

Obstacles on All Sides: Paul's Collection for the Saints in Jerusalem

Part 1

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RÉSUMÉ DE LA PREMIÈRE PARTIE

Dans la première partie de cet article, l'auteur situe la collecte organisée par Paul en faveur des saints de Jérusalem dans le contexte de la vie de l'apôtre et expose brièvement sa raison d'être et sa mise en œuvre. Il considère en détail cinq obstacles que l'apôtre devait surmonter du côté des donateurs pagano-chrétiens (en particulier les Corinthiens) et comment il y a fait face. Dans la culture de ces gens, les bienfaiteurs pourvoyaient à un besoin de leur cité et recevaient pour cela reconnaissance publique et honneur. Les sentiments anti-judaïsme étaient très répandus dans la société. En outre, les relations de Paul avec les chrétiens de Corinthe étaient tendues et il avait des adversaires influents, à la fois à l'intérieur et à l'extérieur de leur communauté. En demandant aux chrétiens

de Corinthe une participation à la collecte, Paul paraissait aussi changer considérablement de politique en matière financière et cela appelait des explications. Il est aussi possible que ces chrétiens aient déjà pris d'autres engagements financiers, ce qui pouvait les rendre peu disposés à contribuer à un nouveau projet. Ainsi, la réconciliation que Paul cherchait à produire en organisant la collecte paraissait avoir un coût élevé.

Dans la seconde partie, l'auteur considérera les obstacles qui existaient du côté des destinataires de la collecte à Jérusalem et comment Paul a dû y faire face, pour autant que l'on puisse le déterminer. Enfin, il traitera des obstacles qu'il pouvait y avoir du côté de Paul lui-même et comment il les a surmontés ou ignorés. Il proposera ensuite quelques implications pour le ministère de réconciliation dans le monde actuel.

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SUMMARY OF PART 1

The first part of this essay places Paul's collection for the saints in Jerusalem in the context of Paul's biography and briefly discusses its origin and development. It examines in detail five obstacles to be overcome on the side of the Gentile Christian donors (in particular the Corinthians) and Paul's response to each of them. The Gentile Christians had to overcome their understanding of benefaction as serving *local* patronage and *local* honour and the prevalent anti-Judaism of the ancient world. In addition, Paul's relationship with the Corinthians was strained and there were influential opponents in the community and from outside. In demanding the Corinthians to partici-

pate, Paul also seemed to take a sharp turn in his financial policy which needed explanation. There also might have been previous other financial engagement of the Corinthians that made them reluctant to participate in another project. It becomes clear that the reconciliation which Paul sought to procure through the collection came at a high price.

Part two will examine the obstacles on the side of the recipients of the collection in Jerusalem and Paul's likely response to them as far as it can be reconstructed. In addition, it will discuss the obstacles on Paul's side and how he addressed or neglected them. A final section will provide a summary and draw out some of the implications for the ministry of reconciliation in today's world.

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ZUSAMMENFASSUNG VON TEIL 1

Der erste Teil dieses Aufsatzes stellt die Sammlung von Paulus für die Heiligen in Jerusalem in den Zusammenhang seiner Biographie und setzt sich kurz mit dem Ursprung und der Entwicklung dieses Sammlungsprojektes auseinander.

Dann folgt eine detaillierte Untersuchung von fünf Hindernissen, die seitens der heidenchristlichen Geber zu überwinden sind (insbesondere auf Seiten der Korinther), und die Erwiderung von Paulus auf jedes von ihnen. Die Heidenchristen mussten ihr Verständnis

von Wohltätigkeit, die einer *ortsansässigen* Klientel und den dazugehörigen Ehrenvorstellungen dient, und den vorherrschenden Antijudaismus in der antiken Welt überwinden. Außerdem war die Beziehung des Paulus zu den Korinthern gespannt und es gab einflussreiche Gegenspieler in und außerhalb der Gemeinde. Durch seine an die Korinther gerichtete Aufforderung, sich an dem Projekt zu beteiligen, schien Paulus eine scharfe Kehrtwende in seiner Finanzpolitik vorzunehmen, die einer Erklärung bedurfte. Auch könnte es andere, vorherige finanzielle Verpflichtungen der Korinther gegeben haben, was zu ihrer widerstrebenden Haltung in Bezug

auf ein weiteres finanzielles Projekt geführt haben mag. Es wird deutlich, dass die Versöhnung, die Paulus durch die Sammlung anstrebt, einen hohen Preis gekostet hat.

Der zweite Teil wird sich mit den Hindernissen seitens der Empfänger in Jerusalem befassen und mit der vermutlichen Antwort von Paulus an sie, so weit dies rekonstruiert werden kann. Darüberhinaus werden die Hürden auf Seiten von Paulus selbst erörtert, und wie er sie anging oder ignorierte. Der letzte Abschnitt legt eine Zusammenfassung vor und zieht einige Schlussfolgerungen daraus für den Dienst der Versöhnung in der Welt von heute.

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1. Introduction

The language of reconciliation is used in the New Testament primarily for God's initiative in reconciling sinful humanity to himself. God took the initiative, provided the means of reconciliation and now offers it to all who believe (see e.g. 2 Cor 5:18-20).¹ This reconciliation is the foundation and mandate for reconciliation between humans.² While the language of reconciliation hardly appears in this context in the New Testament, what is meant by it appears over and over again in other terms. The theme is so prominent in the Bible and in the society, in the churches and in families that we cannot ignore it. This article is devoted to a New Testament example and model of reconciliation between different groups of people. It argues that already in early Christianity reconciliation had to overcome major obstacles on all sides and that it came at a high price.

Before entering a new phase in his mission ministry in the West at the end of his third missionary journey (Rom 15:22-32), Paul returned once more to Jerusalem with a delegation of Christians which represented the predominantly Gentile Christian communities which he had founded in the Eastern Mediterranean world (Acts 20:4-5). They brought with them a substantial sum of money for the poor Christians in Jerusalem. The funds were meant to meet the material needs, but for Paul far more was at stake: the collection was intended as an expression of Gentile Christian recognition of debt to Israel/Jewish Christianity and as an effort of reconciliation and mutual recognition between some Jewish and Gentile Christians.

Paul made high demands on all the people involved in this project: for the *Gentile Christians*, Jerusalem was far away; therefore no bestowal of local honour was to be expected in return for

contributing to the collection. In addition, in the context of ancient anti-Judaism, the Jews were a suspected minority in the Roman Empire, and bestowing benefactions on them was not a natural choice. For the *Jewish Christians of Jerusalem* to accept the donation – and with the sum of money also its donors – implied the recognition of these Gentiles as part of the people of God (at least this was what Paul had in mind) and a relegation of their own ancient Jewish privileges. The delivery of the collection and its acceptance, perhaps impressively staged by Paul (earlier on, Paul had brought the Gentile Christian Titus with him to Jerusalem; Gal 2:1-3), would happen in Jerusalem and not remain a private, inner Christian matter. Jewish Christians who relativised Jewish privileges in this way would have to face resistance and criticism from fellow Jews in a politically increasingly tense climate in the 25 years leading up to the first Jewish war (AD 66-73). *Paul* had to delay his own plans, travel East once more and face a number of risks.

