

Comparing Judaism and Christianity: An Academic Autobiography  
A paper read at “New Views of First-Century Jewish and Christian Self-Definition:  
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I have never before felt the need to say that “words fail me”. I have always thought that a thank-you speech that begins “words are inadequate to express my gratitude” shows lack of careful thought or a remarkably small vocabulary. Now, however, I must say that “words fail me.” The reason, though, is not the size of my vocabulary or failure to think about the papers that you have written. The problem is that expressing gratitude for this event would cause me to cry, and I don’t want to waste your time in that way; I can cry on my own time. So let me simply say that I know what each person who has read a paper has done: You have all taken the time to write the paper, spent time and energy traveling, and spent time listening to other peoples’ papers. The Jewish members of the conference have found it especially difficult because of the demands of Passover. For all of us, time is life. It is flowing like grains through an hourglass, but the passing minutes and days are more like grains of gold than grains of sand. I am sure that I have never done anything to merit so much expenditure of time, the most precious commodity, and so all I can do is thank you from the bottom of my heart for your generosity — as well as for the gifts of your intelligence. Perhaps I am prejudiced, but I think that the conference has been admirable. I especially note that the papers were both on the subject of the conference and were of very high quality. This made it the most enjoyable academic occasion I have ever attended — though the prospect of all this scrutiny also, of course, made me very anxious.

The organizers, who modestly refrained from writing papers, have spent their own precious time without even getting a publication added to the c.v. You will receive no merit salary increases

this year! You four are my dear friends. You have all contributed to my education. On next Monday, my lecture will express gratitude to the work of Gregory Tatum.<sup>2</sup> In a recent publication I have indicated at least some of the things that I have learned from Fabian Udoh and Mark Chancey.<sup>3</sup> Susannah Heschel has taught me how much I did not know about 19<sup>th</sup> century Germany when I wrote about it.<sup>4</sup> I wish you would all stop doing conferences and publish more so that I could learn more. Fabian, of course, has borne the brunt of the labor, and has done so when he had better and more important things to do. Susannah, I am told, was chief letter writer. It is a tiring and demanding task, and it requires a remarkable degree of dedication and drive from someone who was not my student and for whom I have never even written a letter of recommendation. Again, thanks, from the bottom of my heart. Thanks to you all.

The original idea of my having an hour was to respond to your papers. I realized some time ago that this would be impossible. Twenty-four papers were scheduled, and at best I could have discussed only a few points. I decided instead to discuss the circumstances in which I wrote some of my books. More precisely: what did I think that I was doing? I shall spend longest on Paul and Palestinian Judaism. I do not think that my intellectual biography is either impressive or important, and there are dangers in later reflections: hindsight may serve as rose-coloured glasses, and thinking about one's youth may be merely self-indulgent. Thus I am by no means confident that I should do what I am going to do. Naturally I still think that the books addressed important topics, and it may be worth something if I say how I came to write them.

## TEXAS

Before explaining the books, however, I want to say a few words about growing up in Grand Prairie, Texas in the 1940s and 1950s. Although Grand Prairie is close to both Dallas and Fort Worth, families such as mine, which was at the lower end of the economic spectrum, lived almost

entirely in our small town. Besides being thus separated from the influence of major cultural attractions, we were also very remote from the world of advanced learning. Thanks to my mother's college textbooks, I read extensively in English literature and world history, but despite this I had no conception of a life lived as a scholar and (of course) no idea of what such a life would require. My intellectual horizon was only a few yards beyond junior high school (age 13-16). Since the struggle to learn languages became a dominant factor in my life, I shall focus on available language facilities. I did not meet a foreigner, or even someone who spoke a foreign language, until I went to college. Before I started high school (16 years of age), the only foreign language that was available was two years of Spanish (though Spanish speakers had not yet settled in the area where I lived). Thanks to the influence of my boyhood friend, Dudley Chambers, who was the son of the Superintendent of Schools, two years of Latin became available when we began high school. Dudley and I, together with a few others, dutifully worked on Latin. I attended the only college that I could afford, Texas Wesleyan College in Fort Worth, which generously provided both a scholarship and arranged for a part-time job. There the only language available was French, which I studied for three years, gaining fair fluency in reading. We had no language laboratories, and I did not acquire the ability to comprehend spoken French.

I have been asked why I did not go elsewhere, for example, Europe, to learn modern languages. There are two answers: (1) I did not think of it, nor did anyone mention it to me; (2) I could not have afforded it. Since travel is now very cheap relative to incomes, and it is hard to comprehend how difficult it was to escape small-town (or small-college) isolation, I shall offer an anecdote from a novel dealing with small-town America in the 1920s and 1930s (published in 1946). In it, a mind-reader is explaining the trick of knowing what is in a person's mind. First, one must realize that there are only a few main questions: Health, Wealth, Love, Travel, and Success. The most-asked

question was, “Am I ever going to make a trip?”<sup>5</sup> Money was not quite as scarce, nor was travel quite as rare in the 1950s (which began when I was 13) as it had been in the 1920s or 30s, but the circumstances of my own family were not much different from the period of the Great Depression. A round-trip (return) ticket to Europe would have cost more than my father’s annual income, and we were not entirely abnormal. One of my teachers, the daughter of one of the town’s more prosperous families, once spent a week in New York, and her description of the trip filled the children with wonder. It was the first time I had heard of anyone traveling so far (except, of course, to fight during World War II). I knew of only one small group of Grand Prairians who went abroad before I graduated from college.

The teachers and many other people in Grand Prairie knew that I had abilities. They talked to me about how well I could do in the professions. A local doctor, William Colip, offered to guarantee my expenses in medical school if I made A’s in pre-med. courses. Alas! I was interested in the humanities, especially history and literature, and the only well-educated people I knew were in the three professions that flourish in small towns — law, medicine, and ministry. I learned many things from going to church, but not that reading the Bible required Hebrew and Greek, nor that understanding it required German and French. I had local boosters, but none who could point me in the right direction.

I knew from the time I was in college (1955-59) that I wanted to study ancient history and specialize in religion. But I did not know what I needed to know, nor did anybody tell me, until I went to Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University in Dallas (1959-62). There, it readily became apparent that I needed Greek, Hebrew, and German (as well as French). I took all the language courses I could while at S.M.U. (Greek, Hebrew, Aramaic, and Syriac), and I took summer courses in German (besides selling cookware, which, along with scholarships and work in

local churches, supported me). My life basically changed when William R. Farmer, the senior New Testament scholar at Perkins, decided that I should have a year of study abroad. Bill and Samuel Crossley, a friend and former employer who was then Director of Christian Education at University Park Methodist Church<sup>6</sup>, set out to raise money. A large contribution came from a member of First Methodist Church in Fort Worth (where Sam and I had formerly worked). Bill Farmer, for his part, contacted Rabbi Levi A. Olan of Temple Emanuel in Dallas, who received a very large anonymous donation from one of the members of the Temple. I felt overwhelmed by generosity, and I especially vowed that the gift from Temple Emanuel would not be in vain. Altogether, Bill and Sam raised about \$10,000. Bill wrote some letters of introduction. I had met two major scholars when they lectured at S.M.U., and both were very helpful at this stage of my life (as well as later). David Daube encouraged me to come to Oxford and said that he would help me if I were there. Morton Smith contributed letters of introduction and advised me on people who could be helpful in Israel. Most fruitfully, both Bill Farmer and Morton Smith wrote to Yigael Yadin. And I set off on my adventure (1962-63).

I studied German in Göttingen from June until October of 1962 and then went to Oxford to see what David Daube could arrange. This resulted in my working on Rabbinic Hebrew for two terms. Dissatisfied with my progress, I decided to study modern Hebrew to learn how to read unvocalized texts and went to Jerusalem. There Yigael Yadin twisted the arm of Mordechai Kamrat, who accepted me as a private pupil, and I began to acquire a serious amount of Hebrew.

Almost all of the people mentioned in the previous paragraphs are now dead, and some did not live to see whether or not their selfless assistance to a poor, ignorant boy paid off. I hope that I have been half as helpful to a few as these great, busy men were to me.

#### PAUL AND PALESTINIAN JUDAISM

When I started graduate school at Union Theological Seminary in New York (September, 1963), where the New Testament faculty members were John Knox, W.D. Davies, and Louis Martyn, I had three views about the field that I was entering and what I would like to do. (1) Religion is not just theology, and in fact is often not very theological at all. New Testament scholarship then (as now) paid too much attention to theology and not enough attention to religion. Bultmann, who came out of the Religionsgeschichtliche Schule, bore a lot of the responsibility. His turn towards Lutheran theology was part of a larger movement, and I mention him only because he was so influential in New Testament studies. (2) To know one religion is to know none. The human brain comprehends by comparing and contrasting, and consequently comparison in the study of religion is essential, not optional. (3) New Testament scholars ought to study Judaism.

