The Parting of the Ways

Jonas Søderstjerna
Stud. No. 61350494
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1. Introduction

In the past century, the relationship between the Christians and the Jewish communities has changed tremendously. From the scholars working with the Standard View of Paul initialized by The Tübingen School through Baur and Bultmann, who wanted to make the divide between Jews and Christians clear. The division between Jewish and Christians and the rhetoric being used have had ethical consequences and can be said to have been leading to and culminating in the Holocaust during World War Two. After World War 2 the Christian approach to Jews has changed, leading both to new interest in the Early Church's relation to the Jewish communities, and to new exegetical approaches to the Bible and particularly Paul. In this respect, I would like to investigate the following: How did the Early Church define themselves and how did that lead to the parting of the ways, and does that identity correspond to the opinions of Paul?

In this research report, I will investigate the identity of the Early Church and how they defined themselves with respect to the Jews. In doing this I will present different scientific theories of modern scholars.

It is obvious that the Christians and the Jewish have separated in an event now called The Parting of the Ways. I will demonstrate this parting by presenting and discussing some of the historical events that lead to the parting of the ways.

Some of the modern scientific approaches that have changed drastically during the last century are the approach to the apostle Paul and how to interpret his epistles. The interest in Paul its in the fact that he has been a great contributor to the dogmatism and understanding of the Christian faith since many of the earliest Christian texts are contributed to him. I will present some of the opinions of Paul regarding the Jews and compare them to correlating opinions of other early Christian texts.

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1.2 The Metaphor The Parting of the Ways

As stated above the rhetoric has had an impact on the relationship and interactions between Christians and Jewish. In modern scholarship, this term is commonly used as a metaphor for the fact that Christians and Jews divided into two different religions during the antiquity. In this section, I will give a brief introduction to the term and its impact. The term contains both a polemic approach but also a consoling. It offers no uncertainty that the implicated have differences and identifies themselves as two different entities. But in the meantime, they consolidate with each other by the fact that they originate from the same path, and that they at some point in history took separate paths. This metaphor allows both Jews and Christians to use the same history and genealogy³, as is shown by the common use of the Old Testament.

One can discuss when the parting took place and what event that initiates it and if it can be isolated in one event rather than a series of events. Examples of this could be the death of Jesus, the missionary work of Paul, the destruction of the second temple or the Bar Kochba revolt⁴.

2. Modern Scientific Approaches to the Parting of the Ways

In my investigation of the Parting of the Ways, I will present different scholarly views on why the parting took place because of how different groups or communities identified themselves and dissociated themselves from the others. The groups in question are particularly Jews, Christians, and Jewish-Christians. The latter has been receiving a lot of attention in modern scholarship

2.1 The Jewish Identity

In the debate of the parting of the ways and of Jewish Christianity it is important to establish who the different parties are, so in this section, I will present some of the different definitions that can be used in identifying Jews and some of the problems with doing so. Even in Greek canonical sources, we can see that the word ιουδαιος can mean both the land of Judea and the Jewish People. At the same time, we can have difficulties determining what the term

Jew consists of since multiple definitions exist. I will give some definitions of Jews, but when defining Jewish Christianity some similarities will occur. One could argue that the definitions of Jews below can be applied differently on individual Jews or communities and other would argue that trying to define Jews by one definition is too shallow and that a Jew can or should contain more or all of the definitions below.\textsuperscript{5}

The definition of the Jews today may differ from the Jew in antiquity, but in these definitions, I will try to present the Jew of antiquity.

### 2.1.1 An Ethnic Definition

An ethnic-based definition can prove to be too broad of a term, so that it may define some Jews, but still too vague to clearly say anything. The Pentateuch commands the Jews only to marry other Jews, to keep a lineage of Jews. Still, the ethnic definition could contain the lineage of the tribe of Judah, which could create doubt of which was meant.

I will argue that this definition also would consist of those inhabited in Judea, which not all would be of Jewish descent.

The ethnic definition can be used to illustrate the Jews as a tribe or nation but is too vague to be used in this paper.

### 2.1.2 A Religious Definition

I would use this definition to characterize the Jews who identify themselves as believers of the God of Abraham. The stories of the Old Testament show Jews as struggling with doubt and faith or distrust or trust in the God who rescued them from Egypt.

There are a number of problems with this definition. Firstly, it does not consider dogmatic. As in most religions, there can be a discussion of the dogma. And this definition cannot determine what the correct dogma is, and who falls out of it. You could argue, that it is allowed to divert from the dogma to a certain degree, but it is difficult to set those boundaries. Secondly, Trust or belief cannot be measured and the question of when you believe enough can be asked.

### 2.1.3 A Praxis-based Definition

The Pentateuch is full of prescriptions on how to be a Jew and to keep on good terms with God and fellow humans. This definition will determine Jews as the ones who follow those

praxes. One could argue that some of the praxes are more identity determining than others, such as circumcision, observing the Sabbath and keeping the food regulations. Carleton Paget also argues that this definition best would suit the Jews of antiquity since “in the ancient world most people defined Jews in terms of their practices.”

