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'Bearing His Reproach' (Heb 13.9–14)

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Heb 13.9–14 envisages a situation where Christians of a Jewish background are still defining themselves too much by their Levitical heritage. They are still interacting with the synagogue, including participating in religious meals. Hebrews urges the readers to go outside the camp/gate, to sever the ties with Jerusalem, that is, to make a clean break from Judaism both in understanding and in practice. Such a parting may bring abuse, but this is only to follow the way of Jesus. The problem then is not so much an attraction back into Judaism, but a failure to leave it sufficiently in the first place.

I. Introduction

Chapter 13 is often said to be the key to the theology of Hebrews.[1] More specifically Heb 13.9–16 has been nominated as one of the epistle's most important sections.[2] Moreover, the verses that concern us, vv. 9–14, are among those many passages that have attracted the notoriety of being one of the most difficult texts in the NT.[3] There is certainly debate over whether the verses refer to the Eucharist or not, specifically the meaning of θυσιαστήριον (v. 10); there is an unclarity about the meaning of the 'various and strange teachings' (v. 9a), and about the nature of the foods that are unprofitable for those who 'live by' them (v. 9b). There is also disagreement over who is meant by 'those who serve the tent',

1 F. V. Filson, *"Yesterday": A Study of Hebrews in the Light of Chapter 13* (SBT 2/4; London: SCM, 1967) 82; J. Thurén, *Das Lobopfer der Hebräerbrief: Studien zum Aufbau und Anliegen von Hebräerbrief 13* (Åbo: Åbo Akademi, 1973) 246–7; D. Lührmann, 'Der Hohepriester ausserhalb des Lagers (Heb 13,12)', *ZNW* 69 (1978) 186.

2 S. Lehne (*The New Covenant in Hebrews* [JSNTSup 44; Sheffield: JSOT, 1990] 157 n. 129) says that Heb 13.9–16 contains 'the gist of Heb. in a nutshell'.

3 'One of the most complex passages in Hebrews, if not in the entire New Testament' (J. W. Thompson, '"Outside the Camp": A Study of Heb 13.9–14', CBQ 40 [1978] 53; repr. in *idem*, *The Beginnings of Christian Philosophy: The Epistle to the Hebrews* [CBQMS 13; Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1982] 141); 'among the most difficult passages of the entire New Testament' (H. Koester, '"Outside the Camp": Hebrews 13.9–14', *HTR* 55 [1962] 299); 'one of the most controversial passages in Hebrews' (W. L. Lane, *Hebrews* 9–13 [WBC 47B; Dallas: Word Books, 1991] 530).

and over what point the author is making with his quotation of Lev 16.27 in v. 11. Considerations like these led F. J. Schierse to say that the exegete stands before the passage at a complete loss ('in völliger Ratlosigkeit').[4] However, our concern is not directly with these celebrated *crux interpreta*, but with the historical reality behind the exhortation that concludes the author's paraenesis – the appeal to go out to Jesus outside the camp (ἐξερχώμεθα πρὸς αὐτὸν ἔξω τῆς παρεμβολῆς, v. 13).

How are the readers supposed to go out to Jesus, outside the camp? Was this simply a mental disposition, or was some physical act involved? And why would this going outside the camp bring reproach or abuse? Is this reproach simply verbal insult, or does it have affinities with Jesus' physical sufferings outside the gate? Why would they be reviled, and who would revile them?

This is not the first time the author has used the term 'reproach' (ὀνειδισμός). It is one of the words he uses to describe the readers' own previous experience of suffering (10.33), and it also describes Moses' acceptance of the 'reproach of Christ' (ὁ ὀνειδισμὸς τοῦ Χριστοῦ) in preference to the pleasures of Egypt (11.26). This last example directly parallels the author's exhortation to his readers in 13.13 to bear his reproach (ὁ ὀνειδισμὸς αὐτοῦ). What was the reproach of Christ?

II. 'The reproach of Christ' (Heb 11.26)

In concluding his list of the champions of faith, the author tells how Jesus 'endured the cross' (ὑπέμεινεν σταυρόν) and 'gave no thought to its shame' (αἰσχύνης καταφρονήσας, 12.2). Such language reflects the terms used to describe the Maccabean martyrs in 4 Maccabees (6.9; 13.1; 14.1, 11; 16.2).[5] Furthermore, Jesus 'endured hostility' (ὑπομεμενηκότα ... ἀντιλογίαν) from sinners against himself.[6] Given the writer's emphasis on the death of Jesus, it is clear that this 'opposition', notwithstanding the term ἀντιλογία, was not limited to verbal abuse.[7]

Likewise, the language concerning his suffering refers to the nature of his death (13.12).[8] This is clear from 2.9, which speaks of τὸ πάθημα τοῦ θανάτου. As well, in 9.25–8 the author links the necessity of Jesus' suffering (ἔδει αὐτὸν παθεῖν) with his death. He makes this link clear through three additional state-

4 F. J. Schierse, *Verheissung und Heilsvollendung: Zur theologischen Grundfrage des Hebräerbriefes* (MTS 1/9; München: Zink, 1955) 184.

5 N. C. Croy, *Endurance in Suffering: Hebrews 12:1–13 in its Rhetorical, Religious, and Philosophical Context* (SNTSMS 98; Cambridge: CUP, 1998) 187.

6 If the plural reading (ἑαυτούς or αὐτούς) is preferred, it means to their own harm (for a defence of the plural reading see Lane, *Hebrews 9–13*, 400 n.[u]).

7 Croy, *Endurance*, 189. D. A. deSilva sees a background in Ps 68.8, 10 LXX (*Despising Shame: Honor Discourse and Community Maintenance in the Epistle to the Hebrews* [SBLDS 152; Atlanta: Scholars, 1995] 194).

8 The Romans generally crucified their victims in a conspicuous public place, such as outside a busy thoroughfare (see M. Hengel, *Crucifixion* [London: SCM, 1977] 87).

ments. First, he refers to his offering himself (ἵνα . . . προσφέρῃ ἑαυτόν, v. 25) once for all (ἅπαξ προσενεχθείς, v. 28); secondly, he mentions his sacrifice (θυσία, v. 26); and thirdly, he speaks unequivocally of Jesus' once-for-all death (ἅπαξ ἀποθανεῖν, v. 27).[9]

The writer therefore identifies the suffering of Jesus with his death by crucifixion, and this for him is the reproach of Christ.[10] The reproach of Christ then involves more than social marginalisation. Furthermore, the author is conscious of the location of Jesus' suffering, and it has significance for him.