I now cannot say what had convinced me of numbers 1 and 2: too much theology, comparison necessary. Bill Farmer had told me item number 3 (study Judaism), and I simply believed him. This explains why, before beginning doctoral work, I had gone to Oxford, where Daube got me into a class, taught by David Patterson, that was translating Mishnah Sanhedrin and why I went to Israel to study modern Hebrew. It was also the intention to study Judaism that led me to Union. W. D. Davies was the leading New Testament scholar who wrote about the Rabbis, and he had also argued in favor of the interpenetration of Judaism and Hellenism.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, Union was across the street from Jewish Theological Seminary, where I took some courses.

Although I do not know for sure why I thought that students of religion should not concentrate so exclusively on theology, I do know some of the things I had read. My two favorite books were E. R. Goodenough's By Light, Light<sup>8</sup> and C. H. Dodd's The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel.<sup>9</sup> I liked the mysticism that was so obviously important in the study of Philo and John, and at the time I identified it as part of "non-theological religion": it is more about experience than about thought.

Dodd's detailed use of passages from Philo and the Revelation of the Thrice-Great Hermes to illuminate John was, I thought, marvelous. And I found Goodenough's portrayal of mystic Judaism enticing. While at Union, I also started working my way through Goodenough's Jewish Symbols,<sup>10</sup> which impressed me almost as much as By Light, Light.

I spent some weeks reading about ancient astrology, which I then started seeing on lots of the pages of the New Testament. Astrology constituted more evidence of a fairly non-theological form of religion.

Even if I could, I would not now take you through the rest of my reading list. I found that meeting the requirements of a doctoral program distracted me from my true studies, and I also knew that I could not write a comparative doctoral dissertation. It was bound to take a long time, and I wanted out. So I hopped through the hoops with as much alacrity as I could and finished in two years and nine months, graduating in May, 1966.

My doctoral dissertation was called The Tendencies of the Synoptic Tradition.<sup>11</sup> It dealt with a question of Form Criticism: did the gospel tradition change in consistent ways, becoming (for example), longer, more detailed, and less Semitic? This question went back to the interest in synoptic studies that Bill Farmer had planted in me,<sup>12</sup> though I did not write on the "synoptic problem" as such.<sup>13</sup> The dissertation left me knowing less about the "authenticity" of the synoptic tradition than Bultmann (for example) had known, since it argued that there were no "laws" of the tradition that governed change. The material had altered in the course of transmission, but I concluded that we do not know in what ways it changed. At the time, I did not see any way of beginning work on the historical Jesus, but I wanted to postpone that anyway, since I intended, after graduation, to begin a career as a comparativist. Having written a doctoral dissertation that was substantially influenced by the agenda of Bill Farmer, I proposed after my doctoral work to take up a

project that would be more like the work of W. D. Davies.

My plan was then to return to Israel to begin reading Rabbinic literature. I won a scholarship, but job offers began to arrive. The year was 1966; the U.S. had recently learned that the Constitution did not prohibit teaching about religion in tax-supported universities. The baby boomers were arriving in full force; universities were expanding; departments of religion were springing up and growing. Growth and expansion affected Canada as well. Eugene Combs of McMaster University (Hamilton, Ontario) phoned and asked if I would come for an interview. I replied, as I had to others, that I was going to Israel. Eugene, however, proposed that I come for two years and then take leave to go to Israel; they wanted to get New Testament started in their new department. So that's what I did. I remained at McMaster from 1966 to 1984, though I spent a few years away, either on leave or as visiting professor elsewhere.

Why study the Rabbis when what had most interested me was Hellenistic astrology and mysticism? I had thought of a Jewish topic that was not theological and that allowed for comparison and contrast — the three points that I regarded as essential. First, I would carry out an intra-Jewish comparison. Then I would figure out a way to compare something Jewish with something Christian. My conception of project number one, an intra-Jewish comparison, was largely determined by E. R. Goodenough. I had read in his Jewish Symbols — and of course I believed it — that George Foot Moore's Judaism<sup>14</sup> really existed, though it was a long way from being “normative.” Moore's Rabbinic Judaism, rather, was a small island in a vast ocean of Hellenistic Jewish mysticism. Goodenough was not an expert in Rabbinic literature, and he had very little to say about how the two sorts of Judaism related to each other, except that they were quite distinct and that “hellenized Judaism,” especially as seen in Philo and the synagogue at Dura Europos, was by far the larger kind of Judaism.<sup>15</sup> I had read Wolfson<sup>16</sup> and Belkin<sup>17</sup> on Philo, and so

I knew that there were studies of Philo and the Rabbis. But I thought that Goodenough's Philo — not Wolfson's — was the real Philo, and that therefore the real Philo had not yet been properly compared and contrasted with the Rabbis.<sup>18</sup> I also knew that there were lots of things that I could not do, such as study the legal topics common to Philo and the Rabbis. Nor, I thought, was it necessary, in view of previous work. Since mysticism was appealing, I first thought of comparing Philonic mysticism with Rabbinic, but I decided against it on the grounds that mysticism was not very important in Rabbinic literature generally.<sup>19</sup> Apart from mysticism and astrology, I knew of another non-theological aspect of religion: pious practices. I usually called these, unhappily, “practical piety,” but “pious practices” is a superior term.

I did not know anything about ancient pious practices. Well, I knew about prayer and — very vaguely — sacrifice, and I also knew from Goodenough that mysticism might include mystic rites. Guided by ignorance and a few clues, I thought that there must be bunches of pious practices, that I would be able to find them, and that by comparing Rabbinic and Hellenistic Jewish practices I could make a contribution to understanding the relationship between Goodenough's Judaism and Moore's Judaism. Thus I could do a Jewish comparative study on a non-theological aspect of religion and eventually follow it up by turning to pious practices in early Christianity. To say that at this stage I “saw through a glass darkly” would be to claim far too much.

In any case, the plan was hatched: compare the pious practices of the Rabbis and Goodenough's Jews (Philo + Jewish symbols). I realized that I would have to dig for the pious practices. Moore and Goodenough did not give sufficient information.

Cheered on by my colleagues and the administration at McMaster<sup>20</sup>, I won a fellowship and headed for Israel to study the Rabbis (1968-69).<sup>21</sup>

I should confess that it never occurred to me that I could not do what I proposed. Along with a

great deal of ignorance, I carried out of Texas the simple assumption that anyone could do anything. Ignorance, in a way, was bliss. Had I known the difficulties, I would probably have tried something much more modest. But, as things were, I wrote a grant application, referees wrote letters, and a committee approved the application. The project appeared feasible, given a bit of work. It was, in fact, several years after I completed Paul and Palestinian Judaism that I realized that it was all beyond my abilities. I have felt like a fraud ever since, though I worked hard to try to cover it up. (I have by now reached the point of viewing it as salutary that when one learns a lot of stuff one also learns how much is yet to be done.)

Perhaps I could put this reflection thus: At a fairly early stage, I became aware of the fact that I sometimes applied the principle “nothing ventured, nothing gained,” and other times the principle “better safe than sorry,” but that I did not know in advance which one to follow. When young, of course, I mostly lived by the first maxim.

In the Fall of 1968, my beloved friend and teacher, Mordechai Kamrat, took me in as a student again. Kamrat was one of the two most remarkable people I have ever known: the other was David Daube, with whom I had had numerous discussions in Oxford in 1962-63. Kamrat knew all languages: I once heard him converse in Danish, and once he and I watched a T.V. program from Cyprus: he translated, though he had never been in a Greek-speaking country.<sup>22</sup> And he could teach anyone anything. Like many Israelis, he was chronically short of money. I paid him a weekly sum that seemed reasonable at the time; it was about the same as I later paid for my daughter’s piano lessons.

Dr. Kamrat had started studying the Talmud at the age of 4 in Poland. Befriended by a Catholic priest, he was given access to a library and began to acquire languages other than Yiddish, Aramaic, Hebrew, Polish and Russian, and knowledge other than Talmudic. He ended up with a

Ph.D. from the University of Krakow in pedagogical psychology, went to British-controlled Palestine (the only one in his family to escape the Holocaust), and figured out how to teach Hebrew to immigrants from anywhere.<sup>23</sup> He taught me modern Hebrew and Rabbis in the same way: inductively, with drill. We started with the Mekhila. I went to Moshe Schreiber Buchhandlung, dusted off my 5-year old modern Hebrew, and asked advice about editions. I came back with most of the Tannaitic midrashim. Fortunately, I did not know that Lauterbach had translated the Mekhila into English. When I later consulted the existing German translations of the midrashim, I am glad to say, I found the Hebrew clearer than the German. I don't mean to say that I achieved fluency in Rabbinic Hebrew. A long way from it. I read slowly and sometimes needed help, even at the end of the year. And now, 35 years later, my Hebrew is quite rusty, and I have to look up lots of words that I once knew. As I indicated above, I shared the common American weakness of starting to learn foreign languages after I became an adult. Moreover, I'm not gifted. Being around Kamrat was sufficient to make me very modest about my ability to learn languages.

