

JOURNAL OF THE
COLOMBO THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Volume X

2014

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CTS Publishing
Colombo Theological Seminary
Sri Lanka

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First published by Colombo Theological Seminary
189 Dutugemunu Street, Kohuwela, Sri Lanka

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Printed in Sri Lanka.

ISSN 2386-186x

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EDITORIAL

First published in 2001, the *Journal of the Colombo Theological Seminary (JCTS)* publishes on all aspects of Christianity, providing a forum for the academic staff of the Colombo Theological Seminary as well as younger scholars making a distinguished debut. The journal publishes original research in full-length articles and shorter communications and major surveys of the field in historio-theological reviews and review articles. Contributions are aimed both at specialists and non-specialists. We are glad to publish the tenth volume of the *JCTS* this year. In this issue, we have a collection of valuable articles dealing with issues relevant to the Church today.

Ivor Poobalan's paper *How the Concept of Satan Developed: From Jewish Antiquity to the Apostle Paul* is a scholarly analysis of the development of the concept of Satan in Judeo-Christian literature. It is a relevant topic given contemporary interest in demonology in many branches of the Christian churches.

Mano Emmanuel, in her paper entitled *Go and Be Reconciled: Matthew 18:15-17*, offers a deep scholarly study of the biblical research on the subject with contextualized analysis relevant to Sri Lanka.

Simon Fuller, in his *The Origins of the Assemblies of God of Ceylon: Events and Personalities of the Second Decade (1918-1927)* constructs the early history of the Pentecostal movement in Sri Lanka with the help of a large amount of new material he has been able to collect from numerous resources.

G P V Somaratna's *Ecumenical Experiment in Teacher Training: The Story of Peradeniya Teacher Training Colony* is an attempt to record the history of the Teacher Training College at Peradeniya during the period of its Christian management.

M Alroy Mascenghe's *The City, the Ship, and the Tower: Reading the Babel Story* looks at the Tower of Babel in detail, and in comparison with Cain's city and Noah's ark. His conclusion is that

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the Tower of Babel stands as a monument to God's faithfulness to His promises.

Vinodh Gunasekera's *Shall I Not Drink It? A Link between Suffering and Love from John 18:11* examines this verse with the help of modern biblical research.

Prabo Mihindukulasuriya looks back at the seminal work of the late Géza Vermes (1924-2013), the brilliant Hungarian-British Jewish scholar whose writings made a decisive influence on the contemporary 'Historical Jesus Research'. Prabo examines Vermes' central thesis that Jesus was a miracle-working Galilean holy man.

The *JCTS* is a scholarly journal publishing peer-reviewed articles representing the evangelical Christian Community. We will consider manuscripts on all areas related to issues of the evangelical Christian faith in South Asia, in general, and Sri Lanka, in particular. We hope you will consider submitting a manuscript for publication in the *JCTS*.

It is our hope that this journal will be a valuable contribution to evangelical Christian scholarship.

G P V Somaratna

August 2014

HOW THE CONCEPT OF SATAN DEVELOPED: *FROM JEWISH ANTIQUITY TO THE APOSTLE PAUL*

IVOR POOBALAN

INTRODUCTION

“Satan” is a full-orbed doctrine of Christianity, sometimes termed *diabology* or *satanology*. Within the popular formulations, Satan is viewed as a very powerful being that personifies evil and has wide-ranging influence within the known world and the unseen realm of existence. Various views of his origins exist, the most common being that he was once a created angel that rebelled, and with his fall from grace misled a vast number of fellow angels into divine judgment. He exercises his evil intentions through this horde of spirit beings, now called demons, and unleashes on humanity every form of wickedness, destruction and suffering imaginable. Some hold that he must have been at one time the “worship leader” in heaven, and so would have enjoyed the closest intimacy with God.

Popular Western culture today, as expressed in the print and visual media, evinces a phenomenal increase in interest in the devil and his diabolical plans. This is partly due to the work of Christian-fiction writers such as Frank Peretti:

Spurred on by the best-selling novels of Frank Peretti, with lurid descriptions of grotesque, sulphur-spewing demons circling small towns, threatening children and overthrowing

elected governments, many Christians have awakened to the reality of spiritual warfare.¹

Christians subscribe to varying views on the extent of Satan's influence, with the more elaborate proposals projecting a being who occupies the apex of a complex chain of command by which he is able to exercise dominion over both the vastness of the celestial and the minutiae of terrestrial existence. The most influential proponent of this image of Satan and the consequent popularization of modern beliefs on spiritual warfare has been Peter Wagner. A survey of the titles of dozens of books he has published from the early seventies reveals an interesting pattern. In the early years (1973 – 1989) Wagner concentrates on the Holy Spirit and Church Growth. From 1990 he shifts to write extensively on the demonic and spiritual warfare.² The modern notion that Satan's demons are hierarchically organized, much like a military command and control structure, received its most definitive shape through Wagner's writings.³

¹ Chuck Lowe, *Territorial Spirits and World Evangelization* (Great Britain: OMF International, 1998), 10; see also 152. "Peretti's novels (1986, 1989) have been the stimulus to much of the current interest in demons."

² All published by Regal Books, Ventura, California: *Wrestling with Dark Angels: Toward a Deeper Understanding of the Supernatural Force in Spiritual Warfare* (1990); *Engaging the Enemy: How to Fight and Defeat Territorial Spirits* (1991); *How to Seek God's Power and Protection in the Battle to Build His Kingdom* (1992); *Breaking Strongholds in Your City: How to Use Spiritual Mapping to Make Your Prayers More Strategic, Effective and Targeted* (1993); *Confronting the Powers: How the New Testament Church Experienced the Power of Strategic-Level Spiritual Warfare* (1996).

³"According to leading advocate Peter Wagner, demons fall into three basic categories: ground-level, occult-level and strategic-level. Ground-level spirits are the sort that possess people and must be exorcised. Occult-level spirits empower magicians, witches, warlocks and shaman. Strategic-level spirits (otherwise known as cosmic-level, or territorial, spirits) are the most powerful of the three categories. Their

But to what extent are our modern views of Satan drawn from the Bible? How much of these is a result of accretions from various cultural beliefs rooted in specific historical experiences? How much has resulted from tenuous extrapolations of disputed biblical texts and from creative imagination?

In what follows we shall examine the early development of the Judeo-Christian concept of Satan, limiting our enquiry to the biblical period, and including the views reflected in the Jewish literature of the Intertestamental Era.

Speculations about Evil in Jewish Antiquity

The essence of evil is abuse of a sentient being, a being that can feel pain. It is the pain that matters. Evil is grasped by the mind immediately and immediately felt by the emotions; it is sensed as hurt deliberately inflicted. The existence of evil requires no further proof: I am; therefore I suffer evil.⁴

The perception of evil is ubiquitous; it is as ancient as human experience, and as pervasive as the air we breathe. No individual is alien to it, and no society or culture has been untouched by it. However, evil can only be perceived, it is the individual pain that is experienced as fact. The particular interpretation of the source and the reason for the pain is what leads to a perception of evil. Thus, whereas a mother's pain in childbirth is *perceived* as a necessary challenge that she must bravely endure, the hate-speech and jeers of a racist mob are immediately *perceived* as evil.

function is to rule over specified domains, preventing the people that reside there from coming to faith. So the proposed differences between the categories involve both power and function: strategic-level spirits are the highest ranking class of demons and they are territorial in jurisdiction" (Lowe, *Territorial Spirits*, 16-17).

⁴ Jeffrey B. Russell, *The Devil: Perceptions of Evil from Antiquity to Primitive Christianity* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1977), 17.

Jeffrey Russell's exhaustive and fascinating study of the perceptions of evil in a variety of ancient cultures, including Hindu, Egyptian, Mesopotamian, Mexican, African, Greek, and Persian, confirms that at no point does evil have to be argued. People have always recognized its existence and created a vocabulary of images and speech by which to talk about it.⁵ From perceptions then each culture explores the possible *origins* of evil, and the result is a myriad proposals of who might ultimately be responsible to inflict wanton pain on sentient beings.

The Hebrew people of antiquity would have similarly perceived evil, and speculated on its source and the reasoning behind its manifestation. While their homeland of Canaan was flanked on the one side by Egypt and on the other by Syria-Mesopotamia, it was the latter that most shaped the Canaanite and Hebrew concept of personified evil.⁶ Mesopotamia had a well-developed taxonomy of evil powers, and these ideas could not have escaped the attention of the Hebrew patriarchs and their succeeding tribes of Israel.⁷

⁵ See Russell, *The Devil*, 36-173.

⁶ "The civilizations of Mesopotamia and Syria helped shape the Western concept of the Devil more directly than did that of Egypt. Sumerian civilization stands directly behind that of Babylonian and Assyria, which directly influenced both the Hebrews and the Canaanites" (Russell, *The Devil*, 84).

⁷ "The demonology of Mesopotamia had enormous influence on Hebrew and Christian ideas of demons and the Devil. The demons of Mesopotamia were generally hostile spirits of lesser dignity and power than gods. They were sometimes considered the offspring of Tiamat, but more often they were thought to be the children of the high god Anu. The terrible *annunaki* were the jailers of the dead in hell. The *etimmu* were ghosts of those who have died unhappy. The *utukku* lived in desert places or graveyards. Other evil spirits were demons of plagues, demons of nightmares, demons of headaches, demons of the windstorm (like Pazuzu), and demons of every human ill. Among the most terrible was Lilitu or Ardat Lili, the ancestral prototype of the biblical Lilith (Isaiah 34).

Nevertheless the strict monotheism of the Hebrews from their founding posed a major obstacle to an uncritical acceptance of Mesopotamia's speculations of evil and its personifications. In almost every other culture, its polytheistic worldview allowed for the assignation of good or benevolence to 'good' deities, and evil or malevolence to similarly powerful, but 'wicked' deities. In Hebrew religion, however, Yahweh alone was God, and while it was plausible that angels and demons existed, the sovereignty of God was inviolable:

The Jews knew, before the exile, that evil beings existed. Of uncertain nature, they were never said to be created by God, but could do evil to humans. They were arranged on two levels: there was the cosmic level, on which can be placed monsters like Yam and Leviathan (the sea and a sea-monster); and the more earthly and less imposing level, that of the *shedim*, of the *se'irim*, of Lilith, the demon of the night that will gain great importance in Rabbinic Judaism. These are what we would call today 'evil spirits'. Misfortune could come upon the Jews from these, but could also come from the punishment which their god could send upon them for their transgressions. Already in the eighth century Amos insisted that only God could send salvation and misfortune; an anti-polytheistic polemic, but also contrary to the conception of demons as having real power.⁸

Lilitu was a frigid, barren, husbandless "maid of desolation" who roamed the night attacking men as a succubus or drinking their blood. Labartu, carrying a serpent in each hand and often accompanied by a dog or pig, attacked children, mothers and nurses. Usually the demons were grotesque, appearing as ugly animals or as misshapen humans with partly animal forms. To protect oneself against them one resorted to the use of amulets, incantations, exorcisms or other magic, but particularly to the careful worship and cultivation of one's tutelary deity" (Russell, *The Devil*, 92).

⁸ Paolo Sacchi, *Jewish Apocalyptic and Its History* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990), 213.

Elaine Pagels sees a further twist in this evil tale. Adopting an anthropological reading of Israelite history, she suggests that the patriarchs and their descendants would have initially treated any who were not of Abrahamic descent or the Chosen line as “the other,” who would thereafter, in time, be viewed as their “enemies,” and caricatured as monsters such as Leviathan, the serpent or dragon (see Isaiah 27:1).⁹

However, with the experience of internecine warfare, apostasy, and schisms *within* the Jewish nation, the “enemy” took on new meanings. The threat was insidious and therefore that much more potent. Pagels thinks this new situation led to fresh speculations on the nature and the fountainhead of “evil”:

Certain writers of the sixth century B.C.E. took a bold step further...Instead of Rahab, Leviathan, or “the dragon,” most often they identified their Jewish enemies with an exalted, if treacherous, member of the divine court whom they called *satan*. The *satan* is not an animal or monster but one of God’s angels, a being of superior intelligence and status; apparently the Israelites saw their intimate enemies not as beasts and monsters but as *superhuman* beings whose superior qualities and insider status could make them more dangerous than the alien enemy.¹⁰

While it is characteristic of the Hebrew Bible to demythologize the prevalent worldviews of Mesopotamia and Egypt, and polemically dethrone the aspects of creation these cultures venerated as gods, it is significant that the Jewish scriptures maintain a clear belief in the existence of celestial beings with supra-human abilities. It is within the allowance for such entities, that the figure of Satan appears.

⁹“Many anthropologists have pointed out that the worldview of most peoples consists essentially of two pairs of binary opposites: human/not human and we/they. Apart from anthropology we know from experience how people dehumanize enemies, especially at wartime” (*The Origin of Satan* [New York: Random House, 1995], 37).

¹⁰ Pagels, *Origin of Satan*, 39.

'Satan' in the Hebrew Bible

The noun שָׂטָן occurs 26 times in the Hebrew Bible. It bears the meaning, "to persecute, to be hostile, to accuse"¹¹ or to describe "one who is in opposition."¹² Although the concept of Satan "has had extensive development theologically in the NT,"¹³ its use in the Hebrew Bible for the most part provides little indication of the notion of "a semi-autonomous archfiend who wields the forces of evil against God's will"¹⁴:

In biblical sources the Hebrew term the *satan* describes an adversarial role. It is not the name of a particular character. Although Hebrew storytellers as early as the sixth century B.C.E. occasionally introduced a supernatural character whom they called the *satan*, what they meant was any one of the angels sent by God for the specific purpose of blocking or obstructing human activity. The root *śṭn* means "one who opposes, obstructs, or acts as adversary."¹⁵

¹¹ Rivkah Scharf Kluger, *Satan in the Old Testament* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1967), 25.

¹² *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis (NIDOTTE)* Vol. 3, 1231.

¹³ *NIDOTTE* Vol. 3, 1231.

¹⁴ Peggy L. Day, *An Adversary in Heaven* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988), 63. "In the Hebrew Bible, as in mainstream Judaism to this day, Satan never appears as Western Christendom has come to know him, as the leader of an "evil empire," an army of hostile spirits who make war on God and humankind alike. As he first appears in the Hebrew Bible, Satan is not necessarily evil, much less opposed to God. On the contrary, he appears in the book of Numbers and in Job as one of God's obedient servants . . ." (Elaine Pagels, *The Origin of Satan* [New York: Random House, 1995], 39)

¹⁵ Pagels, *Origin of Satan*, 39. "The name 'satan' is not a proper name, but a common one, signifying 'enemy', a name with a very strong value, but not used to indicate an enemy in war. As a technical term we may think of it as indicating the accuser in a trial. Hence the angel's name: his function was that of accusing humans before God of their misdeeds" (Paolo Sacchi, *Jewish Apocalyptic and Its History* [Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990], 222)

Kluger organizes the references to Satan in the Hebrew Bible by first separating the “Concept of Satan in the Profane Realm”¹⁶ from the “Concept of Satan in the Metaphysical Realm.”¹⁷

In the case of the former, several texts are identified where the noun שָׂטָן is used without any connotation of personality: 1 Samuel 29:4; 1 Kings 5:4 (MT 5:18); 11:14, 23; Numbers 22:22; 2 Samuel 19:22. In each of these occurrences שָׂטָן refers generally to anyone who opposes or offends another. Whether it was the Philistine commanders’ fear that David could turn against them in the battlefield and become their ‘adversary’ (1 Samuel 29:4), or the ‘adversaries’ such as Hadad and Rezon that God raised up against Solomon (1 Kings 11:14, 23), the term שָׂטָן in these contexts may only bear a general nominal sense.

In exploring the metaphysical sense, Kluger identifies four texts where שָׂטָן refers to a trans-human personage (Numbers 22:22; Job 1:6ff. and 2:1ff; Zechariah 3:1ff; and 1 Chronicles 21:1). The major contributions of Kluger’s work on these texts were both her proposal of a chronological schema for these four references, and, the accompanying argument that they show evidence of an evolutionary development of the Satan-concept within the Old Testament period.¹⁸

¹⁶ Kluger, *Satan*, 34 – 38.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 38 – 53.

¹⁸ Writing some two decades later, and based on a preferred view of the dating of individual books of the Hebrew Bible, Peggy L. Day is not so sure about Kluger’s chronological scheme: “Kluger’s evolutionary model of a developing Satan concept must be viewed with extreme caution if not entirely abandoned, because she dates the ass story significantly earlier than Job 1 – 2, Zechariah 3 and 1 Chronicles 21” (Day, *Adversary*, 62).

Numbers 22:22–35¹⁹

In context, the wilderness narrative has the Israelites camped on the plains of Moab, causing grave concern to the Moabite king Balak. To counter the threat of Israelite presence he decides to send for the Syrian prophet Balaam, to pronounce a curse on Israel. But God opposes Balaam, and the מַלְאֲכֵי יְהוָה (“angel of the LORD,” a circumlocution for Yahweh) stands blocking the path with a drawn sword in his hand, as an “adversary,” אֲדָוֶי:

The divine and the human planes meet for the first time in a most significant way in Num. 22:22. Here it is an angel who stands in the way of Balaam, the human being, as *satan*, as adversary. He is by no means as yet the demonic figure called “Satan,” but the *ma’lak Yahweh*, who blocks Balaam’s path, *le-satan-lo*, “for an adversary to him.” The term *satan* is used here only in apposition to *ma’lak Yahweh*: he stands in Balaam’s way as adversary.²⁰

It is important to note that even here “satan” bears no titular sense; it merely describes the adversarial function of the angel of Yahweh. At the same time it is significant because it introduces the idea of a celestial figure rising up in opposition to a human being.²¹

¹⁹ “The story of Balaam and the ass (Num 22:22 – 35) marks the first appearance of a nonhuman *satan* in the Hebrew Bible. In later stories, Satan is the grand chameleon and assumes many forms. In this account from the book of Numbers, however, we should still understand the term “satan” in the lower case. In other words, *satan* in the Balaam story does not refer to the Devil, who in pre-Exilic biblical narratives does not yet exist” (T.J. Wray and Gregory Mobley, *The Birth of Satan* [New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005], 57).

²⁰ Kluger, *Satan*, 38.

²¹ “Kluger identifies Numbers 22 as the locus in which the profane “Satan concept” was first transposed into the mythical sphere. That Yahweh could act as a *satan* was for Kluger the first stage. This same concept was later transferred to one of the *bene Elohim* (Job 1 – 2, Zech 3) and given the status of a mythological personality. Later still (1 Chron 21)

Job 1:6 – 12; 2:1 – 7

The noun שָׂטָן occurs most in Job: fourteen times within the narrative portions of chapters 1 and 2. The Joban “Satan” has a distinct personality, and this is indicated by the use of the definite article throughout: הַשָּׂטָן.

Job 1:6 introduces Satan surprisingly as a member of the divine council: “One day the angels came to present themselves before the LORD, and [the] Satan also came.” The concept has moved on from Numbers 22:22 where an “angel of the LORD” took up the position of an “adversary,” against Balaam, to the Job narrative where a particular angel is identified as “the Adversary” or the *satan*.²²

Nevertheless, he is still a member of the divine council, a “son of God” (בְּנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים), and is free to wander on the earth (1:7) as well as to be entertained in the presence of Yahweh.²³ He shows some signs of hostile independence – charging Yahweh with showing favouritism towards Job (1:9-11; 2:4-5) – but clearly cannot act independently of divine approval (1:12; 2:6).

The Joban Satan heavily influences the semantics of the term so that it, henceforth, includes the notion of “an accuser”.²⁴ Accusing Job appears to be his most distinct role alongside that of wreaking destruction on all which that righteous man possessed.

the term *satan* was divorced from the divine council context and became the proper name of an independent personality” (Day, *Adversary*, 62).

²² “*Hassatan*, it appears, has a special function in the divine government: to audit human virtue. *Hassatan* does not seem to be stirring up trouble on earth – at least not yet – but merely reporting in to his supervisor” (Wray and Mobely, *Birth of Satan*, 60).

²³ See Kluger, *Satan*, 39.

²⁴ “Both question and answer, as well as the dialogue which follows, characterize Satan as that member of the divine council who watches over human activity, but with the evil purpose of searching out men’s sins and appearing as their accuser” (“Satan” in *The Jewish Encyclopedia* Vol. XI [New York: KTAV, 1969], 68).

Some have suggested that this idea of a professional accuser comes from the Persian period, during which the Persian emperors ran a kind of secret police operation; men in mufti wandering about the vast empire scrutinizing suspicious individuals, picking up any hints of seditious activities, and then presenting a legal brief against them.²⁵ Although this made for an interesting background explanation, it lacked evidence of fact:

I have searched in vain for evidence to suggest that professional accusers *per se* existed in the early Persian period. While each satrapy had a secretary or secretaries who communicated directly with the central government, and therefore were responsible for reporting seditious activity, I do not think it would be correct to define these people as professional accusers.²⁶

Despite the fact that later Christian doctrine would persist with the transliteration of the Hebrew שָׂטָן as a title for the devil, and although in both cases the term will carry the notions of accusation and destruction, the correspondence would seem to end there. The later concept would emerge only after several stages of further development:

Although Job 1:1 – 2:10 reveals the most complete portrait of Satan in the Hebrew Bible, it is clear that this figure is far from the demonic tempter who would later appear in the desert to test the spiritual mettle of Jesus in the Gospels. *Hassatan's* function in the Prologue of Job seems merely to administer tests, to aid the LORD by finding out if mortal virtue is more than skin deep. *Hassatan* does not act without the LORD's permission, and must play by the Almighty's rules.²⁷

²⁵ See, Kluger, *Satan*, 29–30.

²⁶ Day, *Adversary*, 42.

²⁷ Wray and Mobley, *Birth of Satan*, 63.

Nevertheless, the Joban stage marks a very significant point of development of the concept: the emergence of an entity that wills to act entirely on his own:²⁸

Of course the notion of being “tested” or “punished” by God is not an alien concept in the Bible. But what is wholly different in this story of testing and misfortune is that God employs a lieutenant to carry it out. This marks a significant turning point in our exploration of Satan. We now have evidence of the *satan* figure acting on behalf of the deity, but just one step away from acting alone. For although *hassatan* in Job is still featured as a member of the heavenly court, he also appears to be a somewhat independent figure, roving the earth, wreaking havoc and disrupting the life of a good and pious man, and daring to make wagers with the Almighty himself. There is even a certain arrogance and audacity associated with this character – and if God is testing Job, one could just as easily argue that *hassatan* is testing God.²⁹

Zechariah 3:1 – 7

Zechariah is generally thought to have been written around 520bc, and may belong to the same milieu as Job. Zechariah 3:1ff brings the reader to the fourth of eight visions in Zechariah, to catch the last stages of what may be termed a celestial courtroom drama. The person being examined is Joshua the High Priest, ostensibly to establish his suitability as a co-regent in Jerusalem in Zechariah’s “idealized pictures of a political reality: a future of shared political-priestly leadership. Israel would be ruled by both a king – from the line of David – and a priest in the LORD’s service.”³⁰

²⁸ “The book of Job too describes the *satan* as a supernatural messenger, a member of God’s royal court. But while Balaam’s *satan* protects him from harm, Job’s *satan* takes a more adversarial role. Here the Lord himself admits that the *satan* incited him to act against Job (2:3)” (Pagels, *Origin of Satan*, 41).

²⁹ Wray and Mobley, *Birth of Satan*, 64.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

Like Job, here, Joshua is “accused” or “opposed” by the Satan. God is obviously well-disposed towards Joshua since “he is a brand plucked from the fire,” and speaks to declare Joshua’s acceptability to Yahweh despite the accusations of the Satan.³¹

Interestingly the presentation of שָׂטָן in both books have striking similarities: he is an angelic being called הַשָּׂטָן, the setting is the divine council, a human being favoured by God is the subject of the discussion, the *accuser* is *accusing*, and other servants of God (מַלְאֲכֵי הַרוּחַ “angel of Yahweh” in Zechariah; cf. בְּנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים in Job) are present.³²

However, there is still much that is unclear. Is the Satan Joshua’s adversary or Yahweh’s? Is his role within the divine council – although adversarial – commissioned by Yahweh, or entirely independent of him?³³ Is the fourth vision of Zechariah a pre-

³¹ “Differing in content, yet the same in form, we find the concept of Satan in Zech 3:1 ff. Here again Satan stands opposite God. i.e., the *ma’lak Yahweh*. Thus, it is not a personality essentially differentiated from Yahweh who confronts the *ma’lak Yahweh*, but rather two aspects of God who confront each other” (Kluger, *Satan*, 39).

³² “Taken together with the description of *hassatan* in the book of Job, the portrait in Zechariah 3 confirms the image we had there: *Hassatan* is a member of the divine government with the thankless but essential job of examining the moral integrity of superficially pious mortals” (Wray and Mobley, *Birth of Satan*, 65).

³³ See Kluger’s suggestion (*Satan*, 39) – based on a Jungian interpretation of personality – that “Satan” is, in the early stages, simply a dark side of the divine personality: “Differing in content, yet the same in form, we find the concept of Satan in Zech 3:1 ff. Here again Satan stands opposite God. i.e. the *ma’lak Yahweh*. Thus, it is not a personality essentially differentiated from Yahweh who confronts the *ma’lak Yahweh*, but rather two aspects of God who confront each other;” see also Jeffrey B. Russell, *The Devil: Perceptions of Evil from Antiquity to Primitive Christianity* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1977), 177: “Whatever the origins of Hebrew monotheism, the Old Testament writers had come to identify Yahweh, the god of Israel, with the one God of the cosmos. Since Yahweh was the one God, he had to be, like the God

Christian version of the law versus grace antithesis; the Satan representing legalistic Judaism, and the angel of the LORD representing grace?

Peggy Day has this to say about the latter – law versus grace – reading of Zechariah 3:1–7:

“Unfortunately I suspect that underlying the interpretation that the *satan* of Zechariah 3 represents a strict adherence to law that is opposed to divine grace is an anti-Judaic polemic. I would suggest that the *satan* interpreted as the champion of the law over grace may present us with a vestige of the mediaeval notion that equated the devil and the Jew . . . the widespread belief in mediaeval Christendom that the Jews were in league with the devil – indeed, were themselves devils incarnate. Interpreting Zechariah’s *satan* as the advocate of strict law over grace is but a more sophisticated and abstract expression of the old equation of the devil and the Jew. Zechariah’s *satan* becomes the spokesperson of Jewish law as opposed to Christian grace. The superiority of Christianity is thus affirmed by giving it a textual basis, while Judaism, represented by the *satan*, is pronounced contrary to God’s will. Grace supersedes law as the way to community salvation.”³⁴

of monism, an “antinomy of inner opposites.” He was both light and darkness, both good and evil. We are accustomed to thinking of Yahweh in his creative aspects, but let us now consider his shadow;” also see Wray and Mobley, *Birth of Satan*, 51, who similarly find the psychoanalytical explanation useful: “It is clear that the shift from many gods to a singular Lord of the Universe gives rise to an existential frustration among God’s chosen people as they grapple with the reality of a God who creates both weal and woe. It would appear that, over time, an exorcism of sorts takes place; the negative aspects of Yhwh are cast out and assigned to alternate beings, such as the Destroyer (*Mashit*), the “smiting angel” (*hammal’ak hammashit*), and, of course, *hassatan*.”

³⁴ Day, *Adversary*, 125.

The portrait of Satan in Zechariah receives new shades and nuances of personality, while retaining the characteristic ambiguity found in the Old Testament accounts of the Satan-figure. Jeffrey Russell explores the implications of Satan's appearance in Zechariah:

Here is a supernatural being who not only acts as an obstructor, but whose nature and name are those of an obstructor. Next, this being shows himself in overt hostile opposition to at least one man, for the adversary stands before the God to accuse Joshua. Satan appears here in the specific sense of an *accuser*, a sense broadly accepted in Apocalyptic Judaism and Christianity owing to the connotations of the Greek *diabolos*. There is a hint of Satan's opposition to Yahweh as well as to human beings, for the God reproaches him for his activities. Yet Satan appears merely to be punishing Joshua for his sins; rather than having any malicious intent, he may simply have failed to understand that Yahweh intended to be merciful.³⁵

Wray and Mobley suggest that with his appearance in Zechariah as the accuser, Satan is well on his way to becoming the classic enemy of God:

Or is this more than intramural sparring, more than the inevitable but provisional residue of an adversarial hearing? Indeed, the genesis of a cosmic separation of powers? If the latter is the case, then we have – for the first time in the Hebrew Bible – *hassatan* acting as God's opponent in a forensic setting. And although Satan is not yet a fully developed, independent being in Zechariah 3, we can see the beginnings of what would later become the perennial confrontation between Satan and God.³⁶

1 Chronicles 21:1

This final Old Testament text under consideration may well be also the most controversial in terms of our view of the development of the concept of Satan.

³⁵ Russell, *The Devil*, 190 – 191.

³⁶ Wray and Mobley, *Birth of Satan*, 66.

The books of Chronicles were, with little dispute, the latest among the canonical writings.³⁷ In any case it is chronologically the last, compared to Numbers, Job, and Zechariah, whatever may be their sequence. In addition to its chronological position Chronicles is unique in that it is in fact a commentary on other canonical books written much earlier: 2 Samuel and 1 & 2 Kings.

To make matters, for our subject, wildly more interesting, 1 Chronicles 21:1 directly parallels a text in 2 Samuel 24:1. Both are describing David's punishable offence of commissioning a census, but whereas the earlier text (1 Samuel 24:1) attributes this misjudgment in part to Yahweh ("Again the anger of the LORD burned against Israel, and he incited David against them saying, "Go and take a census of Israel and Judah" ESV), the later rendition (1 Chronicles 21:1) offers a different *agent provocateur*: "Satan rose up against Israel [עַל-יִשְׂרָאֵל] שָׂטָן [וַיַּעֲמֵד שָׂטָן] and incited David to take a census of Israel" ESV!

Assuming an evolutionary development, Kluger first notes that in this text, the previously regular definite noun הַשָּׂטָן is rendered without an article. Given (as we know) that at the end of the trajectory Satan has become a proper name, she probably reads this back to interpret its use here as the earliest and only canonical use of "Satan" as a proper noun in the Hebrew Bible: "Here Satan is an independent personality, who in a particular function appears instead of God."³⁸ Her argument is that by 1 Chronicles 21 we have the most mature notion of the Satan-concept (and, we might add, if so the closest depiction to his appearance in the New Testament):

³⁷ Proposed dates range from the late-sixth century to the third century BC. The Chronicles are thought to be contemporaneous with Ezra-Nehemiah. Some scholars though, would argue that Daniel was written last; between 168 and 164 BC.

³⁸ Kluger, *Satan*, 39;

Satan is divested of his character as a divine function. He no longer appears, as in the book of Job, as part of the divine court; he is an independent figure, apparently separated from God, who no longer stands in dialectic confrontation with God or his angel, as in Job and Zechariah.³⁹

Kluger's assertions, while plausible, are not without inherent exegetical weaknesses. First, while the indefinite noun שָׂטָן allows for it to be rendered as "Satan," a proper name, it can equally be read as "a satan" or better still, "an adversary" bearing the "profane" meaning Kluger detects in at least six other texts. If this were the case then the writer of the Chronicles is merely reassigning the blame, for instigating the census, away from Yahweh to an unspecified agent (the apparent ambiguity then allows for either a human or celestial adversary-figure). This is the gist of Peggy Day's counter-argument.⁴⁰ She avers that the earliest use of Satan as a proper name may be definitively fixed only from the second century BC:

To sum up our findings thus far, we have seen that there is no evidence to support reading *satan* as a proper name in Chronicles. Recent research into the composition of Chronicles-Ezra-Nehemiah suggests a redactional history

³⁹ Kluger, *Satan*, 155; Sacchi, *Jewish Apocalyptic*, 222, adopts the same reasoning (as most Bible translators imply when they render the noun, "Satan"): "Towards the end of the Persian period his figure appears again in the first book of Chronicles (21:1), where his name has already become a proper name. It has lost the article, and from 'the satan' has turned into 'Satan' with a capital 'S'." Wray and Mobley, *Birth of Satan*, 67 – 68, follow the same logic, albeit more dramatically(!): "It is as if Satan is stepping from the shadowy ranks of the heavenly host at the back of the stage, chanting their "Holy, Holy, Holies," to emerge front and center as a character in his own right. Satan – no longer God's lackey as in the book of Job – stands alone in Chronicles, acting apart from the divine council."

⁴⁰ See, Day, *Adversary*, 144–145; for the same position see Alden Lloyd Thompson, *Responsibility for Evil in the Theodicy of IV Ezra* (Missoula, Montana: Scholars Press, 1977), 37–38.

which would date 1 Chr 21:1 – 22:1 between 520 and 400 B.C.E., yet the earliest clear evidence for understanding satan as a proper name comes from the second century.⁴¹

A second weakness in Kluger’s otherwise creative discussion follows from the above. The Chronicler’s only use of the indefinite noun שָׂטָן simply strains under the weight of meaning Kluger assigns to it. With little substantial evidence Kluger asserts from 1 Chronicles 21:1 that *Satan* is:

- a. Divested of his character as a divine function
- b. No longer a part of the divine court
- c. An independent figure apparently separated from God
- d. No longer in dialectic confrontation with God⁴²

Peggy Day goes on to note that in 1 Chronicles 21:15 – 30 there is another celestial figure, the מְלֹאךְ יְהוָה, holding a drawn sword, much like the “angel of Yahweh” in Numbers 22. She, therefore, proposes two different “satans” or adversaries of David and Jerusalem:

In effect 1 Chronicles 21 speaks of two celestial satans; the first is an unspecified accuser who brings a complaint against Israel to the heavenly tribunal, and the second is the messenger dispatched as a consequence of Yahweh’s wrath.⁴³

We may, however, venture that Peggy Day may be far too sweepingly dismissive (on the basis of her admissible arguments regarding 1 Chronicles 21:1) to deny the existence of a shadowy Satan figure in the entire Old Testament. She is certainly inaccurate to claim that Satan’s “fundamental purpose and nature” has no foundation in any of the biblical satan texts:

⁴¹ Day, *Adversary*, 141 – 142.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 145.

If there is no Satan in 1 Chronicles 21 then there is no Satan in the Hebrew Bible, hence to talk about a profane Satan concept is, within the context of the Hebrew Bible texts that use the term *satan*, anachronistic. In heaven as on earth, the term *satan* has neither a single meaning nor a sole referent. And when Satan as it were materializes as an independent personality the traits attributed to him definitely include reflections of and implications drawn from certain of the texts that employ the noun *satan*, but what we might call Satan's fundamental purpose and nature was not derived from any of the biblical *satan* texts.⁴⁴

Summary on Satan in the Old Testament

Our exploration of the relevant texts in the Hebrew Bible at the least confirms that the etymology of "Satan" shows its roots in the Hebrew noun שָׂטָן which commonly spoke of any opponent, adversary or accuser, but sometimes was descriptive of little-known celestial figures that showed up in crisis situations on earth, or more likely in heavenly council-scenes.

We are also able to confirm that the ancient texts do not provide any indication of the well-defined, independent personality and epitome of evil that we encounter more naturally within the writings of Paul and the later New Testament.

