

Romans 5:12–21 against the Background of Torah-Theology and Hebrew Usage*

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■ Paul and Jewish Sources

Paul was an original thinker, and his epistles are full of novel, at times paradoxical, ideas. Christology stands at the center of Paul's system, and his Christological teaching is unique among Jewish writings of the Second Temple period. Some, especially non-Christological, elements of Pauline theology do, however, have illuminating parallels in earlier Jewish teachings, which seem to have been modified and adapted by Paul to fit his own revolutionary thought. While Paul's theology cannot be reduced to these elements, they might help to explain (at least partly) its emergence. After all, even the ideas of the most original thinkers owe their emergence to prevailing conceptions of the culture in which those thinkers operated, taking some of them for granted and incorporating them naturally into their thought, while struggling with and reacting to others. In Paul's case, Jewish concepts played a significant role in shaping some central features of his theology.¹ Thus, reading Paul in the light of the Dead Sea scrolls and rabbinic writings is important both for understanding Paul as well as for dating and interpreting rabbinic parallels.

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¹ An interesting overview of the subject written for the general public is David Flusser, "Die jüdische und griechische Bildung des Paulus," in *Paulus in 114 Farbbildungen erzählt von Erich Lessing* (ed. E. Lessing; Freiburg: Herder, 1980) 11–39. For a more detailed and more extensively documented discussion of the affinities of some Pauline passages with Qumranic writings, see n. 3.

Jewish writings sometimes supply precedents for Pauline motifs, conceptions, and terminology, and therefore help in analyzing the elements of Paul's system. The rare cases in which Paul's sources (i.e., literary units reformulated by Paul) can be discerned enable us to observe how he reworked and reshaped existing texts,² terms, and ideas. The importance of such cases is not confined to supplying evidence for Paul's Jewish "background"; rather, identifying such sources enables one to penetrate Paul's thinking on one specific issue and to observe, as if in a master's workshop, how he molded his own revolutionary system from existing material. Comparing some Pauline passages with passages of the Dead Sea scrolls has yielded fascinating results (differences between the two theological systems notwithstanding).³ It has been suggested that rabbinic literature might be a key source in this endeavor,⁴ a point that I hope to demonstrate in the following discussion.

Today it is clearer than ever that rabbinic literature often preserves motifs from the Second Temple period. The possibility that a certain passage in rabbinic literature may take issue with (Pauline) Christianity should indeed be taken into account, but this can by no means be a default assumption; indeed, many Pauline passages can be illuminated by parallels in rabbinic literature. Moreover, there are cases in which a passage in rabbinic literature that is anti-Christian in its present context is a mere reproduction or elaboration of a pre-Christian tradition. Similarly, a pre-Christian statement can become Christian simply by being included in a Christian context (thus, reproofs of Israel by the prophets become anti-Jewish in the writings of some Church Fathers by their inclusion in anti-Jewish polemics; for further examples, see below).

In this article I will consider a source of Rom 5:12–21, in which Paul contrasts Adam and Christ. I will try to demonstrate that Paul's source was close to a nomistic non-Christological passage attributed to Rabbi Yose in the *Sifra*, as well as to other Jewish passages. Rabbi Yose and the *Sifra* are obviously later than Paul, but, as we shall see, the tradition that the *Sifra* passage reflects (henceforth "the *Sifra* Passage" or simply "the *Sifra*") is much earlier than the compilation of the *Sifra* itself or even than Rabbi Yose. I will begin my analysis by discussing more primitive forms of the tradition in question, and then continue with an analysis of the actual *Sifra* text ("Ancestors and Their Descendants"). A detailed comparison of the Pauline

² Needless to say, the existing Jewish texts that might be considered his possible sources were not necessarily identical to the texts as we have them in the extant rabbinic collections, nor were all his sources necessarily in writing.

³ See David Flusser's pioneering work, "The Dead Sea Sect and Pre-Pauline Christianity," in idem, *Judaism and the Origins of Christianity* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1988) 23–74. Flusser's discussion was subjected to harsh criticism by E. P. Sanders in *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977) 15–16. Sanders, however, compares Paul's thinking and Judaism as two closed religious systems, while Flusser attempts to demonstrate how contemporary Jewish ideas could have been transformed into Pauline doctrine.

⁴ For some examples, see W. D. Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism: Some Rabbinic Elements in Pauline Theology* (London: S.P.C.K., 1984).

passage to the *Sifra* and to other Jewish passages will follow (“Paul and the *Sifra* Passage”). Another version of the midrashic passage is found in Theophilus of Antioch, as will be shown (“Theophilus of Antioch and the *Sifra*”). Finally, a Christianized version of the *Sifra* passage in the medieval work *Pugio Fidei* will be discussed (“The *Pugio Fidei* Version of the *Sifra* and Modern Scholarship”). This version shows how easily Jewish material could be adapted to the framework of Christian-Paulinian theology.

■ Ancestors and Their Descendants: From Miqra to *Sifra*

An anonymous statement in the Babylonian Talmud reads:

[A] Happy are the righteous!

[B] Not only do they acquire merit for themselves (זכין לעצמן), but they also acquire merit for (זכין or מזכין) their children and their children’s children to the end of all generations;

[C] For Aaron had several sons who deserved to be burnt like Nadab and Abihu . . . but the merit (זכות) of their father helped them.

[A’] Woe to the wicked!

[B’] Not only do they acquire condemnation for themselves (חבין לעצמן), but they also acquire condemnation for (חבין)⁵ their children and their children’s children to the end of all generations;

[C’] Many sons did Canaan have who were worthy to be ordained like Tabi, the slave of Rabban Gamaliel, but the guilt of their ancestor caused them (to lose the chance). (*b. Yoma 87a*)

The translations “(acquire) merit” and “condemnation” are problematic. I know of no adequate English translation for the pair זכין (*zky*) — חבין (*hwb*). Here as well as in the following pages I chose translations that would fit both the present context and the comparison to the Pauline passage (the consequences of the roots’ polysemy will become clear later; see p. 408–9). The verb זכין (*zky*), usually translated “acquire merit,” may also be translated “benefit”;⁶ it is even more difficult to translate its antonym.⁷

The idea expressed here is that, for better or worse, the deeds of the ancestors affect the fate of their descendants as decreed by God. This ancient concept occurs in the Hebrew Bible (see, e.g., Exod 20:5–6: “visiting the iniquity of the fathers

⁵ This is not the place to enter into a discussion of the variant readings of talmudic manuscripts (זכין / מזכין and חבין / מחיבין in the *qal* or in the *pi’el*, respectively).

⁶ For a detailed discussion of this verb and the difficulty of translating it, see Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 187–88.

⁷ These are clearly legal business metaphors of “credit” and “debit.” For a study of “legalistic” approaches in Judaism without any of the pejorative prejudicial connotations of them, see also Gary A. Anderson, “From Israel’s Burden to Israel’s Debt: Towards a Theology of Sin in Biblical and Early Second Temple Sources,” in *Reworking the Bible: Apocryphal and Related Texts at Qumran* (ed. Esther G. Chazon, Devorah Dimant, and Ruth A. Clements; STDJ 58; Leiden: Brill, 2005) 1–30.

upon their children to the third and the fourth generations of those who hate me, but showing kindness to thousands [of generations] of those who love me and keep my commandments"; Deut 12:28: "Observe, hear and obey⁸ all these words that I command you, that it may go well with you and with your children after you forever"). According to the saying studied here, divine reward and punishment take place in this world (rather than in the World to Come), and apply to one's descendants.⁹

Similarly, we read in the Book of Ben Sira:

צדקת אב לא תמחה . . . ביום צרה תזכר לך כחם על כפור להשבית עוניך, "The righteousness of your father will not be wiped out"¹⁰ . . . in a day of trouble it will be remembered to you (by God) to cancel your sins as heat melts ice" (Sir 3:14-15; cf. 44:13: עד עולם יעמד זכרם וצדקתם [לא תמחה], "forever will their memory abide, and their righteousness will not be wiped out").¹¹ This is clearly a reversal of the biblical verse: יזכר עון אבתיו אל ה' וחטאת אמו אל תמח, "may the sin of his fathers be remembered before God, and the iniquity of his mother not be wiped out" (Ps 109:14),¹² and an early form of the well-known rabbinic conception of זכות אבות, "merit of the ancestors."¹³ Indeed, it is one of the earliest formulations of the concept of the "treasure of merits" (explicitly mentioned in Sir 3:4), of the

⁸ The Hebrew word ושמעה means both "hear" and "obey." In the Samaritan Pentateuch and the Septuagint, the sense of obedience is emphasized by the addition of the word ועשיה, καὶ ποιήσεις.

⁹ On the ancient view according to which one's descendants are considered, at least to some extent, extensions of oneself, and on the survival of such views into Late Antiquity, see Menahem Kister, "Some Blessing and Curse Formulae in the Bible, Northwest Semitic Inscriptions, Post-Biblical Literature and Late Antiquity," in *Hamlet on a Hill: Semitic and Greek Studies Presented to Prof. T. Muraoka on the Occasion of his Sixty-Fifth Birthday* (ed. M. F. J. Baasten and W. Th. Van Peursen; Leuven: Peeters, 2003; OLA 118) 313–32.

¹⁰ So Genizah MS A; Genizah MS C reads אל תשכח, "will not be forgotten" (rather than "will not be wiped out"), in keeping with the Greek and the Syriac versions. The relevant pages of MS B have not survived. See also n. 11.

¹¹ So Genizah MS B (the Syriac version seems to have had a similar *Vorlage*). The ancient Masada manuscript reads: עד עולם יעמד זרעם וכבודם לא ימחנה, "forever will their seed abide, and their honor will not be wiped out" (Yigael Yadin, *The Ben Sira Scroll from Masada* [Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society and Shrine of the Book, 1965] 37); the *Vorlage* of the Greek version read זרעם וכבודם, while the Syriac read in this verse זכרם וכבודם. However, the similarity between Sir. 44:13 and 3:14 according to the Genizah MSS and the close relation of both passages to Ps 109:14 suggest that this may well be the original reading; it is highly unlikely that a copyist would create such a thoughtful allusion in two verses so distant and ostensibly different in meaning. This is probably the key to the correct interpretation of the expression צדקת אב, "the righteousness of your father," rather than "righteous acts (of you) towards your father (i.e., honoring him)," as it is understood by many commentators.

¹² Note that at least in this case the ancestors' iniquities are held against a person who is himself wicked. Ben Sira, however, depicts the merits of ancestors as counteracting the iniquities of their descendants.

¹³ For a discussion of some aspects of this teaching see Solomon Schechter, *Aspects of Rabbinic Theology* (New York: Macmillan, 1909) 185–88; Arthur Marmorstein, *The Doctrine of Merits in Old Rabbinical Literature* (London: Oxford University Press, 1920).

view that “merits offset demerits” (see especially Sir 3:3, 15), and probably also of the notion of “transfer of merits” from ancestors to their descendants. These ideas also occur in rabbinic literature (although such a transfer should not be viewed as a result of a purely mechanical calculation).¹⁴ In our talmudic passage, the balance between positive and negative inheritance is obvious from the wording.¹⁵ The basic formula, “if one acquires merit (זכה), it is acquired for one’s descendants and descendants’ descendants until the end of all generations,” is developed in other contexts in Tannaitic literature as well.¹⁶

A striking parallel to the passage in *b. Yoma* 87a, albeit with a somewhat different message, occurs in the *Sifra*, a Tannaitic midrash. The saying, attributed to Rabbi Yose,¹⁷ reads:

ר' יוסה או: נפשך לידע מתן שכרן של צדיקים לעתיד לבוא, צא ולמד מאדם הקדמוני שלא ניצטווה אלא על מצוה אחת בלא תעשה ועבר עליה, ראה כמה מיתות ניקנסו לו ולדורותיו ולדורות דורותיו עד סוף כל הדורות. וכי אי זו מדה מרובה, מידת הטוב או מידת הפורענות? הוי אומר מידת הטוב, ומידת הפורענות מעושה ראה כמה מיתות ניקנסו לו ולדורותיו ולדורי דורותיו עד סוף כל הדורות. מידה טובה מרובה—היושב לו מן הפיגולים ומן הנותרים והמתענה ביום הכפורין על אחת כמה יזכה לו ולדורותיו ולדורות דורותיו עד סוף כל הדורות.

Rabbi Yose¹⁸ says: If you wish to know the reward [that will be] given to the righteous in the Age to Come (מתן שכרן של צדיקים לעתיד לבוא), you may learn this from Adam [i.e., from Adam’s punishment]: He was given only one commandment, a prohibition, which he transgressed, and see how many deaths Adam was condemned [to suffer] (ניקנסו) [as a result]: his own, and those of all his descendants and his descendants’ descendants to the end of all generations. Now, which (divine) measure is greater (מרובה), the

¹⁴ Pace Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 197–98, 338 n. 24. See the general observations of Anderson (above, n. 7).

¹⁵ The illustration of “passing on guilt” is much milder than the one of “passing on merit”: Aaron’s merits prevent his descendants from dying, while Canaan’s sin only prevents his descendants from being ordained as rabbis. The talmudic text as received, however, may not reflect the tradition in its most original form; it may be a variation of a sentence such as “Canaan sinned, and all of his seed will be blotted out from earth, and all his remnant, and there is none of him who will be saved on the day of judgment” (Jub 22:21).

¹⁶ See *m. Makkot* 3:15 (probably an addition to the Mishnah); a baraita added to *Sifre Deuteronomy* 79 (ed. Finkelstein; Berlin: Jüdischer Kulturbund in Deutschland E.V. Abteilung, 1939) 145; and *Mekhilta Deuteronomy* (D. Z. Hoffmann, *Midrasch Tannaim* [Berlin: Itzkovski, 1908] 61) = M. I. Kahana, *The Genizah Fragments of the Halakhic Midrashim* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 2005) 351 (in Hebrew). These sayings are related to Deut 12:28. See also the medieval compilation *Midrash Aggadah* to Deut 12:25 (ed. Buber; Vienne: Avraham Fanto, 1894) 2.191.

