

Did  
**JESUS**  
Oppose the  
**PURITY  
LAWS?**

PAULA FREDRIKSEN



In the last century, especially in the last few decades, historians of Christianity have increasingly understood Jesus of Nazareth as a participant in the Judaism of his day. Many scholars, however, while emphasizing Jesus' articulation of Jewish ethics, or his Jewish scriptural sensibility, or the apocalyptic convictions he shared with so many contemporaries, draw the line at the biblical laws of purity. These laws rarely appear realistically integrated into historical reconstructions of Jesus. Connected as they are to an ancient system of sacrifices, they seem obscure to modern religious sensibilities; and after the Roman destruction of the Temple in 70 C.E., they soon became irrelevant to the later, largely Gentile church. Perhaps, too, purity codes—a hallmark of virtually all ancient religions—are too disturbingly archaic to fit comfortably with modern constructions of Jesus and his message.

Very recently, a handful of prominent New Testament historians and theologians have even argued that Jesus taught and acted specifically *against* the purity codes of his native Judaism. The repudiation of the biblical rules of purity, "the taboos of Torah," stood, they say, at the very heart of Jesus' ministry. Marcus Borg, for example, has urged that Jesus opposed the purity codes, motivated as he was by a vision of a more compassionate society: Jesus imagined "a community shaped not by the ethos and politics of purity, but by

**"GREAT CROWDS CAME TO JESUS [preceding pages], bringing with them the lame, the maimed, the blind, the mute, and many others" (Matthew 15:30). In this etching, Rembrandt (1606-1669) depicts Jesus mingling with and healing society's outcasts. Several New Testament scholars have portrayed Jesus as a radical social reformer who preached a gospel of compassion in opposition to the Jewish purity laws—which, these scholars claim, preserved unjust social distinctions.**

Such a view, Paula Fredriksen observes, rests on a misunderstanding of purity. She notes that the purity laws are not concerned with who you are but with *sacral* contamination (resulting from eating some foods, certain bodily discharges, or contact with a corpse, for example) and prescribe ritual means for removing such contamination. Those who are impure cannot approach the Temple altar, or enter the Temple or its compound—depending on the kind of impurity contracted. Being pure enables one to approach holy places, but impurity is not in itself sinful, and it does not imply any social stigma. Nor are femaleness or poverty signs of impurity: A priest who just buried his father is impure, whereas a poor destitute woman may be completely pure.

For Fredriksen, Jesus, like his fellow Jews, obeyed the purity rules—forcing us to look elsewhere for the source of his message. *Photo by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Bequest of Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer, 1929.*

the ethos and politics of compassion."<sup>1</sup> Similarly, John Dominic Crossan portrays Jesus as a radical social egalitarian for whom the purity codes of the Temple system were morally and socially anathema.<sup>2</sup> N.T. Wright's Jesus opposed Judaism's "violent nationalism"; as part of his struggle, Jesus fought against purity codes and the Temple.<sup>3</sup>

These reconstructions in which Jesus opposes the purity system depend, as they must, on the evangelists' depictions of Jesus' activity.

What, during his mission, did Jesus actually do? He traveled, eating with the people he encountered and sharing their table ("practicing commensality"); he healed the sick, frequently through touch; and he called women as well as men to receive his message of the Kingdom of God. In the main, his audiences were other Galilean peasants, but at the end of his mission he left Galilee and journeyed to Jerusalem at Passover. There, in the final week of his life, he caused a scene on the Temple Mount. The chief priests, in concert with the Romans, then moved against him. Arrested around Passover (Mark says on Passover; John, the night before), tried before a full meeting of the Sanhedrin (Mark and Matthew describe two meetings; Luke, only one), or perhaps only stopped for an interrogation by the high priest (John), Jesus was handed over to Pilate, who crucified him for sedition.

Embedded in this activity, these scholars maintain, lie the outlines of Jesus' vision: He fought against the social, economic and gender stratifications of his society, and thus he fought against Judaism's purity codes. How so? Jesus proclaimed and lived out a vision of radical egalitarianism, a new social vision of the Kingdom of God; but purity codes are about distinctions, divisions and separation. Eating with the poor, with outcasts and sinners, meant that Jesus did not attend to the niceties of purity; touching and healing the sick—the leper, the demoniac, the hemorrhaging woman—"shattered" and "subverted" ritual law. Disregarding taboos, Jesus approached both women and Gentiles, demonstrating his contempt for the prejudices of purity. Outside the system of atoning sacrifices, he independently proclaimed the forgiveness of sin.

Finally, inevitably, Jesus went to Jerusalem to confront the dark heart of the purity system itself: the Temple. More than just the privileged location of the "purity elite" (that is, the priests), the Temple embodied and propagated the economically and socially oppressive system that Jesus fought to undermine. Enraged at its splendor, disgusted by its grandiose wastefulness, and repulsed by the monopoly on forgiveness exploited by its sacrificial cult, Jesus overturned the moneychangers' tables. He thereby symbolically repudiated and indicted everything that the Temple and its purity system stood for; and he thereby courted his own death.

One immediate virtue of this reading of the



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Gospels is that it closes the gap between Jesus' day and our own. Jesus battles the same social ills that bedevil thoughtful people in the modern West: economic inequality, racial prejudice, even sexism. And he does so by energetically repudiating something that has been irrelevant to the practice of Christianity at least since 70 C.E.—namely, the rules concerning purity and the approach to the sacrificial altar.

This is a passionate and appealing interpretation. To work, it requires only two things: (1) a systematic misconstrual of the meaning and application of the purity codes; and (2) an equally systematic censoring of the evidence, embedded in the Gospel narratives, that Jesus was a Jew of his own time rather than a left-leaning liberal of ours.

To understand the notion of purity, we must of course begin with the Bible. The unforgettable stories that open the Bible—God's creation of the universe and humanity; Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; Joseph and his brothers; Israel's bondage in Egypt; the battle of wills between Pharaoh and Moses—transmute, about halfway

**JESUS HEALS A LEPER.** This scene, from a 12th-century manuscript in the Athos Monastery in Greece, depicts a miracle of cleansing described in all three Synoptic Gospels (Matthew 8:2-3; Mark 1:40-42; Luke 5:12-13). In the Bible, leprosy is not only a disease; it is also a state of impurity (Leviticus 13:1-46). Having leprosy, or coming into contact with a leper, renders one unfit to offer sacrifices at the Temple. A person who contracts leprosy-impurity must undergo purificatory rituals—ablutions, waiting periods, the burning of clothes—to be pronounced "clean."

In healing the leper, Jesus would thereby have become impure. Some scholars argue that Jesus deliberately flouted the biblical purity laws—not only by mingling with lepers, but by touching the blind and raising the dead—because he sought to promote a vision of a more just society. Author Fredriksen, however, points out that "impurity" is associated neither with sinfulness nor with class distinctions; rather, impurity is regularly contracted in the course of everyday life, such as when a parent dies, as a result of childbirth, or when a man has a seminal emission. After healing the leper, Jesus would simply have had to undergo a ritual cleansing to be purified; and there is no reason to believe that he did not do so.

through Exodus, to an odd series of non-narrative directives and descriptions. Story gives way to different types of civic and social legislation, torts and criminal law, rules for the adornment of the tabernacle and its priests. By Leviticus and Numbers, we stand in a thick forest of rules for distinguishing between holy and common, between *tahor* ("clean") and *tameh* ("unclean").