While we do not know what precisely happened in Jerusalem in the early summer of the year AD 56 or 57, when Paul eventually arrived to deliver the funds which he had collected,³ Paul's effort of reconciliation between followers of Jesus of different backgrounds still poses a major challenge to Christians of all sorts and all ages despite its salvation-historical particularity: Whom are they willing to recognise as part of God's people? What are they willing to sacrifice for each other? Are they ready to acknowledge each other publicly? While the focus of this essay is primarily historical-exegetical, it also draws out the implications for Christians facing the challenge of reconciliation. For the New Testament, the horizontal and vertical dimension of reconciliation must not be separated.

We shall first briefly survey the origin and development of Paul's collection for the saints of Jerusalem.⁴ Then we shall examine what was involved on the side of the Gentile Christian donors, with a particular focus on Corinth. Which obstacles had to be overcome in getting involved? How did Paul address these obstacles? Thereafter we will examine the obstacles on the side of the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem. How did or would Paul address them? Finally, we will see what obstacles Paul himself had to overcome. In a final section we shall draw out the implications for reconciliation between Christians of different backgrounds and traditions in our day and age. It will become clear that reconciliation came at a high price for those Paul wanted to reconcile to each other and for Paul, the reconciler, himself. Paul lost his freedom during this visit to Jerusalem and spent several years in prison.

2. The origin and development of Paul's collection for the saints

The origin of Paul's collection enterprise is not fully clear. Two passages are of interest for this question, and both raise a number of issues.

If *Galatians* is to be dated early,⁵ then Galatians 2:10 is chronologically the first reference to some kind of collection in which Paul was involved. On Paul's second visit to Jerusalem as a Christian (according to his own account in Gal 1-2), he met with leaders of the Jerusalem Christian congregation (2:2) and reached an agreement with them (2:9). They accepted Paul and his ministry among the Gentiles and placed only one obligation on him, namely 'that we remember the poor, which was actually what I was eager to do' (2:10; Paul had come with Barnabas and Titus, 2:1). The note has a private character (a personal charge to Paul, Barnabas and Titus, not to all the Gentiles that he/they had and was/were about to convert). Probably at a later stage during his so-called second and third missionary journeys,⁶ Paul extended this charge to all the Christians within his sphere of ministry. Even if *Galatians* is to be dated late,⁷ Paul is not referring to the present time of writing anyway but to events some fourteen or seventeen years after his calling.⁸ Even with a late date, this would still be an indication concerning the origin of the collection.

Many have noted the strange absence of the collection in Acts.⁹ There may be a cryptic reference to it in Acts 24:17 where it might appear

in the disguise of private piety: 'I came to bring alms to my nation and to offer sacrifices.'¹⁰ Acts 20:4 mentions the delegates from various areas of Paul's previous ministry who met with him at the end of the third missionary journey in order to travel with him to Jerusalem. Although this is the beginning of the third 'we-passage' in Acts (where the author probably indicates his personal involvement in the events), no reason is given why these delegates came to Jerusalem.¹¹ In the context of Paul's arrival and meeting with the Christian leaders of the city, no mention is made of a collection (21:17-25; Paul was asked to pay for some rites in order to demonstrate his own Jewish identity and his loyalty to his fellow Jewish Christians; he probably did so from the collection fund).¹²

However, it is noteworthy that Acts tells of an early visit of Paul to Jerusalem; according to Acts, this was his second visit to the city after his conversion/calling. At that point Barnabas and Paul were sent by the Gentile Christians of Antioch to Jerusalem with a donation to relieve hunger due to a famine.¹³ There are good reasons to equate this visit to Jerusalem with the visit reported in Galatians 2:1-10,¹⁴ one of them being that both events include gifts to the poor. It was probably on this occasion that Paul met with the Jerusalem leaders (as reported in Gal 2) and they charged him to *continue* to remember the poor, which Paul was 'eager to do' (Gal 2:10).

Paul's collection for the saints in Jerusalem, as it is generally understood, comes clearer into focus during the second missionary journey. In 1 Corinthians 16:1-4, Paul addresses the collection as something that needs no further introduction as the Corinthians must have been aware of it.¹⁵ The Corinthians are to follow the instructions which Paul also gave to the churches of Galatia (16:1). In 2 Corinthians 8-9 Paul goes to great lengths to persuade the Corinthians to overcome the obstacles to participation on their side. The last reference to the collection appears in Romans 15:22-31. Paul informs the Roman Christians about his impending journey to Jerusalem to deliver the collection. He voices his concerns regarding his own safety and the acceptance of the collection and requests their prayer support.¹⁶

3. Costly reconciliation then

In this section we shall *first* address the obstacles on the side of the *donors*. The references to the collection in 1 and 2 Corinthians indicate that par-

ticipation from the Gentile Christians – which Paul expected and certainly demanded! – was far from obvious.¹⁷ Paul had to use all his rhetorical skill to persuade them. We will then focus on obstacles on the side of the *recipients*. In Romans 15:31 Paul – in the form of a prayer request – voices some doubts about the acceptance of the collection: ‘... and that my ministry to Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints’. What could have made the funds, which were urgently needed, ‘unacceptable’? Finally we examine what obstacles the collection entailed for *Paul* himself.

In this quest we have to rely on Paul’s own statements and his own estimate of the situation as no other sources are available. This involves some ‘mirror-reading’. It is not clear why other New Testament authors are silent regarding Paul’s collection for the saints of Jerusalem and why Paul’s later letters do not mention it either. Was the collection a matter of the past that had accomplished its purpose and needed no further mention? Did Paul perhaps have good reasons not to mention the matter again as it did not achieve its intended purpose?

3.1 Obstacles on the side of the donors

There were several obstacles to participating in Paul’s collection which concerned *all* Gentile Christian donors in the North-Eastern area of the Mediterranean world (Galatia, Macedonia, Achaia).

3.1.1 Local patronage and local honour

There are instances of upper class people in the ancient world serving as benefactors and recipients of public honour (for example through statues and inscriptions) in other places. For example, king Herod the Great did not only rebuild and enlarge the temple in Jerusalem and fund other projects within his realm, but also outside of it. The same applies to king Herod Agrippa I.¹⁸ But within the prevalent ancient reciprocal system of patrons and clients, the usual praxis of benevolence was to use funds *locally* in order to gain public recognition and honour, and to enhance one’s own status within the community.¹⁹ In this context, it made little sense to donate for recipients hundreds of miles away, who were unable to reciprocate in any meaningful way. As Paul expected all Christians to be involved, there was little potential for status-enhancement within the local and translocal Christian community through generous contributions. Those contributing to Paul’s collection

renounced their chances to gain status at home. Ascough has rightly observed:

For the Christian groups themselves their first priority seems to have remained their local congregations. ... Paul’s troubles with raising the money promised, and his rhetorical strategies in his letters to the Corinthians ... suggest, that they, at least, remained unconvinced that they had a social and religious obligation to an otherwise unknown group. What confuses the Corinthians is not necessarily the fact that they have to donate, but that the monies are going to Jerusalem rather than the common fund of the local congregation.²⁰

3.1.2 Ancient anti-Judaism

While some Gentiles were attracted to Judaism to varying degrees (from full proselytes to sympathising ‘god-fearers’²¹) – also attested for Corinth – there was also the latent and at times violent anti-Judaism of the Roman world.²² The account in Acts 18:12-17, located in Corinth, provides evidence of this.²³ Gentile Christians without any prior attachment to Diaspora Judaism were unlikely to donate for impoverished *Jews* of all people.