¹⁷ For a parallel passage, attributed in the *Sifre* to Rabbi Yose’s contemporary, Rabbi Yehuda, see Appendix.

¹⁸ Thus most textual witnesses; see *variae lectiones* of the *Sifra* (ed. Louis Finkelstein; New York: Jewish Theological Seminary, 1983) 3.286. The attribution to Rabbi Yose ha-Gallili; see S. Lieberman, *Sheqi’in* (Jerusalem: Bamberger & Wahrman, 1939) 65–66 (in Hebrew) is probably erroneous. R. Yose ha-Gallili was a contemporary of Rabbi ‘Aqiva (early second century C.E.), while R. Yose was R. ‘Aqiva’s disciple.

measure of (divine) benevolence or the measure of (divine) punishment (מידת הטוב או מידת הפורענות)? Certainly, the measure of benevolence is greater.¹⁹ If, then, the lesser measure, that of punishment, resulted in Adam and his descendants and descendants' descendants being condemned to so many deaths [for a single transgression], someone who refrains²⁰ from eating *piggul*²¹ or *notar*²² and who fasts on the Day of Atonement, how much more does such a person acquire merit (מזכה) for himself and for his descendants and all his descendants' descendants to the end of all generations!²³

The passage in the *Sifra* shares not only the same general ideas, but also the same literary setting and formulations as those of the passage in *b. Yoma*. Some elements, however, are unique to the *Sifra* and should be noted here. Most of the following observations on the *Sifra* are relevant, too, for Rom 5:12–21, with which we shall deal in detail below (“Paul and the *Sifra* Passage”).

1. In the *Sifra*, the sinners are represented by Adam, rather than by Canaan, as in the Babylonian Talmud. The consequence of Adam's act—death—is much more severe than that of Canaan, and applies to every human being. On the other hand, no specific personality is named in the *Sifra* as representing the other pole, that of the righteous. Instead, the text presents every person (i.e., every Jew) who observes the Torah's commandments (by refraining from eating food forbidden by the Torah) as the polar opposite of Adam, the sinner, and therefore such a person acquires merit for his descendants through his righteousness (see Deut 12:28).

2. The subject of the statement is “the reward given to the righteous in the Age to Come.”²⁴ This is, at least partly, related to the previous point. After all, any righteous, observant Jew is a descendant of Adam, and thus naturally shares the punishment of death decreed upon Adam “to the end of all generations.” That means that the goodness that Adam's righteous descendants may bestow upon *their* descendants can only be on another level, in another time or another world:²⁵ Death has not been abolished, so the reward for the righteous can be given only after death.²⁶ Thus a

¹⁹ See Ex 20:5–6, cited above.

²⁰ The original reading is וישב, in the sense “refrain from”; the reading השב in the printed editions is erroneous. Sanders's statement (*Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 112) should be corrected accordingly.

²¹ A sacrifice that is unfit because of an improper intention on the part of the officiating priest.

²² Portions of sacrifices left over beyond the legal time, which must be burned.

²³ *Sifra Hova*, parasha 12:12 (ed. Finkelstein, 1989 2.206–207). For *variae lectiones* to this passage see *ibid*, 3.286.

²⁴ It is not quite clear to what extent “the Age to Come” (literarily: “what is to come, the future,” referring in the context of our midrash to the eschatological future) is equivalent to “the World to Come.” See Chanoch Albeck, *Shisha sidre mishnah* (6 vols; 2d ed.; Jerusalem-Tel Aviv: Devir, 1965) 4.454, 478, 519 (in Hebrew); and especially Chaim Milikowsky, “Gehenna and the ‘Sinners of Israel’ in the Light of Seder ‘Olam,’” *Tarbiz* 55 (1986) 312–23 (in Hebrew).

²⁵ See 4 Ezra 4:29–30: Goodness can be bestowed upon the righteous only after the passing of this world, in which the effects of Adam's sin are dominant.

²⁶ Needless to say, the emphasis on reward in the Age to Come is very appropriate for the theology of rabbinic Sages.

statement of ethical theology (concerning reward in this world) becomes a statement of soteriology. The soteriological aspect is not explicitly spelled out because it is not an integral part of the stylistic pattern that is reworked in this statement. The basic theme of this passage is the ancient idea of reward during one's lifetime, as can still be observed in *b. Yoma 87a*.²⁷

A theologian (and even certain Jewish sages in antiquity) might have asked whether God, by punishing Adam's descendants and bestowing reward on the descendants of the righteous, was being just. Our passage, however, does not question this; rather, it assumes that God is just. A theologian would have also asked whether a descendant of a righteous person who is not personally righteous has a guaranteed place in the Age to Come. Similar questions are raised in the Bible (Ez 18:1–20)²⁸ and in early rabbinic literature (e.g., *Mekhilta de-Rabbi Yishma'el, ba-ḥodesh*, 6).²⁹ They are alien, however, to the rhetoric, and perhaps also to the religious atmosphere, of this passage. It is therefore unfitting to pose them in the context of interpreting this specific passage.

3. This passage adds a new theological dimension to the dichotomy of the righteous and the sinful. It includes a statement common in midrashic literature, that the measure of divine benevolence is greater than the measure of divine punishment.³⁰ Since these measures are but two manifestations of divine activity, two sides of the same coin, Adam's punishment is not conceived of merely as the opposite of the reward of the righteous, but also as a case from which such generous reward may be inferred by deduction *a minori ad maius* (קל וחומר).

4. Adam's sin is construed not as mere disobedience, but rather as a violation of the first divinely given *commandment*, anticipating the commandments given at Sinai.³¹ This nomistic interpretation became common in ancient Jewish literature because of the great significance attributed to the Torah. In this context, a comparison between the one commandment transgressed by Adam and the many commandments kept by the Jews was unavoidable. The emphasis in such a comparison can be

²⁷ Sanders writes concerning this source: "The Rabbi does not actually name a reward which is greater than universal death, although the logic of the argument would seem to imply that he should" (*Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 190). The apparent asymmetry in the wording, I contend, is due not to theological concerns, but rather to the evolution of the stylistic pattern.

²⁸ See H. G. Enelow, ed., *The Mishnah of Rabbi Eli'ezer or the Midrash of Thirty-Two Hermeneutic Rules* (New York: Bloch, 1933) 93. Instead of עֲוֹנוֹתָם read: עֲוֹנוֹתָם, "their sin (i.e., the ancestors' sin) is (remains) with them (i.e., with the descendants)."

²⁹ Hayyim Saul Horovitz and Israel Abraham Rabin, eds., *Mekhilta de-Rabi Yishma'el* (Frankfurt am Main: Kauffmann, 1931) 226–27.

³⁰ E.g., *t. Sotah* 4:1; *Mekhilta de-Rabi Yishma'el ba-ḥodesh* 6 (ed. Horovitz-Rabin, 227); *Mekhilta de-Rabbi Shim'on ben Yoḥai* to Ex 16:14 (ed. J. N. Epstein and E. Z. Melamed; Jerusalem: Yeshivat Sha'are Raḥamim, 1955) 111; Exod 20:6 (ibid, 148), 22:23 (ibid, 211); *Sifre Numbers* 8 (ed. Hayyim Saul Horovitz; Leipzig: Fock, 1917) 14–15, 15 (ibid, 20) 18 (ibid, 22) 115 (ibid, 127) 160 (ibid, 220); *Sifre Deuteronomy* 40 (ed. Finkelstein, 83); *Eccl. Rab.* 4:1.

³¹ See, for example, 4 *Ezra* 7:11–24. See also Joel S. Kaminsky, "Paradise Regained: Rabbinic Reflections on Israel at Sinai," in *Jews, Christians, and Theology of the Hebrew Scriptures* (ed. Alice Ogden Bellis and Joel S. Kaminsky; Atlanta, Ga.: SBL, 2000) 15–43.

either on the commandments or on those commanded (Adam and Israel).³² A good example of the former is a verse in *4 Ezra*:

Consider now for yourself:³³ *One* grain of evil seed—how much fruit of ungodliness has it produced; when, therefore, ears of good grain without number are sown—*how great* will be the harvest!³⁴ (4:31–32)³⁵

This statement is similar to the saying in the *Sifra* in its theological assumptions (e.g., that Adam's sin affected subsequent generations; the importance of human obedience to God's will; that goodness surpasses evil), its general attitude, and its formulation, even though the content takes a different twist. Later, in the course of analyzing Paul's argument in detail, we will return to the passage in *4 Ezra* in order to deal with other aspects of it.

Finally, two details in the wording of this saying may be noted:

1. One would have expected the wording of the *Sifra* to have been as follows: "Adam was given only one commandment . . . which he transgressed—how much more will someone who observes commandments be rewarded,"³⁶ but this is not the case. The present wording, which speaks of refraining from eating *piggul* or *notar* and fasting on the Day of Atonement, is awkward. Perhaps this is a remnant of a different, parallel version, according to which Adam's sin was more specific:

³² For an example of the praise of Israel, see *Genesis Rabbah* 21:7 (ed. Julius [Jehuda] Theodor; Berlin: Ittskovski, 1903) 202. Adam and Israel are dramatically contrasted in *Tanḥuma Buber Shemini* 13 (ed. Salomon Buber; Vilna: ha-almana veba-ahim rom, 1990) 3.31: Adam could not observe the commandment for one hour, whereas his descendants, the People of Israel, observe many difficult commandments. The passage in the *Tanḥuma* (and perhaps also the passage in *Genesis Rabbah*) may well be anti-Pauline, but its elements existed in Jewish thought before Christianity. The polemic against Christianity could only give the pre-Christian elements their anti-Christian dimension; see my remark at the end of the introduction to the present article.

³³ Functionally, this term is synonymous to צא ולמד in the *Sifra*.

³⁴ The words אִינָא אֲדִרְא עֲתִידִין לַמַּעֲבָד (Syriac) and "quam magnam aream incipient facere" (Latin) reflect the Hebrew expression לַעֲשׂוֹת נוֹרָן. Literally, this expression means "to do a threshing floor," but in rabbinic literature it means "to pile up the (gathered) harvest" (*m. Peah* 2:5–6). This phrase is a perfect parallel to the phrase "how much fruit . . . has it produced" in the preceding verse of *4 Ezra*. The temporal expression עֲדָמָא דְנֵאחָא אֲדִרְא (Syriac), or "cum veniet area" (Latin), reflects the Hebrew idioms שֶׁתִּנִּיעַ נוֹרָן. *t. Neziqin, Bava metsi'a* 9:24; a fragment of a midrash on Job 31:39, published in Abraham Joseph Wertheimer, *Batte midrashot* (2 vols; Jerusalem: Mosad ha-Rav Kuk, 1955) 2.182; and בֵּא הַנוֹרָן (*Cant Rab.* 7:3).

³⁵ Cf. Michael E. Stone, *Fourth Ezra* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990) 90. See Stone's commentary on v. 30 (95) and his discussion of Adam's sin (63–66).

³⁶ In a late midrash parallel to the *Sifra*, the figure contrasted with Adam is "he who observes the commandments," הַמְקִיִּים אֶת הַמִּצְוֹת (*The Mishnah of Rabbi Eli'ezer* [ed. Hillel Gershom Enelow] 55). Elsewhere, the figure is "he who studies Torah and fasts on the Day of Atonement and keeps the Sabbath"

אָדָם שִׁוְשֵׁב וְעוֹסֵק בַּתּוֹרָה וּמִתְעַנֶּה בְּיוֹם הַכִּפּוּרִים וְשׁוֹמֵר שַׁבָּת; see B. M. Levin, "Halakhic Midrashim and Maimonides' *Pesaqim*," in *Rabbenu Moshe ben Maimun: Qovets torani mada'i* (ed. Y. L. Fischmann-Maimon; Jerusalem: Yad ha-Rav Kuk, 1935) 124 (in Hebrew). See also Lieberman, *Sheqi'in*, 66. These secondary readings highlight the awkwardness of the wording in the *Sifra*.

disobedience by eating forbidden fruit, the opposite of which is fasting³⁷ or refraining from eating prohibited food.³⁸

2. The *Sifra* uses the verb נִקְנָסוּ, “condemned,” or “fined,” instead of its synonym, חָיִיב, which is used in *b. Yoma* 87a and is a perfect antonym for זָכַי.

■ Paul and the *Sifra* Passage

We may now proceed to compare the passage in the *Sifra* to a particularly well-known and central passage in the Epistle to the Romans in which one man, Adam, is compared to another man, Jesus Christ (Rom 5:12–21). Many of the details of this passage have been the subject of inner-Christian debate throughout the centuries and are prone to divergent interpretations by modern exegetes. I will try to present a fairly literal translation of the passage (suggestions for alternative renderings of some details will be discussed below):³⁹

- (12) (a) Therefore, as through one man sin (ἡ ἁμαρτία) came into the world
- (b) and through sin death (came into the world)
- (c) and so death came to (διῆλθεν) all men
- (d) because (? ἐφ’ ᾧ)⁴⁰ all men sinned (ἥμαρτον).
- (13) (a) For until the Law sin was in the world,
- (b) but sin is not counted where there is no law.
- (14) (a) Yet (ἀλλὰ) death reigned from Adam to Moses,
- (b) even over those whose sins were not like the transgression of Adam,
- (c) who was a type (τύπος) of the coming (one / age) (τοῦ μέλλοντος).

