

CARLA SWAFFORD WORKS

The Church in the Wilderness

*Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen
zum Neuen Testament 2. Reihe*

379

Mohr Siebeck

Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen
zum Neuen Testament · 2. Reihe

Herausgeber / Editor

Jörg Frey (Zürich)

Mitherausgeber / Associate Editors

Markus Bockmuehl (Oxford) · James A. Kelhoffer (Uppsala)
Hans-Josef Klauck (Chicago, IL) · Tobias Nicklas (Regensburg)
J. Ross Wagner (Durham, NC)

379



Carla Swafford Works

The Church in the Wilderness

Paul's Use of Exodus Traditions
in 1 Corinthians

Mohr Siebeck

CARLA SWAFFORD WORKS, born 1976; 1998 BA Williams Baptist College; 2002 MA (Th) Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary; 2004 MAR Yale University Divinity School; 2011 PhD Princeton Theological Seminary; currently Assistant Professor of New Testament at Wesley Theological Seminary, Washington, D.C.

e-ISBN PDF 978-3-16-153606-9

ISBN 978-3-16-153605-2

ISSN 0340-9570 (Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament, 2. Reihe)

The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliographie; detailed bibliographic data are available on the Internet at <http://dnb.dnb.de>.

© 2014 by Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen, Germany. www.mohr.de

This book may not be reproduced, in whole or in part, in any form (beyond that permitted by copyright law) without the publisher's written permission. This applies particularly to reproductions, translations, microfilms and storage and processing in electronic systems.

The book was printed by Laupp & Göbel in Nehren on non-aging paper and bound by Buchbinderei Nädele in Nehren.

Printed in Germany.

To Nick, Jonathan, and Katherine Grace,
my loving companions on this wilderness journey

Preface

God has placed countless people in my life who have walked with me and encouraged me along this wilderness journey. It would be impossible to list them all here.

This book is a revision of my doctoral dissertation. I would not be submitting this work without my mentors and teachers at Princeton Theological Seminary. It is with much gratitude that I thank the members of my dissertation committee, Professors J. Ross Wagner, Shane Berg, and Beverly Roberts Gaventa. Professor Gaventa served as a mentor to me during my entire study at Princeton and has continued to mentor me during my first years of teaching. I am grateful for her guidance, her sound advice, and her constant encouragement over the years. She provided probing questions throughout this project, and her insights and concerns linger with me. Also, I am deeply indebted to Professor Wagner for agreeing to supervise this work and for nurturing the curiosity of a project birthed in his 1 Corinthians seminar during my first year of course work. Over the years, he has not only served as an advisor, but has demonstrated his constant faith that the God who called me to this task would indeed provide all that I needed to finish.

To my colleagues and students at Wesley Theological Seminary, I give thanks beyond measure. I especially want to thank Bruce Birch, Amy Oden, Sharon Ringe, and Denise Dombkowski Hopkins for providing opportunities for me to write while teaching. For my faculty prayer group, I thank God for their constant support and encouragement, and I am humbled by their commitment to be the church of God.

The publication of this book would not be possible without the publication team at Mohr Siebeck. Special thanks is due to Dr. Henning Ziebritzki and Dr. Jörg Frey for supporting the publication of this project. Also, it was a joy to work with Matthias Spitzner whose production expertise resulted in the layout of the document and whose abundant patience was both astounding and humbling. Any errors found in the content of this work are completely my own. I also want to express gratitude to Kendra Mäschke for marketing this work.

To my family, I am ever grateful to God for your presence, your love, and your unwavering support. My parents and in-laws made countless trips across the country to visit us, to help us during difficult times, and to walk with us on this faith journey. It is the constant support of my husband that

has been a joyful blessing along the way. To my loving husband Nick, you have always encouraged me to be the person whom God has called me to be. Without your discernment and faithfulness, I would not have had the courage to take the road less traveled. I am grateful for your partnership on this journey, and I thank God for the blessing of our children. My son Jonathan, I wish that there were words to express how great a gift from God that you truly are. My daughter Katherine Grace, you are nothing short of a miracle.

