

JEFFREY R. WISDOM

Blessing for the Nations and the Curse of the Law

*Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen
zum Neuen Testament 2. Reihe*

133

Mohr Siebeck

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133



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Paul's Citation of Genesis and Deuteronomy
in Gal 3.8–10

Mohr Siebeck

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For Chris,

My Wife, Friend, and Partner in Life

Preface

This monograph is a revised version of a PhD dissertation accepted by the University of Durham in 1998. The completion of a dissertation is a complex task, and I have benefited from the influence and support of many people who made its completion possible. It is my pleasant obligation to acknowledge those who have helped me complete this work.

First, I owe a great debt of gratitude to my supervisor, Prof. James D. G. Dunn. His careful scholarship, insightful critique, and personal warmth made my course of study at Durham both a time of academic growth and a source of great personal enrichment. It was my joy and privilege to complete this study under his direction. I am grateful to my examiners, Dr. Joel Marcus and Dr. Robert Hayward. Their careful reading of the dissertation and many helpful comments have improved it at a number of points. I am also grateful to Dr. Donald Garlington, who sent me several drafts and the final version of his recent article on Galatians, and to Dr. R. Barry Matlock, who kindly sent me a draft of a paper he read on Gal 3.10-14 at SBL in New Orleans.

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Unless otherwise noted, the following editions and translations are cited in this monograph. For the Jewish scripture, the Hebrew text is *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*, (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1983) and the Greek text is A. Rahlfs, *Septuaginta*. 2 Vols. (Stuttgart: Privileg. Württembergische Bibelanstalt, 1935). The text of the apocrypha is in Rahlfs, *Septuaginta*. The translation of the pseudepigrapha is J. Charles-

worth (Ed.) *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 2 Vols., (New York: Doubleday, 1983/1985). The text of the Qumran literature is E. Lohse, *Die Texte aus Qumran*, (München: Kösel-Verlag., 1971) and the translation is F. García Martínez, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated: The Qumran Texts in English*, (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994). The text and translation for Philo is F. Colson and G. Whitaker, *Philo*, LCL, 10 vol., (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1958-62). The text and translation for Josephus is Thackeray, H. St. J., et. al., *Josephus*, LCL, 10 vol., (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1926-1963). Unless otherwise noted above or in the notes in this monograph, all translations of Hebrew and Greek texts are the author's.

Many have contributed to the completion of this monograph, and any contribution to scholarship it makes is due in large measure to the positive influence of so many on my growth in academics. Any error it contains is my responsibility, however. It is my sincere hope that the results of this study will bear fruit in the pastoral ministry to which God has called me. *Soli Deo Gloria.*

December, 2000

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Chapter One

Introduction

1. The Problem Addressed by this Study

Paul's relationship with first century Judaism and his view of the law have been at the center of much scholarly controversy for the last two decades.¹ The impetus for this comes, at least in part, from E. P. Sanders' watershed work.² In the wake of this influential study, scholars have either vigorously defended traditional interpretations or have followed newly opened lines of investigation. Within the context of this vigorous scholarly debate, the interpretation of Gal 3.10 has been the focal point for a considerable amount of scholarly activity. The present study seeks to make a contribution to the current debate through an examination of Paul's citation of Gen 12.3/18.18 and Deut 27.26 in Gal 3.8 and 3.10 respectively.

The problem which the present study seeks to address comes into focus when it is recognized that Paul's assertion in Gal 3.10 that ὅσοι γὰρ ἐξ ἔργων νόμου εἰσὶν ὑπὸ κατάραν εἰσὶν is widely acknowledged as one of the most difficult statements within the Pauline corpus.³ This is true especially with respect to the identity of ὅσοι ἐξ ἔργων νόμου.⁴ For many interpreters assume that Paul intended this phrase to refer to Judaism as a whole.⁵ However, there is reason to doubt this assumption.⁶

¹ Recent works which address the issue of Paul and the law include Sanders 1983; Räisänen 1983; idem 1992; Hübner; Moo 1987; Westerholm 1988; Martin 1989; Thielman 1989; idem 1994; Dunn 1990; Tomson; Wright 1992a; idem 1992b; Winger; Schreiner 1993; Hong 1993; Dewey; Amadi-Azuogu; and Eckstein.

² Sanders 1977.