III. 'Outside the gate' (Heb 13.12)

'Outside the gate' describes the physical place where Jesus was crucified – outside the city of Jerusalem.[11] In addition it carries with it the idea that Jesus was rejected by his own Davidic city. According to A. T. Hanson 'the essence of the Messiah's reproach was that he should be rejected by his own'.[12] It is the historical location of Jesus' crucifixion outside the gate of Jerusalem that attracts the author to a minor feature in the Day of Atonement ritual, that is, the burning of the carcasses of the sacrificial animals outside the camp of Israel. This, as Hanson says, was 'a relatively minor feature of the rite as a whole'.[13]

Nevertheless, it has relevance from the author's point of view, which is governed by the events of Jesus' death rather than the procedures of the OT cult as such. A good example of the christological direction of the author's interpretive method is found in 9.22. In this text he focuses on the final act of pouring out (αἱματεκχυσία) the sacrificial blood at the base of the burnt offering altar, which in the Levitical sin-offering ritual occurred *after* the atoning act proper was concluded (Lev 4.7, 18, 25, 30, 34). As Windisch observed, the disposal of the blood at the base of the altar was 'no special ritual act (*besonderer ritueller Akt*), but the outpouring of blood that belonged to every offering'.[14] The author is drawn to this

9 The author clearly parallels the mortal destiny of all humanity (ἅπαξ ἀποθανεῖν, v. 27) with Jesus' death. This is made plain by the introductory phrase (οὕτως καὶ ὁ Χριστός, v. 28a) and the corresponding language (ἅπαξ προσενεχθεὶς, v. 28b).

10 The language of the Gospels and Paul is instructive here. Mark uses ἐμπαίζω, ἐμπτύω, μαστιγόω in foretelling the death of Christ (10.34). With the exception of μαστιγόω (cf. John 19.1), Mark uses them again at the time of the event (14.65; 15.20). To describe the reaction of those present at the crucifixion, Mark uses βλασφημέω, ἐμπαίζω and ὀνειδίζω (15.29–32). Paul associates words like μωρία and σκάνδαλον with the cross (1 Cor 1.18; Gal 5.11).

11 Josephus paraphrases Lev 16.27 'on the city's outskirts' (ἐν τοῖς προαστείοις), that is, outside Jerusalem (*Ant.* 3.241). Philo also understands 'outside the camp' to refer to a place some distance from the centre (καὶ οὐ πλησίον, ἀλλὰ πορρωτάτω, *Ebr.* 100). Philo of course relates the language to his Platonic vision of Judaism (*Leg. All.* 3.151; *Gig.* 54).

12 A. T. Hanson, 'The Reproach of the Messiah in the Epistle to the Hebrews', *SE* 7 (TU 126; 1982) 239.

13 Ibid., 238.

14 H. Windisch, *Der Hebräerbrief* (HNT; 2nd edn; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Siebeck], 1931) 82.

minor and non-atoning part of the sin-offering ritual because of the ambiguity of αἱματεκχυσία, which can mean either the pouring out or the shedding of blood. The author accepts the meaning 'shedding of blood', for this allows him to relate the death of Christ more readily to the Levitical ritual. Thus he virtually ignores the sprinkling of the blood, which was the cultic act proper, preferring the final disposal of the blood because it better suits his purpose of applying the ritual to the death of Jesus on the cross.[15]

Using the same technique as in 9.22, the author in 13.11–12 relates the suffering of Jesus to the burning of the sacrificial carcasses of the Day of Atonement, the point of contact for the author being the similarity of their location, that is, outside the gate and outside the camp. The author then draws two further points from the fact that the bodies of the young bull and the goat used in the Day of Atonement cleansing were burnt outside the camp of Israel (Lev 16.27).[16] As we have noted, this is a minor part of the ritual and had in the law no atoning significance; but it did for our author.

IV. 'Those who serve the tent' (Heb 13.10)

To defend his statement excluding 'those who serve the tent' (v. 10) from the Christian altar, the writer appeals (note the linking γάρ, v. 11) to the Mosaic legislation concerning the priests' right to eat from the sacrifices. The law stipulated that the priests were to eat the sin offering (Lev 6.19, 22) and portions of certain other sacrifices (Lev 7.6; 1 Cor 9.13). There was, however, an exception to this general principle: if the blood went beyond the burnt-offering altar into the tabernacle proper, including the holy of holies, then the priests were commanded *not* to eat of the sin-offering. In this case the carcasses were to be burnt outside the camp (Lev 6.30; 16.27).

From this Mosaic legislation the author makes the first of his two points, namely, that the old order and the new are mutually exclusive; those who serve the tent, that is, the Levitical system, cannot at the same time adhere to the new order in Christ. By the rules of the Levitical law itself, those who minister at its tent cannot eat of the Day of Atonement sacrifices. This the author correctly observes, φαγεῖν οὐκ ἔχουσιν ἐξουσίαν οἱ τῇ σκηνῇ λατρεύοντες (13.10). Since Jesus'

15 The efforts of T. C. G. Thornton ('The Meaning of αἱματεκχυσία in Heb. ix.22', *JTS* n.s. 15 [1964] 63–5) and W. G. Johnsson ('The Cultus of Hebrews in Twentieth-Century Scholarship', *ExPT* 89 [1977–8] 104–8) to relate αἱματεκχυσία to sprinkling, even some post-Calvary blood application of the risen Jesus, are mistaken. For a reply, see N. H. Young, 'Αἱματεκχυσία: A Comment', *ExPT* 90 (1978–9) 180.

16 'Man kann aber hier zwei Schritte des Vf erkennen' (W. R. G. Loader, *Sohn und Hoherpriester: Eine traditionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung zur Christologie des Hebräerbriefes* [WMANT 53; Neukirchen: Neukirchener, 1981] 180).

offering is a Day of Atonement sin offering, the priests by Levitical law are excluded from partaking of it. It is received by grace not by the mouth of a priest (χάριτι, . . . οὐ βρώμασιν, 13.9; cf. Lev 10.16–20).[17]

That the 'tent' mentioned in 13.10 refers to the Levitical order is apparent from the epistle's usage elsewhere: 8.5; 9.2, 3, 6, 8, 21. Having told us that the Levitical priests, who offer gifts according to the law, serve as a model and a shadow of the heavenly things, the author introduces the establishment of the Mosaic tent (8.5). These two things, the priests and the tent, are clearly bonded and both therefore belong to the era of shadows; neither is final. When he refers to Jesus' venue of ministry, the author speaks of the true tent or the greater and more perfect tent (8.2; 9.11); when he comments on the Levitical ministry, he uses the qualification *first* tent (9.2, 6, 8).[18] And just as the Levitical priests are a model or shadow of heavenly things, so the first tent is an 'illustration' (παραβολή) – an illustration destined to disappear at the coming of the new order (καιρὸς διορθώσεως, 9.10).

Those who serve (οἱ . . . λατρεύοντες) the tent are strictly, then, the Levitical priests (10.11, Καὶ πᾶς μὲν ἱερεὺς ἕστηκεν καθ' ἡμέραν λειτουργῶν καὶ τὰς αὐτὰς πολλάκις προσφέρων θυσίας),[19] for the law separated the Levites from the rest of the Israelites to minister the service of the tent of the Lord (λειτουργεῖν τὰς λειτουργίας τῆς σκηνῆς κυρίου, Num 16.9b LXX) and to stand and serve the people (παρίστασθαι ἔναντι τῆς συναγωγῆς λατρεύειν αὐτοῖς, v. 9c LXX).[20] Elsewhere in Hebrews λατρεύω is used of the worshippers in general (9.9; 10.2). Accordingly, although the language in 13.10 is specific to priests, it refers to anyone whose worship is still conditioned by the system of the Levitical law.[21] This is a negative description of Judaism and should not be construed as referring to Christians serving the heavenly sanctuary.[22]

17 This does not mean Hebrews opposes the Lord's Supper, though the author is no sacramentalist. Fully discussed in H.-F. Weiss, *Der Brief an die Hebräer* [KKNT; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1991] 726–9.

