

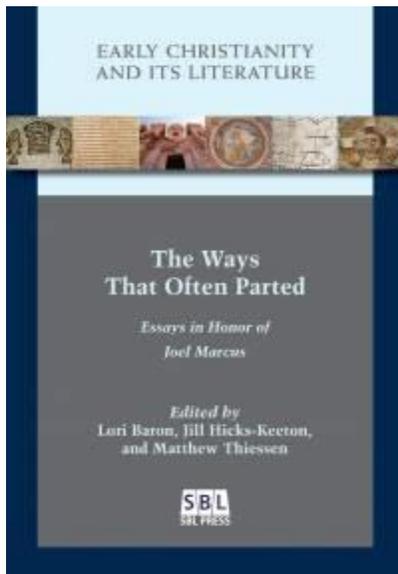


Reviews of the Enoch Seminar 2019.07.09

Lori Baron, Jill Hicks-Keeton, and Matthew Thiessen, eds. *The Ways That Often Parted: Essays in Honor of Joel Marcus*. Atlanta: SBL Press, 2018. ISBN: 9781628372168. Pp. 432. \$61.95. Paperback.

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In memory of my father, Benoni Batista de Oliveira ב"ר



How did Christianity, originally a Jewish movement, become an entity separate from Judaism? This fascinating issue, known in Anglophonic scholarship as the “parting of the ways,” has received renewed scholarly interest in recent decades. *The Ways That Often Parted* contributes to this discussion with a series of essays dedicated to New Testament scholar Joel Marcus. In what follows, I will summarize each chapter and, when pertinent, offer critical responses before assessing the significance of the entire work.

The Ways That Often Parted is arranged roughly in chronological order. It begins with a study by Timothy Wardle, “Samaritans, Jews, and Christians: Multiple Partings and Multiple Ways” (15–39). Wardle describes early Jewish-Samaritan relations with an eye on the parting of the ways between Christians and Jews. Samaritans and Jews shared much in common: both claimed Israelite descent; lived in the ancestral homeland of Israel; shared a scriptural base, the Pentateuch; and observed many of the same customs (the Sabbath, circumcision, etc.). Cordial interaction prevailed between both communities until John

Hyrchanus destroyed the Samaritan temple (111–110 BCE). Thereafter, relations soured, though not completely or decisively (30). The rift between Jews and Samaritans, therefore, like the parting of the ways between Jews and Christians, was by no means straightforward or sudden. Indeed, there are some noteworthy parallels. In both cases, the temple played a pivotal role. The destruction of the Samaritan temple caused resentment among Samaritans toward Jews who could triumphantly claim that the Jerusalem temple was the only proper place of worship. Similarly, some Christians would see in the destruction of the Jewish temple confirmation that God resided among their community alone. Furthermore, in each parting Scripture played an important role. While early Jews and Samaritans differed mainly over the wording of key passages in the Torah, which culminated in the emergence of two different textual traditions (the

Samaritan Pentateuch and the Masoretic Text), first-century Jews and Jesus believers argued especially about the proper interpretation of Israelite Scripture (32–33).

There is one point of comparison by Wardle where I would sharpen his terminological usage:

In the case of Jews and Samaritans, originally geographical terms eventually broadened to include issues of religious and cultural practice. But even with this semantic expansion, there are no examples of people who were both Judean and Samaritan, or Jewish and Samaritan, at the same time. The geographic overtones still seem important. The situation between Jews and Christians, however, is different, as a person could simultaneously be both Jew and Christian. Not all Christians fell into both categories. But from the very beginning a number of Jewish followers of Jesus could and did simultaneously claim both Jewish and Christian identity. (30)

Earlier, however, Wardle rightly notes that the Samaritans claimed descent from the *tribes of Israel* (18). In other words, they viewed themselves as *Israelites*—not Jews. These two terms should not be assimilated to each other.¹ In antiquity, the word *Israel* retained its tribal scope, referring to the twelve tribes of Israel, an entity larger than the Jewish people. The Jews descended primarily from Judah, only one of the twelve tribes. All Jews, in other words, were Israelites, but not all Israelites were Jews. This agrees with Samaritan self-understanding, which claims descent primarily from the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh. Interestingly, Josephus corroborates this self-understanding despite his prejudice toward Samaritans, reporting that they view themselves as “descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh, tracing their genealogy from Joseph” (*Antiquities* 11.341; see also 9:291). Since both Jews and Samaritans are Israelites, a “Jewish Samaritan” (or “Samaritan Jew”) is inconceivable—from both a Jewish and Samaritan standpoint.