Difficulties with this definition could be to determine when enough prescriptions have been followed to define one as Jew, and if some are more important, then which are more important?

2.2 The Christian Identity

The identity of a Christian, I imagine, would be very important to define, as Christianity rose in the midst of the Jewish community struggling with a Hellenistic influence. In the Bible we learn that the disciples were “…day by day, attending the temple together…” This and the use of the metaphor Parting of the Ways suggest that Christians started from the standpoint of Jews, but in the end defined themselves, or was defined as something other than Jews.

I incline to agree with Carleton Paget in his definition of Christians as “someone who accepts the messianic status of Jesus (the bare minimum required of someone wishing to be a Christian)” If one wanted to criticize this definition one could discuss the nature of the messianic status.

Another reason for the Christians to define their identity was the loss of the apostles. As time went by the apostles grew old or were executed which brought an authoritative gap when discussions of orthodoxy arose. This brought by a spectrum of opinions within the early church ranging from those who viewed themselves as reformed or messianic Jews to those who viewed themselves as a whole new mystery cult.

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6 Also known as kosher.
8 Citation from Acts 2:46 in the English Standard Version (ESV) Bible
2.2.1 Heresiology

In determining the Christian identity scholars refer to Heresiology, which is the science of heresies\textsuperscript{11}. It follows instinctively that when you define a group as something, there are other definitions that fall outside the first one. We know for example that some church fathers criticized certain groups for their lack of emphasis on Christology\textsuperscript{12}. The struggle for the first Christians was that they originated from the Jews and shared some of the same defining theologies, ideologies, and morals. Thus providing the Christians with an already partly defined identity as Jews, but they still distanced themselves from Jews as they had the Messiah. This resulted in the Christians often defining themselves as what the Jews were not, which may be explained by the fact that they often should define themselves to Jews in the beginning. This has resulted in scholars as Denis Guénon to argue that Christianity developed what later has been termed religion, since he defines religion as the difference between religions\textsuperscript{13}. Thus defining Judaism as a religion, not for the sake of the Jews, but for the Christians in order for them to distance themselves from the Jews and define themselves. Heresiology was the method since Christians announced some as heretics.

If Christians defined themselves as what the Jews were not, as what they were missing, this might have contributed to the parting, as such rhetoric can be experienced as hostile.

2.3 The Jewish Christian Identity

The term Jewish Christian is a neologism\textsuperscript{14}. The term Jewish Christian can be encountered in scholarly works both with and without a hyphen. This can depend on the used definition. When writing without a hyphen might suggest that Jewish is used as an adjective to Christian, and writing with a hyphen can suggest equal terms for the defining traits of Judaism and Christianity. It can also be used as a classification of a group that is not Jewish and not Christian, but somewhere in between. It is a description invented and used by modern scholars, as we see no use of this in ancient sources, and no self-definition by anyone as Jewish Christian. This makes it problematic to say much certain about Jewish Christians in antiquity since the sources do not say anything directly. This said there are sources mentioning groups that

\textsuperscript{11} Boyarin, “Hybridity and Heresy: Apartheid Comparative Religion in Late Antiquity,” 339.
\textsuperscript{12} Marcus, “Jewish Christianity,” 89.
\textsuperscript{13} Boyarin, “Hybridity and Heresy: Apartheid Comparative Religion in Late Antiquity,” 353.
\textsuperscript{14} Carleton Paget, “Jewish Christianity,” 3:733.
modern scholars would define as Jewish Christians, but this is an interpretation. Ferdinand Baur has, as one of the modern theology’s’ influential scholars, brought the term Jewish Christianity into practice\textsuperscript{15}.

Because of the vast definitions of Jewish Christianity and the lack of sources, it is difficult to pinpoint a certain group, and many would argue that many communities would fall under the definition of Jewish Christian. For example, does Jean Daniélou argue for three types of Jewish Christianity\textsuperscript{16}. The first type was the ones who accepted Jesus as the Messiah but did not accept his divinity, an example on this were the Ebionites. The second type was represented by the community of James, the brother of Jesus, which some identifies as the Nazarene. It is said that this community had an orthodox Christology while following the Jewish customs. These two types never really had a lasting impact, and especially the second type is said to have disappeared after the Jewish revolt in 70. Paget argues that the third and most important type of Jewish Christianity according to Daniélou was a form of Christianity heavily affected by Jewish thought forms, especially apocalyptic. This form of Jewish Christianity was supposedly the dominant thought form of Christianity up until the Bar Kochba revolt\textsuperscript{17}.

Daniélou also expressed criteria for defining a text as Jewish Christian. Some of these criteria were that it should originate prior to the middle of the second century; be written in a popular literary genre in Judaism and contain ideas particular of the Jewish Christians, which according to Daniélou often would be apocalyptic.\textsuperscript{18}

I will in the following present other definitions of Jewish Christianity\textsuperscript{19}.

2.3.A An Ethnic Definition

This definition would define the people of Jewish descent who became a Christian as a Jewish Christian. In this definition, Jewish is understood as an adjective. This definition can be opposed since it is clear that Christian Jews varied greatly in their opinions and emphasizes, for an example, one can refer to Paul, Peter, and James.