18 He uses 'second' to describe the earthly holy of holies, but this is to facilitate his use of this part of the tabernacle to symbolise the permanent realm of the second covenant. See Lehne, *New Covenant*, 100–1.

19 The reading ἀρχιερεύς (A, C. P) is a corruption probably based on Heb 7.27.

20 Though using a different verb and referring to the altar, the same idea is found in Heb 7.13 (ἐφ' ὃν γὰρ λέγεται ταῦτα φυλῆς ἑτέρας μετέσχηκεν, ἀφ' **ἧς οὐδεὶς προσέσχηκεν τῷ θυσιαστηρίῳ**).

21 Lehne, *New Covenant*, 115–16; J. M. Scholer, *Proleptic Priests: Priesthood in the Epistle to the Hebrews* (JSNTSup 49; Sheffield: JSOT, 1991) 101–2.

22 As some do, for example J. Moffatt, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews* (ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1924) 234–5; T. H. Robinson, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (MNTC; London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1933) 202; E. Grässer, *An die Hebräer (Hebr 10, 19–13,25)* (EKK; Benziger/Neukirchener: Zurich, 1997) 384–6.

The pronominal suffixes used in v. 10 – ἔχομεν, ἔχουσιν – immediately notify us that the author is distinguishing two groups, two ways of worship, two approaches to God.[23] This conclusion finds some support from Barnabas's usage, who consistently uses the plural demonstrative pronoun, ἐκεῖνοι, for the Jews and the first person plural pronoun, ἡμεῖς, for the Christians.[24] Indeed, οἱ περιπατοῦντες (13.9c) is used for living within one's national customs; it does not naturally convey the idea of living according to the invisible securities of the earthly sphere.[25] Acts 21.21 and Eph 4.7 are good parallels to Hebrews' usage:

> κατηχήθησαν δὲ περὶ σοῦ ὅτι ἀποστασίαν διδάσκεις ἀπὸ Μωϋσέως τοὺς κατὰ τὰ ἔθνη πάντας Ἰουδαίους, λέγων μὴ περιτέμνειν αὐτοὺς τὰ τέκνα μηδὲ τοῖς ἔθεσιν περιπατεῖν.
>
> μηκέτι ὑμᾶς περιπατεῖν καθὼς καὶ τὰ ἔθνη περιπατεῖ ἐν ματαιότητι τοῦ νοὸς αὐτῶν.

'Those who "live by" foods' (v. 9) and 'those who serve the tent' (v. 10) are identical. Both refer to Judaism, and by extension to all those whose sense (if not practice) of community and worship is overly swayed by the Levitical system.[26] The writer is directing his readers to a worship detached, distinct and independent from Judaism. The altar which 'we [Christians] have' is clearly Calvary, for an altar is a place of sacrifice, and that for the writer is outside the gate/camp, where Jesus suffered in order to sanctify the people by means of his own blood. The language is very cultic and reminiscent of the Day of Atonement with its sin offering for the 'people'.[27] Hebrews emphasises Jesus' death as effective for the 'people' (2.17; [5.3; 7.27;] 9.7; 13.11).[28] It is quite misleading to relate the altar to the heavenly sanctuary – heaven is the place of Jesus' intercession, not his sacrifice (7.25; 9.24).[29] It is

23 As noted long ago by J. E. L. Oulton, 'Great Texts Reconsidered: Heb. xiii.10', *ExpT* 55 (1944) 304, and ably defended by P. Ellingworth, *The Epistle to the Hebrews: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids, MI/Carlisle: Eerdmans/Paternoster, 1993) 710. *Per contra* Grässer, *Hebräer*, 378–9.

24 'It is "they" *in contrast to "us"*. The author of *Barnabas* deals with two different peoples' (R. Hvalvik, *The Struggle for Scripture and Covenant: The Purpose of the Epistle of Barnabas and Jewish–Christian Competition in the Second Century* [WUNT 82; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Siebeck), 1996] 63). Hvalvik (135–9) gives an extended list of the 'they' and 'we' contrasts in *Barnabas*.

25 *Pace* the opinion of Thompson, '"Outside the Camp"', 61–3.

26 That the addressees are emotionally attached to the Levitical cult cannot be ruled out even for Christians in the Diaspora, let alone in Palestine. See A. N. Chester, 'Hebrews: The Final Sacrifice', *Sacrifice and Redemption: Durham Essays in Theology* (ed. S. W. Sykes; Cambridge: CUP, 1991) 59.

27 καὶ ῥανεῖ ἐπ᾽ **αὐτοῦ** (*sic* τοῦ θυσιαστήριου) ἀπὸ τοῦ **αἵματος** τῷ δακτύλῳ ἑπτάκις καὶ καθαριεῖ αὐτὸ καὶ **ἁγιάσει** αὐτὸ ἀπὸ τῶν ἀκαθαρσιῶν **τῶν υἱῶν Ισραηλ** (Lev 16.19 LXX). See Loader, Sohn, 180.

28 Brought to my attention by one of my students, Jotham Kingston.

29 Of course, his intercession is premised on his atoning death.

equally perverse to attempt to find the Eucharist in this reference to an altar.[30] The altar 'we have' is the historical death of Christ – the means of forgiveness, and a source of encouragement to a community experiencing pain.

The law itself and the practices of the Day of Atonement preclude those of the old order from participating in the new sacrifice of Calvary. As Jesus observed, the attempt to contain the new within the old creates a disastrous tension (Mark 2.21–2). The writer's call is for his readers to commit themselves exclusively to their own altar, Calvary.

V. 'Outside the camp' (Heb 13.11, 13)

The second point the author draws from the fact that the carcasses of the Day of Atonement sin-offering sacrifices were burnt outside the camp relates to his exhortation to his readers. They too are to leave the Levitical framework and express their worship as a separate community, with its attendant risks, outside the camp of Israel. A bold affirmation of their adherence to Jesus as Messiah could trigger again the reproach of Christ that they had known in the past.[31] If this happens, the author calls them to endurance (13.13). In this context the present participle, φέροντες, means 'bearing up', 'enduring', and indicates that the author expects that their 'going out' will lead to persecution.[32] The list of abuses in 11.32–8 may be an extreme picture – but a picture nevertheless – of the prospect the writer anticipates for those who declare their Christian faith openly and boldly. It appears then that the author is urging them to cut their ties with the relatively safe ancestral religious environment of the synagogue. But why were they fraternising with the synagogue in the first place?