This observation leads to a second point, what the rise of a new Jewish messianic movement proclaiming the restoration of *Israel* might have meant for the previous parting between Samaritans and Jews. Initially, some Jewish followers of Jesus wished for Samaritans and Jews to be reconciled within a wider pan-Israel restoration, as evidenced by the Gospel of John (4:4–42) and especially Luke-Acts (Luke 9:52–56; 10:29–37; 17:11–19; Acts 1:8; 8:4–25). Before the parting of the ways between Jews and Christians, there was hope for a converging of the ways within Israel. This hope did not materialize, however, since most Jews and Samaritans did not recognize Jesus as Israel’s messiah. Still, this initial expectation illustrates how social boundaries can be radically redrawn when new religious movements rise.

In “John and Jesus in Josephus: A Prelude to the Parting of the Ways” (41–63), Albert I. Baumgarten analyzes Josephus’s evaluations of John and Jesus. According to Baumgarten, Josephus viewed the former favorably but the latter negatively. Baumgarten suggests that Josephus could not accept that Jesus was the messiah because Josephus “was one of those Jews for whom a messiah who died on the cross was a stumbling block (and for Greeks a folly), as Paul noted in 1 Cor 1:23” (45). But why did Josephus view John the Baptist in positive terms if he disdained prophetic figures? Baumgarten proposes that the answer lies in the circumstances of John’s death. The Jews of John’s time viewed him favorably. Josephus was cognizant of this fact but did not mention the eschatological aspect of John’s work because of his adversity toward expectations of imminent redemption (47, 55). By contrast, the Gospels, Mark especially, highlighted John’s eschatology but cast John as a “religious crank” or “an eccentric *nudnik*,” rather than as someone who touched a live issue of wide resonance in the Jewish world of his time, in order to subordinate him to Jesus (55).

I found Baumgarten’s depiction of John as an “eccentric *nudnik*” engaging and humorous, although I am not sure it agrees with the Gospel portrait(s) of John. The prophet of the wilderness may have been shaggy

¹ See Jason A. Staples, “Reconstructing Israel: Restoration Eschatology in Early Judaism and Paul’s Gentiles Mission,” (PhD diss., University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2016).

and unkempt, but he did not suffer from Jerusalem syndrome in the eyes of the Gospel writers. Subordinate John to Jesus they did, but as one who played an integral role in the preparing the way for Israel's eschatological restoration. At any rate, Baumgarten draws our attention to a fundamental matter about Jesus that divided Jews early on: his shameful execution by the Romans was a reality too shocking for Jews to believe that he was paradoxically Israel's messianic deliverer.

No discussion of the parting of the ways can ignore Paul. This volume includes three separate studies on the apostle to the gentiles. The first treatment is by Matthew Thiessen, "Paul, the Animal Apocalypse, and Abraham's Gentile Seed," 65–78. Paul, as Thiessen observes, maintained that gentile believers in Jesus were not merely saved in Christ but also became full members of Abraham's *seed*. Many scholars have seen this aspect of Paul's teaching as anomalous to Second Temple Judaism. Thiessen, however, calls into question this assertion by drawing attention to manner in which the Animal Apocalypse envisions the eschatological transformation of gentiles. In its allegorical retelling of history, the Animal Apocalypse depicts gentiles as wild beasts that change into snow-white cows when a mysterious snow-white bull with huge horns appears at the eschaton. This eschatological bull has been interpreted variously: as a messianic figure, a new Adam, or a figure related to Seth or Noah. Thiessen wonders whether the bull may refer to Abraham and Isaac, the last white cows mentioned in the Apocalypse. If this identification is correct, the eschatological snow-white cows would represent gentiles who have been incorporated into a righteous and pure line descended from Abraham: "They are Abrahamic seed who inherit God's eschatological salvation as uncircumcised gentiles" (70). Quite significantly, the Animal Apocalypse does not posit that gentiles become *Jews* at the end time. As white sheep, the Jews continue to retain their distinctive identity even after the gentiles undergo eschatological renewal. Thiessen believes that Paul similarly leaves room for Jewish identity even if gentiles and Jews are now both equally counted as Abraham's seed (74).

