogrom against the Jews in Syrian Antioch occurred, with Josephus merely explaining that “as much as the Jewish genos is scattered παρέσπαρται across the civilized world, it is all the more intermingled with Syria.” He then proceeds to explain that “about this time … all men had taken up a great hatred against the Jews” (7:46–47). It goes without saying that this is not the kind of statement of pride in the diaspora Feldman’s summary would suggest. Along the same lines, although Feldman is surely correct that Josephus spends so much time on his account of Esther to “show what Jews can do in an alien environment and how God will rescue them,” this does not mean Josephus presents that alien environment as a good in itself. Rather, Josephus uses these stories to demonstrate God’s faithfulness in spite of the (negative) context of captivity—and highlight the certainty of ultimate rescue for those who continue to serve God. The only way one could conclude such passages express favorable sentiments about the exile or diaspora is if one came to them under the assumption that any mention of the diaspora is inherently positive. And indeed, it is difficult to escape the sense that many of Josephus’ modern interpreters want him to be positive about the diaspora and latch onto any possible indication of such a view, ignoring all evidence to the contrary.

874 Feldman, “Restoration in Josephus,” 226
Diaspora in Josephus

Feldman’s tortured analysis of διασπείρω in Josephus offers a prime example of preconceptions interfering with interpretation. Although Josephus never uses the noun διασπορά,875 but he does use verbal forms of διασπείρω in decidedly negative contexts, such as in the mouth of Haman, the arch-enemy of the Jews (A.J. 11.212), a reference Feldman somehow regards as evidence that Josephus “did not view the exile negatively,” continuing:

The fact that he (Ant. 11.212) closely follows the Septuagint’s version (Esther 3:8) that the Jews are “a nation scattered (δεσπαρμένον) among the nations in all your kingdom” indicates that for him the verb διασπείρω from which Diaspora is derived is not to be viewed negatively, inasmuch as this word is put into the mouth of the Jews’ arch-enemy Haman, and especially since he has Haman add immediately thereafter, in phrases that have no counterpart in the Hebrew original or in the Septuagint, that the Jews are unsociable (ἄμικτον, “unmingled,”—a term used of Centaurs and Cyclopes) and incompatible (ἀσύμφυλον, “unsuitable,” “not akin”). Since these are stock charges similar to those used by the Alexandrian Jew-baiters whom Josephus answers in his essay Against Apion, we may assume that Josephus did not view the scattering of the Jews in a negative sense.876

This interpretation is puzzling. That Josephus places additional insults on the lips of Haman does not diminish the negative sense of what comes immediately before, as the continued insults only clarify that Haman was not flattering the Jews by referencing their scattered state. Instead, Feldman assumes that the LXX takes a positive view of the diaspora (despite the strong evidence to the contrary discussed above) and that Josephus’ use of LXX source material necessarily means that he is taking a similarly positive perspective. But even if these premises were true, are we really to imagine they should supersede the Josephan context in which the great enemy of the Jews uses this term as part of a statement reviling the Jews? Such a conclusion is obviously untenable.

875 Josephus’ avoidance of this term is seen as evidence of his pride in the spread of the Jews in Schlatter, Theologie des Judentums, 87.

Feldman, however, goes further, similarly pointing to Josephus’ proud statement that Jewish priests manage to keep strict account of their marriages even in the dispersion (διεσπαρμένοι; Ap. 1:33) and concluding that the term is “certainly not [used] in a negative sense” here. But Feldman again gets it precisely backwards. As before, Josephus’ pride is not in the conditions of diaspora but in the priests’ steadfast commitment to faithfulness even in the far more difficult and sub-optimal conditions of dispersion. That Josephus also uses this term to describe the punishment of Israel for following the impious ways of Jeroboam (A.J. 8.271) further reinforces the negative connotations of this term and its underlying concept in Josephus. Van Unnik’s conclusion is more fitting on this point: “Jeden falls wird deutlich, wie Josephus auch das Wort διασπείρω verstand, das auch bei ihm mit Schmach und Sklaverei verbunden ist.”

*Covenant Theology, Exile, and Restoration in Josephus*

In stark contrast to his supposedly positive view of the exile or diaspora, Josephus states his traditional Deuteronomic covenantal perspective right at the beginning of the *Antiquities*:

One may especially learn from this history that those who follow after the purpose of God and do not dare to transgress [his] well-legislated laws are established in all things beyond belief [πέρα πίστεως] and that happiness [εὐδαιμονία] is set before them as honor from God. But inasmuch as they apostatize from the precise observance of these laws, the practicable things become impracticable, and

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878 Even Feldman, “Restoration in Josephus,” 225, acknowledges that the term is here used in a negative sense and associated with punishment and acknowledges that it tends to have such a negative sense in other writers, but he nevertheless claims this is the only such negative use in Josephus.

879 Van Unnik, *Das Selbstverständnis*, 142.

880 The phrase πέρα πίστεως is interesting here, as it could just as easily be rendered “beyond faithfulness”—that is, God is over-faithful to those who keep his laws.
whatever seemingly good thing they labor over is turned into incurable misfortunes. (A.J. 1.14)

It is difficult to imagine a more characteristically Deuteronomic statement than that God rewards those who obey his laws, while calamity awaits those who do not obey. Josephus steadfastly applies this principle throughout his account, blaming the many sufferings of his people on disobedience against the good legislation given by Moses, calling attention to the deportations of Israel and Judah as the prime examples of this perspective.\(^{881}\) Josephus repeatedly emphasizes the punitive nature of these deportations, appealing to the connection between retention of the land and obedience to God to explain the history of the Ἰουδαίοι.\(^{882}\)

Josephus goes out of his way to portray the circumstances of his own day as divine punishment for disobedience not only in the War (as Schwartz recognizes) but also in the Antiquities.\(^{883}\) For example, Josephus expands on Deuteronomy to have Moses specifically warn the people of dispersion and slavery throughout the world, better connecting that passage to the present (post-70 CE) conditions:

…since having been elevated [by your wealth] into disdain and belittling of virtue, you will also lose the goodwill of God. And when you have made him your enemy, the land you will acquire will be seized back again from you, beaten in arms with the greatest of disgraces, and having been scattered [σκεδασθέντες] throughout the whole world, you will fill land and sea with your slavery. After you experience these trials, your repentance and remembrance of the laws you did not keep will be useless. (A.J. 4.190–191a)

\(^{881}\) See Attridge, The Interpretation of Biblical History, 67–107; Lincicum, Paul and the Early Jewish Encounter, 180–81; Spilsbury, "Flavius Josephus."

\(^{882}\) Halpern-Amaru, "Land Theology," 219. It should be noted that Josephus’ stated interest is not the history of Israel but of the Ἰουδαίοι, the modern people of which he is a part. Of course, this involves discussion of Israel—of which the Ἰουδαίοι are themselves a portion—but it is worth noting the distinction.

This passage closely matches Josephus’ descriptions of the aftermath of the revolt against Rome (e.g., *A.J.* 20.166), conflating the events of both 587/86 BCE and 70 CE and viewing both through the lens of divine punishment. The connection between 4:190–191 and 20:166 makes it clear that Schwartz’s attempt to distinguish the “divine punishment pure and simple” found in the *War* from the more positive “divine corrective” found in the *Antiquities* on the basis of the wording of 20:166 is misguided. For Josephus as with his biblical source material (e.g., Jer 30:11), God’s punishment of Israel is never merely punitive but is always corrective; any attempt to distinguish between them is misguided. In any case, Josephus’ final summary of Moses’ giving of the Torah again straightforwardly presents a classic Deuteronomic perspective on the exile:

Moses foretold, as God had declared to him, that after disobeying his worship they would suffer the following evils: Their land would be filled with weapons of their enemies and their cities razed and their temple burned to ashes, and having been sold for slavery to men who would never have pity on their afflictions, but suffering these things they would repent to no benefit. Nevertheless, the God who created you will return to your citizens both your city and your temple. But the loss of these will happen not once, but often. (*A.J.* 4.312–14)

By adding that this was to happen “not once, but often,” Josephus suggests that the present (post-70 CE) circumstances are part of this continued pattern of punishment for disobedience and hints that the present captivity is not final but will be followed by the return promised in the previous clause. Josephus does not limit his attention on these themes to the Pentateuch, either, as Halpern-Amaru recognizes:

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884 Halpern-Amaru, "Land Theology," 220: “In this particular passage the sin which brings forfeiture of the land is “violence against those set over you.” The punishment is not just loss of land but also ignominious dispersion into servitude throughout the world. Is Josephus simply interpreting the Biblical text or is he prophesying, Daniel-like, the exile of Judea in 586 BCE. Or is he describing what he has seen in his own lifetime?” See also van Unnik, *Das Selbstverständnis*, 141–42.

885 Halpern-Amaru, "Land Theology," 221: “No secular historian, Josephus cannot explain 586, let alone the Roman destruction, without reference to divine punishment. So he restructures the Biblical passages to make them prophesy
In his account of the monarchy Josephus expands on several passages regarding exile and dispersion in order to point to and explain the cause of the Babylonian exile or of the destruction of the Second Temple.  

For example, in his account of Solomon’s revelatory dream after the dedication of the first Temple, Josephus retains the biblical warning that Israel would be “cast out of the land which [God] had given their fathers,” to which he appends “and settle them as foreigners in other lands,” applying hindsight to connect the prophetic warning with the events of history. Josephus also substantially alters the meeting between the prophet Azariah and King Asa in 2 Chron 15:2–6 to include a prophecy that if (that is, when) the people turned away from proper worship and obedience, the time would come when no true prophet will be found among your people nor any priest to give righteous judgment, but your cities will be laid waste and the nation sowed (σπαρήσεται) all over the earth to lead the life of aliens and wanderers.  

Josephus’ version of Ahijah’s prophecy against Jeroboam from 1 Kgs 14:15–16 is especially significant for this study, as Josephus here specifically blames the sin of Jeroboam for the dispersion of Israel:

The multitude will also share in the same punishment: they will be driven from the good land and dispersed (διασπαρέν) to places beyond the Euphrates because they followed the impious ways of their king [Jeroboam] and worship the gods he made. (A.J. 8.271)
Not only is this passage strangely absent from our Greek versions (and probably Josephus’ own), the statement about Israel following Jeroboam’s impieties does not appear in the Hebrew Bible. Yet again, Josephus has added material to emphasize the connection between disobedience and dispersion. Even more significantly, like the biblical narratives, Josephus specifically blames Jeroboam and his introduction of idolatry in the northern kingdom for Israel’s exile. He further emphasizes this point in Antiquities 9:280–82, blaming the “sedition which they raised against Rehoboam” and Jeroboam’s “bad example” for the calamities that ultimately befell the northern kingdom. Josephus thus retains and even augments the first half of the traditional prophetic restoration-eschatological perspective, and (as shown in the first chapter) connects this theme to the dispersion of Israel and the deportation of Judah later in the work (e.g., A.J. 9.278–80; 10.183–85; 11.8), emphasizing that the present dispersed state of Israel is the result of Israel’s disobedience.

The Land and the World

In this light, Josephus’ decision to diminish the importance of the land covenant only serves to emphasize the connection between obedience and land/dominion by making a distinction between the eternal covenant with the people and the conditional promise of land (and Temple), thus alleviating some of the tensions present in the biblical stories that tie these

888 Cf. the judgment of van Unnik, Das Selbstverständnis, 139–140: “Dort wird gesagt, daß nicht nur das Königshaus, sondern auch das Volk, das dem König in seiner Abgötterei gefolgt ist, durch Verbannung gestraft werden wird …. Hier kennt also Josephus den Zusammenhang von grober Sünde und Diaspora, die Zerstreung ist nämlich Strafe für die Sünde.”

889 Pace Feldman, “Exile in Josephus,” 153–54, Josephus does not limit the punishment to the demolition of the Israelite government. Feldman here glosses over the second half of Josephus’ account of these events (9:280–82), which clearly portrays the deportation of the north as part of that punishment.

elements together. In the process, Josephus reworks prophetic passages to emphasize that Israel would become so numerous that they would fill the whole world. This has led some, such as Halpern-Amaru, to conclude that Josephus had abandoned traditional hopes of restoration, instead seeing the diaspora as permanent and positive:

Josephus replaces the classical messianic eschatology with his own vision of future blessings: a glorious people whose eternal existence is assured by divine blessing and promise; a people who have a motherland, but whose population is so great that they overflow into every island and continent. It is not a portrait true to the classical Biblical end of days; rather it is a reflection of the Hellenistic world—a motherland (as a point of reference) with an extensive eternal diaspora which might even be seen as colonial in character.

But Josephus does not in fact eliminate the promise of land, nor does he ever characterize the present dispersion as having fulfilled of the patriarchal promises. Instead, he plays up the conditional nature of Israel’s dominion and possession of the land and takes advantage of the ambiguity of the Greek word γῆ by expanding the promises of Israel’s possession of the land (γῆ) to apply to the whole earth (γῆ). For example, whereas the biblical promise to Jacob promises that his seed would be given “the land on which you lie” (Gen 28:13), Josephus expands this promise to give “the dominion of the land τῆς γῆς to Jacob’s descendants, “who will fill earth

891 A.J. 1.282; 4.115–16. These blessings may allude to a curse in Sib. Or. 3.271, “The whole earth will be filled with you and every sea,” only Josephus converts this curse into a blessing planned by God from the beginning. That does not mean, however, that the actual means of filling the earth and sea is positive, as will be discussed below. Cf. Halpern-Amaru, “Land Theology,” 227.

892 Halpern-Amaru, “Land Theology,” 228; see also Feldman, “Exile in Josephus,” 153; see also Schalit, Josephus, Jewish Antiquities [in Hebrew], bxxxii.

893 On the ambiguity of this term (shared also by the Hebrew גֶּפֶן), see Daniel R. Schwartz, “The End of the Γῆ (Acts 1:8): Beginning or End of the Christian Vision?” JBL 105, no. 4 (1986): 669–676. This ambiguity and the development toward a more totalizing interpretation provides a helpful explanation for the trend toward what W. D. Davies, “Reflections on Territory in Judaism,” in Fishbane et al., ‘Sha’arei Talmun, 339–344 (342–43), calls the “transcendentalizing and spiritualizing of the Land” in later Judaism and Christianity.
[γῆ] and sea, as far as the sun beholds them” (A.J. 1.282). Given Josephus’ circumstances as a
client of the Roman emperors, the breadth Josephus assigns to this promise is surprising.

_Balaam’s Oracles_

Josephus’ summary of Balaam’s first three oracles similarly promises that the people
would become so numerous that they would fill not only the land of Canaan but the whole world
(πᾶσα ἡ γῆ) and that “the civilized world [οἰκουμένη] is set before them to be their eternal
dwelling” (A.J. 4.115–16). The emphasis Josephus places on this point is often understood as
indicating that Josephus saw the exile/diaspora as not only “very positive” but eternal, but
exile or diaspora is not mentioned here, nor does Josephus suggest that Balaam’s prophecies
have been fulfilled. In fact, the details Josephus includes suggest that the ultimate fulfillment
of Balaam’s blessings lie beyond Josephus’ own day, as Balaam claims this widespread people
will be invincible in war and have dominion, neither of which resembles the diaspora
circumstances of which Josephus was allegedly so fond. Josephus explicitly says the final

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894 Tuval, _From Jerusalem Priest to Roman Jew_, 189: “It seems that his view of this triumph was not perceived only
in the narrow terms of the restoration of the Judeans to their land—rather it was to be universal—as is abundantly
clear both from his interpretation of Balaam’s oracle and of the second and seventh chapters of Daniel.”

895 _Pace_ Per Bilde, “Josephus and Jewish Apocalypticism,” in Mason, _Understanding Josephus_, 35–63 (52), which
sees this passage as expanding and elaborating Balaam’s first blessing, Josephus’ summary is a pastiche of Balaam’s
first three oracles, summarizing the various promises in order, including distinction from the nations (first oracle,
Num 23:9; A.J. 4.114), innumerable offspring (first oracle, Num 23:10; A.J. 4.115–16), divine presence and blessing
(second oracle, Num 23:21–23; A.J. 4.116), wide geographical spread (third oracle, Num 24:5–7; A.J. 4.116), and
ultimate military victory (third oracle, Num 24:8–9; A.J. 4.116–17). Josephus stops short of summarizing the fourth
oracle (24:15–24), surely due to its messianic content.


897 So van Unnik, _Das Selbstverständnis_, 142, “Ausbreitung des Volkes, aber es ist nirgendwo von Josephus gesagt,
daß diese Prophezeiungen in seiner Zeit erfüllt worden sind.”

898 Bilde, _Flavius Josephus_, 188.
fulfillment of Balaam’s words remains in the future in his allusive summary of Balaam’s fourth oracle a few paragraphs later:

Balaam fell on his face and foretold what sufferings would befall kings and what would befall the most distinguished cities (some of which had not yet begun to be inhabited), events that have happened by land and sea both to the people born in previous times and also in my own memory, from all of the things which have come to the end he predicted, one might judge what will also happen in the future. 

(\textit{A.J. 4.125})

As Per Bilde observes, “the concluding clause can only be taken to refer to the coming messianic salvation and restoration of Israel.”\textsuperscript{899} The fourth oracle of Balaam to which he alludes here of course contains the famous prediction that “a star will come from Jacob and a scepter will rise from Israel” (Num 24:17) and was foundational to the messianic hopes of the Dead Sea Scroll community (e.g., 4QTest) and the Bar Kochba Revolt of 132–135 CE, with Bar Kochba himself deriving his title (“Son of a star”) from the passage.\textsuperscript{900} The passage goes on to promise that Israel will finally crush the Moabites, Edomites, and the Amalekites, and that the Kittim will come to destruction after their ships first afflict Asshur and Eber. The Kittim were identified with the Romans in Josephus’ time (cf. Old Greek Dan 11:30; \textit{4QHab} 3:4, 9–11; etc.) and Edom was also identified with Rome in later rabbinic traditions,\textsuperscript{901} so through his coy citation of this prophecy (which as Feldman notes,\textsuperscript{902} he had no reason to mention otherwise) Josephus here subtly reminds his readers that Rome would ultimately experience the same fate as the other

\textsuperscript{899} Bilde, “Josephus and Jewish Apocalypticism,” 52.


\textsuperscript{902} Feldman, “Exile in Josephus,” 166.
eminent cities of the past, while Israel would receive the eternal dominion promised in the remainder of Balaam’s oracle, the content of which he surely could not reproduce here.

_Song of Moses_

Were this the only place Josephus makes such a move, one might overlook it as unreflective of Josephus’ own views and an indication that he “wished somehow to satisfy his Jewish readers, who might well have recognized an allusion to Rome here,”\(^903\) but this is only the first of three passages in the _Antiquities_ in which Josephus calls attention to as yet unfulfilled biblical prophecies while remaining vague as to their contents. The second is the Song of Moses (Deut 32), which Josephus says, “contained a prediction of what was to happen afterward, in accordance with which everything has happened and is happening, since he in no way deviated from the truth” (A.J. 4.303).\(^904\) Josephus is again vague about the latter contents of this song for good reason, as Graham Davies explains:

Deuteronomy 32.1–33 gives an account of the history of Israel, beginning with her election in the wilderness and describing her wrongdoing and consequent punishment at the hands of her enemies. But in verses 34–42 the theme changes to the eventual vindication of Israel, and it appears as if Josephus was committed to an understanding of the poem which would put that vindication still in the future at the time of his writing.\(^905\)

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\(^903\) Feldman, “Exile in Josephus,” 166.

\(^904\) See Lincicum, _Paul and the Early Jewish Encounter_, 177–180. Cf. Philo, _De Vita Mosis_ 2.51.288, “Some of these [prophecies] have already come to pass, while others are still looked for, since confidence in the future is assured by fulfillment in the past.” See also the section on Deuteronomy in ch. 4 above.

\(^905\) Davies, "Apocalyptic and Historiography," 18.
Daniel’s Visions

But the most striking indication of Josephus’ restoration hopes is found in his delicate handling of Daniel’s visionary material.906 Josephus presents Daniel as “one of the greatest of the prophets” (A.J. 10.266), distinguished from others by prophesying not only future events “but also the time of their accomplishment” (10:266) and also because he prophesied good things rather than misfortunes (10:267).907 But Josephus then nowhere openly presents those good things or the timeframe of their accomplishment.908 He does, however, recount Nebuchadnezzar’s dream in which the stone destroys the fourth kingdom of iron (Dan 2:44–45; A.J. 10.205–9). But he declines to provide the meaning of the dream, commenting,

And Daniel also revealed to the king the meaning of the stone, but I have not thought it proper to relate this, since I am expected to write about the past and not the future. If, however, anyone has so keen a desire for exact information that he will not stop short of inquiring more closely but wishes to learn about the hidden things that are to come, let him take the trouble to read the Book of Daniel, which he will find among the sacred writings. (A.J. 10.210).

This is an especially flimsy pretense in light of Josephus’ theological agenda throughout the Antiquities, which began with an appeal that the reader learn from the past (A.J. 1.14–15).909

Neither Josephus nor any other extant ancient historian ever expresses such a sentiment

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907 Josephus’ claim that Daniel predicted the time of fulfillment surely refers to Daniel’s seventy sevens (Dan 9:24–27). Wright, "Israel's Scriptures," 324, connects this reference to Daniel’s prophetic timetable to B.J. 6.312, where Josephus says the revolt owed to an oracle which said a ruler would arise from Judea at that time.

908 Attridge, The Interpretation of Biblical History, 105.

elsewhere,910 and as with Balaam’s oracle, if Josephus were truly concerned only with the past, he had little reason to mention this vision at all—except as a subtle reminder to knowledgeable (Jewish) readers that Daniel promises the future downfall of Rome.911 Roman readers, on the other hand, were highly unlikely to take the trouble.

Josephus very clearly identifies this fourth kingdom as Rome,912 explaining after a summary of Daniel’s vision of the goat and the ram (Dan 8; A.J. 10.269–75) that Daniel had predicted the desolation of the Temple by Antiochus Epiphanes and “also wrote about Roman empire and that it would be desolated by them” (10:276; cf. Dan 9:24–27). Josephus is deliciously ambiguous here, as Jewish and Roman readers would read this concluding statement very differently, with Roman viewers understanding “it” as the Temple and “them” as the Romans, while readers familiar with Dan 9:26 would (connecting it also with the stone of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream already discussed) would understand Josephus as referring to the destruction of the Roman Empire by “our nation.”913

910 On the contrary, Thucydides (1.22.4) says history is valuable in part precisely because it provides a guide to the future. Cf. Feldman, “Exile in Josephus,” 167.

911 Feldman, “Exile in Josephus,” 169. “Likewise, Josephus (Ant. 10.209) omits the portion of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream (Dan 2:42) referring to the division of the fourth kingdom, perhaps because, like the rabbis (cf. Exod. Rab. 35:5), he may have identified this with Rome and so would have been careful not to offend his Roman readers by mentioning it” (“Exile in Josephus,” 167). Cf. Tuval, From Jerusalem Priest to Roman Jew, 282–83.


913 My translation follows the text of the editio maior, which is ambiguous. An alternate reading is found in John Chrysostom’s Adv. Jud. 5.8. That reading (followed by Marcus in the LCL), αἱρεθήσεται τὰ Ἰεροσόλυμα καὶ ὁ ναὸς ἐρημωθήσεται, eliminates the ambiguity and is therefore more likely secondary, the result of Chrysostom’s attempt to clarify Josephus’ meaning. On the ambiguity of Josephus’ statement and its function in the passage, see Jay Braverman, Jerome’s Commentary on Daniel: A Study of Comparative Jewish and Christian Interpretations of the Hebrew Bible, CBQMS 7 (Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1978), 109–111. Some, such as Robert Eisler, The Messiah Jesus and John the Baptist According to Flavius Josephus’ Recently Rediscovered “Capture of Jerusalem” and Other Jewish and Christian Sources, trans. Alexander H. Krappe (New York: MacVeagh, Dial, 1931), have suspected an interpolation here, a claim first rebutted in Marcus, LCL 489, 310–11, and then in Feldman, “Exile in Josephus,” 170 n. 48. Feldman notes that either way, Josephus’ omission of any direct discussion of Dan 9:24–27 despite his significant attention to Daniel suggests reluctance to broach the subject.
It is surely no accident that Josephus is so vague and allusive in precisely these passages—or that he chooses to call attention to these specific passages about the future. He pays remarkably little attention to the classical prophets, and, as Halpern-Amaru notes, “In their place, he uses the Midianite prophet Balaam and the prophet Daniel as the central spokesmen for his own eschatology.” That choice is telling, since Balaam and Daniel were also the chief spokesmen for the messianic eschatology in for Dead Sea Scrolls sect and in the Bar Kochba revolt, and these very prophetic passages likely served together as the “ambiguous oracle” that Josephus credits as having undergirded the first revolt. Davies’ judgment is correct:

His excuse that such things are not the business of a historian like him will deceive few. It was better, in Rome, to keep quiet about such hopes. That Josephus shared in them is clear enough, and his disagreement with the Zealots will not therefore have been over the hope of a glorious future for the Jews as such, but over the time, and also the manner, of its coming.

of Rome’s downfall with a Roman audience. He was apparently not so reluctant as to avoid signaling that end to his more informed Jewish readers, however.

Cf. Halpern-Amaru, "Land Theology," 224; Joseph Blenkinsopp, “Prophecy and Priesthood in Josephus,” JJS 25 (1974): 239–262. Feldman, “Bibliography of Josephus,” 411, explains this paucity of attention to the prophets by remarking, “it is precisely because Josephus is writing a history rather than a work of theology that he does so. Moreover, his rationalistic pagan readers might have found the concept of prophecy difficult to accept.” This explanation is patently absurd. First of all, it takes Josephus’ coy explanation for why he chooses not to provide the interpretation of Daniel’s prophecy at face-value, as though Josephus took a modern view of the role of the historian vs. the role of theologian or reporter of miracles, something Feldman himself acknowledges elsewhere that Josephus does not do (“Exile in Josephus," 167–69). Secondly, the idea that Josephus’ Roman pagan readers would have had difficulty accepting the concept of prophecy is entirely unfounded, especially since Josephus makes such a fuss in Antiq. 10:277–80 about Daniel’s prophecies serving as proof that divine providence truly governs the affairs of human beings.

Halpern-Amaru’s seeming surprise on this point, the use of Balaam’s prophecy in particular makes special sense since it is found in the Torah, which had more universally-agreed authority than the classical prophets. Balaam’s prophecies, inasmuch as they were contained in the Torah, seem to have been regarded as having Mosaic authority.

See e.g., Valentin Nikiprowetzky, “Josephus and the Revolutionary Parties,” in Feldman and Hata, Josephus, the Bible, and History, 216–36 (228).

That some scholars have taken Josephus at face value here is surprising, e.g., Mason, “Josephus, Daniel, and the Flavian House," 173; Feldman, “Bibliography of Josephus,” 411.

Each prophetic passage predicts Israel’s ultimate dominion and an end to gentile domination, and throughout Josephus’ summaries, the reader in the know can fill in the blanks, assured (as Josephus makes explicit) that Rome’s dominion had been given by God and (as Josephus leaves implicit) that God will destroy Rome and exalt Israel in the future.

Other Indications of Restoration Eschatology

Indications of Josephus’ eschatological hopes are not limited to these passages, either, but can be found across the full Josephan corpus, with these hopes at the very root of Josephus’ overall perspective. For example, Josephus’ hints at his eschatological hopes in his speech to his countrymen (J. W. 5:367), where he states that God and the dominion, after having gone around various nations, were now (νῦν) in Italy—implying that Rome’s dominance was only temporary. This idea of the rotation of empire from one nation to another again appears to derive from Daniel, and Josephus again hints at the Romans’ eventual downfall. His disagreement with rebels here is therefore not with respect to the final outcome of that prophecy but rather the manner and timing of its fulfillment. Whereas they saw the present military action as the means of Rome’s final overthrow, Josephus read Daniel 9:24–27 as predicting another desolation of the Temple to precede that overthrow and expected Israel’s final victory and exaltation through divine intervention rather than human military action. Feldman expresses


skepticism on this point, suggesting “It seems very unlikely that Josephus, having been commissioned by the Romans to urge the Jews to surrender, would have ventured to suggest such an anticipation in clear defiance of his Roman hosts.”923 On the contrary, such subtle rhetoric is precisely what we should expect from Josephus in this case, as can be seen in the analogous example of Jeremiah (with whom Josephus identified),924 who urged his countrymen to serve Babylon while assuring them that the deportation and Babylon’s supremacy would be of limited duration (Jer 27:17; 29:10).925

Josephus makes the same move in Against Apion, referring to the Romans as those “who are now lords of the civilized world,” again hinting at the limited nature of said lordship. He further reinforces this point later in the treatise by observing that changes have brought the great imperial powers of the past into subjection to others, quietly implying a similar eventuality for Rome, though in the most general possible terms (Ap. 2:127).926 A few paragraphs later, Josephus references other strong and pious peoples who had been subjected and the numerous great temples that had been burned, making the bold statement that “no one reproached those sufferers but those who did these things” (Ap. 2:129–31), implying that the Romans would eventually be reproached for their violent subjugation of the Jews—but again in a general, indirect manner.927

Such hopes also provide a plausible explanation for the lack of attention paid to Ezra and Nehemiah in *Antiquities*,928 which Feldman sees as evidence that, “the concept of return from exile was not for Josephus a matter of major importance.”929 On the contrary, Josephus did not view these figures as especially important because (unlike Feldman) he did not see them as marking the promised end to Israel’s exile, which in Josephus’ view was ongoing.930 As we have already seen, the biblical accounts portray Ezra’s efforts at restoration as having failed, and Nehemiah’s heroic efforts were needed precisely because the promised restoration remained a future hope rather than a present (or past) reality. Josephus’ treatment of these figures is in keeping with the biblical portrayal, though he emphasizes their loyalty to their imperial patrons and the quality of their leadership.

**Josephus’ Apocalyptic Quietism**

Josephus was no Roman stooge, having gone native after years of luxurious living under Flavian patronage to the point that as “the supporter and admirer of the Romans,”931 he found “the establishment of an independent nation … abhorrent.”932 Rather, although he stays vague due to political prudence,933 he repeatedly implies in subtler tones that Roman rule will be

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930 Feldman’s lengthy article on restoration in Josephus focuses on “the restoration period”—that is, the period of Ezra, Nehemiah, Cyrus, and Zerubbabel while dismissing any idea that Josephus held hopes for any other sort of restoration, especially “the establishment of an independent nation, so abhorrent to him” (“Restoration,” 253).
931 Feldman, “Restoration in Josephus,” 251
933 Davies, "Apocalyptic and Historiography," 18: “He of course wisely avoids openly declaring his hopes of Israel’s restoration to his Roman readers, but there can be little doubt that Josephus did in fact look forward to Israel’s
temporary, to be followed by the righteous rule of Israel. As Spilsbury has demonstrated, even Josephus’ conciliatory perspective toward the Romans depends on the idea that Roman rule will be temporary, meaning Jeremiah’s counsel to the exiles remains the best course of action. 

Essentially, Josephus counsels his Jewish readers to “wait it out”—any attempt to speed the process in advance of God’s own intervention is both foolish and impious. Valentin Nikiprowetzky explains:

Josephus never saw Vespasian as the Messiah of Israel, as is too often said. Some cautious but highly significant allusions make it possible to ascertain that the historian had never renounced the messianic hopes of his people and that, like all Jews, he believed in the ultimate ruin of the Roman Empire. But he also situated this cataclysm in a far-distant future and thought that, in the meantime, the justification and survival of Israel required a realistic attitude and the establishment of a modus vivendi with the imperial city which, without any doubt, obeyed the laws of providence and whose reign, for one reason or another, was in conformity with the will of God, eager to punish the crimes of humanity and Israel’s infidelity in particular. The liberation of Israel would come at the hour preordained by divine will, and the desire to precipitate the event, “to hurry up the end,” according to the technical theological expression then in use, was a basically impious attitude. Hostility toward Rome and over-flamboyant patriotism constituted, in fact, just another impious act toward the divine being itself.

Josephus is indeed ever at pains to distance himself and other Jews from his day from the militant nationalism that spawned the revolt and to explain that despite those recent events, most

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936 Josephus does apply a prophecy about Vespasian to the effect that he will become the ruler of the world (War 6:313), but given his handling of the prophecies of Balaam and Daniel, he seems to regard Vespasian as the ruler who would destroy the city and the sanctuary (Dan 9:26) and as the leader of the Kittim who would afflict Asshur and Eber (Num 24:24) before his kingdom was itself destroyed at Israel’s ascendance. This nuance is all too often missed by interpreters, but Nikiprowetzky is correct in noting the fine distinction in what Josephus says.

Jews were peaceable and no threat to rebel. But it was not the idea of Israel’s restoration or dominion that was so abhorrent to Josephus but rather the foolish and impious means by which the radical insurrectionists had attempted to bring it about. Instead, Josephus advocates a quietistic and conciliatory approach, characterizing this as the only appropriate Jewish response to Roman authority and thereby marginalizing those who rebelled. But again, this is merely a difference in approach, not an abandonment of eschatological hopes. Josephus argues along these lines in his speech to his countrymen, just after hinting at the temporary (but inexorable) nature of Roman rule:

In short, there is no instance where our ancestors triumphed by arms or lacked success without them when they had committed their cause to God. If they sat still they conquered, as purposed by their judge, but when they fought, they always fell. (War 5:390)

Josephus therefore counsels his Jewish interlocutors (and readers) to wait patiently for the “rod of empire” to move away from the Romans while scrupulously devoting themselves to obeying God’s laws, thereby positioning themselves for the redemption and dominion promised to Israel when the time comes for God’s intervention. This is a similar position to that advocated by Jesus, Paul, and numerous other early Jewish apocalyptic thinkers, who argued against violent action on the basis that redemption will only come through God’s sovereign action—and will only benefit those who have not stained themselves with unrighteous violence.

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938 This is a similar rhetorical move (a version of the “no true Scotsman fallacy”) to that made by many modern Muslims with respect to groups like the so-called Islamic State or al-Qaeda or by Christians in response to the Crusaders, abortion clinic bombers, or Westboro Baptist Church. Extreme groups are marginalized as “not authentically Muslim/Christian” in the same way that Josephus marginalizes Jewish insurrectionists as unrepresentative of other Jews due to their impious and violent behavior.

939 Bilde, *Flavius Josephus*, 188, “So, Josephus actually did have an eschatology and a hope for the future, and it must be noted that we find expression of this in all his great works. It was merely of a different nature than that of the militant nationalists. It was rather more similar to what we find in contemporary apocalyptic circles, e.g. the book of Daniel, by the Essenes, John the Baptist, Jesus and Paul.”

**Israel’s Restoration in Josephus**

Thus, despite his vague and allusive treatments of eschatological matters, Josephus does provide enough hints that a coherent eschatological picture emerges. After allusively recounting Balaam’s oracles, Josephus narrates Balaam’s advice to Balak about how a temporary victory over the people may be won:

> Complete destruction will not befall the race of the Hebrews, neither by war nor by pestilence and scarcity of the fruit of the ground, nor will any other unexpected cause destroy it [cf. Num 23:23], for God’s providence is theirs to save them from all evil and to permit no such suffering to come upon them under which all of them would be destroyed. But a few sufferings may befall them and for a short time, under which they will appear to be humiliated. Then they will blossom to the fear of those having brought the harm upon them. (A.J. 4.127–28)

This is a strikingly subversive statement in light of the sufferings that had befallen the Jews in Josephus’ day, under which they certainly appeared to be humiliated.941 Josephus has the Midianite prophet declare not only that those humble circumstances are only an appearance (δοκοῦντες) and ephemeral, he promises that those who brought the harm upon them will ultimately fear “the race of the Hebrews.” As Spilsbury argues, this uncharacteristically bold flourish also confirms the identity of the stone in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream which Josephus summarizes but does not explain.942 Balaam’s declaration that the people would fill the whole world (πᾶσα ἡ γῆ) and that “the civilized world [οἰκουµένην] is set before them to be their eternal dwelling” (A.J. 4.115–16) also parallels a key detail of the dream-stone: “but the stone increased to such a degree that the whole earth seemed to be filled with it” (A.J. 10.207).

Spilsbury explains,

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941 Spilsbury, "Flavius Josephus,” 19, calls this “a somewhat uncharacteristic flourish” given Josephus’ restraint throughout his treatments of Daniel and Balaam.

942 Spilsbury, "Flavius Josephus,” 19.

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Thus, the prediction of the worldwide spread of the Israelites in Balaam’s oracle and the world-filling stone in the king’s dream would seem to be a further indication that Josephus read Numbers 24 and the Book of Daniel in close connection with each other; and further, that Josephus interpreted the stone as the Jewish nation dispersed abroad throughout the world.943

So we have come full circle, finding that Josephus’ restoration hopes also inform his understanding of the present worldwide spread of the people. The diaspora is not in itself a positive thing but a punishment, a chastening of the people. But it also has the effect of laying the groundwork for the future dominion of the people, so God (or providence, for Josephus) uses a negative to produce the ultimate positive result for his people, who will inherit not only the land but dominion of the whole world.944 But one more detail yet remains to be clarified: whereas Spilsbury says Josephus interpreted the stone as “the Jewish nation dispersed abroad,” these passages connect to yet another allusive reminder that Josephus’ people would not always be subject to Roman dominion. As we saw in the first chapter, when Josephus explains why he has begun to use the term οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι, he looks back to the time of Ezra:

…when these Ἰουδαῖοι learned of the king’s piety towards God, and his kindness towards Ezra, they loved [him] most dearly, and many took up their possessions and went to Babylon, desiring to go down to Jerusalem. But the whole [ὁ πᾶς] people of Israel remained in that land; so it came about that only two tribes came to Asia and Europe and are subject to the Romans. But the ten tribes are beyond Euphrates until now and are a boundless multitude, not to be estimated by numbers. (A.J. 11.132–33)

Although Rome has subjugated the Ἰουδαῖοι, the rest of Israel is not only beyond Roman dominion but innumerable. Here Josephus ever so subtly suggests that even Roman power will


944 Thus, although Josephus does not cite the prophecies of Second Isaiah in connection with the return from Babylon (as noted in Feldman, “Restoration in Josephus,” 252), his eschatological picture actually looks remarkably similar to the expansive vision in the later chapters of Isaiah in which Israel is not only restored but rules the entire world and receives the nations as an inheritance (e.g. Isa 49:19–20).
be insufficient to withstand the eventual dominion of this boundless multitude.\footnote{Cf. the concerns of Petronius about the number of the Jews in Philo, \textit{Legat}. 214.} The dispersion not only includes the Jews (Ἰουδαῖοι) currently subject to the Romans but also the rest of Israel—and when the whole people is considered, the extent of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream-stone is already mighty indeed.\footnote{Barmash, “Nexus,” 233, “In either case, Josephus assumes that the population of Jews [sic] ‘beyond the Euphrates’ consists of the descendents [sic] of the northerners.”}

Thus, upon close examination, Josephus’ eschatological hopes are more comprehensive than just expecting an independent state of Ἰουδαῖοι,\footnote{Cf. Bilde, \textit{Flavius Josephus}, 188 (see also 226).} though he carefully conceals his hopes with hidden-transcript style passages.\footnote{Davies, “Apocalyptic and Historiography,” 18: “Naturally he expresses himself cautiously, to avoid offending his Roman readers, but there can be little doubt about his meaning.” Feldman observes that if Josephus’ eschatology was indeed similar to contemporary apocalypticists, “Josephus certainly was careful to conceal his eschatological beliefs or to wrap them in ambiguity” (“Exile in Josephus,” 171 n. 49). For more on hidden transcripts, see Scott, \textit{Domination and the Arts of Resistance}; Barclay, \textit{Pauline Churches and Diaspora Jews}, 301–16, 331–44; Richard A. Horsley, \textit{Hidden Transcripts and the Arts of Resistance: Applying the Work of James C. Scott to Jesus and Paul}, SemeiaSt 48 (Leiden: Brill, 2004).} Such subtlety was not beyond Josephus, as he elsewhere contrasts Moses’ open revelation with the need of the “wisest among the Greeks” to hide their true sentiments from all but a few (Ap. 2:168–69). How much more must Josephus have felt the need to veil his own restoration eschatology from his Roman patrons while still leaving room for fellow insiders to discern the truth! Although at pains to avoid offending his Roman patrons, who would not have appreciated the view that Israel was only temporarily scattered and subservient as punishment for disobedience (but cf. A.J. 1.14), Josephus does not imagine that the Israelites will always remain beyond the Euphrates,\footnote{\textit{Pace} Feldman, “Restoration in Josephus,” 225, who flatly comments, “Josephus presents no prophecies or hope of the return of the ten tribes.”} nor that “the two tribes … subject to the Romans”
will remain so forever. Of course, until God intervenes and reunites “the two tribes” (τὰς δύο φυλὰς) with the entire people of Israel (ὁ πᾶς λαός τῶν Ἰσραηλιτῶν), any effort by the two tribes alone to speed the eschatological timetable will necessarily result in failure. This last element suggests that, at least for Josephus, the continued distinction between these terms depends in large measure upon restoration eschatology—the continued hope of the full restoration of the whole twelve-tribe entity of Israel. So we see that Josephus’ distinction between οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι and Ἰσραήλ is not haphazard but is connected with his traditional understanding of the exilic status of Israel and his eschatological hopes—hopes that also inform his quietistic and conciliatory stance toward Roman dominion. And, as will be further demonstrated below, Josephus was by no means idiosyncratic in this respect.

Israel and Restoration in Philo

The massive literary corpus of Philo of Alexandria provides another important test case from the first century. Thanks to the highly allegorical and philosophical focus of most of the

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950 Feldman, “Exile in Josephus,” 172, shortly after acknowledging that Josephus shared the apocalyptic hopes of the Pharisees, reverses course and concludes that Josephus, whose luxurious Roman life Feldman regularly emphasizes, only took such a position when “talking to his fellow-countrymen … but his deepest felt sentiments, as seen in his Life are to view the Diaspora positively…. Josephus clearly regarded the exile as everlasting and never foresees an end to it.” On the contrary, it is far more likely that Josephus took pains to appeal to his Roman patrons by concealing his deepest sentiments (nowhere more than in Life, where he is establishing his own credibility to this Roman audience) than that he occasionally injected subtle eschatological hopes into his work merely to appeal to his Jewish readers.

951 Tuval, From Jerusalem Priest to Roman Jew, 283: “Josephus had a bigger fish to fry—he expected the “return” to encompass the whole world. It would not come about as the result of another military confrontation between Rome and the Jews; rather it will transpire peacefully and naturally. Until that happens (and in order for it [to] happen) the Jews must be faithful to the Law…. They should leave politics to God, who in His own time will bring this all about.”

952 Schwartz, “Punishment to Program,” 208: “it bears emphasizing that in this respect Josephus agreed not only with the Bible, but also with Palestinian literature of the Second Temple period, Josephus’ more immediate predecessors.”

953 The bibliography on Philo is massive and growing. The first port of call for Philo research is the now three-volume annotated bibliography: Roberto Radice and David T. Runia, Philo of Alexandria: An Annotated Bibliography 1937–1986, VCSup 8 (Leiden: Brill, 1988); David T. Runia and Helena Maria Keizer, Philo of
Philonic corpus, the relationship between restoration eschatology and Israel terminology is in some respects more difficult to assess for Philo than for Josephus, and there has been significant debate about both Philo’s understanding of Israel and whether he held hopes for a literal restoration of Israel at all, though these two questions are generally considered independently.954

We will consider the latter question first before taking a closer look at the related matter of Philo’s use of the term “Israel.”

Ἀποικία, Dispersion, and Exile in Philo

The contours of the discussion about Philo’s perspective on the diaspora and potential eschatological hopes largely follows the same lines we have observed in the larger discussion about diaspora Judaism to this point; as Collins notes, “The majority of scholars have tended to discount his interest in practical nationalism.” Like other Jewish authors writing in Greek, Philo follows the LXX in preferring the term ἀποικία for the exile/diaspora, which some have taken (together with his high level of acculturation) as evidence that Philo took a positive view of the present circumstances and did not hold to traditional restoration-eschatological hopes. And

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955 For more discussion of the relationship between these terms and concepts in general, see pp. 242–53 above.

956 Collins, Between Athens and Jerusalem, 133.

957 E.g., Gruen, “Diaspora and Homeland,” 27–28; Feldman, “Exile in Josephus,” 146; Andrea Lieber, “Between Motherland and Fatherland: Diaspora, Pilgrimage and the Spiritualization of Sacrifice in Philo of Alexandria,” in Heavenly Tablets: Interpretation, Identity and Tradition in Ancient Judaism, eds. Lynn Lidoncini and Andrea Lieber, JSJSup 119 (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 193 (195–98). These arguments presume that ἀποικία is a positive term in the LXX and elsewhere, which we have already seen is not the case (see pp. 241–53 above). By contrast, Scott, “Philo and the Restoration of Israel,” 563, rightly notes that even if Philo could not read Hebrew, he was “aware of the prevalent usage of ἀποικία with reference to the exiles.”
indeed, Philo does make ample use of the ambiguity of the term, sometimes characterizing the diaspora as the “colonization” of the world,958 most notably in Against Flaccus 45–46:

For no one land can contain the Jews because of their populousness, for which reason they inhabit many of the most prosperous and fertile countries of Europe and Asia … regarding the holy city, in which is established the holy temple of the Most High God, as their metropolis, but regarding as their fatherlands those regions in which their fathers, grandfathers, and even more remote ancestors dwelt, in which they were born and raised, and to some of which they even came at their very foundation, sent to establish a colony (ἀποικίαν) as a favor to the founders.959

Philo here says nothing of the punitive nature of exile, instead claiming the Jews’ spread is the result of their vast population, which could not be contained in one country,960 a fact he ties to the Abrahamic promise.961 He also calls attention to Jews’ patriotism toward their new homelands, though acknowledging that they continue to regard Jerusalem as their capital city (likely derived from LXX Isa 1:26).962 Philo has Agrippa I express similar sentiments in his letter to Gaius (Legat. 281–83), indicating that Jerusalem is the μητρόπολις of the Jews, who live in “every region of the civilized world” (καθ᾽ἕκαστον κλίμα τῆς οἰκουμένης; Legat. 283).963 But

958 Kiefer, Exil und Diaspora, 400–02.
959 Wolfson, Philo, 402–03, argues that Philo saw the diaspora “as natural growth … analogous to that of the Roman Empire” but simultaneously and paradoxically understood the dispersion in scriptural terms as “captivity, as divine punishment.” See also Scott, “Philo and the Restoration of Israel,” 556–562; van Unnik, Das Selbstverständnis, 127–137; Kiefer, Exil und Diaspora, 399–402.
960 Cf. also Mos. 2.232.
961 Congr. 3; Spec. Leg. 1.7. Cf. also Somn. 1.175. See Scott, “Philo and the Restoration of Israel,” 559–562.
963 In this passage Philo also indirectly explains (as Josephus argued directly) that Ἰουδαῖος is not merely a geographical term, since the Ἰουδαῖοι are not geographically tied but are scattered everywhere (Legat. 281–282). As Niehoff explains, “[For Philo] Jews differed, in other words, from Judeans”; Maren R. Niehoff, Philo on Jewish Identity and Culture, TSAJ 86 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 33. On the authorship of Agrippa’s letter, see Daniel R. Schwartz, Agrippa I: The Last King of Judaea, TSAJ 23 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1990), 179, 200–02; Solomon Zeitlin, “Did Agrippa Write a Letter to Gaius Caligula?” JQR 56, no. 1 (1965): 22–31. Philo’s image of Jerusalem as μητρόπολις most likely derives from LXX Isa 1:26 and echoes Greek colonial imagery and the concept of a capital city. See the discussions of this image in Pearce, “Jerusalem”; Niehoff, Philo on Jewish Identity; Aryeh Kasher, “Jerusalem as a ‘Metropolis’ in Philo’s National Consciousness,” Cathedra 11 (1979): 45–56; The Jews in
Philo’s role as an apologist should not be forgotten; it is surely no coincidence that such statements occur in explicitly apologetic contexts.964

In particular, Philo’s statements to this end should be considered in light of Egyptian colonial rhetoric, including the claim that Egypt, which sent out numerous colonies on account of its excessive population, including the nation of the Jews.965 Philo counters these claims by asserting that his people were in fact the most populous nation (Congr. 3; Virt. 64)—more populous than the Egyptians (Mos. 1.8, 149)—and are colonizing the world, including Egypt itself.966 Remarkably, he also refers to the exodus itself in colonial terms as a “migration from here” (τῆς ἐνθένδε ἄποικίας; Mos. 1.71, cf. 1.170), appropriating and reframing Egyptian propaganda about the Jews’ origins.967 Philo also makes the implications of such great populousness clear through Petronius, the governor of Syria, who regards the task of fighting all

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964 As observed by van Unnik, Das Selbstverständnis, 136: “Ein gewisser Stolz ist hier unverkennbar, aber man soll nicht die Tatsache überschätzen, daß Philon hier als Apologet schreibt.”

965 Cf. Diod. Sic. 1.28.1–29.6. Note also the testimony of Hecataeus of Abdera cited in Diod. Sic. 40.3.1–8, in which the claim is that the Jews were cast out of Egypt because of a pestilence related to their presence in the land. Interestingly, the word ἄποικία is still used in this (negative) context of expulsion.


967 Philo uses the same terminology as Hecataeus but reframes it to speak positively about the Hebrews’ migration from Egypt. Niehoff, Philo on Jewish Identity, 35, reads these passages as critiquing overattachment to the Land and making specific claims about Jewish identity in the diaspora: “Moses, when approaching the land of Israel, was moreover shocked by the Jewish [sic.] population which had remained there. Although Moses naturally treated them as kinsfolk (συγγενεῖς), he quickly discovered that they had abandoned all their ancestral customs and sense of belonging (Mos. 1:239). Philo stresses in this context that the group of inauthentic Jews “had been attached to the soil” (ἐφιλοχώρησεν), while the virtuous ones had gone abroad.” Niehoff is mistaken and misreads Philo’s reference to Edom (Mos. 1.240) as referring to “inauthentic Jews,” applying terminology Philo himself never uses in this tractate. Philo also does not suggest that the virtuous “Jews” had gone abroad as a result of their virtue or that being attached to the land had been a bad thing. The negative aspect in the passage was that Edom had forgotten its ties to Israel, while the Israelites had remembered their kinship and retained their ancestral customs despite being abroad. This portrayal is indeed informative of Philo’s notion of diaspora life, but it does not suggest that Philo sees “attachment to the soil” of the holy land as inherently negative.
the Jews as too perilous to undertake (Legat. 214–215), confirmed by the multitude that appears in Phoenicia a few paragraphs later (Legat. 226–227).  

Like Josephus, Philo interprets the patriarchal promises expansively, with Israel’s promised domain not limited to the land but “to extend up to the very ends of the universe (ἄχρι τῶν περάτων τοῦ παντὸς εὑρόνεται) … inheriting all the parts of the world” (τῶν τοῦ κόσμου κληρονόμον μερῶν; Somn. 1.175). Gruen argues that these sentiments together indicate that Philo “eradicates any idea of the ‘doctrine of return,’” but as we have already observed with Josephus, such statements are not inherently at odds with traditional restoration eschatology. And indeed, despite his apologetic flourishes about the extent of Jewish population and expansion, Philo nowhere indicates that these patriarchal promises have been fulfilled or that the various Jewish ἀποικίαι enjoy the sovereignty one would expect of a colony. Rather, Philo is fully aware that, whereas the Greek colonialists ruled the colonies they founded, in the words of David Winston, “the position of the Jewish emigrants was generally one of a tolerated community, and nowhere that of masters.” In keeping with that understanding, Philo elsewhere characterizes the diaspora in traditional terms, connecting the concept with the classic schema of sin and

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968 Recall Josephus’ subtlety when discussing the “innumerable” descendants of the ten tribes not under Roman rule in A.J. 11.133. For more on Philo’s recasting of diaspora existence as a marker of strength rather than weakness, see Lieber, “Between Motherland and Fatherland.”


punishment,\textsuperscript{972} while also acknowledging that those abroad continue to yearn for a return to their native homeland (cf. \textit{Conf. 78}).\textsuperscript{973}

These seemingly incompatible perspectives (e.g., is the diaspora the result of overpopulation or divine punishment?) have proven difficult to reconcile. Van Unnik, for example, argues that Philo was psychologically conflicted, attempting to suppress the negative implications of diaspora for the concrete situation in which he lived but unable entirely to forget the negative theology so deeply rooted in scripture and the restoration hopes of his countrymen.\textsuperscript{974} Others have ignored or denied the presence of negative attitudes toward exile or argued that Philo’s eschatology changed later in his life due to the difficult events of Gaius’ reign.\textsuperscript{975} A more plausible explanation, however, is that Philo’s positive eschatological hopes provide the common thread that ties all these elements together.\textsuperscript{976} That is, in much the same way

\textsuperscript{972} See, for example, \textit{Conf. 118–121}, where Philo clearly depicts being geographically dispersed (διασπείρω) as “punishments … inflicted by God” (119). The same sentiment can be seen in \textit{Spec. 2.169–170}, where Philo discusses the expulsion of the Canaanites and the near disappearance of their race—and then says these events were to teach those who replaced them (i.e., Israel) that the “same fate” befalls all who practice evil deeds, alluding to Israel’s exile in the same terms as Lev 18:24–30 and hinting that a similar situation exists at present in the Land. Philo also refers to those dwelling in the ends of the earth as “in slavery” in \textit{Praem. 164}. For more on Philo’s negative characterization of the exile, see Scott, “Philo and the Restoration of Israel,” 562–66.

\textsuperscript{973} Philo’s meaning in this passage and its application to those in the diaspora is disputed. Scott, “Philo and the Restoration of Israel,” 563, emphasizes this passage as illustrating Philo’s own desires for return, but Pearce, “Jerusalem,” 25–27, argues that in this passage, Philo distinguishes between sojourners and colonists, arguing that the latter do not in fact wish for a return to the mother-city. The point of dispute is the function of the final μὲν … δὲ clause, which could either distinguish “colonists” from “sojourners” (as Pearce) or the two conflicted attitudes of colonists/sojourners (as Scott). Nevertheless, even if Pearce is correct in her construal of this passage, Philo’s reference to the ingathering and return of the ἄπῳκισµένους in \textit{Praem. 117} is problematic for the argument that Philo draws a hard distinction between those in ἄποικεια and those who hope for restoration. Cf. also the ambivalence of Flaccus toward his exile in \textit{Flacc. 159}. The view of Niehoff, \textit{Philo on Jewish Identity}, 35–36, that Philo both recognizes the tendency of colonists to gradually regard their new land as the homeland while also regarding allegiance to the mother city of Jerusalem as of prime importance seems most likely correct here (though see the criticisms of Pearce, “Jerusalem,” 27–31).

\textsuperscript{974} Van Unnik, \textit{Das Selbstverständnis}, 137.

\textsuperscript{975} For an example of the former, see Gruen, “Diaspora and Homeland,” 27–37. For the latter, see Schaller, “Philon von Alexandrea,” 180–81. See also the discussion in Scott, “Philo and the Restoration of Israel,” 573–75.

\textsuperscript{976} See Scott, “Philo and the Restoration of Israel,” 573–75; Tobin, "Philo and the Sibyl," 102–03.
we already saw with Josephus, although the diaspora is the result of divine judgment for sin, it simultaneously sets the stage for Israel’s future rule, chastening and training the people (cf. *Praem.* 19, 115) as they multiply and gain strength. The positive aspects of the spread of the Jews derive from the restoration and victory Philo envisions in the future.

In his discussion of the Babel episode, Philo manifestly explains how diaspora is a punishment with redemptive purposes:

Therefore Moses also says, “The Lord dispersed (διέσπειρεν) them from that place,” which is equivalent to “he scattered (ἐσκέδασεν) them,” “he put them to flight (ἐφυγάδευσεν),” “he made them invisible (ἀφανεῖς ἐποίησε).” For to sow (σπείρειν) is for good purpose, but to disperse (διασπείρειν) is the cause of bad things (κακῶν), because the former happens for the sake of growth, increase, and generation of other things but the latter for destruction (ἀπωλείας) and decay (φθορᾶς). But God, the gardner, wishes to sow (σπείρειν) excellence in everyone but to disperse (διασπείρειν) and drive accursed impiety from the citizenship of the world so that the good-hating customs may at some time stop building the evil city and godless tower.

For when these are scattered (σκεδασθέντων), those who long ago fled (πεφευγότες) the tyranny of folly may, at one proclamation (κηρύγματι), find the path of return [cf. Isa 40:3], with God having both written and confirmed the proclamation, as the oracles make clear, in which he expressly states, “Even if your διασπορά is from one end of heaven to the other end of heaven, he will gather you together from there” [Deut 30:4]. (Conf. 196–197)

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977 Recall Philo’s reminder, “Even punishment is not harmful (ἐπιζήμιον), since it is a hindrance of doing wrong and a correction (ἐπανόρθωσις)” (Conf. 171). Cf. *Praem.* 33–34. Had Philo written a treatise on Judges, one could imagine him drawing attention to Judg 16:22 in this context, “But the hair of [Samson’s] head began to grow again after it was shaved off.” The way both Philo and Josephus seem to envision the diaspora is similar to this idea—the punishment has placed the people in position for ultimate victory.

978 Philo’s equation of these various terms serves as strong counter-evidence to Feldman’s claim that φυγή is the standard and proper term for exile (“Exile in Josephus,” 145–46). In contrast, in addition to the terms used here, Philo also uses ἔλασις as a synonym, paralleling it with φυγάς in *Flacc.* 184.


Philo here clarifies that διασπορά is indeed a negative punishment, intended to drive away impiety and the impious, but he also argues that when God scatters, it is not only a negative (since nothing God does is entirely negative) but also produces positive results, in fact preparing for the restoration of the righteous. Although this passage does not directly address the dispersion of Israel, that subject is not far from the surface, as the remarkable reference to Deut 30:4 to close the passage demonstrates. Philo is at pains to remind the reader that a divinely ordered diaspora ultimately clears away evil so that the righteous may return to greater prosperity. As Phillip Sherman states, “Such a verse must have resonated strongly with Philo on both philosophical and personal levels.”

Lest the reader object, imagining that this promise applies only metaphorically or spiritually, Philo has already clarified only a few paragraphs earlier (Conf. 190) that those who interpret these passages literally should not be criticized, as that interpretation is “equally” (ἴσως) true, though those who stop at that point are missing the deeper truths conveyed in the scriptures. In the words of E. P. Sanders, “Philo, despite his allegorizing, maintained the traditional hope for the restoration of Israel.” Indeed, although it rarely surfaces, this hope runs deeply throughout the Philonic corpus.

981 Sherman, Babel’s Tower Translated, 273.

982 E.g., Halpern-Amaru, “Land Theology in Philo and Josephus,” 85; Gruen, “Diaspora and Homeland,” n. 50. Both Halpern-Amaru and Gruen ignore this passage entirely, arguing that there are no appreciable indications of restoration eschatology in the Philonic corpus outside On Rewards and Punishments, which they argue is entirely allegorical.

983 This is consistent with his statements elsewhere about the allegorical vs. literal sense of the scriptures, e.g., Migr. Abr. 89–93; cf. Borgen, ”Philo of Alexandria,” 126–28.

984 Sanders, Jesus and Judaism, 86. Sanders, “The Covenant as a Soteriological Category and the Nature of Salvation in Palestinian and Hellenistic Judaism,” in Jews, Greeks and Christians: Religious Cultures in Late Antiquity, ed. Robert G. Hamerton-Kelly (Leiden: Brill, 1976), 11–44 (35), does, however, note that Philo’s emphasis is elsewhere: “Philo’s heart did not lie in awaiting the day of national revival, but in teaching men to follow the ‘royal road.’”
Restoration in Philo

Philo’s restoration hopes are nowhere more evident than in his aptly-named treatise *On Rewards and Punishments*, an exposition of Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28–30 that serves as a capstone for his Exposition on the Torah (*Praem*. 1–4).\(^9\)\(^8\)\(^5\) The treatise is divided into two primary sections, of which the latter is particularly important for our investigation.

Examples of Rewards and Punishments

The first section (7–78) establishes the ethical paradigm of the treatise by examining the rewards and punishments of biblical persons, whose examples demonstrate the connections between ethics and outcomes.\(^9\)\(^8\)\(^6\) Philo’s comments about Enoch are noteworthy for his understanding of diaspora and exile, as he cites Enoch as an example of the ethical “contests that concern repentance” (15), showing that the rewards for turning away from wickedness and toward virtue are ἀποικία and solitude (μόνωσις), respectively (16). “Many have been trained (ἐσωφρονίσθησαν) through going abroad (ἀποδημίαις),” he explains, since departures from home leave behind “the images (εἴδωλα) of pleasure” through which the passions could be inflamed (19). Nevertheless, he warns:

There are also snares in a foreign land similar to those at home into which the unwary who rejoice in the society of the multitude must become entangled…. For just as the bodies of those just beginning to recover from a long illness are easily affected since they have not yet built their strength, so also the soul which is now healing. Its intellectual vigor is flaccid and trembling so as to fear, lest that passion get excited again, which gets stirred up by living together with purposeless people. (*Praem*. 20–21)

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The allusions to Israel’s idolatry and reeducation through departure from the land are difficult to miss, and Philo warns the reader against falling prey to the same temptations while living among foreign nations, since rewards await those adequately trained through their migrations. The lesson seems to be that those in ἀποικία will, by their pursuit of virtue, gain μόνωσις, avoiding entanglement with the practices of the foreign “purposeless people” among whom they live. In so doing, the “healing” brought by the ἀποικία can take full effect.

That Philo then presents Cain’s banishment as the prime example of individual punishment is also significant, especially given his explanation that banishment is worse than death since, while “human beings see death as the end of all punishments, in the view of the divine tribunal it is scarcely the beginning of them” (70). Philo’s later discussion of the horrors of exile and slavery, which he calls the “most intolerable evil, which wise men are willing to die to avoid” (137) further develops his discussion of Cain’s punishment, though in this case it is applied to the people more generally (137–140). As he retells these stories of the past, Philo also reminds the reader that the rewards of the Torah are not only for individual human beings but are offered to whole houses and families—specifically the twelve tribes (57), which enjoyed prosperity in keeping with their virtue (66).

987 Cf. also Abr. 54; Conf. 120–21, 196.
Eschatological Curses and Blessings

Then, after a lacuna of uncertain length, the second section (79–172) focuses on the blessings and curses of the Torah decreed for the future. This section follows the basic outline of Leviticus 26, with support from Deuteronomy 28 and 30, interpreting these passages eschatologically rather than as general principles for observance or nonobservance of Torah.

Thomas Tobin has summarized the basic structure as follows:

1. Lev 26:3–13 Blessings for keeping the commandments (Praem. 79–126)
2. Lev 26:14–39 Punishments for not keeping the commandments (Praem. 127–162)
3. Lev 26:40–45 Restoration after repentance (Praem. 163–72)

Although Leviticus 26 provides the backbone for the passage, Philo actually cites and alludes directly to Deuteronomy more often throughout the section, with Deut 28 corresponding to the first two components and Deut 30:1–10 functioning as the equivalent of Lev 26:40–45. Philo blends the literal and allegorical senses throughout this section, portraying Israel as the “seeing part” (Praem. 44) of the world, superior to all other peoples (43), a macrocosmic

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analogue to the human soul with respect to the body.\footnote{Philo’s treatment of Israel is reminiscent of Δικαιόπολις in Plato’s Republic or the way the macrocosmos is also a representation of human nature in the Timaeus. Similar concepts and imagery abound in early Christian teaching as well, with Israel depicted as “the salt of the earth” and the “light of the world” (Matt 5:13–14). Later Jewish authors also applied similar approaches to the microcosmos-cosmos relationship, including the application of the concept of exile and restoration to metaphysical reality in addition to the physical reality of the Jews. Cf. Ithamar Gruenwald, “Major Issues in the Study and Understanding of Jewish Mysticism,” in Neusner, Historical Syntheses, 1–49 (esp. 45–46). Kyle B. Wells notes that Philo’s application to the microcosm of the soul has exegetical warrant in Deut 29:17–18, which “begins with an individual’s mind turning to God” (Grace and Agency in Paul and Second Temple Judaism: Interpreting the Transformation of the Heart [Leiden: Brill, 2014], 189.)} The exile and restoration of Israel thus serves as the image of the soul’s disobedience and return to virtue, and Philo also associates Israel’s literal restoration with a worldwide ethical transformation to virtue (89–97). As a result, although in some passages he uses the language of the soul while in others he more plainly paraphrases the scriptural passages he interprets, he is in fact speaking of both aspects throughout (cf. Praem. 61, 65, 158). In Tobin’s words, “As one reads this section, one is not really in doubt that Philo is writing about the future fate of the Jewish [sic] people, although who constitutes this people is complex.”\footnote{Tobin, "Philo and the Sibyl," 97. Cf. also Collins, Between Athens and Jerusalem, 136.} The eschatological picture Philo paints is remarkably detailed and has been delineated by Ferdinand Dexinger and summarized by Birger Pearson as follows:

Starting point:
   a) Enmity between man and beast (Praem. 85, 87)
   b) Assault of enemies (Praem. 94; cf. Psalm 2)

Messianic occurrences:
   a) Exemplary Status of Israel (Praem. 114)
   b) Leadership of a “man” (Praem. 95, 97; cf. Num 24:7 [LXX])
   c) Gathering of Israel (Praem. 165)
   d) Passage out of the wilderness (Praem. 165) [cf. Isa 40]
   e) Divine manifestations (Praem. 165)
   f) Arrival at cities in ruins (Praem. 168)

Results:
   g) Peace in nature (Praem. 89; cf. Isa 11:6)
   h) Peace among nations (Praem. 95, 97)
i) Rebuilding of cities (Praem. 168)\textsuperscript{996}

Philo calls attention to the negative present situation, which is characterized in particular by the assault and victory of the enemies of the “class of human beings not far from God” (84) early in this second section,\textsuperscript{997} Philo proclaims that if the nation is pious, their enemies will not even attack them due to their virtue, which will have even the wild animals at peace with them (91–93). If, however, some enemies insist upon indulging their uncontrollable lust for war, Philo explains that the blessed will easily vanquish them with the help of a messianic figure, “‘For a man will come forth,’” says the oracle [Num 24:7 LXX], leading an army and waging war, and he will subdue great and populous nations, with God sending the assistance suitable for holy men” (Praem. 95).\textsuperscript{998} Philo’s citation of the plainly messianic Septuagintal version of Balaam’s prophecy is striking here—all the more in that he nowhere diminishes the literal sense of the passage or follows it up with an allegorical interpretation.\textsuperscript{999} Remarkably, even the victory through this messianic figure and the irresistible and eternal dominion he attains will be


\textsuperscript{997} This includes the natural enmity between beasts and humans, of which Philo says, “This war … cannot be destroyed by a mortal but can only be undone by the uncreated, whenever he judges some persons as worthy of salvation … for if this good should ever shine upon the world (βίῳ) … the wildness of the soul will have been tamed before that” (Praem. 87–88), clearly associating the taming of the wild beasts (cf. Isa 11:6) with the transformation of righteousness also promised at the eschaton, asserting that the latter is the necessary precursor of the former.

\textsuperscript{998} Halpern-Amaru, “Land Theology in Philo and Josephus,” 82, notes with some surprise that Philo (like Josephus) turns not to the classical prophets but to Balaam when addressing a messianic theme. As previously noted, this should not be surprising, since Balaam’s prophecy occurs in the Torah proper and thereby carries not only the weight of the Midianite prophet but of Moses, giving it a greater authority in this period than even the declarations of the classical prophets, especially at the end of a commentary on the Torah itself.

\textsuperscript{999} For a more thorough evaluation of this passage and the messianism reflected in it, see Borgen, “There Shall Come Forth a Man.”
“bloodless” (ἄναιµωτὶ), with Philo further emphasizing the importance of virtue and minimizing the role played by violence in the restoration.\textsuperscript{1000}

Throughout the second section, Philo consistently contrasts “what you now endure” (诇 νῦν ύποµένεις; \textit{Praem.} 106) with the blessings of the eschatological future, such as superabundant life and perfect health (\textit{Praem.} 110). Notably, Philo specifically identifies the present circumstance as διασπόρα, arguing on the basis of the Torah’s promises that the most important thing for those in that state is to obey Moses:

If a nation does so, it will sit upon all the nations just as the head upon the body, having favor visible from all around…. I say this concerning those wishing to imitate the excellent and marvelous things of beauty so that they will not despair of a transformation (μεταβολὴν) for the better, nor of a return (ἐπάνοδον), as it were, from a diaspora (διασπορᾶς) of the soul which evil has cultivated from the virtue and wisdom. (\textit{Praem.} 114–115)

Philo encourages his reader not to despair of the long-awaited transformation and restoration from diaspora (!) but to commit to obeying the Torah fully, for once the nation fully obeys the commands, it will be exalted all the nations. Philo’s language here shifts between the level of the nation and that of the individual soul, thereby echoing the parallel emphases found in the prophets of moral transformation and the return from diaspora to better things.\textsuperscript{1001} For Philo, these two aspects (microcosm: soul // macrocosm: Israel) are inseparable, as he emphasizes in \textit{Praem.} 93–97 that the promised eschatological blessings are contingent upon the people’s obedience to the commands and their embodiment of the virtues found in the Torah.\textsuperscript{1002} Israel cannot obtain or retain its inheritance unless it is obedient, so it must be transformed into an

\textsuperscript{1000} Cf. Tobin, "Philo and the Sibyl," 100–01.
\textsuperscript{1001} As noted by Wells, \textit{Grace and Agency}, 189, Philo’s individual application follows the lead of Deut 29:17–18.
\textsuperscript{1002} Cf. Borgen, “There Shall Come Forth a Man,” 357.
obedient nation for the promised restoration to occur. Philo therefore counsels the reader to repent (116) as this draws the favor of God, whose favor (ἵλεως) makes such transformation and return easy. After all, Philo explains,

Just as God could easily collect the exiles (ἀποκισμένους) in the utmost parts [of the earth] with one command, bringing them from the end [of the earth] to whatever place he should choose, so also the merciful savior can easily lead back the soul after its long wandering … from a pathless place to a road [cf. Isa 40:3], once it has determined to flee without looking back, by no means a disgraceful flight but rather a salvation which would not be wrong to call better than any return from exile (καθόδου). (Praem. 117)

This passage is pregnant with the language of exile and return, and Philo again lumps the transformation of the soul to virtue together with a literal return—in fact using the certain expectation of the latter as evidence that the soul can be transformed, which he explains is an even greater salvation than just a return to one’s homeland. Philo further develops the parallel in the succeeding paragraphs, this time working from the mind to the people group:

The God of all things peculiarly calls himself the God of this mind, and this [mind] his chosen people, not the portion of any particular rulers (ἄρχόντων) but of the one and true ruler, the holy of holies. This is the mind which was a little while before yoked under many pleasures and desires and myriad necessities from evil things and desires, but God crushed the evil things of its slavery (τούτου τὰ κακὰ τῆς δουλείας; cf. Lev 26:13), delivering it [the mind] to freedom. (Praem. 123–124)

1003 Feldman, “Exile in Josephus,” 146, cites this passage as evidence that “Philo does not regard the Jews who, in his day, were living in the Diaspora as ‘exiles’…. The word which he here uses for exiles connotes those who have emigrated, who have settled in a far land, and who have been sent to colonize it, and has not the connotation of having been punished thus.” This is simply incorrect. Feldman again ignores the substance of the statement in favor of overinterpreting a term borrowed from the LXX. The very fact that Philo here connects these ἀποκισμένους with a future return at a single divine command overturns Feldman’s basic premise. This reference to a regathering of ἀποκισμένους also problematizes the strong distinction between “colonists” and “those abroad” in Conf. 77–78 made by Pearce, “Jerusalem,” 25–27.

1004 The Greek κάθοδος is often used of the return of an exile to his country (e.g., Herodotus 1.60, 61; Thucydides 3.85, 5.16. Philo’s language in this passage is pregnant with the concepts of exile and restoration.

1005 An allusion to Deut 32:8–9, where the nations are distinguished Israel is marked out as the special possession of YHWH. Philo directly quotes this passage in Plant. 59, again in the context of a discussion of diaspora and return.
Again, Philo portrays the present time as under the yoke of slavery awaiting God’s deliverance to freedom, both with respect to the metaphorical application to the mind/soul and the empirical application to the people. As his focus shifts to punishments, Philo’s language shifts rather dramatically away from the allegorical or metaphorical register; in Burton Mack’s words, “something is triggered in Philo that allows for the language of apocalyptic to surface.”

From this point on, he speaks of desolated families and emptied cities (133; cf. Lev 26:31), cannibalism (134; cf. Lev 26:26–29; Deut 28:53–57), and the most intolerable evil of all—the enslavement of the people by their enemies both by force and through voluntary submission (138–140; cf. Lev 26:17, 33; Deut 28:29–44). Although the people was once prosperous thanks to the blessings of obedience, he says, “Those seeing their cities razed to their foundations will not believe that they were ever inhabited, and they will make their appearance a proverb for all the sudden disasters from brilliant prosperity” (150; cf. Deut 29:22–28). Those who refused to heed the commandments did violence even to the land by not observing the prescribed Sabbatical years and will receive the punishment for their conduct, while the land enjoys its rest and recovers from its abuse like an athlete recovers from exertions (150–157; cf. Lev 26:34–35). Philo’s language is so plain in this section that Mack, for example, confesses, “The reader accustomed to the allegories of wisdom and the soul is stunned…. The topic of punishment has simply become the occasion for a kind of apocalyptic projection.”

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1007 In keeping with his previous statements about the nature of exile/diaspora, Philo explains the desolated cities serve “for the warning of those able to be instructed” (Praem. 133; cf. Deut 29:22–28).

1008 Mack, "Wisdom and Apocalyptic in Philo," 32. Similarly, Ulrich Fisher, who argues that Praem 79–159 takes the perspective of individual universalism rather than Jewish particularism, admits that 162–172 is an exception: Zwar setzt Philo in PraemPoen 93–97 und 162ff insofern neue Akzente gegenüber der übrigen Schrift, als er
Philo’s straightforward language is not limited to the discussion of punishments, however, but also extends to the restoration to follow these desolations after the land has had its rest. Philo concludes his treatise with a detailed exposition of a robust restoration eschatology in passages corresponding to Lev 26:40–45 and Deut 30:1–10. He begins with an exhortation, observing that the curses are not intended to destroy but should rather be received as a warning and instruction; if only those who had gone astray would reproach themselves and confess their sins, they would find favor with God (Praem 162–163; cf. Deut 30:1–3). Philo then triumphantly expresses his expectation that after obtaining God’s favor through repentance, the nation will be restored all at once through divine intervention:

For even though they may be at the utmost parts of the earth (cf. Deut 30:4), serving as slaves to those enemies who led them away into captivity, they will all be set free in one day (cf. Praem. 117), as though by a single watchword, with their universal change to virtue causing terror among their masters, for they will set them free, ashamed to govern those better than themselves. (Praem. 164)

But when they have obtained this unexpected freedom, those who a short time before were scattered (οἱ σποράδες) in Greece and barbarian lands, among the islands, and across the continents, will rise up with one zeal to hasten from every direction and locale to one place pointed out to them, guided by a certain vision more divine than human in nature, unseen by others but visible only to those being restored (ἀνασῳζοµένοις), employing three helpers (παρακλήτοις) for their reconciliation with the Father. The first is the forebearance and kindness (χρηστότητι) of the one being invoked, 1009 who always prefers pardon to punishment. Second is the piety of the founders of the nation, because they, with souls freed from their bodies exhibit sincere and naked service to the ruler are not accustomed to making ineffectual requests on behalf of their sons and daughters, since their reward granted by the father is that their prayers be heard. Third and most of all is because of that quality by which the goodwill of those mentioned above is overtaken, and that is the improvement of those brought to treaties and...
agreements [cf. Isa 33:7] who have scarcely been able to come from a pathless place to a road [cf. Isa 40:3; Jer 38:9 LXX], the end of which is none other than pleasing God as sons please a father. (Praem 165–67)

And when they return, cities which were ruins shortly before will be rebuilt, and the desert will be inhabited, and the barren will be changed into fertility, and the good fortunes of their fathers and ancestors will be considered a small portion because of the bountiful abundance which they will have in their possession. (Praem. 168)

As Tobin notes, “it is difficult not to register initial surprise at the corporate, this-worldly aspects of [this treatise’s] eschatology.” Not only does Philo put forward unvarnished restoration theology in keeping with traditional, this-worldly interpretations of the Torah passages he is paraphrasing, he specifies that these promises apply to those scattered “in Greece and barbarian lands,” language that connects with his statements elsewhere about the geographic dispersion of his people. Far from allegorizing or distancing this language from the real world, Philo thus ensures that the literal understanding of this return remains central in this passage.

Numerous biblical echoes abound throughout these passages, of which we can only call attention to a few. Peder Borgen is almost certainly correct in connecting the divine vision (τινὸς θειοτέρας ὀψεως) here with the divine vision (θεία τις ὀψις) in the cloud that Philo says guarded and guided the Hebrews during the exodus (Vita Mos. 2.252), linking this eschatological scenario with the idea of a new exodus (cf. Jer 16:14–15). This literal restoration is also contingent upon a divinely-orchestrated “universal change to virtue” (Praem. 164), echoing the connection between

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1012 Starling, Not My People, 33: “Even in Philo, however, the allegorical reading of Isa. 54:1 is preceded by a literal reading of the verse, interpreting it as a promise of the eschatological restoration of Israel, and the allegorical application of the soul transformed by suffering is embedded within that larger story. Thus, when the time comes for Israel to be restored, it will take place by means of the moral transformation accomplished by God through the sufferings of exile and their effects in the souls of the individual exiles.”
repentance and restoration in Deuteronomy, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel in particular. As with his source material, Philo portrays the agency of this change ambiguously or synergistically, with Praem. 163 apparently upholding human agency while Praem. 164 hints at a determined divine decree. Philo further explores this ambiguity in Praem. 165–167, explaining that the restoration will be the result of God’s mercy and the merits of the patriarchs together with the “improvement” of the nation that essentially activates first two factors.

At any rate, Philo emphasizes that the true restoration will involve not only a reunification of the people and return to the land but first and foremost a transformation to obedience while in exile. The restoration of the people—complete with the rule of the entire world, which will be subject to the universal principles of the Torah—will immediately accompany the turn to virtue (Praem 164). This emphasis on the connection between a return to virtue and Israel’s restoration is markedly similar to the views reflected in Josephus (as seen above) and the Dead Sea Scrolls (see below), as well as Paul’s concern with Spirit-provided virtue in his communities.

When this happens, not only will the nation itself be exalted, the very order of the world will be reversed. Philo declares that the enemies of the nation (τοῦ ἔθνους), who had previously

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1013 The citation of Isaiah 54:1 in Praem. 158 and the numerous echoes of prophetic passages throughout somewhat offset the surprise of Halpern-Amaru, “Land Theology in Philo and Josephus,” 82 about Philo invoking Balaam’s oracle rather than anything from the classical prophets.


rejoiced in their misfortunes and mocked them by “turning their lamentations into ridicule and celebrating their unlucky days as public festivals” (171), will themselves fall under the curses that had previously come upon the nation only for “a warning and admonition” (170). As Borgen has shown, this description of the nation’s enemies is by no means haphazard but corresponds with the descriptions of the Jews’ enemies in To Flaccus and Embassy to Gaius, serving notice that Philo does indeed look forward to the ultimate overthrow of Rome and indicating that the eschatological motifs of this treatise were more central to Philo’s thought than has generally been appreciated.  

As a result, this passage is obviously problematic for those committed to the image of Philo as a universalizing diaspora Jew with a positive view of the present and thus no significant hopes of restoration, as demonstrated by Gruen’s attempts to dismiss it:

Philo, in a puzzling passage, does make reference to Jews [sic] in Greek and barbarian islands and continents, enslaved to those who had taken them captive, and ultimately to strive for the one appointed land; Praem. et Poen. 164–65. … But the language must be metaphorical and the sense is allegorical, with messianic overtones, as the Jews [sic] will be conducted by a divine and superhuman vision.  