Whether they are participating in the actual worship of the synagogue or simply shrinking back (10.32) into a ghetto-like form of Christianity that is virtually indistinguishable from Judaism may not be entirely clear.[33] Nevertheless, if the group was functioning somewhat like a synagogue, it is probable that they were also interacting with the Jewish community. Wilson observes that the context of Hebrews 'certainly suggest[s] that the author is trying to wean his readers from the hankering after Jewish thought and practice'.[34] Whatever the case, there was

30 'Daher ist ein Bezug auf die Eucharistie keineswegs sicher' (Loader, *Sohn*, 180); R. Williamson, 'The Eucharist and the Epistle to the Hebrews', *NTS* 21 (1974–5) 300–12.

31 If the genitive (αὐτοῦ) is taken as objective, as does the RSV, then the meaning is 'bearing abuse for him'. The NRSV does not retain this rendering, but prefers a subjective genitive, 'and bear the abuse he endured'.

32 Φέροντες can have a similar connotation to ὑπομένω (see Heb 12.20).

33 T. W. Lewis, '"... And If He Shrinks Back" (Heb. X.38*b*)', *NTS* 22 (1976) 88–94.

34 S. G. Wilson, 'The Apostate Minority', *Mighty Minorities? Minorities in Early Christianity – Positions and Strategies: Essays in Honour of Jacob Jervell on his 70th Birthday* (ed. D. Hellholm et al.; Oslo: Scandinavian University, 1995) 205; and cf. J. T. Sanders, *Schismatics,*

obviously some arrest in their progress in the Christian faith and some muting of their Christian witness. They were in danger of 'drifting away' (2.1), of 'failing to enter' (4.1), of 'falling away' (6.6), of 'spurning the Son of God' (10.29), of 'shrinking back' (10.32), of 'growing weary and faint-hearted' (12.3), of 'refusing the voice of God' (12.25), of 'being led astray' (13.9).

There are three main views as to why the readers were being tempted to align their worship to the practices of the synagogue.[35] First, there was the attraction of having a recognised identity that involvement in an ancient religion provided. It is estimated that the Mediterranean Roman world had a population of some 60 million, of which about 7–10 per cent were Jews.[36] Hence religiously the society divided nicely into two clearly defined, though unequal, groups – pagan and Jew. In the late first century the Christians numbered in the thousands; numerically they were a decided minority.[37] In their self-understanding they were no longer under the law (Rom 6.14), that is, Jews, but neither, having turned from idols to serve the living God (1 Thess 1.9), were they pagans. To define their place in the Greco-Roman world, Christians were tempted to interrelate to either pagan society (1 Corinthians, Revelation), or Jewish (Galatians). The addressees of Hebrews would appear to belong to the latter group: 'It is therefore to the maintenance of this group and its self-understanding as the people of God that the author's words are directed.'[38] Dunnill describes the group in sectarian terms and says 'they are Christians for whom Judaism offers the natural *alternative* identity-

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Sectarians, Dissidents, Deviants: The First One Hundred Years of Jewish–Christian Relations (London: SCM, 1993) 60.

35 Leaving aside views that deny there is any pull towards Judaism in Hebrews at all. For example, M. E. Isaacs (*Sacred Space: An Approach to the Theology of the Epistle to the Hebrews* [JSNTSup 73; Sheffield: JSOT, 1992] 67) argues that the writer's purpose is to shepherd the readers through the emotional loss of the holy city and temple, while E. Larsson ('Om Hebréerbrevets syfte', *Svensk Exegetisk Årsbok* 37/38 [1972–3] 308–9; *idem*, 'How Mighty was the Mighty Minority?', *Mighty Minorities?*, 101) attributes the community's flirtation with Judaism to their own misreading of the LXX scriptures. Some significant researchers believe the addressees are Gentiles and the Levitical imagery in Hebrews is simply used as a foil to demonstrate to the flagging spirits of the readers the superiority of Christ (thus Moffatt, *Hebrews*, xxvi–xxvii; W. G. Kümmel, *Introduction to the New Testament* [London: SCM, 1966] 280).

36 R. L. Wilken, *The Christians as the Romans Saw Them* (New Haven: Yale University, 1984) 113–14; S. G. Wilson, *Related Strangers: Jews and Christians, 70–170 C.E.* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995) 21.

37 Wilson, *Related Strangers*, 25–9; H. Räisänen, 'The Clash Between Christian Styles of Life in the Book of Revelation', *Mighty Minorities?*, 151–2; R. L. Fox, *Pagans and Christians in the Mediterranean World from the Second Century AD to the Conversion of Constantine* (London: Viking Penguin, 1986) 317.

38 J. Dunnill, *Covenant and Sacrifice in the Letter to the Hebrews* (SNTSMS 75; Cambridge: CUP, 1992) 22.

base, and who are vulnerable to theoretical and social pressures to turn back, or turn aside, to that alternative'.[39] Nothing in this view favours a date either before or after the destruction of the Jerusalem temple in 70 CE.

The second view is not entirely exclusive of the first, but it stresses Judaism as a *religio licita*, and that Christians were identifying with the synagogue as a haven from impending Roman persecution.[40] The idea that Rome had a list of legally permitted religions and others that were outlawed is unlikely, but there is no doubt that Judaism had gained some tolerance and status as an ancient religion.[41] This position fits a date before 70 CE, though Jews in the Diaspora were not very adversely affected by the 66–73 CE revolt, so a date after 70 CE cannot therefore be ruled out.

A third interpretation stresses the pre-70 CE situation of the rising anti-Roman sentiment amongst Palestinian Jews. The Jews were putting pressure on Christian Jews to show their loyalty and solidarity with the nation and their support for the holy city and temple by participating in festive meals.[42] Their fear then would not have been due to Roman persecution, but rather of Jewish disdain and social rejection. The pressure then would be for them to join in the temple movement and identify with the Jewish struggle against the Romans.

VI. 'Bearing his reproach' (Heb 13.13)

These three ideas are not entirely exclusive of one another. They all propose some form of reattachment to Judaism, even apostasy from their Christian group. The apostasy was probably more the author's foreseen possible consequence of the group's present timidity than their actual state. The small early Christian enclaves must have been constantly tempted to find a sense of belonging in the larger and more venerable Jewish communities. This would be true whether they were attempting to escape from Roman persecution (which seems doubtful), or to identify with the Jews against the Romans (which is somewhat more plausible). The presence of persecution and the threat of it is well attested in Hebrews, not least in 13.9–14 (note also v. 6), the text before us.[43] To account for

39 Ibid., 24.

40 S. G. Sowers, *The Hermeneutics of Philo and Hebrews* (Zürich/Richmond: Evz-Verlag/Knox, 1965) 74. For a similar view see Loader, *Sohn*, 258; Lehne, *New Covenant*, 116; Wilson, *Related Strangers*, 125; F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (NICNT; rev. edn; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990) 382.

41 For the case against Judaism being a *religio licita*, see R. Maddox, *The Purpose of Luke–Acts* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1982) 91–3.

42 P. W. L. Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City: New Testament Perspectives on Jerusalem* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996) 227–34.