Reluctance motivated by anti-Judaism on the side of some Corinthians was all the more probable as some ancient Roman authors accused the Jews of being a lazy people²⁴ because of their strict Sabbath observance,²⁵ although it is difficult to assess how representative such views were for the wider population.²⁶ Thus, if some Jewish people in Jerusalem were in need, the solution was simple and obvious: let them work more and more often.

In addition, for the Corinthians there were three more obstacles which were peculiar to them:

3.1.3 Paul’s quarrels with the Corinthians and the presence of opponents

Both letters to the Corinthians indicate strained relationships between Paul and some of the Corinthian Christians. While 1 Corinthians is more didactic than apologetic (here I follow Hafemann against Fee²⁷), by the time Paul wrote 2 Corinthians, in addition to the various quarrels between Paul and the Corinthians regarding doctrine and ethics, there were a number of fierce opponents in Corinth. Hafemann describes the problems as follows:

By the time Paul wrote 2 Corinthians everything had changed. For a while, between the writing of 1 and 2 Corinthians, the church as

a whole was in open rebellion against Paul and his gospel due to the influence of Paul's opponents who had recently arrived (cf. 2 Cor 11:4). Since then a significant segment of the church had repented and returned to Paul's side. But Paul's apostolic authority is no longer common ground between Paul and his entire church. There is still a sizeable opposition to Paul among the Corinthians, with Paul's opponents lurking behind them. As a result, the church now stands divided over Paul and his legitimacy as an apostle. ... Hence, whereas the problems in 1 Corinthians were within the church, the central problem to be solved in 2 Corinthians is the authority and legitimacy of Paul as an apostle.²⁸

Regarding the strategy of the opponents, Hafemann notes:

By the time of 2 Corinthians, however, Paul's opponents had arrived from outside Corinth and had capitalized on the Corinthians' over-realized eschatology, preaching a view of Christ and of the Spirit that the Corinthians were open to receiving (2 Cor 11:4). Instead of calling the Corinthians to endure faithfully in the midst of adversity in hope of their future resurrection and vindication, Paul's opponents promised the Corinthians a life in the Spirit that was characterized by deliverance from suffering and by a steady diet of miraculous experience.

If this reconstruction of their teaching is correct, some Corinthians or the opponents there might have suggested a simple and obvious solution to the needs of the Christians of Jerusalem: let them simply live in the Spirit and experience divine deliverance from their suffering! And let the money stay in Corinth! Whatever is donated for Jerusalem is no longer available for Paul's opponents who would readily accept gifts from the Corinthians.

3.1.4 Paul's financial policy in Corinth

Another obstacle was peculiar to Corinth. While ministering there Paul had refused to accept money (although he defends his right to do so in 1 Cor 9:1-14) and insisted on meeting his needs through his own manual labour.²⁹ Paul refused to depend on the local upper class Christian patrons whose client he would have become by accepting their support.³⁰ Furnish spells out the implications of this decision:

In the ancient world, giving and receiving, placing someone under and being oneself placed

under financial obligation were extremely important components of the social structure. Thus, within Roman society specifically – and the Corinth Paul knew was a Roman colony – the wealthy expressed and enhanced their power by becoming patrons of the needy. The extent of one's philanthropies and the number of one's clients were important measures of a person's social standing and influence. To be the recipient of a benefaction was to be placed immediately under an obligation of gratitude to the benefactor, and the gratitude of the beneficiary in turn placed the benefactor under further obligation.... Therefore, to accept a gift was to become a client of and dependent upon the more privileged person, even though the patron, too, assumed the obligation of further benefaction. At base, the relationship sprang not from friendship, although the conventions of friendship were there, but from the patron's quest for power and prestige and from the client's need to be helped. One made friends by money ... and since friendship was based on benefaction, not the reverse, to refuse a benefaction was an act of social enmity, for which in Paul's day an elaborate protocol had been developed. If this social context is taken into account, it is understandable why the Corinthians were upset by Paul's refusal to accept their financial support: it was a renunciation of their status as a patron congregation (cf. 2 Cor 12:13) and therefore a repudiation of their friendship (cf. 11:11), as well as a regrettable act of self-humiliation.³¹

In addition to unavoidable dependency, such kind of relationships would have impeded Paul's mission, as Schnabel observes:

Paulus verweigert die Annahme von Unterstützung seitens einer Gemeinde, solange wegen der Annahme derselben durch gegnerische Agitationen seine Missionsarbeit in der betreffende Gemeinde bzw. das von ihm gebrachte Evangelium gestört oder gar vernichtet werden könnte. Einige Christen in Korinth meinten, Paulus hätte finanzielle Mittel von ihnen annehmen sollen (1Kor 9,1-18; 2Kor 2,17) und sich mit brillanten Redetechniken aggressiver um Erfolge kümmern müssen (vgl. 1Kor 1,17-2,5). Vielleicht handelt es sich um dieselben korinthischen Christen, die glauben, dass Paulus ihnen im Blick auf seine Reiseziele Rechenschaft schuldig sei (2Kor 1,17). Paulus betont gegenüber diesem Ansinnen von

Christen in Korinth, dass nicht nur die Inhalte und die Erfolge seiner Missionspredigt, sondern auch der *modus operandi* seiner Mission im Blick auf Redetechniken, im Blick auf seine Reisen und im Blick auf seine finanzielle Unabhängigkeit allein von Gott abhängig ist.³²

This issue led to tensions with some Corinthians and Paul's opponents would have readily attacked his policy.³³ At the same time, Paul accepted gifts from other churches (Phil 4:10–20) and even tells the Corinthians about it in 2 Corinthians 11:8–9. Furnish observes:

It is probable ... that the Corinthians were distressed with Paul's refusal of support from them because it seemed inconsistent with his accepting support from other congregations. In Thessalonica, for example, Paul had received contributions from the Philippians at least twice (Phil 4:16) in order to supplement what he was able to earn from his craft (see 1 Thess 2:9), and the Philippians continued their support of his ministry even after he left Macedonia (Phil 4:15). Indeed, it is likely that the aid which was brought to him in Corinth by certain brothers who came from Macedonia (2 Cor 11:9) had been sent by the Philippians. ... This would be further evidence for his critics of the inconsistency and inconsistency of which they have long suspected him.³⁴

While refusing their support (with all the strings attached to it!), Paul at the same time expected the Corinthians to contribute to the collection and to provide the means for his own travelling and for his co-workers as he writes in 1 Corinthians 16: 'so that you may send me on my way, wherever I go' (v. 6); 'send him on his way in peace, so that he may come to me' (v. 11); 'I urge you to put yourselves at the service of such people, and of everyone who works and toils with them' (v. 16).