Anthropologists call such rules "purity codes." These codes are a ubiquitous feature of ancient religions, as are the sacrificial systems usually linked to them. Their presence in the Pentateuch simply attests to the antiquity of biblical tradition. The Bible presents the purity codes in the narrative context of Israel's wandering in the wilderness. But these rules continued to structure ancient Jewish society and worship—from the sexual intimacy of marriage partners to the great communal celebrations of the annual pilgrimage festivals—in the post-biblical period, until the Roman destruction of the Second Temple in 70 C.E.

Purity concerned not just the priests (though they did have additional rules peculiar to their station), but in principle the entire people of Israel. Some rules prohibit contact with or consumption of certain unclean animals, or eating the fat or blood of permitted ones: Willful, deliberate transgression of these rules is sinful.<sup>4</sup> Other purity rules focus particularly on the human body. Discharges from the genital area—menstruation, miscarriage or childbirth; seminal emissions—cause "impurity," as does contact with (or even proximity to) a corpse.<sup>5</sup> "Leprosy" (which can afflict houses as well as persons\*) also conveys impurity.<sup>6</sup> For all these conditions, the Bible prescribes periods of separation, lustrations and offerings, after which, in the language of Leviticus, the person can again "approach the Tent of Meeting"—that is, enter the zone of holiness surrounding the altar—and make a sacrifice to God. Purity enables proximity to holiness.

Scripture assumes, in other words, that people will contract impurity as a matter of course.<sup>7</sup> Impurity is not prohibited, and being impure implies no moral censure. The system cannot be transposed *tout court* to a moral key except as metaphor (for example, having an "impure heart"). An impure person—a menstruant, a leper or a mourner—is not thereby a sinner, nor is a pure person necessarily righteous. The priest whom God mandates to burn the red heifer in Numbers 19 is rendered impure by the procedure—which, paradoxically, produces the ritual detergent necessary to remove the most serious form of impurity, corpse-contact (Numbers 19:7-13). Impurity is incurred in the course of fulfilling the more routine *mitzvot* (commandments) of the Torah: having marital intercourse,<sup>8</sup> giving birth, burying the dead. The remedy

is not "forgiveness," but rather purification.

By Jesus' time, how many of these biblical rules were observed? We can only draw inferences from sources that are slightly later. In Greek: the writings of Philo of Alexandria (d. 50 C.E.), Josephus (last quarter of the first century), and the New Testament canon, which includes the letters of Paul (mid-first century), the Gospel stories about Jesus (c. 70-90 C.E.) and the historical information in Acts (c. 100 C.E.). In Hebrew and Aramaic, from the end of the second century: the rabbinic (and perhaps Pharisaic) material preserved in the Mishnah.\*\* Taken together, these sources attest to a widespread consensus on the importance of keeping the Law, as well as to a rich diversity of opinion on how best to keep it.<sup>9</sup>

Both Philo and Paul provide interesting glimpses of the lives of observant Jews in the Diaspora, where the distance from the Jerusalem Temple, diverse religious commitments (Philo's to an allegorical view, Paul's to an apocalyptic faith) and the vicissitudes of a Gentile environment made for interesting improvisations. Philo, for example, mentions sprinklings done for purification after a funeral or after sexual relations, perhaps before entering a synagogue, and perhaps before praying. These lustrations, not mentioned in the Bible, may have been affected in part by pagan analogues. As for scriptural purifications, Philo often explains the motivation or meaning of a biblical law by appeal to allegory and symbolism.<sup>10</sup>

Paul addresses himself to Gentiles (thus to people not obligated to keep the Law); yet he often exhorts his communities to assume voluntarily certain aspects of Jewish custom and behavior. They should shun idols and *porneia* (sexual misconduct), support the poor, keep litigation within the community and contribute to his fund-drive for "the saints who are in Jerusalem."<sup>11</sup> Idolatry and fornication are sin; but Paul, looking ahead to the fast-approaching day of Wrath, also uses the language of pollution: "This is the will of God for your sanctification.... For God has called us not to impurity but in holiness" (1 Thessalonians 4:3-7). And finally, as a religious Jew,<sup>12</sup> Paul held that the *latreia*—the cult mandated by God through Moses at Sinai and offered in the Temple in Jerusalem—was one of the abiding glories and privileges of Israel. Like the Divine presence itself (another oblique reference to the Temple, the abode of the *Shekinah*<sup>13</sup>) and the fleshly descent of the Messiah, the Temple cult signaled Israel's special dignity as God's chosen (Romans 9:4).

Josephus (as well as Philo) describes other Jews, whose interpretations of Torah distinguished them as distinct communities within Second Temple Judaism: the Sadducees, the Pharisees, the Essenes, the "school

\* See Kenneth V. Mull and Carolyn Sandquist Mull, "Biblical Leprosy—Is It Really?" BR, April 1992.

\*\* The Mishnah is the earliest rabbinic work; compiled in about 200 C.E., it forms the core of the Talmud.



of Judah" (insurrectionists), the Therapeutae and the allegorizers. The followers of John the Baptist, as well as the priestly sect of Essenes, evidently developed new interpretations of the biblical rules of immersion.<sup>14</sup> And the disputes between the houses of Hillel and Shammai\* over the interpretation of the purity codes still echo in the Mishnah.

The Therapeutae and the Essenes were genuinely sectarian, living apart in their own communities. The others, despite vigorous and pointed differences on important issues of interpretation, nonetheless interacted: Pharisees joined insurrectionists; men and women from the houses of Hillel and Shammai married each other. And everyone (except for certain Essenes) worshiped at the great Temple in Jerusalem despite the conviction that the (largely Sadducean?) priesthood did not keep the laws of purity as others thought they should.

The Temple and its impressive cult stood at the heart of Jewish religious sentiment and observance. A vast number of Jews everywhere in the Empire and beyond voluntarily contributed the half-shekel tax for the Temple's upkeep. Pilgrims annually flooded the city to spend their second tithe money\*\* celebrating the great pilgrimage festivals—Passover, Shavuot ("Weeks" or, in Greek, *Pentecostos*), Sukkot ("Booths," or Tabernacles); for this reason, the Romans even moved extra troops up from Caesarea to supervise holiday crowds. When Caligula attempted to introduce a statue with his likeness into the Temple, he risked the resistance of Jews everywhere, who preferred death "in defense of the Laws" to such a desecration.<sup>15</sup>

The movement around Jesus of Nazareth, both in his lifetime and later, during the first generation of his followers, clearly fits into this early first-century Jewish context of vigorous diversity within a broad religious consensus. The Gospels frequently depict Jesus arguing with contemporaries (often scribes and Pharisees) about the correct understanding of "the Law and the prophets." He has one opinion, his opponents another; but all stand within the framework of the idea of Israel, and all presume the importance and sanctity of the Law. Argument implies participation.