43 P W. L. Walker, 'Jerusalem in Hebrews 13:9–14 and the Dating of the Epistle', *TB* 45 (1994) 59.

this we need think of nothing more than the hostility that almost any larger group manifests towards any minority that begins to separate from it. The polemic associated with the Christian partings from Judaism would of course produce considerable heat from both sides.[44]

On balance, a date prior to 70 CE appears most likely.[45] The urgency of the epistle's appeal, and the seriousness of the readers' failure to assert their faith in Christ boldly with its attendant risk of falling away, indicate that the writer's purpose is not merely to encourage despondent Christians with the thought that their sanctuary is secure in heaven and not in ruins in Jerusalem.[46] They are not bereaved, they are tempted.[47] The appeal to the tabernacle rather than the temple grows out of the author's biblicism. The addressees were most likely a Jewish-Christian community, but then we should recall that 'nothing in early Christianity was un-Jewish'.[48] There is good reason to think that the situation facing the readers included possible physical abuse and property forfeiture and not simply loss of social status and prestige.

In the scattered network of small gatherings that made up the early Christian community the news of any martyrdom – or even near martyrdom – would be quickly disseminated throughout the various groups. A Stephen, a James or an Antipas would be interpreted by such small, ostracised groups as the omen of worse things to come. We do not need, therefore, to assume an environment of systematic and widespread persecution to explain the passion and urgency of the Epistle to the Hebrews. A few instances of physical and verbal abuse would be enough to feed the fears of these culturally isolated enclaves.[49]

All three theories concerning the situation of the readers discussed above agree that the problem is a turning back – for various reasons – to the syn-

44 For persecution of Christians in the first two centuries, see G. E. M. de Ste Croix, 'Why Were the Early Christians Persecuted?', *Past and Present* 26 (1963) 6–38; D. R. A. Hare, *The Theme of Jewish Persecution of Christians in the Gospel According to St Matthew* (SNTSMS 6; Cambridge: CUP, 1967) 19–79; Fox, *Pagans and Christians*, Ch. 9 'Persecution and Martyrdom'; C. J. Setzer, *Jewish Responses to Early Christians: History and Polemics, 30–150 C.E.* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1994).

45 See the judicious discussion in D. A. deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on the Epistle "to the Hebrews"* (Grand Rapids, MI/Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 2000) 20–3; Walker, 'Jerusalem in Hebrews 13:9–14', 39–71.

46 Isaacs, *Sacred Space*, 73; earlier A. A. T. Ehrhardt, *The Framework of the New Testament Stories* (Manchester: Manchester University, 1964) 109.

47 Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City*, 228.

48 R. Bauckham, 'James at the Centre', *Society for the Study of Early Christianity Newsletter* 39 (2001) 6.

49 A. E. Harvey, 'Forty Strokes Save One: Social Aspects of Judaizing and Apostasy', *Alternative Approaches to New Testament Study* (ed. A. E. Harvey; London: SPCK, 1985) 79–96.

agogue.[50] However, continued 'association' and a failure to embrace the Christian religious ethos fully rather than 'attraction' back into a former life is probably the situation that concerns the writer. The stress throughout the epistle on going out/on (4.16; 6.1 [φέρω]; 7.25; 10.22; 11.8; 12.22; 13.13) and even into (3.11, 18, 19; 4.1, 3, 6, 10, 11; 6.19, 20; 9.12, 24, 25) would indicate that the problem is not a turning back so much as a failure to go forward and separate from Judaism completely in the first place. That timidity in expressing their Christian faith in a bold and forthright manner and a tendency to fraternise with the synagogue was the problem the author of Hebrews was addressing appears persuasive to me for two reasons.

VII. 'Regulations about food' (Heb 13.9 NRSV)

First and foremost is the obvious point that the concerns in vv. 9–14 are religious. Even if the language is not to be taken with unimaginative literalism, the situation the terms envisage is certainly religious. Thus we note χάρις, βρώματα, θυσιαστήριον, σκηνή, λατρεύω, αἷμα, τὰ ἅγια, ἀρχιερεύς, ἔξω τῆς παρεμβολῆς. Isaacs is to be accepted when she concludes on the basis of Heb 9.9–10 that βρώματα refers to Israel's sacrificial ritual.[51] The plural βρώματα is used of the sacrificial foods of the altar in Mal 1.7, 12 (LXX).[52] Religious partaking of or abstention from foods and drinks was common in the ancient world.[53] A cultic context is the most likely meaning here in 13.9b.[54] Meals played a vital part in Jewish religious and social life and were a major control in keeping Jews separate from the surrounding Gentile world.[55]

It may well be that the readers were joining their Jewish neighbours in the synagogue to celebrate communal meals such as the Passover.[56] We know that in later

50 B. Lindars (*The Theology of the Letter to the Hebrews* [Cambridge: CUP, 1991] 10–14) also sees attraction to the synagogue and its fellowship meals as the problem; but he believes that this was because the readers felt the need to experience forgiveness through a solidarity with the Jerusalem temple cult.

51 M. E. Isaacs, 'Hebrews 13.9–16 Revisited', *NTS* 43 (1997) 281; also Koester, '"Outside the Camp"', 305–7; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 708.

52 This makes Lane's comment (*Hebrews 9–13*, 534) that 'the plural form βρώματα**,** "foods," is never used in the LXX in reference to Jewish sacrificial meals, but only to distinguish pure from impure foods (Lev 11:34)' somewhat misleading. See J. M. P. Smith, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi and Jonah* (ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1912) 26–7, 33.

53 Bel. 1.11, 21; Plut. *Mor.* Fragments 47.19 (LCL 15.136); Jos. Ap. 2.141; *Barn.* 10.9; Just. *Dial.* 20.1.

54 For a useful discussion of βρώματα here see the excursus 'Strange Teachings and Foods' in H. W. Attridge, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1989) 394–6.

55 *Ep. Arist.* 139; *Sifre* on Deut 32.9; J. M. G. Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora: From Alexander to Trajan (323 BCE–117 CE)* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1996) 434–7.

56 There is some evidence that Diaspora Jews celebrated the Passover sacrifice: Philo, *Spec. Leg.* 2.145; *Mos.* 2.232; Jos. *Ant.* 14.260; E. P. Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief 63 BCE–66 CE* (London/Philadelphia: SCM/Trinity Press International, 1992) 133–4; Barclay, *Jews*, 415–16.

times Christians were tempted to join the Jews in the Passover worship.[57] There is some evidence of similar fraternisation in the sub-apostolic period.[58] The denouncements against such associations made by both Jewish and Christian leaders indicate that the establishment of strict boundaries, especially for the common people, took centuries.[59] Involvement in Jewish religious meals probably gave Christians the same sense of community and identity that the rituals had for Jews. There may also have been some sense of security supplied by identifying with the larger and more recognised group.[60]

It is now clear that ξέναις διδαχαῖς are practices that the author considered foreign to the community of Christ.[61] Ellingworth accepts the REB translation 'outlandish', but this is to give the practices a sense of the bizarre.[62] The idea is simply that they do not belong to the religion of Christ. Those who practised these alien teachings, and those who served the tent, belonged to a different religious philosophy from that espoused by the author of Hebrews. Worship through Christ demanded the abandonment of the old ritual approaches to God, even in the

57 From the *Martyrdom of Pionius* (mid-3rd century) we learn that Jews were successfully inviting Christians to the synagogue (12.2, Ἀκούω δὲ ὅτι καί τινας ὑμῶν Ἰουδαῖοι καλοῦσιν εἰς συναγωγάς; quoted in Hvalvik, *Struggle*, 246). Origen and Chrysostom also preached against joining with Jews in meals or the Passover, as did the councils of Elvira (*c.*300), Antioch (341) and Laodicea (360).