The biblical doctrine as a whole then shows a clear development of the Satan-concept from a general noun to the proper name of an imposing figure. Our interest has been to ascertain if the Old Testament evinces a stage in that development, and the study above makes it difficult to deny that some of the key characteristics of Satan – adversary of God, accuser of humans, destroyer and source of misfortune – begin to emerge within the pages of the Hebrew Bible, albeit in sketchy and tenuous forms.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 62–63.

Some scholars, however, deny the Old Testament any substantial part in the formation of the Satan concept, and prefer to view it entirely as a foreign import from cultures that impinged on the Israelites during the Exile.⁴⁵ But this either-or approach is not necessary; it is plausible that the later doctrine of Satan emerged *both* from its infancy in the Hebrew scriptures, *as well as* from the radical and accelerated shaping it received during the tumultuous and dynamic period of Second Temple Judaism.⁴⁶ It is to an investigation of the latter that we now turn.

⁴⁵ “Without the fundamental notion of a semi-autonomous archfiend who wields the forces of evil against God’s will and to the detriment of all humankind, there is no Satan. As many before me have said, this notion seems not to have been an organic product of home-grown Israelite speculation, but rather was borrowed from Zoroastrianism and grafted onto certain branches of early Judaic thought. If this was indeed the case, then to speak of the development of a concept prior to its introduction is ludicrous. The notion may be said to have evolved on its own soil and within its own thought world, and may be said to evolve in Judeo-Christian thought after its introduction, but it cannot be said to have developed in Israel prior to the time that it was introduced into the biblical stream of consciousness” (Day, *Adversary*, 63).

⁴⁶ ““Satan” originally was a title of the prosecutor in Yahweh’s heavenly court (e.g., Job 1,6), but in the post-exilic period he also becomes the head of the wicked forces opposing God. He is the same as Mastema in Jubilees 10, 8-11, a name also found in CD 16, 5. The name Satan does not occur in the Qumran scrolls, however, except in three broken contexts in which it may well be simply the common “adversary”, so it is not clear that Satan is identified with Belial at Qumran. On the other hand, the Book of Jubilees seems to identify Satana not only with Mastema (10, 8-11) but also with Belial (1, 20; 15, 33). In the New Testament the figure of Satan is well developed . . . Thus, it is clear that certain strands of the devil tradition continued to circulate separately and did not necessarily coalesce, at least in some circles of Judaism. Nevertheless, there seems to be a unified tradition bringing together many or all the elements by the first century C. E. in some Jewish circles.” Footnote No. 12 in Lester L. Grabbe, “The Scapegoat Tradition: A Study in Early Jewish Interpretation,” *Journal for the Study of Judaism* Vol. XVIII, no. 2 (1987), 158.

The Emergence of Satan within the Second Temple Period

For the most part of Christian history, the period between the Old and New Testaments were referred to as “the four hundred silent years”. Today, we know that those years were neither four hundred, nor silent! The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls in 1947, together with the burgeoning interest in the Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, and the vast corpus of related “Greco-Roman writings from the Diaspora,” have opened new avenues (over the last five decades or so), to understand more deeply the social, political, and philosophical environment of post-Exilic, or Second-Temple, Israelite religion⁴⁷— now more commonly termed *Early Judaism*.⁴⁸

The Chronological and Cultural parameters of Second Temple Judaism

This period gets its name from the events that transpired during the second half of the sixth century BC, when, following the return from Exile, the Judahites rebuilt the Temple of Solomon under the leadership of Zerubbabel and Joshua.⁴⁹ The dedication

⁴⁷ See John J. Collins and Daniel C. Harlow ed., *Early Judaism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012), vii.

⁴⁸ “For German scholars of the nineteenth and early and mid-twentieth century, such as Emil Schürer and Wilhelm Bousset, this was *Spätjudentum*, “Late Judaism.” The “lateness” was relative to the teaching of the prophets, and bespoke decline as well as chronological sequence. The decline reached its nadir in rabbinic Judaism, understood as a religion of the Law. After the Holocaust, this way of characterizing ancient Judaism was widely (but not universally) recognized as not only offensive but dangerous. It was also inaccurate. On any reckoning, the history of Judaism since the Roman period is longer than the preceding history. Moreover, it is now increasingly apparent that the religion of ancient Israel and Judah before the Babylonian conquest was significantly different from the “Judaism” that emerged after the Exile” (Collins and Harlow, *Early Judaism*, 1).

⁴⁹ “Typically, scholars of Israelite history assign the dates of 1800 to 450 B.C.E. as the Biblical period, and 520 B.C.E. to 70 C.E. as the overlapping designation for the Second Temple period. In addition,

of the Second Temple, following the prophet Haggai's urgent promptings to complete its reconstruction, took place in 516 BC.

Thereafter, it suffered desecration at the hands of the Seleucid emperor Antiochus IV in 167 BC, and had to be rededicated by Judas Maccabaeus in 164 BC. Again in 20 BC, Herod the Great commenced a massive restoration, beautification, and expansion programme on the Temple which would only be finalized in 64 AD. By this stage, the material glory of the Second Temple had far surpassed that of Solomon's Temple, and had gained iconic status within the Roman Empire. This, though, would be short-lived.

With the commencement of the First Jewish War in 66 AD, the Roman army led by Vespasian laid siege to Jerusalem. Although the latter had to urgently return to Rome to be crowned, following Emperor Nero's suicide, Vespasian's son, Titus, continued the campaign. Finally, after sufficiently starving out the Jerusalemites, by 70 AD, Titus' soldiers invaded the city. They had express orders to preserve the Temple as a trophy for the emperor, but for reasons that are unclear the Romans stormed the Temple, looted its treasures, and set fire to it. Thus, the historic institution of the Jewish temple in Jerusalem was brought to a violent and tragic end.

Nevertheless when discussing this era, it is better to view it more as a cultural phenomenon than a mere historical timeframe.⁵⁰

Hellenistic Judaism typically refers to the period between 300 B.C.E. to 200 C.E." (Jeff Anderson, *The Internal Diversification of Second Temple Judaism* [Maryland: University Press of America, 2002], 3:).

⁵⁰ The limits of this period are understood variously; extending from as early as 538 BC to as late as 135 AD. But see Collins and Harlow *Early Judaism*, 2: "The conquests of Alexander are taken as the *terminus a quo*, on the grounds that they mark a major cultural transition. Several extant postbiblical Jewish writings date from the third or early second century B.C.E., prior to the Maccabean Revolt, which has often served as a marker for a new era . . . The reign of Hadrian (117 – 138 C.E.) and the Bar Kokhba Revolt (132 – 135 C.E.) are taken to mark the end of an era." Also

The irreversible effects of Alexander's Hellenization programme, independent kingdom of Judah under Hasmonean rule, and the accommodations to Roman hegemony that began in the second half of the first century BC, all contributed to provide a particular context within which Judaism had to reinvent itself following the cataclysmic events of 586 BC and the experience of exile. And, it is the specific reshaping of Judaism during these centuries that gives to the Second Temple Period its most enduring importance, particularly as the threshold across which Christianity emerged. Consequently, for our purposes, the narrower period from the reign of Alexander to the destruction of the Temple (333 BC – 70 AD) will be made the focus of our enquiry.

The Literary Witness to Beliefs within Early Judaism

Until the twentieth century our understanding of what was believed within early Judaism was limited to the information that could have been gleaned from the canonical writings (including the Apocrypha). And, considering the chronological gap between the testaments and the paucity of epigraphic information, the reasons for the significantly different religious environment, symbols, and ideas found in the New Testament could at best only have been a matter of speculation.

The situation has of course changed dramatically over the last hundred years with the discovery and painstaking translations of hundreds of Jewish documents that had originated from the Second Temple period.⁵¹ Through this new-found window we are

see Anderson, *Internal Diversification*, 3: "While all designations for the period are ultimately artificial, the preference here will be to speak of the Second Temple period or the Second Commonwealth. Such a designation avoids confessional rhetoric and has definable beginning and end dates, since the second temple was completed in 515 B.C.E. and later destroyed in 70 C.E."

⁵¹ "If we ignore for the moment the contents of what is called the pseudepigraphical literature (those ancient writings that are not part of the Bible or Apocrypha), the contents of the Dead Sea Scrolls from the Jordan Valley, the Nag Hammadi library from the Nile Valley, as well as

able to apprehend with greater certainty the ideas that had most currency between the rise of Alexander the Great and the Fall of Jerusalem.⁵²

In addition to the Hebrew Bible, three other major literary witnesses now exist to guide us in our reconstruction of early Judaism: the *Apocrypha*, the corpus classified as *Pseudepigrapha*, and the Dead Sea Scrolls. And, relevant to our enquiry, all these bodies of literature provide rich insights to Jewish conceptualizations of evil and Satan in the period leading up to the writings of Paul.

The Apocrypha: Meaning “the hidden things (books),” the Apocrypha refers to a collection of Jewish writings that were not found within the corpus of the Hebrew Bible. This collection is understood variously within the different religious traditions today; Jewish, Christian Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Protestant.⁵³ However, for the purposes of our study a particular

the myriad documents preserved in translated form in Ethiopic, Old Church Slavonic, Greek, Coptic, Aramaic, and Latin, we must marvel at the sheer *quantity* of religious literature produced between 200 B.C.E. and 200 C.E.” (Wray and Mobley, *Birth of Satan*, 96–97).

⁵² “Thanks to the hard work of countless archeologists who have unearthed great caches of ancient libraries and the painstaking research of contemporary philologists, we have a more complete picture of the fractious, unruly, and creative period that produced Judaism and Christianity” (See *Ibid.*, 96).

⁵³ See Collins and Harlow, *Early Judaism*, 179–191. Which books comprise the Apocrypha, their status with regard to canon, and relative merits for religious use and spiritual edification, have been matters of serious debate and dispute for much of Christian history, going back at least to Jerome and the Vulgate Bible. In fact Jerome and his contemporaries were ambivalent about their value, with some recognizing them as useful reading and other eschewing them altogether. While the Protestant Reformers did not discard the Apocrypha, there was a great divergence of opinion regarding their status, with some Reformers levelling sharp criticisms against some books. The Roman Catholic Church reacted to the latter via the first

understanding of “Apocrypha” – as referring to the books found in the Septuagint but absent from the Hebrew Bible – will be sufficient. Based on the three most important Greek codices (Sinaiticus, Vaticanus and Alexandrinus) a maximum of fifteen books may be identified as “the Apocrypha”.⁵⁴ The LXX emerged during the third to second centuries BC from within Alexandrian Judaism,⁵⁵ and so the *diabology* reflected within the corpus of its “apocryphal books” will potentially be significant to our understanding of how the doctrine of Satan developed.

The Pseudepigrapha: This refers to a vast (and expanding) corpus of writings, which are mostly dated to the period between 200 BC – 200 AD. The term literarily means “books that are falsely ascribed,” and on this basis some scholars assert that even some books in the Hebrew Bible (Deuteronomy, Proverbs, Qoheleth, Daniel and some Davidic Psalms) are “arguably pseudepigrapha”!⁵⁶ Nevertheless the general designation today is to books that are outside of canon, but may not necessarily be

Council of Trent in 1546 and “pronounced a curse against any who were not prepared to recognize all those books contained in the Latin Vulgate Bible” (p.180). Its preference was to call the Apocrypha by the term “Deuterocanonical Books” and use the former term to designate the books usually called “Pseudepigrapha”!

⁵⁴ Here the Apocrypha consists of: Greek Esther, Tobit, Judith, 1 Maccabees, 2 Maccabees, 3 Maccabees, 4 Maccabees, Wisdom of Solomon, Sirach, Psalms of Solomon, 1 Baruch, Epistle of Jeremiah, Susannah, Bel and the Dragon, Psalms and Odes (including the Prayer of Manasseh). See Collins and Harlow, *Early Judaism*, 183.

⁵⁵ “Unlike the nebulous situation regarding early Aramaic translations, the probability is strong that the Jewish community in Alexandria had translated the Torah into Greek during the third century B.C.E. . . .in the last third of the second century Ben Sira’s grandson translated his grandfather’s work and only casually mentions the translation of the Torah and the Prophets and other books, which suggests that those translations were not recent but had become widely known”(Collins and Harlow, *Early Judaism*, 128).

⁵⁶ See Collins and Harlow, *Early Judaism*, 191.

falsely ascribed. James H Charlesworth, in his monumental two-volume work, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, includes sixty-three such writings, and advances the following criteria for the classification:

The present description of the Pseudepigrapha is as follows: Those writings 1) that, with the exception of Ahiqar, are Jewish and Christian; 2) that are often attributed to ideal figures in Israel's past; 3) that customarily claim to contain God's word or message; 4) that frequently build upon ideas and narratives present in the Old Testament; 5) and that almost always were composed either during the period 200 B.C. to A.D. 200 or, though late, apparently preserve, albeit in an edited form, Jewish traditions that date from that period."⁵⁷

Since our enquiry is limited to, the conceptualizations of Satan within Second Temple Judaism and until the emergence of the Pauline corpus, the pseudepigraphal writings we refer to will only be those that are established to have been composed no later than the early first century AD.⁵⁸

The Dead Sea Scrolls: The chance find by a young Bedouin shepherd, in 1946 or 1947, of a cave with ancient manuscripts, would led to the unravelling of the greatest and most fascinating archaeological discovery of epigraphic material of the twentieth century.⁵⁹ By 1956 a total of eleven caves had been discovered in the region of Khirbet Qumran on the north-western shore of the Dead Sea, and together they had yielded complete scrolls or partial representations of over 800 original documents now

⁵⁷ James H Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* Volumes 1 and 2 (Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 2013), xxv.

⁵⁸ The Pauline corpus may be safely assigned to the period 49–64 AD.

⁵⁹ "The manuscript find has been hailed as the greatest archaeological discovery of the twentieth century," Frederick J Murphy, *Apocalypticism in the Bible and Its World* (Michigan: Baker Academic, 2012), 197.

famously called the Dead Sea Scrolls.⁶⁰ The DSS is without parallel in its importance, and have in one move paved the way for a complete reassessment of what had previously been largely assumed about the pre-Christian history of canonical texts, the Apocrypha, and pseudepigraphal writings.⁶¹ Vermes proposes that “Qumran’s greatest novelty” would likely be the radical undermining of the previously-held view that ancient Judaism was a monolithic literary-religious system:

The Dead Sea Scrolls have afforded for the first time direct insight into the creative literary-religious process at work within the variegated Judaism which flourished during the last two centuries of quasi-national independence, before the catastrophe of 70 CE forced the rabbinic successors of

⁶⁰ In Cave 4 alone Emmanuel Tov, in 1992, had catalogued 575 titles (p.10). See Geza Vermes, *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English* (London: Penguin, 2011), 1 – 12; For an updated figure, however, also see Collins and Harlow, *Early Judaism*, 206: “The present inventory of the Dead Sea Scrolls lists around 930 items. In most cases one item corresponds to one manuscript, but in view of the many unidentified fragments that have not been included in the lists, it is plausible that the material known to us, stem from more than a thousand different manuscripts.” (emphasis added)

⁶¹ “The uniqueness of the Qumran discovery was due to the fact that with the possible exception of the Nash papyrus . . . no Jewish text in Hebrew or Aramaic written on perishable material could previously be traced to the pre-Christian period;” Collins and Harlow, *Early Judaism*, 204: “The importance of the Dead Sea Scrolls for the history of Judaism lies in the combination of the size, the antiquity, and the nature of the corpus. The scrolls are by far the largest collection of Jewish religious texts from the Second Temple period, preserving fragments of more than a hundred different religious compositions, most of which were hitherto unknown. For many different aspects of Judaism, the Dead Sea Scrolls provide the first literary evidence. Thus, for example, the corpus contains the oldest Hebrew and Greek biblical manuscripts, the first Aramaic translations of biblical books, the oldest *tefillin*, the earliest liturgies for fixed prayers, the oldest non-biblical halakic works, as well as the oldest exorcistic prayers” (Vermes, *Complete Dead Sea Scrolls*, 15).

the Pharisees to attempt to create an 'orthodoxy' by reducing dangerous multiplicity to simple, tidy and easily controllable unity.⁶²

For our purposes any allusions or references, or the evidence of a more systemized understanding of evil and its manifestations in the DSS, would be invaluable to help piece together conceptualizations of Satan in the ferment of Second Temple Judaism.⁶³

Aliases for Satan and Permutations of *Diabology* in the Second Temple Literature

If the Hebrew Bible yielded only a shadowy and tenuous apparition of a diabolical archfiend, the writings of the Second Temple period "suddenly shifts into overdrive"⁶⁴ and present the uninitiated reader with bewildering permutations of the notion of evil; its origin, manifestation, and influence on humankind. Nothing is 'fixed' at this stage. Within the overarching monotheism and covenantal theology of adherence to *Torah*, Second Temple Judaism became thoroughly plural.⁶⁵

One contributing factor was the perpetual social and political instability of the Jews all the way from the conquest of Alexander

⁶² Vermes, *Complete Dead Sea Scrolls*, 23–24.

⁶³ Since the bulk of the material pre-dates the era of Christian writings; Vermes, *Complete Dead Sea Scrolls*, 14: "In sum, the general scholarly view today places the Qumran Scrolls roughly between 200 BCE and 70 CE, with a small portion of the texts possibly stretching back to the third century BCE, and the bulk of the extant material dating to the first century BCE, i.e. Late Hasmonean or Early Herodian in the jargon of the paleographers."

⁶⁴ Wray and Mobley, *Birth of Satan*, 95.

⁶⁵ There were some uniform markers of Jewish identity of course: monotheism, observance of the Sabbath, unique dietary habits, and circumcision. Nevertheless, "what flourished in the Second Temple Period was not a single, fixed, "normative" Judaism, but a developing, evolving religion." See Anderson, *Internal Diversification*, 5.

to the Fall of Jerusalem, and the Bar Kochba Revolt. This era was distinctively marked by the political intrigues of the religious leaders of the Jews, as one faction or the other attempted to manoeuvre its way to gain favour with the powers of the time. The resulting alienation and repeated fracturing of segments of the community intensified the diversity of Jewish identity, along with the diversity of the interpretation of the Hebrew Scriptures.

Significant diversity of religious outlook had already been thoroughly woven into the matrix of Second Temple Judaism because it emerged through the coming-together of three major religio-cultural strands of Judaism that had developed during, and well-after, the period of the Exile. The Babylonian exile had resulted in the formation of large communities of Judahites in three regions: those that had remained in the land represented *Palestinian Judaism*; those who had been exiled represented *Babylonian (and Persian) Judaism*; and those who had fled to Egypt during the turbulent periods of economic deprivation, war and exile, constituted *Alexandrian Judaism*.⁶⁶

It is inevitable then, that conceptualizations of Satan and views about evil would be diverse. The first factor that strikes the enquirer in this regard is the lack of uniformity in the designation of Satan. The literature evinces a long list of aliases for the enemy of God and His people. In addition to the sparing use of the Hebrew "Satan," he is variously called Diabolos, Beliar/Belial, Samael, Azazel, Mastema, Malkiresha, Semyaza/Samyaz, and Satanael/Satanail. And, these names are by no means spread uniformly; specific literatures adopt one or more of these names as the standard designation of Satan. So for example, the LXX (including the deuterocanonical books) favours *Diabolos*, *1 Enoch*

⁶⁶All three communities claimed some sort of superiority. The Palestinian Jews claimed priority for having lived "in the Land," the Babylonian returnees claimed priority by their genealogy, and the Alexandrian Jews could appeal to sheer numbers, having over 200,000 in that city alone. See Anderson, *Internal Diversification*, 63ff.

simultaneously speaks of *Semyaza*, *Satanael*, and *Azazel*, the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* use *Beliar/Belial*, *Jubilees* refers to *Mastema*, and the Dead Sea Scrolls, *Beliar/Belial* and *Melkiresha*.⁶⁷

The Apocrypha, like the Hebrew Bible, shows the least interest in diabolology. With “a satan” appearing just once in Sirach (Ecclesiasticus) 21:27 (“When an ungodly person curses an adversary, he curses himself”), and *diabolos* (“devil”) being used only in 1 Maccabees 1:36 (“an evil adversary of Israel at all times”), and Wisdom of Solomon 2:24 (“but through the devil’s envy death entered the world”), the paucity of references to the personification of evil within the ferment of the period is remarkable. What accounts for this disinterest, particularly when the contemporary literature – from the third century BC to the first century AD – presented such elaborate ideas about Satan? One possibility is that the books that were later recognized as “apocryphal” belonged to a stream of tradition that eschewed the growing speculations on the demonic; in contrast to other traditions that followed quite different trajectories.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ “So the Devil goes by many names in this period . . . Although the names may differ, the Prince of Demons’ function remains the same. His role, regardless of the epithet preferred by a particular author, is a subversive one.” Wray and Mobley, *Birth of Satan*, 108.

⁶⁸ See for example Alden Lloyd Thompson, *Responsibility for Evil in the Theodicy of IV Ezra* (Missoula, Montana: Scholars Press, 1977), 39 – 40: “The late OT hints of a dualistic solution to the problem of evil were destined neither for an immediate nor total triumph, at least not within Judaism proper. There is evidence of a struggle to maintain a more purely monotheistic solution to the problem. This reaction is evident in Ecclesiasticus 21:27: “When an ungodly man curses his adversary he curses his own soul.” This passage properly belongs to a discussion of the evil *yetzer*, but it definitely represents some sort of polemic against the tendency to posit an external tempter who might diminish man’s personal responsibility.”

By and large the literature of this period has much to say about Satan. In fact one might argue that the devil as we know him really manifests here.⁶⁹ He emerges as an independent individual of some importance, surrounded and supported by a plurality of similar beings, together functioning as a “parallel kingdom” whose highest agenda is to frustrate the will of God in the affairs of humanity:

The devil has therefore changed from being the metaphysical principle of evil to the head of a kind of kingdom, parallel to that of God, to whom God actually assigns as subjects the souls of the giants, that is, the evil spirits. The kingdom of evil is unified and made contemporary to humans.⁷⁰

Despite the vast corpus of literature from the period, our investigation limits us both by subject (those that make any significant reference to Satan) and by chronology (those that may, with some confidence, be assigned to pre-date Paul). Given these factors, in addition to the DSS, we can identify the following pseudepigraphal texts as promising for our research:

1 Enoch: Classified as an apocalyptic writing, 1 Enoch is a composite work of 107 chapters made of five “books” (possibly modelled after the Torah, the Psalms and the Megilloth)⁷¹: The Book of the Watchers (1–36), the Book of the Similitudes (37–71),

⁶⁹ “This turbulent period also marks the adolescence of Satan. In previous chapters we glimpsed only snapshots of the Devil’s infancy, usually only in the background of group photos from the Hebrew Bible where the central focus was on another subject altogether. In the Intertestamental Period, however, Satan acquires articulation and definition; the Devil comes of age and begins to act independently, apart from the divine court. Satan now has his own agenda and his own band of cosmic lackeys” (Wray and Mobley, *Birth of Satan*, 96).

⁷⁰ Sacchi, *Jewish Apocalyptic*, 225.

⁷¹ See Anderson, *Internal Diversification*, 161 – 182; Sacchi, *Apocalypticism*, 211 – 212, makes the interesting suggestion that 1 Enoch in turn is derived from *The Book of Noah*, which is dated back to 500 BC.

the Book of Astronomical Writings (72–82), the Book of Dream Visions (83–90), the Book of the Epistle of Enoch (91–107). The sections were composed in different periods, but some parts of 1 Enoch, such as *The Book of Watchers*, go back to the third century BC.⁷² The importance of this writing cannot be overstated. In addition to its antiquity, 1 Enoch is also the fountainhead of a completely alternative, but orthodox, Jewish narrative of the origin and nature of evil in the universe.⁷³ The thesis of “the Watchers” – first innovated in 1 Enoch⁷⁴ – becomes the basis for discussions about Satan and evil in other subsequent writings.⁷⁵

⁷² See the discussion in Charlesworth, *Pseudepigrapha* I: 5 – 12.

⁷³ Anderson, *Internal Diversification*, 110 – 111: “The preponderance of literary evidence would indicate that Enochic Judaism was extremely popular in the late Second Temple period. Beliefs in the super-human origins of evil, the freedom of these and all beings to rebel, and the freedom of God to deliver the world from such rebellion were the philosophical pillars of this alternative ways of thinking.”

⁷⁴ Although see Sacchi, *Apocalypticism*, 212, who argues that the diabology in 1 Enoch comes from the earlier *Book of Noah*: “The text narrated in Hebrew how some angels, some generations before the Flood, in the time of Jared, fell in love with women and descended to earth to marry them, with disastrous consequences for humanity, this event being the cause of the Flood . . . The group of angels which leaves heaven for earth has as its head one sometimes called Asa’el and sometimes Semeyaza, later confused in the Greek and Ethiopic translations with Azazel . . . What is important is that in this account there is a head of the rebel angels, whose rebellion caused great ruin for humanity, because it was the cause of the Flood. This head of the rebels is the first, dim image of the devil.”

⁷⁵ Contrary to previous scholarly consensus that Second Temple Judaism was uniformly Torah-centric, the “Enoch tradition” attests to an alternate way of being Jewish; one less dependent on externals such as Torah and cult, and grounded more in revelation-knowledge, the immediate and the individual. On this, see Murphy, *Apocalypticism*, 126 – 127: “Numerous scholars have noticed that the Enoch literature does not put much stress on Torah. It may represent a

Jubilees: Also called “Little Genesis” because Jubilees is a retelling of Genesis 1 – Exodus 12, which in turn was believed to have been revealed to Moses on Mount Sinai where he spent the forty days mentioned in Exodus 24:18. The work is dated to go as far back as to the mid-second century BC, and recognized to be of complex genre with affinities to, “history, testament, apocalyptic, ritual law, and chronology!”⁷⁶ The writer was well acquainted with 1 Enoch and the story of the Watchers, and makes extensive reference to evil powers in the world.⁷⁷

The Testaments of the Twelve: Here we are into more debatable dating, because scholars differ on whether this work falls entirely within a Christian provenance, or whether it was originally a Jewish work predating Christianity, which was later shaped by Christian redaction.⁷⁸ Charlesworth has no doubt that it could not have “been composed by anyone other than a hellenized Jew,” and discusses a date between the completion of the Septuagint (250 BC) and the reign of John Hyrcanus (137 – 107 BC).⁷⁹ The *Testaments* is a compendium of the “last words” of each of the Twelve Patriarchs individually made just prior to their death (on the pattern of Jacob’s last words in Genesis 49), but with a special

Judaism not fully consonant with what we think as mainstream, centered on Torah and priesthood. The discussion is ongoing and has not resulted in consensus . . . The lack of mention of the larger story centered on Sinai stands in stark contrast with other Jewish apocalypses as well as the literature of the apocalyptic community of Qumran. The religion of the Enoch literature is Jewish, but it is not Mosaic. It is covenantal, but the laws on which it is built are not those of Torah but are broader, rooted in the universe as a whole. One can compare it to the wisdom tradition in its relative lack of interest in the Sinai covenant and the particular history of Israel.”

⁷⁶ See the discussion in Charlesworth, *Pseudepigrapha* II: 35 – 50.

⁷⁷ See Thompson, *Responsibility for Evil*, 40: “One of the sources which is permeated with evil spirits, led by Satan (Mastema), is Jubilees;”

⁷⁸ See Murphy, *Apocalypticism*, 192.

⁷⁹ *Pseudepigrapha*, 777 – 778.

emphasis on the significance of the tribes of Levi and Judah, the founders of the priestly and kingly traditions in Israel. This text, too, shows a major interest in the demonic, with Satan most commonly being called “Beliar.”⁸⁰ The cumulative result of the multiple references to the demonic in the *Testaments* is that it significantly advanced Jewish conceptualizations of Satan:

In this work earlier ambiguities about the relation between God and the tempter are resolved: the boundary between good and evil is clear. The devil is entirely extraneous to God; his will is inimical to God. “You must hold fast to the will of God and reject that of Belial” (*T. Naph.* 3.1). “God is Light, Belial is Darkness” (*T. Jos.* 20.2). The two kingdoms have clearly separate locales and, more than being merely distinct are opposed.⁸¹

The Testament of Job: While resembling the “form and purpose of the better-known *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, this elaborates on the biblical narrative. It is indisputably Jewish, and dated to the first century BC. Following the tradition of the biblical book, it only uses “Satan” as the title for Job’s tormentor.

Life of Adam and Eve: Produced between 100 BC and 100 AD, this work tells a story of Adam’s fatal illness, and how he instructs Eve and Seth to return to Eden and get him the oil of healing from the tree of life. Seth is attacked by an animal, and an angel informs that the healing oil will only be available at the end of time. The tradition about the original “Fall” that eventually persisted into Christian theology – Adam, Eve and the Serpent – is reiterated in this book. It also only uses “Satan” as a proper name for the enemy of God.

⁸⁰ “Another source which is permeated with a vast demonology is the *Testaments*. Beliar is the head of the evil spirits, and either he or his cohorts are mentioned in every one of the twelve testaments” (Thompson, *Responsibility for Evil*, 45).

⁸¹ Sacchi, *Apocalypticism*, 227.

Lives of the Prophets: Dated with a degree of probability to the first quarter of the first century AD, the *Lives of the Prophets* also provide added insight into the development of the Satan doctrine in Second Temple Judaism preceding Paul.⁸² *Lives of the Prophets* prefers the name “Beliar” for personified evil.

In what follows we shall attempt to bring together the extant references to the figure of Satan, and explore the most likely underlying beliefs about personified evil in Early Judaism. For greater clarity we shall examine these under three topics: the *Origins or Genesis* of Satan, the *Profile or Functions* of Satan, and the *Prospects or Fate* of Satan.

I. The Origin or Genesis of Satan

The most common modern assumption about the origin of the devil is based on an idea that was least proffered in the Second Temple period. In fact, based on the uncertainty in the dating of its source document (2 Enoch), it is questionable if such a view even prevailed in Jewish thinking prior to Paul.⁸³ In summary,⁸⁴ this view holds that Satan was once a “high-ranking officer in the cosmic army, known in the Hebrew Bible as the *saba’ot* or the “[angelic] hosts” who attempted to revolt against God, and was subsequently cast down from heaven in disgrace. 2 Enoch 29:4–5 states it this way:

But one from the order of the archangels deviated, together with the division that was under his authority. He thought up the impossible idea, that he might place his throne higher than the clouds, which are above the earth, and that he might become equal to my power. And I hurled him out

⁸² For dating and introductory discussion see Charlesworth, *Pseudepigrapha II*: 379 – 384.

⁸³ The earliest extant copy of 2 Enoch is as late as the 14th century AD. Scholars dispute if it in fact might not be a “Christian” writing, although opinions vary as widely as the proposed dates that range from the first century BC to the Middle-Ages! See the Introduction in Charlesworth, *Pseudepigrapha I*: 91–100.

⁸⁴ See Wray and Mobley, *Birth of Satan*, 108 – 112.

from the height, together with his angels. And he was flying around in the air, ceaselessly, above the Bottomless.⁸⁵

The language here alludes to a couple of passages in Isaiah (14:12–15) and Ezekiel (28:12–19), which may in turn have become the basis for speculation in later Judaism or Christianity. The Isaiah woe-oracle to the “king of Babylon” (here called the “Morning Star”) points out how he has “fallen from heaven,” who had once tried to “raise [my] throne above the stars of God...[and] make [myself] like the Most High.” The later Latin translation of “Morning Star” – *lucifer* – was picked up by John Milton in his poem, “Paradise Lost,” and went on to become one of the most popular personal names for Satan in modern times.⁸⁶

Even though Ezekiel, too, addresses a human figure (the king of Tyre), it is the elevated language, strong allusions, and celestial metaphors that give rise to the possibilities that a celestial figure, Satan, and not the human king of Tyre, is the actual object of God’s speeches through the prophets.

The essence of John Oswalt’s comments with regard to the object of God’s condemnation in the Isaiah text may be equally applied to the Ezekiel passage:

Some of the church fathers, linking this passage to Luke 10:18 and Revelation 12:8, 9, took it to refer to the fall of Satan described in those places. However, the great expositors of the Reformation were unanimous in arguing that the context here does not support such an interpretation. This passage is discussing human pride, which, while monumental to be sure, is still human and not angelic.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ Charlesworth, *Pseudepigrapha* I: 148.

⁸⁶ Wray and Mobley, *Birth of Satan*, 111. See also, 158–160, for Milton’s influence on our conceptualization of “hell.”

⁸⁷ John N Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah – Chapters 1–39* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), 320.

The narrative of Satan's origin that is more likely to have circulated within Early Judaism – from which the above 2 Enoch account may have originated – is found in the *Life of Adam* 1–17, which relates a story of what followed after Adam and Eve had been expelled from Paradise.

The couple suffers great sorrow, and Eve is remorseful and suicidal. She blames herself for leading Adam to this great disgrace, but Adam comes up with a plan to show true penitence, and so to hope for God's mercy. He suggests that he would stand neck deep in the Jordan for 37 days, and Eve should do the same in the Tigris.

Their extreme penitence makes Satan angry and he works to successfully tempt Eve a second time (chapters 9–10). When Adam realizes this he cries: "O Eve, Eve . . . how have you again been seduced by our enemy?" Realizing her repeated failure Eve cries out: "Woe to you O Devil! Why do you assault us for nothing?" In answer to that question Satan sighs, and proceeds to present a fascinating account of the genesis of our arch-enemy (chapters 12–16).

All Satan's hatred is directed towards humanity because he lost his place in heaven, was denied any further fellowship with the angels, and was thrown down to the earth, on account of Adam. When God had created Adam in God's image, Michael the archangel had presented the man to the other angels and called them all to "Worship the image of the Lord God, as the Lord God has instructed." Satan refuses: "Why do you compel me? I will not worship one inferior and subsequent to me. I am prior to him in creation; before he was made, I was already made. He ought to worship me." Hearing this "other angels who were under" Satan also refused to worship the human creature. This rebellion makes God angry, and he expels Satan and his followers and casts them to earth.

The most influential narrative about the origin of Satan was, however, the myth about the “Watchers,” first detailed in 1 Enoch.⁸⁸ As mentioned above, this work was well received during the centuries prior to Paul, and its *diabology* adopted by other esteemed works such as *Jubilees*. The elaborate narrative is extrapolated from one of the most obscure passages in Genesis (6:1–4), which talks about the “sons of God” having relations with the “daughters of men” and producing the *Nephilim* (from נְפִילִים, “the fallen ones”?).

The primordial ‘sin’ in this account is lust, since it is the beauty of the antediluvian women that entices about two hundred angels who had been appointed to *watch* over the universe. They determine to breach the created-boundaries and engage in illicit, sexual alliances with women. At the beginning, their leader is Semyaza, who is cautious; he doesn’t want to be left carrying the can: “I fear that perhaps you will not consent that this deed should be done, and I alone will become responsible for this great sin” (1 Enoch 6:3). In response, they all bind themselves by an oath, and descend to earth and carry out their ill-advised plan. In addition to illicit intercourse, they corrupt humanity by teaching magical arts, metallurgy, and beauty culture! (1 Enoch 7–8)⁸⁹

A total of eighteen leaders of the Watchers are named (6:7–8), but as the narrative progresses another Watcher named Azazel is identified as the head of this group of rebel angels (see 1 Enoch

⁸⁸ Walter Schmithals, *The Apocalyptic Movement* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1975), 22: “In some cases the adversary is portrayed as the fallen angels, who according to Gen. 6 mingled with the children of men and begot the host of demons, the cause of sickness and the ones who lead people astray into idolatry and other sins. This conception dominates, for example, in the Ethiopic Book of Enoch, which knows the angels Azazel and Semjaza as the leading figures of the evil powers.”