I thank my God always for all of you.

Carla Swafford Works
Pentecost 2014

Table of Contents

Preface.....	VII
Abbreviations	XII
Introduction: Being the Church of God in Corinth	1
<i>A. Situating this Study</i>	3
<i>B. Paul and the Corinthian Congregation as Readers of Scripture</i>	12
<i>C. An Overview</i>	17
Chapter One: God and the So-Called Gods: Teaching the Corinthians to be the “Church of God”	19
<i>A. “Many Gods and Many Lords”</i>	20
I. Corinth’s Religious Landscape	20
II. The Corinthian Church and the Problem of Many Gods and Many Lords.....	24
<i>B. The Power of Paideia</i>	27
<i>C. One God and One Lord: Pauline Paideia with Exodus Traditions</i>	31
I. The Power of the Exodus Tradition as Paideia	31
II. Passover and Paideia	36
III. Concluding Reflections on the Power of Exodus Traditions	38
IV. Pauline Paideia, Israel’s Exodus, and 1 Corinthians	39
<i>D. Conclusion: Being the Church of God in Corinth</i>	40
Chapter Two: A “New” Past: 1 Corinthians 10:1–22 Part One...	42
<i>A. Situating this Reading</i>	43
<i>B. 1 Corinthians 10:1–13: The Legacy of Faithfulness</i>	47

I.	1 Corinthians 10:1–5: God-Created Unity	47
1.	The Rites of Baptism and Eucharist Among the Corinthians	48
2.	The Rites of Baptism and Eucharist Among the “Ancestors”	51
3.	“Our Ancestors”	52
4.	The Ancestors’ Baptism	54
5.	Baptism into Moses	55
6.	Baptism “in the Cloud and in the Sea”	60
7.	The “Eucharist” of the Israelites	61
8.	Summary: Revisiting 1 Corinthians 10:1–5 and Hearing the Dire Warning	63
II.	1 Corinthians 10:6–11: Learning from the Mistakes of Our Ancestors	64
1.	The Ancestral Examples	65
2.	The Ancestral Transgressions	69
a.	Craving Evil	70
b.	Idolatry	71
c.	Porneia	73
d.	Testing Christ	75
e.	Grumbling	76
3.	Summary	78
C.	<i>Our Theological Past: Serving the Faithful God of our Ancestors</i>	79
I.	Illustrating God’s Unswerving Faithfulness	81
II.	God’s Faithfulness in 1 Corinthians	84
D.	<i>Conclusions</i>	87
Chapter Three: The “New” Past in Light of the Perilous Present: 1 Corinthians 10:1–22 Part Two		
89		
A.	<i>1 Corinthians 10:16–17: The Eucharistic Tie that Binds</i>	90
	Summary	97
B.	<i>1 Corinthians 10:18–20: The Bond of Fellowship in Sacrifice</i>	98
I.	1 Corinthians 10:18: The Israelites as Partners in the Altar	98
II.	1 Corinthians 10:19–20: The Sacrifices at the Corinthian Temples	100
1.	Idol Food and the Table of Demons: Looking Back at 8:1–13	101
2.	The Table of the Lord and the Table of Demons: 1 Corinthians 10:19–20	109
	Summary	113
C.	<i>1 Corinthians 10:21–22: Κοινωνία with a Jealous God</i>	114
	Summary	120
D.	<i>Conclusions for 1 Corinthians 10:14–22</i>	121