\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., 3:731.
\textsuperscript{16} Ibid., 3:737.
\textsuperscript{17} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{19} Carleton Paget, “Jewish Christianity,” 3:733–37.
2.3.B A Praxis-based Definition

As in 2.1.3, this definition identifies itself by its relation to the Jewish law. This definition merits from the earlier statement that Jews in antiquity were identified by their praxes, so accordingly a Christian who upholds these customs must be defined as a Jewish Christian. The difference between a Jew and A Jewish Christian would then be that the Jewish Christian accepts the messianic status of Jesus of Nazareth. One of the favors this definition has is that it is somewhat determinable whether one upholds the Law, rather than determining if their opinion corresponds to the dogma.

As for challenges in this definition could be mentioned, first, the dose\textsuperscript{20} required to earn the title of Jewish. The Jews had many laws and the bible tells us of events when the disciples and apostles upheld some of the laws but were not considered Jews. The question is which laws you have to follow to be considered orthodox. For example, could it be possible to be Jewish Christian when being circumcised while not the kosher regulations?

A second challenge to the definition is the relationship between the ones called Jewish Christians and the ones Didache Judaizers. I will give a short presentation of the Judaizers below in 2.3.4.

Paget presents a third challenge to the definition by questioning if a definition by praxes is adequate. Do Jewish Christians differ theologically from Christians and should this be credited in the definition?

2.3.C Ideological and Doctrinal Definitions

One scholar who particularly advocated for this definition was the Jewish H. J. Schoeps, who in 1949 published a book advocating that the Jewish Christian were, in fact, the Ebionites, know from before 70 A.D., and was therefore consistent with the earliest Christians. Schoeps was criticized for relying on the so-called pseudo-Clementine literature. Daniélou was one of the scholars who opposed Schoeps and advocated for three types of Jewish Christianity as mentioned above.

2.3.1 The New Perspective on Paul

When discussing the Christian relation to Jews and the law one has to relate to Paul and his writings against the Jewish and their law obedience. Particularly interesting in this context is that modern scholarship has experienced a change in perspective on Paul. James Dunn was

\textsuperscript{20} Termed "La dose" by Marcel Simon.
the first to express the term The New Perspective on Paul in 1983 but was influenced by the works of N. T. Wright.\footnote{Zetterholm, *Approaches to Paul*, 118.} The Tübingen School and their perspectives on Paul earlier\footnote{And still influences some today.} heavily influenced the scholarly milieu led by scholars such as Bultmann, Stendahl, and Bornkamm. This Standard View of Paul was inclined to anti-Semitism and interpreted Paul's message as a strong reaction against a Jewish law that was impossible to fulfill, and that Jews as a Christian were free of the law.

As expressed above, the wake of World War Two brought about a new perspective on the Jews\footnote{Boyarin, “Hybridity and Heresy: Apartheid Comparative Religion in Late Antiquity.”} and it was natural for the theologians to compare the view in society with the biblical view. This resulted in the New Perspective on Paul on the ground of scholars such as Dunn, Wright, and Sanders. According to the new perspective on Jews, scholars questioned the Standard View on Paul as criticizing all Jews. They suggested that Paul did not convert from Judaism to Christianity but the wanted to reform the Jews back to orthodoxy; that instead of raging against the law in general, he raged against the Pharisaic legalism. This new perspective gives a more positive attitude against Jews and gives new exegetical discourses to explore since all of the Pauline theology is affected.

2.3.2 Wave Theory\footnote{Ibid., 346.}

In the process of describing Jewish Christianity, Daniel Boyarin has turned to theories from other scholarly fields. The theory in use is the wave theory from the linguistic field. It claims that religions interact and affects each other like languages and dialects do. Earlier scholars assumed that languages spread like a stem tree, with a protolanguage dispersing into other languages and dialects.\footnote{Ibid., 346.} The wave theory presents the possibility that different languages originated and spread out like rings in the water. These waves would mingle with each other and create new dialects or languages by giving or taking from each other.

When posing the wave theory unto religious groups the different communities or belief systems correspond to dialects or groups of dialects. When diversities of belief is present one could argue that it corresponds to dialects. Examples of differences could be emphasizing particular customs according to the law or Christology as in the question whether Jesus is a man...
or God?25 The idea is that when two religions or communities meet, they are never the exact same, but in their interaction, they both affect each other.

The wave theory also uses the term dialect clusters. The use refers to areas with a cluster of different dialects, but still very much the same language. Some resemble each other more than others, but they are not considered as another language. In the same way, there are religious communities that differ in opinion and emphasizes, but they still identify as the same religion. In such cases heresiology, as presented above, was the method of differentiating from each other.

