4

Beyond the Boundaries

From the mid-30s to early 40s AD, Paul was sent to work under Barnabas as his protégé in Antioch, where a Christian community already thrived,[1] to preach and to attempt to meet the immediate need to raise money for famine-struck Jerusalem. Paul also traveled with Barnabas to synagogues in Asia Minor, preaching of Jesus as a messiah who came to save not only Israel but the world. It was in these synagogues that Paul found an audience in the pagans who attended, a group that Acts calls "God-fearers" or "God-worshipers." Gentiles were the majority of people in the world Paul inhabited, and they worshiped powerful gods. The Jews had not only a powerful god but also a sacred book of wisdom and an ancient tradition—a combination that would have been quite appealing.

These God-fearers allowed Paul his first opportunity to put into action his Abraham-inspired mission of bringing the teachings of Jesus to all the nations. As Paula Fredriksen explained: "Paul was fulfilling what God, by means of the Diaspora, was making good his promise to Abraham that through him all the nations [Heb. *goyim*; LXX *ethnē*] of the earth will be blessed (Gen 18:18). To Paul the Diaspora was all part of God's far-reaching plan—Israel was in exile in order to turn the Gentiles to God."[2]

It is unlikely that Barnabas shared Paul's views on Gentile conversion, which became explicit in Paul's later career when he wrote to the Romans of his journey to Jerusalem (Rom 11); such conversion is an idea we are hard-pressed to find in Barnabas. Paul's mentor went to the synagogues

1. Antioch was already helping raise money to support the apostles in Jerusalem. Paul was more than happy to venture out to expand further the collection's reach. See Betz, *Galatians,* 106.

2. Fredriksen, *From Jesus*, 17.

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and tried to convert Jews, and as long as Paul was operating as his protégé he would need to follow along. But as we know, the Jews did not welcome Paul and his controversial gospel, and as a result he naturally turned toward the pagans and the God-worshipers. At the time, despite their interest in the god of Israel, these God-fearers were not anyone's potential converts.[3] To most of them, the Jewish god was just one among many powerful gods they wanted to know about. It was one thing for them to attend synagogue casually, but quite another for them to undertake the ritual and purity laws required to become Jewish. Even Paul would likely have completely ignored his Gentile audience had they not been somewhat familiar with Hebrew Scriptures. But beginning in the late third century BC, the Hebrew Bible and some related texts had been translated into Greek, including the Septuagint (Greek Old Testament). For the first time, meanings formerly contained solely in Hebraic ideas had found their way into the Greek language.

And not only had the Septuagint brought Hebrew ideas to a Greek audience, but it had also inserted some Greek ideas into the Scriptures. These notions would directly impact how Paul would offer his gospel to the Gentile world. As Paula Fredriksen explained:

> This translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek both echoed and facilitated a translation of ideas from one cultural system to the other. With the Greek language came paideia. When, for example, the Jewish God revealed his name to Moses at the burning bush (Ex 3:14), the Hebrew ehyeh (I am) became in the LXX ho on (the being). Anyone with even a rudimentary Hellenistic education would recognize in this designation the High God of philosophy.[4]

As these scriptural inroads allowed the apostles' message to spread on pagan ground, Paul took more of an interest in these Gentiles and offered a new freedom outside Judaism that eventually caused friction with Barnabas and their agreed-upon mission. Where Barnabas believed all converts must first become Jewish, Paul, as evidenced by the progression of his letters,

3. Paul's synagogue strategy in Roman cities, which had the intention of reaching God-fearers, when and if he were truly told not to preach to Jews, would later cause trouble when the conflict with Christian Judaism intensified. With help from Paula Fredriksen, interviewed by Robert Orlando for the film *A Polite Bribe*, directed by Robert Orlando (2013; The Nexus Project, LLC). Also see Orlando, Review of A. N. Wilson, *Paul: The Mind of the Apostle*, 24–26. For further information about Paul and his relation to pagans and God-fearers, see Crossan and Reed, *In Search of Paul*, 34–41.