On the contrary, the passage is remarkably straightforward; it is only “puzzling” if one comes to it with preconceptions about Philo’s view of diaspora and restoration, convinced that he

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1016 Borgen, “There Shall Come Forth a Man,” 359, lists the following parallels: “1) enemies rejoiced in the misfortunes of the nation (Praem. 169 and Gaium 122, 137, 353–54, 359, 361, 368; Flacc. 34)[,] 2) enemies showed cruelty (Praem. 171 and Flacc. 59–66)[,] 3) enemies rejoiced in their lamentations (Praem. 171 and Gaium 197, 225)[,] 4) enemies proclaimed public holidays on the days of their misfortunes and feasted on their mourning (Praem. 171 and Flacc. 116–18).” Borgen also notes (359–60) that the principle of reversal emphasized here in Praem. is also central in Flacc. 167–70.

1017 It bears repeating that a positive view of the present does not rule out hopes of restoration. See pp. 261–69 above.

1018 Gruen, “Diaspora and Homeland,” n. 50. See also Halpern-Amaru, "Land Theology," 85, who also claims these sections should be understood as merely metaphorical.
could not hold to the views he puts forward here.\textsuperscript{1019} Moreover, simply asserting “the language must be metaphorical” is not a strong argument, and the idea that the returnees will be divinely guided has no bearing on whether the sense is allegorical since Philo was not a post-Enlightenment materialist.\textsuperscript{1020} Rather, Philo explains only a few lines earlier that the prophetic utterance “also speaks allegorically of the soul” (Praem. 158) implying that it does not solely have an allegorical meaning.\textsuperscript{1021} This dual commitment to both the literal sense and the allegorical or symbolic understanding of the scriptures is by no means unusual in Philo, either, as he elsewhere complains about those who wrongly believe that the allegorical understanding is all that matters (Migrat. 89–92) and reminds the reader on at least two other occasions in this tractate that both the literal and metaphorical meanings are in play (Praem. 61, 65).\textsuperscript{1022} Indeed, in

\textsuperscript{1019} As stated by Tobin, "Philo and the Sibyl," 94, “One needs, of course, to be careful about one's surprise. While his thought has a universalizing character to it, Philo is also deeply concerned about Jewish identity as a community and the role the Jewish people should play in his more universalizing ways of thinking.” Cf. also Birnbaum, “Place of Judaism”; Birnbaum, Place of Judaism.

\textsuperscript{1020} Pearson, "Christians and Jews," 209, rightly notes that even if Philo himself preferred not to interpret these themes in a literal sense, “the importance of this ‘messianic scenario’ in Philo’s treatise is that it represents contemporary Alexandrian tradition.” Given the richness of Philo’s allusive treatments of scripture throughout the treatise, a reader unfamiliar with the Jewish Scriptures could scarcely have followed Philo’s arguments in this treatise. Cf. Ferda, "Ingathering of the Exiles," 180–81.

\textsuperscript{1021} Tobin, "Philo and the Sibyl," 99: “These allegorical interpretations do not undo the corporate character of Praem. 79–172, but they do emphasize the importance within the corporate concerns of the treatise of the practice of virtue by the individual.”

\textsuperscript{1022} The idea that Philo is a thoroughly committed allegorist—despite his clear statements to the contrary—often underlies the arguments of those who claim Philo did not hold traditional restoration hopes. For example, most of the objections to a Philonic eschatology put forward by Mack, “Wisdom and Apocalyptic in Philo,” depend on a view of “Wisdom” and “Apocalyptic” as distinct and competing modes of thought with no possibility for carryover. Thus Mack critiques Borgen for “shift[ing] worldviews when interpreting these passagees” (“Wisdom and Apocalyptic,” 34), from Philo’s wisdom paradigm to an apocalyptic paradigm Mack finds unimaginable for Philo. As Mack concludes, “Philo was a child of wisdom and the diaspora synagogue. He was hardly a strong candidate for an apocalyptic persuasion. Because he was not, the turn he took with its language in De praemiiis et poenis is singularly unconvincing. Wisdom in Philo? Yes. Apocalyptic? No” (“Wisdom and Apocalyptic,” 39). More recent scholarship has, however, showed that the boundary between Wisdom and Apocalyptic traditions is more porous than previously appreciated. The publication of 4QInstruction in 1999 was especially important, as it provides an example of a wisdom text with a clearly apocalyptic worldview. That Philo should exhibit characteristics of both wisdom and apocalyptic traditions should therefore be no surprise, as the two traditions are not inherently at odds with one another. Rather, as Matthew J. Goff, “Wisdom and Apocalypticism,” in The Oxford Handbook of Apocalyptic Literature, ed. John J. Collins (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 52–68 (53), explains, “There is,
the capstone for his commentary on the Torah, Philo assumes the centrality of restoration eschatology and brings both the metaphorical/allegorical sense (that is, the lessons pertaining to right living) and the literal sense (Israel’s return) into vision, for as we have seen, these two aspects are intertwined for Philo. As Borgen explains,

Since the foundation of the Hebrew nation and its native land is the cosmic and national laws of Moses, their divine virtues and wisdom, it follows that the return to these laws, virtues, and wisdom is the basis of the national and geographical return to Palestine. Thus the literal and allegorical interpretations are interwoven, and the concrete national and “messianic” eschatology and the general, cosmic principles belong together.1023


1023 Borgen, “There Shall Come Forth a Man,” 360.
Although often claimed otherwise, the eschatological perspective Philo displays here is not limited to *On Rewards and Punishments*, either.\(^{1024}\) On the contrary, these unambiguous passages provide a clearer lens through which Philo’s more subtle handling of these matters elsewhere can be understood.\(^{1025}\) All too often interpreters have worked the opposite direction, not recognizing eschatological themes in Philo’s more difficult philosophical material and then (on the basis of the supposed absence of those themes elsewhere) denying the significance or even the presence of those themes here. But once those eschatological themes are discerned here, their impact can be detected throughout the Philonic corpus. For all his apparent emphasis on the universal, Philo consistently argues for a particular (Jewish) perspective as the superior embodiment of the universal and cosmic principles.\(^{1026}\) Interpreters should not be fooled by Philo’s subtle apologetic rhetoric.\(^{1027}\) Where he highlights non-Jewish peoples and philosophical principles as worthy of praise, he does so because they serve as examples for principles he finds in the Torah, which is not only the national laws of the people set apart to be the head of all humanity but in fact the ultimate embodiment of the cosmic/universal *Logos*.\(^{1028}\) Philo not only advocates for the special supremacy and wisdom of the Torah but fully expects all other nations

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\(^{1025}\) For example, Goodenough’s conviction that Philo held traditional restoration hopes was based on his reading of *On Dreams*, which he understood as a veiled attack on Roman rule (Goodenough and Goodhart, *Politics of Philo*), an interpretation also followed (although in more measured terms) by Collins, *Between Athens and Jerusalem*, 133–34.


\(^{1027}\) “Philo was an apologist for Judaism more profoundly than he was a philosopher. The entire structure of his writings is designed as an explanation of the Jewish scriptures, not as an independent philosophical quest” (Collins, *Between Athens and Jerusalem*, 132).

\(^{1028}\) On the *Logos* in Philo, see Winston, *Logos and Mystical Theology*.
ultimately to abandon their own ancestral customs and honor the Torah of Moses alone after observing the renewal of the people to whom it was given (Mos. 2.43–44).  

This should, of course, be no surprise given the high degree of eschatological fervor in works popular among Philo’s contemporaries like 3 Maccabees or the *Sibyline Oracles*. Thomas Tobin has, for example, shown numerous points of connection between Philo’s eschatological statements and the militantly nationalist eschatology of the *Sibyline Oracles* 3 and 5, demonstrating that Philo does not abandon restoration eschatology as reflected in the *Sibyline Oracles* but rather thoroughly revises that eschatology away towards an emphasis on Torah-observance and the practice of virtue as the means to restoration and away from anything that could serve as the basis for any sort of uprising against Roman or other authority. As Collins notes, “Where Philo’s eschatology differs from that of many apocalyptic writers and from that of most of the sibylline books is not so much in the actual concepts as in the degree of urgency,” and “the fact that Philo still finds some place for national eschatology indicates that messianic beliefs must have been widespread in his time, even in Egyptian Judaism.” For all Philo’s emphasis on the allegorical and ethical value of the Torah, it is difficult to disagree with Scott’s conclusion:

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1029 As Borgen, “There Shall Come Forth a Man,” 347, observes, Philo’s expectation that the world will ultimately submit to Torah is fully in keeping with his restoration hopes.

1030 For a closer look at 3 Maccabees, see chapter 8 below.


1033 Collins, *Between Athens and Jerusalem*, 137.
“Philo looks forward to the ingathering of the exiles, the defeat of the nation’s enemies, the reign of the Messiah and the Jewish [sic] nation over the world, and universal peace based on harmony with the law of God.”

All Israel and the Jews in Philo

Scott’s summary statement, however, references “the Jewish nation” where Philo does not. In contrast, Philo clearly identifies the people who will be awakened and restored from their exilic state of servitude not as “the Jewish nation” but as “Israel” (Praem. 44)—that is, the people “originally divided into twelve tribes” (Praem. 57). Indeed, the term Ἰουδαῖος never appears in this tractate, despite being the significantly more common term in the Exposition as a whole. In fact, although using the term Ἰσραήλ (79) or Ἰσραήλιτικός (1) eighty times (on 72 occasions) in the extant Greek works, Philo never uses Ἰσραήλ as synonymous with Ἰουδαῖος. The degree of separation between the terms across the Philonic corpus is striking (see Fig. 3), as all but three of these occurrences of Ἰσραήλ or Ἰσραήλιτικός are found in the Allegory, with only two instances in the Exposition (Abr. 58 and Praem. 44) and one in the non-exegetical works (Legat. 4). Sixty-nine of those refer to the biblical nation or patriarch (of

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1034 Scott, “Philo and the Restoration of Israel,” 573.

1035 See Birnbaum, Place of Judaism, 45.

1036 Search made using the Philo-T module of Accordance Bible Software 11. This count includes the Greek fragment of QE 2.47. Because there is at present no extant Greek text of QGE, the four other references to Israel (QG 3.49; 4.233; QE 2.30, 37) and the numerous periphrastic substitutions for Israel found in the translations of those works will not be addressed here.

1037 As Birnbaum, Place of Judaism, 55, observes, “Philo uses different vocabulary to describe the real historical and contemporary nation, on the one hand, and ‘Israel,’ on the other. For the most part, he speaks about the real nation—either past or present—and ‘Israel’ in separate works.” David M. Hay, “Philo of Alexandria,” in Carson et al., The Paradoxes of Paul, 357–379 (369), states it more plainly, “Philo does not use ‘Israel’ and ‘the Jews’ as identical terms.”

which 45 occur in direct quotations of scripture), with the term occurring only eleven times in a
discussion not specifically tied to the biblical nation or patriarch.\textsuperscript{1039}

\textit{Figure 3: Israel and the Jews in Philo of Alexandria}\textsuperscript{1040}

Philo nowhere refers to his own present-day people (that is, the Jews) by the term Ἰσραήλ

or Ἰσραηλιτικός. Even more remarkably, with the exception of the treatise \textit{Embassy to Gaius},

Philo never even uses Ἰσραήλ and Ἰουδαῖος (or Ἰουδαϊκός) in the same treatise,\textsuperscript{1041}
and even in

that case, the two terms are separated by one hundred and thirteen paragraphs, as Philo begins his

apology by highlighting the historical relationship between God and the nation of Israel,

\textsuperscript{1039} Birnbaum places these references in four categories: references interpreting “Israel” using the etymological

meaning of “seeing” (49); uninterpreted references, usually in biblical quotations (15); interpretations not related to

the etymology (17); and references where the interpretation is unclear but the metaphor of “seeing” is used (2).

Birnbaum’s total (83) differs slightly from mine because she includes the four uses from the English \textit{QEG} but not


\textsuperscript{1040} Graph made using \textit{Accordance Bible Software 11}. In addition to the data represented in the graph, the term

Ἰουδαϊκός appears eleven times, three times in \textit{Flacc.} and eight times in \textit{Legat}.—overlapping with Ἰουδαῖος but not

Ἰσραήλ/Ἰσραηλιτικός.

emphasizing the term’s allegorical meaning, “the seeing nation” (Legat. 4).\textsuperscript{1042} It is not until Legat. 117 that Philo first uses the term Ἰουδαῖος, which he uses forty-three times in the tractate to refer to his contemporary people (plus eight uses of Ἰουδαϊκός also referring to the contemporary period). Although he clearly implies a link between the terms, Philo does not use the two terms synonymously even in this treatise.\textsuperscript{1043} As Runia explains,

Ἰουδαῖος is Philo’s usual way of referring to contemporary Jews in their socio-political situation. It occurs no less than 79 times in his two political treatises. In other treatises it is less common, but always with reference (direct or indirect) to the contemporary situation. Revealingly it is never used in the Allegorical Commentary.\textsuperscript{1044}

Thus like Josephus, Philo distinguishes between these terms, using Ἰουδαῖος for the contemporary (post-Babylonian Exile) people while Israel never refers to the contemporary people but rather occurs in other contexts. On these grounds, Birnbaum suggests that Philo appears not to regard these terms as synonymous:

Philo’s separate uses of these terms are indeed puzzling to the modern reader, who may expect “Israel” and “Jews”—or, in the case of the Biblical nation in Moses’s time, “Israel” and “Hebrews”—to be synonymous. For Philo, however, “Israel” may represent something else …. Philo may regard “Israel” and “Jews”—or “Hebrews”—as overlapping in meaning but not necessarily synonymous. If “Israel” and “Jews” or “Hebrews” do indeed have different though perhaps

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{1042} Harvey, True Israel, 222: “This introductory usage establishes a philosophical point about vision, rather than a political or social one about the people.”
  \item \textsuperscript{1043} Pace Birnbaum, Place of Judaism, 105–07, although Philo clearly intends the reader to link (as explained in Place of Judaism, 191) Israel and the Jews, he does not clearly identify them as the same entity. That is, the Jews seem to be presented as related to (i.e., descended from) Israel but Philo nowhere explicitly identifies the two terms. Given the distinction he holds between them everywhere else, it is probably best to recognize the subtle handling of the terms here as well. It is a subtle difference, and I otherwise agree with the analysis of the rhetorical function of the use of “Israel” presented in Place of Judaism, 189–191.
  \item \textsuperscript{1044} Runia, “Philonic Nomenclature,” 15.
\end{itemize}
overlapping meanings, then it is only logical that Philo would use these different terms in different places for different purposes.\textsuperscript{1045}

That Philo’s distinction between the terms is no accident is especially well illustrated by the differing quotations of Balaam’s oracles in the Allegory and Exposition. Whereas he retains the names “Jacob” and “Israel” (as in the LXX) in the Allegory, he substitutes “Hebrews” for both names each time he quotes this passage in the Exposition, thus avoiding the word “Israel” (\textit{Conf.} 72; \textit{Mos.} 1.278, 284, 289).\textsuperscript{1046} As Birnbaum notes, “Because Balaam’s oracles appear as direct quotations both in the Bible and in Philo’s rendition, the consistent change from the original “Jacob” and “Israel” to “Hebrews” is especially salient.”\textsuperscript{1047} Philo even uses different words to describe Ἰσραήλ and the Ἰουδαίοι as collectives, preferring γένος for Ἰσραήλ but ἔθνος and sometimes λαός for Ἰουδαίοι, clearly marking out the latter as a nation but framing the former in more ambiguous terms.\textsuperscript{1048}

Even more significantly, “\textit{Philo portrays the relationship between God and ‘Israel’ and between God and the Jews in different ways,}”\textsuperscript{1049} and he characterizes the membership of each group differently, further suggesting that the two terms are not to be understood as identical.\textsuperscript{1050}

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{1046} For more on Philo’s use of Ἑβραῖος, see ch. 10 below.
\item \textsuperscript{1047} Birnbaum, \textit{Place of Judaism}, 49, also noting, “Philo’s non-mention of “Israel” is particularly striking in the two treatises on Moses—part of the Exposition series—which are predominantly concerned with the Biblical nation Israel. In these treatises, Philo never calls the people “Israel,” as they are called in the Bible, but instead uses the proper name “Hebrews” or else calls them simply “the nation” or “the people.” Even when paraphrasing Scriptural quotations in which the word “Israel” appears, he changes this term to “Hebrews” (\textit{Place of Judaism}, 27).
\item \textsuperscript{1048} Cf. Birnbaum, \textit{Place of Judaism}, 222–23
\item \textsuperscript{1049} Birnbaum, \textit{Place of Judaism}, 223 (emphasis hers).
\item \textsuperscript{1050} “Because the distinguishing mark of ‘Israel’ is its ability to see God, it would seem that anyone who qualifies—whether Jew or non-Jew—may be considered part of ‘Israel’” (Birnbaum, \textit{Place of Judaism}, 224). “In contrast to
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
There is, moreover, no indication that any sort of insider/outsider distinction is in play.\textsuperscript{1051} Rather, the appearance of Ἰσραήλ in \textit{Praem.} 44, at the very end of the Exposition, where Philo otherwise avoids the term, hints at a more plausible solution: As with Josephus, for Philo, “Israel” is an aspirational identity deeply tied to eschatology.

That is, Philo’s philosophical interpretations of Israel are intertwined with and complementary to his eschatological outlook.\textsuperscript{1052} Throughout his corpus, Philo constructs “Israel” as a class of virtuous people who embody the principles of the Torah and have come to “see God.”\textsuperscript{1053} This corresponds with his eschatological vision, in which those who are obedient to Torah and have come to see God (that is, “Israel”; \textit{Praem.} 44) are restored and exalted above ‘Israel,’ who sees God, the Jews constitute the community of people—past and present—who believe in and worship God by observing specific laws and customs” (223).

\textsuperscript{1051} \textit{Pace} Birnbaum, \textit{Place of Judaism}, 12–13, 28–29, 55–56, 117, 120–21, 159, who does not offer evidence for an insider/outsider distinction but proposes different audiences for Philo’s works as a possible explanation for the different terminology across the various works, e.g., “Both passages are found in works that are probably intended at least in part for ‘outsiders’” (Birnbaum, \textit{Place of Judaism}, 121). I find implausible the idea that the Exposition was targeted at “‘outsiders,’ i.e., people who are not familiar with Judaism who who may be put off by its claims to an exclusive relationship with God or by the seeming burden of its laws” (Birnbaum, \textit{Place of Judaism}, 159), especially given the level of familiarity with the text Philo appears to assume at different points through the Exposition. Given the exhortation at the end of \textit{Praem.}, it seems more plausible to identify the Exposition as targeted at those on the margins of what Philo regarded as proper Jewish practice, that is, those liable to be swayed into not adequately keeping the Torah, on the verge of what he would regard as apostasy, or those tending toward a more militant nationalism.

\textsuperscript{1052} As argued by Jaubert, \textit{La notion d’Alliance}, the various levels on which this term is used all work together: “Because Israel is a spiritual people, it is the collection of pious souls; what applies to all counts also for each one” (407). For the related point that Philo’s exegetical and historical writings illuminate each other, see Borgen, \textit{Philo of Alexandria; “Application of and Commitment to the Laws of Moses. Observations on Philo's Treatise On the Embassy to Gaius,” in In the Spirit of Faith: Studies in Philo and Early Christianity in Honor of David Hay}, eds. David T. Runia and G. E. Sterling, BJS 332 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 2001), 86–101.

\textsuperscript{1053} \textit{Pace} Isaak Heinemann, \textit{Philons griechische und jüdische Bildung: Kulturgleichende Untersuchungen zu Philons Darstellung der jüdischen Gesetze} (Hildesheim: Olms, 1973), 483, although Philo says little about the covenant with Israel in his extant work (but cf. \textit{Mut.} 53), he is clearly aware of and upholds Israel’s special covenantal status, as is evident in his eschatology. His consistent emphasis on the importance of fulfilling the principles of the Torah and his connection of that obedience with restoration is fully in keeping with a framework of a form of “covenantal nomism,” though not in “soteriological” terms as put forth by Sanders, “The Covenant as a Soteriological Category,” 41. Cf. Hay, “Philo of Alexandria,” 370. As Birnbaum, \textit{Place of Judaism}, 36 n. 21 observes, some of the confusion in this regard owes to interpreters conflating Philo’s “Israel” with “the Jews,” which is not in fact identical with the former. Rather, “Israel” is the covenantal people who fulfill the Torah and “see God.”
all other nations. In both the philosophical and eschatological material, “Israel” is thus an aspirational category related to but not the same as “the Jewish nation,” which has descended from the Israel of the past but is not identical to Israel. Intriguingly, Philo’s “Israel” does not include all Jews, some of whom have been cut off from the nation due to disobedience (Det. 107–108; Virt. 156–157; Praem. 152, 172), leaving only the roots of the tree (Praem. 172), while proselytes who imitate Abraham’s example can be incorporated (152, 172). Branches may be cut away from the tree due to their unfaithfulness, but the tree itself will always be preserved, with new shoots regenerating the tree to life (Praem. 172). Borgen explains:

If the Jewish nation in this way is for a while rejected, proselytes take over the role of the native citizens. Then, finally, restoration and return will take place and the curses will be turned upon the persecutors of the nation (Praem. 152–72).

Fuller explains Philo’s distinction, “even while Philo holds on to the restoration of ‘Israel’ (per his definition), he does not envision that event as being the exclusive heritage of the Jews.” Taken together, Philo’s eschatological picture and explanation of Israel are striking. For Philo, not all who have been descended from Israel are in fact Israel (that is, “the seeing ones”); instead, that status is something to be attained through the practice of virtue, as defined by the Torah. Philo further explains that Israel, though not a visible, identifiable people or nation

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1054 This is one treatise where Philo refers to “Israel” as an ἔθνος.

1055 Hay, “Philo of Alexandria,” 369, “‘Israel’ seems regularly to denote the community of all who ‘see God,’ and Philo does not claim that all Jews are inside that circle or that all Gentiles are outside.” Cf. also Birnbaum, Place of Judaism, 225–26.

1056 The parallels to Paul’s olive tree allegory here are inescapable. See pp. 555–68 below.


1059 Fuller, The Restoration of Israel, 92 (his emphasis).
at present, will be raised up again in the future when the nation has learned from their migrations and come to obey the Torah fully. In that day, the “seeing nation” will itself be visible, and the eschatological promises to Israel will be accomplished. Perhaps even more remarkably, Philo explains that although the restoration is but a hope at present, this “hope is joy before joy … because reaching what is coming also proclaims the gospel of the perfect good” (Praem. 161).

Philo’s metaphorical/ethical interpretation is therefore thoroughly linked to his eschatological understanding of Israel, since the ethical dimension is the necessary precursor to the eschatological aspect. Perhaps the most startling sentiment in this eschatological scenario is that, in the face of Jewish disobedience, Philo argues that proselytes can actually take the role of native citizens. Those descended from Israel who rightly practice the principles of the Law are incorporated in the renewed people at the restoration while those who do not are cut off. This is remarkably close to Paul’s argument about gentile incorporation, though Paul goes a step further in not regarding circumcision and full observance of the food laws as necessary for full

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1060 Birnbaum, Place of Judaism, 43: “Israel” seems to describe an entity which cannot be easily identified with a particular social group.”

1061 Gk. φθάνονσα τὸ μέλλον καὶ πλήρες ἀγαθὸν εὐαγγελίζεται. I have overtranslated εὐαγγελίζεται here to draw out the parallel to New Testament language; both Philo and the New Testament authors obviously derive this language from the LXX’s use of the term in restoration contexts. Note also the use of φθάνον, a word that Paul also uses in the context of restoration (Rom 9:31).

1062 Starling, Not My People, 33: “Even in Philo, however, the allegorical reading of Isa. 54:1 is preceded by a literal reading of the verse, interpreting it as a promise of the eschatological restoration of Israel, and the allegorical application of the soul transformed by suffering is embedded within that larger story. Thus, when the time comes for Israel to be restored, it will take place by means of the moral transformation accomplished by God through the sufferings of exile and their effects in the souls of the individual exiles.”

1063 Cf. also the discussion of repentance (μετάνοια) and proselytism in Virt. 175–86, the treatise immediately preceding Praem.

1064 Cf. Collins, Between Athens and Jerusalem, 136.
proselytism.1065 Nevertheless, the basic principles of Philo’s eschatology and understanding of Israel appear to be closer to Paul’s than generally appreciated.1066

Overall, Philo’s conception and construction of Israel also appears to match closely with that of Josephus, as each of them discourages violent rebellion while emphasizing the need to keep the Torah to facilitate Israel’s future restoration. For both Philo and Josephus, “Israel” remains an aspirational identity tied to the past and hoped for in the eschatological future, and when he speaks of the historic people of God and of the future people restored from exile, he uses “Israel” or “Hebrews.”1067 But like Josephus, Philo does not use that term to refer to his contemporary ἔθνος or γένος. Rather, for Philo, Ἰουδαῖος is the proper term for the present day people,1068 while “Israel” is used in past, allegorical/philosophical/spiritual, or eschatological contexts.

1065 Philo himself is aware of radical allegorists in his own community who do not regard keeping the literal laws as necessary so long as one understands their noetic symbolism (Migr. 89–90). Cf. Gregory E. Sterling “Thus Are Israel’: Jewish Self-Definition in Alexandria,” SPhiloA 7, no. 8 (1995): 12 (15–16); David M. Hay, “Philo’s References to Other Allegorists,” SPhilo 6 (1979–1980): 41–75 (DATE RANGE 1979–1980). Paul seems not to have gone so far, however, as his resistance to gentile circumcision as the proper means of entering the covenant seems to be based on something other than allegorical interpretation (see Ch. 11 below).

1066 This lacuna in scholarship has only recently begun to be addressed, most notably in Bekken, The Word is Near You, 115–230 and Wells, Grace and Agency, 188–208. Cf. also Barclay, “Grace within and Beyond Reason.”

1067 For more on Philo’s use of Ἑβραῖος, see chapter 2 above. Birnbaum, observing that Philo avoids “Israel” and prefers “Hebrews” for the biblical people in the Exposition and noting that his use of “Israel” in the Allegory is nearly always accompanied by the etymology, argues that Philo does not use “Israel” to describe the “real nation” (Place of Judaism, 43). But the presence of the etymological explanation does not negate the fact that he frequently uses “Israel” of the biblical people throughout the Allegory, though not in the Exposition.

1068 Runia, “Philonic Nomenclature,” 18: “[Ἰουδαῖος] generally refers to contemporary Jews or Jews in the relatively recent past. For Philo … this means post-exilic Judaism.”
CHAPTER 8: ISRAEL AND RESTORATION ESCHATOLOGY IN OTHER EARLY JEWISH LITERATURE

Once one has been immersed in the restoration-eschatological perspective of the Jewish Scriptures and how Israel is constructed therein, a scarcely more than casual reading of other Jewish literature from the Second Temple period reveals the same eschatological themes and terminological distinctions in great abundance. Kuhn himself notes the preference for Israel terminology among texts that are “religious rather than historical or political,” continuing, Ισραήλ is always used in such works and never Ἰουδαῖοι. Examples of this type of writing are Sir., Jdt., Tob., Bar., Ps. Sol., 4 Esr., Test. XII, 3 En. Ισραήλ is found on innumerable occasions in these works, but never Ἰουδαῖος.

Kuhn of course interprets this preference for Israel terminology through the lens of his insider/outsider model, citing the insider context of such “religious” literature and ignoring that among his listed examples Judith and Tobit present themselves as (quasi-) historical narratives, countering his distinction between “religious” and “historical” works. But like the literature we have covered so far, these texts tend to use the term Israel when referring to the larger people of God in continuity with the preexilic past or to a future, eschatological Israel. In contrast, οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι is the preferred term when referring to contemporary Jews. Israel is not preferred because it is an “insider” term but rather because those texts that Kuhn labels “religious” or “insider” texts are either set in the biblical past or express expectations for Israel’s full restoration as constructed in prophetic literature (or both). As the previous chapters have

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1069 Kuhn, TDNT 3:361
demonstrated, this common perspective of restoration eschatology was a significant part of the frame of reference established by the increasingly-authoritative scriptures, which situate the reader in a negative present but promise a better future. Unlike with Philo and Josephus, the prevalence of eschatological hopes throughout Jewish literature of the Second Temple period is widely recognized in scholarly literature, so there is little need to elaborate on that point.  

Robert Carroll explains,

Much of the literature of the Second Temple period recognizes a category of exile after the destruction of Jerusalem in 587/86, but it does not recognize any return in subsequent centuries. This literature … represents Israel as being in exile for centuries; virtually in permanent exile.

Scant attention, however, has been paid to the relationship between Israel terminology and restoration eschatology in this literature, and the concern for the restoration of the northern tribes of Israel frequently reflected in these texts is usually only mentioned as an aside, if recognized or acknowledged at all. This chapter will therefore focus on the use of “Israel” terminology in a wide range of Jewish texts from the Second Temple period, further demonstrating the continued distinction between “Israel” and “the Jews” (οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι) and its connection to restoration eschatology. The following table of the extant early Jewish literature that uses either of these terms helps illustrate that connection:

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Table 2: Israel and the Jews in Deuterocanonical and Pseudepigraphal Literature\textsuperscript{1073}

Key: Bib = Biblical; Esch = Eschatological; Cont = Postexilic/Contemporary. Numbers in parentheses denote clearly Christian interpolations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Israel*</th>
<th>Israel* per 1000</th>
<th>Ioudaios</th>
<th>Ioudaios per 1000</th>
<th>Bib</th>
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<td>3 Macc</td>
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<td>28</td>
<td>5.48</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Baruch</td>
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<td>X</td>
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\textsuperscript{1073} Searches made using *Accordance Bible Software 11* and then verified by hand. Texts designated “Charles” are not fully extant in Greek, so the English text of Charles’ *APOT* has been used as a proxy. The same is true for 4 Ezra, 2 Baruch, and the Testament of Moses, only the Latin, Syriac, and Latin versions, respectively, serve as a proxy rather than Charles’ English translation. The table does not include those Jewish texts that use neither term, authors only known through other later authors (e.g., Eupolemus, Artapanus, Cleodemus Malchus), or overly fragmentary texts but otherwise aims to be exhaustive. The term Ἰουδαϊκός also appears five times in Aristeas (in addition to the seventeen instances of Ἰουδαῖος listed in the chart) but appears nowhere else in the corpus.
<table>
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<th>Ioudaioi per 1000</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

In keeping with the material covered to this point, “Israel” terminology is highly correlated with a setting in the past, biblical period, an eschatological context, or in ritual or prayer contexts that often imply one or both of the biblical/eschatological contexts.1074 Conversely, 'Iouðaioi terminology is highly correlated with a context of postexilic or contemporary Jews but not biblical Israel or the future restored people. Of course, correlation is

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1074 Pace Esther G. Chazon, “‘Gather the Dispersed of Judah:’ Seeking a Return to the Land as a Factor in Jewish Identity of Late Antiquity,” in LiDonnici and Lieber, *Heavenly Tablets*, 157–175 (174), there is no indication of a distinction between “Palestinian” and diaspora prayers in their eschatological hopes upon a full view of the evidence.
not causation, so a closer look at each of these texts is necessary, and it is to this task we now turn.

Preexilic/Biblical or Northern Setting

Many Jewish texts from the Second Temple period use the term “Israel” because they are set in the pre-deportation “biblical” past or refer specifically to northern Israelites as distinct from southern Judahites/Jews. Among this group are books like Tobit, Judith, the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, Jubilees, Joseph and Aseneth, and 1 Enoch, the last of which illustrates this rule by using neither term since it is set in a time before Israel itself existed. Other apocalyptic texts such as 4 Ezra, 2 Baruch, and the Assumption of Moses also fit into this category inasmuch as their pseudonymous authors are ostensibly biblical figures. Throughout this literature, we also consistently find reference to a restored, eschatological Israel comprised of all twelve tribes, with much of the attention focused on restoration eschatology.

The book of Tobit,\textsuperscript{1076} which tells the story of a descendent of Naphtali taken into Assyrian captivity by Shalmaneser, is a signal example of the continued use of Ἰσραήλ in the Second Temple period to distinguish those descended from northern stock from their southern

kinsmen, the Ἰουδαῖοι. Indeed, as noted by Beattie and Davies, "Tobit is from the tribe of Naphtali and is a worshipper of Yahweh, but not described as a Jew." Instead, the book of Tobit uses the term Ἰσραήλ and cognates seventeen times while eschewing the term Ἰουδαῖος. The book emphasizes the northern identity of its protagonists and their relationship to their southern kinsmen from the very start, explaining that the tribe of Naphtali had “deserted from the

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1077 A word about the text of Tobit is in order here. On the basis of fragments from one Hebrew and four Aramaic manuscripts found at Qumran, it is generally agreed that the book was originally composed in a Semitic language, though there is some debate as to whether that language was Hebrew or Aramaic, with the evidence insufficient to establish an “original” Semitic text. The full narrative survives in both Greek and Latin manuscripts, with two primary Greek versions: a shorter version preserved in Codices Vaticanus and Alexandrinus (G) and a longer form represented in Sinaiticus (GII). A third text-form survives only in part (Tob 6:9–12:22) and is likely secondary to the others. As demonstrated in Joseph A. Fitzmyer, “The Aramaic and Hebrew Fragments of Tobit from Qumran Cave 4,” CBQ 57, no. 4 (1995): 655–675, the longer GII version features more frequent Semiticisms and tends to correspond more readily to the five Qumran manuscripts of Tobit and is on that basis generally regarded as an earlier version than G, which features a shorter, more tightly edited, and more idiomatically Greek text. Sinaiticus, however, contains numerous textual problems, making it difficult to restore a coherent longer recension in spots. Unless otherwise noted, the citations and references in this chapter will be to the GII text, though the differences between these recensions do not make an appreciable difference for my argument; what holds for GII also holds for G in this regard. For more on the text of Tobit, see Stuart Weeks, “Restoring the Greek Tobit,” JSJ 44, no. 1 (2013): 1–15; Stuart Weeks, Simon Gathercole, and Loren Stuckenbruck, eds., The Book of Tobit: Texts from the Principal Ancient and Medieval Traditions. With Synopsis, Concordances, and Annotated Texts in Aramaic, Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and Syriac 3/ (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2004); Stuart Weeks, “Some Neglected Texts of Tobit: The Third Greek Version,” in Bredin, Studies in the Book of Tobit, 12–42; Fitzmyer, "Fragments"; Tobit, 3–15; “The Significance of the Hebrew and Aramaic Texts of Tobit from Qumran for the Study of Tobit,” in Schiffmann et al., The Dead Sea Scrolls, 418–425; “4QpapTobit2 ar, 4QpapTobit ar, and 4QpapTobit2” in Qumran Cave 4. XIV: Parabiblical Texts, Part 2, ed. James C. VanderKam, DJD 19 (1995), 1–76 + plates i–x; Armin Schmitt, “Die hebräischen Textfunde zum Buch Tobit aus Qumran 4Q902,” ZAW 113, no. 4 (2001): 566–582; Robert Hanhart, Septuaginta: Vetus Testamentum Graecum Auctoritate Academiae Scientiarum Gottingensis editum VIII.5: Tobit (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1983), 31–55.

1078 Beattie and Davies, "What Does Hebrew Mean?," 82 n. 32.

1079 The only exception is found in the Sinaiticus version of Tob 11:17, which says “all the Ἰουδαῖοι in Nineveh” (πᾶσιν τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις τοῖς οὖσιν ἐν Νινεβί) rejoice upon learning of Tobit’s good fortune. The shorter recension (G) from Vaticanus/Alexandrinus, on the other hand, has only πᾶσι τοῖς ἐν Νινεβί ἀδελφοῖς αὐτοῦ. Since GII generally appears to be the earlier version and the Ἰουδαῖος reading introduces an anachronism, the GII reading is the more difficult reading and was more likely corrected by the later editor (or a scribe) to produce the G reading, which preserves the distinction observed elsewhere in the book. In either case, the GII reading involves an uncharacteristic slip either by the author or a later translator, editor, or scribe, though it is not an especially significant one since the group indicated by Ἰουδαῖος is ambiguous and does not clearly refer to a northerner (like Tobit) in this verse and could be at least theoretically defended as referring to Tobit’s southern kinsmen taken into Assyrian exile. But pace Bauckham, “Anna,” 77, it is nevertheless a significant departure from the language found elsewhere in the book and does not suggest that the terms were understood as equivalent.
house of David and Jerusalem” (1:4). Tobit demonstrates his righteousness by not behaving like his northern relatives choosing not to sacrifice “to the calf that Jeroboam the king of Israel had erected in Dan” (1:5), instead going alone to Jerusalem for the proper festivals (1:6). Once in exile, Tobit and his family continue to display their piety by continuing to observe Israelite/Jewish ritual regulations such as burial of the dead and keeping the festivals (though obviously not in Jerusalem) and especially by maintaining the boundaries set between Israel and the nations.1082

The very existence of a novella like Tobit is evidence for the continued concern for the northern tribes among early Jews, as the romantic fairy tale answers questions about the fate of the northern exiles, emphasizing that some northerners have indeed retained their Israelite heritage and tribal distinctions in exile. The latter is an especially important point throughout the book, which places special emphasis on endogamy and the maintenance of tribal ancestry in the diaspora.1083 The central plot conflict is between Tobit’s family and the conditions of exile; as William Soll observes, “all three instances of ‘misfortune’ in Tobit can be seen as acute

1080 Miller, "Meaning of Ioudaíos," 108, “The use of ‘Israel’ may be related to Tobit’s position as an exile from the tribe of Naphtali in the northern kingdom of Israel. Since one of the book’s main emphases is the unity of the twelve tribes of Israel and the necessity of their restoration, it is also possible that ‘Israel’ was used, at least in part, for its covenantal or eschatological significance.”

1081 Instead of calling him “son of Nebat” as is more common in the Bible, the narrator draws further attention to the distinction between northern Israelites and southern Judahites by introducing Jeroboam as “the king of Israel.” G1 omits the reference to Jeroboam and instead talks of sacrifice to “Baal the heifer.” Pace Fitzmyer, Tobit, 106, the reference to Jeroboam’s apostasy is not “a peculiar anachronism” but a commonplace understanding in the Second Temple period with respect to Jeroboam’s apostasy as beginning the period of the covenantal curses, a view derived from 2 Kgs 17:5–17. E.g, Josephus, A.J. 8.271; 9.280–82; CD 7:12–13; 14:1; 4Q398 f11–13 2 (=4QMMT C 19).

1082 Bauckham, “Tobit as a Parable,” 145.

1083 Hicks-Keeton, "Already/Not Yet," 115, “Perhaps the most conspicuous ethical tenet in Tobit is that of endogamy.”
manifestations of the chronic condition of exile." Building upon this recognition, Richard Bauckham has shown that Tobit’s three key misfortunes—Tobit’s loss of property, Tobit’s blindness, and Sarah’s lack of a husband—are personal manifestations of the descriptions of Israel’s punishment in Deuteronomy and the prophets.1085

The root misfortune of exile overshadows everything else in the narrative, with the protagonists striving (with divine help) to overcome the central challenge of exile: maintenance of their distinctive Israeliite identity, which chiefly depends upon endogamy.1086 In the words of Amy-Jill Levine, the text presents endogamy as “the means by which the threat of the diaspora is eliminated,”1087 and the struggle is ultimately between the conditions of diaspora and the need to preserve identity through endogamy. Inasmuch as the misfortunes of Tobias and Sarah serve as obstacles to their marriage and consequent production of heirs,1088 they specifically highlight the


1085 Bauckham, “Tobit as a Parable,” 147–49. Those parallels are as follows: (1) The plundering of Tobit’s goods mirrors the predictions of Deut 28:30–31, 33, 51; cf. 2 Kgs 21:14. (2) Blindness matches closely with Isa 59:9–10; Lam 3:1–2, 6; Mic 7:8–9. Bauckham does not mention it in this section but notes elsewhere (153) that Isa 9:1–2 is also noteworthy as it specifically mentions blindness in connection with the exile of Naphtali. (3) Sarah’s desolation mirrors that of Jerusalem in Isa 62:4; Lam 1:1; etc. Bauckham also discusses other connections between Tobit and the prophecies of exile throughout, such as the connection between Anna spending her waking hours watching the road for Tobias as fulfilling the curse of Deut 28:32.

1086 Levine, “Diaspora as Metaphor,” 106, notes that even the historical and geographical inaccuracies in the story function to call attention to the fact that “things are not as they should be” in exile, while endogamy provides the stability otherwise missing in this unstable world. For a list of the historical and geographical inaccuracies in the book of Tobit, see Moore, Tobit, 10; Hicks-Keeton, “Already/Not Yet,” 112–13 n. 39 observes that these inaccuracies function to make Tobit ahistorical and potentially more accessible to the Hellenistic-era reader.


1088 Tobias’ poverty makes him an unsuitable husband, while the tendency of Sarah’s suitors to die before being able to consummate the marriage is an obvious attack on her fertility.
difficulty of maintaining their tribal identity in exile.\textsuperscript{1089} Even the basic geography of the exiled community is a major obstacle. Although Tobias and Sarah are from the same family in Naphtali (Tob 1:1; 3:7; 6:11) and were set apart for one another from the creation of the world (6:18), they are unknown to one another because of the dispersion of the Israelites. The miraculous intervention of angel-in-disguise Raphael/Azariah is ultimately required if the exile-crossed lovers are to preserve their family line.\textsuperscript{1090}

It is important to recognize that endogamy for Tobit does not simply involve the avoidance of gentile intermarriage but the preservation of tribal, clan, and familial lines. This is not merely a matter of marrying “a nice Jewish girl” to maintain Jewish identity in the diaspora.\textsuperscript{1091} On the contrary, the narrative depends on the fact that these are not Jews at all—they are Naphtalites in danger of losing their distinctive \textit{tribal} identity due to the diaspora.\textsuperscript{1092} If Sarah were to marry a Jewish man, that would be as much a tragedy in this narrative as if she were to marry a gentile, for in marrying a Jewish man she would lose her tribal distinction, and her father (who had no other child) would be left without an inheritance in Israel at the restoration, a hope without which there was no reason to live (Tob 3:15).\textsuperscript{1093} The concern for

\textsuperscript{1089} In this respect, the sufferings of Tobias and Sarah are of a piece with the sufferings of Tobit himself and the larger community as a whole, since they involve the perpetuation of his line in Israel. Cf. Bauckham, “Tobit as a Parable,” 141.

\textsuperscript{1090} Bauckham, “Tobit as a Parable,” 148, observes that Raphael’s name itself echoes the theme of God’s healing (𝒌핌) in numerous restoration promises, as does the vocabulary of healing throughout Tobit.


\textsuperscript{1092} Pitkänen, “Family Life,” 113: “One would expect that Tobit would limit his scope to fellow Israelites, but he seems to go even further in focusing on fellow Naphtalites only, as far as marriage is concerned.”

specific tribal membership is highlighted throughout the book, from Tobit’s precision about his geographical origins (Tob 1:2) and his acts of charity primarily for people of his own tribe (1:3, 16), to his marriage within his own tribe and clan (1:9) and expectations for his son to do the same (4:12). The importance of maintaining not only Israelite identity but also specific tribal distinctions is especially accentuated when Tobit quizzes a young “Israelite” (in fact the angel Raphael) about his tribal heritage to determine his trustworthiness as a traveling companion for his son (Tob 5:5–12). The familial language that pervades the narrative further highlights the importance of endogamy not only within Israel but specifically within tribe and clan.

This emphasis on endogamy and the maintenance of tribal and familial distinctions is explicitly tied to eschatological hopes throughout the book. Tobit, for example, enjoins his son to marry within his father’s tribe specifically so that his posterity may inherit the land as promised to the patriarchs (4:12). Levine notes that for Tobit,

[E]ndogamy is also a necessary element in Israel’s eschatology…. The telos of endogamy is thus the ingathering of the exiles. By identity-determining kinship ties the land is reobtained; the land is now the result, rather than the origin, of community self-definition.

Jill Hicks-Keeton adds,

The hope of Israel’s restoration grounds Tobit’s practical advice. Tobias should conduct himself—as Tobit has—in a way that will preserve Israelite identity so that they will be returned to the promised land. This relationship between the theological affirmation and the ethical exhortations therefore emerges: Israelites

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in the Diaspora should act in a way that both expects and engenders God’s faithfulness in the ingathering.\textsuperscript{1097}

The eschatological expectations so central to the narrative are made especially explicit in the final two chapters, in which Tobit launches into praise after the reversals of his misfortunes (ch. 13) and then gives his final words and blessing before his death (ch. 14).\textsuperscript{1098} Tobit’s declaration of praise after his son’s wedding—and the discovery that the reversals of misfortune were all due to divine intervention through the angel Raphael in response to his own and Sarah’s prayers—rejoices not only in the reversal of his own individual misfortunes but looks at his own story as paradigmatic for the people of Israel as a whole. That is, God’s action on Tobit’s behalf serves as evidence that God has not abandoned Israel in exile but will surely restore them as promised. The passage is rife with restoration-eschatological themes,\textsuperscript{1099} emphasizing both the mercy of God and the importance of repentance and righteousness in the punishment of diaspora to facilitate the restoration:

\begin{quote}
\textit{Acknowledge him before the nations, O children of Israel; for he has scattered (διέσπειρεν) you among them. He has shown you his greatness even there….
In the land of my exile (αἰχμαλωσίας) I acknowledge him,}\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{1097} Hicks-Keeton, "Already/Not Yet," 115–16.

\textsuperscript{1098} Some scholars have found the overt eschatological nature of these chapters to be so at odds with the rest of the book that they declared them to be later additions. E.g., Frank Zimmermann, \textit{The Book of Tobit}, Dropsie College ed., JAL 7 (New York: Harper, 1958); Deselaers, \textit{Das Buch Tobit}. This position has become increasingly untenable, first by the presence of these chapters among the fragments of Tobit found among the Dead Sea Scrolls and secondly by better literary analysis demonstrating the integrity of Tobit as a whole and the thematic correspondence between these chapters and the narrative itself. For a fuller discussion of the integrity of Tobit and why “there is no serious reason to think that the Book of Tobit, as we have it today, is not integral,” see Fitzmyer, \textit{Tobit}, 42–45 (here 45) and Irene Nowell, “Tobit: Narrative Technique and Theology,” (PhD Thesis, The Catholic University of America, 1983). For fuller discussions of the Deuteronomic themes of the final two chapters and their connection to the rest of the story, see Weitzman, "Allusion, Artifice, and Exile in the Hymn of Tobit"; Alexander A. Di Lella, “The Deuteronomic Background of the Farewell Discourse in Tob 14:3–11,” \textit{CBQ} 41, no. 3 (1979): 380–89; Weeks, “Deuteronomic Heritage.”

\textsuperscript{1099} Weitzman, "Allusion, Artifice, and Exile in the Hymn of Tobit" has convincingly demonstrated that the hymn of praise in Tobit 13 is modeled on and alludes to the Song of Moses in Deut 32 and that the allusive themes of this song have been “shaped by a larger allusive strategy that governs Tobit as a whole” (50).
and show his power and majesty to a nation of sinners …

‘Turn back, you sinners, and do what is right before him;
perhaps he may look with favor upon you and show you mercy.’ …

A bright light will shine to all the ends of the earth;
many nations will come to you from far away,
the inhabitants of the remotest parts of the earth to your holy name,
bearing gifts in their hands for the King of heaven.
Generation after generation will give joyful praise in you;
the name of the chosen city will endure forever. (Tob 13:3–4a, 6e, 11 NRSV)\textsuperscript{1100}

Whereas Tob 3:2–6 presented a lament for the circumstances of exile, this prayer involves the reversal of those circumstances, with the wording of 13:5b and 3:4b especially close, highlighting the reversal of the very scattering among the nations described in the early chapters.\textsuperscript{1101} Tobit goes on to declare that the “children of the righteous … will be gathered together” and that Jerusalem would be rebuilt with gold and precious stones to serve as the Lord’s house once again (13:14–15)—despite the fact that the destruction of the first Temple still lies in the future from the perspective of the narrative itself (cf. 14:4), and the Second Temple was almost certainly already standing when the book was composed. Tobit’s hope is that a “remnant of my descendants should survive to see [Jerusalem’s] glory” (13:16), again emphasizing the importance of the survival of his family line.

By maintaining their Naphtalite heritage and preserving their right to inheritance in the land, the protagonists of the book of Tobit demonstrate their continued faith in the coming restoration that will not only involve Judah and Jerusalem but even Naphtali, the first tribe to

\textsuperscript{1100} There is a lacuna from 13:6–10a in G\textsuperscript{II}, likely the result of parablepsis, but these verses are found in G\textsuperscript{I} and some of the material from the lacuna is found in Aramaic 4Q196, which suggests that Sinaiticus is indeed defective. See Fitzmyer, *Tobit*, 304.

have been taken into exile.\textsuperscript{1102} The prophets, of course, promised the restoration of all Israel, including the specific mention of Naphtali in one especially widely-cited prophecy:

\begin{quote}
Previously he brought the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali into contempt,\textsuperscript{1103} but finally he will make the way by the sea glorious, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.
The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.
Those who lived in a land of darkness on them the light has shined. (Isa 9:1–2; MT 8:23–9:1)
\end{quote}

The preservation of specific tribal lineages in exile is instrumental to the promised restoration, for if, as Levine asserts, “Naphtali, like the rest of the Northern tribes, permanently lost both its connection to the land and its self-identity,”\textsuperscript{1104} how could the restoration promised by the prophets, one that includes Naphtali, come to pass? How could Naphtali be restored if there is no Naphtali left to restore? The continuation of Tobit’s Naphtalite line is thus critically important to the fulfillment of the prophets’ promises and requires God’s providential oversight in the midst of exile. The book of Tobit thus reassures its protagonists—and through them the reader—that there must be a faithful remnant of Naphtali somewhere, preserved by God’s providence and awaiting the final restoration. As Bauckham notes, “A narrative so embedded in such specific tribal loyalty can scarcely serve as the paradigm for a restoration of the nation in a sense that would exclude this tribe from it.”\textsuperscript{1105} The story of Tobit and his family thus serves as a model for the survival of the various tribes of Israel, without whom the restoration cannot be complete. Bauckham further explains:

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{1102} Cf. 2 Kgs 15:29.
\item \textsuperscript{1103} LXX: “Do this quickly, O land of Zebulun, land of Naphtali.”
\item \textsuperscript{1104} Levine, “Diaspora as Metaphor,” 107; cf. the objections on this point in Bauckham, “Tobit as a Parable,” 154–59.
\item \textsuperscript{1105} Bauckham, “Tobit as a Parable,” 151–52.
\end{itemize}
By making a family deported in this very first of the deportations the subject of his story, the author of Tobit devised a story that can apply inclusively to all the deported tribes. Tobit’s family stands for all those who were exiled subsequently, down to the fall of Jerusalem. From his vantage-point at the beginning of exile, Tobit can foresee the whole history of exile.1106

Tobit states his view of that whole history in his deathbed testament,1107 directing his son to flee with his family to Media where they would be “safer than in Assyria and Babylon” (Tob 14:4) because of the impending destruction of Nineveh prophesied by Nahum and putting Tobit’s faithful family in one of the traditional locations of the northern tribes (as already observed in Josephus above).1108 The exile itself will continue far longer, scattering “all of our kindred, inhabitants of the land of Israel,” including the desolation of both Samaria and Jerusalem (14:4).

But most notably, Tobit does not portray the return from Babylon and building of the Second Temple as the end of the exile. Instead, that return is only a partial mercy preceding the actual times of fulfillment:

But God will again have mercy on them, and God will bring them back into the land of Israel; and they will rebuild the temple of God, but not like the first one until the period when the times of fulfillment shall come. After this they all will return from their exile and will rebuild Jerusalem in splendor; and in it the temple of God will be rebuilt, just as the prophets of Israel have said concerning it. Then the nations in the whole world will all be converted (ἐπιστρέψουσιν) and worship God in truth. They will all abandon their idols, which deceitfully have led them into their error; and in righteousness they will praise the eternal God. All the Israelites who are saved in those days and are truly mindful of God will be gathered together; they will go to Jerusalem and live in safety forever in the land of Abraham, and it will be given over to them. Those who sincerely love God will

1106 Bauckham, “Tobit as a Parable,” 152.


1108 Levine, “Diaspora as Metaphor,” 107 n. 9 points out that “Tobit is consistent with if not the origin of other notices that the so-called ‘ten lost tribes’ were living in Media and its environs,” an explanation that reappears in other literature throughout the Second Temple period. Cf. also the discussion in Yehoshua M. Grintz, “Tobit, Book of,” EncJud 15 (1971): 1183-87 (1186).
rejoice, but those who commit sin and injustice will vanish from all the earth.
(Tob 14:5–7 NRSV)

This passage is critically important, as each statement contrasts the true and final fulfillment of the prophets’ restoration promises with the return from Babylon, emphasizing the inadequacy of that return and of the Second Temple. Like so much of what we have already examined, Tobit considers the return from Babylon an incomplete restoration at best. Yes, Jerusalem and the Temple were rebuilt, but all Israel has not been saved, Jerusalem was not built in splendor or honorably (ἐν τίμω; 14:5), and the Temple was not rebuilt just as the prophets have said concerning it and cannot compare to the first one. The true restoration will come some time after the return from Babylon “when the proper time is fulfilled” (οὗ ἀν πληρωθῇ ἡ χρόνος τῶν καιρῶν; 14:5).

At that time, in contrast to small return to Jerusalem from Babylon, all of the exiles (ἐπιστρέψουσιν ἐκ τῆς αἰχμαλωσίας αὐτῶν πάντως) will return and rebuild Jerusalem “in splendor” (14:5) as opposed to the paltry rebuilding job after the return from Babylon. And in that glorious Jerusalem, the Temple will be rebuilt just as the prophets of Israel have said concerning it—as opposed to the present, inadequate building that comes nowhere close to fulfilling the grand promises of the prophets. Then all the nations of the world will abandon their idols and worship Israel’s God, again a sharp contrast to the gentile domination throughout in the Second Temple period. Finally, the passage specifies that the “all” who will be saved among Israel are those who are “mindful of God in truth” (that is, those like Tobit and his family), while the unjust will disappear, having been eliminated through the exile. As Bauckham explains,

1109 Knibb, “The Exile in the Literature of the Intertestamental Period,” 268, observes, “There could hardly be a more explicit statement of the view … that the return from the exile in the sixth century had only a provisional character, and that the post-exilic cultus was defective. The decisive change in Israel’s condition of exile was only to come when the ‘times of the age’ were completed.” See also Fuller, The Restoration of Israel, 30–31.
Tobit’s eschatological prospect is not simply the restoration of the exiles of Judah, but, more importantly for the message of the book, the return of the exiles of the northern tribes to the land of Israel and their reconciliation to Jerusalem as the national and cultic centre.\textsuperscript{1110}

These eschatological statements at the end of the book fit closely with the concerns of the narrative. The governing conceit of the narrative is that some northerners like Tobit’s family have indeed remained faithful in exile, keeping their lineages pure and awaiting the “times of fulfillment” when they will be restored together with the rest of Israel. The resolution of the misfortunes of exile with divine help are paradigmatic of God’s oversight of all of pious Israel in exile; Tobit’s “fate is inextricably bound up with that of Israel.”\textsuperscript{1111} The narrative shows how God has been actively engaged in preserving a remnant to restore when the time is right, and that preservation is itself the assurance of the final ingathering.\textsuperscript{1112}

In so doing, the book of Tobit provides answers to natural questions about Israel’s fate among those looking forward to Israel’s restoration but questioning how all Israel could be restored if there were no northern Israelites remaining to be restored.\textsuperscript{1113} No, Israel had not (yet)

\textsuperscript{1110} Bauckham, “Tobit as a Parable,” 141.


\textsuperscript{1113} This strikes me as a more plausible context than Bauckham’s suggestion that the book was written for an audience of northern Israelites (Bauckham, “Tobit as a Parable,” 154–163). Bauckham’s argument that “the Jews of northern Mesopotamia were predominantly descended from the northern Israelite exiles … while those of Media were descended from those Israelites of the northern tribes who settled there in the eighth century, perhaps augmented later by others” (158) is fatally flawed by the fact that these “Jews” would by definition have lost their distinct northern identities—thus being called “Jews.” That distinct tribal heritage precisely what is at issue in Tobit, and although I see no reason to think many Jews in this period were descended in part from northern stock, the mixture between different tribes and groups is a challenge to an eschatological expectation that “all Israel” will be restored, including a distinct remnant from each specific tribe. Pace Bauckham and others who situate the book in the eastern diaspora, I therefore agree with Fitzmyer, \textit{Tobit}, 54 in finding the book more likely to have arisen in or around the Levant, where the absence of northern Israelites was evident and imagining various tribes awaiting restoration in the unknown East would be less far-fetched, since there would be no readily apparent empirical evidence to the counterpart. For a list of those taking an eastern diaspora view, see Moore, \textit{Tobit}, 42–43.
returned as promised. Yes, there seems to be little remnant of northern Israel, raising the question of how all Israel could be restored without such a remnant. But, Tobit assures its reader, God has continued to preserve a pious remnant of all of Israel—even the first small tribe to have been taken into exile. The book of Tobit thus demonstrates that the restoration of all Israel—again understood to be more than just οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι—is therefore assured sometime in the future when the proper time is fulfilled.1114

Judith

Like Tobit, Judith is ostensibly set in the Assyrian period and as such, it should come as no surprise that Judith prefers “Israel” and cognates (which occur 50 times) and entirely eschews the term Ἰουδαῖος.1115 And as noted by Beattie and Davies, “The clues to [Judith’s] tribal

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1114 Fuller, The Restoration of Israel, 29 n. 62: “[T]he narrative as a whole emphasizes that the Diaspora community should live righteously in view of the restoration.” Fuller is wrong, however, in arguing that “the implicit appeal of the writing is for all Jews to return to the Land” (32), as the narrative presumes that such a return must be divinely administered (not to mention that it will include Naphtalites and other Israelites in addition to Jews). The story thus advocates righteous living in the diaspora and expectation of restoration but not an attempt to return absent divine intervention.

affiliation (8:1–3; 16:23–4) suggest she was, despite her name, of the tribe of Manasseh.”

Nevertheless, the text’s numerous anachronisms and historical inaccuracies belie the text’s ancient setting and signal to the reader to read through the Assyrian-period veneer and understand the story as applicable to the Hasmonean period.1117 For example, the antagonists in the story are “Nebuchadnezzar, king of the Assyrians,” depicted as ruling from Nineveh,1118 and his chief general Holofernes,1119 who loses his head while prosecuting the campaign against Judith’s city of Bethulia, all symbolic names and settings indicating the story’s fantastic and parabolic nature. As Philip Esler observes, “the text announces at the outset that it will draw on history, but will take extreme liberties in the manner it does so.”1120

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1116 Beattie and Davies, "What Does Hebrew Mean?,” 82 n. 32.

1117 Ellen Juhl Christiansen observes that the contemporary readers would easily have gotten this message, comparing the fictional setting of Judith to Hans Christian Andersen’s fairy tale, “The Ugly Duckling,” “which for all Danish readers clearly is a story about Andersen himself, how he grew up in poverty and became famous, while readers from other countries would easily miss this point” (“Judith: Defender of Israel—Preserver of the Temple,” in Xeravits, A Pious Seductress, 70–84 [71 n. 3]). On Judith as a Hasmonean-era composition, see Otzen, Tobit and Judith, 132–35; Moore, Judith, 67–70; Philip F. Esler, “Ludic History in the Book of Judith: The Reinvention of Israelite Identity?” BibInt 10, no. 2 (2002): 107–143 (107).

1118 Esler, "Ludic History," 117, compares the story’s introduction of Nebuchadnezzar as king of the Assyrians as “akin to beginning with, ‘When Napoleon was the emperor of Russia.’”

1119 This is a Persian name and may be linked to the Holofernes who prosecuted a campaign against Egypt on behalf of Artaxerxes III Ochus in the mid fourth-century BCE. Cf. Esler, "Ludic History,” 119–120.

1120 Esler, "Ludic History,” 117.
The story itself has previously been labeled a novella, folktale, legend, or parabolic history, but it seems to fit best into a category of “ludic” alternate historical fantasy. Such stories are superficially situated in the past but in fact take place in an imagined world clearly diverging from the actual (typically well-known) past, in some cases reversing the winners and losers of key conflicts or enacting virtual vengeance on past villains to the delight of the contemporary audience, as in Tarantino films. Whereas the historical Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple centuries after the Assyrians had destroyed and scattered the kingdom of Israel, the book of Judith imagines a world in which these outcomes were drastically different, with Israel, Jerusalem, and the Temple preserved by the heroic actions of a piously deceptive widow. Esler explains, “The text seems determined to offer a rerun of an event in Israel’s past which, this time, will have a happy ending.”

This alternate history only thinly veils its connection to the Hasmonean period, as the “Assyrians” (Ἀσσυρίος) serve as an easy representation of Seleucid Syria (Συρίας). Judith, on the other hand, stands as the model for those sharing her name, “Jew/Jewess” and also evokes the

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1121 For Judith as a novella or folktale, see Moore, Judith, 71–78. This category is further parsed into “legend” by Hellmann, Judit, 52–62 and Otzen, Tobit and Judith, 125–26. “Parabolic history” (parabolische Geschichtserzählung) is suggested by Haag, Studien zum Buche Judith, 63 and Hans J. Lundager Jensen, “Juditbogen,” in Tradition og nybrud. Jødedommen i hellenistik tid, eds. Troels Engberg-Petersen and Nils Peter Lemche, FBE 2 (Kopenhagen: Museum Tusculanum, 1990), 153–189 (158) but protested as ontologically prioritizing violence and war rather than peace by Christiansen, “Judith,” 70–71 n. 1.


1123 The writing of “virtual” or “counterfactual” history is a recent phenomenon even in scholarly historiography, as seen in Niall Ferguson, ed., Virtual History: Alternatives and Counterfactuals (London: Picador, 1997) and J. Cheryl Exum, Virtual History and the Bible (Leiden: Brill, 2000). For more on alternate history as a subgenre of historical fiction, including numerous examples, see Alternate History Wiki, http://wiki.alternatehistory.com.

1124 Esler, "Ludic History," 118.
figure of Judah the Maccabee, the masculine counterpart of her name. The name of Judith’s home city, Bethulia, seems to be a cypher for Jerusalem itself. Lest a reader miss these signals, the book explains that the “Israelites who lived in Judaea” (Jdt 4:1) who heard of Holofernes’ approach were terrified “for they had only recently returned from exile” and reconsecrated the altar and Temple (4:3; cf. also 5:18–19), further emphasizing the fanciful nature of the Assyrian period setting. Placing the story in the Assyrian period does, however, symbolically represent Seleucid rule as but a continuation of the foreign domination stretching back to the Assyrian period, with their defeat through Judith’s actions marking the beginning of the end of that period. In the fantasy world of the story, Judith’s actions entirely erase the consequences and memory of the initial Assyrian victory over Israel.

It is also worth noting that the “Israelites” throughout the story are consistently portrayed as faithful and righteous, which puts them in position to receive divine deliverance. This is in sharp distinction to the biblical stories in which Israel and Judah fell to their foreign assailants due to their unfaithfulness. In this sense, the message of the book of Judith is similar to that of 1 Maccabees in that the victories of the Hasmonean period are suggestively portrayed as the beginning of an age of righteousness and divine favor. That is, as with the activity of Judah the Maccabee in 1 Maccabees, the righteousness of the Jews represented by Judith herself is salvific for the larger body of Israel and are part of the divine plan for Israel’s salvation, including not


1127 Note the exceedingly negative use of διασπορά in 5:19.
only Judaea but traditionally northern territory such as Samaria (1:9; 4:4) and the Jezreel Valley (3:9).\textsuperscript{1128}

Goodblatt has argued that Judith should be understood as a representative example of how the people of Hasmonean Judaea typically identified themselves, calling the state Judah/Judaea (cf. Jdt 1:12; 3:9; 4:1, 3, 7, 13, 8:21; 11:19) but the people by the alleged insider term “Israel,” thus confirming Kuhn’s model.\textsuperscript{1129} But the historical-fantasy genre and symbolic nature of the story should caution against such a straightforward transference of its terminology to the contemporary Hasmonean world—unless, of course, one wishes to argue that they typically called Antiochus “Nebuchadnezzar,” the Seleucids “Assyria,” the Seleucid capital “Nineveh,” their neighbors “Canaanites,” and Jerusalem “Bethulia.” Instead, it is more suitable to understand Judith’s use of “Israel” terminology as part of the Assyrian-period framing with the effect of connecting the contemporary (faithful) inhabitants of Judaea with their Israelite forebears. “Israel” is once again preferred because the subjects in question are not (at least ostensibly) contemporary Jews but rather “Israelites” of the imagined past.

\textit{Baruch}

Few works more fully illustrate the relationship between Israel terminology and restoration eschatology and how Israel (and the reader) are rhetorically situated in exile on the threshold of restoration, than the (Greek) book of Baruch, which may have been written to

\textsuperscript{1128} Such a reading provides an explanation for why, despite the territorial setting of Judaea throughout the work, Judith is the only figure referred to by the corresponding ethnonym or tribal label (her name). That is, she represents Jewish righteousness and action ultimately leading to the salvation of all Israel. For a discussion of the oddity of Judith being the only “Jew” in the story, see Esler, "Ludic History," 136–37.

\textsuperscript{1129} Goodblatt, “Israelites who Reside in Judah,” 80–82.
The very structure of the work corresponds to the exile-repentance-restoration model of restoration eschatology, opening with a lengthy prayer of confession (1:1–3:8) followed by a wisdom poem in the middle (3:9–4:4) and concluding with a poem of prophetic consolation (4:5–5:9). The book was almost certainly written in Greek, which makes it a notable exception to Goodblatt’s model in which books written in Hebrew prefer “Israel” terminology while books written in Greek use the supposed outsider term.


since the book lacks any examples of Ἰουδαῖος while using Ἰσραήλ nineteen times in five short chapters. The book does, however, go out of its way to distinguish the kingdom and territory of Judah as a subset of Israel, using the term Ἰουδα on seven occasions for that purpose (1:3, 8 [2x], 15; 2:1, 23, 26).

The book presents itself as having been written in Babylon by Baruch, the scribe of Jeremiah (cf. Jer 32:12; 36; 43:3; 45:1–5), and sent back to those remaining in Jerusalem by those already in exile (Bar 1:5–13). The first, confessional portion of the book is “largely modeled on the penitential prayer of Daniel 9” and confesses that the curses of the end of Deuteronomy have come to pass (1:20), recounting the disasters that have fallen upon “the people of Israel and Judah” (2:1) and highlighting the worst of the curses of Deuteronomy, such as parents eating the flesh of their children (2:3). Throughout the confession, Baruch declares that the Lord is in the right for his just treatment of his people (1:15; 2:6), having “carried out the threat he spoke against us: against our judges who ruled Israel, and against our kings and our rulers and the people of Israel and Judah” (2:1; cf. also 2:26). The Lord has scattered


1135 Watson, Hermeneutics of Faith, 460, “[I]n Baruch, the disasters that have now taken place show that the curse of the law is the controlling factor of Israel’s whole history, from the exodus to the present. Paul is not alone in claiming that the whole of Israel’s existence is subject to the curse of the law.”

1136 The thoroughgoing Deuteronomic perspective of Baruch is summarized in detail in Marttila, “Deuteronomic Ideology.”

1137 Translations of Baruch in this section are from the NRSV unless otherwise noted.
(διέσπειρεν; 2:4, 13; 3:8) his people among the nations as he promised, \(^{1138}\) “yet,” Baruch declares, “we have not obeyed his voice” (2:10; cf. 2:24). The prayer of confession concludes with an appeal to Moses’ promise of restoration after exile leads to repentance (2:27–35), \(^{1139}\) declaring that this confession itself is part of the divinely-granted repentance to accompany and initiate the promised restoration:

For you have put the fear of you in our hearts so that we would call upon your name; \(^{1140}\) and we will praise you in our exile \([\text{ἀποικίᾳ}]\), \(^{1141}\) for we have put away from our hearts all the iniquity of our ancestors who sinned against you. See, we are today in our exile \([\text{ἀποικίᾳ}]\) where you have scattered \([\text{διέσπειρας}]\) us, to be reproached and cursed and punished for all the iniquities of our ancestors, who forsook the Lord our God. (Bar 3:7–8)

Shannon Burkes summarizes the perspective of the opening prayer in this way:

The first section has expressed its Deuteronomic view of sin and punishment in terms of death. Those who have already died cannot continue in relationship to God, and in a broader sense, the entire people is described as “perishing forever,” as being in a perpetual state of dying.” \(^{1142}\)

At this point, the addressee shifts to Israel in the wisdom poem that comprises the second part of the book. \(^{1143}\) In this poem, Baruch explains that Israel is growing old among its enemies

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\(^{1138}\) Note the dim view of the diaspora, which matches with the broader discussion of the chapter on the diaspora above.

\(^{1139}\) Pitre, *Jesus*, 450: “[I]n the often-overlooked book of Baruch, the promise of an ‘everlasting covenant’ (Bar 2:34) is very explicitly tied to the LORD’S promise to bring Israel home from ‘exile’ (Bar 2:27–35).” Cf. also Watson, *Hermeneutics of Faith*, 462.

\(^{1140}\) Wells, *Grace and Agency*, 138 notes the echo of LXX Jer 39:40 here, observing, “this reference to fear being placed in the heart communicates that Jeremiah’s promised new and eternal covenant is now realised.”

\(^{1141}\) Note the exceedingly negative use of the allegedly positive term \([\text{ἀποικίᾳ}]\) in this passage. Interestingly, the book does not mention the destruction of the Temple (which based on 1:5–13 appears to still be standing) but focuses exclusively on diaspora and exile rather than on the rebuilding of the Temple. Cf. Watson, *Hermeneutics of Faith*, 456–58; Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature*, 110–11; Burkes, "Wisdom and Law," 270.

\(^{1142}\) Burkes, "Wisdom and Law,” 271.

\(^{1143}\) Marttila, “Deuteronomic Ideology,” 331–32, shows that the wisdom poem is closely connected to the preceding section, as both are strongly influenced by Deut 4 and 30. The poem thus appeals to the people to “choose life by seeking the wisdom that is revealed in the book of the commandments of God” (332).
in a foreign land, “defiled with the dead” and “counted among those in Hades” (3:10–11)
because Israel has neglected wisdom (3:12–14), namely the divinely-revealed wisdom given in
the Torah (3:35–4:1). The wisdom poem concludes with an exhortation that Israel fully repent
and be restored:

Turn, O Jacob, and take her;
walk toward the shining of her light. …
Happy are we, O Israel,
for we know what is pleasing to God.
Take courage, my people,
who perpetuate Israel’s name!
It was not for destruction
that you were sold to the nations
but you were handed over to your enemies
because you angered God. (4:2, 4:4–6)

From this point, the book progresses into a prophecy of consolation heavily dependent on
Second Isaiah, declaring that Israel will be restored and Jerusalem’s enemies, who mistreated
her and enslaved her children (4:31–32) will be ruined and destroyed.

For God has ordered that every high mountain and the everlasting hills be made
low
and the valleys filled up, to make level ground,
so that Israel may walk safely in the glory of God.
God will lead Israel with joy,
in the light of his glory
with the mercy and righteousness
that come from him. (5:7, 9)

The book of Baruch therefore provides yet another signal example of restoration
eschatology looking backward to a prior time of sin and forward to the restoration of both Israel

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1144 The poem echoes Deut 30:12–13 to demonstrate that wisdom cannot be attained through human means (3:29–
30) but goes on to assert that the Lord himself has brought wisdom down from the clouds and from over the sea,
presenting her to Israel in the form of the Torah revealed to Moses. Cf. Wells, Grace and Agency, 140–43.
1146 Ferda, "Ingathering of the Exiles," 178–79, notes the “clear echoes of Isa 40” in this passage.
and Judah (2:1, 26). Marko Marttila’s summary of the book’s themes could just as easily serve to describe restoration eschatology, “Baruch’s book is branded by its long and profound confession of sin, but it is also a book that confidently looks at the future. Israel will have a bright future if it turns from its wicked ways and keeps the law.”

Burkes further explains, “[Baruch] is responding to the perceived ‘death’ of Israel, a death set in the context of an exile brought about as punishment for breach of covenant.” For Baruch, Israel is presently dead, but the day of its resurrection, which most prominently includes a moral/ethical transformation, is yet at hand, as summarized by Wells: “Dead in exile, incompetent Israel will be reconstituted by God as a competent moral agent. The gift of a new heart along with the gift of Torah allows Israel to respond to God and obey unto life.” In the process and in keeping with the pattern set forth in prior biblical literature, Baruch rhetorically situates the reader in the liminal space between exile and restoration, “at the point of intersection … Israel appears perpetually poised on the verge of the land, like Moses glimpsing it from afar but unable to enter.”

Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs

It is challenging to assess the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs due to the numerous stages of redaction, Christian interpolations, and difficulty dating the compositions, but this body

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1149 Burkes, “Wisdom and Law,” 271 n.47 notes the similarity of this theme in Baruch with that of Ezekiel 37’s valley of dry bones. Wells, Grace and Agency, 136–37 notes several other key points of contact with Ezekiel, particularly in the metaphor of Israel receiving a new heart as accompanying the end of the exile.
1150 Wells, Grace and Agency, 146.
of texts is nevertheless worth a brief look in this context. Although the received form of the text is a Christian redaction, it is still an important witness to early Jewish (and Christian) attitudes toward Israel and restoration eschatology, especially since the conception of Israel and use of terminology reflected throughout is in continuity with the patterns observed elsewhere.

These texts purport to be a record of the deathbed words of the twelve sons of Israel/Jacob, including exhortations and prophecies of the future of their descendants. Since these

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texts are set in the biblical past and tell of the eschatological future, we should expect them to prefer “Israel” language, and that is precisely what we find, with “Israel” and cognates occurring (approximately) 59 times and “Judah” (Ἰουδαίος) 37 times,1153 while Ἰουδαῖος is never used. Yet again, Israel terminology appears to be linked to restoration eschatology, as the Testaments repeatedly emphasize the separation of the northern and southern houses and disappearance of “Joseph” and look forward to the future restoration of all twelve tribes of Israel.1154

For example, T. Zebulun 9:5 references the division between the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, while T. Reuben likewise blesses “Israel and Judah” (6:11). Judah and Levi are repeatedly set apart as those through whom salvation will come (e.g., T. Naph 8:2–3; T. Gad 8:1; T. Judah 21:1–5; T. Sim. 7:1–3). Similarly, Joseph recounts a vision of beasts in ch. 19 that begins with

1153 Most (17) of these are found in combination with Levi, as these two tribes and patriarchs are envisioned as ruling Israel. Another 14 uses are specifically in reference to the patriarch. The remaining six refer to the tribe or kingdom of Judah in general.

1154 Marinus de Jonge, “The Future of Israel in the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs,” JSJ 17, no. 2 (1986): 196–211 (196): “The Testaments are very much interested in the future of Israel; they not only look ahead at the events between the fictitious and the actual time of writing (and reading) but also deal with the final destiny of Israel (often represented by the descendants of the patriarch in question).” De Jonge distinguishes two types of eschatological passages, those following the Sin-Exile-Return (S.E.R.) template and those following a Levi-Judah (L.J.) template. Cf. Jonge, "Future of Israel"; Jonge, Jewish Eschatology; Marinus de Jonge, The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs: A Study of their Text, Composition and Origin, SVTP 1 (Assen: van Gorcum, 1953). Each fits nicely in the category of restoration eschatology, and the L.J paradigm (also a prominent element in the Dead Sea Scrolls) especially emphasizes the primacy of the southern kingdom while emphasizing the twelve tribe structure of Israel. Both of these appear to be from a pre-Christian form of the tradition, though the Christian redaction has added elements to each—such as Levi’s sin especially including the mistreatment and rejection of Jesus by the priests. Mendels, The Land of Israel, 102, sees the early Jewish layer of the work reflecting “the anxiety of the writer concerning the wholeness of the nation, and its continuity as one entity consisting of twelve tribes.” For other material on Israel and eschatology in the Testaments, see Jacob Jervell, “Ein Interpolator interpretiert: Zu der christlichen Bearbeitung der Testamente der zwölf Patriarchen,” in Studien zu den Testamenten der zwölf Patriarchen, eds. Christoph Burchard et al. (Berlin: Töpelmann, 1969), 30–61; Anders Hultgård, L’eschatologie des Testaments des Douze Patriarches: 1, Interprétation des Textes (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1977); Anders Hultgård, L’eschatologie des testaments des Douze Patriarches: 2, Composition de l’ouvrage textes et traductions (Uppsala: Almqqvist & Wiksell, 1982).
twelve stags, nine of whom are “dispersed over all the earth,” followed into dispersion afterwards by the other three (T. Jos. 19:2).

Even more significantly, T. Naphtali includes two apocalyptic visions about the scattering of Israel, with the first including Joseph catching hold of a winged bull and being swept away from his brothers. This vision is followed by another, in which the twelve sons of Jacob depart on “the Ship of Jacob” (T. Naph. 6:2), which is then broken up by an intense storm:

And Joseph escaped in a light boat while we were scattered about on ten planks; Levi and Judah were on the same one. Thus we were all dispersed, even to the outer limits. (T. Naph. 6:6–7)

Notably, while the brothers are scattered “to the outer limits,” Levi and Judah remain together, representing the separation of the other Israelite tribes from the southern kingdom.

Upon recounting his dream to Jacob, Naphtali receives the following explanation:

“These things must be fulfilled at their appropriate time, once Israel has endured many things.” Then my father said, “I believe that Joseph is alive, for I continually see that the Lord includes him in the number with you.” And he kept saying tearfully, “You live, Joseph, my son, and I do not see you, nor do you behold Jacob who begot you.” He made me shed tears by these words of his. I was burning inwardly with compassion to tell him that Joseph had been sold, but I was afraid of my brothers.

Behold, my children, I have shown you the last times, all things that will happen in Israel. “Command your children that they be in unity with Levi and Judah, for through Judah will salvation arise for Israel, and in him will Jacob be blessed.” (T. Naph. 7:1–8:2)

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1155 As noted in Jonge, "Christian Influence," 215–17, T. Jos. 19 “is an extremely complicated chapter” (215), plagued by textual problems and significant Christian redaction, but there is little reason in my view to regard the opening two verses as owing to that Christian redaction, especially since the view of the exiles characterized here is common through the Testaments.

1156 Translations in this section are from Kee, “Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs,” unless otherwise noted.

1157 This seems to be a meta-aware reference to the fact that the Jewish scriptures continue to reference all twelve tribes of Israel, including them in restoration promises despite their apparent absence.
T. Naphtali depicts Joseph as separated and apparently lost in exile, mirroring the fate of their forefather in Egypt. But like the patriarch, he will one day be restored to his brothers in the last days. The scattering of Israel—even to the point of the tribes forgetting their Israelite heritage—likewise features in T. Asher,

You will be scattered to the four corners of the earth; in the dispersion (ἐν διασπορᾷ) you will be regarded as worthless, like useless water, until such time as the Most High visits the earth…. For this reason, you will be scattered like Dan and Gad, my brothers, you shall not know your own lands, tribe, or language. (T. Asher 7:3, 6)

This passage exhibits the same concern as the book of Tobit—loss of tribal heritage in exile—but unlike Tobit presumes that this will actually happen rather than imagining that a righteous remnant managed to preserve their identity. Nevertheless, restoration is still promised, as one day, “he will gather you together in faith through his compassion” (T. Asher 7:7).

This restoration is envisioned as first and foremost a return to virtue in T. Dan 6:4, which proclaims, “on the day in which Israel trusts, the enemy’s kingdom will be brought to an end.”

The Testament of Benjamin also looks forward to the time when the “twelve tribes will be gathered” together to the temple (9:2), connecting this restoration with the restoration of Joseph (T. Benj. 10:1), the resurrection of the patriarchs (T. Benj. 10:6; cf. T. Judah 24–25), and YHWH revealing “his salvation to all nations” (T. Benj. 10:5).1159

1158 A similar typological interpretation of the Joseph story as depicting the fate of Joseph’s exiled descendants can be found in 4Q372 1, discussed further below. The combination of that theme and the Levi-Judah emphasis of this section are almost certainly pre-Christian.

