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Thesis and History of Research

THESIS

What kind of death did Jesus die, according to the NT authors: representative or substitutionary? And what background influences shaped the NT authors' presentation of Jesus' death? In this monograph, I argue a twofold thesis. First, in the Epistle to the Romans, Paul presents Jesus' death as both a *representation of* and a *substitute for* Jews and Gentiles. Second, the Jewish martyrological narratives are a background behind his presentation of Jesus' death in Romans. By representation, I mean that Jesus became the sinner in that he functioned as the sinner in life and in death, although he was not an ontological sinner. By substitution, I mean that Jesus, a Torah-observant Jew, died in the place of non-Torah-observant Jewish and Gentile sinners in order to accomplish specific soteriological benefits for them.¹ By Jewish martyrological narratives, I refer to the narratives in 2 and 4 Maccabees and LXX Dan 3:1–90 that record the deaths of Torah-observant Jews for the salvation of non-Torah-observant Israel.

I endeavor to support the thesis in this book and to advance the arguments by means of grammatical-historical exegesis and by means of a conceptual, theological, and comparative analysis of all of the relevant texts in the Jewish martyrological narratives and in Romans. I develop the following arguments to support my thesis. First, the Jewish martyrological narratives appropriated Levitical cultic language and Isaianic language to

1. For a similar approach, see Simon J. Gathercole, *Defending Substitution*.

the deaths of the Jewish martyrs (Torah-observant Jews) to present their deaths as a representation, a substitution, and as Israel's Yom Kippur for non-Torah-observant sinners. Second, in a parallel way Paul similarly appropriated Levitical cultic language and Isaianic language to the death of Jesus (a Torah-observant Jew) to present his death as a representation, a substitution, and as the Yom Kippur for Jews and Gentiles (non-Torah-observant sinners).²

HISTORY OF RESEARCH³

Jesus' death for others is an important historical and theological motif in many of Paul's letters.⁴ Discussions about the background influences behind and the origins of Paul's conception of Jesus' death have a long and prestigious history in biblical scholarship.⁵ Scholarly discussion, however, as to whether martyr theology influenced Paul's conception of Jesus' death gained widespread attention in the twentieth century. The discussion focused mainly on five trajectories of thought, which I discuss in detail below.

2. To clarify, I do not argue for a central atonement model in Romans. Instead, I simply argue that both representation and substitution are present in Romans and that the Jewish martyrological narratives are a background behind Paul's presentation of Jesus' death in Romans. Furthermore, my book does not attempt to engage dogmatic claims in favor of or against representation and substitution. Rather, I discuss representation and substitution as these categories appear in Paul's argument in Romans. Finally, my book does not attempt to discuss all of the related theological, philosophical, and practical implications of representation and substitution in Romans. To the contrary, my book proposes that both representation and substitution are important elements in Romans.

3. This history of research overlaps with my 2010 book *Maccabean Martyr Traditions*, but this monograph provides an up to date survey of scholarship up to 2015.

4. In a 1995 monograph on the death of Jesus, John T. Carroll and Joel B. Green rightly acknowledged that "Paul is widely recognized as the quintessential theologian of the cross. The aptness of the description is suggested not only by the sheer quantity of references to the cross in his correspondence but also by the multitudinous ways in which Jesus' suffering and death are woven into the fabric of Paul's letters. Indeed, the passion of Christ is related to all aspects of Paul's apostolic message—especially his soteriology, Christology, eschatology, and ethics—and is pivotal to his self-characterization as an apostle and servant of Christ." For the full quote and scriptural citations that support the statement, see Carroll and Green, *The Death of Jesus in Early Christianity*, 113. However, the authors of the preceding quote likewise contended that scholars have overemphasized substitutionary atonement in Paul's letters and in his soteriology and that Paul does not view Jesus' death as a vicarious punishment. For example, Carroll and Green, *The Death of Jesus in Early Christianity*, 113–15, 123.

5. For a bibliography, see Finlan, *The Background and Content of Paul's Cultic Atonement Metaphors*; Williams, *Maccabean Martyr Traditions*, 6–26; Williams, *For Whom Did Christ Die?* 24–27.

The first part of the history of research focuses on scholars who have discussed the background behind Paul's understanding and presentation of Jesus' death. The second part of the history of research focuses on scholars who have argued that Paul presents Jesus' death as a substitution for or as a representation of others.

1. Jewish Martyrological Narratives Not the Background behind Paul's Presentation of Jesus' Death in Paul

Jewish Martyrological Narratives, Jesus' Death, and ἱλαστήριον

First, there are those scholars who argued that martyr theology was *not* the background behind Paul's presentation of Jesus' death. Ethelbert Stauffer was the first scholar to analyze the relevant literature and then to set martyr theology into systematic categories.⁶ In 1955, Stauffer discussed martyrdom in 2 and 4 Maccabees, the New Testament, Polycarp, and in texts that post-date the New Testament. However, he does not discuss whether martyr theology is the background in front of which interpreters should read Paul.

In 1955, Leon Morris considered the background behind Paul's conception of Jesus' death.⁷ His investigation was particularly concerned with the meaning of ἱλαστήριον in Rom 3:25. He argued that there is no clear meaning of ἱλαστήριον. Yet, he contended that it refers not to the mercy seat nor to the Yom Kippur ritual, but to the removal of God's wrath. Regarding martyr theology and ἱλαστήριον, Morris argued that 4 Macc 17:21–22 is parallel with Rom 3:25 since both contain ἱλαστήριον.⁸ He likewise argued that a parallel between these two texts based on this one term does not necessarily mean that martyr theology (and particularly 4 Macc 17:21–22) shaped Paul's understanding of Jesus' death. Instead, Morris emphasized that the two texts have similar terms, and he forcefully argued that the OT was Paul's primary background.⁹

6. Stauffer, *New Testament Theology*, 185–334.

7. Morris, "The Meaning," 3–43. References are to the third edition published in 1965.

8. This is the only extant text where the author applies ἱλαστήριον to the vicarious death of a Torah-observant Jew for the Torah-disobedience for their soteriological benefit.

9. Although the following scholars interpret Rom 3:25–26 differently, see additional arguments against a martyrological background behind Paul's use of ἱλαστήριον in Rom 3:25 in Fryer, "*Hilastērion*," 99–116, esp. 103–4; Stuhlmacher, *Romans*, 58–61; Travis, *Christ and the Judgment of God*, 190–91; Moo, *Romans*, 230–40, esp. 27–30; Jewett, *Romans*, 286; Grayston, "Atonement and Martyrdom," 250–63; Knöppler, *Sühne*, 112–17;

In his 1999 unpublished doctoral thesis at Cambridge University, Daniel P. Bailey provided the most detailed analysis of ἱλαστήριον in current English-speaking scholarship. Bailey's work is intensely lexical. He analyzed all of the relevant extant texts wherein ἱλαστήριον and related terms occur in pagan Hellenistic literature and in Hellenistic Jewish literature, and he compared those occurrences with Paul's use of the term in Rom 3:25. He argued with lexical *tour de force* that the term's occurrences in 4 Macc 17:22 and Rom 3:25 have a distinct meaning from one another. After Bailey reviewed the evidence in the relevant Hellenistic literature that he argued supports reading the term as propitiatory, he argued that various inscriptions confirm that ἱλαστήρια were offered either to appease the offended deity or to elicit a favor from it. Additionally, Bailey claims that his analysis supports that -τήριον words regularly refer to places instead of to actions. He concludes that the meaning of ἱλαστήριον in 4 Macc 17:22 as it relates to the martyrs' deaths should be sought against a non-sacrificial background. 4 Maccabees nowhere states that the martyrs died as atoning sacrifices for Israel's sin, and Paul's background behind ἱλαστήριον is the OT mercy seat instead of martyr theology.¹⁰

In his 2002 monograph *Christ as Devotio*, Basil S. Davis argued that Paul presents Jesus as *Devotio* in Gal 3:13.¹¹ In the Greco-Roman world, there were different types of *Devotio* sacrifices. One type died in order to save the people from an imminent disaster. Davis contended that the curse language in Galatians should be understood in light of the Greco-Roman culture of cursing. To defend this thesis, Davis offered evidence from the curse tablets and from Greek and Latin authors who were contemporaries of

Holland, *Contours*, 157–82.

10. Bailey, "Mercy Seat." The mercy seat reading has a long and prestigious history. For example, Origen, *Romans*, 216–25; Calvin, *Romans*, 75; Barth, *Romans*, 104–5; Manson, "ἱλαστήριον," 1–10; Nygren, *Romans*, 156–62; Lyonnet, "expiationis," 336–52; Lyonett, *Sin*, 157–66; Bruce, *Romans*, 104–7; Swain, "For Our Sins," 131–39; Wilckens, *Römer*, 191–92; Käsemann, *Romans*, 97; Janowski, *Sühne*, 350–54; Meyer, "The Pre-Pauline Formula," 198–8; Hultgren, *Paul's Gospel and Mission*, 59–60; Hultgren, *Paul's Letter to the Romans*, 156–57; Schreiner, *Romans*, 192 n. 24 and 192–95; Newton, *The Concept of Purity at Qumran*, 76–77; Barrett, *Romans*, 73–75; Schlatter, *Romans*, 99; Byrne, *Romans*, 132–33; Hooker, *Not Ashamed*, 43–44; Kraus, *Der Tod Jesu*; Ben Ezra, *Yom Kippur*, 198–202; Knöppler, *Sühne*, 112–17; Jewett, *Romans*, 286–87. Similarly Talbert (*Romans*, 110–15), who argues that ἱλαστήριον refers to the new mercy seat as the locus of the divine presence. Since Bailey's 1999 doctoral thesis, no scholar who defends the mercy seat interpretation of Rom 3:25 has offered any fresh arguments for this interpretation. Instead, scholars continue to recycle old arguments to support this reading.

11. Davis, *Christ as Devotio: The Argument of Galatians 3:1–14*.

Paul.¹² Basil contended that one should look beyond the Jewish background when searching for the origins of Paul's cursing language in Gal 3:10–13.¹³ According to him, if one finds similar curse language in non-Jewish texts as one finds in Gal 3:10–13, then one should include those texts in the investigation by considering the meaning of the curse language in their literary contexts as a key for interpreting the curse language in Gal 3:13.¹⁴ Davis offered an impressive analysis of ancient Greek and Latin texts with a *Devotio* theme in them with the intent of highlighting the parallels between those traditions and Gal 3:10–13.¹⁵ Davis argues since the *Devotio* curse formula was present in Paul's Greco-Roman culture and since Paul states that Jesus redeemed the "us" from the curse of the law with language similar to that of ancient *Devotio* texts, the latter likely provided Paul with the background for his description of Christ as a redeemer of those under the curse.