⁸⁹ See Sacchi, *Jewish Apocalyptic*, 217; Murphy, *Apocalypticism*, 127 - 130

8:1; 9:6; 10:4).⁹⁰ The *Nephilim* wreak havoc on the earth, and bring great distress to humanity, and are eventually destroyed, but their souls live on and become the evil spirits or demons that would continue to torment humanity.⁹¹

A third significant strand of tradition about the origin of Satan is reflected in writings located within the DSS corpus. Here, we find a systemic dualism within its apocalyptic thought⁹² that is not characteristic of the other literature within the comparable period.⁹³ In *The Community Rule* (1QS III–IV) we find the following ideas:

⁹⁰ This echoes the name of the enigmatic wilderness-demon mentioned in Leviticus 16:8, 10 & 26. For a discussion on the relationship between 1 Enoch and Leviticus 16, and for the interesting argument as to how and why the Azazel tradition served both diabolology and Christology in Judaism and early Christianity respectively, see Lester L. Grabbe, "The Scapegoat Tradition: A Study in Early Jewish Interpretation," *Journal for the Study of Judaism* Vol. XVIII, no. 2 (1987), 152 – 167.

⁹¹ Sacchi, *Jewish Apocalyptic*, 218: "Regarding the giants [Genesis 6:1-4], God made them quarrel and kill each other in fratricidal battles. Unfortunately this measure could be only a palliative: their souls, immortal like all souls, remained on the earth to do evil to humans and turn them against God. In this way the evil spirits of tradition also fit within a framework acceptable to reason, in that their origin was explained without tracing it to God and to creation, yet without considering them independent of the creation."

⁹² Although at no point does it go as far as the absolute dualism of Persian religion which saw no temporal relationship between Ahura Mazda (Wise Lord) and Ahriman (Fiendish Spirit); they were viewed as "original in being themselves uncreated representatives of contradictory principles." See Wray and Mobley, *Birth of Satan*, 85 – 87; also see Murphy, *Apocalypticism*, 204: "Jewish thought could not fully accommodate the idea that there is any power in the universe equal to that of its God. Therefore the scrolls tell of a universe whose dualism is transcended by God and is therefore not absolute."

⁹³ Although see *T.Ash.* 1:3 – 5: "God has granted two ways to the sons of men, two mind-sets, two lines of action, two models, and two

He has created man to govern the world, and has appointed for him two spirits in which to walk until the time of His visitation: the spirits of truth and injustice . . . All the children of righteousness are ruled by the Prince of Light and walk in the ways of light, but all the children of injustice are ruled by the Angel of Darkness and walk in the ways of darkness . . . Until now the spirits of truth and injustice struggle in the hearts of men and they walk in both wisdom and folly . . . For God has established the two spirits in equal measure until the determined end, and until the Renewal, and he knows the reward of their deeds from all eternity.⁹⁴

Then, comparing these various traditions, we may conclude that Second Temple Judaism was greatly burdened by the problem of evil, and sought an explanation for its existence. This was noticeably unlike the writers of the Hebrew Bible, and even the Apocrypha. Those writers posited the existence of a rational and independent being that was the fountainhead of evil, temptation and misery. Who exactly this figure may be, and the one name he may be called was still in flux; so various candidates appear in different texts. However, the idea of a separate entity and an elaborate organization of evil has, by the first century AD, become mainstream Judaism.

Questions remain. Is Satan then to be understood to be a *bene Elohim*, a member of the divine council who fell away from his lofty position due to pride or lust, and dragged a host of other, lesser angelic beings with him (as for example in, the *Life of Adam*

goals. Accordingly, everything is in pairs, the one over against the other. The two ways are good and evil; concerning them there are two dispositions within our breasts that choose between them" (*Pseudepigrapha* 1:816–817).

⁹⁴ Vermes, *Complete Dead Sea Scrolls*, 101 – 103; see also Pagels, *Origin*, 57 – 58: "The Prince of Light thou has appointed to come to our support; but Satan; the angel Mastema, thou hast created for the pit; he rules in darkness, and his purpose is to bring about evil and sin (1 QM 19:10-12)."

and Eve, the *Enochic* literature, and *Jubilees*)? Or is he, as Qumran would have it, a special creation of God for the purpose of leading a stream of evil in the world so as to test the mettle of humans and distinguish between those who are worthy to be called the “children of Light” and those who ought to be condemned as “the children of Darkness?”

II. The Profile or Functions of Satan

Judaism in general was diffident about depicting the Devil’s physical appearance; quite unlike every other culture, where art and sculpture almost always were primary vehicles for expressing religious beliefs. In Hebrew religion the greater emphasis in characterization was placed on moral qualities. Consequently the isolated reference to *Melkiresha*’s physical appearance in the *Testament of Amram* is arresting:

I raised my eyes and saw one of them. His looks were frightening [like those of a viper] and his garments were multi-coloured and he was extremely dark . . . And afterwards I looked and behold . . . by his appearance and his face he was like that of an adder, and he was covered with . . . together, and over his eyes . . .⁹⁵

Satan is portrayed as existing to persecute humanity, wreak destruction in the world and corrupt creation. The *Damascus Document* speaks about an age when, “Belial shall be unleashed against Israel” and he will set “three nets” by which he will catch Israel: fornication, riches, and profanation of the Temple.⁹⁶ In *Jubilees* 10:1 - 3 Noah’s grandchildren are being led astray, blinded and destroyed and Noah has to pray for their rescue. We have already seen Satan’s avowed intentions in *The Life of Adam and Eve* 12:1: “O Adam, all my enmity and envy and sorrow concern you;” and 16:3: “So with deceit I assailed your wife and

⁹⁵ Vermes, *Complete Dead Sea Scrolls*, 571.

⁹⁶ Vermes, *Complete Dead Sea Scrolls*, 132; it continues to warn that those who do not hold fast to the Covenant, “shall be visited for destruction by the hand of Belial” (135).

made you to be expelled through her from the joys of your bliss.” In 1 *Enoch* 9:6 Azazel is held responsible for “all forms of oppression on the earth,” and later God calls him the source of all sin: “And the whole earth has been corrupted by Azazel’s teachings of his own actions; and write upon him all sin” (10:8). Again the *Testament of Benjamin* 3:3 suggests that “the spirits of Beliar seek to derange [people] with all kinds of oppression.”⁹⁷

The Devil is known as a cunning deceiver who uses his trickery against individuals and nations alike. In the *Lives of the Prophets* 17:1–4, the prophet Nathan perceives ahead that David was going to “transgress” in the Bathsheba affair, and so hurries to warn him. On his way Beliar tricks him by getting him to encounter “a dead man who had been murdered”. Delayed by this incident, Nathan is unable to help David. In the *Life of Adam and Eve*, we recall how Satan masqueraded as an angel of light (9:1, *Pseudepigrapha* II: 260). In the *Testament of Job*,⁹⁸ Satan is angry with Job because he had destroyed the “temple of the idol” (5:1–3; cf. 4:3–4). In the subsequent story, Satan’s primary *modus operandi* is cunning and deceit, on more than one occasion coming at Job through disguise. In 6:4, he comes, “having disguised himself as a beggar”; in 7:1, “Satan departed and put a yoke on his shoulders”; in 17:2 he comes “disguising himself as the king of the Persians”; and in 23:1, he deceives Sitis, Job’s wife, having “disguised himself as a bread seller”.

With regard to the nation, the *Damascus Document* states: “In ancient times Moses and Aaron arose by the hand of the Prince of Lights and Belial *in his cunning* raised up Jannes and his brother when Israel was first delivered.”⁹⁹ And Jubilees 48:9 says: “And

⁹⁷ Also see *T.Benj.* 7:1 – 2: “Flee from the evil of Beliar, because he offers a sword to those who obey him. The sword is the mother of seven evils: moral corruption, destruction, oppression, captivity, want, turmoil, desolation.”

⁹⁸ *Pseudepigrapha* 1:839–868.

⁹⁹ Vermes, *Complete Dead Sea Scrolls*, 133; cf.

Prince Mastema stood up before you and desired to make you fall into the hand of Pharaoh. And he aided the magicians of the Egyptians and they stood up and acted before you.”

Satan is also (as in Job) quite dependent on God for the space and time he is granted to exercise his evil intentions in the world. One example is when Noah intercedes for his grandchildren who are being led astray and destroyed by demons that had emanated from the bodies of the *Nephilim*. The angels are thereby ordered to bind the demons, at which point Mastema makes a plea that while ninety percent may be lost, that God allows him to keep ten percent: “And let them do everything which I tell them, because if some of them are not left for me, I will not be able exercise the authority of my will among the children of men . . .”¹⁰⁰

III. The Prospects or Fate of Satan

Despite this entire devilry, Satan is clearly a temporal being of limited power and whose morbid end is repeatedly rehearsed. In the *Benedictions* (4Q280) *Melkiresha'* is cursed:

Be cursed Melkiresha, in all the thoughts of your guilty inclination. May God deliver you up for torture at the hands of your vengeful Avengers. May God not heed when you call on Him. May he raise his angry face towards you . . . May you be cursed with no remnant, and damned without escape.¹⁰¹

I Enoch makes clear that Azazel and his armies will face condemnation and be punished in due course; the forces of God (inclusive of the chief angels Asuryal, Raphael, Gabriel, and Michael)¹⁰² overwhelmingly dominate the sequence of events: “The Lord said to Raphael, “Bind Azazel hand and foot and throw

¹⁰⁰ Jubilees 10:1 – 9, *Pseudepigrapha* II:75–76.

¹⁰¹ Vermes, *Complete Dead Sea Scrolls*, 395.

¹⁰² See 1 Enoch 10; *Pseudepigrapha* 1:17–18.

him into the darkness.”¹⁰³ *T. Levi* mentions that the Lord will raise up a new priest, and “Beliar will be bound by him.”¹⁰⁴ *T. Judah* 25:3 speaks of the destruction of Beliar: “There shall be no more Beliar’s spirit of error, because he will be thrown into the eternal fire.”¹⁰⁵

References to Satan and the Theology of Paul

Within the chronological appearance of the books of the New Testament, the letters of Paul distinguish themselves as the earliest documents to be written. Until recently 1 Thessalonians was regarded as the first among them, but by scholarly consensus Galatians has now replaced it in the top slot! The latter is thought to have been composed as early as AD 48. All of Paul’s letters had to have been written before AD 64 when, tradition has it, Paul was executed by beheading just outside the city of Rome.¹⁰⁶

Paul was in many ways the true Second Temple Period Jew. He, like the Judaism of his time, was subject to the formative influences of multiple cultures and traditions. In fact, Paul may be identified as simultaneously inhabiting three worlds: *Judaism*, as expressed both in the cosmopolitan context of Tarsus, as well as through the more conservative rabbinic school of Gamaliel; *Hellenism*, “which by Paul’s day had permeated most of the

¹⁰³ So Raphael proceeds to put Azazel in a hole in the desert, and covers it with sharp rocks, and prevents him from enjoying any light, “in order that he may be sent into the fire on the great day of Judgment.” *Pseudepigrapha* I:17. Later Enoch pronounces Azazel’s judgment (13:1 – 2), *Pseudepigrapha* I:19: “There will not be peace unto you; a grave judgment has come upon you. They will put you in bonds, and you will not have an opportunity for rest and supplication, because you have taught injustice and because you have shown to the people deeds of shame, injustice, and sin.”

¹⁰⁴ *Pseudepigrapha* I: 794 – 795.

¹⁰⁵ *Pseudepigrapha* I: 802.

¹⁰⁶ “Paul was beheaded, tradition asserts, at Aquae Salviae (now Tre Fontane) near the third milestone on the Ostian Way,” F.F. Bruce, *Paul: Apostle of the Free Spirit* (UK: Paternoster Press, 1977), 450.

recesses of the Eastern Mediterranean world,” because of which, “Paul [was] at home, in fact, in the street-level world of Hellenistic discourse”; and of course, *Roman citizenship*, which Paul was privileged to enjoy from birth, and which he prudently used on occasion, as recorded by Luke in Acts.¹⁰⁷

What then do the letters reveal as Paul’s views about Satan? What is the extent of his interest in the ‘enemy’? What is Paul’s *diabology*? Does he maintain the intensity of interest that was evident in the pre-Pauline literature? And, given his distinction as perhaps the most influential exponent of Christian theology in its early years, did he advance any innovative ideas about Satan and the existence of evil?

It is obvious that Paul believed in a personal devil, not merely a principle or force of evil. In his references he uses the language of personality, indicating that Satan is capable of scheming, hindering, entrapping, masquerading, deceiving, and leading astray.

At the same time, one is struck by the relative disinterest Paul shows towards the subject. He mostly uses “Satan”; that, too, only on ten occasions (Rom. 16:20; 1 Cor. 5:5; 7:5; 2 Cor. 2:11; 11:14; 12:7; 1 Thess. 2:18; 2 Thess. 2:9; 1 Tim. 1:20; 5:15), and only four times does he refer to the “Devil” (Eph. 4:27; 6:11; 1 Tim. 3:6 – 7; 2 Tim. 2:26). Others are miscellaneous references: in a highly disputed text (2 Cor. 6:14–18) he once refers to Satan as “Beliar,” and on other occasions, “serpent” (2 Cor.11:3), “the tempter” (1 Thess. 3:5), and “the evil one” (2 Thess. 3:3).¹⁰⁸ Only in three instances (Rom. 8:38; 1 Cor. 10:18–22; 1 Tim. 4:1) does he refer to demons (*daimonia*).

¹⁰⁷ On this see N. T. Wright, *Paul: Fresh Perspectives* (London: SPCK, 2005), 3–6; also, Bruce, *Paul: Apostle*, 22 – 52.

¹⁰⁸ See, D. G. Reid, “Satan” in *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 864; Colin Brown ed., *New International Dictionary of the New Testament* Vol. 3 (UK: Paternoster Press, 1976), 468 – 477.

Unlike the apocalyptic writers that preceded him, Paul does not engage in any speculations about the origins of Satan,¹⁰⁹ nor does he dwell on Satan's demise except to tell the Roman church, "the God of peace will soon crush Satan under [your] feet" (16:20). The notion of a cosmic battle between the forces of evil and the angels of God that seemed to be a major theme in Jewish apocalyptic writings, and would later be picked up again in Revelation, is absent from Paul. Even in the concluding section in Ephesians, when he refers to the "principalities, and powers and spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places," he 'earths' the battle as one that is engaged in by the church on earth, not by the angelic beings in heaven.

There is a pragmatic feel to Paul's references to the devil: usually mentioned in the course of describing his ministry-experiences, or in the process of exhorting the church or individuals to live victorious Christian lives. Unlike subjects such as Christology, soteriology, ecclesiology, or eschatology – on which the apostle innovatively elaborated and bequeathed a great legacy for posterity – Paul makes no effort at all to construct a systematic teaching on Satan:

Paul's references to Satan always occur in the course of meeting the demands of his apostolic ministry; nowhere in the Pauline corpus is there any attempt to set forth a systematic "satanology." But the picture which emerges from the fragments of evidence preserved in the Pauline letters seems in most respects compatible with that which we find in the common "satanology" of Judaism – though in Paul these themes are transposed into a Christian framework.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁹ Although 1 Tim. 3:6 – 7 may constitute a faint allusion to *The Life of Adam and Eve*, chapters 12 – 16, which suggest that *pride* was the 'original sin' that resulted in a devil.

¹¹⁰ Reid, "Satan," 864.

We also agree with Reid's latter point that the connotations of most of Paul's references to Satan echo the pre-Pauline literature of the Second Temple Period. The key characteristics of Satan, found in common in both sets of literature, are: hindering or obstructing the will of God, cunning and deceptive actions, and the entrapment of the people of God.

Satan Hinders and Obstructs the will of God

On one occasion, Paul tells the Thessalonians that he and his co-workers intensely longed to visit the church, "but Satan hindered us" (1 Thess. 2:18). This is reminiscent of the account in *The Lives of the Prophets*, where Nathan was "hindered" by Beliar for warning David about the danger of sinning with Bathsheba.¹¹¹ Wray and Mobley suggest that 'hindering' could well be Satan's main function in Paul's thought:

When Paul chooses the word "Satan" in his letters, he has one particular role in mind: Satan as obstructor. Specifically, Paul uses "Satan" to refer to those who hinder – usually through undermining Paul's teaching – the fully realized existence that the Christian religious experience offers.¹¹²

Satan is Cunning and Deceitful

On more than one occasion Paul alludes to Satan's cunning and deceitfulness: a dominant characteristic of the devil in Second Temple literature. In 2 Thess. 2:9, when he speaks about a person who will come "according to the working of Satan" performing "miracles, false wonders and signs," one is reminded of how Mastema "aided the magicians of the Egyptians" (Jubilees 48:9).¹¹³

In 1 Cor. 7:5 he warns married couples that wish to separate and abstain from sex during periods of prayer, that "Satan [may] tempt you because of your lack of self-control." This brings to

¹¹¹ Charlesworth, *Pseudepigrapha* II: 395.

¹¹² *Birth of Satan*, 129.

¹¹³ Charlesworth, *Pseudepigrapha* II: 139.

mind the account of Adam and Eve desperately seeking God's favour by *separating* themselves and standing neck-deep, in silence, in the waters of the Jordan and the Tigris. The *separation* gave Satan the opportunity to once again tempt Eve.¹¹⁴

It is out of the same pseudepigraphal background that in 2 Corinthians 11, Paul mentions that "Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning" (2 Cor. 11:3), and goes on to argue that "Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light" (2 Cor. 11:14).¹¹⁵

Satan Entraps the People of God

In Ephesians Paul portrays the devil as one who is constantly on the lookout for an opportunity to gain a foothold through the weaknesses in the Christian community (4:27), using *methodeia* (schemes) to defeat God's people (6:11). The objective is to entrap Christ's followers to make them ineffective in serving God (1 Tim. 3:6 – 7; 2 Tim. 2:26).

In *Jubilees* 48:12, Mastema inspires the Egyptian army to pursue the Israelites with their superior vehicles and weaponry.¹¹⁶ In the *Testament of Job*, too, Satan is relentless in pursuing Job's downfall, and succeeds somewhat by entrapping Sitis, Job's wife, to barter her hair and urge Job to curse God and die.¹¹⁷

Echoes from the Hebrew Bible

On a few occasions however, Paul appears to be working more directly with the assumptions of the Hebrew Bible rather than the later ideas of Early Judaism. In the few remaining references to

¹¹⁴ "Life of Adam and Eve," Charlesworth, *Pseudepigrapha* II: 259 – 260.

¹¹⁵ See Life of Adam and Eve 9:1: "Eighteen days went by. Then Satan was angry and transformed himself into the brightness of angels and went away to the Tigris River to Eve and found her weeping." (*Pseudepigrapha* II: 260)

¹¹⁶ *Pseudepigrapha* II: 139.

¹¹⁷ *Pseudepigrapha* I: 848 – 849.

the Devil, Paul twice talks about “handing over to Satan” (1 Cor. 5:5; 1 Tim 1:20). A closer reading shows that this drastic action is, paradoxically, with a positive outcome in mind. In the first instance, it is so that “his spirit may be saved,” and in the second instance that “they may be taught not to blaspheme.” Here then, Satan functions more like an unsavoury divine agent; one through whom *God’s purposes* are accomplished (cf. Job 1 – 2).

This notion becomes most explicit in 2 Cor 12:7: *καὶ τῇ ὑπερβολῇ τῶν ἀποκαλύψεων. διὸ ἵνα μὴ ὑπεραίρωμαι, ἐδόθη μοι σκόλοψ τῇ σαρκί, ἄγγελος σατανᾶ, ἵνα με κολαφῆ, ἵνα μὴ ὑπεραίρωμαι* (“Now because of the surpassing revelations, in order that I be not conceited, a thorn in the flesh – a messenger of Satan – *was given* to torment me, in order that I be not conceited”).¹¹⁸

Although sitting easily within the context of the Hebrew Bible and its high view of the sovereignty of Yahweh, the idea that the Satan works towards the fulfilment of the divine will was jettisoned in the Second Temple literature. In the latter context, Satan was viewed as an almost completely independent personality ruling over a rival kingdom. In fact, the Qumran Scrolls come very close to a Persian-type dualism with its rhetoric about the Prince of Darkness and the Prince of Light.

This brief mention of the “angel of Satan” in 2 Cor. 12:7 is therefore significant. It may hint at a radical recommitment to the sovereignty of God in Paul’s thought, and consequently explain why, in contrast to the popular and elaborate views of Second Temple Judaism, he maintains a ‘low-view’ of Satan. For Paul, it appears, that although Satan was an adversary of some intelligence and power, he was entirely finite and his most certain future prospect was to be humiliatingly “crushed” under the feet of those he once enslaved (Rom. 16:20).

¹¹⁸ It is not difficult to argue in the context of the passage that e*doqh is a theological passive suggesting that the “messenger of Satan” was “given (by God)” to Paul!

GO AND BE RECONCILED *MATTHEW 18:15-17*

MANO EMMANUEL

Usually enshrined in official procedures for, and figuring widely in discussions about, “church discipline”, Matthew 18:15-20 is a well-known, if little applied passage.¹ The actual practice of church discipline is fraught with difficulty, not just in Sri Lanka, but everywhere it seems. In some parts of the world, pastors fear being embroiled in disciplinary issues because it might result in law suits being brought against the church. In honour–shame cultures, since what people think is so important, church leaders do not generally want to discipline their members, because it will make them unpopular, and cause more trouble than seems worth.² The Belgic Confession (1561) emerged out of the Reformation enshrined church discipline as one of the marks of the true church, along with the preaching of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments.³ Church discipline ought to be part of discipleship: a necessary part of enabling Christians to grow in spiritual maturity and purity. And so the involvement of

¹ David L. Turner, *Matthew*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 431. It is hard to read a commentary on Matthew 18:15-20 without the words “church discipline” appearing, but as Turner writes, restricting it to church discipline is “superficial and simplistic.”

² Wong Fong Yang, *Discipline or Shame?* (City Malaysia: Kairos Research Centre, 1998), 32.

³J. Carl. Laney, “The Biblical Practice of Church Discipline,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 143, no. 572 (Oct 1986): 353.

the church in addressing issues of holy living amongst its members, including unresolved conflict, seems unavoidable. In fact, Matthew 18 does not address the congregation as a whole or church leaders in particular. It seems to address individual believers, asking them to take the initiative to bring about reconciliation and restoration with their brothers and sisters. It is one of the clearest explanations of the process to be undertaken by ordinary believers facing the sin of a brother or sister in the church.

Matthew 18:15-20 is largely unique to Matthew with the closest parallel being Luke 17:1-5. It is found within a chapter referred to as the “ecclesiastical discourse” in which the term *ekklesia*, also unique to Matthew, appears three times. Several issues are raised by these verses, some of which will be considered here. Firstly, there are variant readings of verse 15. Secondly, there is the awkward juxtaposition of a seemingly judgmental and condemnatory attitude, especially in verse 17 compared to Jesus’ teaching elsewhere in the gospel. Even within the chapter, verses 15-18 do not fit easily in between the exhortation to seek the lost sheep and the command to forgive.⁴ There is also some tension between the apparent strictness of the church’s action on the unrepentant believer with the warning against judging (7:12). Barclay calls this one of the most difficult passages to interpret in the gospel: “It does not sound like Jesus; it sounds much more like the regulations of an ecclesiastical committee.”⁵ Thirdly, there also seems to be some tension between Jesus’ teaching in Matthew about the church being allowed to be a mixture of wheat and tares until the final judgement (Matt. 13:24-43; 22:11-14) and Matthew 18:18 where there is a suggestion that an

⁴ Ulrich Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001), 450; Bridget Illian, “Church discipline and forgiveness in Matthew 18:15-35,” *Currents in Theology and Mission* 37, no. 6 (December, 2010): 444.

⁵ William Barclay, *The Gospel of Matthew*, vol 2. (Edinburgh, Scotland: Saint Andrew Press, 1975), 187.

eschatological verdict can be anticipated by the church.⁶ Some scholars suggest that Matthew 18 is incoherent and that Matthew is caught in an unsolvable tension which he leaves as it is.⁷ Luz suggests four different ways in which the passage may be interpreted to deal with the tensions.⁸ He favours the idea that Matthew is recording this teaching within the context of covenant, confirmed by Jesus' presence with the church (Matt. 18:20). The covenant confers both privileges and responsibilities. Jesus reminds the church that the seriousness of sin demands prompt action, while forgiveness is always available for the repentant.⁹ Bruner suggests that while Matt. 13:24-30 forbids the violent removal of those who are not true believers, that it is not incompatible with order and discipline within the church.¹⁰ Finally, for some, there is the added problem that it addresses a

⁶ Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 450; Frederick Dale Bruner, *Matthew: A Commentary Volume 2. The church book: Matthew 13-28* (Grand Rapids, Michigan. William B Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1990), 226.

⁷ Bruner, *Matthew*, 648.

⁸ Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 450-51. The grace model: verses 15-18 speak not of excommunication but winning back the lost. In this case the verb *elengcheo* means not to accuse or reprove but to reason. Treating the person as a tax collector does not mean expulsion. It might even be that the treatment is meted out by the offended individual not the church. Luz is not convinced by this argument, calling it "absurd". "Borderline case model": this passage is referring to an extreme case not the norm. The normal model is the forgiveness which is enjoined in 10-14, 21-22. Luz rejects this since verse 18 suggests a special heavenly sanction for what will be a rare occurrence. The covenant model: Taking verse 20 to be the key to interpreting this passage, Jesus' presence in the church reminds them of the responsibilities and privileges of being the people of God. Jesus' presence and his forgiveness are to be seen in this context as is the seriousness of sin, since they call into question the covenant relationship. The inconsistency model: In this view there is no recognizable coherence in the passage. Matthew has chosen to place his own church's disciplinary procedure in the most congenial spot he can find.

⁹ Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 450.

¹⁰ Bruner, *Matthew*, 226.

“church” which did not yet exist, a dilemma that leads them to attribute these words, not to Jesus, but to later editors.¹¹

One of the problems with interpreting this passage is the temptation to study and apply it apart from its context within the whole chapter. Before we get to verse 15, Matthew sets the scene by laying down several strands of Jesus’ teaching that will impact our understanding of these five verses. The chapter begins with Jesus answering the disciples’ question, “Who is the greatest in the Kingdom of heaven?” by showing them a little child. Considering the social standing of children at the time, the answer would have caused some surprise. Children were loved but seen as needy, dependent, and uninformed.¹² Greatness in the Kingdom, according to Jesus (v. 4) is based on becoming like a child. Carson suggests that it is childlike humility and disregard for status that Jesus means.¹³ France adds a necessary refinement to this explanation. He argues that it is not the virtue of humility Jesus is referring to, since that is a virtue children do not necessarily possess. He suggests that it is their lack of status to which Jesus refers. Children are not usually humble but perhaps we might say that they are unselfconscious about needing others, and do not possess, nor are interested in, apportioning status in the same way and on the same basis as adults. To “humble himself” is not “an arbitrary asceticism, or a phony false modesty; it does not describe a character trait . . . but the acceptance of an inferior position”, and is used of Jesus in Philippians 2:8.¹⁴ “Not ‘humbles himself as this little child humbles himself’, but rather

¹¹ Barclay *Matthew*, 187. Barclay concludes that these are not the words of Jesus but built upon actual sayings.

¹² R.T. France, *The Gospel according to Matthew: An introduction and commentary*. (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1985), 270; Gibbs and Kloha discuss the Mediterranean view of children in their article. “Following” Matthew 18: interpreting Matthew 18:15-20 in its context,” in *Concordia Journal* 29, no. 1 (2003): 6-25.

¹³ D.A. Carson, *God with us: Themes from Matthew*. (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1985), 112.

¹⁴ France, *Matthew*, 271.

‘humbles himself until he becomes like this little child.’¹⁵ In his continuing discourse, Jesus tells his disciples that God places great value and showers protective care on those “little ones” who place their trust in Jesus (18:5-6, 10-14). This is illustrated by the story of the shepherd who leaves behind the flock that is safe to go in search of the one sheep who is lost. Bruner calls 18:10-14, 15-20 and 23-35 three “other seeking stories” which sets it in a different light to a procedure for “church discipline.”¹⁶

In having a procedure laid out to deal with a recalcitrant member of a community, the emerging church community was not unique. Voluntary associations, both religious and otherwise, had formal procedures for dealing with discipline.¹⁷ Groups such as the Essenes and the Pharisees had detailed instructions for dealing with offenders within the community. Discipline was, after all, crucial in corporate identity formation.¹⁸ However, in comparison to known practices, the notion of gaining a brother back is distinctively

¹⁵ Morris 1992, 460.

¹⁶ Bruner, *Matthew*, 645.

¹⁷ Warren Carter, *Matthew and the margins: A socio-political and religious reading*, JSNT Supplement 204 (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 367ff; Dennis C. Duling, “The Matthean brotherhood and marginal scribal leadership,” in *Modelling Early Christianity*, ed. Philip Esler (London: Routledge, 1995), 167. Many scholars compare the passage to the by-laws for the *lobakchoi*, a Dionysian cult in Athens which laid out regulations with penalties for fighting and unruly behaviour.

¹⁸ J. Andrew Overman, *Church and community in crisis*, (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1996), 268; Duling, “The Matthean brotherhood,” 167-9; Nelson 2012, 44. The writers of the Dead Sea Scrolls had a similar three-step procedure for addressing personal grievances: “They shall rebuke one another in truth, humility, and charity. Let no man address his companion with anger, or ill-temper, or obduracy, or with envy prompted by the spirit of wickedness. Let him not hate him [because of his uncircumcised] heart, but let him rebuke him on the very same day lest he incur guilt because of him. And furthermore, let not man accuse his companion before the Congregation without having admonished him in the presence of witnesses.”

Matthean (16:26, 25:20, 22).¹⁹ The concern for the erring brother or sister is consistent with the wider teaching in Matthew regarding love for one's neighbour found in 5:43, 19:19, 22:39.²⁰

In Sri Lankan churches, the process for dealing with those who stray is vague and varied. In some churches, authoritarian pastors administer discipline with no participation by ordinary members of the congregation and very little consistency. A person may be asked to leave the church because they asked awkward questions about finances or chose to marry the wrong person, while in other churches grave misdeeds by leaders or clergy are ignored because of the status of the offender. A worship leader may be ordered, in front of the congregation, to leave the podium and take himself home because he has not shaved, while in another church the pastor who has sexually assaulted a member of his congregation is given a rap over the knuckles or transferred to another church so that he is not shamed by visible disciplinary action. A rich person is often disciplined in a different way to a poor person. Since the rich person has a lot to lose in terms of position and status by being "exposed", the pastor will often leave them alone. Prominent members of the congregation could also cause problems for the church if they are not treated well – by withdrawing their financial support, or influencing others negatively. However, since a poor person is considered to have so little position or face to safeguard, the church has less reservation about publicly humiliating such a member.²¹ Confused, angry, and unrepentant believers leave one church and join another never dealing with unresolved conflicts with brothers and sisters. Others remain in the church refusing to speak to or spreading gossip about those who have offended them. A few churches attempt to make use of small groups or disciplers to deal more pastorally with members, with varying degrees of success.

¹⁹ Overman, *Church and community in crisis*, 268.

²⁰ W F Albright and C S Mann. *Matthew* (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1971), 220.

²¹ Yang, *Discipline or shame?*, 36.

“If your Brother Sins (Against You)” (Matthew 18:15)

The two earliest manuscripts as well as patristic commentators omit the phrase “against you” (*eis se*); and so, some scholars omit the clause, finding the flow of the argument more persuasive without it.²² However, there are compelling reasons for accepting the longer reading. Gundry offers two reasons. Firstly, the next verse has the clause “between you and him alone,” which suggests that the person going has been affected by the sin, and secondly, this section is followed by an expanded teaching on forgiving a brother who has sinned “against you”.²³ Blomberg points out that several words found in verses 15-20 are repeated in Peter’s question to Jesus. In its most intelligible form, his question is literally “Lord, how often shall against me my brother sin and I shall forgive him? Up to seven times?” The same term for “brother”, *adelphos*, and “sin” *hamarteano* are also used.²⁴ Blomberg also argues that it is inconceivable that Christians could “monitor all the sins of all their believing acquaintances”.²⁵

²² John Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew: A commentary on the Greek text* (Grand Rapids: William B Eerdmans Publishing, 2005), 745; Bruner, *Matthew*, 225.

²³ Robert H. Gundry, *Matthew: A Commentary on his Handbook for a Mixed Church under Persecution*. 2nd Ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1994), 367.

²⁴ Craig L. Blomberg, “On building and breaking barriers: Forgiveness, salvation and Christian counseling with special reference to Matthew 18:15-35,” *Journal of Psychology & Christianity* 25, no. 2 (2006): 142,138; 1992, 278. According to Blomberg, scholars would normally go for the harder reading assuming a later addition of the two words to aid interpretation. However, the word for sin (*amartaise*) ends with two syllables pronounced identically as the words for “against you” (*ets se*), which makes it quite likely that they might have been omitted in error by a scribe reading the words aloud, suggesting *homophony*.

²⁵ Blomberg, “On building and breaking barriers,” 138. Keeping in mind that the New Testament in several places urges believers to intervene when seeing a brother or sister sin, whether or not the sin is against them, (Gal. 6:1; James 5:19-20), we shall favour the longer reading in this essay. For a detailed analysis of the arguments for and

We shall concur with Gundry, Blomberg and Luz et al. that the situation being addressed here is the sin (*amarteo*) of a brother against another. In the context of Matt. 18, the brother or sister who sins is a “little one” who has gone astray (v6) or might even have been led astray (10-14).²⁶ Bruner says that in the parable of the lost sheep this person was “at the beginning of the end” and now they are at “the end of the beginning.”²⁷

This is the first time Matthew uses “sin” (*hamartanein*) as a verb.²⁸ Since the sin is not specified, we could speculate as to what manner of offences fall into this category. Illian suggests that in the context of Matthew 18 as a whole, sin is that which causes a little one to stumble.²⁹ Bruner, thinking along the same lines, widens the definition by describing this “sin” as the sin of deliberately and wilfully hurting another’s faith by “teaching or living unrepentantly and shamelessly, contrary to God’s clear Word and commands.”³⁰ Thompson, more expansively, states that the sin could be “public or private, serious or slight, accidental or intentional, against God or against one’s neighbour”.³¹ However, since the sin is serious enough to be the basis for excommunication or exclusion it seems unlikely that it

against both forms of the verse see Gibbs, Jeffrey A., and Jeffrey Kloha. 2003. "Following" Matthew 18: interpreting Matthew 18:15-20 in its context." *Concordia Journal* 29, no. 1 (2003): 6-25.

