

# The Book of Exodus

*Composition, Reception, and Interpretation*

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# Exodus in the New Testament

## *Patterns of Revelation and Redemption*

Craig A. Evans

The exodus story was the single most important story in Israel's sacred national narrative. For influence on Judaism and early Christianity in late antiquity among the books of Moses the book of Exodus was eclipsed only by the book of Deuteronomy, the most often quoted book of Moses.

The book of Exodus narrates the story of the birth of Moses, his providential protection and care, his life in the court of Pharaoh, his flight into the wilderness, his encounter with God at the burning bush, his confrontation with Pharaoh, the ten plagues that humiliated Pharaoh, his magicians and their gods, the remarkable exodus itself, including the crossing of the sea and the destruction of Pharaoh's army, the wilderness wonders, including the provision of manna, the receiving of the law at Mount Sinai, and the construction of the tabernacle.

Running throughout the book of Exodus is the theme of God's absolute sovereignty. He is no mere god among many, he is the only God, the God of the whole earth and his people, Israel, are to worship him and him alone. He is also a gracious covenant God, whose desire is to shepherd Israel, to guide them to a permanent home, to give them a law that promotes justice and promotes the religious and spiritual maturity of Israel.

It is not surprising that Jesus and the major authors of New Testament literature draw so heavily upon the book of Exodus. For Jesus the covenant is foundational to understanding his mission. For Paul it is the many lessons, not least the defeat of mighty Pharaoh and the exaltation of Israel. For the fourth evangelist it is the giving of the law a second time and then filling the tabernacle with God's glory, an adumbration of the incarnation of the Logos in the person of Jesus.

## 1 Exodus in Jesus

### 1.1 *"By the finger of God"*

Embedded in Mark and Q is tradition in which Jesus is accused of being empowered by Satan (Mark 3:20–30; Matt 12:22–32 = Luke 11:11–23 + 12:10). In Mark the accusation is found on the lips of "scribes who came down from Jerusalem," who say of Jesus, "He is possessed by Beelzebul [Βεελζεβούλ ἔχει], and by the

prince of demons he casts out demons” (Mark 3:22). We should assume parallelism here, that is, the “prince of demons” is Beelzebul. This is made clear in Matthew, where it is the Pharisees who accuse Jesus, saying, “It is only by Beelzebul [ἐν τῷ Βεελζεβούλ], the prince of demons, that this man casts out demons” (Matt 12:24). Matthew has either simplified Mark’s language, or he has used the parallel in Q. In any case it is clear that Beelzebul and the prince of demons are indeed one and the same. The evangelist Luke does not identify those who accuse Jesus, saying only that “some of them said, ‘He casts out demons by Beelzebul, the prince of demons’” (Luke 11:15). Luke’s language is similar to Matthew’s, so it is possible the form of the accusation in Matthew and Luke derives from Q and not from Mark.

The epithet “Beelzebul” comes from the Canaanite Baal Zebul, בעל זבול, probably meaning “Lord of the princes,” but in 2 Kings it appears as בעל זבוב, a deliberate mispronunciation, probably meaning “Lord of the Flies” (see 2 Kings 1:2, 3, 6, 16 “Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron”). The Greek translator understood the Hebrew this way, translating Βααλ μύια, “Baal of flies.” Accordingly, the Synoptic Βεελζεβούλ, transliterating Jesus’ Aramaic words, בעל זבול,<sup>1</sup> reflects the original pronunciation.<sup>2</sup>

There are more than a dozen occurrences of Beelzebul in the first-century pseudepigraphon *Testament of Solomon*, a work that is more of a handbook on demonology and exorcism than a testament. In this imaginative account Israel’s famous king overpowers the demons, including Beelzebul. In 3:6 Solomon demands the demon’s identity, and it replies, ἐγώ εἰμι Βεελζεβούλ τῶν δαιμονίων ὁ ἔξαρχος (“I am Beelzeboul, the ruler of the demons”). The parallel with the language used in the accusation against Jesus is apparent.

To be sure, our version of the *Testament of Solomon* has been edited by Christians, but in its original form it was Jewish (beginning of the first century?) and reflected the kind of lore we hear about in Josephus’ account of Eleazar the exorcist who in the name of Solomon and with the help of incantations said to have been composed by Solomon was able to cast out demons—on one

1 Maurice Casey (*An Aramaic Approach to Q: Sources for the Gospels of Matthew and Luke* [SNTSMS 122; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002], 156) believes the Aramaic-speaking Jesus would have said בעל זבול. Casey thinks that Βεελζεβούλ was not originally in Q but, influenced by Mark, the evangelists Matthew and Luke added it.

2 For a concise summary, see Wolfgang Herrmann, “Baal Zebub,” in *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible* (ed. Karel van der Toorn, Bob Becking, and Pieter W. van der Horst; Leiden: Brill, 1999), 154–156. For further discussion, see Lloyd Gaston, “Beelzebul,” *TZ* 18 (1962): 247–255; E.C.B. MacLaurin, “Beelzeboul,” *NovT* 20 (1978): 156–160; and Walter A. Maier III, “Baal-zebub,” *ABD* 1:554.

occasion in the very presence of General Vespasian, his son Titus, and other Roman officers and authorities (Josephus, *Ant.* 8.45–49). There can be little doubt that the Solomonic exorcistic traditions were being put to good use in the days of Jesus.<sup>3</sup> Not only were Jewish exorcists out and about, invoking Jesus' name (Mark 9:38–40; Acts 19:13–17),<sup>4</sup> in addition to the names of Solomon and other worthies, Jesus himself apparently conceded without embarrassment or qualification that disciples and colleagues of the Pharisees and scribes also engaged in exorcisms.<sup>5</sup> In this way Jesus was able to discredit the logic behind the accusation leveled against himself: “And if I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges” (Matt 12:27 = Luke 11:19). If the success of Jesus in casting out evil spirits warrants a charge of being in league with Beelzebul, then the success of the exorcists who associate with the scribes and Pharisees warrants the same charge.<sup>6</sup>

But what catches our eye is the main point that Jesus makes regarding the significance of his victory over Satan: It is evidence of the truth of his proclamation that the kingdom (or rule) of God is at hand. The saying comes

3 In the time of Jesus and beyond, if the magical papyri, lamellae, and bowls, which often appeal to Solomon, are any indication.

4 Pagan exorcists made use of the name of Jesus, much to the annoyance of Origen (*Contra Celsum* 1.6; 2.4). The name of Jesus also appears in charms and incantations. The Rabbis debate the matter, arguing that it was better to die safe within the boundaries of Torah than to be healed in the name of Jesus (*t. Hullin* 2.22–23). Apparently they had something to debate, for the name of Jesus sometimes appears in Jewish charms and incantations.

5 Rightly R.T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 479: “Jesus takes it for granted that genuine exorcisms are taking place in Jewish circles unconnected with himself.” However, early Christian interpreters found it difficult to accept what Jesus readily concedes, namely, the disciples of the Pharisees could successfully cast out evil spirits. Some Christian interpreters think Jesus was referring to his own disciples (“your sons”). For example, see Thomas C. Oden, ed., *Incomplete Commentary on Matthew (Opus imperfectum)* (trans. James A. Kellerman; Ancient Christian Texts 2; Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2010), 228. Jerome resists this temptation, interpreting the saying of Jesus as it should be. See Manlio Simonetti, ed., *Matthew 1–13* (ACCSNT 1A; Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 247.