Argument also implies a shared understanding of the basic presumptions of the contested tradition. How did first-century Jews, particular interpretive differences aside, understand impurity to work?

\*Hillel and Shammai lived in the first century B.C.E. and represented rival schools of biblical interpretation and moral reflection; the Talmud frequently refers to their disputes.

\*\*Second tithes represent the portion of a family's produce put aside to be spent specifically in Jerusalem; see E. P. Sanders, *Jewish Law from Jesus to the Mishnah* (Philadelphia: Trinity Press, 1990), pp. 45-48.

First, *impurity is not sin*. No one errs, as we have seen in contracting impurity, nor does the Torah prohibit it. In some cases, impurity inevitably results from fulfilling some of the *mitzvot*. One may or may not contract impurity from tending the sick, depending on the category of the sickness; but in any case impurity can always be removed. The Torah defines what impurity is, how it is contracted and how to remove it—through various ablutions, waiting periods and, depending on the case, offerings. Thus the remedy for impurity is not forgiveness, but purification.<sup>16</sup>

Second, in Jewish tradition, *purity does not correspond to social class*. Impurity is a fact of life, but not of class. The lowliest peasant who has just completed the ritual of the red heifer is pure, whereas the most aristocratic priest, having just buried a parent, is not. The fussiest Pharisee, the highest high priest, is neither more nor less *tameh* after marital intercourse than is the scruffiest Galilean fisherman. Only the priest must refrain from certain normal activities, because his workplace is the Temple. To see impurity as a quasi-permanent state, and then to confuse or conflate such a state with social class, is simply wrong.

Third, *impurity is gender-blind*. A healthy adult Jewish woman incurs impurity on a regular basis, through menses; but she is no more impure than is her husband, whose semen is a medium of impurity, after intercourse. During pregnancy, all other things being equal, she is pure while her husband, after a nocturnal emission, is not. Some impurities are specific to only one gender, while others—leprosy and corpse-impurity, for example—apply equally to both. To erect on a foundation of Leviticus and Numbers a superstructure of supposed Jewish sexism is one way to enable Jesus to exorcise this modern demon; but it tendentiously misreads these texts. We might as well, in search of the ancient roots of radical Jewish feminism, laud the far-sighted Levitical author for deeming only male orgasm ritually sully, while leaving the post-climax female pure.

These ancient religious categories are not readily squeezed into our modern political-cultural ones. If gender were the fundamental category for determining purity status, for example, all women, not just Jewish ones, would impart impurity. A Mishnah text discussing the pollution of menstrual fluid, however, states: "All blood-stains that come from *Reqem* [Gentiles] are clean" (Niddah 7.3). This is because Leviticus 15 refers only to Jews. Gentile menstrual fluid thus does not impart menstrual-impurity; and the operative category for determining impurity is therefore not gender.<sup>17</sup>

Marcus Borg offers a recent and prominent exam-

Jesus was a Jew of his time rather than a left-leaning liberal of ours.

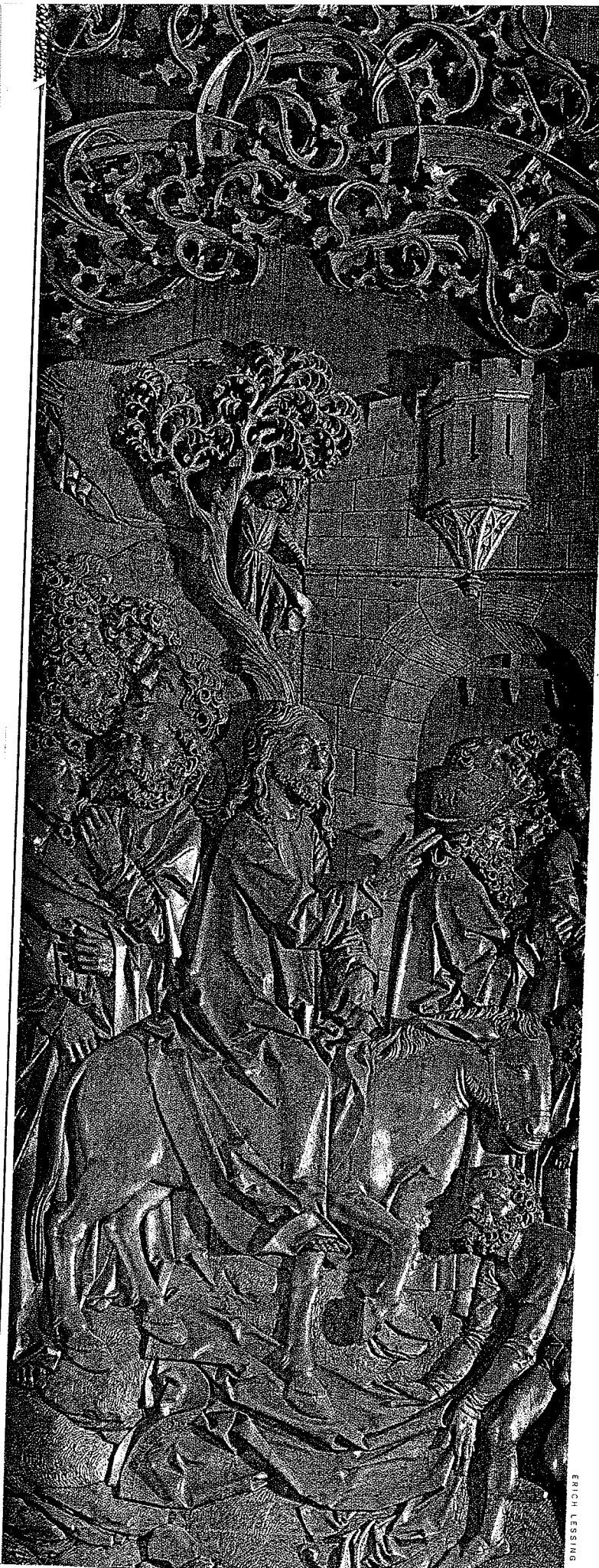
ple of a thorough misunderstanding of the purity laws. Borg confuses impurity with social distinctions throughout his work on Jesus: From 1984 (*Conflict, Holiness, and Politics in the Teaching of Jesus*) to 1994 (*Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time*), and frequently in between, Borg has reiterated and elaborated on this error. Thus, he says, the first-century peasants to whom Jesus preached—"the unclean and degraded classes"—were "not only impoverished but also impure."<sup>18</sup> Conflating the purity code with morality, Borg writes: "The pure were the righteous, the radically impure were the sinners."<sup>19</sup> He also conflates purity, morality, class and gender: "Pure and impure got attached to other primary social polarities... [to] the chronically ill and the maimed, Jew and Gentile; and associationally to the contrasts between rich and poor, male and female."<sup>20</sup> He cites no primary evidence in support of these statements; nor could he.