I agree with Thiessen's interpretation of the Animal Apocalypse, having argued some of the same points elsewhere.² The Animal Apocalypse does not erase Jewish-gentile difference. Having said that, I wonder what to make of Paul's thought in relation to the wider Enochic corpus. Numerous passages in 1 Enoch describe superhuman evil as affecting *all* humans (e.g., 10:21–22) and announce a future eschatological deliverance in general terms, without caring much about the distinction between Jews and non-Jews (1:9; 10:21–22; 48:4–5; 50:1–5; 91:14; 100:6; 105:1–2, etc.). Questions therefore remain: What role if any does the Mosaic Torah play in 1 Enoch, which is barely mentioned and does not appear to be effective in shielding Jews from evil and suffering? Which strands of Enochic tradition are closer to Paul's thought? And does Paul evolve in his opinion concerning Jewish-gentile difference as a comparative reading of Galatians with Romans might suggest?³

In "Unveiling Death in 2 Corinthians" (79–101), Susan Grove Eastman appreciates the visual aspect of the language in 2 Cor 3–4, especially the image of the veil, which Paul uses to contrast Moses's veiled face with the unveiled faces of believers in Jesus who behold the glory of the Lord (2 Cor 3:13, 18). According to Eastman, male veiling of the face in the cultural context of Paul's Corinthian auditors could indicate grief, loss, shame, or even a transitioning from life to death. Eastman concludes that Paul's Corinthian audience would have related Paul's description of Moses's veil to a change in status of the Mosaic covenant, which had come to its lethal end (85–86, 98).

² Isaac W. Oliver, "Luke's Eschatology and Genealogy in Light of Enochic Tradition," in *The Early Enoch Tradition and the Synoptic Gospels*, ed. Loren T. Stuckenbruck, Gabriele Boccaccini, James H. Charlesworth, and Matthias Hoffmann, Jewish and Christian Texts 224 (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, forthcoming). This article is based on a paper that was presented at the Seventh Enoch Seminar in Camaldoli, Italy (2013).

³ See Robert B. Foster, *Renaming Abraham's Children: Election, Ethnicity, and the Interpretation of Scripture in Romans 9*, WUNT 2/421 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016).

Eastman is aware of the issue of supersessionism that arises from this interpretation, since Paul's reading of Moses may be seen as "radically destabilizing Jewish allegiance to torah" (100). She seeks to control its potential supersessionism by stressing that Paul also viewed his own ministry "as drenched in death, almost overtaken by death, quintessentially mediated by death," even if it pointed in the end to life, in sharp distinction to Moses's ministry (98). She faults especially the church for subsequently understanding Paul's interpretation of the Sinai narrative in supersessionist ways. This is vividly illustrated in later Christian art, which took up the image of Moses wearing a veil and transposed it onto the image of the synagogue as a blindfolded female slave over against the victorious figure of the *ekklesia*, thereby leaving out the weakness and death intrinsic to Paul's own ministry, which allows for no such triumphalism (100).

Second Corinthians 3 is, in my estimation, a thorn in the flesh for those who argue that Paul thinks that the Mosaic Torah retains its covenantal value for Jews. I'm not sure, therefore, that Paul can be completely exonerated from supersessionism (depending on how this concept is understood). Eastman acknowledges this point but maintains that the issue of supersessionism cannot be determined from the text of 2 Corinthians only: "Its answer will be rendered differently by the experience and judgment of different living, interpretive communities of practice" (91). Finally, 2 Cor 3 must be counterweighed with Romans, where Paul establishes an ongoing role for the Jewish people and never replaces Israel with the church (91 n. 26). Again, I ask: has Paul had a change of heart in Romans?

The third and last essay devoted to Paul is by Michael Winger, "'Being a Jew and Living as a Gentile': Paul's Storytelling and the Relationship of Jews and Gentiles according to Galatians 2," 103–22. According to Winger, Paul tells of past encounters with Peter in dramatic fashion in Galatians in order to engage his audience and demonstrate that Jewish-gentile distinctions no longer remain. Paul accordingly refers to the Antioch incident to show that Peter, Barnabas, and other Jewish followers of Jesus at one point no longer observed the Jewish food laws. Their resumption of law observance was mere role-playing, but not respect for law as law (105). Winger reads other parts of Paul's writings in similar fashion. For example, he thinks that Paul rejects in 1 Cor 8 any command to abstain from meat sacrificed to idols (110).

I have a hard time imagining Jewish followers of Jesus like Peter eating pork or other forbidden creatures and suddenly reverting to a kosher diet. The prohibition against eating nonkosher meats could not be easily jettisoned during the Second Temple period. Some Jews were willing to die over such matters (Philo, *Flaccus* 96; 4 Macc 5–6; see also 1 Macc 1:47). Perhaps some Jewish followers of Jesus momentarily loosened their dietary observance in other ways (e.g., consuming *kosher* food offered to idols or prepared by non-Jews). Or maybe Winger is right after all: Paul is witness to the radical propensities of a nascent movement convinced that the end of all things, Jewish norms included, was at hand. Whatever the case, the suspension of torah observance would play its role in distinguishing Judaism from Christianity, once it became a normative Christian belief.