6 For further discussion of the seriousness of the charge that was brought against Jesus, see Meinrad Limbeck, “Beelzebul—eine ursprüngliche Bezeichnung für Jesus?” in *Wort Gottes in der Zeit Festschrift Karl Hermann Schelkle zum 65. Geburtstag* (ed. Helmut Feld and Josef Nolte; Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1973), 31–42; Arland J. Hultgren, *Jesus and His Adversaries: The Form and Function of the Conflict Stories in the Synoptic Tradition* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1979), 100–106; and Dwight D. Sheets, “Jesus as Demon-Possessed,” in *Who Do My Opponents Say that I Am? An Investigation of the Accusations against the Historical Jesus* (ed. Scot McKnight and Joseph B. Modica; LNTS 327; London: T&T Clark, 2008), 27–49.

from Q, but not with an important difference in Matthew and Luke. Matthew words the dominical assertion this way: “But if it is by the *Spirit of God* that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you” (Matt 12:28, emphasis added). Luke words it this way: “But if it is by the *finger of God* that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you” (Luke 11:20, emphasis added). Many agree that Luke’s “by the finger of God” (ἐν δακτύλῳ θεοῦ) represents the original form of Q, reflecting the very words of Jesus, while Matthew’s “by the Spirit of God” (ἐν πνεύματι θεοῦ) is a deliberate avoidance of anthropomorphism.<sup>7</sup>

By declaring that his ability to cast out evil spirits is “by the finger of God,” Jesus has alluded to the confession of Pharaoh’s magicians: “This is the finger of God” (Exod 8:19).<sup>8</sup> In saying this, the magicians have conceded that it is not magic at work in Moses and Aaron; rather, it is the power of God. Through magic they can mimic some of the things performed by Aaron and Moses, but other things are beyond their powers.

In rabbinic and targumic interpretation the notorious Jannes and Jambres were numbered among Pharaoh’s magicians (e.g., *Tg. Ps.-J.* Exod 1:15; 7:11; *Tg. Ps.-J.* Num 22:22; *b. Menah.* 85a; *Exod. Rab.* 9.7 [on Exod 7:12]). The antiquity and currency of the Jannes and Jambres legend is attested by Qumran’s *Damascus Covenant* (CD 5:18–19; 4Q266 frag. 3, col. ii, lines 5–7; 4Q271 frag. 1, line 1; 6Q15 frag. 3, lines 1–2), by an apocryphal work that may have circulated under the name *The Book of Jannes and Jambres*, by Pliny the Elder (*Nat. Hist.* 30.1.11), and by 2 Tim 3:8–9, among others.<sup>9</sup>

7 It is also thought that the evangelist Luke would have retained “Spirit” (given his interests in the Spirit) had that been the original reading of Q. For comments on Matthew’s form of the text, see Dale C. Allison Jr. and W.D. Davies, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to Saint Matthew. Volume II: Commentary on Matthew VIII–XVIII* (1CC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1991) 339–340; France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 479–480. For comments on Luke’s form of the text, see I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978) 475–476; and Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel according to Luke X–XXIV* (AB 24A; Garden City: Doubleday, 1985), 918.

8 The allusion is not to Exod 31:18 and Deut 9:10, which refer to the tablets of stone, which were “written with the finger of God.”

9 The allusion to Jannes and Jambres in the Damascus Covenant reads in full: “For in times past Moses and Aaron stood in the power of the Prince of Lights and Belial raised up Yannes and his brother in his cunning when seeking to do evil to Israel the first time” (CD 5:17–19 and parallels in caves 4 and 6 already cited). The apocryphal *Book of Jannes and Jambres* is extant in three papyrus fragments housed in Dublin, London, and Vienna. See Albert Pietersma and R.T. Lutz, “Jannes and Jambres,” in James H. Charlesworth (ed.), *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (2 vols., New York: Doubleday, 1983–1985), 427–442. For discussion of the



Jesus' use of the words, "finger of God," rather than some other equivalent, such as "power of God" or "Spirit of God," in the context of being accused of being in league with Satan, leads me to believe that Jesus intentionally alluded to the story of Moses and the magicians in Exodus 7–8.<sup>10</sup> One thinks of the rabbinic interpretation of Exod 8:15 (v. 19 in Eng.): "This is the finger of God." According to the sages, "As soon as the magicians realized that they were not able to produce gnats, they recognized that the deeds were those of God and not demons" (*Exod. Rab.* 10.7 [on Exod 8:15]). Some will object that this rabbinic interpretation is found in a late source and so is not admissible. But we have already seen, the legend of Jannes and Jambres, also found in the *Exodus Rabbah*, the Talmud, and a not particularly old Targum, is attested in the *Damascus Document*, which dates to the first century BCE, and in a mostly lost apocryphal work, that probably dates to the first century CE. Closely related to the Jannes and Jambres legend is the idea that the magicians of Pharaoh, which would include Jannes and Jambres, were empowered by demons. The parallel with the accusation against Jesus and the way Jesus replies is too close to be a coincidence.

If his power is "by the finger of God," then Jesus stands in the company of Moses and Aaron, not in the company of Pharaoh's magicians, who according to contemporary interpretation, were themselves in league with Satan (or "Belial," as the *Damascus Document* expressed it) or with demons (as in rabbinic midrash).<sup>11</sup>

His critics may well have sensed that there was indeed something extraordinary about Jesus. They do not accuse him, as they did John the Baptist, of

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Targum and other traditions, in which Jannes and Jambres appear, see Martin McNamara, *The New Testament and the Palestinian Targum to the Pentateuch* (AnBib 27A; 2d ed., Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1978), 82–96.

10 See Thomas Walter Manson, *The Teaching of Jesus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1948), 82–83. Ben Meyer agrees with Manson, describing Jesus' "submerged reference" to Exod 8:15 as "typical of Jesus." See Ben F. Meyer, *The Aims of Jesus* (London: SCM Press, 1979), 294 n. 89.

11 In retelling the story of the encounter with Pharaoh's magicians, Josephus has Moses speak of the divine power at work in him, as opposed to the magic and trickery of the magicians (*Ant.* 2.286). Israel's old story of God's defeat of Pharaoh and his magicians was well known in late antiquity. Sometimes it was even mentioned in the context of a magical spell! We see this in a major incantation, intended to be used against demons, in which Jewish traditions appear in several places. At the mid-point in the charm the exorcist is instructed to say: "I adjure you by him who appeared to Israel in the pillar of light and in the cloud by day, and who rescued his people from the work of Pharaoh and brought upon Pharaoh the ten plagues because he disobeyed" (*PGM* IV.3033–3037).

“having a demon” (Matt 11:18 = Luke 7:33); they accuse Jesus of being possessed by the *prince* of the demons, also known as Beelzebul.<sup>12</sup> The accusation is, in a sense, a left-handed compliment. It also gives Jesus the opportunity to affirm the truth of his message regarding the kingdom, that God is present in a new and powerful way, and to affirm that God is at work in him in a way that is comparable to the way God was at work in Moses, in bringing about the salvation of Israel. In the present work of Jesus God is again at work, saving his people.