4. Fredriksen, *From Jesus*, 14.

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began to branch out from strictly Jewish messianic notions into something completely new: a message not given through a binding Law but through a relationship entered into with the Messiah, Jesus, who fulfilled the Law by dying on the cross. Paul's belief was that if the messianic age had come, and the kingdom had arrived, his most important calling was to make sure the Gentiles were brought into the fold. Why let any human restrictions remain an obstacle to the kingdom? Why begin to impose rigid dietary laws or the painful procedure of circumcision if God would soon dissolve the distinctions between Jew and Greek in the kingdom?

What seems like a sound contemporary argument was a completely unacceptable line of reasoning to most of Paul's peers. Its premise was a kingdom age that those unwilling to hold to his transformative, nonethnic vision might still have doubted. And soon it was no longer Paul as protégé primarily carrying out the orders of a high authority from Judea but Paul espousing a singular mission to the Gentiles. Increasingly his gospel of freedom, the message he had received directly from Jesus, would push beyond the boundaries of his mentor, Barnabas, offering a message of salvation that no longer required adherence to Jewish Law.

We see the first recorded signs of difference between Paul and Barnabas in the town of Lystra. When the pair faced persecution there, Paul alone was driven to the edge of town and almost killed. It appeared their roles were changing. In this account from Acts, we see Paul emerging as the leader and therefore the one who would pay the price.

> In Lystra there was a man sitting who could not use his feet and had never walked, for he had been crippled from birth. He listened to Paul as he was speaking. And Paul, looking at him intently and seeing that he had faith to be healed, said in a loud voice, "Stand upright on your feet." And the man sprang up and began to walk. When the crowds saw what Paul had done, they shouted in the Lycaonian language, "The gods have come down to us in human form!" Barnabas they called Zeus, and Paul they called Hermes, because he was the chief speaker. The priest of Zeus, whose temple was just outside the city, brought oxen and garlands to the gates; he and the crowds wanted to offer sacrifice. When the Apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of it, they tore their clothes and rushed out into the crowd, shouting, "Friends, why are you doing this? We are mortals just like you, and we bring you good news, that you should turn from these worthless things to the living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all that is in them. In past generations He allowed all the nations to follow

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> their own ways; yet He has not left himself without a witness in doing good—giving you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, and filling you with food and your hearts with joy." Even with these words, they scarcely restrained the crowds from offering sacrifice to them. But Jews came there from Antioch and Iconium and won over the crowds. Then they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing that he was dead. But when the disciples surrounded him, he got up and went into the city. The next day he went on with Barnabas to Derbe. (Acts 14:8–20)

It would not have been unusual for apostles traveling from town to town to arrive with a message of a Messiah or even to make an appeal to the God-fearers in a synagogue, so why, when "Jews came there from Antioch and Iconium," was Paul treated with hostility, without harm coming to Barnabas? Some might argue it was because Paul was the key speaker, but would that have been enough of a reason not to persecute Barnabas, who was his faithful traveling companion? Acts says both of them were considered gods, so why not take both out of the town to be stoned? And if the people stoned Paul because he was preaching about the Messiah in a way that was unacceptable, why go so far as to try to have him killed? Others speculate there was a mere theological difference between Paul and Barnabas that can be characterized as a case of degree, i.e., a quibble over the act of circumcision—that they basically agreed, but Paul took it too far. But then, what aspect of their teaching did Paul take too far? To find and understand these answers, we need to use our narrative tools to seek out the true source of conflict and the reasons it occurred.

It is undeniable that Paul's preaching pattern is an established motif in the Book of Acts. Within this history Paul, when arriving in a new city, is shown first going to the synagogue, being rejected by the Jews there, and then taking his gospel to the Gentile population in the streets. Over the last several decades, this notion of Paul's trajectory has been tested, and for good reason. The New Perspective movement has effectively shown that Paul was not a person waiting to become a Christian but an unabashed Jew who simply thought the Messiah had come, and the world was about to change along with its prior laws. Some have gone as far as to say that Paul had separate gospels for the Jews and Greeks[5] and that his letters are

5. For an idea of the two paths, or *Sonderweg*, see Gager, *Reinventing Paul*, 146. Also see my Review of *Reinventing Paul*, 128–29. Also see Ridderbos, *Epistle of Paul*, 46–51, which argues against Gager's suggestion of a Sonderweg by stating that any introduction of Jewish Law would be a "threat of the overthrow of the gospel."