³⁷ A Samaritan homily likewise states: “Adam ate, preparing death, Moses fasted, preparing life.” *Tibat Marqe: A Collection of Samaritan Midrashim* (ed. Ze’ev Ben-Hayyim; Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1988) 254 (Book IV, § 30, fol. 194a). This part of the compilation is relatively late (Introduction, 24). Similarly, Christian writers emphasize that Adam was defeated by Satan by eating, while Christ defeated Satan by fasting. E.g., Ephraem Syrus; see *Des Heiligen Ephraem des Syrers Hymnen de Ieiunio* (ed. Edmund Beck; CSCO 246; Louvain: Secrétariat du Corpus SCO, 1964) 34–35.

³⁸ Both elements appear one after the other also in *Tanḥuma Buber Shemini* 13 (ed. Buber, 3.31): After a general statement about observing the commandments, the specific examples of the abstinence of Jews from eating nonkosher food and fruit prohibited by the Torah are contrasted with Adam’s eating the food prohibited to him. See also *Genesis Rabbah* 21:7 (ed. Theodor, 202). The common feature of the three prohibitions mentioned in the *Sifra* is that their violation is punished by *karet* (untimely death).

³⁹ For a short and lucid commentary on Rom 5:12–21 (in which many of the interpretational options suggested in scholarship are mentioned) accompanied by a detailed study of the passage, see O. Hofius, “Die Adam-Christus-Antithese und das Gesetz: Erwägungen zu Röm 5, 12–21,” in *Paul and the Mosaic Law* (ed. James D. G. Dunn; WUNT 89; Tübingen: Mohr, 1996) 165–206.

⁴⁰ I will not address the meaning of ἐφ’ ᾧ, which has been much discussed in scholarship. See, e.g., James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 1–8* (WBC 38A; Dallas, Tex.: Word Books, 1988) 273–74; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *Romans: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 33; New York: Doubleday, 1993;) 413–17. The rendering of these words does not affect my argument.

(15) (a) But not like the trespass (παράπτωμα)	(b) is the favor (χάρισμα).
(c) For if many died through one man's trespass	(d) how much more have the grace (χάρις) of God and the gift (δωρεά) in the grace of the one man Jesus Christ abounded for many.
(16) (a) And not like (the effect) of that one man's sin	(b) is the gift (δῶρημα)
(c) For judgment (κρίμα) (brought) condemnation (κατάκριμα) by (ἐξ) one,	(d) but favor (brings) justification (δικαίωμα) by (ἐκ) many trespasses.
(17) (a) If, because of one man's trespass (τοῦ ἐνὸς παραπτώματι), death reigned (aβ) through one man,	(b) much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness (περισσεῖαν τῆς χάριτος καὶ τῆς δωρεᾶς τῆς δικαιοσύνης) reign in life (bβ) through the one man Jesus Christ.
(18) (a) Then as by one man's trespass (δι' ἐνὸς παραπτώματος) — condemnation for all men,	(b) so by one man's act of righteousness (δι' ἐνὸς δικαιώματος) — justification of life (δικαίωσιν ζωῆς) for all men.
(19) (a) For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners (ἁμαρτωλοὶ κατεστάθησαν),	(b) so by one man's obedience many will be made righteous (δίκαιοι κατασταθήσονται).
(20) (a) Law came in, to increase the trespass;	(b) but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more,
(21) (a) so that, as sin reigned in death,	(b) grace will reign through righteousness (διὰ δικαιοσύνης) to eternal life (bβ) through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Most scholars have overlooked the striking parallel between Paul and the *Sifra* passage. A few scholars have noted, in passing, individual similarities between elements occurring in Rom 5:12–21 and the passage in the *Sifra* (among other Jewish texts),⁴¹ but no one has suggested, to the best of my knowledge, that the two passages as such are significantly related. I will argue that Rom 5:12–21 as a whole is intimately related to the *Sifra* passage as a whole. Moreover, I will suggest that Paul used a passage similar (though not identical) in its wording to the one in the *Sifra* and that it was this passage that served as his source for this unit,⁴² which he adapted to his own theology by inverting its message.⁴³ Some verses of the Pauline unit (vv. 12–14, 20–21) have parallels elsewhere in rabbinic literature,

⁴¹ See below, n. 124.

⁴² Michel stresses that this passage is a complete unit. Otto Michel, *Der Brief an die Römer* (5th ed.; KEKNT 4; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1978) 185.

⁴³ As we have seen above, Rabbi Yose's saying can easily be explained as developing older, more simple and schematic statements, such as the one in *b. Yoma*. There is no reason to suppose that it was influenced by Christianity.

and the question arises whether these verses were part of the same putative Jewish source, in which the supreme value was the Torah and its commandments. It should be stressed that the Pauline passage and its rabbinic parallels carry very different, even contradictory, messages. Discerning Paul's Jewish source does not make Paul less anti-nomistic or more "Jewish" in his attitude; rather, it enables us to see him at work, using Jewish nomistic material to create his novel christological, anti-nomistic ideas (v. 20a).

First, let us compare the Pauline passage to the saying in the *Sifra*:

1. Both passages consider Adam's sin a violation of God's commandment, and both stress that this single violation had horrible results for all human beings: It was the cause of death for all of Adam's descendants (*Sifra*), or, in other words, for all human beings (Paul). According to both passages, "a man" is the source of the positive things granted by God to many others, either all his descendants (*Sifra*) or all human beings (Paul). While the expression "Adam's descendants and his descendants' descendants" (*Sifra*) is a synonym for "all men" (verse 18a), there is a remarkable difference between all the descendants associated with the positive figure according to the *Sifra* and "all men" in Romans (verse 18b).⁴⁴ The identity of this positive figure is quite different in the two passages, as well: According to Paul, the "man" who is diametrically opposite to Adam is Jesus Christ, while according to the *Sifra* he is any Jew who refrains from doing things prohibited by the Torah.⁴⁵ The two passages are soteriological, albeit in very different ways. A later Midrash (*Tanḥuma Niṣavim* 2) may reflect a shift in emphasis from the universal value of doing righteous deeds to the figure of the righteous person who, by his righteous deeds, gains merit for the whole nation or even for the whole world.⁴⁶ Yet the profound difference between such a message and Pauline ideology should not be blurred. For Paul, only Jesus' sacrifice can outweigh sin, whereas the message

⁴⁴ The awkward wording "all men" in v. 18b (see Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 473 and n. 63) might be related to the rhetorical argument of Paul and the *Sifra*.

⁴⁵ One should note here that in the parallel in *b. Yoma* 87a the positive pole is represented by a specific personality (Aaron). Although Paul's tradition is especially close to the tradition in the *Sifra*, other parallel traditions might have played some role in formulating Paul's thought. See also n. 46.

⁴⁶ In *Tanḥuma Niṣavim* 2, one finds a cluster of ideas similar to those that occur in Rom 5:15–19. Two figures are contrasted: one sinner (as in Rom 5:19) who brings punishment (Achan, Josh 22:20), and one righteous man whose merit (זכות) bestows life upon the whole world. The beneficial effect of righteousness is inferred by the argument *a minori ad maius* from the baneful effect of the sinner, because "the measure of divine benevolence is greater than the measure of punishment" (similarly Rom 5:15; see below). The theme and logic are similar to those of the *Sifra* and *b. Yoma*, but according to the *Tanḥuma* those who benefit from the merit of the righteous are not only their descendants, but rather a much larger circle of human beings (see above n. 45). Although *Midrash Tanḥuma* is a relatively late composition, one should not necessarily assume that the ideas in this passage were influenced by Christianity: Every element in it is well attested prior to Christianity's emergence. The passage in *Tanḥuma Niṣavim* also contains elements that are reminiscent of 1 Cor 12:12–30; see Menahem Kister, "'In Adam': 1 Cor 15:21–22 and its Jewish Parallels" (forthcoming).

of the rabbinic passages (even when the figure of the righteous person, צדיק, is mentioned) is that good deeds in general outweigh sin.⁴⁷

2. Some exegetes of Paul have interpreted “death” as “spiritual death,” which is presented in perfect symmetry with “eternal life” (21b). While the notion of “spiritual death” did exist in Hellenistic and Palestinian Judaism,⁴⁸ it can hardly be read into the *Sifra*, and probably should not be read into Paul’s statements either.⁴⁹ It seems that in both passages there is some asymmetry between the punishment and the positive things granted by God. In the *Sifra*, the asymmetry is intrinsic: The divine punishment of death applies even to the righteous, and must therefore be balanced on another level, the “reward in the Age to Come.” In Paul, a similar asymmetry is balanced by eternal life (probably through resurrection; see 1 Cor 15:21–22).

The rabbinic passage is certainly eschatological, though by no means messianic. As for Paul, the future tense of the words “will reign” (Rom 5:17b) and “will be made righteous” (19b) has been interpreted by some scholars as indicating an eschatological future.⁵⁰

3. Paul’s message in this passage is that after the constitutive event—Jesus’ crucifixion—the rules have changed, so to speak, from divine judgment to grace. This is quite different from the rabbinic view, according to which the same rules apply to every transgression of God’s commandments, whether committed by Adam or by any other human being until the end of history: All are judged, and in judgment they are either punished or rewarded. Notwithstanding this substantial difference, the structure and formulation of the two texts is very similar. The *Sifra* makes it clear that the reward for the righteous may be inferred from the punishment by an argument *a minori ad maius* (קל וחומר) concerning God’s action in the world: “Which (divine) measure is greater, the measure of (divine) benevolence or the

⁴⁷ “Condemnation is brought about because all individuals sinned . . . but righteousness is not brought about because the individuals, as Christ, accomplished obedience; it need only be accepted in faith as procured by Christ.” Rudolph Bultmann, “Adam and Christ according to Romans 5,” in *Current Issues in New Testament Interpretation: Essays in Honour of Otto A. Piper* (ed. William Klassen and Graydon F. Snyder; London: SCM, 1962) 158.

⁴⁸ Menahem Kister, “Leave the Dead to Bury Their Own Dead,” in *Studies in Ancient Midrash* (ed. James L. Kugel; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001) 43–56; idem, “Divorce, Reproof and Other Sayings in the Synoptic Gospels: Jesus Traditions in the Context of ‘Qumranic’ and Other Texts,” in *Text, Thought, and Practice in Qumran and Early Christianity: Proceedings of a Joint Symposium by the Orion Center for the Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Associated Literature and the Hebrew University Center for the Study of Christianity, 11–13 January, 2004* (ed. Daniel R. Schwartz and Ruth A. Clements; STDJ; Leiden: Brill, forthcoming).

⁴⁹ Concerning the interpretation of Paul in the light of parallel motifs in the literature of the Second Temple period, see Thomas H. Tobin, “The Jewish Context of Rom 5:12–14,” *Studia Philonica* 13 (2001) 160–75. The Jewish parallels cited by Tobin and especially the passage in the *Sifra* (to which he does not refer) prove that the reason Paul was interested in Adam was not, as Tobin suggests, “because he [=Adam] stands at the ultimate origin of both Jews and Gentiles” (175).

⁵⁰ The expression τοῦ μέλλοντος may also support this position, if it is interpreted as referring to the eschatological era, as will be suggested below (#5).

measure of (divine) punishment (מידת הטוב או מידת הפורענות)? Certainly, the measure of benevolence is greater. If, then, the lesser measure, that of punishment, resulted in Adam and his descendants . . . being condemned to so many deaths . . . how much more does (a righteous person) acquire merit (יזכה) for himself and for his descendants. . . ." The terms מידת הטוב and מידת הפורענות occur several times in rabbinic literature.⁵¹ The expression "the divine measure of benevolence," מידת הטוב, is essentially synonymous with "reward for the righteous." (N.B.: God rewards and punishes in strict judgment; it is not implied that the righteous are treated with greater *mercy* than others).⁵² In rabbinic literature, the two "measures" are two parts of one system.⁵³ The deduction drawn by Paul in verse 15 is similar (though not identical, as we shall presently see) to the rabbinic argument⁵⁴ (as noted by Delitzsch⁵⁵ and Marmorstein⁵⁶), and is the key to the whole passage. The words περισσεΐαν and ὑπερπερίσσευσεν, usually translated "abundance" and "abounded" in verses 17 and 20, may well be the equivalents of the Hebrew word מרובה ("greater") used in the Midrash for a deduction similar to Paul's.⁵⁷ In light of the Hebrew usage in the Midrash, the word περισσεΐα can be translated "excess," and the word ὑπερπερίσσευσεν may be rendered "was superior, excessive."

Although one should not forget that in our passage⁵⁸ Adam is defined positively as τύπος, i.e., a type or example rather than an antitype of Jesus, there is a dichotomy in this passage between Adam and Jesus, sin and justification. Unlike the rabbinic מידת הטוב ("measure of benevolence"), God's "favor" and "gift" in Paul's system (vv. 15–16) has nothing to do with God's recompense and retribution.⁵⁹ In verse 16c κρίμα, "judgment," stands in opposition to χάρισμα, "favor," in a fashion reminiscent of another well-known pair designated in rabbinic writings: מידת הדין, "the measure of divine judgment" and מידת הרחמים, "the measure of divine mercy,

⁵¹ See some references above, n. 30.

⁵² Unlike the term "reward," the term "measure of benevolence" does not inherently imply that human beings *deserve* the beneficial acts of God, so it can be easily adapted to Paul's purposes.

⁵³ Cf. Ephraim E. Urbach, *The Sages: Their Concepts and Beliefs* (2 vols; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1979) 448–51.

⁵⁴ The phrase ἄλλ' οὐχ ὥς . . . οὕτως; should be interpreted quantitatively (πολλῷ μᾶλλον): God's favor is not on a par with human sins and their punishments, but is much greater. For wording similar to that of vv. 15–16, οὐχ ὥς τὸ παράπτωμα, οὕτως καὶ τὸ χάρισμα . . . πολλῷ μᾶλλον, see Ps 103:10–11; contrast Robin Scroggs, *The Last Adam: A Study in Pauline Anthropology* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1966) 81.