In his most recent work, Borg acknowledges in a footnote that, so far as he knows, "There are no purity sayings that explicitly associate wealth with purity and poverty with impurity." In the absence of supporting facts, Borg invokes a generalization about the function of purity codes: "A purity system," he writes, "is more than the sum of a culture's explicit purity laws. Purity systems have a logic and structure that cause notions of pure and impure to become associated with other central contrasts in the society."<sup>21</sup> The passive voice obscures the agent who makes this association: not the "purity system" (much less Jesus' contemporaries), but Borg himself.

Anthropologist Mary Douglas reads more carefully: "These books [Leviticus and Numbers] never use the principle of ritual purity to separate classes or races, foreigners or natives.... This should be totally unex-

**JESUS ENTERS JERUSALEM**, as depicted on a carved wood panel by the German artist Tilman Riemenschneider (1460-1531); the panel forms part of the altarpiece in the church of Saint Jacob, Rothenburg, Germany. Arriving in Jerusalem before Passover, Jesus soon throws over the tables of the money-changers in the Temple, preaches to the lame and blind, and is arrested and crucified by the Roman procurator Pontius Pilate.

In throwing over the tables, some scholars argue, Jesus repudiated the sacrificial system and purity laws associated with the Temple. Author Fredriksen points out, however, that Jesus observed several pilgrimage festivals by traveling to Jerusalem, implicitly accepting the norms of purity required of those who entered the Temple. Jesus probably arrived in Jerusalem prior to Passover because the purity rules called for a series of immersions in the pools adjoining the Temple compound on the part of those intending to partake of the Passover feast. It was not opposition to the purity code that in the end cost Jesus his life on earth, Fredriksen concludes, but rather his proclamation of the imminent arrival of the Kingdom of God.



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pected to the anthropologist used to purity codes in other religions.”<sup>22</sup> As Douglas notes in her study, biblical purity lays out conditions under which people may approach what is holy, most particularly the Divine presence; it does not aim to delineate class or race.

That Jews held Gentiles to be “impure” is another *idée fixe* of New Testament scholarship. The idea does double-duty, burnishing Jesus’ image as a social radical (or at least a liberal) and also accounting for later difficulties between Jerusalem and Antioch once the Christian mission moved out of home territory and began to address significant numbers of Gentiles. True, Jews in general did not think highly of Gentiles in general, as a quick perusal of Paul’s letters in the New Testament reveals: Even when addressing Gentiles and in some sense acting as their advocate, Paul refers to them, quite unself-consciously, as “sinners” (Galatians 2:15). Their characteristic social and sexual sins—slander, insolence, deceit, malicious gossip, envy, heartlessness, disrespect of parents, homosexual and heterosexual fornication—were the varied expression of their fundamental spiritual error: They worshiped idols.<sup>23</sup> Gentile culture, and the sort of people it produced, were not topics of Jewish enthusiasm.

But were Gentiles “impure” in general? To wax rabbinical: yes and no. Jews concerned about *kashrut* (dietary laws) avoided Gentile food-stuffs. Gentiles converting to Judaism underwent rituals of purification. And Gentiles in the Second Temple period had only limited access to the Temple. But they had more access than a Jew who was leprosy or menstruating: The latter were excluded from the entire Temple complex.<sup>24</sup> Being a Gentile *per se* (or being in contact with menstrual blood *per se*) was not in itself a cause of impurity. Rabbinical authorities opined that Gentiles, their garments and their houses were not subject to leprosy-impurity, nor could Gentiles contract corpse-impurity. Their idol-worship, however, was polluting—as Paul reminded his Gentile audience.<sup>25</sup> In conclusion, both the issue and the sources are extremely complex, and shed virtually no light on Jesus’ attitudes toward purity—nor, probably, toward Gentiles.

What about data in the Gospel narratives indicating that Jesus kept the laws of biblical purity, data that these scholarly reconstructions, conflating impurity with sin and social class, either ignore or misconstrue? Here we have two different types of evidence. Let’s distinguish the two types as “manifest” and “latent.”

The manifest evidence directly addresses purity

issues. In one instance (Mark 1:40-44), Jesus cures a leper by touching him. He then orders the man whom he has just “cleansed” (that is, cured) to show himself to the priest and offer the requisite sacrifices as “Moses commanded.” This episode stands as an uncomplicated affirmation of the procedures outlined in Leviticus 14:1-32 concerning the ritual cleansing of a leprosy person.

A second instance (Mark 7:1-23) is longer and more complicated. The Pharisees and scribes query Jesus about some of his disciples who eat without first washing their hands (verses 1-5: the issue is purity, not hygiene). Jesus, quoting Isaiah 29:13 (“They honor us with their lips, but their heart is far from me”), accuses them of hypocrisy:

They abandon God’s precepts for those of their own devising (verses 6-8). Jesus concludes by teaching a crowd he summons that people are defiled not by taking in something that is outside, but by letting out something that is inside (verse 14). The disciples, puzzled, ask for clarification, whereupon Jesus explains that “whatever goes into a person from outside cannot defile, since it enters not the heart but the stomach, and goes out into the sewer” (verse 19a). He then elaborates on his point: What defiles is what comes out of an evil heart—fornication, theft, murder and so on (verses 20-23). Between verses 19a and 20, the

evangelist inserts, parenthetically, an interpretive gloss: “Thus he declared all foods clean.”<sup>26</sup>

This passage has been the object of much scholarly analysis for many reasons, not least for its violation of biblical law: the repudiation of *kashrut* (dietary laws). The parallel passage in Matthew 15:1-20 does not include the reference to cleansing all food, which Mark introduces very artificially. Further, we have the simple conflict between this passage and earlier primary material preserved in Paul’s letter to the Galatians, where Peter and Paul argue seriously about whether Jewish Christians should eat non-kosher food.<sup>27</sup> If Jesus, even implicitly, had abrogated the food laws during his ministry, apparently neither his own disciples nor Paul himself knew. (No one invoked such a teaching to settle the argument.) I conclude that the Marcan passage declaring all foods clean reflects the controversies over Jewish practice in Mark’s post-70 C.E. Gentile community much more clearly than any issues we can plausibly situate in Jesus’ own mission to fellow Jews around 30 C.E.

Jesus bears the burden of being required to make immediate sense to us. It's a lot to demand of someone from the first century, too much, in fact.