2.3.3 Hybridity

In the discussion of what Christians, Jews, and Jewish Christians were and how they affected each other the scholars turn to hybridity to explain and understand the interactions. The theory of hybridity suggests that religions as Christianity and Judaism in antiquity should not be seen as homogenous as it has been, but that it is diverse in various ways. It suggests that we should regard it as two polarized religions or orthodoxies, that in interaction with each other or pagans, they affect each other and create a whole spectrum of communities with varieties in beliefs and opinions.26

David Chidester uses the theories of hybridity to use the apartheid as a metaphor to describe religions.27 He claims that as different races were divided in an effort to protect the purity and homogeneity of their races, in such way the religions have sought to protect or border themselves to preserve its orthodoxy. When the apartheid did not succeed and two of separate races made offspring, this offspring would be a mix of the two and thus a hybrid. As Bhabha puts it, the hybrid is “neither the one thing nor the other.”28

In order to border itself, the religion would use heresiology to distance itself from the hybrids, which would differ in beliefs. I will point to the problems in distinguishing between hybrids differing enough to be counted as heretics and hybrids that could still be accepted as orthodox. In this problematic on can refer to the metaphor of the apartheid, because the question arises:

25 For a more direct example, I will refer to the Church Fathers’ arguments against the Gnostics.
28 Ibid., 343.
who determines what orthodoxy is? One could argue that during the apartheid the white race were overwhelming the black in power in the form of money, influence, and education. Thus one could argue that the strongest or the most influential religion determines the orthodoxy. So as the saying, the winner writes the history.

2.3.4 Judaizers

The Judaizers are relevant in this connection because it occurs in some of our earliest sources such as Gal 2:4 and in Ignatius’s letter to the Magnesians 10:3. In these sources, Judaizers are negatively portrayed and is a behavior that is sought to be avoided. Besides the mentioned examples we can find further mentions in the bible of people claiming that Christians need to be circumcised followed by the author taking distance to this message. The Judaizers are portrayed as Christians who seek to increase Jewish living in the Christian community either by words or actions. In modern scholarship, they have widely been defined as "Christians, more often than not of Gentile origin, who chose to adopt a Jewish lifestyle understood in terms of praxis." The fact that Celsus would “… characterise [sic] Jews who believed in Christ as having left the ancestral law, …” argues for the fact that the Judaizers were gentiles.

The connection to Jewish Christianity is that when defining Jewish Christianity they are most often portrayed as Christians practicing the Jewish customs, similarly, the Judaizers are presented as Christians compelling other Christians to practice the Jewish Customs. The question is then: are the Jewish Christians the Judaizers, and therefore regarded as outside Christianity by the Christians in antiquity? According to Paget the Jewish Christians and Judaizers are not to be distinguished in the context of self-definition, but according to many sources Judaizers were considered extra ecclesiam, whereas Jewish Christians were not in all instances.

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29 I feel compelled to say that I do not agree with the apartheid or the supremacy of one race, but am simply trying to follow an argument given by others.
30 Holmes, The Apostolic Fathers.
34 Especially if one accepts the Gospel of Matthew and the Epistle of James defined as Jewish Christian sources.
3. A Historical Description of the Parting of the Ways

I write this paragraph in order to address the question if it was merely theological and ideological differences that caused the parting of the ways or if there were historical or political causes too. I will in the following present historical events and discuss their influence on the parting of the ways.

3.1 The death of James

James, who is said to be the author of the Epistle of James and the leader of the Christian community in Jerusalem, was according to Josephus executed in 62.\textsuperscript{35} The high priest Ananus ordered his execution, but we are not informed about the exact reasons, although the charge was lawlessness\textsuperscript{36}. What we know is that this was opposed by Christians and Jewish. The Jews revered James as a pious man and sometimes referred to him as James the Just because of his observance of the law.\textsuperscript{37} Making a martyr of James had consequences for the high priest, but did it have other implications?

I will argue that the actions of the high priest had implications in the Jewish community. The worst scenario would be fragmentations in the community into parties pro James or pro Ananus. I take the removal of the high priest as an argument that the party pro James were the larger or more influential one, and I have no reason to conclude whether or not a pro Ananus party fragmented or resolved their issues with the pro James party. One could consider the possibility of the pro James party joining in a possible Jewish Christian community, but I would oppose that since they had an influence on the position of the High Priest and therefore influence over the Jews which I imagine would require them being acknowledged as orthodox.

The martyrdom of James may have affected the Christians’ relations with the Jews since many would resent the Jews for killing their leader. This argument I would apply to the Jewish Christians as well, since James, by some, are regarded as Jewish Christian, and that he was a Christian who apparently was respected for his law observance.

3.2 Persecution of Christians in Rome

It is a known fact that persecution of both Jews and Christians have occurred several times during history, even in the first centuries in the process of defining the Christian identity.

\textsuperscript{35} Carleton Paget, “Jewish Christianity,” 3:746.
\textsuperscript{36} Ibid., 3:770.
\textsuperscript{37} Marcus, “Jewish Christianity,” 91.
Nero is an example of an emperor in Rome, who persecuted Christians, which shows pagans differentiating between Jews and Christians. Even though the Jews were not directly implicated it could still affect the relationship between Jews and Christians. I imagine that some persecuted Christians would feel tempted to identify as Jews since they have some similarities. The Jews also enjoyed special rights such as being allowed not to sacrifice to the emperor but for the emperor, which the Christians were not allowed. Differentiation between two groups with dire results for the one will create distance and resent towards the other.