⁵⁵ Franz Delitzsch, *Paulus des Apostels Brief an der Römer. Aus dem griechischen Urtext . . . in des Hebräische übersetzt und aus Talmud und Midrasch erläutert* (Leipzig: Dörffling und Franke, 1870) 83. As we shall see below (n. 120), Delitzsch compares Paul to a Christianized version of the *Sifra* rather than to its genuine text (see below, "Pugio Fidei Version of the *Sifra*").

⁵⁶ Arthur Marmorstein, "Paulus und die Rabbinen," *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 30 (1931) 271–77, esp. 277.

⁵⁷ Note the interchange between יתר and מרובה (*Genesis Rabbah* 61:2 [ed. Theodor, 659] = y. *Neziqin Bava Qama* 4:6, [4c]).

⁵⁸ Unlike 1 Cor 15:21–22.

⁵⁹ See also Ps 103:10–11 compared above, n. 54.

grace, favor.” As we shall see below, this pair (albeit not in exactly the same form as the rabbinic terminology) is well established already in the literature of the Second Temple period. According to many rabbinic statements, the “measure of mercy” has the upper hand. In most of rabbinic literature the two pairs are distinct. “The measure of benevolence” (מידת הטוב) and “the measure of mercy” (מידת הרחמים) occur simultaneously in rabbinic literature, apparently without any attempt to place them together in one coherent theological system,⁶⁰ and only very rarely are they used as synonyms in antiquity.⁶¹ In modern scholarship the two have occasionally been equated—unjustifiably, in my mind.⁶²

In compositions discovered at Qumran, however, God’s “benevolence” (טוב) is synonymous with “grace” (חסד), “mercy,” (רחמים), and “righteousness” (צדקה or צדקות).⁶³ The contrasting pair of God’s “judgment” (דין) and “mercy” (רחמים) is a commonplace at Qumran, anticipating the “measure of judgment” (מידת הדין) and the “measure of mercy” (מידת הרחמים) in rabbinic literature. A text from Qumran contrasts God “who judges in annihilating wrath” (השופט באף כלה) with God’s actions “through the grace of righteousness and abundant mercy, gracious gift”⁶⁴ (through the grace of righteousness and abundant mercy, gracious gift)⁶⁵ (בחסד צדקה וברוב רחמים תחנה) (*Hodayot*, 4Q427 frg. 7, i, 21–22).⁶⁵ The latter expression is a precise equivalent of τὴν περισσείαν τῆς χάριτος καὶ τῆς δωρεᾶς τῆς δικαιοσύνης (v. 17b); literally, these Greek words would read in Hebrew: רוב רחמיו (טובו) וחנינת (מחן תחנת) צדקתו.

⁶⁰ Logically, the “measure of benevolence” (מידת הטוב) and the “measure of punishment” (מידת הפורענות) could be considered subdivisions of the “measure of judgement” (מידת הדין); see M. Kadushin, *The Rabbinic Mind* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary, 1965) 219 n.73), but the two systems almost never operate together, to the best of my knowledge. Nor can it be shown that the pair “judgment and mercy” replaces “benevolence and punishment” in different versions of one saying or in close parallels.

⁶¹ In *Leviticus Rabbah* 24:2 (ed. M. Margulies; Jerusalem: Jewish Theological Seminary, 1993) 550–51, we find the following pairs, which seem to be in parallelism: חסד / משפט, דין / רחמים (“benevolence / punishment; grace / judgment; judgment / mercy”). In the late Midrash *Otiyyot de-Rabbi Aqiva* Version A (Wertheimer, *Batte Midrashot*, 2.334–35), מידת הטוב, “measure of benevolence” is synonymous with מידת הרחמים, “measure of mercy.”

⁶² Arthur Marmorstein, *The Old Rabbinic Doctrine of God: 1. The Names and Attributes of God* (London: Oxford University Press, 1927) 43–53; Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 123–24.

⁶³ E.g.: עשה עמנו ה' כטובכה כרוב רחמיכה וכרוב צדקותיכה, “Deal with us, YHWH, according to Your benevolence, according to the abundance of Your mercy and Your just (act)s” (11QPs^a 19:4–5); באפכה כול משפטי ננע ובטובכה רוב סליחות ורחמיכה לכול בני רצונכה, “In Your wrath are all verdicts of punishment, and in Your benevolence, abundance of forgiveness; and Your compassion over for all those whom You favor” (1QH^a 19:8–9 [=Sukenik, 11:8–9]).

⁶⁴ The word תחנה is a noun derived from the root חנן (see Ezra 9:8).

⁶⁵ See Eileen Schuller, *Qumran Cave 4. XX: Poetical and Liturgical Texts, Part 2* (DJD 29; Oxford: Clarendon, 1999) 97. The lines probably refer to God’s attitude toward the elect and toward sinners; see 4Q434 1 i 5–6. Moshe Weinfeld and David Seely, eds., “Barkhi Nafshi,” in *Qumran Cave 4. XX: Poetical and Liturgical Texts, Part 2* (ed. Esther Chazon et al.; DJD 29 Oxford: Clarendon, 1999) 270.

Moreover, according to the Qumranic texts, divine benevolence, mercy, and righteousness (צדקה, the Hebrew equivalent to δικαιοσύνη) save the elect:

He delivers my soul from annihilation (שחת) . . . in His mercies he draws me (to Him), and by His kindness (בחסדיו) he judges me. He judged me in the righteousness of His truth (בצדקת אמתו), and in the abundance of His benevolence (וברוב טובו). He atones for all my sins, and in His righteousness (ובצדקתו) He cleanses me from the uncleanness of humans (נדת אנוש) and from the sin of the sons of man (or: sons of Adam, חטאת בני אדם) (1QS 11:13–15).⁶⁶

This cluster of ideas is reminiscent of some aspects of the Pauline passage (of course, with the exception of the Christian expression “through [or: of] the one man Jesus Christ” found in vv. 15d and 17b, which is crucial to Paul’s exclusive christology).⁶⁷ However, the main argument of Rom 5:15–19 has not been found at Qumran: the comparison between Adam and another man, and the deduction *a minori ad maius* inferred from Adam (i.e., Adam’s punishment).

The Qumran phrases, referring to God’s benevolence (טובו) and abundant mercy (רוב רחמיו), though quite distinct in content from the saying in the *Sifra*, use key terms that are ostensibly similar to those used in the *Sifra*,⁶⁸ especially God’s “abundant measure of benevolence” (מידת הטוב מרובה). I would suggest, then, that the grafting of the contrast between the notions of divine “judgment” and “mercy, favor, goodness” (Qumran, rabbinic literature) onto the system of the two complementary divine measures of “benevolence” and “punishment” (*Sifra*) created an idea that is very different from the one in the *Sifra*. This grafting might have been done by Paul himself, or it might have taken place before him,⁶⁹ but it is essential for Paul’s christological teaching as conveyed in this passage: Grace comes instead of judgment through Jesus Christ. Fortunately, we have striking verbal parallels to Paul’s wording both in the Midrash (*Sifra*) and in the Qumran writings (*Hodayot* and *Serekh*). Paul’s overall acquaintance with both the terminology and the theological system of the Qumran writings and with those of (what came to be) rabbinic literature is well established.⁷⁰ The suggestion that these two systems were combined here and received a christological twist seems, therefore, quite plausible. This suggestion does not impugn Paul’s originality, for the passage is

⁶⁶ See also: “I was near to death because of my sins. . . . You, the Lord, saved me according to the abundance of Your mercy and the abundance of Your righteousness” (כרוב רחמין וכרוב צדקותיכה). . . . Bestow on me a spirit of faith and knowledge” (11QPs^a 19:9–11).

⁶⁷ Notably, in the writings of Qumran the gift is related to the right interpretation of the Torah granted by God, which enabled the members of the sect to observe its commandments, while for Paul it is exclusively Christological.

⁶⁸ For a similar phenomenon in other religions see David Flusser, *Yahadut u-meqorot ha-natsrut* (*Jewish Sources in Early Christianity*) (Tel-Aviv: Sifriyyat Po’alim, 1982) 359–60 (in Hebrew).

⁶⁹ The Christological elements can be easily set aside without any damage to the argument.

⁷⁰ See above nn. 3, 4.

not a reproduction of Jewish writings; it rather emphasizes that Paul creatively combined two systems into a novel system of his own.

4. The works of Adam and the “other man” are contrasted in our Pauline passage: Adam was punished for “trespass” and “disobedience,” whereas the other man gains “justification” by an “act of righteousness” and by “obedience” (vv. 18–19). In this passage Paul makes no mention of his main argument in the preceding passage (Rom 5:1–11)—that Jesus died for the sinners—nor does he mention the ontological difference between the two men (emphasized in 1 Cor 15:46–49). Paul refers here to Jesus’ crucifixion in strictly nomistic terms!⁷¹ In other words, if vv. 18–19 are read in isolation from the Pauline context, they can be considered perfect parallels to the passage in the *Sifra*. In the Pauline context, the “one act of righteousness” (δικαίωμα) seems to be Jesus’ crucifixion, whereas in a Jewish context the same sentence would refer to observing any commandment. Similarly, for Paul, “obedience” seems to be Jesus’ willingness to be executed according to God’s will (cf. Phil 2:8), whereas in Jewish terms the observance of the Law is “obedience” par excellence.⁷² Moreover, Deut 12:28, a verse that inspired sources closely parallel to the *Sifra*,⁷³ contains the imperative to obey the commandments in order to acquire merit for one’s descendants. This is where the Pauline passage, in

⁷¹ Michel remarks: “Aber man darf nicht übersehen, dass unser ganzer Abschnitt mit rechtlichen Begriffen arbeitet, und dass die Gegensatz Übertretung–Rechtat auf das Gebot Gottes bzw. das Gesetz bezogen ist.” *Der Brief an die Römer*, 191–92.

⁷² The resemblance between the Jewish and Christian ideas has been noted by W. D. Davies (*Paul and Rabbinic Judaism*, 268–73). Davies writes concerning Rom 5:17–19: “It was a postulate in Rabbinic thought that a man by his obedience to the Torah could obtain merit. . . . These merits, however, benefited not merely the person who by his obedience acquired them, but also his contemporaries, and in addition, because of that solidarity of all the members of the community . . . they would also avail for those who preceded him and those who would follow him both here and hereafter” (268). “Paul could think in terms of a ‘merit’ of Christ, gained through obedience, that was efficacious for all” (273). Unfortunately, these profound observations have not received the attention they deserve as a clue to Paul’s theology in commentaries and later studies of Paul’s thinking, as far as I have seen. Karl Barth has written: “He was *the Jew*. . . . By freely submitting himself to the Law He fulfilled it,” assuming that Christ’s “obedience” includes obedience to the Torah. Karl Barth, *Christ and Adam: Man and Humanity in Romans 5* (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1956) 33. Generally speaking, the gap between Paul and Barth’s theological treatise is clear enough to critical readers; I find it highly unlikely that Paul’s intention here is the one ascribed to him by Barth. Even if by “obedience” Paul referred not only to Jesus’ crucifixion but also to his life, it seems to me out of place in the context of Pauline theology to claim that Christ’s redemption was attained by his observance of the Law; see also N. T. Wright’s commentary on this verse in *The New Interpreter’s Bible* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2002) 10.529. We do not find here an explicit statement explaining “how gentiles can attain obedience [through] Jesus Christ, [who] introduced an obedience affecting all.” Stanley K. Stowers, *A Rereading of Romans: Justice, Jews, and Gentiles* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994) 252–53. The figure opposing Adam is not an obedient person per se, but rather Jesus Christ, and there is no hint that some people were “obedient” before Christ. An abstract sense of “obedience” is alien to Jewish thought of that period, in which it was always related to divine *Law*, especially the Torah; the latter is mentioned in this passage, but is not connected to obedience.

⁷³ See above, n.16.

all its elegance, not only seems to be a close parallel to the *Sifra*, but also appears to be a clear adaptation of a Jewish passage similar to Rabbi Yose's assertion in the *Sifra*.

5. The wording of v. 14c, (Adam) ἐστὶν τύπος τοῦ μέλλοντος, resembles the wording in the *Sifra*:

אם נפשך לידע מתן שכרן של צדיקים לעתיד לבוא צא ולמד מאדם הקדמון, "If you wish to know the reward (that will be) given to the righteous in the Age to Come, you may learn this from Adam (i.e., Adam's punishment)." Commentators have almost unanimously interpreted the words τοῦ μέλλοντος as masculine, referring to Jesus⁷⁴ (hence the English translations "the coming one" or "the one who was to come"). The words τοῦ μέλλοντος, however, may also be interpreted as neuter.⁷⁵ Perceived this way, τὸ μέλλον is the precise equivalent of the Hebrew expression לעתיד לבוא ("the [Age] to Come") in the *Sifra*.⁷⁶ Unlike the *Sifra*, however, Paul does not dwell on the "Age to Come." He could be referring to "the future" (from Adam's perspective), i.e., the coming of Jesus. Why would he refer to Jesus' coming in such an unusual way? It seems more plausible that the words τοῦ μέλλοντος, fitting the Hebrew idiom so well, occurred in a Jewish source of Paul (see below). It may still be open for debate whether Paul meant the word μέλλοντος to be genitive neuter or whether he perhaps transformed it into genitive masculine.

In this sentence another stylistic affinity between the *Sifra* and Paul may be noted. In the clause "you may learn this from Adam" (*Sifra*), the word "Adam" is an ellipsis for "Adam's punishment."⁷⁷ The same may be true for Paul: The word τύπος may mean "example" (see 1 Cor 10: 6),⁷⁸ and a possible translation of the Greek sentence would be "Adam (i.e., Adam's punishment), which is the example of (grace given to men in) the (Age) to Come." Thus rendered, Paul's wording is strikingly close to the wording of the *Sifra*, and may thus reflect a similar Jewish source.