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directed only to the God-fearers. This is an easy position to refute given Paul's many references to the forces that opposed him, who wanted to "mutilate the flesh,"[6] or claimed to be the purest Hebrews of Hebrews. He even named such groups as his audience (Phil 3:1–6).

It is indeed true that the ex-Pharisee's Jewish roots did not change. There is little evidence to suggest that the man who lived perfectly under the Law, the "Hebrew of Hebrews" who gave his life to become a Pharisee, denounced his Jewish heritage. On the contrary, as we know, he fanatically preached his ethnicity, which in his pre-Christian past included a hundred-mile walk to Damascus with a Temple guard to find and eliminate a "Hellenizing" Christian church (Gal 1:13, 14; Acts 7:57, 8:3). Few believe that Paul set out to become anti-Jewish or even to frame a Christian paradigm that could mean an indictment of his own religion.[7] It would be equally impossible, however, to dismiss the severe conflict between Paul and his Jewish Christian brethren and the Orthodox Jews (non-Christians).

From the letters of Paul, written from AD 50 to AD 60, to Luke's Acts in AD 85–90 or later, there was a vast passage of time, and with it the world had geographically changed in landscape. After the Jewish Wars of AD 66–70, Luke would have been writing with a new Roman audience, with new sources, and could have been fictionalizing historical realties to dramatize his themes,[8] creating a metanarrative of Paul reaching Rome, or the apostles and then the disciples acting as traveling successors to Jesus so the message could reach Spain, the end of the known world. Last, there were the antagonists of the story, the Jews, who made an easy target for Luke in a way that perhaps satisfied his employer, Theophilus, most likely a Roman patron.

No one can or should underestimate the hurt that using this historical coverage to portray Jews as blocking the message of Jesus, at least Paul's version of that message, has caused. We don't want to underestimate the

6. Paul's reference to "mutilators" in his Letter to the Philippians (Phil 3:2) correlated to his mention of castration in the Letter to the Galatians (Gal 5:12); for the irony in the verse in Philippians, see Thurston and Ryan, *Philippians and Philemon*, 112–13. Though several theories have been considered, Paul's language and argument clearly showed that circumcision was the primary issue: see Reumann, *Philippians*, 472–74.

7. See Harrington, *Witnesses to the Word*, 71, for Paul's view that Jesus fulfilled Judaism. Also see Stauffer, *Christ and the Caesars*, 192–98, for Paul's vision as being in keeping with his faithfulness to Israel.

8. For the literary setting of Acts and the Roman influences see Kahl, "Acts of the Apostles," 137–56.

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power of this perspective when it is presented irresponsibly. No one should be so naïve as to think that placing Christians on the right side of history and Jews, in need of conversion, on the other, dark side of history, would not lead to heartache. It could, and it did. Yet when we have digested the serious threat Luke's tale posed, we must still process its overlap with Paul's testimony in his letters, where he referred in many places to the antagonism he faced from his fellow Jews.

There is no doubt Paul suffered for many reasons including his health, Gentile enemies, dangerous roads, and the list goes on (e.g., 2 Cor 12:10).[9] No doubt Paul's travels alone were perilous, and his preaching efforts might have found occasional enemies when he threatened the powers that be. At the same time, within a biographical framework, it is hard to understand how Paul's life is comprehensible without the central conflict with his own people. His gospel message meant an end to what he believed to be his former Judaism, something his opponents never conceded. Also, Paul was in such conflict with the others that it defined both his mission and his personality, as revealed in his letters. This conflict also exposed how the other Judean-based apostles had very little problem living in the shadow of the Temple or dwelling among Orthodox Jews—a sharp contrast to Paul's relationship, which seemed at war with the Jewish authorities throughout his career.[10]