3.3 The Jewish Revolt

According to Euseb the Christians in Jerusalem fled to Pella in the Decapolis just prior to the Jewish revolt in 66.\textsuperscript{38} The Christians' escape from Jerusalem is questioned by scholars, by referring to Euseb as a tendentious source and that he elsewhere in his writings state that the Christians stayed in Jerusalem until the Bar Kochba revolt. Further, it is argued that it would have been difficult for the Christians to escape the city when it was under siege and that Pella is an unlikely destination. Lastly one would expect that such an event would be mentioned more frequently in Christian sources. According to Paget all of these arguments are nondecisive, it is not possible to determine whether all Christians fled or not. Maybe it was just some of the Christians who fled, and perhaps they returned after the revolt so that Euseb's statement of the Christians being in Jerusalem until Bar Kochba was correct too.

It is most likely that the Christians did not participate in the Jewish revolt,\textsuperscript{39} and that would impact the relations between the Jews and the Christians. It is clearly a distancing from the Jews when the Christians did not participate in their revolt, which at least some of the Jews would have considered a betrayal. It is difficult to say if the Jewish Christians participated in the revolt or not, as I imagine that they were more likely to identify with the Jews than the Christians were. It is possible that they fled Jerusalem as a result of James being executed,\textsuperscript{40} since he, by some scholars, is regarded as the leader of the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem.

3.4 Pliny the Younger

Pliny the Younger is a known governor in the late first century. He has written a letter to Trajan, who was emperor of Rome in 98-117 A.D., about what to do with Christians. This in-

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{Carleton Paget, “Jewish Christianity,” 3:746–47; Marcus, “Jewish Christianity,” 99.}
\footnote{Holmes, \textit{The Apostolic Fathers}, 8.}
\footnote{Carleton Paget, “Jewish Christianity,” 3:746.}
\end{footnotes}
icates a persecution of Christians, although not systematic\textsuperscript{41}, and a differentiation between Jews and Christians, which could further part the Christians and the Jews.

3.5 Birkat Haminim

Birkat Haminim is the twelfth of the eighteen benedictions that were used as daily prayers in synagogues in the first centuries. Most often when Jewish sources refer to other groups than Jews they refer to them as non-Jews or heretics. The Hebrew word for heretics is minim, and therefore this benediction is most often translated as the cursing of the heretics. The benediction has been revised at some point to exclude “… the Nazarenes and the minim [Heretics]…"\textsuperscript{42} from the Book of Life.

The use and addressees of this benediction are discussed among scholars. It is problematic that it is very general in its term, so it is difficult to argue that it is aimed at Christians, although some scholars claim that these were the aim. As an argument for this claim scholars refers to Justin, Dial. 16 and 110, in which he refers to Jews cursing Christians in the synagogues.\textsuperscript{43} According to Paget, a min was a non-orthodox Jew who rejected the Rabbis and the Halakah\textsuperscript{44}.

Though it is discussed when and why this benediction was reworded it is evident that the Rabbis wanted to exclude some from the synagogues. According to the Church Fathers, this was aimed at the Christians, but it cannot be concluded that it was only meant for the Christians. The use of the word Nazarene can suggest that it is meant for the Christians, but according to Paget, the benediction was meant for Jewish heretics. It is therefore probable that the Nazarene mentioned were not the Christians in general but the Jewish Christian cult also known as the Nazarenes. It is possible that this benediction affected the relations between Christians and Jewish, but it is probable that it was meant more at Jewish Christians since they were more likely to identify themselves as Jewish.

3.6 The Bar Kochba Revolt

In 132-135 A.D. a second Jewish revolt took place in Israel and particularly Jerusalem. According to Church Fathers, the Christians experienced persecution from the Jews during the

\textsuperscript{41} Birgitte Graakjær Hjort, \textit{Det Nye Testamentes Omverden - Om Politiske, Religiøse Og Filosofiske Forhold På Det Nye Testamentes Tid} (Aarhus Universitetsforlag, 2003), 71.
\textsuperscript{42} Holmes, \textit{The Apostolic Fathers}, 9.
\textsuperscript{43} Marcus, \textquotedblleft Jewish Christianity," 100; Carleton Paget, \textquotedblleft Jewish Christianity," 3:772.
\textsuperscript{44} Carleton Paget, \textquotedblleft Jewish Christianity," 3:772.
revolt and eventually, they were expelled from Jerusalem.\textsuperscript{45} This indicates that in the course of a century a parting has taken place to the extent that the Jews persecute the Christians.

It is not stated exactly why the Christians were persecuted, but I will present some possible explanations. Firstly, the revolt was an attempt to free the land of the Roman occupants and restore the Jewish state; perhaps the Christians were not included in the Jewish state. Secondly, it is possible that the Christians refused to participate in the revolt, which would have been understood as treachery. This could be because of a pacifist orientation or a disagreement with the Jews on their grounds for revolting. The leaders of the revolt had strong messianic connotations. This would have been impossible for Christians to support since they believed that Jesus was the true Messiah.

