TIMOTHY WARDLE

The Jerusalem Temple and Early Christian Identity

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27 July 2010 Timothy Wardle

Table of Contents

Chapter 1

Introduction

The Jewish temple in Jerusalem cut a majestic and imposing figure. Situated atop the Temple Mount in the eastern half of the city, the sanctuary towered over all other structures on its side of the Tyropolean Valley. For most Second Temple Jews, however, the figurative significance of this institution far exceeded its literal importance. Josephus, Philo, and a whole host of other Jewish, Greek, and Roman writers of this period remark on the magnificence of the city and its temple and the magnetic pull that the sanctuary exerted on Jewish hearts and minds in both Palestine and the Diaspora.[1] The temple and its cult created a shared religious and emotional experience that knit together Jews all around the ancient world.[2] In a very real sense, the temple, and participation in it, fashioned both an individual and a collective Jewish identity.

Not all, however, participated in the worship of the God of Israel in the Jerusalem temple. Most Jews did not dwell in Palestine,[3] and even many Palestinian Jews did not live close to the city of Jerusalem. As a result, though throngs of Diaspora Jews traveled to Jerusalem in order to triannually participate in the pilgrimage festivals, a significant number probably never set eyes on Jerusalem or the temple. While it is unlikely that all Jews the world over pined to go on pilgrimage to Jerusalem, many who wished to visit the city and temple were likely prevented from doing so by geographic and economic constraints.

On the other end of the spectrum, three distinct communities living in and around Judea in the Second Temple period separated themselves from the Jerusalem temple on ideological grounds, deliberately cutting themselves off from the temple and its worship. This physical detachment from the temple, however, did not, by itself, entail a rejection of the idea of a

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[1] E.g., Philo, *Spec. Laws* 1.67–78; Josephus, *Ant.* 15.392–425; *Ag. Ap.* 2.193; Pliny the Elder, *Nat.* 5.70; *b. B Bat* 4a.

[2] E. P. Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief 63 BCE – 66 CE* (London: SCM, 1992), 256–57; Richard Bauckham, "The Parting of the Ways: What Happened and Why," *ST* 47 (1993): 135–51, esp. 139.

[3] On the phenomenon of Diaspora Judaism, see John M. G. Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora: From Alexander to Trajan (323 B.C.E. to 117 C.E.)* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1996), passim.

temple. Rather, these groups formed alternative temples to that in Jerusalem, with some erecting physical sanctuaries (the Samaritan and Oniad temples) and another establishing a communal temple identity (the Qumran community).

The present study focuses on a fourth community which, toward the end of the Second Temple period, established another alternative temple to the one in Jerusalem. The formation of this new temple occurred in Jerusalem among the disciples of Jesus of Nazareth, who had begun to proclaim and worship him following his death and resurrection. Animating their proclamation was the belief that God, through Jesus, had fulfilled many of the promises originally given to Israel. The application of temple terminology and ideology to their community represents one important manifestation of this new conviction: these early Christians came to believe that a new temple had been founded in their midst, and that they themselves were constituent parts of it.

This idea of the Christian community as a new, eschatological temple is deeply embedded in early Christian tradition and appears throughout the New Testament. In 1 Corinthians 3:16–17 Paul first refers to the Christian community as a temple, and his reference to Peter, James, and John as those "reputed to be pillars" in Galatians 2:9 indicates that this temple ideology arose very early in the Jerusalem church. Later New Testament documents develop this idea, as depictions of the community as a temple, both explicit and implicit, appear in Mark, Acts, Ephesians, 1 Peter, Revelation, and early non-canonical Christian texts.[4] This metaphorical temple language appears to have been both descriptive and normative for the early Christian community, serving not only as a way in which early Christians could describe themselves to fellow Jews (or Gentiles, as the case may be), but also as an expression of their real and tangible belief that their community had been transformed into a temple.

The prominence of this idea in the storehouse of early Christian imagery is not difficult to discern.[5] As early as the first decade after Jesus' death and continuing into later centuries, the application of temple imagery to the community was closely tied to the belief that God's presence, his Spirit, now inhabited this communal temple in a special way.[6] Indeed, the persistence of this view of the community as a temple attests to the resonance that this particular image held, especially in a largely pagan society in

[4] E.g., Mark 14:58; Acts 15:16; Eph 2:20–22; 1 Pet 2:4–8; Rev 3:12; *Barn.* 4:11; 6:15–16; Ign. *Eph.* 9:1; 15:3; *Magn.* 7:2; *Trall.* 7:2; *Phld.* 7:2; *Herm. Vis.* 3.3.

[5] For the continued popularity of this image in later centuries, see Frances M. Young, "Temple Cult and Law in Early Christianity," *NTS* 19 (1973): 325–38; W. Horbury, "New Wine in Old Wineskins," *ExpTim* 86 (1974): 36–42.

[6] E.g. 1 Cor 3:16–17; 6:19; 2 Cor 6:16–17; Eph 2:22.

which many converts had formerly frequented pagan temples. In contrast to their previous way of life, these Christians could now proclaim with powerful conviction, "God dwells in ***our*** midst, and ***we*** are his temple."

This understanding of God's presence in the community in the form of his Spirit carried with it several important corollary convictions, including an emphasis on the unity and holiness of the Christian community, while also providing a new way to speak of Gentile inclusion into the Christian faith. In contrast to the Jerusalem temple, which restricted Gentiles to the outer courts, in this new, eschatological temple the Gentiles were now seen as equal participants in the worship of God and full members of the people of God.

Although these are all important ***effects*** of the appropriation of this temple imagery in early Christianity, in this study I contend that none of these convictions should be understood as the ***cause*** of the construction of this temple identity. In other words, the appropriation of temple terminology was ***not*** predicated primarily on the belief that God's presence could now be ultimately found in the Christian community, nor in the related idea that the Christian community was now holy or that Gentiles could now be included in the Christian faith. Rather, I will argue that the transference of temple terminology to the Christian community must be understood in light of the harsh critique that often surfaced in this period against the priestly overseers of the Jerusalem temple. Indeed, I will claim that the decision to proclaim the Christian community as a temple was a bold and calculated move that held particular cultural currency in the first century C.E. It was a culturally recognizable way to register dissent. Moreover, the decision to construct an alternative temple ***in Jerusalem***, in the shadow of the sanctuary that dominated the skyline of Jerusalem, held potentially explosive socio-religious consequences. In ascertaining the origins and potency of the idea of the Christian community as a temple, we must look first and foremost to the small Jewish Christian community located in the shadow of the Jerusalem temple.