It might have seemed to some that – despite his early insistence of his independence and refusal of patronage – Paul was now trying to get at their money after all.³⁵ Could Paul be trusted? Would the money really go to Jerusalem?

Some of this happened when Paul's opponents readily accepted payments from the Corinthians and for these reasons would have opposed sending money to Jerusalem. Hafemann observes:

Moreover, Paul's opponents sealed their claims by demanding money from the Corinthians as a sign of the value and legitimacy of their message (2 Cor 2:17). But in order to make these

claims and demand this payment they had to attack Paul himself and his apostolic legitimacy, which called both their gospel and their lifestyle into question.³⁶

3.1.5 Previous other financial engagement of the Corinthians?

Perhaps in apparent conflict with our first observation regarding reluctance in translocal involvement, a further reference needs brief attention. The last words of 2 Corinthians 9:13, 'and with all others' (καὶ εἰς πάντας), do not mean that the saints will also glorify God over the involvement of other churches (which Paul will have hoped for); they rather suggest that the Corinthians had also share(d) with (all) other Christians: '... the generosity of those who graciously share their resources with them and (so the saints may presume) with all Christian brothers and sisters'.³⁷ Although some of this sharing could and most likely will have happened among the Corinthians, it was not limited to local confines but directed εἰς πάντας. Martin comments: 'This should strictly mean that the Gentile congregations raised money *gifts for other churches and worthy causes other than the needs of the people at Jerusalem*.'³⁸ However, as we have no knowledge of such actions, Martin suggests that the phrase must be taken 'to be a general one in praise of the generous spirit that moves the readers, and would move them wherever there may be need'.³⁹ Yet the fact that *we* might not know of such actions does not mean that Paul simply praises a generous *attitude*. The statement should therefore be taken at face value.⁴⁰ If 'all others' refers primarily to Christians in Achaia, there would have been some direct benefits involved for the Corinthian donors, at least more benefits than from donating for Jerusalem. We do not know what role Paul may have played in this past sharing of the Corinthians.⁴¹ Possibly this past and present sharing with 'all others' also accounts for the Corinthians' reluctance to get involved in yet another translocal project, in particular as it was a project far beyond their control. Such giving of the Corinthians would have secured them a prominent role among the Christians in Achaia. This explains the intensity of Paul's interaction with the Corinthians and his opponents there.

3.2 Paul's answer

3.2.1 *First Corinthians 16*

It is instructive to read Paul's letters to the Corinthians against this backdrop. This is not the place to analyse Paul's argument in detail, rather we note how he addresses these obstacles in the context of the collection enterprise and elsewhere. We cannot examine how Paul deals with his opponents and defends his apostolic ministry and his financial policy.

In 1 Corinthians 16:1-4, Paul asks the readers to follow the instructions given to the churches of Galatia, which must have been known in Corinth.⁴² The collection is by no means a project designed just to get at the Corinthians' money after all but it is part of a larger project. The same instructions apply to all Christians. Paul indicates that the Galatians are also called to contribute to a translocal project. While not obvious for some Corinthians, translocal responsibility for other believers is part and parcel of Christian identity.

According to Paul *all* Corinthians are to be involved ('each of you', 16:2). Christian charity is not just a status-enhancing project for the wealthy members. Garland notes that,

Paul's concern throughout the letter to build up horizontal relationships among the Corinthians ... his expectation that everyone will take part in this project on a voluntary basis fosters this goal. If a few patrons were to give all the money, they would gain all the honor and divide the 'haves' from the 'have-nots' even more. If free artisans, small traders, and slaves also give, then the gift will represent the entire body, not just a few wealthy donors.⁴³

This charge agrees with Paul's emphasis on the unity of the church throughout the letter:

It is striking that most of the commands throughout 1 Corinthians center on some aspect of church unity (cf. 1 Cor 1:10; 3:1-3; 4:14, 16; 5:4, 5, 7, 8; 6:1, 4, 6f, 18, 20; 8:9, 13; 10:14; 11:33f; 12:14, etc.). Clearly Paul's primary concern is with the true nature and life of the church, making ecclesiology the most important theme of 1 Corinthians. As the 'church of God' (1 Cor 1:1), the Corinthians are 'the temple of God', due to their reception of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 3:16f; 14:24f); and the 'body of Christ', due to their submission to the lordship of Christ (1 Cor 6:17; 10:17; 11:29; 12:12-16, 27).⁴⁴

In addition, the collection should be well prepared and organised: 'on the first day of every week, each of you is to put aside and save whatever extra you earn'. Garland describes several

principles that undergird Paul's instructions for the collection. It is to be done regularly ('on the first day of every week'), universally ('let each of you'), systematically ('set aside', 'save up'), proportionately ('as one has been prospered'), and freely ('so that no collections might take place when I come').⁴⁵

Furthermore, the Corinthians are to approve the delegates who will take the gift to Jerusalem together with a letter explaining the collection and its purpose (16:3).⁴⁶ Against all possible suspicions regarding Paul's financial policy and in particular regarding his use of funds entrusted to him, Paul emphasises and guarantees full transparency: the money will definitely *not* go through and eventually end in his own pocket.⁴⁷ Rather, delegates from Corinth and approved of by the congregation will deliver the funds directly to Jerusalem.

In addition, while for now the Corinthians had to take Paul's word for it, the delegates will eventually see the need of the Christians in Jerusalem themselves; it will become clear that they have not been naive in taking Paul's statements at face value.⁴⁸

Paul's contribution will be an explanatory letter to Jerusalem. If it seems advisable that Paul should travel also, these delegates will accompany him (16:4; Acts 20 indicates that this option had materialised later on).

3.2.2 *Second Corinthians 8*

In 2 Corinthians 8-9, Paul first reports of the exemplary involvement of the Christians of Macedonia (in addition to the churches of Galatia, 1 Cor 16:1). The implementation of this 'work of grace' (8:1) is then described. Again, the collection is not exclusively aimed at the Corinthians, but a truly ecumenical project. The Macedonians are already involved translocally; they have already overcome this obstacle. Now the Corinthians are called to do likewise.

Paul exuberantly praises the Macedonians for their generous participation despite their poverty: 'for during a severe ordeal of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part' (2 Cor 8:2). Furnish notes: 'The apostle's comment about the extreme poverty of the churches in

Macedonia shows that he perceives the Corinthian Christians to be relatively well off.⁴⁹ In this way Paul adds pressure to his charge. The wealthier Corinthians are not to be put to shame by the generosity of the poor Macedonian Christians. Paul's praise of the Macedonians was to challenge the Corinthians to contribute with similar commitment.⁵⁰ While for the Corinthians' local honour for such involvement was limited or non-existent, they will also receive public honouring before the wider Christian community from Paul if they contribute generously.