Paul's early missions could not have occurred without the Diaspora synagogues, but his relationship with them was contentious at best. In contrast Paul's peers—e.g., James, Peter, John, and Barnabas—never suffered in the way he did, or at least not that we see in Paul's letters and secondary sources. They were able to coexist with their brethren. This warrants a few key questions: Why was there such a disparity between Paul and the others? Did they not all believe in Jesus, the Messiah? If preaching this same gospel was their common ground, why would Paul alone be thrown out of the synagogues and categorically rejected by the Jews? For one, Paul did not insist on circumcision or dietary laws. But why would the other apostles see this as contradictory in light of the Messiah and kingdom? They believed

9. The list of perils constitutes *soteria*. See Nock, *Conversion*, 9. For background on travel conditions in Paul's time, see Stambaugh and Bauch, *The New Testament*, 37–41.

10. See examples of Paul's conflicts in Acts 13–15; 14:19; and 16:19–40; also 1 Cor 9:20–23. Later, in nearby Thessalonica, the Jews again incited the crowds and pitted the Christians against the Roman authority (Acts 17:6–8), as told through the Council of Jerusalem (1 Cor 9:20–23; Gal 2:2–4, 2:6; 1 Cor 9:20; Acts 21:26; Phil 3:2; 1 Thess 2:15–16), though he seemed to want to reconcile (Rom 9–11).

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in the return of the Messiah. If we can trust the later Gospels, Jesus had promised it himself. Did they not think all would be transformed in the "twinkling of an eye" (1 Cor 15:52)?

There were many reasons the other apostles were unwilling to accept Paul's teachings about these laws. For one, it is crucial to remember that the Law was a vital, identity-giving aspect of new Christ groups. If a Gentile were not circumcised, he could not share a meal with a Jew. And if a Gentile were serving a piece of steak sacrificed to idols, a Jew could not eat with him. Divisions like this severed fellowship and meant the two sides could not share in the cup and bread of Christ. One group would be seen as impure and defiled and the other as privileged; Paul knew this inequity would not only indict the very message he received from Christ but most likely end his mission. How could the kingdom of God on earth begin with two unequal parties?

A central question was not if one was circumcised or what one ate but with whom one was allowed to eat. Whom one sat with was not a purely theological question but one of ethnic blending that stood at the crossroads of Paul's message to the synagogue. Although in Acts Luke attempted to whitewash many of these conflicts in favor of dwelling on God's divine plan, these well-defined ethnic boundaries provided the very terrain that allows us to witness Peter and Paul crossing over or not. If, as Luke wanted us to believe, there were no severely defined ethnic boundaries, it raises the question: What is all the fighting about? Though it seems disguised below, witness how Peter acknowledged openly that he was actually "breaking the law" to visit a Gentile even though God had intervened and told him to do so.

> Now while Peter was greatly puzzled about what to make of the vision that he had seen, suddenly the men sent by Cornelius appeared. They were asking for Simon's house and were standing by the gate. They called out to ask whether Simon, who was called Peter, was staying there. While Peter was still thinking about the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Look, three men are searching for you. Now get up, go down, and go with them without hesitation; for I have sent them."
>
> So Peter went down to the men and said, "I am the one you are looking for; what is the reason for your coming?" They answered, "Cornelius, a centurion, an upright and God-fearing man, who is well spoken of by the whole Jewish nation, was directed by a holy angel to send for you to come to his house and to hear what you

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> have to say." So Peter invited them in and gave them lodging. The next day he got up and went with them, and some of the believers from Joppa accompanied him. The following day they came to Caesarea. Cornelius was expecting them and had called together his relatives and close friends. On Peter's arrival Cornelius met him, and falling at his feet, worshiped him. But Peter made him get up, saying, "Stand up; I am only a mortal." And as he talked with him, he went in and found that many had assembled; and he said to them, *"You yourselves know that it is unlawful for a Jew to associate with or to visit a Gentile; but God has shown me that I should not call anyone profane or unclean. So when I was sent for, I came without objection. Now may I ask why you sent for me?"* (Acts 10:17–29; italics added)

Peter's vision described a reality that is essential to understanding the conflicts in the New Testament and how they played out with the conflict in Paul's gospel message and life. This was a world in which religion and ethnicity were hard to parse. Where theology began and ethnicity ended was not clear. Our American South is not a perfect analogy, but we can say that, before civil rights laws, both blacks and whites could be Christians or even worship in one church but not eat together at a lunch counter or share seating on the bus.