1159 The Christian redactor of course continues with Jesus, who was not believed “when he appeared as God in the flesh” (10:8–9), presiding over the final judgment. Although the final form of this passage is clearly Christian (as with the Testaments as a whole), it seems more likely that the emphasis on Israel’s restoration throughout is more likely owing to a earlier pre-Christian version or source.
Some previous interpreters focusing on the Christian redaction of the Testaments have mistakenly regarded the text’s concern with Israel’s restoration as indicating continued Christian concerns about the fate of “the Jews,” ignoring the absence of Ιουδαίος language and the emphasis on all twelve tribes throughout these texts. On the contrary, the Testaments consistently highlight the continuing exile of Israel with particular emphasis on the fate of the north, expecting that all twelve tribes would one day be restored through divine intervention. And as with so many other sources examined so far in this study, “Israel” in the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs denotes a larger group than the Jews (Ἰουδαίοι), remarkably including even those who may have forgotten their tribal and ethnic heritage as Israelites (T. Asher 7:6). These texts thus provide yet further evidence of the persistence of restoration eschatology and the concern for all twelve tribes of Israel even beyond the Second Temple period and also show how these strands can be easily shaped into Christian theology.

1 Enoch

Since it is situated in the primordial past before Israel’s existence, the terms “Israel” and “Jew” do not appear at all in 1 Enoch, and in that sense this work further illustrates the

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1160 E.g., Jonge, "Future of Israel," 210–11.

1161 1 Enoch or The Ethiopic Apocalypse of Enoch is a compilation of five originally independent works composed in Hebrew and/or Aramaic and attributed to the figure of Enoch from Genesis 5:21–24. The collection fully survives only in Ethiopic, though Aramaic fragments of four of the five sections were found among the Dead Sea Scrolls (excepting chs. 37–71, the Similitudes, which were the last section to be written; cf. Michael A. Knibb, “The Date of the Parables of Enoch: A Critical Review,” NTS 25, no. 3 [1979]: 345–359; Matthew Black, “The Messianism of the Parables of Enoch: Their Date and Contribution to Christological Origins,” in Charlesworth, The Messiah, 145–168). For more on the text of 1 Enoch, see Michael A. Knibb, The Ethiopic Book of Enoch: A New Edition in the Light of the Aramaic Dead Sea Fragments; 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1978); Matthew Black, ed., Apocalypsis Henochi Graeci in Pseudepigrapha Veteris Testamenti, PVTG 3 (Leiden: Brill, 1970). For more on 1 Enoch in general, see E. Isaac, “1 (Ethiopic Apocalypse of) Enoch,” OTP 1 (1983): 5–89; George W. E. Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch: A Commentary on the Book of 1 Enoch, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001); Matthew Black and James C. VanderKam, eds., The Book of Enoch, or, 1 Enoch: A New English Edition: With Commentary and Textual Notes (Leiden: Brill, 1985). The chronological elements of the Book of Dreams, more specifically in the Animal Apocalypse, are most relevant to this section, but the general perspective reflected in the Book of Dreams on these matters is not at odds with what is found in the rest of the corpus. For more on the Book of Dreams, see Portier-
contextually-dependent use of these terms in other contemporary early Jewish literature.

Nevertheless, its apocalyptic visions address the future from the perspective of the biblical patriarch, including discussions of the exile, return from Babylon, and the need for further restoration—that is, restoration in the reader’s future—with eschatological proclamations as early as the first chapter.\footnote{1162}

More significantly, the Animal Apocalypse of 1 Enoch portrays the return from Babylon as a fundamentally flawed restoration, asserting that although a new temple had been built, only three of the sheep returned to build it,\footnote{1163} and the sacrifices offered in it were “polluted and not pure” (1 En. 89:73). Furthermore, “all that had been destroyed and dispersed” (1 En. 90:33) do not return until after the eschatological throne is established, when the “Lord of the sheep” sits in judgment. In addition, like Philo, the Animal Apocalypse connects the return of the sheep with them all becoming virtuous, finally obedient to their Lord (1 En. 90:33–34).\footnote{1164}

\footnote{1162} 1 En 1:9 is of course known for its use in Jude 14–15, but more noteworthy in this context is 1 En. 1:6, which Ferda, "Ingathering of the Exiles," 180–81 n. 60, suggests is an allusion to Isa 40 to “signal eschatological restoration and the reversal of Israel’s misfortunes.”

\footnote{1163} Tiller, Animal Apocalypse, 38 n. 41, argues that two is the original reading of the passage.

\footnote{1164} A similar theme is present but lacks the emphasis on the return to the land in Jubilees, in which “restoration of a lost purity, not exile and return to the land, is the signature of the imminent eschaton” (Betsy Halpern-Amaru, “Exile and Return in Jubilees,” in Scott, Exile, 127–144 (144)).
One striking element of the Animal Apocalypse is its depiction of the fate of the gentiles at this future time.\textsuperscript{1165} Remarkably, the dispersed sheep return together with the various beasts (\(=\)gentiles), which also enter the house of the Lord, apparently also having been made “good” like the sheep (1 En. 90:33–34).

Both [Daniel and the writer of the Animal Apocalypse] were aware that the historical movement in 538, however momentous to some, did not mark an ultimately significant or meaningful point in the history of God’s dealings with his people. The time of Babylonian exile was merely the first part (the first 12 times) of a larger and longer-lasting phenomenon—the cruel reign of the seventy shepherds which would continue to the imminent end. The word exile never surfaces in the symbolic narrative of the Animal Apocalypse, but the language of dispersion is used and continues to be employed even after the end of the historical exile (see, e.g., 89:75). For the author, exile was an ongoing condition that would soon end with the final judgment.\textsuperscript{1166}

This view matches closely with what we have already observed in a broad cross-section of early Jewish literature stretching back to the depiction of those events in Ezra-Nehemiah, and it will reappear in much of the literature covered in the rest of this chapter. Despite not using either term, the eschatological perspective and view of the diaspora reflected in 1 Enoch does therefore help further illustrate the distinction between them.

\textsuperscript{1165} See Olson, \textit{A New Reading}.

Jubilees

Similar themes are present in Jubilees, a text presented as a revelation to Moses on Mount Sinai and usually classified as “rewritten Bible.” In keeping with its biblical and apocalyptic setting, Jubilees uses “Israel” and cognates 112 times but avoids the anachronism of referring to “the Jews.” Most of the book focuses on retelling the past for the edification of

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the reader and to support specific halakhic interpretations, such as in calendrical matters, but the book does feature two pericopes that focus on eschatology: 1:5–29 and 23:8–31. These chapters draw heavily from Deuteronomy, particularly Deut 29–31, with Jub 1:15 reading Deut 30:1–2 together with Jeremiah 29:13–14 to establishing the standard sin-exile-repentance-restoration model that governs the rest of the book.

Significantly, although Jubilees is obviously aware of the historical return from Babylon, as Halpern-Amaru notes, the book makes it clear that this return to the land should not be understood as the promised eschatological restoration:

The author splits the repentance stage so as to create a double-tiered restoration. Repentance ends the exile. But repossession of the Land no longer is the culminating point. It is followed by a more thorough-going repentance, by a spiritual regeneration that reflects the relationship between God and Israel decreed at Creation.

Kyle Wells explains further:


1171 The originality of these chapters to Jubilees has been questioned by both Michel Testuz, Les idées religieuses du Livre des Jubilés (Paris: Droz, 1960) and Gene L. Davenport, The Eschatology of the Book of the Jubilees, StPB 20 (Leiden: Brill, 1971), but the presence of these chapters in the Qumran copies of Jubilees suggest that they were part of the work at a very early date, and more recent work has treated these passages as integral to the book. See, for example, Scott, On Earth as in Heaven; Lambert, "Did Israel Believe"; Wells, Grace and Agency, 147–163; George J. Brooke, “Exegetical Strategies in Jubilees 1–2: New Light from 4QJubilees,” Albani et al., Studies in the Book of Jubilees, 39–57; Ben Zion Wacholder, “Jubilees as the Super Canon: Torah-Admonition versus Torah-Commandment,” in Legal Texts and Legal Issues: Proceedings of the Second Meeting of the International Organization for Qumran Studies, Cambridge, 1995, Published in Honour of Joseph M. Baumgarten, eds. Moshe J. Bernstein, Florentino Garcia Martinez, and John Kampen, STDJ 23 (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 195–211.


1173 Wells, Grace and Agency, 147–49.

What we have, therefore, is a re-established moral competence on the basis of a reconstituted disposition. Nevertheless, it is still only after the people ‘acknowledge their sins and the sins of their ancestors’ that they will return in an upright manner, which, it is implied, requires the pain of exile (1:22).\footnote{Wells, \textit{Grace and Agency}}

Until the Torah is properly interpreted and faithfully obeyed, Israel’s restoration has not taken place, as obedience and the return are interconnected (Jub 23:24–31).\footnote{Lambert, "Did Israel Believe," 633, has argued that Jubilees emphasizes “a dramatic, divinely initiated transformation of human nature … rather than a humanly initiated repentance” (emphasis his), providing a solution to the problems of human vs. divine agency reflected in Deuteronomy. Although Lambert is correct in highlighting Jubilees’ emphasis on divine transformation (though repentance need not be regarded as inherently humanly initiated), VanderKam notes that the return precedes the divine transformation of Israel’s nature in Jubilees just as it does in Deut 30:1–10, calling into question Lambert’s hard distinction between human and divine agency in Jubilees (VanderKam, "Jubilees," 425. Wells, \textit{Grace and Agency}, 152, also objects that Lambert’s argument assumes “that if something is divinely foreordained, it is divinely initiated,” countering that Jubilees presents Israel’s transformation as foreordained but still resulting from their repentance brought on by the experience of exile. Wells concludes that for Jubilees, “Restoration is on offer and must begin with Israel’s turning” (161). Nevertheless, even in Wells’ picture, Israel’s turning is the result of the divine action of exile, which spurs Israel’s repentance. Lambert has also more recently moderated his point of emphasis here, observing that although Jubilees does emphasize divine transformation, it does not share the concerns for agency of its modern interpreters (\textit{How Repentance Became Biblical}, 126). Cf. also Todd R. Hanneken, “The Status and Interpretation of Jubilees in 4Q390,” in \textit{A Teacher for All Generations: Essays in Honor of James C. VanderKam}, vol. 2, eds. Eric F. Mason et al., JSJSup 153 (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 407–428 (427 n. 42). See also pp. 194–95 n. 612 above for more discussion of repentance and questions of agency.}

And although only two chapters directly address this eschatological element, the book’s overriding focus on chronology is deeply rooted in these eschatological hopes, showing that God’s plan for Israel’s restoration continues to operate according to the ordained timetable.\footnote{On the distinctive calendar and chronology of Jubilees, see Joseph M. Baumgarten, “The Calendars of the Book of Jubilees and the Temple Scroll,” \textit{VT} (1987): 71–78; Jaubert, "Le calendrier des Jubilés et de la secte de Qumrân"; "Le calendrier des Jubilés et les jours liturgiques de la semaine"; Julian Morgenstern, “The Calendar of the Book of Jubilees, Its Origin and its Character,” \textit{VT} 5, no. 1 (1955): 34–76; VanderKam, “Studies in the Chronology”; “2 Maccabees 6,7a.”}

The telos of history for Jubilees is the eschatological restoration and reformation of Israel, with the emphasis on Israel’s moral transformation:

The ultimate goal of history for Jubilees is the complete restoration of sacred time and sacred space, so that what is done in the earthly cultus in the Land of Israel exactly corresponds to the way that things are already done in the heavenly cultus,
that is, in accordance with the will of God from creation as inscribed on the heavenly tablets.\textsuperscript{1178}

This full restoration is envisioned as coinciding with (indeed equivalent to) Israel’s obedience and depicted in terms that suggest “a mythic recovery of paradise lost,”\textsuperscript{1179} including thousand year lifespans and eschatological blessings, along with the judgment of the wicked.\textsuperscript{1180}

In any case, the return to the land recounted in Ezra-Nehemiah is only of secondary importance for Jubilees, in which Israel’s restoration is envisioned as far larger, including a divinely-orchestrated return to virtue and the righteous governance of the world. That restoration remains a future hope.

\textit{4 Ezra}

Written in the wake of the destruction of the Second Temple,\textsuperscript{1181} the apocalypse of 4 Ezra envisions a messianic future restoration of all Israel that supersedes the incomplete restoration of Judah from Babylon, making special reference to the miraculous return of the northern tribes:

\begin{footnotesize}

\footnote{Halpern-Amaru, \textquote{Exile and Return}, 142}

\footnote{Based largely on the image of the progressive reversal of the reduction of lifespans in 23:27–29, Scott argues that the book, which covers the 50 jubilee periods (2450 years) from creation to the entry into the land, looks forward in symmetrical fashion to another 50 jubilee periods to follow the twenty Jubilees of the preexilic and exilic ages (980 total years), culminating in the promised restoration. See Scott, \textit{On Earth as in Heaven}. As noted by VanderKam, \textquote{Jubilees}, 425–26, Scott must derive the 980 years of pre- and exilic periods from outside Jubilees, making his theory less certain, but the theory is nevertheless elegant and in my view very likely right, at least in the larger sense of setting up an eschatological reversal of the deterioration from primordial paradise.

And as for your seeing him gather to himself another multitude that was peaceable, these are the ten tribes which were led away from their own land into captivity in the days of King Hoshea, whom Shalmaneser the king of the Assyrians led captive; he took them across the river, and they were taken into another land. But they formed this plan for themselves, that they would leave the multitude of the nations and go to a more distant region, where mankind race had never lived, that there at least they might keep their statutes which they had not kept in their own land. For at that time the Most High performed signs for them, and stopped the channels of the river until they had passed over…. Then they dwelt there until the last times; and now, when they are about to come again, the Most High will stop the channels of the river again, so that they may be able to pass over. Therefore you saw the multitude gathered together in peace. But those who are left of your people, who are found within my holy borders, shall be saved. (4 Ezra 13:40–49, my emphasis)\(^\text{1182}\)

For 4 Ezra, a restoration that does not include the ten tribes deported by Assyria is an incomplete restoration;\(^\text{1183}\) the final eschatological restoration must include “another multitude” comprising the bulk of Israel,\(^\text{1184}\) while “those who are left of your people” (that is, Baruch’s people, those from Judah) will be saved as well. Once again, Israel terminology appears to be tied to eschatology, as 4 Ezra never mentions “the Jews,” instead preferring “Israel,” which appears twelve times and consistently refers to the full twelve-tribe nation in this work.

One noteworthy development in 4 Ezra is that the gathering of Israel is not envisioned as from among the nations as in the biblical prophets. Rather, the apocalyptic writer explicitly states

\(^{1182}\) Translation from Metzger, “The Fourth Book of Ezra.”

\(^{1183}\) The manuscripts of 4 Ezra vary between nine and ten tribes. Cf. Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 404, who concludes that the less common “nine and a half” is probably original.

\(^{1184}\) Cf. in this context John 10:16, which refers to sheep from another sheepfold who must be incorporated to create “one flock.”
that the northern tribes have withdrawn themselves from “the multitude of the nations” by 
traveling to a distant region in which no one else had ever lived (4 Ezra 13:41–45), 1185 apparently 
eliminating any room for the concomitant salvation of the nations themselves. 1186 In any case, 4 
Ezra provides yet another example of “Israel” terminology occurring in the context of restoration 
eschatology, specifically the restoration of the northern kingdom of Israel.

**2 Baruch**

Similarly written in the wake of the destruction of the Second Temple (perhaps even as a 
rejoinder to 4 Ezra), 1187 the Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch (2 Baruch) begins by calling attention 
to the fate of the northern kingdom:

> Have you seen all that this people are doing to me, the evil things which the two tribes which remained have done—more than the ten tribes which were carried away into captivity? For the former tribes were forced by their kings to sin, but

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1185 This may be a further development of the tradition reflected in Tobit, in which Tobias and his family migrate to 

preserve their tribal heritage. See Levine, “Diaspora as Metaphor,” 109 n. 9. The name of this legendary land likely 


river crossing and its relationship to later legends about the Sabbath river, see Barmash, “Nexus.”


1187 “2 Baruch appears to be written as a rejoinder to 4 Ezra, telling people to trust in the Almighty and his law, and 


however, has argued that the literary relationship goes the other direction. See Pierre-Maurice Bogaert, *L’Apocalypse 

a synopsis of the two works, see Klaus Berger, *Synopsis des Vierten Buches Esra und der Syrischen Baruch-

Apokalypse*, TANZ 8 (Tübingen: Francke, 1992). For general resources on 2 Baruch, see Albertus F. J. Klijn, “2 


(Leiden: Brill, 2008); Lester L. Grabbe, “Chronography in 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch,” in *Society of Biblical Literature 


Frederick James Murphy, *The Structure and Meaning of Second Baruch* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1984); Riv Iv Nis, 

*The Destruction of Jerusalem and the Idea of Redemption in the Syriac Apocolypse of Baruch* (Atlanta: Society of 

Biblical Literature, 2003); Nicola Roddy, “Two Parts: Weeks of Seven Weeks’: The End of the Age as Terminus ad 


Analysis of 2 Baruch* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1984); Willett, *Eschatology*; J. Edward Wright, *Baruch ben Neriah: 

From Biblical Scribe to Apocalyptic Seer* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2003)
these two have themselves forced and compelled their kings to sin.\textsuperscript{1188} (2 Bar 1:2–3; cf. Jer 3)

Later in the book, the vision of the “black seventh waters,” a part of the so-called “Apocalypse of the Clouds,” tells of the idolatry of the “nine and a half tribes” who followed Jeroboam and Jezebel until “the time of their captivity,” when they were deported by Shalmaneser the king of Assyria (2 Bar 62).

The book concludes with Baruch writing two letters, one sent by an eagle to the nine and a half tribes (presumably because a human messenger could not find them) and the other sent to those that were at Babylon by means of three men (77:19).\textsuperscript{1189} The nine and a half tribes are envisioned as still in exile somewhere across the Euphrates (77:22), separated from their brothers from Judah who have been exiled to Babylon. Baruch assures the northern tribes that they are not forgotten, since “Are we not all, the twelve tribes, bound by one captivity as we also descend from one father?” (2 Bar 78:4). He then admonishes them to repent and await restoration:

\begin{quote}
You shall receive hope which lasts forever and ever, particularly if you remove from your hearts the idle error for which you went away from here. For if you do things in this way, he shall continually remember you. He is the one who always promised on our behalf to those who are more excellent than we that he will not forever forget or forsake our offspring, but with much mercy assemble all those again who were dispersed. (2 Bar 78:6–7)
\end{quote}

\footnote{1188 Translations of 2 Baruch from Klijn, “2 Baruch” unless otherwise noted.}

\footnote{1189 There is some textual variation here as to the number of tribes, with most Latin MSS have “ten,” a few minor MSS have “nine,” and the Syriac, two Arabic, and two Ethiopic MSS have “nine and a half.” Stone, Fourth Ezra, 404, has persuasively argued that the last of these is most likely original. The problem owes to ambiguity in the biblical materials as to how Levi and the two half-tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh are counted. As a result, the northern tribes are sometimes considered ten tribes and other times nine or nine and a half in early Jewish literature. See Bogaert, L’Apocalypse Syriaque de Baruch, 339–352; Eileen M. Schuller, “4Q372 1: A Text about Joseph,” RevQ 14 (1991): 349–376 (361). Cf. also the related discussion of the “two tribes” (1:2–4) versus “two and a half tribes” (62:5; 63:3; 64:5) in Lied, The Other Lands of Israel, 38–39 n. 40 and the sources referenced there.}
After a lengthy discourse in which Baruch summarizes what has happened to Zion since the deportation of the northern tribes and declares the characteristics of the impending eschatological reversal, Baruch warns,

> Remember that once Moses called heaven and earth to witness against you and said, “If you trespass the law, you shall be dispersed. And if you shall keep it, you shall be planted.” And also other things he said to you when you were in the desert as twelve tribes together. (2 Bar 84:2–3)

This book epitomizes traditional restoration eschatology, looking back to an idealized time when the twelve tribes of Israel were unified, lamenting the continued state of exile, and looking forward to a future restoration of all twelve tribes of Israel. And of course, 2 Baruch prefers “Israel” terminology, using it exclusively to refer to the full twelve-tribe entity (10 times) or the northern kingdom (62:3), whereas aside from three references to kings of Judah, 2 Baruch avoids Jew/Judahite language entirely, looking instead to the past and future unity of “Israel.”

**Testament of Moses**

As early as its first chapter, the Testament of Moses (also called the Assumption of Moses) promises a future “day of repentance, in the visitation when the Lord will visit them at the end of days” (1:18).\(^{1190}\) The division between the kingdoms and the status of the separate houses of Israel and Judah are central to the narrative of Test. Mos., which portrays the “two holy

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“tribes” as established in Jerusalem (2:4) but the “ten tribes” as rebelling against the others and establishing “kingdoms for themselves according to their own ordinances” (2:5). Ultimately the sins of the ten tribes filter down to the other two, leading to the following exchange upon the deportation of the two tribes by the “king from the east” who burns the holy temple (3:1):

Then, considering themselves like a lioness in a dusty plain, hungry and parched, the two tribes will call upon the ten tribes, and shall declare loudly, ‘Just and holy is the Lord. For just as you sinned, likewise we, with our little ones, have now been led out with you.’ Then, hearing the reproachful words of the two tribes, the ten tribes will lament and will say, ‘What shall we, with you, do, brothers? Has not this tribulation come upon the whole house of Israel?’ (3:4–7)

After a captivity lasting “seventy-seven years” (3:14),

Then some parts of the tribes will arise and come to their appointed place [Jerusalem], and they will strongly build its walls. Now, the two tribes will remain steadfast in their former faith, sorrowful and sighing because they will not be able to offer sacrifices to the Lord of their fathers. But the ten tribes will grow and spread out among the nations during the time of their captivity. (4:7–9)

Yet again, Israel’s restoration is portrayed as incomplete, with only “some parts of the tribes” having returned after Cyrus’ decree and only “the two tribes” continuing to serve the Lord faithfully. Nevertheless, Test. Mos. assures the reader that God will visit the earth, at which point Israel would be fully saved, crushing the nations and looking down upon them from the heights of heaven (10:7–10). Like Josephus (A.J. 11.132–33), Test. Mos. portrays the ten tribes as multiplying and increasing to huge numbers among the nations of their exile. In keeping with its

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1191 Translation from Priest, “Testament of Moses.”

1192 Translation from Priest, “Testament of Moses.”

1193 Ferda, "Ingathering of the Exiles," 180 n. 60, notes that Test. Mos. 10 twice echoes Isa 40 while describing the final ingathering, reading Isa 40 “as a description of the end-time when God comes to vindicate Israel and fulfill his promises to them.”
restorationist focus, Test. Mos. avoids Ἰουδαῖος language in favor of “ten tribes”/“two tribes” terminology, and both uses of “Israel” refer to the twelve tribe totality.

Israel, the People of God

Other works that are, in Kuhn’s words, “religious rather than historical or political,” also prefer “Israel” terminology in keeping with the tendencies we have already observed. These occurrences of “Israel” are—as also among the texts covered above—often in contexts of prayer or ritual, those cases denoting the diachronic people of God (more specifically, the “God of Israel”) in continuity with biblical Israel. Such instances also tend to reinforce the connection between “Israel” terminology and restoration eschatology since so many of these prayers are prayers of appeal (often labeled “penitential prayers”), confessing past transgression and requesting divine reconciliation. As a rule, the other occurrences of the term “Israel” even in texts otherwise focusing on contemporary Jews refer either to biblical Israel or to eschatological Israel. Sirach and the Psalms of Solomon are the major texts classified among this group.

1194 Kuhn, TDNT 3:361–62.
1195 In keeping with Lambert, How Repentance Became Biblical, 33–49, I prefer the terminology of “appeal” rather than “penitence,” since the latter tends to imply an introspective contrition not necessarily implied by these prayers.
The Wisdom of Ben Sira

Although it is generally placed within the genre of wisdom literature, the Wisdom of Ben Sira also demonstrates significant hopes for Israel’s restoration, a concern most evident in the prayer of Sir 36:1–17, which entreats God to “hasten the appointed time and remember the oath” (36:7) and take action on behalf of his people:


1199 The versification of Sirach varies among modern editions and versions; this section follows the versification in Alfred Rahlfs, ed., Septuaginta (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2006) unless otherwise noted.

1200 The eschatological sentiments of this chapter are so striking that some scholars have challenged its authenticity. John J. Collins, Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998), 23, 110–11, for example, finds these statements “so alien to the thought world of Ben Sira that it must be regarded as a secondary addition,” and sees no reason for such animosity toward foreign rulers in the time of Antiochus III, who had assisted in rebuilding Jerusalem and the Temple in Jesus ben Sira’s day, suggesting that the prayer fits better in the Maccabean period. Cf. also Middendorf, Die Stellung Jesu Ben Siras, 125–132; Schrader, Leiden und Gerechtigkeit, 87–95; Burkard M Zapff, Jesus Sirach 25–51, NEchtB 39 (Würzburg: Echter, 2010), 236. Such an argument, however, depends on the presumption that the benefaction of a given foreign ruler would entirely alleviate resentment on the part of the dominated people in those years, which seems a stretch. In addition, several others have noted that this prayer is thoroughly integrated in its surrounding context, particularly with the material from the previous chapter—
Crush the heads of hostile rulers
who say, “There is no one but us.”
Gather all the tribes of Jacob
and give them their inheritance, as at the beginning.
Have mercy, Lord, on the people called by your name,
on Israel, whom you have made like your firstborn. …
Give witness to those you created in the beginning,
and awaken the prophecies spoken in your name.
Reward those waiting for you
and let your prophets be found trustworthy. (Sir. 36:9–11, 14–15)

Ben Sira’s concern for the reconciliation and gathering of the exiles—which he
specifically grounds in the promises of the prophets—is especially striking given that he was a
member of the “retainer class” living in Judaea in the early part of the second century BCE.¹²⁰¹

This sentiment is from someone who might be expected to regard the return as having already
taken place. After all, Jerusalem and the Temple have been rebuilt and strengthened (cf. Sir 50),

which itself already includes and appeal for God to vindicate his people and judge the nations. See Goering,
_Wisdom's Root Revealed_, 204–213; Skehan and Di Lella, _The Wisdom of Ben Sira_, 420; Fuller, _The Restoration of
Israel_, 36–37; Gregory, "Poor in Judea." Goering follows Jacob, “Wisdom and Religion in Sirach" in arguing that
the prayer predates its incorporation by Ben Sira into his larger work, though it is an original part of that work (201–
24). In either case, the prayer is thoroughly integrated into and in keeping with the rest of the composition. Far from
being a stark departure from Ben Sira’s thought elsewhere, the prayer is instead consistent with the concerns with
injustice and oppression addressed in the surrounding context and as observed by Gregory, "Poor in Judea,” 313,
“flows from prior understandings of the theological status of the poor and of the nature of Israel’s election” with
the transition from the individual to the national reflected in the prayer mirroring a widely attested phenomenon in early
Jewish literature. See also Maria Carmela Palmisano, "Salvaci, Dio dell'Universo!": _studio dell'eucologia di Sir
33(36),1–19 secondo il ms. ebraico B e la tradizione manoscritta greca. Analisi letteraria e lessicale,” _RivB_ 42, no. 4
(1994): 409–446. That similar eschatological sentiments can be found elsewhere in the book further confirms the
authenticity of this prayer (which was, in any case, integral to the book by the first century) and the importance of
Israel’s restoration to the Ben Sira tradition. A similar prayer also occurs in MS B of Sirach 51, also known as the
“Prayer of Jesus, son of Sirach,” which is attested in both Greek and Hebrew MSS and thought to be authentic to
Sirach, though the earliest MSS do not contain the portion between 51:12 and 13 that mentions the dispersion and
gathering of Israel. Skehan and Di Lella argue that this dispersion/gathering passage nevertheless dates to the mid
first century BCE (perhaps composed at Qumran), supplying in any another witness to restoration eschatology
within the Ben Sira tradition. See Skehan and Di Lella, _The Wisdom of Ben Sira_, 569.

¹²⁰¹ See Benjamin G. Wright III and Claudia V. Camp, “‘Who has been Tested by Gold and Found Perfect?’” in
_Praise Israel for Wisdom and Instruction: Essays on Ben Sira and Wisdom, the Letter of Aristeas and the
Septuagint_, JSJSup 131 (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 71–96; Richard A. Horsley, _Scribes, Visionaries, and the Politics of
notes Ben Sira’s concern for the poor and how he connects the fate of the poor with that of Israel as similarly
striking given his social location.
and he was living in the land. Along these lines, Michael Fuller observes, “The basic perspective of Sirach is that until Jews outside Palestine return, even those within Palestine remain in exile.” Similarly, Robert Hayward notes, “The prayer of ben Sira, therefore, is that God give to the Jews of his day the inheritance promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.”

Such observations are correct about the restoration-eschatological perspective of Sirach but with one major flaw: Ben Sira never mentions οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι but instead consistently speaks of “Israel.” Goodblatt, of course, regards this as due to the “insider” nature of the text, which was composed in Hebrew, but Miller rightly notes that other explanations may be preferable:

[Goodblatt’s] reliance on the statistical correlation between the Hebrew language and ‘Israel’ sometimes masks alternative explanations…. It is significant that Ben Sira never uses Ioudaios, but it is possible that ‘Israel’ was chosen not because it was the standard label in Ben Sira’s time, but because it suited the elevated nature of his discourse. Of the seventeen occurrences of ‘Israel’ in the Greek text of Ben Sira (excluding the prologue), eleven refer to the period between Moses and Jeroboam; three more refer to [Ben Sira’s] own time, but in a liturgical context (50.13, 20, 23); 36.11 is a prayer, as is the Hebrew poem included between 51.12 and 13.

Indeed, Ben Sira’s use of “Israel” matches the pattern we have observed elsewhere, either referring to (1) preexilic biblical Israel, (2) the diachronic “people of God” in prayer or liturgy, or (3) restored eschatological Israel. This case of prayer for eschatological restoration in 36:10–11 sheds additional light on the matter, as Ἰσραήλ occurs alongside “the tribes of Jacob,” an even

1202 Fuller, The Restoration of Israel, 42.
1205 There are 21 instances of “Israel” in the Hebrew version, thanks to the three instances in the psalm between 51:12 and 13.
1206 I disagree with Miller that 50:23 clearly denotes the people of Ben Sira’s own day, as it occurs in the context of a prayer for mercy and restoration.
more pregnant phrase specifically calling attention to the full restoration of all the tribes. The consistent use of “Israel” elsewhere in Sirach thus accords with this concern not only for the return of “the Jews” but for the restoration all twelve tribes to their ancestral inheritance.

Nevertheless, Fuller dismisses Sirach’s mention of the tribes as insignificant:

> The author of Sirach does not envision Israel’s restoration as a return to the tribal confederacy. It is more likely that he is simply drawing on the symbolic value of the tribes to the Land in his hope that all the people of Israel (i.e., the Diaspora) will return to the Land. In some writings, the actual tribes are mentioned, making it difficult to discern whether the writer is further emphasizing Israel’s relationship to the Land or hoping for an actual restoration of the twelve tribes themselves upon their historic allotments of territories (e.g., T. 12 Patr.; 11QT col. xxiv).¹²⁰⁸

Fuller does not provide any evidence for this assertion, apparently assuming that such hopes could obviously no longer be held by Ben Sira’s day. On the contrary, it is far more likely (especially in light of other contemporary literature) that Ben Sira actually meant what he said, hoping for the actual restoration not only of the Jews of the diaspora but of all twelve tribes, including those from northern Israel scattered long before the exile to Babylon. This probability is further confirmed by the fact that Sirach not only prays for the reconciliation of the “tribes of Jacob” but specifically mentions the reestablishment of the historic tribal allotments. That Ben Sira specifically prays for the resumption of the traditional inheritance (κατακληρονόμησον) upon the restoration of the tribes makes it clear that he indeed expects a return to an (idealized) tribal confederacy “as in days of old” (36:10).¹²⁰⁹ It is odd that Fuller ignores this specific request, only to note that some other early Jewish texts actually appear to hold such hopes. Nor is it “difficult to discern” whether those texts that mention the specific tribal names hope for “an

¹²⁰⁸ Fuller, The Restoration of Israel, 38 n. 94.

¹²⁰⁹ This is the Hebrew reading, which echoes the new Exodus passage in Isa 51:9 (cf. also Mic 7:20; Ps 44:2) and “suggests that, at the very least, ben Sira is thinking of the restoration of an ideal past” (Hayward, "New Jerusalem," 132–33, 137.)
actual restoration of the twelve tribes” themselves; such comments are rather a signal example of willfully ignoring the continued hopes for the restoration of the northern tribes in early Jewish literature. If, as we have seen, “Throughout the Second Temple period, the assumption was that the northern tribes still existed,”¹²¹⁰ there is no reason to doubt that Ben Sira did in fact hope for a return to the tribal confederacy.

This conclusion is strengthened by the fact that Ben Sira’s hopes for the restoration of all Israel also appear elsewhere in the book. Specifically, Ben Sira also emphasizes Israel’s restoration in its account of Elijah (48:10).¹²¹¹ But just how Ben Sira’s discussion of Elijah fits in the context of the larger encomium of Israel’s heroes (44:1–50:24) and Sirach’s emphasis on northern Israel in this larger section have all too often been missed.¹²¹² Immediately before the Elijah passage, Sirach recounts Solomon’s sin, explaining that in consequence, “the rule was divided, and a rebel kingdom arose out of Ephraim. But the Lord … gave a remnant to Jacob, and to David a root from his own family” (47:21–22). “Jacob” here appears to denote the northern tribes as an antithetical parallel to the root from David’s family (that is, Judah), shedding further light on the meaning of the “tribes of Jacob” in ch. 36.


The following verses further clarify these events, focusing on how Jeroboam’s influence led to Israel/Ephraim’s exile:1213

And Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who caused Israel to sin and gave to Ephraim their sinful path. And their sins multiplied greatly until they were removed from their land. For they sought every kind of evil, until just punishment came upon them. (47:24–25)

It is at this point that Ben Sira introduces Elijah (and then Elisha) as heroic figures for having done great wonders in opposing the idolatry of the northern kingdom, which nevertheless did not repent but were “plundered from their land and scattered in all the earth,” while “the people were left few in number but with a ruler from the house of David” (48:15). But Israel’s scattering is not final, for Elijah was taken up by a whirlwind (48:9) and:

Ordained for reproofs at the appointed time, to stop the wrath [of the Lord] before [it becomes] fury To turn the hearts of the parents to their children and to restore the tribes of Jacob. (48:10)

Ben Sira here quotes the promise of Malachi 4:6 that Elijah will “turn the hearts of their parents to their children” but adds an element most likely from Isa 49:6, “and to restore the tribes of Jacob”—that is, the northern tribes among whom Elijah ministered that had been “scattered over all the earth” (48:15).1214 This scattering is a different event from what Ben Sira narrates later, when “the kings of Judah came to an end” (49:4) and the “chosen city of the sanctuary”


was burned (49:5). The description of Elisha immediately following that of Elijah similarly "concentrates on the sins of the people of the northern kingdom."\footnote{Perdue, "Ben Sira and the Prophets," 149.}

In keeping with his more expansive restoration expectations, Ben Sira’s praise of the key figures in the return from Babylon and narration of that event is limited and brief—the absence of Ezra from the list is especially striking given Ben Sira’s scribal heritage.\footnote{That is not to say that he regards this event as unimportant. As shown by Hayward, "New Jerusalem," 128, he clearly sees Nehemiah’s work as fulfilling prophecy. But this work, although important, was not the totality of the promised restoration but only an intermediate step. “The gathering of the exiles is not yet underway: for ben Sira, it remains as much a hope for the future as it was for the author of Tobit 13,16–18” ("New Jerusalem," 132).} Fuller notes,

> For a writer who esteems the Temple so highly, it is striking that those who were instrumental in its construction and the wider restoration of the 6th century receive such brief acclaim. But Sirach plays down their role …. That is, the author maintains that the return and restoration under Persia was not completed in the 6th century.\footnote{Fuller, The Restoration of Israel, 39–40.}

In their place, Ben Sira effusively praises another figure through whose action he hopes the promised restoration will be swiftly fulfilled: his contemporary, the high priest Simon II, “the leader of his brothers and the pride of his people” (50:1).\footnote{This phrase only appears in the Hebrew version and is left out of the Greek as the translation tends to downplay Simon’s importance. Cf. Hayward, "New Jerusalem," 136–37. For more on the portrayal of Simon in Sirach, see Otto Mulder, Simon the High Priest in Sirach 50: An Exegetical Study of the Significance of Simon the High Priest as Climax to the Praise of the Fathers in Ben Sira’s Concept of the History of Israel (Leiden: Brill, 2003); Otto Mulder and Renate Egger-Wenzel, “Two Approaches: Simon the High Priest and YHWH God of Israel/God of All in Sirach 50,” in Ben Sira’s God: Proceedings of the International Ben Sira Conference, Durham-Ushaw College 2001, BZAW 321 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2002), 221–234.} Ben Sira effusively praises Simon for repairing and fortifying the temple and city,\footnote{The Hebrew of Ben Sira 50:1 says that the house was “visited” rather than “repaired,” which may indicate that Ben Sira believed the divine presence had returned to the Temple in Simon’s day. The translation, however, downplays Simon’s work here and elsewhere. See Hayward, "New Jerusalem," 128–29, 136–37.} having “considered how to save his people...
from ruin” (50:4). That is, Sirach represents Simon as having completed the work begun by Nehemiah, preparing Jerusalem and the sanctuary for the final ingathering.1220

Nevertheless, Hayward notes that this rebuilding still falls short of the promise:

We begin to see something of the problem which confronted this sage… God had indeed built certain things through the agency of Zerubbabel, Jehoshua, Nehemiah, and Simon: the present reality of Jerusalem and its Temple presided over by the Zadokite priests accurately demonstrated that God is יָרָשְׁלָם. The “house,” in the narrow sense of Jerusalem and its Temple, is “built”; and we have seen what ben Sira has to say of it. But the builder of Jerusalem is also the one who will “gather the dispersed of Israel,” as Ps 147,2 asserts in one breath. As long as Jews [sic] are scattered in exile, then, the “house” is not yet finally “built.”1221

Thus Ben Sira describes Simon’s glory in performing his priestly duties (50:5–21) to the satisfaction of God and the admiration of the people, culminating in Simon’s pronunciation of the priestly blessing “over the whole assembly of the children of Israel” (50:20),1222 but the absence of the tribes of Jacob and incompleteness of Israel is acutely felt throughout the section, which is immediately followed by a plea for mercy and deliverance so that Israel may experience peace “as in the days of old” (50:23).1223 That is, the depiction of Simon’s glorious service and priestly blessing is followed by Ben Sira’s own prayer that the priestly benediction upon all of Israel would finally be fulfilled. As Hayward rightly notes, although Ben Sira views Simon II as

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1221 Hayward, "New Jerusalem," 133–34.

1222 Sir 50:13 and 50:20 both refer to Simon’s activity before the “assembly of Israel,” potentially problematic in that they appear to refer to the present-day people as “Israel,” unlike the pattern we have observed thusfar and the way the term is used elsewhere in Sirach. This is, however, a stock phrase in the context of priestly liturgy (cf. Deut 31:30; 1 Kgs 8:14, 22, 55; 2 Chr 6:3, 12, 13; Josh 8:35), as the priests are specifically serve on behalf of and to bless the “assembly of Israel.” It should be noted that in this context, those gathered to the Temple are properly the assembly “of Israel” in a partitive sense, even if much of Israel remains absent and un restored (thereby being blessed in absentia by the priest, with Ben Sira’s additional prayer for mercy and restoration especially applying to that absent group).

1223 My translation follows the Hebrew here; the Greek says, “as at the beginning” rather than “as in days of old.”
having (perhaps) accomplished the necessary preparatory work, “For Ben Sira, these are not yet realities: they have still to be requested in prayer.”

Moreover, the presence of the rival Shechemites, who Ben Sira bitterly denounces as “not a nation” and “the foolish people” (50:25–26; cf. Deut 32:21), provides a persistent testimony to Israel’s absence and the fact that restoration remains but a future hope. That hope seemed even more distant by the time Ben Sira’s grandson translated the book into Greek, and the translation understandably downplays the significance of Simon’s work and line (diminished by the events of the Maccabean period); the hope for Israel’s restoration remains prominent in Greek Sirach but with less immediacy and vibrancy.

Nevertheless, even in the diminished Greek version, the book of Sirach unmistakably portrays Israel’s restoration as incomplete, with the bulk of Israel (“the tribes of Jacob”) remaining in exile and the situation of those in the land limited until the rest of Israel is restored. Despite living in the land with a functioning Temple run by an admirable heir of the Zadokite priesthood, the author prays for restoration promised by the prophets, highlighting the solidarity of those in the land with those still in exile by the plea, “have mercy on us” (36:1) and “all those called by your name” (36:11). Until all of Israel has been restored, even those in the land await the fulfillment of the promises. And in keeping with this hope, for Ben Sira, “Israel” is not the insider equivalent to “the Jews” but rather denotes the full twelve-tribe people scattered among the nations but eventually to be restored to full glory.

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1224 Hayward, "New Jerusalem," 133.
1225 On the Samaritans being regarded as a reminder of the absence of the northern tribes, cf. Thiessen, "4Q372"; see also pp. 420–25 and 548 n. 1668 below.
1227 Cf. Fuller, The Restoration of Israel, 41 n. 102.
Israel’s restoration will be fulfilled. That restoration will involve the advent of a Davidic messiah who will overthrow the current usurpers and “reign as king in Jerusalem, ingather the diaspora tribes, and judge the peoples and nations of the earth with righteous wisdom.”

The term “Israel” appears thirty-two times in the Ps. Sol., which never once use Ἰουδαῖος or its cognates, but “Israel” is never used in reference to the contemporary Jewish people. Rather, the term always refers either to the diachronic people of God (e.g., “God of Israel,” “Israel his servant forever”) or to the historical/biblical or eschatological people. Lest one should imagine that these texts merely prefer the “insider” term functionally equivalent to the outsider term “Jews,” several passages clarify that the “Israel” of Ps. Sol. represents more than just the southern Ἰουδαῖοι, including the full tribal heritage of Israel, restored in the days of the Davidic messiah, who will rule with a rod of iron:

He will gather a holy people
whom he will lead in righteousness;
and he will judge the tribes of the people
that have been made holy by the Lord their God.

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1229 Note yet again the highly negative use of διασπορὰ and view of the present circumstances. Ferda, "Ingathering of the Exiles," 179, sees “clear echoes of Isa 40” in Ps. Sol. 11:1–7, looking forward to “the returning exiles.”


1231 Count made with Accordance Bible Software 11, which uses the Greek text from Herbert E. Ryle and Montague R. James, Psalms of the Pharisees. Commonly Called the Psalms of Solomon: The Text Newly Revised from All the MSS (New York: Columbia University Press, 1891), 2–153. One additional occurrence of “Israel” is found in a variant of 2:24, where the reading is either “Jerusalem” or “Israel.”

1232 Ps. Sol. 4:1; 9:8; 16:3.

1233 Ps. Sol. 12:6. Cf. also 5:18; 7:8; 8:26, 34; 11:7, 9; 14:5; 18:1, 3. Because most of these are also clearly in the context of discussing exile/diaspora and/or eschatological restoration, they could easily be placed in the biblical/eschatological category as well.

1234 Ps. Sol. 8:28; 9:1, 2, 11; 10:5, 6, 7, 8, 11:1, 6, 7, 8, 9; 12:6; 17:4, 21, 42, 44, 45; 18:5.

1235 Cf. Ps. 2:9; isa 11:4. De Jonge notes that for the Ps. Sol., the power of this messiah is such that “military operations are not necessary. The King has only to speak and his enemies are defeated” (Jonge, "Expectation of the Future," 102). This is reminiscent of Philo’s vision of a “bloodless” conquest under a messianic figure in De Praemiis (see section on Philo above).
And he will distribute them upon the land
according to their tribes;
the alien and the foreigner will no longer live near them.
He will judge peoples and nations in the wisdom of his righteousness. (Ps. Sol. 17:26, 28–29, my emphasis)

This is the majesty of the king of Israel
which God knew,
to raise him over the house of Israel
to discipline it.…
Blessed are those born in those days
to see the good fortune of Israel
which God will bring to pass in the assembly of the tribes.
May God dispatch his mercy upon Israel. (Ps. Sol. 17:42, 44–45a, my emphasis)

The eschatological restoration envisioned by the Ps. Sol. is not merely the “hope that all
Jews will return to Jerusalem” or “the release and return of the dispersed Jews to Israel,”
as Ps. Sol. nowhere mentions “Jews.” Rather, these psalms hope for the restoration and return for
Israel—including all of the non-Judahite tribes—from their dispersion among the “mixed nations
(συµµίκτων ἑθνῶν)” (17:15; cf. 9:1–2). In contrast to the Hasmonean or Herodian kingdoms,
which were ruled by non-Davidic stock and did not include the plenum of Israel, Psalms of
Solomon looks forward to the day of the Davidic messiah, who will gather the tribes of Israel
and rule in righteousness as promised. Yet again, in Ps. Sol., “Israel” terminology is closely
tied to restoration eschatology and is not synonymous with οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι.

1238 The bitter indictment of the “sinners” who set up a non-Davidic kingdom in 17:4–6 and the foreigner who took
their place illustrates the first point; the passages quoted above illustrate the second. In any case, these two elements
seem to go together in this corpus, most evidently in Ps. Sol. 17.
Psalms of Solomon: Language, History, Theology, eds. Eberhard Bons and Patrick Pouchelle, EJL 40 (Atlanta: SBL
1240 The declaration of William Scott Green, “Messiah in Judaism: Rethinking the Question,” in Neusner et al.,
Judaisms and their Messiahs, 1–13 (3), that Ps. Sol. 17 is “neither apocalyptic nor eschatological” is puzzling in
light of these eschatological features. Similarly, Burton L. Mack, “Wisdom Makes a Difference: Alternatives to
Other Examples

Numerous other early Jewish texts further illustrate the basic principles observed so far.

For example, the term Ἰσραήλ occurs seven times in Joseph and Aseneth, each of which refers to the patriarch in a biblical setting, while Ἰουδαῖος, which would be anachronistic in this context, does not appear.1241 Similarly, Ἰσραήλ appears seven times in The Lives of the Prophets,1242 each of which refers either to biblical Israel (3:2; 3:14; 21:3; 22:3), eschatological Israel (3:13; 15:5), or the northern tribes as distinct from Judah (20:1). Remarkably, Lives refers to the tribes of Dan

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1242 The provenance and date of The Lives of the Prophets are disputed. Some have argued for a Semitic original, but it seems more likely to have been originally composed in Greek. See Peter Enns, “Lives of the Prophets,” *EDEJ* (2010): 892-94 (893); Douglas R. A. Hare, “The Lives of the Prophets,” *OTP* 2 (1985): 379–400 (380–81). Guesses as to the date and provenance of the work have ranged from a Jewish author in first-century Palestine to a Byzantine Christian author in the fourth century. For the former, see Anna Maria Schwemer, *Studien zu den frühjüdischen Prophetenlegenden Vitae prophetarum: Die Viten der grossen Propheten Jesaja, Jeremia, Ezechiel und Daniel*, TSAJ 49 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1995); for the latter, see David Satran, *Biblical Prophets in Byzantine Palestine: Reassessing the Lives of the Prophets*, SVTP 11 (Leiden: Brill, 1995).
and Gad as having opposed the prophet Ezekiel in Babylon, with the result that “they will be in Media until the completion of their error” (3:19). The term Ιουδαῖος also occurs twice in the book, each time referring to those from the kingdom of Judah, first in reference to historical Judahites living in Jerusalem at the time of Hezekiah (1:4) and the second time referring to Daniel from Judah in Babylon, “regarded by the Jews” as a eunuch (4:2).

4 Baruch, also known as the Paralipomena Jeremiou, is notable in that it was almost certainly composed in Greek but uses “Israel” (four times) rather than Ιουδαῖοι, providing yet another exception to Goodblatt’s Hebrew/Greek revision of Kuhn’s insider/outsider model.1243 The book is, however, set in the biblical period, right at the point of the deportation to Babylon, though it is unusual (though technically correct) in referring to the exiles from Judah as “sons of Israel” (1:1; 6:16; 9:30), with the fourth reference a more typical reference to the “God of Israel” (6:23). This book is also strongly connected with restoration eschatology and “may have contributed to, or even been produced by, the resurgent hope for a restoration of Jewish institutions that led ultimately to the second [Bar Kokhba] revolt.”1244


The Testament of Solomon is yet another work written in Greek and set in the biblical period that prefers “Israel,” with that term occurring nine times in the text, all in historical or “God of Israel” contexts. The only use of Ἰουδαῖος in this text is found in an obvious Christian interpolation, which predicts that the messiah will be “crucified by the Jews” (22:20). Similarly, the Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah uses the term “Israel” four times; two of these are in combination with “Judah” to denote the totality of Israel including both kingdoms (2:6; 3:7), another refers specifically to the northern kingdom (“Ahab, king of Israel”; 2:12), and the other to the “going astray of Israel” in general (2:10).

Perhaps the biggest exception to the pattern observed throughout this literature can be found in the Greek additions to Esther, in which “Israel” occurs seven times (the term does not occur at all in the Hebrew version). Of these, four are more typical, occurring in stock phrases in the context of prayer (13:9; 13:13; 14:1), including one reference to historical Israel, from one tribe of which which Esther comes (14:5). But the remaining three occurrences are unusual in that they refer to Esther’s contemporaries and the implied reader not as “Jews” (as in Hebrew Esther) but as “Israel” (10:9; 10:13; 13:8). Esther also serves as an inversion of Goodblatt’s

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model, since the Hebrew version refers to “Jews” (יהודים) but the Greek additions use Ἰσραήλ. My suggestion is that the cosmic scope of these sections and their apocalyptic/eschatological focus on God’s protection and salvation of his people accounts for the shift in terminology.

Susanna, part of the Greek additions to Daniel and set in the Babylonian deportation of Judah, provides an unusual case further complicated by differences between the two Greek versions. The Old Greek version uses Ἰσραήλ five times; four of these refer to the characters within the story as “children (υἱος/θυγάτηρ) of Israel” (Sus 28, 48 [2x], 57), while the other is similar, marking Susanna’s husband as “from the people of Israel” (7). The OG uses Ἰουδαῖος once, referring to Susanna as a “Jewess” in vs. 22.

Theodotion, on the other hand, refers to “the Jews” who came to Susanna’s husband because he was the “most honored of them” (Sus 4 θ´) but lacks both references to Susanna’s husband and the synagogue assembly as children of Israel (7 and 28), with that term only used in

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1247 Goodblatt, “Israelites who Reside in Judah,” 77 acknowledges Hebrew Esther as an exception to his model, suggesting that it was influenced by “outsider” Persian usage, but he does not address the Greek additions.

1248 The Greek additions also directly (and repeatedly) mention God, while the Hebrew version does not.

the climactic scene in which Daniel castigates the “sons of Israel” for unjustly condemned a
daughter of Israel” (48) and rebukes the elders for having taken advantage of “daughters of
Israel” (57).

This last example, which occurs in both versions, is especially unusual, as “Israel” is
negatively contrasted with “Judah”:

[Daniel] said to him, “Why is your seed perverted, as of Sidon and not of Judah? Beauty deceived you, the polluted desire [deceived you]. Thus you did to the daughters of Israel, and they had intercourse with you because they were afraid, but a daughter of Judah surely did not endure your disease of lawlessness.” (Sus 56–57 OG)

[Daniel] said to him, “Seed of Canaan and not of Judah! Beauty deceived you, and desire turned your heart. Thus you did to the daughters of Israel, and they had intercourse with you because they were afraid, but a daughter of Judah would not endure your wickedness.” (Sus 56–57 θ᾽)

This passage appears to distinguish between Susanna as a “daughter of Judah” and
daughters of Israel,” though Susanna was herself called a “daughter of Israel” in v. 48.1250 These
designations are evidently not envisioned as mutually exclusive, with “daughters of Judah” a
subset of the “daughters of Israel” apparently possessing superior virtue when compared to the
larger group. This understanding is further strengthened by OG 22, where Susanna is called “the
Jewess” at the very point she responds to the elders’ threat. This is an unusual distinction in early
Jewish literature—actually backwards from what one might expect from, say, Philo—and some
have suggested that it derived from a particular dispute in the time of the author, perhaps in the
context of Jewish-Samaritan antagonism.1251 In any case, Susanna does not depart from the
concept of Ἰουδαῖοι as a subset of the larger body of Israel descended from Judah; what is
unusual is the portrayal of that group as the more righteous subset of Israel.

1250 Collins, Daniel, 434 notes that the comparison in 57 is “problematic” given v. 48.

1251 E.g., Collins, Daniel, 434; Moore, Daniel, Esther, and Jeremiah, 112.
Texts that Prefer Ἰουδαῖος

After examining numerous early Jewish texts that prefer the term “Israel,” it will be instructive to look at those texts that prefer Ἰουδαῖος/Jew terminology. One does not have to search long to find a common pattern among this group: The texts that prefer Ἰουδαῖος/Jew terminology are consistently set in the postexilic or contemporary period, using that terminology to denote the present-day people descended from the kingdom of Judah. In addition to works already covered in separate chapters above, this category most notably includes 3 Maccabees and the Letter of Aristeas, along with a few minor or fragmentary examples.1252

3 Maccabees

The book of 3 Maccabees tells a fantastic story of the persecution and deliverance of Alexandrian Jews in the time of Ptolemy IV Philopator (221–204 BCE), and in keeping with its subject matter, the book favors the term Ἰουδαῖος, which occurs twenty-eight times, all of which refer to the contemporary people.1253 By comparison, Ἰσραήλ occurs seven times, each of which is either in prayer (2:6, 10, 16; 6:4, 9; 7:23) or a stock reference to God, “the eternal savior of Israel” (7:16). Some of these are also references to biblical Israel, reminding God of his saving action in the exodus from Egypt (2:6; 6:4) or his election of Israel (2:16).

1252 E.g., Bel and the Dragon, part of the Greek additions to Daniel, in which the Babylonians complain, “the king has become a Jew” (28). Collins, Daniel, 415 notes that such a reference is in keeping with the rise of conversion in the Hasmonean period. Other examples, such as the citations of Pseudo-Hecataeus found in Josephus or Origen, are too fragmentary and incomplete for consideration here.

The distinction between the two terms is sharp in 3 Maccabees, as is the overarching theme of exile and exodus, with Ptolemy twice compared to the Pharaoh of the exodus period (2:6–7; 6:4) and the prayer of the pious elder Eleazar referencing the impieties committed in exile (ἀποικία; 6:10). Gruen objects to the importance of the latter reference to exile, arguing, “the sins, not the location, provide the grounds for potential destruction.”1254 Although he is correct on that specific point, the location of exile and the subservient status of the Jews (and indeed “Israel,” as stated in the prayers) should not be ignored, as evident from the surrounding context of the prayer and indeed the story in general.1255

Only a few verses earlier, Eleazar describes his people as “perishing as foreigners in a foreign land” (6:3), comparing the circumstances to the time before the exodus. A few verses later, he concludes his prayer with the plea that God fulfill his promise not to “neglect them in the land of their enemies” (6:15; cf. Lev 26:44). Eleazar recognizes that the (possible) sins of the people might be the cause of the impending destruction, but that destruction (and perhaps even those sins) are only made possible by the conditions of exile. This larger context affords more probability to Scott’s suggestion that the use of παροικία after the Jews’ deliverance (6:36; 7:19) carries the connotation of a temporary “sojourn” like that of biblical Israel (cf. Gen 47:4; Num 20:15; Deut 26:5), eventually to be ended by a new exodus.1256

1254 Gruen, “Diaspora and Homeland,” 27.
**Letter of Aristeas**

The Letter of Aristeas, a legendary account of the translation of the Torah into Greek in the reign of Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285–247 BCE), further demonstrates the rule, using the term Ἰουδαῖος seventeen times—each one in reference to the contemporary, postexilic people. By contrast, the term Ἰσραήλ never occurs in Aristeas, which neither tells of biblical Israel nor discusses the eschaton. There is, however, one oddity in the story: the sending of “six elders from each tribe” (32, 39, 46, 47–50), which at least initially appears to presume a united twelve tribes in the postexilic period.

Interestingly, when the men from each tribe are listed in 47–50, the names of the tribes are never mentioned; instead the tribes are listed by number (first, second, etc.). That the first elder mentioned for the first tribe is named “Joseph” and the first from the second tribe is “Judah” is surely no accident, illustrating the playful treatment of this subject in Aristeas. The conceit of elders being sent from all twelve tribes at a time when the twelve tribes were no longer present lends a playful, fairy-tale air to the story (especially given the absence of “Israel” and the tribal names from the account), while emphasizing the special, miraculous, authority of the Greek translation.

Although the book does not directly discuss the eschaton, several hints of a restoration-eschatological perspective slip through the cracks. First, the narrative ostensibly occurs on the heels of the deportation of tens of thousands of Jews to Egypt, many of whom were reduced to slavery (12–14); their emancipation and Ptolemy’s benefaction in sponsoring the Greek translation could only be a partial compensation for such “miserable bondage” (15). This context is further reinforced by the sentiment reflected in the elder’s answer to the king’s question of how one could be patriotic:
“By keeping it in mind,” he said, “that it is good to live and die in one’s own land, but residence abroad (ξενία) brings both disgrace to the day-laborer and reproach to the wealthy, as though they had been banished (ἐκπεπτωκόσιν) for a crime.”

In the context of the deportation mentioned earlier in the book, it is hard to escape the conclusion that Aristeas presents life outside the land as less than ideal, even for those who have prospered in the diaspora. It is apparently not impossible to escape this conclusion, however, as Gruen dismisses this interpretation, arguing,

In the context of the whole work, a disparagement of Egypt as a residence for Jews would be absurd…. In this instance, the king asks how he might be a genuine lover of his country. The first part of the answer, which contrasts native land and foreign residence, seems curiously irrelevant…. Like so many of the swift and brief retorts by Jewish sages at the banquet, this one is bland and unsatisfying, containing statements that barely pertain to the king’s query. The passage, whatever its significance, can hardly serve as a touchstone for the thesis that diaspora Jews were consumed with a desire to forsake their surroundings.1257

Dismissing the content of the statement as “absurd,” “irrelevant,” and “bland and unsatisfying” does not constitute an argument about its meaning or how it should be construed. Gruen appears to be unwilling to consider that the book could actually mean what it says here. That Gruen finds the content “bland and unsatisfying” is a matter of aesthetics, not historical judgment. And when one considers the “context of the whole work,” is it truly “absurd” to take a negative view of the circumstances of life in Egypt when the book begins by establishing the context of deportation and slavery? Moreover, the seeming disconnect between the question and answer does not diminish its importance but rather does the opposite, since the sentiment was apparently so strong as to be expressed with the barest pretense for its inclusion.

This is, of course, not the same as saying that “diaspora Jews were consumed with a desire to forsake their surroundings,” as Gruen suggests. Instead, it marks a recognition of the

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inferiority of the present diaspora conditions when compared to a future divinely-orchestrated restoration, not when compared to life in a Judaea that is hardly less subservient to foreign dominance than the life experienced by those in Alexandria. In any case, the Letter of Aristeas further confirms the link between restoration eschatology and “Israel” terminology, using the Ἰουδαίος terminology one would expect from a text focusing on postexilic Jews rather than on the past or eschatological people of Israel.

**Conclusion**

Although these texts are by no means univocal, a thorough review of early Jewish literature from the apocrypha and pseudepigrapha has demonstrated a striking degree of consistency in how Ἰσραήλ and Ἰουδαίος terminology is used across these texts. When the contemporary or postexilic people are in view, these texts almost universally prefer Ἰουδαίος and cognates, while this term almost never refers to the biblical or eschatological people of Israel, as even those texts that otherwise prefer “Jew” terminology use “Israel” terminology in such cases and in the contexts of prayer or ritual. Conversely, texts that discuss the biblical people (that is, the preexilic and sometimes exilic people) universally prefer “Israel” terminology, as do those focused on eschatology. A continued concern for the fate of the northern tribes of Israel also emerges in a surprising number of these texts, which consistently exhibit hopes for an eschatology restoration that includes a reunion with these tribes.

The connection between these elements is unlikely to be accidental; it is far more likely that “Israel” terminology continued to be understood as including the northern tribes, whether present or not, while the present Jewish people were understood to be only the portion of Israel that derived from the kingdom of Judah. Put another way, it is evident that these terms operate within their own separate domains throughout this body of literature, and it appears those
domains are ultimately governed by the restoration eschatology established in what eventually became the Jewish Scriptures, which ensured that Jewish communities continued to “remember” the difference between their present communities and the totality of Israel ultimately to be restored.
CHAPTER 9: EXILE AND ISRAELITE RESTORATION IN THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS

That the sect behind the Dead Sea Scrolls looked forward to the restoration of Israel is widely recognized.\(^{1258}\) The sect’s self-identification vis-à-vis Israel and other related terms, however, is less well understood, as is the way the scrolls depict the exile from which the group expected restoration.\(^{1259}\) What follows will demonstrate that the scrolls as a whole bear witness to the same basic trajectory observed in Ezra-Nehemiah, Daniel, 2 Maccabees, and many of the


Hellenistic Jewish texts covered in the prior chapters. Moreover, the sectarian scrolls attest to a group that did not believe those currently living in the land had been restored and saw itself as having rejoined wider Israel in exile to await the final and authentic restoration of all Israel. As with the other literature so far examined, the sect’s theology of exile and restoration had a significant impact on its preferred nomenclature, with the sect retaining essentially biblical distinctions between these important terms.1260

Until fairly recently, a scholarly consensus held that the sect identified itself as “Judah,” building primarily on the language of 4QpHab 8:1–3:

Its interpretation concerns all observing the Law in the House of Judah, whom God will free from the house of judgment on account of their toil and their loyalty to the Teacher of Righteousness.

This reference has typically been read as identifying the sect with the “House of Judah,” seen as loyal to the Teacher of Righteousness.1261 John Bergsma, however, has pointed out that this passage does not unambiguously identify the sect as Judah but rather identifies a group of righteous people not as Judah but as in (that is, a part of) Judah.1262 The same document later confirms this point in the statement, “‘Lebanon’ refers to the Council of the Yahad [יָהָד עֵצָת], and ‘animals’ are the naive of Judah who obey the Law” (4QpHab 12:3–5a). This passage clearly differentiates between the Yahad and those “of Judah who obey the Law”—conclusive proof that the sect does not identify itself as “Judah.”

1260 In the words of Talmon, “Community,” 12, they exhibit “self-implantation in the world of biblical Israel,” retaining biblical language and terminology even to a fault. Cf. also Bergsma, "Qumran Self-Identity," 187.


CD 7:9–15 has also been interpreted as a passage in which the sect identifies itself as Judah:

When God visits the land to return the deeds of the wicked upon them, when the word of the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz comes to pass, which says [Isa 7:17], “Days are coming upon you and upon your people and upon your father’s house that have never come before, since the departure of Ephraim from Judah,” when the two houses of Israel separated, Ephraim detaching from Judah. All who rebelled were handed over to the sword, but all who held strong escaped to the land of the north, as it says [Amos 5:27], “I will exile the Sikkut of your king and the Kiyyune of your images from my tent to Damascus.”

Although this passage has often been interpreted as referring to the sect’s (“Judah’s”) separation from Ephraim (that is, from the group’s opponents, from whom the group split), using Isaiah 7:17 “as [an allegory] signifying contemporary rivals,” such a reading does violence both to the passage as it stands in CD and to the verse from Isaiah which it cites. The first problem is that both the historical event and its recollection here refer to “Ephraim detaching from Judah,” not vice-versa. Thus, since the group regards itself as having “left the land of Judah” (CD 6:5), it seems more fitting to identify the group with Ephraim in this passage rather than Judah. Likewise, Amos 5:27 refers to the exile of the northern tribes (that is, Ephraim), not Judah, which accounts for its use here, in conjunction with another passage addressing the same events. It does not appear that the sect identifies itself specifically with either party in this case. Instead, CD merely cites a prophecy of a time of strife (understood as referring to the


1264 This specific identification is equally unlikely, however, given the use of “Ephraim” in the pesharim (see below).

1265 The passage depicts those who went into exile “to the land of the north” as the righteous, while the wicked perished by the sword, paralleling the sect’s own example of the righteous going into exile to await restoration, while the wicked remain behind. This notion of the righteous going into exile with the wicked left behind likely borrows from the “good figs” of Jer 24 and the “meat in the pot” of Ezek 11 (see discussions of each in Chapter 4 above). See also the discussion of attitudes toward the diaspora in Chapter 6 above and the discussion of the implications of the sect’s voluntary exile in Hacham, “Exile and Self-Identity,” 14–15.
present day) so great as to recall the original split between the northern and southern kingdoms. Any attempt to identify the sect specifically with either party in this passage strains credulity. That CD so prominently recalls the division between the kingdoms and the subsequent Assyrian exile is important, however, and will be revisited below.

Bergsma rightly points out that the group’s strong priestly/Levite leadership was a factor in the group’s avoidance of the simple identification of “Judahites” or “Judeans,” despite their presence in Judaea and descent from the southern tribes:

This is a society governed by priests who are proud of their Levitical, Aaronic, and Zadokite lineages. The tribe that consistently is given primacy in the documents is Levi, followed by Judah. Since the Levitical/Zadokite leadership of the Yahad probably wrote many of the documents themselves, they strongly resist suppressing their own tribal heritage under that of Judah.1266

Levi and other priestly nomenclature is prominently featured throughout the core sectarian scrolls (CD, Community Rule, 1QSa, War), where Levi is regularly presented in an overwhelmingly positive manner and nearly always mentioned in a leadership context. At any rate, it is evident that the sectarians of the scrolls do not straightforwardly identify themselves as Yehudim.1267 Nevertheless, they do acknowledge their origins in the southern kingdom of Judah and do not regard “Judah” or Yehudim as a negative or “outsider” term. Rather, Judah includes both righteous and wicked, with the texts typically using specific “subset” language to mark which part of Judah they are referencing.1268 Bergsma succinctly sums it up:

1267 Harvey, True Israel, 41: “‘Judah’ is applied to both ‘good’ and ‘bad’ in Qumran Literature …. It is applied to both the producers of Qumran Literature and their opponents in other groups.” Oddly, Harvey refers to “a distinctive use of the phrase ‘House of Judah’ as a name for the Community” on the same page.

1268 Examination of the approximately 32 incidences of “Judah” in the scrolls (excluding scripture citations, the Temple Scroll, or cases too fragmentary to assess), suggests that the sect is excruciatingly careful how it uses the term, typically using qualifiers with the term (i.e., “the X of Judah” or “X in the house of Judah”). Examples of this can be seen above with phrases like “those observing the Law in the House of Judah,” “the simple folk of Judah,” or “all who did evil in Judah” (CD 20:26–27) denoting parts of a larger whole called “Judah.” The “land of Judah” is
From the perspective of the Yahad, the category “Judah” is a mixed bag. “Judah” includes some who are sympathetic to the Teacher of Righteousness, and some who want to destroy the Yahad. Nowhere do we get a one-for-one identification of the Yahad with “Judah” or even an identification of the “doers of the law” with “Judah.” All that can be known is that there are “doers of the law” in “Judah” and there are “doers of the law” in the Yahad; and there are also enemies of both the Yahad and the “doers of the law” in “Judah.” All of this seems to be a tenuous basis on which to assert that “the Essenes saw themselves as ‘the true Judah’,” much less that the Qumran Yahad saw itself as such.”

The same is true with regard to “Israel.” The sect tends to prefer cognates of “Israel” rather than “Judah” when referring to itself, a fact that has been interpreted as further proof of the supposed insider/outsider distinction between the terms. At first glance, the scrolls’ preference for “Israel” might indeed suggest that their use of these terms differed from their more Hellenized counterparts. But yet again, a closer examination shows that the cause for the difference lies elsewhere—specifically in the sect’s beliefs about their location on the eschatological timetable.

The first thing to note is that, as E. P. Sanders has observed, although the sect regularly uses the term Israel, the sect “generally refrained from simply calling [itself] ‘Israel.’” Rather,

typically seen in a negative light, as can be seen by passages such as CD 6:5, where the sect is portrayed as having left the land. “The House of Judah” is something of a generally good “blanket” term that includes both the righteous and the wicked. It thus depends on what qualifier is paired with it—for example, “the cruel Israelites in the House of Judah” (4Q171 1–2 II, 13) or the aforementioned quote in 4QpHab 8:1–3. On a positive side, Judah is (as will be explored below) one of the three tribes identified as part of the sect in War, which clearly identifies the sect as being partially comprised of people from Judah, but does not identify the sect as Judah.

1271 Sanders, Paul and Palestinian Judaism, 247. “They do not call themselves simply ‘Israel’” (246). See also Collins, “Construction,” 25–42 (esp. 28–29). Contra Hayward, “New Jerusalem,” 136, “But for this Sect, the notion of a gathering of the dispersed and a restoration of all exiled Jews passed into practical insignificance given that they, and they alone, are Israel, complete and entire.”
they consistently identify themselves as a faithful subset within Israel (e.g., שאריה לארץ or שבי ישראל). Sanders further explains,

The members seem to have been conscious of their status as sectarians, chosen from out of Israel, and as being a forerunner of [eschatological] Israel, which God would establish to fight the decisive war.1273

The community presents itself as only one part of the larger whole remaining in exile, the firstfruits of the eschatological harvest, as Bergsma explains:

The identification of the Yahad with “Israel” in 1QS and 1QSa is very strong—but one must also recognize that the community acknowledges an “Israel” that is larger than their community, in which and for which they exist.1274

The sect’s self-understanding as eschatological forerunners thus shapes its nomenclature. Yet again, when the term “Israel” occurs in this period, it is pregnant with eschatological and apocalyptic meaning. Whereas most of the material we have seen so far restricts “Israel” to the past or eschatological future, the Yahad sees itself as already participating in the eschatological future. Although the full restoration has not yet occurred, the sect is the breakthrough, the leading edge of the divine movement. Whereas Philo, for example, expects a future wide-scale transformation to virtue immediately preceding Israel’s return to the land, the foundational scrolls assert that its members have already experienced this awakening to virtue by following the Teacher of Righteousness. In their exiled, wilderness community, the sect is ritually fulfilling the Deuteronomic requirements for Israel’s full restoration.1275 They are now simply awaiting the

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1272 Sanders, Paul and Palestinian Judaism, 245. Bergsma, "Qumran Self-Identity" has convincingly demonstrated this with respect to the so-called “foundational documents” (CD, Community Rule, 1QSa, 1QpHab, 1QM, 4QMMT, War, the Temple Scroll, and 1QH).


1274 Lambert, How Repentance Became Biblical, 141: “For sectarians, the sect’s formation was seen as the fulfillment of this promised “turn,” when elements of Israel would turn away from their corrupted ways and observe the Law according to its proper (sectarian) interpretation.” Note that this is not the same as suggesting that the sect is
rest of Israel to experience the same transformation—and then restoration to the land—for the eschatological promise to be fulfilled. For this reason, the community does not consider itself to be “the true Israel” as is often assumed.1276

Indeed, “Yaḥad,” the term most clearly associated with the sect in 1QS and elsewhere, has strong restoration underpinnings, recalling Deut 33:5 and Ps 133:1. The former celebrates the kingship of God when the tribes of Israel were unified (yaḥad) in the days of Moses.1277 The latter is a prayer—among the Psalms of ascent—specifically for the reunification of Israel and Judah, represented in the poetic form of the Psalm by the dew of Mt. Hermon (in the north) coming down upon the mountains of Zion (in the south).1278 The first line celebrates the unity (yaḥad) of these brothers dwelling together,1279 and the psalm closes with the assertion that such unity in Zion is the fulfillment of YHWH’s promise of “life always.”1280 11QPsa makes the

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1276 Disappointing as the study may be in other respects, Harvey, True Israel, 189–218, convincingly demonstrates that the Qumran sect did not regard itself as the “true Israel,” listing numerous instances in which Israel is envisioned as much larger than the sect, even including the wicked.


1279 Although many interpreters have taken the first line straightforwardly as referencing literal brothers among extended family, Othmar Keel has persuasively argued for a Zion-centered cultic interpretation (in which the “brothers” are worshiping together in Jerusalem) in Keel, “Kultische Brüderlichkeit—Ps 133,” in FZPhTh 23 (1976): 68–80.

restoration context even more explicit with a closing line not elsewhere attested, “Peace upon Israel.” The sect evidently regards itself as participating in this pan-Israelite restoration, but as will be seen below, although that restoration is presently underway, it is not yet complete.

**Sect as Eschatological Forerunner: The Foundational Scrolls**

**Damascus Document**

The Damascus Document portrays the group as the “repentant/returnees/captives of Israel” (שבי ישראל; CD 4:2; 6:5)\(^{1281}\) who were exiled into the land of “Damascus”\(^{1282}\) where they

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\(^{1281}\) The phrase is ambiguous and can mean any of the three listed options; Jonathan G. Campbell, “Essene-Qumran Origins in the Exile: A Scriptural Basis?” *JJS* 46, no. 1–2 (1995): 143–156 (153), observes, “this ambiguity is remarkably similar to what is found in Isa 59 or Ps 106, on both of which it cannot be doubted our writer has drawn.” Cf. also Martin G. Abegg, “Exile and the Dead Sea Scrolls,” in Scott, *Exile*, 111–125 (112–13); Talmor, “Community,” 244. Lambert objects to the specific translation “penitents of Israel,” observing that the group is not continuously engaged in penitence or repentance. Lambert, "Did Israel Believe," 648; *How Repentance Became Biblical*, 133–142 (esp. 140–42). Lambert is correct that the group is not continuously engaged in penitence, but the notion of a “repentant” group does not require constant rituals of penitence. Rather, such terminology merely denotes that the group has turned aside from prior error or sin to live the correct way, which accords with Lambert’s own conclusions and suggested translation “those who have turned” (Lambert, *How Repentance Became Biblical*, 134, 141; cf. "Did Israel Believe," 649). Lambert also objects to the idea that the sect “believed Israel’s redemption depended on its repentance,” instead emphasizing divine agency, arguing that they saw themselves as simply part of the divinely ordained plan for redemption (“Did Israel Believe,” 649–650). However, as observed by Wells, *Grace and Agency*, 150–53, these ideas are not necessarily mutually exclusive, since participation in the divinely foreordained plan may be understood as voluntary, while voluntary participation also depends on divine grace: “It is possible that under the direct determination and foreordination of God, creatures possess the capacity as effective agents to perform acts which influence God” (153). See also VanderKam, "Jubilees," 425; John C. Endres, “Eschatological Impulses in Jubilees,” in *Enoch and the Mosaic Torah: The Evidence of Jubilees*, eds. Gabriele Boccaccini and Giovanni Ibba (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 323–337 (328, 335); Hanneken, “Status and Interpretation,” 427 n. 42; Heschel, *The Prophets*, 253, 310, 333–334, 367. Thus it is likely that the sectarian believers’ repentance is the *divinely foreordained* precursor to Israel’s restoration. In any case, the group’s view of its practices as the fulfillment of the Deuteronomic promises associated with Israel’s restoration is significant for the purposes of this study regardless of how they envisioned the interaction between divine and human agency.

\(^{1282}\) The particularities of the sect’s history are not important for the purposes of this study. Whether CD’s use of “Damascus” is literal or symbolic is secondary to the point that the sect regarded itself (and the larger body of Israel) as still in exile, still awaiting the promised restoration. What is significant is that the sect ties the events in “Damascus” to Amos 5:27 (a passage about the exile of the north) and the split between the two houses of Israel (CD 7:9b–16). For more on CD and historical reconstructions based on it, see Ben Zion Wacholder, *The New Damascus Document: The Midrash on the Eschatological Torah of the Dead Sea Scrolls: Reconstruction, Translation and Commentary* (Leiden: Brill, 2007); Maxine L. Grossman, *Reading for History in the Damascus Document: A Methodological Method*, STDJ 45 (Leiden: Brill, 2002); Philip R. Davies, *The Damascus Covenant: An Interpretation of the 'Damascus Document,'* LHBOTS 25 (London: Continuum, 1983); Louis Ginzberg, *An Unknown Jewish Sect* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1976).
became participants in the “new covenant” (CD 6:19; 8:21; 19:33; 20:12; 1QpHab 2:3), through which Israel would be restored.\(^{1283}\) Significantly, this takes place in the “era of wrath” (ברקtight; CD 1:5), of which the birth of the community through the new covenant marked the beginning of the end. The language of a “new covenant”—and its implication of a full Israelite restoration—is by no means haphazard.\(^{1284}\)

Rather, CD 20:12 speaks of “the covenant and faithfulness they established in Damascus—that is, the new covenant,” making sure to add an appositional statement specifying the covenant established in Damascus as the new covenant to accompany Israel’s restoration promised by Jeremiah (Jer 31:31–34 MT).\(^{1285}\) As shown above, the sect clearly recalls the division between Israel and Judah and the two exiles, giving prominent place to Isaiah 7:17, which speaks of the days “when the two houses of Israel separated, Ephraim detaching from Judah” (CD 7:12–13), an event CD understands as prefiguring the divisions in the sect’s own day.

The scripture passages referenced here (Amos 5:27 immediately follows) recall the Assyrian invasion and exile rather than the Babylonian Exile, continuing to illustrate the sect’s

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\(^{1284}\) Pitre, *Jesus*, 450: “[I]t is no coincidence that the famous occurrence of the phrase ‘new covenant’ in the Dead Sea Scrolls (CD 6:19) takes place in the overarching context of a discussion regarding the Exile, the ‘returnees of Israel,’ the coming of the Messiah, and the restoration of the Davidic kingdom (CD 6:1–19).”

comprehensive vision of exile and restoration. That the Damascus Document dates the group’s origin to 390 years into the “time of wrath” (CD 1:4–10) alludes to the years of the iniquity of the house of Israel in Ezekiel 4:5 and indicates that the sect did not understand the return of Yehudim from Babylon as Israel’s reconciliation or the end of the exile. Rather, Israel has remained in the period of wrath long after the return recounted in Ezra-Nehemiah. The community understands its own origin as the true beginning of Israel’s restoration—as of yet but a root (CD 1:7; cf. 1QpHa 14:18), the forerunner of fully restored Israel. Davies concludes,

The ideology of CD is that of a community that regards itself as the true remnant of Israel, continuing to suffer the divine punishment of Israel initiated at the time of the exile …. As a result of a renewed covenant, this community observes the

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1286 Pace Abegg, who sees the passage as recalling the Babylonian Exile, with Amos 5:27 “‘updated’ in their understanding to have relevance for the sixth-century exile” (“Exile and the Dead Sea Scrolls,” 118). On the contrary, neither the Isaiah passage and the Amos reference give any indication of being about Babylon. Cf. Jonathan Campbell’s demonstrations of interconnected Bible usage throughout CD (and take note of the prominence of passages dealing with the Assyrian exile): Campbell, “Essene-Qumran Origins”; Use of Scripture.

1287 Lawrence H. Schiffman, “The Concept of Restoration in the Dead Sea Scrolls,” in Scott, Restoration, 203–222 (220); see also Collins, “Construction,” 28; Campbell, “Essene-Qumran Origins,” 148, “Indeed, CD does not mention the sixth century BCE return directly, because the writer considered the exile to have ceased only with the foundation of his own community. This should not lead us to accept that the jump from Nebuchadnezzar’s deportation to the sect’s foundation is historically accurate. Rather, it signifies only that, for the writer, nothing worthy of note took place in between these two episodes, with no implications as to the duration of the intervening period.”

1288 Some have attempted to connect the 390 years with specific dates in the effort to pin down the origins of the sect, but most recognize that the number should not be taken overly literally, due to the the symbolic and allusive nature of the number. Cf. Knibb, “Exile in the Damascus Document,” 113; Campbell, “Essene-Qumran Origins,”” 153–54; Gert Jeremias, Der Lehrer der Gerechtigkeit, SUNT 2 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1963), 151–52; Isaac Rabinowitz, “A Reconsideration of 'Damascus' and '390 Years' in the 'Damascus' ('Zadokite') Fragments,” JBL 73, no. 1 (1954): 11–35.