<i>E. Revisiting the Whole: Reading 1 Corinthians 10:1–22</i>	122
I. Reading the Exodus through the Wisdom of the Cross	122
II. “God is really among you”: The Story of God for the Church of God	123
 Chapter Four: Be as You Really Are: 1 Corinthians 5:6–8	125
<i>A. 1 Corinthians 5:1–5: The Dilemma</i>	126
<i>B. 1 Corinthians 5:6–8: Be As You Really Are</i>	133
I. 1 Corinthians 5:6–7a: Cleanse Out the Old Leaven	133
II. 1 Corinthians 5:7b: The Paschal Sacrifice	139
1. Christ, Our Πάσχα	139
2. A Paschal People	140
III. 1 Corinthians 5:8: Let Us Feast	144
1. “Not Even Among the Gentiles:” The Significance of the Invitation	146
2. The Corinthians and Passover	147
3. Paul’s Treatment of the Paschal Tradition	150
<i>C. 1 Corinthians 5:9–13: Drive Out the Wicked Person</i>	151
<i>D. Being “A New Lump:” The Identity of the Community</i>	155
<i>E. Paul’s Use of Exodus Traditions in 1 Corinthians 5:6–8</i>	157
 Conclusion: Paul’s Use of Exodus Traditions in 1 Corinthians ..	160
<i>A. Re-reading the Exodus Traditions in Literary Order</i>	160
<i>B. Paul’s Use of Exodus Traditions</i>	164
<i>C. Conclusion: The “Church of God” in Corinth</i>	166
 Bibliography	169
Index of Ancient Sources	187
Index of Modern Authors	201
Index of Subjects	204

Abbreviations

AB	Anchor Bible
<i>ABD</i>	<i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i>
AGJU	Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums
ANTC	Abingdon New Testament Commentary
<i>AThR</i>	<i>Anglical Theological Review</i>
<i>BA</i>	<i>Biblical Archaeologist</i>
BECNT	Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament
<i>Bib</i>	<i>Biblica</i>
<i>BBR</i>	<i>Bulletin for Biblical Research</i>
BHT	Beiträge zur historischen Theologie
<i>BK</i>	<i>Bibel und Kirche</i>
<i>BT</i>	<i>The Bible Translator</i>
<i>BTB</i>	<i>Biblical Theology Bulletin</i>
<i>CBQ</i>	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
<i>CTR</i>	<i>Criswell Theological Review</i>
<i>EDNT</i>	<i>Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament</i>
<i>ETL</i>	<i>Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses</i>
<i>EstEcl</i>	<i>Estudios biblicos</i>
<i>EvQ</i>	<i>Evangelical Quarterly</i>
<i>ExpTim</i>	<i>Expository Times</i>
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
<i>GOTR</i>	<i>Greek Orthodox Theological Review</i>
HNT	Handbuch zum Neuen Testament
HNTC	Harper's New Testament Commentaries
<i>HTR</i>	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
<i>Int</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JETS</i>	<i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
<i>JAAR</i>	<i>Journal of the American Academy of Religion</i>
<i>JRA</i>	<i>Journal of Roman Archaeology</i>
<i>JSNT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
<i>JSOT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i>
JSPSupS	Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha: Supplement Series
JSNTSup	Journal for the Study of the New Testament: Supplement Series
<i>MSJ</i>	<i>The Master's Seminary Journal</i>

<i>Neot</i>	<i>Neotestamentica</i>
NICNT	New International Commentary on the New Testament
NIGTC	New International Greek Testament Commentary
<i>NovT</i>	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
<i>NTS</i>	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
<i>OGIS</i>	<i>Orientalis graeci inscriptiones selectae</i>
OTL	Old Testament Library
<i>ResQ</i>	<i>Restoration Quarterly</i>
<i>RevExp</i>	<i>Review and Expositor</i>
<i>RIDA</i>	<i>Revue internationale des droits de l'antiquité</i>
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
<i>SJT</i>	<i>Scottish Journal of Theology</i>
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
SNTSU	Studien zum Neuen Testament und seiner Umwelt
<i>TDNT</i>	<i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i>
<i>TJ</i>	<i>Trinity Journal</i>
<i>TynBul</i>	<i>Tyndale Bulletin</i>
<i>VR</i>	<i>Vox reformata</i>
UBS	United Bible Society
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
<i>ZNW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche</i>