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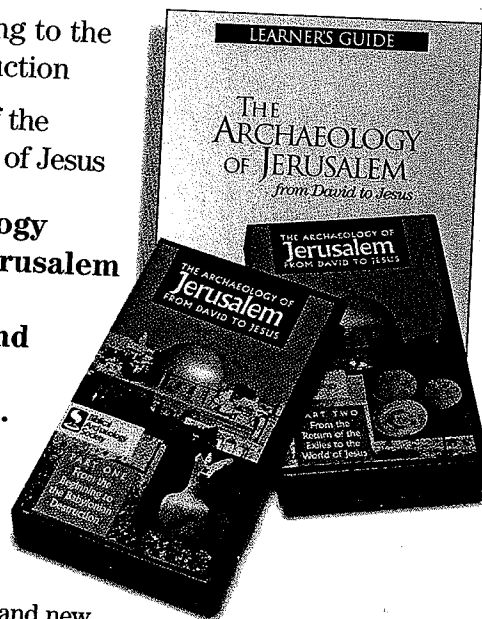
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**Purity Laws**  
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What about "latent" evidence? By this term I mean incidents in the Gospel narratives obliquely touching on or presupposing a purity issue that does not in itself figure prominently, but that unobtrusively shapes the story. The most straightforward example occurs in the Sermon on the Mount, when Jesus instructs his followers on how to make offerings at the Temple: "So when you offer your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift" (Matthew 5:23-24). The worshiper needs to be in a state of purity to enter the Temple and approach the altar. Could a worshiper disregard the biblical laws of purity, while observing the biblical laws of sacrifice? Theoretically, yes: Many of the purity rules depend on self-regulation and cannot be publicly enforced. Our Matthean worshiper could deliberately bring his offering while remaining (secretly) impure. But this is much less plausible and more complicated (why go to the Temple at all?) than to assume that he does observe the purity requirements in the first place, or that Matthew's original ancient audience would suppose him to have done so.

Second, we have the report in both evangelical traditions, Synoptic\* and Johannine, that Jesus went to Jerusalem for pilgrimage festivals. John mentions five journeys: two for Passover (John 2:13, 11:55), one for Sukkot (John 7:10), one for an unspecified feast (John 5:1) and one for the non-biblical "festival of Dedication" (the latter in celebration of the Temple's purification by the Maccabees [John 10:22]). Entry to the Temple at Passover required special purification; entry at other times, required at least immersion in one of the many pools located next to the Temple compound for this purpose. Thus, in John 5:1-2, Jesus converses with a sick man by the pool of Beth-zatha: Evidently they are both waiting to immerse.<sup>28</sup> Again, theoretically, Jesus could have entered the city, remained in a state of impurity, and refrained from entering the Temple area (but then why go to Jerusalem at all, especially during the festivals?); or he could have entered the Temple compound while deliberately disregarding the purity requirements. But we have no reason at all to suppose Jesus repudiated purity laws.

\*The Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke (but not John) are often referred to as the Synoptic Gospels because of similarities in their presentation of the life and teachings of Jesus.



In the Passion narratives, we have two more instances where Jesus' purity-observance accounts for the shape and even the details of the story. The Synoptic Gospels portray Jesus entering the city with other pilgrims: This accounts for the crowds that usher Jesus into Jerusalem in the so-called "Triumphal Entry." He then proceeds to the Temple area and overturns the tables (Mark 11:15ff; cf. John 2:13-17). He remains in and around the Temple, teaching publicly to the others gathered there in the days before the feast (Mark 14:1; Matthew 21:12-15; Luke 19:45 ff.; John 2:13-17). What are they all doing there?

The Paschal meal had to be eaten in a state of purity, including and especially purity from corpse-contact (Numbers 9:6). Those rendered corpse-impure within a certain period preceding Passover had to wait until the following month to observe *Pesach sheini*, the "second Passover," established specifically by God for people in this situation (Numbers 9:6-12). But those who were corpse-impure sufficiently in advance of 14 Nisan, the day preceding the feast, entered Jerusalem at least a week before the holiday—no later than 8 Nisan. Most pilgrims, assumed to be corpse-impure, had to undergo a special week-long rite of purification.<sup>29</sup>

This ritual is described in Numbers 19: "Those who touch the dead body of any human being shall be unclean seven days. They shall purify themselves with the water on the third day and on the seventh day, and so be clean" (Numbers 19:11-12). The "water" in question was mixed with the ashes of an entirely immolated red heifer (verse 9). Those in Jerusalem for Passover would undergo this ceremony, punctuated by the sprinkling of special water on the correct days. If Jesus entered the city with other pilgrims, and if he taught for days in the Temple area to holiday crowds, he was there, as were they, to be purified through this special rite.<sup>30</sup>

Finally, the Passover meal celebrated in the Synoptic Gospels by Jesus and his disciples presupposes that they all were purified, in order to eat the meal. And at least one of them would have sacrificed a lamb at the Temple earlier that day, so that they could eat the Paschal offering at the meal (Mark 14:12-16; I assume they did not violate Exodus 12:3 and simply order the lamb from the hotelier [see Mark 14:15]).

Again, we can imagine otherwise: Jesus deliberately refused purification, and he directed his disciples to refuse also; the disciple who sacrificed the Paschal lamb deliberately did so in a state of impurity, and that

is how they ate their meal. One wonders, if this is the case, why they did not simply spend the holiday at Capernaum. The response might be: Because the very point was to celebrate the Passover in Jerusalem in defiance of the Law. But if that were the case—which certainly Mark and John, with their prominent anti-Temple themes, would have been happy to exploit—why is there no trace of such a protest in any evangelical text?

But weren't the priests involved in Jesus' death? And wasn't their motivation that he had publicly denounced them—the Temple, and all it and they stood for, especially the purity rules—when he overturned the tables in the Temple court?<sup>31</sup>

Although the traditions behind the Passion narratives are notoriously difficult to sort out, two facts seem fairly clear: Some priests had something to do with Jesus' arrest, and Pilate crucified him for sedition. We have seen how a principled antagonism to biblical purity laws is an unlikely motive for Jesus' mission. For the sake of argument, let's grant that, from the action in the Temple court to his crucifixion, Jesus did denounce the purity code. How does such a hypothesis clarify the Passion accounts?

The priests, on this construction, were insulted and offended by Jesus' publicly proclaimed view, and so turned him over to

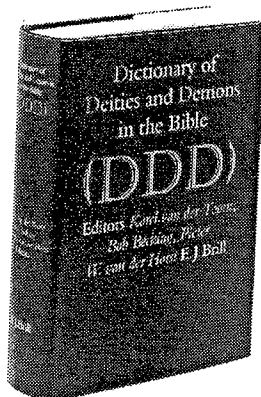
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Pilate. But the priests had many more substantial disagreements with other figures within their society—the Pharisees (who also disagreed among each other), the Essenes (so put off by the current priesthood that they sometimes eschewed going to the Temple altogether). Why bother with the relatively powerless Jesus? I suppose the answer would be: The priests were concerned that Jesus' action would turn "the people" against them. But how likely is that? The priests had God's own instructions in the Torah, and centuries of tradition and practice on their side: How credible a threat to this could Jesus

be? All right, he publicly embarrassed them; they needed him offstage, at once. So why not simply incarcerate him until after the holiday? And if they feared popular outrage were Jesus known to be arrested (as the Gospels suggest, for example, in Mark 11:18,32), why suddenly make a big public production of it by starting with Pilate (where the crowds, unexplained, suddenly show up as hostile [Mark 15:6-15])?