1289 “Indeed CD does not mention the sixth century BCE return directly, because the writer considered the exile to have ceased only with the foundation of his own community …. Although community members experience a foretaste of ultimate salvation, CD 4:1 2b-5:1 5a pictures the rest of the world as in a perilous ongoing exile state” (Campbell, “Essene-Qumran Origins,” 148, 149). To this, Abegg rightly adds, “Note that the sect still considers itself in exile as well” (“Exile and the Dead Sea Scrolls,” 120).
“law prescribed for the period of wickedness” in the expectation of God’s ultimate termination of his dispute with his people.1290

Community Rule

The same concept is prominent in the Community Rule, where the group is identified with those who “prepare the way of YHWH in the wilderness” (1QS 8:12b–14; 9:18–20), a reference to Isaiah’s prophecy of Israelite restoration (Isa 40:3; cf. Mk 1:3; Jn 1:23). The “covenant of mercy” (1:8; cf. 1:16, 18, 20, etc.) should probably be equated with the “new covenant” of CD, an identification strengthened by the reference to circumcision of “the lower nature,” which “establishes a foundation of truth for Israel, that is, for the Yaḥad of the eternal covenant” (1QS 5:5–6; cf. those of the house of Judah “who have circumcised themselves spiritually in the last generation” in 4Q177 9 6–8).

Likewise, the document’s emphasis on the role of the holy spirit in the community (1QS 9:3–4) suggests the centrality of new covenant theology, borrowing from Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Remarkably, even native-born Israelites must be initiated into the covenant of the Yaḥad to participate in the eschatological restoration; the group apparently regards the rest of Israel as remaining under the curses of the broken covenant (cf. 1QS 2:25b–3:9a; 5:10b–15a), requiring a new entry into the covenant.1291 The recitations at initiation (1:24–2:18) prominently feature Deuteronomic theology and look a good deal like the appeal for restoration in Dan 9, while “the

1290 Davies, “Eschatology at Qumran,” 52, though Davies mistakenly asserts that the exile was “initiated … under Nebuchadnezzar,” overlooking CD’s concern with the exile not only since Nebuchadnezzar but that initiated under Assyria.

1291 This also seems to have been the case in John the Baptist’s movement and early Christianity, as baptism in the Jordan seems to have represented a new exodus, a new return to the land of promise, joining the new covenant in repentance. Cf. Colin Brown, “What Was John the Baptist Doing?” BBR 7 (1997): 37–50; Ferda, "Ingathering of the Exiles."
dominion of Belial” (1:23–24; 2:19; et al.) seems to refer to the exile, Israel’s “time of tribulation.”

As discussed above, Deuteronomy promises that Israel will turn back to YHWH and experience a circumcision of the heart in exile at the time of the restoration (Deut 30:6), a theme further developed by Jeremiah and Ezekiel and underlying the traditions of prayers of appeal in the Second Temple period. The Yaḥad seems to have regarded itself as the necessary and sufficient episode of repentance to initiate the restoration of Israel, seeing itself as the acceptable atonement for Israel’s sin:

When men such as these come to be in Israel, then the counsel of the Yaḥad will truly be established, an “eternal planting” [Jub 16:26], a temple for Israel, and—mystery!—a Holy of Holies for Aaron, true witnesses to justice, chosen by God’s will to atone for the land and to repay the wicked their due [Dan 9:24].

They will be a blameless and true house in Israel, upholding the covenant of eternal statutes. They will be an acceptable sacrifice, atoning for the land and ringing in the verdict against evil, so that perversity ceases to exist. (1QS 8:4b–7a; 8:9–10)

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1292 The prayers of Daniel 9 and Baruch discussed above are obvious examples. For more on the development of these prayer traditions (often called “penitential prayers”) in this period and afterwards, see Lambert, How Repentance Became Biblical, 33–49; Boda, “Confession as Theological Expression”; Boda, Falk, and Werline, Origins of Penitential Prayer; The Development of Penitential Prayer; The Impact of Penitential Prayer; Bautch, Developments in Genre; Bergsma, “Persian Period as Penitential Era”; “Penitential Liturgy”; Werline, Penitential Prayer; Scott, “Galatians 3.10,” 187–221.

1293 This “mystery” language is prominent in the scrolls and often seems tied to Israel’s restoration, the details of which have been shrouded in mystery until the revelation to the group. Such a use of “mystery” language is remarkably similar to that found in the Pauline literature (e.g. Rom 11:25; 16:25; 1 Cor 2:7; 4:1). Cf. T. J. Lang, Mystery and the Making of a Christian Historical Consciousness: from Paul to the Second Century, BZNW 219 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2015); Samuel I. Thomas, The "Mysteries" of Qumran: Mystery, Secrecy, and Esotericism in the Dead Sea Scrolls, EJL 25 (Leiden: Brill, 2009); Benjamin L. Gladd, Revealing the Mysterion: The Use of Mystery in Daniel and Second Temple Judaism with Its Bearing on First Corinthians (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2008); Goff, "Mystery of Creation"; Markus N. A. Bockmuehl, Revelation and Mystery in Ancient Judaism and Pauline Christianity (Tübingen: Mohr, 1990); David E. Aune, “Charismatic Exegesis in Early Judaism and Early Christianity,” in The Pseudepigrapha and Early Biblical Interpretation, eds. James H. Charlesworth and Craig A. Evans, JSOTSup 14 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), 12–50; Raymond E. Brown, The Semitic Background of the Term "Mystery" in the New Testament (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1968).
“Israel” is thus conceived of as larger than the Yahad, which is an *atonement for Israel*, possessing special revelation from the “Interpreter” (שופר) not revealed to the rest of Israel.¹²⁹⁴ Rather, the Yahad is set apart to “prepare the way of YHWH in the wilderness,” serving as the atoning sacrifice that will spur the restoration.¹²⁹⁵

They will atone for the guilt of transgression and the rebellion of sin, becoming an acceptable sacrifice for the land through the flesh of burnt offerings, the fat of sacrificial portions, and prayer—becoming, in effect, justice itself, a sweet savor of righteousness and blameless behavior, a pleasing freewill offering. (1QS 9:4–5)¹²⁹⁶

The group thus serves as the forerunner, with its repentance making way for the coming of the “prophet and the messiah(s) of Aaron and Israel (1QS 9:10–11), with the group “preparing the way in the wilderness” (1QS 9:19–20), preceding and preparing for their coming—and the restoration of Israel associated with the coming of these figures. Similar conceptions of a necessary degree of repentance prior to the restoration were likely foundational to John the Baptist’s ministry and the earliest Jesus movement and are also reflected in R. Eliezer’s views (against R. Joshua, who seems to get the better of his foe in this debate) in b. Sanh. 97b–98a.¹²⁹⁷

¹²⁹⁴ *Pace* Hartmut Stegemann, *The Library of Qumran: On the Essenes, Qumran, John the Baptist, and Jesus* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 102–04, it is unlikely that this indicates that the Rule was originally composed before the group’s sectarian consciousness had been established. Instead, as Collins, “Construction,” 37, notes, “the text reflects the hope that separate sectarian existence will no longer be necessary at the end of days.”

¹²⁹⁵ In light of the discussion of repentance and agency in pp. 194–95 n. 612 and pp. 372 n. 1176 above, note the combination of divine foreordination and human action in this construction. God has specifically set apart the Yahad to perform the actions necessary to instigate the restoration.

¹²⁹⁶ The parallels to Paul’s language of presenting oneself as a “living and holy sacrifice” (Rom 12:1) and becoming the “righteousness of God” (2 Cor 5:21) here are striking.

¹²⁹⁷ John’s ministry is of course framed in “forerunner” language within the Gospels, and John and Jesus preached repentance in advance of the impending “kingdom of God,” which is best understood as denoting the promised restoration. Cf. Ferda, “Ingathering of the Exiles”; Brown, "John the Baptist"; Joan Taylor, *The Immerser: John the Baptist within Second Temple Judaism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997); Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*; Pitre, *Jesus*.

4QMMT

4QMMT, an apologetic letter from the community to outsiders, clearly elucidates the sect’s restoration-eschatological theology. The letter exhorts its reader to understand “[the events of] the generations”—the overarching narrative and plan of history in “the book of Moses, the book[s of the pr]ophets and Davi[d]” (4QMMTc 10). The covenant had established blessings and curses for Israel; the blessings were fulfilled in the days of Solomon (4Q398 11–13 1; cf. 1 Kings 8:56), while the curses “came in the days of [Jer]oboam son of Nebat and up to the ex[i]le of Jerusalem and Zedekiah, king of Judah” (4Q398 11–13 2). Yet again, the division between the kingdoms is central in the sect’s memory and tied to the curses of the covenant and exile (4QMMTc 18b–20)—this time as the beginning point of the curses promised in the covenant, which resulted in the exiles of both Israel and Judah, a punishment that remains in force.


1300 Contrary to Waters, End of Deuteronomy, 46, there is no indication that “4QMMT conceives the epoch of the Deuteronomic curses to cease with the exile of Jerusalem.” Rather, the point is that the fullness of the curses had fallen on Israel by the time of the exile of Jerusalem, as Qimron explains, “MMT provides an important witness to
The sect implores the reader of 4QMMT to understand that the sect’s withdrawal from “the multitude of the people” should not be understood as “disloyalty or deceit or evil” but rather as tied to the promises of exile and restoration in “the book of Moses [and] the book[s of the prophets and Davi[d]],” which tell of a time in which Israel will stray and rebel (4Q398 14–21 7–15; cf. Deut 31:29). The letter thus establishes that the covenantal curse remains in force but points to the promise of restoration “in the last days,” citing Deut 4:30 and 30:1–2,

And it is written: and it will happen [when all these things shall befall you at the end of days, the blessing and the curse then you shall take it to] your heart and will turn [to him with all] your heart and with [all] soul at the end. (4Q398 14–21 12b–14)\textsuperscript{1301}

The sect believes that “it is now the last days, when those of Israel will return to the Law …] and will never turn back” (4Q398 11–13, 4; cf. CD 4:4, 6:11; 1QSa 1:1; 1QpHab 7:7–12, 9:6), redeemed from the curses of the Law and delivered from exile. They admonish the recipient of the letter to consider the examples provided in the history of Israel in light of this understanding of the times, remembering that those who turned back to the Law were blessed and forgiven in the past, concluding,

And we have also written to you some of the works of the Law which we think are good for you and for your people, for we saw that you have intellect and knowledge of the Law. Reflect on all these matters and seek from him that he may support your counsel and keep the evil scheming and counsel of Belial far from you, so that at the end time, you may rejoice in finding that the essence of our words are true. And it shall be reckoned to you as righteousness when you do

the Community members’ belief that they were living in the last days of an evil period of history. From the halakhic content of the composition it is apparent that this belief is precipitated by the Community’s perception that the rest of Israel was transgressing the Torah. In other words, halakhic concerns are the basis for the Community members’ belief that they were living in the ‘latter days.’” Elisha Qimron et al., “Some Works of the Torah,” in The Dead Sea Scrolls: Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek Texts with English Translations: Damascus Document II, Some Works of the Torah, and Related Documents, eds. James H. Charlesworth and Henry W. M. Rietz, PTSDSP 3 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 187–251 (193). Cf. Moshe J. Bernstein, “The Employment and Interpretation of Scripture in 4QMMT: Preliminary Observations,” in Kampen and Bernstein, Reading 4QMMT, 29–51 (48–50); Qimron and Strugnell, Miqrat Ma‘ase Ha-Torah, 60; Lincicum, Paul and the Early Jewish Encounter, 76–79.

\textsuperscript{1301} Translation from García Martínez and Tigchelaar, The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition, 801.
what is upright and good before him, for your good and that of Israel. (4QMMTc 26–32).

It is therefore clear that the sect presents itself as a forerunner in the larger restoration of Israel, the first to have fully repented/returned (שוב) as written in Deuteronomy and the prophets. They do not see the exile only as a figurative typology but as an empirical reality in their own day and experience. Their departure is not figuratively or allegorically related to the exile but is envisioned as actually rejoining the rest of Israel in the exile that began with the Assyrian deportations and has continued to their own day. Moreover, as Collins notes,

Even though the sect claims to have the right interpretation of the Torah, it does not usurp the name Israel, a title that still is understood to apply to the larger group to which both the sect and the ruler who is addressed belong. The community is instead understood as the vanguard of Israel’s restoration—those who have repented, have circumcised hearts, and are evidence that the promised restoration has been set in motion. Their repentance/return is the preparation for and example by which the rest of Israel will soon be restored, complete with the restoration of the Davidic and Aaronic lines. Nevertheless, although all of Israel (that is, all twelve tribes) will be restored as promised, not every individual Israeliite is guaranteed to participate in that restoration. If the reader of 4QMMT wishes to participate in Israel’s restoration, (s)he must follow the sect’s interpretations.

1302 Based on 4Q398 11–13 2, one might even extend the time of wrath further back even to the division of the kingdoms.

1303 Collins, “Construction,” 34.
Twelve-Tribe Restoration

War Scroll

The War Scroll makes it clear just how comprehensive the sect expected this eschatological restoration to be. Like Philo and Josephus, the sect expected a full restoration of all twelve tribes of Israel, including the reunion of the northern tribes of Israel with the southern Yehudim at the eschatological battle, which would be fought between:

the forces of the sons of darkness, the army of Belial: the troops of Edom, Moab, the sons of Ammon, the [Amelekites], Philistia, and the troops of the Kittim of Assyria, supported by those who have violated the covenant. The sons of Levi, the sons of Judah, and the sons of Benjamin, those exiled to the wilderness, will fight against them with [...] against all their troops, at the return of the exiles of the sons of light from “the wilderness of the peoples.” (1QM 1:1–3)

The sect thus identifies itself as comprised of Levi, Judah, and Benjamin (the traditional southern tribes), with the tribe of Levi listed first and suggesting priestly leadership. These southern tribes will ultimately be joined by the “exiles of the sons of light from the wilderness of the peoples”—a reference to the “house of Israel,” having already undergone the judgment “in the wilderness of the peoples” (Ezek 20:35) prior to its restoration to the land (cf. Ezek 20:39–44). Thus the eschatological battle will be fought by all “twelve tribes of Israel” (1QM 3:14;

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1305 That the Romans (“Kittim”) are identified with the Assyrians rather than the Babylonians is significant.

1306 Abegg recognizes the importance of the reference to Ezek 20:35 but (due to his assumption that the sect regards itself as “the true Israel”) misses the significance of the “house of Israel” terminology in Ezek 20, suggesting the allusion “may be interpreted as [the sect’s] exile from Jerusalem and the Temple” (“Exile and the Dead Sea Scrolls,” 124). This is better understood a separate group that will join the sect for the eschatological battle.
5:1–2), the three southern tribes united with the eschatologically restored northern tribes.\footnote{Cf. Pitre, Jesus, 115.} In the words of Brant Pitre,

Several important observations follow from this remarkable passage. First, in this context, the famous “sons of light” appear to be nothing less than the reunited twelve tribes of Israel. Note that this group seems to include both the “exiled” of Judah, Benjamin, and Levi (i.e., the Babylonian exiles of the southern kingdom), and those who returned “from the desert of the nations” (i.e., the Assyrian exiles of the northern tribes). Second, this group is an eschatological remnant of Israel: they are elsewhere described as “the remnant, the survivors of your covenant” who are redeemed and become “an eternal nation” (1QM 13:8–10). Third and finally, it appears that this restoration, which begins during the final time of tribulation, will be completed when Jerusalem itself is restored and the Gentiles bring their wealth to Mt. Zion (1QM 12:7–17).

\textit{4Q372 1}

Joseph Novella in such a manner, as suggested above. The fragment depicts “Joseph” and his brothers as “cast into lands which he did not k[now], among unknown nations and scattered in all the world” and “given into the hands of foreigners who were devouring his strength and breaking all his bones until the time of the end.” Meanwhile, “fools” living in Joseph’s land are inciting “Judah, Benjamin, and Levi” to jealousy and anger. But Joseph and his brothers will return and offer sacrifices and praise when God “will destroy [the foreigners] from the entire world” (4Q372 1, 22).

Schuller’s initial publication points out that the “Joseph” of 4Q372 1 is actually a cipher for the northern tribes. (It should be noted, however, that Joseph is not actually envisioned as all the northern tribes but only speaks as their representative as the leading tribe; the other northern tribes are the “my brothers” of line 19.) Florentino García Martínez takes it a step further, arguing that Joseph should be seen as a multivalent figure in 4Q372 1, being simultaneously the patriarch and also the northern tribes, an argument Michael Knibb contests, considering it doubtful that there was any “real influence from the story of the patriarch

1310 García Martinez, "Nuevos textos no bíblicos procedentes de Qumrán," 122–23 suggests that the author of the rest of this fragmentary work may have also handled other biblical episodes in this manner.


1312 That is, the Samaritan presence in “Joseph’s” land is a constant reminder that full restoration has not been achieved and still lies in the future (Thiessen, "4Q372," 395). Thiessen persuasively connects the themes of jealousy in 4Q372 1 to Deut 32 and Ps 78, which puts the fragment on a similar trajectory to that of Rom 10:19 and 11:11–17 (see pp. 543–47 below).

1313 Schuller and Bernstein, “4QNarrative and Poetic Composition,” 170.

1314 “Este protagonista es el patriarca José que es visto al mismo tiempo como el epónimo de las tribus del Norte, y varios detalles del texto (como a alusión a Jerusalén en ruinas la construcción de un ‘lugar santo’ en una montaña elevada, la referencia a las tribus de Levi, Judá y Benjamin, etc.) indican que el autor ha transpuesto los detalles de la historia del Génesis a la situación de exilio de las tribus del Norte y a las polémicas antisamaritanas de la época macabea.” García Martínez, "Nuevos textos no bíblicos procedentes de Qumrán," 124. Allegue arrives at the same conclusion in J. Vázquez Allegue, “Abba Padre! (4Q372 1, 16) Dios como Padre en Qumrán," Estudios Trinitarios 32 (1998): 167–186 (179).
“Joseph” discernable in 4Q372.\textsuperscript{1315} It is unclear, however, why “Joseph” would be used at all rather than other terms that might refer to the northern tribes (most notably “Ephraim” and “Israel”).

As argued earlier, the biblical Joseph narrative—in which Joseph is taken away to a Gentile land and imprisoned until his God-appointed time of release, when he ascends to a position of influence and assists in saving his brothers (and the rest of the family of Israel) from famine—was easily read as typological of the fate of Joseph’s descendants. This fragment serves as evidence of just such interpretation, though due to the fragmentary nature of the document, the details of Joseph’s restoration have sadly been lost. In both the patriarchal narrative and the present situation, “Joseph” is imprisoned and afflicted in a foreign land and must wait the appointed time of his release, which will coincide with the reunification of his brothers and their divine provision. Knibb’s protests notwithstanding, there can be little doubt of the Genesis allusion, which serves as a prototype for the current situation of the northern tribes, expecting that they will indeed be restored like their father Joseph.\textsuperscript{1316} Such an interpretation seems quite close to the type of interpretative tradition evidenced in the pesharim, which reflect a strong consciousness of the historical meaning of the biblical text while also meditating on its application to analogous circumstances in the present day.\textsuperscript{1317}

Since Schuller’s initial publication, which argued that “Joseph” appears in the text to undermine Samaritan claims of descent from the northern tribes, the anti-Samaritan aspects of

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\item \textsuperscript{1315} Knibb, “A Note on 4Q372 and 4Q390,” 170.
\item \textsuperscript{1316} Another similarity is that Joseph’s restoration in Egypt coincided with reunification with his brothers—and their rescue (from famine in the Joseph story, from exile and foreign rule in 4Q372 1).
\item \textsuperscript{1317} See Berrin, \textit{Pesher Nahum}, 15–19 and the next two sections below.
\end{itemize}
4Q372 1 have been emphasized, while the text’s concern with the northern tribes has typically been downplayed.  

1318 Martin Abegg, for example, comments, “The focus of the text … does not appear to be the fate of the Joseph tribes as much as the status of the peoples who dwelt in their place…. [The Assyrian] exile itself is subordinate to the Samaritan problem.”

1319 There is no disputing the presence of a strong anti-Samaritan theme in 4Q372 1; in lines 12–14, the Samaritans revile “Israel” and speak against “the tent of Zion,” likely an allusion to Ezra 4:4–23 and perhaps to the passages in Nehemiah dealing with Sanballat (particularly Neh 4:2). The Ezra passage is an especially important parallel since those writing a letter against Jerusalem call themselves “the remnant of the peoples which the great and noble Osnappar deported and settled in the city of Samaria”—conveniently and readily admitting their foreign (non-Israelite) status rather than claiming descent from Joseph. This passage reinforces the fragment’s argument that the rightful residents of Samaria remain in exile while the present residents are impostors from the nations. Nonetheless, the presence of anti-Samaritan rhetoric in no way reduces the fate of “the Joseph tribes” to a secondary concern.

On the contrary, as Matthew Thiessen has convincingly argued, the anti-Samaritan rhetoric of 4Q372 is grounded in a belief that the rightful occupants of Samaria remain in exile among the nations. The Samaritans are only a problem because the real northern tribes have not yet been restored; the Samaritan presence serves as a daily reminder of this fact.  

1320 Thiessen points out that as long as the Samaritans are fulfilling the role of the “foolish nation” (נבל גוי) of

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1319 Abegg, “Exile and the Dead Sea Scrolls,” 117.

1320 Thiessen connects 4Q372 1 with Ps 78 and Deut 32, arguing that “through the interpretation of the foolish people [from Deut 32] as the Samaritans, the author has re-narrated himself and his readers into the exilic period of Deut 32’s historical scheme.” Thiessen, "4Q372," 393.
the Song of Moses (Deut 32:21; cf. 4Q372 1 11–14), they serve as a constant and stinging reminder that the curse of exile has not yet been reversed. Thus the Samaritan problem is the problem of the continuing Assyrian exile; the fate of the northern tribes is inextricably linked to the fate of the impostors now living in their land—and the fate of the southern tribes remains tied to that of their northern brothers, as each awaits restoration and reunification. In contrast to previous scholarship, Thiessen concludes:

The Samaritans function as a reminder to the southern tribes (Levi, Judah, and Benjamin) that, while they might be tempted to conclude that the exile is over, Israel (Joseph) still endures God’s punishment. Restoration has not been achieved: Joseph is still in foreign lands. Whatever polemic might be found in this fragment is not directed against the Samaritans at Mount Gerizim, but against those in the south who espoused a theology, perhaps dependent upon Ps 78 where God is said to utterly reject Joseph, that claimed that the fate of the descendants of Joseph was unrelated to the fate of Levi, Judah, and Benjamin. 4Q372 1, with the help of Deut 32, demonstrates that Ps 78 cannot be read as God’s utter rejection of the northern tribes. While they remain in exile, full restoration is yet to come, even for those currently in the land. Through such means, the author attempts to convince his readers that the southern tribes’ fate remains bound to the fate of the northern tribes.1321

For Israel to be complete, “Joseph and his brothers” will have to return to their rightful land, joining “Judah, Benjamin, and Levi” at the restoration, accompanied by judgment on the “fools” and other nations. The fragment is also notable in that it is the first extant extrabiblical Jewish text in which YHWH is addressed as “father.”1322 As Pitre has observed, father-language for YHWH in the Hebrew Bible occurs in contexts associated with the Exodus and, in the prophets, the restoration from Assyrian Exile.1323 4Q372 1 thus demonstrates that, as was also

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1321 Thiessen, "4Q372," 395.
1323 “In the Old Testament prophets, the remarkably infrequent imagery of the fatherhood of God appears to be distinctly tied to the end of the Assyrian Exile and the restoration of all of the tribes of Israel in a New Exodus” (Pitre, Jesus, 139).
true for Josephus, the Assyrian exile remained central in the thought of the Dead Sea sectarians, who hoped for the fulfillment of the grand promises of the prophets. The incomplete restoration of Israel and expectations of a future restoration of the northern tribes were foundational to their theological reflection and identity.

The Pesharim: Israel’s Restoration from the Wilderness

The pesharim, line-by-line commentaries on prophetic texts, bear further witness to the sect’s self-understanding, the status of Israel, and expectations of restoration. For example, the Isaiah pesher interprets Isaiah’s description of the eschatological Jerusalem as symbolizing a renewed twelve-tribe Israel, connecting Isaiah’s prophecy with Ezekiel’s eschatological vision (Ezek 48:31).1324 More significantly, the pesherist connects Isaiah 10:24–27, which promises that Assyrian dominion would be temporary, with Ezekiel’s promised return from “the wilderness of the peoples” (4Q161 5–6 15–20), the same passage used by 1QM 1:3 when referring to the full return of Israel to rejoin those from Levi, Judah, and Benjamin. Although the manuscript is too fragmentary to be certain, this return from the “wilderness of the peoples” appears to be incorporated again in the interpretation of Isa 21:14–15 in 4Q165 5 6,1325 further confirming the centrality of this imagery to the sect.1326

Likewise, the Psalms pesher refers to the same restoration:


1326 4Q285 5 appears to connect this event with the advent and presence of a “shoot … from the stump of Jesse,” a “bud from David,” who may or may not be the same figure as “the Prince of the Congregation.” Cf. Abegg, “Exile and the Dead Sea Scrolls,” 124 n. 44.
[of] the ones who will return from the wilderness, who will live a thousand generations in virtue.\textsuperscript{1327} To them and their descendants belongs all the inheritance of Adam [or “humanity”] forever. (4Q171 1–10 II, 26–1–10 III, 2).

This passage connects Israel’s restoration with the expectation (also attested in Philo and Josephus) that at the restoration, Israel will inherit not only Palestine but in fact the whole world. Once again, the development and expansion of what will be inherited is likely due to the ambiguity inherent in \( \text{הארץ} \) (cf. Ps 37:9–11) which can refer either to “the land” (i.e., the promised land) or “the earth” in a more comprehensive sense, which is how the Yahad and eventually early Christians understood the promise.\textsuperscript{1328} At any rate, this pesher yet again illustrates the sect’s belief that Israel remained “in the wilderness,” awaiting its fuller restoration and dominion—which the sectarian commentary on Genesis claims will be accompanied by a Davidic messiah:

When Israel has the dominion, there [will not] be cut off someone who sits on the throne of David. For “the staff” [Gen 49:10] is the covenant of royalty, [and the thou]sands of Israel are “the standards.” Blank Until the messiah of righteousness comes, the branch of David—for to him and to his descendants has been given the covenant of the kingdom of his people for everlasting generations. (4Q252 v 2–4)

The interpretation is clear: David’s heir does not yet rule because Israel does not (yet) have the dominion, but when Israel is fully restored and receives dominion (cf. Dan 7:14), David’s kingdom will be unending. 4QFlorilegium preserves a similar expectation, as “the shoot of David” will arise together with “the interpreter of the Law,” the former of whom will “deliver Israel” (4Q174 1–2 I, 11–13).

\textsuperscript{1327} Note the parallels to Philo’s expectations again here.

\textsuperscript{1328} Pitre, \textit{Jesus}, 333, “It is admittedly difficult (if not impossible) in most cases to distinguish whether or not the destruction of “the earth” (\( \text{הארץ} \)) is describing a \textit{cosmic} destruction of all lands or simply “the land” (\( \text{הארץ} \)) of[\( \text{ישראל} \]) Israel or some other nation.” See also the discussions of this same ambiguity in the sections on Josephus and Philo above.
Some have argued that the “return from the wilderness” here refers specifically to the sect’s return to Jerusalem, with the Yahad understanding itself as the true Israel, but this interpretation is untenable as there is no evidence elsewhere that the sect regards itself as such. On the contrary, Pesher Habakkuk demonstrates that the sect does not regard itself as comprising Israel, as it mentions the “traitors of the new covenant,” calling them “cruel Israelites who will not believe” what is coming in the last days (that is, judgment and restoration; 1QpHab 2:3–10). There are indeed Israelites outside the sect (including some who have abandoned the sect), though these disobedient Israelites are under the curse and will ultimately perish, not participating in Israel’s restoration. (Thus, for the sect, Israel’s redemption does not depend on the participation of every individual Israelite.) Likewise, the Psalms pesher mentions “the cruel Israelites in the house of Judah” (4Q171 1–2 II, 13) and “wicked Israelites” (4Q171 1+3–4 III, 12), who oppose and “plot to destroy those who obey the Law in the Council of the Yahad” (4Q171 1–2 II, 14).

That the “cruel Israelites” are specified as “in the house of Judah” further confirms that the sect uses these terms very much in their biblical sense, with those of “the house of Judah” seen as a subset of the larger body of Israel—and that the sect most certainly does not identify itself as “Judah.” Judah includes the righteous, however, as Pesher Habakkuk explains,

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1329 Cf. Abegg, “Exile and the Dead Sea Scrolls,” 124: “The Qumran sect, true Israel would be vindicated in the last days, as the pesher on Ps 37:19 makes clear.”

1330 Harvey, True Israel, 189–218.
Its interpretation concerns all those who obey the Law in the house of Judah, who God will rescue from the house of judgment because of their suffering/tribulation and faithfulness to the Teacher of Righteousness.\footnote{The notion of faithfulness to the Teacher of Righteousness and suffering being rewarded by rescue from judgment found here is remarkably similar to Paul’s notion of faithfulness to and suffering together with Christ, rewarded by salvation from sin and death.} (1QpHab 8:1–3)

The interpretation of the word concerns the Wicked Priest, that he will be paid back for what he did to the poor, for “Lebanon” refers to the Council of the Yahad \[ יָּהָד \], and “animals” are the naive of Judah who obey the Law. (1QpHab 12:3–5a)

By contrast, the sect is called the Yahad or as “the poor” (cf. also 4Q171 1–2 II, 9) and is not identical with either “Israel” or “Judah.”\footnote{That the sect understands “Lebanon” as a reference to itself is interesting in light of the later Rabbinic propensity to interpret “Lebanon” as referring to the temple. Since the sect appears to regard itself as somehow atoning for Israel, this interpretation of “Lebanon” suggests the sect understood itself as somehow functioning as a replacement temple (cf. the “temple of humanity” in 4Q174 1–2 I, 6; but cf. David Flusser, “Two Notes on the Midrash on 2 Sam vii,” \textit{IEJ} 9 (1959): 99–109 (102 n. 11), which points out that the phrase could also be understood “sanctuary among mankind”). For the community as a new sanctuary in this passage, see Geza Vermes, “The Symbolical Interpretation of Lebanon in the Targums: The Origin and Development of an Exegetical Tradition,” \textit{JTS} 9, no. 1 (1958): 1–12;} That both the enemies and allies of the sect are from “the house of Judah” should not be surprising, as we have already seen that the sect appears to regard the rest of Israel as still in exile. The house of Judah will experience its own time of persecution at the end, prior to Israel being permanently planted in its own place (4Q174 1–3 II, 1–2; 4Q174 4 4–4Q174 5 2). The wicked of Israel, however, will ultimately be wiped out along with “the cruel of the nations,” while “the poor” will inherit the lofty mountain of Israel, the holy mountain (=Jerusalem; 4Q171 1, 3–4 III, 7–4Q171 3–10 IV, 2; cf. 1QpHab 5:3). As in 1QM, the restoration from the wilderness pictured in the pesharim involves other Israelites joining with the sect in a much larger event—even Gilead and the half-tribe of Manasseh from the Transjordan will ultimately be gathered \( קִבְצָה \) at the restoration (4Q171 13 5–6).
The details of the restoration are further described in 11QMelchizedek (11Q13), the “oldest purely exegetical text from Qumran,” a messianic text that interprets Lev 25, Isa 61, Isa 52, and Dan 9:26 together with a few Psalms to describe the last days (cf. 4Q398 11–13 4; cf. CD 4:4, 6:11; 1QSa 1:1; 1QpHab 7:7–12, 9:6), in which the “jubilee to the captives” will be proclaimed (Isa 61:1; 11Q13 2 4). The exile is portrayed as having been extended to ten jubilees (cf. Dan 9:20–27; 1 En 89; 4QPseudo-Moses 4Q180–181), when the “day of atonement” will be fulfilled, atoning “for all the sons of [light] and the people[e who are pre]destined to Mel[chi]zedek” (11Q13 2 6–8; cf. 1QM 1 1–4). The fragment suggests this “year of Melchiz[edek]’s favor” (11Q13 2 9; cf. Isa 62) and atonement for Israel will occur when “an anointed one will be cut off,” citing Dan 9:26 (11Q13 2 18). The clear messianic overtones—and overlaps with passages and interpretations later used by early Christians—of this text’s vision of final restoration further round out the sect’s eschatological expectations.

**Ephraim and Manasseh: On Distinguishing Ephraim from “Ephraim”**

The propensity of the pesharim to use coded language does give reason for pause, however, as the references to “Ephraim” and “Manasseh,” particularly in Pesher Nahum, seem to depart from the traditional biblical meanings of these tribal terms:

[Nah 3:1] Its interpretation: it is the city of Ephraim, the seekers of smooth things [זָהָרֶים תַּלְמוּדָה], in the final days, since they walk in treachery and lie[s.] (4Q169 3–4 II, 2)

[Nah 3:4] [Its] interpretation concerns the deceived of Ephraim, who with their fraudulent teaching and lying tongue, who through their deceptive teaching and lying tongue and dishonest lip lead many astray. (4Q169 3–4 II, 8)

[Nah 3:7b] Its interpretation concerns the seekers of smooth things, whose evil deeds will be exposed to all Israel in the final time; many will perceive their wrongdoing and will hate them and loathe them for their hubris. And when the

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glory of Judah is revealed, the naïve of Ephraim will flee from their assembly and desert the ones who misdirected them and will join the [man]y of [I]srael. (4Q169 3–4 III, 3)

[Nah 3:9] Its interpretation: They are the wick[ed of Judah], the house of Peleg/division, which joined to Manasseh. “She, too, w[ent] into exile [a captive,] with chains” [Nah 3:10]. Its interpretation concerns Manasseh, in the last time, in which his kingdom over Is[rael] will be brought low. (4Q169 3–4 IV, 3)

[Ps 37:14–15] Its interpretation concerns the wicked of Ephraim and Manasseh who will attempt to lay hands on the Priest and the members of his council in the period of trial that will come upon them. But God will save them from their power and afterwards will hand them over to the wicked nations for judgment. (4Q171 II, 18)

Both terms certainly refer to Judahite opponents of the sect, most likely the Pharisees and Sadducees. “Ephraim” has typically been identified with the Pharisees, since the phrase דודיש חלקות (“seekers of smooth things”), a pun on דודיש פרושי הלכות (“seekers/interpreters of halakha”) thought to be a jab at Pharasaic leniency in halakha, is associated with the “city of Ephraim” in 4Q169 3–4 2.1334 The mention of crucifixion in 1Q169 3–4 I, 7–8 also appears to reference events concerning the Pharisees recorded by Josephus in Antiquities 13.14.2 and War 96–98, further confirming the identification.1335 Bergsma, however, rightly notes that the inclusion of the category of “simple folk” or “naïve” (פתאי) within “Ephraim” is problematic for a one-to-one identification of “Ephraim” with the Pharisees.1336


1335 There is some debate as to how to interpret this passage in 4QpNah, but the general consensus is that this places the pesher in the time of Alexander Jannaeus. See the discussion in Berrin, Pesher Nahum, 224–231.

1336 Bergsma, "Qumran Self-Identity," 186–87 n. 29: “4QpNah (4Q169) 3:2–5: The ‘glory of Judah’ (כבוד יהודה) I take to be the royal messiah, and the ‘majority of Israel’—which the simple of Ephraim join—is clearly a technical term for the Yahad (cf. 1QS 5:22). The fact that “Ephraim” contains ‘simple folk’ (פתאי)—a class of people elsewhere described as ‘doers of the law’ [Essenes] and included in ‘Judah’ (cf. 1QpHab 12:4–5)—militates against a simple equation of “Ephraim” with the Pharisees. Whatever ‘Ephraim’ is in the pesharim, it is a complex category, including (like Judah) both good and bad, both (evil) deceivers and (innocent) deceived.”
“Manasseh,” on the other hand, has less in the way of helpful material to aid identification but is typically associated with the Sadducees. Obviously, neither the Pharisees nor the Sadducees originated from northern stock, as Shani Berrin notes:

Ephraim no longer refers to genealogical non-Judahites and to the geographical area inhabited by them. Instead … Ephraim is used consistently within Qumran literature as a technical term for … the Pharisees. The sect’s self-designation as “Judah” leads to the labeling of their opponents as Ephraim.

On the surface, this use of “Ephraim” and “Manasseh” in the pesharim therefore seems problematic for the thesis that the Dead Sea Scrolls tend to differentiate between Yehudim and the rest of Israel in traditional fashion. We have already observed, however, that the sect does not in fact designate itself as “Judah,” a key assumption upon which the usual understanding of these terms depends, suggesting a closer look at the terminology of Ephraim and Manasseh in the pesharim is in order.

That closer examination shows that the use of these terms in the pesharim does not undermine the traditional use of tribal language found elsewhere in the scrolls but in fact presumes the traditional senses of these terms, typologically and analogically applying these labels to opponents in much the same way a modern Christian calling someone a “Pharisee” presumes the hearer will make the connection with the Pharisees of the Synoptic Gospels who were scolded by Jesus for their hypocrisy. In a modern context, such labeling is especially common in Christian sermons on the Synoptics, where the “Pharisees” in the text are often interpreted as “types” of modern hypocrites. The pesharim are rather similar to much modern

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expository preaching in that sense—although constrained by the lemma, their interpretation typologizes the lemma to fit the present situation.

Such typologizing interpretation becomes necessary and prominent once the sacred text becomes fixed, requiring the interpretation rather than the text to be the flexible element, a phenomenon Armin Lange and Zlatko Pleše have labeled “transpositional hermeneutics.” Flexible as it may be, such recontextualization still depends on the historical sense of the text, all the more in groups especially concerned with their own connection to sacred history like that in the scrolls. Berrin observes that the pesherists operated with an appreciation for multivalence in the face of the need for recontextualization:

The author of pesher does not take the eschatological significance of biblical prophecy as its only intended meaning. Rather, the pesher application would have superseded, but not invalidated, the earlier historical significance that the original prophet himself believed to be the subject of his prophecy. The words of the prophet Nahum would have been perceived as applicable to Assyria, but as ultimately important because of their applicability to the end-time…. In this view, pesher does in fact presuppose an originally meaningful base-text…. It is possible that the modern supposition of the irrelevance of the original context of the base-text of pesher has its origins in a mistaken analogy with early Christian exegesis.

The pesharim thus presume a shared understanding of what these terms denote and how they might apply to contemporary Yehudim. Later Rabbinic works often make similar moves, with terms like Edom (=Rome) and Lebanon (=the Temple) applied typologically to modern

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1340 Berrin, Pesher Nahum, 15–16. As will be shown below, Paul’s similar treatment of biblical source texts—and his presupposition of an originally meaningful base-text—has been similarly misunderstood thanks to the same modern assumptions of destructive supersession rather than polysemous recontextualization and application.

1341 Rabbinic materials make similar moves with terms like Edom (often referencing Rome) and Lebanon (the Temple), though no one would suggest that the Rabbis had lost
entities, though no one would suggest that the Rabbis were unaware of the actual, objective sense of these terms in their historical or biblical context. Rather, that shared understanding of the biblical context—often in extraordinarily clever exegetical combinations—is precisely what informs the present typological sense and makes metareferential use of the language and motifs possible, especially given the polyvalent meanings of these terms in their biblical contexts.1342

In this case, “Manasseh” alludes less to the tribal name than to the notorious king of Judah who was blamed for the Babylonian Exile (cf. 2 Kgs 23:26). To call a Judahite king “Manasseh” would be the severest insult possible, identifying him with the king the Former Prophets identify as the worst in the history of Judah. The sect looks forward to the day “Manasseh’s” kingdom will be cast down (4Q169 3–4 iv 3), and the wicked king handed over to the Gentiles for judgment (4Q171 II, 18).1343 Rather than referring to a party (e.g., the Sadducees), the term instead appears to refer to an individual king, although his partisans are condemned with him (e.g., “the nobles of Manasseh,” 4Q169 3–4 iii 9). The most likely candidate for “Manasseh” is Aristobulus II, who (paralleling the imprisonment of the biblical Manasseh in 2 Chron 33:11–13 and the apocryphal Prayer of Manasseh, known in 4Q381) was imprisoned by the Romans before returning to the throne and eventually being deposed again.1344 Aristobulus’ allegiance to the Sadducees also corresponds to the Sadducean characteristics associated with “Manasseh’s” partisans elsewhere in the scrolls.1345


1343 Berrin has convincingly argued that although clearly framed in the future, the pesherist is likely operating ex eventu with respect to the downfall of Manasseh/Aristobulus II in 4Q169. Cf. Berrin, Pesher Nahum, 276.

1344 “Following upon our assessment of Pericope 3, we view Pericope 4 as referring to the defeat of Aristobulus and his supporters, whom we identify as Sadduceans.” Berrin, Pesher Nahum, 271.

1345 Cf. Berrin, Pesher Nahum, 269. For more on Manasseh’s Sadducean characteristics, see Amusin, “Éphraïm et Manassé”; André Dupont-Sommer, “Observations sur le Commentaire de Nahum découvert près de la mer Morte,”
“Ephraim,” on the other hand, most likely does recall the tribe most clearly associated with the northern kingdom, which was sometimes called “Ephraim” itself (cf. Ps 108:8; Isa 11:13; etc.) because its kings (most notably Jeroboam I) came from the tribe of Ephraim. The force of the epithet against the sect’s opponents depends on understanding this historical connection. In the same way that for many modern Christians the epithet “Pharisee” carries the force of “hypocrite” due to familiarity with the Gospel narratives, “Ephraim” here connects the targeted opponent with those who rebelled against the house of David, split Israel in half, established the worship of golden calves in Dan and Bethel, and ultimately led to the exile of Israel. (The sect—regarding itself as the original, properly pure group—apparently misses the irony in its labeling opponents “schismatics,” though 4QMMT suggests the sect is sensitive to this charge against its members [cf. 4Q398 14–21 7–15]). With this terminology, the sect again looks back to the historical division between Israel and Judah (cf. CD 7:12–13; 14:1) as the beginning of the covenantal curses and forward to the restoration of Israel, which would finally undo the division and curses that came due to Jeroboam’s rebellion (4Q398 11–13 2; =4QMMTc 19).

In light of this, to label opponents “Ephraim” is to call them schismatics and idolaters who have broken from the truth just as Ephraim did under Jeroboam and to imply that they will receive similar punishment. Berrin and others have rightly recognized the implications of

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1346 The “house of Peleg” in 4Q169 3–4 IV, 3 seems to be another way of saying “schismatics,” furthering the basic point made here. Cf. Berrin, Pesher Nahum, 271–75.

1347 Berrin, Pesher Nahum, 105–111, notes that 4QpHos includes “Ephraim” in the lemma, which likely influenced the decision to utilize this terminology, which then appears in other pesharim even when it does not occur in the lemma. Unfortunately, it is unclear how the term is interpreted and used in 4QpHos due to the poor preservation of the text; for this reason, 4QpHos will not be examined in detail here. Berrin also observes that it is unclear whether
labeling one’s opponents with terms traditionally denoting the northern kingdom, but because they mistakenly identify the sect as “Judah,” they miss the full force of these epithets.\textsuperscript{1348} That the biblical “Ephraim” and “Manasseh” were brothers is also convenient for the sect, since Aristobulus’ brother and rival Hyrcanus II was partial to the Pharisees. The sect could thus insult each of the rival kings and their partisans with clever filial epithets that labeled their kingships wicked and illegitimate. At any rate, the force of the insults thus does not contradict but rather depends on the historical sense of the terms in the context of the restoration eschatology prominent elsewhere in the sectarian literature.

Although not using tribal terminology, Pesher Habakkuk’s reference to “the family of Absalom” is instructive on this point, as it reflects the same sort of typological labeling of the sect’s enemies:

[{
\textit{Hab 1:13b}}] Its interpretation refers to the house of Absalom and the members of their council, who kept quiet when the Teacher of Righteousness was rebuked and did not help him against the Man of the Lie, \textit{Blank} who had rejected the Law in the presence of their entire council.

Again, the pesher uses biblical language typologically, this time labeling those involved in the power grab as “the house of Absalom,” identifying them with the eldest son of David, who staged an ultimately failed coup against his father—akin to an American referring to a traitor as “Benedict Arnold.” As with the prior sobriquets, this insult presumes intimate familiarity with the narratives of Israel. The coded application to modern opponents does not negate the normal understanding of the term but rather depends upon it. In keeping with this, “Ephraim” appears to

\textsuperscript{1348} E.g. Berrin, \textit{Pesher Nahum}, 110. To be fair, Berrin does observe that Judah does at times seem to refer to “the Jewish nation as a whole” rather than the sect alone, although she then follows the majority of commentators in understanding Judah as the sect itself (205–208).
be used in its more generic traditional sense in the scrolls outside the pesharim (cf. 4Q175 1
27//4Q379 22 ii 113; CD 7:12–13, 14:1; 4Q460 9 i 9–11; 11Q19 24:13; 44:13).

Because of the tendency of the pesharim to assume a significant, shared insider-
knowledge framework as foundation for figurative language and creative epithets (much like
apocalyptic literature), it is important not to lean too heavily on the terminology in these specific
scrolls as a key for all uses elsewhere, as it is difficult for outsiders to discern reliably between
Ephraim and “Ephraim” (not to mention the possibility of deliberately ambiguous usage). In
the end, it should suffice to say that the pesharim provide no reason to doubt the centrality of
Israelite restoration eschatology—and the related distinction between Judah and Israel—that we
have found elsewhere in the scrolls. Instead, the metareferential uses of the pesharim depend
upon this larger framework to give these epithets their power in a new context. Added together to
the evidence from the foundational scrolls, the pesharim therefore provide additional support for
the sect’s identity as only a part of “Israel,” the majority of which remains under the curse.

Other Scrolls

Of the remaining evidence within the scrolls, 4Q434, one of the Barkhi Nafshi (“Bless
YHWH, my soul”) hymns with a salvation-history element, is especially significant. In Abegg’s

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1349 Richard Hays’ advice regarding polyvalent language is helpful here: “Some studies … suffer from a tendency to
seek a single comprehensive definition that will account for every instance in which the word … occurs. This has
the result of leveling out … uneven usage and suppressing the connotative diversity inherent in [the author’s]
language. We should be willing to recognize that [the author’s] language may sometimes be ambiguous by design.”
Hays, *Faith of Jesus Christ*, 161. In this case it is less a matter of ambiguity and more the difficulty of distinguishing
figurative “insider” language from more straightforward terminology, but the basic premise still applies.

1350 There is therefore no reason to suspect, as Boyarin suggests, that the use of Ephraim/Manasseh terminology in
the pesharim indicates that groups of Jews not aligned with the Jerusalem power base would have been called
Ephraim and Manasseh as opposed to *Yehudim*, and if that were the case, it would make no sense that the pesherists,
who believed the Temple to be impure, would have regarded such labels as insulting. Cf. Boyarin, “The IOUDAIOI
in John,” 230.
words, this manuscript “certainly praises God for the future deliverance of Israel.”

He has favored the needy and has opened their eyes so that they see his paths, and
their ear[s] so they hear his teaching. He has “circumcised the foreskin of their
hearts” [Deut 10:16] and has saved them because of his grace and has set their
feet firm on the path and has not abandoned them in their m[a]ny hardships.… He
judged them with much mercy. The sorrowful judgments were to test them. And
abundant in [his] mercy, he has hidden them among the nations (בגוים) […]
man he saved them. He did not judge them by a mass of nations, and he did not
[abandon] them in the midst of the peoples and hid them in […]. “He turned
darkness into light before them and twisting paths into a plain” [Isa 42:16].

The notion that Israel has been “hidden among the nations,” with its restoration provided
for via circumcision of the heart echoes the same restoration themes we have found elsewhere in
the scrolls. The scroll gets increasingly fragmentary but later cites Hosea’s promises of
restoration of (northern) Israel, again featuring the motif of restoration “from the wilderness”:

[…] their houses there from wilder[ness to] a “door of hope” [Hos 2:15]. And “he
made a covenant” for their welfare “with the birds of the air and the beasts of the
field” [Hos 2:18]. He made their enemies like dung and has pounded them as dust.

Even more significantly, 4QApocryphon of Jeremiahc, after first recounting the
destruction of Jerusalem and Israel’s captivity, states,

[And the word of YHWH came to] Jeremiah in the land of Tahpanhes, which is in
the land of Eg[ypt, saying, “Speak to] the children of Israel and to the children of
Judah and Benjamin, [saying] ‘Seek my statutes every day and ke[ep] my
commands [and do not go] after the idols of the nations ….”’ (4Q385b 16 II, 6–9,
my emphasis)
Yet again, we find a clear distinction made in the scrolls between “Israel” and the subset “Judah/Benjamin,” once again illustrating that the latter should not be assumed to be equivalent to the former.

4QPseudo-Ezekiel likewise shows significant concern for Israel’s future restoration, with the prophet responding to YHWH’s promise to “rescue my people, giving them the covenant” (4Q385 2 1):

“I have seen many in Israel who love your name and walk on the paths of [righteousness]. When will these things [Israel’s restoration] happen? And how will they [Israel] be rewarded for their faithfulness?” (4Q385 2 3)

YHWH’s response is a version of the Valley of Dry Bones vision (cf. Ezek 37) in which “a large crowd of men will r[i]se and bless YHWH Sebaoth, wh[o] made them live” (4Q385 2 8–9). This answer apparently does not satisfy the prophet, who again asks when these things will happen. The initial answer is cryptic and fragmentary and concerns a tree bending over and straightening up, apparently the source of the “other prophet” cited as prophesying the crucifixion in Ep. Barn. 12:1 (4Q385 2 5–6). Later, however, the prophet is assured,

“The days will pass rapidly until all the children of humanity say, “Are not the days hastening so that the children of Israel can inherit [their land?]” And YHWH said to me, “I will not sh[u]n your face, Ezekiel. S[ee,] I measure [time and shorten] the days and the years […]. (4Q385 3 2–5)

Israel’s exile is again portrayed as extending beyond the expected time, with Israel still not restored and returned to its land in full. But, the text assures, the days will soon be shortened, and Israel will indeed return to its land in full. Dimant notes that Pseudo-Ezekiel’s interpretation of Ezekiel 37 is also significant in that it gives second century BCE evidence for a belief in the

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eschatological resurrection of the righteous associated with the restoration of Israel, suggesting a more ancient origin for this belief than previously thought.1354

4QPseudo-Moses⁸⁻⁹, a prophetic text schematized according to Sabbaths and jubilees,¹³⁵⁵ tells of Solomon’s kingdom (4Q385a 13 ii 1–3) and subsequent split of Israel (4Q387a 2 7) and declares that Israel’s exile and desolation would be extended, lasting ten jubilees,¹³⁵⁶ with “Israel [kept] from [being] a people” during that period (4Q387 2 ii, 1–4Q387 2 III, 1; 4Q388a 1 II, 4). The return from Babylon is regarded as insufficient, as the returnees continue to do evil, with the exception of the very first who returned to the land to rebuild the temple (4Q390 1 2–6).

In the seventh jubilee after the devastation of the land, they will forget the law, the festival, the Sabbath, and the covenant; and they will disobey everything and do what is evil in my eyes. And I will hide my face from them and deliver them into the hands of their enemies. (4Q390 1 7b–9a)

A remnant will escape but continue in unrighteousness (4Q390 1, 10–12), with Israel’s restoration still a future hope presumably dealt with after our fragments of the composition cut off. At any rate, the fragments we do have make several things clear: Israel remains in exile at present, the result of rebellion dating back to the division of the kingdoms after Solomon, and the return of the Yehudim from Babylon was an inadequate restoration to fulfill the eschatological promises of the prophets.


¹³⁵⁶ In this respect, it closely parallels the ten jubilees or seventy sevens of Daniel 9:20–27, the Animal Apocalypse of 1 En 89, the Melchizedek scroll (11Q13), and (probably) Ages of Creation (4Q180–181).
The Temple Scroll, whether of sectarian or non-sectarian provenance, prominently features all twelve tribes of Israel (cf. 11Q19 xxiii; 11Q20 vi; 11Q19 xxxix–xli;) along with warnings of exile (spoken by God to Moses) and promises of Israel’s subsequent redemption:

They will scatter them over many lands and they will be the[re] a byword and a gibe, under a heavy yoke and devoid of everything. There they will worship gods made by man’s hands, gods of wood and stone, silver and gold. And they, in the lands of their enemies will sigh and scream under a heavy yoke, and they will call but I will not listen; they will shout I will not reply, because of their evil deeds. (11Q19 LIX, 2–7)

Afterwards, they will return to me with all their heart and all their soul, in agreement with all the words of this law, and I will save them from the hands of their enemies and redeem them from the hand of those who hate them, and bring them into the land of their fathers. I will redeem them and multiply them and rejoice in them. And I will be their God and they will be my people [cf. Hos 1:9–2:1 (ET 1:9–10); Jer 31:31–34]. (11Q19 LIX, 9–13)

At this time, in “the day of creation,” YHWH says, “I will create my temple, establishing it for myself for all days, according to the covenant which I made with Jacob at Bethel” (11Q19 XXIX, 9–10). As E. P. Sanders notes, the Temple Scroll thus expects a new temple—built by God himself—at the eschaton, when all Israel is restored as promised.

Finally, “Words of the Heavenly Lights” (4Q504–506) offers perhaps the most extended and thoroughgoing example of the restoration eschatology observed in the scrolls, as the (2nd C. BCE) document portrays Israel as remaining in the exilic age of wrath and prays for restoration:

Please, Lord, act as is your character, by the measure of your great power. Fo[r] you [for]gave our fathers when they rebelled against your command, though you

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1358 Note also the statement, “they will be my people,” immediately preceding these lines as well, more language tied to the redemption and re-election of Israel in the prophets.

1359 Sanders, Jesus and Judaism, 84–85. Again, the sect seems to have regarded itself as the eschatological “temple of humanity,” “not made with hands,” finally serving as an adequate atonement for Israel. Passages like this one in the Temple Scroll therefore may well have been interpreted in this manner.
were so angry at them that you might have destroyed them. Still, you had pity on them because of your love, and because of your covenant (indeed, Moses had atoned for their sin), and also so that your great power and abundant compassion might be known to generations to come, forever. May your anger and fury at all [their] sin[s] turn back from your people Israel. (4Q504 II, 7–11)

[These things were done] that we might [repent] with all our heart and all our soul, to plant your law in our hearts [that we turn not from it, straying] either to the right or the left. Surely you will heal us from such madness, blindness and confusion. [ ... Behold,] we were sold [as the price] of our [iniquity], yet despite our rebellion you have called us. [ ... ] Deliver us from sinning against you. (4Q504 II, 13–16)

You have raised us through the years of our generations, [disciplining us] with terrible disease, famine, thirst, even plague and the sword-[every reproach] of your covenant. For you have chosen us as your own, [as your people from all] the earth. That is why you have poured out your fury upon us, [your zeal], the full wrath of your anger. That is why you have caused [the scourge of your plagues] to cleave to us, that of which Moses and your servants the prophets wrote: You [would] send evil against us in the Last Days […] (4Q504 III, 7–14)

Nevertheless, you did not reject the seed of Jacob nor spew Israel out, making an end of them and voiding your covenant with them. Surely you alone are the living God; beside you is none other. You have remembered your covenant whereby you brought us forth from Egypt while the nations looked on. You have not abandoned us among the nations; rather, you have shown covenant mercies to your people Israel in all [the] lands to which you have exiled them. You have again placed it on their hearts to return to you, to obey your voice [according] to all that you have commanded through your servant Moses.

[In]deed, you have poured out your holy spirit upon us, [bringing] your blessings to us. You have caused us to seek you in our time of tribulation, [that we might pour] out a prayer when your chastening was upon us. We have entered into tribulation, [chastisement and trials] because of the wrath of the oppressor. Surely we ourselves [have tried God by our iniquities, wearying the Rock through] [our] sins.] [Yet] You have [not] compelled us to serve you, to take a [path] more profitable [than that] in which [we have walked, though] we have not harkened to your commandments. (4Q504 V, 7–21)

Despite the fragmentary nature of this text, it would be difficult to produce a clearer statement of the restoration eschatology we have already witnessed elsewhere in the scrolls. The speaker clearly depicts Israel as remaining in exile and sees himself as part of a larger group that has been awakened to obedience. We again witness new covenant language, as the group is
depicted as having had the Covenant “placed on their hearts to return to [God], to obey [his] voice.” This group has received the holy spirit, which has caused them to seek the Lord and await the full restoration of Israel for which the speaker prays.

**Conclusions: Israel, Judah, and Restoration Eschatology in the Dead Sea Scrolls**

The sectarians therefore present themselves as the “repentant captives of Israel” from the tribes of Levi, Judah, and Benjamin. This is not merely a rhetorical claim or allegorical application of scripture but instead a straightforward, literal withdrawal from the wicked in the land to rejoin the larger body of Israel in exile. In so doing, the sectarians see themselves as having “repented/returned” to the appropriate laws for those in exile, ritually fulfilling the Deuteronomic requirements associated with the divinely-orchestrated restoration and return of all Israel.

Like Philo, they see Israel’s restoration as first and foremost a return to virtue and obedience that ultimately culminates in an eschatological reunion of all twelve tribes, regathered to their land, with the nations subjugated to Israel. They, however, regard their community as the vanguard of this return to virtue—it had already happened for them (through the revelation of the Teacher of Righteousness), which was itself the indication that the restoration was imminent. This group regards itself as having properly renewed Israel’s covenant—the “new covenant”—after the curses of the law had been carried out upon Israel, requiring a (re)new(ed) covenant. They do not regard this turn of events as of their own initiative but regard themselves as the vanguard of the repentant of Israel, participating in the (re)new(ed) covenant promised by Jeremiah after the curses of the Torah had been carried out upon Israel, transformed by the divine presence in their midst. Their community, set aside for obedience by God, has thus become the necessary atonement in exile to bring about the final eschatological restoration of all Israel; their
existence and obedience are the final necessary steps outlined for Israel’s restoration in Deuteronomy.

As with the other Jewish literature examined so far, the popular insider/outsider theory of the relationship between Israel(ite) and Jew/Judaean does not hold up under scrutiny within the Dead Sea Scrolls, as that model does not account for the subtlety of the sect’s nomenclature in which they, although preferring the more comprehensive and eschatologically loaded terminology of “Israel,” clearly do not equate this term with Judah and its cognates, instead using the terms in their biblical senses, understanding Judah as a subset of Israel, the larger people of God.

The sect is aware of its Judahite roots—clearly understanding itself as comprised of the southern tribes of Levi, Judah, and Benjamin. But as a priestly Levite-led group distancing itself from the Judaean state apparatus and effectively rejoining the rest of Israel in exile, looking towards the eschatological restoration, the sect does not identify itself as “Judah,” although it is comprised solely of southerners. The sect is therefore neither “Israel” nor “Judah,” though it is comprised of a part of each, with its members both Yehudim and children of Israel. Even the sect’s preferred name “Yaḥad” likely alludes to the eschatological unity between both houses of Israel associated with the restoration. Although on the one hand the sect regards itself as having taken the first steps of repentance towards this restoration—in fact serving as an atonement for the rest of Israel—it is clearly aware of the absence of the other (northern) Israelite tribes who will join together with the sectarians (and other Yehudim joining them) at the eschatological restoration. They are the faithful remnant of the southern tribes awaiting the return and restoration of Israel. John Bergsma explains:

The Yaḥad is actively anticipating the eschatological, pan-Israelite restoration of the twelve tribes. They are the vanguard, the spearhead of the incoming of the lost
tribes in the eschatological era…. The yahad does not see the Hasmonean or Herodian Judaean state as the true successor of biblical Israel; nor was the return of the return of the יהודים from Babylon the fulfillment of the prophecies of restoration in the prophets. It cannot have been: only one tribe returned—or, at best, three, if Levi, Judah, and Benjamin are counted separately. But the prophets foresaw a pan-Israelite restoration including the ten northern tribes. To conclude: although in our schemas we place the Qumran community into the category “Second Temple Judaism,” when we look through their eyes, we might want to describe their worldview as Second Temple Israelitism. The point is, the yahad does not see the post-exilic state of Judah as the sole heir of biblical Israel.1360

The literature found in the scrolls appears unified in rejecting the identification of the return from Babylon as Israel’s restoration. Rather, it appears the sect regarded itself (and Israel as a whole) as still in exile, and “expected to remain in exile until the time of God’s judgment on the nations (1QM 1:2–3).”1361 In fact, the notion of a continuing exile was so foundational to the sect’s thinking that, after some important but unknown event, they withdrew themselves to the wilderness—“the new Sinai—so as to prepare for the coming of God.”1362

Although those who initially returned from Babylon to rebuild the temple were righteous, that return and restoration was an abortion, since Israel remained in exile and the Judahite returnees continued in their wickedness. The sectarians thus regard themselves as exiles within the exile—exiles from rebellious Judah within the continuing exile of Israel. Disillusioned by the Judahite return from Babylon and present state of Judaea, the sect has rejoined the rest of Israel in exile, awaiting the promised restoration. Their repentance and recognition of the present state of affairs has established the roots of the righteous community (Yaḥad); it is now only a matter of time before God acts to restore all Israel, with the sectarians at the forefront of God’s sovereign plan.

1360 Bergsma, "Qumran Self-Identity," 188.

1361 Abegg, “Exile and the Dead Sea Scrolls,” 123.

CHAPTER 10: SUMMARY: ISRAEL, HEBREWS, THE JEWS, AND RESTORATION ESCHATOLOGY

After having gone through the early Jewish evidence in some detail, several conclusions can now be drawn. Remarkably, although numerous perspectives on Israel can be seen throughout the wide variety of Jewish evidence considered in this study, the one perspective that is not significantly represented in this body of evidence is the usual scholarly assumption that Israel is equivalent to the Jews (οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι). Instead, contrary to the common scholarly assumption, the terms “Israel” (Ἰσραήλ), “Jew” (Ἰουδαῖος), and “Hebrew,” (Ἑβραῖος) are not synonymous or coextensive in the Second Temple period, nor is Ἰουδαῖος an outsider term while the other two are insider terms. Instead, each term has its own specific nuance, overlapping with but not identical to the meaning of the others.

“Israel” is the name for the twelve-tribe covenantal people of YHWH, the definition of which was contested throughout the Second Temple period, with a number of variously-related communities claiming to be heirs of the legacy of the biblical children of Jacob. Both Jews and Samaritans, for example, considered themselves Israelites, though many Jews disregarded Samaritan claims to this title as illegitimate. Neither group, however, identified Samaritans as Jews, a clear indication of an important distinction between the terms and evidence that throughout our period of inquiry there were self-identified Israelites who were not Jews. Moreover, Jewish evidence from this period consistently attests to a distinction between the Jews (οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι) and Israel as the entire people of the covenant.

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1363 Knoppers, Jews and Samaritans, 12.
The best explanation for this distinction is that whereas Israel refers either to the whole (twelve-tribe) people of God or to those from the northern kingdom of Israel as distinct from the kingdom of Judah, Jews (Ἰουδαῖοι) are the subset of Israel specifically derived from the kingdom of Judah either by descent, marriage, or (eventually) proselytism. By contrast, Samaritans, who claimed to be derived from the northern tribes of Israel rather than Judah, could claim Israelite heritage without being considered “Jews” (or “half-Jews”). Thus the Hasmonean state called itself “Judah” rather than “Israel,” a fact that has caused significant confusion among interpreters who have assumed the terms were synonymous and that Israel served as the typical “insider” term. But this was, of course, the natural name for the renewed kingdom of Judaea, which had not reached a point where it could justifiably claim to be “Israel,” especially given the Samaritan presence not far north of Jerusalem—though the testimony of 1 Maccabees suggests that at least some hoped the Hasmonean kingdom would result in the restored Israel promised by the biblical prophets.

Those prophetic promises of the restoration of all Israel were a significant factor in the continued distinction between Israel and the Jews throughout this period, since Israel’s restoration was regarded as incomplete at best throughout this period. Only a small portion of Jews ever returned to the land, and a wide range of early Jewish texts ranging from the Torah to texts from well into the Common Era portray Israel (particularly the northern tribes scattered by Assyria) as still remaining under the covenantal curse of disobedience, awaiting the promised redemption. There has been no lack of research on Jewish messianism and eschatology in the Second Temple period, but most of these studies have neglected a (perhaps the) key element of

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1364 E.g., Goodblatt, “Israelites who Reside in Judah,” 84, 86. For further discussion (and explanation) of this anomaly, see chapter 1 and the section on 1 Maccabees in Chapter 5.
restoration eschatology: Jews in this period did not anticipate merely *Jewish* restoration but a full restoration of *all Israel*. In keeping with this expectation, Jewish literature in this period consistently distinguishes between Israel (the whole) and the Jews (one part of the whole).

As a result, when the term Israel appears in the Jewish texts of the Second Temple period, it consistently refers either to biblical Israel, eschatological Israel, or to the suprahistorical/supratemporal people of YHWH, particularly in the context of prayer and ritual, since YHWH is not the “God of the Jews” only but the “God of Israel.”1365 Thus early Jewish texts that deal either with preexilic history or the eschatological restoration consistently prefer the term Israel, while those texts that refer to the present-day *ethnos* avoid that term, instead preferring Ἰουδαῖοι except in prayer or ritual contexts or when referring to biblical or eschatological Israel. “Israel” is the covenantal term for the full people of YHWH but is also a scattered, fragmented, and incomplete entity at present. Only after YHWH fully restores and reunites his people will “all Israel” be present and complete once again. This difference in terminology is therefore not due to an insider/outsider distinction but instead owes to long historical background of the terms and the overarching impact of Israelite restoration eschatology and the biblically-mediated memory of a past twelve-tribe Israel of which Judah was only one part.

Since the kingdom of Judah included other tribes, most notably Benjamin and Levi, Ἰουδαῖος does double duty as a tribal label and an umbrella term including subgroups, introducing further ambiguity since some Jews were more Judahite (that is, from the tribe of Judah) than others. Throughout the Second Temple period, “the patriarchs and their tribal

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1365 For “Israel” as a supratemporal and suprahistorical entity, see Gutbrod, *TDNT* 3:385 n. 128; Saul Kaatz, *Die mündliche Lehre und ihr Dogma* (Leipzig: Kaufmann, 1923), 43.
lineages remained central to the Jewish conception of their own history, with tribal distinctions continuing to be observed far longer than is often appreciated. Moreover, if Ἰουδαῖος is also understood as an umbrella label including other tribes, this helps account for its supposed “outsider” sense, as the term distinguishes the larger group from outsiders not associated with the descendants of the kingdom of Judah, while fellow Jews distinguished themselves from one another by tribe and other markers, such as language or geography.

Once again, a diagram is helpful, illustrating how various markers can serve as subsets of a larger whole when identifying oneself within or among groups:

Figure 4: Umbrella Terms and Nested Identities

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1366 Rajak, Translation and Survival, 107. On the continued importance of tribal descent in Jewish identity, see also Daniel R. Schwartz, Studies in the Jewish Background of Christianity (Tübingen: Mohr, 1992), 8–9. This is in contrast to Michael Satlow’s argument that tribal identity was “long-defunct” by the first century CE (How the Bible Became Holy [New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014], 301 n. 7).

1367 In addition to the emphasis on Tobit as a Naphtalite and the numerous examples in the Dead Sea Scrolls, note Paul’s self-identification as “of the tribe of Benjamin” (Rom 11:1; Phil 3:5). The humorous explanations offered in b. Megillah 12b–13a for how Esther 2:5 calls Mordecai both איש יהודה meaning “man of Judah” or “Jew/Judahite”) and איש ימינה meaning “Benjaminite”) further attest to how long the tribal sense continued to be in view. As Lowe, "Who Were the ΙΟΥΔΑΙΟΙ?," 106, points out, the tribal meaning of איש יהודा is also preserved in m. Sotah 8.1 and m. Taanith 4.5.

1368 For example, note that non-Judaean Jews are referred to by their place of origin: Mary Magdalene, Saul of Tarsus, Joseph of Arimathea, Jesus of Nazareth, etc. (Thanks to Jodi Magness for reminding me of this point.)
The third term, “Hebrew,” is often used to refer to someone from ancient, biblical Israel, especially in the pre-monarchy period, and also serves as less ambiguous way of referring to the whole people given the ambiguity of “Israel” after the division of the kingdoms. Applied to contemporaries, it seems to carry an ethno-linguistic nuance throughout the Second Temple period, referring to a speaker (or perhaps reader) of a Semitic tongue, more commonly Aramaic but also potentially including what we call Hebrew today. Thus a Jew who only spoke Greek is not a “Hebrew,” but an Aramaic speaking Jew or Samaritan would be a Hebrew. The Samaritan, however, although a Hebrew, would not be a “Jew,” as the Samaritans, who identified themselves as the descendants of the people of the ancient northern kingdom of Israel, were not called or considered “Jews.” Thus a Hebrew is not necessarily an Israelite or a Jew, and a Jew or Israelite is not necessarily a Hebrew. Mapping “Hebrew” on the previous graphical illustration of terms results in something like the following figure:

Figure 5: Israelites, Jews, Benjaminites, and Hebrews

![Diagram of Israelites, Jews, Benjaminites, and Hebrews](image)

Similarly, although Jews are Israelites, not all Israelites are Jews, and some such as Philo or the Dead Sea Scroll sect even suggest that not all Jews are necessarily Israelites (see Fig. 6), adopting the biblical prophetic view that individuals can be cut off from Israel through
disobedience and unfaithfulness to the covenant. That is, although Jews are a subset of Israel, Israelite identity is something that can be lost, so Jewish identity does not (at least for many of these authors) necessarily guarantee Israelite identity.

Figure 6: Prophetic/Sectarian View of Israel and the Jews

Thus exactly who is included among “Israel” was ever in dispute, whether among Jews debating with other Jews or among Jews and Samaritans. The Samaritans present a special problem as they claim Israelite heritage but are not Jews, while Jewish assessments of Samaritan identity vary, with some Jews apparently accepting their claim to Israelite status and others rejecting it entirely. But at least some of those rejecting Samaritan claims seem not to have regarded them as gentiles; they were instead a tertium quid, something between Israelite and gentile. Samaritans, on the other hand, although disputing the validity and centrality of the

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1369 As noted by Knoppers, Jews and Samaritans, 220–21, “In the Matthean categorization of the other, the Samaritans are a tertium quid—neither Jews nor Gentiles, but something in between.” The attitudes of the rabbinic sages seem to have undergone a significant shift around the middle of the second century, with Rabban Simeon II ben Gamaliel II teaching that a Samaritan is “like an Israelite in all respects” (note: like an Israelite, not “like a Jew,” nor a Jew proper; pace Knoppers, Jews and Samaritans, 225) while his son Judah ha-Nasi taught that a Samaritans is “like a foreigner” (“כנכרי; t. Ter. 4:12, 14), the view carried forward in b. Ḥul. 6a). See also Lawrence H. Schiffman, “The Samaritans in Tannaic Halakhah,” JQR 75, no. 4 (1985): 323–350; Yitzhak Magen and N. Carmin, The Samaritans and the Good Samaritan, trans. Edward Levin, JSP 7 (Jerusalem: Israel Antiquities Authority, 2008); Pieter W. van der Horst, “Anti-Samaritan Propaganda in Early Judaism,” in Persuasion and Dissuasion in Early Christianity, Ancient Judaism, and Hellenism (Leuven: Peeters, 2003), 25–44; Reinhard Pummer, “Samaritanism in Caesarea Maritima,” in Religious Rivalries and the Struggle for Success in Caesarea Maritima, ed. Terence L. Donaldson, SCJ 8 (Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2000), 181–202.
Jerusalem sanctuary, apparently did not deny their Jewish counterparts the right to consider
themselves part of Israel (as in Figs. 7 and 8).\textsuperscript{1370}

\textit{Figure 7: All Israel Comprised of Jews and Samaritans}  \hspace{1cm} \textit{Figure 8: All Israel Including Jews, Samaritans, and Exiles}

In Fig. 7, Samaritans and Jews comprise the two parts of Israel, corresponding to the ancient northern and southern kingdoms of Israel; this seems likely to have been a view held by some Samaritans. In Fig. 8, Israel is comprised of Jews, Samaritans, and the exiles of Israel still awaiting restoration and return. This may have been the view of Ezra (though as previously discussed, the term “Samaritan” is anachronistic in that period) and was apparently the view of some rabbinic authorities at least until the third century CE. By contrast, many Jews in this period regarded Samaritans as non-Israelites, restricting Israel to Jews (whether all Jews or only some) combined with the Israelites still in exile awaiting restoration (see Figs. 2 and 6). This view, regarding the Samaritans as non-Israelites but looking forward to a future restoration of northern Israelite exiles, seems to have been shared by Josephus and the Dead Sea Scroll sect, among others.

\textsuperscript{1370} Hjelm, “Changing Paradigms,” 164.
Given its association with the larger covenantal group and eschatological expectations, it should therefore be no surprise that when Jewish groups do use “Israel” self-referentially, the use of that term tends to reflect eschatological, messianic, or political claims—as it does in Ezra/Nehemiah, 1 Maccabees, the Jewish Revolt of 66–70 CE, the Bar Kokhba rebellion of 132–35 CE, and of course early Christianity.1371 Often implied in such self-application is that although the opponents of such groups may be “Jews” in that they are descended from Judah (and therefore Israel), they may be regarded by the restorationist group as excluded from “Israel” in its sense of the “people of God.” Such a use of the term marks the group as a part of the chosen remainder of Israel in position for (or already participating in) the promised restoration, whereas their opponents are not part of the group in line for eschatological salvation. This also helps account for the preference for Israel terminology in Rabbinic literature (see excursus below), who are competing for that heritage with Christians, who claim to be restored Israel. Thus Christianity impacts later Jewish discourse, as these Rabbinic Jews also regard themselves as part of the congregation of Israel—albeit incomplete—while those outside are not truly Israelites.1372

In view of the distinctions between these terms, the presence of the Samaritans, and the context of restoration eschatology, rather than speaking of a variegated Judaism (or Judaisms) in the Second Temple period, it would be more precise to speak of multiple forms of Israelism as various Yahwistic groups fought over the heritage and legacy of Israel.1373 What ultimately

1371 Davies, “Old and New Israel,” 35, notes the “remarkable, detailed parallels” between the Dead Sea Scroll sect as presented in CD and the Ezra-Nehemiah stories in their presentation of Israel.

1372 See, for example, Daniel Boyarin, “Justin Martyr Invents Judaism,” CH 70, no. 3 (2001): 427–461.

1373 For more discussion of the term “Israelism,” see pp. 125–26 (esp. n. 396) above.
became Christianity arose in this formative context, with the nascent Jesus-movement arising as part of the competition over the legacy of Israel, as was what eventually became Judaism.

**Excursus: Beyond the Second Temple Period: Rabbinic Literature**

Although later Rabbinic Judaism deemphasized the restorationist apocalypticism that had played such a significant role in the disastrous revolts against the Romans, restoration eschatology by no means disappeared with the destruction of the Second Temple.\(^{1374}\) Quite the contrary, restoration eschatology remains a such significant factor that Chaim Milikowsky concludes, “God’s favor had been taken from Israel at the time of the Babylonian conquest, and not yet been returned. The Rabbis conceived of Israel being in a state of uninterrupted exile.”\(^{1375}\)


\(^{1375}\) Chaim Milikowsky, “Notions of Exile, Subjugation and Return in Rabbinic Literature,” in Scott, *Exile*, 265–296 (295). Milikowsky also cautions that the Rabbinic view of that present exile was complex, as many Rabbis also held that the nomistic relationship of the people to the land had been reestablished upon the return to the land and had not been sundered by the Roman destruction of the Second Temple. See also the discussion of *Seder Olam* in Milikowsky, “Trajectories of Return, Restoration and Redemption in Rabbinic Judaism: Elijah, the Messiah, the
Restoration eschatology is prominent, even central in the Amidah, the chief prayer recited in the traditional Jewish liturgy. Indeed, the petitionary portion of the Amidah (blessings four through sixteen) centers on the various elements of the promised restoration of Israel, starting with knowledge (fourth benediction; cf. Jer 31:34) and repentance/return (fifth; cf. Deut 30:2); followed by forgiveness (sixth; cf. Jer 31:34, 2 Chr 6:39), redemption (seventh; cf. Isa 52:2, Jer 31:11, etc.), healing (eighth; Isa 30:26, 53:5; Jer 3:22; 33:6; Hos 6:1, 14:4), gathering of exiles (tenth), and restoration of justice (eleventh; Isa 42, 41, 59:15–16; Jer 23:5–6); and finally concluding with the rebuilding of Jerusalem (thirteenth, originally the twelfth) and the reestablishment of David’s throne (fifteenth, originally fourteenth). The tenth benediction is especially noteworthy, as it asks YHWH to gather the exiles from the four corners of the earth, concluding, “sound a powerful horn for our freedom and raise a speedy banner for our ingathering. Blessed are you, Lord, who regathers the scattered of his people Israel.”

Israel in Rabbinic Literature

As was also the case in the prayers of the Second Temple period, the Amidah requests the regathering not of the Jews but of Israel. But unlike the bulk of Jewish material from the Second Temple period, Rabbinic literature prefers “Israel” language even when referring to the present

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1376 The obligation to recite the Amidah daily is attributed to R. Gamliel in m. Ber. 28a, b. Meg. 17b.

1377 On “redemption” as language of restoration from exile, see Pitre, Jesus, 408.

community.\textsuperscript{1379} On first glance, this is a sudden and difficult transition to explain, and at least two significant factors must be considered to account for the shift.\textsuperscript{1380}

The first factor is that Rabbinic discussions are thoroughly immersed in the biblical world and involve deep exegesis of biblical passages that pertain to Israel. These scholarly discussions are thus properly about Israel and thus use that terminology. Put another way, Rabbinic literature often occupies an imagined or hypothetical space that no longer exists in the present, debating things like what time the *terumah* (heave offering) should be eaten or when the morning and evening sacrifices should be offered. But of course the Temple no longer existed, and many of the rabbis themselves lived outside the land—their discussions, however, were timeless and applied not only to their own exilic context but to Israel both in the past and in the future. Much Rabbinic literature thus lives in a biblical past and eschatological future in much the same manner as that seen the Dead Sea Scrolls, often ruling on questions that could only be relevant after Israel’s restoration. In this sense, Rabbinic discussions remain fundamentally *hopeful* and even *eschatological*, continuing to look forward to a time in which Israel will be complete and proper halakha practiced.\textsuperscript{1381} Neusner summarizes the evidence this way: “A brief survey of the rich treatment of “Israel” in the various documents of rabbinic Judaism substantiates the claim

\textsuperscript{1379} As noted in Kuhn, *TDNT* 3:360–61, though again his insider/outsider explanation—particularly his claim, “We can see that the Rabbis were very conscious of the profound scorn and contempt with which other nations could treat the name "יהודי" (360)—is as aberrant as when applied to the earlier period.

\textsuperscript{1380} In addition to the two factors discussed here, other factors could of course be noted as well, such as the use of symbolic language in quasi-apocalyptic fashion (e.g., the use of “Edom” to refer to the Romans). But assessing the use of Israel terminology in Rabbinic and other Late Antique Jewish literature would be another major project (or several) on its own, so space and time will not permit a more complete examination here. For the purposes of this study, what matters is that Rabbinic literature continues to exhibit concern for the fate of the northern kingdom and shows awareness of the incomplete state of Israel in the present time.

\textsuperscript{1381} See Jacob Neusner, *Rabbinic Theology and Israeliite Prophecy: Primacy of the Torah, Narrative of the World to Come, Doctrine of Repentance and Atonement, and the Systematization of Theology in the Rabbis' Reading of the Prophets* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2008).
that “Israel” forms a supernatural and religious category, not a this-worldly, merely ethnic one.”

The second and likely more significant factor is the appropriation of Israel terminology by early Christians, who claimed to be the eschatological heirs to the promises of Israel, following the promised Messiah of Israel. Rather than allowing the Christians to lay claim to the heritage of Israel unopposed, non-Christian Jews claimed that title for themselves. Thus, much like the Dead Sea Scroll sect, the Bar Kokhba group, and the early Christians, the rabbis mark themselves and their communities as “Israelites,” the chosen people of God, though acknowledging that the term is used in less than its full sense when applied to the present as can be seen in the discussions of the northern tribes addressed below. Although they are only a portion of Israel and remain in exile, they are yet Israelites and will not allow another group to deny them of that heritage. Nevertheless, in spite of the preference for “Israel” terminology in much Rabbinic literature, the incomplete and unrestored state of Israel remained a topic of discussion, with differing responses to that problem ranging from a conviction that the northern tribes were no longer included as part of Israel (R. Aqiba and perhaps R. Joshua) to a continued expectation of Israel’s full restoration, which appears to be the majority opinion.