Next in the line of contributions is an article by John M. G. Barclay on the deutero-Pauline Epistles and the writings of the Apostolic Fathers ("The Epiphany of Christ and the Identity of Scripture," 123–43). In this essay, Barclay traces the various ways that the deutero-Pauline authors and the Apostolic Fathers related to (Jewish) Scripture in light of their messianic convictions. Barclay contends that these early Christians stressed the *novelty* of the epiphany of Christ and the church despite the cultural disadvantage of doing so in antiquity. This novelty was proclaimed in various ways. For example, Colossians emphasized that the mystery of Christ was only *now* being made manifest, without indicating that Scripture anticipated or was helpful for understanding this manifestation (132). Some, like the author of the Epistle to Diognetus, ignored Scripture altogether, while others melded Scripture with gospel traditions (e.g., 2 Clement). Another strategy involved relabeling Jewish writings simply as "Scripture" or "books," thereby divesting it of its Jewish and ancient texture. What mattered the most was how said Scripture spoke directly to the needs of a new, gentile church (140).

The kind of Christian discourse examined by Barclay that stresses novelty may explain why some Christians, past and present, have shown little interest in the Jewish roots of their faith. Christianity is seen as altogether new, and if there is an “Old Testament,” it concerns the church exclusively, thereby creating rivalry between Jews and Christians. Barclay reflects on this matter from an ecumenical perspective. He asks: “Is it possible now for the scriptures to be *shared* by Christians and Jews on noncompetitive terms?” (141) Barclay believes that this issue can be solved only theologically: “What is needed most, and most urgently, is not that we construct the historical processes by which Jews and Christians began to compete but that we deconstruct the very notion of competition, in the *theological* recognition that it is God who owns us, not we who own God” (141).

The following section of this volume deals with the Gospels, especially John. Mark being the earliest canonical Gospel receives attention first in “Was Mark a Supersessionist? Two Test Cases from the Earliest Gospel” (145–68), by Suzanne Watts Henderson. Henderson challenges traditional assumptions concerning Mark’s supposed supersessionism in two key passages, the garments and wineskins sayings (2:21–22) and the parable of violent tenants (12:1–12). In her estimation, the sayings in Mark 2:21–22 do not advocate rejection of Torah as much as allegiance to Jesus’s messianic mission (151, 156). Noteworthy is the following statement by Henderson critiquing supersessionist understandings of the wineskins saying: “Wine connoisseurs everywhere would affirm that fresh or young wine is generally considered inferior to wine that has been aged with time” (151). This perceptive observation stands nonetheless in tension with Barclay’s study just mentioned, which highlights ways in which some early Christians affirmed the novelty of their faith despite the prevailing veneration for ancestral tradition.

Concerning the parable of the wicked tenants, Henderson similarly argues that Mark does not narrate the rejection of the Jewish people but contrasts the use of conventional power, expressed through violent grasping, with the divine power associated with God’s coming kingdom (158). The tenants in the parable do not represent a discrete people or even their leaders but those in Jesus’s or Mark’s world who “*wield religious or political power in ways that grasp for both resources and authority that are not, rightly speaking, their own*” (160; emphasis original). This conclusion fits with Henderson’s proposal to see Jesus as a nonmilitaristic messiah whose “soft power” nevertheless presented a threat to those in power, since Jesus promoted loyalty to an alternative kind of power (164).

In “Sinai, Covenant, and Innocent Blood Traditions in Matthew’s Blood Cry (Matt 27:25)” (169–85), Claudia Setzer deals with a passage that for Jews is one of the most notorious in the New Testament: Matt 27:25. This verse has been used to justify anti-Semitism, including during the Nazi era (170 n. 1). Many scholars of the New Testament, however, restrict its reference to the destruction of the Jerusalem temple in 70 CE. Matthew composed this verse to claim that Jerusalem was destroyed as punishment for Jesus’s death, rather than blame all Jews throughout time for Christ’s crucifixion. Setzer reads this controversial verse in light of two strands of thought in Matthew’s Gospel that involve innocent blood: what she names the Sinai/covenant strand and the culpable Pharisees strand. She argues, convincingly in my assessment, that Matt 27:25 carries associations with the covenant at Sinai. The entire people (*pas ho laos*) accepting that (Jesus’s) blood fall on them recalls Exod 24:3, 8, when Moses sprinkles all the people with the blood of the Sinaitic covenant. This connection suggests a further question: Does Matthew imply that reconciliation will follow punishment, the blood of Jesus ultimately translating into restoration for the Jewish people? Setzer remains agnostic since Matt 27:25 is stained by its connection with the anti-Pharisaic polemic in Matt 23:34–36 that accuses Pharisees for bloodshed of innocent and righteous prophets.