I was very fortunate that we started and ended with the Tannaitic midrashim, in which I had no translations available. I had Danby<sup>24</sup> with me, but luckily we did not read the Mishnah, and so I had to figure the Rabbis out in their own language — with, of course, Dr. Kamrat's help.

I fell in love. The first things I noticed about the Rabbis were their humanity, tolerance, and good humor. I also noted, of course, their academic love of precision. They wanted to find out what animal the Passover victim should be, how it should be cooked,<sup>25</sup> and so forth, and they were keen to establish the meaning of ben ha-`arabayim.<sup>26</sup> Besides the desire to understand the sacred text, which makes them very much like New Testament scholars, toleration of disagreement was their strongest and most consistent characteristic. The discussion of how long a man could be alone with a woman who was not his wife — which we eventually reached — struck me as a notable case

of rather humorous whimsy. There was a kind of playful one-upmanship. Is “as long as it takes to swallow an egg” longer or shorter than “as long as it takes for a palm tree, bent by the wind, to snap upright”?<sup>27</sup>

Besides making it through most of the major and minor Tannaitic midrashim,<sup>28</sup> the other book that I read that year was J.N. Epstein’s Mevo’ot le-Sifrut ha-Tannaim.<sup>29</sup> It was eye-opening. I toyed with efforts to translate it, but it is full of quotations, for many of which the editor did not give the source. This is all very well for those who have memorized the Talmud, but it was too much for me. What I learned, though, is that it is possible to do critical historical work with the literature, and in particular to identify the s<sup>c</sup>tam, the anonymous voice in each tractate or even each chapter. I of course knew that I could never do it, but Epstein’s demonstration has ever since caused me to look suspiciously at critical work that does not begin with identification of the anonymous voice.

At the end of the year, I re-read George Foot Moore’s Judaism. I planned to compare his Judaism to that of Goodenough, and now that I had read some of Moore’s favorite sources, I thought it was time to re-read his great work.

A moment ago I said that I was struck by the humanity and tolerance of the Rabbis. I had, therefore, begun to form the view that what some of my favorite New Testament scholars, such as Rudolf Bultmann, had told me about Pharisaic/Rabbinic Judaism<sup>30</sup> was not true. Now, as I read Moore, I saw a polemic against another view between the lines. And I concluded that on more-or-less every point that he discussed, he was correct. The Rabbis really believed in the grace of God and the efficacy of repentance. So Moore wrote, so the mere reading of Rabbinic literature proved. I did not like Moore’s organization of the material, which basically followed the Christian creed: the idea of God, followed by Man, Sin, Atonement, and the Hereafter (with some other topics). I thought that it should be possible to present the material in a way that was more natural to it.

By now, my topic had begun to change. I had, of course, found several pious practices, but I was distracted from them by the growing feeling that many influential New Testament scholars had misrepresented the Rabbis. I did not have Bousset<sup>31</sup> or Jeremias<sup>32</sup> with me, and I did not yet know about Moore's own polemical article on Christian scholars who had written about Judaism,<sup>33</sup> but the need to do something about mendacity was growing. I had been told that the Rabbis were deeply concerned with the effort to save themselves by doing more good deeds than bad, and that they were therefore either anxious (because they were uncertain of how the count stood) or arrogant (because they were confident that they had done enough good deeds to save themselves). I realized that possibly such Rabbis were lurking somewhere in the Mishnah and Tosefta — which I had not yet read — but I doubted it. They were certainly not to be found in the Tannaitic midrashim. (It eventually turned out that they cannot be found anywhere.)

“You all know the rest, in the books you have read”: When I returned to McMaster I was ready to write an argument about how to see Rabbinic literature theologically, without recourse to the phony category “legalism.”<sup>34</sup> That is, since I thought that Rabbinic literature as a whole had been misrepresented, it would not suffice to publish on a few of its details, such as pious practices. I felt compelled, rather, to offer a more holistic presentation, especially of Rabbinism's undergirding theology.<sup>35</sup> Nevertheless, this new requirement did not remove my main conviction: I HAD TO COMPARE, just as Gene Kelly had to dance. But besides leaving behind the intention to study pious practices, I had moved a long way from Philo, and I felt the need to look at Palestinian literature earlier than the Rabbis. So I spent some time study the Dead Sea Sect and comparing the Scrolls with the Rabbis.<sup>36</sup> Then I studied the Pseudepigrapha of Palestinian provenance. At some point along the way, “covenantal nomism” came to me. It seemed to me to grow organically out of the material: the literature is not about what Protestants call “legalism” (now sometimes called “merit

theology”), which is effort towards self-salvation, but it does deal with law. It is “nomistic” in its basic subject-matter. But why did the Rabbis and other Jews pursue these subjects at all? Was it not because God had given the law? And why should Jews obey it? To save themselves? Rabbinic literature lacks concern with individual salvation. So why did they pursue the details of law? Does not the effort presuppose the concept of election? Etc. I shall summarize the main arguments of the book below.

When it turned out that the Dead Sea Sect, while differing in some ways from the Rabbis, held approximately the same views of election and law, I knew that I needed a contrast. And so I turned to Paul, who was largely a stranger to me, but who was the man who had previously been compared with the Rabbis by my teacher, W. D. Davies.

Before reaching this point in the writing of what became Paul and Palestinian Judaism, my New Testament expertise was in the synoptic gospels, on which I had spent several years. I had taken (if I remember correctly) a total of two courses on the Greek text of parts of Paul’s letters, one taught by Victor Furnish at Perkins and one by Louis Martyn at Union. I had also read a list of books about Paul and had been examined on Paul as part of my doctoral work. When I began lecturing at McMaster University, I tried to present a Bultmannian Paul. I soon realized that this just did not work (the theory did not fit the text) and that I needed to do something else. By then I had learned THE MOST IMPORTANT LESSON OF MY LIFE: you really know what you learn for yourself by studying original sources. I would never have come to my understanding of the Rabbis by reading secondary literature. I could decide without first-hand study that Moore was better than Bousset, but that was by no means the same as internalizing the Rabbis’ modes of argument and their spirit. Furthermore, I remembered that one of the most exciting afternoons of my life was when I had read the Pauline letters through at a single sitting. Putting these two things together, I simply started reading through

Paul's letters and making notes. II Cor. 12 made it perfectly clear that Paul was some sort of mystic. "Being crucified with Christ," "dying with Christ," and "being one person with Christ" were obviously very important concepts to him, though brushed aside by most Protestant research in favor of "justification by faith," which was understood as judicial declaration of fictional ("imputed") righteousness. After going through the letters a few times, I returned to Albert Schweitzer<sup>37</sup> and then read some of the pre-Schweitzer German scholars, who wrote prior to the re-Lutheranization of German scholarship. I was relieved to see that other people had found approximately the same Paul that I "discovered." These bodies of literature — Rabbinic literature, Dead Sea Scrolls, selected Pseudepigrapha, and Paul's letters — made up the sections of the book.

I originally wrote the parts on Jewish literature without polemic, trying to imitate the tone achieved by Moore in his major work, which omitted the vigorous attacks of his articles. But, near the end of my work, during what was about the sixth revision of the section on the Rabbis, I decided that Moore had been wrong. Bultmann cited Moore as if he only gave additional details about the Rabbis to flesh out the portrait in Bousset's book.<sup>38</sup> I was not going to let that happen again, and so I decided to make it clear that some scholars were wrong and that the Rabbis had been misrepresented. Thus the polemics of the book when it finally appeared..

The only important thing not yet covered is the question of "getting in and staying in." This came from studying the issue of what to compare with what, and the principal negative example was the work of my revered supervisor, W.D. Davies. W.D. started with basic Biblical and Jewish conceptions — the exodus and the giving of the law — and went in search of parallels in Paul. He found a few and concluded that Paul was a Rabbinic Jew who simply replaced an unknown Messiah with a specific candidate, Jesus. There was a new exodus and a new law, the law of Christ. It seemed to me that this gave to these two points an importance that in fact they do not have in Paul's

letters. I could not see “dying with Christ” as a new exodus, nor did I find a great concern in Paul to establish a new “law of Christ.” So I dubbed the effort Motivgeschichte, the study of individual motifs, and went looking somewhere else. I failed to note, I am embarrassed to say, that W.D.’s exodus and law are my covenantal nomism. In rejecting the way in which W.D. had set up the comparison, I did not grasp how close we were on the Jewish side. His error (as I still think it to be) in the analysis of Paul, which led him to miss what was both novel and essential in Paul’s letters, blinded me to his correct perception of the two ingredients of Judaism that determine its basic characteristics. (I am sure that the largest category of my brain consists of things that are buried in it but that I do not call to consciousness at the right time.)