58 *Ign. Magn.* 8.1–9.2; *Trall.* 6.1–2; *Phld.* 6.1–2; *Barn.* 3.6 (ἵνα μὴ προσρησσώμεθα ὡς ἐπήλυτοι τῷ ἐκείνων νόμῳ); *Diogn.* 12.9; *Did.* 8; Jus. *Dial.* 8, 47. Justin frequently alludes to the cursing of Christians in the synagogue, which may indicate that some Christians were attending the synagogues in his day. Whether Christians were welcomed or not depended on the circumstances of their attendance (W. Horbury, 'The Benediction of the *Minim* and Early Jewish–Christian Controversy', *JTS* 33 [1982] 52–3. Repr. in *Jews and Christians in Contact and Controversy* [Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1998] 67–110). M. C. de Boer (*pace* Horbury) refers the curse, at least for the first four centuries, 'to Jews with the fellowship of the synagogue who believed Jesus the Nazorean' ('The Nazoreans: Living at the Boundary of Judaism and Christianity', *Tolerance and Intolerance in Early Judaism and Christianity* [ed. G. Stanton and G. G. Stroumsa; Cambridge: CUP, 1998] 250).

59 J. D. G. Dunn, 'Two Covenants or One? The Interdependence of Jewish and Christian Identity', *Geschichte – Tradition – Reflexion: Festschrift für Martin Hengel zum 70. Geburtstag* (ed. H. Canik, H. Lichtenberger & P. Schäfer; 3 vols; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1996) 3.101–6.

60 Ibid., 101. Not until the seventh century in the city of Antioch did Christian leadership succeed in ending the influence of Judaism on its members (W. A. Meeks and R. L. Wilken, *Jews and Christians in Antioch in the First Four Centuries of the Common Era* [SBLSBS 13; Missoula, MT: Scholars, 1978) 18.

61 Josephus uses these terms to speak of sacrifice that was false to Jewish tradition (καινοτομεῖν θρησκείαν ξένην) and for foreign idolatrous ritual foods (ξενικοῖς τε βρώμασιν) (*Bell.* 2.414; *Ant.* 4.139).

62 Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 707.

book form of the synagogue.[63] This old-order approach, as we have seen, is encapsulated in the catch-all meaning of βρώματα.

VIII. 'Let us then go out to him' (Heb 13.13)

The second reason for seeing 13.9–14 as a struggle to keep a small Christian community from mixing their faith with a tradition that it had, in the writer's view, superseded is the exhortation in v. 13. The call to 'go out to him outside the camp', with its resonances with Jesus' own going outside the gate to suffer, has an appeal to separate that no mere reference to Philonic mysticism can satisfy. DeSilva's language of 'the movement away from security in and belonging to the earthly camp . . . from rootedness in the temporal society' is correct, but it lacks historical specificity.[64] The language of the text refers to a tangible withdrawal from interaction with an entity like the synagogue. The call to 'go to him outside the camp bearing the reproach he bore' (13.13) involves a shift from a safe position to a threatening one. The most obvious import of this exhortation is to make a clear break with Judaism and to embrace Christianity fully as a religion in its own right with all the difficulties that that would probably bring.

Koester's idea that the writer was exhorting his readers to become involved in the life and experiences of the secular world is foreign to the author's whole environment.[65] As Troy Martin, on another issue, has noted, the alternative facing the Christians was a modification of either paganism or Judaism; secularism was not a likely option in the first century.[66]

DeSilva has recently argued that Hebrews addresses a mixed community of 'Diasporic Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians'.[67] The faltering in their faith was caused by 'neither the threat of violent persecution nor a new attraction to Judaism . . . but rather the more pedestrian inability to live within the lower status that Christian associations had forced upon them, the less-than-dramatic (yet potent) desire once more to enjoy the goods and esteem of their society'.[68] Though deSilva does not clearly define which society, it would appear to be worldly, pagan unbelievers. This of course requires that the addressees are

63 Barnabas provides an example of Christian polemic against the Jewish sacrifices and temple (*Barn.* 2.4–10; 16.1–10).

64 DeSilva, *Perseverance*, 502.

65 Koester ('"Outside the Camp"', 302) identifies 'outside the camp' 'with the worldliness of the world itself and the place where men are exposed to the experience of this world rather than protected from it'.

66 Troy Martin, 'Pagan and Judeo-Christian Time-Keeping Schemes in Gal 4.10 and Col 2.16', *NTS* 42 (1996) 108.

67 DeSilva, *Perseverance*, 7.

68 Ibid., 19.

attracted back to their former place in society, which, despite its innovation, is still akin to the traditional view.

We may question whether this makes sense for his own idea of a mixed community of Jewish and Gentile Christians. Since former Jews were quite accustomed to being socially marginalised by pagan society, it is not likely that as Christians they would find integration into pagan society a tempting attraction. On the other hand we know from many other sources that Gentiles were often attracted to Judaism. For Jewish Christians to maintain their links with Judaism is historically plausible, and for Gentile Christians to be at ease with such a compromise is also likely, but for Jewish Christians to move out of the Christian sect into pagan society is highly unlikely. That is to say, Judaism would be an attractive social group for both Jewish and Gentile Christians to identify with, but pagan society would have status appeal only for Gentile Christians – and not all that powerfully for them either if, as deSilva says, they had been 'socialized into a sect' that affirmed the OT.[69]

Nor should we see the matter as a philosophical appeal. Thompson's effort to read 13.9–10 within Platonic or Philonic terms must also be dismissed as erroneous. For Thompson 'the pilgrim existence involves the renunciation of all securities in the earthly sphere', and that 'to "go out" from earthly securities is at the same time to "enter" the heavenly world'.[70] The problem is that he makes the author a thoroughgoing Platonist, for the earthly securities to which he refers are 'the world of sense perception'.[71] Thompson's view lacks historical reference.[72] He does not tell us what the 'earthly securities' are that the readers are to leave, other than a vague Platonic aversion to the material world. He does not explain why a mystical pursuit would bring to the Christian group a reproach and shame akin to Christ's suffering.

It follows then that these two factors – the religious language and the urgent nature of the appeal to go out – require a real historical situation to which the readers are urged to respond. The action that the writer exhorts will bring suffering (v. 13), and he knows this on the very good empirical grounds of the readers' own past experience (10.32–4: note the link word ὀνείδισμοι in v. 33), and the example of Christ whom they are to follow.

69 Ibid., 5.

70 Thompson, '"Outside the Camp"', 62.

71 Ibid., 63.

72 'Eine dualistische Interpretation von Lev 16,27 im strengen Sinne liegt damit im Hebr indes nicht vor' (Weiss, *Hebräer*, 734). He goes on to argue that the biblical phrase 'outside the camp' (i.e. 'outside the gate') does not contrast, as in Philo, an earthly-corporeal with a heavenly-otherworldly dualism, but attaches to the history and destiny of the earthly Jesus.