Introduction

Being the Church of God in Corinth

Stories have the power to shape a people. In his book on Jewish identity in the Hellenistic Diaspora, John Collins claims,

Identity, whether of a people or of an individual, is a matter of knowing who one is, where one is coming from, and where one is going. . . . Any group that holds unusual views is inevitably under pressure to establish its plausibility, not only to win the respect of outsiders, but primarily to maintain the allegiance of its own members.¹

Although Collins's concern is the maintenance of Jewish identity amidst Hellenistic culture, his observations about identity struggles may be applied to numerous groups in any culture. Several factors influence the formation and identity of a group – such as ethnicity, a common language, or shared experiences – but stories tend to unite a community, particularly stories that explain a people's origins.² It so happens, however, that the story that explains the origins of the early Christian movement is, as Collins might say, “unusual.”

Paul would agree. In the beginning of 1 Corinthians, Paul warns the believers that the “word of the cross” is “foolishness to those who are perishing” (1:18), and in 2:1–5 Paul delights that the power of this story is not contingent upon his eloquence to convey it.³ In contrast to Paul's confidence in

¹ John J. Collins, *Between Athens and Jerusalem* (New York: Crossroad, 1983), 1–2.

² See Judith Lieu, *Christian Identity in the Jewish and Graeco-Roman World* (Oxford: University Press, 2004), 62–63, 312–316. Regarding the importance of the exodus story in particular see e.g. M. Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1985), 358–379; D. Daube, *The Exodus Pattern in the Bible* (London: Faber and Faber, 1963).

³ Defining “story” is no easy task. The enterprise is further complicated by the fact that Paul is writing letters, not narratives. For larger discussions of the complexity and difficulties of outlining a narrative substructure to Paul's gospel see the essays in Bruce W. Longenecker, *Narrative Dynamics in Paul: A Critical Assessment* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002). The definition of story in Paul's letters must, by necessity, be a loose definition. The following is a working definition of story: “Story is a series of events that can be perceived as sequentially and consequentially connected. Typically, stories have characters, settings, and a trajectory” (Edward Adams, *Narrative Dynamics*, 23). Story is a means to pass along a tradition. In the case of Israel's exodus, Paul is appealing to traditions that have been narrated already in Israel's scriptures. For our purposes, the stories and traditions of interest are those that help explain the origins of a people, and these have

the wisdom of the cross, however, the letter of 1 Corinthians reveals glimpses of a community that, in Paul's eyes, is failing to reconcile their everyday lives with a seemingly "foolish" story. The church is fractured, and this lack of unity so early in the history of the church's formation threatens the distinctiveness of the community and the allegiance of its own members. For example, when Paul reprimands the behavior of the Corinthians' eucharist practices, he frames their behavior as a threat to the church: "Do you despise the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing?" (11:22; cf. 1:10; 5:1–13; 6:12–20; 8:1–11:1). The apostle counters the church's divisiveness by rearticulating the gospel in which they all believed (1:18–3:23; 11:23–26; 15:1–11) and by reminding the Corinthians of what they all have in common, "You are Christ's, and Christ is God's" (3:23).⁴ Through Christ, their identity is bound to God, as the title "church of God" conveys (1:2; 10:32). The power of the gospel grants the Corinthians a new heritage in a faithful God. God is the source of their life in Christ (1:30). God is the one who called them into fellowship with his Son (1:9), and it is the coming of the Lord that they all await (1:7; 11:26; 16:22). Every facet of the Corinthians' existence as a church is bound to the work of a jealous and faithful God (1:9; 10:13, 22). For Paul, the sum of their identity – who they are, where they have been, and where they are going – hinges upon God's work through Christ.