In any case, I decided to enlarge the categories and to discuss “getting in and staying in.” The weight of each topic is of course quite different in the various bodies of literature. Paul is obsessed with getting people into the new movement, and his discussions of correct behavior once in are rather cursory.<sup>39</sup> The Rabbis were concerned with correct behavior by the in-group and seldom had occasion to mention “getting in” — but, of course, concern over the behavior of the in-group implies that it existed. In the Scrolls, one finds both emphases. Despite the unequal weight, I had a topic that is important all round — even when, or perhaps all the more when, it is assumed rather than argued. In-group literature assumes the importance of being in the in-group.<sup>40</sup>

Paul’s break with Judaism, I thought, had to do with getting in; on behavior within the in-group he agreed closely with other Jews of his day. The difference is his requirement of faith in Christ. This, and only this, I proposed, led to a break between Pauline religion and his native Judaism.

I had some regret that the topic had become theology, but only some, since the mendacity of much of New Testament scholarship had become so important to me. The book did at least meet my other two goals: a comparison that included Judaism.

By the time I had finished the book, I realized that in many ways it was very close, both in method and substance, to the work of Samuel Sandmel.<sup>41</sup> Sam agreed to read the typescript, and I visited him at his home in Cincinnati. For the entirety of two afternoons, we sat on his porch while he patiently commented on aspects of the work. He persuaded Ben Zion Wacholder to check my translations of previously untranslated Rabbinic passages. I add these names to the list of those who donated large amounts of precious time to my work.<sup>42</sup>

I sent the book to the press in October, 1975. Very negative readers' reports both in England and the U.S. led to a delay. Thanks to the fact that John Bowden, Managing Editor of SCM Press, finally read the typescript himself, the book as I had submitted it was published in 1977.

I shall now give a summary of principal arguments, beginning with a negative point: (1) The book is not about the sources of Paul's thought. I granted that many or most topics in Paul could be paralleled in Jewish literature, but I was not pursuing an argument about where Paul got his ideas. Failure to note this point has misled several readers, some of whom have criticized me for using Jewish material later than Paul, while some have even imagined that in proposing that Paul had a different "pattern of religion" I meant that he had no connection with Judaism. (2) In most of Palestinian literature, the "pattern" of "getting in and staying in" is simple: one is in by virtue of the election (or covenant); one stays in by remaining loyal to the Jewish law. These two basic convictions gave rise to the term "covenantal nomism."<sup>43</sup> (3) In Paul, all are "out" of the people of God and may enter only by faith in Christ. (4) The two sets of terminology summarized by the phrases "being justified [righteoused] by faith" and "becoming one person with Christ" essentially mean the same thing: these are the terms that indicate entry into the people of God: one "dies" with Christ or is righteoused by faith and thus transfers into the in-group. (5) Once in, the member of the body of Christ should behave appropriately. In detail, this usually means the adoption of Jewish

rules of ethics and other forms of behavior. (6) In both Judaism and Paul people in the in-group are punished or rewarded depending on how well they adhere to the standards. Punishment and reward, however, are not “salvation”; people are saved, rather, by being in the in-group, and punishment is construed as keeping them in (as in 1 Cor. 11.27-32). (7) Paul does not accept the adequacy of the Jewish election for getting in; he begins the process of a theological rupture with Judaism by requiring faith in Christ. (8) Formally, he sometimes accepts “the whole law,” but it turns out that his Gentile converts do not actually have to keep all parts of the Jewish law, and that sometimes even Jewish Christians should depart from Jewish practice (as in the case of Peter in Antioch). (9) Consequently, Paul’s “pattern” of religion is not the same as “covenantal nomism.” The efficacy of the election is rejected, and the law is accepted with qualifications. (10) Paul’s pattern is, however, like covenantal nomism in that admission depends on the grace of God while behavior is the responsibility of the individual — who, of course, is supported in his or her efforts by God’s love and mercy. (11) Since one gets in by dying with Christ, and since Paul’s outlook is strongly eschatological, I dubbed his pattern “participationist eschatology,” though “eschatological participationism” might have been better.<sup>44</sup>

## JESUS AND JUDAISM

When I told my wife that I do not have much to say about Jesus and Judaism, she expressed her regret, since (she said) it is my best book. But, still, I have less to say about it. Moreover, I cannot yet bring myself to relive the period during which I wrote it (1975-84), which is also the period of the McMaster project in Jewish and Christian Normative Self-Definition, the title of which contributes to the title of the present conference.<sup>45</sup> Despite not wishing to recall those years, I well remember the kindness of friends and colleagues: John Robertson, Ben Meyer, Phyllis DeRosa Koetting, Al Baumgarten, and Alan Mendelson. The most important person in my life, however,

was my daughter, who during those years grew from age 5 to 14, and she was also the most comforting and stabilizing presence in my life.

With regard to the book: I thought of calling it “how to write a book about Jesus without knowing much about what he actually said.” In the years since my doctoral dissertation I had become even more distrustful of relying on a collection of “authentic” sayings to tell us what we want to know about Jesus, and the most important academic decision I made was to shift the discussion away from Jesus’ sayings. I had spent years on criteria of authenticity and had all sorts of lists, but I finally concluded that adding up a list of authentic sayings was never going to explain who he was or what happened. And so I went for what I regarded as better evidence: the skeleton outline of his career and especially his symbolic actions: the calling of twelve disciples, the entry into Jerusalem, and the turning over of tables in the forecourt of the temple. There was also the highly significant fact that John the Baptist, who was an eschatological preacher, and early Christianity, which was a Jewish eschatological movement, frame Jesus’ career. During a brief but memorable conversation with Morton Smith at a meeting of the SNTS in Toronto, we agreed that one has to focus on such facts as these. I was enormously cheered. I was already inclined to give a good deal of weight to Jesus as a healer, since I wanted to emphasize “deeds” to help offset the tendency of academics to present Jesus as only a teacher, and of course talking with Morton about miracles strengthened that inclination.<sup>46</sup>

Mostly, I wanted to know what led to the results: first to Jesus’ death and then to the formation of a group of his followers into a new sect. I doubted the authenticity of most of the passages depicting Jesus in conflict with the Pharisees, and in any case I found the disputes to be rather minor. So what drove history if not fatal Pharisaic animosity? I proposed that it was Jesus’ self-conception as the one who announced the reassembly of Israel and the coming of the kingdom of

God, his dramatic acts (especially the entry to Jerusalem and the temple scene), and the system in Judea, which made the high priest responsible for maintaining locally the pax Romana. Unhappily, I did not use the word “system”, and in a book written at about the same time Ellis Rivkin explained “what killed Jesus” more clearly than I did.<sup>47</sup> Still, I thought, I was helping to put to rest the view that dominated much scholarship: that Jesus was killed because he offended the Pharisees by favoring love, mercy, and grace. I submitted the typescript to the press in the Spring of 1984; the book appeared early in 1985.<sup>48</sup>

To put the main arguments of the book briefly: Jesus was a prophet of the restoration of Israel, who began as a follower of an eschatological prophet (John the Baptist), and whose ministry resulted in an eschatological Jewish movement (early Christianity, especially as seen in Paul’s letters). He pointed to restoration in word and deed, proclaiming the kingdom as soon to arrive and indicating the restoration of Israel especially by calling the Twelve. He made dramatic symbolic gestures pointing to this hope. One of them, overthrowing tables in the temple court, led Caiaphas to the view that he might start a riot. The requirements of the Roman system resulted in his execution. His followers continued his movement, expecting him to return to re-establish Israel. This naturally led to their incorporation of the prophetic hope that in the last days the Gentiles would turn to worship the God of Israel.<sup>49, 50</sup>

#### JUDAISM: PRACTICE AND BELIEF, 63 BCE - 66 CE

Let me now proceed to days that were happier for me. I moved to Oxford (September, 1984) and again, as when I first read the Rabbis, fell in love — this time with the environment created by scholars in other aspects of the ancient world: Geza Vermes, soon the young Martin Goodman, Robin Lane Fox, Fergus Millar, Angus Bowie, and Simon Price. I wanted to be like them. Well, I could never be that clever or learned, but I could go back to non-theological religion and specifically

to religious practice, which I had dropped after 1968-69.