In a 2012 essay, Markus Tiwald assumed that the Yom Kippur ritual was the background behind Rom 3:25. He argued that the background behind Paul's use of ἱλαστήριον in Rom 3:25 is not martyrological for at least two reasons: grammar and date. That is, if Rahlfs' critical edition to the Septuagint is correct in that an article should precede ἱλαστήριον, then in 4 Macc 17:22 the latter is an adjective describing θανάτου (τοῦ ἱλαστηρίου θανάτου). The preceding construction makes a connection with Romans 3 unlikely since ἱλαστήριον is not attributive in Rom 3:25. Furthermore, if most scholars are correct, then we should date 4 Maccabees to the latter part of the first century (e.g., 90–100 CE). According to Tiwald, therefore, 4 Maccabees should no longer be seen as a reference text for Paul in Romans 3 as Eduard Lohse maintained in a monograph on martyrdom in 1955 and again in his Romans commentary in 2003.¹⁶ Contrary to Bailey's 1999 doctoral thesis, Tiwald argued that ἱλαστήριον in Rom 3:25 refers to the Yom Kippur ritual and not necessarily to the mercy seat.¹⁷ As Tiwald stated,

Yom Kippur was the most important celebration in the second temple. And קִפּוּרִים was the holiest place of the temple. Even if it no longer existed in the second temple, its mythic importance continued unbroken. Therefore, by using the expression that God has displayed Christ publicly as ἱλαστήριον, Paul maintains that in Jesus' death the apex of fulfillment of all the expectations

12. Ibid., 12, 119–200.

13. Ibid., 139.

14. Ibid., 141.

15. Ibid., 119–220.

16. Tiwald, "Christ as HILASTERION (Rom 3:25)," 189–208, esp. 192.

17. Ibid., 194, 198.

of redemption has now been reached. Christ is the fulfillment of all hopes to obtain salvation and atonement. In this *pars pro toto* view two different aspects of interpretation, which sometimes have been seen as a contradiction, may also coexist: Christ now becomes the eschatological atonement for our sin . . . and he also becomes the place of the presence of God in this world.¹⁸

Jewish Martyrological Narratives, Jesus' Death, and Reconciliation

In his 1953 monograph on reconciliation, Jacques Dupont offered a detailed analysis of Paul's reconciliation motif and related terms. According to Dupont, martyr traditions were not Paul's background behind his reconciliation motif in Romans and 2 Corinthians.¹⁹ In 1981, Ralph Martin's classic work on reconciliation in Paul discussed the similarities between martyr theology and Paul with regard to reconciliation.²⁰ Martin limited his study to Rom 5:9–11 and 2 Cor 5:18–21. He acknowledged that the presence of *καταλλάσσω* and of the concepts of God's wrath, judgment, and vicarious suffering for sin seem to support a connection between 2 Macc 7:32–33 and Paul. However, he suggested that the distinctions between the traditions suggest otherwise. For example, Martin first pointed out that in 2 Macc 7:33, the martyrs asked God to be reconciled to their servants (*καὶ πάλιν καταλλαγήσεται τοῖς ἐαυτοῦ δούλοις*). The martyrs did not ask God to reconcile them to him. Second, Martin noted that the martyrs offered themselves to God as vicarious acts of piety and merit. Third, Paul and the other apostles emphasize that God initiates reconciliation and that he is never the object of reconciliation in the New Testament.²¹

Stanley E. Porter's discussion of martyr theology and Paul focuses on the occurrence of the *καταλλάσσω* and *καταλλαγῇ* terminology. Porter's thesis is that Paul's reconciliation terminology is unique to him because in Paul God initiates reconciliation, because reconciliation includes the concept

18. Ibid., 205.

19. Dupont, *La reconciliation*.

20. Martin, *Reconciliation*, 105–6. Against a martyrological background behind Paul's reconciliation terminology, see also Beale, "Reconciliation in 2 Corinthians 5–7," 550–81.

21. For further observations about the differences between reconciliation in 2 Maccabees and Paul's letters, see Porter, *καταλλάσσω*, 39–77; Breytenbach, *Versöhnung*, 40–83; Breytenbach, "Versöhnung, Stellvertretung," 59–73; Breytenbach, "Christus starb für uns," 447–75; Breytenbach, "Salvation of the Reconciled," 271–86; Beale, "Reconciliation in 2 Corinthians 5–7," 550–81; Thrall, *Second Corinthians*, 429–39, esp. 429–30.

of justification, because Paul uses passive verbs when he speaks of reconciliation, because Paul grounds reconciliation in Jesus' death, and because for Paul reconciliation communicates a personal and intimate relationship between parties. Consequently, martyr theology is not the background in front of which to read reconciliation in Paul.²²

In a series of publications dating from 1989 to 2010,²³ Cilliers Breytenbach argued that the reconciliation terminology in 2 Maccabees was not Paul's background for his use of reconciliation terminology. Instead, non-religious Hellenistic literature influenced Paul. There reconciliation terminology only appears in political or military contexts. According to Breytenbach, the reconciliation terminology in Paul is different from its occurrence in 2 Maccabees, Philo, and Josephus, each of which emphasizes the need for God to be reconciled to his people, while Paul stresses the need for sinners to be reconciled to God. He additionally argued that Paul's use of this terminology is not sacrificial.²⁴

In a 2010 essay, Breytenbach argued that Paul's reconciliation metaphor should be understood as two different domains: target domain and source domain. The target domain is the audience to which the reconciliation metaphor is directed. The source domain is the place from which the metaphor emerges. Paul's target domain determined how he structured parts of the source domain to appropriate his target domain. The result was that Paul used a non-religious metaphor from one target domain and religiously applied it to a different target domain. Consequently, Breytenbach concluded that some scholars have misinterpreted Paul's use of the reconciliation metaphor in that they required "the reproduction of the source domain in the target domain. In terms of the rules and functions of mapping across semantic boundaries, it is inappropriate to demand the target to be described as a replica of the source."²⁵

By means of an impressive analysis of a few secular Hellenistic and Roman texts, Breytenbach argued that Paul's usage of the reconciliation metaphor in 2 Cor 5:18–20 is similar to the usage in Hellenistic and Roman polis-diplomacy texts. For example, he cited texts in Diodor (5.75.1; 16.82.3), Cassius Dio (41.16.4; 48.11.1–2), 2 Maccabees (4:11; 5:17; 8:17), Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*Ant. Rom.* 2.45.6; 3.9.2; 3.50.4; 5.21.1; 5.31.1–2; 5.62.1; 6.67.2; 6.88.2), Josephus (*Ant.* 15.136), private letters from the CE

22. Porter, *καταλλάσσω in Ancient Greek Literature*.

23. Breytenbach, "Salvation of the Reconciled," 171–86.

24. Breytenbach, *Versöhnung*, 40–83; Breytenbach, "Versöhnung," *Stellvertretung*, 59–73; Breytenbach, "Christus starb für uns," 447–75; Breytenbach, "Salvation of the Reconciled," 271–86; Breytenbach, "Salvation of the Reconciled," 177–79.

25. Breytenbach, "Salvation of the Reconciled," 173.

era (*P.Mich.* 8.502.7–8; *P.Giss.* 17.13–14), Plutarch (*Pel.* 26.2), Chersias the poet (*Mor.* 156f), and Aelius Aristides (*Orationes* 3.344) that discuss reconciliation with similar or the same vocabulary as Paul. These texts express that ambassadors pursued reconciliation by politically negotiating peace between two parties by begging or urging the estranged party to be reconciled to the offended party.²⁶ Breytenbach, therefore, concluded that “there can be little doubt that Paul depicts his role as apostle to the Corinthians metaphorically in the language of the Hellenistic and Roman polis-diplomacy.”²⁷ He based his conclusion on the use of the verbs *πρεσβεύομεν*, *παρακαλοῦντος*, and *δεόμεθα*, which occur in 2 Cor 5:20 and in secular texts that he discussed. The lexical parallels suggest that Paul borrowed from the domain of Greco-Roman political diplomacy to depict his mediating role to the Corinthians, not from the domain of sacrificial ritual. According to Breytenbach, the latter point explains why sacrificial language is absent in 2 Cor 5:18–20 and Rom 5:10–11. Accordingly, the language of reconciliation “has in fact no cultic background. Furthermore, it rarely transferred to relationships between gods and between gods and humans.”²⁸

In a series of publications in 1981, 1996, and 2002, Seyoon Kim discussed the origins of Paul’s gospel.²⁹ With regard to reconciliation, Kim argued that it is unlikely that martyr traditions influenced Paul’s understanding of Jesus’ death. Although he acknowledged the possibility of a martyrological reading of reconciliation in Paul, he asserted that such

26. Dio Halicarnassus *Ant. Rom.* 2.45.6; 3.9.2; 3.50.4; 5.21.1; 5.31.1–2; 5.62.1; 6.67.2; 6.88.2; 2 Macc 4:11.

27. Breytenbach, “Salvation of the Reconciled,” 175.

28. *Ibid.*, 175–76. Breytenbach argued that a few secular texts in Greco-Roman literature describe reconciliation as the actions of a deity or the relationship between the gods. But the emphasis in these texts is on human action instead of divine action. The former’s actions alter the relationship between these two parties from enmity to friendship. For his discussion of these texts, see “Salvation of the Reconciled,” 176–79. Breytenbach’s 2010 essay further contended that Paul’s Christ died *ὑπὲρ πάντων* language in 2 Cor 5:14 does not refer to atonement since his background is the Greek tradition of “dying for,” albeit that he gives the Greek tradition an awkward twist when he uses it to describe how humanity benefits from Christ’s death for all. Breytenbach offers three unconvincing reasons. First, in 2 Cor 5:14, Paul states that Christ died “for all” instead of “for our sins” as in 1 Cor 15:3. Second, *ὑπὲρ* in 2 Cor 5:14 communicates the benefit of Christ’s death for every sinner. By this, Paul universalizes and personalizes the efficacy of Jesus’ death. Third, Paul substitutes *εἰς* for *Χριστός*. See his, “Salvation of the Reconciled,” 180. For his discussion of non-sacrificial vicarious suffering in Paul’s letters, see his 2010 essay (“The ‘For Us’ Phrases in Pauline Soteriology, 59–81”).