IX. 'We have here no permanent city' (13.14)

The switch to language about a city in v. 14 is only a linguistic change, not a conceptual shift, for Jerusalem was the holy city because within it was the holy place, the temple. The city with its temple was a powerful emotional symbol for the Jewish nation, not least for the Diaspora.[73] The biblical data reveal over and again the central place Jerusalem held in the history, religion, politics and emotions of the nation. It is the 'Holy City' (Isa 48.2), 'the City of God or the Lord' (Ps 46.4; 87.3; 101.8), 'the City of the Lord Almighty' (Ps 48.8), 'the Beautiful City' (Ps 48.2), 'the City of the Great King' (Ps 48.2; Matt 5.35), and 'Zion, the City, our Safe Place' (Isa 33.20 LXX). In the Danielic prayer for the restoration of the temple, both the people and the city are said to bear the name of God (ὅτι τὸ ὄνομά σου ἐπεκλήθη ἐπὶ τὴν πόλιν σου Σιων καὶ ἐπὶ τὸν λαόν σου Ισραηλ, Dan 9.19 LXX; cf. Ps 47.1–3 LXX). Speaking of the freeing of the city, 2 Maccabees calls the temple the most renowned in the whole world (καὶ τὸ περιβόητον καθ' ὅλην τὴν οἰκουμένην ἱερὸν, 2.22).[74] Sirach calls Jerusalem the 'beloved city' (ἐν πόλει ἠγαπημένῃ) in which he rested and had his authority (ἡ ἐξουσία μου).

At the end of his history of the 66–73 CE war with Rome, Josephus laments that he has lived to see razed to the ground 'that sacred city' (ἡ ἱερὰ ἐκείνη πόλις) and 'holy sanctuary' (ὁ ναὸς ὁ ἅγιος), the great city (ἡ μεγάλη πόλις) and 'the mother-city (μητρόπολις) of the whole Jewish race' who had God as its founder (οἰκιστής).[75] The coins of both the first and second revolts focus on the deliverance of Jerusalem and the temple. The coins often depict the façade of the temple or a vessel of the temple. The revolutionaries believed that the city and its temple were inviolate since they were under the protection of God.[76] Qumran, despite its rejection of the Jerusalem temple, nevertheless, idealised the holy city (*CD* 20.22–3; 11QPs[a] 22).[77]

73 D. R. Schwartz argues that Hellenistic Jews saw the temple as an institution of the city rather than the city as an extension of the temple ('Temple or City: What Did Hellenistic Jews See in Jerusalem?', *The Centrality of Jerusalem: Historical Perspectives* [ed. M. Poorthuis and C. Safrai; Kampen: Pharos, 1996] 114–28). Even so, it seems to me that the temple still had strong emotional meaning for Diaspora Jews.

74 For references to Jerusalem's centrality to Judaism, see K. H. Tan, *The Zion Traditions and the Aims of Jesus* (SNTSMS 91; Cambridge: CUP, 1997) 30–51; R. S. Hess and G. J. Wenham, eds, *Zion, City of our God* (Grand Rapids, MI/Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 1999).

75 *Bell.* 7.375–80. Philo sees Jerusalem as the mother city not only of Judea, but also of many other countries where Jews had scattered (*Legat.* 281–4).

76 For example, ירושלם (ה)קדשה ('Jerusalem the holy'); לחרות ירושלם ('for the freedom of Jerusalem'). For a listing of these coin inscriptions and translations, see Ya'akov Meshorer, *Jewish Coins of the Second Temple Period* (trans. I. H. Levine; Tel-Aviv: Am Hassefer, 1967) 154–69, and L. Mildenberg, 'Rebel Coinage in the Roman Empire', *Greece and Rome in Eretz Israel: Collected Essays* (ed. A. Kasher et al.; Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1990) 62–74.

77 L. H. Schiffman, 'Jerusalem in the Dead Sea Scrolls', *The Centrality of Jerusalem* (ed. Poorthuis and Safrai), 73–89.

Having no permanent city here on earth (οὐ γὰρ ἔχομεν ὧδε μένουσαν, 13.14) is no doubt part of the 'reproach' the readers are asked to bear.[78] Like the worthies mentioned in Heb 11.38, who wandered in desolate regions, and who dwelt in mountains, dens and caves of the earth, those who go outside the camp will have no earthly πατρίς or μετρόπολις to provide them security and refuge.[79] They are sustained by a faith that sees the future city (μέλλουσα [πόλις], 13.14; cf. 11.10, 16; 12.22) of God. The declaration that the Jesus-community has no permanent city here on earth puts a cleavage between Christianity and Judaism.[80] To abandon Jerusalem as the centre of the Diasporic world is to abandon Judaism.[81] To disregard the tabernacle (temple) leads logically to an abandonment of Jerusalem as having any religious significance.

X. Hebrews: a polemical sermon

However, this gives 13.9–14 a polemical thrust, and the problem with this, according to Thompson, is that it clashes with 'the unpolemical character of the rest of the epistle'.[82] But is the rest of Hebrews unpolemical? The writer's contrasts between the Levitical order and the new way of Christ are certainly disparaging of the former and laudatory of the latter. His language is very carefully nuanced to achieve this goal.

When referring to Jesus, his sacrifice or his people's future he uses comparative terms like κρείττων (1.4; 7.19; 8.6; 9.23; 10.34; 11.40; 12.24), διαφορώτερον (1.4; 8.6), πλείων (3.3), ὑψηλότερος (7.26), μείζων (9.11), τελειοτέρος (9.11) and πόσῳ μᾶλλον (9.14). The point of these comparatives is that Jesus' death has inaugurated a better or superior approach to God than that which was available through the old Levitical/Aaronic order.[83]

When speaking of the Levitical era, the author uses terms of transience such as ἀποθνήσκοντες ἄνθρωποι (7.8), μετατιθεμένη, μετάθεσις (7.12), νόμος ἐντολῆς σαρκίνης (7.16), διὰ τὸ θανάτῳ κωλύεσθαι παραμένειν (7.23), ὑπόδειγμα καὶ σκιά (8.5), παλαιόω, παλαιούμενον καὶ γηράσκον, ἀφανισμός (8.13), τὰ ὑποδείγματα (9.23), σκιὰν γὰρ ἔχων ὁ νόμος (10.1); terms of insufficiency such as

78 Philo advises not to seek the 'city of Being' (τὴν τοῦ ὄντος πόλιν) among the regions of the earth but in the soul (ψυχῇ). His Platonism is quite different from Hebrews' historical and eschatological perspective.

79 B. C. Ollenburger, *Zion, The City of the Great King: A Theological Symbol of the Jerusalem Cult* (JSOTSS 41; Sheffield: JSOT, 1987) 66–80.

80 Eloquently argued by Walker, 'Jerusalem and Hebrews 13:9–14', 52–6.

81 For the powerful significance of Jerusalem and the temple for the Diaspora, see *The Jewish People in the First Century* (S. Safrai et al.; 2 vols; Assen: van Gorcum, 1974) 1.184–215.