### 1.2 “He is not God of the dead”

In one of his rare encounters with the Sadducees Jesus is presented with what some of his contemporaries probably saw as a conundrum (Mark 12:18–27). A woman successively marries seven brothers, each one dying without issue. Finally the woman herself dies. So, “In the resurrection whose wife will she be? For the seven had her as wife” (v. 23).

Our story depicts Sadducees approaching Jesus with an absurd question, whose point—apart from tripping up Jesus—is not entirely clear.<sup>13</sup> The highly improbable scenario envisioned by the question is based on the law of levirate marriage (cf. Gen 38:8; Deut 25:5–6; Ruth 4; Josephus, *Ant.* 4.254–256), in which a man was expected to sire children by the childless widow of his deceased brother. What makes the hypothetical situation so unlikely is that the childless woman finds herself widowed seven times over (perhaps alluding to the unlucky Sarah in Tob 3:7–15). In the resurrection, whose wife will she be? The underlying premise is that the doctrine of resurrection is inconsistent with the teaching of Torah, especially so when someone like Jesus adopts a strict, monogamous position that rules out divorce (as seen in Jesus’ teaching on divorce in Mark 10:1–12, which itself was based on the Torah, Gen 1:27; 2:24). From the Sadducees’ point of view their question cannot be convincingly answered by someone who takes the levirate law seriously and at the same time believes in the resurrection of the dead, a doctrine that the Sadducees reject (Acts 4:2; 23:6–8; Josephus, *J.W.* 2.165; *Ant.* 18.16).

Jesus replies to the question by claiming that his opponents know “neither the Scriptures nor the power of God” (v. 24). In the resurrection, there is no marriage (as in rabbinic interpretation also; cf. *b. Ber.* 17a: “in the world to come there is no ... propagation”). The Sadducees’ question is therefore irrelevant.

12 As noted by Samson Eitrem, *Some Notes on the Demonology of the New Testament* (SO 12; Oslo: A.W. Brøgger, 1950), 1–2, 6.

13 One commentator suggests that the intent was to discredit Jesus in the eyes of his supporters, by forcing him to an absurd position. See R.T. France, *The Gospel of Mark* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 470.

But the Sadducees' real fault lies in their failure to perceive the implications of a very important passage of Scripture in Exodus and the implications of the power of God revealed in that passage. Jesus says: "And as for the dead being raised, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the passage about the bush, how God said to him, 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? <sup>27</sup> He is not God of the dead, but of the living; you are quite wrong" (vv. 26–27).

The passage to which Jesus refers (i.e., "the passage about the bush") is Exod 3:1–6. The last verse reads (in the Hebrew, then in the Aramaic, and then in the Greek):

MT: וַיֹּאמֶר אֲנֹכִי אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם אֱלֹהֵי יִצְחָק וְאֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב:

Tg (Onq.): וַיֹּאמֶר אֲנָא אֱלֹהֵיהּ דְאַבְרָהָם אֱלֹהֵיהּ דְיִצְחָק וְאֱלֹהֵיהּ דְיַעֲקֹב:

LXX: καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ· Ἐγὼ εἶμι ὁ θεὸς τοῦ πατρὸς σου, θεὸς Ἀβραὰμ καὶ θεὸς

Ἰσαακ καὶ θεὸς Ἰακώβ.

Jesus' quotation, ἐγὼ ὁ θεὸς Ἀβραὰμ καὶ ὁ θεὸς Ἰσαὰκ καὶ ὁ θεὸς Ἰακώβ, loosely follows Exod 3:6, omitting "the God of your fathers." The regular appearance of the definite article (in Matt 22:32 and Luke 20:37 also) likely reflects a Greek rendering of Jesus' words independent of the LXX (in which the definite article appears but once, before "your fathers"). Jesus' original utterance could have been based on either the Hebrew or the Aramaic.

Jesus has appealed to one of the most sacred and most important passages in all of Jewish Scripture. To build a compelling scriptural argument for the resurrection, against Sadducean skepticism, one would have to appeal to the Torah, whose authority the Sadducees accepted, not to the Prophets and Writings (such as Isa 26:19; Ps 16:9–11; Job 19:26; Dan 12:1–2), whose authority the Sadducees did not accept. There is a rabbinic story relating to Gamaliel in which the great sage appealed to all parts of Scripture, including Torah: "Sectarians [or heretics] asked Rabban Gamaliel: 'When do we know that the Holy One, blessed be He, will resurrect the dead?' He answered them from the Torah, the Prophets, and the Writings" (*b. Sanh. 90b*).<sup>14</sup>

Jesus' appeal to Torah, in this case Exod 3, shows that he was well aware of what part of Scripture the Sadducees respected as authoritative. Jesus infers from God's self-identification as "the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac,

14 The story may reach back to Gamaliel (first century), but in its present form, where we have explicit reference to the tripartite form of Scripture (i.e., "the Torah, the Prophets, and the Writings"), the language reflects a later period when the canon of Scripture has been settled.

and the God of Jacob” that “He is not the God of the dead but of the living” (Mark 12:27). This affirmation further implies that the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, are still living.

The assertion that God is the God “of the living” is likely an inference based on the frequent association of God with life or living that we find in Hebrew Scripture. Many times we hear in Ezekiel, “as I live, says the Lord God” (Ezek 5:11; 14:16, 18, 20; *passim*). The turn of phrase appears also in Zeph 2:9. Malachi asks, “Has not the one God made and sustained for us the spirit of life?” (Mal 2:15). God is often called “the living God” (1 Sam 17:26, 36; 2 Kgs 19:4; Isa 37:4; Jer 10:10; Hos 1:10; Pss 42:2; 84:2; Dan 6:20, 26).<sup>15</sup> Accordingly, to assert that God is the God “of the living” would have been taken for granted.

The statement, “He is not the God of the dead but of the living” (οὐκ ἔστιν θεὸς νεκρῶν ἀλλὰ ζώντων) is proverbial; parallels are found in rabbinic sources: “The Torah speaks not of the dead but of the living [לא דברה תורה במתים אלא בחיים]” (*Midr. Mishle* on Prov 17:1).<sup>16</sup> Jesus’ hearers, friendly or antagonistic, would all agree that the God of Israel is a God “of the living.” If this is true, and if God identifies himself also as the “God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob,” logic suggests that someday these patriarchs will again live. If not, then the God of Israel is not a God of the living but a God of the dead. Accordingly, the logical inference that the patriarchs are yet living implies and anticipates the resurrection. Grammar and tense play no role here (either in an assumed present tense, or transforming a past reference into a future reference).<sup>17</sup> The argument turns on an inference drawn from parallel truths. God is the God of the patriarchs; he is also the God of the living. Therefore the patriarchs, though presently dead, must some day live.

Jesus’ argument approximates that of his older contemporary Philo, who speaks of the three great patriarchs as eternal (Philo, *On Abraham* 50–55),<sup>18</sup> as

15 The Hebrew emphasis on the Lord as a God of the living or a God of life may on occasional stand in deliberate contrast to the Canaanite god of death (Mot), to which Isaiah may have ironically alluded in 28:15 and 18, where he speaks of Israel foolishly making “a covenant with Death” and “an agreement with Sheol.”