The Scope of the Project

Most recent scholars interested in the transference of cultic and temple metaphors to the Christian community often focus on the linguistic and conceptual parallels that exist between the New Testament and Dead Sea Scrolls, and with good reason.[7] As we shall see in the latter half of the

[7] E.g., John R. Lanci, *A New Temple for Corinth: Rhetorical and Archaeological Approaches to Pauline Imagery* (New York: Peter Lang, 1997); Kåre Sigvald Fuglseth, *Johannine Sectarianism in Perspective: A Sociological, Historical, and Comparative Anal-*

present study, both the covenanters at Qumran and the early Christians chose to imagine their communities in terms of a new, metaphorical temple. Yet the parallels with similar phenomena in Second Temple Judaism do not end here.

In coming to terms with nascent Christianity's appropriation of temple terminology as part of its self-definition, I have chosen to broaden the scope of inquiry to include not only the communal temple ideology found at Qumran, but also two physical temples constructed in the Second Temple period which functioned, to varying degrees, as rivals to the Jerusalem temple. To be sure, the popularity of the Jerusalem temple does not appear to have suffered much loss in this competition. Nevertheless, the very existence of these temples exposes the high level of disagreement and dissatisfaction caused by the Jerusalem temple and its presiding priesthood and the lengths to which some were willing to go in their attempts to worship God freely and rightly.

In point of fact, three important physical temples were constructed or already existed in the Second Temple period: namely, the temple at Elephantine, the Samaritan temple, and the temple at Leontopolis. The archaeological and literary evidence for each of these temples is uneven. As the primary task of this study is to delineate the pattern of dissent from the Jerusalem temple resulting in the construction of these temples, as well as to ascertain its relevance to the construction of the early Christian sense of itself as a temple, I have chosen to exclude the temple at Elephantine from the discussion. The evidence for this temple is so meager, and its destruction so early in the Second Temple period, that its very existence seems inconsequential to first century C.E. Judaism. This is not the case for the other two temples. Even though the Samaritan temple was constructed early in the Second Temple period and was destroyed in the second century B.C.E., the memory of this temple remained a live issue in the first century C.E. As such, it is quite relevant to the discussion at hand. Similarly, the importance of the temple at Leontopolis is seen not only in its existence, but also in the care that the Romans took to have this temple shut down after the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem (Josephus, *J.W.* 7.420–22, 433–36). Roman awareness of the Jerusalem temple's explosive effect on the psyche of the Jewish people made the Romans wary of allowing any Jewish temple to exist, in Jerusalem or elsewhere.

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ysis of Temple and Social Relationships in the Gospel of John, Philo and Qumran (NovTSup 119; Leiden: Brill, 2005).

History of Research

The present study will engage three overlapping yet distinct streams of scholarly inquiry. The first involves discussion of the source of the temple language found in the New Testament. Prior to the discovery of the Scrolls in the late 1940s, it was assumed that the early Christians were unique in appropriating temple terminology for their own community. Hans Wenschkewitz exemplified the ***Zeitgeist*** of his time when he urged that the move to "spiritualize" the temple and apply this terminology both to the individual and the community was the result of Stoic and Philonic influence on early Christian thought.[8] The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls in 1947, however, revealed that the transfer of temple terminology to a community was at home in Palestinian Judaism prior to the rise of the Christian movement and thus was not necessarily dependent on any specific Greek philosophical influence.

In 1965, Bertil Gärtner wrote a groundbreaking study arguing just this point. Giving nearly equal attention to the Scrolls and the New Testament, Gärtner argued that the shared temple symbolism in these texts was based on three factors: criticism of the Jerusalem temple and its sacrifices, a belief that the last days had come, and a belief that God had come to dwell within their respective communities.[9]

Four years later, R. J. McKelvey broadened the scope of the question to include a discussion of the literary representations of the new, heavenly, and spiritual temple in Jewish and Greek literature.[10] While his discussion of the Scrolls was minimal, their impact on his study seems certain from the way in which he assumed a Jewish background to the New Testament's use of temple language. McKelvey's stated goal was to come to terms with the early Christian idea of the community as a temple. As a result, the majority of this monograph concentrated on an examination of the pertinent New Testament texts.

Georg Klinzing's comparative study of the Qumran and New Testament materials in 1971 was characterized by the opposite approach, as he placed a heavy emphasis on the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Qumran community itself.[11] Similar to Gärtner, Klinzing detailed some of the reasons for Qum-

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[8] Hans Wenschkewitz, *Die Spiritualisierung der Kultusbegriffe: Tempel, Priester und Opfer im Neuen Testament* (Angelos-Beiheft 4; Leipzig: Eduard Pfeiffer, 1932), 49–87.

[9] Bertil Gärtner, *The Temple and the Community in the Qumran Scrolls and the New Testament* (SNTSMS 1; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965).

[10] R. J. McKelvey, *The New Temple: The Church in the New Testament* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969).

[11] Georg Klinzing, *Die Umdeutung des Kultus in der Qumrangemeinde und im Neuen Testament* (SUNT 7; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1971).

ran's split from the Jerusalem temple amid his examination of the temple imagery found in the Scrolls. He concluded that the parallel temple conception that arose in both apocalyptic communities resulted from their shared belief that their respective communities were the true community of the last days.

Following the publication of these three monographs, Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza challenged Klinzing's argument, asserting that he had not sufficiently dealt with the peculiarities of each community that gave rise to their parallel communal temple conception.[12] Rather than assuming that the development of each community's temple ideology was predicated on a shared stimulus, as Klinzing had done, she correctly argued that differing theological motivations and concrete occasions gave rise to the transfer of cultic language in each case.