29. Kim, “2 Cor. 5:11–21 and Reconciliation,” 360–84; Kim, *The Origins of Paul’s Gospel*, 215–38. The latter work is a revised version of his 1977 doctoral thesis submitted at the University of Manchester and originally published in 1981 by Mohr Siebeck. My discussion from Kim primarily comes from his 2002 edition.

a reading cannot explain either the means by which Paul soteriologically applies the reconciliation terminology to the death of Jesus or the reason that Paul describes his ministry as a τὴν διακονίαν τῆς καταλλαγῆς.³⁰ Kim specifically defended his thesis that the Damascus-Road experience is the background behind Paul's reconciliation terminology by asserting that Paul uses the terminology to suggest that God reconciles humans to himself or to other human beings and never to declare that God is reconciled or that God reconciles himself to human beings.³¹ For example, in 2 Macc 7:32–33, the seventh martyr utters: εἰ δὲ χάριν ἐπιπλήξεως καὶ παιδείας ὁ ζῶν κύριος ἡμῶν βραχέως ἐπώργισται καὶ πάλιν καταλλαγῆσεται τοῖς ἑαυτοῦ δούλοις.³²

Contrary to Paul's usage of the reconciliation terminology in 2 Cor 5:18–20³³ and Rom 5:10–11,³⁴ Kim asserts that the Hellenistic Jewish usage and the profane Hellenistic usage affirm that God needs to be reconciled to the people.³⁵ These distinctions between Paul and the Hellenistic Jewish traditions suggest that “Paul deliberately makes a fundamental correction of the Hellenistic Jewish conception of reconciliation between God and human beings: it is not God who needs to be reconciled to human beings, but it is human beings who need to be reconciled to God; and it is not by repentance, prayers, or good works on the part of the human beings that reconciliation is brought between God and human beings, but it is by his grace that God reconciles human beings to himself.”³⁶ Kim thinks 2 Cor 5:11–21 provides the earliest and the best access to the origin of reconciliation in Paul.³⁷

In his 2011 monograph on Romans, Richard N. Longenecker distinguished between the use of reconciliation language among the Jews in

30. Kim is reacting to I. Howard Marshall's view here (to be discussed later) in his “Reconciliation,” 129ff.

31. Kim (*The Origin of Paul's Gospel*, 220) acknowledged that Hofius (“Erwägungen,” 14) first suggested this idea but that he did not defend it.

32. Kim, *The Origins of Paul's Gospel*, 217.

33. τὰ δὲ πάντα ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ καταλλάξαντος ἡμᾶς ἑαυτῷ διὰ Χριστοῦ καὶ δόντος ἡμῖν τὴν διακονίαν τῆς καταλλαγῆς, ὥς ὅτι θεὸς ἦν ἐν Χριστῷ κόσμον καταλλάσσειν ἑαυτῷ, μὴ λογιζόμενος αὐτοῖς τὰ παραπτώματα αὐτῶν καὶ θέμενος ἐν ἡμῖν τὸν λόγον τῆς καταλλαγῆς. Ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ οὖν πρεσβεύομεν ὡς τοῦ θεοῦ παρακαλοῦντος δι' ἡμῶν δεόμεθα ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ, καταλλάγητε τῷ θεῷ.

34. εἰ γὰρ ἔχθροὶ ὄντες κατηλλάγημεν τῷ θεῷ διὰ τοῦ θανάτου τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ, πολλῶ μᾶλλον καταλλαγέντες σωθησόμεθα ἐν τῇ ζωῇ αὐτοῦ· οὐ μόνον δέ, ἀλλὰ καὶ καυχώμενοι ἐν τῷ θεῷ διὰ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ δι' οὗ νῦν τὴν καταλλαγὴν ἐλάβομεν.

35. Kim, *Origins of Paul's Gospel*, 217.

36. Ibid.

37. Ibid., 220. On the similarities and differences between Paul's reconciliation motif and 2 Maccabees' reconciliation motif, see Barnett, *Second Corinthians*, 303 n. 10.

2 Maccabees, in Josephus, and its use in Paul. According to Longenecker, God is reconciled in the Jewish texts, whereas in Paul God reconciles sinners to God. Since Paul is the only NT author to use the reconciliation language and since the language does not appear in the earliest Christian writers, Paul probably learned this language because of its inclusion in early Christian confessional material. He came to appreciate such language as accurate expressing what he personally experienced in his relationship with God through Christ by the Spirit. Longenecker stated four reasons why Paul likely borrowed his reconciliation language from early Christian confessions, all of which he based on 2 Cor 5:18–20. First, Paul presents in 2 Cor 5:20 a certain balance structure. Second, Paul introduces the verse with the particle ὅτι, which Paul and other NT writers used to introduce a quotation from traditional material. Third, the verse formally incorporates early Christian proclamation. Fourth, 5:19 is central to 5:18 and 5:20.³⁸

Jewish Martyrological Narratives, Jesus' Death, and Sacrifice

In a series of publications in the 1990s, Bradley H. McLean focused on both the background behind Paul's presentation of Jesus' death and on whether Jesus' death was an atoning sacrifice. His most detailed work on Jesus' death in Paul appeared in a monograph in 1996.³⁹ He specifically focused on the meaning and background behind Gal 3:13.⁴⁰ He argued that Paul's explanation of the cursed Christ is bound up with the larger question of the relationship between transgression, law, and faith, for Paul cites his image of the cursed Christ in the context of arguing against Gentile observance of the Jewish law.⁴¹ Paul's concept of being under a curse should be understood in physical terms. That is to say, transgressors actually incur a deadly curse and are subject to its power, because Paul describes sin as not merely the sum of wrongdoings, but as a hostile power that clings to the human flesh. Consequently, Paul's "under a curse" language is synonymous with his "under sin" language.⁴² Even if Christians were able to do all the law's ordinances, they would still be doomed since the law belongs to the old age.⁴³ McLean

38. For Longenecker's discussion, see *Introducing Romans*, 337–43.

39. McLean, *The Cursed Christ*.

40. For a detailed analysis of the background behind Gal 3:13, see my forthcoming *Christ Redeemed "Us" From the Curse of the Law . . . : A Martyrological Reading of Galatians 3:13* LNTS (London: T. & T. Clark, forthcoming).

41. McLean, *The Cursed Christ*, 113.

42. *Ibid.* 123.

43. *Ibid.*

affirms substitutionary atonement.⁴⁴ “Christ offered his own life as payment for (in exchange for) the lives of Christians who were slaves to the law. This commercial exchange explains how Christians are freed from the curse at the cost of Christ’s life which was given in exchange.”⁴⁵ However, McLean argues that Christ’s substitutionary death in Gal 3:13 should be understood as a curse instead of as an atoning sacrifice.⁴⁶ The curse of Christ originated from the law, not God.⁴⁷ McLean concluded that one cannot support a genealogical connection between martyr traditions and Paul. Instead, he contended that the best one can do is argue that Paul shared the same available paradigm as the traditions that he parallels.⁴⁸

In his 1995 monograph on Paul’s gospel, Christopher Davis agreed that Paul’s presentation of Jesus’ death has parallels with the martyr theology in 4 Maccabees. However, he disagreed that martyr theology could have been the background behind Paul’s presentation of Jesus’ death. Paul sets apart Christ’s death from other humans who suffered an unjust execution when he attaches purgative significance to Jesus’ death. Paul may offer faint echoes of substitution, but he does not present Jesus’ death as a vicarious substitutionary atonement when he uses the Christ-died-for-us formula.⁴⁹

In a 2005 essay, Henk S. Versnel argued that the kind of vicarious death for the soteriological benefit of another that occurs in the NT and in Paul’s letters does not occur in the OT or in 2 Maccabees. Instead, he argued that Greco-Roman pagan texts provided the background for the concept of vicarious death for the soteriological benefits of others in 4 Maccabees, in the NT outside of Paul, and in the Pauline letters. Versnel analyzed several Greek and a few Roman texts. With this analysis, he differentiated between the concepts of dying for a creed, dying for or instead of someone, patriotic death, vicarious death in classical Greece and the early Roman Republic and the later Republic and early Principate, the *Devotio*, and the *Devotio* for the Principate.⁵⁰

Based upon his analysis of the aforementioned texts, Versnel suggested the following four arguments: First, Greek elements of the “dying for” motif

44. Ibid., 126–31 and n. 66.

45. Ibid., 131.

46. McLean developed the above argument earlier in two articles in the 1990s. For example, see his “Christ as *Pharmakos* in Pauline Soteriology”; McLean, “The Absence of Atoning Sacrifice in Paul’s Soteriology.” For a short discussion of martyr theology and sacrifice in Paul, see Daly, *Christian Sacrifice*, 236–50.

47. McLean, *The Cursed Christ*, 137.

48. Ibid., 12–9.

49. Davis, *The Structure of Paul’s Gospel*, 120–24.

50. Versnel, “Making Sense of Jesus’ Death: The Pagan Contribution,” 227–53.

influenced various terminological and conceptual elements of the idea of “dying for” in 2 and 4 Maccabees, Paul, and other NT letters.⁵¹ Second, in agreement with Williams and Hengel, Versnel stated that the “dying for” formula in 2 Maccabees betrays Greek influences, but these influences should be restricted to notions of noble death, which belong to the categories of philosophical and patriotic death. The vicarious death for the soteriological benefit of another is not present in 2 Maccabees. It is only present in 4 Maccabees.⁵² “There existed no explicit reference to a consciously intended vicarious soteriological death in pre-NT Jewish scriptures.”⁵³

Third, according to Versnel, NT authors neither directly nor exclusively developed the notion of the vicariousness of Jesus’ death from 2 and 4 Maccabees. Thus, since both the Jewish Scriptures and the pre-Christian non-canonical texts are without the idea of a vicarious death for the soteriological benefit of another in the sense that Versnel defines it, such interpretations of Jesus’ death in the NT were likely modeled after non-Jewish, Greco-Roman examples.⁵⁴ Fourth, the preceding points presented Versnel with an historical problem, which he asserted that many scholars had ignored prior to his work. Namely, “how are we to explain that these ideas of vicarious dying for the sake of others, so well-known from classical Greek culture, were suddenly adopted in the first century AD in both Christian and independently, or so it seems, Jewish writings, starting in the fifties (Paul) and subsequently in later writings, such as the Gospels—especially John—Hebrews, 1 Clement, and 4 Maccabees?”⁵⁵ Versnel’s answer was that “in the ongoing discussion on tradition, transmission and borrowing of ideas and terminology of vicarious (atoning) death, we should pay much more attention to comparable ideas and practices current in the *contemporaneous* pagan *Umwelt* of the NT.”⁵⁶ That is, both Jewish and Christian sources used Greco-Roman pagan sources, or at least the ideas of vicarious death in the sources, in order to construct their presentation of the vicarious death of a human for the soteriological benefit of another, since the idea occurs nowhere in Jewish culture.⁵⁷