Paul calls the Corinthians to excel in this matter as they have excelled in others. He creates a sense of rivalry between the Christians of Macedonia and Corinth. In the ancient value system of honour and shame – where honour was a considered a limited good – this was a powerful strategy.⁵¹ The earnestness of the Macedonians serves to challenge and to prove the genuineness of the Corinthians' love (v. 8).⁵² They were to complete now what they had begun in the past (v. 10-13).

Paul refers to the 'generous act' of the Jewish *Messiah*, the Lord Jesus *Christ*, who, though he was rich, yet for the readers' sake he became poor, so that by his poverty they might become rich (8:9). Christ's example challenges all notions of reciprocity and status gain.

In 2 Corinthians 8:12-13, Paul describes Christian sharing and his vision of fair balance. He relates the contribution of the Corinthians to the recipients in Jerusalem ('others', v. 13) and shows that the collection was not to be a one-way enterprise. Currently the abundance of the Corinthians can supply the need of the 'saints' there. However, a time might come when the Corinthians will benefit from the abundance of others (8:13-14). There is to be equality and mutuality. What Paul has in mind is different from ancient patronage and benefaction. The Christians of different places and regions are interrelated: they are responsible for each other, not only in prayer but also materially.⁵³ This principle is motivated by a quotation from the Exodus story of God's provision for Israel.

Paul then mentions several other people who are involved (the collection is far from a private project of Paul!) and again emphasises full transparency (v. 16-24). The response of the Corinthians is a matter before all the churches – in honour or in shame (again, there is concern beyond local confines⁵⁴). Regarding Paul's emissaries, Murphy O'Connor notes:

Once before, however, the Corinthians had given their assent and then done nothing. This time Paul was not prepared to rely on words alone, and decided to send emissaries to Corinth, whose presence would be a continuous reminder of his invitation. Even such discreet pressure, however, might be resented by the Corinthians as interference in the internal affairs of a local church. Paul's nervousness is palpable in his presentation of Titus. He emphasizes that he is not really sending Titus, as 8:6 might imply. The latter had volunteered to return to Corinth in response to Paul's appeal (8:17)!⁵⁵

Titus shares the eagerness for the Corinthians and is on his way to Corinth of his own accord (v. 16-17). He will be accompanied by another unnamed Christian, sent by Paul, who is 'famous among all the churches for his proclamation of the good news'.⁵⁶ The Corinthians should not disappoint a man thus qualified! In addition, this brother 'has also been appointed by the churches to travel with us while we are administering this generous undertaking for the glory of the Lord himself and to show our goodwill' (v. 19). The Corinthians are to hear from this man himself that other churches fully participate in the collection and have already appointed this delegate to travel with Paul to Jerusalem – at a time when the Corinthians had not even really started with the collection! This prominent Christian also serves as an independent witness to the Corinthians and the churches who sent him regarding the integrity of Paul and the events during the journey and in Jerusalem.

Far from being a project to enhance Paul's personal status, the collection's prime purpose is 'for the glory of the Lord himself' and 'to show our goodwill' (probably an inclusive plural: Paul and all the other participants, v. 19). Neither is this act of benefaction designed to bring honour to the *donors*. Its purpose is the glory of the Lord himself so generous participation is mandatory. The gratitude of the recipients will be directed primarily to God (v. 12). At the same time, God will provide every blessing in return (v. 8-15).

In verses 20-21 Paul openly asserts his concern for his integrity and transparency in the matter. Thus the Corinthians should dismiss their reservations against Paul and wholeheartedly participate. In addition to Titus and the unnamed brother, Paul will send even another Christian to Corinth, whom he has often tested and found eager in

many matters. This brother is more eager than ever to come to Corinth and be involved there in the preparation of the collection because of his great confidence in the Corinthians (v. 22). This eagerness and confidence in them, the Corinthians should better not disappoint.⁵⁷

Paulus closes with a warm recommendation of Titus: 'he is my partner and co-worker *in your service*'.⁵⁸ Through the sending of these men, Paul is not trying to exploit the Corinthians for his purposes, but to minister to them. Far more is behind their impending visit to Corinth than Paul's authority and commission: these men come 'as messengers of the churches, the glory of Christ' (v. 23). In view of these visitors and witnesses and the ecumenical perspective which they constitute, Paul admonishes the Corinthians once more: 'Therefore openly before the churches, show them the proof of your love and of our reason for boasting about you' (v. 24). Participation in the collection is an opportunity for them to prove their love of the Lord and of their fellow Christians. Paul has already boasted about the Corinthians' participation to other Christians and thus has already enhanced their status within the wider Christian community. There they already have received honour through him so they should not let Paul down but act according to their determination and Paul's boasting. The response of the Corinthians is a matter before all the churches (again, there is to be concern beyond local confines).

3.2.3 *Second Corinthians 9*

In 2 Corinthians 9:1-5, Paul again draws on ancient notions of honour, acknowledging the Corinthians' virtues: 'for I know your eagerness'. He has already boasted about this to the Christians of Macedonia and thus honoured the Corinthians (v. 2). Murphy O'Connor writes regarding Paul's argumentation:

Even though he has to stretch the truth to do so, he praises what can be praised – the willingness of the Corinthians (although it was now a year old; 9:2) – and sedulously avoids even a hint of criticism. He explicitly states that he is not ordering them to contribute (8:8a), but merely expressing his opinion (8:10). The example of the Macedonians is introduced in such a way as to permit the Corinthians' self-respect to function as an internal incentive. In order to assuage any possible anxiety on their part as to the sum expected, he is at pains to

emphasize that their attitude is more important than the value of the gift (8:12). Near the end, however, a hint of the old Paul surfaces in the way he highlights the possibility that he and the Corinthians might be humiliated by the much poorer Macedonian church (9:4). Fortunately, he immediately excludes the hint of moral blackmail, by denying that he wants to extort money from them (9:5).⁵⁹

By mentioning the Macedonian Christians to the Corinthians, Paul indicates that he readily informs and praises the good that other Christians do and in this way bestows honour on them. Although participation in the collection may not serve to enhance local status, elsewhere this surely happens. Paul's earlier report of the Achaïans' zeal (including the Corinthians) in contributing to the collection has stirred up most of the Macedonians in their participation. (At the beginning of chapter 8, Paul praised the Macedonians to the Corinthians in order to spurn them on.) This is the background to Paul's sending of the three brothers:

But I am sending the brothers in order that our boasting about you [to the Macedonians] may not prove to have been empty in this case, so that you may be ready, as I said [to the Macedonians] you would be; otherwise, if some Macedonians come with me [to Corinth, in addition to the three brothers?] and find that you are not ready, we would be humiliated – to say nothing of you – in this undertaking [shame rather than honour for Paul and for the Corinthians]. So I thought it necessary to urge the brothers to go on ahead to you, and arrange in advance for this bountiful gift that you have promised [a reminder of their previous commitment], so that it may be ready as a voluntary gift and not as an extortion (v. 3-5).