16 Burton L. Visotzky, *The Midrash on Proverbs* (YJS 27; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992) 144 n. 8. The application of the proverb in this midrash is not the same as Jesus’ application. In the midrash the “dead” are Gentiles, who have no obligation to the Torah; the “living” are Jews, who do have an obligation to the Torah.

17 On this point, see Robert H. Gundry, *Mark: A Commentary on His Apology for the Cross* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 703–704.

18 Philo’s argument is somewhat obtuse. He reminds his readers that God identifies himself as “the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob” (Exod 3:6) and then

well as the affirmation found in 4 Macc 7:18–19: “But as men with their whole heart make righteousness their first thought, these alone are able to master the weakness of the flesh, believing that unto God they die not, as our patriarchs, Abraham and Isaac and Jacob die not, but they live unto God” (on the last phrase, see Luke 20:38, “for all live to him”).<sup>19</sup> One also thinks of 4 Macc 16:25: “those who die for the sake of God live unto God, as do Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the patriarchs.” The tradition here in 4 Maccabees complements Jesus’ inference from Exod 3:6 and the truism that the God of the patriarchs is indeed a God “of the living.”

A similar argument is found in rabbinic literature and is credited to Rabbi Hiyya: “You know how to recite [Scripture] but you do not know how to interpret [the verse]: ‘For the living know that they will die’ [Qoh 9:5] refers to the righteous who are called ‘the living’ even when they are dead ... And whence do we know that the righteous are called ‘the living’ even when dead? For it is written, ‘This is the land which I swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, saying’ [Deut 34:4]” (*y. Ber.* 2.3; cf. *b. Ber.* 18a).

In short, Jesus’ defense of the resurrection is based on God’s revelation and self-description as “the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” He is the God of the living, not the God of the dead. If he is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—as he himself disclosed to Moses the great lawgiver—then life, not death, will surely be the destiny of all those linked to him in faith. If all of God’s people are destined to perish and to remain dead, then in what sense is he the God of the living? The living God will surely reign over a living people.

### 1.3 “My blood of the Covenant”

During his last meal with his disciples, Jesus declares, in reference to the cup of wine that he shares with his disciples, “This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. Truly, I say to you, I shall not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God” (Mark 14:24–25).

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goes on to assert that “it is more reasonable that the name of the everlasting God should be conjoined with what is immortal than with what is mortal.” In what sense the three great patriarchs are immortal is not clear.

19 For further discussion of this approach, see F.G. Downing, “The Resurrection of the Dead: Jesus and Philo,” *JNT* 15 (1982): 42–50; repr. in Craig A. Evans and Stanley E. Porter, eds., *The Historical Jesus: A Sheffield Reader* (BibSem 33; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 167–175.

The expression, “blood of the covenant” (τὸ αἷμά μου τῆς διαθήκης), alludes to Exod 24:8: “And Moses took the blood and threw it upon the people, and said, ‘Behold the blood of the covenant [תִּירְבֶּה־דָּם / LXX: τὸ αἷμα τῆς διαθήκης], which the Lord has made with you in accordance with all these words.’”<sup>20</sup> Jesus’ words probably also allude to Jer 31(38):31: “Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant [הַשְׁדֵּךְ יִתְּרָ / LXX: διαθήκην καινήν] with the house of Israel and the house of Judah.”<sup>21</sup> The last part of the saying, “which is poured out on behalf of many,” may also allude to the Suffering Servant of Isa 52:13–53:12.<sup>22</sup> These various scriptures may account, in part, for the variations in the language of the Words of Institution (compare Mark 14:24 with Matt 26:28; Luke 22:20; 1 Cor 11:25; Justin Martyr, 1 *Apology* 66.3; *Apostolic Constitutions* 8.12.37).

The foundational passage underlying the Words of Institution is Exod 24:1–8, in which the story is told how God established his covenant with Israel, through Moses. The blood was thrown against the altar, next to the twelve pillars that represented the twelve tribes, then it was thrown upon the people, who shout that they will obey (24:4–8). While throwing the blood on the people, Moses cries out: “Behold the blood of the covenant” (cf. *Tg. Onq.* “This is the blood of the covenant”). In announcing that the wine represented his “blood of the covenant” and then sharing it with his disciples, Jesus has inaugurated the (new) covenant for the people of Israel, represented by his twelve disciples.<sup>23</sup>

20 Vincent Taylor, *Jesus and His Sacrifice* (London: Macmillan, 1937) 71, 131, 204; Rudolf Pesch, *Das Markusevangelium* (HTKNT 2.1–2; Freiburg: Herder, 1977, 1991), 2:358; Rikki E. Watts, *Isaiah’s New Exodus in Mark* (WUNT 2.88; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997), 351–353; Maurice Casey, *Aramaic Sources of Mark’s Gospel* (SNTSMS 102; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 241–242; France, *Mark*, 570; and Joel Marcus, *Mark 8–16* (AB 27A; New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 966.

21 Ben. F. Meyer, “The Expiation Motif in the Eucharistic Words: A Key to the History of Jesus?” *Greg* 69 (1988): 461–487. It is possible that the language of Zech 9:11 (“by your blood of the covenant, I will set your captives free from the waterless pit”) is also echoed. It is unnecessary to paraphrase the passage to read: “the blood of my covenant with you” (cf. RSV, NRSV), for the reciprocity of the covenant is clear enough. See Carol L. Meyers and Eric M. Meyers, *Zechariah 9–14* (AB 25C; New York: Doubleday, 1993), 138–140. The covenant is both God’s (or “my,” as some versions paraphrase) and Israel’s (“your,” which is how the Hebrew actually reads; the second person pronoun occurs in some Greek mss).

22 Ben F. Meyer, *The Aims of Jesus*, 64; Marcus, *Mark 8–16*, 966–967.

23 On the typology of the twelve, see Craig A. Evans, “The Baptism of John in a Typological Context,” in *Dimensions of Baptism: Biblical and Theological Studies* (ed. Anthony R. Cross and Stanley E. Porter; JSNTSup 234; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 45–71.

In the parallel versions of the Words of Institution found in Luke 22:20 and 1 Cor 11:25 we hear of the “new covenant” in Jesus’ blood. The adjective “new” (καίνῃ), which modifies “covenant,” is derived from Jer 31:31, part of an oracle that anticipates the restoration of fallen Israel.<sup>24</sup> The new covenant of Jer 31:31 stands over against the old covenant, given at Sinai (as is made clear in 31:32). Although the adjective does not appear in Mark’s version of Jesus’ words, it is very probable that it was an original part of the tradition, whether explicitly expressed or implied. Indeed, the full import of Jesus’ words can hardly be understood without reference to Jer 31:31–32.<sup>25</sup> The same is probably true in the case of the men of Qumran, who also spoke of “the new covenant” (הברית החדשה), established not through the death of anyone but through their faithful interpretation of Torah (CD 6:19; 19:33; 20:12; 1QpHab 2:3). One will not find Jer 31:31 quoted in any of these passages, but it is probable that this passage from Jeremiah inspired the idea of the new covenant.<sup>26</sup> Indeed, elsewhere among the Qumran scrolls we find references to entering *the covenant*, without the adjective “new,” yet it is this new or renewed covenant that is in view (e.g., CD 15:7–10; 1QS 1:6–7).