51. Ibid., 254.

52. Ibid., 255.

53. Ibid., 225.

54. Ibid., 255.

55. Ibid.

56. Ibid.

57. For Versnel’s entire essay, see 213–94.

2. Jewish Martyrological Narratives Possibly a Background behind Paul's Presentation of Jesus' Death

Jewish Martyrological Narratives, Jesus' Death, and ἱλαστήριον

Second, some scholars cautiously argued that the Jewish martyrological narratives were possibly the background behind Paul's presentation of Jesus' death. For example, in their classic 1896 Romans commentary, W. Sanday and A. C. Headlam argued that the Yom Kippur ritual was not the background behind Paul's use of ἱλαστήριον in Rom 3:25, while they simultaneously affirmed that other textual traditions could have been the background for Paul. They argued that Paul presents Jesus' death as an atoning sacrifice and that the NT authors often use cultic language to explain the significance of his death for others. Nevertheless, their work expresses doubts as to whether the OT is the background behind Rom 3:25.⁵⁸

In his 1925 work on atonement, Hastings Rashdall acknowledged that martyr traditions were the background behind Paul's formulation of Jesus' death in Rom 3:25. But Rashdall also argued that the OT was the most important background behind a sacrificial understanding of Jesus' death in Paul. He affirmed the presence of sacrificial ideas in 4 Macc 17:22 when the text states that the martyrs died as atoning sacrifices for Israel's sin, through whose deaths God saved Israel. He asserted that a martyrological influence on Paul's understanding of the sacrificial nature of Jesus' death in Rom 3:25 is highly probable.⁵⁹

In his 1975 Romans commentary, C. E. B. Cranfield disagreed that Paul's identification of Jesus as ἱλαστήριον in Rom 3:25 refers to the mercy seat. He contended that the martyr traditions' impact on Paul is clear. He especially argued that Paul's presentation of Jesus' death reflects 2 Macc 7:30–38; 4 Macc 6:27–29, and 4 Macc 17:21–22. Cranfield de-emphasized God's wrath in Rom 3:25. However, he acknowledged that the Jewish martyrs died as atoning sacrifices. This martyrological idea was well known to early Judaism and to Paul. While he agreed that martyr traditions were the background for Paul, Cranfield urged that the *Akedah Hypothesis* and Isa 53:10 must also be taken seriously as possible background influences upon Paul.⁶⁰ Similar to Cranfield, James D. G. Dunn in both his 1988 Romans commentary and in his 1998 book on Pauline theology agreed that martyr traditions could have influenced Paul in Rom 3:25.⁶¹ However, he remained

58. Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 87–88, 91–94.

59. Rashdall, *Atonement*, 130–32.

60. Cranfield, *Romans*, 1:214–18, esp. 1:217–18.

61. Dunn, *Romans* 1:170–72, 180, esp. 171, 180; Dunn, *Theology*, 207–33, esp. 215.

unconvinced that setting up martyr theology and cultic theology as diametrically opposed alternatives was helpful (on the grounds that the martyr texts are already infused with cultic theology).⁶²

Jewish Martyrological Narratives, Jesus' Death, and Reconciliation

In a 1974 essay, I. Howard Marshall argued that martyr theology probably shaped Paul's understanding of Jesus' death as the means of reconciliation to God.⁶³ He suggested that Paul's motif of reconciliation appears most frequently in 2 Corinthians and that 2 Maccabees probably has provided the catalyst to the development of Paul's use of the category of reconciliation. Martyr theology presents the deaths of the martyrs as sacrificial offerings (2 Macc 7:32–38). Their offerings were the means by which God ended his wrath against the nation. Paul likewise presents Jesus' death as the means by which God ends his wrath against the nations (2 Cor 5:18–21). The influence of martyr theology on Paul's conception of Jesus' death cannot be categorically proven, but it can be argued and affirmed with a high degree of probability that Paul borrowed from the martyr theology of 2 and 4 Maccabees to present Jesus' death as an atoning sacrifice.

3. Jewish Martyrological Narratives as Paul's Non-Sacrificial Background behind His Presentation of Jesus' Death

Jewish Martyrological Narratives, Jesus' Death, and ἱλαστήριον

Third, some scholars argued that the Jewish martyrological narratives were Paul's background and that this tradition's non-sacrificial presentation of the martyrs' deaths shaped Paul's non-sacrificial understanding of Jesus' death. Two significant works appeared in the 1970s and in the 1990s that argued that martyr theology shaped Paul's conception and understanding of Jesus' death, but they argued that neither martyr theology nor Paul presented the death of a human for others as atoning sacrifices. In 1975, Sam K. Williams' published dissertation provided the most important work on the origins

62. In his 1998 commentary on Romans, Schreiner (*Romans*, 192 n. 24 and 192–95) was cautiously optimistic that martyr theology could have shaped Paul's understanding of Jesus' death in Rom 3:25. Yet, he expressed doubt about whether 4 Maccabees post-dated Romans. However, in conversation after the publication of his Romans commentary, he acknowledged to me that he is now more favorable toward a martyrological reading of Rom 3:25 than he was when he originally wrote his commentary in 1998.

63. Marshall, "Reconciliation," 117–32, esp. 120–21, 129–30.

of Paul's understanding and presentation of Jesus' death.⁶⁴ Williams' work focused on the origins of early Christianity's belief that Jesus' death was a saving event. He contended that the early church interpreted Jesus' death through the lens of Greco-Roman ideas of the effective death of a righteous human. Williams argued that vicarious, expiatory suffering and death are seldom found (if ever) in the OT or in Second Temple Judaism. Instead, the effective suffering and death of a human are found in Hellenistic literature. Fourth Maccabees contains themes of effective suffering and death due to Hellenistic ideas. These ideas likewise provided a framework by which the author of 4 Maccabees interpreted the martyrs' deaths, and these Greek ideas provided new Christians with a needed interpretation of Jesus' death. Consequently, the message of Jesus' effective death spread from Antioch and was widely accepted as a central component of the gospel. According to Williams, Rom 3:21–26 is the central text regarding the influence of martyr theology on Paul's conception and presentation of Jesus' death because of the occurrence of ἱλαστήριον.⁶⁵

Williams boldly stated that no one understood the martyrs' deaths to be vicarious prior to the writing of 4 Maccabees, which Williams labeled as an early Christian document written in Antioch. Paul instead adopted a pre-Pauline Christian formula that interpreted Jesus' death as an expiation for sin. Williams argued that neither 2 Maccabees nor 4 Maccabees teaches vicarious atonement and that 4 Macc 6:28–29 and 17:21–22 were Paul's background. Thus, Williams argued that Paul does not present Jesus' death as a death *qua* death in Rom 3:25–26. Instead, early Christianity interpreted Jesus' death as a saving event in light of the Greco-Roman idea of a human's effective death. Early Christianity interpreted Jesus' death as a saving event both to provide an apologetic response to and to solve the problem of his tragic death.⁶⁶

In 1990, David Seeley investigated the historical influences behind Paul's interpretation of Jesus' death. But he specifically argued that the Greco-Roman theme of noble death influenced Paul's understanding and presentation of Jesus' death. Seeley offered five elements of noble death in

64. Williams, *Jesus' Death*.

65. Ibid., 39–41, 165–202, 233–54. Martin Hengel did not appear to be familiar with Williams' work when he published his 1981 monograph on atonement, but he challenged the latter's thesis. Hengel argued that Greco-Roman literature was a crucial background behind the early church's understanding of the saving significance of Jesus' death. Jesus was the first person to interpret his death as an atoning sacrifice. The OT background alone is insufficient to explain the soteriological categories that the NT authors apply to Jesus' death. Hellenistic religious ideas were very influential on Jewish writers and on Paul. See Hengel, *The Atonement*.

66. Williams, *Jesus' Death*, 39–41, 165–202, 233–54.

Paul and in 4 Maccabees: (1) obedience, (2) the overcoming of physical vulnerability, (3) military setting, (4) vicarious suffering, and (5) sacrificial metaphors. Seeley agreed that 4 Maccabees' understanding of vicarious suffering and death for others shaped Paul's understanding of Jesus' death. However, Seeley redefined vicarious suffering and death to mean exemplary death. He concluded that OT cultic language played no role in shaping Paul's conception of Jesus' death.⁶⁷ In a 2001 monograph about salvation and participation, Daniel G. Powers likewise agreed that martyr theology influenced Paul's interpretation of Jesus' death. He suggested that this martyrological influence came from 2 Maccabees, Judith, *Assumption of Moses*, and the additions of Daniel. However, he argued that 2 Maccabees does not teach vicarious, substitutionary atonement.⁶⁸

In his major 2009 work on Paul's soteriology, Douglas A. Campbell discussed martyr theology's influence on Paul's atonement theory in Rom 3:25.⁶⁹ He argued that Paul describes Jesus' death in martyrological categories. The categories of faith, blood, execution, and the vindication of a heroic person in Rom 3:21–26 points to a martyrological reading of Rom 3:25.⁷⁰ Campbell rejected a direct relationship between Rom 3:25 and 4 Maccabees, for the similarities between the two texts lack the precision needed to support such a claim.⁷¹ He asserted (without substantiation) that since 2 Maccabees 6 and 7 indisputably predate Paul and since these chapters contain the atoning efficacy of the martyrs' deaths, to appeal to Greco-Roman influences on Paul are unnecessary to explain Paul's atonement theory. But he contended that a martyrological reading of Genesis 22 is the background in front of which to read Rom 3:25. Campbell stated that this interpretation is supported by the following arguments. First, Paul emphasizes Jesus' faithfulness (vv. 22, 25, 26). Second, Paul utilizes the heroic death motif and the cultic term *ἱλαστήριον* (vv. 21–26). Third, a martyrological reading of Genesis 22 allows Paul's talk of "blood" in v. 25b to integrate more smoothly within his argument. Fourth, Paul offers multiple references to the resurrection in Romans 3–4. Fifth, this reading explains the presence of a broader discourse of cultic imagery in Romans. Christ dies as the new Isaac. Therefore, Paul recapitulates (even if implicitly) the cultus.⁷²

67. Seeley, *The Noble Death*.

68. Powers, *Salvation through Participation*, 199–211, esp. 210.

69. Campbell, *The Deliverance of God*, 647–56.

70. Ibid., 648.

71. Ibid.

72. Entire paragraph is paraphrased from *ibid.*, 654–55.

4. Jewish Martyrological Narratives as a Background to Sacrifice in Paul

Jewish Martyrological Narratives, Jesus' Death, and Sacrifice

Fourth, some scholars argued that the Jewish martyrological narratives were Paul's background and that the former presents the martyrs as atoning sacrifices. In 1967, David Hill argued that 4 Macc 17:21–22 was Paul's background in Rom 3:25. Hill agreed that *ἱλαστήριον* refers to the mercy seat in Heb 9:5 and many times in the LXX. However, although the Yom Kippur ritual is the context where *ἱλαστήριον* mainly occurs in the canonical LXX, it was not the source of Paul's comments in Rom 3:25. Instead, martyr theology was Paul's source for his propitiatory and sacrificial presentation of Jesus' death for the following reasons. First, both 4 Macc 17:21–22 and Rom 3:25 speak of God's wrath. Second, both textual traditions speak of the shedding of blood at the expense of one's life. Third, death for sin occurs in both texts. Fourth, both texts state that death was the means by which God's mercy and deliverance came to the transgressors. Fifth, both the death of the martyrs and Jesus' death were vicarious sacrifices in the respective texts. Sixth, God initiates atonement in both texts. Seventh, if the author of 4 Maccabees wrote prior to AD 70, Paul could have had access to the text as a source.⁷³

In a 1975 essay, Joseph A. Fitzmyer argued that martyr theology shaped Paul's reconciliation motif.⁷⁴ In the Greco-Roman world, reconciliation spoke of the restoration of broken relationships. When used religiously, the concept spoke of the reconciliation between the gods/God and humans (Sophocles, *Ajax* 744; 2 Macc 1:5; 7:33; 8:29). Since Hebrew does not have a specific word for reconciliation, Fitzmyer insisted that the Greco-Roman world and its martyr theology were Paul's sources for his reconciliation motif; Paul applied martyr theology to the Christ-event, and Paul used martyr theology to fit his theological purposes.