While writing Jesus and Judaism I had become fascinated with the riches of Josephus, whom I had neglected when writing P&PJ.<sup>51</sup> When I had to explain the history of Jesus in light of the power structure of his day, of course, the only source outside the gospels was the work of Josephus. Not the Mishnah. In 1968-69 I had learned from Epstein that most Tannaitic literature comes from the period of R. Akiba and R. Ishmael and later, that is, the last three quarters of the second century. I never thought that Rabbinic law governed Jewish Palestine in Jesus' day. The very first bit of Rabbinic literature I read (please remember) was Mishnah Sanhedrin, which is obviously not a manual of how law courts worked.<sup>52</sup> I remember being told by friends at what is now the Albright School of Archaeology that they were scandalized because an Israeli scholar — whose name, alas! I do not remember — had told them that M. Sanhedrin does not represent the law in effect at Jesus' time. This was no surprise to me.

To understand the legal and governmental system, I turned to Josephus, and I found him to be most illuminating with regard to how things really worked politically and judicially. Furthermore, the gospels and Acts support him. In the days of the prefects and the procurators, Jerusalem was governed by the aristocratic priesthood.

So now, when I decided at long last to return to pious practices, I wanted to make more use of Josephus, while incorporating other literature (including early Rabbinic literature) when possible. I tried to decide what Jews really did in a few dozen cases. I do not think that I have ever written down what my rules of thumb were, so I shall tell you. Assume 5 sources: the priestly writer, Josephus, the Mishnah (standing in for Tannaitic literature), Philo, Other (Dead Sea Scrolls, late Biblical books, Pseudepigrapha, Apocrypha). Agreement among the first 3 is decisive: Leviticus, Josephus, the Mishnah. That is what people really did in the first century. Agreement between

Leviticus and Philo alone is dubious: it probably shows only that Philo read the Bible. Even agreement between Leviticus and Josephus alone must be queried, especially so if Josephus' wording is exclusively that of the Septuagint: sometimes he told his assistant just to write down a summary from the LXX (or so I imagine). Josephus plus the Mishnah against everybody else is probable.

These rules of thumb do not cover everything. No combination works every time; sometimes a source in the "other" category, such as Nehemiah, weighs very heavily. In a few cases the Dead Sea Scrolls make a major contribution to the study of general practice, especially when a passage has a close parallel in Rabbinic literature. Put briefly, the DSS + the Mishnah = a genuine pre-70 topic (not necessarily a decision about precisely what the majority practice was).

Why not cut articles out of the Encyclopedia Judaica and paste them in a book organized by subject instead of alphabetically? The EJ is biased in favor of the Rabbis. Too few of its authors had shaken off the old views that all Rabbinic material is traditional and that the Rabbis always governed Israel, which leads (for example) to the use of fourth- or fifth-century Babylonian material to determine what first-century Jews did in Palestine.

Besides trying to improve on the Encyclopedia Judaica on several topics, I wanted to pursue the question of "who ran what", which involved study of the role of the Pharisees and the passages about a sanhedrin. Moreover, I argued in favor of a common Judaism, consisting of a few beliefs and several practices which, with variations, were very widespread or even universal.

Thus the contents of the book are mixed. The common denominator of these various studies is Real Life: how things actually worked and what most Jews actually did when they were observing the commandments.

Apart from the primary literature itself, the strongest single influence on my views of the role of the Pharisees, the judicial system, how government worked, and how to define common Judaism

was the work of Morton Smith. He had pointed out that Josephus' narrative does not support some of his summaries, such as the statement the whenever the Sadducees were in office they had to submit to the views of the Pharisees, who controlled the populace.<sup>53</sup> Smith had said that "normative Judaism" should be defined as whatever the Pentateuch, the ordinary priests, and the common people agreed on.<sup>54</sup> He had also sponsored a "low" view of the authority of the Pharisees, a view that lives on in the work of his students and admirers.<sup>55</sup> After I finished the chapter on "Who Ran What?", I thought of sending the typescript to Morton, but I decided to wait and to give him a copy of the book, which I imagined I could deliver in person. That was a mistake that grieves me: he died, and so he did not know that I was fully in support of him on these points. What is so wonderful about Morton's views, of course, is that they reflect the primary sources so beautifully. I think that those who work their way through the material will come to the same conclusions — unless, of course, they are entirely in the grip of presuppositions and prefer summaries to study of cases as they appear in detailed narrative — the narratives of Josephus, the gospels, and Acts.

When I moved to Duke University (August, 1990) and started reading the work of members of the Jesus Seminar, I realized that I should have added a section about government from the Roman point of view — how different parts of the Empire were governed and were not governed — and about the placement of the Legions. I tried to repair some of these omissions in the Festschrift for Professor Räisänen.<sup>56</sup>

I wanted the main value of Practice and Belief to be the studies of actual practice.<sup>57</sup> In addition to these, the principal arguments are: (1) There were beliefs and practices common to world-wide Judaism, not dictated by any party, which constitute "Common Judaism."<sup>58</sup> (2) The Pharisees were, after the time of Salome Alexandra (76-67CE) a small but highly respected party within Judaism that had a varying amount of influence from time to time and issue to issue. (3) Real power, however,

resided in the rulers: one of the Hasmoneans; one of the Herodians; the prefects or procurators of Judea (after 6 C.E.); and, in Jerusalem during the period of “direct” Roman rule, the aristocrats, especially the aristocratic priesthood. The evidence indicates that the Pharisees did not dictate policy to any of these groups or individuals.<sup>59</sup>

## CONCLUSION

It is not up to me to say what, if anything, I have achieved. I can say that I still find the main theses of these three books — all the theses listed above, plus a few not mentioned — correct. I can name lots of mistakes and have often thought of things that could have been done in a better way. But I still believe in covenantal nomism and that it (and many practices) were shared by most Jews; that Paul’s only fundamental objection to his native religion was that it did not include faith in Christ; that it was Jesus’ symbolic actions in Jerusalem that alarmed Caiaphas into thinking that he might start a riot. And so, alas! I am largely unrepentant.

Somewhere along the way, Hellenistic mysticism dropped out — not mysticism, which figures in the study of Paul, but Hellenistic mysticism of the sort described by Goodenough: the quest to leave the material world and enter the noetic, real world. I had not realized how completely this sort of mysticism had disappeared from my view until the Spring of 2002, when, for the first time in more than 30 years, I taught a course on Philo. The course was mostly on the historical treatises and the Special Laws,<sup>60</sup> though we did note the passage according to which Moses entered the darkness where God was;<sup>61</sup> we made passing reference to the mystic meal in Joseph and Aseneth ch. 16; and we considered Goodenough on the scene from Dura Europos in which Israelites cross the sea.<sup>62</sup> By Light, Light, which I re-read, no longer grips and persuades as it once did, but I am nevertheless sorry that I never got back to Hellenistic mysticism and that I did so little in Greek-speaking Judaism.

In this connection, I should return to the question of the sources of Paul's thought (above, p. xxx). Troels Engberg-Pedersen recently indicated to me that he expected me to oppose the work that he and others have done on Paul and the Stoics.<sup>63</sup> That is not at all my attitude. I compared and contrasted Paul to the Jewish literature that I had studied, with no intention to claim that he relates only to it, or that he derived all of his ideas from it. I am incompetent to treat Paul's sources thoroughly, since I am incompetent to compare him to Greco-Roman material. If I had two decades ahead, with as much energy as I had in my 30s, 40s, and early 50s, I would love to take up this issue. My first instinct would be to review Goodenough's project and to begin with hellenized Judaism. Let me put it this way: Paul wrote that "we look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen; for what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal" (2 Cor. 4.18). In 1 Cor. 15.53 he wrote about imperishability and immortality. In such passages, it seems to me, we hear a very "Greek" voice, and in fact 2 Cor. 4.18 sounds downright Platonic.<sup>64</sup> Did Paul read Greek philosophical sources? Did he absorb such ideas from his culture? Had this terminology and way of thinking already been accepted in the Judaism in which he grew up? In the case of Philo, we may be fairly confident that he inherited a strongly hellenized Judaism and added to it by direct study of Greek philosophical works, including at least some of Plato. I would be inclined to think that Paul did not have the sort of supplemental education in Greek philosophy that Philo had, and so I would try my hand first at the third possibility: the idea of an unseen world that is eternal (= real), in contrast to the sensible world, which is transient (= not real), had already penetrated the Judaism that he inherited. I do not know this to be true, but that is what I would assume at the outset, which would lead me to the study of Greek-speaking Judaism, including both the literature and the symbols. Philo was not conscious of putting a Greek veneer on something like Rabbinic Judaism; rather true Judaism as he saw it was deeply impregnated with Hellenistic thought (following

Goodenough).<sup>65</sup> The same thing, though put less strongly, might be true of Paul. It seems to me that we need further study of this whole issue, both indirect influence of Greek thought on Paul via the synagogue and direct influence coming from Paul's own knowledge of his environment. I would not wish anything that I have written to be seen as opposing such efforts. On the contrary, I think that further study is required, and I wish that I could join in.