Peter Stuhlmacher very plausibly suggests that in the context of a meal, in which he speaks of a (new) covenant, Jesus foresees the fulfillment of Isa 25:6–8, in which is envisioned the restoration of Israel, when hunger, death, and sorrow will cease. Stuhlmacher believes, rightly in my judgment, that this collocation

24 C.F.D. Moule, *The Gospel According to Mark* (CBC; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965), 115.

25 France, *Mark*, 570.

26 So Matthew Black, *The Scrolls and Christian Origins: Studies in the Jewish Background of the New Testament* (New York: Scribner’s Sons, 1961), 91–92; Jean Carmignac in his commentary on 1QpHab in Jean Carmignac, Édouard Cothenet, and Hubert Lignée, *Les textes de Qumran: Traduits et annotés. Vol. 2: Règle de la Congrégation, etc.* (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1963), 95; and Shemaryahu Talmon, “‘Exile’ and ‘Restoration’ in the Conceptual World of Ancient Judaism,” in *Restoration: Old Testament, Jewish, and Christian Perspectives* (ed. James M. Scott; JSJSup 72; Leiden: Brill, 2001), 107–146, here 145. The prophet Jeremiah is mentioned by name in CD 8:20. The words ברית חדשה are a hapax legomenon in the Hebrew Bible. Their appearance in the *Damascus Document* in the definite form can only be in reference to Jer 31:31. However, in the thinking of Qumran the “new covenant” was not a replacement of the old covenant; it was, rather, a renewal of the covenant. For more on this, see Craig A. Evans, “Covenant in the Qumran Literature,” in *The Concept of the Covenant in the Second Temple Period* (ed. Stanley E. Porter and Jacqueline C.R. de Roo; JSJSup 71; Leiden: Brill, 2003), 55–80, esp. 58–60; and Lawrence H. Schiffman, *Qumran and Jerusalem: Studies in the Dead Sea Scrolls and the History of Judaism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 251–253.

of materials (Exod 24:8; Jer 31:31–32; Isa 25:6–8), interpreted in the light of his anticipated death, originated with Jesus and laid the foundation for the early Church's theology of atonement.<sup>27</sup>

The last clause, “which is poured out on behalf of many” (τὸ ἐκχυννόμενον ὑπὲρ πολλῶν), alludes to Isa 53:12 (“he poured out [הִשְׁרַךְ] his soul to death, and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many [רַבִּים / LXX: πολλῶν]”), a passage drawn to the Exodus context in all probability by the similar language in Exod 29:12 (“and the rest of the blood you shall pour out [שָׁפַךְ / LXX: ἐκχεεῖς] at the base of the altar”). The allusion to the Suffering Servant enables Jesus to link the covenantal language of Exodus 24 and Jeremiah 31 with the figure with whom Jesus identifies.

Whether or not Jesus expected his disciples to drink the cup—the cup that signified his blood, the “blood of the covenant”—“in memory” of him (as in Luke 22:19; 1 Cor 11:24; Justin Martyr, *1 Apology* 66.3), he declared that he himself would not drink it again until the day he will drink it in the kingdom of God (Mark 14:25). Implicit in his declaration is a disjunction between the old covenant, as originally given at Sinai, and the new covenant, foretold by Jeremiah, which will be made possible in Jesus' blood. Jesus will not drink wine again until the new covenant is fully realized in the kingdom of God.

## 2 Exodus in Pauline Theology

Themes and stories from Exodus play significant parts in some of Paul's most important theological discussions. In some cases the stories of Exodus provide Paul with analogies that offer practical guidance. There are several interesting examples in his Corinthian letters. In his first letter, the apostle alludes to the first Passover when he exhorts the Corinthian Christians to clean out the old leaven, reminding them that the Messiah, the Passover lamb, has been sacrificed (1 Cor 5:7–8). A few chapters later Paul draws an interesting comparison between Christian experience and the people of God, under the leadership of Moses, who “passed through the sea” and later were disobedient and were punished (1 Cor 10:1–11). In the second letter, Paul draws a fascinating analogy based

<sup>27</sup> Peter Stuhlmacher, *Jesus of Nazareth—Christ of Faith* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1993), 76–77. See also Martin Hengel, *The Atonement: The Origins of the Doctrine in the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981), 52–54. For a current and nuanced discussion of the Words of Institution, with special reference to the words “blood of the (new) covenant,” see Scot McKnight, *Jesus and His Death: Historiography, the Historical Jesus, and Atonement Theory* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2005), 282–321.



on the veil of Moses (2 Cor 3:12–18) and provides teaching on finances on the basis of what is said about the manna (2 Cor 8:1–15). I shall review these passages briefly and then spend more time in Romans 9, where Paul develops his doctrine of election based on the fate of Pharaoh.

### 2.1 *“Christ, our paschal lamb, has been sacrificed”*

The allusion to the Passover and Christ’s death as the Passover lamb appears in a rather unexpected location. In 1 Cor 5:1–5 Paul severely criticizes the Corinthian church for tolerating the sin of incest. Not only is the sin tolerated; evidently it is the occasion for boasting. Perversely, some in the congregation imagine themselves to be so spiritual that they are untroubled by sinful behavior. Paul warns the congregation, cautioning that “a little leaven leavens the whole lump” (v. 6). The proverb is dominical (Matt 13:33 = Luke 13:20–21; Gal 5:9) and in this instance warns that if the sin is not checked it will spread throughout the whole congregation.

Mention of the removal of the leaven brings to Paul’s mind the removal of leaven as preparation for the observance of Passover (Exod 12:15; cf. 12:3–21; 13:7). This in turn leads to mention of Christ, the Passover lamb, who has been sacrificed. The festival (i.e., Passover) is to be celebrated (i.e., what Christ has done, remembered every time eucharist is observed) “not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth” (v. 8).

Paul and other Christian teachers were able to link the Words of Institution and the whole of the Passion story to the Passover because the Last Supper took place during the Passover Week (probably the evening before the Passover meal was eaten, if we follow the chronology of the fourth Gospel). The blood of Jesus, whereby the new covenant was realized, was easily linked to the blood of the Passover lamb, the blood that saved Israel from harm and paved the way for the exodus itself.

### 2.2 *“All were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea”*

After his discourse on the proper use of liberty (chaps. 8–9) Paul once again warns the Corinthians not to fall into immorality (chap. 10). And again his warning is inspired by stories from the book of Exodus. He reminds the Corinthians that their ancestors “were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same supernatural food and all drank the same supernatural drink” (vv. 1b–3a). Paul refers, of course, to the crossing of the sea (Exod 14:21–22) and the miraculous provision of water (Exod 17:1–7). Saying the ancestors were “under the cloud” refers to the pillar of cloud that led the people by day (Exod 13:21–22).

Passing through the water is compared to baptism. The comparison is imprecise. After all, the people were not immersed, neither did they get wet; they crossed “on dry ground” (14:16, 22). But in passing through the sea they went down, “through the sea” (14:16), and so in a sense passed through water. More importantly, in passing through the water of the sea the Israelites escaped danger, moving from one side, where they were threatened by Pharaoh’s pursuing chariots, to the other side, where they found safety.