⁷⁴ Robinson has suggested that the words τοῦ μέλλοντος in the masculine may "refer to Moses, or, generally, to 'man under the law.'" John A. T. Robinson, *The Body: A Study of Pauline Theology* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1952) 35 n. 1; followed by Robin Scroggs, *The Last Adam: A Study in Pauline Anthropology* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1966) 80–81.

⁷⁵ Haacker, following Johann A. Bengel, *Gnomon Novi Testamenti* (3d ed., Tübingen: Ludov. Frid. Fues., 1855) 552: "ὅς pro ὅ, quae res, genere congruit cum τύπος, futurum, τὸ μέλλον, in neutro dicitur") and some Church Fathers (see below, n. 76), opts for interpreting τοῦ μέλλοντος as neuter, albeit in a different sense from the one proposed here. Klaus Haacker, "Exegetische Probleme des Römerbriefs," *Novum Testamentum* 20 (1978) 16–19.

⁷⁶ The word μέλλον is interpreted as meaning "the future" in an Armenian commentary attributed to Ephrem, *S. Ephraem Syri commentariolii in Epistolas D. Pauli nunc primum ex Armenio in Latinum sermonem a patribus mekitharistis translatis* (Venecia: Typographia Sancti Lazari, 1823) 15. This commentary is surveyed among other patristic interpretations by Karl H. Schelkle, *Paulus, Lehrer der Väter* (Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1956) 187–89 (cited by Haacker, "Exegetische Probleme," 18).

⁷⁷ This may explain the masculine ὅς (see Bengel, *Gnomon Novi Testamenti*, 552).

⁷⁸ On the similarity of the two passages, see *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (ed. G. Kittel and G. Friedrich; trans. G. W. Bromiley; 10 vols.; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1964–1976) 8.252 n. 29 (s.v. τύπος).

6. The form ἐνός in vv. 16c, 18a–b is also grammatically ambiguous, and can be interpreted either as masculine or as neuter. The similarity in content and vocabulary to verses 15 and 19 strengthens the view of some commentators that ἐνός in v. 18a–b is masculine (“one man’s trespass”). On the other hand, the parallel between 16c and 16d makes a strong case for interpreting ἐνός in 16c as neuter (“by one [trespass]”).⁷⁹ In v. 16a, some manuscripts read ἐνός ἁμαρτήσαντος (“one sinner”), while other (Western) manuscripts read ἐνός ἁμαρτήματος (“one act of sin”). Again, the comparison to the passage in the *Sifra* is instructive. In the *Sifra*, the point of “one transgression” is stressed: “He (Adam) was given only one commandment . . . which he transgressed” and, as a result, Adam and all his descendants were condemned to death. This passage also includes, implicitly, the view of Adam as one sinner for whose single sin many are punished.

7. In the passage from *b. Yoma* 87a, the key words זוכין and חבין (or, according to other text-witnesses, in *pi'el*, מוֹכִין and מַחֲיִיבִין), were translated above as “acquire merit for” (cf. זכות, merit) and “acquire condemnation for” (from חובה, guilt), respectively. The word מוֹכִין (translated above as “acquire merit for”) is a key word in the *Sifra* passage as well. The root זכ׳ (zky) in Hebrew is polysemic, having a wide range of denotations and connotations that are not always easy to distinguish from one another, let alone to translate into another language.⁸⁰ The verb זכה means, *inter alia*, “give possession, gift; grant” (concretely and metaphorically) and “acquire merit”; מוֹכִין, in the *pi'el*, may also be translated “acquit;” “cause to be righteous,” “justified,”⁸¹ the roots צדק (šdq) and זכ׳ (zky) being synonymous.⁸² The term זכות means, *inter alia*, “righteous deed,” “merit” and “acquittal.” The verbs מח׳ׁב, חב, and the noun חובה have the opposite meanings.

In light of the striking parallels in phraseology, rhetoric, and style between Paul’s passage and the *Sifra*, it might be suggested that this multiplicity of meanings of the equivalents of εἰς κατάκριμα / εἰς δικαίωμα (16c–d), εἰς κατάκριμα / εἰς δικαίωσιν (18a–b) are לחובה and לזכות respectively; the pair ἁμαρτωλοὶ κατεστάθησαν / δίκαιοι κατασταθήσονται (v. 19a–b) could be a clumsy rendering of נתחייבו and יזכו respectively. The term ἁμαρτία (20b–21a) is also the equivalent

⁷⁹ To be sure, the word πολλῶν in 16d can also grammatically be interpreted as masculine (“trespasses of the many”), but contextually it seems more plausible that it is neuter (“many trespasses”).

⁸⁰ Cf. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 183–90.

⁸¹ Note the interplay between different meanings of the root זכ׳ (acquire merit / cause to [act] righteously / justify, make righteous) in the redactional layer of *b. Yoma* 87a and *m. Mak.* 3:16, where the former meaning is juxtaposed to המזכה את הרבים and לזכות את ישראל (see also below, n. 96).

⁸² The Hebrew root צדק is rendered in the targumim by the Aramaic root זכ׳. We have suggested (above p. 394) that צדקת אב (Sir 3:14) is synonymous with זכות אבות in rabbinic literature, and we shall see another example below (#9, p. 411), from *m. Mak.* 3:16.

of חובה (or: חטא or: עון).⁸³ The root זכי (zky)⁸⁴ is a key term in the strikingly similar passage in the *Sifra* (cf. זכי / חוב in *b. Yoma*). It seems plausible, therefore, that Paul sought to render the Semitic root זכי⁸⁵ (and perhaps also its antonym, חוב) with different Greek words.⁸⁶ If so, bilingual thinking played a role in shaping the argument in our passage.⁸⁷

So far I have demonstrated, I hope, the similarity of our passage to the passage in the *Sifra*. Three points of a possible relationship between this passage and rabbinic literature may also be considered. Paul's statements seem to be an inversion of the Jewish sayings. The content of the following reconstructed Jewish statements is implied in the *Sifra* passage.

8. A parallel to the phrase "death reigned from Adam to Moses" is found in a saying attributed in the *Mekhilta* to Rabbi Yose, the same sage to whom the passage in the *Sifra* is attributed. According to Rabbi Yose, "the Israelites accepted the Torah in Sinai on condition that the angel of death would not have authority over them." Death, then, had authority until the giving of the Torah, and it regained this authority when the Israelites sinned by making the golden calf. As a proof-text, Rabbi Yose cites Ps 82:6, "like Adam⁸⁸ shall you die" (*Mekhilta de-Rabbi Yishma'el ba-hodesh* 9).⁸⁹ The Hebrew verb used here, שלט, means both "rule" and "have authority."⁹⁰ In a Jewish context, the sentence "death reigned from Adam to Moses" is easily intelligible. As I stated before, Adam's sin is conceived of in Second

⁸³ The argument in vv. 20b–21 has an intriguing *stylistic* parallel in rabbinic literature, in which the word זכות is used as the opposite of the biblical word עון: "Which (divine) measure is greater (מרובה), the measure of (divine) benevolence or the measure of (divine) punishment (מדת טובה או מדת פורענות)? Certainly, the measure of benevolence is greater. If, then, the lesser measure, that of punishment, reminds (God) of (one's) sin (מזכרת עון), the excessive measure of benevolence must, by deduction, remind (God) of (one's) righteousness (מזכרת זכות)." *Sifre Numbers* 8 (ed. Horovitz, 14–15). For v. 29a, see no. 9 below.

⁸⁴ Brandenburger has suggested that δωρεά (v. 15d) and δώρημα (16b) echo the root זכי in the sense of "to grant"; see Egon Brandenburger, *Adam und Christus: Exegetisch-religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung zu Röm. 5, 12–21 (1. Kor. 15)* (WMANT 7; Neukirchen: Neukirchener, 1962) 223.

⁸⁵ Contrast Davies who states, "in Rom. 5 Paul does not make use of any phrase that might be considered the equivalent of the term *zakuth*." (*Paul and Rabbinic Judaism*, 273).

⁸⁶ See also below, Theophilus of Antioch and the *Sifra*, p. ***.

⁸⁷ For Paul's bilingual thinking as reflected in 1 Cor 15:45–49, see also Menahem Kister, "'First Adam' and 'Second Adam' according to Paul (1 Cor 15) in the Light of Midrashic Exegesis and Hebrew Usage" (forthcoming).

⁸⁸ The word אדם in this verse might be interpreted here as "Adam"; see, for instance, *Numbers Rabbah* 16:24; *Exodus Rabbah* 32:1. See Gary A. Anderson, "The Status of the Torah in the Pre-Sinaitic Period: St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans," in *Biblical Perspectives: Early Use and Interpretation of the Bible in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (ed. M. E. Stone and E. G. Chazon; STDJ 28; Leiden: Brill, 1998) 1–23, esp. 21–22.

⁸⁹ Horovitz-Rabin, eds., 237.

⁹⁰ The word occurs in Rom 6:12: Μὴ οὖν βασιλευέτω ἡ ἁμαρτία ἐν τῷ . . . σώματι, to which one must compare Rom 6:14: ἁμαρτία γὰρ ὑμῶν οὐ κυριεύσει. The last phrase should be compared to Ps 119:133: ואל תשלט בי כל און (see also Billerbeck's note, Str-B 3:232, to which Qumranic "apotropaic" prayers may now be added, e.g., 11QPs^a XIX:15). The Hebrew and Aramaic

Temple Judaism and rabbinic literature as a violation of a divine *commandment*, anticipating the commandments given at Sinai (above, p. 397); by observing these commandments, therefore, Paradise may be regained, and death annulled.⁹¹ This idea is implied in the *Sifra*, although the passage there does not refer explicitly to *Heilsgeschichte*. In the framework of Pauline theology, the stress is placed on the end of the sentence: “Death reigned from Adam to Moses *even over those whose sins were not like the transgression of Adam*.” This statement implies that between Adam and Moses, human beings were not directly commanded by God (thus ignoring God’s commandments to Noah in Gen 9:1–6).⁹² Receiving the Torah only enhanced the reign of death: “Law came in, to increase the trespass . . . sin reigned in death” (vv. 20–21).

9. The paradoxical statement, “Law came in, to increase the trespass” (v. 20) is essential for Paul, and summarizes much of his teaching concerning the Torah in the Epistle to the Romans (see, e.g., 4:15). Paul does not mention righteous deeds as a positive value, and the merit of obedience to divine commandments (especially those of the Torah) does not balance out disobedience; it is only through the obedience of Christ that redemption is possible. (There is no hint in this passage that it refers only to Gentiles, and that there is such a balance for the Jews.)⁹³ The attitude in the *Sifra* is quite the opposite: Adam trespassed one commandment and was condemned, but when Jews observe many commandments they earn eternal life; the Torah and its commandments *enable* one to attain eternal life. The *Sifra* does not explicitly refer to the possibility of failure to observe the commandments and its implications. The author of *4 Ezra*, likewise, is well aware of the sinful deeds of human beings related to Adam’s sin, but he is nevertheless convinced that the commandments were given in order to increase the reward of those observing them: “Consider now for yourself how much fruit of ungodliness *one* grain of evil seed has produced; when ears of good grain *without number* are sown, *how great* will be the harvest!” (4:31–32, cited above p. 398) There is much more “good grain,” then, than “bad seed.” By and large, Jews, both before and after the destruction of the Second Temple, shared a positive view concerning the merits of the Torah.

root שָׁלַט (and the Hebrew root מָשַׁל) are the exact equivalents of κυριεύω, but lack the royal aspect of its synonym βασιλεύω.

⁹¹ Cf. Anderson’s statement: “He [=Paul] has consciously set Adam within the framework of Jewish Salvation history” (Anderson, “Status of the Torah,” 18); “Paul constructs an exegetical framework that is at one and the same time Jewish and anti-Jewish” (ibid., 21). I think we may take the latter statement one step further and suggest that Paul constructed his anti-nomistic ideas on the basis of a Jewish framework.

⁹² See also Anderson, “The Status of the Torah,” esp. 9–23.

⁹³ Contrast Gaston’s statement: “Sin and death were in the world before the Torah came with Moses and therefore all humanity in that period was under the law without the remedy of the Torah (5:14) or the grace of God in Jesus Christ (5:16).” Lloyd Gaston, *Paul and the Torah* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1987) 31; Stowers, *Rereading of Romans*, 254–55. See also Anderson, “Status of the Torah,” 10–17.

Thus, the Tanna Rabbi Hananiah ben Aqashiah says: רצה הקב"ה לזכות את ישראל לפיכך הרבה להם תורה ומצוות שנאמר ה' חפץ למען צדקו יגדיל תורה ויאדיר 'The Holy One, blessed be He, wished to grant merit (לזכות) to Israel (or: to justify Israel);⁹⁴ therefore He multiplied for them Law and commandments, as it is written, "The Lord wished to make him (i.e., Israel) *righteous* (צדקו),⁹⁵ He multiplied the (commandments of the) Law. . . . (Isa 42:21)" (*m. Mak.* 3:16).⁹⁶ It is a commonplace in Second Temple and rabbinic Judaism that observing the commandments leads to eternal life. To give only few references: a) CD 3:15–17: "His righteous testimonies . . . which man shall do and live thereby"; b) Psalms of Solomon 14:1: "To them that walk in the righteousness of His commandments, in the Law which He commanded us that we may live"; c) Mark 10:17–18: "what shall I *do* that I may inherit eternal life," and Jesus' answer: "you know the *commandments*"; d) John 5:40: "You search the scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life"; e) an ancient Jewish blessing states that God "gave us the Law of truth, and [as] eternal life He has planted it in our midst."⁹⁷

The statement of Hananiah ben Aqashiah is the exact opposite of Paul's statement in v. 20: "Law came in to increase the *trespass*." Verse 21, in which it is emphasized that "*grace* will reign through *righteousness* (διὰ δικαιοσύνης) to *eternal life*" is the exact opposite of the notion that the righteousness of observing the Torah leads one to merit (זכות = צדק = δικαίωσις; see above, no. 7 above) and eternal life. Paul clearly inverts these Jewish concepts in vv. 20–21.⁹⁸

10. In the *Sifra* passage it is stressed that Adam violated only one commandment. Although several Torah commandments (out of many) are mentioned, Adam's violation of a single commandment is clearly contrasted with Israel's observance of many commandments. This point is made explicitly in the passage of *4 Ezra* cited above:

⁹⁴ See above, #7.