Though they disagree on some of the particulars, these latter four studies all have in common a desire to understand the totality of the New Testament's witness to this new temple ideology, and to do so through a comparison with parallel Jewish ideas dating to the Second Temple period. Since Klinzing's work in 1971, there has been no recent comprehensive study of the transfer of temple terminology and ideology to the Christian community. Rather, there has been a proliferation of studies specific to one or more New Testament passages or authors.[13] The lack of a comprehensive treatment of the subject, coupled with new insights into the emergence of a parallel temple ideology at Qumran in the last thirty years,[14] necessi-

[12] Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, "Cultic Language in Qumran and in the NT," *CBQ* 38 (1976): 159–77.

[13] E.g., Lanci, *New Temple for Corinth*; Gregory Stevenson, *Power and Place: Temple and Identity in the Book of Revelation* (BZNW 107; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2001); Stephen Finlan, *The Background and Content of Paul's Cultic Atonement Metaphors* (SBLABib 19; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004); Fuglseth, *Johannine Sectarianism*; Paul M. Hoskins, *Jesus as the Fulfillment of the Temple in the Gospel of John* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2006); Andrew M. Mbuvi, *Temple, Exile and Identity in 1 Peter* (LNTS 345; London: T & T Clark, 2007).

[14] E.g., Carol Newsom, *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice: A Critical Edition* (HSS 27; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985), passim; Devorah Dimant, "4QFlorilegium and the Idea of the Community as Temple," in *Hellenica et Judaica: Hommage à V. Nikiprowetzky* (ed. André Caquot et al.; Leuven: Peeters, 1986), 165–89; David Flusser, "The Dead Sea Sect and Pre-Pauline Christianity," in *Judaism and the Origins of Christianity* (ed. Brad Young; Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1988), 23–74; M. O. Wise, "4QFlorilegium and the Temple of Adam," *RevQ* 15 (1991): 103–32; Daniel R. Schwartz, "Temple and Desert: On Religion and State in Second Temple Period Judaea," in *Studies in the Jewish Background of Christianity* (WUNT 60; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1992); 29–43; George J. Brooke, "Miqdash Adam, Eden and the Qumran Community," in *Gemeinde ohne Tempel – Community Without Temple: Zur Substituierung und Transformation des Jerusalemer Tempels und seines Kults im Alten Testament, antiken Judentum und Frühen Christentum* (ed. Beate Ego et al.; WUNT 118; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck],

tates a fresh investigation into the origins of this belief in the Christian community as a temple.

The second stream of scholarly inquiry that bears on the present study is epitomized by the work of James Dunn and Richard Bauckham.[15] Each has examined the ways in which early Christian attitudes toward the temple are not only revelatory of the Christians' emerging self-perception, but also how this idea would have contributed to the eventual parting of the ways between Judaism and Christianity. Dunn asserted that the Jerusalem temple was one of the four "pillars" of Judaism which was undermined by at least some early Christians (those of a more Hellenistic background), and that the belief that the temple was no longer the center of Israel's national and religious life was an important component in the eventual parting of the ways between Judaism and Christianity. Accepting many of Dunn's conclusions but somewhat critical of his approach, Richard Bauckham attempted to concretize the idea of the Christian communal temple more firmly in the social realia of the first century C.E. Situating the Christian community between the Qumran community and the Samaritans, Bauckham argued that the Christian perception of itself as a new temple was well within the bounds of common Judaism. But the combination of the destruction of the temple in 70 C.E., the growing Pharisaic/rabbinic influence, and the events of the Bar Kokhba rebellion all conspired to plant the Christian community outside of Judaism by 135 C.E.

Though the present study certainly supports the contention that the Jerusalem temple, and early Christian views of it, played an important role in the parting of the ways between the two religions, I am interested principally in the origins of the idea of the Christian community as a temple in earliest Christianity and the ways in which Christian appropriation of temple terminology spurred on the emergence and growth of the earliest Christian movement in Jerusalem.

A third important stream of scholarship significant for this study is the voice of the "other" temples that existed in Judaism during the Second Temple period, namely, the Samaritan and the Oniad temples. Though the existence of these alternative temples is readily acknowledged, discussion of these sanctuaries is usually confined to a few pages or relegated to footnotes.[16] More recently, Jörg Frey has begun to fill this void in his discus-

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1999), 285–301; Richard Bauckham, "The Early Jerusalem Church, Qumran, and the Essenes," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls as Background to Postbiblical Judaism and Early Christianity* (ed. James Davila; Leiden: Brill, 2003), 63–89.

[15] James D. G. Dunn, *The Partings of the Ways Between Christianity and Judaism and their Significance for the Character of Christianity* (London: SCM, 1991); Bauckham, "Parting of the Ways," 135–51.

[16] E.g., Emil Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.–A.D. 135)* (ed. Geza Vermes et al.; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1973); 2.17–19;

sion of the Jewish temples at Elephantine, Mt. Gerizim, and Leontopolis,[17] and recent archaeological excavations on Mt. Gerizim have greatly enhanced our knowledge of the Samaritan temple.[18] Still, a major study of these temples is necessary, for they attest to a felt disconnection with the Jerusalem temple and its presiding priesthood during the Second Temple period. The present study is, in part, an attempt to fill this void. In addition, the results of this investigation into the motivations behind the construction of these alternative temples will offer new insight into the early Christian movement's idea that it was establishing a new, metaphorical temple.

Outline of the Argument

The purpose of Chapter 2 is twofold: to highlight the centrality of the Jerusalem Temple and the influence of the high priesthood in the Second Temple period.[19] While the temple functioned primarily as Judaism's religious center, throughout the Second Temple period it grew in stature not only as an institution in which religious rites were performed, but also as a symbol that united all adherents to the God of Israel, both within and outside of the land of Palestine. By the second and first centuries B.C.E. and the first century C.E., there was no question that the temple stood at the center of Jew-

3.47–48, 145–47; Martin Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism: Studies in their encounter in Palestine during the early Hellenistic period* (trans. John Bowden; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1974), 272–75; Michael E. Stone, *Scriptures, Sects and Visions* (New York: Collins, 1980), 78–82; Sanders, *Judaism*, 23–24.