Paul wishes to remind the Corinthians that in a sense they now share the experience of “our fathers.” Among other things, these ancestors experienced “supernatural food” (i.e., the manna; cf. Exod 16:4, 35) and “supernatural drink” (i.e., the water that gushed from the rock; cf. Exod 17:6). Paul describes the rock itself as “supernatural” (πνευματικός), which reflected a midrash that understood the rock as following the wandering Israelites.<sup>28</sup> The mention of this supernatural rock leads Paul to speak of Christ: “the Rock was Christ” (v. 4), an identification possibly hinting at Christ’s divinity.<sup>29</sup> In any case, the identification does serve to strengthen the link between Israel’s experience in the wilderness long ago and the Corinthians’ experience in the present.<sup>30</sup>

Despite these supernatural experiences many of the Israelites engaged in sin and idolatry: “The people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to dance” (v. 7, quoting Exod 32:6, 19). As a result, they were judged and thousands died. “Now these things happened to them as a warning, but they were written down for our instruction, upon whom the end of the ages has come” (v. 11). Paul drives home his main point: If the people of Israel, that is, “our ancestors,” who despite having experienced God’s saving work were judged when they sinned, what makes the Corinthians think they will escape judgment?

### 2.3 “And we all, with unveiled face”

Paul affirms that those who are in Christ have the veil removed, allowing full view of the divine glory that is in Christ and which as believers they gaze upon.

28 Among others, see Ps.-Philo, *Bib. Ant.* 10:7, where we are told that God provided Israel with manna, quail, and “a well of water to follow them” (see also 11:5; 20:8). It is probable that Paul knew of this interpretive tradition (though probably not *Biblical Antiquities*). For further discussion, see Peter E. Enns, “The ‘Moveable Well’ in 1 Cor 10:4: An Extrabiblical Tradition in an Apostolic Text,” *BBR* 6 (1996): 23–38.

29 See Roy E. Ciampa and Brian S. Rosner, *The First Letter to the Corinthians* (PNTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 451.

30 On this point, see Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 448–449.

They are “changed into his likeness from one degree of glory to another” (2 Cor 3:18), says the apostle.

Paul’s veil metaphor is taken from the story of Moses and his veil (Exod 34:29–35). We are told that when Moses came down from Mount Sinai, with the two newly-inscribed stone tablets, his face shone with the glory of God, “because he had been talking with God” (v. 29). When Aaron and the people saw it they were afraid, so Moses veiled his face, removing the veil when he was in the presence of God and replacing the veil when he was not.

Paul remarks that the divine glory reflected in the face of Moses had begun to fade (2 Cor 3:7) and that Moses continued to wear the veil, in part so that the people of Israel might not notice that this glory was beginning to fade (v. 13). Paul’s point is comparative: Whereas the ministry of Moses was a temporary, fading one, the ministry of Christ is eternal and not only does not fade, it intensifies, “from one degree of glory to another.” It should be noted that what is translated “fading” (καταργούμενος) in vv. 7 and 13 is better rendered “being nullified”, “abolished,” or “make of no effect.” What Moses (and here Paul probably means how the synagogue of his day understands Moses) is trying to hide behind the veil is the loss of the law’s power. In short, the law is no longer effectual. It cannot save.

Paul’s exegesis is curious, for the Hebrew text says nothing about Moses trying to hide from the people the ineffectual glory reflected in his face. If Paul has exploited a Jewish exegesis we cannot tell. It may be his own creative work. However, when Paul loosely quotes Exod 34:34, “when a man turns to the Lord the veil is removed” (2 Cor 3:16), he seems to have interacted with an old Jewish interpretation. In the Hebrew text Exod 34:34 reads: “whenever Moses went in before the Lord to speak with him, he took the veil off.” Paul’s paraphrase is not based on the LXX (which renders the Hebrew literally); it appears to be based on a different vocalization of the Hebrew (or Aramaic). His “turn to the Lord” (ἐπιστρέψῃ πρὸς κύριον) refers to repentance, which in Hebrew and Aramaic is based on the verb *shuv* (“to turn”) and the cognate noun *teshuvah* (“returning [to the commandments]”).

This brings us to the Aramaic paraphrase of Exodus. According to Exod 33:7 in the Hebrew, “every one who sought the Lord would go out to the tent of meeting.” But the Aramaic reads, “anyone who repented before the Lord with a perfect heart went out to the tent of meeting” (*Tg. Ps.-J.*). Paul’s argument in 2 Corinthians 3 presupposes some form of this understanding of Exodus. And there is more.

When Paul goes on to say that “the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom” (v. 17), we probably again have echoes of Aramaic interpretation and paraphrasing. According to Exod 33:16 in the Hebrew, “Is

it not in thy going with us, so that we are distinct, I and thy people, from all other people that are upon the face of the earth?" But the Aramaic reads, "... unless your Shekinah speaks with us and wonders are performed for us when you remove the spirit of prophecy from the nations and speak in the Holy Spirit to me and to your people, so that we become different from all the peoples that are on the face of the earth?" (*Tg. Ps.-J.*).<sup>31</sup> Paul's introduction of the Spirit of the Lord, in a context where he has made reference to Exod 33, likely is related in some way to interpretation current in his day, which comes down to us in a much later and much more developed form in the Targum.<sup>32</sup>

And finally, Paul's reference to "freedom" (2 Cor 3:17), which is not present in the Hebrew text, once again probably reflects Aramaic interpretation. According to Lev 26:13 in the Hebrew God declares, "I am the Lord your God, who brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, that you should not be their slaves; and I have broken the bars of your yoke and made you walk erect." But in the Aramaic we read: "... who broke off the yoke of the nations from you and led you to freedom."<sup>33</sup>

#### 2.4 *"He who gathered much had nothing over, and he who gathered little had no lack"*

Paul articulates a policy for giving and uses the giving of the manna as an analogy. He says, "as a matter of equality your abundance at the present time should supply their want, so that their abundance may supply your want, that there may be equality" (2 Cor 8:14). This is adumbrated with Israel's experience with the manna: "He who gathered much had nothing over, and he who gathered little had no lack" (v. 15, quoting Exod 16:18).

#### 2.5 *"He has mercy upon whomever he wills"*

Of much greater theological significance is Paul's appeal to the rise and fall of Pharaoh in Exod 4–14 (Rom 9:14–18). Paul makes this appeal in the context of explaining the place of Gentiles in the Church (Rom 9–11). The apostle argues that although Israel—his kinsmen according to the flesh—has had

31 English translation of the Targum is based on Michael Maher, in *Targum Neofiti 1 and Pseudo-Jonathan: Exodus* (ed. Martin McNamara, Robert Hayward, and Michael Maher; ArBib 2; Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1994), 257.

32 For further discussion, see McNamara, *The New Testament and the Palestinian Targum*, 179–181.

33 For further discussion, see McNamara, *The New Testament and the Palestinian Targum*, 175–177. English translation of the Targum is based on Bernard Grossfeld, *The Targum Onqelos to Leviticus and Numbers* (ArBib 8; Wilmington: Glazier, 1988), 60.

every advantage (status as God's chosen people, the patriarchs, the covenants, Torah, the temple), much of Israel has become estranged from God through unbelief and hardness of heart (Rom 11:1–10). This should not surprise, because, after all, “not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel, and not all are children of Abraham because they are his descendants” (9:6b–7a).