In verses 6-14, Paul outlines the *spiritual* benefits of being involved in this charitable project. What the donors forfeit in local recognition and honour, they will receive abundantly from God. In view of this prospect, they have all the more reason to give cheerfully. For their great generosity, they will be in every way enriched by God (v. 11). There will be thanksgiving, not addressed to the Corinthians, but to God. By sharing in this ministry, they glorify God by their obedience to the confession of the Gospel of Christ, the Jewish Messiah and they glorify God through their generosity in sharing with the Christians of Jerusalem and all other Christians (v. 13). In addition to

these spiritual benefits, the recipients will long for the Corinthians and pray for them (v. 14): 'Those who have been aided by the collection will also respond with intercessory prayers on behalf of their benefactors', which is a way for Christians to reciprocate for benefits received.⁶⁰

3.2.4 *The Messiah of Israel*

In addition to Paul's careful argumentation regarding the collection in 1 and 2 Corinthians, in both letters we also observe Paul's thoroughly 'Jewish' theology, soteriology and pneumatology and the references to the Jews/Israel/Jewish Christians.⁶¹ Many of these references indicate that the Gentile Christians of Corinth, Achaia and elsewhere have already benefitted tremendously from God's salvation which was primarily intended for his people Israel, into which the Gentile Christians were included.⁶² Therefore there is an existing obligation on their side toward Israel: rather than graciously extending their generosity to the Christians of Jerusalem, the Corinthians owe it to them, as Paul writes in Romans 15:27.

A few notes have to suffice: Paul is the apostle of the Jewish *Messiah* Jesus (1 Cor 1:1). The Corinthians are among those who call the name of the Lord Jesus *Christ* (1:2, and many other references to the *Christ*). Jews and Gentiles both fail in view of God's revelation in Christ crucified (1:22-23); the Corinthians have no reason for feeling superior (1:26-28). The Gospel had been brought to them by Jewish Christian leaders (1:12; 9:5; all witnesses of the resurrection were Jews, 15:5-8). There is no room for judgement (4:1-4) or arrogance (4:6-13) on the side of the Corinthians. A number of severe ethical failures among Gentile *Christians* deconstruct all claims and feelings of superiority over the Jews (chapter 5). Paul reminds the readers of their own ignominious past (6:9-11). In view of this, they are not in the position to lecture anyone on ethics (i.e. to work harder). The quotations and allusions to the Old Testament and the references to the history of Israel in both letters show *where* the authority really lies and *whose* past is relevant for the present:⁶³ what happened in Israel's distant past in a sense happened and was recorded for the present readers' instruction (10:1-22). In the language of the Jews, they cry out 'Maranatha' (16:22). Judea remains an important point of reference for Paul (2 Cor 1:16). Israel saw the glory of God in the face of their God-appointed leader Moses (3:7, 13-16). The promise in 2 Corinthians 6:16-18 was first given to Israel:

they were God's sons and daughters. In addition, several statements in both letters leave no doubt that – probably contrary to their own assessment – many Corinthian Christians have little to boast about.

Thus, for Gentile Christians, sharing in the widespread anti-Judaism of the ancient world is not acceptable at all. What Paul writes to the Romans, namely that the Gentile Christians have a debt to repay to Israel (Rom 15:27) also applies to the Corinthians.⁶⁴

Space does not permit us to outline in detail how Paul defends his own disputed apostolic status and ministry in both letters. Paul also explains his 'financial policy' over against the Corinthians and against likely attempts of patronage and the implications which this kind of relationship would have implied on his side.

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Endnotes

- 1 For surveys see Ralph P. Martin, *Reconciliation: A Study of Paul's Theology*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990); Cilliers Breytenbach, *Grace, Reconciliation, Concord. The Death of Christ in Graeco-Roman Metaphors* (NT.S 135; Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2010) and Stanley E. Porter, 'Reconciliation as the Heart of Paul's Missionary Theology' in T.J. Burke and B.S. Rosner (eds), *Paul as Missionary: Identity, Activity, Theology, and Practice* (LiNTS 428; London: T. & T. Clark Continuum, 2011) 169-179.
- 2 This reconciliation can happen through God's initiative (a prominent example is Eph 2:11-20 which speaks of the reconciliation between Jews and Gentiles) or people are called to reconcile themselves to each other (see, for example, Mt 5:24).
- 3 For the dates see Rainer Riesner, 'Pauline Chronology' in Stephen Westerholm (ed.), *The Blackwell Companion to Paul* (Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2011) 9-29.
- 4 For a recent survey see David J. Downs, *The Offering of the Gentiles. Paul's Collection for Jerusalem and Its Chronological, Cultural and Cultic Contexts* (WUNT II.248; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008); for issues of poverty in the Greco-Roman world and in the Pauline literature see Bruce W. Longenecker, *Remember the Poor. Paul, Poverty and the Greco-Roman World* (Grand Rapids, Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 2010) and my review in the present issue.
- 5 Presupposing the so-called South-Galatian theory, i.e. the recipients are in the Roman province of