Lori Baron explores Mark’s and John’s usage of the Shema in “The Shema in Mark and John and the Parting of the Ways” (187–210). Baron argues that both Gospel writers link the Shema to Jesus to highlight his unique relationship to God. This connection is intimated in Mark but is made explicit and more developed in John. Baron provides a social-historical explanation for the Christological use of the Shema in both: it stems from a common *Sitz im Leben* in the late first century, when some Jewish authorities condemned

Jewish followers of Jesus for infringing on the unity of God. Mark and John do their best to show that this is not the case. Nevertheless, both of these Gospels point to a widening gap between Jewish followers of Jesus and other Jews.

Martinus C. de Boer's piece, "The Johannine Community under Attack in Recent Scholarship" (211–41), is perhaps the most controversial yet engaging contribution in this volume. De Boer offers an apologia for Raymond Brown and J. Louis Martyn who discerned behind John's story of Jesus the history of a particular community of Jesus-followers. The history and experience of this Johannine community are reflected especially in the so-called expulsion texts, which claim that followers of Jesus were expelled from Jewish synagogues (John 9:22; 12:42; 16:2). Two influential scholars, Richard Bauckham and Adele Reinhartz, have seriously doubted Brown's and Martyn's historical reconstructions. De Boer engages critically with their arguments.

De Boer begins with Bauckham, who denies that John (or any Gospel) was written for a specific community.⁴ Bauckham views the Gospel of John as an integral whole designed by a single author whose "universal language" cannot reflect a sectarian milieu. But as De Boer rightly notes, the theological universalism or cosmic perspective expressed in a text should not be confused with the scope of its intended or actual audience (221). I think that this confusion may also lead one to overlook the particularistic character of some of John's statements (e.g., 14:6).

Unlike Bauckham, Reinhartz has admitted that a specific community may stand behind John's Gospel.⁵ The question, however, is whether the text of John provides us with a window into that community's history. At the heart of this debate are the controversial expulsion texts. Brown and Martyn argued that they reflect the actual experience of the Johannine community. Martyn found external evidence for his argument in the *Birkat Haminim*, a rabbinic prayer against Jewish heretics. Reinhartz, however, follows Reuven Kimelman and Steven T. Katz, who investigated the history of *Birkat Haminim* and contended that the expulsion texts were fabrications. Reinhartz, accordingly, proposes a rhetorical function for the expulsion texts: they reflect the self-understanding of a group of Jesus followers that no longer feels part of the wider Jewish community. De Boer, however, finds it unlikely that the author of John, a Jew in his judgment, would fabricate reports maliciously misrepresenting local Jewish synagogues evicting Jewish followers of Jesus (229). De Boer points out that Kimelman argued that the *Birkat Haminim*, which he dated to the late first century, was aimed at Jewish sectarians—including *Jewish* followers of Jesus.⁶ Kimelman's assessment, therefore, is compatible with Martyn and Brown's views, since both argued that Jewish rather than gentile followers of Jesus were expelled from synagogues.

It does seem more straightforward to see the expulsion texts as reflecting a social reality that was actually experienced by the Johannine community. Despite John's demonization of Jews (8:44), the expulsion charges seem too specific to have been fabricated out of rhetorical thin air. This possibility stands independent of the question of the historical reliability of the *Birkat Haminim*. De Boer may be correct to point out that the *Birkat Haminim* targeted Jewish followers of Jesus among other non-rabbinic Jews. However, he does not consider the question of the *normativity* of the *Birkat Haminim*, even if it was early, in relation to the geographical *provenance* of John. Numerous recent studies assert that the rabbinic sages did not dominate Jewish society immediately after 70 CE, especially in the Greco-Roman diaspora.

⁴ Richard J. Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses: The Gospels as Eyewitness Testimony*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2017).

⁵ Given the date of the publication, De Boer could not interact with Reinhartz's recent monograph, *Cast Out of the Covenant: Jews and Anti-Judaism in the Gospel of John* (Lanham: Lexington/Fortress Academic, 2018).

⁶ Reuven Kimelman, "Birkat ha-Minim and the Lack of Evidence for an anti-Christian Jewish Prayer in Late Antiquity," in *Jewish and Christian Self-Definition*, vol. 2., E. P. Sanders, ed. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981), 232.

Rabbinic consolidation was centuries in the making. But perhaps this issue should be revisited particularly in relation to post-70 Judea and Galilee.