While the word of the cross frames Paul's instructions to this community (1:18–2:5), Paul also turns to scripture to instruct the church (10:11). Indeed, for Paul there is an intricate connection between God's good news of the cross and God's deeds in scripture. The "gospel of God" was promised in the holy scriptures (Rom 1:1–2). Christ died and was raised in accordance with scripture (1 Cor 15:3–4). Paul, however, did not come to this interpretation of scripture until God revealed his Son to him (Gal 1:16; cf. 1:12). This "revelation (*ἀποκαλύψεως*) of Jesus Christ" (Gal 1:12) forced Paul to revisit every-

been given various titles. Alan Kirk refers to them as "master commemorative narratives" which do more than preserve the past but help shape perceptions of the present ("Social and Cultural Memory," in *Memory, Tradition, and Text: Uses of the Past in Early Christianity*, ed. A. Kirk and T. Thatcher, Semeia Studies [Atlanta: SBL, 2005], 15). My use of the term "story" here has been greatly influenced by tradition theory, particularly how elements of traditions may be, and at times have been, told in narrative form (See the discussion of traditions in Chapter One). The biblical witnesses appeal to multiple elements of the traditions of the exodus and of the gospel. Sometimes these traditions are transmitted in narrative form, but at other times only specific elements of these traditions are highlighted. Paul, for instance, highlights different elements of the gospel to meet his rhetorical needs (consider 1 Cor 1:18–2:5; cf. 15:1–11) and alludes to various features of exodus traditions (5:6–8; 10:1–22).

⁴ Margaret Mitchell has demonstrated that a direct objective of this letter is to establish unity in the Corinthian church, *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1991).

thing he thought he knew about God’s work in the world. Since scripture is, first and foremost, about God, the revelation of Christ prompted Paul to reinterpret scripture in light of God’s ἀποκαλύψεως through the cross. Scripture helps Paul articulate the identity of this God and the implications of being identified as “God’s people.” Thus, Paul finds in scripture a formative tool to instruct believers how to live faithfully as the church of God (Rom 15:4; 1 Cor 10:11).⁵

To demonstrate how completely the believers depend upon God for their very existence, Paul, at two points in 1 Corinthians, appeals to a story associated with Israel’s origins – the exodus story.⁶ To urge the Corinthians to live in a manner that glorifies God, Paul relies upon Israel’s exodus traditions – either through paschal imagery as in chapter 5 or through a rehearsal of exodus traditions in chapter 10. These appeals to Israel’s exodus may not seem like such a radical move for a “Hebrew of Hebrews” (Phil 3:5), but it is a rather bold strategy when one considers that the Corinthian church is largely composed of Gentiles, not Jews (1 Cor 6:11; 12:2).⁷ Why would Paul appeal to the origin stories of the Jews to instruct a predominantly Gentile community?

The answer to this question requires some framing. First, it is necessary to view the exodus not solely as a story that sheds light on the origin of a people, but also as a story that reveals to a people the identity of their God. As will be argued in Chapter One, the exodus is first and foremost a story about God. Second, this same God has been revealed through the wisdom of the cross. This God is the one who has acted through Jesus and has called the Corinthians to be the church. It is only through Christ that the Corinthians can claim the Israelites as their “ancestors” (10:1). As Paul reminds the Corinthians twice in this letter, the God who called both the ancestors and the Corinthians is faithful (1:9; 10:13). In what follows, I argue that Paul’s use of exodus traditions in this letter teaches the Corinthians how to live faithfully as the church *of God*.

A. Situating this Study

The present examination of Paul’s use of exodus traditions in 1 Corinthians weds two conversations: one concerning Paul’s use of Israel’s scripture and

⁵ See discussions below, pages 19–25.

⁶ It is not the intention of this project to offer a comprehensive account of Paul’s use of scripture in 1 Corinthians. Examining how Paul uses exodus traditions in these specific texts, however, illumines how scripture can inform Paul’s arguments.