²⁶ W. G. Thompson, *Matthew’s advice to a divided community* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1970), 176-177. *Adelphos* is used of a fellow disciple in Matthew 5:47, 18:15, 21 and 23:8 and for “neighbour” in 5:22-24, 7:3-5. Also of Jesus’ own family and the transference of those family ties to the disciples 13:55-56, 12:46-50. Of disciples 25:40, 28:10.

²⁷ Bruner, *Matthew*, 225.

²⁸ Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 745. Nolland remarks that the next time Matthew uses the word as a verb will be when referring to Judas’ sin in 27:4. It is an interesting link to Paul’s injunction to the church to hand the unrepentant brother over to Satan.

²⁹ Illian, “Church discipline and forgiveness,” 445-450.

³⁰ Bruner, *Matthew*, 223.

³¹ Thompson, *Matthew’s advice*, 177.

could be something slight.³² Since there seems to be a desire to keep the matter private, it is probably not known to many,³³ which could also be expected to be the case if the matter is being dealt with as soon as it happens.

In applying the command, we need to be clear that what has happened is “sin” as defined by the whole teaching of scripture rather than what has upset our sensibilities, offended our pride, or gone against our preferences or cultural norms. It is also worth remembering that the Bible does encourage believers where possible to overlook, or cover over the sins of a brother or sister (Prov. 10:12; 17:9; 19:11). In the New Testament, Paul describes the love between believers as one that keeps no record of wrongs (1 Cor. 13:5) while Peter states that such love “covers over a multitude of sins” (1 Pet. 4:8). At other times, believers are warned against being eager to meddle, or engage in useless controversies (2 Thess. 3:11; 1 Tim. 5:13; 2 Tim. 2:23; 1 Pet. 4:15). This suggests that the sins being addressed here must be of a serious nature. Ken Sande lays out several conditions for deciding whether a sin can be overlooked or not. He suggests that a person’s sin cannot be overlooked if it is “visible enough to obviously and significantly affect a Christian witness,” affecting us such that we can no longer maintain the same relationship with them, if it is hurting others, or if it has become a habitual sin that is damaging the person themselves.³⁴ Keeping these considerations in mind will be helpful in an honour-shame culture where people often refuse to admit openly that they have been offended and who might attempt to avoid this injunction to go, by saying that they have no problem with anyone, or that they

³² Bruner, *Matthew*, 648; Donald Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, (Dallas: Word Books, 1995), 551.

³³ W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, *The Gospel according to St Matthew: A critical and exegetical commentary*, vol. 2 (Scotland: T&T Clark, 1991), 782.

³⁴ Ken Sande, *The peacemaker: A Biblical guide to resolving personal conflict* (Grand Rapids: MI: Baker Books, 2004), 53.

have decided to overlook the offence or “forgive and forget”, or alternatively engage in gossip or become quarrelsome. Sin is serious, and the church that ignores it does so at its peril (1 Cor. 5-6): “If the church refuses to face the stern reality of sin, it will gain no credence when it talks of forgiveness.”³⁵

Elaine Ramshaw, warning against taking this passage out of context, catalogues a list of offences against women and children which has often been ignored by the church and not counted as “sin”. Adding insult to injury, the church has then advised relatively powerless victims to forgive (preferring to go straight to Matthew 18:21ff), to be silent, or to leave, rather than address issues of abuse.³⁶ To be able to discern that there is sin involves an element of “judging”, against which Jesus has already spoken in Matthew 7:1-3. In fact, this argument is often used in the church to avoid getting involved in speaking into the life of a brother or sister. However, other New Testament passages make it clear that Christians are expected to be able to discern what is sinful (Matt 7:6, 1 Cor. 6:3), and what Matthew sets out is a series of steps in which judgement is suspended until there is discussion and the chance for the alleged offender to speak for himself or herself.³⁷ Even the speck from our brother’s eye can be our concern, as long as we have made note of the beam in ours (Matt 7:3). Bonhoeffer says that when we judge, we are detached from the other, observing them from a distance but love does away with such detachment, for the brother or sister is one who always has a claim on our love and service:³⁸ “Judging others makes us blind, whereas love is illuminating”.³⁹ If our motive is sincerely to

³⁵ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The cost of discipleship*, trns. R. H. Fuller (New York: The Macmillan Comp. 1957), 288.

³⁶ Elaine J. Ramshaw, “Power and Forgiveness in Matthew 18,” *Word and World* 18, no. 4 (1998): 398ff.

³⁷ Bruner, *Matthew*, 649.

³⁸ Bonhoeffer, *The cost of discipleship*, 184.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 185.

eliminate evil, we will first look for it in our own hearts where his will will certainly be found.⁴⁰

Many times we fall at this first hurdle. In our desire to avoid conflict we will not admit, even to ourselves, that our brother or sister has offended. Richard Walton has suggested three reasons for this. Firstly, many Christians feel ashamed to admit to feelings of anger or hostility. Secondly, we balk at expending so much emotional energy in a protracted conflict. And finally, we fear the risks involved. We cannot predict the outcome of this encounter—there could well be old wounds reopened, unexpected reactions, retaliation, and so on.⁴¹ Occasionally, as mentioned, there is uneasiness at “judging” another, and of course, some will assume that this action is incompatible with love. Instead, what is quite likely to happen in Sri Lankan churches is that, not wishing to cause any unnecessary unpleasantness, we will decide to withdraw from the offender. “Real lovelessness, wrong judging, is to drop another person altogether, without any attempt at seeking conversion, repentance or reconciliation” (Bruner 1990, 646).⁴² The fact that our brother or sister is caught up in a serious sin should concern us on their behalf, rather than on ours. Discipline is part of discipleship, part of nurturing those in the church.

“Go and Point out their Fault just Between the Two of You”

Verse 15 delivers a command, not a suggestion—“Go and point out...”. The person who has been affected by the sin must take the initiative.⁴³ Laney calls church discipline the corollary of

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Walton cited in Douglas Lewis, *Resolving church conflicts: A case study approach for local congregations* (San Francisco: Harper and Row Publishers, 1981), 22-23.

⁴² Bruner, *Matthew*, 646.

⁴³ Bruner, *Matthew*, 226; Gundry, *Matthew*, 367; Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 451.

evangelism. Just as evangelism seeks out the lost outside the church, church discipline seeks out the lost within the church.⁴⁴ The decision to go communicates the concern and commitment of the shepherd in Matthew 18 who goes after the one sheep who has strayed. It is interesting that the officials of the church are not addressed. It appears that it is the ordinary member of the community who must bear this responsibility.⁴⁵ The command “go” carries with it the idea of a conscious decision. This can be taken prayerfully, at a chosen time and location, with time for reflection, self-preparation, and time to cool down, rather than an unprepared outburst at an inopportune time.

Going in person is to be preferred to modern, more efficient but less personal methods of communication like letters or emails. The latter can sometimes be undertaken to protect the writer from the fall out of such a confrontation. Letters and emails have the added disadvantage of not being able to convey emotions, and can easily be misunderstood. In the Sri Lankan context, it is not unknown for anonymous letters or phone calls to take the place of honest, vulnerable presence before the fellow believer. In New Testament times, while electronic communication was not possible, letters were an option, but not in Jesus’ mind.⁴⁶ Of course, we do have one occasion where a brother is written to in order to prevent the escalation of conflict and to advise the church about the proper action to be taken. Paul’s letter to Philemon was written while Paul was in prison and was to be followed up with a meeting.

Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 451; See Matthew 5. Conversely, the onus is on the offender to go. In either case Jesus commands us to take the initiative to seek reconciliation.

⁴⁴Laney, “The Biblical Practice of Church Discipline,” 353.

⁴⁵ Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 451; Bruner, *Matthew*, 227. If “against you” is omitted, the grounds for going are that the private sin committed against a fellow believer is never purely private. Sin always affects the whole community.

⁴⁶Blomberg, “On building and breaking barriers,” 138.

In a shame-oriented culture, communication tends to be indirect, and so, going to the one who has offended does not come easily. In an honour–shame culture harmony is highly valued. Confronting, we fear, might bring about argument and hostility and cause the offender to lose face or be shamed. Harmony will be destroyed and the relationship might be irrevocably broken. A person who has been sinned against might prefer to send a message through a third party, raise the issue in a roundabout way without specifying to whom he or she is referring, withdraw, or show by body language that they are offended. Alternatively, they might choose to get even by sabotaging the offender’s ministry by disagreeing with decisions they make, by refusing to cooperate with them, or picking a quarrel over a completely different issue. Lewis refers to a “parking lot” method of dealing with conflict in church. This is the tendency of believers not to speak out in the proper forum, the church meeting for example, but congregating in the parking lot (with their friends) to voice their opinions, grievances and criticisms, before and/or after the meeting.⁴⁷ Similarly, a person who is aware of another’s sin especially against him or her will tend to unload their feelings of hurt and anger to those who are close and who can be trusted to agree and bolster the offended party’s sense of outrage.

The verb *elegkein* occurs only here in Matthew (Luke uses *epitiman*, “reprove” in Luke 17:3). The primary meaning of *elencho* is “to take to task”, “to call to account”.⁴⁸ It can indicate any part of a judicial process from initial inquiry to passing judgement, but the fundamental meaning is “to lay open, expose, uncover, reveal, demonstrate the mistake or guilt of another”.⁴⁹ It need not include strong rebuke or imply condemnation.⁵⁰ Bruner translates this as “confront”, a word that implies discipline but

⁴⁷ Lewis, *Resolving church conflicts*, 20.

⁴⁸ Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 451. The same verb occurs in 1 Tim. 5:20; 2 Tim. 4:2; Titus 2:15; cf 1 Thess. 5:14; 2 Tim. 2:25; Gal. 6:1.

⁴⁹ Thompson, *Matthew’s advice*, 178.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

not necessarily severity⁵¹ and calls this passage “the magna carta of confrontation”.⁵² Pfitzner points out that *elenchein* and its Hebrew equivalent *hokia* are used to describe God’s actions towards people (Gen. 31:42, Ps. 6:1, 1 Chron. 12:17).⁵³ The allusion to witnesses does have the impact of including the meaning “convict” to the semantic range of *elengcheo*.⁵⁴ The person going is to lay open the incident and invite the person to accept the truth of the matter, but not to take upon themselves the role of judge and executioner.

Churches, typically, take the fight or flight option when it comes to addressing sin in the church. Some may be happy to go and point out someone’s fault but do it in a manner and spirit far removed from Jesus’ intention. We tend to translate *elencho* only as “confront” which means we go unwilling to listen, defensive and determined to get our pound of flesh. For others, flight, ignoring the offender, or leaving the church altogether, seems an easier and sometimes the more “Christian” thing to do, rather than rock the boat. However, leaving just proves to the world that sin has the final say, and its power to separate is greater than the gospel’s power to reconcile.⁵⁵

The background to this command to go and speak openly to the offending brother or sister is found in the Old Testament, specifically Leviticus 19:17.⁵⁶ “Do not hate a fellow Israelite in your heart. Rebuke your neighbour frankly so you will not share in their guilt. Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against

⁵¹ Bruner, *Matthew*, 647.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 224.

⁵³ Victor C. Pfitzner, “Purified community - purified sinner: Expulsion from the community according to Matt. 18:15-18 and 1 Cor. 5:1-5,” *Australian Biblical Review* 30 (1982):35. Pfitzner offers solutions to commonly asked queries about the passage.

⁵⁴ Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 451.

⁵⁵ Lewis, *Resolving church conflicts*, 44.

⁵⁶ Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 451; Bruner, *Matthew*, 225; Gundry, *Matthew*, 367.

anyone among your people, but love your neighbour as yourself. I am the Lord" (Lev. 19:17-18).

Rabbinic interpretations of this text recognized the public admonishing of a fellow Israelite as a sign of neighbourly love and of solidarity within the community of God.⁵⁷ The Pharisees and the Essenes both used this verse as the basis for their own code of conduct.⁵⁸ The connection made in Leviticus 19 to revenge might suggest that the face to face conversation is meant to stop a person allowing anger to fester in their heart, and allowing hatred to develop because of a supposed offence against them. The theme of speaking openly with a brother is a wisdom theme (Prov. 26:24-25; 10:18; 25:9-10). It is a sin to keep these negative or hostile feelings hidden. They must be brought into the open.⁵⁹

Ben Sirach (19:13-17)

Question a friend; perhaps he did not do it;
or if he did, so that he may not do it again.

¹⁴ Question a neighbor; perhaps he did not say it;
or if he said it, so that he may not repeat it.

¹⁵ Question a friend, for often it is slander;
so do not believe everything you hear.

¹⁶ A person may make a slip without intending it.
Who has not sinned with his tongue?

¹⁷ Question your neighbor before you threaten him;
and let the law of the Most High take its course.^[d]

Conflict is not to be denied or ignored but brought into the open (Hauerwas 2006, 165).⁶⁰ "Christian discipleship requires confrontation because the peace that Jesus has established is not simply the absence of violence. The peace of Christ is nonviolent

⁵⁷ Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 451.

⁵⁸ Illian, "Church discipline and forgiveness," 446.

⁵⁹ Thompson, *Matthew's advice*, 179.

⁶⁰ Stanley Hauerwas, *Matthew: SCM Theological Commentary on the Bible*, (London: SCM Press, 2006), 165.

precisely because it is based on truth and truth telling.”⁶¹ Although the truth is hard to hear and sometimes hard to deliver, leaving it unuttered is not love but abandonment of the brother. Truth-telling in Mediterranean society was not owed to those who were outside one’s kin-group, but it was obligatory within the family.⁶²

“Just between the two of you,” *metaxu sou kai auto monou*: by bringing up the matter quickly and privately there is a chance to do away with gossip and innuendo that is common to every community to a lesser or greater extent. The honour of the offender is preserved. And, it might be that in the private talk, the confronter is proved to be mistaken.⁶³ The person is forced to face up to what they are alleged to have done wrong but the possibility of being exposed or shamed is kept to the minimum, while repentance is made as easy as possible (Yang 1998, 43).⁶⁴ We are tempted to believe that time will heal conflicts but this is not the case. If the sin is serious enough that we cannot overlook it, then time will not heal it. The grievance festers, the sin becomes habitual. Time merely makes one offence into a “spiral of unmanaged conflict”. This theory suggests that an unresolved issue (X), far from being healed by time, gains momentum and reappears with increased intensity under different guises as time progresses (X2, X3, etc.).⁶⁵

⁶¹ Hauerwas, *Matthew*, 166.

⁶² S. Scott Bartchy, “Divine power, community formation, and leadership in the Acts of the Apostles,” In *Community formation in the early church and in the church today*, ed. Richard L. Longenecker. (MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2002), 94.

⁶³ Bruner, *Matthew*, 647.

⁶⁴ Yang, *Discipline or shame?*, 43.

⁶⁵ Richard Owen Roberts, *Repentance: The First Word of the Gospel* (Illinois: Crossway Books, 2002), 594-95. Last YEAR, p. Susan Carpenter and William Kennedy’s research cited by Robertson.

- X1: Presenting issue / problem arises.
- X2: Sides form along the lines of the issue (that is, I am for issue X; you are against issue X).
- X3: Positions harden (I see myself as pro-X; I see you as anti-X).
- X4: Communication between parties breaks down. Any meaningful dialogue between us ceases.
- X5: Resources are committed to the cause (I invest time, energy, and money in X).
- X6: Conflict spills outside the parties (I talk to others about you, instead of to you).
- X7: Perceptions of reality become distorted (I see you only as the Enemy, not as a person with whom I happen to disagree on issue X).
- X8: A sense of crisis emerges, and the result can be litigation, dissolution, or war.

The text does not decree that there should be only one meeting between the parties. It is possible that this first step, as with all the others takes time. In an honour–shame culture, time and space and the willingness to listen to the other heals and offers grace to the one who has been shamed by having his or her fault exposed, even if only to themselves and another. If, as Lynd and others point out, exposure to oneself is as painful as being exposed to the gaze of others, there is a need to be mindful both in speaking and listening, remembering the purpose of our going.

“If He Listens, You Have Won Back Your Brother”

Whereas Luke, in the parallel passage about forgiving an offending brother, seems to make a condition “if he repents” (Luke 17:3), Matthew talks of winning back a brother “if he listens”. In Matthew, there is an emphasis on the importance of hearing the word, and listening (e.g. 26:6), for discipleship.⁶⁶

⁶⁶ Bruner, *Matthew*, 227.

“Listen” is more than merely giving someone a hearing. It means “to respond properly”.⁶⁷ What constitutes “responding properly”? Is it acknowledging one’s fault and repenting?⁶⁸ Although the term “repent” is not made explicit, it is hard to see how the erring brother or sister can be reconciled without their agreeing with what is said to them, accepting their fault and being willing to change. It is important then, that repentance, however it is expressed, is genuine. Repentance is not the same as remorse, which is being regretful that one has failed one’s expectations, neither is it the same as shame that one has been discovered, nor is it merely external manifestations, such as tears. Roberts argues that not even reformation of character is proof of true repentance (1 Kings 21:19-24). Fear of consequences, or an attack of conscience might trigger a short term change of behaviour but that is not true repentance.⁶⁹ Godly sorrow at falling short of God’s expectations leads to repentance. Paul writes: “For even if I made you sorry with my letter, I do not regret it (though I did regret it, for I see that I grieved you with that letter, though only briefly). Now I rejoice, not because you were grieved, but because your grief led to repentance; for you felt a godly grief, so that you were not harmed in any way by us. For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation and brings no regret, but worldly grief produces death. For see what earnestness this godly grief has produced in you, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what zeal, what punishment! At every point you have proved yourselves guiltless in the matter” (2 Cor 7:7-10). Repentance will be seen in a willingness to do whatever it takes to change. True repentance will be shown in the willingness to deal with deep rooted causes of certain behaviour and it will not be selective in

⁶⁷ Craig Blomberg, *Matthew*. New American Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1992), 278.

⁶⁸ Carter, *Matthew*, 367.

⁶⁹ Roberts, *Repentance*, 94. Richard Owen Roberts lists 7 myths of repentance in pages 85-103.

its abhorrence of sin.⁷⁰ Someone who is truly repentant will be willing to face potential disgrace, for example, being set aside from ministry, being willing to submit to processes and procedures set out by the fellowship and will be willing to accept that there might be consequences to their actions that repentance cannot erase (Luke 5:17-19). Roberts casts doubts on the genuineness of repentance that is accompanied by defensiveness and bargaining.⁷¹ It is common in Sri Lankan culture that we look for mediating circumstances when confronted with sin in the church. We are not often wise in discerning when a person who appears contrite is merely worried about the shame connected to being found out or is afraid of the cost of being held accountable for his or her sin.

The aim of going is to “win back”. Bruner makes the point that while Paul seeks to win non Christians to Christ Matthew concentrates on winning Christians.⁷² The term “win back” suggests humility and winsomeness. Wherever the term *kerdainein* is used to mean “winning over” it has overtones of humility.⁷³ The person who wins back the brother or sister must have observed the injunction to humble himself or herself like a child (v. 4).⁷⁴ Matthew does not say ‘shamed back’ or “proved yourself right” as we might sometimes want to say.⁷⁵ “Win back” or “have gained” is in contrast to “be lost” in Matthew 18:14. Grace is an antidote to shame, offering the warmth of acceptance to the one who has been exposed. However, grace cannot be the ‘cheap grace’ that Bonhoeffer so scathingly attacks. “Cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, baptism without church discipline, communion without confession, absolution without personal confession. Cheap grace

⁷⁰ Roberts, *Repentance*, 99.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 96.

⁷² Bruner, *Matthew*, 649.

⁷³ Thompson, *Matthew's advice*, 180.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁵ Bruner, *Matthew*, 649.

is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ, living and incarnate".⁷⁶

There is another reminder in this verse that this person is a brother (or sister). Matthew takes pains to emphasise the brotherhood of the disciples (v 15),⁷⁷ using the term 'brother' 39 times (as opposed to Mark's 20 times and Luke's 24 times).⁷⁸ Just as the conflict between brothers is a matter of concern for the whole church, the winning back of the brother is also more than personal reconciliation. It is winning back to the church a disciple who might have been lost because of his sinning.⁷⁹ Neyrey interprets this passage as upholding the general code of honour found in Mediterranean society (1998,183).⁸⁰ Mediterranean society was an agonistic society in which an affront to honour must be addressed. A challenge must be answered by a riposte to maintain one's honour. According to Neyrey, this passage reinforces cultural norms by telling an offended brother or sister to "seek some redress" by telling the one offering a challenge, his or her fault or "accusing him before some assembly" or even "expelling the offender from the group" (Neyrey 1998:183).⁸¹ According to Neyrey, though, Jesus undermines the general code of honour both in verse 21-22 and in Matthew 5:6 by "declaring

⁷⁶ Bonhoeffer, *The cost of discipleship*, 44.

⁷⁷ Gundry, *Matthew*, 367; Duling, "The Matthean brotherhood,"165.

⁷⁸ Duling, "The Matthean brotherhood,"165; Dennis C. Duling, *A Marginal Scribe* (Origen: Cascade Books, 2012). Duling points out that the term is used to allude to fictive kinship in seven Matthean passages (5:21-26, 7:1-5, 12:46-50, 18:15-22, 35, 23:8-10, 25:40, 28:10). Reidar Aasgaard, *"My Beloved Brothers and Sisters!": Christian Siblingship in Paul* (London: T&T Clark International, 2004), 3. Aasgaard finds that the family is Paul's most frequent mode of speaking of Christians, occurring 122 times in the 7 letters Aasgaard attributes to Paul: Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, 1 Thessalonians, and Philemon.

⁷⁹ Gundry, *Matthew*, 368.

⁸⁰ Jerome H. Neyrey, *Honor and Shame in the Gospel of Matthew* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998), 183.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

praiseworthy the acceptance of insults and injury without a riposte". His argument that Jesus "replaces" verses 15-17 with verses 21-22 is not convincing (Neyrey 1998,193).⁸²

In an honour–shame culture, for a person who has offended, to acknowledge or confess to the offence is to add to their shame. So, the alleged offender could well react with accusations of meddling or denials, and retaliate by engaging in gossip, bringing up the faults of his or her 'accuser' and plan some kind of revenge, perhaps blocking the progress of the one who has come by passive aggressive behaviour. Honour that seems to have been lost in this exchange can be regained by gaining support within the church or getting revenge. These are some of the negatives of an honour–shame culture but there are values, positive aspects of the culture that can be harnessed to bring about the objectives of Jesus' teaching.

In honour–shame cultures today, as in the Mediterranean of New Testament times, the family is the most significant kin-group (Bartchy 1999; Robertson 2001).⁸³ Belonging is the most significant aspect of personal identity. A vital consideration when seeking out the erring brother or sister is how the church sees itself. Robertson, remarking on Paul's advice to the Corinthian church on an incestuous relationship in the church, notes that the church has the choice between identifying with the world or seeing itself as set apart from the world as one family. "The Corinthians' choice of self-definition would, in turn, determine how they would deal with internal disputes" (Robertson 2001, 597).⁸⁴ The family is a powerful metaphor for the church in the

⁸² Ibid., 193.

⁸³ Bartchy, "Divine power, community formation;" Roberts, *Repentance*.

⁸⁴ Roberts, *Repentance*, 597; Duling 2012, 215 ;see also Burke 2003, David de Silva Honor, *Patronage, Kinship & Purity: Unlocking New Testament Culture* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 2000); Wayne

New Testament, both for Jesus and Paul. New Testament scholarship has identified the disciples as a 'fictive kin group', one of many voluntary associations which were formed on common interests or some other criteria (age, sex, work) rather than natural kinship.⁸⁵ In the church, the borders of family are extended to include all believers, regardless of ethnicity, gender, or status. "In times of conflict, it was understood that brothers and sisters would not go outside the household network, but rather would find a way to coordinate with the *paterfamilias* and with one another to find a way forward together. That way forward was known as the *concilium*, an intentional gathering of the adult members of a household network for the purpose of addressing problematic issues and allowing warring siblings to attain compromise and conciliation."⁸⁶

In scripture, discipline is a family matter.⁸⁷ God is revealed as the father who disciplines as part of his love (Heb 12:7-9). See Proverbs 3:12 and 25:9.⁸⁸ Burke states that the *paterfamilias* had the role of socializing his children into the family. Imitation of the father was part of that socializing.⁸⁹ Meeks says, of the terms and the affectionate language of Paul's epistles: "Especially striking is the language that speaks of the members of the Pauline groups as if they were family".⁹⁰ The term "brothers" and "sisters", though used in all early Christian literature, occurs most frequently in

Meeks, *The first urban Christians* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983).

⁸⁵ Dennis C. Duling, *A Marginal Scribe* (Origen: Cascade Books, 2012), 215; see also, Trevor J. Burke, *Family Matters* (London: T&T Clark International, 2003); Meeks, *The first urban Christians*.

⁸⁶ Roberts, *Repentance*, 602.

⁸⁷ See Burke 2003 for a discussion of the role of fathers in authority and discipline from both Jewish and non Jewish sources.

⁸⁸ Craig Evans, *Matthew*, NCB (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 334.

⁸⁹ Burke, *Family Matters*, 160-61.

⁹⁰ Meeks, *The first urban Christians*, 86.

Paul's writings.⁹¹ Paul refers to believers as his children, occasionally naming individuals as "son", like Timothy, Titus, Philemon and others (Meeks 1982, 87).⁹² Burke highlights Paul's use of terms of affection for the church, including the endearment "beloved" (1 Thess 1:4, 2:8,2:17) and the establishment of a kinship activity, the kiss of greeting, as part of in the church's ritual.⁹³ Bartchy lists some of the 'obligations of kinship'. Whereas among strangers, honour was considered a limited good and constantly competed for, within the family, honour was freely shared among siblings who were not to compete, challenge or respond to a challenge to honour from within the family. Honour was to be extended to brothers and sisters in Christ who might not have been deserving of such honour according to cultural criteria (Phil 2:3, Rom 12:10, 1 Cor 12:23-26). "The tightest unity of loyalty and affection in the ancient Mediterranean world was experienced in the sibling group of brothers and sisters."⁹⁴ This 'general reciprocity' was to be extended to surrogate kinship groups like the Essenes, and the church. Other characteristics included: loyalty and trust, truth telling, an obligation to meet one another's material needs and opening the home. Members of these groups had a sense of a shared destiny. Barnabas (Acts 4:36-37) is an example of one who embodied these values.⁹⁵ Loewen, therefore, calls Mt 18:15-17 "face to face soul nurture".⁹⁶ Lynd in her treatise on the search for identity says:

⁹¹ Meeks, *The first urban Christians*, 87.

⁹² Meeks, *The first urban Christians*, 87. This practice of using household terms to refer to members of a group was found in Judaism but also in pagan clubs and cults.

⁹³ Burke, *Family Matters*, 4.

⁹⁴ Bartchy, "Divine power, community formation," 93; de Silva *Patronage, Kinship & Purity*, 2000, 76. Bartchy contrasts this with the modern western view of marriage as the closest bond.

⁹⁵ Bartchy, "Divine power, community formation," 94-95.

⁹⁶ J. A. Loewen, "Four kind of forgiveness," *Practical Anthropology* 11 no. 4, Pt. 2 (1970):159.

Enlarging the possibilities of mutual love depend upon risking exposure. This risk of exposure can come about only with respect for oneself, respect for the other person and recognition of non-personal values and loyalties of both persons. Through such love one comes to know the meaning of exposure without shame, and of shame transformed by being understood and shared. Aristotle distinguishes between feeling ashamed of things shameful “according to common opinion” and things shameful “in very truth.” In love there can be the exploring together of things shameful “in very truth.”⁹⁷

Bonhoeffer, in his reflection on the beatitudes, describes the characteristic of being merciful:

Thus they go out and seek all who are enmeshed in the toils of sin and guilt. No distress is too great. No sin too appalling for their pity. If any man falls into disgrace, the merciful will sacrifice their own honour to shield him, and take his shame upon themselves. They will be found consorting with publicans and sinners, careless of the shame they incur thereby. In order that they may be merciful they cast away the most priceless treasure of human life, their personal dignity and honour. For the only honour and dignity they know is their Lord's own mercy, to which alone they owe their very lives.⁹⁸

The question is if the church in Sri Lanka has the confidence to identify itself as family. Of course there are pitfalls to avoid. If the church is family, there is the temptation to expect the pastor to be *paterfamilias*, with children who will not grow up and take responsibility. Family dysfunctions can be carried over into church life.⁹⁹ Sometimes churches fall victim to their own publicised

⁹⁷ Helen Merrell Lynd, *On Shame and the Search for Identity* (Abingdon, Oxon: Rourledge, 1958), 239.

⁹⁸ Bonhoeffer, *The cost of discipleship*, 111.

⁹⁹ Cheryl M. Fleckenstein, “Congregation as family? No, know the pitfalls,” *Word & World* 33, no. 2 (2013): 189-91.

ideals. The congregation expects the church to fulfill their need for acceptance, comfort, emotional support, exercise of power, use of gifts and so on, all under the rubric of being family.¹⁰⁰ Bartchy makes the point that scholarship has engaged in debates over the issue of the structure of the church as either patriarchal or egalitarian, assuming the two to be at opposite ends of the same power spectrum. He argues out that the two terms operate in two different ways, and within the most important social structures of society—kinship and politics. He suggests that while the church is non-patriarchal, that did not mean it was egalitarian.¹⁰¹ Paul's goal was 'not the creation of an egalitarian community in the political sense, but a well functioning family in the kinship sense.'¹⁰² This leaves room for different roles, strengths, and resources being brought by different members of the family for the good of the whole. While the responsibility towards our brothers and sisters should be stressed, churches should work to bring believers to grow in wisdom and spiritual maturity. In Galatians 6:1, Paul urges the church to look out for and restore those who have been 'overtaken' or 'ensnared' in sin. There is a necessity for those who undertake this task to be spiritually mature, and careful that they do not get similarly ensnared. Laney suggests that not everyone is qualified to deal with sin in another's life: "Those who are weak, easily tempted, or unable to forgive should allow others to take the lead in the task of restoration."¹⁰³ Could it be that if the brother or sister does not listen, it is because we have failed in our communication? If so, taking others along could well be a form of protection for the offender rather than for us.

¹⁰⁰ Jean E. Greenwood, "Beyond Shame: Toward an understanding of church conflict," *Clergy Journal* 81, no. 8 (2005): 3.

¹⁰¹ Bartchy, "Divine power, community formation," 97-98.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 98. Petersen (1985,157) disagrees, saying that Paul levels the playing field, so that the church consists of brothers and sisters with no fathers and mothers.

¹⁰³ Laney, "The Biblical Practice of Church Discipline," 357.

If the brother does not listen, the offended believer is to take along “one or two witnesses”. Who are these witnesses and what are they supposed to contribute to the process of reconciliation? At this point, the offended party has to examine his or her motives and attitudes closely. The offender has not listened. What feelings and motivations are most likely to occur if unchecked? Self-righteousness, anger, a desire to make sure the offender pays, exaggeration of the offence? In those circumstances, choosing two or three witnesses could well become a pretext for shaming someone who has offended us. To be shamed is to be exposed to the rejection of others, to be found wanting, Therefore, to have one’s wrongdoing exposed to more and more people can be seen as a deliberate attempt to shame.

Some scholars suggest that the two witnesses are eyewitnesses to the offence.¹⁰⁴ This certainly seems to be the case in the Old Testament reference in the text.

Deuteronomy 19:15 states: “One witness is not enough to convict anyone accused of any crime or offense they may have committed. A matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses”. This concern for ensuring fair play is repeated in the New Testament when Paul writes to Timothy: “Do not entertain an accusation against an elder unless it is brought by two or three witnesses” (1 Tim. 5:19). In 2 Corinthians 13:1, Paul uses the same text in the context of repeating a warning to the church: “This will be my third visit to you. Every matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses. I already gave you a warning when I was with you the second time. I now repeat it while absent: On my return I will not spare those who sinned earlier or any of the others”. Some

¹⁰⁴ J. Carl Laney, *A guide to Church Discipline* (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 1985), 53-54.

scholars suggest that the witnesses here are not individuals but Paul's three visits.¹⁰⁵

While the allusion to Deuteronomy and the plain reading of the text seems to indicate that the two or three are eyewitnesses to the offence, many scholars conclude that they are eyewitnesses not of the initial offence, but of the conversation between the offender and his aggrieved brother/sister.¹⁰⁶ France points out that the context in Matthew is different to that in Deuteronomy, since the brother/sister is not on trial.¹⁰⁷ Pfitzner says the witnesses are there for the sinner rather than against him. They witness to the fact that the sinner was given every chance to repent. Every word will be attested to so that the sinner cannot claim that he was accosted in anger, that his or her accuser is biased or pursuing a hidden agenda.¹⁰⁸ Adams' argument that there is no point trying to keep the matter private if there have been witnesses to the incident¹⁰⁹ must be tempered since there are bound to be occasions when a person's offence against another is witnessed or known about. Horning argues that assuming they are eyewitnesses is in tension with the pastoral and redeeming purpose of the passage as a whole. Their role is not primarily that of witnesses for the prosecution in case the matter goes before the church. In Deuteronomy, the witnesses are to help establish the guilt of a person before the judges. In Matthew, in contrast, the role of the witnesses is to discreetly help convince the fellow disciple of the need for repentance.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁵ Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 785.

¹⁰⁶ Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 452; Gundry, *Matthew*, 368; Albright and Mann, *Matthew*, 220; Blomberg, "On building and breaking barriers," 138; France, *Matthew*, 274; Thompson, *Matthew's advice*, 183.

¹⁰⁷ France, *Matthew*, 374.

¹⁰⁸ Pfitzner, "Purified community," 39.

¹⁰⁹ Jay E. Adams, *Handbook of Church Discipline* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1986), 59-60.

¹¹⁰ Estella B. Horning, The rule of Christ: An exposition of Matthew 18:15-20. *Brethren Life and Thought* 38, no. 2 (1993): 74.

Gibbs and Kloha (2003) strongly disagree and argue that the witnesses are eye witnesses to the incident since that is the sense in Deuteronomy.¹¹¹

Taking into account the broad brushstrokes with which this vignette is painted, where the sin is not specified, it seems likely that these instructions can be applied in situations where there are no eyewitnesses to an offence. It seems reasonable to suppose that while the two witnesses might best be chosen from those who have witnessed an offence, thereby keeping the matter as private as possible, where there are no witnesses, the one who is going might take with him people who will serve as witnesses to the attempt to reconcile. The allusion to the Old Testament text, then, is not to be followed literally but serves to reinforce the principle that “multiple testimony is more convincing.”¹¹² Bonhoeffer, also, deals with the situation where the member of the congregation denies the charge and it cannot be proven to the satisfaction of the witnesses. In those cases, the matter should be left in God’s hands for “they are witnesses not inquisitors!”¹¹³

If they are not eyewitnesses they cannot give their account of the incident to the church. The witness adds their persuasion to that of the one who goes. The witnesses are there to persuade as is seen from the fact that the offender is supposed to listen to them (v. 17). The words they speak are first to the offender rather than to the church as a whole. They are counsellors who become witnesses only if the offender does not listen to them, says Adams who suggests that they are witnesses to “every word” in this conversation.¹¹⁴ They represent the community’s authority and its desire for reconciliation.¹¹⁵ If they have this important

¹¹¹Gibbs and Kloha, “Following Matthew 18,” 6-25.