All of this I say somewhat reluctantly as a Jew who wishes Reinhartz's thesis was the more persuasive one. I remain concerned that the mere acknowledgment of a Jewish exclusion of Jewish followers of Jesus that occurred almost two millennia ago could somehow be manipulated to justify or relativize the subsequent and far more devastating legacy of Christian anti-Judaism. Christian-Jewish relations may have been historically marked by mutual suspicion and rejection. But the power dynamics of that contentious history were utterly uneven. Christendom accumulated social and political force and, backed by anti-Jewish teachings, used it against Jews.

The impact of J. Louis Martyn's research is evident as well in Susan Miller's contribution, "'Among You Stands One Whom You Do Not Know' (John 1:26): The Use of the Tradition of the Hidden Messiah in John's Gospel" (243–63). Miller shows how the true identity of Jesus remains hidden in John, especially from the religious leaders of the Jewish people. Drawing from Martyn, Miller suggests that John's portrayal of Jesus as the hidden messiah may have resonated with the experience of the Johannine Christians who endeavored to explain why the leaders of Jesus's own people failed to recognize his true identity (261–62).

The last essay that deals exclusively with John is by Jill Hicks-Keeton ("John Makes a Way: A Narrative-Critical Reading of Psalm 69 in John 2:17," 265–82). Hicks-Keeton examines the quotation and interpretation of Ps 69:9 in John 2:17, taking into account all of Ps 69. This wholistic approach leads Hicks-Keeton to conclude that Ps 69:9 points not only to Jesus's impending death in John, as many commentators have argued, but also to his resurrection and the rebuilding of the community of Israel, as Ps 69 ends with hopeful images of the restoration of Judah. John thus draws from Ps 69 to account for the destruction of the Second Temple. But Jesus is the raised temple (280). Hicks-Keeton in fact speaks of Jesus *replacing* the temple destroyed by the Romans (279). Although John was originally addressing a specific historical situation, namely, the tragedy of 70 CE, subsequent gentile Christians would adopt John's theological interpretation in supersessionist ways: "When we read the Gospel of John, we watch in action the development of the raw materials by which later gentile followers of Jesus would adopt the mantle of inheritance for themselves" (280).

How might the parting of the ways be understood from a so-called pagan perspective? Bart D. Ehrman looks at early Jewish-Christian relations from this third dimension in "Christian Persecutions and the Parting of the Ways" (283–307). More specifically, Ehrman assesses the historical record of Roman imperial opposition to early Christians, from Diocletian all the way back to Claudius. Throughout this entire period, "emperors knew, or thought they knew, the difference between Christians and Jews" (285). Thus Jews, unlike Christians, were not obliged to offer sacrifices to pagan gods during the Great Persecution under Diocletian, because Romans respected Jewish ancestral customs, however bizarre. The same discriminating policy was applied in earlier periods as well, be it during the persecution under Decius (249–251 CE) or the trials of local Christians by Pliny during the reign of Trajan (beginning of the second century).

How could Roman authorities as soon as the time of Trajan distinguish Christians from Jews? Ehrman draws attention to the *fiscus Judaicus*, a levy that had been enforced upon Jews after 70 CE as a punishment for their rebellion against Rome. Relying especially on the research of Martin Goodman and Marius Heemstra, Ehrman accepts that Jews who stopped observing their ancestral customs no longer had to pay the *fiscus Judaicus* after 96 CE when Nerva relaxed its implementation. Being a Jew now "meant something religiously" to the Roman state (292). Records of Christians subject to the *fiscus Judaicus* are nonexistent because most of them didn't practice Jewish custom, and Roman authorities presumably knew this. But Ehrman in fact argues that Christians were viewed as distinct group by imperial authorities well before 96 CE, since Nero could single them out as scapegoats for the burning of Rome. Ehrman ends with Claudius's

eviction of Jews from Rome due to the unrest created by a certain Chrestus. He doubts that this figure refers to Jesus, since Christianity would have been numerically insignificant at this time (c. 41 CE) to warrant a full-blown expulsion of Jews from Rome. Aquila and Priscilla (Acts 18:2), therefore, were expelled from Rome “not because they were Christians but because they were Jews” (297).

Ehrman shows that Christians were clearly identifiable from Jews at a very early stage. He realizes that this finding might provide ammunition for those who assert an early parting of the ways in an essentialist manner. But he maintains that his intent is not to argue that Christianity was distinct from Judaism, only that it appeared that way to most during the period under investigation. He underscores, furthermore, that Roman opposition to Christianity actually drove Christians thinkers to embrace the Jewish Scriptures, thus making Christians appear to be Jewish in some ways as they defended themselves against pagan attacks of being a new religion (285).