³ Cf. Dunn 1993a: 169; idem 1993b: 83; Wright 1992a: 137; Donaldson 1986: 94; Hansen 1989: 117; Scott 1993b: 657; and Garlington 1997: 85-86.

⁴ For a survey of the suggestions for the phrase ἐξ ἔργων νόμου see Schreiner 1991: 218-224.

⁵ The resulting statement that all Jews living in Paul's era were under a curse has led some to the conclusion that Paul was anti-Semitic, a charge to which D. Boyarin's work is addressed, at least in part. Cf. Boyarin: 136-157.

⁶ See, for example, Stanley 1990: 498. However, in his insistence that Paul only has the Galatians in mind in this text and has issued an implicit threat to them, Stanley has

The present study thus will explore the suggestion that Paul's reference to ὅσοι ἐξ ἔργων νόμου in Gal 3.10 is more narrow than is commonly assumed.

This difficulty, furthermore, is intensified when Paul's support in 3.10b for this assertion in 3.10a is brought into view. For as G. Hansen notes,

The basic problem in the interpretation of his use of Deut. 27.26 is the difficulty of relating this text to the opening statement that 'whoever is of the works of the law is under a curse'. The text seems to state the opposite: 'Cursed is everyone who does not abide by all the things written in the book of the law, and do them'. How can Paul support his statement that those who are of the works of the law are under a curse with a text that says that those who do not keep the law are under a curse?⁷

The diversity of interpretations offered for this verse testifies to the difficulty posed for modern scholarship in tracing the path of Paul's argument here.⁸ This apparent conflict between Paul's statement in Gal 3.10a and his use of scripture to support his argument in 3.10b is therefore an important aspect for the occasion of the present study because in spite of the attention this verse has received in recent years, we will argue that a crucial aspect of Paul's use of scripture has been overlooked. In particular, no one has thus far attempted to place Paul's use of scripture within the context of the dominant theme of Deuteronomy,⁹ which is that the covenant demands exclusive loyalty to the Lord and his commandments.

Within the context of this difficult statement in 3.10, another important aspect of the problem addressed by this study is Paul's use of Genesis in

missed the rhetorical force of this verse in the context of the whole letter. Although Paul may have intended that the Galatians would understand that they themselves would be under the curse if they accepted circumcision, the primary force of Gal 3.10 is directed, we will argue, at a group of Jewish Christians, almost certainly those whom Paul termed the "troublemakers" and upon whom he has already pronounced a curse (Gal 1.8).

⁷ Hansen 1989: 117. Cf. also Stanley 1990: 481; Watson: 71; Cranford: 244; Martyn 1997: 309; and Cosgrove: 53. Smiles: 10-11 statement concerning this difficult text is representative: "...Paul is sometimes on uncertain ground when trying to overturn the natural meaning of the ancient text (e.g. Deut 27.26 in 3.10)." So also Lührmann 1992: 61.

⁸ For surveys of the interpretive options concerning Gal 3.10, see section 2 below. See also Stanley 1990: 482-486; Wright 1992a: 138-139, 144-145; Scott 1993a: 188-194; Thielman 1989: 66-67; Cosgrove: 6-16; Braswell: 90-91; Bonneau: 60-62; and Dunn 1993a: 171-172.

⁹ Pace Wright 1992a: 137-156; Scott 1993a; and Thielman 1989. These scholars attempt to place Paul's argument within a redemptive-historical context which was predicted in Deuteronomy and which was commonly assumed in postbiblical Judaism. This study will argue that Paul has applied the dominant motif of Deuteronomy itself to the Galatian crisis.

Gal 3.8, a text which has received little attention from scholars.¹⁰ Usually this text is taken as the further elaboration of Paul's citation of Gen 15.6 in Gal 3.6,¹¹ and thus it is taken as an ancillary point in Paul's argument. On the other hand, the blessing mentioned in Gal 3.8 is understood as the natural corollary of the curse in 3.10,¹² and although Paul was more concerned with his discussion of the curse of the law,¹³ it is presumed that its mere mention caused his mind to turn briefly to its opposite—blessing. What is left unexplored is why Paul's mind turned to blessing in *Genesis* and not its natural corollary in Deuteronomy of covenant blessing for those who are obedient to the law.¹⁴ Furthermore, the significance of Paul's citation of this text has not been set fully within the context of the Jewish scripture or the postbiblical literature contemporaneous with Paul. This failure to include a detailed study of Paul's use of scripture here is indeed striking, since most commentators have noted the profoundly significant statement that the gospel was preached beforehand to Abraham in the form of the promise to bless the nations through his descendants.