I have never lost my confidence that Goodenough really discovered something — a deeply hellenized Judaism. Nothing could please me more than to see this enormous topic pursued with renewed vigor.

With regard to my own life and work, however, Goodenough was demoted, and his influence is probably imperceptible.<sup>66</sup> In terms of the sort of scholarship that I have found most helpful, I have a list of major items: Albert Schweitzer on both Jesus and Paul;<sup>67</sup> Morton Smith's essays;<sup>68</sup> Saul Lieberman's Tosefta ki-Fshutah;<sup>69</sup> Epstein's Mevo'ot;<sup>70</sup> Davies' The Gospel and the Land;<sup>71</sup> the dozens of essays by Daube;<sup>72</sup> Robin Lane Fox's books on Alexander and Pagans and Christians;<sup>73</sup> Burkert's Greek Religion and Homo Necans;<sup>74</sup> Fergus Millar, The Roman Near East;<sup>75</sup> A.H.M. Jones, Cities of the Eastern Roman Provinces;<sup>76</sup> Lee Levine, Jerusalem.<sup>77</sup> I list these books, I suppose, partly to indicate my long-standing interest in works that deal with the nitty-gritty of religion (such as sacrifice) and those that allow us to set religion firmly in a historical and social setting. I refrain from mentioning the works of people who are present, though some of you belong on my list of heroes. The problem is simply that most of you are too young to have influenced me when I was writing my principal books and the articles that appeared after the last book, which was published in 1993.<sup>78</sup>

When discussing my early interest in mysticism and astrology, I hinted but did not say that I was very attracted to the Religionsgeschichtliche Schule and, in fact, to pre-World War I German New

Testament scholarship in general — before the turn towards Luther, which has done a great deal of harm to German New Testament scholarship. For a long time, I thought that Deismann had written the best book on Paul, and these days I rather miss the company of these now ancient Germans. I should look at some of them again.

I still think that many of the people now engaged in New Testament research know far too little about ancient history and far too little about ancient sources other than the Bible. I continue to hope for more and better comparative studies. They are not all that easy, but they are an awful lot of fun.

## Endnotes to An Academic Autobiography

Abbreviations:

P&PJ Paul and Palestinian Judaism      JLJM      Jewish Law from Jesus to the Mishnah

J&J      Jesus and Judaism      P&B      Judaism: Practice and Belief

HFJ      Historical Figure of Jesus

1. The paper is printed very much as I gave it on April 13, 2003, retaining the lecture form, which included direct address to the participants. I have added a new section, headed TEXAS, a few other paragraphs, and a lot of notes. Apart from this, I have made only a few changes in wording.
2. “Did Paul’s Theology Develop?” Unpublished lecture.
3. “Jesus’ Galilee,” Fair Play: Diversity and Conflicts in Early Christianity. Essays in Honor of Heikki Räisänen, eds. Ismo Dunderberg, Kari Syreeni, Christopher Tuckett (Leiden: Brill 2001), pp. 3-41. For Udoh, see p. 16 and nn. 37, 41. For Chancey, see pp. 31-2 and nn. 6, 64, 75, 76, 83, 86, 92; see now Chancey, The Myth of a Gentile Galilee. SNTSMS 118. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).
4. Susannah Heschel, Abraham Geiger and the Jewish Jesus (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).
5. William Lindsay Gresham, Nightmare Alley, orig. publ. 1946, republ. in Crime Novels: American Noir of the 1930s and 40s (New York: The Library of America, 1997), pp. 517-795.
6. This was before the merger that resulted in the United Methodist Church.
7. See Paul and Rabbinic Judaism. Some Rabbinic Elements in Pauline Theology (repr. of 4<sup>th</sup> ed., Mifflintown, Pa: Sigler Press, 1998; orig. publ. 1948). “Interpenetration” is the subject of ch. 1.
8. By Light, Light. The Mystic Gospel of Hellenistic Judaism (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1935).
9. Cambridge: University Press, 1953.

10. Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period, 13 vols. Bollingen Series XXXVII (New York: Pantheon Books, 1953-1968).
11. SNTSMS 9. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969.
12. While I was a student at Perkins, Farmer was writing The Synoptic Problem. A critical review of the problem of the literary relationships between Matthew, Mark, and Luke (New York: Macmillan, 1964).
13. Much later, my interest in both the synoptic problem and form criticism led to Studying the Synoptic Gospels (London/Philadelphia: SCM/Trinity Press International, 1989), which I wrote together with Margaret Davies. I contributed the sections on source criticism, form criticism, and life-of-Jesus research. Meg wrote the section on holistic readings.
14. Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era. The Age of Tannaim, 3 vols. (Cambridge, Ma: Harvard University Press, 1927-30).
15. I have been unable to find the source of the analogy “like a small island in a vast ocean.” On the two kinds of Judaism, however, and their relative scope, see Jewish Symbols 12, pp. 185-90, 197-8; vol. 4, pp. 3-24. In By Light, Light, Goodenough had hesitated about the relative size of “normative” and non-normative, mystical Judaism: the latter was the Judaism of “at least an important minority” (p. 5; similarly p. 9). Even here, however, some of his claims were stronger: “if Judaism in the circles that were using the Septuagint had come to mean what I have indicated...” (p. 9). In any case, it seems to have been the work that went into producing Symbols that resulted in his confidence that mystic Judaism was far larger than Moore’s normative Judaism.

On Goodenough’s knowledge of Rabbinic sources, see Samuel Sandmel, “An Appreciation,” in Religions in Antiquity. Essays in Memory of E.R. Goodenough, ed. Jacob Neusner. Studies in the History of Religion XIV (Leiden: Brill, 1968), pp. 8-9, 10: despite inability to read Rabbinic literature

in the original languages, he “absorbed a tremendous amount of its quantity and quite a bit of its quality.”

16. Harry A. Wolfson, Philo. Foundations of Religious Philosophy in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, 2 vols. (Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard University Press, 1947, rvsd. 1962).

17. Samuel Belkin, Philo and the Oral Law (Cambridge, Ma: Harvard University Press, 1940).

18. My only published effort at comparing Palestinian and Hellenistic Judaism is “The Covenant as a Soteriological Category and the Nature of Salvation in Palestinian and Hellenistic Judaism,” Jews, Greeks and Christians. Religious Cultures in Late Antiquity. Essays in Honor of William David Davies, ed. Robert Hamerton-Kelly and Robin Scroggs. SJLA 21 (Leiden: Brill, 1976), pp. 11-44. I wrote this when Paul and Palestinian Judaism was almost finished, and so the section on Palestinian Judaism repeated covenantal nomism (though I made use of II Baruch, which I decided not to include in P&PJ). I proposed that Joseph and Aseneth and the “real” Philo (Goodenough’s Philo) reflect forms of mystical Judaism, but that nevertheless in parts of Philo the importance of the covenant (called by him the politeia, “commonwealth”) shines through, as does the view that the law should be obeyed.

19. Emphasis is on the word “generally.” I had read Gershom Scholem, Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism (Jerusalem: Schocken, 1941; pb. repr. of 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., Schocken 1961); Scholem, Jewish Gnosticism, Merkabah Mysticism, and Talmudic Tradition (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary, 1960).

20. Along with several others, I am deeply in debt to the senior administration of McMaster University. Though the sciences predominated in the university and accounted for its reputation in Canada, the administrators wanted strength in the humanities and social sciences, and this included sponsoring and paying for a large and excellent Department of Religion. Our work — and, I admit,

especially mine — was materially assisted in numerous ways. I remember with deep gratitude Mel Preston, Bill Hellmuth, Alvin Lee, Art Bourns, Saul Frankel, and Peter George.

21. The fellowship was from the Canada Council, later called the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC).

22. “All languages” is hyperbolic. As far as I discovered, he knew Latin and Greek, as well as all of the Slavic, Germanic, Romance, and Semitic languages that are spoken today. He once told me that he had dabbled in Chinese — which may have meant that he knew quite a lot.

23. Mordechai Kamrat, Inculcation of the Hebrew Language (in Hebrew) (Tel Aviv, 1962).

24. Herbert Danby, The Mishnah, Translated from the Hebrew with Introduction and Brief Explanatory Notes (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1933).

25. Exodus 12 and Deuteronomy 16 do not entirely agree on the animal or how it was cooked, and so the Rabbis had to sort these matters out. See e.g. Sifre Deut. Pisqa 129.

26. “Between the two evenings” perhaps originally (Exod. 12.6; Num. 9.3) meant “twilight.” That did not allow sufficient time, however, to slaughter tens of thousands of animals in the temple courts, clean up, and perform the regular evening sacrifices. Thus the “right” meaning of the term had to be discovered. According to Mekh. Pisha (Bo’) 5, it meant “after the sixth hour of the day,” i.e. after noon [Jacob Z. Lauterbach, Mekilta de-Rabbi Ishmael (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1933), vol. I, p. 43].