¹¹²France, *Matthew*, 274.

¹¹³Bonhoeffer, *The cost of discipleship*, 291.

¹¹⁴Adams, *Handbook of Church Discipline*, 60.

¹¹⁵Carter, *Matthew*, 368.

function, presumably some care must be taken in choosing them. Important aspects to consider will be their character, integrity,¹¹⁶ their relationship to one or other or both parties, perhaps even their spiritual authority in the church, which is not the same as their positional authority. Osborne suggests that they should be leaders in the community.¹¹⁷ In a culture rife with gossip, the ability to keep a confidence is vital. Counselling skills and training might be useful. The one going must avoid the temptation to choose only those who will show unswerving and uncritical loyalty to him or her. It is to the church's shame that there is in many congregations a dearth of such people who might fit these criteria.¹¹⁸

The text does not say that the church leaders need to be involved here but Adams suggests that the qualities required of such people would quite likely make church leaders suitable candidates. He stresses that they go initially in their private capacity though he admits this would be hard to do.¹¹⁹ A practical suggestion for maintaining confidentiality is that the name of the offender should not be disclosed to a potential "witness" until they have agreed to take on that role.¹²⁰ Barclay offers the insight that a person may find it harder to listen to the one he or she has offended. "A man often hates those he has injured most of all,"¹²¹ so that the presence of others who will also listen to the other side could well be beneficial and make it easier to 'hear'. Blomberg suggests that a person who is repeatedly offended might be too "co-dependent" to effectively deal with the sins of

¹¹⁶ Blomberg, *Matthew*, 278.

¹¹⁷ Grant E. Osborne, *Matthew*, (Grandrapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 686.

¹¹⁸ 1 Cor. 6:1-11. Paul comments on the Corinthian church's inability to mediate and deal with conflict in the church especially in vv. 2-5.

¹¹⁹ Adams, *Handbook of Church Discipline*, 61.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*

¹²¹ Barclay, *Matthew*, 188.

people close to them.¹²² Here, too, taking others who can be more objective will be helpful.

In Rabbinic texts, the witnesses' duty is to warn the offender about his deed. The use of witnesses also makes it harder to condemn an offender for a first offence. He or she has to be warned more than once before being condemned in a legal sense.¹²³ Taking this meaning, the purpose of the witnesses would be either to provide the warning or to strengthen the reproof.¹²⁴

Great damage can be done to a believer, especially a leader, if false accusations are believed or slander is spread. Jesus' instructions here avoid the danger of false accusations, slander as well as gossip, all prohibited by scripture and damaging to the individual and community. This extra work of going, again, shows patience, it acts to protect the sinner from "arbitrary and precipitous" action,¹²⁵ prevents coercion (Bruner 1990, 649), and means going the extra mile to bring back this brother or sister into fellowship.¹²⁶ It could also allow a fresh perspective and greater objectivity. The choice of witnesses is important.

It might be good at this point to stop and consider the alternatives to the church's involvement in the disputes between members. In 1 Cor 6:1-11, Paul admonishes the church for allowing members to go outside the church to the courts to settle a dispute. In Sri Lankan culture, litigation is not as easily resorted to as in some parts of the worldwide church. However, it is the underlying principles that are helpful in reinforcing Jesus' teaching in Matthew 18. Robertson sees the link between Leviticus 19 and Matthew 18 as reflecting the familial nature of

¹²² Blomberg, *Matthew*, 279.

¹²³ Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 452;

¹²⁴ Gundry, *Matthew*, 368.

¹²⁵ Bruner, *Matthew*, 649.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*

the bond between believers.¹²⁷ It seems like there is a long tradition of assuming that the people of God will be able to find within its ranks wise people who will be able to adjudicate between siblings when necessary. Robertson points to the similarity between Deuteronomy 1:12-18 and 1 Corinthians 6 which he links to Leviticus 19.¹²⁸ It is an unfortunate phenomenon that not all churches actively seek and foster wisdom amongst its members, even at leadership level. Perhaps this is one reason, along with the shame characteristics of the culture that lead to conflict not being dealt with in the church.

“If They Still Refuse To Listen, Tell It To The Church; And If They Refuse To Listen Even To The Church, Treat Them As You Would A Pagan Or A Tax Collector” (Matthew 18:17)

The attitude of the erring believer seems to harden as he or she moves from ‘not listening’ to ‘refusing to listen.’¹²⁹ The focus narrows to the one who originally went – he or she must now undertake the difficult task of taking the matter to the church.¹³⁰ Ideally, no matter should come to the attention of the church which has not already been carefully and caringly worked on by one or a few brothers and sisters in the church. There is nothing in the text to tell us how many meetings and how many days should elapse before it is assumed that the offending brother or sister will not listen. Scripture does give instances, though, of matters reaching this stage without going through the previous two stages. In 1 Corinthians 5, the church seems to have been unconcerned at the sinful behaviour of the man who was

¹²⁷ Roberts, *Repentance*, 598, 593-4. Robertson points out that in this context, any victory gained outside the church is still a defeat for the entire church as relationships change and factions develop. When brother takes brother to court in the sight of outsiders, their familial bond is broken.

¹²⁸ Roberts, *Repentance*, 600.

¹²⁹ Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 747.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

committing incest and Paul decrees on behalf of the church that stage three has been reached.¹³¹

Matthew is the only gospel writer who uses *ekklesia*, and this is his second of three uses of the word (16:18, 18:17a, 17b).¹³² The passage does not specify to whom the original party should report. It does not state that they should be the leaders of the church or a particular body charged with handling conflicts within the community. Thompson argues that the use of the term *ekklesia* suggests some kind of organizational structure and formal procedure but there is insufficient evidence to specify what that might be.¹³³ Blomberg suggests that flexibility and sensitivity should feature in the procedures adopted especially since rigid guidelines are not laid down.¹³⁴ For instance, considerable damage could be done if a sin that few know about is now publicized to the whole church. This leads Blomberg to suggest that the text leaves it vague enough to allow the church to exercise its discretion. He suggests that the matter is kept “as private or public as the original offence”.¹³⁵ However, if there is a need for excommunication, then the whole church needs to be told.¹³⁶ The church’s role is “not to rebuke or condemn, but rather to support the individual disciple in his final attempt to convince and reconcile his brother.”¹³⁷ If the person still refuses to listen, drastic measures are taken to treat them no longer as a brother or sister but as a tax collector or pagan.

This verse raises two questions. Who is supposed to treat the offender as a tax collector/pagan? Is it the church or the

¹³¹ Horning 1993, p. In Gal. 6:1, Paul calls for a community rather than individual response (the “you” is plural).

¹³² Gundry, *Matthew*, 368; Thompson, *Matthew’s advice*, 183.

¹³³ Thompson, *Matthew’s advice*, 184.

¹³⁴ Blomberg, *Matthew*, 279.

¹³⁵ Blomberg, *Matthew*, 139.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*

¹³⁷ Thompson, *Matthew’s advice*, 184.

individual? Secondly, what does it mean to treat a believer in that way—is it some kind of limited exclusion such as exclusion from the Lord’s Supper or is it excommunication? Of course the answer to the second question will be linked to the answer to the first, since only the church, not the individual can excommunicate.

The phrase “he shall be to you (*soi*) is addressed to the individual¹³⁸ which leads some scholars to suggest that it is the individual who is to shun the unrepentant offender, so that it is a “quarantine *within* the church, not . . . expulsion *from* her.”¹³⁹ However, the verse which follows and speaks of binding and loosing is in the plural, and thus does not make it so easy to settle. Bruner therefore favours the view that it is the whole church that performs this action.¹⁴⁰ Gundry takes a similar view and explains that the singular is used because of the parallel with the preceding instruction.¹⁴¹ Similarly, Luz who says that although this is addressed to the offended party, for all practical purposes this means expulsion from the church, rather than that the individual offended has nothing to do with them.¹⁴² No mention is made of the formalities of how this is to be done and no mention either of the role of officials of the church in this process.¹⁴³ Other texts suggest that leaders should play a central role here (cf. II Thess. 3:14-15; I Tim. 5:20; Titus 3:10-11). However, if it is not the individual, neither is it the leaders alone who undertake this responsibility – it belongs to the whole church. “When the whole assembly participates in this decision, and not just the leaders, the whole assembly experiences the fear

¹³⁸ Bruner, *Matthew*, 650.

¹³⁹ Bruner, *Matthew*, 650; France, *Matthew*, 275. Also Thompson, *Matthew’s advice*, 185 who sees this as a “threefold attempt at reconciliation than a juridical process of excommunication”,

¹⁴⁰ Bruner, *Matthew*, 651-52.

¹⁴¹ Gundry, *Matthew*, 368.

¹⁴² Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 452.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*

of the Lord and the gravity of sin.”¹⁴⁴ Pfitzner states that this is not a high-handed authoritarian act but recognition of what the sinner has done—cut themselves off from forgiveness and fellowship.¹⁴⁵ In 1 Cor 5:1-12, we read of an example of such action recommended to the church by Paul. Carter argues that this is not excommunication based on the emphasis on mediation and conciliation, and since there are no procedures laid out. In his opinion it is more a recognition that the offender has placed himself or herself outside the community.¹⁴⁶

What does it mean to treat someone as “a pagan or tax collector”? Blomberg observes that Mt. 18:15-17 “resembles the Old Testament practice of ‘cutting’ someone ‘off’ from the assembly of Israel (e.g. Gen. 17:14; Exod. 12:15, 19; 30:33, 38).”¹⁴⁷ Bruner comments that many commentators find it hard to reconcile this teaching with Jesus’ own gentleness and generosity with such people from whom Matthew himself was called.¹⁴⁸ It gives us a clue as to the church’s agenda for the expelled believer—he or she is to be treated as a lost sheep to be brought back to the fold. To be treated thus does not mean condemnation, but does suggest ceasing to have Christian fellowship with them. They can no longer be treated as fellow believers. Although most commentators take this positive view of the church’s concern for the excommunicated brother or sister, Illian points out that in Matthew, few Gentiles and tax collectors are portrayed positively. More often they are shown to be hostile to God and negative examples (5:47, 6:7, 6:32, 20:25). The disciples are told not to waste time on them (10:5). They are outsiders.¹⁴⁹ This must be clear in the church’s mind. Such fellowship activities as the Lord’s Supper or such privileges of

¹⁴⁴ Bruner, *Matthew*, 650.

¹⁴⁵ Pfitzner, “Purified community,” 39.

¹⁴⁶ Carter, *Matthew*, 368.

¹⁴⁷ Blomberg, *Matthew*, 279.

¹⁴⁸ Bruner, *Matthew*, 651.

¹⁴⁹ Illian, “Church discipline and forgiveness,” 449.

membership of the church such as leadership or voting rights would be withheld.¹⁵⁰ Blomberg goes so far as to suggest that this person should not be allowed to participate in public corporate fellowship, but that individual Christians should reach out to them.¹⁵¹ They are “objects of mission.”¹⁵² Excommunication, says Hauerwas, is a “call to come home by undergoing the appropriate penance.”¹⁵³ This suggests that believers would still need to be involved in the life of the offending brother or sister, exhorting and wooing them back.

Church discipline that leads to exclusion causes a person to lose their social standing. Not only the person but their family is shamed. It might be that within the Christian community, the church is shamed. Reverend Yang in his book, *Discipline or Shame*, states from his survey of Malaysian churches that church discipline is rarely practised, and if practised in the form of excommunication, does not result in restoration. Furthermore, reconciliation is never achieved.¹⁵⁴ In an honour–shame culture, a person who is publicly disciplined by excommunication, for example, will not normally return to the church because they have lost face. This inhibits Asian pastors from such practices for fear of the repercussions. Yang also mentions that his survey showed that there was little pastoral care offered to those who had been excommunicated. Pastors were simply not equipped to deal with the complications of church discipline in a culture of honour–shame.¹⁵⁵

Disciplining a church member in this way in a shame-based culture will make the pastor unpopular, raise strong emotions that might well be difficult to control, alienate other members,

¹⁵⁰ Blomberg, “On building and breaking barriers,” 140.

¹⁵¹ Blomberg, *Matthew*, 279.

¹⁵² Carter, *Matthew*, 368.

¹⁵³ Hauerwas, *Matthew*, 165.

¹⁵⁴ Yang, *Discipline or shame?*, 4.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 7.

especially the offender's family and close friends, and possibly lose the offender altogether.¹⁵⁶ In his survey Yang received varied responses to the question of excommunication. Several pastors felt that in shame-based cultures, such a treatment was inappropriate. Others felt that shame could not be avoided if church purity was to be safeguarded. One Nagaland pastor replied that public shaming ought to be carried out. His reason was that when a person sinned, they had already done something which society considers shameful. The church cannot be seen to have a lower standard than society. Public announcement of the sin causes shame but this losing face is an important step towards repentance. In local idiom, "the skin of his face must be removed" so that all can see the true self.¹⁵⁷ Yang extended his research from Malaysia to six Asian countries to include six pastors and two seminarians. The reality was that excessive shaming resulted in the member being lost to the church, partly because of the experience of being shamed and partly because the church rarely provided a way back for the offender. However, face-saving alone would result in all manner of sinful behaviour being left unaddressed.¹⁵⁸

Since the New Testament was written to people in an honour-shame culture, it seems that both Jesus and Paul (1 Cor. 5: 1ff) taught that there was a point at which shame could no longer be hidden. Yang concludes that there is a difference between shaming someone, intentionally and with a desire for vengeance, and allowing them to "sense" their own shame. Feeling shame can lead to positive results. Perceptions of "being shamed" can have disastrous results. Paul allows the offender to feel the shame of his position and be forced to make a decision about his allegiance.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 32-34.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 37.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 38.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 46.

Shame is “a good tool in the hands of a loving community,” says Yang. The person who is disciplined longs to return to the community. Shame, in this positive sense, motivates healing and reconciliation. If the community is uncaring, the person feels alienated. The negative side of shame will overcome the positive.¹⁶⁰ Of course, there is no guarantee that this process will work. Ramshaw points out that in Matthew 18:12-14, the shepherd who goes out to find the one who has strayed rejoices if he finds it, but there is the possibility that he might not.¹⁶¹ And of course, excommunication in this day and age would not have the same effect as it did in New Testament times. The person who has offended merely needs to go down the road to another church whereas in New Testament times they would have been bereft of Christian fellowship.¹⁶²

CONCLUSION

As we have seen, Matthew 18:15-20 is not primarily a manual for church discipline but an impetus for pastoral care within a covenant community called to be God’s holy people. When a brother or sister sins against us, we are called to see their need rather than our hurt pride, anger or even our pain. We are to see them not as evil perpetrators but as a straying brother or sister in danger of being lost. At the same time, we also see the seriousness of sin, both to the individual and to the church community. Sin left unchecked will spread, destroying the sinner and spreading through the church. This means we will not offer cheap grace under the guise of loving. Neither will we rush to condemn. Our love is shown when with the attitude of humility and unconcern for our status, we go after them, to bring them back. If in our concern to save people from shame and ourselves from the awkwardness, uncertainty, and unpopularity, we turn a blind eye to sins committed against us, we are in fact causing

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 59.

¹⁶¹ Ramshaw, “Power and Forgiveness,” 399.

¹⁶² Blomberg, “On building and breaking barriers,” 140.

others to stumble, perhaps irretrievably, from the path of discipleship. Of course, there is risk involved and no guarantee of success. The key to being able to show someone their fault without shaming them is to understand our identity as brothers and sisters. Within the family, we can speak openly, protect one another's honour and forgive freely. This is not something that is the duty of those in pastoral leadership, but the calling of the whole community. This balance of pastoral care for the individual and preserving the holiness of the church must prevail.

**THE ORIGINS OF
THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD OF CEYLON:
EVENTS AND PERSONALITIES OF
THE SECOND DECADE (1918-1927)**

SIMON FULLER

INTRODUCTION

In 2014, the Assemblies of God of Ceylon¹ are celebrating one hundred years of ministry in the island. In an earlier article, a preliminary study has been attempted of the chronology of the first phases of Pentecostal ministry in Sri Lanka, beginning from 1907 and concluding with the departure of William and Vinnie Grier, the first missionary couple of the Assemblies of God (AG), in 1917.² Continuing that story, the present article addresses the years 1918-1927.

Within this second decade, the years 1922 to 1925 in particular, (that is, from the first visit of Mme Anna Lewini to the arrival of Rev Walter Clifford on a longterm basis) is the critical period for the manner in which Pentecostal Christianity in Sri Lanka was

¹ This is still the correct official name of the body, despite the country's change of name from Ceylon to Sri Lanka in 1972.

² 'The Introduction of Pentecostalism to Sri Lanka: A Chronology of the First Decade (1907-1917)', in Mihindukulasuriya, Poobalan and Caldera (eds.), *A Cultured Faith: Essays in honour of Prof. G. P. V. Somaratna on his seventieth birthday*, Colombo: CTS Publishing, 2011, 287-310.

formulated. It is the period in which the key local leaders emerged, whose convictions and decisions determined the course (or courses) of the movement. It is also the subject of much speculation and rumour, as there are different and strongly-held versions of the sequence of events which resulted in the existence of two quite different groups of Pentecostal believers – the Assemblies of God of Ceylon (AG Ceylon) and the Ceylon Pentecostal Mission³ (CPM). The present article explores some avenues of evidence previously unavailable or unutilized, yet at the same time it remains subject to correction as further evidence may yet come to light.

J J B de Silva

As the year 1918 opened, Mary Chapman, the pioneer of AG missionary work in South India, wrote home from Royapettah, Madras, of special meetings during the holiday period in which the participants had been conscious of a very close encounter with the Lord. Among them were five missionaries from other stations, and “a dear brother from Ceylon, who received great blessing.”⁴ This is almost certainly a reference to John James Benjamin de Silva (c.1872-1946)⁵. One of William Grier’s contacts during the latter’s ministry in Wellawatte,⁶ Colombo in 1915-17, he had been identified then as a zealous witness and one who was eagerly seeking the baptism of the Spirit.⁷ The tribute to Bro. de Silva written after his death by missionary C F Graves, speaks of this same event in context:

³ This is the name still used in Sri Lanka, although the CPM is now called by other names in other countries where it has been established, for example The Pentecostal Mission (TPM) in India.

⁴ *Weekly Evangel* 234-235 (no.1, n.s., April 6, 1918), 10.

⁵ We may estimate De Silva’s date of birth from the year of his retirement from the Audit Office, based on information gleaned from *Ferguson’s Ceylon Directory*.

⁶ The De Silvas lived at “Newlyn,” Charlemont Road, Wellawatte (*Ferguson’s Ceylon Directory*, editions of 1923, 1924 and 1925).

⁷ *Weekly Evangel* 127 (February 19, 1916), 13.

He was so hungry for God that he took the trip of more than a thousand miles [to Pandita Ramabai's Mukti Mission at Kedgaon, near Poona] to seek for the Baptism in the Holy Spirit – but came back without it. However, he was now more hungry than ever! Next, he went to a Pentecostal convention in Madras, determined to receive the experience. There he walked the streets, crying to God to fulfill His promise and fill him with the Holy Ghost. The dear Lord heard his cry and gave him a mighty Baptism in the Spirit, with the gift of tongues and interpretation.⁸

We can see, here, a parallel with the experience of another early Sri Lankan Pentecostal, D E Dias Wanigasekera, who, having been convinced of the Pentecostal message under the ministry of A G Garr in 1907, ultimately travelled more than 2,000 miles to Fyzabad in North India in his determination to receive the baptism of the Spirit in 1910.⁹ In the case of both men, the experience was preceded by an otherwise unquenchable thirst for intimacy with God, and followed by an undeniable fruitfulness in witness. It is a matter of regret that the present-day church largely takes the Spirit baptism for granted, having apparently exchanged the 'panting of the soul' (Ps. 42:1) for merely 'making a joyful noise'.

This passion to seek and serve God was to make Brother de Silva one of the most significant personalities in the early years of the AG in Sri Lanka. An Anglican by birth, Baptist lay-preacher by marriage, and a government auditor by profession, this deeply spiritual Christian gentleman influenced many towards Christ, not only at his workplace in Colombo but by persistent witness from the deep south to the far north of the island.¹⁰ He also probably

⁸ *Pentecostal Evangel* 1719 (April 19, 1947), 8-9.

⁹ *Bridegroom's Messenger* 4.75 (December 1, 1910), 2, 4.

¹⁰ There are faded photographs of him preaching in the open air before a hostile crowd at Ahangama in the Galle District; he also pioneered and pastored the first Pentecostal church in Jaffna.

influenced fellow Baptists such as J S Wickramaratne and P I Jacob to seek the baptism of the Spirit.

Sadhu Sundar Singh's Visit

In May–June 1918, the iconic Indian Christian Sadhu Sundar Singh (1889-1929) visited Sri Lanka, ministering for six weeks around the island. Although not yet thirty years of age, his apparent spiritual authority and authentically South Asian gospel message impacted thousands. His meeting at the Methodist Church in Galle in particular made a deep impression upon the 17-year-old Alwin de Alwis¹¹, which was to be instrumental in shaping the latter's concepts of a radically indigenous ministry which later found expression in the founding of the CPM.¹²

J M Hickson

Two years later, in November 1920, healing services were conducted in the island by the Anglican missionary James Moore Hickson. Arriving from a time of ministry in the Coptic churches in Egypt, Hickson was on a remarkable and extensive missionary journey which would take him through India, Burma, Malaya (including Singapore), China (including many cities in the interior), Japan, and Philippines before returning to Colombo a year later. Hickson (1868-1933) was not a Pentecostal but had a remarkable healing gift and sought to restore the healing ministry to the Church at large. It is said that he could discern demons by their smell.¹³ Thousands flocked to his meetings (in India, tens of thousands), which were generally conducted entirely within the structure of the Anglican Church, and many were healed. Between November 9th and 18th, he conducted crowded but well

¹¹Alwin was born on 8th March 1901. This date has been obtained from passenger lists of his later travels to Europe and North America, via the website www.ancestry.com.

¹²See G. P. V. Somaratna, *Origins of the Pentecostal Mission in Sri Lanka*, 30-31.

¹³<http://healingandrevival.com/BioJMHickson.htm> (accessed Sept. 14 2010).

coordinated healing services at Holy Emmanuel Moratuwa, St Michael and All Angels Polwatta, Christ Church Galle Face, Holy Trinity San Sebastian, St Paul's Milagiriya, St Paul's Kandy, and Christ Church Kurunegala. In addition, he visited bedridden cases at home and in hospitals, as well as the deaf and blind school and the mental asylums. All his messages were interpreted into Sinhala and Tamil, and he entrusted the clergy with the responsibility of continuing the healing ministry.¹⁴ He returned for a shorter visit a year later.

J S Wickramaratne

It was around this time that, John Samuel Wickramaratne,¹⁵ a customs officer and Baptist lay preacher, received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. In his own testimony, published in 1938, he recounts,

In 1920 I was led to seek the Baptism with the Holy Spirit and was filled according to Acts 2:4. Many of my associates were also endued with power from on high and we prayed that the Lord would send us a missionary who could give us a better explanation of our new found truth. *Two years later* in answer to our prayers a lady missionary came to Ceylon

¹⁴ Born in Australia, Hickson had moved to London by 1901. He was an accountant by profession and ministered strictly as a lay member of the Anglican Church. From his home address (130, Sutherland Avenue, London W9) he issued a paper entitled *The Healer*. In his first missionary tour of North America between March 1919 and June 1920, he conducted no less than 80 missions and thousands were healed. His second tour, lasting from September 1920 to April 1924 took him to countries of the Middle East, South and East Asia, Europe, Southern Africa and Australasia. His account of this long journey by faith entitled *Heal the Sick* was published in 1924 (New York, E. P. Dutton and Co.).

¹⁵ J. S. Wickramaratne (c.1894-1951) became a member of the first Executive Committee of the AG Ceylon. He was the father of former General Superintendent of the AG Ceylon Rev. Dr. Colton Wickramaratne (b.1931) and grandfather of the present holder of that office Rev. Dishan Wickramaratne.

who told us more about the truths of Pentecost. We joined together and started a work for the Lord" [my italics].¹⁶

There can be no doubt that the "lady missionary" in question was the Danish former actress Anna Lewini, as all sources, including photographic evidence, are agreed that J S Wickramaratne worked with her. Some latitude could be allowed for the recollection of the date (so "1920" might possibly be 1921); but the sequence of events is clear. It indicates without ambiguity that he received the Pentecostal experience before Sister Lewini's arrival in the island, and that the latter took place c.1922.¹⁷

In this account, Brother Wickramaratne is strangely silent about exactly how he was led to seek the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. There seems a good possibility that Brother J J B de Silva (who was also a Baptist lay preacher) may have been instrumental in this regard. Certainly, Wickramaratne and de Silva later were closely associated in the Pentecostal ministry of open-air evangelism.¹⁸ Another line of enquiry is a comparison of the testimonies of Brother Wickramaratne and Brother Paul, the Anglican catechist who became co-founder of the CPM.

In a personal conversation, Rev Colton S Wickramaratne recounted that at that time the Wickramaratne family were living at No. 34, Mohandiram's Road, Colpetty, and that it was upstairs in that house that his father, J Sam Wickramaratne, with his friend Ram Paul prayed together and received the baptism in the

¹⁶*Pentecostal Evangel* 1272 (September 24, 1938), 7.

¹⁷ That is, unless Pastor Wickramaratne's account has been garbled by editors - a possibility which can never be entirely ruled out, although in this case the published version says it has been sent in and verified by Walter Clifford, who had known him for fourteen years.

¹⁸ This was confirmed by Kerrigan LaBrooy, de Silva's great-grandson (personal communication, Oct. 19, 2013).

Holy Spirit. However, Ram Paul at that time received “only a stuttering tongue”.¹⁹

Ramankutty Paul

According to his official biography, Pastor Paul, born Ramankutty, later co-founder of the CPM, was baptized in the Holy Spirit in the year 1921 at Colombo.²⁰ This account is both somewhat different from that recounted by Rev Wickramaratne and also highly elaborated.

Said to have been born in 1881 to Hindu parents in the Trichur District, Travancore State (now Kerala), Ramankutty came to Ceylon as a teenager in search of employment, as did many Malayalis at that time.²¹ He worked in the Aserappa household at ‘Zion House,’ Maradana Road, Borella. Although the CPM sources say that he became a Christian in the home of his employer, one

¹⁹ C. S. Wickramaratne, personal communication, Sept. 2, 2012.

²⁰ *The Biography of Pastor Paul*, Chennai: The Pentecostal Mission, Third edition, 2004, p.24.

²¹ In this nearly hagiographical account of his life, Paul’s place of birth is given as Engandiyur village in Trichur District (p.2), and his age when he first came to Ceylon for employment as fourteen years (p.3). Regarding his family background, Paulson Pulikottil states plainly, “Pastor Paul was a Dalit convert of the Ezhava caste from central Kerala.” (‘Ramankutty Paul: A Dalit Contribution to Pentecostalism,’ in Allan Anderson and Edmond Tang (eds.), *Asian and Pentecostal: The Charismatic Face of Christianity in Asia*, 245). Thus the statement that Paul’s grandfather was a Hindu priest (p.3) and other details in the official *Biography* and similar documents such as http://ceylonpentecostalmission.mannoor.com/history_of_ceylon_pentecostal_mission_in_india.html (accessed Sept. 25 2010) and <http://conversionsinindia.wordpress.com/2008/11/06/raman-kutty/> (accessed Sept. 25 2010) may be legendary additions. Certainly the authors of these documents do not hesitate to ‘improve’ history; for example the last mentioned “testimony” entirely expunges Pastor Alwin de Alwis (the sole Chief Pastor of the CPM from 1945 until his removal in 1962) from the record, by claiming that from the death of Pastor Paul in 1945 it was his son Pastor Freddy Paul who led the movement.

Dr Aserappa, who was a converted Hindu,²² in fact the Aserappas were members of the Colombo Chetty community who had been Christians (at least in name) for several generations. From the Aserappa side of the story, it was in fact Mrs Selina Aserappa (née Perera), widow of Mr John De Melho Aserappa (1831-1891), a lawyer and businessman, and herself a committed evangelical Anglican, whose example and words were instrumental in Ramankutty's conversion to the Christian faith c.1899 and baptism as "Paul" in 1902.²³ Selina had three daughters and five sons, one of whom, Dr John Jeremy Aserappa, may be the Dr Aserappa of the CPM account. She was a member of St Luke's Church, Borella, which was built opposite their house on Maradana Road in 1880-81. St Luke's at that time had services in Tamil as well as English and Sinhala, in order to reach the students of a Tamil boarding school for boys, which was situated on Ward Place close by.²⁴ Therefore, it is highly likely that this was Paul's first church.

Mrs Aserappa prevailed upon the Church Missionary Society (CMS) to start a specific ministry to the Malayalis in Colombo. Because of the considerable number of Malayalis employed at the Wellawatte Spinning and Weaving Mills on Havelock Road, the new Malayalam Mission got established in that vicinity, and therefore the Church of the Good Shepherd at Thimbrigasyaya was given over entirely to this Mission in 1912.²⁵ Eventually, Paul

²² *Biography*, p.3.

²³ Details of the Aserappa family are given by A. T. S. Paul, *The Colombo Chetties – Who Were They?* at <http://www.infolanka.com/org/srilanka/cult/26.htm> (accessed July 26 2014)

²⁴ F. Lorenz Beven, *A History of the Diocese of Colombo: A Centenary Volume*, 1946, 267.

²⁵ This modest church building, situated at the junction of Thimbrigasyaya Road and Jawatte Road was given its present name only after its renovation and reopening in 1895, although it had been originally built a generation earlier (1867). From 1895 it was used for services in Sinhala for some time, but with changing settlement patterns, in 1912 Sinhala services were no longer required and hence it was given

was employed as a catechist or evangelist for this Anglican Malayali congregation. Whether and what he studied at the CMS Bible Seminary in Kottayam, as recounted in the official Biography,²⁶ may be subject to verification, although the nickname 'Paalupadesy' ("Catechist Paul") seems real enough.²⁷ This was his situation when he first came into the Pentecostal experience. He was married²⁸ and already the father of two daughters and three sons: Helen, Freddy, Dora, Sam and Harry.²⁹

over to the Malayalam ministry. See F. Lorenz Beven, *A History of the Diocese of Colombo: A Centenary Volume*, 1946, 262-3, and also the church's website at <http://cogslk.org/> (accessed July 26 2014).

²⁶ See *The Biography of Pastor Paul*, p.12

²⁷ <http://conversionsinindia.wordpress.com/2008/11/06/raman-kutty/> (accessed Sept. 25 2010)

²⁸ Mrs. Paul is said to have been from a traditional Christian (i.e. Syrian Christian) family from Trichur. This being the case, it is possible that her family background was from the Chaldean Syrian Church (the Indian branch of the Assyrian Church of the East, referred to pejoratively as "Nestorian") which is based in Trichur. Her name is unfortunately mentioned nowhere.

²⁹ See *The Biography of Pastor Paul*, p.15. The same account (p.134) says that his eldest son Freddy (Thyagadas Frederick) was born in February 1915, and (p.121) that his second son Sam (Samuel) was born in July 1919. The date of birth of the last son Harry is not mentioned, which is regrettable since it has a direct bearing on dating the beginning of the CPM ministry. According to G. P. V. Somaratna, *Origins of the Pentecostal Mission in Sri Lanka*, p.30 and 32, Pastor Paul's wife died due to unattended complications at the birth of their fifth and last child (i.e. Harry Paul) in December 1923, at the very inception of the ministry. However this is contradicted by the statement of Rev. Colton Wickramaratne (personal communication), heard from his father, that Mrs. Paul's hands had turned blue; she died from septicaemia or blood poisoning because a child had died within her womb. This would indicate a sixth pregnancy. Furthermore the official *Biography* says that Mrs. Paul "entered eternal glory when Pastor Paul's gospel ministry was gaining widespread acclamation" (p.121).

Though there can be no doubt that Paul was indeed a catechist at the CMS Malayalam Mission in Colombo, finding contemporary documentary evidence of this is difficult. Entries in Ferguson's Directory give some details of the Mission, but regarding Pastor Paul the evidence is elusive.

Dr Verghese Chandy, in his recently published autobiography, testifies concerning Pastor Paul: "When he resigned from the Good Shepherd Church, my father was appointed by the CMS to be the Catechist/Pastor in place of Pastor Paul at the Malayalam Mission."³⁰ This is a specific statement which should be verifiable.

M M Chandy (the father of Dr Verghese Chandy) is indeed listed in Ferguson's as the Catechist of the Malayalam Mission – but only from the May 1928 edition onwards³¹. In the previous edition (May 1927), we find not one but three Catechists listed: C C I Abraham, Kottayam; M I Kurien, Reading Room, Wellawatte; and W A Paul, Reading Room, Panchikawatta.³² In the 1926 edition it is the same.³³ Editions of previous years do not name any Catechists. It would be a remarkable coincidence if M M Chandy's predecessor as Catechist was a different Paul – and yet if W A Paul is indeed the same as Ramankutty Paul, there is a serious problem of dating. Paul's official biography acknowledges that after receiving the Spirit baptism he continued in the employment of the CMS for "only" about three years,³⁴ i.e. until about 1924, but six years would be excessive.

The *Ferguson's* editions of May 1926,³⁵ February 1925,³⁶ and May 1924³⁷ do not name any Catechist for the Malayalam Mission,

³⁰Verghese Chandy, *War and Grace*, 2013, 53.

³¹*Ferguson's Ceylon Directory for 1928*, 538.

³²*Ferguson's Ceylon Directory for 1927*, 498.

³³*Ferguson's Ceylon Directory for 1926*, 722.

³⁴*Biography*, 27-28.

³⁵*Ferguson's Ceylon Directory for 1926*, 958.

³⁶*Ferguson's Ceylon Directory for 1925*, 980.

but they do list a parallel “Malayalam Christian Endeavour Society” formed in 1915, the President of which (Rev A E Dibbon) was also the Superintendent of the Malayalam Mission (formed in 1912). The committee members are listed as M O Varieghese, A D Solomon, P K Luke and C K Raman. The last name is intriguing, given Paul’s pre-conversion name of Raman Kutty. Could it be the same man? The verdict should probably remain open. The previous year (May 1923) does not include the name Raman, but gives the committee members of this society as M O Varighiese, C O Matthew, M Samuel, and J Joel.³⁸ The first two of these names are similar to those of two of Paul’s first disciples (Varghese and Matthew) as described in his *Biography*.³⁹

P I Jacob

The CPM tradition is that Paul received the Holy Spirit Baptism through the ministry of two Australian missionaries who came to Colombo in 1921 on the invitation of Rev P I Jacob, a Malayali friend of Paul with whom he had studied at the Seminary at Kottayam and now a pastor in a Baptist church, who had met the missionaries while on a family visit to Madras.⁴⁰ The names of the two missionaries are given as “Todd and Ebenezer”.

³⁷*Ferguson’s Ceylon Directory for 1924*, 940.

³⁸*Ferguson’s Ceylon Directory for 1923*, 844.

³⁹*Biography*, 38-39, 75.