The problem that this study confronts then is two-fold. On the one hand, in spite of much recent effort, the inner logic between Gal 3.10a and 3.10b remains obscure. In particular, no one has attempted to apply the

¹⁰ For example, Longenecker's recent commentary on Galatians does not list a single article or monograph devoted to Paul's use of scripture here.

¹¹ E.g. Lührmann: 60.

¹² Cf. e.g. Sanders 1983: 22.

¹³ It must be noted that the phrase "the curse of the law" is apparently Paul's own, since it never occurs in the Jewish literature of this period. Instead, the phrase frequently used in the Jewish scripture and by Paul's contemporaries is "the curse of the covenant." Bonneau: 60 has rightly noted that in Paul's letters the phrase "the curse of the law" is unique to Gal 3.13, but has failed to note that this is the only occurrence of this phrase. I owe this observation to Dr. R. Hayward, who kindly read and critiqued one of the earliest versions of a section of chapter three while I was in residence in Durham. The significance of this observation will be discussed in chapters seven and eight below. For the moment it will suffice to note that caution must be exercised with respect to the notion that the law itself was a curse for Israel or for Jews, as Boers: 126 suggests: "Rather than appearing as wholesome, the Law is seen as a veritable curse, as in Gal 3:10...The Law on which the Jews rely for their privileged relationship with God is in reality a curse." In this study, therefore, "the curse of the law" will be used only in connection with Paul's usage in Galatians, and "the curse of the covenant" will be used in connection with references in the Jewish scripture or in the postbiblical literature.

¹⁴ For example, why Paul did not cite Deut 30 here which speaks of the blessing for obedience and the curse for disobedience. He was clearly familiar with this text and cited it elsewhere in his letters (Rom 10.6-8; cf. Dunn 1988: 602-607). We are not suggesting here what Paul should have done, but rather we are raising the question of why the mention of the curse from Deuteronomy was conjoined with blessing from Genesis, and not from Deuteronomy itself. On the importance of the motif of blessing in both Genesis and Deuteronomy, see Westermann 1978: 29.

insight concerning the dominant theme of Deuteronomy to the situation in Galatia to which Paul's letter is addressed. On the other hand, the close relationship between Paul's citation of scripture in 3.10b and 3.8b has thus far not been adequately traced. We will argue that for Paul the heart of the covenant which has found expression in the gospel of Jesus Christ is the Lord's promise in Genesis to bless all nations through Abraham's descendants. According to Paul, this has been God's covenant purpose for his people right from the start. Hence both Paul's association of the promise to bless the nations with the gospel and the juxtaposition of this theme with the curse of the law provide the occasion for a fruitful approach to a difficult Pauline text.

2. A Survey of Recent Scholarship

A brief survey of recent interpretations of Gal 3.10¹⁵ will help to set the present study within the context of recent scholarship.¹⁶ This is necessary because this text has received considerable attention during the past two decades, and the need for another study of this well-worked text must be defended, and its contribution to the debate on what it means must be stressed. We will begin with the traditional interpretation both because it has occupied and continues to occupy pride of place since the time of Martin Luther and because virtually all of the recent suggestions have been against the backdrop of this interpretation. We will then consider

¹⁵ A survey of interpretations of Gal 3.8 is not necessary since no one has attempted to place Paul's use of scripture within historical context and this text has received very little attention by scholars. To be sure, a number of scholars have recently pointed to the observation that according to Paul the promise to bless the nations through Abraham's descendants was God's intention from the start (see, for example, Dunn 1993a: 164-166; Gordon 1987: 32-43; and Hays 1989: 105), but few have attempted to carry this insight through to an interpretation of Gal 3.10 which correlates with this covenant purpose. Instead, most recent works that discuss Paul's use of scripture here devote brief attention to Gal 3.8 as part of a wider interest. Cf. Koch; Stanley 1992; Scott 1995; and Eckstein. For a recent attempt to interpret the promise in 3.8 in the context of Paul's reference to "seed", see Pyne: 211-222. For a recent attempt to integrate the interpretation of Gal 3.8 with 3.10, cf. Morland: 198-211. Hansen 1989 has focused attention on the importance of the Abraham story for the interpretation of Galatians, but he does not devote sustained attention to the significance of the promise to bless the nations within the argument of Gal 3.8-10. For example, in the section which discusses Gal 3.6-9, Hansen 1989: 112-116 devotes most of his attention to the function of the citation of Gen 15.6 in 3.6.