What else might account for the disparate facts of Jesus' pilgrimage to Jerusalem, his arrest by the priestly authorities and his crucifixion? *His belief in the approaching*

*Kingdom of God.* Jesus went up to Jerusalem for Passover, the archtypical festival of liberation, to announce the impending Kingdom. His gesture with the tables, if historical, would have announced the same message: The overturned tables symbolized the approaching destruction of the earthly Temple, which would cede place to the final Temple, one not made by the hand of man.<sup>32</sup> The High Priest, aware of the crowd's restive energy, apprehensive about Pilate and anxious to minimize bloodshed, acted quickly to arrest Jesus and turn him over to the prefect, after questioning "Jesus about his disciples and his teaching" (John 18:19). Pilate killed him; Rome disliked proclamations of other kingdoms.<sup>33</sup>

The next information we have about Jesus—the disciples' experience of his resurrection—also points to the Christian movement's origins in the eschatological traditions of first-century Judaism, with its hope for the resurrection of the dead and the vindication of the righteous.

These apocalyptic attitudes also provide an explanation for the most striking feature of earliest Christianity as a Jewish movement: its readiness to accept Gentiles without demanding their circumcision. Only Christianity's conviction that God's kingdom really was at hand accounts for this inclusiveness. In a trajectory of hope that we can trace from the classical prophets through the pseudepigrapha to the writings in the New Testament canon and on through to rabbinic opinions and synagogue prayers, Gentiles at the end of days were expected to join with Israel in order to enter God's Kingdom. Jews anticipated, not Gentile conversion, but Gentile inclusion—as expressed in the following passage from Isaiah 2:2-3:

"It shall come to pass in the later days that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established as the highest of the mountains and shall be raised above the hills; and all the nations shall flow to it, and many peoples shall come, and say, Let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob..."

Jewish hope thus anticipated a double redemption once the Kingdom came: Israel would be redeemed from exile, and Gentiles would be redeemed from their idolatry. Both peoples would ascend to worship God in his Temple; on God's mountain, they would feast together at the meal prepared for them by God (Isaiah 25:6). And why not? The whole city would be pure (Zechariah 14:20-21), Israel would be restored and the

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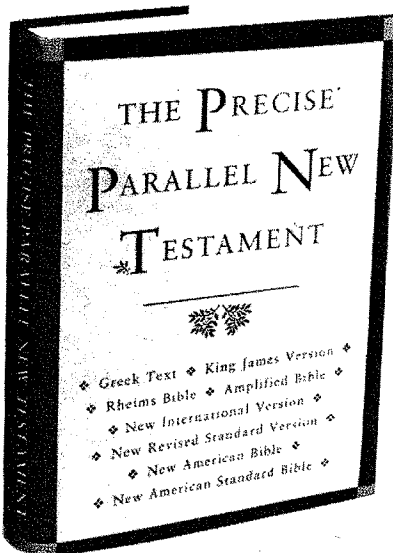
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4 Aram the father of Aminadab, Aminadab the father of Nahshon, Nahshon the father of Salmon,  
5 Salmon the father of Boaz, whose mother was Rahab, Boaz the father of Obed, Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of David.

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Gentiles, finally, would have forsaken their idols: "Therefore I will praise thee among the Gentiles, and sing to thy name.... Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people" (Romans 15:9-10; Psalm 18:49; Deuteronomy 32:43). The nations would be cleansed of the pollution of false gods.<sup>34</sup> And purity, as we have noted, enables proximity to holiness.

In all previous civilizations, comments Mary Douglas, religion has shaped reality and purity codes have shaped the world. In the modern world, we stand in a different situation. "For us," Douglas observes,

"a long scientific liberal tradition has made our culture secular and pluralist. The effort of tolerance so needful for living in a plural society leads us to repudiate the drawing of moral lines and social boundaries; but it is the essence of impurity to draw sharp lines. This may be why comparative religion starts with a prejudice against impurity and finds defilement difficult to understand."<sup>35</sup>

This may be, as well, why some New Testament scholars recoil from a Jesus at home in the world of his contemporaries, a world where leprosy and death defile, where ash and water make clean, where one approaches the altar of God with purifications, offerings and awe. Unlike Philo, or Josephus, or Hillel, or Shammai, Jesus bears the burden of being required to make immediate sense to us. It's a lot to demand of someone from the first century—too much, in fact. A Jesus who rejects his own religious culture turns out to be a 20th-century person in ancient garb—a modern secular liberal offended by impurity's sharp lines.

A Jesus who lives coherently within late Second Temple Judaism is worse than too Jewish: He is too different. Perhaps here, then, on this point, at century's end, we can see the beginning of yet another phase in the quest for the historical Jesus: one seeking to grasp how Jesus understood his own culture, rather than using him as a reflecting surface for understanding our own.

BR

<sup>1</sup> Marcus Borg, *Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1994), p. 49. The opposition between compassion (Jesus) and purity (first-century Judaism, especially as associated with Jerusalem) is a leitmotif of Borg's scholarship; see also his *Jesus in Contemporary Scholarship* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press, 1994).

<sup>2</sup> Jesus, Crossan argues, presented himself as the Temple's "functional opponent, alternative, and substitute" (*The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Peasant* [San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1993], p. 355); Jesus' touching the sick and eating with sinners was intended to "shatter" boundaries erected by purity regulations. (p. 323). Crossan extends this argument in *Jesus: A Revolutionary Biography* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1994).

<sup>3</sup> N.T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992). Wright's Jesus, unlike Borg's and Crossan's, is an apocalyptic figure; nevertheless, Wright's Jesus, like theirs, articulates his fundamental convictions through a princi-

pled opposition to purity rules.

<sup>4</sup>For food prohibitions, see Leviticus 7:19-27 (contact-impurity, carrion, fat and blood); for permitted and prohibited foods, see Leviticus 11:1-47 and Deuteronomy 14:3-21. Anthropologist Mary Douglas has analyzed these narratives in *Purity and Danger* (London: Routledge and Keegan Paul, 1966) and *In the Wilderness: The Doctrine of Defilement in the Book of Numbers* (London: Sheffield, 1993); see also Jacob Milgrom's authoritative commentary on Leviticus in the Anchor Bible Series (New York: Doubleday, 1991).

<sup>5</sup>For childbirth, see Leviticus 12:1-8 (note the graduated scale of purification offerings: "if she cannot afford a sheep, she shall take two turtles doves," a detail nicely caught in Luke 2:24); for menstruation and other vaginal discharges, Leviticus 15:19-30; for various genital discharges and seminal emissions, Leviticus 15:1-18; for corpse impurity, Leviticus 21:1-3; for

the red heifer, Numbers 19.

<sup>6</sup>For human leprosy and other skin ailments, see Leviticus 13:1-46; for purification rituals, Leviticus 14:2-32 (note again the graduated payment scale, "But if he is poor and cannot afford so much..." [verse 21]); for affected clothes, Leviticus 14:47-59; for leprosy houses, Leviticus 14:34-53.