[17] Jörg Frey, "Temple and Rival Temple – The Cases of Elephantine, Mt. Gerizim, and Leontopolis," in *Gemeinde ohne Tempel – Community Without Temple: Zur Substituierung und Transformation des Jerusalemer Tempels und seines Kults im Alten Testament, antiken Judentum und Frühen Christentum* (ed. Beate Ego et al.; WUNT 118; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1999), 171–203.

[18] Most recently, see Yitzhak Magen, *Mount Gerizim Excavations Volume 2: A Temple City* (JSP 8; Jerusalem: Israel Antiquities Authority, 2008), 95–180; ibid., "Gerizim, Mount," in *The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land* (ed. Ephraim Stern; Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 2008), 5.1742–48.

[19] See also Sanders, *Judaism*, 47–145; Marcel Poorthuis and Chana Safrai, eds., *The Centrality of Jerusalem: Historical Perspectives* (Kampen: Kok Pharos Publishing House, 1996), passim; Oskar Skarsaune, *In the Shadow of the Temple: Jewish Influences on Early Christianity* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2002), esp. 87–132; Lee Levine, *Jerusalem: Portrait of the City in the Second Temple Period (538 B.C.E. – 70 C.E.)* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2002), passim; Ingrid Hjelm, *Jerusalem's Rise to Sovereignty: Zion and Gerizim in Competition* (London: T & T Clark International, 2004), passim; James C. VanderKam, *From Joshua to Caiaphas: High Priests After the Exile* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2004), passim.

ish religious, political, and economic life and was the paramount symbol of the covenant relationship between the God of Israel and his people. The throngs of pilgrims who assembled at Jerusalem tri-annually gave elegant testimony to the centrality and sacredness of this place. As caretaker of this temple, the Jewish high priest functioned as the highest-ranking Jewish political and religious figure in the country and exerted considerable influence and power for most of the Second Temple period.

Not all, however, were comfortable with this consolidation of power and authority in the hands of the high priestly establishment. Chapter 3 will focus on the few negative evaluations of the Jerusalem temple and the more numerous and escalating criticisms of the Jerusalem priestly aristocracy.[20] While the rather benign "critique" of the temple was largely confined to its perceived inferiority when compared with the first temple or a future one, the same cannot be said for the high priesthood in this period. Especially in the latter half of the Second Temple period, the ruling priests in Jerusalem often came under scathing review and were routinely branded as illegitimate due to allegations of improper descent, charges of halakhic or sexual impurity, and accusations of greed and arrogance. In this chapter I will argue that this critique was confined largely to Jerusalem and its environs, was sustained over several centuries, and became increasingly polemical.

In Chapter 4 I will concentrate more specifically on three distinct communities whose dispute with the religious leadership in Jerusalem during the Second Temple period resulted in the creation of temples that offered alternatives to that in the capital city. These temples, all outside of Jerusalem, all connected to the Jerusalem – and likely Zadokite – priestly line, and all devoted to the worship of the one true God of Israel, appear to have been established as rivals of the Jerusalem temple and in contradistinction to the high priestly overseers of that city's sanctuary. The Samaritan temple on Mt. Gerizim was erected in the fifth century B.C.E.; that of Leontopolis in the early second century B.C.E. Alongside the existence of these physical temples is the community at Qumran, a group whose members envisioned themselves as a spiritual temple, eschewed participation in the Jerusalem cult, and heaped scorn on the current Jerusalem priests. Although none of these alternative temples could compare with the physical presence of the Jerusalem temple, each community deemed it better to worship in an undefiled temple than to participate in what they perceived

[20] See also Shaye J. D. Cohen, *From the Maccabees to the Mishnah* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1987), 137–43; David Flusser, "No Temple in the City," in *Judaism and the Origins of Christianity* (ed. Brad Young; Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1988), 455–56; Francis Schmidt, *How the Temple Thinks: Identity and Social Cohesion in Ancient Judaism* (trans. J. Edward Crowley; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), passim.

to be a polluted sanctuary. Though much separates these three communities and temples, in this chapter I will argue that the formation of alternative temples outside of Jerusalem follows a common pattern, as similar motivations contributed to each community's separation from Jerusalem and establishment of a new temple.

The early Christian appropriation of temple terminology and ideology is the focus of Chapter 5. The contention of this study is that Jesus, along with many of his contemporaries, held both the temple and the office of the high priest in high regard. This does not mean, however, that the particular chief priests of his day were highly esteemed. Indeed, Jesus, along with several of his contemporaries and some of his followers, appears on occasion to have sharply criticized the current Jerusalem priests officiating in the temple.

Moreover, if I am correct that the formation of alternative temples was the result of specific instances of conflict with the Jerusalem religious establishment, then it stands to reason that the early Christian temple ideology was borne of similar convictions. Though their rationale may have been different (the early Christians appear to have been unconcerned with the purity of the priests and did not question their lineage), the collaboration of the chief priests with the Romans in bringing about the death of their leader likely provided a clear motivation for distancing themselves from the high priestly leadership of the temple. In this chapter I will argue that the Christian appropriation of temple terminology should be understood not only as a continuation of Jesus' critique of the current chief priests, but also as a reaction to the chief priests' involvement in the crucifixion of Jesus and their continued hostility toward the early Christian leadership in Jerusalem.

Thus, on the one hand, we see in the early Christians certain parallels with other groups antagonistic to the Jerusalem priestly establishment; dispute with the priestly overseers of the temple provided the catalyst for the founding of a new temple. On the other hand, the critique of temple and priesthood developed in a different manner than did that of the other alternative temple communities, for disagreement centered on the identity of a specific figure, Jesus, rather than the qualifications of the priests to oversee the temple. Additionally, and in contrast to the founding of the other alternative temples, the Christian transfer of temple terminology to the community occurred in conjunction with continued participation in the Jerusalem temple.