¹⁶ Scholars whose contributions to the debate have been published since Sanders 1977 will occupy our attention. For surveys of treatments of this text before this, see the bibliography cited in n. 8 above.

several lines of investigation which have emerged to challenge this traditional interpretation.

The traditional interpretation of Gal 3.10 is that Paul has assumed an unexpressed middle in a syllogistic argument. This unexpressed middle may be assumed, this line of interpretation argues, because it was so widely acknowledged in Judaism or was so self-evident from human experience. The unexpressed part of Paul's argument is that the law demands perfect obedience to each and every one of its precepts and no one can keep the law perfectly. Thus those who attempt to keep the law perfectly are doomed to failure because they cannot do so, and consequently fall under the curse of the law. T. Schreiner has most actively defended the traditional view,¹⁷ but several other recent works have either defended or affirmed it.¹⁸ Several scholars have recently cast doubt on the accuracy of the traditional view, however. G. Howard, for example, has pointed to one of the principle weaknesses of this line of interpretation:

The problem with this assumption is that Paul, who by his own admission knew the law well (Gal. 1: 14), knew that the cultic aspect of the law implied the imperfection of the law...To keep the law then was, among other things, to find cultic forgiveness for breaking the law. For Paul to have argued that the law demanded absolute obedience and that one legal infraction brought with it unpardonable doom, would have been for him to deny what all the world knew, namely, that the Jerusalem temple stood as a monument to the belief that Yahweh was a forgiving God who pardoned his people when they sinned.¹⁹

The traditional interpretation thus assumed what Paul would not,²⁰ that the law demanded perfect obedience and cursed any who broke even one of its commandments.

E. P. Sanders has advocated the view that Paul's choice of Deut 27.26 to support his argument in Gal 3.10 is motivated merely by the fact that this text is the only one in the LXX which juxtaposes curse and law.²¹ Paul's choice of Deut 27.26 thus is merely terminological. According to Sanders, Paul does not argue from the premise of the impossibility of

¹⁷ Schreiner 1984: 151-160; idem 1991: 217-244; and idem: 1993.

¹⁸ Cf. Bruce 1982a: 159; Moo 1983: 73-100; Hübner: 36-42; Watson: 71; Fung: 141-143; Martin 1989: 86-88; Hansen 1989: 119-120; Longenecker: 118; Matera: 123; Hong 1993: 81-82, 137; George: 230-231; Morris: 103-104; Silva: 189; Amadi-Azuogu: 131-138; and Thielman 1994: 124-129.

¹⁹ Howard: 53. Cf. also Cranford: 244-248; Wright 1992a: 144-145; Dunn 1993a: 171; idem 1993c: 75-77, 83-84; and Sanders 1983: 17-27.

²⁰ Cf. Dunn 1990 226: "The idea that Paul in quoting Deuteronomy 27.26 presupposes the impossibility of fulfilling the law is hardly self-evident and has to be read into the argument." Cf. also Cranford: 249.

²¹ Sanders 1983: 21.

perfect obedience to the law,²² and the assertions he makes are more important to his train of thought than are the scripture texts he cites.²³ Thus Paul cites this text because it contains the key terms of his argument, and consequently, little interpretive weight should be given to the meaning of the citation itself. Sanders suggestion, however, has won little support.²⁴