<sup>7</sup>See the Table of Biblical Impurities, presented with a list of the means of purification and the zone of activity affected, in E.P. Sanders, *Jewish Law from Jesus to the Mishnah* (Philadelphia: Trinity Press, 1990), p. 151. Sanders notes that the only two specifically prohibited impurities are contact with the carcass of an impure creature and eating what dies of itself.

<sup>8</sup>Assuming this results in ejaculation, thus impurity from contact with semen, Leviticus 15:18.

<sup>9</sup>E.P. Sanders has written two major studies of this

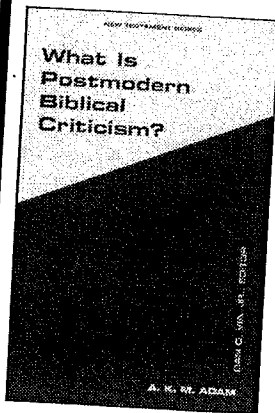
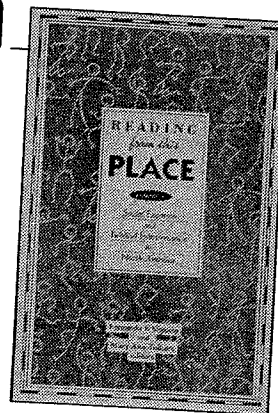
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material: one from the perspective of Jewish law as it appears in New Testament sources, *Jewish Law from Jesus to the Mishnah*, esp. pp. 29-57 (purity, tithes, and temple tax) and pp. 258-271 (purity); the other using early Christian materials to supplement his discussion of Law and practice in Jewish sources, *Judaism: Practice and Belief* 63 B.C.E.-66 C.E. (Philadelphia: Trinity Press, 1992). For an earlier reconstruction from the Jewish material itself, see Jacob Neusner, *The Idea of Purity in Ancient Judaism* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1973), with a response by Mary Douglas.

<sup>10</sup>The purifying mix of red heifer ashes and water, for example, serves to remind the worshiper of the two components of human being, (*Dreams* 1.209-212); for a discussion with references, see Sanders, *Jewish Law from Jesus to the Mishnah*, pp. 263-271. Sanders notes, "By biblical law, all Diaspora Jews were impure all of the time: everyone had to be assumed to have corpse-impurity, which could be removed only at the Temple. Childbirth-impurity also required sacrifices (Leviticus 12:6-8), as did leprosy and discharge.... Nevertheless, Philo... thought that people who carried out a non-biblical domestic rite after corpse-impurity were really pure, in spite of not being allowed to enter the temple," p. 270.

<sup>11</sup>For shunning idols, see 1 Corinthians 5:11; for shunning *porneia*, see 1 Corinthians 5:1-2, 11; 6:15-20 and 7:2; for separate law courts, see 1 Corinthians 6:1-6, cf. 2 Corinthians 13:1; for responsibility for the poor, both at home and in Jerusalem, see 1 Corinthians 11:17-22, 16:1-3; Galatians 2:10 and Romans 16:1-3. For fulfilling the Law even without circumcision, see Romans 2:14-16, 26-29. I analyze how Jesus' exhortations articulate his apoc-

alyptic convictions in "From Jesus to Christ: The Contribution of the Apostle Paul," *Jews and Christians Speak of Jesus* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994), pp. 77-91.

<sup>12</sup>See 2 Corinthians 11:22, Philippians 3:6 and, though admittedly an idiosyncratic example, 1 Corinthians 9:20-22.

<sup>13</sup>In Greek, *doxa*; in NRSV, "glory": Romans 9:4.

<sup>14</sup>Josephus discusses the Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes and insurrectionists (the "school of Judah") in Book 18 of *Antiquities*; Philo discusses the Essenes in *That Every Virtuous Man is Free*, and the Therapeutae, a mysterious sect of celibate men and women, in *On the Contemplative Life*. With less enthusiasm, Philo speaks of "some Jews" who understand the true, allegorical meanings of the Laws and thus cease to observe them literally: "We shall be ignoring the sanctity of the Temple and of a thousand other things if we pay heed to nothing except what is shown us by the inner meaning of things"—a reference to the importance of keeping the purity laws (*On the Migration of Abraham* 16:89-93). According to Josephus, John the Baptist immersed Jews "for the purification of the body once the soul had been previously cleansed by righteous conduct," (*Antiquities* 18:5). Two later texts, one Jewish (Tosefta Yada'im 2:20), one Christian (Eusebius, drawing on a late second-century writer Hegesippus, in his *Ecclesiastical History* 4:22), name another late Second Temple purity-group "the immersers." I thank Dr. Oded Irshai of Hebrew University for this reference, and for his guidance through the Talmudic material on purity.

<sup>15</sup>For the economics of the Second Temple, see, most recently, Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief* 63 B.C.E.-

66 C.E., pp. 146-169; for attendance at festivals, see Sanders, pp. 125-145. Josephus mentions the extra troops in *Jewish War* 2:12.1. For Caligula, see Philo, *Legation to Gaius* 30:203-42:337; cf. Josephus, *Antiquities* 18:8.2 and *Jewish War* 2:10, 2-5.

<sup>16</sup>Forgiveness in any case was not "dispensed" at the Temple. Diaspora Jews, and even Jews living in Judea and Galilee who could not make the pilgrimage to Jerusalem were not thereby cut off from repentance for sin and, thus, forgiveness. On the connection between disease and sin and healing and forgiveness, see Geza Vermes, *Jesus the Jew* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981), pp. 66-67. On the misunderstandings occasioned by the common translation "sin offering" for the purification offerings of Leviticus 5, see Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief* 63 B.C.E.-66 C.E., pp. 108ff., and his discussion of sacrifices, pp. 103-118. Some impurities required atonement sacrifices, but these were specific cases; most did not.

<sup>17</sup>For a fascinating review of the whole legal tangle, see G. Alon, "The Levitical Uncleaness of Gentiles," *Jews and Judaism in the Classical World* (Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 1977), pp. 146-189; his discussion of Niddah and Gentile blood is found on p. 154f. For more information on the same issue and tractate, see Sanders, *Jewish Law from Jesus to the Mishnah*, p. 156.

<sup>18</sup>Borg, *Jesus in Contemporary Scholarship*, pp. 102, 110.

<sup>19</sup>Borg, *Jesus in Contemporary Scholarship*, p. 109.

<sup>20</sup>Borg, *Jesus in Contemporary Scholarship*, p. 109.

<sup>21</sup>Borg, *Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time*, p. 64, n. 20.

<sup>22</sup>Douglas, *In the Wilderness*, p. 25.

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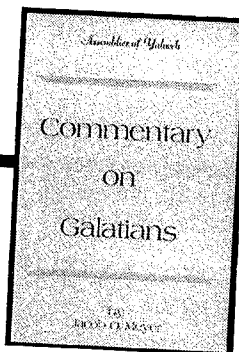
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<sup>23</sup> See Romans 1:8-31, referring specifically to Gentile culture; compare the similar list in Galatians 5:19-21 and 1 Corinthians 6:9-11.