In 1980, J. C. Becker devoted a discussion on Paul's conception of Jesus' death while he defended his thesis that Paul's theology is mainly apocalyptic. Hellenistic-Jewish Christianity applied atoning significance to Jesus' death. The concept of a human atonement for the sins of others was a foreign concept to Jews, but many Jews accepted this concept via Diaspora theology. Wisdom of Solomon suggests that the deaths of righteous sufferers benefit others, while 2 and 4 Maccabees highlight the atoning value of these deaths. Paul received the creedal formulation of martyr theology from

73. Hill, *Greek Words and Hebrew Meanings*, 36–48, esp. 38–48.

74. Fitzmyer, "Reconciliation in Pauline Theology," 155–77.

the Jewish-Hellenistic church (1 Cor 15:3; Rom 4:25), from which he also inherited the interpretation that Jesus' death was a sacrificial offering (Exod 12:13; 1 Cor 5:7), expiation (Rom 3:25), and a covenant sacrifice (Exod 24:4–8; 1 Cor 11:23).⁷⁵

In 1986, John S. Pobee devoted his work to construct a Jewish theology of martyrdom. He suggested that a Jewish martyr theology existed, not a Maccabean martyr theology. He asserted that the following components are present in a Jewish martyr theology: First, the nation suffered because of its sin. Second, God poured out wrath upon the martyrs to propitiate wrath. Third, God judged the martyrs through suffering to avert his eschatological wrath away from them. Fourth, Israel's persecution validated a cosmic war. Fifth, suffering was the means by which the war was manifested. Pobee extended his discussion of martyr theology beyond the Maccabean literature, and he interacted with all Jewish writings from the fourth century BC through the rabbinic period. He affirmed that there was a late Jewish martyr theology in Second Temple Judaism and that martyr theology was the background behind Paul's conception of Jesus' death.⁷⁶

In his 1992 monograph on Christian Origins and in his 2002 Romans commentary, N. T. Wright argued that martyr theology shaped Paul's conception of Jesus' death in Rom 3:25. The martyrs and other Jews understood the martyrs' deaths as atoning sacrifices for Israel, and they understood that the Lord would save Israel from his wrath through their deaths (4 Macc 6:28–29). The Yom Kippur ritual and Isaiah 40–55 was also a background behind Rom 3:25. According to Wright, Paul presented Jesus' death as an atoning sacrifice for sin by using cultic language from Leviticus 16, Isaiah's Servant Songs, and martyr theology.⁷⁷ However, in his commentary on Romans, Wright seems to place greater emphasis upon Isaiah 40–55 and Dan 11:35 and 12:1–12 as primary backgrounds for Paul's remarks in Rom 3:25 than upon martyr theology.

In his 2001 doctoral thesis, completed under the supervision of Wright, Stephen Anthony Cummins argued that martyr theology shaped Paul's conception of Jesus' death. However, Cummins' work was more concerned with the Antiochean Incident in Gal 2:11–14.⁷⁸ Cummins specifically argued that grasping the historical and theological significance behind the Antiochean incident in Gal 2:11–12 would add clarity to the meaning of the incident if

75. Becker, *Paul the Apostle*, 182–212, esp. 191, 203–5.

76. Pobee, *Persecution and Martyrdom*.

77. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God*, 272–79; Wright, “Romans,” 475.

78. Cummins, *Paul and the Crucified Christ*.

interpreters would read the incident through the lens of a Maccabean martyr model of Judaism. According to Cummins, martyr theology provided early Christians with an application for the earliest soteriological interpretation of Jesus' death.

5. Jewish Martyrological Narratives as the Primary Background for Paul

Jewish Martyrological Narratives, Jesus' Death, and Atoning Sacrifice

Fifth, some scholars have argued that Jewish martyrological traditions were Paul's primary background and that the martyrs' deaths were atoning sacrifices. In 1963, Eduard Lohse was one of the first scholars to argue that the Maccabean martyrs functioned as substitutes for Israel.⁷⁹ He argued that Jewish martyr theology was important for early Christians and to Paul's conception of Jesus' death. He excluded Hellenism and Hellenistic Judaism from being martyr theology's background for the vicarious death of a human for the benefit of others. He argued that the concept of martyrdom in 2 and 4 Maccabees was due to Palestinian Jewish thought. Palestinian Judaism, rather than Hellenistic Judaism, provided the earliest examples of martyrdom. According to Lohse, expiatory death is not explicitly stated in 2 Maccabees. Instead, he argued that 2 Maccabees emphasizes that the Jewish martyrs died as representatives for the nation, whereas 4 Maccabees teaches vicarious atonement. The latter traditions influenced Paul. In his 2003 *Romans* commentary, Lohse argued that the martyr theology in 4 Macc 17:21–22 was Paul's background for his presentation of Jesus' death in Rom 3:25 and that Paul conflated martyr theology with OT cultic language.⁸⁰

In a series of publications from 1988–98, Marinus de Jonge investigated the earliest formulations of Jesus' death for others.⁸¹ He argued that the deaths of the martyrs in 2 and 4 Maccabees should be understood as substitutionary atonement for Israel. Greek, Hellenistic, and Roman ideas influenced 2 and 4 Maccabees. The martyrs' deaths were the means by which God averted his wrath away from the nation and brought peace to Israel. The

79. Lohse, *Märtyrer und Gottesknecht*, 37–78, 150–52.

80. Lohse, *Römer*, 134–35.

81. De Jonge, "Jesus' Death for Others," 142–51; reprinted in *Jewish Eschatology*, 125–34; De Jonge, *Christology*; De Jonge, *Jesus, the Servant-Messiah*, 37–48; De Jonge, *God's Final Envoy*, 12–33.

efficacy of the martyrs' prayers before their deaths echoes various OT texts (Exod 32:30–34; Ps 106:16–23; Num 25; LXX Dan 3:38–40). The martyrs' deaths helped early Christians understand both Paul's presentation of Jesus' death and the presentation of his death in early confessional formulas.⁸²

J. W. van Henten is the most prolific scholar of early Christian origins to have written about martyr theology's influence on the NT authors.⁸³ In a 1991 essay, he argued that martyr theology was Paul's primary background in Rom 3:25.⁸⁴ In 1998, his Dutch doctoral thesis on 2 and 4 Maccabees was translated and published in English. This work is a detailed investigation of the martyrological themes in both books. Van Henten argued that the Maccabean martyrs were exemplars of noble death. The deaths of Eleazar, the unknown mother, and her seven sons were idealized stories and representative of specific religious, political, and philosophical ideas. The martyrs' deaths in 2 Macc 7:32–38 are vicarious for Israel. Fourth Maccabees is a spiritualized book that highlights the deaths of the martyrs and the vicarious aspect of their deaths. The authors of both works likely borrowed the concept of vicarious atonement from Greco-Roman traditions. In a 2004 essay, van Henten confirmed this thesis.⁸⁵

In his 2004 monograph about the cultic background behind Paul's atonement metaphors, Stephen Finlan devoted an entire chapter to martyrology.⁸⁶ He agreed with van Henten that martyrdom was the most prominent model behind Paul's conception of Jesus' death and that Paul borrowed from the OT cultic context to convey his martyrological ideas to teach substitutionary atonement. To clarify, Finlan does not pit martyrdom and sacrifice against one another. Instead, he argues that martyrdom is a model of interpretation, because it always refers to a human's death for a noble purpose. Sacrifice is a metaphor, because these kinds of death are not actually part of the sacrificial system.⁸⁷ However, Finlan argued that Paul diverged

82. In a 1987 unpublished dissertation ("Maccabean Martyr Theology: Its Genesis, Antecedents, and Significance for the Earliest Soteriological Interpretation of the Death of Jesus"), Warren Joel Heard provided a detailed study of the origins of Jewish martyr theology. He also argued that martyr theology shaped Paul's conception of Jesus' death. For additional argumentation in favor of a martyrological influence on Paul, see Barth, *Der Tod Jesu Christi*, 37–71.

83. Van Henten, *The Maccabean Martyrs as Saviours of the Jewish People*.

84. Van Henten, "The Tradition-Historical Background," 101–28.

85. Van Henten, "Jewish Martyrdom and Jesus' Death," 139–68. See also David A. DeSilva's 2006 4 Maccabees commentary for sacrifice and substitution in 4 Maccabees.

86. Finlan, *The Background and Content of Paul's Cultic Atonement Metaphors*, 193–224.

87. I am very thankful to Steve for clarifying to me his position in personal correspondence after reading a pre-published version of this monograph.

from martyr theology's propitiatory ideas in that he does not describe God as needing appeasement since God and Jesus initiated his death for the ungodly (Rom 5:5–6). In my 2010 monograph and in my 2012 essay, I built on Van Henten's thesis, with a lexical and conceptual analysis, that martyr theology was Paul's primary background for his conception of Jesus' death in Rom 3:25 and that those traditions teach substitutionary atonement.⁸⁸

REPRESENTATION AND SUBSTITUTION IN PAUL?⁸⁹

In this monograph, I will also argue that in Romans Paul presents Jesus' death both as a representation of and as a substitution for Jews and Gentiles. I support this thesis by arguing that the Jewish martyrological narratives are a background behind Paul's presentation of Jesus' death in Romans. Thus, my history of research below discusses both the major scholars who have written about the origins of Paul's understanding of Jesus' death and the scholars who have considered whether Jesus' death should be understood as a substitute for or as a representative of those for whom he died. Some scholars have discussed both the origins of and the nature of Jesus' death. When possible, I attempt below to avoid unnecessary overlap with earlier discussions. However, some overlap is unavoidable due to the contributions of certain scholars.