82 Thompson, '"Outside the Camp"', 54; 'Jedenfalls ist V 10b keine gezielte antijüdische Polemik' (Grässer, *Hebräer*, 377). Attridge thinks that until v. 12 there is 'an element of polemic . . . but it is indirect' (*Hebrews*, 397).

83 Scholer, *Proleptic Priests*, *passim*.

μὴ δυνάμεναι ... τελειῶσαι (9.9), οὐδέποτε δύναται τοὺς προσερχομένους τελειῶσαι (10.1)[48], ἀδύνατον ... ἀφαιρεῖν ἁμαρτίας (10.4), οὐδέποτε δύνανται περιελεῖν ἁμαρτίας (10.11); and terms of excoriation such as ἀσθενὲς καὶ ἀνωφελές (7.18), ἀσθένεια (7.28).

Along with these rather derogatory descriptions of the Levitical law goes the contrast between the repetitiveness of the old order and the finality of the new. The Levitical service functioned καθ' ἡμέραν (7.27; 10.11), πολλάκις (9.25; 10.11), κατ' ἐνιαυτον (10.1, 3), εἰς τὸ διηνεκές (10.1). In contrast, Jesus' offering was an effective means of cleansing, therefore his sacrifice is once-for-all: (ἐφ)απαξ (7.27; 9.26, 27, 28), μιὰ θυσία (προσφορὰ) εἰς τὸ διηνεκές (10.12, 14). The earthly priests went continuously into the earthly tabernacle to perform their cultic duties: διὰ πάντος (9.6), ἅπαξ τοῦ ἐνιαυτοῦ (9.7), κατ' ἐνιαυτόν (9.25). The verb for their entering the earthly tabernacle is always in the present tense. Contrariwise, Hebrews always uses the aorist when referring to Jesus' entrance into the heavenly sanctuary (εἰσῆλθεν – 6.20; 9.12 [note the addition of ἐφάπαξ], 24).

Indeed, whenever the writer speaks of offering sacrifice, he uses the present tense for the Levitical/Aaronic priests (5.1, 3; 7.27; 8.4; 9.7, 9; 10.1, 2, 8, 11), but the aorist for Jesus' offering of himself, often in juxtaposition with one another (7.27; 8.3; 9.14; 9.28; 10.12).[85] We may add to these the temporal aorist participles that the writer attaches to many of his assertions about Jesus' achievement. These aorist participles infer an action finished before the action of the main verb: ποιησάμενος (1.3), γενόμενος (1.4), τελειωθείς (5.9), προσαγορευθείς (5.10), γενόμενος (6.20), κεχωρισμένος (7.26), ἀνενέγκας (7.27), παραγενόμενος (9.11), εὑράμενος (9.12), προσενεχθείς (9.28), προσενέγκας (10.12). Thus we can appreciate why the earthly priest is described as standing (ἕστηκεν, 10.11) while performing his sacrificial duties, whereas Jesus sat down (ἐκάθισεν, 1.3; 8.1; 10.12; 12.2) having completed his offering for sin.

It is hard to deny the presence of some disdain for the Levitical order in the writer's many contrasts between the two covenantal eras. The whole tone of the contrasts that Hebrews makes is very polemical. Hebrews is not an academic meditation with some practical afterthoughts attached. The whole writing has a powerful and urgent pastoral edge to it. The admonition to go outside the camp, bearing the reproach of Christ, climaxes a theme the writer has written into the body of his work. Thompson's belief that 13.9–14 cannot be polemical because the rest of the exhortation is unpolemical must be rejected. In fact the reverse is true: if 13.9–14 is not polemical, then it is out of align with the rest of the epistle.[86]

84 Cf. Heb 7.11, 19.

85 Heb 9.25 is an apparent exception; only apparent because the writer denies the proposition (οὐδ' ἵνα πολλάκις προσφέρῃ ἑαυτόν).

86 This challenges the occasional scholarly doubt concerning the integrity of ch. 13. G. W. Buchanan, for example, argues that the chapter is a later addition by someone writing to a

XI. Conclusion

The polemic of Hebrews may appear at first to be out of step with the current post-Holocaust rapprochement between Jews and Christians. However, one must not flatten the early Christian texts in order to facilitate such a worthy process. Horbury thinks that with the *Epistle of Barnabas* there is 'a Christian sense of accepted separation from the Jewish community'.[87] That process was already well under way with the earlier Epistle to the Hebrews.[88] Even so, perhaps Hebrews, notwithstanding its polemical language, was more an appeal to the struggling Christian group to define itself over against the stronger and more socially integrated Judaism rather than a direct attack on the parent religion. This has been argued with reference to the even more violent language used against the Jews by second-century Christian writers.[89] Be that as it may, our examination of Heb 13.9–14 has led to the following conclusions:

1. The reference to the various strange teachings and foods points to a degree of concourse between the Christian group and the Jewish assemblies. This has retarded the Christian community's growth as a separate entity. They are still at the basic level of instruction; still being nurtured at the breast and unable to digest solid food (5.11–6.2).
2. The sacrifice that sustains Christians is outside the rights and privileges of the Levitical age. The Christian's worship should then centre on praise of the lips (13.15) and not be enmeshed in the representatives of the Levitical order, for it is in process of decay (8.13).
3. The writer warns the group that unless they cease their dependence on the old order and advance in their Christian understanding they are at risk of losing their identity within those earlier elementary truths.
4. The author urges them to go out, to abandon the comparative security of an established religion, to hazard abuse as a despised sect and thus follow Christ's example. The future and the unseen world of God are their *patria* and not any earthly Jerusalem.

Therefore the objective of Heb 13.9–14 – like the calls to enter the rest (chs. 3–4), or to approach the sanctuary boldly (chs. 9–10), or to go forward while looking

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different audience sometime between the late first and early third centuries (G. W. Buchanan, *To the Hebrews* [AB; New York: Doubleday, 1972] 267–8). For a refutation see Lane, *Hebrews 9–13*, lxvi–lxviii.

87 *Jews and Christians,* 'Introduction', 12.

88 J. D. G. Dunn, *The Partings of the Ways between Christianity and Judaism and their Significance for the Character of Christianity* (London/Philadelphia: SCM/Trinity Press International, 1991) 86–91.

89 R. S. MacLennan, *Early Christian Texts on Jews and Judaism* (Brown Judaic Studies 194; Atlanta, GA: Scholars, 1990) 116.

ahead by faith (ch. 11) – is to encourage suffering and disillusioned Christians to live out their faith in Jesus without compromise, not hesitating to accept the consequences.[90] To achieve this the writer creatively uses imagery drawn from some of the lesser aspects of the Day of Atonement ritual, and conjoins these with the suffering of Jesus as a model of enduring faith.[91]

90 This theme has been nicely brought out by W. L. Lane ('Living a Life of Faith in the Face of Death: The Witness of Hebrews', *Life in the Face of Death: The Resurrection Message of the New Testament* [ed. R. N. Longenecker; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998] 247–69).

91 I unfortunately have not had pre-publication access to R. W. Johnson, *Going Outside the Camp: The Sociological Function of the Levitical Critique in the Epistle to the Hebrews* (JSNTSup 209; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2002)

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