⁹⁵ Cf. LXX, ἵνα δικαιοθῇ. It seems that both the Septuagint and the Tanna read צדקו as a *pi'el* infinitive, i.e., "in order to make him righteous." But cf. Targum of Jonathan to this verse.

⁹⁶ The passage appears in the manuscripts of the Mishnah, but it is probably an addition; see J. N. Epstein, *Mavo le-nusah ha-mishnah* (3d ed.; Jerusalem: Magnes, 2000) 977–78. For a Tannaitic parallel see *Mekhilta de-Rabbi Yishma'el*, Pisha 16 (ed. Horovitz-Rabin, 59). For an Amoraic parallel (in the name of Rabbi Aha) see *Leviticus Rabbah* 31:8 (ed. Margulies, 727). The passage in its Pauline context has been discussed by Davies (*Paul and Rabbinic Judaism*, 269). Marmorstein (*Doctrine of Merits*, 16) considers this saying and other, similar ones to be apologetic claims combating Christian and non-Christian accusations (for some reason Marmorstein's statement refers only implicitly to Christianity). I now tend to think that similar statements could well have been made before Paul and the Church Fathers, and not in reaction to their views (although confrontation with the opposite, Christian view could certainly make such sayings all the more relevant).

⁹⁷ אשר נתן לנו תורת אמת וחיי עולם נטעה בתוכנו; see David Flusser, "'He has planted it [i.e., the Law] as eternal life in our midst.'" *Tarbiz* 58 (1989) 147–153 (esp. 152–53 and n. 28; in Hebrew). The ancient formula is applied to the same verse (Isa 42:21) in *Tanhuma Buber Shelah* 28. Note the use of Isa 42:21, used also in *m. Mak.* 3:16.

⁹⁸ See Flusser, "Die jüdische und griechische Bildung," 22.

Consider now for yourself how much fruit of ungodliness *one* grain of evil seed has produced, when ears of good grain *without number* are sown, *how great* will be the harvest! (4:31–32)

“Without number” in 4 *Ezra* refers to righteous deeds (achieved by observance of the commandments). In Paul’s style this idea might have been expressed here by the words: *τὸ μὲν γὰρ κρίμα ἐξ ἑνὸς εἰς κατάκριμα, τὸ δὲ χάρισμα ἐκ πολλῶν παραπτωμάτων εἰς δικαίωμα*, that is, “For (divine) judgment (brought) condemnation by one (viz. trespass), but (divine) favor (brings) justification by many (viz. righteous deeds).” What Paul writes, however, is the exact opposite (v. 16c–d):

τὸ μὲν γὰρ κρίμα	τὸ δὲ χάρισμα
ἐξ ἑνὸς	ἐκ πολλῶν παραπτωμάτων
εἰς κατάκριμα	εἰς δικαίωμα

That is, “For (divine) judgment (brought) condemnation by one (viz. trespass), but (divine) favor (brings) justification by many *trespasses*.”⁹⁹ The Pauline verse is philologically puzzling: According to many translations, the preposition ἐκ does not have the same sense in 16c and 16d. The content seems to be highly paradoxical.¹⁰⁰ Barrett paraphrases: “for from one act of transgression began the process of judgment which leads to condemnation, but the act of grace, wrought in a context of many transgressions, leads to justification.” He comments that “the act of grace . . . could only take place where sin already abounded.”¹⁰¹ I think it would be worthwhile to consider the possibility that the reason for the awkwardness of Paul’s style is that here he inverted a Jewish statement according to which God’s good reward will be given for many righteous deeds. Paul inverted the saying by adding to it the word παραπτωμάτων (“trespasses”).

The Jewish parallels, all of which have been discussed above in detail, cover virtually every verse of the Pauline passage. The following table of comparison of the Pauline passage to its Jewish parallels is instructive.¹⁰²

⁹⁹ See above, n. 79.

¹⁰⁰ “That one single misdeed should be answered by judgment, this is perfectly understandable; that the accumulated sins and guilt of all ages should be answered by God’s free gift, this is the miracle of miracles, utterly beyond human comprehension.” C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (2 vols.; ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1985) 286. See also Barth, *Christ and Adam*, 13.

¹⁰¹ C. K. Barrett, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Black New Testament Commentaries; 2d ed.; London: A & C Black, 1991) 107. Note that the word ἐκ is translated very differently at the beginning of the sentence and at its end.

¹⁰² In the following table, I use the abbreviations: MY = *Mekhilta de-Rabbi Yishma‘el*; S = *Sifra*; 4E = 4 *Ezra*; Q = Qumran; M = *Mishnah Makkot*.

Paul	Jewish parallels
12(a) Therefore as through one man sin came into the world	
(b) and through sin death (came into the world) (c) and so death came to all men (d) because (?) all men sinned	"like Adam shall you die" (Ps 82:6 cited in MY)*
13(a) For until the Law sin was in the world, (b) but sin is not counted where there is no law.	
14(a) Yet (ἀλλὰ) death reigned from Adam to Moses, (b) even over those whose sins were not like the transgression of Adam,	The Israelites accepted the Torah in Sinai on the condition that the angel of death would not have authority over them (MY)
(c) who was a type (τύπος) of the coming (one / age) (τοῦ μέλλοντος).	If you wish to know the reward [that will be] given to the righteous in the Age to Come (לְעוֹלָם לְבָוֶיָּהּ), you may learn this from Adam (i.e., from Adam's punishment) (S)
15(a) But not like the trespass (b) is the favor (χάρισμα). (c) For if many died through one man's trespass, (d) how much more have the grace (χάρις) of God and the gift (δωρεά) in the grace of the one man Jesus Christ abounded for many. 16 (a) And not like (the effect) of that one man's sin (b) is the gift (δῶρημα)	Which (divine) measure is greater (מְרֻבָּה), the measure of (divine) benevolence or the measure of (divine) punishment? Certainly, the measure of benevolence is greater. He (Adam) was given only one commandment, a prohibition, which he transgressed, and see how many deaths Adam was condemned (to suffer): his own, and those of all his descendants ... someone who refrains from eating <i>piggul</i> or <i>notar</i> and who fasts on the Day of Atonement— how much more does such a person acquire merit (מְזֻכָּה) for himself and for his descendants . . . (S)

*The citation of Ps 82:6 in the *Mekhilta* implies that Adam brought death upon himself and his descendants through his transgression and disobedience, whereas the obedience of the Israelites at Sinai liberated them from the consequences of Adam's sin. For other parallels in rabbinic literature see Marmorstein, "Paulus und die Rabbinen," 271–74.

(c) For judgment— condemnation by (ἐξ) one, (d) but favor (δικαίωμα)—by (ἐκ) many trespasses.	Divine measure of judgment contrasted to measure of mercy (<i>rab. lit.</i>) [One trespass—death; many commandments—"how much reward," because "the measure of benevolence is greater than the measure of punishment" S] How much fruit of ungodliness <i>one</i> grain of evil seed has produced; when ears of good grain <i>without</i> <i>number</i> are sown, how great will be the harvest (4E)
17(a) If, because of one man's trespass (τοῦ ἐνὸς παραπτώματι), death reigned (αβ) through one man, (b) much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness (τῆς χάριτος καὶ τῆς δωρεᾶς τῆς δικαιοσύνης) reign in life (ββ) through the one man Jesus Christ.	When the Israelites accepted the Torah in Sinai, the angel of death did not have authority over them. (MY) "through the mercy of righteousness and abundant grace, gift" (Q)
18(a) Then as by one (man's) trespass— condemnation for all men, (b) so by one man's act of righteousness (δι' ἐνὸς δικαιώματος)—justification of life (δικαίωσιν ζωῆς) for all men. 19(a) For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners (ἁμαρτωλοὶ κατεστάθησαν), (b) so by one man's obedience many will be made righteous (δίκαιοι κατασταθήσονται).	He (Adam) was given only one com- mandment, a prohibition, which he transgressed, and see how many deaths Adam was condemned (to suffer): his own, and those of all his descendants . . . someone who refrains from eating <i>pig-</i> <i>gul</i> or <i>notar</i> and who fasts on the Day of Atonement—how much more does such a person acquire merit (מִצְוָה) for himself and for his descendants . . . (S)
20(a) Law came in, to increase the trespass;	God has multiplied for Israel Law and commandments in order to grant them merit (לְצִדָּקָה) (M)
(b) but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more,	Certainly, the measure of benevolence is greater than the measure of punish- ment (S, above and v. 15)
21(a) so that, as sin reigned in death, (b) grace will reign through righteous- ness (διὰ δικαιοσύνης) to eternal life (ββ) through Jesus Christ our Lord	Keeping the commandments leads to eternal life (<i>rab. lit., Q, et al.</i>)

The parallels between Rom 5:12–21 and the Jewish passages, especially the *Sifra*, are striking. Paul and the *Sifra* do not merely discuss the same topic (Adam's sin and its effect on future generations) with similar motifs and structure (deduction *a minori ad maius*). A close scrutiny reveals further that a) many verses in Rom 5:12–21 have an exact counterpart in the *Sifra* (sometimes gaining a new sense in the Pauline context); b) the Pauline passage uses nomistic language that is very much in keeping with the parallel passage in the *Sifra*; c) the Hebrew terminology in the *Sifra* (and the other Jewish parallels) sheds light on Paul's Greek terminology; d) there are reasons to believe that Paul inverted some Jewish statements. The best explanation for all these phenomena is that the whole unit (Rom 5:12–21) is based on a coherent Jewish source that was in Paul's mind while he was expressing his own, very different ideas. I must stress once more: *My aim is not to suggest a new interpretation of this passage of Paul, but rather to reconstruct the contours of an earlier, Jewish layer upon which the Pauline passage was established*. Needless to say, such a reconstruction is but a heuristic exercise. Although I am well aware that the reconstruction is hypothetical and that many details are far from clear, I find it useful, even illuminating, to do this exercise and compare the Pauline passage to its putative reconstructed Jewish source. A possible reconstruction of this putative source of the Pauline passage would run as follows:

[A] Adam brought death to the world, and death reigned (or: had authority) until the giving of the Torah (for death does not have authority over those who keep it).

[B] Adam's punishment is the example for (the Age) to Come (i.e., the reward of the righteous who observe the commandments), for God's favor is greater than trespass (and punishment), and thus if many were condemned to death by one trespass of a single individual (i.e., Adam), how much more will many acquire merit through the (many) righteous acts of obedience (to the Torah) of a single individual (i.e., of [each] individual who observes the commandments).

[C] For the Torah, containing many commandments, came in to increase righteousness. Inasmuch as sin (and punishment of the transgressors) increased, God's grace (=benevolence for those obeying Him) is even greater. Therefore, as Adam's sin caused the reign of death, the righteousness of keeping the commandments of the Torah leads to eternal life.

In order to reconstruct the putative Jewish source from the Pauline passage,¹⁰³ one must omit the references to Jesus Christ (15d; 17bβ and its counterpart in 17aβ; 21bβ), change the words "trespass" in v. 20, and omit the word "trespasses" in 16d as Pauline inversions.¹⁰⁴ The main change of content, however, was caused by

¹⁰³ For practical reasons, the reconstructed text is based as closely as possible on Paul's wording, taking into account the different Jewish usage and theological setting.

¹⁰⁴ Rom 5:12c–d seems to be a paraphrase of the preceding sentences, perhaps in an attempt to

recontextualizing the passage. Certainly, terms like δικαίωσις, δόρεά and χάρις are distinctly Pauline; in the Pauline context, Rom 5:18 continues the train of thought of Rom 4:25 (“who was put to death for our trespasses and raised for our justification”), using the same pair of Greek words (παράπτωμα / δικαίωσις), but I venture to argue that Jewish phrases and concepts were adapted by Paul in this passage to fit his new christological system. In the process of transforming Jewish (generally Hebrew) concepts into Greek, Paul was able to transform the meaning of a few key terms and adapt them to his own theology. By analogy, *mutatis mutandis*, Paul’s hymn to “love” in 1 Cor 13:1–13 (“If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong . . . and the greatest of these is love”), if taken out of context, could be used in modern times as a hymn to romantic love (with the omission of certain sentences, such as vv. 9–12). The use of the word “love” as a translation of the Greek word ἀγάπη, and the romantic connotation of the word “love” in modern Western culture, make such an adaptation possible. To give another example: Verses in Proverbs in which the word תורה appears were construed by the Sages (and are construed, for that matter, by many Jews to this very day) as referring to the Torah, rather than to human instruction of father or teacher. The very fact that the Hebrew word תורה came to denote the Pentateuch made such a reading of these verses almost automatic. Likewise, in our passage, the use of theological terms current in Paul’s vocabulary may obscure a Jewish usage close to the one found in the *Sifra*.¹⁰⁵

A Jewish source similar to the one reconstructed above (mainly on the basis of the *Sifra* passage) was possibly known to Paul in some form (perhaps orally, either in Hebrew or in Greek). The underlying Jewish phraseology may shed light on some difficult Pauline phrases in this passage. Paul should certainly not be perceived as a redactor who does not fully understand what his source means. Unlike the authors of the Gospels, he does not transmit traditions but rather creates his own innovative theology. In this case, he is reworking existing material, making it an integral part of his own teaching by putting it in the context of his own theological terminology and replacing a few phrases. We shall discuss a similar phenomenon in a medieval text below, pp. 418–20. Even if one is not fully convinced that Paul

explore all of their theological meanings. Verses 13b and 14b stand in tension with other verses in this passage, and may be regarded as Paul’s theological refinement of his source for his own theological purposes; note the striking parallelism between 12a–b and 13a, 14a.