The proof of this is in fact that the promised seed passed through Isaac, Abraham's second-born son, not Ishmael, his first-born son (v. 7b, quoting Gen 21:12). From this Paul infers that physical descent from Abraham is no guarantee of election. God makes his choice in advance—before anyone has done anything (vv. 8–13). God chose Jacob over Esau, not because the former was morally superior to the latter (indeed, a careful and fair reading of the Genesis narrative suggests the opposite), but because God willed it. He had promised an heir to Abraham *and Sarah*, and he kept that promise. In another context Paul explains that in acting the way he has, God has excluded human boasting (Rom 3:27; 4:2; 1 Cor 1:28–31; Eph 2:8–9). In everything pertaining to redemption humans have no grounds for boasting.

To drive home the point he is making about God's sovereign right to choose, Paul reminds his readers of what “the scripture” says to Pharaoh (Rom 9:17): εἰς αὐτὸ τοῦτο ἐξήγειρά σε ὅπως ἐνδείξωμαι ἐν σοὶ τὴν δύναμίν μου καὶ ὅπως διαγγελῆ τὸ ὄνομά μου ἐν πάσῃ τῇ γῆ (“I have raised you up for the very purpose of showing my power in you, so that my name may be proclaimed in all the earth”). Paul has loosely quoted the LXX version of Exod 9:16: ἐνεκεν τούτου διετηρήθης, ἵνα ἐνδείξωμαι ἐν σοὶ τὴν ἰσχύν μου, καὶ ὅπως διαγγελῆ τὸ ὄνομά μου ἐν πάσῃ τῇ γῆ (“For this reason you have been spared in order that I might display in you my power and in order that my name might be proclaimed in all the land”). Whereas the LXX uses the passive verb διετηρήθης, “you have been spared” or “preserved,” Paul uses the active verb and direct object ἐξήγειρά σε, “I have raised you up.” To *raise up* Pharaoh, and not merely preserve him, accentuates his dramatic fall, both in the plagues and in the destruction of his army in the sea. There is also an interesting difference between the Greek and the Hebrew. Whereas the Hebrew reads יְהוָה אֶת־יָדוֹ יִפְתָּח לְפָנֶיךָ, “I will show you my strength,” both the LXX and Paul read ἐνδείξωμαι ἐν σοὶ τὴν ἰσχύν μου, “I might show in you my strength” (Paul: τὴν δύναμίν μου, “my power”). The Hebrew makes it clear that God will demonstrate his strength *to Pharaoh*.<sup>34</sup> But in the Greek God demonstrates his strength *in Pharaoh* (ἐν σοὶ) for the all world to see, as the

34 J.H. Hertz, *The Pentateuch and Haftorahs: Hebrew Text, English Translation with Commentary: Exodus* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1930) 98: “to make thee experience My power.”

last part of the verse suggests: “so that my name may be declared throughout all the earth.”<sup>35</sup>

The experience of Pharaoh becomes a template for Paul's theology of election. From a human point of view Pharaoh possessed great power and from an Egyptian point of view Pharaoh was blessed of the gods. He was chosen of the gods; their elect one. But as it turns out, it was the God of Israel who gave him his power and raised him up, that God might show him (so the Hebrew) and demonstrate in him (so the Greek) the power of God over the false gods and the false, oppressive power of the Egyptian empire.

Paul's appeal to the example of Pharaoh, with which no Jew (whether a follower of Jesus or not) could disagree, reinforces his argument concerning the physical descendants of Abraham. Just as God chose a nation of slaves over mighty Egypt, just as he chose the younger Isaac over Ishmael, or the younger, manipulative Jacob over Esau, so God in his sovereign right may choose whom he wishes to choose. If he chose the physical descendants of Abraham, he may also choose a people for himself from among the Gentiles. This is not a new people that replaces the original people of God; rather, it is a people who stand side-by-side with the Jews, under the Lordship of the Messiah.<sup>36</sup>

### 3 Exodus in Johannine Theology

The Prologue of John (John 1:1–18) is one of the most fascinating passages in the writings that make up the New Testament. Its memorable opening words, “In the beginning was the Word ...,” immediately bring to mind the opening words of the book of Genesis, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” The first five verses of the prologue (John 1:1–5) introduce the Word, the Logos, and place it/him in the very beginning of creation, by which/whom came light and life.

The last five verses of the prologue (John 1:14–18) compare the Logos with Moses the great lawgiver. Through Moses the law was given, at the time of establishment of the first covenant. But it was through the Logos, who from

35 As though to say God's power “will be declared over and over again” throughout the world. See John I. Durham, *Exodus* (WBC 3; Dallas: Word, 1987), 128.

36 Paul argues this because God, who is One, is the God of the Gentiles as well as God of the Jews. For further discussion of Paul's argument, see Mark D. Nanos, “Paul and the Jewish Tradition: The Ideology of the *Shema*,” in *Celebrating Paul: Festschrift in Honor of Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, O.P., and Joseph A. Fitzmyer, S.J.* (ed. Peter Spitaler; CBQMS 48; Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Association, 2011), 62–80, here 67–72.

eternity resided in the very bosom of the Father, that grace and truth were given, at the time of the re-establishment of the covenant. Failure to appreciate fully the Exodus typology at work in the last five verses of John's Prologue has led not only to inadequate exegesis, but also to questionable translation.

I begin with the opening verse, which reads: ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος, καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν, καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος. The RSV translates: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Almost every translation renders the preposition πρὸς in the second clause "with." But πρὸς with the accusative means "to," "(moving) toward," or "facing" (LSJ). Had the author meant to say "with God," he could have used either παρά, or σύν with the dative. Long ago B.F. Westcott sensed the problem. Although his great commentary on John used the Revised Version as its translation (and so rendered John 1:1 "with God"), Westcott remarked in his notes that πρὸς τὸν θεόν implied not so much being with someone but "being (in some sense) directed towards and regulated by that with which the relationship is fixed."<sup>37</sup> C.K. Barrett considers the problem, acknowledging that in its classic usage the meaning of the preposition πρὸς could hardly be "with." But he notes that in the later post-classical koine Greek of the first century πρὸς could sometimes more or less mean "with," as in Mark 6:3, οὐκ εἰσὶν αἱ ἀδελφαὶ αὐτοῦ ὧδε πρὸς ἡμᾶς; ("Are not his sisters here with us?").<sup>38</sup>

That the meaning of πρὸς had begun to be used as an approximate equivalent of παρά followed by a dative is not in dispute. The question before us concerns its meaning in John 1:1. Raymond Brown rightly recognizes the ambiguity of the preposition πρὸς and so paraphrases the verse to read, "In the beginning was the Word; the Word was in God's presence, and the Word was God."<sup>39</sup> Of course, to be *facing* someone is to be in that person's presence.<sup>40</sup>

37 B.F. Westcott, *The Gospel according to St. John: The Greek Text with Introduction and Notes* (2 vols.; London: John Murray, 1908), 1:6.

38 C.K. Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John* (London: SPCK, 1958), 127–128. Barrett's view remains unchanged in the 1978 second edition.

39 Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel according to John* (AB 29/29A; Garden City: Doubleday, 1966–1970), 1:3–5.