Methodological Issues

Before proceeding with the inquiry, it is necessary to lay out a few methodological principles. The present work is predicated on the idea that any study of Jesus and the early Christian movement in Jerusalem must seriously engage the world of Second Temple Judaism. This, of course, is not a new insight. Interest in the Jewish background of Christianity had already begun intensifying in the wake of World War II, and E. P. Sanders' landmark publication of ***Paul and Palestinian Judaism*** in 1977 greatly increased scholarly awareness in the Judaism of Jesus' and Paul's day.[21] Still, I think it important to state at the outset that this study continues in the line of scholarship that has emphasized the Jewishness of Jesus and the early Christian movement.

Additionally, along with several other recent scholars, I have deliberately avoided the term "spiritualization" in describing both the Qumran and Christian application of temple terminology to their respective communities. As the title ***Die Umdeutung des Kultus in der Qumrangemeinde und im Neuen Testament*** suggests, Klinzing chose to speak of reinterpretation rather than spiritualization.[22] Similarly, Schüssler Fiorenza pointed out that the category of "spiritualization" contains so many presuppositions and shades of meaning that "its use tends not to clarify but to confuse."[23] She proposed instead the term "transference," indicating that "Jewish and Hellenistic cultic concepts were ***shifted*** to designate a reality which was not cultic." More recently, Steven Fine has coined the term "templization" to describe how synagogues began to acquire attributes originally reserved for the Jerusalem temple, and how this ***imitatio templi*** is also seen in the literature of Qumran, the New Testament, and the Tannaim.[24] Common to all three of these scholars is the desire to communicate the continuing relevance and vitality of the temple and its sacrifices, for the potency of the comparison is lessened if the original symbol is denigrated or relativized. This line of reasoning seems correct. In place of the term "spiritualization," I will use a variety of terms, such as "application," "templization," and "transference," that speak to the continuing significance of the Jerusalem temple in the early Christian mindset.

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[21] E. P. Sanders, ***Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion*** (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1977), passim.

[22] Klinzing, ***Umdeutung des Kultus***, 143–47.

[23] Schüssler Fiorenza, "Cultic Language," 161.

[24] Steven Fine, ***This Holy Place: On the Sanctity of the Synagogue during the Greco-Roman Period*** (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1997), 32, 55; cf. Jonathan Klawans, ***Purity, Sacrifice, and the Temple: Symbolism and Supersessionism in the Study of Ancient Judaism*** (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 220, 251.

Furthermore, if the new temple terminology is, at least in part, to be understood as a socio-political or socio-religious reaction to the high priestly circles, then this may help explain how the early Christians became a recognizable group within the Judaism of their day. Shaye Cohen has noted that the major Jewish sects of the Second Temple period were all designated as such precisely because of their relationship with and attitude towards the Jerusalem temple and its presiding priesthood.[25] While he cites the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes in this regard, he gives little attention to the early Christians, their relationship to the temple, and the way in which this perception may have made them an identifiable group alongside the above-mentioned sects. Thus, the appropriation of this temple terminology may also aid our understanding of how the early Christians situated themselves vis-à-vis other recognizable groups, as well as shedding light on some of the diversity amidst the early Christian movement.

Finally, unless otherwise noted, I have used several standard translations. For biblical citations, including the Apocrypha, I have followed the NRSV. Translations of the Dead Sea Scrolls are taken from Florentino García Martínez and Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar, eds., *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997–98). For Greek and Latin sources, see the Loeb Classical Library.

[25] Cohen, *From the Maccabees*, 131–32.

Chapter 2

The Centrality of the Jerusalem Temple and High Priesthood in Second Temple Judaism

Introduction

Writing in the early first century C.E., Pliny the Elder lauds Jerusalem as "the most famous city of the East."[1] To many modern readers, this high praise may seem incommensurate with the social reality of a city perched precariously on the edge of the Judean desert. It had little in the way of natural resources and lacked the water supply necessary to support a large population. Moreover, it did not lie near either of the two main trade arteries that ran north-south through Syro-Palestine. The coastal highway, which allowed for trade between Egypt, in the south, and Damascus, Tyre, and Sidon, in the north, lay well to the west of Jerusalem. Likewise, the King's Highway lay to the east of the city on the other side of the Jordan River and the Dead Sea, connecting Damascus with Egypt, the Red Sea, and the Arabian Peninsula.

Pliny's praise was not an anomaly, however, for Jewish, Greek, and Roman sources all extolled this city.[2] The only explanation for the persistent respect shown Jerusalem was the existence of the magnificent temple

[1] Pliny the Elder, *Nat.* 5.70. Cf. Menahem Stern, "'Jerusalem, The Most Famous of the Cities of the East' (Pliny, *Natural History* V, 70)," in *Jerusalem in the Second Temple Period: Abraham Schalit Memorial Volume* (ed. A. Oppenheimer et al.; Jerusalem: Yad Ben-Zvi, Ministry of Defense, 1980), 257–70.

[2] Philo, *Embassy* 281–83; Hecataeus of Abdera, in Diodorus of Sicily, *Bib. Hist.* 40, 3.3; Tacitus, *Hist.* 5.1–2; Dio Cassius, *Hist. Rom.* 65.3–7. For an inscription from 80 C.E. detailing the seeming impregnability of Jerusalem and praising Titus for having conquered it, see Hermannus Dessau, ed., *Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae* (Berolini, apud Weidmannos, 1892), 71 no. 264. Moreover, Elias Bickerman ("The Historical Foundations of Postbiblical Judaism," in *The Jews: Their History, Culture, and Religion* [ed. Louis Finkelstein; New York: Harper & Row, 1949], 88–89) has observed that, due to Jerusalem's distance from the main trade routes, it was not until after the time of Alexander the Great that Greek writers, excluding Herodotus, even mention the Jews. The growth of Jerusalem's reputation and status in the Roman period altered this lack of attention.

positioned on the eastern edge of the city. As Josephus stated, Jerusalem was home to "the one temple for the one God."[3]

The Jerusalem Temple

During the Second Temple period the perceived magnificence of the temple, as well as the prestige bestowed on it by the Jewish people, increased dramatically. Under the aegis of Cyrus and Darius, and led by figures such as Sheshbazzar, Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Ezra, and Nehemiah, the exiles returned from their captivity in eastern lands and began the task of rebuilding the temple and the city of Jerusalem.[4] Furthermore, Cyrus' original edict allowing the Jews to return to Jerusalem did not entail a reestablishment of the Jewish state, but rather the rebuilding of the temple. This building was facilitated by the large number of returning exiles who were priests.[5]

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[3] *Ag. Ap.* 2.193; cf. *Ant.* 4.200. Although the temple in Jerusalem was the preeminent sanctuary for the worship of the God of Israel, several other temples devoted to the worship of the Jewish deity also existed. Brief histories of these alternative temples are given by Josephus, and the very fact that he could profess "one temple for the one God" while also providing details about other temples suggests that he did not see a contradiction between the Jerusalem temple and the alternatives. These temples will be the subject of Chapter 4.