J. D. G. Dunn has argued that a complete understanding of Paul's argument here is possible only within the framework provided by a proper understanding of the social factors and pressures in postbiblical Judaism. Hence, in Gal 3.10 the social function of the law must be kept in view.²⁵ His interpretation argues that τὰ ἔργα τοῦ νόμου refers to those obligations of the law which separated Jew from gentile.²⁶ Jesus' death on the cross as one cursed by the law and thus as an outsider to the covenant together with his vindication by God point to the fact that the covenant is now open to those formerly outside its boundaries.²⁷ Some scholars have criticized Dunn's view²⁸ as he applies it to Gal 3.10 in that the curse on ὅσοι ἐξ ἔργων νόμου is the "curse of a wrong understanding of the law."²⁹ This interpretation is typically viewed as a too narrow understanding of Paul's language concerning the significance of Jesus' death on the cross, both in Gal 3 and elsewhere in his letters. Dunn recognizes this criticism,³⁰ and he has clarified his position by stating that τὰ ἔργα τοῦ νόμου refers to the entire obligation of the law, an obligation which comes into particular focus on those aspects which distinguish Jew from gentile.³¹ Moreover, Paul's statement that ὅσοι ἐξ ἔργων νόμου are under a curse functions in the context of Gal 3.10 to indicate that they have failed to do all that the law requires.³² The present study attempts to build on Dunn's new perspective on Paul and the law and on his understanding of the significance of the phrase τὰ ἔργα τοῦ νόμου. However,

²² *idem*: 20-21.

²³ *idem*: 21-22.

²⁴ Cf. Stanley 1990: 485-486; Hong 1993: 135-138; and Scott 1993a: 190-191.

²⁵ Cf. Dunn 1993a: 170-174; and *idem* 1990: 219-225.

²⁶ Dunn 1993a: 172-174; and *idem* 1990: 215-241.

²⁷ Dunn 1990: 228-230.

²⁸ Cf. Scott 1993a: 192; Stanley 1990: 485; and Hong 1993: 145-148.

²⁹ Dunn 1990: 229.

³⁰ *idem*: 229-230.

³¹ Cf. *idem* 1992: 99-117.

³² So also Cranford: 249-258. Cranford twice states that works of the law are "...accompanied by actual disobedience" (p. 249), and he also states that "...the law pronounces a curse on those who transgress its principal ordinances" (p. 250). But he never identifies the specific disobedience to which Paul alludes, and more importantly, how those under the curse are guilty of this disobedience and transgression.

we will argue that the curse of the law in Gal 3.10 is the curse on those who have wrongly understood the significance of the law, which formerly separated Jew from gentile, for gentiles who have believed in Jesus Christ within the context of the promise to Abraham to bless all nations through his descendants. This wrong understanding of the role of the law in the covenant community amounts to disloyalty to the gospel and unfaithfulness to God's covenant purpose to bless all nations.³³ It is, therefore, apostasy from the Lord and his covenant purpose.

N. T. Wright has recently stressed the redemptive-historical reality of the exile and its possible continuation into the first century of the common era as a key component of Paul's argument. His thesis is that Paul's argument is based on the common assumption in the first century Jewish world that Israel was still under the curse of the exile.³⁴ The argument for this potential background for Paul's statement in Gal 3.10 hinges on the claim that there was a widespread agreement among Jews in the first century of the common era that Israel as a whole continued under the curse of the exile and that no Jew, therefore, would have contested this point in Paul's argument.³⁵ Such a widespread assumption in first century Judaism is doubtful, however. For example, although the Qumran community may have described their foundation in terms of the end of Israel's exile (CD 1. 5-8), this text assumes that the exile ended in the second century B.C.E.,³⁶

³³ Dunn 1993a: 173 does recognize the close link between blessing for the nations and God's covenant purpose, a connection which he terms "...the foundational character of the covenant"; and he correctly understands that in Paul's view ὅσοι ἐξ ἔργων νόμου have failed to do all that the Lord commands. This study will attempt to demonstrate how Paul may have supported his controversial statement from Deuteronomy and how other Jewish authors of this period used the same text or the same language to pronounce a curse on those who had turned from the Lord to other gods.

³⁴ Wright 1992a: 145-148; idem 1992b: 299-301. For a critique of Wright's position, see Dunn 1993a: 171-172; and also George: 232-233. These scholars, however, approach this text from very different perspectives.

³⁵ Wright 1992a: 147-148; and idem 1992b: 268-272. Cf. also Thielman 1989: 68-69; and Scott 1993a: 214.