Representation

Representation (=inclusive place taking) was a prominent understanding of Jesus' death in twentieth-century German scholarship. I first encountered this view in 2004 as a ThM student by reading essays on the death of Jesus by Otfried Hofius. However, the major pioneer of this view (also known as the Tübingen view) was Hartmut Gese, a professor of OT at Tübingen. According to Gese and the Tübingen school, atonement occurs through identification instead of through substitution. The event of atoning sacrifice addresses a specific plight. The Israelite forfeits life, and she or he becomes symbolically willing to die. The Israelite needs to be rescued from death, not necessarily from personal transgressions. This need for deliverance from death is true both for the individual Israelite and for the entire Jewish community. The two important features for atonement on Yom Kippur is both

88. Williams, *Maccabean Martyr Traditions*; Williams, "Martyr Theology in Hellenistic Judaism and Paul's Conception of Jesus' Death in Romans 3:21–26."

89. For a lucid, compelling, and concise defense of substitution in Paul, see Gathercole, *Defending Substitution*.

the laying on of hands and the sacrificial ritual. The laying on of hands on the goat identifies the Israelite with the sacrifice. The animal is entrusted to the priest, who in turn makes atonement for the whole person and nation. The laying on of hands connects the individual and the nation so that when the animal dies, the individual dies with it. Through the animal's death, the Israelite and the community symbolically experience the judgment of death, but not in a substitutionary sense. Through the sacrificial blood ritual, the animal symbolically takes the people into the holy of holies through judgment and connects them with God. The animal gives up its life, but the blood manipulation provides atonement, through which the priest and the people are reconciled and connected to God.⁹⁰

Otfried Hofius applied Gese's theory to the death of Jesus in the NT. In a collection of essays published in 1989, Hofius discussed atonement and reconciliation.⁹¹ In an essay titled *Sühne und Versöhnung: Zum paulinischen Verständnis des Kreuzestodes Jesus*, Hofius discussed Rom 5:8–10 and 2 Cor 5:18–20. He took Rom 5:8–10 as his starting point for his discussion of the death of Jesus. He began by acknowledging that Paul describes in Rom 5:8 Jesus' death as an apparent proof of God's love. After he noted that Rom 5:9 speaks of atonement and 5:10 speaks of reconciliation, Hofius asked: in what sense is the apostle Paul speaking of atonement and reconciliation? With this question, Hofius meant: according to Paul, what kind of death did Jesus die?

In Hofius' view, the death of Jesus should be understood in the following four ways in Rom 5:8–10 and in 2 Cor 5:18–21. First, the OT sin-cult was a participatory *Mitbeteiligung* atonement-action.⁹² The man, who offered atonement, identified himself with the offering by placing his hands on it, and the priest would execute this act as God's representative of the blood-ritual.⁹³ In the occurrences of atonement by means of Jesus' crucifixion, God alone is the doer of atonement, "*Im Sühnegefahren des Kreuzestodes Jesu ist Got allein der Handelnde*."⁹⁴ God himself takes the initiative and gives his own Son in death, and he identifies with sinful humanity with the crucifixion and the resurrection of Christ.⁹⁵ Needy mankind receives atonement and reconciliation in a completely passive way from God through the

90. Entire paragraph paraphrased from Gathercole, *Defending Substitution*. For original primary citations, see Hartmut Gese, "Atonement," in *Essays in Biblical Theology*, 93–116.

91. Otfried Hofius, *Paulusstudien*, 25–49.

92. *Ibid.*, 48.

93. *Ibid.*

94. *Ibid.*

95. *Ibid.*

representative or inclusive place-taking *stellvertretenden*, atoning death of Jesus. This is why Paul asserts in 2 Cor 5:18 that τὰ δὲ πάντα ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ.⁹⁶ Second, the OT atonement cult has a certain inner logic to it.⁹⁷ Israel relies upon the repetition of the sacrificial cult.⁹⁸ The atoning offering of Jesus, however, happens once and for all.⁹⁹ His death actualizes an eternal, valid, atonement and reconciliation. In the word of the cross, the message of reconciliation is proclaimed (1 Cor 1:18; 2 Cor 5:19).¹⁰⁰ Third, Jesus is the sin-offering for all sins unlike the OT sin-offering.¹⁰¹ In the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, God has acted to grant atonement and reconciliation for sinful men.¹⁰² Fourth, the OT sin-offering was only for Israel and not for the heathens.¹⁰³ Jesus' representative and crucifying death is a universal action of atonement for Jews and heathens.¹⁰⁴

In a 1994 book on interpretations of Jesus' death in the NT, Morna D. Hooker argued against substitution in favor of a view of representation that she called interchange.¹⁰⁵ Commenting on 1 Thess 5:9–10, she contended that Paul presents Jesus' death as a sharing in the experiences of those for whom he died instead of as dying as a substitute for others. She supported this by suggesting that Jesus' death does not eliminate the possibility of one's physical death and by suggesting that one still dies with Jesus. In addition, Hooker argued that Christ gives life to those who participate in his death. "He has been raised from the dead, and we share that resurrection life. It is not, then, a question of Christ and the believer exchanging places; it is rather a sharing of experiences. Christ died, and we live with him."¹⁰⁶ In her discussion on the death of Jesus in Galatians, Hooker clearly stated

96. Ibid.

97. Ibid., 48.

98. Ibid., 49

99. Ibid.

100. Ibid.

101. Ibid.

102. Ibid.

103. Ibid.

104. Ibid.

105. In his 1990 monograph on the death of Jesus in the Pauline letters, Charles B. Cousar emphasized representation, but he did not deny substitution. See *A Theology of the Cross*, 44, 74.

106. Hooker, *Not Ashamed of the Gospel*, 28–29; Hooker, "Interchange in Christ." For a recent article that discusses the importance of interchange in defining what it means to become the righteousness of God in 2 Cor 5:21, see Hooker, "On Becoming the Righteousness of God: Another Look at 2 Cor 5:21."

that Jesus' death was a representation instead of a substitution.¹⁰⁷ According to her, Paul believed that he participated in the death of Jesus when he was crucified with Christ (Gal 2:20).¹⁰⁸ In her own words, "he died as our representative, on our behalf."¹⁰⁹ In Hooker's view, Jesus died so that those redeemed from the curse in Gal 3:10–14 would participate in his life-giving resurrection. "Christ shared our humanity, our estrangement from God, in order that we might share his sonship, his relationship with God."¹¹⁰ She argued the same point when she discussed other Pauline texts that have traditionally been interpreted to refer to substitution.¹¹¹

In a 2007 monograph about deliverance from evil, Richard H. Bell argued that the NT teaches the defeat of Satan or redemption from Satan.¹¹² Bell devoted two chapters to Paul in which he discussed Jesus' death as a representation for others and the sinner's participation in his death and resurrection.¹¹³ Bell provided a detailed analysis and critique of Hartmut Gese's understanding of the OT sin-offering, who argued that the animal represents a subjective existential inclusive-place-taking through transference symbolized by the laying of a hand on the animal. Bell instead contended that the use of the word soul (שֵׁפֶט) best describes what the participant has in common with the animal with whom he identifies by the laying on of the hand and because sacrificial texts (e.g., Lev 17:11) use the word שֵׁפֶט to talk about the soul's survival of death. Bell's analysis challenged both Gese and Bernd Janowski, who argued that the animal's life in Lev 17:11 is bound up with the blood and that its life is somehow abstracted from the animal's body.¹¹⁴

According to Bell, the Israelite's soul should be distinguished from its life in Lev 17:11, even though this distinction is not always clear in the OT. Bell defended this distinction with the following argument. "If one is to speak of the participation in the 'life' of the animal in 'substantial' terms, if the Israelite really does die in some sense with the animal, if he undergoes the sentence of death and thereby comes into the presence of God, is it not his 'soul' which participates in the 'soul' of the animal? The essential being

107. Hooker, *Not Ashamed of the Gospel*, 30.

108. Ibid.

109. Ibid.

110. Ibid., 34.

111. Ibid., 29–45.

112. Bell, *Deliver Us from Evil*.

113. Ibid., 189–291.

114. I got this sentence from Bell, *Deliver Us*, 197. For original citation, see Bernd Janowski, *Sühne als Heilsgeschehen: Studien zur Sühnetheologie der Priesterschrift und zur Wurzel KPR im Alten Orient und im Alten Testament*, 247.

of the Israelite participates in the essential being of the animal.”¹¹⁵ In addition, Bell argued, שָׁפַךְ occurs in LXX Lev 17:10 to refer to a person. In LXX Lev 17:11, there is a sentence of death. However, after the animal’s death, the blood, the soul-substance, enters into the presence of God. The soul survives the death (i.e., the giving up of life) of the animal.¹¹⁶

Bell applied his understanding of the OT sin-offering to Jesus’ death in Paul.¹¹⁷ He argued that the hand-placement of the Israelite on the animal in Leviticus suggests that the Israelite participated in the death of the animal. Agreeing with Hofius, Bell suggested that Jesus’ death in Paul is an inclusive place-taking, just as the OT sin-offering.¹¹⁸ Paul presents Jesus’ death as an identification with sinners instead of a substitution for sinners.¹¹⁹ Sinners identify with Christ by faith and baptism.¹²⁰ This identification corresponds to the OT’s sin-offering.¹²¹ By identification with Christ, we have union with Christ, and this union is celebrated in the event of the Lord’s Supper.¹²² “So participation in Christ may appear to be for Christians only. In one sense, this act of identification is made after the sacrifice of the victim in that one comes to faith and baptism at some point after crucifixion.”¹²³ However, according to Bell, identification with Christ also occurs at the moment of Christ’s crucifixion.¹²⁴

Bell continued that Paul does not always mention faith and baptism in relation to participation in Christ’s death. He appealed to 2 Cor 5:14–15a to support this assertion. In Bell’s view, Christ’s death is the death of all people, “even for those who are not in Christ,” which (Bell asserted) the following text crystallizes: ἡ γὰρ ἀγάπη τοῦ Χριστοῦ συνέχει ἡμᾶς, κρίναντας τοῦτο, ὅτι εἷς ὑπὲρ πάντων ἀπέθανεν, ἄρα οἱ πάντες ἀπέθανον καὶ ὑπὲρ πάντων ἀπέθανεν, ἵνα οἱ ζῶντες μηκέτι ἑαυτοῖς ζῶσιν ἀλλὰ τῷ ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν ἀποθανόντι καὶ ἐγερόντι.¹²⁵ The three-fold use of πάντες indicates all people, whereas οἱ ζῶντες refers to those “in Christ, who through Christ’s atoning death

115. Bell, *Delivers Us*, 196.

116. *Ibid.*, 196–97.