A better comparison might be the conflict in Yugoslavia and the clearly defined ethnic lines that kept Muslims and Christians apart. Essentially these laws in Judea also kept groups apart, in this case Jews from all foreigners. What would have happened if they'd needed to share a cup or break bread as the central ritual for worship—not only to memorialize their god but to take of his spirit, to receive grace, and to partake of the spiritual world awaiting in the kingdom? Following the laws meant not all the converts were free to sit and eat with one another. Not only would losing this freedom be a source of social discomfort but it could mean one's very salvation and—possibly, in Paul's mind—the delay of the coming of the Messiah.

Philip Esler added a crucial point on how we should understand the notion of ethnicity and made clear how it was not the same as our modern, post-nineteenth-century idea of race:

> The Greeks and the Romans were certainly ethnocentric; they did dislike other peoples, including Judeans and one another, but they did not do so on racial grounds. The basis of these entirely predictable stereotypifications was what I am here calling ethnicity, usually that part of an ethnic boundary constituted by a distinctive

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> culture. Thus the Romans thought the Greeks were characterized by levitas, that is flightiness, lack of determination and grit. They found the Judeans antisocial, and hence misanthropic, especially because of their refusal to participate in imperial feast days. The Greeks found the Romans vulgar and lacking in taste. Philo probably mouths the views typical of Judeans generally when he says, "It has been said that the disposition of the Egyptians is inhospitable intemperate; and the humanity of him who has been exposed to their conduct deserves admiration."

He continued:

> In spite of the Holocaust, anti-Semitism still exists in the world. The first step in meeting an evil like this is to understand it. Such understanding is only possible via a clearheaded investigation of phenomena in their own historical context, not by sloppy application of concepts appropriate to another time and place, however well intentioned.[11]

Keeping in mind how such ancient prejudices still resound today can help us understand why Paul's teachings were met with such violence. Whether they be ethnic or theological perspectives or a combination of both, we need only ponder the history of Christianity (and other religions) to be front-seat witnesses to the most awful atrocities. Religious issues are never minor. Catholicism is always an easy target, what with the Inquisition, but Catholics are not the only guilty parties. John Calvin, the founder of the Reformation, whose work *Institutes of the Christian Religion* is considered by many to be the foundation for the modern West, had a man tortured and burned at the stake for what he believed was doctrinal heresy.[12] His contemporary, Martin Luther, who was perhaps Paul's most famous convert, was not shy about his sentiments toward Jewish people:

> I had made up my mind to write no more either about the Jews or against them. But since I learned that these miserable and accursed people do not cease to lure to themselves even us, that is, the Christians, I have published this little book, so that I might be found among those who opposed such poisonous activities of the Jews who warned the Christians to be on their guard against them. I would not have believed that a Christian could be duped by the Jews into taking their exile and wretchedness upon himself. However, the devil is the god of the world, and wherever God's

11. Esler, *Conflict and Identity*, 52–53.

12. See Bouwsma, *John Calvin*, 27.

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> word is absent he has an easy task, not only with the weak but also with the strong. May God help us. Amen.[13]

We don't need to travel back centuries to find this hatred. Consider modern-day Bosnia or the Protestants versus the Catholics in Ireland or the Hutu majority in Rwanda, where in one hundred days, eight hundred thousand Tutsi were slaughtered. And the list of brutalities goes on. These contemporary conflicts can help prevent us from downplaying or even discounting the severity of these first-century tensions between Paul and his brethren—real issues that plagued Paul out on the mission field and were evident even in his first relationship with Barnabas.