¹⁰⁵ For a similar case, see Esther Chazon’s discussion of a striking parallel between a passage of the *Apostolic Constitutions* and a Jewish liturgical source of the Second Temple period. She states: “This expression is a favorite of the compiler of the *Apostolic Constitutions* and, therefore, it is usually attributed to him. . . . The fact that the expression . . . suited the Hellenistic concepts of implanted knowledge and innate law could account for its appeal to this fourth century Christian redactor / compiler.” She concludes that the passage in the *Apostolic Constitutions* “made use of a Jewish source like the Thursday prayer [of the *Words of the Luminaries*—M.K.]” Esther G. Chazon, “A ‘Prayer Alleged to Be Jewish’ in the *Apostolic Constitutions*,” in *Things Revealed: Studies in Early Jewish and Christian Literature in Honor of Michael E. Stone* (ed. Esther G. Chazon et al.; SJSJ 89; Leiden: Brill, 2004) 261–76, esp. 268, 270.

used a Jewish source, as I have tried to demonstrate, one will hopefully find that the close comparisons I made between the Pauline passage and the striking rabbinic parallels are instructive for discerning the Jewish background of the specifically Pauline emphases in this passage. The topics with which this paper has dealt were of the utmost importance for Paul as well as for rabbinic Judaism.

■ Theophilus of Antioch and the *Sifra*

In a work by the early Church writer Theophilus of Antioch (second century C.E.), we find a peculiar version of the Jewish midrash that came down to us in the *Sifra*:¹⁰⁶

What man <did not>¹⁰⁷ acquire for himself (ἐαυτῶς περιποιήσατο) through his neglect and disobedience (παρακοῆς), God now freely bestows (δωρεῖται) upon him through love (φιλανθρωπία) and mercy (ἐλεημοσύνη), when man obeys (ὑπακούντος) him. For as by disobedience man gained death for himself (ἐαυτῷ ἐπεσπάσατο), so by obedience to the will of God whoever wills can acquire for himself (περιποιήσασθαι ἐαυτῷ) eternal life. For God gave us a law and holy commandments;¹⁰⁸ everyone who performs (ποιήσας) them can be saved.¹⁰⁹

Most elements of the *Sifra* passage may be discerned here: Death is depicted as a punishment for Adam's sin, a punishment that Adam brought upon himself by violating a commandment; as a diametrical opposite, observance of the commandments is described as enabling one to obtain eternal life; all this is related to what is called in the *Sifra* "the (divine) measure of benevolence" and in Theophilus "(God's) love and mercy." Students of Theophilus have compared some elements in this passage to Paul,¹¹⁰ but in fact the passage is much closer to the *Sifra* than

¹⁰⁶ On the close relations between Theophilus's work and Judaism in general, see Oskar Skarsaune, "Scriptural Interpretation in the Second and Third Century," in *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament: The History of Its Interpretation*, I/1 (ed. Magne Sæbo; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996) 414–18.

¹⁰⁷ One must emend οὐν to οὐκ; an emendation not accepted by Gustave Bardy and J. Sender, *Théophile d'Antioche, Trois livres à Autolycus* (Paris: Cerf, 1948) 111 n. 2; or add οὐ (Miroslav Marcovich, see n. 109).

¹⁰⁸ The expression is found in 2 Pet 2:21; the context, however, is far from the one in the present passage of Theophilus. Theophilus did not observe the Torah commandments as understood by the Jews, as may be demonstrated by the omission of the Sabbath both in the narrative of the Genesis story and in the account of the Ten Commandments (*Ad Autolycum* 3.9).

¹⁰⁹ Theophilus, *Ad Autolycum* 2.27; for an edition of the text, see Miroslav Marcovich, *Theophyli Antiocheni Ad Autolycum* (Patristische Texte und Studien 44; Berlin: Gruyter, 1995) 77; see also Robert M. Grant, *Theophilus of Antioch Ad Autolycum* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1970) 70–71.

¹¹⁰ See the editions of Grant and Bardy (n. 107) and, recently, Marcovich's edition (n. 109) and, in a more elaborate form, Robert M. Grant, *Greek Apologists of the Second Century* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1998) 172. (Note also that some of the features of Theophilus's teaching attributed by Grant to his christology on p. 171 are attested in Jewish midrashim in a different context.)

to Paul.¹¹¹ Christ is not mentioned here at all, the terminology is not Pauline, and redemption is said to be attained by any person¹¹² who keeps the Law and observes the commandments (the key terms “Law” and “commandments” probably had different meanings for Theophilus and for his contemporary Jewish Sages,¹¹³ but the formula is exactly the same). Moreover, the way to obtain redemption is defined in purely nomistic terms. The phrase *περιποιήσασθαι ἑαυτῶς* may well be the Greek equivalent of *זכה לעצמו* (“acquired for himself”) in the *Sifra*. Notably, the influence of one’s sin on others, so central to the *Sifra* passage, is missing in Theophilus; the statement about the impact of Adam’s disobedience on his descendants does not occur here (but note that the “man” who disobeyed and acquired for himself death and the “man” who obeys and observes the commandments are not the same!). Did Theophilus, or his source, deliberately play down the notion of transferring merits?

It seems that the passage in Theophilus is another version of the passage attributed in the *Sifra* to Theophilus’s contemporary, Rabbi Yose.

■ The *Pugio Fidei* Version of the *Sifra* and Modern Scholarship

The potential of adapting the *Sifra* passage to Pauline Christianity was realized as early as the thirteenth century. In Raymond Martini’s *Pugio Fidei* we find the following citation from the *Sifre* [*sic!*]:¹¹⁴

אֲרִי יוֹסִי הַגָּלִילִי: צֵא וְלִמַּד זְכוּת מֶלֶךְ הַמָּשִׁיחַ וּשְׂכָרָן שֶׁל צַדִּיקִים מֵאָדָם הַקִּדְמוֹנִי שֶׁלֹּא נִצְטוּוּהָ אֲלֵא מִצְוָה אַחַת בְּלֹא תַעֲשֶׂה וְעָבַר עָלֶיהָ רָאָה כִּמְהָ מִיתוֹת נִקְנְסוּ לְדוֹרוֹתָיו וּלְדוֹרוֹת דּוֹרוֹתָיו עַד סוֹף כָּל הַדּוֹרוֹת. וְכִי אֵיזוֹ מִדָּה מְרֻבָּה מִדַּת הַטּוֹב אוֹ מִדַּת הַפּוֹרַעֲבוֹנוֹת? הוּא אוֹמֵר מִדַּת טוֹב מְרֻבָּה וּמִדַּת הַפּוֹרַעֲבוֹנוֹת מְעוֹשָׂה וּמֶלֶךְ הַמָּשִׁיחַ הַמַּתְעֵנָה וְהַמַּצְטַעַר בְּעֵד הַפּוֹשְׁעִים שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר וְהוּא מַחֲלֵל מִפְּשָׁעֵינוּ נֹרָא עַל אַחַת כִּמְהָ וְכִמְהָ שִׁזְכָּה לְכָל הַדּוֹרוֹת כֻּלָּן הֵחָדָּה הַפְּנִיעַ בּוֹ אֶת עוֹן כָּלֵנוּ.

Rabbi Yose ha-Gallili says: If you wish to know the merit of the King Messiah and the reward (that will be) given to the righteous in the Age to Come, you may learn this from Adam (i.e., from Adam’s punishment): He was given only one commandment, a prohibition, which he transgressed, and see how many deaths Adam was condemned (to suffer as a result): his own, and those of all his descendants and his descendants’ descendants to the end of all generations. Now, which (divine) measure is greater, the measure of

¹¹¹ For a similar phenomenon concerning Theophilus, Paul, and the midrash, see Kister, “First Adam and Second Adam” (above, n. 87).

¹¹² Bardy’s comment is worth citing in full: “Cf. Rom. v, 19. Le parallélisme des expressions rend plus sensible la distance qui sépare Théophile de Saint Paul. L’apologiste passe complètement sous silence le rôle rédempteur du Christ et semble croire que l’homme, déchu librement, peut librement se relever. Ce moralisme n’est pas inouï chez les anciens Pères, mais il a quelque chose d’étonnant à notre point de vue” (Bardy and Sender, *Théophile d’Antioche*, 111 n. 3).

¹¹³ See above, n. 108.

¹¹⁴ Raymundus Martini, *Pugio Fidei adversum Mauros et Judaeos* (Leipzig: Sumptibus Haeredum Friderici Lanckisi, 1687) 866–67.

(divine) benevolence or the measure of (divine) punishment? Certainly, the measure of benevolence is greater. How much more, then, does the King Messiah, who is afflicted and suffers for the sinners—as it is written, “he was wounded for our transgressions” (Isa 53:5)—acquire merit (or: justifies; יִצְחָק) all generations, as it is written: “the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all” (Isa 53:6).

The only difference between this passage and the original one is the addition of the words “<the merit of the King Messiah and> the reward of the righteous” at the beginning, and the words “King Messiah, then, who is afflicted and suffers for the sinners,” as well as the addition of Isa 53:5–6 at the end.

There is no Jewish textual evidence for the reading of Raymond Martini in the *Sifra*,¹¹⁵ and there can be no doubt that this is a Christianized,¹¹⁶ secondary version¹¹⁷ of the passage in the *Sifra*.¹¹⁸ The Christianization was achieved by changing the identity of the “other man,” the counter-example to Adam, from anyone who observes prohibitions (as in the *Sifra*) to the King Messiah. In the Latin note, Martini (who is probably not responsible for the Christianization)¹¹⁹ explicitly cites Rom 5:15 as a close parallel to the argument in the midrash.

The passage in its Christian context in *Pugio Fidei* demonstrates how easily material can be adapted from one theological system to another by introducing minor textual changes. The substantial difference between the Christianization in *Pugio* and in Paul is that Martini claimed that he was citing a Jewish passage,

¹¹⁵ See Finkelstein’s critical edition of the *Sifra*, 3.286.

¹¹⁶ Contrasting views concerning the problem of forgery in the midrashim cited by Raymund Martini have been expressed by Saul Lieberman and Yitzhak Baer. Lieberman, *Sheqi’in*; Yitzhak Baer, “The Forged Midrashim of Raymund Martini in the Context of the Inter-Religious Controversies in the Middle Ages” in *Studies in Memory of Asher Gulak and Samuel Klein* (ed. S. Asaf and G. Schalom; Jerusalem: The Hebrew University Press Association, 1942) 28–49 (in Hebrew); Saul Lieberman, “Raymund Martini and His Alleged Forgeries in idem, *Texts and Studies* (New York: Ktav, 1974) 285–300. Our passage is a good example of a Christianized version—in other words, a forgery—of a midrash. On the origin of the forgery, see below, n. 119.

¹¹⁷ The wording “the merit of the King Messiah and the reward of the righteous” is clearly secondary. The use of מַתְעֵנָה (in the *niph’al* stem) in the sense of “suffer” is rare in Mishnaic Hebrew, as is the use of בָּעַר in this context. The verses from Isaiah at the end of the passage seem to be an interpolation. Hence, there are sufficient philological grounds for inferring that this is not a genuine reading of the *Sifra*. The interpretation of Isa 53:5–6 given here is also foreign to Jewish sources (in the Targum these verses are interpreted as referring to the Messiah, but not to his affliction), while it is common in Christian writings. The fact that the only textual witness for this reading is a book whose aim is to find Christian truth in rabbinic writings makes it quite clear that it is a Christian forgery.

¹¹⁸ Thus also Lieberman (after considering somewhat unconvincing emendations of the text); see Lieberman, *Sheqi’in*, 65–66 (in Hebrew). Lieberman does not refer to the Epistle to the Romans.

¹¹⁹ The Christian adaptor utilized the word מַתְעֵנָה in the *Sifra*, meaning “tortured, suffering” (cf. Rom 5:8). Interestingly, the Latin translation of the word מַתְעֵנָה, *humiliatus jejunio*, is a misinterpretation of the Christianized Hebrew text as referring to fasting (rather than “suffering”). This indicates that more than one person took part in creating the texts of *Pugio*, for it is doubtful that the Christian “falsification” of the Hebrew text can be attributed to Martini if he himself is responsible for the Latin translation. See Lieberman, *Sheqi’in*, 66, 69.

while Paul used a Jewish source for his own purposes. The mode of adaptation in the two works, however, is quite similar. In Raymond Martini's context the word יִצְחַק is translated "will justify" (*justificabit*), and is thus clearly identified with the Pauline term $\delta\iota\kappa\alpha\acute{\iota}\omega\mu\alpha$, "justify, justification."