⁷ See discussion “Paul and the Corinthian Congregation as Readers of Scripture,” below.

the other regarding the identity formation of the early church. First, at the heart of this study is an investigation of Paul's appeal to Israel's exodus tradition in 1 Corinthians. Although there is only one explicit citation of this tradition in 1 Corinthians (1 Cor 10:7),⁸ Paul's most extensive use of scripture in this letter involves repeated allusions to Israel's exodus story (10:1–22). This project has benefited from the abundance of scholarship on Paul's use of scripture, but is particularly indebted to two key insights.

First, Paul's thought is profoundly shaped by scripture.⁹ As Christopher Stanley acknowledges, "Paul remains deeply engaged with the Jewish Scriptures throughout his life, so that his thinking and mode of expression were continually shaped by the symbolic universe of the Bible and the language of specific passages."¹⁰ Furthermore, Francis Watson has strongly argued that scripture does not merely float on the surface of Paul's letters. Rather, "it goes all the way down."¹¹ The revelation of Jesus Christ to Paul does not

⁸ 1 Cor 10:7 includes the quotation formula "as it is written" before citing Exodus 32:6. This format of quotation meets the requirements defined by Christopher Stanley for a "citation." Stanley argues for three criteria used to determine which verses might be considered a citation of scripture: "(1) those introduced by an explicit quotation formula ("as it is written," "therefore it says," etc.); (2) those accompanied by a clear interpretive gloss (e.g. 1 Cor 15.27); and (3) those that stand in demonstrable syntactical tension with their new literary environment (e.g. Rom 9.7, 10.18, Gal 3.12)" (*Paul and the Language of Scripture: Citation Technique in the Pauline Epistles and Contemporary Literature* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992], 56–57).

⁹ Investigations of Paul's use of scripture have also strongly argued that Paul's arguments have been influenced by scripture rather than simply using scripture as prooftexts. Scripture informed Paul's perception of the world. See Sylvia Keesmaat, *Paul and His Story: (Re)Interpreting the Exodus Tradition*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series 181 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999); J. Ross Wagner, *Heralds of the Good News: Isaiah and Paul "in Concert" in the Letter to the Romans* (Leiden: Brill, 2002); Francis Watson, *Paul and the Hermeneutics of Faith* (London: T & T Clark, 2004); Richard Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989); idem, *Conversion of the Imagination: Paul as Interpreter of Israel's Scripture* (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans, 2005); James W. Aageson, *Written Also for Our Sake: Paul and the Art of Biblical Interpretation* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1993); R. H. Bell, *Provoked to Jealousy: The Origin and Purpose of the Jealousy Motif in Romans 9–11*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2.63 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1994); F. Wilk, *Die Bedeutung des Jesajabuches für Paulus*, Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments 179 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998); C. A. Evans and J. A. Sanders, eds., *Paul and the Scriptures of Israel*, JSNTSup 83 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993).

¹⁰ Christopher Stanley, *Arguing with Scripture: The Rhetoric of Quotations in the Letters of Paul* (New York: T & T Clark, 2004), 1.

¹¹ Francis Watson, "Scripture in Pauline Theology: How Far Down Does It Go?" *Journal of Theological Interpretation* 2 (2008): 181–192, 183. Similarly, Hays, "The Scrip-

erase his many years of scriptural study but reconfigures that study in light of the crucified and resurrected Christ. Paul's proclamation of the gospel is not, nor can it be, divorced from the faithful God who is encountered in the pages of Israel's sacred texts. Instead, there is in Paul's thought an ever-flowing interrelationship between scripture and gospel. Paul uses scripture to interpret his world, and Paul reads scripture through the lens of the cross and the circumstances of his mission. As Watson rightly observes, Paul never stops learning from scripture.¹² The revelation of the risen Christ challenges him to revisit the sacred texts again and again. Watson contends, "The Christ Paul encounters is one who has died and been raised *according to the scriptures* (cf. 1 Cor 15:3–4), and what is encountered in Christ is therefore the true sense of scripture."¹³ What God has accomplished through Christ is Paul's interpretive key to explain how God is rectifying the world and to understand how this same God has been acting faithfully for generations.