³⁶ As Dunn 1993a: 171 has rightly observed, the key text which Wright 1992a: 141; and idem 1992b: 269-270 cites claims that the exile ended with the establishment of the Qumran community in the mid-second century B.C.E., and it is only those Jews who remain outside this 'new covenant' community who are cursed (CD 1.5-8). Thus at least one significant group of first century Judaism would not have shared this assumption. Wright also refers to Knibb 1987 in support of his argument. But Knibb (idem: 20) makes this same point: "The author of the Damascus Document drew on this tradition and was in effect saying that the events to which he was referring marked the end of the period of Israel's punishment, i.e. the end of the exile." It may not be assumed, however, that other Jewish groups shared this perspective that the Qumran community had returned from exile or even the assumption of a protracted exile on which this statement is based. Thus the significance that Wright has overlooked is that this text is

and it is framed within the context of sectarian controversy. Moreover, the text Paul cites states that the curse is on individuals, not the nation as a whole.³⁷ Thus it is doubtful that this text provides evidence of a widespread view within Judaism as a whole in the first century of the common era.³⁸

J. Scott has also recently argued for this understanding of the curse of the exile³⁹ which, he claims, continued into the Second Temple period.⁴⁰ Scott rightly emphasizes that the covenant in Deuteronomy did not call "...for sinless perfection, but rather for covenant faithfulness to Yahweh as opposed to national apostasy"⁴¹ and that the curse came upon Israel because of national apostasy:

The emphasis in this section (i.e. Deut 27-32), however, is clearly on the curse of exile which would come upon Israel for gross disobedience to the law in the form of national apostasy and fundamental covenant violations.⁴²

Moreover, Deuteronomy itself assumed that Israel would break the covenant and would be sent into exile.⁴³ Israel's prophets envisaged a day when Israel would be gathered and restored to the land, but this hope, according to Scott, was never realized.⁴⁴ As a result of this tension between expectation and reality, he argues that:

the witness of one strand of postbiblical Judaism and that this witness is fully two centuries before Paul. Hence it is hardly a text which testifies to a widespread notion in first century Judaism. It is even less likely that the notion of a return from exile in this text informs our understanding of Paul's citation of Deut 27.26 in Gal 3.10.

³⁷ So Stanley 1990: 484-485; Matlock: 5; and Bonneau: 61-62.

³⁸ For further details, see pp. 157-159 below.

³⁹ Scott 1993a: 188-194.

⁴⁰ See also *idem* 1993b: 645-665.

⁴¹ *idem* 1993a: 195.

⁴² *idem*: 197. The parenthetical note is mine.

⁴³ *idem*: 196.

⁴⁴ *idem*, 197-198. Scott cites Neusner 1990 in support of his argument. Neusner's thesis, however, does not support such a conclusion. Although Neusner does point toward the tension between the expected restoration in the Torah and the historical reality in the postbiblical period, this does not lead him to conclude that all Jews thought that the exile continued in their day. Instead, the experience of exile and return functions as a paradigm for what it means to be a Jew, even for those in the sixth century B.C.E. who did not experience exile from the land and restoration to it. Cf. Neusner 1990: xiii, xv, 10-11, and 32-61 (esp. 58-61). This, however, is a significantly different statement from Scott's suggestion (as also that of Wright's above and Thielman's below) that Jews continued under the curse of the exile in the Second Temple Period. If Neusner is correct, then those scholars who point to the pattern of sin, exile and return and suggest that Paul and most other Jews in the Second Temple period thought that Israel continued under the curse have misunderstood Paul's use of this well established,

Thus the hopes of final restoration continued to be postponed throughout the Second Temple period and beyond...In the meantime, Israel was to remain under the curse of the law which had sent her into exile in the first place.⁴⁵

With this biblical context in view, Scott attempts to trace a Deuteronomistic perspective which thought that Israel as a whole continued in exile in the various literature of the Second Temple period.⁴⁶ However, although Scott's examples clearly point to the importance of the well established pattern of Sin-Exile-Restoration in postbiblical Judaism, it is not quite as clear that these point to a continuation of the exile and that Jews in this period thought that they were under a curse. While it may be true that, in particular, Diaspora Jews lived in anticipation of the day when they would be completely restored to the land, this does not mean that all Jews thought that they were still under the curse which fell upon Israel in 586 B.C.E. and resulted in the exile.⁴⁷ The question is whether or not there is any evidence that Jews living in Palestine thought that they themselves were still under the curse. It is far from certain what value Scott's argument has for our understanding Paul's train of thought because it does not explain why Paul viewed the law as no longer necessary for believers in Christ (cf. Gal 3.23-29).⁴⁸ Even if the exile continued into the Second Temple period, this argument does not explain why faith in Christ,