I think, however, that Ehrman’s findings require further qualification. First, the ongoing influence of torah-observant Jewish followers of Jesus who lived after 70 CE should not be underestimated. Ehrman does not deny that there were early Christ-followers who observed Jewish customs but downplays its importance. He speaks of Matthew as the “most Jewish” of Gospels in scare quotes, noting its anti-Jewish polemic and stress on adherence to moral principles rather than distinctively Jewish practices. He assumes that the author and readers of Luke were of non-Jewish extraction because of the Lukan emphasis on the gentile mission. Matthew is “Jewish”; Luke is gentile. I have critiqued this dichotomy elsewhere.⁷ Suffice here to say that Israel remains at the center of concern throughout Luke-Acts and that Luke nods in agreement at Jewish followers of Jesus—from his time—who wish to observe their ancestral customs. They remained a “mighty minority” after 70 CE.⁸ Even after the Bar Kokhba Revolt, when gentile Christianity became ever more triumphant, Justin Martyr still recognized the ongoing presence of torah-observant Jewish followers of Jesus (*Dialogue with Trypho* 47). In this regard, it is worthwhile considering Hadrian’s ban prohibiting Jews from residing in Jerusalem. According to Eusebius, Jewish followers of Jesus continued to abide in Jerusalem after 70, the alleged flight to Pella notwithstanding, until the Second Jewish Revolt when they were banned from dwelling in the city along with other Jews (*Church History* 4.6.4). As in the days of Claudius, Roman imperial authorities from Hadrian’s time would not have cared to discriminate between Jewish followers of Jesus who observed the torah and other Jews.

Daniel Boyarin’s treatment of Ignatius, “Why Ignatius Invented Judaism,” 309–24, is familiar territory for those already acquainted with his work on early Judaism and Christianity. He shows that Ignatius constructed *Ioudaismos* as a false theological position held by certain Christians in contradistinction to *Christianismos*, the true understanding of the Christian faith. Thus, Ignatius’s Judaism has little to do with real Jews or Judaism. His construct of *Ioudaismos* strongly contrasts with Paul’s understanding, for whom *Ioudaismos* meant a Judean way of life that included torah observance. Ignatius is on the way toward the Christian invention of Judaism as a defining “other.”⁹

Dale C. Allison Jr. examines the underappreciated pseudepigraphical work of 4 Baruch in “The Paraleipomena Jeremiou and Anti-Judaism” (325–51). Contrary to what many scholars have maintained, Allison thinks that Christian redaction is evident at several junctions in 4 Baruch, not just its concluding chapter. The Christian redactor of 4 Baruch had a clear anti-Jewish bias. Nevertheless, Allison identifies several features in it that suggest that it was originally a Jewish work. For example, 4 Baruch expresses lamentation for the destruction of the Second Temple. This points to an original Jewish composition in

⁷ Isaac W. Oliver, *Torah Praxis after 70 CE: Reading Matthew and Luke-Acts as Jewish Texts*, WUNT 2/355 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013).

⁸ Jacob Jervell, “The Mighty Minority,” *Studia Theologica* 34 (1980): 13–38.

⁹ See now Daniel Boyarin, *Judaism: The Genealogy of a Modern Notion* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2018).

Allison's argument because "[i]nstead of mourning the fall of Jerusalem, most Christians, including Jewish Christians such as the author of Matthew, discerned in the event the vindication of Jesus—who purportedly predicted it—and of their own cause" (333). I wonder if the nomenclature "Jewish Christians," confining as it is, has led to the oversight that *Luke's* Jesus *does* mourn for the destruction of the Second Temple (Luke 19:41; cf. Luke 13:34–35; 23:27–31), another indicator that Luke is arguably just as "Jewish" as Matthew, if not more so.

Allison also takes the generally negative view expressed in 4 Baruch concerning the Samaritans as evidence of its original Jewish provenance. The positive note in 4 Bar 8:9 concerning Samaritans must therefore be a Christian interpolation from an early period in church history, since Christian writers from the second century onwards (Hegesippus, Hippolytus, etc.) show contempt for the Samaritans in contrast to Luke and John (341–42). This may well be so, although anti-Samaritan sentiments by "Christians" is recorded already in Matthew (10:5–6; 15:24), while rabbinic views on Samaritans remained rather positive until the Second Jewish Revolt.¹⁰ Nevertheless, the cumulative evidence culled by Allison suggests that we have before us a Jewish work recast.