<sup>24</sup> See Sanders's lucid discussion, *Judaism: Practice and Belief* 63 B.C.E.-66 C.E., pp. 72-76. He writes: "Whatever it was about Gentiles that had to be kept away from the holier areas, it threatened the temple's sanctity, and the purity of worshippers, less than did Jewish menstrual blood" (p. 75).

<sup>25</sup> See, for example, 2 Corinthians 6:14ff., in which Paul associates and condemns illicit sexual activity and idolatry, concluding, "Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, and make holiness perfect in the fear of God" (2 Corinthians 7:1). The believers, significantly, are addressed as "the Temple of the living God" (2 Corinthians 6:16). See also 1 Corinthians 6:9-19.

<sup>26</sup> The Greek reads, literally, "cleansing all foods" (*katharizon panta ta bromata*).

<sup>27</sup> Paul thinks so; Peter thinks not; and Barnabas and "the other Jews" (that is, Jewish Christians) side with Peter.

<sup>28</sup> Compare a dialogue between Jesus and a Levite given in a late-fourth-century papyrus from Oxyrynchus (5, No. 840): Challenged by the Levite, Jesus insists that he has prepared properly to enter the Temple area, having immersed in "the pool of David."

<sup>29</sup> Again, the issues and evidence are complicated. Philo states that all pilgrims underwent this ritual (those from overseas could certainly be assumed to be corpse-impure); Mishnaic sources state that those Jews living in Judea or the Galilee might have gone to stations set up around the country for the rite of the red heifer, and so could theoretically enter the city already prepared. See S. Safrai, *Pilgrimage at the Time of the Second Temple* (Tel Aviv, 1965), pp. 123-124. Hillel and Shammai disputed

whether conversion required a seven-day "in between" period, on the analogy of corpse-impurity, or whether a Gentile, converting the eve of Pesach, could eat the meal that holiday (Shammai takes the liberal view, *Mishnah Pesachim* 8,8).

<sup>30</sup> Complications remain. The Gospels depict Jesus going straight to the Temple area before the period of purification would have been completed, and they have him teaching, in the days before Passover, from—that is, within—the Temple. The (much later) Babylonian Talmud, on the basis of Exodus 13:19 ("and Moses took the bones of Joseph with him"), held that one could be corpse-impure and even carry a corpse onto the Temple Mount (Sotah 20B and parallels), but that the Temple area itself would still be out of bounds. Sanders seems aware of a problem, too, and he alters the evangelists' language in his description: "[D]uring the days between the eighth and the fourteenth, Jesus is depicted as teaching near the Temple." *The Historical Figure of Jesus* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1993), p. 251 (my emphasis); for his whole discussion of Jesus' last week in Jerusalem, pp. 249-252.

<sup>31</sup> According to Borg, by overturning the tables, Jesus symbolically repudiated what the Temple had become: "the center of a purity system that was also a system of economic and political oppression," (*Jesus in Contemporary Scholarship*, p. 115). For Crossan, "The spiritual and economic egalitarianism [Jesus] preached in Galilee exploded with indignation at the Temple as the seat and symbol of everything that was nonegalitarian, patronal, and even oppressive on both the religious and the political level" (*A Revolutionary Biography*, p. 133).

<sup>32</sup> Sanders, Borg, Crossan and Wright all assume the historicity of the Temple incident; Sanders interprets it as prophecy (as I did above); the others, as symbolic protest. I have in the past considered this incident as historical; recently, however, I have come to question

whether it in fact originates in evangelical tradition; see Paula Fredriksen, "What You See Is What You Get: Context and Content in Current Research on the Historical Jesus," *Theology Today*, April 1995.

<sup>33</sup> The anti-purity Jesus tends, not surprisingly, to be also a non-apocalyptic Jesus, thereby free of another embarrassing feature of ancient Jewish religion (the vivid conviction that God would overcome evil and establish his dominion soon), and of a big miscalculation (normal history has continued; the first-century apocalyptic time-table was wrong). Many authors reconstruct Jesus' mission and message to cohere with the eschatological expectations of his day. My own interpretation may be found in *From Jesus to Christ. The Origins of the New Testament Images of Jesus* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1988) and, specifically refuting these anti-purity arguments ("What You See Is What You Get").

<sup>34</sup> Other strains of Jewish apocalyptic thought entertained less wholesome fantasies: Some speak of the destruction or subjugation of Gentile nations. But the inclusive strain is the one that matters most both for later rabbinic tradition and, obviously, for those Jews who shaped the beliefs of the first generation of the Church. For the full argument, and the ways in which this interpretation ties Jesus' mission in with subsequent Christianity, see Paula Fredriksen, *From Jesus to Christ*, pp. 133-176.

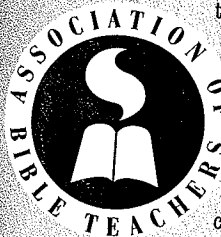
<sup>35</sup> Douglas, *In the Wilderness*, p. 24.

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THE ASSOCIATION OF BIBLE TEACHERS

A New Home for ABT



The Board of Directors of the Association of Bible Teachers met in Louisville, Kentucky, on a warm February weekend just before President's Day and emerged with renewed commitment to the goals and purposes for which the Association of Bible Teachers was founded.

The directors unanimously approved the appointment of David L. Hall of Tennessee as secretary of the Board. Hall serves as chairman of the Bible department at the McCallie School in Chattanooga, Tennessee, and holds a master's degree in Old Testament and Intertestamental Literature from Wheaton College Graduate School in Wheaton, Illinois. David brings both expertise and enthusiasm to his new position.

The Board also established permanent offices for ABT on the campus of Trinity College & Seminary, at 4233 Medwel Drive, PO Box 717, Newburgh, Indiana 47629-0717. In addition, ABT officially joined with two other institutions: Colgate Rochester Divinity School in Rochester, New York, and the Jerusalem Center in Israel. Both of these organizations assisted ABT in offering its first two co-sponsored study trips to Israel in 1994-95. We look forward to many more years of fruitful alliance and shared programming.

Another major step in the growth of ABT is the formation of local chapters and networks, authorized by the Board this February. ABT members and those interested in joining the organization are encouraged to contact our office for information and assistance in the establishment and affiliation of local chapters.

ABT is open to all those who have a passion to teach and understand the Bible. Our goal is to assist members by networking Bible teaching resources, strengthening Bible teaching skills, adapting biblical scholarship for the general audience, and enhancing knowledge of the biblical text. Our organization crosses denominational, religious and theological lines, and is geared specifically to

the non-university Bible teacher, whether salaried or volunteer.

We invite you to become a part of this exciting organization at any of our membership levels: Student Member - \$10; Individual Member - \$25; Institutional Member - \$100; Sponsor - \$100; or Patron - \$500. Contributions go directly to the Association of Bible Teachers and are tax-deductible as allowed by law.\* Join us!

\*Contributions to ABT through BAS are tax deductible to the extent provided by law. BAS is a charitable, educational organization approved as such under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Professional teachers may also deduct part or all of their contribution as a professional expense.

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