3.7 Easter

In the late second and early third century, Hippolytus and Novatian present us with the controversy of the date of Easter.\textsuperscript{46} This would be problematic for the Jewish Christians since different denominations of Christianity wanted different dates. Some wanted to continue the Jewish dates of the fourteenth of Nisan and others wanted to celebrate Easter on the fifteenth of Nisan, which was the day Jesus was crucified according to the Gospel of John.

I imagine that the Jewish Christians would be torn between their both Jewish and Christian identity. At the same time, it is a clear distancing to the Jews to change the date and focus of Easter.

4. A comparison of Paul and other early Christian texts

As presented above the Parting of the Ways is shown in various ways and probably has different reasons. I will in the following discuss how the canonical sources of Paul cohere with non-canonical sources in the question of continuity and discontinuity with regard to the Jews. Due to the vastness of the subject, I have selected relevant passages to use. This approach is taken to show that different parties within Christianity had different views on Jews.

\textsuperscript{45} Ibid., 3:749; Taylor, “The Phenomenon of Early Jewish-Christianity: Reality or Scholarly Invention?,” 316.
\textsuperscript{46} Marcus, “Jewish Christianity,” 96.
4.1 Presentation Of Non-canonical Sources

4.1.1 Didache

The Didache was discovered in 1873. The structure of the Didache is widely agreed to be composite, but different explanations on why are being presented. Some argue that the Didache is a collection of different sources gathered by a single individual, while others argue that it is a product of multiple authors either in the same community or over time. This composite structure creates difficulties dating the text since some argue that it has been composed over a longer period of time. Thus the Didache is being dated from AD 50 to the third century or later.

4.1.2 Epistle of Barnabas

The epistle is anonymous but has early been regarded as written by Barnabas who followed Paul. It was Clement of Alexandria who ascribed it to Barnabas, but the text presumes the destruction of the Temple, which places the epistle later than Barnabas, dismissing him as the author.

The Epistle of Barnabas does not resemble a letter structurally, but rather a polemic educational text, teaching the faults of the Jews and the real exegetics of the Old Testament. Much of the text is allegoric interpretations claimed to be the intended understanding.

4.1.3 Gospel of Ebionites

This text is unknown in its original form. The only known fragments are quotes made by Epifanios, albeit large quotes it is still uncertain if they are presented in the original order. Since the text is known from quotes the author is unknown but is presented as used by the Ebionites.

It is debated who the Ebionites were as they no longer exist. Often it is presumed that the Church Fathers used Ebionites as a term for Jewish Christians. Those defined by faith in Christ and upholding Jewish customs and rituals. The name Ebionites is thought to stem from the

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48 Ibid., 337.
49 Lisbet Müller and Mogens Müller, eds., *Politikens Bibel Leksikon* (København: Politikens Forlag, 1999), 42.
52 Carleton Paget, “Jewish Christianity.”
Aramaic word meaning poor. This has led some to argue that the Ebionites was a Jewish Christian cult consisting of the community fleeing Jerusalem prior the Jewish Revolt. According to Gal 2.10, Paul was to collect money from other communities to the poor in the Jerusalem community.

4.2 Paul And Judaism

4.2.1 Covenant

The covenant is defining for both the Jews and Christians as Jews identify themselves as the chosen people of God in a covenant with God. Jesus establishes, according to Luke 22.20, a new covenant with the disciples. Paul also identifies within a covenantal relationship with God. In Gal 4.21-5.1 Paul allegorically exeges the story of Abraham and his two wives. According to Paul, they are the image of the two covenants. The covenant with Israel on Mount Sinai was to slavery but the other covenant is to freedom and the kingdom of God. The two sons are both sons of Abraham but it is only the later one that is to inherit their father. An interpretation of this paragraph is that both Israel and the Christians have a covenant with God but it is only the Christians as the later ones that inherit the kingdom of God.

Paul quite explicitly speaks against the particularity of the Jews and emphasizes the Christians as the new people of God. Didache can be interpreted to also speak against the Jews in 3.6 when it warns the reader against being a grumbler. This term can relate to the grumbling of the Israelites in the desert in Ex 16.6-8. One could argue that it is to be understood as a critique against the Jews but it could also be understood as a critique against acting like the Jews when they grumbled and resisted God. Didache can be interpreted to have either continuity or discontinuity with the statement of Paul above. I would prefer to interpret the grumbler in Didache as the actions of the Israelites since Didache otherwise does not exhibit a great polem-ic against Jews.