highly significant, and extensively influential motif in Second Temple Judaism. In at least one passage in his extant writings, Paul provides evidence that he understood the significance of Israel's history for his own readers in this manner. See I Cor 10.1-13 where Paul twice refers to Israel's history as an example or pattern for his present day readers (10.6: ΤΥΠΟΣ; 10.11: ΤΥΠΙΚΩΣ), which functions as a warning for them not to emulate Israel's behavior in several specific examples. In this connection see also Rom 15.4.

⁴⁵ Scott 1993a: 198-199. Cf. also idem 1993b: 649.

⁴⁶ idem 1993a: 198-213

⁴⁷ Cf. Ackroyd: 240-243. Ackroyd argues on the basis of the number of texts in the exilic and postexilic literature which link the length of the exile with the idea of an enforced Sabbath observance that although the idea that Israel was punished and sent into exile because of her sin is present in these texts, the emphasis, especially concerning the length of time in which Israel was in exile, lies rather on God's promise of restoration and the necessity of this rest for the land for the restored community after the exile ends. Thus Ackroyd 1968: 242 writes that "...the experience of exile *as such* has become the symbol of a period, viewed in terms of punishment but also in terms of promise."

⁴⁸ In spite of his criticism of Thielman's position (Cf. Scott 1993a: 194), Scott 1993a: 215 appears to come to a similar conclusion: "the law did not bring the Spirit, but rather a long-term curse on Israel." According to Scott Paul's problem with the law is that it only brought a curse, and indeed a protracted one, on Israel and thus must be abandoned in the new covenant.

and not faithfulness to the Torah as would be the case in every form of Judaism in this period, was the necessary precursor for the promised restoration.⁴⁹ Thus in spite of Scott's attempt to demonstrate Paul's continuity with his Jewish heritage, he fails to account for the central role the law played in Judaism, especially against the backdrop of Israel's exile in 586 B.C.E. Hence, Scott's own caveat must be kept in view:

...from the perspective of the Old Testament, the curses of Deuteronomy had befallen the people of Israel in the past. Of course, it would be a quantum leap from recognizing this basic fact to saying, as Gal 3.10 does, that the curses of Deuteronomy applied to the people in Paul's day.⁵⁰

Scott has not demonstrated that Paul has indeed made such a quantum leap.⁵¹

F. Thielman's contribution to the debate concerning Paul's view of the Law in general and to the interpretation of Gal 3.10 in particular is that Paul argues from plight to solution, rather than from solution to plight.⁵² Thielman's interpretation attempts to correct a common failure of all previous attempts to understand Paul's citation of Deut 27.26: the failure to appreciate the contribution "...of exploring the Old Testament context of Paul's quotation for insight into his meaning."⁵³ This context, Thielman argues, supplies clear evidence that the curses of Deut 28 have already occurred,⁵⁴ and thus

The context of Deut. 27.26, viewed from Paul's vantage, would have provided ample evidence that *the covenant could not be kept* and that those ὑπὸ νόμου (v. 23) were under a curse.⁵⁵

⁴⁹ Throughout the exilic, post-exilic, and postbiblical period the dominant concern for Jews was faithfulness to the law and this was intensified when it was juxtaposed against Israel's covenant failure which led to the exile. Many strands of Jewish literature from this period describe the concern to keep the law faithfully, and this desire was fueled primarily by the desire not to repeat the exile.

⁵⁰ Scott 1993a: 194.

⁵¹ For a careful treatment of the diversity of Second Temple Judaism, see Talmon: 16-43. For a balanced assessment of diaspora Judaism, see Collins 1983.

⁵² Thielman 1989 and idem 1994. Thielman's thesis directly confronts Sanders 1977. After he has argued that the pattern of movement from plight to solution is common in ancient Judaism, Thielman applies the insight from this study to the attempt to trace the same pattern in Galatians and Romans.

⁵³ Thielman 1989: 68. He points to the widespread criticism of Noth 1966 on this text as the cause of this failure.

⁵⁴ Thielman 1989: 68.

⁵⁵ *ibid.* Emphasis is mine.

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