Israel’s Restoration in Rabbinic Literature

Despite the variety of opinions among the sages, one sentiment does appear to receive universal approval, a statement that Sanders places at the very center of the rabbinic “pattern of religion”: “All Israel has a part in the world to come” (m. Sanh. 10:1). Of course, this only

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1382 Sanders, "Patterns."


1384 Sanders, "Patterns."
opens the question of who is included within “Israel,” as that dictum is immediately followed by exceptions, specifying which groups or individuals claiming that title do not count as “Israel.” For the purposes of this study, what is most significant is that even the fate of northern Israel continues to be discussed well into the Tannaitic period in considering the answer to this question. The following debate between R. Gamaliel and R. Joshua in m. Yad. 4:4 is an especially good example:

On that day Judah, an Ammonite proselyte, came and stood before them in the house of study. He said to them, “Do I have the right to enter into the assembly?” Rabban Gamaliel said to him, “You are forbidden.” R. Joshua said, “You are permitted.” Rabban Gamaliel said to him [R. Joshua], “The scripture says, ‘An Ammonite or a Moabite shall not enter into the assembly of the Lord, even to the tenth generation’ [Deut 23:4].” R. Joshua responded, “But are the Ammonites or Moabites still in their own territory? Sennacherib, the king of Assyria, has long since come and mingled all the nations, as it is said, ‘In that I have removed the bounds of the peoples and have robbed their treasures and have brought down the inhabitants as a mighty one’ [Isa 10:13].” Rabban Gamaliel responded, “The scripture says, ‘But afterward, I will bring back the captivity of the children of Ammon’ [Jer 49:6], so that they will have already returned.” R. Joshua responded, “The scripture [also] says, ‘I will turn back the captivity of my people Israel and Judah’ [Jer 30:3]. Yet they have not already returned.” So they permitted him to enter the assembly. (m. Yad. 4:4)

R. Joshua’s argument, which the Mishna portrays as the winning side, depends upon the premise that Israel and Judah have not in fact been restored from the Assyrian deportation. The consequences of Assyria’s actions as R. Joshua understands them are even more noteworthy: Assyria not only deported these nations but “mingled” (בָּלֶבֶל) them, implying intermarriage and ethnic mixture. Thus R. Joshua implies that Ammonites no longer exist in an ethnic sense, since they are among the various nations that have been mixed together. The Assyrian exile is thus presumed never to have ended and to have resulted in a mixture of nations.

1385 That is, “May I marry a Jewish woman?” Cf. m. Yeb. 8, 3.
1386 Thanks to Diana Lipton for bringing this passage to my attention.
Not only does R. Joshua take it for granted that Israel has never been fully restored (note the citation of “Israel and Judah” together), that fact is so firmly established that he can use it as a foundation for allowing an “Ammonite” into the assembly—that is, to marry a Jewish woman. More significant than the halakhic outcome is the unstated (but staggering) implication concerning unreturned Israel in R. Joshua’s argument: if Ammon no longer exists because of the mixture caused by the Assyrian deportations, what about Israel? If the Israelites deported by Assyria intermingled and disappeared, what hope is there for their restoration? R. Joshua (and the Mishna) remains silent on that question in this passage.

This question of the fate of the Assyrian exiles is, however, taken up more fully as part of the discussion surrounding who is included among “all Israel” (m. Sanh. 10:1), with R. Aqiba and R. Eliezer specifically debating the fate of the northern tribes:

“The ten tribes are not destined to return, since it is said, ‘And he cast them into another land, as on this day’ [Dt. 29:28]. Just as the day passes and does not return, so they have gone their way and will not return,” the words of R. Aqiba. R. Eliezer says, “Just as this day is dark and then grows light, so the ten tribes for whom it now is dark—thus in the future it is destined to grow light for them.”

(m. Sanh. 10:3)

Like R. Joshua, both parties agree that the Assyrian exile never ended and that the ten tribes have not yet returned—that much is not in dispute. But they differ about the ultimate fate of these tribes, with R. Aqiba taking the view that they would never return (perhaps due to having mixed themselves with the other nations, as implied by R. Joshua) and R. Eliezer still expecting their future restoration, much like many of the texts from the Second Temple period discussed above. Interestingly, R. Eliezer is given the last word by the editor, which suggests his

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position was favored.\textsuperscript{1388} The discussion of this passage in the Bavli is complicated and includes several opinions but nevertheless indicates that at least some rabbis even from a much later period agreed with R. Eliezer and expected the restoration of the northern tribes:

[R. Yohanan:] R. Aqiba abandoned his love [for Israel in taking the position he did.] For it is written, “Go and proclaim these words toward the north and say, ‘Return, you backsliding Israel,’ says the Lord, ‘and I will not cause my anger to fall upon you, for I am merciful,’ says the Lord, ‘and I will not keep my anger forever’” (Jer 3:12). (b. Sanh. 110b)\textsuperscript{1389}

Appealing to Jeremiah 3, R. Yohanan thus continues to expect the restoration of the north nearly a millennium after they had first been scattered. His judgment is echoed by R. Simai:

R. Simai says, “It is said, ‘I shall take you to me for a people’ (Exo. 6:7), and it is said, ‘And I will bring you in [to the land]’ (Exo. 6:7). Their exodus from Egypt is compared to their entry into the land. Just as, when they came into the land, they were only two out of the original six hundred thousand [only Caleb and Joshua], so when they left Egypt, there were only two out of six hundred thousand.” Said Raba, “So it will be in the times of the Messiah, as it is said, ‘And she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the days when she came up out of the land of Egypt’” (Hos 2:17). (b. Sanh. 111a)

As seen numerous times in the literature of the Second Temple period, the opinion of R. Simai connects the restoration of the north with the advent of the messiah and the concept of a new exodus, basing his judgment on a citation from the prophet Hosea, whose prophecy concerned the northern kingdom of Israel. Thus even as late as R. Simai, the original context of Hosea’s prophecy was still taken seriously by some who expected that the northern tribes to whom Hosea prophesied would indeed be restored.

Hosea’s prophecy is further discussed in b. Pesah 87b, where R. Eliezer b. Pedath cites Hos 2:25, “I will sow her in the land” to argue that Israel was scattered among the nations to gain

\textsuperscript{1388} On the last word having favored status in the Mishnah, see e.g., Hauptman, \textit{Rereading the Mishnah}, 138; Lisa Grushcow, \textit{Writing the Wayward Wife: Rabbinic Interpretations of Sotah}, AJEC 62 (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 199.

\textsuperscript{1389} Translation from Neusner, \textit{The Mishnah}, punctuation slightly altered.
converts, since one only sows seed to gain an even greater harvest.\textsuperscript{1390} Modrzejewski notes a possible connection to the Greek of Hos 2:25 and thereby the term “diaspora,” but both he and Feldman understand R. Eliezer’s position as taking a positive view of the exile/diaspora as a rejoinder to negative Christian interpretations, mistaking the positive end result for a positive view of the present.\textsuperscript{1391} But as was demonstrated above, negative views of the diaspora were the default long before Christian polemics. Furthermore, the context of b. Pesaḥ 87b already presumes that the exile was the negative result of divine displeasure; the discussion then emphasizes God’s mercy even in the context of such judgment.\textsuperscript{1392} Like Josephus and most of the authors from the Second Temple period examined in this study, R. Eliezer argues that although exile was the unpleasant result of divine judgment, the effects of the diaspora would eventually be advantageous, remarkably including the multiplication of Israel via conversion, a point that will be relevant to our discussion of Paul below. Thus the point is that God works with both hands to achieve his purposes—even his punishments ultimately lead to greater blessings and glory for his people.

Finally, Genesis Rabbah, which was compiled c. 400 CE, provides yet another witness to a continued restoration eschatology concerned with the ten tribes even into the late fourth and early fifth century.\textsuperscript{1393} The sages debate whether Issachar in fact left a remnant behind after

\textsuperscript{1390} See Gafni, \textit{Land, Center, and Diaspora}, 35–40.

\textsuperscript{1391} Modrzejewski, “How to Be a Jew,” 71; Feldman, “Exile in Josephus,” 155. See the “Good From Evil” section in Chapter 6 above for further discussion of the distinction between positive results and positive circumstances.

\textsuperscript{1392} Gafni, \textit{Land, Center, and Diaspora}, 25, “The overwhelming consensus of rabbinic statements still maintains the biblical attitude, with the rabbis even pointing to historical precedents for the link between sin and exile.”

\textsuperscript{1393} Jacob Neusner, \textit{Genesis Rabbah: The Judaic Commentary to the Book of Genesis, A New American Translation}, vol 1. (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985), ix, further explaining: “Genesis Rabbah presents a deeply religious view of Israel’s historical and salvific life, in much the same way that the Mishnah provides a profoundly philosophical view of Israel’s everyday and sanctified existence…. That program of inquiry concerns the way in which, in the book of
Assyria took them into exile (98.11.2) and associate the tribe of Joseph with the overthrow of Rome, while Judah, Benjamin, and Levi are associated with the overthrow of Babylon, Media, and Greece, respectively. Even more significantly for the purposes of this study, Genesis Rabbah interprets Jacob’s blessing in Gen 48–49 with reference to the re-gathering of the ten tribes (98.2.4), and the reunification of all of Israel (98.2.5). The importance of this connection will become especially clear as we consider Paul’s arguments about the salvation of “all Israel” in the next part of this study.

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Genesis, God set forth to Moses the entire scope of Israel’s history among the nations and salvation at the end of days.”
PART IV: PAUL, THE GENTILES, AND THE RESTORATION OF ISRAEL
CHAPTER 11: PAUL’S RESTORATION ESCHATOLOGY

Restoration Eschatology in the Earliest Jesus Movement

In 1906, Albert Schweitzer argued that Jesus had intentionally gone to his own execution in the effort to initiate God’s eschatological intervention.\(^{1394}\) Over half a century later, Ben F. Meyer built upon Schweitzer, arguing that Jesus’ ultimate aim in going to the cross must have been the full restoration of all twelve tribes of Israel.\(^{1395}\) E. P. Sanders subsequently argued that restoration eschatology is at the root of the earliest Jesus traditions.\(^{1396}\) It has become increasingly recognized that the early Jesus movement was itself focused on the impending restoration of Israel, which the Gospels call the coming of the “kingdom of God.”\(^{1397}\)


\(^{1396}\) Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 106: “What seems virtually certain is that the conception of ‘the twelve’ goes back to Jesus himself (though his closest companions at any given moment may not have consisted precisely of twelve men). His use of the conception ‘twelve’ points towards his understanding of his own mission. He was engaged in a task which would include the restoration of Israel.”

Indications of restoration eschatology are so consistently present on nearly every page of the Gospels that a brief survey of Gospel traditions easily illustrates just how central Israel’s full restoration was to Jesus’ proclamation and that of his earliest followers:1398

1) The very term “gospel” (εὐαγγέλιον) echoes key restoration promises in the prophets (esp. Isa 40:9; 52:7; 61:1; cf. also Joel 3:5 LXX [2:32 MT]; Nah 1:15; Ps 67:12 LXX [68:11 MT]).1399

2) Jesus appoints twelve disciples (Mark 3:13–19 // Matt 10:1–4; Luke 6:12–16), “which either symbolizes, foreshadows, or inaugurates the reconstitution of the tribes.”1400

3) Even more plainly, Jesus promises his disciples that they will “sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel” (Matt 19:27–30 // Luke 22:28–30), a saying almost universally held to be authentic thanks to its potentially embarrassing implications, most notably the presence of Judas Iscariot among the group.1401

4) Matthew’s Jesus says he was sent (and sends his disciples) “to the lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Matt 10:6; 15:24; cf. Jer 50:6 MT [27:6 LXX]; Ps 119:176).1402

1398 Much but not all of the following list borrows from the list found in Ferda, "Ingathering of the Exiles," 156.


1401 Meier, “Jesus, the Twelve,” 386–87; McKnight, "Jesus and the Twelve," 208–09; Evans, “Continuing Exile,” 91–93.

1402 See Willitts, *Matthew's Messianic Shepherd-King* and the abbreviated article version in “Matthew's Messianic Shepherd-king: In Search of ‘the lost sheep of the house of Israel,’” *HTS* 63, no. 1 (2008): 365–382. Willitts highlights the territorial aspects of Jesus’ ministry and that Jesus “primarily conducted his mission within the former Northern Kingdom” (“Matthew's Messianic Shepherd-king,” 371) and that “the phrase refers to the oppressed and
5) Jesus calls himself the “good shepherd” (John 10:11–14; cf. Isa 40:10–11; Ezek 34:10–23; 37:24).\textsuperscript{1403}

6) The Lord’s Prayer (Matt 6:9–13; Luke 11:2–4) is replete with restoration motifs and pleas for Israel’s restoration, such as “hallowed be your name” (cf. Ezek 36:23; 39:7, 25), “your kingdom come,” and the plea to be spared from πειρασμός.\textsuperscript{1404}

7) The admonition to forgive a brother “seventy times seven” times (Matt 18:21–22) likely alludes to the seventy sevens of Daniel 9:24–26, understood as defining the limits of divine forgiveness.\textsuperscript{1405}


\textsuperscript{1405} This is a point to which I will return in a future project, as to my knowledge, this connection has not yet been recognized in scholarship. The phrase ἑβδομηκοντάκις ἕπτα is unusual, as the τάκις more naturally pairs with the second word of the combination, forming ἕπτάκις as in the previous clause, but the awkward phrase is better understood as an allusion to the ἑβδομηκοντάκις ἕβδομαξες of Dan 9:24, contra BDAG, “ἐβδομηκοντάκις,” 269. The oddity of the construction is the likely cause of the alteration of ἕπτα to ἕπτάκις by the original hand of D. This saying is in conversation with the divine limit established in Amos 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 13; 2:1, 4, 6, and developed further in ‘Avot de Rabbi Nathan 40a; b. Yoma 86b, 87a. The restoration predicted in Daniel 9 essentially reverses the judgment of Amos, with God’s forgiveness far exceeding his punishment of his people. For more on Dan 9 and its interpretation in early Judaism, see Dean R. Ulrich, “How Early Judaism Read Daniel 9:24–27,” OTE 27, no. 3 (2014): 1062–083.
8) The significance of the Samaritans in Luke and John (cf. Luke 9:52; 10:33; 17:16; John 4:1–42; 8:48) suggests a connection with the northern tribes and expectations for the restoration of all the tribes.\textsuperscript{1406}

9) Jesus’ promise that he would make his disciples “fishers of humans” (Mark 1:17 // Matt 4:19 // Luke 5:10; cf. Matt 13:41–42) echoes Jer 16:14–16, which promises that God would appoint “many fishers” to search out and restore Israel in a new exodus.\textsuperscript{1407}

10) Many will come “from east and west” (Matt 8:11–12 // Luke 13:29; cf. Ps 107:2–3; Isa 43:5) and eat with the patriarchs in the kingdom (cf. Isa 25:6–9).\textsuperscript{1408}


11) Numerous gathering/scattering passages allude to the exile and restoration, most notably the allusion to Zech 2:6 (MT 2:10) that the Son of Man will send his angels to “gather the elect from the four winds” (Mark 13:27 // Matt 24:31).

12) The institution narrative is full of Israelite restoration themes, presenting Jesus as inaugurating the new exodus (cf. Jer 16:14–18; 23:7–8) through his symbolic and prophetic actions.

Israelite restoration themes are by no means limited to the Gospels and appear elsewhere in the New Testament. The epistle of James, for example, is addressed “to the twelve tribes of Israel in the dispersion” (Jas 1:1), an especially remarkable statement in light of how the term Israel was used in this period. Similarly, Revelation depicts the “sealing” of 12,000 members from each of the twelve tribes of Israel (7:1–8), not just the three southern tribes (i.e., “the Jews”), and appears to identify this group with the multitude from every nation that praises God.
and the Lamb in 7:9–12. And although he does not explicitly mention “Israel” or the twelve tribes, 1 Peter 1:1 is addressed to “the elect strangers of the diaspora” (ἐκλεκτοῖς παρεπιδήμοις διασπορᾶς), again hinting at the restoration identity of the book’s addressees.

Nevertheless, that the earliest Jesus-movement was fundamentally an Israelite restorationist movement anticipating the end of the Age of Wrath and the ingathering of all Israel brings up at least one significant question, as summarized by Matthew Harmon:

> At least one question remains unanswered if Pitre is correct in his conclusion that Jesus understood his death as inaugurating the eschatological tribulation and bringing about the end of the exile: … the natural question is: Where are the twelve tribes?  

In many respects, this question is a reformulation of Schweitzer’s “undischarged task” referenced at the beginning of this study: how did a movement centered on Israel’s restoration develop into the primarily gentile phenomenon that came after Paul—how does one get from Jesus to Paul? Remarkably, this is also the same question governing the narrative of the Acts of the Apostles, which opens with the disciples asking the risen Jesus, “Is this the time that you restore the kingdom to Israel?” (Acts 1:6). That is, if Jesus came to redeem and restore Israel through his death, when will the restoration take place and why has it not already happened? This is not the place for a discussion of Acts’ solution, but suffice it to say that Acts proceeds to answer that question in a roundabout way, portraying the ingathering of the gentiles (most

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1416 Schweitzer, Paul and His Interpreters, v–vii; cf. p. 1 above.

notably through Paul’s ministry) as central to the fulfillment of the promises while the exalted Jesus sits enthroned at the right hand of God.\footnote{See Richard Bauckham, “The Restoration of Israel in Luke-Acts,” in Scott, Restoration, 435–487; Pao, Acts and the Isaianic New Exodus; Ravens, Luke and the Restoration of Israel; Tiede, “Exaltation of Jesus”; Jacob Jervell, Luke and the People of God.} Acts’ basic argument on this crucial point is, as will become clearer with a closer look at Paul, a development of Paul’s own understanding of the connection between Israel’s restoration and the ingathering of the nations, which the remainder of this study will examine in detail.

**Paul, the Jews, and “Israel”**

So far this study has established that, contrary to the assumption of most Pauline scholars today, Paul lived in a world in which it could not be assumed that “Israel” simply meant “the Jews.” Instead, it was generally understood that Israel was a group that included more than just the Jews, with the apparent relative absence of northern Israelites and presence of other claimants to Israelite identity such as the Samaritans (and eventually Christians) serving as a constant reminder of that broader meaning, and there was persistent debate about and competition over who exactly comprised or would comprise Israel. In addition, this distinction was closely tied to restoration eschatology, with most early Jewish literature evincing expectations of a future restoration of Israel extending beyond the current Jewish population and including northern Israelites to whom the label “Jew” was not applied. It should not be surprising that Paul’s own use of these terms corresponds with that of his contemporary interlocutors.\footnote{Many of the core arguments of this and the succeeding chapters were first presented in Staples, "All Israel" though that material is significantly expanded and in some places corrected.}
Indeed, rather than calling himself a “Jew,” Paul “insists on an independent tribal identity,” preferring to identify himself as “from the race of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin” (Phil 3:5; cf. Rom 11:1). Paul’s rebuke of Peter in Gal 2:15, “we are Jews by nature, not sinners from the gentiles,” stands as the one exception to this pattern but in fact further illustrates the principles in play. Indeed, the most noteworthy aspect of Gal 2:15 is that Paul does not distinguish himself and fellow insider Peter from gentiles with the term “Israelites” as would be expected in an insider/outsider paradigm but rather uses Ἰουδαῖοι, avoiding an Israelite/gentile dichotomy that would imply that “Israel” equals “Jews” in distinction from gentiles. An Israel/gentile dichotomy in this context would actually have undermined Paul’s argument for equal status for gentiles in the ἐκκλησία, since by virtue of not being Israelites, these gentiles would be second-class by definition. Indeed, that question of Israelite identity is precisely the matter of debate both at Antioch and in Galatians as a whole. Paul’s argument that Jews and gentiles are equal in the messianic eschatological ἐκκλησία therefore avoids an Israel/gentile dichotomy, at least potentially implying that both fall under the larger umbrella of Israel, God’s chosen people.

In this respect, Gal 2:15 corresponds to Paul’s typical use of Ἰουδαῖος, which occurs twenty-six times in twenty-four verses broadly scattered across the seven undisputed letters. 

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1421 In Staples, All Israel,” 378 n. 36, I explained this exception by citing the insider/outsider context of Paul’s remarks, but I now recognize that the insider/outsider model would actually expect Paul to use “inside” terminology when speaking with fellow insider Peter. Instead, Paul’s statement here is better explained without recourse to typical insider/outsider model, though he does set a distinction between Ἰουδαῖοι and “outsider” gentiles.

1422 Paul also uses cognates of Ἰουδαῖος to refer to the Jewish way of life on four occasions, all in Galatians (1:13, 14, 2:14 2x), and Ἰουδαῖος occurs once more in the disputed letters, in Col 3:11, which declares “there is no Greek and Ἰουδαῖος.”
Of these, all but two (2 Cor 11:24 and 1 Thess 2:14) either explicitly or implicitly contrast ὁι Ἰουδαίοι with Greeks or gentiles, as in the phrase “to the Jew first and also to the Greek” (Rom 1:16). Like other early Jewish literature, when Paul refers to his contemporaries, he prefers the term Ἰουδαῖος.

In contrast, Paul tends not to juxtapose “Israel” with Greeks or gentiles as he does with Ἰουδαῖος, nor does he use it to refer to the contemporary people. Instead, thirteen of the nineteen uses of “Israel” in the seven letters occur in Rom 9–11, and of the six occurrences outside Rom 9–11, three refer to biblical Israel (1 Cor 10:18; 2 Cor 3:7, 13), two to Paul’s (and his rivals’) status as descended from Israel (Phil 3:5; 2 Cor 11:22), and one to “the Israel of God” (Gal 6:16), a phrase that has engendered significant debate, especially given its apparent contrast with Israel κατὰ σάρκα in 1 Cor 10:18 (cf. also Rom 4:1, 9:3). Paul also opens his

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1424 Rom 9:30–31 stands as the lone possible exception and will be addressed more substantively below.

1425 The term occurs once more (Eph 2:12) in the disputed letters.

1426 As Hans Conzelmann, 1 Corinthians: A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians, Accordance electronic ed., trans. James W. Leitch, Hermeneia 67 (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1975), 172, notes, 1 Cor 10:18 “brings a ‘historical’ proof (but one extending into Paul’s own day),” alluding to Lev 7:6, 15; Deut 14:22–27, 18:1–4. Cf. also Gordon D. Fee, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, Accordance electronic ed., NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 470, who also notes, “the usage of κατὰ σάρκα … seems to imply that there is another Israel κατὰ πνεῦμα” (n. 38). Regardless, the inclusion of κατὰ σάρκα in this case ensures that Paul’s addressees not be contrasted with “Israel” but only “Israel κατὰ πνεῦμα.”

1427 Several options for the “the Israel of God” in Gal 6:16 have been proposed. Some have argued that the term refers to Jewish Christians, including Ernest de Witt Burton, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians, ICC (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1921), 357–59; Gottlob Schrenk, “Was bedeutet 'Israel Gottes'?” Jüd 5 (1949): 81–94; Richardson, Israel in the Apostolic Church, 80–81; Albert Vanhoye, Lettera ai Galati (Milan: Paoline, 2000), 147. Others have argued that the term refers to the church as a whole, including both Jews and
discussion of Israel in Rom 9–11 by declaring that “not all who are descended from Israel are Israel” (Rom 9:6), asserting that “Israel” should not be equated with those who are born Jews and further calling attention to his careful treatment of the term Israel. Moreover, as already mentioned, Paul calls attention to the tribal nature of Israel in Rom 11:1, highlighting his own Israelite heritage through the tribe of Benjamin. So whereas Paul regularly sets Jews and gentiles/Greeks opposite one another when referring to his contemporaries, he uses the term Israel differently and does not treat that term as synonymous with Ἰουδαῖος.1428

As is also the case in other early Jewish literature, distinction between these terms is best explained by the connection between Israel terminology and restoration eschatology. It is no coincidence that nearly seventy percent (13/19) of Paul’s uses of Israel terminology occurs in the one place in Paul’s letters where he systematically discusses Israel’s history and the hope of

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1428 Pace Harvey, True Israel, 7: “Paul’s use of ‘Israel’ is little different to his use of ‘Jew.’” Thus Dunn, Theology, 506, notes, “Strictly speaking, it is not possible to include ‘Greeks’ within ‘Jews’; that is simply a confusion of identifiers. But it might be possible to include ‘Gentiles’ within ‘Israel.’ And this is in effect what Paul attempts to do in Romans 9–11” See also Jewett, Romans, 575, 599, 601.
eschatological redemption.\textsuperscript{1429} The terminology shifts in these chapters because, like his predecessors and contemporaries, Paul distinguishes between the Jews and the larger body of Israel of which Jews are a portion, understanding that larger entity of Israel as awaiting redemption.\textsuperscript{1430} (It bears repeating at this point in the study: I am not suggesting that Israel refers exclusively or even primarily to the so-called “lost tribes” but rather that Israel is not limited to the Jews and is preferred when the whole people is in view.) Although it comes into full focus only in Rom 9–11, this restoration-eschatological perspective is foundational to Paul’s theology and gospel proclamation, which are deeply rooted in the hope for Israel’s redemption and the conviction that this restoration began with the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus.\textsuperscript{1431} Indeed,

\textsuperscript{1429} Pace the numerous scholars who apply Kuhn’s paradigm. E.g., Dunn, Romans 9–16, 682: “But now he turns to speak of his people’s own view of themselves, as himself an insider rather than as one looking in from the outside”; Moo, Romans, 560–61: “in contrast to the colorless, politically and nationally oriented title ‘Jew,’ ‘Israelite’ connotes the special religious position of members of the Jewish people.” Cf. also Jewett, Romans, 561–62; Otto Michel, Der Brief an die Römer, 5th ed., KEK 4 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1966), 227; Tomson, "Names," 288; Elliot, "Jesus the Israelite," 144; Luz, Das Geschichtsverständnis, 26–27, 269–70. Also note the more nuanced treatment of Gadenz, Called from Jews and Gentiles, 66–78, who notes that the shift in terminology indicates “that he is considering the situation not just of individual Jews but of Israel as a collective whole” (48) and acknowledges the broader twelve-tribe sense of the term “Israel” but nevertheless treats the two terms as fundamentally co-extensive for Paul, accepting the insider/outsider view. See also the discussion in chapter 1 above.

\textsuperscript{1430} Starling, Not My People, 204: “Paul’s reading of the end-of-exile texts represents a radicalisation of the elements within the Jewish interpretive tradition in which Israel’s unfaithfulness to the law was depicted as effecting a catastrophic discontinuity in the salvation-historical narrative. For Paul, as for some other Second Temple … readers of Scripture, Israel’s plight under the law’s curses can be depicted as nothing less than ‘death.’”

\textsuperscript{1431} That Romans is the only letter to a church Paul did not found and thus required explanation on points he could assume with his own communities probably accounts for why this framework comes into the center of the frame only in Rom 9–11. Restoration eschatology is foundational through the other letters, but foundations are rarely visible once a building project is further along. Note the similar observation about the centrality of covenantal nomism in early Judaism in Sanders, Paul and Palestinian Judaism, 420–21. For restoration eschatology as foundational for Paul’s theology, see, e.g., Wells, Grace and Agency, 209–292; Starling, Not My People, 209–212; Gadenz, Called from Jews and Gentiles, 41–63, 75, 297–303; Waters, End of Deuteronomy, 248–253; Wagner, Heralds of the Good News, 255–56; Frank Thielman, From Plight to Solution: A Jewish Framework for Understanding Paul's View of the Law in Galatians and Romans, NovTSup 61 (Leiden: Brill, 1989); Hafemann, “Paul and the Exile of Israel.”
Paul’s characterization of his ministry in “new covenant” terms is itself a strong indicator of the central role of restoration eschatology in his thought.\textsuperscript{1432}

**Paul’s Gospel: The New Covenant Fulfilled**

Because of a widely-held view that Paul does not operate within a covenantal framework,\textsuperscript{1433} the central importance of Jeremiah’s new covenant promise to Paul’s gospel is

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\textsuperscript{1432} See Wells, *Grace and Agency*, 25–62.

\textsuperscript{1433} For example, Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 543–556, concludes that Paul rejects Jewish covenantal nomism in favor of a non-covenantal participationist eschatology. Similarly, Ellen Juhl Christiansen, *The Covenant in Judaism and Paul: A Study of Ritual Boundaries as Identity Markers* (Leiden: Brill, 1995), argues that covenant has ceased to serve as a primary category for Paul. Stanley, *Paul and the Language of Scripture*, 169, after observing that in the few places Paul actually uses διωθήκη, the idea tends to be “presupposed” rather than developed, concludes that covenant plays a “surprisingly limited” role in Paul’s theology. See also the similar conclusion on similar grounds of James D. G. Dunn, “Did Paul Have a Covenant Theology? Reflections on Romans 9.4 and 11.27,” in *The Concept of the Covenant in the Second Temple Period*, eds. Stanley E. Porter and Jacqueline C. R. de Roo, JSJSup 71 (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 287–307. This is, however, precisely backwards—the very fact that a covenantal framework could be presupposed is an indicator of its foundational role in Paul’s thought in exactly the same way Sanders, observes about Rabbinic Judaism: “it is the fundamental nature of the covenant conception which largely accounts for the relative scarcity of appearances of the term “covenant” in Rabbinic literature” (Paul and Palestinian Judaism, 420–21; his emphasis). Sanders notes that “similar observations could be made about most of the rest of the literature” from the period between 200 BCE—200 CE (421), but nevertheless does not himself apply the same insight to Paul. In keeping with this insight, Stanley E. Porter, “The Concept of Covenant in Paul,” in Porter and Roo, *The Concept of the Covenant in the Second Temple Period*, 269–285, however, protests that a concept like covenant cannot be linked to one lexical item alone but must be studied employing semantic-domain methodology to assess the full scope of the concept, concluding that when this is done, the concept of covenant may be much more significant for Paul than typically recognized. There is, however, some confusion with respect to that semantic domain as well. For example, Beker, *Paul the Apostle*, 264, remarkably argues that Paul goes out of his way in his gospel proclamation to “protect against the idea of [covenantal] reciprocity between God and his people” through the use of “unilateral” grace language—this despite the fact that the concept of reciprocity is inextricably embedded in the term χάρις. On χάρις as a term of reciprocity, see especially Zeba A. Crook, *Reconceptualising Conversion: Patronage, Loyalty, and Conversion in the Religions of the Ancient Mediterranean*, BZNW 130 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2004), 132–147; Bonnie McClachlan, *Age of Grace: Charis in Early Greek Poetry* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993). See also Barelay, “By The Grace of God”; “Grace within and Beyond Reason”; Francis Cairns, “‘ΕΠΟΣ in Pindar’s First Olympian Ode,” *Hermes* 105 (1977): 129–132; Troels Engberg-Pedersen, “Gift-Giving and Friendship: Seneca and Paul in Romans 1–8 on the Logic of God's Χάρις and Its Human Response,” *HTR* 101, no. 1 (2008): 15–44; Gabriel Herman, *Ritualised Friendship and the Greek City* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Jason Whitlark, “Enabling χάρις: Transformation of the Convention of Reciprocity by Philo and in Ephesians,” *PRSS* 30, no. 3 (2003): 325–358. James R. Harrison, *Paul’s Language of Grace in Its Graeco-Roman Context*, WUNT 2/172 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), on the other hand, recognizes that χάρις is an inherently reciprocal term but then remarkably tries to insulate Paul’s own views from that reciprocity, arguing that despite using language of benefaction throughout his letters, “Paul felt that all such views [that is, the universal understanding of χάρις in the Graeco-Roman world] stripped the Abrahamic Covenant of grace in its unilateral and unmerited aspect … and obscured its fulfilment in the glorious Covenant of the Spirit” (346). It is unclear what “grace” could even mean in this context once it no longer translates χάρις, and Harrison misconstrues the Hebrew tradition as unilateral rather than reciprocal (thus stripping it of the fundamental nature and concept of covenant) and assumes Paul sided with that alleged Hebrew view. For Paul as a covenantal thinker, see
often overlooked, with the new covenant only trotted out to emphasize that Paul’s proclamation has superseded and terminated the Mosaic covenant. But new covenant language and themes consistently emerge at key points throughout the Pauline letters. Paul even frames his own apostleship in terms paralleling Jeremiah’s prophetic ministry. Like Jeremiah (and Isaiah), Paul claims he was “set apart and called by [God’s] grace even from [his] mother’s womb” (Gal 1:15; cf. Jer 1:5; Isa 49:1, 6), and Paul’s role as “apostle of nations” (Rom 11:13; cf. Gal 2:8–9; Rom 15:16, 18) not only echoes Jeremiah’s commission as “prophet to the nations” (Jer 1:5) but implies that the good news Paul proclaims is the fulfillment of the promises of the prophets. Paul states as much when defending his ministry to the Corinthians, identifying himself and his co-workers as “servants of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the spirit” (2 Cor 3:6), a covenant “written … on tablets of human hearts” (3:3; cf. Jer 31:33 [38:33 LXX]). Moreover, 


1434 See, e.g., William J. Dumbrell, Romans: A New Covenant Commentary (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2005), ix.

1435 Caroline Johnson Hodge, “Apostle to the Gentiles: Constructions of Paul's identity,” BibInt 13, no. 3 (2005): 270–288 (276): “By echoing the language of these prophetic texts, Paul links himself to the tradition of Israelite prophets whose task it was to go to the nations…. Thus Paul’s work as a teacher of gentiles is a part of the larger story of Israel, not a break from it.” Cf. also Krister Stendahl, Paul Among Jews and Gentiles (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976), 8–11; Lane, "Covenant," 6–7; A. M. Denis, "L’Apôtre Paul, prophète 'messianique' des Gentiles: Étude thématique de l Thess. II,1–6," ETHL 33 (1957): 245–318.

Paul describes his authority in terms of “building up” and “tearing down” (2 Cor 10:8; 13:10; cf. Gal 2:18), again echoing Jeremiah’s call to tear down and build up (Jer 1:10; cf. Jer 31:28 [38:28 LXX]).

An appeal to the promised new covenant stands at the forefront of the argument in Romans, which references those who manifest “the law written on their hearts” (Rom 2:15) and argues that the circumcision that truly matters is “of the heart by the spirit, not by the letter” (Rom 2:29). Paul echoes this concept again later, asserting that those in Christ “serve in newness of the spirit and not in oldness of letter” (7:6), and finally comes full circle by concluding his argument with yet another reference to the covenant through which Israel’s sins would be taken away (Rom 11:27; cf. Jer 31:34 [38:34 LXX]).

Finally, the distinctive reference to the new covenant in Paul’s version of the institution narrative (1 Cor 11:23–25) further confirms its foundational role in Pauline theology—the new covenant is unambiguously embedded into ritual most central to community identity practiced every time the community gathered together as an ἐκκλησία (11:18). As Paul’s communities “proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes,” they are reminded that the Lord’s death specifically inaugurated the new covenant in which they stand. It is difficult to imagine anything more central to Paul’s communities than this ritual and its interpretation.

1437 Lane, "Covenant," 9.
1438 For this passage as especially tied to the new covenant promise, see Wells, Grace and Agency, 224–25.
1439 See, Fitzmyer, Romans, 625; Jewett, Romans, 705.
1440 Stanley, Paul and the Language of Scripture, 169, dismisses the significance of the reference to the new covenant here on the grounds that Paul merely “reflects traditional language,” but his case is weakened by fact that none of the parallel institution narratives aside from the Western non-interpolation in the longer reading of Luke directly mentions ἡ καινὴ διαθήκη. On the Lukan variant, see Bart D. Ehrman, The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture: The Effect of Early Christological Controversies on the Text of the New Testament (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 198–209. Stanley’s case is also weakened by Paul’s construction of the opposite concept “old covenant” in 2 Cor 3:14, further suggesting that “new covenant” was a formative category for Paul.
Once its central role in Paul’s proclamation has been recognized, it is critical to remember that Jeremiah’s prophecy of a new covenant is not about gentile salvation but is rather a promise of the reconstitution and restoration of all Israel—that is, both Israel and Judah. Jeremiah is especially concerned with the fate of the northern kingdom, and the new covenant prophecy is part of a larger section (the “Book of Consolation”) focused on the return of the northern kingdom and reunification of all twelve tribes, picking up with 30:3 (37:3 LXX), “‘For behold, days are coming,’ says YHWH, when I will restore the fortunes of my people Israel and Judah.” Jeremiah 31 (38 LXX) specifically calls for Ephraim, whom Jeremiah recognizes as “no more” (31:15 [38:15 LXX]), to return from among the nations (31:1–22; [38:1–22 LXX]). The promise of “a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah” (31:31; 38:31 LXX) comes in this context, with the prophet specifically emphasizing that this restoration will include and reunite both houses of Israel. As was demonstrated in the first sections of this study, this promise remained especially important among restorationists ranging from Ezra to Philo of Alexandria to the sect behind the Dead Sea Scrolls.

The Curse and End of the Torah

Like many other Jewish restorationists, Paul’s arguments presume a traditional restoration-eschatological framework, including Israel’s special covenant status and present plight, consistently portraying the people of God as under the “curse of the Torah” (Gal 3:10–13; Deut 27–32; Lev 26) and in need of deliverance “from this present evil age” (Gal 1:4; cf. Rom 12:2).1441 David Brondos summarizes:

1441 For a fuller discussion of Paul’s reference to the “curse of the Torah” in the context of Deut 27–30 and restoration eschatology, see Waters, End of Deuteronomy, 80–113, who notes that “Paul’s argument bears striking formal resemblance to Qumran interpretation [particularly in 1QS 2].” See also Lincicum, Paul and the Early Jewish Encounter, 142–47; Thielman, From Plight to Solution, 65–72; Jeffrey Wisdom, Blessing for the Nations and the Curse of the Law: Paul’s Citation of Genesis and Deuteronomy in Gal 3.8–10, WUNT 2/133 (Tübingen: 477
While Paul never presents this story of redemption in systematic fashion in his epistles, those epistles give ample evidence that he understood it in the same way [as that witnessed in other early Jewish literature and the primitive Christian proclamation]. God had promised to act to bless and redeem his people since the days of Abraham. Yet at present they had not been redeemed, and were under the curse of the law due to their sins and disobedience.1442

The basic point of disagreement concerns whether the eschatological promises have indeed begun to be fulfilled—and if so, how. For Paul, Christ died to put an end to the old age of wrath characterized by sin and inaugurate a new era of God’s favor characterized by obedience and faithfulness mediated through the spirit resulting in the blessings promised to God’s people of old.1443 Every piece of this equation is reflective of the central role of restoration eschatology in Paul’s thought.1444 It should be noted that Paul is less concerned with the state of being


1444 It is worth noting that most modern readings of Paul’s concept of “salvation” continue to presume an essentially Protestant perspective often characterized by an introspective individualism foreign to the apostle. See Stendahl, “Introspective Conscience.” Even “new perspective” readings still typically tend toward Protestant paradigms concerned not with Israel’s redemption but with the salvation of individuals. By contrast, a framework of Israelite restoration eschatology is more compatible with a first-century context, though it may be less familiar or relevant to modern concerns.
removed from the land than the “ongoing reality of the Deuteronomic curses,” of which absence from the land is only one example. Israel’s plight under the curse is itself a symptom, a byproduct of Israel’s moral incompetence and unfaithfulness, the root problem with which Paul is chiefly concerned.

Paul therefore presents his gospel not as “law-free” but rather as the only way to accomplish full, faithful obedience to God, reversing the cause of Israel’s current plight. That is, Paul’s gospel proclaims that faithful obedience to YHWH requires the new heart and the indwelling holy spirit granted to the followers of the resurrected Christ. Whereas Israel’s moral impairment meant the Torah could never grant what it promised (Rom 8:3), God has acted according to his promise of eschatological intervention in providing a new heart and new spirit (Ezek 11:19, 36:36; cf. Jer 31:33) capable of exceeding the righteousness that could be

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1446 Thus, as observed by Hafemann, “Paul and the Exile of Israel,” 367–68 n. 73, Paul does not tend to use the Septuagintal vocabulary of “exile” (e.g., ἀιχμαλωσία, ἀποικεσία, μετοικεσία, διασπορά), though Hafemann notes the use of ἀιχμαλωτιζέων in Rom 7:23 may be an exception, albeit metaphorized to speak of captivity to the “law of sin.”


1449 Thus Paul does not regard Torah-keeping as fundamentally opposed to faith in Christ. On the contrary, like his opponents, Paul presumes that the requirements of the Torah must be fulfilled; the debate concerns the proper means of fulfilling the Torah’s requirements. Paul argues that his gospel provides the means of such fulfillment, while those attempting to keep the Torah through other means fall short—it is not their Torah-keeping that Paul argues is the problem, it is that they do not in fact keep the Torah adequately. In this regard, Paul’s arguments are no different than the halakhic disputes between other Jewish sects, which similarly concern the proper means of fulfilling the Torah.
accomplished through the written Torah (Rom 8:2–4, 9–17; 2 Cor 3:4–18). Thus Christ is the “goal of the Torah” (Rom 10:4), having fulfilled the Torah’s requirements to end to the wrath brought about by the law (cf. Rom 4:15; 3:19–31) and fulfilling the promises of redemption and restoration at the end of Deuteronomy and further clarified in the prophets.

Absent the specific details about their present fulfillment through Jesus (the very thing under debate), these declarations by no means represent a departure from Judaism but rather correspond to the same restoration-eschatological framework undergirding the various forms of Judaism in his day. The claim that Israel is currently under the curses of the Torah due to disobedience and thus requires divine intervention and restoration, including the provision of moral competence exceeding what could be attained through the written Torah would not have been controversial. It is simply a restatement of the basic structure of restoration eschatology presumed by most Jews of Paul’s day. Indeed, even Paul’s portrayal of the written Torah as only an approximation of the heavenly Torah revealed to Moses (2 Cor 3), the δικαίωματα τοῦ νόμου (Rom 2:26, 8:4, cf. 1:32), is reminiscent of Jubilees’ distinction between the “heavenly tablets” (3:10, 31, 5:13, 6:17, etc.; cf. I En 81:1–2, 93:2, 103:2, 106:9) revealed to Moses and their earthly approximation in the written Torah. In the same way that Jubilees puts the readers in

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1450 As noted by Sanders, *Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People*, 38, this verse has received perhaps as much attention as any single verse in Paul, and the secondary literature is too extensive to even approximate here. For a detailed study of this verse and the surrounding context, including engagement with prior scholarship, see Bekken, *The Word is Near You*, 153–228. See also the brief discussion of this verse in context on pp. 532–35 below.

Moses’ shoes on Sinai, Paul argues that those who turn to Christ no longer must go through Moses since they stand on the same footing before the Lord that Moses did (2 Cor 3:12–18).\textsuperscript{1452} In this respect, Sanders’ insistence that Paul reasons from solution to plight,\textsuperscript{1453} while correct on a personal level given Paul’s “robust conscience,”\textsuperscript{1454} stands for some revision on a corporate level, since restoration eschatology by definition involves a recognition of Israel’s plight and the need for a divine solution to that plight—as Sanders himself recognizes elsewhere.\textsuperscript{1455} But Paul is not writing as a philosopher concerned with the plight of humanity in general but rather from the perspective of a first-century Jew looking forward to Israel’s restoration and the fulfillment of Israel’s mission to be a “light to the nations.”\textsuperscript{1456} Thus although

\textsuperscript{1452} Ben Sira similarly suggests that the one who has wisdom has access to the source of Torah. See Wright, “Jubilees, Sirach and Sapiential Tradition.”

\textsuperscript{1453} Sanders, Paul and Palestinian Judaism, 442–47. Others, particularly in the so-called “apocalyptic” school, have especially emphasized Sanders’ solution-to-plight principle, most notably Douglas Campbell, who critiques Sanders for being insufficiently consistent on this point. See Campbell, Deliverance of God, 439–440. On the “apocalyptic” perspective, see the section on “Israelite Restoration Eschatology” in Chapter 3 above.

\textsuperscript{1454} Stendahl, “Introspective Conscience,” 80.

\textsuperscript{1455} E.g., Sanders, Jesus and Judaism, 77–119. This distinction between personal conscience and Israel’s corporate need of redemption helps account for Sanders’ recognition that despite his solution-centered mindset, Paul often formulates prospective arguments in his letters: “Paul actually came to the view that all men are under the lordship of sin as a reflex of his soteriology: Christ came to provide a new lordship for those who participate in his death and resurrection. Having come to this conclusion about the power of sin, Paul could then argue from the common observation that everybody sins—an observation which would not be in dispute—to prove that everyone is under the lordship of sin. But this is only an argument to prove a point, not the way he actually reached his assessment of the plight of man” (Sanders, Paul and Palestinian Judaism, 499, his emphases; cf. also Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People, 4). As Campbell, Deliverance of God, 439–440, explains, “this is an extremely difficult hypothesis to sustain; the key contention must fly in the face of the thrust of the text, and is located itself in an uncertain domain (i.e., Paul’s underlying reasoning and intentions).” A better solution is to understand Paul’s prospective arguments in light of Israel’s corporate plight through the lenses of restoration eschatology, in keeping with the evidence of numerous other Jewish authors applying the same types of arguments and prospective cases, with the difference being Paul’s particular solution, as summarized by Hafemann, “Paul and the Exile of Israel,” 369 n. 74: “The ‘plight’ Paul fought as a Pharisee for the purity of his people, even to the point of persecuting Christians, is the ‘plight’ he still fights as an apostle to the Gentiles.” (Note, however, that Paul does not claim to be a former Pharisee but a Pharisee.) See also Thielman, From Plight to Solution; Wright, “Romans 9–11 and the ‘New Perspective,’” 43–44; Donaldson, “The ‘Curse of the Law,’” 102–07; Starling, Not My People, 204, 210.

\textsuperscript{1456} Cf. Johnson Hodge, “Olive Trees and Ethnicities,” 88–89; Lloyd Gaston, Paul and the Torah (Vancouver: University of British Columbia, 1987), 6. Even Sanders’ corrective program regarding Paul and Judaism, while critically important, still shares the soteriological assumptions of Protestant Christianity inasmuch as the primary
Sanders is correct that Paul was not seeking personal salvation arising from some deficiency within Judaism or his own inability to keep the Torah, Paul did assume that Israel stood in need of the redemption promised by the Prophets. Such a view of Israel’s plight would hardly have been controversial among Jews of Paul’s day, though one might wonder whether Sadducees, who reportedly did not believe in the resurrection, would have shared the eschatology of most of their contemporaries.\textsuperscript{1457} What was controversial was the claim that the eschatological hopes of Israel were already being fulfilled through Jesus, who had been declared Lord and messiah at the resurrection (cf. Rom 1:4).\textsuperscript{1458} Even more controversial was Paul’s insistence that non-Jews could consequently be included among the recipients of these promises without circumcision.

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\textsuperscript{1457} Acts 23:6 presents Paul creating a debate among Pharisees and Sadducees over precisely this question of restoration and resurrection (ἐλπίδος και ἀναστάσεως). Pace Joseph A. Fitzmyer, \textit{The Acts of the Apostles: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary}, Accordance electronic ed., AB 31 (New York: Doubleday, 1998), 718, this phrase should not be understood as a hendiadys, nor is it “hope in the resurrection.” Rather, the “hope” referred to here must be the restoration of Israel, which was “bound up with the resurrection of the dead.” F. F. Bruce, \textit{Commentary on the Book of Acts}, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), 428. Cf. the parallel in Acts 26:6–7, where Paul explains that he is on trial “for the hope of the promise to our fathers … to which our twelve tribes hope to attain” (ἐπ᾽ ἐλπίδι εἰς τοὺς πατέρας ἡμῶν ἐπαγγελίας … εἰς ἣν τὸ δωδεκάφυλον ἡμῶν … ἐλπίζω καταντῆσαι).

\textsuperscript{1458} Hafemann, “Paul and the Exile of Israel,” 369 n. 75: “This emphasis on an inauguration in Christ, short of consummation, is, of course, what separates Paul’s view of Israel’s restoration from exile from that found in most of post-biblical Judaism on the one hand, and in the Qumran writings on the other.”
Why Gentiles?

That Israel’s restoration is being fulfilled through Jesus, while controversial, is therefore exactly the sort of thing one might expect from someone operating within a typical restoration-eschatological framework. But the second part, the equal incorporation of the gentiles among the redeemed, is surprising enough that Paul himself labels this incorporation of gentiles a “mystery.”1459 After all, while Paul maintains that he is preaching the good news of the fulfillment of the new covenant, the new covenant is made with “the house of Israel and the house of Judah” (Jer 31:31 [38:31 LXX]), with no overt mention of gentile inclusion in that covenant.1460 So if Paul believed the new covenant was being fulfilled, one would expect him to be proclaiming the miraculous return of the northern tribes, not obsessing over the “mystery” of the justification and inclusion of gentiles in the new covenant ἐκκλησία.1461

That many gentiles would serve YHWH in the eschaton was a common restoration-eschatological expectation, but the incorporation of gentiles in the covenantal people—and without circumcision—-involves a radical shift. Given that he is ostensibly proclaiming the fulfillment of the new covenant, Paul is at pains to explain why he is so adamant about the

1459 On μυστήριον in the New Testament and early Christianity, see Lang, Mystery, who notes that the language marks something that was once hidden but is now revealed to the inside group, establishing a framework for new revelation with claims of antiquity. Paul’s language here is similar to the “mystery” (رمز) language found in the Dead Sea Scrolls, which take a similar apocalyptic perspective. Cf. also Thomas, The “Mysteries” of Qumran; Gladd, Revealing the Mysterion; Bockmuehl, Revelation and Mystery; Aune, “Charismatic Exegesis”; Brown, The Semitic Background. See further p. 414 n. 1293 above.

1460 This is a key point often missed when gentile inclusion in the new covenant is addressed. Wright, for example, says, “the new covenant is emphatically not a covenant in which ‘national righteousness’ … is suddenly affirmed. It is the covenant in which sin is finally dealt with” (Wright, Climax, 251). But no rationale is given for why this (quite national) covenant suddenly applies to the gentiles, raising an obvious question given the terms stated in the covenant promise itself.

1461 One could argue that it is more precise to say “circumcision-optional” than circumcision-free,” since Paul argues that “neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is efficacious” (Gal 5:6). He seems to have no objection to circumcision itself, but vigorously protests the idea that it is necessary for a gentile to be included as an equal in the people of God. Thus gentiles should be incorporated “circumcision-free,” thus my use of this term here and elsewhere.
circumcision-free incorporation of gentiles when the new covenant promises Israel’s restoration, not gentile salvation. This question is central throughout Romans, climaxing in Rom 9–11 with Paul’s explanation of the mysterious relationship between the incorporation of gentiles and Israel’s salvation. That is to say, at its core, Romans is Paul’s defense of how gentile incorporation in the ἐκκλησία is inextricably linked to Israel’s salvation and is proof of God’s faithfulness to Israel.

Paul ties Israel’s restoration together with the redemption of the nations as he begins the letter, declaring that he was set apart as an apostle of the “good news of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets” (1:1b–2), specifically “to bring about the obedience of πίστις in all the nations for his name’s sake.” He repeats this connection yet again in what is widely regarded as the thesis statement (propositio) of the letter, declaring that the gospel “is the power of God for salvation to all who are faithful, to the Jew first and also to the Greek” (1:16). The next eleven chapters develop this thesis more fully, offering an extended argument that gentile inclusion in the new covenant is a necessary component of the promised salvation and restoration of all Israel.

The Law on the Heart: Restoration Requires Justification

Paul establishes this connection between gentile inclusion and Israel’s restoration right from the start—remarkably, Paul’s first major argument for the inclusion of gentiles without physical circumcision involves the application of the new covenant promise to gentiles. To set up

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this argument, Paul first declares God’s righteous judgment against a litany of offenses typical of
gentiles in Jewish literature (Rom 1:18–32).\footnote{Building on Sanders’ puzzlement with how to fit Rom 1:18–2:29 into Paul’s larger theological paradigm (the
passage is relegated into an appendix in Sanders, Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People, 123–135, where he
concludes it must have been a “synagogue sermon” [129]), Douglas Campbell has argued that this section should
not be regarded as Paul’s own voice but is rather an ironic recitation of the views of Paul’s opponents in order to
demonstrate their absurdity (Quest, 233–261; Deliverance of God, 530–547). Campbell notes that Paul never
explicitly states that 1:18–3:20 is operative or reflective of his own views and suggests this undermines such
readings (Deliverance of God, 339–341), but Paul also nowhere explicitly states that these passages do not reflect
his perspective, which seems a much bigger problem, since readers can generally assume an author is presenting his
own perspective unless told otherwise. Campbell asks, “Is it more likely that Paul, the preacher of a law-free Gospel
to the Gentiles, is citing traditional Jewish Propaganda Literature like the Wisdom of Solomon, or that his law-
observing opponents, the Teachers are? Clearly the latter” (Quest, 258). Regardless of what we may think Paul was
likely to have said, Romans 1:18–32 itself provides evidence that Paul did cite such literature. On the other hand, we
do not have enough material from Paul’s opponents to know whether the probability of their use of such material
exceeds 100%. Nevertheless, I do agree that Paul here cites material with which his opponents would agree, but it
does not follow that he objects to these statements himself. Instead, Paul opens his argument by establishing crucial
points of agreement, appropriating his opponents’ foundation from the start. This sort of subversive argument is
precisely what Epictetus recommended: “How did Socrates act? He would force his interlocutor to be his witness.…
He would make the consequences which followed from the preconceptions so clear that everyone recognized the
contradiction involved and therefore abandoned it” (Diatr. 2.12.4–5; 283–89; e.g. Plato, Symposium 199d–201c).
Such a move is precisely what we should expect from Paul, who exhibits this tendency to argue from common
ground elsewhere. In 1 Cor 1:11–3:9, for example, one might expect him to say, “of course you should all follow
Paul (or Jesus!)” and argue against the other parties. Instead, he takes a more rhetorically difficult path and argues
for all to agree on common ground—in accord, of course, with his own gospel (with which the other two would
certainly not be in disagreement). But this style of argument does not work if one does not start from shared
preconceptions but instead by challenging embedded base-level assumptions as Campbell suggests. A “common
ground” reading does, however, make sense of the first person plurals in Rom 2:2; 3:5; 3:9, as Paul speaks for both
himself and his interlocutor on points of fundamental agreement. Cf. the conclusion of Stanley K. Stowers, The
Diatribe and Paul’s Letter to the Romans (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1981), 76–77, that the use of diatribe is not a
polemical tool but rather a pedagogical tool designed “to transform the students, to point out error and to cure it.”

But for those operating within a restoration-eschatological framework, the central problem is
precisely that Israel did not live up to that election but turned from God to idolatry in exactly the
manner outlined in Rom 1:18–32, committing the same sorts of sins as the other nations and
consequently falling under the curses of the covenant, forfeiting her special position. Thus Rom 1:18–32 not only applies to gentiles but tells the story of Israel, which serves as the microcosmic image of the cosmic problem with humanity, repeatedly condemned by the prophets for turning from the living God to lifeless idols. Indeed, by violating the Torah and falling under its curses, the house of Israel has become “nothing” (2 Kgs 17:15), indistinguishable from the other nations that also stand under judgment for their sins.

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1465 Paul notably amends his source material in his account of unrighteousness in Rom 1 to allude to the sins of Israel throughout the biblical history, hinting that Israel has been by no means distinct from the nations in these respects. For example, as noted by Kathy L Gaca, “Paul's Uncommon Declaration in Romans 1:18–32 and Its Problematic Legacy for Pagan and Christian Relations,” HTR 92, no. 2 (1999): 165–198 (171–77), whereas previous polemics against the nations had characterized them as ignorant, Paul ascribes knowledge to the apostates of 1:18–32 and “boldly classifies the truth-suppressing polytheists as though they were Israel in apostasy, and not merely generic rebels against God” (172). Moreover, the allusions to the Golden Calf episode further implicates Israel as complicit in the same sins as the rest of humanity—indeed, Israel serves as the microcosm for the disobedience of all humanity, sinning “in the likeness of Adam’s misstep” (Rom 5:14). Thus Paul allusively lays the foundation for the explicit accusation of Rom 2 by wrapping Israel’s story of apostasy into the story of humanity in general. See especially Jonathan A. Linebaugh, “Announcing the Human: Rethinking the Relationship Between Wisdom of Solomon 13–15 and Romans 1.18–2.11,” NTS 57, no. 2 (2011): 214–237. Contra Stanley K. Stowers, A Rereading of Romans: Justice, Jews, Gentiles (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 83–100; Garroway, Paul's Gentile-Jews, 88–89; Don B. Garlington, “ἸΕΠΟΣΥΛΕΙΝ and the Idolatry of Israel (Romans 2.22),” NTS 36, no. 1 (1990): 142–151 (144–47).

1466 In addition to the numerous parallels to the Wisdom of Solomon 13–15, the progression of turning from God to idolatry and consequent impurities and impieties in Rom 1:18–32 is strikingly similar to that outlined in Philo, Praem. 162, which references “the curses and the punishments which are suitable for those persons who have disregarded the sacred laws of justice and piety and have gone off to polytheistic opinions, the end of which is ungodliness, forgetfulness through forgetfulness of the instruction of their relatives and ancestors, which from their earliest life they were disciplined to know the nature of the One, the highest God, to whom alone it is necessary to join those persons who pursue sincere truth instead of fabricated fables.” Another Philonic parallel occurs concerning the descent of idolatry into increasingly disgusting forms in Decal. 52–56, 66–77, 77–81. Cf. Barclay, Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora, 186. Paul’s depiction of Israel’s failure as a microcosm of humanity also accords with Heschel’s reading of Israelite prophetic material: “What was happening in Israel surpassed its intrinsic significance. Israel’s history comprised a drama of God and all men. God’s kingship and man’s hope were at stake in Jerusalem. God was alone in the world, unknown or discarded. The countries of the world were full of abominations, violence, falsehood. Here was one land, one people, cherished and chosen for the purpose of transforming the world. This people’s failure was most serious” (The Prophets, 17). The argument of Rodriguez, If You Call Yourself a Jew, 26–32, that the critique here only applies to a limited group of gentiles who worshiped hand-made gods, is unpersuasive, particularly in light of the subtle critiques of Israel embedded in the passage. Rather, the passage details the progression of unrighteousness, culminating in idolatry, which is the visible outgrowth of the cardinal sin of all humanity: not worshiping and obeying YHWH. Rodriguez is, however, right that the passage is constructed to have the audience “noding in agreement … confident that Paul’s harangue is neither intended for nor applies to them” (32).

1467 See Linebaugh, "Announcing the Human."
Like Amos, which similarly leads with oracles against Israel’s enemies, Paul follows his opening condemnation of typical gentile offenses by making this point explicit, asserting that possession of the Torah has never guaranteed obedience to its dictates. Like the prophets, Paul emphasizes that “the Lord is the Righteous Judge Who gives to every man according to his deeds,” judging on the basis of desert, rather than showing favoritism or caprice. And since God is impartial, the judgment rendered upon the nations for their offenses applies equally to those who have the Torah but do not fulfill it (2:1–11). As demonstrated by Israel’s history,
those who receive the commands and break them are no better off than the nations who have sinned in ignorance (2:12–24); the only difference is that unlike the gentiles who had not received the Torah, Israel was without excuse and was judged accordingly. The Torah had revealed God’s just requirements (cf. Rom 3:20), but because Israel did not in fact obey, Israel was scattered, becoming indistinct from the nations as a consequence of behaving like the nations.\footnote{Campbell, \textit{Deliverance of God}, 551, rightly notes, “Paul seems well aware, moreover, that the principle of desert, when it is strictly applied \textit{is peculiarly destructive to historical and elective concerns}” (emphasis his). That is, Israel’s election is no security against impartial judgment if Israel does not behave righteously. But again, Campbell sees this as reducing Paul’s opponent’s view to an absurdity rather than Paul actually pressing the point precisely to illustrate Israel’s plight in a grand restoration-eschatological scheme. The absence of Israel terminology throughout this section (which instead uses the second person pronoun, “you”) further reinforces the point that Israel is no longer set apart from the sinful nations (as described in Rom 1:18–33) but stands equal with them with respect to God’s judgment—“you” have become “them.”}

Thus the dictum, “it is not the hearers of the law who are just before God but the doers of the law” (2:13), a statement his opponents would almost certainly also approve (cf. Jas 1:22–24),\footnote{Cf. \textit{M. Abot} 1.17; Josephus, \textit{A.J.} 20.24; Stuhlmacher, \textit{Romans}, 42; Byrne, \textit{Romans}, 88; Simon J. Gathercole, “A Law unto Themselves: The Gentiles in Romans 2.14–15 Revisited,” \textit{JSNT} 24, no. 3 (2002): 27–49 (32–33); Peter J. Tomson, “Die Täter des Gesetzes werden gerechtfertigt werden” (Röm 2,13)—um eine adäquate Perspektive auf den Römerbrief,” in Bachmann, \textit{Lutherische und neue Paulusperspektive}, 183–222.} applies \textit{particularly} to Israel, which despite the Shema’s calls to hear/obey had not fulfilled its covenantal obligations, whereas gentiles had not received the Torah (2:14).\footnote{The connection of “hearing” the law with the Shema has been noted by numerous commentators, e.g., Jewett, \textit{Romans}, 211; Byrne, \textit{Romans}, 88. As Gathercole, “A Law unto Themselves,” 33, notes, the irony here is that the “doers of Torah to be justified are actually not hearers of Torah at all.”} Indeed, this phenomenon of hearing but not obeying God is the very problem that must be solved evidence that Paul in any way disagrees with the traditional Jewish view of God’s justice he himself presents in Rom 1–2. It is equally doubtful that Paul’s interlocutors did not share essentially the same notions of God’s mercy Paul puts forward; as Sanders, \textit{Paul and Palestinian Judaism}, 123–25 has shown, the greatness of God’s mercy is a point of emphasis in numerous early Jewish texts (cf. also Jas 2:13). It is instead more likely that the dispute concerned the means to access that mercy. Moreover, it appears that a central concern of Paul’s gospel is how to become \textit{δίκαιος}—that is, one who deserves reward rather than punishment and will therefore successfully pass through the eschatological judgment.
for Israel to be restored. Paul is standing firmly within the restoration-eschatological mainstream here, repeating the prophetic commonplace that Israel’s plight was the result of an intrinsic moral incompetence (=uncircumcised hearts) and inclination to evil (=σάρξ) that the Torah revealed but could not repair (cf. Jer 31[38]:33; Rom 7:7–24, 8:3).\footnote{Wells, *Grace and Agency*, 280: “[T]he essence of Paul’s antithesis lies in the covenants’ respective abilities to empower their members. Ezekiel 36 and Jeremiah 31 promise a time when people will obey God, not because there will be different requirements, but because God will renovate people, supplying them with new resources for fidelity.” For Paul’s application of this restoration-eschatological motif, see Wells, *Grace and Agency*, 224–275. For more on this prophetic commonplace in general, see addition to Part II above, see Wells, *Grace and Agency*, 25–62. This reading is in sharp contrast to the notion that Paul’s concern was that “where deeds are required, human desert enters the picture, so that God’s grace no longer operates in sovereign, splendid isolation,” as suggested by Stephen Westerholm, “Torah, Nomos and Law,” in Richardson and Westerholm, *Law in Religious Communities*, 44–56 (55). On the contrary, Paul upholds the notion of judgment according to desert; the question is rather how a person can become righteous, which can only come through God’s grace—but that grace is precisely what enables the deeds that then result in a good judgment according to desert.}

The second half of this prophetic commonplace is of course that Israel’s restoration (that is, the reversal of that plight) would require a concomitant ethical transformation in which YHWH would circumcise Israel’s hearts (Deut 30:6), giving them “a new heart and a new spirit” (Ezek 36:26), and writing the “law on their hearts” (Jer 31:33 [38:33 LXX]), thereby enabling Israel to receive the good promises of the Torah. But until that transformation takes place, Paul argues that Israel is in the same position as the nations, having fallen under the curses of the covenant due to disobedience and remaining so in the present time, awaiting the promised restoration.\footnote{Starling, *Not My People*, 163: “Crucially, it is the sin of Israel that is depicted as abolishing the distinction between Jew and Gentile (3:9, 19–20, 22b-23; 4:5–10; 11:30–32), the ‘wrath’ that Israel has incurred under the curses of the law that is depicted as corresponding with the impending wrath hanging over the heads of the Gentiles (eg. 1:24, 26, 28; 2:5, 12; 3:5–6; 4:15; 9:22), and the promised ‘mercy’ of God to Israel that is depicted as corresponding with his mercy in the Gentiles’ calling and salvation (eg. 9:23–24; 11:30–32).” Sanders, *Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People*, 130–31, is therefore mistaken when he asserts that the material in Rom 2 seems neither Jewish nor Pauline. The confusion on this point seems to derive from the fact that Sanders and others have tried to read Rom 2 outside a restoration-eschatological paradigm.}

Thus *Israel’s restoration requires justification* (that is, being transformed into a righteous people), and the connection between
these two concepts throughout early Jewish tradition accounts for the focus on the latter throughout Paul’s presentation of his gospel.  

**Gentiles Who Do the Law**

After establishing these fundamental premises of restoration eschatology as a foundation, Paul presents his gospel as the fulfillment of these promises of ethical transformation, pointing to those who have had the law written upon their hearts and thereby empowered to fulfill the requirements of faithful obedience. But in a startling move, he argues these promises are being fulfilled among uncircumcised *gentiles*:

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1477 “Justification” and “righteousness” are difficult and controversial concepts in Paul, and this is not the place to address the various debates concerning how these terms should be construed. Suffice it to say that in the context of concern for Israelite redemption, the δικ- word group is usually best understood as doing what is right in covenantal terms. God therefore demonstrates his δικαιοσύνη by redeeming Israel, while Israel must be “righteoused” or “justified” (that is, made morally competent) to be redeemed. For more on the state of the debate with respect to these terms, see Michael F. Bird, *The Saving Righteousness of God: Studies on Paul, Justification and the New Perspective* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2007). For Paul’s gospel as centrally concerned with the solution to moral incompetence as the means of redemption, see Wells, *Grace and Agency*, 211–311.

1478 Rom 2:14–15 have proven especially difficult for interpreters, thanks to these verses’ apparent contradiction of Paul’s insistence that no one is justified ἐξ ἔργων νόμου (Rom 3:20, 28; Gal 2:16) and the alleged impossibility of keeping the Torah perfectly. See, e.g., Sanders, *Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People*, 125–131; Räisänen, *Paul and the Law*, 101–09. Numerous solutions have been posed, but there are basically two questions to be resolved: “whether the law-doing Gentile of 2.14, 26–27 was a real or hypothetical figure, and whether he could (in Paul’s view) only be a Christian Gentile” (James D. G. Dunn, “In Search of Common Ground,” in *Paul and the Mosaic Law: The Third Durham-Tübingen Research Symposium on Earliest Christianity and Judaism* (Durham, September, 1994), ed. James D. G. Dunn, WUNT 89 [Tübingen: Mohr, 1996], 309–334 [321]). Interpreters as far back as early Augustine have understood the verses as putting forward natural law theology. For a modern example, see John W. Martens, “Romans 2.14–16: A Stoic Reading,” *NTS* 40, no. 1 (1994): 55–67. But Augustine’s later works shift to an understanding of this verse in the context of the fulfillment of the covenant promise. See Simon J. Gathercole, “A Conversion of Augustine: From Natural Law to Restored Nature in Romans 2:13–16,” in *Engaging Augustine on Romans: Self, Context, and Theology in Interpretation*, eds. Daniel Patte and Eugene TeSelle, RTHC (London: Black, 2003), 147–172. It is difficult to fathom Paul using such loaded prophetic-restoration language as νόμον γραπτόν ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις to represent the concept of natural law among gentiles in general, which he has already established in much less evocative terms in 1:19. Indeed, the numerous problems supposedly caused by these verses are easily resolved by recognizing the allusion to the new covenant promise of the law written on the heart and understanding these gentiles as (surprising) participants in the promise, amounting to a reversal of the description of 1:18–32 (e.g., the shift from ἀναπολόγητος in 1:20 to ἀπολογουµένον in 2:15). Support for this reading has been growing in recent years thanks to its capacity to resolve apparent contradictions raised by other alternatives. See Gathercole, "A Law unto Themselves"; Watson, *Paul, Judaism, and the Gentiles*, 208–216; Akio Ito, “Romans 2: A Deuteronomistic Reading,” *JSNT* 59 (1996): 21–37; N. T. Wright, “The Law in Romans 2,” in Dunn, *Paul and the Mosaic Law*, 131–150; Cranfield, *Romans*, 155–59; Roland Bergmeier, “Das Gesetz im Römerbrief,” in *Das Gesetz im Römerbrief und andere Studien zum Neuen Testament*, WUNT 121 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000), 31–102.
For when gentiles who do not have the law by nature do the things of the law, these not having the law are a law to themselves in that they exhibit the work of the law written on their hearts, their conscience bearing witness. (2:14–15)

Precisely at the point in his argument that one would expect Paul to refer to the ethical transformation and reconciliation of Israel, he asserts that gentiles are exhibiting the promised law-upon-the-heart through their obedient and faithful behavior, implying that these gentiles have received the ethical transformation promised to Israel. At first glance, this application of

1479 I have here translated φύση ambiguously to account for its ambiguous placement in the sentence. Grammatically, it goes better with the first part of the sentence (i.e., “do not have the law by nature”; cf. also the parallel in 2:27), but I suspect the placement is such that it can do double duty, attesting to the gentiles’ changed nature enabling them to do the things of the law. For those taking φύση with the preceding clause, see Gathercole, "A Law unto Themselves," 35–37; Where Is Boasting?: Early Jewish Soteriology and Paul's Response in Romans 1–5 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 127; Bergmeier, “Das Gesetz im Römerbrief,” 52–53; Cranfield, Romans, 156–57. Those taking it with the succeeding clause include Moo, Romans, 149; Dunn, Romans 9–16, 98; Bassler, Divine Impartiality, 142; Fitzmyer, Romans, 310; Colin G. Kruse, Paul, the Law, and Justification (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1997), 178–79; Richard H. Bell, No One Seeks for God: An Exegetical and Theological Study of Romans 1.18–3.20 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998), 152 n. 97; Martens, "Romans 2:14–16."

scriptures about Israel’s restoration to gentiles seems like a radical departure from the restoration-eschatological framework he has set up so far. But on a closer examination, Paul’s logic is not only coherent with this framework but depends upon it, pressing the typical assessment of Israel-under-the-curse to its limit. That is, if Israel has become indistinct from the nations due to sin, does this equality with the nations not now result in the nations having an equal opportunity to partake in Israel’s transformation and restoration from that condition? Because Israel has become like the nations, Israel and the nations are now not only equal, their fates are interconnected.1481 The parallelism in Paul’s argument is unmistakable: In the same way that Israel became indistinguishable from gentiles through disobedience and behaving like the other nations, gentiles are now being incorporated in a renewed eschatological Israel through the law written on their hearts (participation the new covenant) and behaving like faithful, obedient Israelites.1482 Paul later brings this parallelism and the theme of interconnected destinies into the center of the frame in chapters 9–11, particularly 11:11–36.

Presumably anticipating an objection to such a radical claim, Paul reiterates that although the Torah informs and instructs (2:17–18; cf. Rom 3:20), reception and possession of the Torah has never guaranteed obedience to its dictates.1483 Rather, the Torah convicts those who

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1481 Cf. Michel, Römer, 271, who speaks of a “heilsgeschichtlichen Prozeß, der die Juden an die Völker und die Völker an die Juden bindet.” See also Gadenz, Called from Jews and Gentiles, 238.

1482 On the new covenant in Rom 2, see Ito, “Romans 2”; Wright, “Romans 2”; Gathercole, ”A Law unto Themselves.” The objection of Käsemann, Romans, 64, “Since no eschatological facts are made known, the promise of Jer 38:33 LXX is not at issue…. Even a reminiscence is doubtful,” is nonsense in light of the eschatological framework in which Paul is operating throughout. Paul’s very point is that the eschatological gift of obedience has been granted.

1483 Note the parallels to Jer 7 and 9 in these verses discussed in Timothy W. Berkley, From a Broken Covenant to Circumcision of the Heart: Pauline Intertextual Exegesis in Romans 2:17–29, SBLDS 175 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000), 82–90. Recently, Runar M. Thorsteinsson has proposed that Paul’s implied interlocutor in these verses is not a Jew but rather a gentile who has tried to become a Jew through the rite of circumcision (thus Rom 2:17, εἰ δὲ σὺ Ἰουδαῖος ἐπονομάζῃ; Paul's Interlocutor in Romans 2: Function and Identity in the Context of Ancient Epistolography [Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 2003]). This argument has since been adopted by
knowingly violate its commands (2:21–23). To reinforce this point, Paul cites Ezekiel’s indictment of Israel’s lawless behavior, “The name of God is blasphemed among the nations because of you” (Rom 2:24; cf. Ezek 36:18–22; Isa 52:5). This reference, which is a paraphrase rather than a direct quotation, is evocative of another passage recounting Israel’s exile and diaspora and promising the ethical transformation necessary to facilitate Israel’s return:

Therefore I poured out my wrath on them for the blood which they had shed on the Land, because they had defiled it with their idols. I also dispersed (LXX: διέσπειρα) them among the nations and scattered (LXX: ἐλίκησα) them throughout the lands. I judged them according to their ways and their deeds. When they entered to the nations where they entered, they profaned my holy name, because it was said of them, “These are YHWH’s people, and they have come out of his land.” But I had concern for my holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations which they entered. Therefore say to the house of Israel, “Thus says Lord YHWH, ‘It is not for your sake, house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you have entered. I will vindicate the holiness of my great name … which you have profaned in their midst. Then the nations will know that I am YHWH,’ declares Lord YHWH, when I prove myself holy among you in their sight. For I will take you from the nations, gather you from all the lands … I will sprinkle clean water on you and you will be clean. I will cleanse you from all your uncleanness and from all your idols. Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you …. I will put my spirit in you and cause you to walk in my statutes and you will be careful to observe my ordinances…. So you will be my people, and I will be your God.” (Ezek 36:18–28)

The citation of another key restoration passage here only further reinforces the restoration echoes in his reference to the new covenant a few verses earlier (2:14–15). That Paul has so

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1484 See the discussion on the correspondences between Rom 2:17–29 and Ezek 36:16–27 in Berkley, *From a Broken Covenant*, 90–94. See also the larger discussion of Paul’s incorporation of broken/restored covenant material from the prophets throughout this section in Berkley, *From a Broken Covenant*, 170–77.

1485 As Berkley notes, Paul conflates the Ezekiel passage with Isa 52:5, which also “is a recounting of exile and promise of return,” with the nations blaspheming the name of YHWH because his people are in exile Berkley, *From
consistently cited passages from such similar scriptural contexts throughout this passage suggests that they are not chosen haphazardly but rather work together as a to present Paul’s gospel as the fulfillment of the promises to Israel.\textsuperscript{1486} The solution for Israel causing the nations to blaspheme God’s name is the law written on the heart—or in Ezekiel’s terms, a new heart and new spirit. Moreover, through his application of these scriptures, Paul suggests that just as Israel’s disobedience had resulted in gentile blasphemy, Israel’s redemption now results in gentile praise (cf. Rom 15:8–12)—indeed the inclusion of gentiles among those receiving the promised transformation.\textsuperscript{1487} Paul’s argument here and throughout Romans thus rests on a foundation of restoration eschatology, as he presents his gospel as the solution to the condition ascribed to Israel (and the gentiles) throughout the prophets and other early Jewish literature (“under the power of sin,” cf. Rom 3:9) and therefore as the means of Israel’s restoration.

\textit{a Broken Covenant}, 137–140 (quote from 137). Thus to stop the blasphemy of the nations, God will restore his people.

\textsuperscript{1486} In accordance with the observation of Hays, \textit{Echoes}, 71, “Even … where the significance of the passages for Paul’s case is evident, we will miss important intertextual echoes if we ignore the loci from which the quotations originate.” \textit{Pace} James Wallace Aageson, “Paul’s Use of Scripture: A Comparative Study of Biblical interpretation in Early Palestinian Judaism and the New Testament with Special Reference to Romans 9–11,” (PhD diss., 1984), 111, who claims, “There appears to be little or no direct evidence that the larger scriptural contexts were thematically important for Paul.” By contrast, Carol K. Stockhausen, “2 Corinthians 3 and the Principles of Pauline Exegesis,” in Evans and Sanders, \textit{Paul and the Scriptures of Israel}, 143–164 (144), concludes, “A fourth element of Paul’s use of both focus and related texts is his consistent attention to the context of cited passages. It seems to me that this is an extension of his narrative interest.” Hays refers to this phenomenon as \textit{metalepsis}, that is, “a rhetorical and poetic device in which one text alludes to an earlier text in a way that evokes resonances of the earlier text beyond those explicitly cited” (\textit{The Conversion of the Imagination: Paul as Interpreter of Israel's Scripture} [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005], 2, emphasis original). See also Abasciano, \textit{Romans 9:1–9}, 5–26; Starling, \textit{Not My People}, 6–21.

\textsuperscript{1487} For further discussion of Rom 15:8–12 and Paul’s use of Ps 18:49 (17:50 LXX; 18:50 MT) to clinch his argument for the union of Jews and gentiles in Christ, see Hays, \textit{Echoes}, 71–72. Cf. also Abasciano, \textit{Romans 9:1–9}, 6–7. It is worth noting that here Paul suggests that Israel’s disobedience caused the nations to blaspheme, whereas in 11:11 he asserts that Israel’s misstep led to gentile salvation. But as Chapters 12–13 below will make clear, Israel’s misstep resulted in gentile inclusion precisely through God’s redemptive action on behalf of Israel, such that gentiles are now participating in Israel’s restoration. Note also that Ezek 5:6 LXX also strikingly orders the proclamation of τὰ δικαιώματά μου τπη ἀνόμῳ ἐκ τῶν ἐθνῶν, which is echoed in Rom 2:26 and probably also 2:14 (τὰ [δικαίωματά] τοῦ νόμου).
Paul builds upon these arguments introduced in Rom 1–2 throughout the rest of Romans.\textsuperscript{1488} The first part of the argument concludes in Rom 7–8, with Rom 7:7–25 further developing the theme of the Torah’s limitations in dealing with the problem of sin and the consequent need for transformation,\textsuperscript{1489} while Rom 8 presents the spirit received by Christ-followers as the solution to this problem, fulfilling the promises of transformation referenced in Rom 2.\textsuperscript{1490} After establishing that the spirit received by Christ-followers is the fulfillment of the promises of Israel’s heart circumcision, Paul is then at pains to explain how this ethical transformation—and the surprising inclusion of gentiles—relates to God’s promises to restore Israel.

\textsuperscript{1488} Waters, \textit{End of Deuteronomy}, 253, notes that the use of Deut 30 in Rom 2:29 anticipates Paul’s citation in Rom 10:6–8 and does so in a similar setting, concluding, “Further study might consider the significance of this allusion to Deut 30 so early in Romans to the argument of the epistle as a whole. It might also attempt to consider the way in which the Pauline patterns of reading Deut 27–30, 32 may inform some of the difficult exegetical issues surrounding this section in Romans.” See further Lincicum, \textit{Paul and the Early Jewish Encounter}, 150–51 and p. 550 n. 1676 below.

\textsuperscript{1489} See especially Wells, \textit{Grace and Agency}, 224–253.

CHAPTER 12: ROMANS 9: THE UNFAITHFULNESS OF HISTORICAL ISRAEL

Romans 9–11 in Context

By the end of Romans 8, Paul has established that the ethical transformation promised by the prophets as a component of Israel’s restoration is being granted to followers of Jesus Christ. But Paul still has a significant problem on his hands: what about Israel’s actual restoration that was supposed to accompany the circumcision of the heart? If God has provided righteousness by the spirit as promised, what about all the other promises of all Israel being regathered from the nations and reunited, no longer subservient to the gentiles? Even more troubling, why are gentiles participating in Israel’s promises through the spirit while the kingdom seems not to be getting restored to Israel as promised (cf. Acts 1:6).