This relationship between scripture and gospel in Paul's thought world, however, is inseparable from Paul's mission.¹⁴ Paul utilizes scripture in his communication with Gentile churches.¹⁵ In this letter to the Corinthians, scripture, read through the lens of the cross, is a key piece of the theological matrix informing Paul's advice to this fledgling community. Paul believes that God is moving and working among the Gentile believers (14:25). The letter reveals their real struggles to wed their new faith with their daily lives (e.g. 5:1–13; 6:1–11; 7:1–40; 8:1–13; 10:23–11:1). Paul uses scripture to teach them how to be the church of God. In Israel's sacred stories, particularly the exodus tradition (5:6–8; 10:1–22), Paul finds ready examples to com-

tures of Israel were embedded deeply in his [Paul's] bones," *Conversion of the Imagination*, 143.

¹² Watson, "Scripture in Pauline Theology," 191.

¹³ Watson, "Scripture in Pauline Theology," 191.

¹⁴ Wagner, *Heralds of the Good News*, 1–5.

¹⁵ Although direct scriptural quotations are missing in 1 Thessalonians, Philippians, and Philemon, the case can be made that there are scriptural concepts or allusions undergirding Paul's arguments in 1 Thessalonians and Philippians. For example, see M. D. Hooker, "Adam Redivivus: Philippians 2 Once More," in *The Old Testament in the New Testament: Essays in Honor of J. L. North* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2000), 220–234; J. A. D. Weima, "1 and 2 Thessalonians," in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old*, ed. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), 871–890; M. Silva, "Galatians," in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old*; 785–812; E. Springs Steele, "The Use of Jewish Scriptures in 1 Thessalonians," *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 14 (1984): 12–17; Ronilick E. K. Mchami, "Paul's Use of the Instruction of the Mosaic Law in his Paraenesis: 1 Thessalonians 4:1–8," *Africa Theological Journal* 29 (2006): 74–90; Craig E. Evans, "Ascending and Descending with a Shout: Psalm 47:6 and 1 Thess 4:16" in *Paul and the Scriptures of Israel*, ed. C. E. Evans and J. A. Sanders (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1993), 238–53.

municate the need for the Corinthians to take seriously their new identity as God's church.

The interrelationship between scripture, gospel, and mission leads to the second insight that has shaped this study: Scripture informs Paul's understanding of how the "church of God" should live.¹⁶ In 1 Cor 10:11, Paul writes that Scripture has been written for the instruction of the church, and in Rom 15:4 he makes a similar claim: "For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope." In these passages, Paul himself acknowledges the critical role that scripture plays in the formation of these communities who are called together by God for the proclamation of the gospel. By using 1 Corinthians 5–7 as a test case, Brian Rosner has persuasively argued that Israel's scriptures are a "crucial and formative source for Paul's ethics."¹⁷ Scripture has shaped how Paul perceives the world, God, and the rest of humanity. It has informed a fundamental part of his identity. Scripture has taught him what it means to be a child of God, and the language of scripture gives him the vocabulary to instruct the church how to be people of God.

This book expands the conversation about Paul's use of scripture in two ways. First, more work needs to be done on Paul's use of Israel's stories. Most of the recent studies have focused on Paul's citations, his *Vorlage*, and the rhetoric of scriptural quotations in Paul's letters.¹⁸ The present work focuses on Paul's employment of Israel's exodus traditions. Sylvia Keesmaat has already made important strides in this area in her extensive study of potential exodus traditions influencing Paul's arguments in Romans 8 and Galatians.¹⁹ In her book, *Paul and His Story*, Keesmaat notes the significance of the exodus tradition in Israel's scriptures and uses tradition theory to help interpret ways in which adaptations occur in traditions to make them relevant

¹⁶ For an excellent overview of the consideration of scripture in the study of Pauline ethics and a lengthy list of those who reject in the influence of scripture in Paul's admonition, see Brian S. Rosner, *Paul, Scripture, and Ethics: A Study of 1 Corinthians 5–7*, *Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums* 22 (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 1–15. See also Hays, *The Conversion of the Imagination*, 1–24, 143–162; idem, *Echoes*, 158–159.