The author of the Epistle of Barnabas shows great continuity with the above statement by Paul as he uses the exact same allegorical interpretation of the story of Abraham and his two wives. He also explicitly writes that the second people shall inherit the covenant, most likely saying that the Christians inherits the covenant with God that the Jews earlier enjoyed. Other statements in Barn. backs this up. for example 2.9; 4.6-9 and 14.1. He states that Israel indeed received the covenant but they were sinful and lost is when Moses destroyed the stone tablets.
When stating this Barn. goes too far and creates discontinuity with Paul as he in Rom 11.1 states that God has not rejected his people. The Gospel of the Ebionites states that Jesus wanted the apostles to be a testimony to Israel. This I interpret as continuity to the statements of Paul by asserting a particularity to the Christians suggesting a supremacy and correction to the Jews, but still in a friendly tone.

4.2.2 The Law

One of the defining traits of the Jews is the law and therefore it is a well-visited theme of Paul. A particular law that is defining is the circumcision. This practice was heavily discussed in the early church to establish its continuity. Paul has several conflicting statements about the law such as “...the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.” And “Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law...”, which opens a debate about the law too great to present in this paper. Even though Paul gives positive statements about the law it is clear that he also gives negative statements, I will primarily present the negative statements, which I interpret to be aiming at the Jewish law and not the law Christ mentioned in Gal 6.2.

Paul states in Rom 7.4 that they are dead to the law, which clearly presents a distance to the law that is defining for the Jews. He mentions in Gal 2.3-4 that false brothers demanded that the Christians should be circumcised. The circumcision was supposed to be the identity marker of the Israelites and those in a covenant with God. When Paul distances Christians from circumcision he makes a clear discontinuity to the Jews. He even states in Gal 5.2 that if Christians become circumcised Christ will not merit them.

Didache states that you must not forsake the Lord’s commandments. This can be interpreted in different ways. It can refer to the Torah, the ten commandments of Jesus, or the law of Christ that Paul presents. The last two options imply that Jesus is regarded as the Lord, which is stated in 8.2. I interpret Didache to have continuity with the statements of Paul regarding the law.

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53 The discussion of Israel’s role in the salvation history is vast and is not possible to describe properly in this paper. As shown, Paul both states that the Christians are the heirs of the covenant once belonging to Israel, but also that God has not rejected his people, leaving the question of the role of Israel.
55 English Standard Version (ESV) Rom 7.12
56 ESV Gal 3.13
The Epistle of Barnabas also mentions the new law of Christ in 2.6 creating continuity to Paul distancing themselves from the Jews. At the same time mentioning the Jewish law and the Jews in harsh terms such as yoke of compulsion\(^{57}\) and shipwreck to their law\(^{58}\). The author of the Epistle of Barnabas offers the correct interpretation of the commandments as God intended distances himself from the Jews and even uses an allegorical interpretation of the food laws to compare the Jews to pigs. I see in Barn. continuity with Paul in the use of the Jewish law, but Barn. is being more polemic against Jews than Paul.

4.2.3 Temple

Paul would as a scholarly Jew know the temple and its significance to the Jewish people. In Acts 21.26 we are told that Paul went into the temple thus making continuity to the Jewish temple. Afterwards, the Jews in the temple seize Paul and want to kill him because of his presence in the temple. Contrary Paul states in 1 Cor 3.16 and 6.19 that the Corinthians and their bodies is the temple of God. I interpret Pauls opinions to the temple as positive of the temple and its meaning but negative toward the Jewish use and institutionalizing of it resulting in discontinuity to the physical temple but continuity to the temple as Gods dwelling place.

I find that Didache shows continuity toward Pauls understanding of the temple. In 10.2 it is written that God dwells in our hearts, which is similar to Pauls statements of the body being a temple and Gods temple being in the Corinthians. Further continuity is shown in the terminology of 13.3, where the author uses the “first fruits of the produce and “high priests”\(^{59}\) on the salary and the prophets. In this way, the author disperses the use of the temple away from the temple.

The Epistle of Barnabas shows continuity to Paul by speaking of the Christians and their hearts as the temple of God.\(^{60}\) Further, the author, like Didache, uses temple terminology to describe Christ and applies it directly to Jesus. Calling Jesus the lamb of the rite of atonement creates continuity to the use and meaning of the temple.

In the Gospel of Ebionites emphasizing the Aronitic descent of John the Baptist shows continuity connecting the priestly service of the temple to the preachers and prophets of Christianity. Contrary stating that Jesus wanted to stop the sacrifices creates discontinuity to the Jewish temple cult, but continuity to the opinion of Paul to the temple.

\(^{57}\) Barn. 2.6  
\(^{58}\) Barn. 3.6  
\(^{59}\) Holmes, The Apostolic Fathers, 365.  
\(^{60}\) Barn. 4.11; 6.15; 16.6-8
4.2.4 Justification

Justification is a very important subject and is the very reason that Paul conducts his missionary work. His goal is everybody’s justification. Therefore it is interesting to study what the result of justification is and how people achieve this justification. These questions are heavily debated and not in the scope of this paper. In this paper, I will assume the justification as reaching community with God and being worthy to stand before him.

As stated above Paul polemics against law and also writes that it is not by the law that one is justified but by faith. He references Abraham to show that Abraham was counted as righteous because of his faith and not his works, which can be explained by Abraham living before the law was given. When Paul in Rom 3.30-31 writes that the law is not overthrown it opens the discussion of the purpose of the law and its significance in the justification.