⁴⁰*Biography*, Chapter 3, 16-24. Michael Bergunder in *The South Indian Pentecostal Movement in the Twentieth Century*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008) p.287, neatly summarizes the story thus: “In Colombo, one of his [Paul’s] friends was P. I. Jacob, a Baptist pastor who hailed from Kerala and whose children lived in Madras. In the early 1920s when Jacob went to visit his children in Madras, he became acquainted with two Australian Pentecostal missionaries who were most probably guests in the congregation of Benjamin Jacob. Impressed by their teaching, he invited them to Colombo, where they held Tarrying Meetings in 1921. During this time P. Paul received the baptism of the Spirit, and eventually Ceylon Pentecostal Mission was started, in which he became the dominant figure.”

Rev Jacob seems to have been a key person in the early history of Sri Lankan Pentecostalism. Only he and Ms Lewini are mentioned by name, if only in passing, in both the CPM and AG published accounts of their formative events. Yet, ironically, he disappears from the histories of both groups almost as fast as he appeared, and has consequently been much overlooked. He appears by name in the AG story at Chilaw in December 1923,⁴¹ and again (unnamed but identifiable) in the Glad Tidings Hall in Colombo in January 1925.⁴²

Rev P I Jacob is listed in various editions of *Ferguson's Ceylon Directory*, and his changing locations and affiliation accord precisely with the details available in the AG and CPM sources. In the edition of 1920-21 (revised up to October 1920), he appears as "Tamil Pastor B.M.S., Cinnamon Gardens, Colombo."⁴³ In the next edition (revised up to February 1922) he is listed as "Tamil Pastor, Baptist Missionary Socy., Mohandiram's Road, Colpetty, Colombo;"⁴⁴ the same information is repeated for the edition of May 1923.⁴⁵ In the May 1924 edition, however, we find him under the Baptist Missionary Society list at Chilaw, while S M Edward is now at "Muhandiram's Road, Kollupitiya."⁴⁶ In the edition of February 1925, while S M Edward is listed at Muhandiram's Road under the Ecclesiastical listing,⁴⁷ Jacob's name has been removed from the list of Baptist clergy but appears in the general address list once again as "Tamil Pastor, Baptist Missionary Socy., Mohandiram's Rd., Colpetty,

⁴¹*Pentecostal Evangel* 552 (June 28 1924), 11.

⁴² 'Work Opens in Ceylon,' *Pentecostal Evangel* 588 (March 14 1925), 10.

⁴³*Ferguson's Ceylon Directory for 1920-21*, 929.

⁴⁴*Ferguson's Ceylon Directory for 1922*, Part II, 161.

⁴⁵*Ferguson's Ceylon Directory for 1923*, Part II, 177.

⁴⁶*Ferguson's Ceylon Directory for 1924*, 578. The name "Kollupitiya" alternates with its Anglicized form "Colpetty" just as "Muhandiram" does with "Mohandiram."

⁴⁷*Ferguson's Ceylon Directory for 1925*, 646.

Colombo.”⁴⁸ However In May 1926, he has become “Jacob, Rev. P. I., Tamil Pastor, Pentecostal Mission, Colombo”⁴⁹; this entry is repeated in the editions of 1927 and 1928⁵⁰. Meanwhile by 1928, Rev S M Edward’s address has been upgraded to “B.M.S. Gospel Hall”⁵¹, Muhandiram’s Rd., Colpetty.”⁵²

Thus, Rev P I Jacob, an independently documented Spirit-baptized ordained Baptist minister, can be seen as an important figure in linking together the disparate narratives. It was he who invited the Australian Pentecostal missionaries from India to minister in Colombo and invited Paul to hear them. His address at Mohandiram’s Road, Colpetty dovetails with Pastor Colton’s account of his father and Brother Paul first speaking in tongues at 34 Mohandiram’s Road. Mohandiram’s Road was (and is still) a narrow but thickly populated lane leading off the “Galle Road” near the Kollupitiya Police Station (Colombo 3). It is inconceivable that Wickramaratne and Jacob, as fellow Baptist preachers living down the same small road, could have not been well acquainted; he would surely have been one of the “associates” whom Wickramaratne speaks of in his testimony.⁵³ One is inclined to guess that it was, in fact, Jacob who introduced Wickramaratne to Paul – a fellow-Baptist to a fellow-Malayali.

⁴⁸*Ferguson’s Ceylon Directory for 1925*, Part II, 136.

⁴⁹*Ferguson’s Ceylon Directory for 1926*, 151. This entry is unique in that no other Ministers of the Pentecostal Mission are listed.

⁵⁰*Ferguson’s Ceylon Directory for 1927*, Part II, 169; *Ferguson’s Ceylon Directory for 1928*, Part II, 181.

⁵¹ The name “Gospel Hall” does not necessarily imply that there was a purpose-built chapel; the AG “Glad Tidings Hall” moved from one rented house to another until the erection of its own building (the Colombo Gospel Tabernacle) in 1936. The Tamil-language Baptist ministry in Kollupitiya later shifted to Bagatalle Road where a chapel was built. Rev. S. M. Edward, the minister of that church, was the father of Rev. John Edward, an AG minister who was a close friend and fellow-Bible School student of Rev. Colton Wickramaratne.

⁵²*Ferguson’s Ceylon Directory for 1928*, Part II, 119.

⁵³*Pentecostal Evangel* 1272 (September 24, 1938), 7.

Rev Jacob's presence at the Cinnamon Gardens Baptist Church may also have been one factor in Walter Clifford's ability to hold a healing meeting there in November 1923. Perhaps we could speculate that he was one of those who invited Walter Clifford to come from India to minister in Ceylon. By the end of 1923, Jacob was in Chilaw, and participating with Anna Lewini and J J B de Silva, another fellow Baptist, in a Pentecostal convention there. After joining the ministry of the Glad Tidings Hall at Borella in 1924-5, he seems by 1926 to have thrown in his lot with the CPM group led by his fellow-Malayali, R Paul.

H N Todd and Y T Ebenezer

In the CPM traditional narrative, the Pentecostal missionaries whom Rev Jacob invited to Colombo are named "Todd and Ebenezer" (in that order, not alphabetically), suggesting that it was "Todd" who was the leader of the pair. Providentially, it is now possible to identify them as H N Todd, a missionary of the Pentecostal Mission, based at the Good News Hall in North Melbourne,⁵⁴ and his South Indian co-worker Y T Ebenezer.

Henry Nathan Todd, who was born in 1867 at Sandhurst, Victoria, Australia,⁵⁵ had been ministering in South India since 1911,

⁵⁴ The Good News Hall, situated at 104 Queensberry Street, North Melbourne, founded in 1909, was Australia's first Pentecostal church (despite some doctrinal aberrations regarding the Godhead), and was the headquarters of the Pentecostal Mission (later known as the Apostolic Faith Mission of Australasia from 1926). The Mission was led by Mrs. Sarah Jane ('Jeannie') Lancaster, who had prayed for and received the Baptism in the Holy Spirit in Australia after reading a Pentecostal tract. This was the first church in Australia that Smith Wigglesworth ministered in when he arrived in Australia in February 1922.

⁵⁵ His name appears in references of the Good News Hall, Melbourne both as 'Nathan Todd' and 'H. N. Todd.' Based on this, a search in the International Genealogical Index of the www.familysearch.org site for all persons in the SW Pacific Region with the surname Todd, unambiguously identifies him as Henry Nathan Todd, born in 1867 at Sandhurst, Victoria, the son of Nathan Todd and Elizabeth Percival.

having been first accompanied by Athelstan Lancaster,⁵⁶ son of Mrs Lancaster, the founder of the Good News Hall. A number of references from Australia are sufficient to establish the general outline of his ministry as a Pentecostal missionary in South India (and Ceylon) between 1911 and at least 1927.⁵⁷ Their ministry in

⁵⁶ Alfred Athelstan Lancaster, born in 1884, was the second son of Alfred Lancaster and Sarah Jane Lancaster née Murrell, cf. <http://mepnab.net.au.net/m/m18.html> (accessed Aug.29, 2010).

⁵⁷ In 1911, Nathan Todd together with Athelstan Lancaster, son of Sister Lancaster, had gone as missionaries to South India. From there they had written to Good News Hall requesting a married couple to come and assist them so that they could minister more effectively to women and girls. Although no couple came, two dedicated single women answered the call, as reported in the *Good News* 1:5, January 1913, 9 (as cited by Barry Chant, 'The Hallowed Touch: A Reflection on the Assembly of God Church Cairns, North Queensland,' in *Australasian Pentecostal Studies*, Issue 9, 2006, at <http://webjournals.alphacrucis.edu.au/journals/aps/issue-9/10-the-hallowed-touch-a-reflection-on-the-assembly/>, accessed Aug. 29, 2010). Twenty years later the ministry in Madurai by these four, i.e. Todd, Lancaster, and "Sisters Mortomer and Ethel" was still remembered with appreciation at least by a few. *Good News* 24.2 (February 1933), 10 at http://media.alphacrucis.edu.au/webjournals/pdf/GN/gn-vol24-no2-feb-1931/GN1933.02_web.pdf (accessed Aug. 29,2010).

Ten years later, in an 'Open Letter' of February 1923, Mrs. Lancaster speaks approvingly of, among others of her associates, missionary Nathan Todd (Barry Chant's thesis, citing *Good News* 9:1, 17, says that she refers to "Nathan Todd, missionary to Japan." *The Spirit of Pentecost: origins and development of the Pentecostal Movement in Australia, 1870-1939*, pp.247-8 at <http://barrychant.com/thesis/7Love.pdf> (accessed Aug. 29, 2010). However the reference to 'Japan' must be an error for 'India'; this edition of *Good News* is unfortunately not available online for verification).

Most significantly, there is a notice dated March 1927 of the Apostolic Faith Mission of Australasia advertising a "10 Days' United Campaign, Unique in the History of Pentecostal Australia" from April 15-24 1927 at the "Good News Hall" in North Melbourne. At these meetings, "H. N. Todd (Missionary in India)" is advertised as one of the "noted Pentecostal leaders" who would be the speakers. <http://webjournals.alphacrucis.edu.au/journals/GN/gn-vol18-no3-mar-1927/11-notices-apostolic-faith-mission-gn-mar-1927/> (accessed Aug. 29, 2010).

India, at least at the beginning, was perceived as controversial even by other Pentecostals.⁵⁸ He was accompanied by his wife (always referred to simply as “Sister Todd”) until her death in 1927,⁵⁹ and also his son Clarence.⁶⁰ His dedicated and effective co-worker Brother Y T Ebenezer, whose mother (referred to as “Mother Timothy”) was also a member of the ministry team, passed away in March 1926, unmarried,⁶¹ and a warm editorial tribute to “this talented young man” was published in the Good News magazine of the Good News Hall, Melbourne.⁶²

⁵⁸ Pentecostal missionary George E. Berg writing from Frazertown, Bangalore in 1912 reported, “A band of workers calling themselves the “Australian Pentecostal Band” have settled south of Bangalore and are teaching many wrong and foolish things. We want it understood that we have no part or lot with these people or their teaching.” ‘Lights and Shadows in India,’ *Latter Day Evangel*, September 1912, 23. “These people teach and spread false doctrine such as “no Trinity,” “no eternal hell” and what all, all this under professed Pentecost accompanied with speaking in tongues. What a lot of harm it is doing and has done already God knows ...” *Bridegroom’s Messenger* August 15 1912, 1.

⁵⁹ Todd’s wife passed away in 1927 on the return voyage to India from Australia, and was buried at sea.

In 1927 Todd would have been 60 years of age. How long he remained in India thereafter is not known. However Australian Electoral Rolls (located via the ancestry.co.uk website) record his presence at Bendigo, Victoria in 1936 and again in 1942. He died in 1943 (*Australia Death Index, 1787-1985* record at ancestry.co.uk website).

⁶⁰ See ‘A Letter from Brother Todd’ dated July 17, 1923 at <http://webjournals.alphacrucis.edu.au/journals/GN/gn-vol-14-no-10-november-1923/16-a-letter-from-bro-todd-india/> (accessed Aug. 29, 2010)

⁶¹ *Good News*, April 1926, at <http://webjournals.alphacrucis.edu.au/journals/GN/gn-vol17-no4-apr-1926/19-notice-gn-april-1926/> (accessed Aug. 29, 2010).

⁶² *Good News*, June 1926, at <http://webjournals.alphacrucis.edu.au/journals/GN/gn-vol17-no6-jun-1926/14-greetings-in-the-lord-jesus/>. A study by him on “Salvation” was printed in the Good News magazine <http://webjournals.alphacrucis.edu.au/journals/GN/gn-vol18-no5-may-1927/21-salvation/>. After the loss of Bro. Ebenezer, his

In the May 1924 edition of *Good News* appears a detailed account by one John E Monk of the ministry of Brother Todd and his Pentecostal Band among the Anglo-Indians at Perambur, Madras.⁶³ At Perambur, Todd published a paper for free distribution entitled *Glorious News*. "And through the 'Glorious News' two doors were opened and money was sent for Brother Todd to go and give the Word to them. So in this way the Lord undertook for the train fare to Mangalore and to Ceylon; many in those parts were greatly blessed, awakened and stirred up, and many got healed." The date of this, Brother Todd's initial ministry visit to Ceylon, is not given here, but it was between 1919 and 1924.⁶⁴

These references, important as they are, do not enable us to verify the exact date of Brother Todd's ministry visit to Colombo.⁶⁵ However, assuming that CPM traditional date 1921 is reasonably accurate, it would be safe to say that his visit predated the arrival both of Sister Lewini and of Brother Clifford.

role seems to have been fulfilled by Bro K. G. Daniel. See <http://webjournals.alphacrucis.edu.au/journals/GN/gn-vol18-no4-apr-1927/13-letter-from-our-native-evangelist-in-madras/>, and <http://webjournals.alphacrucis.edu.au/journals/GN/gn-vol18-no5-may-1927/17-a-tamil-evangelists-story/> (accessed Sept. 5, 2010).

⁶³ Having been baptized in the sea at Royapuram at the hands of Bro. Ebenezer in July 1918, and baptized in the Spirit on the same day, Monk recounts that later "I was led to ask Sister Williams to write to Brother Todd, who was then at Guindy, to come to our place at Perambur and hold cottage meetings occasionally." This led to Bro. Todd relocating the Band to Perambur.

⁶⁴ 'My Testimony, and God's Dealings with us—The Anglo-Indians of Perambur,' <http://webjournals.alphacrucis.edu.au/journals/GN/gn-vol-15-no-5-may-1924/my-testimony-and-gods-dealings-with-us8212the-angl/> (accessed Sept. 5, 2010).

⁶⁵ The definitive answer to this question can likely be found by referring to editions of *Good News* of the years 1921-22; however in the set of editions online at <http://webjournals.alphacrucis.edu.au/> (accessed Sept. 5, 2010), there is regrettably a lacuna between 1913 and 1923.

Hickson's Return Visit

In November 1921, J M Hickson made a return visit to the island. He addressed large crowds and prayed for many sick persons at the Colombo Anglican churches of St Michael's Polwatta and Holy Trinity San Sebastian. His words are significant: "It was a great pleasure to find the work going forward so well, and the interest in Christian Healing which was kindled during the time of the Mission a year before just as keen as ever."⁶⁶ From Colombo he resumed his missionary journey to Egypt, Palestine,⁶⁷ and from thence to South Africa and onwards to Australia and New Zealand. Although much less famous now than his contemporaries, healing evangelists Smith Wigglesworth and Aimee Semple McPherson, probably because he chose to confine himself to the "mainline" church of his birth, Hickson's ministry not only brought relief to many sufferers, but would have prepared the way for the spread of Pentecostalism by creating a public awareness and expectation of the operation of supernatural gifts.

Madame Lewini

Toward the end of 1922, Anna Emilie Lewini, one of the key figures in the planting of Pentecostalism in the island, arrived in Ceylon for the first time. Born July 22, 1876 in Denmark, into a theatrical family of partly Jewish ancestry,⁶⁸ she had previously been an actress, both on stage and in at least one silent film.

⁶⁶ James Moore Hickson, *Heal the Sick*, Chapter 4, at <http://webjournals.alphacrucis.edu.au/journals/EB/heal-the-sick-hickson-1924/04-the-christian-healing-mission-in-china-japan-an/> (accessed Sept. 14, 2010)

⁶⁷ A report of his Mission of Healing at St. George's Cathedral, Jerusalem from December 27th to 30th 1921 appears in *Confidence*, July-September 1922, pp.38-39.

⁶⁸ Her surname Lewini is of Jewish origin. Her grandfather William (William Horton Isidor Lewini, 1810-1887) was born of Jewish parents on the island of St Thomas in the Danish West Indies (now the US Virgin Islands) and moved to Copenhagen where he was at first a

Copenhagen was the cultural capital of Scandinavia and in the entertainment field could compete with Paris. The period 1890-1920 was considered the golden age of Danish theatre. However, she was radically converted under the ministry of Thomas Barratt⁶⁹ who preached in Copenhagen in 1908-9 soon after

typographer but became a successful actor and theatre director. He and his actress wife Hansine (née Jakobsen) (1816-1890) celebrated their golden wedding anniversary in 1885 – a very rare event in the theatrical world. (For some details of Hansine Lewini's theatrical roles see <http://www.litteraturpriser.dk/1850r/personnr318.htm>, accessed Aug. 9, 2010). Their daughter Emilie (Emilie Marie Annette Sophie Lewini, 1844-1893) also acted, making her theatrical debut in 1856 and playing a wide repertoire in both Denmark and Norway until retiring from the theatre in 1883 to settle into married life with Mr. Rasmussen. She died only 10 years later on 9th July 1893 at Fredericia. (See pp.95, 169 and 201 of *Meddelelserom skuespil og theaterforhold i Odense; I anledning af hundredearsdagen for den førstedanske comedies opførelsepaa Odense theater, den 18. Nov. 1896*, at http://www.archive.org/stream/meddelelseromsku00schmuoft/meddelelseromsku00schmuoft_djvu.txt, accessed Aug. 22, 2010). Anna Emilie (born 1876) was their daughter. This explains the otherwise cryptic note, "Skuespillerinde, lægprædikant Anna Emilie Lewini, født Rasmussen ..." ("Actress and lay preacher Anna Emilie Lewini, born Rasmussen ...") at <http://www.danskefilm.dk/skuespiller/8987.html> (accessed Aug. 9, 2010), where "Rasmussen" is not the name of Anna Lewini's place of birth (as one might expect, except that there is no such place) but rather her father's surname.

⁶⁹ Thomas Ball Barratt (1862-1940) was one of the key persons in the early years of the Pentecostal ministry. Born in Cornwall, England, but living in Norway from the age of four years, he was a Methodist until on a visit to USA in 1906 he heard of the events at Azusa Street and was baptized in the Holy Spirit. He was the first to bring the Pentecostal revival to England (September 1907), and ministered powerfully in the five Scandinavian countries (Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Iceland and Finland) as well as Estonia and Poland. In addition he spent several months of 1908 (April 3 – August 15) ministering in South India, especially to the missionary community at Coonoor in the Nilgiris. See http://www.revival-library.org/pensketches/oth_pentecostals/barratt.html and <http://www.pentecostalpioneers.org/Barratt.html> (both accessed

returning from India.⁷⁰ Experiencing salvation on 27th April 1909 and baptized in the Holy Spirit on May 13th 1909,⁷¹ by the time she came to Ceylon in 1922 Ms Lewini was a mature woman in her upper forties with 13 years of solid Pentecostal experience and witness behind her. This is important for us to appreciate, since the commonly held view is that her arrival was without much preparation, for example the following garbled account:

Anna Lewini, a Danish actress who had accepted the Lord and been filled with the Holy Spirit in the early 1920s, stopped in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) on her way to India where she was scheduled to make a movie. She had meetings in Colombo's theatrical center...⁷²

Regarding her marital status, she is referred to in local Pentecostal memory respectfully but ambiguously as "Madame" Lewini. In fact,

Aug. 9, 2010); also Michael Bergunder, *The South Indian Pentecostal Movement in the Twentieth Century*, 24.

⁷⁰ Anna Lewini was also much influenced by her colleague Anna Larssen (née Halberg, 1875-1955), who had appeared as a child actress from the age of 7 and had become probably the foremost and most popular Danish actress of her time. Larssen was baptized in the Holy Spirit on December 13, 1908 through Barratt's ministry, left the theatre (breaking her contract) amidst a storm of publicity and became an itinerant evangelist with her (second) husband Sigurd Bjørner. See Svend Løbner, 'En skuespiller oplever Helligånden' at <http://www.udfordringen.dk/art.php?ID=16826>, and also Jørgen Mortensen, 'Vækkelse blandt kultureliten' at <http://www.domino-online.dk/?p=2499> (both accessed Aug. 9, 2010).

⁷¹ Anna Lewini's testimony, which would have caused a sensation at the time, was published in Danish in 1910. *Min Omvendelse og hvorledes jeg modtog Aandens Daab med Tungetale: Personligt Vidnesbyrd* ('My Repentance and how I received the Spirit Baptism with Speaking in Tongues: a Personal Testimony'), 1910, 24 pages; reprinted 1912, 23 pages.

⁷² From a document strangely entitled "Sinhala, the Language of Sri Lanka" to be found at <http://www.lifepublishers.org/widgets/download.aspx?file=%2Ffiles%2FCase+Studies%2FSinhala+FB+Case+Study.pdf> (accessed Aug. 9, 2010).

she had been married to a fellow-actor Sigurd Lomholt (born 4 April, 1871, at Copenhagen) and appeared with him under her married name Anna Lomholt in a silent film *I sidste Sekund* ("At the Last Moment"), produced in 1913. So she did not leave her acting career immediately upon conversion, although she did eventually. Her marriage (date not yet discovered) was unfortunately dissolved.⁷³ However, because she had been a married lady she continued to be referred to by other missionaries in Ceylon as "Mrs Lewini". Her ex-husband apparently never re-married and passed away on 19 March, 1948, in Denmark. The couple apparently had a son (Carl Thorstein Lewini Lomholt, born c.1897), who migrated to the USA in 1920,⁷⁴ after which date Anna would have been free of any family responsibilities and therefore able to commit her life to overseas mission. She returned from Ceylon to Denmark for the last time in about 1949, where she passed away on 7 December, 1951, and was buried at Aarhus. Although Sister Lewini welcomed the arrival of Rev Walter Clifford and cooperated with him, it is very likely that her marital status (having a former partner still living) was a factor in her never obtaining credentials with the Assemblies of God.

The Date of Mme Lewini's Arrival

According to G P V Somaratna's *Origins of the Pentecostal Mission in Sri Lanka* (1996), Anna Lewini first arrived in the Island in the year 1919,⁷⁵ and returned to Denmark in June 1920 "after more than one year's work in Sri Lanka".⁷⁶ The date 1919 has been widely quoted from this source, even in recent Assemblies of God publications. However, this date does not seem to be supported

⁷³ <http://www.danskefilm.dk/skuespiller/8987.html> and <http://www.danskefilm.dk/skuespiller/7195.html> (accessed Aug. 9, 2010).

⁷⁴ *US Naturalization Records Indexes 1794-1995*; also 1930 *United States Federal Census* record at North Bergen, New Jersey; both courtesy of www.ancestry.com.

⁷⁵ G. P. V. Somaratna, *Origins of the Pentecostal Mission in Sri Lanka*, 16-18

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

by any documentary evidence. Some other secondary or tertiary sources mention the year 1920. However in Somaratna's next book *Walter H Clifford: Apostle of Pentecostalism in Sri Lanka* (1997), which gives a fuller account of Ms Lewini, the earliest date mentioned for her presence in Sri Lanka is 1922 (pp.14-15, 17). Then, in *The Events of Christian History in Sri Lanka* (1998), p.42, Somaratna gives the date of her arrival in the island more precisely as December 1922. On p.114 of the same book he says that she arrived in Sri Lanka in 1922 and founded the Glad Tidings Hall in December 1923.

The later dating of Lewini's first arrival in the island (i.e. late 1922) seems certain for a number of reasons. First, it is clearly documented that she participated for three months between February and May 1921 in the meetings of Smith Wigglesworth in Sweden and Denmark. There she was personally refreshed and strengthened⁷⁷ and Wigglesworth became an important influence in her own life and ministry. It is in fact by her testimony to Wigglesworth's ministry in Scandinavia that her name is most widely known outside Sri Lanka (as a search for her name on any web search engine will demonstrate).⁷⁸ In her account of Wigglesworth's 1921 Scandinavian ministry, published in England in April 1922, she gives her address as 149, Winston Road, Stoke

⁷⁷She admits candidly that she came to Orebro, Sweden "to seek help myself, being worn out with long unbroken service in the Lord's work. I had not heard of Mr. Wigglesworth before, but I knew that Pastor Barratt, my spiritual father, was there. ... As hands were laid upon me the power of God went through me in a mighty way. I was immediately well." <http://www.smithwigglesworth.com/life/scandinavia1921.htm>.

⁷⁸Her glowing account of the meetings in Scandinavia, originally published in *Confidence* magazine (Sunderland, England), was reprinted in the *Pentecostal Evangel* of 22 May 1922, p.10, and subsequently in Smith Wigglesworth's well-known book *Ever Increasing Faith* (1924).

Newington, London.⁷⁹ Furthermore, on Pentecost Sunday 1922, she was one of the prominent personalities present at the dedication of the new Pentecostal church building in Østerbro, Copenhagen.⁸⁰

The passenger list survives for her journey on the ship “Narkunda” which departed from the port of London on 15th September 1922 bound for Sydney. Describing herself as a “Missionary,” aged 47, she had contracted to land at Bombay, and gave her country of intended future residence as India.⁸¹ Thus the traditional story of her visiting Ceylon “on the way to India” is right, although the idea of her being on the way to make a movie is rendered rather implausible in view of her self-identification as a missionary.

During Anna Lewini’s first visit to the island, she held evangelistic meetings at the Tower Hall in Maradana which she hired for the purpose, very possibly drawing on her theatrical connections to do so. She is said to have been accompanied by two other missionary ladies, Sisters Pauline and Margaret, about whom nothing else is now known.⁸² According to Rev Colton S Wickramaratne’s book published in 2007, his father John Samuel Wickramaratne and mother Lillian Wickramaratne,⁸³ both received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit in these meetings of Anna Lewini at the Tower Hall.⁸⁴ This basic account has been

⁷⁹ *Confidence* 129 (April-June 1922), 22-23, 26; at <http://www.smithwigglesworth.com/life/scandinavia1921.htm>.

⁸⁰ Jørgen Mortensen, ‘Apostolsk Kirkes historie’ at <http://www.nyk-frikirke.dk/default.asp?id=49520&SStID=4>.

⁸¹ Passenger list accessed courtesy of www.ancestry.com. Her last address in the United Kingdom was 7 Eton Road, Haverstock Hill (London NW3).

⁸² G. P. V. Somaratna, *Origins of the Pentecostal Mission in Sri Lanka*, pp.16-18

⁸³ Her maiden name was Lillian Matilda Fernando.

⁸⁴ Colton Wickramaratne, with Dishan Wickramaratne and Hal Donaldson, *My Adventure in Faith*, 2007, 27.

elaborated upon at the hands of others.⁸⁵ However, as noted above, according to J S Wickramaratne's own testimony published in 1938,⁸⁶ he received the baptism and shared this experience with his friends two years prior to Sister Lewini's arrival. After this first visit, Ms Lewini moved on to India, apparently both for the purpose of preaching and possibly in order to fulfill the final obligation of her acting career. Pastor Colton states that she "reluctantly did the last trip to India."⁸⁷

The Beginnings of Glad Tidings Hall

In mid-1923, Anna Lewini returned to the island, this time to stay. She came to Ceylon in response to a divine call⁸⁸, after a powerful and fruitful ministry at the Mukti Mission of Pandita Ramabai in India,⁸⁹ which had been envisaged as part of a worldwide evangelistic tour. Her words, penned soon after her arrival, are worth quoting in full:

God told me to go to Ceylon, but I did not think that I was to settle down here. But the Lord clearly told me to do so and

⁸⁵ For example, the Assemblies of God Division of Foreign Missions *Field Focus: Sri Lanka*, August 1980, which begins with the usual tale that "Madame Lewini accepted the Lord and was filled with the Holy Spirit while under contract to make a film in India," continues with the theatrical scenario: "... she gathered some Christian friends together and held meetings in a place called Tower Hall. Among those who attended these services was a Protestant lay minister, John Wickramaratne. These believers noticed Madame Lewini had a special anointing of the Holy Spirit. One day some of her friends asked her what it was. Madame Lewini's answer was to share with them her Pentecostal testimony. Then she took a group of these friends into a side room and prayed with them. John Wickramaratne was one of those filled with the Holy Spirit that day. When Mr. Wickramaratne told a pastor friend about his experience, this man also received the Holy Spirit..."

⁸⁶ *Pentecostal Evangel* 1272 (September 24, 1938), 7.

⁸⁷ Colton S. Wickramaratne, personal communication, September 2, 2012.

⁸⁸ *Pentecostal Evangel* 513 (September 8, 1923), p.9.

⁸⁹ *Pentecostal Evangel* 500 (June 9, 1923), p.8.

to open up a Pentecostal mission station, the first and only one among Ceylon's five million people. I believe God wants this place as a center for the Pentecostal power. We know 10 or 12 in the island who have received their 'Pentecost' and a few who are really longing for it. God has given me the opportunity to proclaim this truth all over Colombo and in other parts of Ceylon and now we are preparing to open up a real Pentecostal hall. Pray for a mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit. We hope to start the meetings in a couple of weeks. God has sent Miss Minnie Houck (one of the workers who went out with Miss Abrams) down from Newara Eliya [sic] to stay with me...⁹⁰

She rented a hall at Borella to commence the meetings.⁹¹ Apparently this was located opposite the Hotel de Roi at 3rd Division Maradana Road.⁹² In this endeavour she was financially supported by two Burgher ladies, Sister Sauliere and Sister Margenout⁹³, while Brother J S Wickramaratne and Brother

⁹⁰ *Pentecostal Evangel* 513 (September 8, 1923), p.9.

⁹¹ G. P. V. Somaratna, *Origins of the Pentecostal Mission in Sri Lanka*, p.17, says that "Soon after her return to Sri Lanka, she rented a hall at Borella to conduct the gospel meetings in 1922 because the nucleus of a group of believers had already been formed." However this date is problematic, since the *Pentecostal Evangel* of June 9, 1923 reports that "Miss Anna Lewini ... is *at the present time* making a world-wide evangelistic tour. She sends a very encouraging report of the revival that God has sent to Mukti in India." (my italics).

⁹² This information was supplied by Rev. A. O. Speldewinde (Superintendent of the Assemblies of God of Ceylon from 1957 to 1964) writing in the *Souvenir to mark the twenty fifth anniversary of the Assemblies of God of Ceylon* in 1971, p.1. Rev. Speldewinde (1902-1983) may be considered a very reliable witness as he came into the Pentecostal fold in 1930 through the Glad Tidings Hall ministry and was well known for his no-nonsense factual manner.

⁹³ This is very likely the Miss M. Margenout who was the Hostel Superintendent at the YWCA in Union Place, Colombo 2. See *Ferguson's Ceylon Directory for 1924*. Part II, 236.

(Ramankutty) Paul were working with her in the ministry.⁹⁴ An early photograph survives of a small congregation of 27 adults with 6 children gathered under the banner “Glad Tidings Hall” in which Mme Lewini, Brother Wickramaratne, and Brother Paul are unambiguously all together.

During this period Brother Egbert, an evangelist from India also ministered in the Glad Tidings Hall and it is said that through him many were added to the church.⁹⁵ Egbert, an Indian national, was associated with the ministry of Benjamin Jacob, the founder pastor of the church which later became known as the Madras Pentecostal Assembly. This latter ministry had also a Scandinavian input in its origins, having begun in 1913 through the visit of two Swedish ladies Karin Andersson and Ida Nilsson who had, like Anna Lewini, spent time at the Mukti Mission.⁹⁶

Anna Lewini’s residential address in Colombo was “Mizpah”, Ridgeway Place, Bambalapitiya.⁹⁷ It is not impossible, although unverified, that the present day Life Centre Assembly of God Church at No. 5 Ridgeway Place is providentially, although unwittingly, built on the same location.

⁹⁴ A. O. Speldewinde, op. cit. p.1.

⁹⁵ Ibid., p.1.

⁹⁶ http://stanleyvasu.blogspot.com/2013/2013_10_01/archive.html (accessed May 10, 2014); also Bergunder, *The South Indian Pentecostal Movement in the Twentieth Century*, 25.

⁹⁷ *Ferguson’s Ceylon Directory for 1924*. Part II, 224. In this “who’s who” of the island’s society, her listing reads, “Lewini, Mme. A. E., Danish Lady Evangelist. “Mizpah, Rodgeway [sic] Place, Bambalapitiya, Colombo.” This edition was revised up to May 1924, and thus may be taken as a further evidence that Lewini took up residence in the island between May 1923 (the date of the previous edition in which she is not listed) and May 1924. The same address is repeated by subsequent yearly editions of *Ferguson’s* to 1929 at least.

Walter Clifford

In November 1923⁹⁸ Walter Clifford, an Assemblies of God missionary appointed to North India, made his first visit to the island, as part of a month-long healing mission tour of South India (including Bangalore, Salem, and Tuticorin) and Ceylon.

Born October 2, 1887 at the picturesque stone-built village of Box, Wiltshire in the West of England, he was the second son of James Clifford, an agricultural labourer, and his wife Mary. After joining the army in England in 1907 he had done military service in Malta (1908-11) and North China (1911-1913) before being assigned to North India.

Clifford came to a living faith in Christ in June 1914 in Quetta, Northwest India (now Balochistan, Pakistan) where he was stationed. He was married to Gertrude (née Eveleigh) at Bombay on 15 June, 1916,⁹⁹ and they returned to Quetta. They were worshipping with the Plymouth Brethren and were at first prejudiced against reports of Pentecostal things. However, after the death of their first child in October 1917,¹⁰⁰ they were ready to listen to a former missionary to the Tibetans who came to their home at Quetta and shared the Pentecostal message, and Clifford was baptized in the Holy Spirit the following month (30 November).

⁹⁸ The estimate of the month November is based on the fact that Clifford's report of the entire month-long tour, of which the Sri Lankan leg came last, was published in the February 9, 1924 edition of the *Pentecostal Evangel*, and allows for a typical time-lag of close to two months between writing in Ceylon/India and publication in USA.

⁹⁹ *India, Select Marriages 1792-1948*, via www.ancestry.com. Since their marriage was registered at Colaba, Bombay (in the southernmost part of the city), it is quite likely they were married in the famous 'Afghan Church' (the Anglican Church of St John the Evangelist), with its military associations.

¹⁰⁰ Violet Mary Eileen Clifford, born 1917, died October 12 1917 and buried the next day at Quetta. (*India, Select Deaths and Burials*, at www.ancestry.com).