27. Sifre Zuta to Num. 5.13 [H. S. Horovitz, Siphre d’Be Rab. Fasciculus primus: Siphre ad Numeros adjecto Siphre zutta (corrected ed. Jerusalem: Wahrmann Books, 1966; orig. publ. Leipzig, 1917), p. 233; cf. Tosefta Sotah 1.2 [Saul Liberman, The Tosefta (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1973), Sotah, p. 151]]. My memory is that Dr. Kamrat and I read h<sup>a</sup>zārat deqel as “restoration of a palm tree [bent by the wind].” In light of lehaqqîf in Sifre Num. Pisqa 7

(Horovitz, p. 12), one might translate “as long as it takes to encompass (walk around) a palm tree.”

28. We read the Mekhilta, Sifre on Numbers and Deuteronomy, most of Sifra, Sifre Zuta on Numbers, and parts of the Mekhilta of R. Shime`on b. Yohai.

29. Introduction to Tannaitic Literature, ed. E. Z. Melamed (Tel Aviv/ Jerusalem: Magnes, Hebrew University and Dvir, 1959).

30. It took a long time for the difference between Pharisees and Rabbis to emerge into full consciousness in Jewish and Christian scholarship. I am inclined to attribute general clarity on the distinction to Jacob Neusner’s The Rabbinic Traditions About the Pharisees Before 70, 3 vols.

(Leiden: Brill, 1971-72). On the other hand, during 1968-69 I knew that I was studying the Rabbis and not the Pharisees, and I conceived my project in terms of bodies of literature, not named groups. Epstein (n. 29 above) was doubtless influential, but I am unable to give the history of my own early views about the relationship between the pre-70 Pharisees and Rabbinic literature.

31. Wilhelm Bousset, Die Religion des Judentums im späthellenistischen Zeitalter, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Tübingen: Mohr, 1926).

32. Joachim Jeremias, Jerusalem zur Zeit Jesu (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1962). The E.t., Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus (London/Philadelphia: SCM/Fortress), appeared in 1969.

33. Moore, “Christian Writers on Judaism,” HTR 14, 1921, 197-254.

34. For some years, I have been lecturing on the false construction “legalism,” pointing out that, in addition to other flaws, it requires a degree of individualism that cannot be found in ancient Jewish literature. It assumes that Jews thought that each individual had to achieve self-salvation, with no group benefits and no collective privileges. Legalism is an invention of polemical attack on Roman Catholicism and Judaism. I hope eventually to publish this and related lectures.

35. Reading the works of Max Kadushin made a holistic study even more attractive and helped me think that it could be done. See e.g. Organic Thinking. A Study in Rabbinic Thought (New York:

Bloch repr. n.d.; orig. publ. 1938); The Rabbinic Mind (2<sup>nd</sup> ed New York: Blaisdell, 1965). I was also encouraged to search Rabbinic literature for basic assumptions and underlying theological principles by reading Abraham Joshua Heschel's Torah min ha-Shamayim ba-Aspaqlaryah shel ha-Dorot, 2 vols. (London and N.Y.: Soncino Press, 1962, 1965).

36. In those ancient days, twelve principal scrolls comprised the collection [see Die Texte aus Qumran, ed. Eduard Lohse (2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1971)]. I also found it possible to read through virtually the entirety of the secondary literature. Perhaps needless to say, this could not be done now, except by someone whose full-time occupation is Scrolls research.

37. The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle (E.t. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. London: Adam and Charles Black, 1953).

38. See Paul and Palestinian Judaism (London/Philadelphia: SCM/Fortress, 1977), pp. 43-7.

39. Paul often displays great ingenuity in arguing for certain behavior, as in the chapters on idolatry in 1 Cor. 8 and 10. But the result is not in the least novel: do not directly engage in the worship of idols. Often, however, he simply gives general admonitions, such as “be blameless” (1 Thess. 5.3). His creativity appears in his discussions of “getting in” and in some of his arguments about behavior, not in the content of that behavior.

40. The argument about “assumption” or “presupposition” in Jewish literature has proved hard for many readers to see: they seek prooftexts. I discussed this issue in “Covenantal Nomism Revisited,” a paper given at the meeting of the Mid-Atlantic AAR and SBL in March, 2004, which I hope soon to publish.

41. Especially “Parallelomania,” JBL 81 (1962) 1-13; “The Need of Comparative Study,” Theological Soundings: Notre Dame Seminary Jubilee Studies 1923-1973, ed. I. Mihalik (New Orleans:???) , pp. 30-35.

42. I also had fruitful discussions of the book with C. F. D. Moule and W. D. Davies. These trips, as well as my salary and secretarial assistance, were supported by a Killam Senior Research Scholarship. The Scholarship was continued for the year 1975-76, while I worked on Jesus and Judaism and began (with Ben Meyer and Al Baumgarten) the McMaster Project on Normative Self-Definition; see n. 45.

43. Covenantal nomism appears even in Philo (“The Covenant as Soteriological Category,” n. 18 above). In P&PJ, I described it by using such words and phrases as “common,” “basic,” “assumption,” “presupposition,” “underlying agreement,” “underlying pattern,” and “basic common ground” (e.g. pp. 70, 71, 75, 82, 85, 424). I thought of it as a “lowest common denominator” of many types of Judaism, though I chose not to write that phrase. In re-reading Goodenough in the Spring of 2004, I discovered that he had written that Jews were loyal to “some common Jewish denominator,” which consisted of loyalty to the Jewish people and belief in the Bible. He also referred to this as “minimal Judaism.” He wrote that Philo “still believed with all his heart that Jews had a special revelation of God in the Torah, and a peculiar relationship with him.” (See Jewish Symbols 12, pp. 6-9.) These pages, which I had read in 1964 or 1965, contained no pencil marks indicating that I had regarded the terms or the proposal as important. I nevertheless wonder whether they lodged in my subconscious mind, to surface ten years later. I wish that I had remembered these pages, since I would have been delighted to have Goodenough’s support on both Philo and Judaism in general.

44. Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983; London: SCM, 1985) was, as John Bowden complained to me, basically a long footnote to the Paul section of P&PJ. The earlier book had dealt with Paul in a less detailed way than New Testament scholars expect, and I wanted to give full exegetical detail of the most complicated topic: the law. I remain satisfied with the

discussion of the various contexts in which Paul writes about the law. He answers diverse questions, and the answer to each question is consistent; but the various answers, when placed side-by-side, give a confusing picture. One cannot derive from them a systematic view of the law. To this discussion I appended a treatment of his view of the Jewish people, offering fairly detailed exegesis of Rom. 9-11.

45. This project was supported by a very generous five-year “programme grant” from the SSHRC (1976-1981). Our work was continued for another year at the expense of McMaster University.

46. See Morton Smith, Jesus the Magician (San Francisco: Harper&Row, 1978).

47. Ellis Rivkin, What Crucified Jesus? The Political Execution of a Charismatic (Nashville: Abingdon, 1984). Rivkin’s book appeared after I submitted the typescript to the press.

Unfortunately, in the summer and fall of 1984 I was engaged in moving to Oxford, and I did not read Rivkin’s book until after I had sent in the proofs. In retrospect, I see that I should have insisted on inserting a footnote even at that late date.

48. J&J was written with the aid of a Killam Senior Research Scholarship at the beginning of the project and a SSHRC Leave Fellowship near the end. Most of the book was written while I was Visiting Fellow Commoner at Trinity College, Cambridge (1982).

49. I assumed that Seán Freyne had accurately and adequately explained what Galilee was like in Jesus’ day, and so I saw no need to say much about it. When later I moved to the U.S. (August, 1990), I began slowly to learn that completely erroneous views were becoming popular in the U.S. Nevertheless, when I finished The Historical Figure of Jesus (London: Penguin, 1993) in 1992, I had not perceived the full influence of these views. I thought that they would gradually disappear. On Freyne’s work and my own later efforts, see n. 78 below.

50. I attempted to base J&J entirely on “bedrock” tradition, passages that are most certainly

authentic. I eventually decided that criteria for authenticity strike most readers as being merely a convenience by which an author gets rid of unwanted material. Moreover, the importance of finding the right context grew in my mind, with the result that I eventually concluded that if one has the right context for Jesus, which sayings are quoted do not really matter very much. Consequently, when I wrote HIFJ for the “general reader,” I quoted many more sayings as coming from Jesus than I had used in J&J. This does not imply full belief that they are all authentic.