¹⁷ Rosner, *Paul, Scripture, and Ethics*, 24.

¹⁸ For a thorough overview see Stanley, *Paul and the Language of Scripture*, 8–28.

¹⁹ Her study particularly concerns Rom 8:14–39 and the pattern of the exodus in Galatians (especially important for her argument are Gal 4:1–6 and 6:15), Keesmaat, *Paul and His Story*. Others have devoted articles or sections of books to this topic. See, for example, W. D. Davies, "Paul and the Exodus," in *Christian Engagements with Judaism* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1999), 123–126.

to each new generation.²⁰ My investigation makes extensive use of her insights on living traditions.²¹ By examining appearances of the exodus in canonical and non-canonical Jewish writings, Keesmaat assembles a large number of texts to form a scriptural matrix within which to compare Paul's vocabulary and imagery to the vocabulary, imagery, and themes often found in rehearsals of Israel's exodus tradition. In her comparison she has chosen Hays's intertextual approach.²² Keesmaat is careful to maintain that Paul may have been alluding to some passages intentionally while other allusions may have arisen out of an intertextual matrix which informed his cultural consciousness and which he echoed almost unconsciously.²³ Ultimately, she finds that Paul reinterprets the exodus tradition in ways that are both continuous and discontinuous with the exodus tradition, yet she concludes that this scriptural story – reconfigured in light of Christ – is critical to shaping Paul's thought.²⁴ Keesmaat's work has much to commend it, although her method has been subject to the same criticisms leveled at Hays's intertextual approach. Chiefly, her work has been criticized for finding too many echoes of the exodus in Romans 8 and Galatians with little evidence in the context of the proposed echo to support the allusion.²⁵ However, Keesmaat's overall project demonstrates that more attention needs to be granted to the role of Israel's stories in Paul's rhetoric.

Part of the dilemma of studying Paul's allusions to scriptural stories is defining what constitutes an allusion.²⁶ In the most basic terms, allusion is a type of "literary borrowing" or "(1) a species of reference that (2) refers,

²⁰ For the importance of traditions in shaping culture see Edward Shils, *Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 328–330; George Allan, *The Importances of the Past: A Meditation on the Authority of Tradition* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1986), 237; cf. Clifford Geertz, *Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 46, 49, 140 with reference to organizing "symbols."

²¹ See Chapter One.

²² Hays, *Echoes*, 1–33.

²³ Keesmaat, 34–53, esp. p. 50.

²⁴ She cites Gal 6:15 as a particularly subversive feature of Paul's reinvention of the exodus, and she concludes that the Romans and the Galatians are each handling Israel's traditions in a different way. In Romans, Keesmaat argues that Paul is countering an abandonment of tradition while in Galatians he must challenge those who cling to Israel's traditions without adapting them in light of Christ (223–231).

²⁵ See Bruce W. Longenecker, review of Sylvia Keesmaat, *Paul and His Story*, *Evangelical Quarterly* 73 (2001): 351–53; Brad Eastman, review of Sylvia Keesmaat, *Paul and His Story*, *Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses* 30 (2001): 106–07.

²⁶ The lines between allusion and echo are blurred by multiple definitions of these terms. For example, according to Hays (*Echoes*, 14–21), "allusion" and "echo" are virtually interchangeable, yet Porter makes a rigid distinction between the terms ("Allusions and Echoes," in *As It Is Written: Studying Paul's Use of Scripture*, ed. S. E. Porter and C. D. Stanley [Atlanta: SBL, 2008], 40).