These are the questions Paul is at pains to address in Romans 9–11, which is by no means an unrelated treatise on the fate of Israel attached to the rest of the letter but instead represents the next logical step in the progression of Paul’s overall argument that the promises to Israel are in fact being fulfilled through Christ.1491 As Moo explains, “Those who relegate chaps. 9–11 to

1491 As noted by Leander Keck, Romans, ANTC (Nashville: Abingdon, 2005), 226, “The allusions to chapters 1–8 indicate that chapters 9–11 were written for the letter, and are not simply Paul’s previously preached sermon ‘On the Rejection of Israel’ as Dodd (1932, 149) proposed,” citing C. H. Dodd, The Epistle of Paul to the Romans, MNTC 340 (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1932), 149. Byrne, Romans, 282, similarly explains, “at times this section has been regarded as more or less detachable from the remainder of the letter—a separate ‘treatise’ on the fate of Israel. Such a judgment has now given way to the almost universal recognition that chapters 9–11 form an integral and necessary element of Paul’s total project in Romans.” Heinrich Schlier, Der Römerbrief: Kommentar, HThK 6 (Freiburg: Herder, 1977), 282–83, rightly notes that Rom 9–11 continues the basic theme of the rest of the letter, namely a defense and explanation of the δικαιοσύνη τοῦ θεοῦ. It is now widely agreed that Rom 9–11 is in fact the climax of the letter. See, e.g., Stendahl, “Paul Among Jews and Gentiles,” 4, 28; Cranfield, Romans, 445–450; Dunn, Romans 9–16, 519–521; Fitzmyer, Romans, 541; Ben Witherington III and Darlene Hyatt, Paul's Letter to the Romans: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 237.
the periphery of Romans have misunderstood the purpose of Rom. 9–11, or of the letter, or of both.”

Thanks in large part to the assumption that “Israel” is synonymous with “the Jews,” many modern interpreters have interpreted Rom 9–11 as a disquisition on the fate of the Jews in light of their rejection of the gospel. Peter Stuhlmacher summarizes the consensus:

His main reason for [Rom 9–11] is that the saving work of the one God is incomplete and remains unfinished as long as the majority of the chosen people of God are rejecting the gospel (of Paul) and do not recognize Jesus as the messiah sent from God.

Many emphasize that the experiential quality of these chapters, arguing that they are not foundational to Paul’s theological understanding but rather a response to cognitive dissonance, “Paul’s attempt to describe an explain a visible circumstance. Israel has said no to

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1492 Moo, Romans, 548. See also Christoph Stenschke, “Römer 9–11 als Teil des Römerbriefs,” in Wilk et al., Between Gospel and Election, 197–225.


1494 Stuhlmacher, Romans, 142. One of course wonders what would constitute a sufficient “majority” for such not to be a problem in this framework. Similarly, Elisée Ouoba, “Paul's Use of Isaiah 27:9 and 59:20–21 in Romans 11:25–27,” (PhD diss., Wheaton College, 2010), 187: “The attitude of Israel not only creates an obstacle to Paul’s missionary endeavor, but it also makes his theological task more difficult: the apostle’s overall exposition of the definitive, salvific intervention of God in Jesus collapses if the unenthusiastic Jewish response to this rescue operation means the failure of a previous divine plan for Israel.” There is near universal agreement on this reading of Rom 9–11. Cf. also Otfried Hofius, “Das Evangelium und Israel: Erwägungen zu Römer 9–11,” ZTK 83, no. 3 (1986): 297–324 (297–98).

Christ, and then to the apostles.”1496 Some commentators add that the seeming failure of the Jewish mission was further highlighted by the relative success of the gentile outreach, as Terence Donaldson explains,

Paul wants to deny that the law-free mission to the Gentiles, and its relative success in comparison to the Jewish mission, represents the failure of God’s covenantal promises to historic Israel. But the route he traces out to reach it is virtually unnavigable.1497

This reading is problematic, however, as it presumes the circumstances of the gentile-dominated church a generation later,1498 but there is no indication that Paul’s ministry was resulting in mass conversions of gentiles dramatically exceeding the number of Jews in the early Jesus-movement.1499 A few households in each city does not amount to “incredibly successful Gentile churches.”1500 In any case, there is no evidence of a significant difference in “relative success” at this early point (most Jews and gentiles rejected the gospel) and therefore little reason to suppose the “relative success” of the gentile movement was the problem at issue. What we do know was controversial, however, is the incorporation of any uncircumcised gentiles among the people of God.


1498 In this respect, most historic interpreters have read Rom 9–11 from the perspective of later Christianity, in which “an acute challenge to their [Christians’] increasingly triumphalist theological posture [was represented by] the ongoing and exasperating presence of those thorough unbelievers, the Jews” (Jacobs, "A Jew's Jew," 262).

1499 Even attempting to compare the number of Jews versus gentiles by the names of those Paul greets in the letters is problematic, as Jews did not necessarily go by Semitic or traditionally Jewish names. Παῦλος, for example, is a Roman surname (Latin Paulus) and would not in itself suggest a Jew; similarly, Paul’s συγγένεις Andronica and Junia have names that would not otherwise indicate Jews. Moreover, even if Paul’s churches were primarily gentile, the very fact of the circumcision debate suggests that the larger Jesus-movement was still chiefly Jewish, although it would not remain so for long.

1500 The phrase is that of Grieb, “Paul's Theological Preoccupation," 393.
Brian Abasciano argues that a distinction should be made between the problem of Israel’s unbelief and God’s response to that unbelief, with Paul’s primary concern being the latter:

Many assume that what causes Paul’s grief is Israel’s unbelief. This is undoubtedly true on some level, but it is not what Paul addresses and it is not what he laments in the text. The actual problem he addresses is God’s rejection of Israel rather than their rejection of Christ; he addresses their exclusion from salvation (e.g., 9.3, 8, 22–10.1). The point is subtle, but its significance is great. Just as a slight mistake in the direction set at the beginning of a journey can result in landing far off the original mark, so in exegesis. Practically, if it is the unbelief of Israel which is the problem Paul addresses, then Romans 9–11 can tend to be read as seeking to explain Israel’s unbelief and God’s responsibility for it. On the other hand, if it is rather God’s rejection of Israel that is the issue, then, with most interpreters, Paul is defending God’s response to Israel’s unbelief.\textsuperscript{1501}

Abasciano is right that Israel’s unbelief is not in fact the primary concern in the text. Israel has indeed been unfaithful, but in the context of restoration eschatology, Israel’s chronic unfaithfulness could be taken for granted—this unfaithfulness long precedes anything having to do with a rejection of Paul’s gospel and is the reason redemption was needed in the first place.\textsuperscript{1502} But the problem Paul faces is how his gospel truly fulfills the promises when it certainly does not look like Israel’s return is taking place. This of course includes the fact that many Jews did not believe the gospel, but the problem is bigger than that. What he needs to establish is how his gospel—including the counterintuitive incorporation of gentiles—fulfills the promises of Israel’s redemption despite not looking like Israel’s restoration.

\textsuperscript{1501} Abasciano, \textit{Romans 9:1–9}, 33. See also John A. Ziesler, \textit{Paul’s Letter to the Romans} (Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1989), 234: “If historical Israel was the recipient of God’s promises to Abraham (vv. 4–5), and if God has now rejected her in favor of a new and multi-racial people, does that not impugn the faithfulness and reliability of God?”

\textsuperscript{1502} Some have previously noted formal and thematic parallels between Rom 9–11 and the so-called penitential prayers of the postexilic period that are similarly characterized by restoration eschatology and covenantal theology. See Gadenz, \textit{Called from Jews and Gentiles}, 57–63.
But the proposal that “it is rather God’s rejection of Israel that is the issue” is equally mistaken, since although Paul is at pains to defend against the charge that God has rejected his people in light of the inclusion of gentiles and seeming absence of Israel’s restoration, he is abundantly clear throughout Rom 9–11 that God has not rejected Israel. The declaration of 9:6a governs the argument throughout: despite appearances, God’s word has not failed. Thus Rom 9–11 should be understood as the final step in Paul’s explanation of how his gospel in fact fulfills the promises to Israel, clarifying that the incorporation of gentiles established in the first eight chapters is a necessary part of God’s plan to redeem Israel and proof of God’s overarching faithfulness to his people.

These chapters therefore conclude the defense of God’s faithfulness begun in Rom 1–2, asking whether 1) Israel’s unfaithfulness has caused God’s promises to fail and 2) whether God’s handling of Israel’s unfaithfulness has been unjust or unfaithful to Israel. He answers both of these with a resounding, “No!” arguing that God has in fact been over-faithful, going so far as to extend redemption to the Gentiles as a means to redeem “all Israel” (11:26). Thus throughout Rom 9–11, Paul explains why gentiles are partaking in the promises associated with Israel’s redemption—and why many Israelites are not—from the larger perspective of Israel’s story, furthering the argument for the interdependence of the incorporation of gentiles and Israel’s salvation he has been making since the beginning of the letter. Moreover, Paul explains that

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1503 Not only does Paul expressly make this statement, he nowhere suggests that God has rejected Israel. Cf. Herman N. Ridderbos, Aan de Romeinen (Kampen: Kok, 1959), 240, on Rom 11:7.


1505 Pace Starling, Not My People, 162, who asserts, “a motif that is noticeable by its almost complete absence from Paul’s arguments from Scripture in Rom. 1–4 and 9–11 is the appeal to the Gentiles’ incorporation into Christ,
God not only has been able to accomplish his redemptive purposes in spite of Israel’s disobedience, God has consistently used Israel’s disobedience as a key ingredient in the recipe of redemption.

“Not All from Israel Are Israel”

As previously mentioned, Romans 9 marks a shift in language from οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι to “Israel” terminology. Unfortunately, the scholarly discussion is yet again complicated by the conflation of the two terms. For example, Dunn opens his treatment of Rom 9 with the statement, “Whatever is made of Paul’s talk of ‘Israel’ in v 6, it should not be forgotten that he prefaces the whole discussion with the firm statement, ’the Jews are Israelites,’”1506 curiously ignoring the fact that Paul nowhere makes such a statement. In order to understand Paul’s arguments in this tightly-integrated section, it is critical to note Paul’s precise word choices, including a consideration of what he does not say. For another example, Romans 9:3 does not say, as often glossed, “I was praying that I myself were anathema from Christ for the sake of Israel,”1507 nor does he say “for the sake of the Jews.”1508 Instead, the passage uses very specific, limited language. Paul is clear that those for whom he is grieved are in fact Israelites (οἵτινές εἰσιν
effected and evidenced by the Spirit, as the hermeneutical warrant for their inheritance of the scriptural promises [as in Galatians].” We have already seen that this is not the case in Rom 2, and a close reading of Rom 9–11 will find this appeal underlying nearly every argument in Rom 9–11.

1506 Dunn, Romans 9–16, 526.

1507 E.g., the NIV rendering of Rom 9:4, “the people of Israel.” Paul’s language of wishing himself anathema on behalf of Israel echoes Moses’ intercession on behalf of Israel after the Golden Calf episode in Exod 32:31–32, which is further echoed in Paul’s citation of God’s response to Moses in 9:15. See Munck, Christ and Israel, 29; Hahn, ”All Israel,” 89–90; Wagner, Heralds of the Good News, 45; John M. G. Barclay, “I will have mercy on whom I have mercy: The Golden Calf and Divine Mercy in Romans 9–11 and Second Temple Judaism,” EC 1, no. 1 (2010): 82–106. Additional echoes of LXX Esth. 4:17 may also be heard here, as noted by Panagiotis Bratsiotis, “Eine exegetische Notiz zu Röm. IX 3 und X.1,” NovT 5, no. 4 (1962): 299–300.

1508 Instead, Paul nowhere refers to “the Jews” (οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι) as a whole in Romans, only “Jews” without the definite article, and he entirely avoids the term Ἰουδαιος in Romans 9.
Ἰσραηλῖται; 9:4)—this must never be forgotten. But it is equally important to note that Paul does not say Israel stands apart from Christ but rather some Israelites, his “kin according to the flesh (συγγενῶν μου κατὰ σάρκα)” (9:3).

Moo’s observation about Rom 11:26, “Paul writes ‘all Israel,’ not ‘every Israelite’—and the difference is an important one,” applies here but in the opposite direction: Paul does not write “they are Israel” but “they are Israelites”—and the difference is equally important. Indeed, after listing the blessings they should be sharing (Rom 9:4–5), Paul explains that these Israelites should not be equated with Israel as a whole, “But it is not as though the word of God has failed, for not all of those who are from Israel are Israel” (Rom 9:6). Thus Paul explains at the beginning that his lament is not for Israel, which will indeed be saved through the redemptive work of the spirit (11:26), but for those disobedient Israelites who stand in danger of not participating in Israel’s salvation.

1509 As noted by Keck, Romans, 227, “instead of writing simply ‘my kindred according to the flesh, Israelites,’ he inserted the unnecessary eisin (‘are’), thus pointing out that despite their current unbelief they are and remain Israelites.” Indeed, Paul calls them ἀδελφῶν μου, language otherwise reserved for those in Christ (e.g., Rom 1:13; 7:1; 8:12; 10:1; 11:25; 12:1; 1 Cor 1:1, 10, 26). Cf. Dunn, Romans 9–16, 533.

1510 Moo, Romans, 722.

1511 The textual tradition witnesses to the difficulty of this verse at a very early stage, as P46, the Old Latin, Syriac, and Ambrosiaster omit the second Ἰσραήλ, while D F G and the Vulgate read οὗτοι Ἰσραηλῖται. Some recent commentators have suggested taking the οὐ not with the first phrase (πάντες οἱ εξ Ἰσραήλ) as does my translation but with the second (οὗτοι Ἰσραήλ), resulting in “All those who are from Israel, these people are (i.e., they constitute) Israel.” Regardless of how the phrase is rendered in English, the basic meaning is Israel is not equivalent to those who have been descended from Israel.

The point is subtle but highly significant: The defining problem Paul confronts is neither Israel’s unbelief nor (especially not) God’s rejection of Israel. Rather, Paul defends God’s faithfulness to Israel while explaining the exclusion of some Israelites from Israel’s salvation and the related inclusion of some gentiles in that salvation. God has not rejected Israel—μὴ γένοιτο! Indeed, Paul endeavors throughout Rom 9–11 to demonstrate that such a pruning of Israel is in accord with the previous faithful activity of God and does not endanger the fulfillment of the promises to the whole. On the contrary, Israel’s salvation does not depend on the inclusion of every Israeliite—all Israel will be saved irrespective of the participation of any individual Israeliite. Nevertheless, Paul expresses his grief that many of his “kin according to the flesh” (9:2), who are indeed Israelites (9:3), stand in danger of not participating in Israel’s salvation (11:17–23).1513 This distinction is further illustrated in that although he expects “all Israel” to be saved (11:26), Paul does not expect this salvation to include all his fleshly kin (despite the fact that they are Israelites) but rather hopes to “save some of them (σώσω τινὰς ἐξ αὐτῶν)” (11:14). As will also become increasingly clear below, “all Israel” in Rom 11:26 should therefore be understood as a reference to the corporate twelve-tribe body of Israel—in keeping with the other Jewish evidence discussed to this point—not “every Israeliite” and certainly not “all Jews.”1514

1513 This is analogous to a common problem in modern political discourse when addressing the problem of terrorism: Does an attack on one citizen—or even a few thousand—amount to an attack on the entire nation? Are governments responsible to protect each individual citizen or the nation/civilization at large? And if one draws such a distinction, how does one differentiate between the two?

1514 As noted by James M. Scott, “And Then All Israel Will Be Saved (Rom 11:26),” in Scott, Restoration, 489–526 (507), “In the OT, the expression ‘all Israel’ relates exclusively to the tribal structure of the descendants of Jacob/Israel.” See also James W. Flanagan, “The Deuteronomic Meaning of the Phrase ‘kol yišrā’ēl,’” SR 6, no. 2 (1976): 159–168.
It must again be stressed that this is by no means a perspective unique to Paul. As Talmon notes, such eschatological rhetoric of distinction between the righteous and the unfaithful among God’s people is also common in biblical literature:

At the end of his book [Malachi], which signals the closure of the collection of prophetic writings and indeed the termination of biblical prophecy (as a whole), the author records a controversy between two (certainly ‘Jewish’) factions: ‘those who fear God and serve him’ and ‘those who do not fear God nor serve him’ (Mal 3.13–21). The first are promised good fortunes and salvation, the other misery and damnation on the ‘appointed day.’

That disobedient Israelites will be (or have been) cut off even as the people itself is preserved is also a common motif throughout other early Jewish literature. Numerous passages in the Dead Sea Scrolls, for example, presume that those descended from Israel who oppose the sect will be wiped away along with the unclean nations due to their persistence in disobedience. Philo likewise expects that many Jews will not participate in Israel’s salvation (and suggests that proselytes may participate in their place). The message of John the Baptist as summarized in the Gospels amounts to a warning that the “axe is laid at the root of the trees” (Matt 3:10 // Luke 3:9), with God about to remove the wicked “brood of vipers” (Matt 3:8 // Luke 3:7) and preserve the people as a whole through the salvation of the righteous remnant.

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1515 See Fig. 6 on p. 450 above.

1516 Talmon, “Emergence of Jewish Sectarianism,” 601.


Indeed, descent from Abraham is no guarantee of salvation, as “God is able to raise up children for Abraham from these stones” (Matt 3:9 // Luke 3:8). Even m. Sahn. 10:1 allows that some Israelites (e.g., those who do not believe in the resurrection, Epicureans) may disqualify themselves from partaking in Israel’s ultimate salvation in the age to come. In this respect, Rom 9:6 says nothing new or unusual, serving only as a repetition and reminder of traditional covenantal theology.\footnote{Alan F. Segal, “Paul's Experience and Romans 9–11,” \textit{PSB} Suppl. Issue 1 (1990): 57–70 (58): “Whereas for the Jew it is the positive fact that God chose Isaac and Jacob, for Paul the converse fact is equally important: God disinherit[ed] Esau and Ishmael in spite of their ancestry.” “God never promised Abraham that all his physical offspring would be within the covenant.” (Wright, \textit{Climax}, 238), but cf. Gaston, \textit{Paul and the Torah}, 94.} Put another way, Paul’s assertion in Rom 9:6 is hardly more than a reformulation of Hosea’s declaration that the Israelites to whom he preached were “not my people” (Hos 1:9); it is therefore surely no coincidence that Paul cites Hosea’s corresponding redemptive promise at the end of the same chapter.

\textbf{Vessels of Mercy and Wrath from the Same Lump}

After appealing to examples from the patriarchs to show that not all Abraham’s descendants inherit the promises to Abraham (9:7–13) and responding to the potential charge of divine injustice (ἀδικία; Rom 9:14) by appeal to God’s right to show mercy to whomever he
Paul anticipates the objection that by exercising such choice God is therefore arbitrary and capricious (“For who resists his will?” Rom 9:19), responding:

Or does the potter not have a right over the clay to make from the same lump a vessel for honorable use and another for dishonorable? And if God produced

\[\begin{align*}
\textit{ἡ εὖκ ἔχει ἐξουσίαν ὃν κεραμεὺς τοῦ πηλοῦ ἐκ τοῦ αὐτοῦ φυράματος ποιῆσαι ὃ μὲν εἰς τιμήν σκεῦος ὃ δὲ εἰς ἀτιμίαν; εἰ δὲ \textit{θέλων ὃ θεὸς ἐνδείξασθαι τὴν ὁργήν καὶ γνωρίσαι τὸ δυνατὸν αὐτοῦ ἤγεκεν ἐν πολλῇ μακροθυμίᾳ σκεῦς ὁργῆς κατηρτισµένα εἰς ἀπώλειαν, καὶ ἵνα γνωρίσῃ τὸν πλοῦτον τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ σκεῦς ἔλεους ὃ προητοίμασεν εἰς δόξαν; Οὐκ καὶ ἐκάλεσεν ἡμᾶς οὐ μόνον ἐξ Ἰουδαίων ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐξ ἕθνων.}
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1520 Wagner, *Heralds of the Good News*, 53, notes that the allusion to Exod 34:6–7 here specifically invokes “that God has freely chosen to be merciful to Israel and to keep his covenant with his people even in the face of their unfaithfulness and idolatry,” specifically the Golden Calf episode to which Paul has already alluded in Rom 9 (50–52). Jonathan A. Linebaugh, “God, Grace, and Righteousness: Wisdom of Solomon and Paul's Letter to the Romans in Conversation,” (PhD diss., University of Durham, 2011), 170–76, argues that the argument of 9:6–18 undermines the reasons for election established in Wis. Sol., particularly in that for Paul “divine mercy is scripturally defined in the event *Wisdom* deletes from Israel’s history—namely, the Golden Calf debacle” (174). Paul’s appeal to God’s mercy in Rom 9 is similar to the summary of the prophetic message by Heschel, *The Prophets*, 306: “The way to God is mediated not only by the interplay of deed and redemption…. Above reward and punishment is the mystery of His paths. Sin does not inevitably bring about punishment. Between act and retribution stands the Lord God, ‘merciful and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin’ (Exod. 34:6f). He remembers that ‘man is but flesh’ (Ps. 78:39). Indeed, the central message of the prophets was the call to return.” Note also the allusion to Tob 4:19 in Rom 9:18 as pointed out by Alexander A. Di Lella, “Tobit 4,19 and Romans 9,18: An Intertextual Study,” *Bib* 90, no. 2 (2009): 260–63.


1522 The view of Cranfield, *Romans*, 492, that the use of δὲ “indicates an element of opposition … it also brings out the fact that God’s ways are not just like the potter’s,” overreads the particle, which need not denote opposition but rather denotes simple connection of one clause to another. The point seems to be precisely that God has behaved like a potter (in line with YHWH’s revelation in Jer 18:1–11), not that his ways are different from a potter’s ways.

1523 Most interpreters and translations read ἤγεκεν as “endured” (or “bore,” meaning the same), influenced by the nearby μακροθυμία, but the meaning in this context is closer to “produced” or “formed,” a fairly common meaning for φέρω in a range of contexts (e.g., Philo, *Mos.* 2.62; *Leg.* 3.30; *Opif.* 78, 167; Mark 4:8; John 12:24; 15:2; Plato, *Tim.* 24d; cf. also T. Naph 2:2). Cf. also LSJ, “φέρω,” 112 (V and IV.3); BDAG, “φέρω,” 1051–52 (1052 #10), though the latter is mistaken in limiting the “produced” meaning solely to the context “of a plant and its fruits,” as seen in Philo, *Leg.* 2.95 (bearing children): 3:30 (τὰ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ πάντα φέρεται χωρίς ἡμέρονος); *Mos.* 2.62 (γῆ τὰ ὕμνων αἰῶνος καὶ πρότερον ἤγεκε; “earth also previously produced innumerable species [of animals]”); Plato, *Tim.* 24d (producing living beings); etc. Rather than deriving its sense from μακροθυμία, the operative phrase is ἤγεκεν σκεῦος ὁργῆς, very close to Jer 27:25 LXX (50:25 MT): ἐξῆγεκεν τὰ σκεῦα ὁργῆς (see the discussion of the allusion below). Paul has simply removed the ἐξ from the verb, steering the meaning toward the production rather than the “bringing out” of the vessels. The sense is therefore that the potter showed great patience in the process of producing vessels of wrath—certainly a more coherent sense than the idea of “enduring” pottery, with all due respect to what my wife may suggest about certain decorations. Pace Michel, *Römer*, 245 n.1, who asserts, “Ein besonderer Ton liegt auf dem Verbum ἤγεκεν (V 22): dies "Tragen" (Ertragen) Gottes ist eine Ausdrucksform der göttlichen Langmut, die PIs in besonderer Weise rühmt (πολλῇ fällt daher auf). Der altliche Zusammenhang (Jer 27,25:

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with much patience vessels of wrath amended1524 for destruction, wishing to
demonstrate his wrath and to make his power known so that he might also make
known the riches of his glory toward vessels of mercy, which he prepared
beforehand for glory—us whom he also called not only from Jews but also from
gentiles.1525 (Rom 9:21–24)

Paul here turns to the familiar metaphor of potter and clay to demonstrate how God is
justified in his dealings with Israel, though many interpreters have assumed that the lump refers
to humanity as a whole. Dunn, for example, dismisses Paul’s mention of the lump as irrelevant,
suggesting that “Paul’s point could be made without this emphasis … he no doubt intends a
reminder that all humanity, Israel included, is made of the same common (lump of) clay.”1526 On
the contrary, even such seemingly extraneous details should not be ignored, especially since the

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1524 Translating κατηρτίσεν typically translated “prepared” or “made” in this passage (partly because ἐξένεγκεν has been misread, necessitating a verb of production somewhere). But καταρτίζω typically means something closer to “mend,” “repair,” or “make good,” including all other Pauline uses: 1 Cor 1:10; 2 Cor 13:11; Gal 6:1; 1 Thess 3:10. This participle therefore suggests the potter remaking or amending the vessel as part of the process of working with stubborn clay.

1525 The grammar is difficult here as v. 22 provides the protasis for an apodosis that is not grammatically explicit. My translation retains the anacoluthon, such that an implied apodosis (something like “then God is justified”) is left unexpressed. It is also possible to construe v. 23 as the apodosis introduced by καί (assuming the καί is original, as it is lacking in a few minor MSS). For a defense of this reading, see Folker Siegert, Argumentation bei Paulus, gezeigt an Röm 9–11, WUNT 34 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1985), 132–33. Others have argued that 22–23 is the protasis with 24 supplying the apodosis. See, e.g., Dieter Zeller, Juden und Heiden in der Mission des Paulus: Studien zum Römerbrief, FB 8 (Frankfurt am Main: Echter, 1973), 203–08.

I have also taken θέλων as denoting purpose rather than in a causal or concessive sense. For further discussion of the grammar in these verses, see Günther Bornkamm, ed., Das Ende des Gesetzes: Paulusstudien, BEvT 16 (Munich: Kaiser, 1952), 90–92; Cranfield, Romans, 492–98; Jewett, Romans, 595; Moo, Romans, 604. The language of these verses strongly echoes that found in key verses throughout Rom 1–8, as discussed by Gaventa, “Calling-Into-Being.” 266.

1526 Dunn, Romans 9–16, 557.
context specifically concerns God’s justice toward Israel, governed by the thesis that “not all who are from Israel are Israel” (9:6).

The lump (φύραμα) of 11:16 certainly represents Israel, and there is similarly no reason to think otherwise of the lump here. Thus when Paul explains that not all “from the same lump (ἐκ τοῦ αὐτοῦ φυράματος)” (9:21) are made into the same kind of vessel, this analogy is best understood as further developing the thesis of 9:6, with the single lump representing Israel, from which God makes vessels for different uses. As Wagner notes, “To anyone familiar with Israel’s scriptures, however, it would be evident that Paul is drawing on a traditional metaphor for God’s relationship to creation, and, more specifically, to his people Israel.” This discussion is best understood as Paul’s explanation and defense of how God’s choice to make dishonorable use of a portion of Israel and how that squares with the promises of Israel’s redemption.


1528 See Gadenz, Called from Jews and Gentiles, 193–94. If the lump is Israel, the suggestion of Battle, "Paul's Use," 125–27, that the “vessels of wrath” of v. 22 refers to gentile oppressors of Israel is impossible, as these vessels also derive from the same lump as the vessels of mercy.

1529 For the sense of honor and dishonor here as referencing differing functions, see Dunn, Romans 9–16, 557; Jewett, Romans, 594–95.

1530 Wagner, Heralds of the Good News, 57–58, my emphasis. Paul’s argument can of course be expanded to apply to humanity in general (as also in the potter/clay passages in the Hebrew Bible), but that is not his central concern here.
Worthless Vessels for Dishonorable Use

Paul’s language and the potter/clay analogy itself evoke “complex echoes from numerous scriptural antecedents,”¹⁵³¹ and it is likely “that the metaphor had currency outside written texts, as part of Paul’s larger cultural heritage.”¹⁵³² Most scholarly attention to the use of scripture in this passage has focused on the fact that the rebuke of Rom 9:20 especially recalls Isaiah 29:16/45:9 as well as Job 9:12/33:13 and Dan 4:35,¹⁵³³ or to the allusion to Wis 15:7–8 in the image of a potter making different types of vessels from the same clay.¹⁵³⁴ Ross Wagner has also noted that the potter passages in Isaiah (particularly 45:9), are in the context of restoration promises “that judgment will not be God’s final word,”¹⁵³⁵ continuing,

Paul’s use of the potter/clay metaphor in the unfolding argument of Romans 9–11 is remarkably congruent with the way this figure functions in Isaiah 29:26/45:9. Both of these Isaianic passages set the clay’s challenge to the potter in the context of Israel’s confrontation with god over his chosen means of redemption. Israel is portrayed as blind and deaf, doubting God’s wisdom and resisting his appointed means of redemption, either by relying on their own schemes for salvation or by questioning God’s plan of deliverance.¹⁵³⁶

Nevertheless, owing in part to the assumption that the lump represents all humanity, the historical (restoration-eschatological) resonance of Paul’s argument has too often been overlooked. That is, in arguing that God has the right to make vessels for dishonor from Israel,

¹⁵³¹ Hays, Echoes, 65. These verses appear to draw upon at least Hos 8:8, 13:15; Wis 15:7–8; Isa 8:5, 10:5, 29:16, 45:9; Jer 18:1–11, 50:25 (LXX 27:25); Job 9:12, 33:13; Dan 4:35; Sir 27:4; Ps 2:7–10; 31:12 (30:13 LXX).
¹⁵³² Wagner, Heralds of the Good News, 70 n. 88.
¹⁵³⁶ Wagner, Heralds of the Good News, 67–68. See also Wagner’s discussion of similar themes in 1QS 11, further supporting such an understanding of Paul’s similar metaphor (Wagner, Heralds of the Good News, 68–71).
Paul reminds the reader that God has previously done exactly that in the exiles of Israel and Judah. Indeed, Paul’s vessels/dishonor language immediately recalls Hosea’s declaration that northern “Israel is swallowed up; they are now in the nations like a worthless vessel (LXX: ὡς σκεῦος ἄχρηστον)” (Hos 8:8) and Jeremiah’s declaration that recently exiled king Jeconiah/Jehoiachin “is dishonored (ἀτιµώθη) like a useless vessel, for he is hurled out and cast into a land which he did not know (Jer 22:28 LXX).” By echoing this language, Paul once again reminds his readers of the past consequences of Israel’s unfaithfulness and that God has always reserved the right to respond to Israel’s disobedience in this manner. But dishonor and wrath is nevertheless not God’s final word for the northern tribes or for Jehoiachin’s descendants, a point Paul highlights in 9:24–25 and to which we will return shortly below.

**God’s Patience and Divine Pathos**

Remarkably, Paul’s use of the potter/clay metaphor has frequently been read not as a rebuttal of the claim that God is capricious but as a *defense* of God’s sovereign right to arbitrary choice, engendering the natural question, “Wie kann der Gott, dessen Hingabe und Treue in Röm 1–8 so konsequent entfaltet wird, zusammengedacht werden mit dem willkürlichlichen Töpfer?” But this reading gets the essence of Paul’s appeal to the potter/clay metaphor

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1537 That Israel is called ἄχρηστον (a homonym of ἄχριστον, “without Christ”) may have drawn attention to the verse in Hosea (cf. Rom 3:12). Epictetus applies the same language of a person as a “worthless vessel (σκεῦαριον … σαπρόν … σκεῦος ἄχρηστον),” a parallel noted by Jewett, *Romans*, 594 n. 72, though Jewett appears unaware of the same language in Hosea. As noted by Holladay, *Jeremiah I*, 610, the phrase “useless vessel” in Jer 22:28 is itself “a quotation from Hos 8:8.... Now, therefore, Jehoiachin will suffer the same fate as the northern tribes.” Similarly, Paul’s echo of the same language both reminds the reader of past judgments against Israel and suggests that God still reserves the right to respond to his people in precisely the same way.


exactly backwards; Paul marshals this metaphor not to defend God’s right to arbitrary choice but rather to rebut the idea that God’s choices are capricious. Specifically, by calling attention to God’s patience and the process of amendment in v. 22, Paul alludes to Jeremiah 18:1–11, where the potter and clay metaphor is used to teach the remarkable lesson that although YHWH shapes the destiny of people and nations, he does not do so unilaterally or arbitrarily. Rather, those decisions are contingent on his interactions with human beings who can and do resist his will. As Abraham Heschel explains, Jeremiah appeals to divine pathos, that is, God’s flexibility and responsiveness to human action, portraying a God who is capable of being affected by his creation:

The All-wise and Almighty may change a word that He proclaims. Man has the power to modify his design. Jeremiah had to be taught that God is greater than His decisions. The anger of the Lord is instrumental, hypothetical, conditional, and subject to his will. Let the people modify their line of conduct, and anger will disappear.

Likewise, Paul suggests that God does not set out to condemn but patiently works with stubborn clay to achieve his purposes. The implication is that if anyone resists God’s initial plan,

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1540 Dunn, Romans 9–16, 558: “To appreciate the force of μακροθυμία here it must be recalled that God’s patience with his chosen people was one of Israel’s most common refrains…. But 2 Macc 6:14–16 thinks of God’s patience with regard to other nations simply as an allowing them to reach the full measure of their sins, in contrast to his purpose of mercy in disciplining his own people.” Wisdom 12:20–21 similarly refers to God’s patience in granting time to repent, though it complains of God’s strictness toward his own people. Paul previously brought up God’s μακροθυμία in Rom 2:4, where God patiently provides an opportunity for repentance.


1542 R. Waddy Moss, “A Study of Jeremiah's Use (xviii. 1–17) of the Figure of the Potter,” ExpTim 2, no. 12 (1891): 274–75 (274): Jeremiah reveals that human beings “can actually, by their choice of evil or carelessness concerning right, frustrate God’s purposes of grace, just as by penitence and self-reform they can avert a doom that is impending.”

1543 Heschel, The Prophets, 367.
God will find another way for that person/nation that will serve his larger, overarching purpose in history.\textsuperscript{1544} As Dunn notes, “Paul’s argument in Romans 9:22–23 is thoroughly grounded in a traditional Jewish conception of how God works in history to make even ungodly nations serve his purposes.”\textsuperscript{1545} But such an amended (κατηρτισµένα) function, although still ultimately serving God’s purposes, may not result in the most honorable outcome for that individual vessel.\textsuperscript{1546}

The story of Israel is of course all about Israel resisting God’s purpose to transform the world through his people. As Heschel observes, the prophets arose precisely because God’s plans were being frustrated:

Israel’s history comprised a drama of God and all men. God’s kingship and man’s hope were at stake in Jerusalem. God was alone in the world, unknown or discarded. The countries of the world were full of abominations, violence, falsehood. Here was one land, one people, cherished and chosen for the purpose of transforming the world. This people’s failure was most serious.\textsuperscript{1547}

But throughout Romans 9–11, Paul argues that God has nevertheless accomplished (or, rather, is accomplishing) his redemptive purposes through and for Israel by other, previously unforeseen means. Indeed, like clay, Israel has been obstinate and stubborn, and God has responded by patiently reshaping (κατηρτίζω) and forming instruments for his ultimate

\begin{footnotes}
\item[1544] Heschel, \textit{The Prophets}, 222–23: “Ultimately there is only one will by which history is shaped: the will of God; and there is only one factor upon which the shape of history depends: the moral conduct of the nations. The history of mankind moves between these two poles.”
\item[1545] Wagner, \textit{Heralds of the Good News}, 73.
\item[1546] Crabbe, "Fighting Against God," sees a similar principle at work in Josephus’ \textit{War} and the book of Acts, in which divine providence is “an unstoppable force” (22) but “human responses to divine providence have eschatological consequences…. [B]y failing to embrace divine providence, characters can become fighters of God and, in so doing, bring disaster upon themselves” (39).
\item[1547] Heschel, \textit{The Prophets}, 17. “For accomplishing his grand design, God needs the help of man. Man is and has the instrument of God, which he may or may not use in consonance with the grand design. Life is clay, and righteousness the mold in which God wants history to be shaped. But human beings, instead of fashioning the clay, deform the shape” (253).
\end{footnotes}
redemptive purposes, including the shaping of some of that clay into “vessels of wrath” in the process. In light of God’s pathos and mercy, the potter/clay imagery serves as a call to repentance for those vessels that are as yet unfinished and unhardened, as one second-century Christian interprets:

For we are clay in the hand of the craftsman. As in the case of a potter: if he makes a vessel that is turned or crushed in his hands, he can reshape it again. But if he has already put it into the kiln, he can no longer rescue it. Thus also with us. As long as we are in this world, we should repent from the evil that we did in the flesh. (2 Clem. 8:2)

Yes, “God has absolute autonomy to show mercy to any person he chooses,” but he is also a God of pathos who does not act arbitrarily but in responsive concern for his creation. Each is therefore “to submit in creaturely humility before the divine potter, and perhaps by implication, to submit thereby also to his power to remake.”

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1548 Gaventa, “Calling-Into-Being”: “[T]he image of the potter and the clay does not suggest that either part of the lump is intended for destruction: even the less honorable pot is used for something.”

1549 Pace Dunn, Romans 9–16, 559, Paul is not thinking of the potter “breaking the flawed pot to reconstruct it” as though the pot is already formed (cf. also Jewett, Romans, 596). Rather, the process of reshaping takes place before the pot is hardened. Once the clay has been fired in the kiln, it can no longer be reshaped but only destroyed once it is no longer of use. Along these lines, the nominal form of the term for “hardening” in 9:18 (σκληρύνειν; cf. Exod 4:21; 7:3, 22; 8:15 [ET 8:19]; 9:12, 35; 10:1, 20, 27; 11:10, 14:4, 8; 14:17) appears elsewhere in reference to clay hardened in a kiln (Plutarch, Publ. 13.2.4 [103]; cf. also Aristotle, Mete. 383a 25 [figs rather than clay]; 386a 24; Gen. an. 743a 15; Ps. Aristotle, Probl. 12.10.1–2 [931a]), providing a linguistic link to the potter/clay metaphor in the succeeding verses. “Hardening” (σκληρύνειν) therefore is best understood here as the final step of judgment at which point the vessel is set in its given shape and is hardened to remain that way permanently. “Hardening” does not involve reshaping; it involves permanently setting the clay (or person) in the state in which it already exists. But in 9:20–23 the potter is depicted as still working with the clay, which is not said to have yet become hardened. God’s mercy entails showing patience with the clay trying to form it into a better vessel prior to hardening it in its final state.


1551 Thiessen, Gott hat Israel nicht verstoße, 53: “Dieser Zusammenhang zeigt, dass es darum geht, dass Gott das ‘Gefäß’ zu anderen Zwecken umformen kann, was er jedoch nicht unabhängig von der jeweiligen Voraussetzung, der Herzenseinstellung der Menschen, tut.”

1552 Dunn, Romans 9–16, 565.
**Vessels of Wrath**

The language of “vessels of wrath” is as close to a direct quotation of scripture as appears in 9:19–24, directly referencing Jeremiah 27:25 LXX (50:25 MT),\(^{1553}\) which says the Lord “has brought out the instruments of his wrath” with which he will destroy the land of the Chaldeans:

*Table 3: Vessels of Wrath*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jer 27(50):25 LXX</th>
<th>Rom 9:22</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>κύριος … ἐξήνεγκεν τὰ σκεύη ὀργῆς αὐτοῦ</td>
<td>ὁ θεὸς … ἠνεγκεν … σκεύη ὀργῆς</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This allusion highlights that even vessels with a dishonorable use still serve a function in God’s redemptive plan, as Munck notes:

> This [instrumental] meaning would fit Pharaoh. He is just the sort of weapon of indignation that corresponds to Ishmael and Esau; he is the persecutor used by God for a redemptive purpose. If this interpretation of σκεύη ὀργῆς is chosen, it is natural also to interpret σκεύη ἔλεους in the same way, as weapons used by God with which to show mercy. In that case σκεύη does not refer to objects of God’s wrath or mercy, but to agents who effect God’s wrath or mercy.\(^{1554}\)

Remarkably, this verbal parallel has typically been dismissed as “interesting but of doubtful relevance here,”\(^{1555}\) in favor of understanding these vessels as objects of God’s wrath, as Dunn argues:

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\(^{1553}\) A similar reference to σκεύη ὀργῆς αὐτοῦ appears in Isa 13:5 (Symmachus; also Codex Marchalianus), referring to the instruments of the Lord’s wrath which he will summon “from a far country” and with which he will destroy the whole land of Babylon (not, as Munck, *Christ and Israel*, 67, “the whole earth”). Anthony T. Hanson, “Vessels of Wrath or Instruments of Wrath? Romans ix. 22–3,” JTS 32 (1981): 433–443 (434–35), points out that the targumim interpret the two passages the same way, suggesting they were connected in the tradition. Note also the intriguing interpretation in a later rabbinitic text reflecting on the merciful purpose of God in scattering Israel: “Of course the owner (i.e. God) knows where he put his tools (i.e. the people of Israel); when he returns to his house (i.e. the Land, or the Temple) he will restore the tools to his house” (Seder Elyahu Rabbah 10); translation from Gafni, *Land, Center, and Diaspora*, 32 based on the edition of Meir Friedman, ed., *Seder Elyahu Rabbah ve-Seder Elyahu Zuta (Tana de-ve Eliyahu)* (Jerusalem: Wahrmann, 1969), 54.


\(^{1555}\) Dunn, *Romans 9–16*, 559.
The genitive construction of σκεύη ὀργῆς allows various senses—vessels made in anger or made to experience eschatological wrath. But since the following phrase has more clearly in view final destruction and its cause, σκεύη ὀργῆς here is probably intended in the sense “vessels which are objects of God’s wrath now.”\footnote{Dunn, Romans 9–16, 559. Similarly, Simon Légasse, L’épître de Paul aux Romains, LD 10 (Paris: Cerf, 2002), 609–610: “promis qu’ils [vessels] sont au châtiment divin” (609). Cf. also Ouoba, “Paul’s Use of Isaiah,” 177; Jewett, Romans, 596–97; Moo, Romans, 609; Käsemann, Romans, 270; Michel, Römer, 244–45.}

On the contrary, if someone mentions a “vessel of water,” it would never mean “a vessel which is the object of water now,” whether in English or Greek.\footnote{I suspect that some interpreters have been led astray by the verbal quality of ὀργῆς, thereby interpreting the phrase as an objective genitive. But an objective genitive requires that the head noun include or imply a verbal idea; a verbal noun in the genitive is irrelevant. See Smyth, Greek Grammar, §1328–1335. The genitive must therefore be understood as attributive rather than verbal. See Daniel B. Wallace, Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament with Scripture, Subject, and Greek Word Indexes (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 86–88.}

Similarly, a σκεῖος of something might be a vessel filled with or conveying something or otherwise some sort of object serving as an instrument with respect to something else (cf. Paul as a “chosen vessel” in Acts 9:15; cf. also 2 Cor 4:7). Paul could have chosen any number of other words to represent objects on which God’s wrath rests, but the very word σκεῖος implies a functional instrument, particularly given the scriptural echoes evoked by the phrase.

Thus, rather than understanding “vessels of wrath” as referencing the final destruction of said vessels based on the following εἰς ἀπώλειαν, the phrase should be interpreted in light of the context of the prior verse, which portrays a potter making different kinds of vessels, each with a particular function, whether honorable or dishonorable.\footnote{As Thiessen, Gott hat Israel nicht verstoßen, 52: “Es ist jedoch davon auszugehen, dass der Begriff in Rom 9,22f. nicht unabhängig vom Gebrauch in Röm 9,21 zu sehen ist.” Cf. also Christian Müller, Gottes Gerechtigkeit und Gottes Volk: Eine Untersuchung zu Römer 9–11 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1964), 27. Remarkably, although Dunn notes of the previous verse “the more natural sense of the metaphor is of vessels put to differing uses within history” (Romans 9–16, 557), he immediately drops this instrumental reading for the “vessels of wrath” phrase in the very next verse. Similarly, Battle, “Paul’s Use,” 127, acknowledges that “‘Of wrath’ is certainly a genitive of quality, ‘vessels characterized by wrath,’” but immediately asserts that the meaning must be something else: “in Paul’s context the thought predominates that these vessels will receive God’s wrath, just as the ‘vessels of mercy’ will receive his mercy.” Cranfield, Romans, 495 n. 4, also suggests, “σκεῖος … is used in vv. 22 and 23 …}
vessels for the purpose of immediately destroying them (that is, making them objects of his wrath) but rather so that they should have some useful function.\textsuperscript{1559} Similarly, the “vessels of mercy” in v. 23, though also recipients of God’s mercy, should be understood in an instrumental sense of God’s mercy to the world, thereby fulfilling the role of Israel as a “light to the nations.”\textsuperscript{1560} Munck rightly notes that an instrumental reading of “vessels of honor” and “vessels of mercy” brings out a theme of interdependent redemption:

In this connection, a peculiar feature of Paul’s thought in Romans 9–11 may be noted, namely that none of the participants in \textit{Heilsgeschichte} are saved or lost for themselves alone. The hardening of the one has as its redemptive motive the salvation of the other, and again, the salvation of the other leads to the salvation of the first after all.\textsuperscript{1561}

It is nevertheless unnecessary to render \textit{σκεῦος} as “weapons,” as does Munck. Rather, “vessels,” “utensils,” or “instruments” seems best in the context of the potter/clay metaphor. Regardless of how it is translated, an instrumental sense—that is, that God is working out his

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{1559} As Hanson, "Vessels of Wrath," 440. Cf. Cranfield, \textit{Romans}, 492 n. 2: “The potter does not make ordinary, everyday pots, merely in order to destroy them!”

\textsuperscript{1560} Cf. the observation of Ronald E. Clements, “‘A Remnant Chosen by Grace’ (Romans 11:5): The Old Testament Background and Origin of the Remnant Concept,” in \textit{Pauline Studies}, eds. Donald A. Hagner and Murray J. Harris (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 106–121 (108), that in the so-called postexilic period, the remnant are viewed as “the instruments through whom salvation could be brought to all Israel, and even to the Gentiles.” Such a distinction between the remnant (or remainder) of Israel and “all Israel” is problematic, however, as discussed in n. 1721 on p. 562 and n. 1787 on p. 583 below. Pace Starling, \textit{Not My People}, 119 n. 44, the phrase in v. 23 is not support for the objective genitive reading in v. 22 but rather should also be understood instrumentally in light of the pottery metaphor Paul has been employing through the entire passage.

\textsuperscript{1561} Munck, \textit{Christ and Israel}, 67–68.
\end{footnotesize}
wrath through these vessels—is in the foreground. Nevertheless, the additional εἰς ἀπώλειαν also clarifies that the final fate of such utensils is—much as it was for Pharaoh in Exodus after his purpose was complete—their own destruction. But for those vessels that are as yet unfired and still malleable, a better hope remains.

Hosea: “Not My People”

The theme of interconnected redemption is all the more evident once we again recall the historical foundation of the larger argument, namely that God has previously made vessels of dishonor from unfaithful Israel and cast them among the nations as (apparently) useless vessels. Those Israelites were scattered and dishonored by those who served as God’s instruments of wrath at that time. But now, the redemptive purpose of that destructive work has been revealed, as God is now calling vessels of mercy:

\[\text{ἡ µᾶς οὐ µόνον ἔξ Ιουδαίων ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐξ ἑθνῶν, \text{ός καὶ ἐν τῷ Ωση ἔλεγε καλέσω τὸν οὐ λαὸν μου λαὸν μου καὶ τὴν οὐκ ἠγαπημένην ἠγαπημένην κα\text{и}}\]

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1562 Gaventa, “Calling-Into-Being,” 267: “Rom 11 will contend that God is using Israel’s disbelief in order to bring about the salvation of Gentiles and then the full salvation of Israel, so that the instrumental reading of σκεύη here better serves to lay the groundwork for that argument.”

1563 Pace Thiessen, Gott hat Israel nicht verstoße, 51–55, who acknowledges that an instrumental aspect (“Werkzeug”) is present in the phrase as used in the verse but regards an objective aspect (“Gefäß”) as in the foreground (54). See also Christian Maurer, “σκεῦος,” TWNT 7:359–368, who also sees both senses, with God working out his wrath both on and through these vessels.

1564 Watson, Hermeneutics of Faith, 23, has noted the striking chronological order of Paul’s citations through Rom 9, starting with Genesis and ending in Isaiah. Romans 9 then closes with Israel in exile, having not reached the law of righteousness which it pursued and standing in need of redemption. Whether Hosea or Isaiah came first in Paul’s scripture collections is irrelevant since both prophets were associated with the fall of northern Israel, with Hosea slightly preceding Isaiah chronologically (pace Starling, Not My People, 151 n. 170). Similarly, Wright, “Romans 9–11 and the ’New Perspective,’” 42: “This is the covenental history of Israel, told as always from one point of view.”

1565 E.g., Assyria: ἡ ράβδος τοῦ θυμοῦ (Isa 10:5) and Babylon: σύ μοι σκεῦ πολέμου (Jer 28[51]:20 LXX).

1566 Niebuhr, “Nicht alle aus Israel,” 435: Der Anakoluth betont das hier eingeführte ‘wir’ (οὐς καὶ ἐκάλεσεν ἡµᾶς) und unterstreicht damit das souveräne Erwählungshandeln Gottes.”

1567 The calling of a people of ἐξ ἑθνῶν is evocative of a panoply of restoration texts in which Israel is gathered and restored ἐξ ἑθνῶν (Ezek 38:8), ἐκ τῶν ἑθνῶν (1 Chr 16:35; Ps 106:47; Ezek 11:17; 28:25; 34:13; 36:24; 39:27; T.
us not only from Jews but also from gentiles, as he also says in Hosea, “I will call ‘my people’ those who were ‘not my people,’1568 and she who was not beloved, I will call beloved. And it will be in the place where it was said to them, ‘you are not my people,’ there they will be called children of the living God.” (Rom 9:24b–26)1569

Many interpreters have noted that, as Elizabeth Johnson observes, “Paul appears to wrench Hos 2:25 and 2:1 from their historical contexts to apply them to gentiles rather than Israel.”1570 But as was also true of his use of scripture in Romans 2, Paul’s application of the “not my people” motif to gentiles at this point in his argument is by no means arbitrary.1571 As has been the case throughout, Paul remains conscious of the scriptural background of his citation and

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Naph. 8:3). That the phrase was also commonly used to refer to gentiles (e.g., 1 Kgs 11:12; Acts 26:17; Gal 2:15; Josephus, A.J. 9.253; 13.196) allowed Paul to read these passages as prophesying Israel’s restoration from the gentiles rather than from among the gentiles. Acts 15:14 seems to have a similar play on the phrase, as James refers to God “taking a people for his own name ἐξ ἐθνῶν,” again echoing prophetic language about God restoring his people from among the nations but interpreting it as actually referring to gentiles. Cf. Gadenz, Called from Jews and Gentiles, 99 n. 55.

1568 As noted by Wagner, Heralds of the Good News, 81, by reversing the of the clauses in Hosea and placing the reference to οὐ λαός μου first, Paul gains the leverage to wrest from it “the astounding conclusion that the promise of return from exile and national restoration for Israel in Hosea is really an announcement of Gentiles as God’s own people.”

1569 For a fuller evaluation of Paul’s alterations of his source material and their significance, see Starling, Not My People, 110–14; Wagner, Heralds of the Good News, 79–92. For a thorough rhetorical analysis of the passage, see Gadenz, Called from Jews and Gentiles, 91–102.

1570 E Elizabeth Johnson, The Function of Apocalyptic and Wisdom Traditions in Rom 9–11 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989), 150. Dodd, Romans, 159–160: “When Paul, normally a clear thinker, becomes obscure, it usually means that he is embarrased by the position that he has taken up. It is surely so here…. It is rather strange that Paul has not observed that this prophecy referred to Israel, rejected for its sins, but destined to be restored…. But if the particular prophecy is ill-chosen, it is certainly true that the prophets did declare the calling of the Gentiles.” Hays, Echoes, 67: “with casual audacity he rereads the text as a prophecy of God’s intention to embrace the Gentiles as his own people.” J. Ross Wagner, “‘Not from the Jews Only, But Also from the Gentiles: Mercy to the Nations in Romans 9–11,’” in Wilk et al., Between Gospel and Election, 417–432 (422): “[Paul] audaciously appropriates for the Gentiles an oracle … that originally envisioned the redemption of Israel.” Cf. also Bruce D. Chilton, “Romans 9–11 as Scriptural Interpretation and Dialogue with Judaism,” ÉxAud 4 (1988): 27–37 (29); Ouoba, “Paul's Use of Isaiah,” 188 n. 133

1571 Pace Eduard Lohse, Der Brief an die Römer, KEK 4 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2003), who remarks: “Doch auf den Kontext der Prophetenworte nimmt der Apostel keine Rücksicht.”
that Hosea’s promises were made to Israel—this is in fact instrumental to his argument.1572

Indeed, in the context of what Paul has been arguing in the immediately preceding passage of which these verses serve as the conclusion,1573 the point is precisely that God is now calling vessels of mercy from among the nations where Israel was sown (Zech 10:9; cf. Hos 2:23), with these previously dishonored vessels being redeemed and transformed into instruments of God’s mercy and being used for God’s purpose of transforming the world through his people after all.

As William Campbell notes,

> It would be most unlikely for Paul to use the Hosea citation with reference to Gentiles when this was not its original purpose and especially since it is immediately followed by two other Scripture citations that clearly apply to Israel. I would maintain that the Hosea citation is taken by Paul to apply primarily to Israel and thus the three citations [in Rom 9:25–29] all have the same point of reference, Israel. Rejected Israel, like the northern tribes, will be restored. This is Paul’s primary thesis, but in and with the restoration, another “non-people,” the Gentiles, will also be blessed. Paul does apply the Hosea citation in a secondary sense, typologically, to Gentiles also, but only after he has used it to refer to

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1572 “It is not likely that he has overlooked that in Hosea the symbolic names refer to God’s mercy toward the rejected Israel.” Nils A. Dahl, *Studies in Paul: Theology for the Early Christian Mission* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1977; repr., Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2002), 146. Similarly, Romano Penna, *Lettera ai Romani II: Rom 6–11*, SOCr 6 (Bologna: Dehoniane, 2006), 283: “Il testo profetico, in realtà, serve a Paolo per richiamare il tema della riunificazione di Giuda e Israele, che per lui diventano paradigma di una più insospettata unione tra giudei e gentili nel nome di Cristo.” Cranfield also observes that the quote serves as an ideal type of both the rejection of Israel and the restoration of the Gentiles (*Romans*, 499–500). See also Starling, *Not My People*, 117, 120, 163–65; Wagner, *Heralds of the Good News*, 86–89. The argument of Gadenz, *Called from Jews and Gentiles*, 107–08, that Paul may have in mind here the (non-Israelite?) children of Gomer in addition to the northern kingdom of Israel, thus allowing him to apply the passage to gentiles is unnecessary and unlikely, stretching too far to avoid the idea that Paul directly applies Israel’s promise to gentiles. It is unclear why Gomer’s children would be any less Israelites than any other northern Israelite children in their generation. The very point in Hosea is that the whole people has been divorced, and this is the point Paul stretches to its limit in his citation of this passage.

1573 The close connection between v. 24 and what comes immediately before should not be forgotten; the relative clause of v. 24 depends on σκεύη ἐλέους in v. 23 and further develops the argument of the potter/clay metaphor. Cf. Thomas H. Tobin, *Paul’s Rhetoric in Its Contexts* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2004), 334; Starling, *Not My People*, 115–16. Nevertheless, many scholars treat 9:24 as the start of a new unit (9:24–29); e.g., Dunn, *Romans* 9–16, 569–576; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 571–75; Moo, *Romans*, 609–616; Penna, *Romani II*, 280. Gadenz, *Called from Jews and Gentiles*, 94, defends this view: “Formal criteria … such as the change of actors (from the imaginary interlocutor in vv. 19–20 to the ‘us’ in v. 24) and the change of vocabulary (from ‘mercy’ back to ‘call’) suggest that v. 24 begins a new unit.” Nevertheless, the clear grammatical links to v. 23 suggests that this “new unit” is the conclusion of 19–23.
Israel. Like Hosea, he envisions the reuniting of the twelve tribes into one people, that is, the hardened and the remnant parts of Israel will one day be reunited.1574

Campbell’s insight here is fundamentally correct, but he appears not to recognize the full import of that insight. Paul’s primary thesis is indeed that Israel will be restored, but these redeemed gentiles are not another non-people at all. For one thing, although many interpreters treat “the gentiles” as a specific people group analogous to “the Jews,” the term does not denote a specific people but the nations in general.1575 Moreover, as Dunn notes, it is “not ‘the Gentiles’ as a class, but (some) Gentiles, some ἐκ ἐθνῶν,“1576 who are called.

Paul also does not apply Hosea citation to gentiles merely in a secondary or typological sense. The key is to remember that the terrible message of Hosea is precisely that northern Israel has been cut off from the chosen people and “mixed among the peoples” (Hos 7:8).1577 Once a part of God’s elect nation, “Israel [the north] is swallowed up; they are now in the nations [gentiles] like a worthless vessel” (Hos 8:8 LXX),1578 having indeed become “not my people,” indistinct from the non-chosen nations. In other words, these Israelites have become gentiles—after all, what does “not my people” mean if not “gentiles”?

1574 Campbell, “Divergent Images,” 199. See also Battle, “Paul's Use.”

1575 This is a remarkably common mistake among interpreters. E.g., (in addition to Campbell) Ouoba, “Paul's Use of Isaiah,” 175: “God has chosen … some Jews and the Gentiles to be vessels of his mercy.”

1576 Dunn, Romans 9–16, 580. See also Cranfield, Romans, 506, on Rom 9:30.

1577 As discussed in n. 430 on p. 138 above, the idea is that Ephraim has become ethnically mixed with non-Israelites through the exile. In contrast, the Ἰουδαῖοι remain ἄμικτοι (“unmingled”), which becomes a point of contention and accusation by their enemies (cf. A.J. 11.212).

Paul reads Hosea in combination with Deut 32:21 (cf. Rom 10:19) as a declaration that the northern house of Israel has become gentiles.\(^{1579}\) And if these Israelites have indeed become gentiles (“not my people”), their redemption by definition requires inclusion of gentiles.\(^{1580}\) Thus Paul applies Hosea’s promise to “not my people” to gentiles not in a secondary or typological sense but as a necessary part of the promised redemption to Israel, suggesting that for Hosea’s promise to be fulfilled, “not my people” (=gentiles) must be transformed into “my people” (=Israel).\(^{1581}\) As he has already hinted as far back as the second chapter, Paul takes the radical step of identifying faithful, uncircumcised gentiles as the “not my people” being restored to Israel as promised in Hosea.\(^{1582}\)

This reading is further strengthened by the succeeding citation of Isa 10:22–23, which is also drawn from a passage specifically addressing the fate of the northern house of Israel in the wake of its destruction by Assyria, promising that a remnant of that people will ultimately

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\(^{1579}\) That Deut 32:21 uses the title “not-people” (העם ל; LXX οὐκ ἔθνει) specifically to refer to gentiles provides a natural lens through which to interpret Hosea in exactly this manner. Indeed, since ἔθνος does not have the same valence as “gentile” in the Hebrew Bible/LXX, “not my people” is a clear way to communicate what is now understood by the term “gentile”—that is, someone outside the covenant with Israel. See also p. 544 n. 1656 below. On ἔθνος and relevant or analogous terms and categories in the Hebrew Bible see Rosen-Zvi and Ophir, “Paul and the Invention of the Gentiles.” See also n. 4 on p. 4 above.

\(^{1580}\) Starling, Not My People, 164: “Gentiles can become ‘my people’ because Israel has first become ‘not my people’; the Gentiles become Christ’s not by being grafted through the law into the branches of a flourishing, obedient Israel, but by being grafted through the new covenant promises of the prophets into the stump from which the branches of disobedient Israel have been broken.” Hays, Echoes, 120: “Paul extends the logic of reversal at work in the text well beyond the referential sense envisioned in the original.” Pace Dunn, Romans 9–16, 575.

\(^{1581}\) Gadenz, Called from Jews and Gentiles, 108–09: “The phrase ‘not-people’ thus enables Paul to associate the salvation of the nations with the restoration of Israel, an association he will further develop in Rom 11.”

\(^{1582}\) Penna, Romani II, 297: L’importanza dell’affermazione di 9,25–26 è denotata, se non altro, dal fatto che questa è la prima volta che in Rm emerge il concetto di popolo; e l’osservazione è complicata dal fatto che esso è attribuito non a Israele bensì ai Gentili (aderenti all’evangelo)!” If these gentiles are indeed included in the people of God, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that they are Israelites, since for Paul as for any other Jew, Israel is the people of God. Paul gives no indication that God has substituted a new people, and as will be shown below, he consistently depicts those called from the nations as adopted into the already-existing people of God—that is, Israel. Pace Battle, "Paul's Use," esp. 129, who seems to forget that Paul applies vv. 24–26 to both Jews and gentiles. Cf. A. Andrew Das, Paul and the Jews, LPS (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2003), 111–13.
return. Then, in the third citation of the series, Paul asserts that Isaiah foretold exactly this situation, in which YHWH Sabaoth has demonstrated his mercy by leaving a “seed” for his people after Assyria’s ravaging of Israel and Judah, which left “Zion like a shelter in a vineyard … like a besieged city” (Isa 1:8 LXX), rather than destroying them like Sodom and Gomorrah (Rom 9:29; cf. Isa 1:9). Campbell is correct that Paul has not shifted his point of reference from gentiles in 9:25–26 to Israel in the succeeding citations—Israel’s restoration has been in view all along. But Paul draws the surprising conclusion that the harvest from the Israelite seed which God sowed for himself in the earth (cf. Hos 2:25) is being reaped from “not my people”—that is, gentiles.

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1583 Ouoba, “Paul’s Use of Isaiah,” 188–89: “It is not surprising, therefore, that the prophecy of Isa 10:22–23 to which Paul appeals is in fact a promise of survivors following the Assyrian invasion…. This serves Paul’s purposes well, for the apostle seeks to show that Israel’s rebellion has led to God’s judgment upon her, and that only a remnant remains faithful to him following the blindness of the many.” Wagner, Heralds of the Good News, 103: “Rather than announcing an imminent devastation of the entire land out of which “only” a remnant of Israel will survive, Isaiah 10:22c–23 LXX functions as a coda to the prophet’s oracle of salvation (10:20–23), proclaiming the swift accomplishment of redemption for the remnant of Israel throughout the inhabited world.” See further Wagner, Heralds of the Good News, 102–110. As already discussed in the section on Isaiah in Chapter 3 above, much of Isaiah is especially concerned with the fate of the northern kingdom in the wake of the Syro-Ephraimite conflict and the destruction of Samaria by the Assyrians, including the establishment of a broad definition of Israel in the opening lines of the book. This also impacts the understanding of Isa 1:9, cited by Paul in Rom 9:29, as it is also drawn from a passage especially concerned with Israel as a whole in the wake of the Assyrian onslaught. Cf. Battle, "Paul's Use,” 124: “The remarkable thing about these quotations from the prophets [in Rom 9:20–33] is that, with the exception of Isa 45:9, every quotation comes from the same period in Israel’s history—the time of impending Assyrian conquest…. It is more significant that in each case the Assyrian judgment of Israel is the subject of the prophecy.”

1584 The reference to σπέρμα in Isa 1:9 may have suggested the quotation to Paul, not only because of his arguments about “seed” in Rom 4:16–18 and again in 9:8 but also because of his immediately prior use of Hos 2:25, in which God “will sow” those who were “not my people” in the land/earth, after which he will say to them “my people.” Note the connection between Hos 2:25 and Isa 8:14, 28:16 in 1 Pet 2:6–10, which suggests Paul was not the first to interpret these passages together. On the connection with 1 Pet 2:6–10, see Wagner, Heralds of the Good News, 131–36. As noted by Starling, if the chronological sequencing followed by Paul to this point continues through the end of the chapter, it suggests Paul reads Isa 1:9 as chronologically subsequent to the Isa 10:22 quotation (Not My People, 151).

1585 That the harvest is being reaped where the seed was sown helps account for the spatial reference ἐν τῷ τόπῳ … ἐκεῖ. This is a better explanation than “instead of” (e.g., Cranfield, Romans, 501; Lohse, Römer, 283; Jewett, Romans, 601) or the idea of an eschatological pilgrimage (e.g., Munck, Christ and Israel, 72–73; Dahl, Studies in Paul, 146).
**Dishonored Vessels Redeemed**

In the context of the larger argument, the point is that even the vessels for dishonorable use have been made so that God’s ultimate mercy might prevail. Like Isaiah’s Suffering Servant, whose form was ἄτιμον and who was ἐτιμασθη καὶ οὐκ ἐλογίσθη (Isa 53:3 LXX)—God is using those who were dishonored as instruments of mercy so that both the vessels of honor and of dishonor should be redeemed. The incorporation of transformed gentiles—whereby formerly rejected Israel is also being restored—therefore serves as proof of God’s concern even for dishonored vessels and his continuing faithfulness to unfaithful Israel.

On the flip side, those who are now unfaithful and disobedient stand in danger of the same dishonorable consequences of the past (e.g., Hos 8:8; Jer 19; Jer 22:28)—or they may even be reshaped to serve as vessels of God’s wrath akin to the gentile kings and empires of old. As Paul’s audience would presumably know, the typical fate of such instruments of wrath after their function was concluded was destruction (e.g., Isa 10:12), hence the εἰς ἀπώλειαν in Romans 9:22 (cf. also σκεύος ἀπολωλός in Ps 31:12 [30:13 LXX]). But Paul regards his contemporary unfaithful kin according to the flesh not as hardened vessels already ruined beyond repair but as not-yet-fired clay still in the molding process and therefore still having the opportunity to repent. Thus Paul hopes through his ministry “to save some of them” (11:14).

But Paul’s redemptive hopes stretch still further: even if they do not heed Paul’s message, he still appeals to God’s redemptive action among the gentiles as proof that God’s mercy may still prevail. If God has made redemptive use even of Israel’s past disobedience, the same can be

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1586 Hays’ insight about the Suffering Servant is relevant here: “[Paul] hints and whispers all around Isaiah 53 but never mentions the prophetic typology that would supremely integrate his interpretation of Christ and Israel. The result is a compelling example of metalepsis: Paul’s transumptive silence cries out for the reader to complete the trope.” Hays, *Echoes*, 63; see also Wagner, *Heralds of the Good News*, 335.

1587 Again, cf. 2 Clem 8:2.
expected in the present. If those dishonorable vessels previously rejected as “not my people” are now being shown mercy, by implication, those who are now becoming dishonorable may also be redeemed through the mercy shown to those who have previously gone through the same process. That is, just as God is now redeeming previously dishonored vessels through such an extreme step as the transformation and inclusion of gentiles, so also he may show mercy to those currently resisting his purposes—God’s redemption of the former group demonstrates his continued concern for the latter also. Thus all stand on equal footing before a God whose intention is to show mercy to all, and the present incorporation of the gentiles paradoxically serves as the prime proof of God’s overarching mercy and faithfulness to Israel.

Have Gentiles Attained Righteousness?

Paul follows this shocking suggestion by further developing the point that some gentiles have indeed become participants in the promises of righteousness.1588

Τί οὖν ἐροῦμεν; ὅτι ἐθνη τὰ μὴ διώκοντα δικαιοσύνην κατέλαβεν δικαιοσύνην, δικαιοσύνην δὲ τὴν ἐκ πίστεως. Ἰσραήλ δὲ διώκων νόμον δικαιοσύνης εἰς νόμον οὕκ ἐφθασεν. διὰ τί; ὅτι οὐκ ἐκ πίστεως ἀλλ’ ὡς ἔργον προσέκοψαν τῷ λίθῳ τοῦ προσκόμματος, καθὼς γέγραπται ἱδοὺ τίθησι ἐν Σιὼν λίθον προσκόμματος καὶ πέτραν σκανδάλου, καὶ ο πιστεύων ἐπ’ αὐτῷ οὐ κατασχυνθήσεται.

What will we say then? That gentiles,1589 who were not pursuing righteousness,1590 overtook righteousness—even the righteousness which is from

1588 V. 30 amounts to a restatement of 2:14–16, with those who “did not pursue righteousness” parallel to those “not having the law by nature” and “overtook righteousness” parallel to “do the things of the law,,” which they were enabled to do by receiving the new covenant promise of the law written on the heart. See Bergmeier, “Das Gesetz im Römerbrief,” 52–53; Gathercole, "A Law unto Themselves," 31–32.

1589 Note that ἐθνη is again anarthrous, denoting some gentiles, not “the gentiles” as a whole. Cf. Dunn, Romans 9–16, 580; Cranfield, Romans, 506.

1590 The present participle with the aorist verb requires an imperfective sense, though “most English language commentaries carelessly translate this with ‘Gentiles who do (or did) not pursue righteousness’” (Jewett, Romans, 609 n. 19). E.g., Dunn, Romans 9–16, 580; Ziesler, Romans, 249, 252; Fitzmyer, Romans, 577.
faithfulness, but Israel, despite pursuing a law of righteousness, did not reach the law. Why not? Because [they pursued] not by faithfulness but as though by works. They stumbled over the “stone of stumbling,” as it is written “See, I am laying in Zion a stumbling stone, a rock for trapping, and whoever trusts upon it will not be put to shame.” (Rom 9:30–33)

This passage is almost universally treated as Paul addressing “the present situation of his fellow Jews in relation to the Gentiles,” specifically, “the irony and tragedy that while Gentiles who never sought that righteousness are now attaining it, Israel as a whole has failed to reach it.” Thus the primary problem requiring explanation is assumed to be Israel’s continued rejection of the gospel, though commentators have noted that “it remains unclear in v. 31 precisely why the ironic failure occurred,” as Dunn explains:

Oddly enough, however, throughout [this] section Paul has never stated explicitly the problem with which he is wrestling, viz., Israel’s failure to believe in the gospel of the Messiah Jesus, the Son of God.”

Interpreters have also struggled with why Paul breaks the parallelism between verses 30 and 31, as one would expect the object of Israel’s pursuit to be “righteousness” in parallel to what the gentiles have attained despite not pursuing it. But instead, v. 31 says Israel pursued

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1591 The δέ in this second clause serves to emphasize the implausibility of the statement—that is, how could gentiles be faithful when they did not have the covenant? What were they faithful to? The point is that not only have gentiles overtaken righteousness, they have attained covenant righteousness.

1592 Wagner, Heralds of the Good News, 122, notes the parallels between Paul’s wording here and LXX Isa 51:5 οἱ διώκοντες τὸ δίκαιον, with Paul amending the target of Israel’s pursuit to νόμον δικαιοσύνης. Paul’s emendation is reminiscent of the polemical phrase חלקות דורשי (“seekers of smooth things”) in Pesher Nahum (4Q169 3–4 2), suggesting that Paul is employing a similar (and perhaps familiar) polemical move here.

1593 Tobin, Paul’s Rhetoric, 341.

1594 Dunn, Romans 9–16, 592

1595 Jewett, Romans, 610; cf. Dunn, Romans 9–16, 581.

1596 Dunn, Romans 9–16, 591.

“a law of righteousness” and fell short not of righteousness but of the law.\textsuperscript{1598} This has been a source of puzzlement and has “become a storm center of debate,”\textsuperscript{1599} with numerous interpreters at least as far back as Chrysostom amending or glossing the passage to “righteousness from the law” to arrive at a more parallel construction.\textsuperscript{1600}

One key is in recognizing that, although nearly every translation and scholarly treatment renders the verse this way on the assumption that Paul is speaking of contemporary Jews, v. 31 does not in fact say “Israel has not reached the law,”\textsuperscript{1601} as if the verb were in the perfect. Instead, the verse says, “Israel did not reach the law (ἔφθασεν).”\textsuperscript{1602} The use of the aorist reinforces that Paul is once again referring to Israel in its fuller, biblical sense.\textsuperscript{1603} Thus Dunn is correct that Paul’s “choice of Ἰσραήλ rather than Ἰουδαίοι (cf v 24) is probably significant,” but the significance is not (as Dunn concludes) that Paul “is against his people’s self-understanding

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\textsuperscript{1598} C. Thomas Rhyne, “Nomos Dikaiosynes and the Meaning of Romans 10:4,” \textit{CBQ} 48, no. 3 (1986): 486–499 (489), argues that there is little reason to understand the law negatively in this context and that attainment of the law would amount to righteousness akin to what the gentiles have attained. The problem is not the law but rather that “[t]hey falsely imagined that they could attain to the law simply by performing its works (see 10:5) rather than by faith (see 10:6–8)…. He does not fault Israel with pursuing the law per se but with pursuing it as though the righteousness it promises could be reached by works.” (490).

\textsuperscript{1599} Moo, \textit{Romans}, 622 (see 622–28 for further discussion of the various options in this debate).

\textsuperscript{1600} See \textit{Hom. Rom} 16:10 (PG 60.563). Cf. also Käsemann, \textit{Romans}, 277; Westerholm, “Law, Grace,” 68: “righteousness which is based on the law.” Fitzmyer, \textit{Romans}, 578, observes that this interpretation has rightly been abandoned by most contemporary exegesis.

\textsuperscript{1601} Dunn, \textit{Romans} 9–16, 578.

\textsuperscript{1602} Recall Philo’s explanation that although Israel’s redemption remains a future hope, φθάνουσα τὸ μέλλον καὶ πλήρες ἄγαθον ἐναργελίζεται (\textit{Praem.} 161). When Paul here proclaims that Israel ἔφθασεν what it sought, he is likely using familiar or stereotypical language concerning Israel’s restoration.

\textsuperscript{1603} Cf. also the aorists in Rom 11:30–31, which also refer to past (perfective) disobedience both on the part of the gentiles and Israel without regard to the continuation of such a state of disobedience into the present, such that mercy toward one means mercy toward all—again the theme of interconnected fates appears throughout these chapters. There is nothing in this passage to suggest that a gnomic aorist, which would imply that Israel always falls short of what it seeks and therefore no hope for redemption. Rather, all contextual markers suggest a historical (perfective) understanding of the verb as applied to biblical Israel, which has been the subject of the discussion to this point.
of what it means to be the covenant people.”\textsuperscript{1604} On the contrary, Paul by no means opposes such a self-understanding in these passages. Instead, the significance of “Israel” with the aorist verb in this passage is that Paul is restating a basic tenet of mainstream Jewish theology at the end of a chronological retelling of Israel’s biblical history: Israel did not keep the covenant but fell short of the law they had been given. This premise was not in dispute—Paul merely reminds his readers of what they already know from the scriptures on this point. This is not to say that Paul does not want his readers to draw inferences from the past into the present—that is precisely what he does as he develops these themes in his argument—but in this passage Paul argues from what the scriptures say happened to Israel and deals with the present day only by implication.

This distinction resolves several interpretive problems with this passage, including why Paul has not specifically brought up “Israel’s failure to believe in the gospel” to this point—he is still establishing the basic facts of God’s previous dealings with Israel and how those facts have led to the current gentile ingathering. By framing God’s past dealings with Israel in this way, Paul is of course making an implicit argument concerning his contemporaries who have not believed the gospel, but he has not yet reached into the present to make that connection explicit—that happens in Romans 10. At this point in the argument, he is still reminding the reader of Israel’s past, with the present unbelief of some present Israelites a strong undercurrent to be brought to the surface later.

This reading also makes sense of Paul’s shift from gentiles attaining “righteousness” in contrast to Israel falling short of the law, as Israel’s failure was precisely the failure to keep the stipulations of the covenant in the Torah. That failure to keep the Torah led to the curses of the covenant and Israel’s need for redemption. By contrast, gentiles “who do not have the law” (Rom

\textsuperscript{1604} Dunn, Romans 9–16, 581.
2:14) cannot be said to have pursued it—but nevertheless some gentiles (through Christ) attained the righteousness to which the Torah testifies (Rom 2:15; 9:30). This is the shocking claim in need of explanation (again, recall the immediately preceding context). From the perspective of restoration eschatology, Israel’s unfaithfulness and failure is neither surprising nor does it require explanation. But that gentiles attained the righteousness to which the Torah attests and are partaking in Israel’s promises is not only surprising, it is scandalous. How could gentiles who did not even have the Torah and thus could not pursue righteousness have succeeded where Israel, which was specially chosen to receive the Torah, failed?

Here, Paul returns to the theme of πίστις. Some gentiles have attained the righteousness which is ἐκ πίστεως, in contrast to Israel, whose unfaithfulness is well established in the biblical accounts. Paul summarizes the source of Israel’s failure as the attempt to accomplish desired ends ἐξ ἔργων rather than trusting and obeying God. Traditional readings, assuming “Israel” here refers to contemporary Jews, have tended to take ἐξ ἔργων as a reference either to Jewish legalism (“works-righteousness”) or ethnocentrism, but the reference to the “stumbling stone” of Isaiah 8:14 and the following (conflated) citation of Isaiah 28:16 suggest something else is in

1605 Pace Dieter Zeller, *Der Brief an die Römer*, RNT 6 (Regensburg: Pustet, 1985), 184. Rom 2:14–15 is not “long forgotten” but fully in view here, as this passage picks up the thread started in Rom 2 and developed throughout the book—namely, that gentiles transformed by the spirit are being made righteous in keeping with the promises of Israel’s renewed covenant. To draw a distinction here between “moral righteousness” and “righteous status in God’s sight” (Cranfield, *Romans*, 506) or “covenant righteousness” (Dunn, *Romans* 9–16, 580) or “forensic righteousness” (Moo, *Romans*, 621), as have many interpreters is to miss the point entirely, as Paul has already established in Rom 2:1–11 that such a distinction is inappropriate in light of divine impartiality. For Paul, God’s judgment is just, meaning right status in God’s sight requires moral righteousness, and no other factors (possession of the Torah, descent from Israel, etc.) will obscure that, “for there is no partiality with God” (Rom 2:11). Paul systematically undermines the distinction between “forensic righteousness” and “moral righteousness” right from the start. Thus the objection that “Paul well knows that many Gentiles in his day were earnest and diligent in their pursuit of moral ‘uprightness’” and therefore cannot mean righteousness in its moral sense here misses the mark. Rather, Paul’s statement here relies on the caricature of gentiles established in Rom 1:18–32; gentiles are by default unrighteous and, not having the law to instruct them, do not pursue righteousness. Nevertheless, through the spirit, they have attained the righteousness that comes through the new covenant (ἐκ πίστεως reinforces the covenantal sense of the language here). Contra, in addition to those mentioned above, Michel, *Römer*, 249–252.
view. As Ross Wagner explains, both of the “stumbling stone” passages occur at the climax of prophetic rebukes about Israel’s attempts to save itself in the face of the Assyrian threat through political machinations, foreign treaties, and military strength rather than by trusting in YHWH:

In Isaiah 8 and 28–29, trust in God entails staking one’s life on God’s righteousness—God’s wisdom, power, and faithfulness—to rescue his people from the international crises threatening to engulf them. The antithesis of such trust is to rely for protection on foreign rules and their gods, whether the kings of Damascus and Syria (8:6) or Pharaoh (28:15; 30:1–7; 31:c–3). Israel’s misplaced trust stems from their inability to perceive God’s plans vis-à-vis Israel and the nations—that God is using these nations as a tool to discipline and ultimately to deliver his people. Ironically, those who refuse to submit to God’s righteousness by resisting his use of these Gentile nations and who seek to establish their own righteousness apart from God by entering into treaties with foreign nations suffer the very fate they sought to avert and forfeit the deliverance God promises to those who trust in him.1606

By contrast, those who instead trust in the stone placed in Zion as their foundation will not be put to shame. That stone is also specifically identified as YHWH, who will be a refuge for those of his people who trust in him but a stone of stumbling for those who do not:

“It is YHWH of hosts you should regard as holy. … Then he will become a sanctuary, but to both houses of Israel, a stone to strike and a rock to stumble over.”