- Galatia; for the full argument see D.A. Carson and D.J. Moo, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, second edn (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005) 458-468.
- 6 For a survey of Paul's mission see Eckhard J. Schnabel, *Paul, the Missionary. Realities, Strategies and Methods* (Nottingham: IVP/Apollos, 2008) 39-122.
- 7 For the arguments see Carson & Moo, *Introduction*, 460-461.
- 8 Three years and fourteen years, Galatians 1:18 and 2:1; for discussion see Riesner, 'Chronology'.
- 9 See the survey in David J. Downs, 'Paul's Collection and the Book of Acts Revisited' in *New Testament Studies* 52 (2006) 50-70.
- 10 On this statement see Jerome Murphy O'Connor, *Paul. A Critical Life* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1996) 348.
- 11 See Carson & Moo, *Introduction*, 290-291.
- 12 See the reconstruction of the events in Murphy O'Connor, *Paul*, 343-346. The fact that Paul came to Jerusalem with a group of Gentile Christians who represented various areas in which he had founded churches, was probably a further reason for the request made by the Jerusalem leaders of Paul to demonstrate his own Jewish identity. The reason Luke provides this demonstration are false accusations concerning Paul's ministry in the Jewish Diaspora that had spread in Jerusalem and were believed by many Christians (Acts 20:20-25).
- 13 Acts 11:27-30; see Rainer Riesner, *Paul's Early Period. Chronology, Mission Strategy, Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998) 125-136 and Bruce W. Winter, 'Acts and Food Shortages' in D.W.J. Gill and Conrad Gempf (eds), *Graeco-Roman Setting* (AFCS II; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; Carlisle: Paternoster, 1994) 59-78. Luke does not directly mention that the church in Antioch also consisted of Jewish Christians (see Acts 11:19-20).
- 14 See David Wenham, 'Acts and the Pauline Corpus II. The Evidence of Parallels' in B.W. Winter and A.D. Clarke (eds), *Ancient Literary Setting* (AFCS I; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; Carlisle: Paternoster, 1993) 215-258; Carson & Moo, *Introduction*, 319-320 and Holger Zeigan, *Aposteltreffen in Jerusalem. Eine forschungsgeschichtliche Studie zu Galater 2.1-10 und den möglichen lukanischen Parallelen* (ABG 18; Leipzig: EVA, 2005) 307-386.
- 15 For details on 1 Cor 16:1-4 and 2 Cor 8-9 see Christoph Stenschke, "Not the only Pebble on the Beach." The Significance and Function of Paul's References to Christians Other than the Addressees in 1 and 2 Corinthians' in *Neotestamentica* 45 (2011) 331-357.
- 16 See Robert Jewett, *Romans: A Commentary* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007) 918-940. A number of suggestions have been made as to the conceptual background of Paul's collection (did Paul follow any known model for collecting funds from Diaspora Jews or Gentiles for Jerusalem?) which need not concern us here; for surveys see Downs, *Offering*, 3-26 and Seyoon Kim, 'Paul as an Eschatological Herald' in Burke and Rosner, *Paul*, (9-24) 18-23.
- 17 We do not know whether there were the same or other problems involved for the donors in Galatia and Macedonia.
- 18 For a survey see Emil Schürer, Geza Vermes and Fergus Millar, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C. – A.D. 135)* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1973) I, 304-305, 308 and Bo Reicke, *The New Testament Era. The World of the Bible from 500 B.C. to A.D. 100* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1968) 200.
- 19 For surveys see Peter Lampe, 'Paul, Patrons, and Clients' in J.P. Sampley (ed.), *Paul and the Greco-Roman World. A Handbook* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 2003) 488-523; Jonathan Marshall, *Jesus, Patrons, and Benefactors. Roman Palestine and the Gospel of Luke* (WUNT II.259; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009) 24-173 and Kunio Nojima, *Ehre und Schande in Kulturanthropologie und biblischer Theologie* (Wuppertal, Wien: Arco Wissenschaft, 2011) 143-246. In addition, David Garland, *1 Corinthians* (BECNT; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003) 752.
- 20 Richard S. Ascough, 'Translocal Relationships Among Voluntary Associations and Early Christianity' in *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 5 (1997) (223-241) 237.
- 21 See J.E. Burns, 'Conversion and Proselytism' in *The Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism* (Grand Rapids, Cambridge U.K.: Eerdmans, 2010) 484-486.
- 22 For a survey see G. Bohak, 'Gentile Attitudes Toward Jews and Judaism', in *Eerdmans Dictionary*, 668-670. For more detail see Louis H. Feldman, *Jew and Gentile in the Ancient World. Attitudes and Interactions from Alexander to Justinian* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993); Peter Schäfer, *Judeophobia. Attitudes toward the Jews in the Ancient World* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1997) and Christoph Stenschke, 'Apologetik, Polemik und Mission. Der Umgang mit der Religiosität der „anderen“' in K. Erlemann et al. (eds), *Neues Testament und antike Kultur III. Weltauffassung, Kult, Ethos* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 2005) 244-253.
- 23 See Christoph Stenschke, *Luke's Portrait of Gentiles Prior to Their Coming to Faith* (WUNT II.108; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999) 78-79.
- 24 See Bohak, 'Gentile Attitudes', 669.
- 25 Juvenal, *Sat.* 15,105-106; Tacitus, *Hist.* 5.4; see R. Goldenberg, 'The Jewish Sabbath in the Roman World up to the Time of Constantine the Great',

- ANRW II.19.1. (1979) 430-442.
- 26 See also the surveys of B. Nongbri, 'Greek Authors on Jews and Judaism' in *Eerdmans Dictionary*, 692-696 and M.H. Williams, 'Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism' in *Eerdmans Dictionary*, 870-874.
- 27 See Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987) 4-19 and Scott J. Hafemann, 'Corinthians, Letters to the' in *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters* (Downers Grove, Leicester, 1993) (164-179) 174.
- 28 Hafemann, 'Corinthians', 174, who goes on to describe the origin of the problems in Hellenistic culture and an 'over-realised eschatology' which 'led to more boasting and disunity in the church, as well as to the eventual rejection of Paul's legitimacy as an apostle and of his gospel' (175). For Paul's opponents in Corinth see also Jerry L. Sumney, *Identifying Paul's Opponents. The Question of Method in 2 Corinthians* (JSNT.S 40; Sheffield, Sheffield Academic Press, 1990) and the essays in Stanley E. Porter (ed.), *Paul and His Opponents* (PAST 2; Leiden: Brill, 2005).
- 29 For several reasons, this would have been an embarrassment to the Corinthians; see Victor P. Furnish, *2 Corinthians* (Anchor Bible 32A; Garden City: Doubleday, 1984) 507.
- 30 Kathy Ehrensperger, *Paul and the Dynamics of Power. Communication and Interaction in the Early Christ-Movement* (LiNTS 325; London, New York: T. & T. Clark Continuum, 2007) 70: 'Patronage makes lower-ranked clients dependent on elite patrons not for the well-being of the client but for the enhancement of the status and power of the patron. ... Such acts maintained not transformed political, economic, and societal inequality and privilege.' Eckhard J. Schnabel, *Urchristliche Mission* (Wuppertal: R. Brockhaus, 2002) 1389 notes that accepting patronage would have meant: '[Paul would have] die Botschaft, die er verkündigen wollte, unweigerlich kompromittiert, mindestens die Freiheit verloren, das Evangelium samt seinen Konsequenzen für das persönliche Verhalten auch dieser Bessergestellten zu verkündigen.'
- 31 Furnish, *2 Corinthians*, 507-508.
- 32 Schnabel, *Urchristliche Mission*, 1389.
- 33 Murphy O'Connor, *Paul*, 319; Ralph P. Martin, *2 Corinthians* (WBC 40; Waco: Word Books, 1986); Peter Marshall, *Enmity in Corinth. Social Conventions in Paul's Relations with the Corinthians* (WUNT II.23; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 1987) and J.K. Chow, *Patronage and Power. A Study of Social Networks in Corinth* (JSNT.S 75; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992); on Paul's financial policies see Stephen Walton, 'Paul, Patronage and Pay' in Burke and Rosner, *Paul*, 220-233, Schnabel, *Urchristliche Mission*, 1385-1390 (particularly in Corinth, 1389-1390) and the instructive study of C.R. Little, *Mission in the Way of Paul. Biblical Mission for the Church in the Twenty-First Century* (Studies in Biblical Literature 80; New York, etc.: Peter Lang, 2005).
- 34 Furnish, *2 Corinthians*, 507.
- 35 Furnish, *2 Corinthians*, 508.
- 36 Hafemann, 'Corinthians', 175.
- 37 Furnish, *2 Corinthians*, 451, for the limitation to Christians see 445.
- 38 Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 294 (italics CS).
- 39 Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 294.
- 40 It is unlikely that Paul refer by πάντας to the other churches involved in the collection. In that case the Corinthians might have contributed to a 'common fund'.
- 41 Possibly Paul refers to funds that he expected churches to contribute to his mission; cf. John P. Dickson, *Mission-Commitment in Ancient Judaism and in the Pauline Communities. The Shape, Extent and Background of Early Christian Mission* (WUNT II.159; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003) 178-213 ('Providing for the Gospel: Mission-Commitment as Financial Assistance').
- 42 For a detailed discussion of the passage see Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 750-757. On p. 751 Garland argues that Paul is responding to another issue raised by the Corinthians in their letter to him. He had previously solicited the Corinthians to participate. Now they only inquire about the best way to make this collection. 'Since he gives instructions only for the actual collecting of the money, they appear to have asked him how they should manage its implementation'.
- 43 Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 754.
- 44 Hafemann, 'Corinthians', 178.
- 45 Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 753. Regarding this stipulation, he observes: 'By taking up the collection in advance, they are completely free in what they give, and he will not know who contributed what. Possibly, he wanted to avoid being perceived as twisting arms to get money by asking in person (cf. 2 Cor 9:5) or did not want to take time from other labor to try to raise money' (754-755).
- 46 Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 755 notes: 'It is Paul's special project, but he does not infringe on the church's autonomy in choosing their representatives. As each individual decides how much to give, the church decides whom they will entrust to represent them in their mission.'
- 47 Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 755 writes that Paul 'also may be sensitive to possible accusations of chicanery (cf. 2 Cor 8:20; 12:14-18). He may have been aware of an event that made a collection of money for Jerusalem a touchy issue. Josephus (*Ant* 18.3.5 § 81) reports that a Palestinian Jew and three cohorts induced one of their notable Roman converts, Fulvia, to send valuables for the temple