The Didache does have a section of the two ways that decrees what to do and not to do. It does not explicitly say that one's justification depends on the works or if you follow the rules or not. This could allow an interpretation that one is justified by works, which shows discontinuity to Paul. It can be questioned if this shows discontinuity since Paul encourages people to do good works in his letters.

Several statements in the Epistle of Barnabas suggest discontinuity to Paul. In chapter 19 and forth the author presents the way of light and darkness, which consists of ways to behave. In 21.1 he writes, “…the one who does these things will be glorified in the kingdom of God;” In 4.12 he writes, “All will receive according to what they have done:” These statements suggest justification by works which is a discontinuity to Paul. This can be contested when looking at 9.7 where he writes that Abraham looked forward to Jesus when he circumcised. Although not saying explicitly that Abraham was justified by faith, it is an apparent interpretation to understand it that way, thus making continuity to Paul. Barn. 1.6 states “… a glad and rejoicing love, which is the testimony of works of righteousness.” This opens a debate of what the works of righteousness are which I will not include in this paper. It facilitates an interpre-

61 Gal 3.6 and Rom 3.30  
63 Ibid., 391.  
64 Ibid., 383.  
65 In this case, I consider righteousness and justification to be parallel in their results albeit one could discuss the detailed differences.
tation that works that results in justification is the result of love for the Lord, thus making faith in the Lord more important that the works, thereby creating continuity to Paul.

4.2.5 Scripture

The common ancestry between Christians and Jews makes it interesting to investigate in what way the Christians use the Jewish writings of the Old Testament. Paul himself quotes from the Old Testament multiple times, for example in Rom 3.10. in Rom 1.1-2 he even states that the prophets foretold the gospel of Jesus, creating continuity to the Jewish scriptures.

Didache also quotes the Old Testament in 1.2 when it says that you shall love God and love your neighbor as yourself. The dependence on the Old Testament can be contested since this quote has been used multiple times in the New Testament, thus making it possible that the Didache was dependent on the New Testament instead. Didache also uses the common ancestry to the Jews mentioning the God of David and the holy vine of David. I find that the Didache shows continuity to Paul's use and opinion on the scriptures since they both quotes the scriptures and rely on the common ancestry with the Jews.

The Epistle of Barnabas also quotes from the Old Testament and the mentioning of prophets in 2.4 suggest a use of the Old Testament. In this way, the Epistle of Barnabas shows continuity to Paul, but he also crosses the line. In 10.12 he claims that the Christians have the better interpretation of the scriptures, which is shown in the allegorical exegesis shown throughout the epistle. When claiming to have the better interpretation the author creates distance to the Jews and therefore discontinuity.

In the Gospel of Ebionites we are told, by Epifanios, the Ebionites has changed the gospel and replaced the word ἀκρις with ενκρις, thus creating a link to the manna that the Israelites received in the desert. Thereby creating a continuity to the Jews and the scriptures. The fact that they added more continuity suggest that they do not agree with the amount of continuity with Paul, therefore, creating discontinuity to Paul.

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66 Quote from Lev 19.18
67 Respectively 10.6 and 9.2
68 Ledet Christiansen and Kjær Nielsen, Nytestamentlige apokryfer, 79.
5. Summary

When discussing the Parting of the Ways it shows to be more complex than, I think, most people assume. It is accepted that both Jews and Christians had a common ancestry, but the problem comes when they part ways. Multiple problems arise when trying to define the involved parties. First, there is the problem of knowing the self-definition of Jews and Christians who lived thousands of years ago. Many sources are missing, and others are second-hand sources. Another problem is the variety of definitions that could apply, such as; ethnic, religious and praxis-based.

The complexity intensifies when involving modern scholarship and Jewish Christianity. Some modern scholars use methods from the social sciences, like linguistics, to describe the variety within religions such as Judaism and Christianity, comparing them to waves and dialects. Another theory claims that all interactions create hybrids, showing differences in opinions. All creating a whole spectrum of Judaisms and Christianities.

A study for another paper could be the defining point between the Jews and Christians. The point at which Heresiology specifies the orthodoxy from heresy. The differences between the Jews and Christians and their quest of self-defining has resulted in their parting, but it is possible that it is not only religious differences that divided them but that also historical events had a role in the parting.

Historical events such as persecution of Christians and revolts can be said to have forced the involved to decide which party they belonged to, thus creating a distance.

Early Christian texts show a variety of opinions, confer the aforementioned spectrum. In this paper, I have investigated the continuity and discontinuity between Paul’s letters, the Didache, the Epistle of Barnabas and the Gospel of Ebionites. I have shown their typological differences and conclude that the Didache is not to polemic and often shows continuity to Paul; The Epistle of Barnabas is polemic against the Jews and shows both continuity and discontinuity albeit mostly discontinuity; The Gospel of Ebionites shows great sympathy towards the Jews whereby creating continuity to Paul, but it sometimes sympathises more with the Jews than the Christians thus creating discontinuity to Paul.
6. Bibliography