(Isa 8:13–14 MT)1607


1607 The LXX differs significantly from the MT here, but Paul’s citations also differ in key respects from the LXX, showing a tendency “toward a Hebrew exemplar,” as noted by Wagner, *Heralds of the Good News*, 134 (cf. also 129–30). It is of course impossible to know exactly what kind of exemplar Paul knew in these cases, but this case, it seems likely that Paul knew a version of Isa 8:13 that included YHWH Sabaoth, providing a connection from his citation of Isa 1:9 to his reference to the “stumbling stone” three verses later. The LXX also lacks the reference to “both houses of Israel,” instead referencing “the house of Jacob,” but the basic takeaway of the passage—trust in YHWH or he will become a stumbling block—is the same. For more analysis of this passage in the LXX and discussion of Paul’s exemplar, see Wagner, *Heralds of the Good News*, 126–157. For another possible example of a variant closer to our MT than the LXX underlying Paul’s arguments in these passages, see Enno Edzard Popkes, “Jes 6,9f. MT als impliziter Reflexionshintergrund der paulinischen Verstockungsvorstellung: Ein Beitrag zur paulinischen Jesaja-Rezeption,” in *The Letter to the Romans*, ed. Udo Schnelle, BETL 226 (Leuven: Peeters, 2009), 755–769.
By citing these passages, Paul not only reminds the reader not only that God has himself previously served as a “stumbling stone” for the unfaithful among his people while saving those who trust him but (once again) also of the fate of the unfaithful northern kingdom. Given the thematic undercurrent of Paul’s citations to this point, it is surely no accident that each of these passages also occurs in the context of the fall of the northern kingdom.1608 Isaiah 28 is specifically directed at “the drunkards of Ephraim,”1609 while Isaiah 8 serves as a warning not to follow the example of those who have put their trust in the Syro-Ephraimite coalition that will soon be destroyed. Only those who trust in YHWH as their foundation will be preserved, while the rest will be shattered by YHWH himself.

This reading also makes sense of the theological/christological ambiguity of the “stumbling stone.” As read in the context of Paul’s argument to this point, it is not primarily

1608 These citations are not haphazard but are held together by a series of linguistic and thematic ties. Hos 2:25 not only connects with the following citations of Isa 10:22–23 and 1:9 via the theme of (northern) Israel’s destruction and the preservation of a remnant, that God will “sow” (σπερῶ) “not my people” for restoration in Hos 2:25 connects to the “seed” in Isa 1:9, where “YHWH Sabaoth” connects to the “stone of stumbling” in Isa 8:14, which then connects to the stone in Zion of Isa 28:16, which draws out the theme and language of πίστις, such that ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ’ αὐτῷ will not be put to shame, as opposed to those who will be swept away due to unfaithfulness in the background of each of these passages (e.g., Isa 28:1–22; 8:1–22). And of course not being “ashamed” connects back to Paul’s opening statement in Rom 1:16, while gentiles becoming “righteous” connects back to Rom 2:14–16. All of these citations are also pulled from passages specifically dealing with the destruction and eventual restoration of the northern kingdom—it is implausible that this is accidental. Remarkably, the verbal ties between some of these verses are in the portions Paul does not in fact quote (e.g., the “sowing” of Hos 2:25, the reference to YHWH Sabaoth in Isa 8:13). This is similar in some respects to the phenomenon of secondary citation, in which the interpretation is guided by a passage operating below the surface, observed in the pesharim found in the Dead Sea Scrolls in Shani L. Berrin, “The Use of Secondary Biblical Sources in Pesher Nahum,” DSD 11 (2004): 1–11. Paul’s connection of these passages is reminiscent of the the Rabbinic rule of gezerah shavah (equal comparison), on which see M. Mielziner, Introduction to the Talmud, 4th ed. (New York: Bloch, 1969), 142–152. On Pauline techniques resembling later Rabbinic interpretive practices, see Dan Cohn-Sherbok, “Paul and Rabbinic Exegesis,” SJT 35, no. 2 (1982): 117–132 (esp. 127–28 for gezerah shavah); Pasquale Basta, Gezerah Shawah: Storia, forme e metodi dell’analogia biblica (Roma: Pontificio istituto biblico, 2006), (esp. 85–p104). But see also the warning of Philip S. Alexander, “Rabbinic Judaism and the New Testament,” ZNW 74, no. 3–4 (1983): 237–246 (242–44), with respect to applying later Rabbinic rules of interpretation to Paul.

christological but rather theological—the point is that God himself was the stumbling block for biblical Israel, the rock on which they should have depended but did not, instead trusting in their own strength and breaking the covenant.\textsuperscript{1610} But by implication, the same is happening in the present, as many from Israel are now following the example of their biblical forebears, refusing to trust in Christ as the agent of YHWH’s salvation in the present day such that Isaiah’s past warning now also applies to the present, a connection Paul proceeds to make in 10:1–4.\textsuperscript{1611} Thus the stumbling stone is theological while reading forward but nevertheless pregnant with implications about the present and then christological when read retrospectively, in light of what Paul says afterwards.

All of this discussion of Israel’s past failings of course has strong implications regarding Paul’s contemporary fleshly Israelite kin, but a solely christological reading of the stumbling stone misses the force of Paul’s rhetoric throughout this section: those from Israel who are now resisting the gospel are merely repeating or persisting in their biblical forebears’ unfaithfulness, which is what led to Israel’s present need for redemption in the first place, and unless they change course, they will end up like their unfaithful predecessors. It is also especially noteworthy that each of these citations references a division and reduction of Israel in the past, specifically the destruction of the northern kingdom (and accompanying ravaging of Judah) that led to Israel being scattered and intermingled among the nations in the first place. The argument establishes a restoration-eschatological framework—Israel was unfaithful and stands in need of redemption,

\textsuperscript{1610} As noted by Gadenz, \textit{Called from Jews and Gentiles}, 102: “the Israelites who do not believe in the gospel have not yet been explicitly introduced in the argument of 9,6–29.” \textit{Pace} Moo, \textit{Romans}, 620: “By means of a composite quotation from Isa. 8:14 and 28:16, Paul shows that Israel’s failure is ultimately christological: by failing to believe in him, he has become for Israel the cause of her downfall (vv. 32b–33).” Similarly, Dunn, \textit{Romans 9–16}, 594; Jewett, \textit{Romans}, 611–12; Fitzmyer, \textit{Tobit}, 579; Frank Schleritt, “Das Gesetz der Gerechtigkeit: Zur Auslegung von Römer 9,30–33,” in Wilk et al., \textit{Between Gospel and Election}, 111–120 (288–89).

\textsuperscript{1611} Cf. also 1 Cor 10:4, where Paul interprets the rock in the wilderness christologically.
with some from Israel having become “not my people” (thus indeed “not all from Israel are Israel”). But now God has begun to redeem “not my people” as promised—even to the point of including gentiles in the process.

**Redemptive Reversal**

The entire chapter of Romans 9 therefore applies both sides of “the logic of redemptive reversal already present in Hos 1–2,” beginning with the declaration that some Israelites have become equivalent to gentiles (Rom 9:6; cf. Hos 1:9) and then concluding that the promise to restore Israel therefore requires the incorporation of gentiles (Rom 9:25–29; cf. Hos 2:25, 2:1 [English: 2:23, 1:10]). Paul’s logic consistently works on two levels, looking to history and prophecy for insight into the present. According to Hosea, many who were descended from Israel are no longer Israel, having become gentiles (“not my people”). In the same way, contemporary descendants of Israel can be cut off from Israel just as those in the past had been. But does this mean that those who are currently being cut off and separated from Christ are permanently lost?

Μὴ γένοιτο! This is where the two threads of the argument converge, as Paul presents God’s faithfulness to Israel in gathering in the fullness of the nations to redeem all of his people as evidence that even God’s rejections can prove salvific: if those who had become “not my people” through Israel’s past disobedience can now be restored through the work of the spirit, hope remains for those currently resisting the work of God in Christ.

Throughout this historical argument, Paul emphasizes how God has dealt with Israel in the past and thus implicitly suggests this is also how God is dealing with his people in the present. He then makes this argument explicit in Romans 10, where he presents Christ as τέλος

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1612 Wagner, “Not from the Jews Only,” 422.
vóμου (Rom 10:4), the one who has fulfilled the Torah and lives by it (10:5; cf. also Gal 3:12–14), the solution to Israel’s predicament, able to grant the righteousness and restoration promised in Deuteronomy and the prophets. Thus any effort to usher in Israel’s restoration or

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1614 Rom 10:5 appears to refer to the resurrection as evidence of Christ’s righteousness, which also appears to be how the resurrection is understood in Acts 2:24–36 and 17:31, as well as Romans 1:17. See Walter C. Kaiser, “Christ the End of the Law: The Meaning of Romans 10:4ff,” JETS 39, no. 4 (1985): 39; Stowers, Rereading of Romans, 308–09; Felix Flückiger, “Christus, des Gesetzes τέλος,” TZ 11 (1955): 153–57; Rhyne, "Nomos Dikaiosynes"; Howard, "Christ the End of the Law"; Badenas, Christ: the End of the Law, 114–17. Pace Dunn, Romans 9–16, 601, who suggests such an interpretation “completely misses the point; within the context of Jewish thought outlined above it would make Jesus an exemplar of Israel’s nationalistic righteousness—the very opposite of Paul’s intention” (cf. also Jewett, Romans, 624–25). But Paul’s intention has never been to undermine “Israel’s nationalistic righteousness”; rather, the question is how Israel can become righteous, and Paul asserts that it is only through a faithful response to God’s righteous action in Christ, who was validated by the resurrection. Paul is also not saying, as argued by Schreiner, "Paul's View of the Law," 135, and others, that “righteousness does not come through the law because the law cannot be obeyed perfectly.” Paul in fact never says this, and as Schreiner himself recognizes, “V. 6–8 make it plain that Christ has provided all that is necessary for salvation” (Schreiner, "Paul's View of the Law," 135). That is precisely the point of v. 5, which establishes the proof (the resurrection) that Christ has provided all that is necessary for salvation. In this light, although he does not recognize the reference to the resurrection, Preston M. Sprinkle, Law and Life: The Interpretation of Leviticus 18:5 in Early Judaism and in Paul, WUNT 2/241 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 165–190, is correct in arguing that this verse opposes human endeavor to attain eschatological salvation with receiving that salvation through the divine redemptive action through Christ.
the messianic age ("that is, to bring Christ down"; Rom 10:6) by repentance or perfect law-
observance is misguided,\(^{1615}\) and Israel’s salvation once again depends on trusting the foundation
stone placed in Zion rather than stumbling over it in the effort to accomplish that salvation like
many from Israel in the past. Nevertheless, Israel “did not all heed the good news” (10:16) but a
portion remained “a disobedient and obstinate people” (Rom 10:21; Isa 65:2).\(^{1616}\)

\(^{1615}\) Barrett, *Romans*, 199: “the Messiah has appeared, and it is therefore impossible to hasten his coming (as some
devout Jews thought to do) by perfect obedience to the law and penitence for its transgressions.” Paul thus
“repudiate[s] efforts to usher in the messiah through zealous campaigns” (Jewett, *Romans*, 625). Cf. further Jewett,
final redemption is well-attested in Jewish sources of the second century and later.” Among Rabbinic material,
several examples appear in b. Sanh. 97a–98b, and other examples can be found in b. Sabb. 118b; Sifre Deut. 41
(79b); b. B. Bat. 10a; b. Yoma 86b; y. Ta’an. 63d. Allison observes that Acts 3:19–21 attests the idea of a contingent
eschatology in the first century and points to T. Dan. 6:4; T. Sim. 6:2–7; T. Jud. 23:5; As. Mos. 1:18; 2 Bar. 78:7;
and Ap. Ab. 29 as examples within Pseudepigraphal material that suggest repentance is a prerequisite for the coming
redemption (Allison, "Conditional Prophecy," 78). That 4 Ezra 4:39–43 argues against the concept provides further
evidence that some did hold the belief that the restoration was delayed due to unrighteousness and by implication
awaited repentance to righteousness.

\(^{1616}\) For more discussion of Rom 10:19–21 and the significance of the scriptural citations there, see Wagner, *Heralds
CHAPTER 13: ROMANS 11: THE MYSTERY OF ISRAEL’S SALVATION

After ending Romans 10 by tying Israel’s historical unfaithfulness to the present situation, which necessarily raises the incredulous question that begins the next chapter, “God has not rejected his people, has he?” (11:1),1617 Paul responds emphatically, Μὴ γένοιτο! He himself is proof of God’s continuing faithfulness,1618 noting that even in the days of historical Israel only a remnant was preserved (11:2–4), again portraying Israel as “a nation profoundly divided” through his use of the Elijah narrative.1619 Then he finally brings all the historical implications up to this point explicitly into the present: “So also in the same way in the present time there has come to be a remnant according to a choice of grace” (11:5). That is, God continues to deal with his people in the same manner displayed in all these past examples, as Israel remains an incomplete, divided people still in need of restoration, but God has continued to preserve his people as a whole.


1618 Note again that Paul does not refer to himself as a Ἰουδαῖος here but instead highlights his precise tribal lineage, again emphasizing Israel’s larger, tribal nature. Cf. Hahn, “All Israel,” 94, “This is perhaps the clearest instance in Romans 9–11 of a continuing awareness of Israel as constituted by members of all the tribes.” Note also that Paul serves as an example in two respects, as an Israelite and specifically as an Israelite who violently opposed the gospel at first. Thus he is himself especially relevant to the succeeding discussion of misplaced zeal.

1619 See Hahn, "All Israel," 94–96, who rightly notes the connections between Elijah and Moses as intercessors for the people (cf. Rom 9:1–5) and also that “Elijah’s ministry is exclusively to northern Israel …. The remnant of 7000, in the context of 1 Kings 19, is clearly a remnant of northern Israel.” On the Elijah parallels, see also Gadenz, Called from Jews and Gentiles, 231–34; Wagner, Heralds of the Good News, 238.
Paul states his premise straightforwardly: “As to what Israel was seeking, this it did not obtain. The election obtained it, but the rest were made insensible” (11:7). This verse effectively restates 9:30–33 but in the context of the present situation (11:5), noting that Israel did not receive the promise but was rather bifurcated due to disobedience and unfaithfulness.

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1620 This translation takes ἐπιζητεῖ in a historical imperfective sense, following Stanley E. Porter, *Verbal Aspect in the Greek of the New Testament, with Reference to Tense and Mood* (New York: Lang, 1989), 197, who treats this verse as a standard example of a historic present (though he oddly translates with a perfective: “Israel sought”). The verb of the relative clause is dependent on the aorist verb of the subsequent main clause, suggesting a past orientation. In such cases, Porter argues that the present form marks “a discourse unit selected for special significance, such as a climactic turning point” (*Verbal Aspect*, 196). But see also Kenneth L. McKay, “Time and Aspect in New Testament Greek,” *NovT* 34, no. 3 (1992): 209–228 (212), who acknowledges that “it is quite possible” that the verb should be taken as a historical present and that its main sense is imperfective but also notes that a present sense cannot necessarily be ruled out, in which case the verb would be best rendered with “an all-embracing has been seeking” (his emphasis). In any case, the sense of the verb is aspectively imperfective, such that Israel’s “seeking” is depicted as an incomplete process—that is, the promises to Israel remain unfulfilled. Some scribes seem to have had difficulty with the present form, as attested by the alteration to the imperfect ἐπιζητεῖ in F G 104 1836 pc latt sy. The point is the same regardless—Israel did not obtain (perfective aspect) the promises that were being sought (imperfective aspect). For the rendering of the relative ὅ with “as to what,” see Smyth, *Greek Grammar*, §2494.

1621 The contrast between “Israel” and “the election” (ἡ ἐκλογὴ) here is jarring, as Israel is generally identified as the elect people.

1622 The typical rendering of ἐπωρώθησαν as “hardened” has led to confusion, as interpreters often read this passage as a repetition of the “hardening” (σκληρύνω) motif in 9:18, but the concepts in play are quite different, with σκληρύνω representing a final hardening like clay in a kiln (see n. 1549 on p. 513 above), while πωρόω means something more like “insensibility,” “obtuseness,” or “blindness,” in keeping with the scripture citations in vv. 8–10. This problem was noticed as far back as J. Armitage Robinson, “ΠΩΡΟΣΙΣ and ΠΗΡΟΣΙΣ,” *JTS* 3, no. 9 (1901): 81–96 (92): “‘[H]ardness’ has the advantage of recalling the primary signification of the word. But this advantage is outweighed by the confusion with a wholly different series of words, viz. σκηρύνειν, σκλαροτίς, σκληροκαρδία. These words convey the idea of stiffness, stubbornness, unyieldingness, obduracy; whereas πωρός is numbness, dullness or deadness of faculty.” Gadenz, *Called from Jews and Gentiles*, 207–8 n. 144, however, objects that “Paul himself seems to suggest such a parallel by using the verb σκληρύνω in 9:18 and πωρόω in 11:7,” and concludes “the common translation ‘harden’ for πωρόω is not that misleading.” On the contrary, by using a different term (and a different concept) in 11:7, Paul avoids making a direct parallel to 9:18 (as argued by Tobin, *Paul's Rhetoric*, 358). The obtuseness in 11:7 may lead to a final hardening as in 9:18, but they should not be regarded as synonymous, as this πωρός is not necessarily definitive (cf. 11:11–26). Therefore, to retain the distinction that would have been evident to a Greek reader, my translation here and elsewhere (when not simply retaining the Greek word) follows Wagner, *Heralds of the Good News*, 240 n. 68. I am not, however, persuaded by Nanos’ argument that the sense of the term is “protected” (see “‘Callused,’ Not ‘Hardened’: Paul's Revelation of Temporary Protection Until All Israel Can Be Healed,” in *Reading Paul in Context: Explorations in Identity Formation. Essays in Honour of William S. Campbell*, eds. Kathy Ehrensperger and J. Brian Tucker [London: T&T Clark, 2010], 52–73), as that seems to run counter to the theme of judgment in the explanatory catena of 11:8–10. Nanos’ analogy to the formation of a callous on a plant is interesting, but as he admits, Theophrastus does not use the same terminology in his description of that process. Nevertheless, I do agree that for Paul the insensibility of 11:7 is a state that can be healed through Christ. For a recent assessment of the same matter with respect to German translation, see Marie-Irma Seewann, “‘Verstockung,’ ‘Verhärtung’ oder ‘Nicht-Erkennen’: Überlegungen zu Röm 11, 25,” *KI* 12 (1997): 165–170.
Only the remnant/election was preserved while the rest (οἱ λοιποί), stumbling over the stumbling stone, were ἔπωρώθησαν. It is worth noting that this verse is usually interpreted as though the verbs were in the perfect (i.e., “Israel has not obtained … the rest have been hardened”) under the assumption that it references contemporary Jewish unbelief, but each verb is in fact in the aorist (as also in 9:31), again denoting Israel’s past failings and divisions, though the lasting consequences of that hardening remain διὰ παντός (11:10). The catena of 11:8–10 then serves as a witness to Israel’s obduracy, as Gadenz explains, “Scripture thus attests to the hardening of Israel. Indeed, the citations in some sense come from three parts of the Bible, as if to indicate that the whole Bible witnesses to Israel’s hardening.” Nevertheless, Paul himself serves as an

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1623 E.g., Moo, Romans, 679–680; Cranfield, Romans, 548. Even when the translation itself is correct, commentators regularly interpret the passage (including a restatement of the translation) as though the verbs were in the perfect, e.g., Stuhlmacher, Romans, 164; Wagner, Heralds of the Good News, 240–41.

1624 Note the parallel use of the verb with reference to historical Israel in 2 Cor 3:14 and see Margaret E. Thrall, 2 Corinthians: A Critical and Exegetical Commentary, ICC (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994), 262. The point both there and here is that the insensibility that characterized Israel in the past can be healed through turning to Christ; the aorist implies that past insensibility need not apply to the present.


example of transformation (11:1); just as he was previously insensible but he is that no longer, so also God has provided for the healing of the πώρωσις of “the rest.”

Once again, it is important to note Paul’s careful language here as he speaks not of Ιουδαῖοι but of Israel in the fuller sense, nor does he suggest that Israel as a whole was made insensible. Rather, he portrays Israel’s situation as characteristically divided, with some standing within the promise and οἱ λοιποὶ outside due to unfaithfulness. Again, the problem is not only that many Jews have resisted the gospel but that the anticipated elements of Israel’s restoration (including the reunion of both houses of Israel) seem to be lacking. Both those who were ἐπωρώθησαν from the northern kingdom and those Jews who are currently characterized by πώρωσις stand outside the promises. Paul proclaims the gospel of Israel’s redemption, but the actual circumstances seem not to look much like Israel’s redemption, a divergence only further underscored by the incorporation of gentiles. How exactly God is in fact fulfilling his promise to heal of this division in Israel is the subject of the rest of Romans 11.

Disobedience, Mercy, and Jealousy

Λέγω οὖν, μὴ ἔπταισαν ἵνα πέσωσιν; μὴ γένοιτο ἄλλα τῷ αὐτῶν παραπτώματι ἡ σωτηρία τοῖς ἔθνεσιν εἰς τὸ παραζηλῶσαι αὐτούς. εἰ δὲ τὸ παράπτωμα αὐτῶν πλούτος κόσμου καὶ τὸ ἔθνη ἀντὶ πλούτος ἔθνων, πόσῳ μᾶλλον τὸ πλῆρωμα αὐτῶν. Ἐκ γὰρ ἡ ἀποβολὴ αὐτῶν καταλλαγὴ κόσµου, τίς ἡ πρόσληψις εἰ μὴ ἐξ αὐτῶν. εἰ γὰρ ἡ ἀποβολὴ αὐτῶν καταλλαγὴ κόσµου, τίς ἡ πρόσληψις εἰ μὴ ζωὴ ἐκ νεκρῶν;

1627 Note again that Paul was insensible (which Acts 9:18 represents through hardened eyes), but that condition does not necessarily imply continuation into the present, illustrating why translating the aorists as perfects in 11:7 is imprecise and potentially misleading.

1628 “[T]hese hardened others in Paul’s time are juxtaposed with the idolatrous Israelites in the time of Elijah” (Gadenz, Called from Jews and Gentiles, 235).
I say then, did they stumble in order to fall? μὴ γένοιτο! But by their misstep salvation [came] to the nations to make them jealous. And if their misstep was riches for the world and their loss riches for the nations, how much more their fullness! I am speaking to you who are gentiles; on the other hand, inasmuch as I am indeed an apostle of gentiles I glorify my service, hoping that somehow I may make my flesh jealous and save some of them. For if their casting away is the reconciliation of the world, what is their reception if not life from the dead? (11:11–15)

Paul here adds another layer to the relationship between Israel and the nations, explaining that the misstep of οἱ λοίποι brought salvation for the nations to make them jealous. Interpreters have found this passage difficult in several respects. First, Paul does not here explain why the misstep of οἱ λοίποι should lead to gentile salvation in the first place; the logic of that...

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1629 Παράπτωμα is typically rendered “trespass” or “transgression,” but given the motif of stumbling and the race metaphor of 9:30–33, I have retained the literal sense of the term. The same language is applied to Adam and humanity in general in Rom 5:15–17, reinforcing that Israel, having the Torah, “sinned in the likeness of Adam’s offense” (5:14). The sense of παράπτωμα is that of a stumble or false step from which one can recover (Gal 6:1; Ps 18:13; Pss. Sol. 3:7; 13:5, 10). Cf. Gadenz, Called from Jews and Gentiles, 239–240; Jewett, Romans, 673. Wagner, Heralds of the Good News, 266 n. 151: “It is impossible to capture in English Paul’s clever play on words, in which παράπτωμα means both “false step” and “transgression.” Cf. also Jean-Noel Aletti and Udo Schnelle, “Romains 11: Le développement de l’argumentation et ses enjeux exégético-théologiques,” in The Letter to the Romans, BETL 226 (Leuven: Peeters, 2009), 197–223 (201 n. 7).

1630 Following Cranfield, Romans, 559, μὲν οὖν likely carries the sense of “contrary to what you might think,” rather than a concessive sense as suggested by Marie-Joseph Lagrange, Saint Paul, Épitre aux Romains (1916; repr., Paris: Lecoffre, 1950), 277. I have tried to reproduce this sense with the contrasting “on the other hand.”

1631 Here I take both παραζηλώσω and σώσω as aorist subjunctives marking intention following Gadenz, Called from Jews and Gentiles, 240, but they can also be read as future indicatives, as argued by Richard Bell in Provoked to Jealousy, 116. In either case, the final outcome is the same—Paul’s ministry makes his fleshly kin jealous and may/will save some of them.

1632 Ἀποβολή is often translated as “rejection” here in parallel with 11:1, but the term alludes to Israel’s having been cast out among the nations (cf. Deut 29:27–28; Hos 9:15; Jer 12:14, 15; 22:28). Paul has already strongly denied that God has in any way rejected (ἀπώσατο) his people (11:1); like the distinction between the terms for “hardening” in 9:18 and 11:7, it is important to distinguish between the different terms used in 11:1 and 11:15. See Gadenz, Called from Jews and Gentiles, 251–54.

1633 The terminology of πρόσληψις refers to God’s action of taking up, choosing, or receiving his people for himself (echoing 1 Sam 12:22). As Gadenz, Called from Jews and Gentiles, 251–52 n. 309, mentions, every other time Paul uses this term, it refers to the acceptance of people (Rom 14:1; 3; 15:7; Phlm 17), and all but three of the twenty occurrences of προσλαμβάνω in the Bible refer to receiving or accepting people.
progression is assumed rather than explained in this passage.\textsuperscript{1634} Secondly, many have found it difficult to understand how Paul would imagine “jealousy” or “zealous rage”\textsuperscript{1635} should bring about salvation or the desire to emulate the behavior of believing gentiles, with Sanders wondering, “Does he really think that jealousy will succeed where Peter failed?”\textsuperscript{1636} A third problem has to do with what seems like an attempt to have it both ways, as summarized by Donaldson: “Why if the world is blessed through Israel’s failure should it also be blessed through its success?”\textsuperscript{1637}

As for why “their misstep” would result in salvation for the nations, many interpreters have simply assumed that Paul here alludes to “the way in which he and other preachers of the gospel would turn to the gentiles after being spurned by the Jews,”\textsuperscript{1638} leaning on the accounts in Acts (8:1; 13:44–48; 18:4–7; 19:8–10; 28:23–29).\textsuperscript{1639} But reading Acts into Romans in this way is problematic, and this interpretation still does not explain why preachers would turn to the

\textsuperscript{1634} “How Paul understood the divine rationale in all this is not clear. Was the casting off of Israel really necessary at this stage in salvation-history? Why could not the Gentiles have come in without the bulk of the Jews being thrown out, albeit temporarily?” (Dunn, Romans 9–16, 670). That many interpreters have misidentified the antecedent as “Israel” as a whole and then identified “Israel” as the Jews of Paul’s day has further muddled interpretation of this and the succeeding points, e.g., also Moo, Romans, 688; Fitzmyer, Romans, 612; Jewett, Romans, 680–81.


\textsuperscript{1636} E.g., Sanders, Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People, 198. Cf. also Jewett, Romans, 644–47, 674–75; Käsemann, Romans, 304–07; Gadenz, Called from Jews and Gentiles, 249. Fitzmyer’s condemnation is especially remarkable: “Paul’s motivation in seeking to make Israel “jealous” is not of the highest level; he argues from a very human consideration” (Romans, 611).

\textsuperscript{1637} Donaldson, "Riches for the Gentiles," 91.

\textsuperscript{1638} Moo, Romans, 687.

gentiles after rejection in the synagogue in the first place. Others have suggested that Jews needed to be put aside so that Jewish customs would not be an obstacle in the path of gentile faith, but this theme does not appear in Romans and the theory again begs the question: why should salvation go to the gentiles in the first place such that some among Israel should be made obtuse? Others, following Karl Barth, have suggested that the Jews’ rejection of Jesus himself, which led to his crucifixion and thereby the redemption of the world, is in view, but Paul clearly views Jesus’ death as salvific for Israel and this view again begs the question in presuming that the death of the Messiah should lead to salvation for the gentiles. Wright has noted parallels between Paul’s portrayal of Israel in Rom 11:11–15 and the death of the resurrection of Christ in Rom 5, suggesting that Israel needed to be cast aside, descending into death to bring salvation to the nations, thereby imitating the death and resurrection of the messiah. Nevertheless, that the plight of oἱ λοιποί is the result of disobedience (παράπτωµα) sharply contrasts with Christ’s obedient death and consequent resurrection; as a result, these parallels do not explain why oἱ λοιποί would need to be cast aside to conform to the fate of the messiah—nor do they explain why salvation would go to the gentiles for the purpose of making disobedient Israelites jealous. In any case, most readings as far back as the adversus Judaeos

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1641 Karl Barth, A Shorter Commentary on Romans, trans. David H Van Daalen (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), 87; accepted by Cranfield, Romans, 556.

1642 Wright, “Messiah,” 180–82. See also Hays, Echoes, 61.

1643 Cf. Bell, Provoked to Jealousy, 111–12; Jewett, Romans, 674 n. 70. Despite these objections, Wright’s insight with these parallels is on the right track with respect to a key theme in these passages, though he falls short of a full explanation for the passage itself. With respect to the obedience/disobedience contrast, the key is returning to the potter/clay analogy, where Paul explains that God will accomplish his purpose either through obedience (as with Christ) or disobedience (“the rest” of 11:11), though the end result for each individual instrument at the end may be different depending on whether it was through obedience or disobedience. Thus Paul’s concern for his disobedient
traditions in late antiquity understand Rom 11:11 as suggesting salvation is a zero-sum proposition with respect to Jews and gentiles. \footnote{E.g., John Chrysostom: “For it is into their place that you have been set and their goods that you enjoy” \textit{(Homilies on Romans} 19 [on Rom 11:18]).} Paul Achtemeier’s comment summarizes this position well: “Israel’s stumbling was the occasion for redemption to be opened to gentiles. There is almost a spatial analogy here. Only if some Israelites have been cleared out will there be room for gentiles.”\footnote{Paul J. Achtemeier, \textit{Romans}, IBC (Atlanta: John Knox, 1985), 180.} This view, however, falters in that verses 12 and 15 clearly suggest that their success and fullness leads to even greater results than their defeat, and 11:25–26 clearly states that there is plenty of salvific “space” for the fullness of the nations and all Israel.

Thus many interpreters have effectively punted on the passage, appealing to a vague “salvation-historical aspect,” \footnote{Käsemann, \textit{Romans}, 304;} “apocalyptic scenario,” \footnote{Jewett, \textit{Romans}, 674.} or “plan of salvation”\footnote{Aageson, "Typology, Correspondence," 282.} underlying Paul’s statements here. Recognizing the problems with the spatial reading, Donaldson has proposed that Paul is instead thinking \textit{temporally} rather than spatially. That is, Jewish rejection of the gospel has delayed the parousia, which would mark the “termination of Gentiles’ opportunity for salvation,” \footnote{Donaldson, "Riches for the Gentiles," 94.} so Jewish unbelief has therefore provided the time delay necessary for gentile salvation. \footnote{Donaldson, "Riches for the Gentiles," 92–98. Others holding this temporal view include Seyoon Kim, \textit{The Origin of Paul’s Gospel} (Tübingen: Mohr, 1981), 96–97; Sanders, \textit{Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People}, 195; Stowers, \textit{Rereading of Romans}, 315; Murray Baker, “Paul and the Salvation of Israel: Paul’s Ministry, the Motif of fleshly kin—they will still be used salvifically, but their own fates are contingent on incorporation in the new covenant via the faithfulness mediated by the spirit.}
to the gentiles in such a case or the function of jealousy as a motivation for gentile salvation or means of Israelite repentance. Recognizing this problem, Donaldson suggests that the apostle’s argument is circumstantial and shows a “startling lack of logical consistency”:1651

Believing that what has happened must be part of God’s plan, and that God’s plan must include the eventual salvation of Israel itself, he links together in a sequence the failure of the Jewish mission, the success of the mission to the Gentiles, and the eventual salvation of “all Israel” (perhaps as a reworking of traditional Gentile pilgrimage expectations). Since the sequence is divinely intended, Paul can assume that the stumbling of the Jews and the salvation of the Gentiles are causally linked, and so can write as he does in vv. 11–12 and 15. In this approach, then, the nature of the causal link is not to be identified.1652

Seen from this perspective, then, scholarly investigation of these verses should be concerned not to ascertain any logical consistency but to use the cracks in the argument as windows into the underlying structure of Paul’s convivial world.1653

Jealous God, Jealous People

On the contrary, Paul’s argument here is not only coherent, it is fairly straightforward. The key is to read this passage in light of Paul’s citation of Deut 32:21 in Romans 10:19. The close proximity of that verse is what allows him to use the shorthand “in order to make them jealous” without explanation in 11:11 since he has already provided the explanation a few lines earlier. By citing the Song of Moses, which was typically read “as a prophecy of Israel’s future … [and] widely understood as itself predicting Israel’s restoration after exile,”1654 Paul again


1653 Donaldson, "Riches for the Gentiles," 91.

appeals to the framework of restoration eschatology and Israel’s present plight. This particular section was especially useful for Paul in that it links Israel’s disobedience with benefit for the nations, as Richard Bell explains,

Paul understood the link between the παράπτωμα of Israel and the salvation going to the Gentiles on the basis of his reading of Dt. 32…. Paul sees a reference to the inclusion of the Gentiles in Dt. 32.21 (quoted in Rom. 10.19 and alluded to here in 11.11, 14) and in Dt. 32.43 (quoted by Paul in Rom. 15.10). For Paul the disobedience of Israel, the inclusion of the Gentiles, the provoking to jealousy of Israel, and the final salvation of Israel all belong together. They belong together because the themes are linked in Dt. 32.1655

In this specific passage, YHWH declares, “They made me jealous by what is not a god; they provoked me to anger with their idols, so I will make them jealous with a not-nation;1656 I will provoke them to anger with a senseless nation.”1657 That is, God will turn the tables on unfaithful Israel by acting like a spurned lover, pursuing another to spur his adulterous beloved (cf. Deut 31:16; Hos 1–2) into a jealous rage and drive her back to him.1658 As Wagner notes,

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1655 Bell, Provoked to Jealousy, 112–13.
1657 Translated from the LXX. As such, Paul’s slightly altered quotation of Deut 32:21 in Rom 10:19 should probably be understood emphatically: “I will make you jealous by a non-nation, and with a senseless nation I will make you angry” (note the emphatic ὑμᾶς in each clause).
1658 In Wagner’s words, “One good spurn deserves another” (Wagner, Heralds of the Good News, 190, punctuation slightly amended). There is no reason to think παραζηλόω means anything different in 11:11, 14 than it does in 10:19 (and Deut 32:21), contrary to Bell’s suggestion that it be understood here “in the good sense, ‘provoke to emulation’” (Bell, Provoked to Jealousy, 39, cf. 113; followed by Waters, End of Deuteronomy, 208–09). For a full critique of a “positive” reading of the term, see Gadenz, Called from Jews and Gentiles, 245–49; cf. also Baker, "Paul and the Salvation of Israel," 472. The suggestion that the function of jealousy is to indicate “that the gentile mission is still ongoing” is equally unpersuasive, as that serves no function with respect to Israel and is circular: the mission to the gentiles is ongoing to make Israel jealous in order to demonstrate that the mission to the gentiles is
Paradoxically, it is this lover’s ploy to win Israel back that manifests God’s fidelity and demonstrates his enduring commitment to the covenant Israel has so brazenly violated. God shows favor to another [non] ἕθνος in order to provoke in Israel feelings of jealousy and a renewed desire for the God they have spurned. His ultimate aim is the restoration of the covenant relationship.  

To induce this jealousy on his people, YHWH will “heap disasters on them” (Deut 32:23), pouring out the covenant curses upon them while showing favor toward a “not-nation” so that they will see the difference between his favor and his wrath. But in time, when YHWH “sees that their strength is gone” (32:36), he will yet again raise his people up, thereby demonstrating that he is the one who “puts to death and gives life” (32:39; cf. Rom 11:15) and is the one who wounded and will heal. Thus Moses’ song concludes: “Rejoice, nations, with his people!” (32:43), a verse Paul quotes in the close of this letter (Rom 15:10). Paul’s argument through Rom 11 thus follows the same progression from jealousy to redemption as the Song of Moses.

That the non-people/foolish nation and jealousy motifs of Deut 32:21 were applied to the Samaritans in Paul’s day adds an extra layer to the argument here, since Samaritan claims to Israelite status as descendants of the northern tribes was precisely what rankled their Jewish ongoing. Contra Aletti and Schnelle, “Le développement de l'argumentation,” 221; Baker, “Paul and the Salvation of Israel,” 476–79; Gadenz, Called from Jews and Gentiles, 250–51.


1660 Recall Josephus’ appeal to the same pattern in his explanation of why the “rod of empire” currently rests in Rome. Cf. Spilsbury, “Flavius Josephus,” 21. See also the “Restoration Eschatology in Josephus” section in Chapter Seven above.


1662 Recall the use of Deut 32:21 with reference to the Samaritans in 4Q372 1 and Josephus’ views of the Samaritans as Israelite pretenders who were the result of Assyrian repopulation of the land (depending on 2 Kgs 17; see chapter 2 above). For a more general summary of the use of Deut 32 in the Dead Sea Scrolls, see Bell, Provoked to Jealousy, 217–221. Contra the remarkable assertion of Tobin, Paul's Rhetoric, 361: “The Deut 32:21 motif of God making Israel jealous is not found elsewhere in the Scriptures or elsewhere in Judaism during this period.”
rivals who regarded them as gentile pretenders who were the result of intermarriage. Samaritans and their claim to Israelite status therefore serve as a ready parallel for Paul’s faithful gentiles and his claim that they should be received as full covenant members.\textsuperscript{1663} This passage therefore yet again recalls the fate of northern Israel, never far from the surface throughout Romans 9–11. Nevertheless, although Deut 32:21 says God will make his people jealous by a not-nation, it does not say this not-nation will be saved or participate in Israel’s redemption.\textsuperscript{1664} To arrive at this conclusion, Paul interprets Deut 32:21 together with the earlier-referenced promise of Hosea to “not my people,” applying both of them together to the gentiles now participating in the promise of the spirit.\textsuperscript{1665}

This connection between the not-people of Deut 32:21 and the not-my-people of the northern kingdom brings yet another passage into play, from which Paul pulls the idea that the rebellion of one people leads to the salvation of another. In Jeremiah 3, Judah’s abhorrent behavior serves as the rationale for the redemption and return of the northern kingdom:

“Faithless Israel has proved herself more righteous than treacherous Judah. Go and proclaim these words toward the north and say, ‘Return, faithless Israel, declares YHWH; I will not cause

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\textsuperscript{1663} It is probably no coincidence that the Samaritans serve a similar symbolic function at the halfway point between the Jews and the nations in the Gospels and Acts.

\textsuperscript{1664} See, for example, 4Q372 1 20–22, which interprets the Song of Moses such that the “enemy” dwelling in Joseph’s land will be destroyed when Joseph is finally restored.

\textsuperscript{1665} See Watson, \textit{Hermeneutics of Faith}, 448: “Paul may have identified the ‘non-nation’ of the Deuteronomy text with the Gentile Christian community by association with the ‘not-my-people’ of his earlier citation from Hosea.” Starling’s comments on Rom 9:25–26 are similar: “This … use of the Hosea texts fits within a larger hermeneutical pattern in which Paul appropriates ‘not…’ texts originally referring to Israel (9:30, cf. Isa. 51:1; 10:20, cf. Isa. 65:1) and applies them to the Gentiles, as part of the still larger pattern within Romans in which Israel’s story of sin, exile and redemption is presented as corresponding typologically with the idolatry, judgement and salvation of the Gentiles” (\textit{Not My People}, 163–64). Cf. Bell, \textit{Provoked to Jealousy}, 185 n. 84; Gadenz, \textit{Called from Jews and Gentiles}, 109–110. If Paul was aware of the Hebrew reading (“not people,” הָעֵם), such a connection would obviously have been even more natural.
my face to fall on you in anger’” (Jer 3:11–12). Thus to shame Judah, YHWH chooses to restore Israel from divorce, while still pleading with Judah to repent and be saved itself. This theme then carries through much of the rest of Jeremiah, particularly in Jer 31 (38 LXX), where the promise of a new covenant for both houses of Israel occurs at the end of an extended passage calling for Ephraim’s return.1666 The logic is that if Judah will ultimately be shown mercy in spite of its treachery then Israel must also be shown mercy for its previous rebellion.

**Impartial Justice, Mercy to All**

Paul suggests Israel’s πώρωσις has resulted in salvation for the nations in precisely the same way that Jeremiah says Judah’s treachery has resulted in Israel’s redemption. The logic is the same: God’s impartial justice demands that if mercy is shown to one, it must be extended to the other (cf. Rom 2:9–11). Paul has already argued in Romans 2 that through behaving like the nations, Israel became subject to the same judgment as the nations, with the nations now consequently having access to the same mercy as Israel.1667 Israel’s misstep put Israel in the same position as the nations, so now the nations may share in Israel’s redemption by the spirit. Note, however, that it is not only the Jews’ πώροσις but that of both houses of Israel that has led to salvation for the nations. First, those of the northern kingdom who became insensible were cast away among the nations, becoming “not-my-people,” a “non-nation.” But then Judah’s misstep set Ephraim’s return in motion, opening the door for the redemption of “not-my-people.” Even the stumbling of part of Israel was not used for their destruction but rather to accomplish the very purpose for which Israel was chosen: riches for the world and salvation for all nations, all the

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1666 See the discussion on Jeremiah in Chapter 3 above and the resources listed there. Remarkably, according to Isa 11:13, Ephraim’s jealousy (LXX: ζῆλος) of Judah is ultimately the cause of its destruction, from which a remnant will ultimately return (11:11).

1667 See the “Why Gentiles?” section in Chapter 11 above.
more now that the promises to Israel are being fulfilled through the spirit. Thus the fulfillment of
the promises (Israel’s fullness) results in even greater riches for all than the initial disobedience.

Paul then explains that he hopes his ministry to the gentiles stirs his unfaithful kin to zeal;
like the presence of Samaritans in the land, God’s favor among the gentiles is proof of God’s
judgment and that these Israelites must themselves turn to God for redemption.\footnote{1668} Paul seems to
allude here to his own experience in which his violent zeal climaxed in a revelation of Christ.\footnote{1669}
Nevertheless, being stirred to jealousy does not necessarily have positive results for all, as Paul
apparently only expects “some” (τινῶς) of them to be saved.\footnote{1670} But even those who have been
made jealous (and thus stand under the judgment of Deut 32:21) have not stumbled beyond
redemption, as the gentile ingathering (let alone Paul’s own example) proves.

Indeed, he once again returns to the interconnected nature of the whole process: “If their
casting away is the reconciliation of the world, what is their reception but life from the dead?”
(11:15). The language in this elliptical verse is especially loaded and has often been
misunderstood. Paul does not here refer to “the Jews’ rejection of the gospel”\footnote{1671} or “Israel’s

\footnote{1668} Thiessen, "4Q372," 395: “The Samaritans function as a reminder to the southern tribes (Levi, Judah, and
Benjamin) that, while they might be tempted to conclude that the exile is over, Israel (Joseph) still endures God’s
punishment.” Sifre Deut. 331 also interprets this verse of the Samaritans, indicating that this tradition persisted even
at a much later date. Cf. Waters, End of Deuteronomy, 71–75.

\footnote{1669} See Jewett, Romans, 675.

\footnote{1670} Gadenz, Called from Jews and Gentiles, 249–251, argues that Paul is speaking of two separate groups here, one
stirred to jealousy and another who are saved, but this is difficult to sustain since Paul himself fits in both groups,
having been spurred to jealous anger and then saved. It is instead better to see jealousy as the motive for the
inclusion of gentiles, with some (like Paul) potentially passing through that jealousy into salvation.

\footnote{1671} Contra Fitzmyer, Romans, 612, who argues on the basis of 11:1 that the genitive here must be taken in a
subjective sense, referring to “the Jews’ rejection (of the gospel).” See Fitzmyer, Romans, 612; Jewett, Romans,
680–81. But ἀποθέω does not appear in 11:1, which rather uses the verb ἀποθέω. There are, however, numerous
LXX references to God “casting away” his people; it was a historical fact that God had cast out his people among
the nations, though he never abandoned them. The former is the concept in play in 11:15, the latter in 11:1. The
subjective reading also must supply an object (such as the gospel) since no such language appears in the context. See
47, no. 4 (1991): 326–336 (329). Moreover, Gadenz, Called from Jews and Gentiles, 251–52, points out that since
rejection” (which he has already denied in Rom 11:1), nor does the second half of the verse refer to some future event (perhaps at the parousia) when the Jews will accept the gospel en masse. Many interpreters see this verse as denoting a future sequence of events (based on a particular reading of 11:25–26); Gadenz, for example, explains, “Note the temporal shift between the two parts of v. 15.” But this begs the question; any temporal shift must be supplied and imported by the reader because the clause is nonverbal. I propose that the clauses in vv. 12, 13, and 15 are all elliptical precisely to avoid a chronological reading; by leaving out the verbs, Paul retains temporal ambiguity just a bit longer, continuing to set the stage for the reveal in 11:25–26, where he finally unveils why Israel’s destiny is so thoroughly wrapped up with the fate of the nations. These statements should therefore be understood as gnomic, not chronological. It should also be noted that a temporal reading (e.g., “if their current rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be?”) is especially problematic in that it implies that the salvation of Israelites or Jews is not taking place in the present epoch but only after the gentiles are reconciled—and the gentiles can only be reconciled until Jews begin to receive the gospel. But we know from Paul’s use of himself as an example in 11:1 that this is not in fact the case.

It is better to understand the verse in light of the big picture of restoration eschatology. By referencing the ἀποβολή of the λοιποί, Paul refers to God’s action in Deut 29:27–28, where the apodosis almost certainly refers to God’s action of receiving his people, the protasis should be taken objectively in reference to God’s action as well.

1672 As held by Jewett, Romans, 676; Käsemann, Romans, 307; and others holding to the “eschatological miracle” position. See p. 571 n. 1752 below.

1673 Gadenz, Called from Jews and Gentiles, 250.

1674 That is not to suggest that they cannot be read chronologically or that Paul denies any sort of historical/chronological aspect to the process he outlines, but the relationship between these terms should be understood as primarily logical not chronological. See the section on 11:25–27 below for more explanation.
YHWH, bringing every covenantal curse upon his rebellious people, will finally “cast them away” (LXX: ἐχέβαλεν) into another land. The next verse (Deut 29:29) declares that “the secret things (τὰ κρυπτὰ) belong to the Lord,” transitioning to Deut 30, which foretells Israel’s eventual restoration from the curse and return to the land. Paul will unveil those secrets (the mystery) of Israel’s restoration a few verses later in Rom 11:25–26, though he has been hinting at that solution throughout.

The consequence of Israel’s covenantal punishment (its ἀποβολὴ among the nations) is the reconciliation of the world—and with the world, Israel also. Through the inclusion of gentiles—whom Paul also portrays as formerly dead and raised to new life in Christ (cf. Rom 6:4; 7:4; 8:10–11)—those formerly cast away are now becoming partakers in the covenant community. And if Israel is truly being received back again, how is it anything but life from the dead? Salvation has come to the gentiles precisely to bring Israel back from the dead. Once again, Israel’s salvation is inextricably linked to that of the nations, and salvation coming to gentiles is the proof that even those who are now insensible may yet be saved through the new life of the spirit.

*Jealousy, Not-My-People, and a Non-Nation*

At this point some may ask how, if transformed gentile believers are becoming “Israelites,” their inclusion would make Israel jealous. It is obviously nonsense to suggest that these new Israelites would make themselves jealous. But Paul does not say “to make Israel jealous,” but “to make them (αὐτούς) jealous”—that is, οἱ λοιποὶ who were made insensible. This

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1676 The reference to ὁ ἐν τῷ κρυπτῷ Ἰουδαῖος in 2:29 has already recalled Deut 29:29, as discussed in Lincicum, *Paul and the Early Jewish Encounter*, 150–51. Cf. also Seder Eliyahu Rabbah 10, which seems to echo Deut 29:29 in suggesting that “the owner knows where he put his tools” even if others do not. See p. 514 n. 1553 above.
continues Paul’s careful language throughout Romans 9–11; he consistently uses pronouns or refers back to his fleshly kin as a way to represent a portion of Israel that has become insensible, and he has consistently characterized such divisions between the righteous and unrighteous within Israel as typical throughout Israel’s history.

Secondly, this objection does not sufficiently appreciate what Paul is suggesting when he employs the “not my people” and “non nation” motifs. Paul nowhere suggests that there are “disguised” Israelites among the nations who have simply forgotten their true ethnic heritage and are now being restored through recognition of their Israelite heritage. The nations/gentiles are not Israelites. On the contrary, the point is that the bulk of the northern kingdom has actually become “not my people” (=gentiles). That is, a large portion of Israel has truly become gentiles, having been divorced from the covenant (cf. Jer 3:8) and fully intermingled/intermarried with the nations among which they were scattered. Israel’s redemption is therefore not a matter of finding and identifying unknown Israelites among the nations but rather involves recreating Israel from the gentiles through the transformative work of the spirit.

They therefore must be adopted and transformed to become “my people” again—this process is not merely recognition and reunion but resurrection, life from the dead, a new creation. But adoption does not make sense unless they are fully integrated into the family as full heirs. These are not foster children but adoptees—legitimate, legal children and heirs. They are Israelites, having become Israelites through the same process of selection from among the nations that created Israel in the beginning, in fulfillment of the promises to the prophets that even divorced Israel, swallowed up among the nations, would not be forgotten but redeemed. Again, the logic is that Israel behaved like the nations and so became gentiles, so now Israel’s redemption includes the nations themselves.
That the motif of jealousy was also applied to the Samaritans is instructive here—the cause of anger is the Samaritans’ claims to be Israelites while they are (at least according to Jewish polemic) no different from gentiles due to their intermarriage with the non-Israelite peoples imported into Samarian territory by the Assyrians. Those gentiles coming to faith in Christ through Paul’s ministry are in the same situation but even further along the continuum—they may or may not have a drop of actual Israelite blood in their veins, but that is immaterial since the only way for God to redeem Israel from “not my people” is to incorporate “not my people” (that is, actual gentiles). As with the Samaritans, the logic of jealousy only makes sense in the context of the incorporation of non-Israelites such that they become Israelites; the inclusion of such gentiles (or Samaritans) in Israel’s promises is what stirs up outraged jealousy on the part of natural born Israelites.1677 Nevertheless, what brings the argument full circle is that these non-Israelites must be incorporated for Israel to be complete, since Israel has become inseparably intermingled among the nations.

**Consecrated by Incorporation**

εἰ δὲ ἡ ἀπαρχὴ ἁγία, καὶ τὸ φύραµα καὶ εἰ ἡ ρίζα ἁγία, καὶ οἱ κλάδοι

“If the firstfruits are holy, so is the lump,”1678 and if the root is holy, so also are the branches” (11:16).

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1677 The situation is analogous to granting large-scale expedited citizenship to undocumented immigrants in the USA; even the suggestion of such would surely stimulate outrage among many xenophobic natural-born US citizens. But that outrage would not imply that these new citizens are not actual citizens. Indeed, it is the opposite—their new citizenship is precisely what would spur other citizens to outraged zeal and efforts to tighten the national boundaries.

1678 The use of φύραµα recalls the lump (of clay) in 9:21. Paul shifts the metaphor here to dough rather than clay, but the imagery is linked by the lump, which represents Israel in each case. See Gadenz, *Called from Jews and Gentiles*, 193–94.
Verse sixteen serves as a bridge between the discussion of 11:11–15 and the olive tree allegory immediately following, for which it also functions as a thesis statement. The two halakhic statements of the verse have, however, been poorly understood by most interpreters. The first statement (firstfruits/lump) has typically understood as an allusion to the practice of setting aside a small portion of dough for the priest when baking bread, in keeping with Num 15:18–20. After explaining the allusion, Gadenz makes the remarkable statement:

The biblical principle itself does not support the conclusion which Paul draws from it, but, as we have already discussed with regard to the premises of the enthymemes in vv. 12 and 15, the important thing is that the premise in the metaphor be accepted by Paul’s audience in order for it to be persuasive.

But even if Paul’s audience were to accept the premise in the metaphor, Benjamin Gordon has pointed out an additional problem:

The sanctification of the loaf, once the offering is set aside from it, would run precisely counter to Paul’s message regarding the inalienability of Israel’s heritage to the church. Applying its logic to the metaphor that follows, it would be as if the tree is sanctified once the root is cut off from it! Rather, most fitting to the context would be a saying that illustrates how something is sanctified when it is added to a holy entity (not detached from it), like branches sanctified once they are grafted into a holy tree.

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1681 Gadenz, *Called from Jews and Gentiles*, 2018. Similarly, Jewett, *Romans*, 682: “Whether or not the OT itself explicitly states that the sample purifies the whole, … Paul introduces this premise as if [it] would be readily acceptable by his audience.” Dunn, *Romans 9–16*, 659: “The idea of this cultic holiness extending to the rest of the doh/harvest etc. is not present in the OT…. [But] the logic of Paul’s assertion here would be widely recognized and accepted even though formal justification for it was lacking.”

As one might expect, the problem lies not with Paul’s misapplication of a biblical principle but with modern biblical scholars’ misidentification of the tradition from which Paul is drawing. Rather than the practice outline in Num 15:18–20, Gordon explains:

A solution to these issues is that Paul refers in 11:16a to admixtures of heave-offering and unconsecrated produce. In rabbinc thought, unless the heave-offering is not outweighed a hundredfold by the unconsecrated portion, the entire admixture is rendered forbidden to the non-priest and still subject to the law of heave-offerings.

The basic point is therefore not that the ἀπαρχὴ has been removed from the lump but rather that unconsecrated dough has been added to the consecrated ἀπαρχὴ, becoming holy through integration with the previously consecrated material. As Gordon explains, “The metaphor read in this fashion better fits Paul’s larger message on the role of non-Jewish Christians in the people Israel as he envisions it.” The point is that gentiles are sanctified via integration into consecrated Israel.

The second saying is similarly halakhic in nature, likewise “establishing a principle of extended or transferrable sanctity: just as the heave-offering sanctifies the batch when it is

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1683 This is a frustratingly common occurrence, as many scholars seem surprisingly ready to assume ignorance or inconsistency on the part of the ancient author rather than reexamining their own (mis)readings of said author when inconsistencies appear.


1685 The basic logic is the same as with “a little leaven leavens the whole lump” (Gal 5:9; 1 Cor 5:6), only the thing being transmitted in this case is sanctity, not impurity.


1687 Gordon suggests that “lack of familiarity with the obscure ancient Jewish practice of consecrating real estate and moveable properties to God and his priests has led scholars to assume that Paul must be speaking figuratively here, perhaps drawing on biblical language where Israel is compared to an olive tree (e.g., Jer 11:16), a root (Hos 14:6), or a righteous plant (e.g., Jub 1:16)” (Gordon, “Sacred Land Endowments,” 255). Recognizing the halakhic nature of the saying does not, however, reduce the figurative use of the halakhah in the passage or the biblical echoes implied in the choice of an olive tree specifically.
intermixed with the non-sacred, so too the root sanctifies the branches of a tree.”

This second concept thus leads naturally into the more extended allegory of the olive tree.

**The Olive Tree**

Εἰ δὲ τινες τῶν κλάδων εξεκλάσθησαν, σὺ δὲ ἀγριέλαιος ὃν ἐνεκεντρίσθη ἐν αὐτοῖς καὶ συγκοινωνός τῆς ρίζης τῆς πιότητος τῆς ἑλαίας ἐγένου,

µὴ κατακαυχῶ τῶν κλάδων εἰ δὲ κατακαυχᾶσαι οὐ σὺ τὴν ρίζαν βαστάξεις ἀλλ’ ἤ ρίζα σέ. Ἐρεῖς οὖν εξεκλάσθησαν κλάδοι ἴνα ἔγω ἐγκεντρισθῶ. καλῶς τῆς ἀπιστίας ἐξεκλάσθησαν, σὺ δὲ τῇ πίστει ἑστήκας. µὴ ψηλὰ φρόνει ἀλλὰ φοβοῦ εἰ γὰρ ὁ θεὸς τῶν κατὰ φύσιν κλάδων ὁ πόσῳ φρόνει τῆς ἑλαίας ἐγένετο, µὴ κατακαυχῶ τῶν κλάδων εἰ δὲ κατακαυχᾶσαι οὐ τὴν ῥίζαν βαστάζεις ἀλλὰ τὴν ῥίζα σέ.

καλῶς τῇ ἀπιστίᾳ ἐξεκλάσθησαν, σὺ δὲ τῇ πίστει ἑστήκας. µὴ ψηλὰ φρόνει ἀλλὰ φοβοῦ εἰ γὰρ ὁ θεὸς τῶν κατὰ φύσιν κλάδων ὁ πόσῳ φρόνει τῆς ἑλαίας ἐγένετο. µὴ ψηλὰ φρόνει ἀλλὰ φοβοῦ εἰ γὰρ ὁ θεὸς τῶν κατὰ φύσιν κλάδων ὁ πόσῳ φρόνει τῆς ἑλαίας ἐγένετο, µὴ κατακαυχῶ τῶν κλάδων εἰ δὲ κατακαυχᾶσαι οὐ τὴν ῥίζαν βαστάζεις ἀλλὰ τὴν ῥίζα σέ.

But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being from a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, becoming co-partakers of the root, of the fatness of the olive tree, do not boast against the branches. But if you do boast against them: it is not you who supports the root—the root supports you. You will say then, “Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in.” Fine. They were broken off for unfaithfulness, but you stand by faithfulness. Do not be proud but be afraid, for if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you. Behold then the kindness and severity of God: toward those who fell, severity but toward you, kindness—if you remain in his kindness. Otherwise you

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1690 V. 17 contains a text-critical problem likely due to the awkwardness of the phrase τῆς ρίζης τῆς πιότητος τῆς ἑλαίας (א B C Ψ). Some omit τῆς ρίζης (P46 D* F G) or introduce α καὶ after ρίζης (κ` A D5), each of which makes the reading easier. See Gadenz, Called from Jews and Gentiles, 264.

1691 With these references to God’s χρηστότης, Paul seems to be punning on χρίστος (as also in Rom 2:4), which would have been homonyms since since η and ι were pronounced so similarly in this period. See Philo’s similar pun in Praem. 164. Cf. p. 320 and p. 510 n. 1537 above.

1692 Translating τῆς πιότητος τῆς ἑλαίας epexegetically, in apposition to τῆς ρίζης, following Franz Mussner, “Mittelhalberin an der Wurzel: Zur Ekklesiologie von Röm 11,11–24,” in Die Kraft der Wurzel: Judentum — Jesus — Kirche (Freiburg: Herder, 1987), 153–59 (157 n. 10), rather than adjectivally (“the rich root”) as do most modern versions (e.g., NRSV, NASB, NAB; cf. Moo, Romans, 702 n. 28).

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also will be cut off. And those ones also—if they do not remain in unfaithfulness—will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. For if you were cut off from the wild olive tree to which you belonged by nature were grafted into a cultivated olive tree contrary to nature, how much more will these who are natural branches be grafted into their own tree? (Rom 11:17–24)

Having just established that the holy root makes the branches holy, Paul concedes that some branches were cut off from the consecrated tree while others have been grafted in from the outside. Despite several other suggestions, this consecrated olive tree represents Israel, which has been in view throughout Rom 9–11 (and Romans as a whole). Any other meaning would require a sudden and unannounced shift of subject, and any reader familiar with the Bible or traditional prophetic imagery would immediately identify the olive tree as Israel. Jeremiah, for example, depicts Israel as an olive tree with branches being cut away (Jer 11:16–17a), while Hosea uses this image to portray Israel after the redemption of not-my-people: “I will be like dew to Israel … his branches (κλάδοι) will spread and he will be like a fruitful olive tree” (Hos

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1693 Κατὰ φύσιν is often translated as though it modifies the olive tree (i.e., “from that which is by nature a wild olive tree”; as NRSV, NASB, Käsemann, Romans, 303–04, etc.), but the phrase is best understood in light of the parallel φύσιν clauses immediately following this one, such that the branch is being cut out of the tree to which it belongs and engrafted into another through outside intervention, as opposed to the natural branches which would be grafted into the tree to which they belonged by nature. See Cranfield, Romans, 571–72; J. C. T. Havemann, “Cultivated Olive—Wild Olive: The Olive Tree Metaphor in Romans 11:16–24,” Neot (1997): 87–106 (102–03). Although many commentators have suggested that παρὰ φύσιν implies that Paul is signaling an impossible or ridiculous process, the phrase is better understood as a reference the fact that the transplantation of branches involves interfering with nature and is by no means a natural process. See A. G. Baxter and John A. Zeisler, “Paul and Arboriculture: Romans 11.17–24,” JSNT 24 (1985): 25–32 (29); Cranfield, Romans, 566, 571.

1694 The φύσις terminology here recalls the language of the first two chapters of the letter (1:28; 2:14, 27).

1695 Gordon, “Sacred Land Endowments and Field Consecrations in Early Judaism,” 268: “[the] points of connection between the halakhic saing of 11:16b and the olive tree allegory strongly suggest that Paul is using the same consecrated tree as the basis for his message.”

Because olive trees were famous in antiquity for their regenerative properties, as reflected by Pliny’s declaration, “An olive tree, even after being completely burned, rejuvenates,” an olive tree is an especially natural image of Israel’s restoration.

As for the components of the tree, the root has been variously identified as equivalent to the tree itself (=Israel), the patriarchs (in keeping with 11:28), the promise to the patriarchs, or Christ (cf. 15:12), but an exact identification of the root is ultimately unnecessary, as it symbolizes the essence of the tree regardless of its exact referent, which Paul does not clearly identify. It is important, however, that the branches not be identified as

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1698 Oliva in totum ambusta revixit. Pliny, Nat. 17.241. Alison Burford, Land and Labor in the Greek World (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), 130: “Olives might be sprouted from pieces of the trunk chopped up; or an old tree could be cut down so as to sprout afresh, and so the deme officials of Aixon specified that olive trees be cut down to stumps to improve them” (see also 231–32).

1699 Wagner, Heralds of the Good News, 274.


1702 E.g., Svetlana Khobnya, “The Root' in Paul's Olive Tree Metaphor (Romans 11:16–24),” TynBul 64 (2013): 257–273; Anthony T. Hanson, Studies in Paul’s Technique and Theology (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), 117–121; N. T. Wright, “The Letter to the Romans: Introduction, Commentary, and Reflection,” NID 10 (2002): 393–770 (683–84). In this interpretation Christ serves as the fulfillment of the promises to the patriarchs and the source of Israel’s (the tree’s) blessings. Christ could also be seen as taking on the identity of Israel, as Wright often argues. But regardless of whether Christ is understood as the root, the tree is still Israel and the branches Israelites, meaning the metaphor still functions more or less the same way.


1704 In addition to the aforementioned options, Holger Zeigan, “Die Wurzel des Ölbaums (Röm 11,1): Eine alternative Perspektive,” Protokolle zur Bibel 15 (2006): 119–132 (128), has proposed that the root represents faith, but the branches stand in relationship to the root by πίστις, so in this view, branches would stand in the root by the root, making this view implausible.
“Israel” but rather as “Israelites,” with the tree itself representing Israel as a collective whole. Indeed, one of the points of the allegory is that the tree does not depend on the branches but only the root, while the branches must remain attached to the life-giving root to survive.

Once again the imagery reiterates what Paul has explained throughout Rom 9–11: not all Israelites are Israel (9:6), and just as some in the past were removed, the unfaithful in the present (whether natural or unnatural branch) will likewise be removed. Thus he warns the newly-elect gentiles that there is no basis for celebration or boasting over the broken branches, as it only proves that one’s place in the tree must be actively maintained. Neither natural birth nor unnatural adoption guarantee permanent standing in the covenant, which must be maintained by πίστις. The promises ultimately regard the preservation of the tree and those remaining in it, not the individual branches. The allegory therefore serves to illustrate two basic points: God is able

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1705 As also noted by Nanos, “Broken Branches,” 369

1706 Johnson Hodge, “Olive Trees and Ethnicities,” 80–86, observes that the metaphor of an olive tree bears affinities to the figure of the “family tree,” showing the relationship between generations, with each succeeding member the continuation of preceding progenitors. See also Johnson Hodge, If Sons, Then Heirs, 143.

1707 Pace Gadenz, Called from Jews and Gentiles, 263–66; Aletti and Schnelle, “Le développement de l’argumentation,” 205. Nevertheless, it is unnecessary to speak of the trunk of the tree (which Paul does not explicitly mention), as does Franz Mussner, Traktat über die Juden (München: Kosel, 1979), 68–74; Mussner, “Mitteilhaberin an der Wurzel,” 153–55. Indeed, as Klaus Haacker, Der Brief des Paulus an die Römer, ThKNT 6 (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1999), 233, points out, the tree Paul envisions may not match what a modern audience would envision. But there are still three terms in view: the root, the branches, and the tree as a whole, which includes the branches but does not cease to be the tree if branches are removed.

1708 See Garroway, Paul's Gentile-Jews, 150: “Paul proposes that certain Israelites … have relinquished their physiological connection to the patriarchs. They have been separated from their roots so that, in effect, they are no longer the physical descendants of the biblical patriarchs, no longer able to benefit from the character and sustenance provided by the circumstances of their birth. Paul has ‘unfleshed’ them, in a sense, expunging them from the family by rhetorically dissolving their connection to the previous generations. Of course, Paul anticipated this ‘unfleshing’ when he proclaimed, at the outset of Romans 9–11, that God’s people Israel is not coterminous with the physical descendants of the patriarchs.”
to re-engage broken branches, and the engrafted branches may be cut off if they do not remain faithful.\footnote{1709}

Interestingly, this passage confirms that Paul has by no means abandoned the principle of covenantal nomism: Jews are born into the tree by nature (i.e., elect from birth) and can only be removed for unfaithfulness. Gentiles, on the other hand, must come into the tree by an “unnatural” process (i.e., proselytism) and can still likewise be cut off for unfaithfulness.\footnote{1710}

These two premises would hardly have been controversial. Recall that Philo used a similar metaphor for the same basic purpose in Praem. 152–72, explaining that Jews who do not obey are cut off, leaving only the roots of the tree (Praem. 172), while proselytes who imitate Abraham’s example can be incorporated (152, 172). Moreover, the new shoots help regenerate the tree to life (172).\footnote{1711}

Once again, Paul’s arguments concern neither the foundational assumptions concerning the covenant nor restoration eschatology but rather where the boundaries should be drawn—that is, what constitutes faithfulness or unfaithfulness and what a proselyte must do to become a full Israelite.\footnote{1712} For Paul, only those who follow Christ and have received the spirit fulfill the

\footnote{1709} Cf. Gadenz, Called from Jews and Gentiles, 261–62.

\footnote{1710} Based on 1 Cor 7:14, Paul also seems to regard the children of gentile Christ-followers as naturally born into the covenant (ἅγιος), which suggests that he regards their transformation as what we would call ethnic—they have become Israelites and thus their children are as well. (Remarkably, Paul seems to regard either a male or female parent as sufficient, which differs from later Rabbinic developments.)

\footnote{1711} See p. 333 above. See also Bekken, The Word is Near You, 213–17.

\footnote{1712} The image of grafting was used to symbolize intermarriage in later rabbinic literature. Marc Rastoin, “Une bien étrange greffe (Rm 11,17): Correspondances rabbiniques d’une expression Paulinienne,” RB 114, no. 1 (2007): 73–79, has suggested a connection between Paul’s allegory and b. Yebam. 63a, which describes the engrafting of Ruth and Naomi into Israel, though the metaphor there is that of vine cultivation rather than that of an olive tree. Gordon, “Sacred Land Endowments,” 272–73, points to an interesting midrash on Ps 128:3 by R. Levi in y. Kil. 27b that says Jewish families should never be adulterated through foreign intermarriage “just as there is no grafting with olives,” a declaration Gordon suggests may be an example of anti-Christian polemic: “In sharp contrast to Paul, where foreign branches sustain the tree, R. Levi has them polluting it” (273). On Ps 128:3 and how it “presupposes an astonishing familiarity with the cultivation of olive trees on the part of the poet as well as the hearers of our Psalm,” see Frank-
 δικαιώματα τοῦ νόµου (2:26); those Jews who refuse to follow Christ are therefore by definition unfaithful (to the Torah!), endangering their position in Israel. On the other hand, all those who have received the spirit through Christ—whether circumcised or uncircumcised—are confirmed as the redeemed people of God through their participation in the new covenant promise and therefore stand in the tree by πίστις, though they too can be removed if they become disobedient.1713 As Garroway explains, “Such a notion of constructed paternity was hardly peculiar in ancient perceptions of kinship. Adoption, for example, was an especially important institution in the Roman world, and evidence indicates that ‘grafting’ was a familiar metaphor for describing it.”1714 To borrow Johnson Hodge’s words, “God has added a branch to the family tree,”1715 with these newly engrafted branches fully incorporated into the corporate body of all Israel.

A Common Motif of Judgment

Similar images are employed in the Gospels by both John the Baptist (Matt 3:10//Luke 3:9) and Jesus (Matt 7:19; John 15:4–10), warning that those who do not bear good fruit will be

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1713 Garroway, Paul’s Gentile-Jews, 152: “As new offspring in the family tree of Israel, these Gentile initiates have acquired a new physiological status, a new birthright, as Paul indicates through the [φύσις] terminology describing how they were incorporated into the tree.”


cut off/down and eventually burned. This motif of plants being trimmed or cut down is a common motif of judgment throughout the prophets, with the basic concept being that since Israel has not cut off ( Himself) the unfaithful as the Torah prescribes, God has taken the initiative to prune his people, cutting off those who are not truly his. One example comes from a passage from which Paul has already quoted in Rom 10:15:

> Look! On the mountains the feet of him who brings good news…. Because the Lord has turned away the hubris of Jacob (just as the hubris of Israel, because they have completely shaken them off and have destroyed their branches). (Nah 2:1a, 3 [ET 1:15, 2:2])

Another occurs in the context of eschatological renewal, which will not bring redemption but also remove the wicked from the people:

> Then you will return and discern between the righteous and the wicked, the one who serves God and the one who does not. A day is coming burning like an oven and will consume them. And all the foreigners (Heb: ) and those who do lawlessness will be chaff. And the coming day will set them ablaze, says the Lord almighty, and neither root nor branch will be left of them.” (Mal 3:18–4:1 LXX)

Paul’s use of the specific imagery of an olive tree is most evocative of Jeremiah’s warning:

> The Lord called your name an olive tree well-shaded, beautiful in form. A fire was kindled against it toward the noise of its cutting ( ), and great is the affliction ( ) coming upon you—her branches ( ) have become worthless ( ). And the Lord who planted you pronounced evil against

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1716 Feldmeier, “Vater und Töpfer?,” 389, points out a related similarity between the Baptist’s message and Paul’s: “Das Täuferwort, dass Gott dem Abraham aus Steinen Kinder erwecken kann (Lk 3,8 par. Mt 3,9), würde wohl auch Paulus unterschreiben können.”


1718 That God is cutting off ( Nikki the unfaithful among his people an uncommon prophetic motif: see Psa 37:9, 22, 28, 34, 38; Psa 101:6–8; Prov 2:21–2; Isa 48:18–19; Jer 6:2; 44:7–12; Hos 8:1–4; 10:1–15; Nah 1:15; Zeph 1:4–6; Zech 13:8–9. See also 1 Kings 9:7; 14:10, 14; 21:21; 2 Kings 9:8; 10:32; 2 Chr 22:7. The typical LXX rendering of Nikki terminology in these cases tends to be , though the terminology of cutting off is retained in some instances (e.g., in LXX Jer 6:2; LXX Jer 51:7).
you because of the evil of the house of Israel and the house of Judah. (Jer 11:16–17a LXX)\(^{1719}\)

Paul employs a common prophetic image to explain that the rules have not changed, nor has God rejected or redefined his people; rather, those who have forfeited their covenantal standing through unfaithfulness are removed, but those from Judah who are ὁ ἐν τῷ κρυπτῷ Ἰουδαῖος (2:29) remain.\(^{1720}\) Paul has argued throughout Rom 9–11 that this present action is fully in keeping with what has happened in the past, but God has always preserved a remnant through it all (e.g., 9:26–30; 11:2–5).\(^{1721}\) Israelites can be broken off from Israel for disobedience, but all Israel—the corporate body as a whole—will be preserved (cf. 11:26).

That God stands ready to cut off the disobedient is jarring to modern sensibilities, but Paul has little trouble maintaining what today may seem an irreconcilable juxtaposition: “Behold

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\(^{1719}\) Zech 4:3, 11–14 also offers an interesting parallel in that it presents a picture of two olive trees before the Lord, but given the thematic differences that passage seems not to be in view here.

\(^{1720}\) On the significance of 2:29, see p. 495 n. 1488 and p. 550 n. 1676 above. Though the notion of cutting off the unfaithful is unpalatable to a modern reader, it is entirely in keeping with motifs present both in the Torah and the prophets. In no way does Paul think true Israelites among the Jews have been rejected; his defense centers on God cutting off only those unfaithful to the covenant. In addition, he is quick to remind the reader that anyone who has been cut off for unfaithfulness can be grafted back in. Michel, Römer, 275, comments, “Auf jeden Fall muß erkannt werden, daß Pls auf einer älteren Tradition fußt. Seine Ausführungen sind sachlich bestimmt und durchdacht.”

\(^{1721}\) It is worth noting here that the remnant therefore comprises the whole people (that is, the whole people that remains) both for the prophets and Paul, as also seen with Philo and others discussed earlier in this study. Indeed, as Lambert observes, in the biblical oracles Israel’s restoration is typically presented as “a process that usually entails the violent removal of whatever cuts Israel off from [the deity] … often through the elimination of a portion of the people” (“Torah of Moses,” 97). In this common prophetic picture (to which Paul has been referring throughout Rom 9–11), the salvation of “all Israel” (that is, the people as a whole) requires cutting off of the portion of the people whose unfaithfulness endangers the people as a whole. This perspective is contrary to the increasingly popular view among New Testament scholars that Rom 11 moves from the salvation of the remnant to the salvation of οἱ λαοὶ. Gadenz, Called from Jews and Gentiles, 263, for example, points to “the implicit image of the remnant-branches remaining on the tree attached to the root” in Isa 37:31 and 2 Kgs 19:30, but neither example mentions branches at all, only “the remnant of the house of Judah,” which takes root again. The remnant is the entire plant that remains, while the branches that have been stripped off are no longer part of that plant. Nevertheless, Paul insists that those excised branches can be reincorporated into the tree, joining the remnant that will be saved. On the other hand, he does not indicate that all will be reincorporated, only that they can be reincorporated if they do not persist in unfaithfulness. That distinction is an important one, as again Paul is clear that only the remnant will be saved, though the size of the remnant may be increased.
the kindness and severity of God” (11:22). Such a view of God’s preservation of Israel (kindness) through the removal of unfaithful Israelites (severity) is again reflective of mainstream early Jewish theology. For example, Peter Enns explains that in the book of Jubilees:

Israel as a people will always remain because God is faithful. Transgression of eternal commands, however, will result in individual punishment and forfeiture of one’s individual covenant status. The fact of Israel’s election, however, remains sure. In fact, it is precisely the fact that God destroys individuals while maintaining the whole that demonstrates to the people that he is faithful to the covenant: the actions of individuals cannot affect God’s purpose and plan—Israel’s existence is his doing.1722

Moreover, the real force of the passage is directed against the newly engrafted gentile, who stands in danger of boasting just like the Ἰουδαῖοι Paul chastises in Romans 2–3.1723 Paul warns these unnatural branches yet again that election is no guarantee of salvation, which must be sustained by πίστις (cf. 9:30–32; 10:6).1724 As he will reinforce in 11:25–26, Paul reminds the unnatural branches that they depend on the root—they are participating in Israel’s salvation and their salvation is part of Israel’s story.1725 There is no supersession or replacement here, only incorporation into Israel, God’s one people.

But Paul does not stop there. These prophetic passages generally share two familiar tropes: (1) bad branches (those that are unfruitful or bear bad fruit) get cut off while good branches are preserved, and (2) the excised branches are burned. A reader familiar with this

1722 Enns, “Expansions of Scripture,” 97 (his emphasis).
1723 The motif of boasting also recalls Jer 9:22–23.
1724 The conflation of election and salvation has long been a problem in studies of Paul and early Judaism. Enns, “Expansions of Scripture,” 98, points out, “It might be less confusing to say that election is by grace but salvation is by obedience…. The point still remains, however, that the final outcome is based on more than initial inclusion in the covenant.” Enns’ distinction between “grace” (χάρις) and “obedience” is also problematic, however, given the reciprocal quality of χάρις. It is more precise to say that election is by God’s choice but final salvation requires obedience in response to that election, all of which falls under the reciprocal rubric of χάρις. Nevertheless, the distinction between election and salvation is an important one, as Paul himself draws a fairly significant distinction between the two throughout Rom 9–11.
1725 Kim, "Reading Paul's καὶ οὕτως," 321.
prophetic topos would therefore expect Paul to portray Israel as an olive tree whose wicked branches are being removed at the time of the eschatological renewal, with those branches subsequently being burned. But Paul has made surprising alterations to this familiar topos, expanding the arboricultural image to include the concept of engrafting branches in addition to removing them.

**Broken Off and Grafted In**

Gordon notes that in the context of the halakhic statement concerning a consecrated tree in 11:16b,

> [T]he grafting of new branches would have as its primary goal, on a literal level, the sustenance and rejuvenation of the consecration, and on a symbolic level, the joining of all Israel together as a holy [assembly] regardless of the stock from which its branches derive. The allegory thus becomes one in which branches from a non-consecrated tree are grafted onto a consecrated one, and by virtue of their connection, become holy. Sanctity too extends to broken branches rejoined to the tree. Together the branches are consecrated by virtue of the roots. Together they nourish and sustain the tree.\(^{1726}\)

In this light, there is little reason to suppose that Paul was either a townsman ignorant of arboriculture\(^ {1727}\) or that he is deliberately talking botanical nonsense by reversing the usual process of grafting cultivated branches into wild trees (thus the \(\pi\ar\dot\alpha\ \phi\sigma\iota\nu\) of 11:24) to emphasize a specific point about Jewish superiority.\(^ {1728}\) Rather, in the context of a consecrated


\(^{1727}\) As famously asserted by Dodd, *Romans*, 180: “[Paul] had not the curiosity to inquire what went on in the olive-yards which fringed every road he walked” (yet another example of a modern interpreter having difficulty with an image and ascribing inconsistency or ignorance to the ancient author rather than to himself). Commentators as far back as Origen have objected to the impossibility of the practice (*Commentary on Romans* 8:10).

tree, the purpose of such a practice is the maintenance of the consecrated tree, assuring its longevity and productivity for sacred purposes by the insertion of previously unconsecrated branches.\textsuperscript{1729}

Moreover, it can no longer be disputed that the grafting of scions of the wild olive (\textit{ἀγριέλαιος}) into cultivated olive trees was a known practice in antiquity to make an unfruitful cultivated tree more fruitful.\textsuperscript{1730} In addition, grafting of unconsecrated branches into sacred olive trees appears to have been practiced in Classical Athens, for example, as a means of propagating the \textit{µορίαι}, olive trees sacred to Athena supposedly derived from the original olive tree planted by the goddess herself on the sacred rock of the Acropolis.\textsuperscript{1731} In any case, the primary point of

\textsuperscript{1729} Gordon, “Sacred Land Endowments,” 269. The objection of Esler, "Ancient Oleiculture," 119, against the language of “rejuvenation” since Roman society so valued ancestral traditions and antiquity, misses the point, since the object of such rejuvenation is to keep the older plant strong and productive, not to make it younger.