At some point, in the vicinity of Lystra, Barnabas decided he'd had enough and returned to Antioch with reports that likely eroded Paul's relationship with Jerusalem. Paul had finally gone beyond the boundaries of the synagogue with his mission, directly to the Gentiles. Since his revelation Paul had always understood a new and unique vision, but now was his chance—possibly the first one since his exodus from Nabataea—to speak his heart. He had begun by hopping from town to town along the Roman road with Barnabas; now he was making his routes based on the capitals and big cities like Ephesus, Philippi, and Corinth. Once in the cities, he visited the synagogues and focus on the God-worshipers. And though he initially found success, he knew it would not satisfy his Jewish brethren long-term. He was also poaching their contributors, those casual God-fearers who gave money to the synagogues. Others from Antioch who shared Paul's vision joined him. They included new converts like Timothy (his protégé), Silas, and Titus, a Greek disciple Paul had likely met during his mission with Barnabas to Antioch. Titus, like Timothy, had Paul's absolute confidence. Paul used him as a delegate to deliver his letters and carry his collections.

After the split with Barnabas, Paul found independent success preaching his message to Philippi and Thessalonica, two regions that later became important donors to his collection for the Jerusalem Church.[14] Paul's missionary route, which he traveled for fourteen years, stretched across Asia Minor from the Aegean Sea and into Macedonia, from cities like Philippi and down into the heart of Greece and the wealthy city of Corinth.[15]

13. Luther, *Jews and Their Lies*, 311–13.

14. For Paul as an independent missionary after Antioch, see Dunn, *Jesus, Paul*, 161.

15. For background on the culture and society of Corinth, see Winter, *After Paul Left Corinth*, 7–25.

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As a result of his good news, for the first time the world witnessed the god of the Jews performing miracles in the heart of foreign lands. Men and women of all races and religions responded to the power of Christ to heal and bring salvation to a divided world. Paul wanted the Gentiles to come freely to Jesus as Gentiles and not as converts first to Judaism. There was no need for them to keep dietary regulations or be circumcised—a new policy that created enormous tension with those who believed that faith in Jesus was strictly a Jewish phenomenon.[16] If God had revealed himself in this Messiah, and this same Jesus revealed to Paul an age without laws separating Jews from Greeks, why trouble with laws at all?

Paul knew that the farther his mission took him outside the synagogue, the more controversial it would grow among the other apostles, which meant he needed to find new meeting places. From what we know, Paul met his followers at various patrons' homes, called *ekklesiai*.[17] These were not private homes in the way we perceive them today but large households consisting of extended families, partners in trade, workers, and servers.[18]

Loosely basing what we know on Acts, we can see that Paul's mission was already rife with turmoil, yet the Apostles in Judea had never directly confronted him.[19] We can speculate he was watched closely when handling the finances for Antioch but also in the mission field in regard to how his teachings developed among this nascent group. The Jerusalem delegates would have been keeping an eye on him and reporting back. The delegates were sent out from Jerusalem or outposts such as Antioch to supervise the mission. Their main purpose was to monitor how monies were collected and sent back to the home church,[20] but they also reported on the business of the day.

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16. See Stambaugh and Bauch, *The New Testament*, 53.

17. Meeks, *The First*, 74–110. Horsley, *Paul and Empire*, 242–52. *Ekklesia* refers to "a gathering of citizens called out from their homes into some public place, an assembly," "an assembly of the people convened at the public place of the council for the purpose of deliberating," or "an assembly of Christians gathered for worship in a religious meeting." Also see Thayer, *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*.

18. Meeks, *The First*, 76–77. For background information about the interdependent units within Roman society, see Lampe, "Paul, Patrons, and Clients," 488–523. For the influence of the Greco-Roman household on the early Christian church, see Meeks, *The First*, 106.

19. For a detailed look at Paul's mission as recorded in Acts, see Achtemeier, Green, and Thompson, *Introducing the New Testament*, 257–61.

20. These delegates also needed to make certain these transactions were done properly in the eyes of Rome, which forbade any collections or taxes other than those for the

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For the average individual listening to Paul, perhaps elite discussions of the finer points of philosophy or theology were not the issue. But on the ground, both Jew and Greek knew what it meant to eat or not eat with another.[21] To refuse a dinner invitation based on the host's nation of origin was to dishonor that person. Privilege based on ethnic origin was also not foreign in those times, as we have seen above.