[4] The debate concerning the date of the return of the exiles from Babylon is summarized in Lester L. Grabbe, *Judaism from Cyrus to Hadrian* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), 1.75–79, 88–93; Joseph Blenkinsopp, "Temple and Society in Achaemenid Judah," in *Second Temple Studies 1: Persian Period* (ed. Philip R. Davies; JSOTSup 117; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991), 37–40. Sheshbazzar, Zerubbabel, and Jeshua were amongst the first wave of returnees and were responsible for the rebuilding of the temple (Ezra 1–6; Hag 1). The book of Nehemiah recounts that Nehemiah first returned to Jerusalem in the twentieth year of the reign of Artaxerxes (Neh 2:1) and made a return trip in Artaxerxes' thirty-second year (Neh 13:6–7). Accordingly, Nehemiah would have traveled to Jerusalem in 445 B.C.E. and again in 433 B.C.E. The date of Ezra's return is more uncertain. According to the order of events in the book of Ezra, Ezra returned in the seventh year of Artaxerxes, or 458 B.C.E. Many have argued, however, that Artaxerxes is a reference to Artaxerxes II, which would place Ezra's arrival in Jerusalem in 398 B.C.E. Determining the exact chronology is not of great importance for our purposes. In either case, the book of Ezra is one of the oldest documents to discuss the restoration of the cult and temple.

[5] According to Wilhelm Bousset (*Die Religion des Judentums im Späthellenistischen Zeitalter* [HNT 21; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1926], 98), one-sixth of the returning exiles could claim priestly ancestry: "In der Exulantenliste Es 2:3–39 = Neh 7:8–42 werden unter einer Bevölkerung von 25000–26000 Männern 4289 Priester (übereinstimmend nach Es 2:36–39, Neh 7:39–42) gezählt, d. h. es kam auf je sechs erwachsene männliche Laien jedesmal ein Priester." While rightfully acknowledging the difficulty in ascertaining concrete data and numbers from these few lists, he maintains that the basic ratio is probably correct. More recently, Martha Himmelfarb (*A Kingdom of*

To those who had known the first temple, the appearance of the second temple left much to be desired (Ezra 3:12; Hag 2:3). Despite its humble beginnings, this temple grew increasingly central to Jewish identity and nationalism in the years between its restoration in the late sixth century B.C.E. and its destruction in 70 C.E. After its initial reestablishment in Jerusalem, periodic architectural modifications ensued. Sirach 50:2–4, for example, states that in the days of Simon the Just (circa 200 B.C.E.), the sanctuary was fortified and a reservoir was built inside the confines of the Temple Mount, and 1 Maccabees 4:43–46 credits Judah Maccabeus with demolishing the altar that had been polluted by Antiochus Epiphanes and erecting a new altar in his purification of the temple in 164 B.C.E. These structural modifications, however, pale in comparison to Herod the Great's enlargement and beautification of the temple at the end of the first century B.C.E. Herod spared no expense, and the magnificence of the temple reached its pinnacle during his reign.[6] Even the rabbinic traditions, which are usually hostile to Herod, declare: "Whoever has not seen Herod's building has not seen a beautiful building in his life."[7] Not long after Herod's remarkable reconstruction efforts, however, Jerusalem fell to the Romans, and the temple was destroyed. Nevertheless, from its renewal in the sixth century B.C.E., this temple, and the priesthood that governed daily operations in it, grew in stature religiously, economically, and politically. What follows in this chapter concerns the related issues of temple, priesthood, and power, the central position of the temple, and the role of the high priest in the Second Temple period.

The Religious Significance of the Jerusalem Temple

The central place of the Jerusalem temple in Jewish religious life of the Second Temple period is well documented in recent scholarship.[8] At the

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Priests: Ancestry and Merit in Ancient Judaism [Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006], 6) has noted that many more priests (4289) were involved in the return than Levites (341), a ratio of 12:1 (Ezra 2:36–42). This disparity between priests and Levites does not appear to be an anomaly among the early returnees; a century later Ezra is unable to find any Levites among the community in Jerusalem and must search for some in the broader community (Ezra 8:15–20).

[6] Josephus, *Ant.* 15.380–425; Philo, *Spec. Laws* 1.71–75; cf. Levine, *Jerusalem*, 219–43.

[7] *b. B. Bat.* 4a; cf. Mark 13:1; *b. Ta'an.* 23a.

[8] E.g., Moshe David Herr, "Jerusalem, the Temple, and Its Cult – Reality and Concepts in Second Temple Times," in *Jerusalem in the Second Temple Period: Abraham Schalit Memorial Volume* (ed. A. Oppenheimer et al.; Jerusalem: Yad Ben-Zvi, Ministry of Defense, 1980), 166–77; Sanders, *Judaism*; Poorthuis and Safrai, eds., *The Centrality of Jerusalem: Historical Perspectives*; Levine, *Jerusalem*; Skarsaune, *Shadow of the Temple*; Hjelm, *Jerusalem's Rise to Sovereignty*.

temple, the core beliefs and practices of Judaism were on public display, and it was widely held that the one God of Israel had chosen to dwell in Jerusalem and to inhabit the temple that had been built for Him. This belief is evidenced by the popular designation of the temple in the Hebrew Bible as the "house of God."[9] The New Testament and Josephus attest to the continued prevalence of this understanding in the first century C.E.[10] In Matthew 23:21, for example, Jesus is reported to have said: "Whoever swears by the temple, swears by it and by the one who dwells in it," an affirmation of God's continual presence in the temple. Similarly, Josephus noted on several occasions that the presence of God resided in the temple. This is perhaps seen most clearly in his assertion that prior to the destruction of the temple, the priests overheard a voice declaring, "We are departing hence," a portent of the removal of God's presence and the ensuing vulnerability of the temple (*J.W.* 6.300; cf. *J.W.* 5.412; *Ant.* 3.215–18; 20.166).