\textsuperscript{1730} This was first argued by William M. Ramsay, “The Olive-Tree and the Wild-Olive,” \textit{Expositor} 2 (1905): 16–34 and more recently by Baxter, and Zeisler, "Paul and Arboriculture," on the basis of the first-century Roman writer Columella, who writes in his \textit{De re rustica} that well-established but unproductive trees can be rejuvenated and made more productive by engrafting wild olive shoots (5.9.16–17). Cf. also Jewett, \textit{Romans}, 684–85. Remarkably, despite his awareness of the statements of Paul’s contemporary that this practice, although reserved for unproductive or unfruitful trees, was indeed practiced, Esler, "Ancient Oleiculture," 112–120, nevertheless argues that Paul would not have been aware of such a practice because he “had spent his life in the Eastern Mediterranean,” where such practices allegedly were not practiced. To demonstrate this, Esler (113–16) appeals to the earlier Greek writer Theophrastus (371–287 BCE), who outlines the usual practice of grafting cultivated branches onto wild trees and notes that the reverse will not result in quality fruit (τὸ δὲ καλλικαρπεῖν οὐχ ἔξει; \textit{De causis plantarum} 1.6.10). But Theophrastus neither denies that such is done, nor do his comments prove that such practices were not performed in the Eastern Mediterranean three centuries later. Esler then notes that olive trees were generally raised in nurseries in Italy rather than by grafting (117–18), a detail hardly relevant to the discussion. Moreover, by Esler’s own admission (118) Columella visited Cilicia and Syria and would thus have been aware of Eastern Mediterranean practices. That Philo mentions an analogous practice in \textit{Agr.} 6, (“Those which do not produce good fruit, he wishes to improve by insertion of other kinds into their roots, grown together in union”) further damages Esler’s case. Finally, Esler argues that Paul nowhere says anything about the tree being unfruitful (Esler, "Ancient Oleiculture,” 20–21; anticipated by Michel, \textit{Römer}, 275), so Columella’s procedure would not apply. But the stock image of branches being removed already presumes that the branches are broken off because of unfruitfulness (or bad fruit), so this would not need to be stated outright. Moreover, Paul does state that the broken branches are “unfaithful” (ἀπιστίᾳ), which implies unfruitfulness. He also suggests that the non-Jewish branches need to produce good fruit in order to remain in the tree and that the natural branches are more naturally fruitful provided they are faithful. See further n. 1727 below.

the metaphor is that the engrafted branches are in fact sanctified by incorporation into the holy tree (11:16b).

The newly engrafted branches are brought in for the purpose of bearing holy fruit, but there is some irony in that wild olive trees do not produce worthwhile fruit, so the allegory depicts unproductive natural branches being broken off and previously fruitless wild branches being grafted into the tree. By including that detail, Paul emphasizes that these newly engrafted branches were not selected due to their superiority; as already stated in 11:16b, they derive their holiness (and eventually fruitfulness) from the root of the consecrated tree. The newly-engrafted wild branches must also be faithful (=produce good fruit) to remain in the tree, or they will share the fate of the removed natural branches.

In a second change, rather than telling of the broken branches being burned, Paul unexpectedly explains that even previously broken branches can be restored into the tree—a striking alteration for a reader expecting to hear of branches being cut off and burned. Thus the caprification branches attached to consecrated sycamore trees, declaring such to be sacred by their attachment to the consecrated trees.

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1732 As noted by Theophrastus, De causis plantarum 1.6.10. See also Esler, "Ancient Oleiculture," 122, though again his fuller argument depends on the idea that Paul aims “deliberately to diverge from accepted horticultural practice, in a manner that would be immediately recognized by his eastern Mediterranean audience as a divergence.” Why Esler imagines the recipients of Romans to be an eastern Mediterranean audience remains a mystery.

1733 On Israel as unfruitful or producing bad fruit, see e.g., Jer 2:21; Isa 5:1–2. Citing m. Tamid 2:3, Michel, Römer, 275, notes that “Für den holzstoß auf dem Brandopferaltar waren die Äste des wildmachsenden zugelassen, nicht aber die des edlen.”

1734 Paul may have understood the gentiles’ material contribution to the poor in Jerusalem (15:27) to be an example of good fruit already being produced. That Paul here says “cut off also” (11:22) implies that the broken branches were indeed cut off, which hurts Nanos’ case that Paul does not intend to suggest that the natural branches have been detached from the tree but are instead “damaged” and being protected by God. Nanos concedes the problem but suggests that Paul’s allegory “goes awry” here (Nanos, “Broken Branches,” 368) and that “[T]he tree allegory has proven unable to communicate this nuanced perspective effectively—it is itself broken” (Nanos, “Broken Branches,” 369, yet another example of a modern interpreter concluding Paul was incompetent or inconsistent rather than reexamining the interpretation to find a more coherent reading of Paul). Given the force of Paul’s arguments to this point and the venerable prophetic tradition of Israelites being cut off from Israel due to unfaithfulness, perhaps a better conclusion is that Paul is not trying to communicate the nuanced perspective Nanos wishes he were here.
newly engrafted branches should not boast against the broken branches not only because they themselves stand in danger of being excised but also because even broken branches can be reincorporated. Indeed, the gentiles are themselves proof of the extent of God’s mercy, which applies all the more to those naturally connected with the tree.

This reminder about God’s capacity to reincorporate previously pruned branches is made even more poignant by the realization that the unnatural branches now being grafted in are not branches of other types of trees (which was also practiced in antiquity) but wild olive branches. Although interpreters have regularly discussed the meaning of the cultivated olive tree, the source of the wild branches is generally not considered. But recall that many branches had previously been excised from Israel and scattered among the nations. Most Roman olive trees were grown from cuttings from older trees, so there may be a hint that these previously excised branches had resulted in uncultivated olives (that is, non-Israelites derived from branches that had previously been cut off from the tree). And now, through the incorporation of unconsecrated (non-Israelite) branches, even the remnant of those previously excised branches may now be incorporated into the cultivated tree.

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1736 Varro, *Res rustica*, 1.41.6; Theophrastus, *Caus. plant.* 5.1.3–4; *Hist. plant.* 2.1.4 (the latter of which says olives grow in more ways than any other plant). Since olives do not grow well from seed, cuttings of one sort or another were the typical method for growing new trees. Ovules (trunk growths) seem to have been preferred by Greek farmers due to the lower water supply, while cuttings from branches were more typically used by Roman husbandmen. See Lin Foxhall, “Olive,” *OCD* (1996): 1064–65; Lin Foxhall, “Olive Cultivation within Greek and Roman Agriculture: The Ancient Economy Revisited,” (PhD diss., University of Liverpool, 1990), 335; Burford, *Land and Labor*, 130–31.

1737 Some may object that this is pressing Paul’s analogy too far, but Paul himself brings up the possibility of grafting previously broken branches back into the tree. In any case, although interpreters have typically ignored the identity of the second, uncultivated tree, Paul clearly references more than one olive tree in this allegory. Nevertheless, identifying the engrafted branches as derived from the previously removed branches, while an intriguing possibility, is not necessary for Paul’s argument, which merely establishes that the branches being grafted
And if God can incorporate these wild branches, recently broken branches can obviously be reincorporated even more easily through the same process, as they remain elect “according to nature” (cf. 11:28–29). Thus God is calling his people back, not only from the Jews but also from the nations among which Israel had intermingled, and the fact that God is incorporating outside branches is in fact proof of his continuing faithfulness to Israel and evidence that those who are currently broken can themselves be reincorporated. Nevertheless, that reincorporation remains contingent on the response of the broken branches, who must not remain in unbelief or they will not be grafted back in despite God’s capability for doing so. Ultimately, both non-Jewish and Jewish branches must coexist equally in the olive tree, the whole of Israel.

**Paul’s Mystery Revealed**

Paul concludes the olive tree metaphor by bringing his entire argument to its climax, finally unveiling the κρυπτά of Deut 29:29, explaining the mystery of the connection between the ingathering of gentiles, and Israel’s salvation:

> Ὅ γὰρ θέλω ὑμᾶς ἀγνοεῖν, ἀδελφοί, τὸ μυστήριον τοῦτο, ἵνα μὴ ἓτε [παρ'] ἑαυτοῖς φρόνιμοι, ὅτι πώρωσις ἀπὸ μεροὺς τοῦ Ἰσραήλ γέγονεν ἄχρι οὗ τὸ πλήρωμα τῶν ἑθνῶν εἰσέλθῃ καὶ οὕτως πᾶς Ἰσραήλ σωθήσεται, καθὼς γέγραπται


1739  “Paul describes the reinstatement of Jews into the olive tree as a possibility, rather than a certainty, insisting that Jews may be regrafted only if their unbelief lapses…. Paul is by no means predicting that all Jews will return, but merely affirming how glorious it would be if they did so. Again, if they did so. These are expressions of hope from a man distraught over the fate of his kinsmen, not certifiable predictions from a man convinced his kinsmen will be saved.” Garroway, *Paul’s Gentile-Jews*, 145–46.

1740  As noted by Lang, *Mystery*, 44 n. 52, the γάρ links Paul’s conclusion to the olive tree imagery and, “more specifically, to the claim that God can and will again graft severed Israel[ites] onto the tree.”
For I do not want you to be ignorant, siblings, of this mystery (lest you become high-minded yourselves) that an insensibility has come upon Israel for awhile until the fullness of the nations has entered—and thus all Israel will be saved, just as it is written: “The deliverer will come from Zion; he will

1741 Paul’s reading (έκ Σιών) differs from every other ancient reading of Isa 59:20, which portrays the Lord’s victorious return to Zion. See Wagner, Heralds of the Good News, 284–886.

1742 A difficult phrase to translate precisely (Gk. ἀναμονήν ητε ἁπατοῖς φρόνιμοι), Paul is probably echoing the LXX of Prov 3:7 here. The essential meaning—warning against pride of position—is clear. Cf. Jewett, Romans, 699.

1743 Paul brings the πώρωσις theme begun in 11:7 to its conclusion here. For more discussion of πώρωσις, see p. 536 n. 1622 above. Again, the concept here is not the same as that employed in Rom 9:18.

1744 The sense of ἀπὸ μέρους has long been the subject of debate among scholars. Some have argued it should be taken adjectivally with Ἰσραήλ, meaning “a part of Israel,” including Jewett, Romans, 699–700; Käsemann, Romans, 312–13; Barrett, Romans, 206; Anders Nygren, Commentary on Romans, trans. Carl C. Rasmussen (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1949), 404. Others have argued that the phrase should be taken adverbially with γέγονεν, rendering “a partial hardening has come upon Israel.” See Cranfield, Romans, 575; Dunn, Romans 9–16, 679; Fitzmyer, Romans, 621; Moo, Romans, 717. Oddly, although Cranfield argues for the adverbial usage in his grammatical section, he then translates and treats the phrase adjectivally (Romans, 572–75). Although I translated the phrase adjectivally in Staples, "All Israel," 371, I have become persuaded that the adverbial reading is grammatically preferable, particularly because the phrase is adverbial in every other Pauline example (Rom 15:15, 24; 2 Cor 1:14, 2:5). The phrase could either be temporal (modifying γέγονεν and interacting with the ἁρτί αὐτῶν; as in the Peshitta) or partitive, “by portion” or “in part” (modifying πώρωσις). The objections to the adverbial reading by Jewett, Romans, 700, do not apply to the temporal reading, which seems to me the strongest option (pace the objection by Wagner, Heralds of the Good News, 278 n. 191, that this reading “makes the ἁρτί αὐτῶν somewhat redundant”). I have therefore translated the phrase temporally, though both meanings may to be in play, as Israel’s hardening is both temporary and partial (that is, a limited portion with respect to both time and space). The second adverbial meaning approaches the meaning of the adjectival reading, which underscores that the sense of the phrase is perhaps more easily understood than translated.

1745 Garroway, "Circumcision of Christ," 203 n. 22, rightly argues that ἁρτί αὐτῶν here is durative, emphasizing “not the event that follows Israel’s blindness, but the duration of Israel’s blindness.” Cf. similar uses of the phrase in 1 Cor 11:26, 15:25; Heb 3:13.

1746 Since Paul’s language is ambiguous, I have chosen an equally ambiguous translation (“thus”). There is a much debate on the sense of the καὶ οὗτος here. Moo, Romans, 719–720, lists four options, choosing the fourth: temporal (“and then”), consequential (referring backwards), consequential (referring forwards), and manner (“in this manner”). Pieter W. van der Horst, “Only Then Will All Israel Be Saved: A Short Note on the Meaning of καὶ οὗτος in Romans 11:26,” JBL 119 (2000): 521–25 (521–539), has shown that there is (rare) lexical support for the temporal option, leading Jewett, Romans, 701 and Scott, “All Israel,” 492–93, to conclude that it probably has such a meaning here (in conjunction with ἁρτί αὐτῶν). But even if a temporal sense is possible for the phrase, the primary sense seems to be modal—the default Pauline usage for οὗτος (e.g. Rom 1:15; 4:18; 5:12, 15, 18–19, 21; 6:4, 11, 19; 9:20; 10:6; 11:5; 31; 12:5; 15:20) As Christopher Zoccali, “And so all Israel will be saved: Competing Interpretations of Romans 11.26 in Pauline Scholarship,” JSNT 30, no. 3 (2008): 289–318 (309), points out, were it intended to be primarily temporal in weight, Paul would more easily have written καὶ τότε (a change often made in the patristic period, see Scott, “All Israel,” 491–92. Lang, Mystery, 44 n. 56, rightly observes that what matters here is that Israel’s salvation is presented as the logical consequence of the first two factors, whether or not it should be
remove ungodliness from Jacob. And this is my covenant with them, when I take away their sins.” (Rom 11:25–27)

Most interpreters have agreed with the sentiment of Origen, “Who the ‘all Israel’ are who will be saved, and what that fullness of the Gentiles will be, only God knows and his only-begotten and perhaps anyone who are his friends.”1747 Paul’s unveiling has been found a mystery in itself, his cure seemingly worse than the disease. Nearly every word in 11:25–26 has been the subject of significant debate.1748 To understand the passage, one must satisfactorily answer three primary interpretive questions: 1) how Paul defines “all Israel,” 2) what Paul means by “the fullness of the nations,” and 3) how the salvation of the former is connected (καὶ οὕτως) to the incoming of the latter.1749 These questions can be further boiled down and framed as follows:

what does the entrance (into what?) of “the fullness of the gentiles” have to do with the salvation of “all Israel”? 

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1748 For a fuller look at the history of interpretation over the past century, see Zoccali, "All Israel" and Zoccali, *Whom God Has Called*, 91–117.

“All Israel”: All Twelve Tribes

By this point in the study, it is apparent that by πᾶς Ἰσραὴλ, Paul does not mean “all Jews,” whether that means all “elect” Jews (that is, the Jewish-Christian remnant), a corporate group of Jews to be saved by some “eschatological miracle,” every Jewish individual throughout history, or all Jews in Rome in Paul’s day. Rather, for Paul as for other authors of this period, Israel is a larger group of which the Jews are only one portion, and Paul draws

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1752 A version of this interpretation is held by, among others, Jewett, Romans, 701–02; Cranfield, Romans, 577; Dunn, Romans 9–16, 691–93; Theology, 526–29; Byrne, Romans, 349–354; Moo, Romans, 722–26; Fitzmyer, Romans, 618–625; Wagner, Heralds of the Good News, 278–298; Witherington III and Hyatt, Romans, 273–76; Nygren, Romans, 404–06; Käsemann, Romans, 311–15; Barrett, Romans, 204–07; Segal, "Paul's Experience" (esp. 65–66); Mussner, "Ganz Israel"; F. F. Bruce, The Epistle of Paul to the Romans (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1966), 222–22; Munck, Christ and Israel, 131–38; Esler, Conflict and Identity, 305–06; Beker, Paul the Apostle, 87, 333–37; Bell, Provoked to Jealousy, 127–145; Dahl, Studies in Paul, 153–55; Hafemann, "The Salvation of Israel!"; Otfried Hofius, “All Israel Will Be Saved: Divine Salvation and Israel's Deliverance in Romans 9–11,” PSB Suppl. Issue 1 (1990): 19–39; Stuhlmann, Romans, 170–73; Gadenz, Called from Jews and Gentiles, 276–78. This consensus is so strong that it is difficult to imagine another point on which all of these commentators agree.

1753 As in the “two-covenant” model, most clearly and comprehensively put forward in Gaston, Paul and the Torah. Cf. also Stowers, Rereading of Romans; John G. Gager, Reinventing Paul (London: Oxford University Press, 2000). The idea itself is usually traced back to Stendahl, Paul Among Jews and Gentiles, though Stendahl distances himself from this interpretation in his later work (Final Account: Paul's Letter to the Romans [Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993], x–xi). Many of the “eschatological miracle” group effectively hold to the idea of a Sonderweg for Israel but in different terms, instead connecting the Jews’ eschatological salvation with Christ’s second coming (e.g., Mussner, "Ganz Israel"). For critiques of the two-covenant perspective, see Reidar Hvalvik, ‘A 'Sonderweg' for Israel: A Critical Examination of a Current Interpretation of Romans 11.25–27,” JSNT 38 (1990): 87–107; Sanger, "Rettung der Heiden"; Terence L. Donaldson, “Jewish Christianity, Israel's Stumbling and the Sonderweg Reading of Paul,” JSNT 29, no. 1 (2006): 27–54. A newer subgroup of scholars has also recently emerged, presenting a “two-ways salvation” reading that both avoids the “personal salvation” assumption of so many in this discussion and also avoids the language of two covenants but still argues that Paul regards all Torah-observant Jews as saved whether or not they follow Jesus. See Pamela Eisenbaum, Paul Was Not a Christian: The Real Message of a Misunderstood Apostle (New York: HarperOne, 2009).

1754 As Nanos, Mystery, 239–288.
attention to that comprehensive sense of the term with the qualifier πᾶς.\textsuperscript{1755} Like other apocalyptic Jews holding to typical restoration-eschatological theology, Paul’s concern was not only for the salvation of “the Jews” but the larger redemption of the full twelve-tribe people of Israel in accordance with the glorious promises of the prophets. That has been the subject in view all along, and his conclusion naturally resolves the question of how Israel’s fullness will be restored: through the combination of Israel’s πώρωσις and the entrance of the “fullness of the nations,” Paul proclaims that not only the Jews but all Israel—that is, the entire sacred olive tree from 11:16–24—will be saved.

\textit{A Mysterious Sequence?}

Despite identifiable scriptural analogues for each of the three elements of the mystery, most interpreters have found Paul’s revelation mystifying.\textsuperscript{1756} Why is Israel’s salvation contingent on the incoming of the fullness of the nations and how are those two elements related? Most modern interpreters have regarded Paul’s equation as a non sequitur and have therefore either added another factor between the incoming of the nations and all Israel’s salvation—that is, the mass conversion of all Jews, perhaps out of jealousy in response to the

\footnote{1755}{That is, the phrase “all Israel” draws attention to the “tribal structure” of Israel. See Scott, “All Israel,” 507. The argument of Ferdinand Hahn, “Zum Verständnis von Römer 11.26a: ‘... und so wird ganz Israel gerettet warden,’” in \textit{Paul and Paulinism: Essays in Honour of C.K. Barrett}, eds. Morna D. Hooker and S. G. Wilson (London: SPCK, 1982), 221–236 (229), that the phrase serves to indicate that in the end Israel will surpass the number of saved gentiles in percentage terms is creative but requires Paul to have said something other than what he meant. Understanding “all Israel” as denoting the whole people (including all the tribes) though some individuals may be cut off from that people is the simplest solution, especially on the heels of the olive tree metaphor.}

\footnote{1756}{See e.g., Seyoon Kim, “The 'Mystery' of Rom 11:25–26 Once More,” \textit{NTS} 43 (1997): 412–429 (415–420); Jewett, \textit{Romans}, 698–99. Moo, \textit{Romans}, 716, lists several difficulties in the passage in addition to the sequence itself: What is not clear is the relative weight to be assigned to these clauses. Or, in other words, what is the real ‘core’ of the mystery? The fact of Israel’s hardening? The fact that Israel’s hardening is only partial and temporary? The fact that ‘all Israel will be saved’? Or some combination of these?”}
gentile ingathering. Others have denied any connection between the incoming of the fullness of the nations and Israel’s salvation (since the Jews are saved through a Sonderweg). But Paul’s καὶ οὕτος makes a clear connection between the first two elements and the consequent result, and it is this logical progression that he labels a μυστήριον, previously hidden but newly revealed knowledge of the eternal design and plan of God for Israel’s salvation.

The primary difficulty with Paul’s sequence is that the entrance of the gentiles comes before the salvation of Israel, which most interpreters see as an inversion of the salvific order expected in prophetic and apocalyptic literature, where Israel’s restoration is followed by gentiles making an eschatological pilgrimage (Völkerwallfahrt) to worship YHWH in Jerusalem.

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1757 As in the “eschatological miracle” reading. Sanders, Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People, 196, protests, “It seems to rely too heavily on finding a second mystery in the quotation from Scripture…. He seems to have quoted Scripture to prove what he had just said, that all Israel would be saved as a consequence of the Gentile mission.” “The first mystery is that Israel will be saved as a result of the Gentile mission. The second would be that at the end Israel will be saved apart from the work of the apostles” (206 n. 92).

1758 E.g., those who hold to the two-covenant view. See n. 1749 above.

1759 See Lang, Mystery, 44: “It is not any individual element that makes the mystery; it is their surprising logical and temporal interconnectedness that constitutes the new revelation.” Lang’s larger project demonstrates how Paul and other early Christians use this type of “once hidden/now revealed” schema and language of μυστήριον to imbue new revelation with old authority. Lang rightly notes of this passage, “there is nothing necessarily “mysterious” or cryptic about the mystery. It is a mystery strictly in the sense that it is a previously unknown divine secret that Paul is now sharing with the Roman Christians” (44 n. 58). Cf. also Sanger, “Rettung der Heiden,” 115. Paul similarly says in 1 Cor 2:6–13 that his gospel is a proclamation of a “mystery,” which is revealed through the reception of the spirit. I see no reason to think that the mystery explained here is different from the one he references there, particularly given the parallels in the doxology. Cf. Heikki Räisänen, “Römer 9–11: Analyse eines geistigen Ringens,” ANRW 25.4:2891–2939 (2922). See also p. 483 n. 1459 above on “mystery” language in Paul and elsewhere.

1760 Sanders, Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People, 171, goes so far as to argue that “Paul's entire work, both evangelizing and collecting money, had its setting in the expected pilgrimage of the Gentiles to Mount Zion in the last days,” though the success of the gentile mission and corresponding failure of the Jewish mission meant "the eschatological scheme has been reversed; Israel will be saved not first, but as a result of the Gentile mission" (195). Similarly, Dunn, Romans 9–16, 682: “Note again, however, that Paul has inverted the more typically Jewish expectation that the eschatological pilgrimage of the gentiles would be the final climax and would underscore the triumph of Israel’s faith … here the restoration of Israel is to be a consequence of the incoming of the gentiles.” Others holding to this view include Roger D. Aus, “Paul’s Travel Plans to Spain and the ‘Full Number of the Gentiles’ of Rom. XI 25,” NovT 21, no. 3 (1979): 232–262; Moo, Romans, 716–17; Jewett, Romans, 700–01; Hays, Echoes, 71, 162; Hofius, "Das Evangelium und Israel"; Käsemann, Romans, 312–14; Albert Schweitzer, The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle, trans. William Montgomery (New York: Holt, 1931; repr., New York: Seabury, 1968), 177–79, 182–87; Scott, "Paul's Use," 664–65; Michael G. Vanlaningham, “Romans 11:25–27 and the Future...
However, as Donaldson has noted, not only is an eschatological pilgrimage reading of Paul poorly grounded in the texts since “Paul never cites pilgrimage texts, despite plenty of opportunities,”¹⁷⁶¹ such an inversion of order in fact abandons the foundation of the tradition itself, since the gentile pilgrimage is a response to Israel’s redemption and the glorification of Zion.¹⁷⁶² Such a scheme also seems to invert (or outright contradict) the order Paul establishes in the very thesis of Romans, where he says the gospel is “to the Jew first and also to the Greek” (1:16).¹⁷⁶³ As Gadenz notes, interpreters have been unable to locate such an order of events in the scriptures:

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¹⁷⁶¹ Donaldson, "Riches for the Gentiles," 92. Moreover, εἰσέρχομαι is not used in any eschatological pilgrimage texts, as acknowledged by Bell, Provoked to Jealousy, 132, though he believes this “is not an insuperable difficulty.”

¹⁷⁶² Donaldson, "Riches for the Gentiles," 92. These observations marked a change of position for Donaldson, who had previously taken the eschatological pilgrimage view in "The 'Curse of the Law,'" 94–112. Scott, “All Israel,” 495, on the other hand, argues that Isa 49:22; 60:4, 9; 66:20 imply that “the nations will become devotees before the exiles are brought back to Jerusalem” and concludes that Paul believed in a “two-stage process of Israel’s restoration” (further 492–96, 524–25). See also Bauckham, “Restoration of Israel,” 457 (cf. 472): “In Isaiah it is the Gentile nations, drawn by the light of the gloriously restored Jerusalem, who will bring mother Zion’s exiled children back to her.” Hahn, "All Israel," 102, however, objects that “Scott’s two-stage model, in which first the Gentiles come in and then Israel is saved, is not supported by the Isaianic oracles, which, as we have seen, portray the regathering of the exiles of Israel as concurrent with, not subsequent to, the Gentile pilgrimage” (his emphasis).

¹⁷⁶³ Kim, "Mystery," 418–19, 428, argues that Paul did not himself follow this order since there is “little evidence for Paul’s ever having concentrated on a mission to the Jews, or, at least, for his having worked for the Jewish mission as much as for the gentile mission.” See also Jewett, Romans, 698. On the contrary, that Paul received thirty-nine lashes from the Jews five times (1 Cor 11:24) suggests that he did in fact spend his evangelistic energy in synagogues, though one wonders on what basis one could judge whether such efforts were “as much as for the gentile mission” or not. In any case, if the reading presented in this study is correct, Paul would have understood his gentile mission as part and parcel of a mission to Israel—which would naturally explain why some synagogue authorities might have taken exception to his activities.
“[T]here are no texts which support the three clauses of the mystery together; i.e., there are no texts which speak of Israel’s salvation following upon a period of hardening which ends when the fullness of the nations comes in. The mystery is thus not revealed as such in the Scriptures.”

Similarly, Seeyoon Kim concludes that Paul’s mystery must have been the result of a personal revelation since there is no scriptural source for such a sequence of events:

Is it not strange that Paul explicitly substantiates the inference from the ‘mystery’ proper with the Scriptures but does not do the same for the ‘mystery’ proper itself? Had he obtained the ‘mystery’ from the exegesis of the Scriptures, is it not to be expected of him to substantiate it with reference to those Scriptures?

**Paul’s Mystery: The Fullness of the Nations**

But Paul in fact does substantiate the mystery proper from the scriptures, as he cites what he apparently regards as the final, conclusive proof at precisely the transition between Israel’s ἀφοσίας and salvation: the incoming of τὸ πλήρες τῶν ἔθνων. But Paul’s modern interpreters have unfortunately missed the reference and have therefore had tremendous difficulties identifying exactly what is meant by this peculiar phrase. Some have suggested the phrase represents the completion of the gentile mission (i.e., when gentile salvation reaches its “fullest extent” or the gospel has gone out to the whole gentile world), while the majority of interpreters understand it as denoting a predestined but unspecified number of elect gentiles in

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1764 Gadenz, Called from Jews and Gentiles, 210 n. 149. See also Byrne, Romans, 283: “That Gentiles would have a share, at least to some degree, in Israel’s salvation had long been part of Jewish expectation; Paul’s sense of ‘inclusion’ in this respect was nothing new. What was truly novel was the reversal of order: not, Israel first, Gentiles second; but Gentiles first and Israel second—and only following a sustained period of rejection.”

1765 Kim, “Mystery,” 416–17. Similarly, Gadenz, Called from Jews and Gentiles, 210–11, assumes that the revelation is not found in the scriptures, though he cautions that this does not mean it controverts scripture, “‘Since it is something new, the mystery in 11:25b–26a is not contained as such in the (OT) Scriptures. The mystery itself goes beyond the Scriptures (but not against them), and indeed, the Scriptures can be re-read in light of the revealed mystery.” Cf. also Hofius, ”Das Evangelium und Israel,” 324.

1766 E.g., Munck, Christ and Israel, 134–35; Hübner, Gottes Ich und Israel, 112–13.
keeping with some apocalyptic scheme. But the key to understanding this passage is recognizing that the peculiar τὸ πλήρωμα τῶν ἑθνῶν is a reference to Jacob’s blessing of Joseph’s sons, where the aged patriarch explains that he is placing his right hand on the younger Ephraim’s head because:

“[Manasseh] will also become a people and he will also be great. However, his younger brother [Ephraim] will be greater than he, and his seed will become the fullness of the nations.” (Gen 48:19)

Once again at a pivotal point in his argument, at the very climax, Paul alludes to yet another passage referencing the northern Israelites, only this time the cited passage explicitly identifies gentiles as having a direct connection to Israel/Ephraim. It is remarkable that interpreters have so consistently missed the scriptural antecedent of such a singular and difficult concept.

1767 See especially Stuhlmann, *Das eschatologische Mass*, 164–178; Hans Hübner, “πλήρωμα,” *EDNT* 3:110–11. Cf. also Jewett, *Romans*, 700; Dunn, *Romans 9–16*, 691; Moo, *Romans*, 718–19; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 621–22; Byrne, *Romans*, 349; Gadenz, *Called from Jews and Gentiles*, 243, 274. Scott, *Paul and the Nations*, 127, explains that the “full number” notion “is probably based on the traditional 70 or 72 nations of the world from Deut 32:8 and the Table-of-Nations tradition.” Aus, “Paul’s Travel Plans,” has proposed that this full number included Spanish converts accompanying Paul with gifts to Jerusalem, which is chronologically problematic. Some interpreters have noted that the vagueness of πλήρωμα gives a qualitative flavor to the “full number” concept. As Dunn, *Romans 9–16*, 691 explains, “Certainly there will be a full measure of the Gentiles, the full number intended by God, but how many that would be Paul does not say—all, many, or only some; he is content simply to specify all that God will call.” Gadenz, *Called from Jews and Gentiles*, 243 n. 269, argues that “the idea is not of a full number of ‘Gentiles’ (individuals) but rather of a full number of ‘nations.’” Cf. also Arland J. Hultgren, “The Scriptural Foundations for Paul’s Mission to the Gentiles,” in *Paul and His Theology*, ed. Stanley E. Porter (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 21–44 (35). The parallel to τὸ πλήρωμα αὐτῶν in Romans 11:12 is usually noted, but most agree that “there is not a complete parallel between the two uses of πλήρωμα” (Gadenz, *Called from Jews and Gentiles*, 243 n. 269), because v. 12 is most likely not quantitative (*pace* Jewett, *Romans*, 700). But since none of Paul’s other uses of πλήρωμα are quantitative (Rom 11:12; 13:10; 15:29; 1 Cor 10:26; Gal 4:4), perhaps it is time to rethink whether 11:25 is an exception.


1769 Recall that Ephraim is used in synonymous parallelism with Israel in Hos 5:3, 5; 6:10; 7:1 and represents the whole nation in Hos 4:17; 5:11; 7:8; 8:11.
The most likely reason is that Paul's wording differs slightly from the LXX, as seen in Table 3 below:

**Table 4: Ephraim’s Seed: The Fullness of the Nations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rom 11:25b</th>
<th>Gen 48:19b MT</th>
<th>Gen 48:19b LXX</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ὁτι πώρωσις ἀπὸ μέρους τοῦ Ἰσραήλ γέγονεν ἀρχή οὐ τὸ πλήρωμα τῶν ἐθνῶν εἰσέλθη</td>
<td>ἀλλά ὁ ἀδελφὸς αὐτοῦ ὁ νεώτερος μείζων αὐτοῦ ἔσται καὶ τὸ σπέρμα αὐτοῦ ἔσται εἰς πλήθος ἐθνῶν</td>
<td>ὁτι πῶρωσις ἀπὸ μέρους τοῦ Ἰσραήλ γέγονεν ἀρχή οὐ τὸ πλήρωμα τῶν ἐθνῶν εἰσέλθη</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Paul’s τὸ πλήρωμα τῶν ἐθνῶν is word-for-word rendering of the odd Hebrew phrase מלאהיה גוים, which is nearly as baffling in its Genesis context as Paul’s own use of the phrase. The LXX, on the other hand, renders the phrase the same way it does the גוים המון “(multitude/tumult of nations)” promised to Abraham in Genesis 17:4. The LXX nowhere else translates מלא as πλῆθος, which more typically translates רבב, but Paul’s use of πλήρωμα accords with the usual LXX translation for מלא elsewhere. We have already noted that Paul’s quotations often

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1772 That the LXX uses the same phrase in both passages the two passages were often interpreted together. Paul himself cites Genesis 17:4 in Gal 3:7–8 to argue that justified gentiles are children of Abraham.

1773 E.g., Gen 16:4; 27:28; 30:30; 32:12; 36:7; 48:16; Exod 1:9; 15:7; 19:21; 23:2) and occasionally יהוה (Gen 17:4; Judg 4:7; 2 Sam 18:29).

1774 E.g., 1 Chr 16:32; Psa 23:1; 49:12 [50:12 MT]; 88:12 [89:12 MT]; 95:11; 97:7; Ecc 4:6; Jer 8:16; 29:2 [47:2 MT]; Ezek 12:19; 19:7; 30:12
differ from the LXX in Rom 9–11, often tending “toward a Hebrew exemplar” or altering the wording to suit his argument, and the unique character and context of this phrase (a *hapax legomenon* and interpretive puzzle in each testament) militates against accidental coincidence of language. It is more likely that Paul either had a different Greek version or made the change himself, since *πλήρωµα* is a word often carrying a special apocalyptic or eschatological connotation both in Paul and elsewhere, fitting nicely into the apocalyptic context of this passage.

By referencing τὸ πλήρωµα τῶν ἐθνῶν at the climax of his argument, Paul makes explicit what he has been arguing since the opening chapters: the connection between transformed

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1777 Some may object that such a short phrase is insufficiently recognizable as an allusion to Gen 48:19, but the oddity and distinctiveness of the phrase in both contexts gives the allusion an especially high intertextual volume. Even one word can easily be evocative given the right context and setup among a group sharing the same cultural capital. For example, among the right group of people, the exclamation “Inconceivable!” is enough to draw knowing laughter based on immediate recognition of the referenced source material. Moreover, as Wagner, *Heralds of the Good News*, 147–48, notes, “We should not underestimate the close knowledge of [scripture] possible for ancient readers—particularly those with scholastic interests—who regarded it as a sacred text.” In any case, the echo of Gen 48:19 is far stronger than any alleged echoes to the “eschatological pilgrimage” traditions typically referenced in this passage, such as the suggestion of Aus, "Paul's Travel Plans," 251, that the phrase is a modification of LXX Isa 60:5 (μεταφερόμενος εἰς σὺ πλούσιος ἐθνῶν), which has the disadvantage of sharing only ἐθνῶν with Paul’s phrase here. For the concept of intertextual volume, see Hays, *Echoes*, 30.

1778 Paul’s claim to be a native Semitic speaker (see Chapter Two above) is obviously relevant to this latter possibility, though it perhaps more likely that his Greek exemplar already contained this reading.

gentiles and Israel’s restoration. Ephraim’s seed has become “the fullness of the nations” in accord with Jacob’s prophecy, and the gentiles now receiving the spirit are therefore Ephraim’s seed—Israelites—restored through the new covenant. Moreover, all Israel must include not only Jews but the remnant of both houses of Israel, so the incoming of τὸ πλήρωμα τῶν ἐθνῶν is a necessary condition for the reunion and restoration of all Israel. Paul’s conclusion “καὶ οὕτως all Israel will be saved” thus triumphantly declares that God has indeed provided not only for the salvation of the Jews but of all Israel. The previously puzzling connection between the ingathering of τὸ πλήρωμα τῶν ἐθνῶν and the salvation of “all Israel” suddenly makes sense, since “all Israel” must include Ephraim’s descendants. The fullness of the nations must therefore enter into (ἐισέλθη) Israel in order for all Israel to be complete. Paul has not inverted the order of Israel’s salvation and the gentiles turning to YHWH. He has combined them.

1780 Thus Sanger, "Rettung der Heiden," 115, is correct in his declaration that Rom 11:25–27 does not reveal a mystery that has not already been covered in the preceding chapters; these verses only makes the content of the prior chapters more explicit, concluding the argument with a summary statement.

1781 The implied object of εἰσέλθη “has long vexed interpreters who think the destination is anything but God’s people Israel” (Garroay, "Circumcision of Christ," 144). Cranfield, Romans, 576, notes that the verb is “seldom used by Paul, and he uses it in this pregnant sense nowhere but here.” Some see a reference to the gentiles’ eschatological pilgrimage (inverting the order), including Stuhlmann, Das eschatologische Mass, 166–67; Plag, Israels Wege, 56–58; Aus, "Paul's Travel Plans," 251–52; Räisänen, "Römer 9–11," 2922; Wilk, Die Bedeutung des Jesajabuches, 68–70; Ziesler, Romans, 284; Zeller, Römer, 198; Wilckens, Römer II, 254–55; Tobin, Paul’s Rhetoric, 371–72. But εἰσέρχομαι is not used in any Völkerwallfahrt passages, and Paul nowhere else references those passages. Others have noted that although rarely used by Paul, the verb is reminiscent of Jesus’ regular use of the term in the Gospels for “entering into the kingdom of God or into life” (Cranfield, Romans, 576), concluding that Paul is likely drawing from a pre-Pauline tradition and refers to entrance into the kingdom (or some analogous concept), e.g., Dunn, Romans 9–16, 680; Sanday and Headlam, Romans, 335; Michel, Römer, 280; Käsemann, Romans, 313; Schlier, Der Römerbrief, 339; Leon Morris, The Epistle to the Romans (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 420; Stuhlmacher, Romans, 172, “eschatological city of God”; Fitzmyer, Romans, 622, “community of salvation.” In agreement with this view, Jewett, Romans, 700–01, adds, “the implied logic is more likely to be the eschatological church containing the predestined full number of Jews and Gentiles.” But this begs the question, as the relationship of the “eschatological church” (or the “kingdom”) to Israel is left undefined, and Paul seems not to envision “salvation” outside of Israel. If the gentiles are coming into Israel (which is God’s kingdom), however, these difficulties pass away. It is therefore best to take εἰσέλθη in keeping with the engraving process in the olive tree imagery (and the general thrust of the argument for full gentile incorporation in the new covenant throughout Romans), indicating the inclusion of gentiles into the covenant community of Israel. Cf. Mary Ann Getty, “Paul and the Salvation of Israel: A Perspective on Romans 9–11,” CBQ 50, no. 3 (1988): 456–469 (459). Note also the
In this light, Christian Beker’s comment that “Paul does not envision Israel’s eschatological salvation as its absorption into the Gentile-Christian church” is accurate, since Paul’s vision is exactly the opposite.\textsuperscript{1782} The existence of a “gentile church” or even a church of Jews and gentiles as an entity distinct from Israel is anachronistic and foreign to Paul. “Rather the point,” Rafael Rodriguez explains, “is that Gentiles find themselves included alongside Jews within the covenantal label ‘Israel.’”\textsuperscript{1783} The gentiles are participants in Israel’s salvation through incorporation into Israel; the reverse is necessarily a non sequitur.\textsuperscript{1784}

If the phrase τὸ πλήρωµα τῶν ἔθνων were the only data point, it could be potentially dismissed as an interesting but insignificant echo, but this reading is in elegant continuity with everything Paul has argued to this point and also continues a clear pattern of applying scripture about the northern kingdom (Ephraim) to the nations throughout Romans and especially chapters 9–11. This is indeed the concluding statement to which Paul has been building from the very beginning of the book. The physically uncircumcised displaying the “work of the the law written on their hearts,” (Rom 2:14–15) are God’s way of resurrecting of the house of Israel, which must be united with the faithful from the house of Judah (cf. the “inward Jews” of Rom 2:28–29).\textsuperscript{1785}

\begin{itemize}
\item language of entering into the covenant community in the Dead Sea Scrolls. Cf. Hofius, ”Das Evangelium und Israel,” 313; Refoulé, ‘‘Et ainsi,’’ 82–83; Jaubert, La notion d’Alliance, 183.
\item Beker, Paul the Apostle, 334–35.
\item Rodriguez, If You Call Yourself a Jew, 222.
\item Notably, Jewett, Romans, 700, dismisses this reading as “a less likely option,” referring the reader to “the critique by [Dunn, Romans 9–16, 680],” who himself merely states without argument that this reading is “less natural,” a good example of how better readings can be dismissed due not to actual critiques of their merits but rather to modern theological concerns.
\item It is doubtful that Paul imagines that all the gentiles coming into the church are literal descendants of ancient Israelites, but the rationale behind gentile inclusion still relies upon the notion that gentiles are being incorporated as a means of Israel’s promised restoration, since Ephraim’s seed had been mixed into the gentiles. Israel had passed away and now must be resurrected through the process of re-adoption. The point is that God’s promise to restore Israel is what has opened the door for gentile inclusion in Israel’s covenant.
\end{itemize}
Once dishonored and useless vessels cast among the nations (Hos 8:8; Jer 22:28) are becoming vessels of mercy (Rom 9:23). God is redeeming “not my people,” from among the nations as promised—but in a surprising twist, that redemption involves calling vessels of mercy “not only from Jews but also from among gentiles” (9:24). Branches were once broken off from the olive tree of Israel due to unfaithfulness (Jer 11:16–17), but now wild olive branches are being grafted into the tree by πίστις (11:17–24). Ephraim’s seed (τὸ πλήρω ἑθνῶν) is being restored from among the nations, becoming “children of the living God” once again—thus all Israel will be saved as promised.

God’s plan for Israel’s redemption has therefore been more comprehensive than anyone had foreseen (thus it is the revelation of a mystery): Ephraim’s return has become the means not only for mercy toward Israel but mercy toward all, fulfilling the promise to Abraham that all nations would be blessed not “through” his seed (i.e., as outsiders) but by inclusion and incorporation in his seed (Gal 3:7–8; cf. Gen 17:4). Paul’s mystery is that Israel’s promised salvation depends on the incorporation of the gentiles—the fates of Israel and the nations are interconnected. Israel’s πώρωσις was the means of mercy toward the gentiles, and that mercy toward the gentiles is in turn the unforeseen means by which Israel’s own redemption is being accomplished. Through saving Ephraim, the nations are saved; by saving τὸ πλήρω ἑθνῶν ἐθνῶν, Ephraim is redeemed. Israel’s redemption is the redemption of the cosmos. These concluding verses thus succinctly summarize Paul’s argument:

Verse 25: “For I do not want you to be ignorant, siblings, of this mystery (lest you become high-minded yourselves)”: On the heels of the olive tree allegory, Paul explains that a fuller understanding of the purpose of gentile ingathering should keep the gentiles in his audience from an attitude of superiority. They have not been called because they were worthier
than Israel. On the contrary, their salvation is actually for the express purpose of bringing about
the salvation of all Israel and is the direct result of God’s continuing faithfulness to Israel. They
are participating in Israel’s salvation.

“…that an insensibility has come upon Israel for awhile”: As we have seen throughout
Romans 9–11, Israel’s πώρωσις has worked on multiple levels. First, the northern kingdom was
ἐπωρώθησαν and intermingled with the nations. Then on the second level, the north’s restoration
is the direct result of Judah’s πώρωσις, which led to God restoring Israel from divorce in order to
shame Judah (cf. Jer 3:11–12). But Ephraim has intermarried and is no longer ethnically distinct,
so the twofold πώρωσις of both portions of Israel have combine to open the door to the gentiles
in order to restore Ephraim. Thus Israel’s twofold hardening has facilitated the incoming of the
fullness of the nations. Ephraim’s punishment appeared to be permanent, but God has used even
that punishment for redemptive purposes, raising Ephraim to life from gentiles who were
previously dead in their trespasses. Moreover, the mercy now being shown to the northern house
through the incorporation gentiles is the guarantor of mercy towards unfaithful Israelites in the
present, who although in danger of being cut off for disobedience can (and Paul seems to hold
more than a little hope that they will) be grafted in again. The reincorporation of previously
removed branches is akin to life from the dead (11:15), a new creation (2 Cor 5:17).

“…until the fullness of the nations has entered”: This is yet another two-level reference.
It refers to the gentiles entering into Israel through the reception of the spirit, but the reference to
Gen 48:19 draws attention to their new identity as the reconstituted “seed of Ephraim,” as true
children of Abraham. The uncultivated olive branches that had long been cut off from the
cultivated tree are now being grafted into the olive tree of Israel. Paul is here proclaiming both
the ingathering of gentiles and the redemption of the previously insensible northern kingdom as
occurring in the same redemptive action by the spirit. Thus Wagner is correct when he says Paul is concerned with “the full inclusion of ‘the rest’ who have in the present time been rendered insensible,”¹⁷⁸⁶ but that inclusion is happening precisely through the ingathering of the fullness of the nations.

Verse 26: “and thus all Israel will be saved.” In keeping with the metaphor leading into this conclusion, the entire olive tree will be saved. Since “all Israel” means more than Judah alone but includes both houses of Israel, the incorporation of τὸ πλήρωμα τῶν ἐθνῶν is therefore a necessary component of the salvation of “all Israel,” which requires the restoration of “Ephraim’s seed.”¹⁷⁸⁷ Thus in order to restore all Israel, God is calling his people from among both Jews and those who were “not my people.” Israel’s πλήρωμα (11:15) includes even the πλήρωμα of the nations (cf. Isa 49:6), and is indeed life from the dead, as the house of Israel was but dry bones but has now been reconstituted by the spirit (cf. Ezek 37). Many from Israel had ceased to be Israel, but in the words of Jennifer Glancy, “when God acts to save the people he has elected, Israel becomes Israel.”¹⁷⁸⁸


¹⁷⁸⁷ Scott, “All Israel,” 520: “The Septuagint frequently uses σῶζω of the ingathering and bringing home of the dispersed from the whole world.” See further Scott, “All Israel,” 519–524 Note, however, that in passages like Jer 31(38):7–8, the totality of Israel that is saved is called “the remnant,” which problematizes a distinction between the remnant and the totality of Israel. It rather appears that both Paul and his source material identify the “all Israel” to be saved as the remnant of all twelve tribes of Israel. Contra Gadenz, Called from Jews and Gentiles, 276: “‘all Israel’ refers to the sum of the remnant and the λοιποί.” But Gadenz’s argument is circular, as Paul nowhere else indicates that all of the λοιποί will be saved but rather hopes to save some of them (11:14; cf. Garroway, Paul’s Gentile-Jews, 145–46). In order to argue that all of the λοιποί will be saved, Gadenz must assume that “all Israel” includes the λοιποί, and only after this can he argue that “all Israel” must therefore include the λοιποί. But these interpretive problems disappear in light of the prophets’ declarations that the remnant (that is, the ones who remain after others are removed) of all Israel will be saved.

Verse 27: “just as it is written: ‘The deliverer will come from Zion; he will remove ungodliness from Jacob. And this is my covenant with them, when I take away their sins.’” This is the mechanism of Israel’s salvation: the new covenant, provided by the redeemer who came out from Zion to redeem the whole people of Jacob.\(^\text{1789}\) All those having the “law written on the heart” (Jew or gentile) are citizens of the renewed Israel.

**Mercy to Israel, Mercy to All**

Paul then concludes with a final elaboration of his thesis,\(^\text{1790}\) yet again emphasizing the cosmic scale of Israel’s redemption:

κατὰ µὲν τὸ εὐαγγέλιον ἔχθροι δι’ ὑμᾶς, κατὰ δὲ τὴν ἐκλογὴν ἄγαπητοι διὰ τοῦς πατέρας ἀμεταμέλητα γὰρ τὰ χαρίσματα καὶ ἡ κλῆσις τοῦ θεοῦ. ὡσπερ γὰρ ὑμεῖς ποτε ἤπειθήσατε τῷ θεῷ, νῦν δὲ ἠλεήθητε τῇ τούτων ἀπειθείᾳ, οὕτως καὶ οὗτοι νῦν ἠπείθησαν τῷ ὑμετέρῳ ἐλέει, ἵνα καὶ αὐτοὶ [νῦν] ἐλεηθῶσιν. συνέκλεισεν γὰρ ὁ θεὸς τοὺς πάντας εἰς ἀπειθείαν, ἵνα τοὺς πάντας ἐλεήσῃ.

With respect to the gospel, they are enemies for your sake, but with respect to election they are beloved for the sake of the fathers, for the gifts and the callings of God are never taken back. For just as you were once disobedient to God but now have been shown mercy because of their disobedience, so also these disobeyed now, so that because of the mercy shown to you they may also now be shown mercy. For God has shut up all in disobedience in order to show mercy to all. (Rom 11:28–32)

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\(^{1789}\) This should not be understood as a reference to the parousia, which requires reading Zion as a symbolic reference to heaven, as Gadenz, *Called from Jews and Gentiles*, 284: “Paul intentionally changed the text to refer to Christ’s parousia from the heavenly Zion.” Cf. Moo, *Romans*, 728; Donaldson, "Riches for the Gentiles," 93–94. Instead, as Wagner, *Heralds of the Good News*, 284, explains, “Paul’s quotation depicts the Lord’s coming in person from … Zion to bring deliverance to his people who are scattered among the nations.” This change “coheres admirably with the similar alterations made to his citations of Isaiah 52:7 (Rom 10:15) and Hosea 1:10 (Rom 9:26)” (Wagner, *Heralds of the Good News*, 285–86). Garroway, *Paul’s Gentile-Jews*, 147, explains, “By manipulating the proof text, Paul confirms his contention that God has fulfilled his promises to Israel by extending a gospel of faith to those Gentiles who were always meant to be part of Israel in its final form.” See also J. R. Daniel Kirk, “Why Does the Deliverer Come εἰκ Σιών (Romans 11.26)?” *JSNT* 33, no. 1 (2010): 81–99; Berndt Schaller, “ΕΞΕΙ ΕΚ ΣΙΩΝ Ο ΡΥΟΜΑΝΟΣ: Zur Textgestalt von Jes 59:20f. in Röm 11:26f.,” in *De Septuaginta: Studies in Honour of John William Wevers on his Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, eds. Albert Pietersma and Claude Cox (Mississauga, ON: Benben, 1984), 201–06.

As Mary Ann Getty states, “Paul’s thesis, then, is that the promises of the covenant with Israel are being fulfilled. The present witnesses to the fidelity of God.”1791 The preceding unveiling of the mystery has shown that God has by no means rejected his people but has been so faithful as to even incorporate gentiles to facilitate Israel’s salvation.1792 Israel’s past punishments, including Ephraim’s incorporation among the nations, which appeared to be a total and final rejection, has been used to accomplish the very task for which Israel was initially appointed—the redemption and “transformation of the world.”1793 In the same way, contemporary unfaithful Israelites have in no way lost their election. They are God’s chosen in every sense that the faithful branches of the olive tree are despite their opposition to the gospel, which (like historical Israel’s unfaithfulness) is itself being used for redemptive purposes (cf. 9:21–26).

God has not turned back from his promises, nor will he repent of his choices.1794 God will continue to use his chosen instruments to serve his redemptive purposes—with or without their cooperation, whether through their obedience or their disobedience. Since Israel failed to be a “light to the nations” through obedience (cf. Rom 2:19–20), God caused them to fulfill this mission through their disobedience. Those now in Christ are the proof of this very truth, having themselves been redeemed from the disobedience in which the unfaithful elect now persist. Israel’s disobedience has not foiled God’s redemptive purposes but rather has been used for the

1791 Getty, "Paul and the Salvation of Israel,” 461.
1792 Cf. the parallels between 5:6–11 and 11:25–32 noted in Gadenz, Called from Jews and Gentiles, 287–88, though his interpretation of the parallels assumes an unnecessary difference in the scope of the two passages.
1793 Heschel, The Prophets, 17.
1794 It should be recalled, however, that for Paul election does not guarantee salvation; it must be maintained by faithfulness (see pp. 560–64 above).
redemption of the nations, which is itself the means of mercy for Israel. The extension of mercy to the one guarantees the extension of mercy toward the other, for the ultimate good of all. The master potter continues to achieve his merciful purposes despite the uncooperative nature of the clay. Israel has been intermingled with the nations, but God’s gifts and callings are irrevocable, so even the nations are now being incorporated in the people of God, fulfilling God’s promises to Israel. The mystery has been revealed, and God’s purposes are far deeper than anyone ever imagined—even God’s rejections prove salvific. It is no wonder Paul breaks into praise at this point, expressing his wonder at the hidden wisdom, the unsearchable and unfathomable plan of God:

"Ω βάθος πλούτου
καὶ σοφίας καὶ γνώσεως θεοῦ
ὀς ἀνεξεραύνητα τὰ κρίματα αὐτοῦ
καὶ ἀνεξηχύσματοι αἱ ὁδοὶ αὐτοῦ.
τίς γὰρ ἔγνω νοῦν κυρίου;
ἡ τίς σύμβουλος αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο;
ἡ τίς προέδωκεν αὐτῷ,
καὶ ἀνταποδοθήσεται αὐτῷ;
ὅτι εἰς αὐτοῦ καὶ δἰ’ αὐτοῦ καὶ εἰς αὐτὸν τὰ πάντα
αὐτῷ ἡ δόξα εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας, ἀμήν.
Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God!
How unsearchable are his judgments, and untraceable are his ways!
For who knows the mind of the Lord or who became his counselor?
Or who first gave to him so that it should be paid back to him?
For from him and through him and to him are all things.
To him be the glory forever. Amen.

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1795 The “mercy” language of Hosea again pervades this passage.
CHAPTER 14: THE END OF THE MATTER

In Rom 9–11 and indeed Romans as a whole, the apostle has turned the question of God’s rejection of Israel on its head by reminding the reader that “all Israel” is a larger entity than just the Jews. God has neither been unfaithful to Israel nor rejected his people. In fact, his plan goes far beyond only saving Judah but extends to the house of Israel as well—all Israel will be saved, Paul insists, not just one part. Far from rejecting Israel, Paul argues that through the ingathering of the nations, God has reached out and saved more of Israel than anyone could have imagined in a manner that could only be compared to life from the dead. God’s faithfulness to Israel is so great that he has provided to save all—even gentiles—in Israel. God has not moved to a new people but is gathering, restoring, and reconciling even those who were irretrievably lost. Paul thus argues that God’s covenant-keeping power extends beyond the grave, capable even of bringing life from the dead (Rom 11:15), of producing Israelites ἐξ ἐθνῶν.

Paul’s statements regarding Israel and his arguments about the status of uncircumcised Christ-followers are therefore not contradictory but reflect a nuanced argument concerning Israelite identity in light of Paul’s belief that the promised restoration was underway. Contrary to the assumptions of modern interpreters that Paul “did not conceive of categories beyond ‘Jew’ and ‘Gentile,’”


1797 The Samaritans themselves were often understood by Jews to be a tertium quid, something in between Israelite and gentile (e.g., Matt 10:5). See Knoppers, Jews and Samaritans, 220–21.
but is not limited to the Jews and hoped for the glorious restoration of the full twelve-tribe people of God. Israel is not a third race but a specific ethnic, national, and theological identity including Jews but also necessarily including non-Jews (that is, non-Judahites).

As uncircumcised individuals began to receive the spirit in Pauline communities, Paul returned to his scriptures to understand this new development, concluding that these gentiles participating in the promises to Israel are in fact the fulfillment of God’s restoration of the northern house of Israel through an unexpected process: God had promised to call his people ἐξ ἐθνῶν, but Paul concludes this actually entails calling gentiles his people. That is, ἐξ ἐθνῶν meant not only “from among the nations” but “from the gentiles” as the means of Israel’s redemption. Israel had been divorced, cut off from the covenant, intermarried with the nations, and could be reckoned as dead. But the God who brings life from the dead is doing just that by redeeming “not-my-people” and incorporating them among his covenant people of Israel. As Isaiah had promised, “your brothers from all the nations” (66:20; cf. Rom 15:16) are now being incorporated into Israel as part of the restoration. Thus God has by no means forsaken his people; even those who had through rebellion and disobedience been reckoned as useless, dishonored vessels were put to a redemptive purpose and now all nations are truly being blessed in Abraham’s seed.

In this light, Romans is an extended argument for gentile inclusion as evidence of God’s faithfulness to Israel and a necessary component of Israel’s redemption. Much of Israel had become mixed among the gentiles (just as gentiles had mixed among the Samaritans), so now gentiles demonstrating circumcised hearts are proof that God has begun to fulfill all the promises

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1798 The prophet goes so far as to suggest YHWH will take some of these “brothers from all the nations” for “priests and Levites” (66:21). Middlemas, “Intra- and Internationalization,” 122. Cf. also Nihan, “Ethnicity and Identity,” 95; Blenkinsopp, "Prophet of Universalism"; Kim, "Reading Paul's καὶ ὁ Ἰσραήλ," 322–23.
of Israel’s transformation and consequent restoration. Thus the incorporation of physically uncircumcised but divinely transformed “Israelites” into the eschatological ἐκκλησία by no means suggests God has abandoned his people but rather vindicates God’s overarching faithfulness even to a stubborn and stiff-necked people. Even the chastening and punishments of the past have served a redemptive purpose for Israel—and has achieved the redemptive purposes for the nations for which God chose and appointed Israel in the beginning.\(^{1799}\) Thus Paul argues that God’s plan has been larger than anyone had imagined and shows how he has accomplished his purposes even when his people have not cooperated and have resisted his hand.

Once one recognizes that Paul understands uncircumcised Christ-followers not as Jews or gentiles but as restored, revivified Israelites, Rom 2 and 9–11 go from being puzzles on the anomalous periphery of Pauline thought to being the hermeneutical keys to the whole argument, a picture that is much clearer when seen through these lenses. This model not only provides a coherent reading of Romans, it elegantly solves many of the biggest puzzles throughout the Pauline corpus and in Pauline thought in general. Many passages that have been regarded as anomalous, contradictory, or even non-Pauline are fully coherent if Paul understood faithful uncircumcised Christ-followers as restored non-Jewish Israelites through receiving the new covenant promise of circumcised hearts. Paul’s inclusion of gentile believers among the descendants of the patriarchs (1 Cor 10:1; Gal 3:29), his reference to them as former gentiles (1 Cor 12:2), and his assertion that they are “the circumcision” (Phil 3:3) alongside his assertions and implications that they are not Jews is no contradiction; it is a reflection of his identification of these people as renewed non-Jewish Israelites. Likewise, Paul’s repeated application of

\(^{1799}\) For Israel’s vocation as a “light to the nations” as critical to Paul’s apostolic identity, see Windsor, *Paul and the Vocation of Israel*.
Israelite restoration passages to gentiles—particularly since his selections in these cases refer with surprising consistency to the northern kingdom—is not merely metaphorical or typological but literal.\footnote{See, for example, the analyses of Paul’s use of restoration passages with reference to the gentiles in Starling, Not My People.} He argues that his gentile converts are actually becoming transformed, ethnic Israelites, complete with circumcisions not performed with human hands.\footnote{Cf. Garroway, "Circumcision of Christ."} If anything, Paul’s interpretation is hyper-literal, taking the wording of his scriptures to its full extent and producing shocking results.

Similarly, Paul’s positive statements about the Torah are not at odds with his assertions that those who have received the spirit are no longer under the Torah. He nowhere suggests that the Torah is abrogated through Christ but rather argues that the the spirit is performing the justification of Israel promised in the Torah itself, resulting in an Israel that does the will of God through the Torah written on the heart. But those who have not received the spirit or persist in disobedience remain under the Torah and its curses for disobedience—the Torah remains in force, and the circumcision of the heart is the only way through which it may be fulfilled.

Paul’s mission to the gentiles is therefore ultimately about Israel’s restoration.\footnote{Matthew V. Novenson, “The Jewish Messiahs, the Pauline Christ, and the Gentile Question,” JBL 128, no. 2 (2009): 357–374 (363), notes that early Jewish messianic traditions were concerned with the fate of Israel and also provided “a framework in which Jews could make sense of the role of the Gentiles in the world.” That is, “the messiah not only restores the fortunes of Israel but brings the whole οἶκοςμακενή under his rule” (364). Paul’s proclamation of Messiah Jesus does just that, providing a single elegant solution to the gentile question and Israel’s restoration.} In this respect, modern scholarly interpretation has typically read Romans backwards, looking for how Israel can be saved in light of gentile salvation, while Paul is looking at things exactly the other way around—everything is always about Israel’s salvation. Jews do not need to be integrated
into a gentile church (which of course did not exist at this point) to be saved; rather, in
Donaldson’s words, “Gentiles had to become part of Israel to be saved.”\footnote{Donaldson, \textit{Paul and the Gentiles}, 298. Donaldson argues that Christ displaces Torah and ethnic descent as the boundary markers for this spiritual, Christ-focused Israel but nevertheless suggests that a parallel “Israel” defined by traditional Torah observance remains an important category for Paul. On the contrary, as explained by Garroway, \textit{Paul’s Gentile-Jews}, 155: “The notion of two Israels would be theologically incomprehensible to Paul, however, for whom there was but one Israel, which was fleshly, ethnic, and historical, as well as spiritual, eschatological, and true.” For Paul, a focus on Christ is not at odds with a focus on Torah; rather, Torah can only properly be fulfilled through Christ. Rather than suggesting that Paul establishes a second, Christ-focused Israel, displacing Torah and ethnic elements as boundary markers, it is more accurate to say that Paul understands Christ as reinscribing rather than replacing those markers (Garroway, \textit{Paul’s Gentile-Jews}, 168 n. 9). See also pp. 577–86 above.} There is therefore no need to argue that Paul constructs two linked but discrete peoples of God\footnote{As Johnson Hodge, \textit{If Sons, Then Heirs}.} or that gentiles are incorporated into Abraham but not Israel.\footnote{As Gadenz, \textit{Called from Jews and Gentiles}, 82.} For Paul, the idea of two peoples of God would be nonsense; there is only one people of God and only one heir to Abraham’s promises: Israel. Thus if the gentiles are heirs of Abraham, they are by definition part of Israel. Similarly, there is no need to posit a hybrid category of “Gentile-Jews” to reflect this ethnic transformation,\footnote{As Garroway, \textit{Paul’s Gentile-Jews}.} since gentile believers become Israelites but not Jews, who are a subset of the larger whole of Israel. Thus Paul can say, “be blameless also to Jews and to Greeks and to the ἐκκλησία of God” (1 Cor 10:32), since the first two are distinct categories, while the ἐκκλησία of God is distinct from both while including members of each.\footnote{\textit{Pace} Garroway, \textit{Paul’s Gentile-Jews}, 182–83 n. 49. This explains how, as Wagner, \textit{Heralds of the Good News}, 279 n. 193, notes, “there are indications that Paul’s thought tends toward the identification of the Church as a third entity … though significantly, he speaks in these passages not of Ἰσραήλ, but of Ἰουδαίοις. The latter distinction is exactly the point—for Paul, they are Israelites but not Jews.} The binary distinction between Jew and Greek remains for those outside, but in Christ, there is no longer Jew or Greek, only the Israel of God.\footnote{Martyn’s suggestion that Paul’s nuanced treatment of “Israel” in Romans “clarifies and supplements his use of the word ‘Israel’” with reference to his churches, such as in Gal 6:16, strikes me as likely correct (\textit{Galatians}, 32–34 [quote from 32], 567 n. 13; “Romans as One of the Earliest Interpretations of Galatians,” in \textit{Theological Issues in the Letters of Paul} [Nashville: Abingdon, 1997], 37–45 [43–45]). Martyn’s explanation is even more likely if, as}
Why Not Circumcision?

Of course, if this model is correct, it raises an obvious question: If Paul believed his
gentile converts had become Israelites, why should they not be circumcised, since circumcision
is the sign of the covenant with Abraham and the one definitive stipulation for Abraham’s heirs?
The command to circumcise even precedes the reception of the Torah at Sinai, so it would seem
that if these gentiles were to be considered Israelites, they should be circumcised. To this I say,
extactly! This seems to have been precisely the argument of Paul’s opponents, with the debate in
Galatians and Romans concerning that very question.

The debate over circumcision only makes sense if it concerns full Israelite status.
Consider the converse: If Paul were arguing these gentiles were something other than a part of
Israel, why would anyone argue that they should receive the mark of Israelite status and
membership in the covenant?1809 What would be the rationale for circumcising non-Israelites? If
uncircumcised gentiles could already worship the God of Israel with secure status in non-
Christian Judaism—and there was a court of the nations in the temple for that very purpose—

Douglas Campbell has compellingly argued, both Galatians and Romans were written during Paul’s “year of crisis,”
with Romans written shortly after Galatians, perhaps after Paul received more accurate reports of what his
opponents were arguing against him. See Douglas A. Campbell, Framing Paul: An Epistolary Biography (Grand

1809 E.g., Jdt 14:10, which equates circumcision with being joined to Israel. On circumcision as the mechanism for
full conversion, cf. Cohen, Beginnings of Jewishness, 137–38, 156–58, 218–20; “Crossing the Boundary and
Becoming a Jew,” HTR 82 (1989): 13–33. On the other hand, there is evidence that some Jews, such as those behind
the book of Jubilees believed that any circumcision not performed on the eighth day did not count for Israelite
membership, making Israelite membership impossible for both gentiles and those born to Israelite parents who for
whatever reason were not circumcised on the eighth day. See Thiessen, Contesting Conversion, 67–86. The
frequency of conversions involving circumcision in this period is unknown, and there is considerable debate
regarding the alacrity with which Jews proselytized in antiquity. For more Jewish proselytism in antiquity, see Louis
H. Feldman, Jew and Gentile in the Ancient World: Attitudes and Interactions from Alexander to Justinian
(Cincinnati, OH: Hebrew Union College Press, 1968), 13–24; Scot McKnight, A Light among the Gentiles: Jewish
Missionary Activity in the Second Temple Period (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 49–77; Martin Goodman, Mission
and Conversion: Proselytizing in the Religious History of the Roman Empire (Oxford: Clarendon; New York:

But as Nanos points out, Paul was arguing for something different:

Unlike the conventions in place in all Jewish groups of the time of which we are aware, these non-Jews were being identified not merely as guests, however welcome and celebrated, as in other Jewish groups. They were instead being treated as members in full standing.\footnote{Nanos, “Why Not Paul’s Judaism?,” 145.}

Paul does not argue that these faithful uncircumcised fit in a special category or parallel people of God. Instead, he argues that they are rightful heirs of Abraham and descendants of the patriarchs, that these uncircumcised Christ-followers have actually become equal heirs to the promises of Israel along with their Torah-observant Jewish siblings in Christ, vigorously resisting any effort to relegate these gentiles into second-class status or any less members of the same people of God that Jews are. It is precisely this assertion that his opponents found so unbearable. Placing them into the category of righteous gentiles would engender little if any controversy (and would not require circumcision), but the uncircumcised \textit{as Israel} is a shocking affront and a grave threat to traditional constructions of Israelite identity. There can be no question that the debate fundamentally concerns the status and identity of the people of Israel and the proper place for the boundaries of that people.
But the question still stands: Why does Paul so steadfastly resist the circumcision of these newly-recreated Israelites? His primary rationale is that they already have been circumcised by God through receiving the spirit, so requiring them to be circumcised by human hands is to invalidate the work of the spirit as the divine agent of Israel’s restoration. It is to imply that God’s approval and designation of covenant members is insufficient, still needing to be validated by human beings to really count. In that case, physical circumcision—the work of human hands rather than the work of God—would be what is truly efficacious for creating Israelites. But if their reception of the spirit is invalid, then how is it any different for Jewish Christ-followers who also must receive circumcised hearts to participate in the new covenant?

Moreover, if the reception of the spirit is the necessary prerequisite to validate the circumcision (and participation in the covenant) even for the previously circumcised, to require those who have already received the spirit to be circumcised is an absurdity. Rather, their uncircumcision has now been reckoned as circumcision (Rom 2:26), validated by the approval of God himself. As Garoway explains, “the cross puts an end to the need for circumcisions wrought by men precisely because it realizes circumcisions wrought by Christ.” Essentially Paul presses the question: Is new covenant Israel defined by the circumcision of the heart by the spirit or by circumcision performed by human hands? Or more simply, is covenant membership defined by the spirit or the foreskin? If the former, then why should physically uncircumcised

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people who receive the spirit be circumcised? If the latter, then the spirit is declared inadequate and ineffectual, and Israel remains in need of redemption.\footnote{Bonneau, “Logic of Paul’s Argument,” 69: “[T]o continue maintaining the Jew-Gentile distinction (Gentiles in Christ are still sinners), is tantamount to saying that Christ has not been raised, that the Age to Come has not been inaugurated, that the power of sin still rains.”}

Finally, as Matthew Thiessen explains, such gentile circumcisions do not meet the requirements for Abraham’s heirs as stipulated in the Torah since like those of the Egyptians, Arabs, and others, they are performed in adulthood rather than on the eighth day of the man’s life as required by the Torah.\footnote{Thiessen, Contesting Conversion, 67–86.} The attempt to enter Israel through adult circumcision therefore paradoxically transgresses the command:

\begin{quote}
A gentile undergoing circumcision in order to become a Jew fails to keep the law of circumcision in the very act of being circumcised. He is circumcised and yet becomes a transgressor of the law of circumcision through the γράμμα … and through the rite of circumcision. His circumcision is reckoned as uncircumcision.\footnote{Thiessen, “Paul’s Argument,” 388. Cf. also Rodríguez, If You Call Yourself a Jew, 56–61. Note, however, that the “אָ” was required to be circumcised in order to eat the Passover and once circumcised was to be regarded as “like a native of the land” (Exod 12:48). Similarly, Abraham is commanded to circumcise not only the servants born in his house (presumably on the eighth day) but also those “bought with money from any foreigner” (Gen 17:12–13).}
\end{quote}

To become an heir of Abraham, gentiles therefore need a miracle akin to Abraham’s own election by God himself, which is precisely what Paul argues has happened through the spirit.\footnote{The fact that Abraham only received the command to circumcise after his unfaithfulness with Hagar further confirms such circumcisions as the consequence of disobedience, a point I will revisit in a future project.} Requiring spirit-filled gentiles to go through the rite of circumcision to become full members of Israel therefore not only denies the legitimacy what they have already received by the spirit but also attempts to incorporate gentiles into Israel through an invalid process that only confirms the gentiles’ incapacity to be circumcised on the eighth day to become Abraham’s heirs—yet another self-refuting absurdity.
It is important to emphasize that Paul has no objection to circumcision *per se*, only circumcision as a rite of entrance into Israel for gentiles already having received the spirit. In the latter case, he resists not circumcision in principle but the implication that the work of the spirit is insufficient. There is no indication that Paul would have discouraged Jews in the community to stop circumcising their boys on the eighth day, and I suspect he encouraged rather than discouraged the continuation of this practice as a part of each person remaining “in the state in which he was called” (1 Cor 7:20). One wonders whether he had any objection to the children of believing gentile parents being circumcised—a question that the letters do not resolve. In any case, for those in Christ, “neither circumcision nor foreskin has power but faith working through love” (Gal 5:6) and “circumcision is nothing and foreskin is nothing, but what matters is keeping the commands of God” (1 Cor 7:19).

**Continuity and Discontinuity**

It is precisely at this point that Paul is simultaneously most continuous and discontinuous with his Jewish peers. On the one hand, he continues to preach God’s special election of Israel, the lasting value of Israel’s covenant, and the restoration and ultimate salvation of Israel; on the other, he extends this election to gentiles without requiring circumcision—an unacceptable move in the eyes of many of his peers, both Christ-followers and not.\(^{1818}\) When considering Paul in relation to “Judaism,” it is important to remember that Paul lived in a context in which there were more claimants to the heritage of Israel than the Jews alone (such as Samaritans), and the primary concern even in Jewish theology was *Israelite* identity and heritage.

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\(^{1818}\) Philo complains of Jews who recognize the allegorical truths of the Law but neglect the literal, even seeing circumcision as unnecessary (*Migr.* 89–92; *QE* 2, 2).
Paul’s gospel is another piece of that “Israelism,” though his extension of Israelite identity beyond Jews (Ἰουδαῖοι) with no need for physical circumcision represents a departure from Judah-specific identity and practice.\(^{1819}\) If we acknowledge that there was a larger “Israelite” category over which various parties contended, including Jews and Samaritans and eventually Christians, we can understand that Paul has not in any way departed from this larger Israelite theological matrix of which Judaism was the largest component, nor has he abandoned the basic Jewish theological framework in which he lived before his encounter with Christ. If we must label Paul’s perspective, I suggest the term “Israelism,” specifically a restorationist form of Israelism based on the conviction that the new covenant had been inaugurated by the death and resurrection of Israel’s messiah, a Jew named Jesus.\(^{1820}\)

**The Payoff: A Solution to Schweitzer’s Great Undischarged Task**

This reading makes sense of Paul’s argument in the context of apocalyptic early Judaism and the early Jesus-movement while also providing a reasonable explanation for the emergence of the supersessionist patristic perspective on Israel. In full Jewish sectarian fashion, Paul sees the ἐκκλησία in total continuity with Israel—in fact as the righteous remainder of Israel (cf. Rom 9:27–29; 11:6). Much like the writers of the Dead Sea Scrolls view other Jews as apostate but still potentially redeemable if they come to the sect’s way of life, Paul sees Jews who are not yet following Jesus as still being Israelites (though disobedient and in danger of being cut off); and, so long as time remains, these others can still be saved. The entire discussion is framed by the apocalyptic expectation of the restoration of all Israel as promised by the prophets; Paul is at

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\(^{1819}\) For more discussion of the term “Israelism,” see pp. 125–26 (esp. n. 396) above.

\(^{1820}\) This explains why Paul can speak of his “former way of life in Judaism” (Gal 1:13–14) while clearly regarding himself as an Israelite preaching Israel’s restoration.
pains to explain how the ingathering of the gentiles relates to this anticipated restoration. Thus when Paul asks, “Has God forgotten his people?” he is not addressing the fate of the Jews alone but the larger question concerning the promised Israelite restoration. He asks, in effect, “Has God abandoned his promises through the prophets to restore all Israel, rejecting his people and turning to the gentiles?” Paul rejects this, showing how the incorporation of gentiles into the eschatological ἐκκλησία of new covenant Israel is in fact a fulfillment of God’s promise to redeem “all Israel.”

In the same way that the apocalypticism of John the Baptist and the apocalyptic views of the earliest Christians demonstrate the apocalypticism of Jesus as the middle term,¹⁸²¹ Paul stands between Jesus’ Israelite restoration movement and early Christian claims that the church is the “true Israel.” As the middle term, Paul must have taught that the ἐκκλησία is eschatological Israel in the process of restoration. For Paul the ἐκκλησία (comprised of both Jews and gentiles) is the יהוה קהל,¹⁸²² in direct continuity with ancient Israel. Gentiles coming into the body of Christ indeed become members of Israel, but they are in no way replacements. Jews (Ἰουδαίοι) remain Israel by nature; the engrafting of gentiles does not threaten or diminish their Israelite status. Both Jews and gentiles, however, can find themselves cut off from Israel because of unfaithfulness, though restoration is possible even then. Paul envisions a renewed Israel expanding through incorporation, not a transfer of Israelite status from one group to another.¹⁸²³

¹⁸²¹ Sanders, Jesus and Judaism, 91–95.
¹⁸²² Deut 23:1, et al; cf. also ישראל קהל, Deut 31:30; 1 Kings 8:14; et al.
¹⁸²³ Similarly, Slenczka, “Frage nach der Identität Israels,” 476, “dies ist aber gerade nicht, ich unterstreiche es noch einmal, so zu verstehen, dass der Gegenstand der Zuwendung Gottes sich ändert und Gott einen neuen Bundespartner erwählt. Paulus vertritt hier keine 'Substitutionstheorie', sondern die These, dass der Bund Gottes mit Israel unvermindert fortbesteht, dass dieser Bund aber eben schon bei Abraham ein auf den Glauben an Christus begründeter Bund ist.”
For Paul, even gentile inclusion itself is in continuity with ancient Israel, since much of Israel has been ethnically intermingled among the nations, requiring gentile inclusion for Israelite restoration.

The nuance of this teaching and its foundation of Israelite restoration eschatology (and Judah/Israel reunion) seems to have been lost as the church became more dominated by gentiles, but the fundamental point—gentile converts become Israelites—remained. The tenor of the teaching also changed as the composition of the church changed, since it no longer involved an inner-Jewish dispute over whether the church truly was the beginnings of Israelite restoration but rather evolved into a claim that the Jews who had rejected the church were themselves effectively “replaced” as Israel by the gentile church. Such a notion was not even possible in the first century, when the church was still dominated by Jewish leadership and grounded in Israelite restoration eschatology. Unlike later patristic thinking, Paul could hardly have conceptualized a primarily gentile church (which did not exist) as a “new” or “true” Israel replacing “the Jews,” and a “third race” notion would have been impossible for a man who believed salvation could only be found within and through Israel, the one people of God.

That said, the patristic perspective did not emerge from thin air. It is instead a natural (albeit unimaginable for Paul) development of Paul’s equation of the ἐκκλησία and eschatological Israel and Paul’s assertions that faithful gentiles are Israelites. When Paul wrote Romans, a church led by and primarily composed of Jews was still grappling with the question of gentile inclusion. But within a generation, that problem had long been resolved, and the church was increasingly comprised of gentiles. In this new gentile-dominated context, Rom 9–11 was read (and has continued to be read) nearly exactly backwards, from the perspective of the present situation in the church as opposed to looking forward from the perspective of early
Judaism into the situation of Paul’s day. And as the context of early Christianity changed, the nuance and subtlety of Paul’s argument was lost, replaced by the blunt replacement theology or “third race” notion (a distortion of Israel as Paul understood it) of the patristic period.\footnote{1824}

Thus Paul’s discussion of the promised restoration of Israel in light of gentile incorporation—a discussion rooted in apocalyptic Jewish concerns—was misinterpreted as a thesis on the fate of the Jews in light of their rejection of the gospel. Likewise, Paul’s argument that gentiles were being incorporated into Israel as the fulfillment of the promises of Israel’s restoration was misconstrued as meaning that the Jews had been replaced as Israel by the gentiles, who by that later period comprised the majority of the Christian church. In the end, Rom 9–11 has been so misunderstood for so long because interpreters have approached it from the wrong end, asking inverted, anachronistic questions.

This study therefore provides an elegant solution for the “great and undischarged task” of defining the position of Paul and the connections between Paul’s gospel and both the earliest Jesus-movement and later Christianity. It also provides a plausible explanation for the substance of Paul’s disagreements with his contemporaries—something that post New Perspective scholarship has especially struggled to provide. Sanders, for example, offers only the famous tautology, “this is what Paul finds wrong in Judaism: it is not Christianity.”\footnote{1825} Ultimately, Sanders sees Paul as having abandoned covenantal nomism in favor of a participationist eschatology, much to the dismay and disappointment of many interpreters who saw Paul on

\footnote{1824} E.g., the sloppy argument for replacement theology in Barn. 13.

\footnote{1825} Sanders, Paul and Palestinian Judaism, 552. In the same context, Sanders explains, “It is thus not first of all against the means of being properly religious which are appropriate to Judaism that Paul polemizes (‘by works of law’), but against the prior fundamentals of Judaism: the election, the covenant and the law” (552). This study has demonstrated this statement to be categorically wrong; Paul in no way polemizes against or rejects election, the covenant, or the Torah. Rather, his argument concerns how these fundamentals should be understood and applied.
nearly every page of Sanders’ sections on Judaism. My thesis provides a more robust solution: Paul did not abandon covenantal nomism at all, nor is his participationist eschatology at odds with a covenantal perspective or Judaism itself. The debate in which Paul was engaged concerned neither legalism nor different patterns of religion. Moreover, Paul should not be understood as preaching inclusiveness over and against Jewish particularity or ethnocentrism. Paul was not driven by an ethic of inclusion but rather a by a particular image of Israel’s restoration; he did not reject Israel’s special status but remained a participant in a long-standing debate about the proper boundaries of Israel and what constitutes Israelite identity.

In this respect, Sanders’ famous dictum requires amendment, since there is no indication that Paul found anything wrong with Judaism at all. His quarrel was not with Judaism but with other Jews, some of whom were also followers of Jesus. Paul’s arguments indeed presume the validity of the core elements of Judaism, including Israel’s special covenant status, the authority of the Torah and the Prophets, and the foundational schema of restoration eschatology. Like many other Jewish restorationists, Paul in no way critiques the traditional discourse of Judaism but rather participates within that discourse, debating the present position on the eschatological timetable and the implications of that position. Paul believed that the age of wrath had ended with the resurrection of the messiah, providing for the redemption of Israel—a restoration that surprisingly required the incorporation of uncircumcised gentiles transformed by the spirit, fulfilling the promise through Hosea to restore “not my people.” His various interlocutors, while agreed on the fundamentals of covenant and Israel’s restoration, disagreed with one or more points along this progression. Thus it is more accurate to say instead that Paul finds nothing at all wrong in Judaism; he simply regards the death and resurrection of Jesus and the consequent
spiritual transformation of both Jews and the uncircumcised as fulfilling the promises of Israel’s restoration.
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