51. Bill Farmer had urged me to read Josephus’ Jewish War while I was at Perkins (1959-62), and I had complied. What he saw in it, however, was (1) that lots of Jews were zealous for the law, which led to the view (2) that the Pharisees controlled Judaism and made people zealous, which was bad because (3) zeal for the law is the same as legalism, which is horrible. I eventually learned that none of this was true, but this experience made me miss most of the actual treasures in Josephus.

Farmer’s views of Judaism were taken entirely from Joachim Jeremias. Approximately this same view of Josephus and Pharisaic control has now been argued by Martin Hengel and Roland Deines, “E.P. Sanders’ ‘Common Judaism,’ Jesus, and the Pharisees,” JTS n.s. 46, 1995, 1-70. The view is no better now than it was then.

52. This statement applies to the tractate taken as a whole, including especially the structural statements and the view that “sages” constituted the membership of courts. I assume that some of the material is pre-70 and may even be of Hasmonean origin.

53. On case studies versus summaries, see Judaism: Practice and Belief 63 BCE-66 CE [London/Valley Forge, Pa.: SCM/Trinity Press International, 1992; 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (including subject index), 1994], pp. 318, 393-4, 401-2, 481-90.

54. Smith, “The Dead Sea Sect in Relation to Ancient Judaism,” NTS 7 (1960-61) 356; cf.

“Palestinian Judaism in the First Century,” Israel, Its Role in Civilization, ed. Moshe Davis (New

York: Jewish Theological Seminary, 1956), pp. 73-4.

55. See P&B, p. 401 and n. 45 (on p. 535).

56. N. 3 above.

57. In the course of working on P&B, I wrote several studies, many of which would not fit. Some of these were collected and published as Jewish Law from Jesus to the Mishnah. Five Studies (London/Philadelphia: SCM/Trinity Press International, 1990). The publishers, unfortunately, persuaded me not to use “Studies in” or “Aspects of” in the main part of the title. The main subjects are “the synoptic Jesus and the law,” “did the Pharisees have oral law?,” “did the Pharisees eat ordinary food in purity?,” “purity, food and offerings in the Greek-speaking diaspora,” and “Jacob Neusner and the philosophy of the Mishnah.”

58. John Meier, A Marginal Jew III: Companions and Competitors (New York: Doubleday, 2001), uses both the terms “common” and “mainstream” Judaism (pp. 7-8; cf. 329, 384). “Mainstream” excludes the Qumran sectarians because they did not worship in the Jerusalem temple. This is certainly a fair distinction, but I would note that even here there was common agreement on the temple considered abstractly, the disagreement focusing rather on architecture, calendar, and the high priesthood.

59. Work on JLJM and P&B was supported by a Guggenheim Fellowship, and P&B was completed while I was on leave from Duke University. The study of immersion pools (miqva’ot) in Israel was funded by a British Academy Research Grant. I am indebted to Hanan Eshel for a good deal of instruction during visits to many archaeological sites.

60. Whereas once upon a time I felt totally inadequate to compare Philo’s legal opinions with those of others, I now feel reasonably able to do this. On the other hand, I have no confidence in my ability to discuss mysticism in a comparative way, and I have always been incompetent to discuss

Philo's relationships with the Greek philosophical schools.

61. Philo, Moses I, 158.

62. Goodenough, Jewish Symbols 11, West Wall plate XIV; vol. 10, ch. 16. On the importance of this scene for Goodenough's overall view, see vol. 12, pp. 188f.

63. Engberg-Pedersen, Paul and the Stoics (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 2000); ed., Paul Beyond the Judaism/Hellenism Divide (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 2001).

64. Alpha privatives, such as the two words in 1 Cor. 15.53, or words that may be alpha privatives (as in 2 Cor. 4.18) always catch my eye. If Paul were Philo, would he have written the antitheses of 2 Cor. 4.18 in such a way as to include aorata (a word that he uses in Rom. 1.20; see later Col. 1.15f.)?

65. E.g. Jewish Symbols 12, pp. 9, 12.

66. Except in "The Covenant as a Soteriological Category," n. 18 above.

67. Schweitzer on Paul, n. 37 above; on Jesus: The Quest of the Historical Jesus. A Critical Study of its Progress from Reimarus to Wrede (repr. E.T. New York: Macmillan, 1961; orig. publ. 1906).

68. Smith, Studies in the Cult of Yahweh, 2 vols., ed. Shaye J.D. Cohen. Religion in the Graeco-Roman World 130/1 (Leiden: Brill, 1996).

69. Saul Lieberman, The Tosefta and Tosefta Ki-Fshutah, 13 volumes (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary, 1955-1973). Whenever I faced a really difficult passage, I prayed that it would have a parallel somewhere in the first three orders of the Tosefta, since in that case Lieberman would have explained it. The most essential volumes for work on the Rabbis were the superb concordances published by members of the Kasovsky family (see P&PJ, pp. 564-5).

70. N. 29 above.

71. W. D. Davies, The Gospel and the Land. Early Christianity and Jewish Territorial Doctrine (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974).

72. As did many, I cut my teeth on Daube's The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism (London:

Athlone Press, 1956; repr. by Arno Press in 1973). See also Daube, New Testament Judaism, ed. Calum M. Carmichael. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000.

73. Robin Lane Fox, Alexander the Great (London: Allen Lane, 1973); Pagans and Christians in the Mediterranean World from the Second Century A.D. to the Conversion of Constantine (London: Viking, 1986).

74. Burkert, Greek Religion. Archaic and Classical (E. T. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1985); Homo Necans. The Anthropology of Ancient Greek Sacrificial Ritual and Myth (E.T. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983).

75. The Roman Near East 31 BC - AD 337 (Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard University Press, 1993).

76. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1937; repr. 1998; 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Amsterdam: Adolf M. Hakkert, 1983.

77. Jerusalem. Portrait of the City in the Second Temple Period (538 B.C.E. - 70 C.E.) (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2002).

78. During revision of this essay, I decided that it would not be taken amiss if I mention some of my main debts to people who gave papers at the conference. I take them in chronological order: (1) During our long years at McMaster (1973-84), I learned many, many things from Al Baumgarten. I was able to make use of some of his articles in “The Dead Sea Sect and Other Jews: Commonalities, Overlaps and Differences,” The Dead Sea Scrolls in their Historical Context, ed. Timothy H. Lim and others (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000), pp. 7-43. Unfortunately, Baumgarten’s masterful book on the sects [The Flourishing of Jewish Sects in the Maccabean Era: An Interpretation. SJSJ 55. (Leiden: Brill 1997)] was not available when I wrote P&B. (2) While I was working on J&J, Seán Freyne’s Galilee from Alexander the Great to Hadrian. 323 BCE to 235 CE (Wilmington/Notre Dame, In.: Michael Glazier and University of Notre Dame Press, 1980) allowed me not to spend time and pages on Galilee. Now that Galilee has become a contentious issue, my support for Freyne

is indicated in “Jesus’ Galilee” (n. 3) and in “Jesus’ Relation to Sepphoris,” Sepphoris in Galilee. Crosscurrents of Culture, eds. Rebecca Martin Nagy, Eric M. Meyers, Carol L. Meyers, and Zeev Weiss (Raleigh: North Carolina Museum of Art, 1996), pp. 75-9. (3) While we were writing books on Paul and the law, Heikki Räisänen and I exchanged typescripts [his Paul and the Law (orig. publ. 1983; 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1987)]. This benefitted me enormously. (4) Martin Goodman’s books The Ruling Class of Judaea. The Origins of the Jewish Revolt Against Rome, AD 66-70 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987) and State and Society in Roman Galilee, AD 132-212 (Totowa, N.J.: Rowman & Allanheld, 1983) were of appreciable use when I was writing JLJM and P&B. (5) My article on “Jesus’ Galilee” (n. 3) was greatly improved thanks to my association with Eric Meyers, partly because we jointly supervised the dissertation of Mark Chancey (see n. 3 above), partly by frequent contact with him, and partly by his publications, both articles and edited books. See “Jesus’ Galilee,” nn. 1, 3, 6, 10, 64, 83. (6) Peter Richardson’s book Herod. King of the Jews and Friend of the Romans (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina, 1996) was very helpful while I was writing “Jesus’ Galilee.” I wish it had been available during the composition of P&B. Perhaps I may add that, were I ever to write again on Jesus or Paul, the works of most of the other scholars whose essays appear here would be strongly represented.

Start by marking "Redefining First-Century Jewish and Christian Identities: Essays in Honor of Ed Parish Sanders" as Want to Read: Want to Read savingâ| Want to Read.Â These are three enormously significant areas of research; most good scholars need an entire career to master, let alone influence, any one of them. The present collection of essays by leading researchers of early Judaism and early Christianityâincluding an insightful intellectual autobiography by the great man himselfâis a fitting tribute to the career and thought of a giant in the field.â âBart D. Ehrman, James A. Gray Professor, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.