40 Many commentators appeal to Mark 6:3, but we will do better to look at an example from the Johannine Writings. We find in 1John 1:1–2, "we ... proclaim to you the eternal life which was with the Father [πρὸς τὸν πατέρα]." 1John 1:1–2 alludes to the opening verses of John's Prologue. Here the "eternal life" plays on the "word of life" in v. 1, which refers to the Logos, who is the source of life, and at the same time is the message Jesus proclaimed, which if accepted results in life. This "word" was "with the Father," or, better, was "facing the Father," or as Brown argues with respect to John 1:1, was "in the Father's presence."

My primary concern here is not how we render *πρὸς τὸν θεόν* in 1:1, but that we not allow the conventional translation “with God” obscure the point that the Prologue tries to make in the final five verses (1:14–18). In this part of the Prologue Moses and Jesus are compared. The author wishes to demonstrate the surpassing greatness of the latter and to do this he underscores the difference in each person’s position with regard to God.

Of Moses the Prologue says, “For the law was given through Moses ... No one has ever seen God” (vv. 17a, 18a). The first part (v. 17a) is explicit, referring to the giving of the law at Mount Sinai (Exodus 20–32). The second part (v. 18a) is implicit but clear. The reference is to Moses’ request to see the face (or glory) of God: “I pray thee, show me thy glory” (Exod 33:18), to which God replies: “you cannot see my face; for man shall not see me and live” (33:20). God makes it possible for Moses to catch but a fleeting glimpse of his back (33:21–23; 34:6–7).

Of Jesus the Prologue says, “grace and truth came through Jesus Messiah ... the only Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has made him known” (vv. 18b, 17bc). The words “grace and truth” (ἡ χάρις καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια) allude to the very words God spoke when he passed before Moses: “The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness” (Exod 34:6). The words “steadfast love and faithfulness” are *חַסֵּד וְאֱמֻנָה*, which in Greek can be translated *χάρις καὶ ἀλήθεια*. Earlier in the Prologue we are told that the Logos “became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth” (v. 14a). The phrase, “full of grace and truth” (*πλήρης χάριτος καὶ ἀληθείας*), corresponds with the Hebrew’s “abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness” (*רַב־חַסֵּד וְאֱמֻנָה*).<sup>41</sup> This Jesus, full of grace and truth, is God’s Son and he alone resided “in the bosom of the Father” and in his incarnation (v. 14) and ministry he has made the Father known. Residing in the bosom (not side) of the Father implies that the eternal Son has enjoyed a face to face relationship with God. This is why it is important to be reminded of the basic meaning of the preposition *πρὸς* in the first verse of the Prologue: The Word faced God.

When the Prologue says, “the Word became flesh and dwelt [*ἐσκήνωσεν*] among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory [*δόξη*]” (v. 14ab), it recalls the glory of God filling the leather tabernacle: “Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory [*כְּבוֹד* / LXX: *δόξη*] of the Lord filled the tabernacle [*נִשְׁכַּנְתָּהּ* / LXX: *ἡ σκηνή*]” (Exod 40:34). The Prologue’s “dwelt” (*ἐσκήνωσεν*) is cognate with *σκηνή*, which can be translated “tent,” “dwelling,” or, as

41 The Prologue’s Greek represents an independent rendering of either the Hebrew or Aramaic, not a borrowing of the LXX, which reads: *καὶ πολυέλεος καὶ ἀληθινός* (“full of mercy and truth”).



in Exodus, “tabernacle.” The theme of wisdom dwelling on earth and disclosing the wisdom of God to humans (e.g., Prov 8; Sir 24) makes a major contribution to Johannine Christology, to be sure, but in v. 14 the Prologue alludes to that moment when the glory of the Lord filled the tent, thus bringing the story of Exodus to a fitting and dramatic conclusion.

The Prologue also states that “from his fullness have we all received, grace upon grace” (v. 16). The RSV’s translation “grace upon grace” is problematic. It is better to render *χάριν ἀντὶ χάριτος* “grace in place of grace.” Had the author of the Prologue wished to speak of “grace upon grace” he would have written *χάριν ἐπὶ χάριτος*. In the context of the Prologue, where the law given through Moses is contrasted with the “grace and truth” that came through Jesus, the “grace in place of grace” here in v. 16 means the new grace of Jesus—the one who is full of grace and truth—has taken the place of the old grace of the law given at Sinai. That the old grace of the law would be exchanged for a new grace was adumbrated at Sinai when it became necessary for God—who is full of grace and truth—to give Israel the law a second time.

The allusions to the story of the second giving of the law and Moses’s request to see the glory or face of God supply the biblical backdrop for the remarkable Christology of the Johannine Prologue. In contrast to Moses, who catches but a brief glimpse of God’s retreating back, the eternal Word, who became flesh in the person of Jesus, faced God, in his very bosom, for all of eternity. The Law given at Sinai came through Moses, the grace and truth of which God spoke when the broken covenant was re-established came through Jesus the Messiah, “the only Son, who ... has made him known” (vv. 17–18).

#### 4 Conclusion

Exodus’ story of the giving of the covenant, the tabernacle whereby God’s dwelling presence among his people is both seen and felt, and the wilderness experience itself—both the good and the bad—established patterns and typologies by which Jesus and his teaching successors understand what has taken place in their time and are able to articulate a theology and an ethic that will guide the Church in the centuries to come. The Exodus takes its place alongside Genesis as a book that contributes major theological ideas to the thinking of Jesus and his early followers.

In his ability to heal and cast out evil spirits, Jesus believed that he was imbued with the very power of God that had been at work in Moses and Aaron, the power that defeated Pharaoh, his magicians, and their gods. The power of God that resulted in Israel’s deliverance from Egyptian bondage was now

at work in Jesus, who like Moses long ago proclaims the kingly authority of God. Indeed, the way by which the God of Israel identified himself to Moses at the burning bush implied that the patriarchs remained alive to God and so guaranteed the truth of the resurrection. These great convictions, all founded on the book of Exodus, made it possible for Jesus to speak of his anticipated death in terms of “blood of the new covenant.”

For Paul the stories of Exodus supplied the early Church with a number of lessons relating to morals and behavior. But the story of God’s power over Pharaoh provided Paul with an important paradigm that enabled him to understand God’s sovereignty, especially with respect to election. But more importantly, in the Exodus God demonstrated his power over all deities and the nations that serve them. This vision of God made it possible for Paul to speak of God as a God of all people and to conceive of a Church, an “assembly of God” (1 Cor 1:2; 10:32; 11:16, 22; 15:9; Gal 1:13; 1 Thess 2:14; 2 Thess 1:4), in which all people—Jews and Gentiles alike—stand as equals under God and the lordship of God’s Son, Jesus the Messiah.

The fourth evangelist finds in Exodus a narrative typology upon which he can build his wisdom Christology. He finds in the dramatic story where God demonstrates that he is indeed full of grace and truth, in which God forgives his idolatrous people and gives the law a second time, the very presence of the eternal Logos, the Son, who existed in the bosom of the Father and in human time “became flesh and dwelt among us,” an event foreshadowed by God’s dwelling within the leather tabernacle.

The book of Exodus is quoted and echoed in a number of other New Testament writings, among them especially the book of Hebrews, but the limited survey above has hopefully demonstrated how foundational the second book of Moses was for Jesus and his early followers who developed in greater detail their Master’s theology.

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