In December 1918, he received the believer's baptism by immersion at the hands of Alfred Blakeney, an Assemblies of God missionary in Saharanpur, North India. Early the following year, he left the army, and in April 1919, became a full-time missionary associated with the Assemblies of God. He served first at Saharanpur before moving up into Afghanistan for a time, and then down to Lucknow at the end of October. His official Assemblies of God Missionary appointment to India was given on November 25th 1919; thus, he joined the General Council of the Assemblies of God without leaving India. In his first term (1919-1924), he served in Lucknow, Mankapur and Fyzabad. He was ordained by the Assemblies of God at a moving service in Saharanpur on Sunday November 7th 1920. In a "Report of the India Conference, Assemblies of God, Convened at Saharanpur, Nov, 3-14, 1920," we find the following account:

On the Lord's day, November 7th, the Lord especially blessed the coming together of the missionaries. At the beginning of the service Brother W. H. Clifford was ordained to the ministry by the laying on of hands of the Presbytery. The presence of the Lord was very real, for the Holy Spirit fell upon the whole assembly. Some wept, some laughed and there was a shout in the camp. Even strings that were thought to be slack and out of tune began to tune themselves to the praises of God.¹⁰¹

Thus, Walter Clifford came to Ceylon as a fully-fledged Assemblies of God minister from the start and not as an "independent missionary", as claimed by some. However, the fact that he was an Englishman whose spiritual journey from conversion to ministry as a gifted healing evangelist and ordination by the Assemblies of God took place entirely within South Asia set him apart from the more "typical" American missionaries who were to follow.

¹⁰¹*Pentecostal Evangel* 380-381 (19 February, 1921), 20.

Clifford's first public meeting in the island was held at the Jampettah Methodist Church.¹⁰² He ministered in Colombo, Jaffna, and Madampe, and a number of remarkable healings and deliverances took place. In Colombo, a Hindu woman who had not eaten solid food for eight months and was close to death was carried in on a chair by a Buddhist boy and his friends; after Brother Clifford's prayer she left the meeting on the chair but at her own request got down and walked home, ate rice, and recovered. In Jaffna, a number of deaf and dumb children were delivered.

In a later recollection of this first visit, Clifford says that he "found just one other Pentecostal missionary [i.e. Anna Lewini] and about half a dozen people who had received the Baptism in the Spirit according to Acts 2:4."¹⁰³ On one Sunday afternoon he had a tarrying service¹⁰⁴ with Sister Lewini's congregation.¹⁰⁵

In an account based on the family recollections of some early Pentecostal believers, it was on November 3rd 1923 that Pastor Clifford had a meeting at the Ferguson Memorial Hall of the Cinnamon Gardens Baptist Church in Colombo.¹⁰⁶ On that day when he prayed for the sick, the first person to go forward was a very fashionable English-trained teacher who had heard about the meetings at the birthday party of a friend. Because of the large number of tablets she was using, she was described as a "walking hospital" by her friends. She was Frances de Alwis, a

¹⁰² 'On Tour in India and Ceylon,' *Pentecostal Evangel* 533 (February 9, 1924), 10-11.

¹⁰³ W. H. Clifford, 'The Work in Ceylon,' *Pentecostal Evangel* 745 (April 28, 1928), 11.

¹⁰⁴ "Tarrying" (from Luke 24:49, KJV) refers to the Pentecostal practice of waiting upon God for the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

¹⁰⁵ Walter H. Clifford, 'Latter Rain in Ceylon,' *Pentecostal Evangel* 1356 (May 4, 1940), 6.

¹⁰⁶ This account is based on a written document provided by Mr. Raju Niles (personal communication Sept. 17, 2012), who received it from his cousin the late Mr. Samson Rajaratnam. Their grandparents Mr. and Mrs. Nagalingam were early believers in the CPM.

Methodist from Kalahe in Galle. Because of the healing touch she received from God when Pastor Clifford prayed for her she continued to attend the same church (Cinnamon Gardens Baptist) and later decided to take water baptism, a step for which she was teased by her sisters and brothers. Frances kept in contact by letter with Clifford and thus she knew that he would return to Colombo in March.

During the December holiday period of 1923, a Pentecostal convention was held at Chilaw, convened by Brother J J B de Silva,¹⁰⁷ a Spirit-baptized layman conversant in all three languages, assisted by Mrs Lewini and others from Colombo. In her account of this event, missionary Minnie Houck refers to "Brother Jacob's home,"¹⁰⁸ this being perhaps the place where meetings were held. This is none other than Rev P I Jacob, the Baptist minister who had invited Todd and Ebenezer to Colombo. Sometime between May 1923 and May 1924, Jacob had relocated from Mohandiram's Road, Colpetty to Chilaw, while still being associated with the Baptist Missionary Society.¹⁰⁹ Miss Houck also reports that "after this Convention, Mrs Lewini felt definitely led to open up work in a new place in Colombo".

Clifford's Second Visit

In March 1924,¹¹⁰ on the way home to England on a much overdue furlough¹¹¹ from North India, Walter Clifford stopped in

¹⁰⁷ Bro J. J. B. De Silva was a mature Christian, a little older than Sis. Lewini; the eldest of his four daughters Sis. Dorothy De Silva (one of the first batch of graduates from the Ceylon Bible Institute in 1949) was born in 1898. The others were Marjorie (Mrs. de Silva), Hilda (Mrs. Berenger), and the youngest Esme (born 1910). Unusually for a member of the Burgher community, he was competent in both Sinhala and Tamil, a skill acquired in the Civil Service.

¹⁰⁸ *Pentecostal Evangel* 552 (June 28, 1924), 11.

¹⁰⁹ *Ferguson's Ceylon Directory for 1924*, 578.

¹¹⁰ In the *Pentecostal Evangel* 544 (April 26, 1924) on p.10 we find, 'Brother Walter H. Clifford of Mankapur, India writes: "I am writing from Colombo, Ceylon, where we have come to hold some Full Gospel

Ceylon for a month of special meetings, beginning on the 9th. Minnie Houck recounted: "A few weeks later [i.e. after the convention in Chilaw] God sent Brother Clifford to conduct a series of meetings at Glad Tidings Hall."¹¹² Such was the impact of his ministry, he was labeled: "The Colombo Conversion Company" and accused of turning the city upside down. In the short time that he was in the Island, over two hundred persons were saved, large numbers healed, twelve baptized in water, and one baptized in the Spirit.¹¹³ After the meetings in Colombo, Pastor Clifford went on to have a powerful series of meetings for four days in the Galle Methodist Church. "Some seventy souls

meetings prior to going home. We started meetings on the 9th ..." The Cliffords' daughter Ruby was born at Mankapur on 3rd February, giving them just time to recover from childbirth, pack their household to leave on furlough and travel from North India by land and ship to Colombo in time to begin the meetings on 9th March.

¹¹¹ He had been continuously away from home, first in military service, then in missionary service, since 1908. In the spring of 1923 he had written from Mankapur, N. India, "We are feeling the need of a furlough. This fall will make fifteen years away from home without a furlough so we are praying that we may be able to go next spring if it be His will." (*Pentecostal Evangel* 500 (June 9, 1923), p.12). Later in the year his wording was more direct: "It is fifteen years ago the fifth of November of this year that I left my home for the field, and during all those years have not had a furlough. The reason we desire to go on a furlough is, that we are both tired and worn out, and we feel that if we can get a change and rest for these tired bodies of ours, we shall be able to return, D.V., better equipped for the battle than we are at present." (*Pentecostal Evangel* 526 (December 15, 1923), 10). From these poignant words we can understand something of the physical and financial constraints under which the Cliffords lived a life of faith and faithfulness; furthermore his dynamic ministry in Colombo and Galle in March 1924 is all the more remarkable when we understand that he was already exhausted when it began.

¹¹² 'Good News from Ceylon,' *Pentecostal Evangel* 552 (June 28, 1924), 11.

¹¹³ *Pentecostal Evangel* 548 (May 24, 1924), 10.

were dealt with for salvation during those four days, and many were healed.”¹¹⁴

Sister Frances de Alwis

Clifford later recalled that in the tarrying service he held in Colombo on this visit, “a young Singalese [sic] woman, a schoolteacher who had been healed of tuberculosis in the 1923 meetings, received the baptism in the Holy Spirit. She is now the leader of a Ceylonese Pentecostal work.”¹¹⁵ In another account (written in 1928) of the same event he says: “In 1924 we held an evangelistic campaign for three weeks.... We were only able to hold one tarrying meeting at that time, but in that meeting a Singhalese sister was baptized in the Holy Spirit and has been instrumental in winning her entire family to the Lord, three of whom are now active in gospel work among the Singhalese and Tamil people. Another sister in this family has a school for Pentecostal children...”¹¹⁶

The young Sinhalese woman referred to in these accounts was Frances de Alwis¹¹⁷, the fashionable young teacher he had met when she was healed four months previously. Aged about 28 in 1924, she belonged to a large family¹¹⁸ at Kalahe, Galle, who were

¹¹⁴ Walter H. Clifford, ‘Latter Rain in Ceylon,’ *The Pentecostal Evangel* 1356 (May 4, 1940), 6.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ W. H. Clifford, ‘The Work in Ceylon,’ *The Pentecostal Evangel* 745 (April 28, 1928), 11.

¹¹⁷ Frances Vivian de Alwis (c.1896-1981).

¹¹⁸ According to the recollection of Mrs. Nirmali Beling, a great-niece of Frances de Alwis, there were altogether 17 children in the family. The Methodist community roll of 1901 onwards lists 15 names; of these Mrs. Sylvia Weerasingha (b. 1922, mother of Rev. Tissa Weerasingha) could remember 13 including her mother Helen, the eldest (personal communication, 14th March 2014). These 13 siblings of the de Alwis family who survived childhood were Helen (Mrs. Weerackoon, b. c.1879), Lucy (Mrs. Ranasinghe, b. c.1880), Alice (Mrs. Wijesekera, b. c.1881), Enid (also Mrs. Wijesekera, b. c.1883), Samuel (b. c.1885), Harris (b. c.1887), Felix (b. c.1891), Clement (b. c.1893), Blanche (Mrs.

prominent members of the Methodist Church there.¹¹⁹ After being a founder member of the CPM she later became the leader of the Zion Pentecostal Mission, which she founded when she broke away from the CPM over disagreements concerning the status of women; hence, Clifford was able to refer to her in 1940 as “the leader of a Ceylonese Pentecostal work”.¹²⁰ Her younger sister Freda¹²¹ and youngest brother Alwin¹²² are the other two whom Clifford described in 1928 as “active in gospel work among the Singhalese and Tamil people.”¹²³

Jayasundera, b. c.1894), Frances (CPM sister, b. c.1896), Freda (CPM sister, b. 1897), Victorine (Mrs. Weerasinghe, b. c.1898) and Alwin (CPM Chief Pastor, b.1901). Mrs. Sylvia Weerasinghe further mentioned that the mother of this large family (Eliza Catherine de Alwis) was married twice, the second Mr. de Alwis being the brother of the first; also that she had a younger sister who married a third de Alwis brother and they were the parents of (among others) Stephanie (Mrs. Guruswamy, b.1914, at 100 years the oldest living member of the family).

¹¹⁹Michael Bergunder, *The South Indian Pentecostal Movement in the Twentieth Century*, in a summary of Pastor Alwin de Alwis’ life on p.256, repeats erroneous hearsay “it is said that he [Alwin] had been converted to Christianity from Buddhism. In any case, he probably belonged to the Baptist Mission in Ceylon before he became Pentecostal.” In fact the de Alwis family were staunch Methodists.

¹²⁰*Origins of the Pentecostal Mission in Sri Lanka*, p.27 mistakenly identifies the sister who was healed as Frances’ younger sister Freda, who was also a teacher trained at the English Teachers’ Training College at Maharagama and also became a founder member of the CPM, but never “the leader of a Ceylonese Pentecostal work,” since the CPM, to which she remained loyal until her death, did not allow women to hold leadership positions.

¹²¹Freda Beatrice de Alwis, b. 26 August 1897.

¹²²Alwin R. de Alwis (1901-1967).

¹²³One cannot fail to be impressed by Clifford’s constructive tone and generous spirit in the way he describes this family, who had by the time of writing broken away from him, taking others with them, to form an independent ministry.

Sister Frances recalled what took place in March 1924¹²⁴, at Ms Lewini's rented hall in Borella. When Pastor Clifford asked those who wished to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit to come forward for prayer, she was unprepared and she was asked to go home and read Romans 12:1 and return the following day. Through meditating on that verse she was convicted that she needed to forsake worldly things including her fashionable clothes and to offer herself as a living sacrifice. The following day, she attended the meeting with a transformed attitude and wearing plain white. The power of God fell on her "like a flash of lightning" and on the third day she spoke in other tongues.

Since Frances now faced ridicule at the YMCA hostel where she was staying, she moved in with Sister Lewini, who was at that time staying at "The Grange", a home in Slave Island. When the school term ended she went to her ancestral home at Kalahe in Galle and shared this experience during their family prayer time. The result was that Freda, Alwin, and their mother also received the Holy Spirit in that house. After some time, Frances felt led by the Lord to give up her teaching. After the death of their father, the sisters started a school and faith-home in a house at Magalle. Their brother Alwin, who was still teaching, used to come and preach there. Sister Lewini was also a regular visitor. Through Sister Lewini, Pastor Paul also visited there and wanted to send his children to the school. Later again, "Pastor Paul wanted to join the mission and 'live by faith' as Frances and others were doing."¹²⁵ It must have been at this point that there would have been a split in the Glad Tidings Hall, where Paul had hitherto been ministering alongside Sister Lewini and Pastor J S Wickramaratne.

¹²⁴ Mrs. Nirmali Beling (personal communication 14th March 2014) recounted this testimony as she heard it directly from Sis. Frances who was her great-aunt. Supplementary details are from the account as written by the late Mr. Sam Rajaratnam based on what he heard from his grandparents who were early CPM members.

¹²⁵ Account written by late Mr. Sam Rajaratnam. The content of this paragraph is condensed from this narrative.

Later still, Freda continued the school and faith-home at Magalle, while Frances, Alwin, and Paul moved to Colombo to begin a faith-home, first at Pamankade and subsequently at Borella.

In G P V Somaratna's initial research on this subject, based on recollections of older members of the CPM, the year 1923 is mentioned as the date of the founding of the Mission by Paul and Alwin.¹²⁶ However, this is too early given that the very first contact the de Alwis family had with Walter Clifford (Frances' healing) was on his initial brief mission tour in November 1923, and their first Pentecostal experience was in March 1924.¹²⁷

The CPM official biography of Pastor Paul (38-39, 75) gives a somewhat different version, namely that the first three "whom Pastor Paul received as fellow-workers when he began the gospel work in the city of Colombo" were Brothers Adam (who was healed of leprosy), Varghese (a father of two), and Matthew (a businessman who had been contemplating suicide and was given this name upon baptism). It was only thereafter, albeit "within a short time" that "Mrs. Alwin and her children i.e. Alwin, Francis and Freeda (who were later known as Pastor Alwin, Sis. Francis and Sis. Freeda) came forward for the gospel work and joined Pastor Paul". This is the only mention of the "Alwin" (i.e. de Alwis) family in the whole book, and the contempt shown towards them by the present TPM/CPM leadership is reflected in the fact that three of the four names are carelessly misspelled.

Organization of the Glad Tidings Hall

In April/May 1924, Minnie Houck, the American independent Pentecostal missionary residing in Nuwara Eliya, reported that:

...before Brother Clifford left [in April 1924], the first Pentecostal Assembly was formed in Colombo. Two

¹²⁶ *Origins of the Pentecostal Mission in Sri Lanka*, 30.

¹²⁷ Clifford is quite specific that 1923 was his first visit to Ceylon ('Good News from Ceylon', *Pentecostal Evangel*, 552 (June 28, 1924), 11).

brethren, both people of Ceylon, were set apart for the ministry.¹²⁸

These are significant words, since they record the formal beginning of the Colombo congregation of the Assemblies of God that was known as the Glad Tidings Hall and would later be known as the Colombo Gospel Tabernacle. Of the “two brethren” set apart for the ministry, one would have been J S Wickramaratne. The other may have been Brother Paul. If so, not only the 1923 date for the beginning of the CPM is definitively impossible, but also, the CPM account which says he remained in the employment of the Anglican CMS for about three years after receiving the Holy Spirit Baptism until stepping into a life lived by faith alone, must be interpreted to mean that his life lived by faith actually began in the ministry of the Glad Tidings Hall. (Another remote possibility is that the second brother was not Pastor Paul but J J B de Silva. However, if so, it is difficult to see why J J B de Silva is, even after this, always referred to as a “layman”).

Minnie Houck continued her report: “Though Mrs Lewini is still the missionary in charge, she is praying that someone may be led to take her place”.¹²⁹ Again, these brief words give important insight into the leadership roles at the time. Two Sri Lankan men had been set apart as pastors for the congregation (one Sinhalese, the other Malayali or possibly Burgher), while Sister Lewini as the pioneering missionary was still the acknowledged leader of the group (even without AG credentials!). She was praying for someone to take her place – not because she intended to leave the field (she in fact remained for at least twenty years more), but because she believed that a mature man was needed.

¹²⁸ ‘Good News from Ceylon’, *Pentecostal Evangel* 552 (June 28, 1924), 11.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*

Miss Houck herself was still in charge of an orphanage in Nuwara Eliya. She says: "I am...asking God to send me a consecrated person to take charge of my orphanage, then we can get about over the island to establish Pentecostal centers. Please join us in praying that the Pentecostal flame may spread over Ceylon and also be kindled up here in this hill station for I have been praying for the past ten years that it may break out here". On the other hand, work in the Colombo area was advancing; she writes: "We praise God for the earnest workers who are now carrying on the work in the suburbs of Colombo with great success and we are confidently looking forward to a great revival..."¹³⁰ Thus, in the summer of 1924, everything seemed positive.

Inauguration of the Jaffna ministry

This optimistic picture was augmented when in June 1924, Brother J J B De Silva commenced the Assemblies of God ministry in Jaffna¹³¹. Thus, the Jaffna AG Church owes its origin to a layman from the South. De Silva was ahead of his time in several ways. He was the first Sri Lankan to pioneer a Pentecostal Church (as opposed to doing evangelism alone); he was a lay person (an auditor by profession), who lived by his own resources, not a "full-time" minister or missionary; and most impressively, he ministered in what would have been his third language. Although he was from a family which self-identified as Burgher, he had acquired competence in both Sinhala and Tamil in the course of his government service in the Audit Office. Seeing the need in Jaffna, he began to evangelize there and upon retirement in 1927,¹³² devoted himself completely to the ministry there, using

¹³⁰ 'Good News from Ceylon,' *Pentecostal Evangel* 552 (June 28, 1924), 11.

¹³¹ *Pentecostal Evangel* 588 (March 14, 1925), 10.

¹³² In *Ferguson's Ceylon Directory for 1926* (Revised up to May 1926) p.610, under "Audit Office," J. J. B. De Silva is listed as the second in seniority among the 11 listed Principal Clerks (and numerous other unlisted Clerks), drawing an annual salary of Rs. 4,900 (a very considerable amount of course in those days). In the 1927 edition of the

his pension to support his family in Colombo. In the modern jargon, he was a tent-making cross-cultural church-planter. The present-day Jaffna Assembly of God with its dozens of daughter churches and branches all over the North is the direct continuation of Brother de Silva's pioneering work.

Todd and Ebenezer Return

In July or early August of the same year¹³³ Brother H N Todd and Brother Y T Ebenezer arrived for their second period of ministry in Ceylon. By May 1924, Brother Todd's ministry among the Anglo-Indians at Perambur, Madras, had continued for "over five years," and become well established, so that the Australian Pentecostal Band was now "free to accept a call to a needy field in Ceylon". The Editor of *Good News* appealed to readers in Australia to pray and support this new outreach which would require the "removal of four people [which] requires money" – the four people referred to being Brother Todd, Sister Todd, Brother Ebenezer, and possibly either the Todds' son or Ebenezer's mother.¹³⁴

However, their time in Ceylon was one of severe testing. On September 3rd, Brother Todd wrote that he and his wife were

same work (revised up to May 1927), p.156, under "Audit Office", his name is not listed. This indicates that he retired from Government employment between May 1926 and May 1927. If he retired at 55, this would place his date of birth as c.1872.

¹³³The July 1924 edition of *Good News* was published "on the eve of the removal of the Australian Pent. Band from Perambur to another hopeful field ..." <http://webjournals.alphacrucis.edu.au/journals/GN/gn-vol-15-no-7-july-1924/revival-anglo-india/> (accessed Sept. 5, 2010). But by August 13th Bro. Todd was already down with malaria in Ceylon - see <http://webjournals.alphacrucis.edu.au/journals/GN/gn-vol-15-no11-nov-1924/13-field-news-i/> (accessed Sept. 5, 2010).

¹³⁴'My Testimony, and God's Dealings with us—The Anglo-Indians of Perambur,' <http://webjournals.alphacrucis.edu.au/journals/GN/gn-vol-15-no-5-may-1924/my-testimony-and-gods-dealings-with-us8212the-angl/> (accessed Sept. 5, 2010).

both “living skeletons” after weeks of malarial fever. A few days later, Brother Ebenezer added: “We are chastened, but not killed. Though He slay us, yet we will trust in Him. Our confidence is in Him Who is able to deliver us from death”. He mentions also “a dear young man here [who] is earnestly longing for the Holy Spirit.”¹³⁵ (Could this possibly be a reference to Alwin de Alwis?) It is uncertain for how long the team remained in Ceylon.¹³⁶ The next available reference finds them back in South India in November 1925,¹³⁷ but they likely returned very much before that.

Given that Pastor Paul’s conversion to Pentecostal experience is attributed to the ministry of these two brothers (on their earlier visit c.1921), it is almost certain that he and any associates would have been associated with them during this their second sojourn in the island. The refusal of the Australian/Indian Pentecostal team to resort to medicine even in extreme circumstances would have also influenced Pastor Paul’s convictions on the subject. The question is, had Pastor Paul and the fledgling CPM group already separated itself from the Glad Tidings Hall at this stage or not?

In this regard, there is one more piece of relevant evidence, albeit from three years later. In September 1927, the same year in which H N Todd was a convention speaker (in April) at the Good News Hall in Melbourne, now renamed the ‘Apostolic Faith Mission of Australasia,’ the announcements page of the same Mission advertises the ministry of Mrs A E Lewini in Ceylon and that of H N Todd in Madras side by side.¹³⁸ Moreover, we know that Smith

¹³⁵ *Good News*, November 1924. <http://webjournals.alphacrucis.edu.au/journals/GN/gn-vol-15-no11-nov-1924/13-field-news-i/> (accessed Sept. 5, 2010).

¹³⁶ Unfortunately editions of *Good News* for the year 1925, which would settle this question, are not available online.

¹³⁷ <http://webjournals.alphacrucis.edu.au/journals/GN/gn-vol-17-no-2-feb-1926/what-god-hath-wrought-in-south-africa-also-india-i/> (accessed Sept. 5, 2010).

¹³⁸ The relevant portion of the notice (listing all places of worship and service times of the mission), reads,

Wigglesworth, with whose ministry Anna Lewini had been closely associated for three months in 1921, went to Australia (via Colombo) to minister at the very same church in Melbourne in early 1922. Thus it is very probable that H N Todd and Anna Lewini were well known to each other and that the circles of believers and contacts they ministered to in Colombo overlapped considerably.¹³⁹ In that case, the decision of Pastor Paul to set out independently with Alwin would likely have taken effect late in 1924, after the departure of Brothers Todd and Ebenezer.

The picture that thus emerges of this early period is of a Spirit-led cooperative network of ministries with input from Scandinavia, Britain, Australia, India, and America. It must also be borne in

FORIEGN MISSIONS [sic]:-- CEYLON. For times of meetings, apply to Mrs. A. E. Lewini—Missionary, "Glen Ville," Campbell Place, Maradana, who will welcome any passing that way. * * * INDIA. Brother H. N. Todd, Ballard Street, Perambur, Madras, S. India. * * * (*Good News*, September 1927, at <http://webjournals.alphacrucis.edu.au/journals/GN/gn-vol18-no9-sep-1927/12-a-vision-of-flying-dovesnotices-of-the-apostoli/> (accessed Aug. 29, 2010). The identical notice is carried in the editions of *Good News* up to November 1927, after which the details pertaining to Mrs. Lewini alone are carried in December 1927 and up to March 1928. (e.g. at <http://webjournals.alphacrucis.edu.au/journals/GN/gn-vol18-no12-dec-1927/11-notices-of-the-apostolic-faith-mission-of-austr/> accessed Aug. 29, 2010).

¹³⁹ The exact nature of the relationship between Anna Lewini and the Good News Hall, Melbourne is unknown, although it would be fascinating to discover. By this time the latter had moved into doctrinal orthodoxy, abandoning the heterodox teachings which characterized early editions of its publication the *Good News*. (Mrs. Lancaster's original non-Trinitarian position had been not the "Sabellianism" of the Oneness Pentecostals, but a kind of "Subordinationism" by which she saw God the Father and the Holy Spirit as One, but the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God, but not God the Son). The name of H. N. Todd's Assembly in Madras was the "Glorious News Hall" – an Indian variation on "Good News Hall" the name of the mother church in Melbourne. The name "Glad Tidings Hall," given presumably by Anna Lewini herself to the Assembly she pioneered in Colombo, perhaps also bears a family resemblance.

mind that at this early stage, the total number of Pentecostal missionaries in the world was a very finite set. Therefore, doctrinal details and denominational affiliations still took a back seat to the more pressing realities of the outpouring of the Spirit and the urgent need for world evangelism. It is, therefore, all the more regrettable that the subsequent division of the Pentecostal congregation in Colombo into two ideologically different organizations became so entrenched.

The Naming of the CPM

A delightful anecdote attaches itself to the name Ceylon Pentecostal Mission. Mrs Nirmali Beling¹⁴⁰ recounts how she once directly asked her Great Aunt Fanty (i.e. Sister Frances de Alwis) why she named her church the Ceylon Pentecostal Mission when it ought to have been Assembly of God. Sister Frances replied that indeed at Magalle they did once have an Assembly of God nameboard, but it was stolen in the night, and they therefore decided that that name was not God's will and set up the Ceylon Pentecostal Mission board instead. The tradition recorded by the late Mr Sam Rajaratnam¹⁴¹ offers an elaborated version of this incident, saying that the original name Ceylon Pentecostal Mission was suggested by Mme Lewini. However, Pastor Clifford regarded Sister Frances as his convert and therefore wanted her to use the name Assembly of God, so to please him they exchanged the CPM board for an AG one. However, because the new board was removed by thieves, they decided that it was not God's will and the CPM board was restored.

This curious story illustrates the close relationship, yet with their different opinions, which existed between the main players in the early years of the Pentecostal movement. It also suggests how even though the relationships were cordial, the Sri Lankan

¹⁴⁰ Mrs. Nirmali Beling is a granddaughter of Frances de Alwis' elder sister Mrs. Lucy Ranasinghe.

¹⁴¹ As related by his grandparents Mr. and Mrs. Nagalingam. Personal communication from Mr. Raju Niles.

believers may still have felt a certain pressure of competing loyalties between different missionaries. The role of Pastor Clifford in this exchange of ideas may well have taken place by correspondence, as he was out of the island between April 1924 and September 1925.

Herbert and Lillie Maltby

On Christmas Eve 1924, Mrs Lillie Doll Maltby¹⁴² and her husband Herbert Sanford Maltby¹⁴³, a middle-aged American couple¹⁴⁴ who had been serving as Assemblies of God missionaries in Basti, North India, arrived in Ceylon. Appointed by the AG headquarters in Springfield, Missouri, their task was to continue the work begun by Clifford nine months previously. They were not the first missionaries who would be called upon to step in where Brother Clifford had left off, which (as they were to discover) was no easy task.¹⁴⁵ However, Mrs Maltby in particular was a well-seasoned worker and not averse to challenges.¹⁴⁶

Lillie or Lillian E Doll, who was from Jersey City, New Jersey, had been one of the party of seven Spirit-baptized single women (of

¹⁴² Lillie Estella Doll (1868-c.1948), born at Quakertown, Pennsylvania.

¹⁴³ Herbert Sanford Maltby (1864-1937), born at Placerville, California, died at Coonoor, Nilgiris, South India.

¹⁴⁴ Herbert and Lillie were aged 60 and 56 respectively when they boarded the “Hobson’s Bay” at London, bound for Colombo (record via www.ancestry.com).

¹⁴⁵ Spencer May in 1927, Walter Foster in 1930-31, Carl Graves in 1931-34 and others all faced the challenge of trying to conserve the fruits left by this charismatic pioneer when he was absent from the island.

¹⁴⁶ For example, Miss Blanche Cunningham, Lillie Doll’s co-worker at Basti (prior to her marriage), wrote, “After a time permission was received from the C.M.S. at Gorakhpur to occupy the deserted C. M.S. mission houses. Miss Doll moved in at once, even before it was fit to live in, and slept on the floor with the rats and moles crawling around ...” *Latter Rain Evangel* 4.2 (November 1911), 18.

which Minnie Houck was another) led by the veteran missionary Minnie Abrams who arrived in Bombay from the USA on December 2, 1910.¹⁴⁷ Brother Herbert S Maltby and Miss Lillie E Doll were married at Basti, UP, India on March 17, 1921 and continued to minister in that area.¹⁴⁸

Upon arrival in Colombo, the Maltbys were met by Brother J J B De Silva, who almost immediately took them along to Jaffna to minister at the first convention he had arranged there commencing December 27. About 100 persons were present each day, 12 were baptized in water, and 12 definitely received the Holy Spirit baptism.¹⁴⁹

Upon returning to Colombo in January 1925, the Maltbys proceeded to take charge of the congregation (“Glad Tidings Hall”) that was set up by Walter Clifford in the first quarter of 1924. Mrs Maltby reported that “the Lord has given us a Spirit-baptized preacher as our worker. He is an ordained minister, formerly under the Baptist Church.”¹⁵⁰ This evidently refers to Rev P I Jacob; it cannot refer to J S Wickramaratne or J J B de Silva, both of whom had been only lay preachers in the Baptist Church.¹⁵¹ We can take note that Mrs Maltby makes no reference

¹⁴⁷ See the *Latter Rain Evangel*, October 1910, 11; *The Pentecost*, November 1910, 14; Stanley M. Burgess and Gary B. McGee, *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, 7, and Gary B. McGee, ‘Baptism of the Holy Ghost and Fire! The Revival Legacy of Minnie F. Abrams,’ at http://enrichmentjournal.ag.org/199803/080_baptism_fire.cfm (accessed Aug. 14, 2010). Some account of her ministry with Miss Abrams at Uska Bazar and Basti in 1911 is given in ‘Prayer Answered in North India,’ *Latter Rain Evangel* 4.1 (October 1911), 9-10.

¹⁴⁸ *Pentecostal Evangel* 396-397 (June 11, 1921), 12.

¹⁴⁹ ‘Work Opens in Ceylon,’ *Pentecostal Evangel* 588 (March 14 1925), 10.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ J. S. Wickramaratne was finally ordained in 1947 together with R. N. Asirwatham and Eric Nathanielsz, subsequent to their election

in her report to the two men set apart for the ministry as reported by Miss Houck nine months previously. Evidently something had happened. She comments obliquely that “circumstances beyond our control are hindering us from laboring in Basti District, India at present as we had expected to do”.

In the May 1925 edition of the *Latter Rain Evangel*, in addition to a repeat account of the Jaffna Convention, a remarkable statement of Mrs Maltby is recorded: “The Missionary in charge of the work in Colombo has asked us to take charge of the work as she is leaving. This we have done. It is a large and responsible work and we need your earnest prayers...”¹⁵² In fact Sister Lewini left the island in February 1925¹⁵³, and spent time in Sweden but returned in October the same year¹⁵⁴ after the arrival of the Cliffords. We know that she had already been praying for several months for the right successor, but her decision to leave at this critical stage seems surprising. Could it be that she was discouraged over some developments that had occurred?

A Great Sifting

After a few weeks of ministry at Colombo, Mrs Maltby reported again more candidly:

The Ceylonese Pentecostal work has undergone a great sifting time and was in a very unsettled state when we took

to serve on the first elected Executive Committee of the Assemblies of God of Ceylon in August of that year. J. J. B. de Silva was never ordained, having passed away probably in the previous year.

¹⁵² *Latter Rain Evangel*, May 1925, 17 (my italics).

¹⁵³ She arrived in Southampton, UK on 14th March 1925 having travelled 3rd class on the Australian ship “Hobson’s Bay” from Colombo. (*UK Incoming Passenger Lists 1878-1960*, from www.ancestry.com).

¹⁵⁴ She boarded the Australia-bound “Moreton Bay” from the port of London on 6th October 1925, having contracted to land at Colombo. She gave her last address as in Norrkoping, Sweden. (*UK Outward Passenger Lists 1890-1960*, from www.ancestry.com).

up the work in Glad Tidings Hall a few weeks ago. Last Sunday a break came..."¹⁵⁵

Her choice of the word "sifting" suggests both a testing or shaking (Luke 22:31) and a separation. Most probably this "great sifting" (and even perhaps the more veiled "circumstances beyond our control" of her previous letter) refers to the separation of the group (led by Pastor Paul and the de Alwis family of Galle) who began the CPM. This means that the split between the CPM and the AG Glad Tidings Hall took place in the latter part of 1924.

Various reasons have been mentioned for the separation. One is Alwin's vision of a truly indigenous ministry (inspired by Sadhu Sundar Singh), which was in conflict with submission to a foreign organization and leadership (epitomized by the Assemblies of God). Another was Paul's insistence on the ascetic life including denial of conjugal relations, a position which was rejected as unscriptural both by J S Wickramaratne (who nevertheless continued to be Paul's friend)¹⁵⁶ and Walter Clifford. An emphasis on the new birth, the baptism of the Holy Spirit, the soon coming of Christ, and divine healing were shared by both groups, but the de Alwis siblings and Paul interpreted the faith life in a more radical way, insisting on dependence on God alone to supply not merely spiritual salvation and physical healing but all their material needs too. The biography of Pastor Paul alludes to Mme Lewini in this context in the following passage:

When Pastor Paul was doing the gospel work being steadfast in faith life, a missionary named Miss Livini [sic] met him. That lady had come to know that Pastor Paul was living a faith life having given up the ministry in the CMS church. Therefore, she rendered a small financial help to Pastor. Two months later she informed pastor saying she

¹⁵⁵ *Pentecostal Evangel* 595 (May 2, 1925), 10.

¹⁵⁶ Rev. Colton Wickramaratne recalls vividly a car being sent regularly by Pastor Paul to pick up the Wickramaratne family to bring them to the CPM at Borella. This would have been in the 1930's.

was prepared to help him financially, if he joined her in gospel work. However, he did not accept it. He had realized that it was against the norms of faith life to receive regular financial aid from someone to do the ministry of God.¹⁵⁷

This alleged incident must have occurred in 1924, since the same biography states that he continued in the employment of the CMS for three years after being baptized in the Spirit in 1921.¹⁵⁸ The reality was that Paul did join with Sister Lewini (and J S Wickramaratne) for some time, as evidenced both by the iconic photograph of the Glad Tidings Hall congregation which still survives, and the testimony of early members of the Pentecostal Mission.¹⁵⁹ However, a scenario in which Pastor Wickramaratne accepted an allowance to provide for his family¹⁶⁰ whilst Pastor Paul felt that it was worldly or indicative of a lack of faith to do so, is a plausible reason for their decision to part as far as the ministry was concerned.¹⁶¹ This is particularly persuasive given that the separation took place at a time (1924) when Sister Lewini was leading the church and no Assemblies of God missionaries were present.