This allegedly Jewish source in *Pugio Fidei* has been cited as a striking parallel to Rom 5:15–19 in the scholarly literature of the nineteenth century (and sometimes later). Franz Delitzsch (1870), who considered the passage from Martini the best parallel to Romans, noted that "Rabbi Yose's saying is not found in the printed editions of the Sifri."¹²⁰ Some scholars nonetheless continued to regard Martini's reading as genuine. It has been cited by many New Testament scholars, who considered it unique evidence for a Jewish conception of the suffering of the Messiah.¹²¹ Billerbeck's judgment was more decisive, and rightly so: After citing the Christianized version (not from *Pugio Fidei*, but from the prestigious edition of the New Testament by Wettstein),¹²² he noted: "We have not found this citation; we also do not believe that it is found anywhere in the ancient literature," and he rightly suggested that it is an erroneous form of our Sifra passage.¹²³ For him, the passage in the Sifra is no more than a parallel to the deduction a minori ad maius in Rom 5:15. Later commentators, who owe so much to Billerbeck's commentary, lost interest in the rabbinic passage. It is cited, if at all, either as an illustration of the inference in 5:15, or in the context of Jewish passages dealing with the impact of Adam's sin. Scholars did not compare the two passages in their entirety, and did not note the far-reaching conclusions that should be drawn, I think, from their similarities.

¹²⁰ Delitzsch, *Brief an der Römer*, 82–83.

¹²¹ The falsified midrash is cited from *Pugio Fidei* by G. H. Box and W. O. E. Oesterley in a chapter entitled "Some Characteristics of the Midrashic Literature and Some New Testament Illustrations." *The Religion and Worship of the Synagogue: An Introduction to the Study of Judaism from the New Testament Period* (London: Pitman & Sons, 1907) 93. Part of the source (omitting the Christian element) is cited from Oesterley-Box book as "Sifri" (in the name of Martini) by Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 95–96 n. 27. Lagrange tends to prefer the non-messianic text of the *Sifra*, but not without some hesitation and not before saying: "Si le texte le plus rationnel devait être regardé comme seul authentique, il n'y aurait pas à hésiter [= to opt for Martini's text – M.K.]. Mais ce serait faire trop d'honneur à la casuistique rabbinique que de lui refuser les raisonnements bizarres et fantastiques." Marie-Joseph Lagrange, *Le Messianisme chez les Juifs* (Paris: Gabalda, 1909) 244–45. The passage from Martini was also cited by Schürer as a Jewish source in the 2d ed. of his *Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes im Zeitalter Jesu Christi* (2 vols; Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1886) 2.465; whereas in the 3d ed. (2 vols; Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1898) 2.555, he expresses uncertainty whether our texts are shortened or Raymond Martini used an interpolated exemplar. W. D. Davies cited (in 1948) the passage from the English translation of Schürer's work, while dealing with the notion of a suffering Messiah in Judaism (*Paul and Rabbinic Judaism*, 282), albeit with hesitations expressed at the end of his book (*ibid.*, 335).

¹²² Johann J. Wettstein, *Ἡ Καινὴ Διαθήκη: Novum Testamentum Graecum editionis receptae. . . nec non commentario plenior* (2 vols; Amsterdam: Officina Dommeriana, 1751) 2.48 (cited as "Sifre," without reference to Raymond Martini).

¹²³ Str-B 3:230.

■ Conclusion

Rom 5:12–21 and *Sifra hova* 12:12 are not just two passages with some common elements.¹²⁴ I have argued that a passage similar to the one in the *Sifra* was a source that was known to Paul and was used by him in his own writings. The evidence is cumulative: The ensemble of ideas, motifs, arguments, and phrases in a short passage of Paul and its parallel in the *Sifra* is striking. Paul's stress on "obedience," "one act of righteousness," and the ambiguity concerning the status of the giving of the Law in the *Heilsgeschichte* can be better understood against the foil of the rabbinic passage. It would be difficult to answer the question whether Paul himself converted the Hebrew ideas into Greek. Be that as it may, the Jewish, Torah-oriented source was reworked by Paul, who transformed it into quite a different ideology, which is anti-nomistic at least to some extent. The cumulative weight of evidence (including the parallel from *b. Yoma*) indicates that what we have in Rom 5:12–21 is a Christianization of a Jewish nomistic conception rather than a "democratization" of a messianic idea in the *Sifra*, as some Christological additions are discernible in the Pauline passage. According to Paul, the text refers specifically to Jesus Christ. For him, "obedience" refers to Jesus' obedience (probably at the crucifixion) rather than obedience to the Torah, and there is no "righteousness" in the Law, but only that which is achieved through Christ. God's "favor" is also given exclusively through Jesus, in contrast to the way this conception functioned in the Jewish source (and similarly in Theophilus's wording). The shift was not too difficult, because the axioms of each theological system dictated a different interpretation of every single phrase of Romans even when Paul's wording was identical to that of his Jewish source. In two verses, Paul may have inverted key terms of a Jewish source, thus reversing the original emphasis on the significance of the Law.

The assumed Jewish source was strikingly close to the *Sifra* in its wording, as we have noted above in detail (e.g., לעתיד לבוא τοῦ μέλλοντος, above #5). It seems, however, that the source was not fully identical to the *Sifra* (the opposite of זכה in this source may indeed have been חייב, as in *b. Yoma* 87a, and it apparently

¹²⁴ As I have already noted in the course of this study, some scholars have in the past observed some isolated affinities between the *Sifra* and Rom 5:12–21. Delitzsch noted the importance of the Hebrew root זכ for understanding the background of the Pauline passage (*Brief an der Römer*, 83), but could not apply it to the original, non-Christianized reading of *Sifra*, of which he was not aware; Str-B, (3:230) noted the similarity in the argument *a minori ad maius*; Marmorstein ("Paulus und die Rabbinen," 271–77) suggested that the theological assumption that God's benevolence is greater than his punishment is reflected in Paul's statements; Davies (*Paul and Rabbinic Judaism*, 268–73) noted some relationship between obedience to the Torah and Christ's obedience; Sanders wrote: "For the form of the argument, compare *Sifra*" (*Paul and Rabbinic Judaism* 473 n. 63; see also 190 n. 46); Brandenburger (*Adam und Christus*, 59–60, 222–23, 277) noted several affinities between Paul and the *Sifra* in various contexts, but he did not compare the two passages in their entirety, and certainly did not take note of the far-reaching conclusions of such a comparison. Each of these scholars noted only one isolated similarity between the two passages, without paying attention to the other components of the *Sifra*, on the one hand, and of Paul, on the other.

included explicit reference to “obedience” (to the Torah).¹²⁵ Our conclusions are not insignificant for the study of the midrash. If Paul and Theophilus used a passage similar to the *Sifra*, it follows that Rabbi Yose was only a tradent of a much earlier tradition, as is often the case in rabbinic literature. The tradition was preserved almost intact for at least one hundred years. At the same time, the comparison to the *Sifra* also highlights Paul’s bilingual thinking and the influence of Hebrew religious terms on his theological enterprise.¹²⁶

The Jewish parallels give us clues to a better understanding of some details of this passage, especially with regard to how Adam is related to his descendants and Christ to his believers. In this passage, as well as in the other two Pauline passages concerning Adam and Christ, ancient notions found in the Hebrew Bible about the relationship of ancestors to their descendants (and the notion that righteous deeds and sins of an ancestor affect that individual’s descendants)¹²⁷ underlie Paul’s thinking regarding the relation between Adam and his descendants and between Christ and his believers.¹²⁸ More importantly, we have a rare opportunity to see Paul at work, creating his text and developing his theology, and to have a fresh look at core doctrines in Christianity and their complex relationship to Jewish conceptions.

■ Appendix: A Parallel to Rabbi Yose’s Saying, Attributed to Rabbi Yehuda

The first part of Rabbi Yose’s saying in the *Sifra* is also found in *Sifre Deuteronomy* 323:¹²⁹

ענבימו ענבי רוש—בניו של אדם הראשון אחם שקנסתי עליו מיתה ועל תולדותיו
אחריו עד סוף כל הדורות.

“Their grapes are grapes of *rosh*” (Deut 32:32)—He [=God] said to them [=Israel]: You are the children of Adam who was punished by his own death and by the deaths of his descendants to the end of all generations.

The saying is attributed to Rabbi Yehuda, a contemporary of Rabbi Yose and, like himself, a disciple of Rabbi ‘Aqiva. It is part of Rabbi Yehuda’s interpretation of Deut 32 as praise for Israel.¹³⁰ In this context, however, the saying does not make sense. A longer, and probably more original version of this saying in the same

¹²⁵ See above nn. 16, 73.

¹²⁶ See also Kister, “‘First Adam’ and ‘Second Adam’” (forthcoming).

¹²⁷ Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism*, 268–73 (above, n. 72).

¹²⁸ See my forthcoming articles “‘In Adam’: 1 Cor 15:21–22, 12:27 in their Jewish Setting”; “‘First Adam’ and ‘Second Adam’ according to Paul (1 Cor 15) in the Light of Midrashic Exegesis and Hebrew Usage.”

¹²⁹ *Sifre Deuteronomy*, 323 (ed. Finkelstein, 374).

¹³⁰ See the midrashim in the name of Rabbi Yehuda on Deut 32:28, 32, 37 in the *Sifre* as well as in *Midrash ha-gadol* on these verses (cited from the lost *Mekhilta Deuteronomy*); note

context is recorded in *Midrash ha-gadol* on Deut 32:32,¹³¹ which is probably derived from the *Mekhilta Deuteronomy*:¹³²

ענבימו ענבי רוש—אמ' להן: בניו של אדם הראשון אתם שלא נצטווה אלא על מצוה אחת בלא תעשה ועבר עליה ראה כמה מיתות נקנסו לו ולדורותיו ולדורות דורותיו עד סוף כל הדורות. וכי איזו מדה מרובה, מדת הטוב או מדת הפורענות? הוי אומר מדת הפורענות מעושה ראה כמה מיתות נקנסו לו ולדורותיו עד סוף כל הדורות.

“Their grapes are grapes of *rosh*” (Deut 32:32)—He [=God] said to them: You are the children of Adam who was given only one commandment, a prohibition, which he transgressed, and see how many deaths Adam was condemned [to suffer] (נקנסו) [as a result]: his own, and those of all his descendants and his descendants’ descendants to the end of all generations. Now, which (divine) measure is greater, the measure of (divine) benevolence or the measure of (divine) punishment? Certainly, the measure of benevolence is greater, and the measure of punishment is lesser. See how many deaths Adam was condemned [to suffer]: his own, and those of all his descendants and his descendants’ descendants to the end of all generations.

The extant form of this saying is puzzling. One could easily suggest that two sentences have been omitted by mistake, and the saying should be reconstructed with the help of the *Sifra* as follows:

Certainly, the measure of benevolence is greater, and the measure of punishment is lesser. <If, then, the lesser measure (is) that of punishment,>¹³³ see how many deaths Adam was condemned [to suffer]: his own, and those of all his descendants and his descendants’ descendants to the end of all generations. <(As for) someone who [observes several commandments?]
—how much more does such a person acquire merit (מזכה) for himself and for his descendants and all his descendants’ descendants to the end of all generations>.¹³⁴

The two missing sentences could easily have dropped by *homoioteleuton* in *Mekhilta Deuteronomy*, and another mishap of *homoioteleuton* could explain the wording in *Sifre Deuteronomy*.¹³⁵ It might be therefore argued that the saying attributed to Rabbi Yehuda in the *Mekhilta Deuteronomy* and in the *Sifre* is almost identical to the one attributed to Rabbi Yose in the *Sifra*.

The history of Rabbi Yehuda’s tradition, however, is far more complex and elusive. According to *Genesis Rabbah*, the same Rabbi Yehuda allegedly identified the Tree of Knowledge as a vine using the same proof-text, the words in Deut

especially Rabbi Yehuda’s midrash on the preceding stichoi (Deut 32:32; *Sifre Deuteronomy*, 323 [ed. Finkelstein, 373–80]).

¹³¹ Solomon Fisch, *Midrash ha-gadol: Deuteronomy*. (Jerusalem: Mosad ha-Rav Kuk, 1983) 723.

¹³² Hoffmann, *Midrash Tannaim*, 200.

¹³³ In Hebrew: <מידת הפורענות מעושה > כמה אם מידת הפורענות מעושה >

¹³⁴ In Hebrew: . . . עד סוף כל הדורות > הן . . . על אחת כמה וכמה שיזכה לו ולדורותיו
עד סוף כל הדורות >

¹³⁵ This mishap could have occurred in either written or oral transmission.

32:32.¹³⁶ This identification of the Tree of Knowledge is an old one: Its earliest occurrence is in *I En* 32:40.¹³⁷ While the word “grapes” in Deut 32:32 was interpreted metaphorically¹³⁸ by the tradition documented in *Mekhilta Deuteronomy*, the same word was interpreted in *Genesis Rabbah* in its plain sense.

One may conclude, then, that two traditions were attributed to Rabbi Yehuda. According to both, Rabbi Yehuda interpreted the word עֵץ in this verse as Adam (i.e., אָדָם, the first man). The two traditions may represent different interpretations of an ambiguous saying of Rabbi Yehuda in the context of Deuteronomy on the one hand (in the midrashim on Deuteronomy, where Rabbi Yehuda’s saying is contrasted, originally or secondarily, with Rabbi Nehemiah’s interpretation on the same verse) and of Genesis on the other hand (in *Genesis Rabbah*; see also *I Enoch*). Rabbi Yehuda’s saying in the *Sifre* and in *Mekhilta Deuteronomy* is likely an application of the tradition attributed to Rabbi Yose in the *Sifra* by a later sage who did his best to interpret Rabbi Yehuda’s saying.¹³⁹

¹³⁶ *Genesis Rabbah* 15:7 (ed. Theodor, 140).

¹³⁷ See Louis Ginzberg, *Die Haggada bei den Kirchenvätern und in der apokryphischen Literatur* (Berlin: Calvari, 1900) 40.

¹³⁸ It is unlikely that the *Mekhilta Deuteronomy* understood the verse as arguing that “Israel’s grapes are those of Adam,” taking “grapes” literally rather than as a metaphor.

¹³⁹ Theoretically, both traditions may be remnants of a complex interpretation of Rabbi Yehuda, but the solution suggested above seems more likely.