Probably through the delegates, who traveled back and forth from Antioch to Jerusalem, Paul's reputation eventually reached the ears of Jesus's brother, James. After fourteen years of Paul's travels, first with Barnabas and then on his own, for reasons we can suspect were not positive, to say the least, James wanted Paul to return.[22] He called on the rogue preacher to come back from the mission field, which was probably in Europe at that time—a trip that would have taken weeks and given Paul time to ponder what Barnabas had shared with the others. It was not surprising that the seeds sown by following conflicting authorities (a relationship with the historical Jesus versus Paul's isolated vision) would grow into an outright clash.

During those long days on the high seas and across the winding roads, Paul pondered his fate.[23] He knew he had gone too far. Ironically he also knew he had done exactly what Jesus had told him to do. The questions

Jewish state; see Nickle, *The Collection*, 88–89. Also see Rajak, *Josephus*, 122, for information about the Temple tax. For the idea that James sent the delegates or at least that they were allied with James, who "became the leader of the Jerusalem Church after Peter left Jerusalem," see Matera, *Galatians*, 85. See Dibelius, *James*, 13, for James as the head of the church after Peter left Jerusalem. Also, James was referred to as "Bishop of the Church at Jerusalem" in Aquinas, *Commentary*, 47.

21. For family meals, see Sampley, *Paul in the Greco-Roman World*, 275–76; Johnson, *Among the Gentiles*, 144; Osiek and Balch, *Families*, 193–204. For Paul's teaching in Antioch as a threat to Peter and Barnabas, see Dunn, *Jesus, Paul*, 136.

22. Although in Galatians 2:2, Paul said he returned because of a "revelation," we have seen already that he often took some license with the term. Whether he had a true revelation or not, his return seems to have been compelled by some very human factors. Based on the reception he received in Jerusalem, it seems clear he was summoned there for a prolonged discussion about the gospel he was preaching. Why else would Paul have brought Titus and announced his willingness to publicly circumcise him? He had given up his entire life and his affluence for a belief that rendered this very act meaningless. The only logical conclusion is that he was forced to return. See Betz, *Galatians*, 85; and Haenchen, *The Acts*, 464.

23. Calculating for three missionary journeys with the help of sea routes, roads, and postal services, it is estimated that Paul traversed 6,200 miles! See Hawthorne and Martin, *Philippians*, 945–46.

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were: Did Jerusalem believe him, or had they fallen back into a more rigid stance? Did he still have their support regarding a Gentile mission? Or had he been operating alone for fourteen years? What had changed? He had gambled all on his revelation in the desert, and now Jerusalem could end his mission.[24] It was a humiliating recall. He would take Titus, a Gentile, with him as an exemplar of the new mission, and a possible statement of defiance.[25] This attitude toward the Jewish authorities, in light of Paul's new mission from Christ, leads us to conclude he returned only because he was compelled to work out a deal.

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24. Without James's support Paul would have had no roots for his Gentile mission in the Holy Land, and the authority of his message would have been based solely on his vision of Jesus. He would have needed the relationship to claim apostolic succession. See Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament*, 61, for the significance of Paul's collection to his place within apostolic succession. In addition, without James and Jerusalem, how could there have been the final Parousia? Jesus, as the Messiah, was to return to rule in Jerusalem with his twelve apostles, or pillars of the Temple. For background on the meaning of *pillars*, see Bauckham, "James and the Jerusalem Church."

25. Gerd Lüdemann , interviewed by Robert Orlando for the film *A Polite Bribe*, directed by Robert Orlando (2013; The Nexus Project, LLC), characterized the bringing of Titus as a "dare" forcing the hand of the Jewish Christians, as did Candida Moss, claiming the Jewish-Christians were trying to force Paul's hand, a step he was willing to take to complete the operation. For more insight on the dynamics in this meeting, see Bruce, *The Pauline Circle*, 58–65.

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