Nevertheless, it was also recognized by some that God could not be circumscribed in time and space. In his dedication speech at the completion of the temple, Solomon articulated that the temple that he had built would be a special focal point of God's presence on the earth, but he reasoned: "will God indeed dwell on the earth? Even heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain you, much less this house that I have built! Regard your servant's prayer and his plea, O Lord my God...that your eyes may be open night and day toward this house" (1 Kgs 8:27–29). This same awareness appears also in Deuteronomy, where the temple is said to be the place where God will place his name, not where he will live, as well as in writings throughout the Second Temple period (see Isa 66:1–2; 2 Chr 2:5–6; 2 Macc 3:28–39; *J.W.* 6.127). These passages illustrate that not all were comfortable with the idea that God was restricted to the confines of the temple. Rather, they insist that God is transcendent and cannot be contained in one place.

Even so, reverence for the temple appears to have increased throughout the periods of the Monarchy and the Second Temple, as it was understood that God's presence (or at least his name) resided in Jerusalem and permeated the temple with his holiness.[11] Alongside the description of the temple as a "house," many psalms and a significant number of prophetic passages utilize mountain imagery when speaking of the temple.[12] Isaiah

[9] E.g., Gen 28:17; Exod 23:19; Deut 23:18; Josh 9:23; Judg 18:31; Pss 84:11[10]; 92:14[13]; 122:1; Eccl 5:1; Isa 2:3; Jer 27:21; Ezek 10:19; Dan 1:2; 5:23; Joel 1:13; and throughout 1 and 2 Chronicles.

[10] Cf. Sanders, *Judaism*, 70–71.

[11] Cf. Stevenson, *Power and Place*, 181–82.

[12] Yaron Z. Eliav (*God's Mountain: The Temple Mount in Time, Place, and Memory* [Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2005], 6–8) points out that geography played a role in the development of mountain imagery for the temple in Jerusalem, since Jerusa-

56:7 states: "these [the Gentiles] I will bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on my altar," and the Psalmist, speaking for God, declares: "I have set my king on Zion, my holy hill" (Ps 2:6). As the terminology for the temple begins to multiply, the edifice's sacredness begins to extend beyond its architectural bounds, and the city of Jerusalem attains a similar level of sanctity.[13] Several passages in Isaiah assert that the holy mountain of Jerusalem and the house of the God of Jacob will be the focus of pilgrimage by all the nations in the future (2:1–4; 27:13; cf. Mic 4:1–2), and even after the destruction of the first temple, Ezekiel declares that Jerusalem is the center of the world and that the city's new name will be "the Lord is there" (5:5; 48:35).[14] The theme of the elevation of the city is typified by Isaiah 60:14: "The descendants of those who oppressed you shall come bending low to you, and all who despised you shall bow down at your feet; they shall call you the city of the Lord, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel" (cf. Isaiah 48:2; 52:1; 62:1–2). In addition, Jerusalem is depicted as the navel of the world (*1 En.* 26:1; *Jub*. 8:19; *Sib. Or*. 5:250; *J.W.* 3.52),[15] and the binding of Isaac is cleverly associated with the

lem was situated on a hill. Cf. Ronald E. Clements, *God and Temple* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1965), 1–17; Richard J. Clifford, *The Cosmic Mountain in Canaan and the Old Testament* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972), 98–192; Carol L. Meyers and Eric M. Meyers, "Jerusalem and Zion after the Exile: The Evidence of First Zechariah," in *Sha'arei Talmon: Studies in the Bible, Qumran, and the Ancient Near East Presented to Shemaryahu Talmon* (ed. Michael Fishbane and Emanuel Tov; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1992), 130.

[13] Lee Levine, "Second Temple Jerusalem: A Jewish City in the Greco-Roman Orbit," in *Jerusalem: Its Sanctity and Centrality to Judaism, Christianity, and Islam* (ed. Lee I. Levine; New York: Continuum, 1999), 53–54. Cf. Jon D. Levenson, *Sinai and Zion: An Entry into the Jewish Bible* (Minneapolis: Winston Press, 1985), 89–184; Dunn, *Partings of the Ways*, 31–35; Eliav, *God's Mountain*, 6–8.

[14] The city is described as holy in several Second Temple sources (e.g. CD 12.1; 11QT 45.11–12, 16–17; Matt 4:5; 27:53). Several of the Dead Sea Scrolls (4QMMT B 29–31, 58–60; 1QSa 1.25–26; 11QT 45.7–14; 51:1–6; CD 12.1–2; 1QM 7.3–5) also ascribe to Jerusalem the sanctity which had originally been reserved only for the temple itself: See Hannah K. Harrington, "Holiness in the Laws of 4QMMT," in *Legal Texts and Legal Issues: Proceedings of the Second Meeting of the International Organization for Qumran Studies, Cambridge, 1995: Published in Honour of Joseph M. Baumgarten* (ed. Moshe J. Bernstein et al.; Leiden: Brill, 1997), 112–17. For coins from the time of the Jewish revolt engraved with "Jerusalem the holy," see Ya'akov Meshorer, *Ancient Jewish Coinage* (Dix Hills: Amphora, 1982), 2.96–131.