- in Jerusalem. Rather than conveying the goods to Jerusalem, they absconded with them. When their scam was discovered, it created such a clamour that the emperor Tiberius ordered all Jews to be banished.⁴⁷
- 48 See Murphy O'Connor's (*Paul*, 319) plausible reconstruction of the response of the judaising opponents of Paul to the collection enterprise (quoted above).
- 49 Furnish, *2 Corinthians*, 413, also for the reasons of this poverty in Macedonia. Were the Thessalonians less poor than other Macedonian Christians in general and therefore able to help them financially? Was it through this display of love that their example in suffering (1 Thess 1:6–8) became widely known in Macedonia and Achaia?
- 50 Paul's sending of Titus and others to complete the collection among the Corinthians suggests that he did not rely only on his previous charge to the Corinthians and the good example of other Christians (2 Cor 8:6). Somebody trusted by Paul was to attend to the matter 'on site'.
- 51 On ancient notions of honour and shame see C. Janssen & R. Kessler, 'Ehre/Schande' in *Sozialgeschichtliches Wörterbuch zur Bibel* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher, 2009) 97–100; Victor H. Matthews (ed.), *Honor and Shame in the World of the Bible* (Semeia 68; Atlanta: SBL, 1996) and J. Plevnik, 'Honor/Shame' in Bruce Malina and John J. Pilch (eds), *Handbook of Biblical Social Values* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2000) 106–115.
- 52 The giving of the Macedonian Christians is mentioned again in 2 Corinthians 11:9: Paul accepted from the Macedonians what he refused from the Corinthians; on the relation of Paul's refusal of support in Corinth and his urgent call to participate in the collection, Furnish, *2 Corinthians*, 508 notes: 'His promotion of this project at the same time that he was declining to let the congregation become his own patron evidently aroused the suspicion, or allowed his rivals to plant the suspicion, that the collection was but a subterfuge, a way of gaining the support from the Corinthians without obliging himself to them as their client (see 12:16). This, too, seems to be behind Paul's remarks in 11:5–15.'
- 53 The description of the collection in 1 and 2 Corinthians does not imply an elevated position of the church in Jerusalem over others. There is a different emphasis in Romans 15:27.
- 54 For the full force of this argument see Stenschke, 'Pebble'.
- 55 Murphy O'Connor, *Paul*, 315.
- 56 For discussion of his identity see William O. Walker, 'Apollon and Timothy as the Unnamed "Brothers" in 2 Corinthians 8:18–24', *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 73 (2011) 318–338. Murphy O'Connor, *Paul*, 315 suggests that '... in the light of the contacts between the Corinthian and Macedonian churches (1 Thess 1:7–9; 2 Cor 11:9), the simplest hypothesis is that he was a Corinthian Christian, who had gone to aid the spread of the church in Macedonia, and who there had established himself as an exceptional preacher of the gospel. When the Corinthians recognized him, and heard Paul's eulogy, they would have been both flattered and relieved. Their contribution to a sister church was publicly praised, and Paul's emissary was not a critical Macedonian (9:4), but one of their own. *His specific role was to guarantee the integrity of the collection* (8:20f, italics CS).'
- 57 Perhaps this is in contrast to Paul: his writing of two full chapters, 2 Cor 8–9, to encourage the Corinthians in participating and sending *three* men to see to the successful completion of the collection suggests that Paul himself was not confident that the Corinthians would do as he requested of them.
- 58 Murphy O'Connor, *Paul*, 314 observes: 'The initial enthusiasm of the Corinthians for the collection for the poor of Jerusalem had evaporated in the heated atmosphere of the factional disputes within the community. Deeply offended by the way they had been pilloried in 1 Corinthians, the spirit-people, who were potentially the major donors, retaliated by refusing to take part in a project so dear to Paul's heart. Titus, however, had won the consent of their allies, the Judaizers, by a clever *ad hominem* argument, and Paul decided to exploit the opening.'
- 59 Murphy O'Connor, *Paul*, 314.
- 60 Furnish, *2 Corinthians*, 452. In view of early Jewish views of Gentiles, this longing of Jewish Christians for *Gentile* Christians is all the more remarkable. Did Paul misjudge the atmosphere and feelings by at least some Christians in Jerusalem? It is not clear whether Paul ascribes particular efficacy to the prayer of the Christians in Jerusalem.
- 61 The significance of the Old Testament for Paul's argument in 1 Corinthians has recently been emphasised by Roy E. Ciampa and Brian S. Rosner, *The First Letter to the Corinthians* (Pillar New Testament Commentary; Grand Rapids, Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, Nottingham: Apollos, 2010). See also Roy E. Ciampa and Brian S. Rosner, '1 Corinthians' in G.K. Beale and D.A. Carson (eds), *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Nottingham: IVP, 2007) 695–752.
- 62 The amount contributed to the collection was to reflect this divine generosity.
- 63 Paul's demonstration of his Jewish loyalty and of the thoroughly Jewish context of the gospel in Romans also serves as an antidote to the prevalent anti-Judaism in the Roman Empire. For the significance of the Jewish nature of Paul's gospel in Romans see Christoph Stenschke, 'Paul's Jewish Gospel and the Claims of Rome in Paul's Epistle to the Romans', *Neotestamentica* 46 (2012) 338–378.

64 In view of the length of Paul's argument in 2 Corinthians 8-9 it is noteworthy that Paul does not explain the reasons for the need of the Christians of Jerusalem, either as being the consequence of famine/increased cost-of-living (see Acts 11:28), of

persecution (see 1 Thess 2:14) or of the particular circumstances which earlier on made the sharing of goods necessary according to Acts 2:44-45; 4:32 – 5:11, 6:1-7. For the time being, the Corinthians had to take Paul's word for it.

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