Lucas Van Rompay appreciates a fascinating yet neglected composition, *An Exposition of the Gospel in "The Blessed Land and the Inheritance of Israel": The Old Testament and Judaism in a Fourth-Century Refutation of Marcion*, 353–76. This text survives only in Armenian although it is generally believed to have been translated from Syriac. The text may have been written in the fourth century, but it is very difficult to contextualize it either in Armenian or Syriac Christianity. The *Exposition* was written to combat Marcionism, leading it to make some remarkable statements concerning Israel and the Jews. Noteworthy is the text's interpretation of the story of Joseph and his brothers. As in other early Christian texts, the brothers represent the Jews who (allegedly) killed Christ. However, the *Exposition* does not focus on the brothers' betrayal of Joseph but on their reconciliation, affirming in turn that the Jewish people, once they recognize Jesus, will be restored, "indeed more than anyone else" (370). Remarkably, the work accounts for the Jewish delay in confessing Jesus as the messiah through comparison with Joseph's own brothers who initially did not recognize Joseph. The *Exposition*, therefore, illustrates how Christians could develop more positive, even if problematic, views concerning Jews (the text, after all, still longs for their conversion), and cautions against seeing the parting of the ways as an inevitably widening chasm.

The current volume concludes with the only piece that deals exclusively with Jewish literature. In "Narrative and Counternarrative: The Jewish antigospel (*The Toledot Yeshu*) and the Christian Gospels" (377–401), Philip S. Alexander surveys the textual evidence of the *Toledot Yeshu* literature, an anti-gospel Jewish tradition that contradicts and even mocks the Christian Gospels. Alexander also offers some preliminary remarks on the origins and development of this vast material, which evolved for at least 1,500 years. The earliest evidence of the *Toledot Yeshu* comes from the Cairo Genizah but is fragmentary. Alexander thinks that the version represented by the Cairo Genizah fragments goes back to the fourth century. He stresses, however, that this only marks the beginning of a *literary* tradition of the *Toledot Yeshu*. Jewish anti-Jesus stories circulated well before that as evidenced by Celsus and the Gospel of Matthew, whose account of Jesus's burial shows signs of reaction to polemical Jewish narratives about Jesus (391).

Alexander defines *Toledot Yeshu* as "counternarrative," which can refer to a variety of phenomena in literary theory. Alexander uses this term "in the sense of a narrative constructed for polemical purposes to counter a prior narrative, as a way of negating the prior narrative's key claims" (388). As Alexander notes, a counternarrative can serve as an instrument of oppression (e.g., by colonial powers). More often though, it functions as "a defense mechanism by which an oppressed minority resists the discourse of a dominant, oppressing power" (389). This latter observation would certainly befit the development of the *Toledot Yeshu*

¹⁰ See Lawrence H. Schiffman, "The Samaritans in Tannaitic Halakhah," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 75 (1985): 323–50.

tradition in later stages of Christian history when the church became a dominant, even oppressive reality for Jews. But the situation was admittedly different during the first two centuries CE, when Christianity was still a minority. The traces of Jewish anti-gospel traditions in Celsus and Matthew as well as Matthew's own anti-Pharisaic diatribe remind us that Jewish-Christian relations were unfortunately marked by polemics early on.

As the editors of *The Ways That Often Parted* state, the volume does not purport to offer one coherent narrative on the separation of Judaism and Christianity. The essays are varied and deal with multiple sources and methods. However, there is one point of agreement reflected in its eye-catching title. The editors agree “that Christianity’s eventual distinction from Judaism was messy and multiform, occurring at different paces in diverse geographies with varied literary resources, theological commitments, historical happenstance, and political maneuvering” (2). In other words, the parting of the ways took place *often*. Yet the editors are quick to deny that the title of their scholarly collection should be taken as a polemical response to Becker and Reed’s *The Ways That Never Parted*.¹¹ In fact, they esteem that the cumulative findings of these essays provide additional evidence for the argument presented by the editors of *The Ways That Never Parted*, namely, that there was no one single, definitive, early parting of the ways between Judaism and Christianity (4).

After reading this important publication, I nevertheless came out with the impression that the parting of the ways was in many ways well under way during the first centuries CE. Most of the contributions in this volume (especially Ehrman’s) seem to point in that direction rather than confirm that “after the second century, the boundaries between ‘Jewish’ and ‘Christian’ identities often remained less than clear.”¹² So while all may agree that the parting(s) between Jews and Christians was complicated (Isn’t any divorce complicated?), there were clear signs indicating that this relationship would be broken early on. The ways parted sooner than later.

¹¹ Adam H. Becker and Annette Yoshiko Reed, ed., *The Ways That Never Parted: Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003; repr., Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007).

¹² Annette Yoshiko Reed and Adam H. Becker, “Introduction: Traditional Models and New Directions,” in *The Ways That Never Parted*, 2.