[15] Cf. Philip S. Alexander, "Jerusalem as the *Omphalos* of the World: On the History of a Geographic Concept," in *Jerusalem: Its Sanctity and Centrality to Judaism, Christianity, and Islam* (ed. Lee I. Levine; New York: Continuum, 1999), passim.

site of the temple by the suggestion in 2 Chronicles 3:1 that the temple was built upon Mount Moriah.[16]

Not only was the temple, and by extension the city, the locus of holiness and sanctity for Jews during the Second Temple period, it was also at the heart of religious experience. Here at the center of the Jewish religious universe stood the sacrificial system and its provision for atonement and forgiveness. Daily sacrifices were performed in the temple enclosure, maintaining the relationships between God and the people.[17] The introductory lines of the Mishnaic tractate *Abot* articulate the significance of the temple and the sacrificial system: "On three things does the world stand: on the Torah, on the temple service, and on deeds of loving kindness."[18] The maintenance of this temple service was crucial to the continuance of Israel's relationship with God and his preservation of the world.

Participation in the cultic system required the petitioner to be in a state of ritual purity when entering the temple precinct,[19] the purity enjoined upon the participant being matched by the sacredness of the temple itself. The temple, with all its barriers and restrictions, consisted of a series of interlocking circles of holiness.[20] At the center stood the holy of holies, into which none but the high priest could enter. Outside of this were courtyards for the priests, Jewish men, Jewish women, and finally a larger space for Gentiles. Its layout ensured that only Jews could enter the inner courts of the temple, with further distinctions even within the Jewish people. Thus, in this place, and especially in this place, one knew where one stood vis-à-vis Judaism and its God. The barrier between Jew and Gentile was never more sharply delineated than in this spot, for here a warning of death, written in Greek and Latin, warned any Gentile who wished to pass beyond the stone balustrade separating the court of the Gentiles from the

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[16] Cf. *Jub.* 18:13; *Ant.* 1.224–26, 7.333; *Gen. Rab.* 55; Klaus Seybold, "Jerusalem in the View of the Psalms," in *The Centrality of Jerusalem: Historical Perspectives* (ed. Marcel Poorthuis and Chana Safrai; Kampen: Kok Pharos Publishing House, 1996), 12–14.

[17] For descriptions of the daily service, see Philo, *Spec. Laws* 1.168–93, 274–277; *Heir* 174, 196. Cf. Robert Hayward, *The Jewish Temple: A Non-Biblical Sourcebook* (London: Routledge, 1996), 118–41.

[18] *m. Abot* 1.2. Translation and text from Joseph H. Hertz, *Sayings of the Fathers* (New York: Behrman House, 1945), 15. Few would claim that this statement goes back to the historical Simon the Just. The passage, however, seems to capture the respect which the temple and its service held in the period.

[19] Sanders, *Judaism*, 70–72, 112–16, 217–30.

[20] *Ant.* 15.417–20; *J.W.* 5.190–226; J. N. Lightstone, *Society, the Sacred, and Scripture in Ancient Judaism: A Sociology of Knowledge* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1988), 36; Sanders, *Judaism*, 54–76; Levine, *Jerusalem*, 237–43; Martin S. Jaffee, *Early Judaism: Religious Worlds of the First Judaic Millennium* (Bethesda: University of Maryland Press, 2006), 174–81.

inner courts of the temple (*J.W.* 5.193–94; 6.124–26).[21] The religious requirement of appearing at the temple and performing sacrifice made the experience intimate, as one had to be not only Jewish, but also in a state of ritual purity.

Due to the biblical injunction to assemble in Jerusalem tri-annually (Exod 23:17; 34:23; Deut 16:16), the city was the destination of Jews worldwide during the pilgrimage feasts.[22] During the early years of the Second Temple, pilgrimage, if it occurred at all, was probably undertaken by those living in nearby towns and villages. Presumably, the number of pilgrims rose in the Hasmonean era,[23] but it is not until the reign of Herod at the end of the first century B.C.E. that we hear of mass international pilgrimage.[24] The immense number of Jews who participated in these annual pilgrimages distinguished Judaism from other Roman cults, for international pilgrimage was not a common feature of Roman religions.[25] Other shrines in the Roman Empire held large festivals and gatherings, but for the most part participants came from nearby regions, very few from international destinations.[26] By contrast, many seem to have made pilgrimage to the Jerusalem temple, with visitors arriving from all corners of the Roman and Persian empires.[27] These pilgrimage feasts were principally a time of

[21] The inscription read: "No foreigner is to enter within the forecourt and the balustrade around the sanctuary. Whoever is caught will have himself to blame for his subsequent death." For text, translation, and a commentary in which it is argued that the priestly authorities were able to carry out the death penalty for transgressors of this warning, see Peretz Segal, "The Penalty of the Warning Inscription from the Temple of Jerusalem," *IEJ* 39, no. 1–2 (1989): 79–84. For bibliography, see Schürer, *HJP*, 2.285 n. 57.

[22] Pilgrimage seems to have been viewed as commendable and meritorious rather than mandatory; see Shmuel Safrai, "Relations Between the Diaspora and the Land of Israel," in *The Jewish People in the First Century* (ed. Shmuel Safrai and Menahem Stern; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1974), 191–94.

[23] Shmuel Safrai, *Pilgrimage at the Time of the Second Temple* (Jerusalem: Akademon, 1985), 151–53.

[24] Martin Goodman, "The Pilgrimage Economy of Jerusalem in the Second Temple Period," in *Jerusalem: Its Sanctity and Centrality in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam* (ed. Lee Levine; New York: Continuum, 1999), 70.

[25] Ibid., 70–71.

[26] Ibid., 70–71; cf. Ramsay MacMullen, *Paganism in the Roman Empire* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), 25–29.

[27] Shmuel Safrai, *Die Wallfahrt im Zeitalter des Zweiten Tempels* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1981), 44–93; ibid., "Relations," 184–215; cf. Acts 2:5–12; *Ant.* 17.26; *b. Meg* 26a; *Abot R. Nat.* B, 55. Philo's statement that "countless multitudes from countless cities come, some over land, others over sea, from east and west and north and south at every feast" (*Spec. Laws* 1.69) overstates the case, but the general tenor of his assertion, that Jews from all geographical points of the compass annually converged on Jerusalem, remains valid. The Theodotos inscription also suggests that many Diaspora