117. *Ibid.*, 190–200.

118. *Ibid.*, 200.

119. *Ibid.*

120. *Ibid.*

121. *Ibid.*

122. *Ibid.*

123. *Ibid.*

124. *Ibid.*

125. *Ibid.*, 201.

have come to life and participate in Christ's resurrection" (2 Cor 5:15b).¹²⁶ However, Bell stated that these verses appear to affirm that God reconciles all people and that Paul supports his interpretation in 2 Cor 5:19 (ὡς ὅτι θεὸς ἦν ἐν Χριστῷ κόσμον καταλλάσσων ἑαυτῷ, μὴ λογιζόμενος αὐτοῖς τὰ παραπτώματα αὐτῶν καὶ θέμενος ἐν ἡμῖν τὸν λόγον τῆς καταλλαγῆς).¹²⁷

According to Bell, another difference between participation in the OT sin-offering and in Jesus' death in Paul is resurrection. In 2 Cor 5:15b, Paul refers to the resurrection by connecting the active participle ἀποθανόντι to the passive participle ἐγεθέντι. "Humans participate in and experience the death of Jesus when the soul is transferred into the reality of the crucified Christ."¹²⁸ In Bell's view, Christ's soul (i.e., his essential person) and the sinner's soul (i.e., his/her essential person) are knitted together. Paul does not play Jesus' divinity and humanity against one another. "In Paul, Christ is man not in contrast to the fact that elsewhere He is termed the Son of God, but because he is Son of God, and expresses and demonstrates Himself as such in the fact that He is man."¹²⁹ Therefore, when we participate in Christ by means of his soul, we participate in both his divinity and humanity (i.e., his essential nature).¹³⁰ In Bell's view, the believer actually participates in Jesus' death on the cross, because 2 Cor 5:14b states εἰς ὑπὲρ πάντων ἀπέθανεν, ἄρα οἱ πάντες ἀπέθανον.¹³¹

Only Substitution or Both Representation and Substitution?

Leon Morris offered a classical defense of substitution in Paul. In 1965, he argued in a monograph on the cross in the NT that substitution is at the heart of the atonement in the NT. He grounds his analysis of atonement in the Pauline letters in man's plight, God's salvation, and man's response.¹³² Morris argued that Paul has a serious view of man's plight.¹³³ According to him, Paul sees sin as pregnant with devastating consequences, and he con-

126. Ibid.

127. Ibid.

128. Ibid.

129. Ibid. Original quote comes from Karl Barth, *CD* 3/2:46.

130. Ibid, 209.

131. Ibid., 210–11.

132. Leon Morris, *The Cross in the New Testament*, 180–269. In addition to the scholars whom Morris cites, see the following works in agreement with his view. For a recent defense of penal substitution from Evangelical scholars, see Mike Ovey et al., *Pierced for Our Transgressions*.

133. Morris, *The Cross in the New Testament*, 180–269.

nects humanity's sin with wrath, death, and other forces opposed to man.¹³⁴ God acted on behalf of humanity by taking the initiative in choosing to redeem his people and by sending his Son, Jesus, to pay for their sins via the cross.¹³⁵ Man should, therefore, respond to God's great act of salvation in the substitutionary cross of Jesus Christ with faith to experience deliverance from God's wrath.¹³⁶

In 1990, Charles B. Cousar argued that Jesus' death is both a representation and substitution in Romans and in 2 Corinthians. He especially noted that Paul presents Jesus as a substitute in 2 Cor 5:21 since he states that Christ was a replacement for sinful men and women. However, Cousar went on to say that Paul does not "go on to say that [God] accepts their punishment so as to appease the otherwise unsatisfied anger of God, an observation that leads many simply to avoid the use of the term substitution altogether."¹³⁷ In a co-authored work in 1995 on the death of Jesus in early Christianity, John T. Carroll, Joel Green, and contributors argued in a chapter on Paul that he does not portray God as an angry God in need of mollification, for Paul does not present God's wrath as divine retribution. Instead, when men and women resist God's saving righteousness, they experience God's righteous condemnation in that God hands them over to experience the consequences of their own sin that they choose. In their view, this suggests that "Paul does not regard the death of Jesus as a vicarious punishment." His theology of Jesus' cross "lacks a developed sense of divine retribution." Instead, according to Rom 5:6–8, Paul presents Jesus' death as the ultimate expression of God's love." For Paul, the death of Jesus proves God to be a covenant keeping God, not primarily as one who judges.¹³⁸ Carroll and Green affirm that Jesus' death effects atonement, but their view contends that the cross in Paul's letters is about God's faithfulness despite humanity's unfaithfulness.¹³⁹ However, they acknowledge that vicarious substitution and representation are two of the many Pauline metaphors of atonement and that the latter does not truncate the former.¹⁴⁰

134. Ibid.

135. Ibid.

136. Ibid., 260–69.

137. Cousar, *A Theology of the Cross*, 79. Cousar interestingly notes "that there is nothing to suggest that Jesus' death is to be attributed to God in the sense that God killed Jesus" (*A Theology of the Cross*, 109). He suggests instead that Paul's letters persist in presenting that of Jesus theonomously and as an event of revelation.

138. Entire paragraph above comes from Carroll, Green, et al., *The Death of Jesus in Early Christianity*, 122–23.

139. Ibid., 123–24.

140. Ibid., 125–29.

In a recent 2015 monograph on substitution in Paul, Simon J. Gathercole defends substitution. Gathercole's work provides the most balanced presentation with the fewest words since Martin Hengel's classical work on the atonement.¹⁴¹ Gathercole wisely resists the common either-or impulse in biblical scholarship to defend only one particular theory of the atonement in Paul over and against others or to argue for a central atonement theory in Paul. By providing an analysis of selective texts from 1 Cor 15:3 and Rom 5:6–8 and by interacting with the major retractors of substitution in Paul, Gathercole defends substitution as one of Paul's important atonement models.

Apocalyptic Readings of Jesus' Death in Paul¹⁴²

Since the publication of J. Louis Martyn's articles and influential Galatians commentary, in which he argued for an apocalyptic soteriology in Paul, scholars have advocated an apocalyptic understanding of Jesus' death in Paul's letters. In 1995, Alexandra R. Brown devoted an entire monograph to Paul's apocalyptic word of the cross in 1 Corinthians.¹⁴³ She argued that Paul's proclamation of the cross was both an inclusive and empowering message of liberation, peace, and reconciliation. There is much conflict and division in the church in 1 Corinthians. Paul attacks the center of the schism in the church at Corinth. Contrary to the barriers of ego, ideology, and social status, all of which divided the believers at Corinth, Paul proclaims a liberating word. Brown considered the way that Paul's word about the cross in 1 Corinthians invaded its hearers' understanding. She further considered how Paul's word liberated the Corinthians from the old age with all of its enslaving powers and convictions and instead ushered the Corinthians into the world of new creation revealed by the cross.

Brown contended that Paul states early in 1 Corinthians that the word of the cross is an apocalyptic word in 1 Cor 1:18 and in 2:8. In 1:18, Paul connects the word of the cross with end-time apocalyptic judgment in that

141. However, Hengel's aim was not to defend substitution but to discuss the origins of the concept of atonement in the NT.

142. There are different apocalyptic understandings of Jesus' death within the apocalyptic view: cosmological apocalyptic and forensic apocalyptic. For the purpose of this section, I simply discuss the key scholars within an apocalyptic framework without distinguishing between the different apocalyptic readings. For essays on apocalyptic readings of Paul, see Davis and Harink (eds.), *Apocalyptic and the Future of Theology*; Gaventa, *Apocalyptic Paul*.

143. Alexandra R. Brown, *The Cross & Human Transformation: Paul's Apocalyptic Word in 1 Corinthians*.

he divides humanity into those who are perishing and those who are being saved. In 2:8, he attaches apocalyptic significance to the word of the cross by referring to the rulers of this age. Again, in 2:8, Paul apocalyptically speaks of the word of the cross by referring to the present age, which (Brown argued) implies another age. Consequently, Paul employs the two-age apocalyptic schema.¹⁴⁴

Brown continued that Paul's other "references to the cross or crucifixion in 1 Corinthians imply apocalyptic significance in that they concern the true or false perception that arises from the cross as revelatory event."¹⁴⁵ In 1:13, Paul condemns the divisive allegiance of some whom he had baptized with a statement that includes the crucifixion of Jesus as part of his indictment. With this rhetorical move, Paul places Jesus' cross against all systems and alliances. In 1:17, Paul highlights the cross as the central component of his preaching, claiming that it is the operative power in the salvation experience, instead of baptism either by an apostle or by anyone else.

With regard to 1:23, Brown argued that Paul echoes 1:18's word of the cross as an apocalyptic divider when he states that "we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles." In 1:23, Paul identifies as the whole world those who misunderstand the cross (i.e., Jews and Greeks)—the whole world seeks signs or wisdom instead of seeking satisfaction in the preaching of the cross. Finally, in 2:2, Paul gives an autobiographical statement about the relationship between the cross and knowledge: "I decided not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified." The perceptual or epistemological effects of the cross in the letter reveals both the apocalyptic nature of Paul's vision of the cross and the susceptibility of Paul's gospel in Corinth to perceptual error. Paul "seems to locate the Corinthian error in an insufficient comprehension and experience of the cross. Thus, he adamantly emphasizes his role to preach the gospel . . . lest the cross . . . be emptied (1:17) and, over against, their gnosis, decides to know nothing among [them] except Jesus Christ and him crucified."¹⁴⁶ Paul's word of the cross serves to dismantle the Corinthians' perception of their reality dominated by social status, power, and wealth.¹⁴⁷ Paul argues against their worldview by proffering the message about the crucified Christ (weakness in the Corinthian context) as power, social status, and wealth,

144. The entire paragraph comes from Brown, *The Cross & Human Transformation*, 24.

145. Ibid.

146. The entire paragraph comes from *ibid.*, 24–25.

147. Ibid., 1–169.

and by presenting wisdom (power in the Corinthian context) as weakness.¹⁴⁸ However, Brown never addresses whether Paul presents Jesus' death as a representation or a substitution. But she argues that the background behind his word of the cross in 1 Corinthians is apocalyptic thought.

In his famous Galatians commentary in 1997, Louis Martyn discussed the death of Jesus in Gal 3:13. He argued that redemption in 3:13 is a synonym for justify in 2:16.¹⁴⁹ Central to Christ's death in 3:13 is not the standard formulation of substitutionary atonement that results in the forgiveness of sins, but rather victory, "God's victory in Christ and the resultant emancipation of human beings."¹⁵⁰ Apocalyptic warfare is in the foreground in Paul's words. Thus, there are four actors in Paul's redemption theology in 3:13: first, the powerful, enslaving curse of the law, second, human beings enslaved under the power of that curse, third, Christ, who comes to embody the enslaving curse, and fourth, God, who in this Christ powerfully defeats the law's curse, thus liberating human beings from their state of enslavement.¹⁵¹ Martyn argued that Christ became the law's curse on behalf of us, but he accomplished this not by taking upon himself a punishment due to us. Instead, he embodied the curse in such a way in his crucifixion so as to be victorious over its enslaving power.¹⁵²

Martyn continued that in light of the cosmic battlefield language in 3:6–4:7, Paul stresses that humans need deliverance from the malignant powers that hold them in bondage and not so much forgiveness of sins.¹⁵³ The anti-God powers are the law's power to curse (3:10), the law as it pronounces a curse on the crucified Christ (3:13), sin's function as the prison warden over the whole of creation (3:22), and the elements of the cosmos that enslave both Jew and Gentile (4:3). In Gal 3:10–4:5, Paul refers to "being under something" no fewer than eight times, thus referring *seriatim* to anti-God powers that enslave humans.¹⁵⁴ Martyn suggested that Christ's death in 3:13 happened in collision with the law. Paul builds upon a Jewish-Christian atonement tradition and emphasizes with his remarks in 3:13 that humans need deliverance, not forgiveness.¹⁵⁵ Christ by his death has accomplished our redemption from slavery since Paul emphasizes that the

148. Ibid.

149. Martyn, *Galatians*, 317.

150. Ibid.

151. Ibid.

152. Ibid., 318 n. 110.

153. Ibid., 272–3.

154. Ibid., 272 n. 175.

155. Ibid., 273.

law has placed us under a curse.¹⁵⁶ With the advent of Christ, his death, and the impartation of his Spirit, God has invaded the present evil age and destroyed the forces of evil in Christ and thereby delivered us from the evil cosmos.¹⁵⁷

In his 2001 monograph on *Cruciformity: Paul's Narrative Spirituality of the Cross*, Michael J. Gorman argued that soteriology in Paul is apocalyptic and participatory. In Gorman's view, Paul—and other Christians—imitate Christ's suffering and self-giving love by participating in his death and living out his sufferings in their daily Christian experiences. "Paul saw himself, then, as a participant in and continuation of the life-giving death of Jesus his Lord that was narrated in the gospel he preached and the hymns his communities sang."¹⁵⁸ Paul chiefly expounds his theology of the cross by showing correspondence between Christ's death and the life of the believing community.¹⁵⁹

Gorman discussed thirteen master patterns under which he argued Paul's understanding of the cross fits.¹⁶⁰ Two of those patterns are interchange/representation and apocalyptic. For example, Gorman stated "substitution per se may or may not be involved in these texts, though some sense of representation and 'interchange' is certainly at work."¹⁶¹ That is, Jesus' death accomplished an interchange between him and believers. Although he was rich, Christ became poor so that the poor would become rich (2 Cor 8:9). Although he was righteous, he became sin so that we would receive the righteousness of God in him (2 Cor 5:21).¹⁶² Regarding the apocalyptic nature of Jesus' cross in Paul, Gorman argued that "Christ's death ended the reign of certain alien and hostile powers, thereby effecting liberation from them and from this age (Gal 1:4) and inaugurating the new age or new creation."¹⁶³ The powers include especially sin and death (Rom 6:9–10) and the old man (Rom 6:6, 1 Cor 6:19; 2 Cor 5:15).¹⁶⁴ The victory through Christ's death transfers believers into the realm of Christ's lordship (2 Cor 5:14–15; Rom 14:9; 1 Thess 5:9–10), which was the purpose for which he

156. Ibid.

157. Ibid., 95–105.

158. Michael J. Gorman, *Cruciformity*, 31. For his recent work on cruciformity, see his *Inhabiting the Cruciform God*.

159. Gorman, *Cruciformity*, 75–76.

160. Ibid., 84–86.

161. Ibid., 84.

162. Ibid., 84.

163. Ibid., 86.

164. Ibid.

died.¹⁶⁵ Gorman suggested that Christ's death paradoxically creates life. However, Gorman asserted, the purpose and effect of his death should not be restricted to the forgiveness of sins as if it was only a sacrifice, but his death includes transformation. That is, his death includes "a fundamental renewing and reorienting of life."¹⁶⁶

In his major 2009 work on Paul's soteriology, Douglas A. Campbell discussed martyr theology's influence on Paul's atonement theory in Rom 3:25.¹⁶⁷ He argued that Paul describes Jesus' death in martyrological categories. The categories of faith, blood, execution, and the vindication of a heroic person in Rom 3:21–26 point to a martyrological reading of Rom 3:25.¹⁶⁸ Campbell rejected a direct relationship between Rom 3:25 and 4 Maccabees, for the similarities between the two texts lack the precision needed to support such a claim.¹⁶⁹ He asserted that since 2 Maccabees 6 and 7 indisputably predate Paul and since these chapters contain the atoning efficacy of the martyrs' deaths, to appeal to Greco-Roman influences on Paul is unnecessary to explain Paul's atonement theory. But he contended that a martyrological reading of Genesis 22 is the background in front of which to read Rom 3:25.

Campbell argued that soteriology in Paul is both apocalyptic and participatory. Agreeing with Martyn, Campbell affirmed that salvation in Paul is fundamentally liberative and that it happens in the face of evil powers, from whom God frees humanity. According to Campbell, "God, therefore, is not fundamentally just and the atonement designed to assuage God's righteous anger at transgression; God is fundamentally benevolent and the atonement intended to deliver humanity from bondage to evil powers and to reconstitute it in the age to come."¹⁷⁰ Campbell asserted that although Paul presents Jesus' death in Rom 3:25 as a singular atonement for sin, this is not to be understood as a sacrifice. God appointed Jesus' death to replace the temple cultus.¹⁷¹ However, Paul's use of the term *ἱλαστήριον* signifies a singular event in relation to atonement and reconciliation.¹⁷² That is, Paul suggests that Jesus' atonement was of an extraordinary nature, like the Yom

165. Ibid.

166. Ibid., 86. However, Gorman acknowledged that Paul believed that Jesus' death was an atonement for sins. For example, see Gorman, *Cruciformity*, 163.

167. Campbell, *Deliverance*, 647–56.

168. Ibid., 648.

169. Ibid.

170. Ibid., 192.

171. Ibid., 654.

172. Ibid.

Kippur ritual and the deaths of Isaac and the Maccabean martyrs.¹⁷³ This atonement does not refer to a payment in terms of propitiating an angry deity, “although a connotation of sacrifice seems fair (as long as that is correctly nuanced).”¹⁷⁴ According to Campbell, Paul’s argument in Rom 3:21–26 is that Jesus’ death forensically liberates sinners and that God shows himself to be just in that he delivers Jesus from death by means of resurrecting him from the dead in response to Jesus’ faithfulness.¹⁷⁵

CHAPTER SUMMARIES

Having surveyed the state of scholarship, it may be helpful to outline the journey ahead. Chapter 2 offers an analysis of cultic action and cultic function in the Hebrew cult and in Isaiah 53. The chapter argues that both representation and substitution are present in the Hebrew cult and in Isaiah 53. Chapter 3 investigates all of the relevant Second Temple texts that contain a Jewish martyrology. This chapter argues that a Jewish martyrological tradition existed in Second Temple Judaism prior to Romans. It argues further that just as Isaiah 53 describes the death of YHWH’s servant with Levitical cultic language, the Greek version of Daniel 3:1–90 and 2 and 4 Maccabees likewise describe the prospective deaths of Daniel’s three friends (LXX Dan 3:1–90) and the deaths of the martyrs (2 and 4 Maccabees) with Levitical cultic language and language from Isaiah 53. Chapter 3 also argues that the relevant Jewish martyrological texts suggest that the Jewish martyrs died as representatives of and as substitutes for Israel’s Torah-disobedience and that they functioned as Israel’s Yom Kippur.

Chapters 4–6 focus on every text in Romans relevant to the thesis that the Jewish martyrological narratives are Paul’s background behind his presentation of Jesus’ death as a representation of Jews and Gentiles, as a substitution for Jews and Gentiles, and as Yom Kippur for Jews and Gentiles. Chapters 4–6 argue the preceding by offering historical, lexical, grammatical, and theological evidence to support this premise and by offering a comparative analysis of the relevant Levitical cultic texts, Isaiah 53, and the Jewish martyrological narratives. Chapter 4 argues that the Jewish martyrological narratives are a background behind substitution in Rom 3:21–4:25. Chapter 5 argues that the Jewish martyrological narratives are a background behind substitution in Rom 5:6–11, 8:3, and 8:31–34. Chapter 6 argues that representation is present in Romans 5:12–6:23 and that Paul’s

173. Ibid.

174. Ibid.

175. Ibid., 656–56.

presentation of Jesus' death as a representation links Paul's presentation of Jesus' death with the Jewish martyrological narratives. Chapter 7 offers general conclusions from chapters 2–6.

A WORD ABOUT THEOLOGICAL METHOD IN PAUL

Paul's letters are occasional and do not present an exhaustive theology of anything, not even an exhaustive theology of the cross. Instead, all of Paul's comments about the death of Jesus are contextual, and they occur in discourse with other communities. They often occur when he engages in fierce rhetorical polemics against his audience (e.g., 1 Corinthians) or against his opponents (e.g., Galatians). Thus, Paul's presentation of Jesus' death is in critical dialogue with particular audiences at specific times in his ministry.¹⁷⁶ Yet, although Paul's remarks about the death of Jesus are not exhaustive and are culturally conditioned, these non-exhaustive and culturally conditioned statements about Jesus' death actually reflect what he believed about the death of Jesus. Consequently, when we read the Pauline letters in context, we can discern Paul's theology of the death of Jesus by engaging in rigorous exegesis and by analyzing his statements about Jesus' death in the diverse historical contexts of his letters. To this kind of an analysis from Paul's letter to the Romans, I now turn.

176. Carroll and Green, *The Death of Jesus in Early Christianity*, 114.