¹⁵⁷ *Biography*, Chapter 6, p.45.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.* pp.27-28.

¹⁵⁹ The narrative of the late Mr. Sam Rajaratnam based on the recollections of his grandparents Mr. and Mrs. Nagalingam states, "Miss Levini [sic] visited Galle and Magalle frequently while Frances [de Alwis] was in Magalle. Pastor Paul a catechist from C. M. S. Thimbirigasyaya who was working for Miss Levini visited Magalle and wanted to send his four children to the school ... "

¹⁶⁰ In 1924 Pastor Wickramaratne and his wife Lillian already had two small sons (Andrew and Calvin).

¹⁶¹ Rev. Gerald Senn (personal communication, 12th April 2014) said he had heard from his parents, who were committed members of the CPM during the time of Pastor Paul, that it was over the issue of the handling of money that Pas. Paul had separated from Pas. Wickramaratne, although he was aware that this was not the story that most people told.

The Maltbys continued for a few months at the Glad Tidings Hall in Colombo before moving to Kandy in June 1925 to restart the AG work there, which had been commenced by the Griers in 1913-15.¹⁶²

Walter Clifford Petitioned to Return

At some point during his stay in Britain in 1924-5, Walter Clifford received a definite invitation to return to Ceylon on a longterm basis. It should be remembered that until this time he was appointed by the AG to serve at Mankapur in North India. In a personal communication written years later, he says that “while on furlough we received a petition signed by about 25 people asking us to come to Ceylon and open an Assembly of God work in Colombo. After much prayer and consulting with the brethren we decided to go to Ceylon.”¹⁶³ It is not clear whether the focus of the petitioners was on Brother Clifford personally (as distinct from any other missionary known or unknown), or on the Assemblies of God (as distinct from any other fellowship or organization or even the absence of any), or in fact both.

Clifford Appointed to Ceylon

On September 19, 1925, Walter Clifford with his wife Gertrude (née Eveleigh)¹⁶⁴ and their three children arrived back in

¹⁶² *Pentecostal Evangel* 625 (December 5, 1925), 18, and 627 (December 19, 1925), 11.

¹⁶³ Letter dated August 16th, 1950 from Walter and Viola Clifford at “Anathoth”, Route 2, Red Wing, Minnesota, addressed to Mrs. George Carmichael of 234, W. Pacific Street, Springfield 1, Missouri.

¹⁶⁴ The identity and background of Walter Clifford’s first wife Gertrude has been missed by all previous writings on this subject. Her maiden name was Eveleigh; this is established from the obituary notice of Walter and Gertrude Clifford’s daughter Ruby Jean Schafer who passed away in 2007. http://www.kramerfuneralhome.com/sitemaker/sites/Kramer1/obit.cgi?user=800_RHervevSchafer178, accessed Aug. 14, 2010).

We also know that Gertrude was two years older than Walter Clifford. This is evident from the couple’s Applications for Ordination

Colombo, now with an AG missionary appointment to Ceylon. He was taken to the Glad Tidings Hall at Borella, where he received the gift of prophecy. Recalling this day twelve years later, Clifford wrote: "In the afternoon of that day some twenty people met us at the rented meeting hall at Borella for a time of fellowship and rejoicing. Of that number some are now in the glory, some are still with us and a few of them never joined us."¹⁶⁵ The last phrase is interesting and reflects the fact that a number of those who turned out to welcome Clifford back and acknowledged him as their spiritual father nevertheless declined to join the Assemblies of God. Since September 19, 1925 was a Saturday, the twenty persons who gathered for a perhaps impromptu meeting may not fairly reflect the strength of the entire congregation.

Smith Wigglesworth's Visit

In March 1926, Clifford's ministry was further strengthened when he was able to host the notable Pentecostal healing evangelist

Certificate with the Assemblies of God in late 1919, in which she gives her age as 34 whereas Walter gives his as 32. This information is sufficient to identify her as Gertrude Eveleigh, born 1885 at Ottery St Mary, a large village on the River Otter, in the eastern part of the county of Devon, in southwest England. The town of Honiton is further up the river to the northeast. Her parents were Richard Eveleigh (born 1848 at Talaton, Devon) and his wife Elizabeth Sarah J. Isaac (born 1851 at Feniton, Devon), whom he married in 1871 at Honiton. Details of all of Gertrude's 4 grandparents and 8 great-grandparents are also given on this page, with details of her lineage in the Eveleigh line traced back 10 generations to one Michael Eveleigh, born in Devon in 1585. http://www.familysearch.org/eng/search/PRF/pedigree_view.asp?recid=1433168232&familyid=1431144556&frompage=99 (accessed Aug. 14, 2010).

A comparison with the entries for the family in the 1881 and 1891 census enumerations reveals that Gertrude Eveleigh, later Mrs. Walter Clifford, was born the seventh of nine children in her family; her father Richard Eveleigh's occupation was described in 1881 as "Assistant to General Merchant" and her mother Elizabeth was a "Dressmaker."

¹⁶⁵ Walter H. Clifford, "What God Hath Done!" *Pentecostal Evangel* 1230 (December 4, 1937), 9.

Smith Wigglesworth who stopped in Ceylon on the way to Australia and conducted healing rallies for two weeks.¹⁶⁶ (Four years previously In early 1922 Wigglesworth had passed through Colombo en route to Australia, but there is no specific record of him conducting any meetings at that time.)¹⁶⁷

Ministry in Matara

Clifford's ministry grew rapidly. It was by no means confined to Colombo; he travelled widely, conducting Pentecostal rallies with their emphasis on salvation, divine healing, baptism in the Spirit, and the Second Coming of Christ. In the middle of 1926, Clifford together with Spencer May¹⁶⁸, a fellow British missionary who had arrived during the Wigglesworth meetings and stayed on to assist the work for a few months, conducted one such five-day mission in Matara, at which they were able to minister to a cross-section of society including a good number of professionals. The

¹⁶⁶ *Pentecostal Evangel* 648 (May 22, 1926), also 649 (May 29, 1926).

¹⁶⁷ Smith Wigglesworth arrived at Melbourne, Australia on February 16, 1922 (as reported in *Confidence*, April-June 1922, 11), and started meetings the same day at the Good News Hall; after three months of ministry in Australia he moved on to New Zealand for meetings in May-June (see <http://www.smithwigglesworth.com/life/australianz1922.htm>, accessed Aug. 9, 2010); from there he crossed the Pacific from Wellington and arrived in San Francisco on July 31 1922, to begin a period of ministry in the USA (this date being confirmed from official immigration records via the ancestry.co.uk website). Therefore his stopover in Ceylon must have occurred on the way to Australia in January or early February 1922.

¹⁶⁸ Rev. Spencer Edward May (1901-1956) was a Welsh-speaker from the coal-mining community of Ystradyfodwg (Rhondda), Glamorganshire, who had first arrived in Travancore (now Kerala) in 1923 and ministered alongside pioneer AG missionaries Mary W. Chapman and Robert F. Cook. He and his wife Daisy Maud (née Scott) joined the British Assemblies of God and served two terms of service in India (including time in Sri Lanka) from 1923 to 1928 and 1931 to 1946. Later he was involved in Bible College ministry at Bristol in England and finally in New Zealand where he passed away, aged 55.

conclusion of this outstanding event was described in Clifford's own words,

At the close of the last meeting, we had a consecration service; about 60 came up to the altar to consecrate their lives and their bodies as a living sacrifice unto the Lord. Truly it was a wonderful time. A letter since received from there says, about 100 were saved, that the voice of praise and prayer is being heard all over the city, and that they are begging us to come again.¹⁶⁹

As much as the work was growing and flourishing, Clifford also had a tendency to overstretch himself. His friend May could foresee the dangers of this and the need for co-workers:

The work is on the increase and dear Brother Clifford has really more than he can cope with alone. He surely does need some Spirit-filled helper. May the Lord send him one after His own heart.¹⁷⁰

The Maltbys in Kandy

The work in Kandy also prospered. The Maltbys were based at No. 22A, Halloluwa Road.¹⁷¹ In about November 1926, Mrs Maltby was able to write from there: "We have just closed a blessed convention, with Rev Egbert and Dr Andrews of Madras with us. A special awakening with souls saved and others seeking the Baptism in the Holy Spirit is the result. Five were immersed."¹⁷² A few days later she writes again (presumably still referring to the work in Kandy): "At the present time we have six earnest, Spirit-filled workers, two women and four men, who represent different nationalities and languages and are blessed in their ministry. With the last move we made Sept. 1, we have far better accommodations for the work and are within reach of both

¹⁶⁹ *Pentecostal Evangel* 661 (21 August, 1926), 11.

¹⁷⁰ *Pentecostal Evangel* 663 (September 4, 1926), 11.

¹⁷¹ Herbert S. Maltby, Application for Extension of Passport dated September 11, 1925 (via www.ancestry.com).

¹⁷² *Pentecostal Evangel* 681 (January 22, 1927), 10.

town and outside district work. We also have a prayer room where any of the workers or those from the town who desire can spend an hour in prayer for the requests which are listed. ... The morning Bible Study classes continue with unabated interest. Almost all the students are our own workers.”¹⁷³

The Valley of the Shadow of Death

Clifford continued to stretch himself. A few months into 1927 his world fell apart. On May 19, after a brief illness his wife Gertrude died, aged 41. She was buried the following day at the hill station of Yercaud in Salem District, South India.¹⁷⁴ Just a month later (June 23), she was followed in death by their eldest surviving daughter, Queenie, aged 8. Clifford suddenly found himself alone with three small children aged 5, 3 and 1.¹⁷⁵ Grieving and also physically seriously ill, unable even to lift pen to paper, he took a break at Landour¹⁷⁶ in North India. It was there that he met Viola May Nourse, an American missionary whom he married on November 1st at Pasrur in Punjab (now in Pakistan), where she had been serving as a missionary nurse in the United Presbyterian Church.¹⁷⁷ In the period of absence and incapacitation of Brother

¹⁷³ *Pentecostal Evangel* 682 (January 29, 1927), 10.

¹⁷⁴ *India, Select Deaths and Burials, 1719-1948* at www.ancestry.com. This is despite the impression given in *Pentecostal Evangel* 707 (July 23, 1927), p.10 that she died in Colombo.

¹⁷⁵ The children of Walter Clifford by his first wife Gertrude née Eveleigh were, (1) Violet (died in infancy, 12.10.1917); (2) Queenie (died 23.06.1927, aged 8 years); (3) Walter Paul (born 12.06.1921, died 16.10.1945 in Italy while serving in the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve); (4) Ruby Jean (born 03.02.1924 at Mankapur, U.P., India; married Hervey Schafer of Sherburn, Minnesota; died 25.12.2007); and (5) John Vernon (born 09.02.1926 at Colombo; married Janet Rosemarie; living in Australia).

¹⁷⁶ Landour, Mussoorie in U.P. (now in Uttarakhand State) was a popular “hill station” for expatriates and Anglo-Indians.

¹⁷⁷ They met at Landour but married at Pasrur in Punjab (now in Pakistan), where Viola had been serving as a missionary nurse in the United Presbyterian Church.

Clifford, his ministry in Colombo was covered by his Welsh friend Brother Spencer May.¹⁷⁸ Yet, in the words of 2 Corinthians 4:9, Clifford was “struck down but not destroyed”. By the time 1928 dawned, he was able to bounce back into ministry with renewed vigour with his new American wife, and a new chapter in the AG history in Sri Lanka could begin.

The Kandy Ministry Handed Over to Indigenous Leadership

At the end of 1927, the Maltbys withdrew from Kandy, entrusting the work to the leaders they had trained, and moved on to Bangalore to start a new work there.¹⁷⁹ Now aged 63 and 59, Herbert and Lillie were unfazed by the idea of handing over their hard work to those whom they had discipled and embarking on another church planting project. The move was quite deliberate and reflects their belief in the priority of training indigenous leaders. Even in the middle of 1926, Lillie Maltby was writing concerning their training classes for leaders at Kandy: “The aim in our work is to lead all work to become self-supporting”.¹⁸⁰ Unfortunately records have not survived to give us an idea of the health of the Kandy ministry in the period following their departure. However, their daring move contrasts with the methods of a later generation of American missionaries who tended to hold on to the key churches until pushed by circumstances.¹⁸¹

Mme Lewini Withdraws from Prominence

Anna Lewini continued to minister in Colombo, but apparently on somewhat independent lines. After leaving the island early in 1925 (leaving the Glad Tidings Hall in the hands of Herbert and Lillie

¹⁷⁸*Pentecostal Evangel* 707 (July 23, 1927), 3, 10.

¹⁷⁹*Christ's Ambassadors Monthly*, February 1929, 11, 14.

¹⁸⁰*Pentecostal Evangel* 655 (July 10, 1926), 18.

¹⁸¹ It is said that as late as 1955 when Pastor Colton Wickramaratne succeeded missionary Rev. William Farrand as the pastor of the Assembly of God Kandy, he was the first national pastor successfully to make this transition!

Maltby), she had returned in the latter part of the same year after Walter and Gertrude Clifford's arrival, and remained until June 1928. She was to return to the island for another sojourn from August 1930 to February 1935, and again from October 1937 until she finally retired to Denmark in about 1949.¹⁸² For the final decade or more, she was to live a life of prayer at the village of Makevita.

In December 1927, a notice of the Apostolic Faith Mission of Australasia (organized in that year, with headquarters in North Melbourne, Australia), advertised the addresses and service times of its branches throughout Australia, and then lastly, under the heading "FOREIGN MISSIONS," listed: "CEYLON. For times of meetings, apply to Mrs A E Lewini – Missionary, "Glen Ville," Campbell Place, Maradana, who will welcome any passing that way".¹⁸³ Apart from telling us Sister Lewini's location – still in the Borella area¹⁸⁴ – this notice shows us that while cooperating with the AG work, she also maintained other contacts of her own.

¹⁸² The dates except that of her final return are taken from passenger lists accessed via www.ancestry.com.

¹⁸³ <http://webjournals.alphacrucis.edu.au/journals/GN/gn-vol18-no12-dec-1927/11-notices-of-the-apostolic-faith-mission-of-austr/> (accessed Aug. 29, 2010). To advertise Sis. Lewini's Colombo address on a notice distributed in Australia was not as strange as it might seem today; ever since the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 until the advent of international passenger flights, Colombo was a familiar stopover for passengers between Australia and Europe and vice-versa.

¹⁸⁴ Campbell Place (originally Jail Road, now Ananda Rajakaruna Mawatha), connects the Maradana Road at Punchi Borella Junction to the Baseline Road at the Welikada Prison, running past the Campbell Park and All Saints' (Roman Catholic) Church, Borella. Thus although the address, then as now, is officially in Maradana (Colombo 10), it is centrally located between Borella, Dematagoda and Maradana, close to the original location of the Glad Tidings Hall.

An Assessment of Clifford's Ministry

As Rev Walter Clifford as perhaps the main personality in the Sri Lankan AG history of this period, it is appropriate to comment on his ministry in context of what preceded and followed it.

It is not difficult to discern a difference between the first and second generations of Western Pentecostal missionaries. The first generation was characterized by reckless faith, a passionate belief in the supernatural leading and enablement of the Spirit, and a concern for the urgency of world evangelization in view of the imminent coming of Christ. With little or no preparation financially or culturally and no formal theological education, they left all and travelled the world in faith, usually with no arrangements regarding their return journey. Some crashed while others thrived.

The second generation, from the late 1920s onwards, was required to undergo Bible School training, to be accountable to a leadership, to have a budget and to be generally systematized and organized. These innovations were done in good faith and in reaction to embarrassing mistakes, excesses, and casualties, which had sometimes occurred in the past.

The Griers who ministered in the island in 1913-17 clearly belonged to the first generation, as did the Garrs whom preceded them in 1907; the Graveses who were to follow Clifford belonged clearly to the second. The ministry of Walter Clifford spanned both generations; however, his spiritual mentoring and preparation for ministry was entirely in India under the early ministers who were typical of the first generation. Having no Bible School background, no home church or district, indeed having never so much as stepped foot in North America until 1931 (the year of the Graveses' arrival in Ceylon), Clifford was clearly different. In ministry he was a pioneer, a healing evangelist who proclaimed Christ with signs following. His ministry was established and recognized solely on the basis of his fruits. He had no theological certificates, but such was the power of his preaching and prayer that he was dubbed the "Colombo Conversion Company". He drove himself to the limit and likely

expected others to do the same. Wherever he went there were healings and conversions.

Clifford made disciples and expected to leave them in charge and move on. This was the method of the Apostle Paul. Later in life, he recalled with a sense of achievement that he had had the honour of serving as the first Superintendent of the Assemblies of God of Ceylon (in 1946-47), and that in the following year all the office-bearers were nationals.¹⁸⁵

Like the Apostle Paul, Clifford was also possessive in a parental sort of way of his converts. He regarded Frances de Alwis in this way, which is why he wanted her to put an "Assembly of God" board outside her prayer centre in Galle. His possessiveness of the believers adversely affected his relationship with Brother Spencer May, the Welsh missionary who stood by his side and looked after the Glad Tidings Hall congregation when Clifford was incapacitated by illness and grief at the loss of both his wife and eldest daughter in the space of a few weeks in 1927.¹⁸⁶ Likewise Clifford blamed Ram Paul for taking people away from Glad Tidings Hall to the CPM.

¹⁸⁵ He however discreetly refrained from mentioning what to him would have been a great disappointment, namely that this committee in which all the office-bearers were nationals, including the first Sri Lankan Superintendent Richard Nalliah Asirwatham, lasted for only one year (1947-48), whereafter he was recalled to America and the AG Ceylon reverted to missionary leadership for another 9 years under the Reverends Cawston, Graves and Farrand.

¹⁸⁶ When Walter Foster, who pastored the Glad Tidings Hall in 1930-31 in the absence of Walter Clifford (who had had to leave the island suddenly to save the life of his second wife Viola), was himself physically and mentally exhausted, Spencer May stepped in once again to fill the gap. However based on Clifford's disapproval of this arrangement, May's offer was refused by the Committee of the South India and Ceylon District of the AG. May in turn was stung by the refusal of his offer and wrote, "Let me clearly state that if your Committee fears we desire to creep in and hold Mr. Clifford's work, their fears can be

CONCLUSION

In this second decade of Pentecostal ministry in Sri Lanka, we can see several attractive personalities whose combined faith and influence were instrumental in the Pentecostal faith being decisively established in the land. Although no church buildings were made during this period,¹⁸⁷ we can see tremendous progress in faith and ministry. The spiritual passion which characterized the period puts the present day church to shame. The determination to empower disciples and release them into ministry is another lesson that many present-day leadership-hungry ministers could learn from. The example of J J B de Silva who, already past middle-age, planted a church in his third language while earning his own living, is an example of creative ministry that is impressive even in today's missiologically-aware generation. On the negative side, the separation of the AG and CPM, both of which claim to be filled by the same Holy Spirit, which remains entrenched to this day, is a matter of deep regret. Undoubtedly, this first rift set the precedent for numerous other more trivial splits which have happened over the years.

quite dispelled, for we would not consider it for one minute ... *We do not desire to have any conflict with any of the old matters*" (my italics). (Quoted from a letter dated June 13, 1931 written by Spencer May to Rev. Thomas Stoddard, the District Superintendent of South India and Ceylon, preserved in the archives of the British Assemblies of God; <http://digitallibrary.usc.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/p15799col114/id/37458/rec/20>, accessed May 10, 2014).

¹⁸⁷ The first AG church building in Sri Lanka was the Berean Gospel Tabernacle at Cripps Road, Galle, built in 1935 within a year of the arrival there of Rev. Carl F. Graves.

**ECUMENICAL EXPERIMENT IN TEACHER TRAINING:
THE STORY OF PERADENIYA TEACHER TRAINING COLONY
(1916-1962)**

G P V SOMARATNA

INTRODUCTION

The founding of the Teacher Training College¹ at Peradeniya (PTC) in 1916 by the Anglican and Methodist Churches was a remarkable achievement with regard to inter-church co-operation in Sri Lanka. It worked across denominational barriers, taking candidates from other Protestant Churches as well. A good number of school teachers and evangelists who received training at the Peradeniya Training College (PTC) became the main source of Sinhala teachers for the schools and catechists for the Protestant church in the Sinhala districts.

In the first place, the PTC was an ecumenical body. The Church Missionary Society (CMS) and the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society (WMMS) in Sri Lanka federated as regards the governing of this institution which was in the hands of a special Council selected by them. The CMS had the preponderating

¹ This institution is referred to as Peradeniya Training College, Peradeniya Training Colony, Ceylon Training College and Teacher Training College at Peradeniya. It is located at Penideniya village. But it is known as Peradeniya Training College because of its postal address at Peradeniya.

interest on the basis of larger capital invested, but there was nothing in the constitution which gave special rights or privileges to either society. In this ecumenical set up they could worship together, while maintaining their own liturgical traditions. Unity and fellowship were marked features of the Training College during the period of its existence.²

This ecumenical teacher training Institution, often known as Peradeniya Teacher Training Colony, derived its name from the region, 8km outside Kandy. The institution which was sponsored and supported by the Anglican and Methodist Churches lasted from 1916 until nationalisation in 1962. The Institution was situated on Penideniya Hill, overlooking Peradeniya railway station. It was inaugurated on September 14, 1916, by the CMS mission, mostly as an Anglican institution, as others who were invited did not join at the initial stages.

Eventually, it worked in close collaboration with Protestant Churches, particularly the Anglican and Methodist denominations. Its aims and objectives were distinctively ecumenical. Baptists and Salvationists also could avail themselves of the use of the facilities of the institution for training their teachers. Baptists and Salvationists did not run as many schools as the Anglicans and Methodists. Therefore, they could not offer their full participation to the Colony.

The Colony has always stood for certain ideals in the life of the Church in Sri Lanka. In the first place, as a union institution it sought to bring together students of all the Protestant Churches in the island. This was achieved while introducing them into the wider fellowship of the Church of Christ without impairing their loyalty to their own Church. Although opportunities were given for specific teaching of their own church service every Sunday

² G. C. Jackson, *Basil: Portrait of a Missionary* (Colombo: Ecumenical Institute for Study and Dialogue, 2003), 17; Peter C. Phan, *Christianities in Asia*, (London: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 51

morning, yet the main currents of their spiritual life and religious teaching were deeper than any denominational teaching of worship. The daily experience of quiet time for meditation and their worship every Sunday evening remained with the students long after they departed into distant and often remote corners of the island. They were able to transcend their denominational loyalty in the context of their service. The students could fit into this larger fellowship which they found in the Colony.³

Although the PTC was a training institution for teachers, it had a considerable component of teaching of Christianity in practical, personal and theoretical ways. Its curriculum had a great emphasis of Christian living in order to make the trainees living agents of evangelism. The timetable was filled with lectures, drill, evangelism, social service, and prayer. For nearly fifty years these trainees worked among the predominantly Buddhist society in imparting subject knowledge and Christian ethics. The holistic impact that these teachers made on their pupils in the Sinhala society cannot be measured in statistical terms.

Background

The twentieth century saw the rise of Asian nationalism. The missionaries, who were closer to the people than the administrators, had to face up to the repercussions of emerging nationalism in many countries. The Buddhist majority was gradually gaining ground in the political arena in Sri Lanka. Emerging national leaders viewed Christianity as an important aspect of imperialism, and therefore resisted what they perceived as an alien religion. Sporadic resistance to Christian activities locally in the south and south-western parts of the country forced Christian missionaries to seek less militant forms of evangelism.⁴

³ *Ceylon Methodist Church Record*, Hereafter referred to as *CMCR*, 1928, 94.

⁴ For an account of this period of militant evangelism see: Kitsiri Malagoda, *Buddhism in Sinhalese Society 1750-1900: A Study of*

Therefore, it was advisable for the churches to equip the people of the land to evangelize their own people. Some missionaries of this era were convinced that peoples of these nations could be brought to Christ without leading them into the culture of Western civilization. Some individual missionaries in Sri Lanka embarked on programmes of ecumenism as well as incorporation of indigenous culture to present the Christian faith to the people of the land. The Colony clamoured for indigenization of the Church without deviating from the objective with regard to conversion of the masses. The Colony instilled in the minds of the teachers, who underwent training there, that being a Christian did not mean the rejection of everything that was national and embracing everything that came from the West.

This idea was confirmed by the findings in the “Missionary Survey of Ceylon” published by A S Beaty and W J T Small in 1925, based on the census of 1921.⁵ It showed that the percentage of Christians of the total population had not changed since censuses were taken regularly from 1871. It proposed that the indigenous Christians should be equipped to take the gospel to their own people. They found the paid evangelists were not suitable for the task.⁶ Regarding missionary work, critics have pointed out that the failure to communicate the gospel at the deepest level occurred because of their disregard of the worldview of the people of Sri Lanka. This has produced negative results. Missionaries did not contextualize their theological teaching because they did not understand that their own theology was conditioned by their own culture of origin. However, they imposed changes on the receiving people, which was tantamount to rejecting indigenous culture.

Religious Revival and Change (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976).

⁵ A.S. Beaty and W.J.T. Small, *Survey of Missionary Work in Ceylon*, (Colombo: NCC, 1924). 8.

⁶ K.M. de Silva (ed.) *Sri Lanka: A Survey*, (London: C. Hurst and Company, 1977) 305.

At the same time, church and mission history is also thankfully blessed with exceptional examples of fine pioneers and groups who tried to contextualize their valuable message with sensitivity and creativity. The experiment carried out in the Teacher Training College can be regarded as one such episode in the tapestry of contextualization of Christianity in a local culture.

The Need for Training

The Ceylon Training Colony for training of Sinhala teachers and evangelists was established largely through the efforts of the Rev A G Fraser (1873-1962), who was the Principal of Trinity College, Kandy (1904-1924).⁷ The scheme which he put forward was for a Christian community which he named 'colony', where all the Christian churches of the Sinhala-speaking areas in Sri Lanka could co-operate to train men and women as teachers and evangelists. He believed that the effectiveness of organised Christian work for the extension of the Kingdom of God depends on the quality and character of the workers. He saw it as a missionary problem.⁸ Gibson, who became the first Principal of the Colony, also made a similar point in 1918 in an article at the time of the centenary of the CMS Sri Lanka mission. One reason he gave for the slow progress in the Christian mission was that it was always evangelism that suffered in the activities of the CMS. He pointed out that the evangelists so far did not need to reach any specific standard in training, whereas teachers had to reach an agreed government standard.⁹

⁷ Rev. A.G. Fraser (1873-1962) was the Principal of Trinity College, Kandy, for a twenty year period from 1904 to 1924. <http://trinitycollege.lk/rev-a-g-fraser> (accessed 12/6/2014). Rev. Fraser left in 1924 to head Achimota School in Gold Coast (Ghana).

⁸ Lord Hemingford, "Fraser of Trinity and Achimota," *Learning for Living* 5, no. 2 (November 1, 1965): 31–32.

⁹ Gordon Hewitt, *The Problems of Success: A History of the Church Missionary Society, 1910-1942*, vol. 2 (London: SCM Press, 1971), 174; Anoma Pieris, *Architecture and Nationalism in Sri Lanka: The Trousers Under the Cloth* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2012), 251.

In a pamphlet published by Gibson in 1920, "The Key to the Missionary Problem," he indicated that the mistake the missionaries made was entrusting difficult pioneer work in the villages largely to untrained or inadequately trained workers, catechists and schoolmasters.¹⁰ In 1911, Wesleyan schools alone had over 1100 teachers in the country. The number of trained evangelists was insufficient for their schools. The majority of the teachers were not formally trained to bear the responsibility of an educator. The same predicament was shared by the CMS and other missionary societies. The missionary societies disliked the idea of employing non-Christians on the teaching staff in their schools. The Sinhala-medium schools could not overcome the difficulty by finding teachers from South India as was done in the case of Tamil-medium schools in the island. The government controlled the number of Christian training colleges for fear that such a contingency would create more than the necessary number of trained teachers.¹¹ Fraser, who realised this appalling situation, intended to set aside someone from the Trinity staff to visit village schools, helping the teachers who were already in service.¹² Writing in 1908,¹³ Fraser proposed a training institute close to Trinity College for male and female teachers separately. These proposed institutions were to be added to an existing school run by the CMS.

Discussions

This design had to be worked out in detail with its financial implications. The proposal was laid before the relevant ecclesiastical bodies whose co-operation was desired, during the years 1910-1912. The Church Missionary Society both in London

¹⁰ *Ceylon Churchman*, XXXI, 1936, 307.

¹¹ D.K. Wilson, *The Christian Church in Sri Lanka: Her Problems and Her Influence*, (Colombo 1975) 30

¹² W.E.F. Ward, *Fraser of Trinity and Achimota*, (Ghana University Press, 1965), 77. (Hereafter Ward, *Fraser*)

¹³ *Extension of Trinity College*, Kandy, Ceylon (Aberdeen: The Aberdeen University Press, 1908), 17.

and in Colombo, the Friends' Mission, the Wesleyan Methodist Mission, the American Missions, and the Dutch Reformed Church all expressed their agreement to this suggestion. At a meeting held on 12th December 1912, the Standing Committee of the Diocese of Colombo appointed a Select Committee to consider the proposal and draw up a Constitution for formal action.

Indigenization

During the years immediately prior to the First World War, the Protestant as well as Roman Catholic missionaries responded to the critical attitude to their work arising in South Asia by seeking to accommodate the nationalist resistance to the Western appearance of Christianity.¹⁴ The intention in this period was to make the missions become visible as indigenous institutions so that they would be less conspicuous as foreign agencies. The Training Colony can be considered as a step towards making Christianity appear Sri Lankan. The missionary thinking in Sri Lanka was very much influenced by the tendencies in neighbouring India. In his *The Christ of the Indian Road*, Stanley Jones described the progress of how Christ was becoming naturalized in India.¹⁵ There was a widespread attempt to search for ways to prevent a revulsion against the easy association of Christianity with Western culture. Before that, the missionaries had a condescending view towards the cultures of the non-Western world. On the other hand, some sectors of the missionary education movement took a positive view toward non-Western cultures and criticised the non-Christian aspects of Western culture from the beginning of the twentieth century.¹⁶

¹⁴ K.M. Panikkar, *Asia and the Western Dominance*, (George Allen & Unwin Ltd. 1959), 16; Richard Gombrich, Gananath Obeyesekere, *Buddhism Transformed: Religious Change in Sri Lanka* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1990), 290.

¹⁵ E. Stanley Jones, *The Christ of the Indian Road* (London: Abingdon Press, 1925).

¹⁶ Dana L. Roberts, "The First globalization: The internationalization of the Protestant Missionary Movement Between the World Wars," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* (2002): 54.

The writings in this period on missionary work clearly expressed that interpreting Christ according to each culture was a vital task for the indigenisation of Christianity.¹⁷

Rev Alec Fraser was one who believed in the necessity of indigenous expression of Christianity. He introduced Sinhala and Tamil languages to the curriculum of Trinity College,¹⁸ even though many other missionaries criticised him for it.¹⁹ His attitude to swabhasha was disliked by the High Church people of the Anglican Church. Nevertheless, his vision continued with regard to the formation of the Ceylon Training Colony. Rev Gibson who served as the first Principal had to put some of those ideas into practice. His Vice Principal, Basil Jackson, believed that the missionary should adequately equip Sinhalese Christians to express their faith in terms of their own culture. When he became the Principal in 1930 he put those ideas into practice.²⁰

Ecumenism

There was a predisposition in the first decade of the twentieth century for interdenominational initiatives aimed at greater Christian unity and cooperation. The missionary principle in this period was no longer a matter of expansion so much as of consolidation and slimming down. Missionary education was a field where the transformation of this attitude was felt. The Protestant denominations were now considering the futility of wasting their energy in sectarian squabbles among themselves. It was during this period that the Edinburgh Conference of 1910 was held to seek co-operation among the non-Roman Catholics. The World Missionary Conference, held at Edinburgh in 1910, was

¹⁷ Op. Cit., 58.

¹⁸ Trinity College, Kandy, founded in 1872 (first begun in 1857 and re-opened in 1872 as Trinity College) by Anglican missionaries, as an Independent elite private boys' school providing primary and secondary education in the English medium.

¹⁹ Ward, *Fraser*, 46-47.

²⁰ *Trinity College Centenary*, 1972, 37.

an interdenominational conference convened by societies with foreign missions in both Great Britain and the United States. This conference was convened as a discursive enterprise. However, there was a decision to establish a Continuation Committee when Commission VIII's report was presented. In the next few years, members of this committee, under the direction of John R Mott, headed to, among other countries, India and Sri Lanka in their Asian tour to encourage ecumenical cooperation.

Several of Sri Lanka's Protestant Christian leaders, including missionaries, attended the Ceylon Missionary Conference held at the Bible House in 1912. At this conference, common strategies for ideology and practice with regard to missionary work as well as inter-denominational co-operation were discussed and agreed upon. Deliberations were presided over by John R Mott (1865-1955) and Sherwood Eddy (1871-1963).²¹ The latter was a speaker at the convention, held over several days at the Old Racquet Court Building in Colombo.²² Most of the addresses were given by Mott and Eddy. This was followed in November by another meeting at the All-Ceylon YMCA. A call for unity among Protestant missionaries was a common desire expressed at the conference. This, in fact, helped the Protestant missions in Sri Lanka to seek co-operation among themselves and to make some significant efforts to synchronize their activities.²³ The foundation of the National Christian Council germinated here.

Training Colony

A G Fraser made a special attempt to go down to Colombo when John R Mott came to Sri Lanka to hold talks for missionary

²¹ George Sherwood Eddy (1871-1963) was an American Protestant missionary, author, administrator and educator.

²² Racquet Court was an open space outside the east gate of the Colombo Dutch Fort by the side of the lake. The Fort was demolished in 1870. However the name remained.

²³ J.P.S.R.R. Gibson, *Limited Company with Unlimited Possibilities*, (London, 1926) 220.

cooperation. He made it point to attend these meetings together with some teachers of Trinity College. His views on ecumenical co-operation received an impetus as a result of attending the Missionary Conference. Thus, he became the man behind the initial moves to establish a co-denominational teacher training institution where teaching would be in the Sinhala language.

Leadership of the Protestant Church

One has to remember that the leadership of the Christian Church in this period was predominantly European. In the case of Anglicans, Methodists, Baptists and Salvationists, the leaders were British. The Anglican Bishop of Colombo was Ernest Copleston, DD (1903-1924), and the Chairman of the South Ceylon District of the Methodist Church was Rev W H Rigby (1907-1917). In addition, the leader of the Baptist Missionary Society was H J Charter (1913-1914), and of the Dutch Reformed Church were John Francke (1913, 1918), David Tweed (1914, 1919), L A Joseph (1915), and D MacMichael (1917). They took decisions regarding the evangelical and pedagogical work of the Sinhalese teachers who were expected to take part in the rural mission.

Local Church Conferences

Local Conferences were meetings of missionaries. They held meetings at least once a year to decide on the policy of their mission. Special meetings were called by the district superintendent or the church board. The local church decided upon the number of business meetings to be held each year. Public announcement of these meetings was made well in advance of the meeting date. It was recommended that at least two weeks or two Sundays be considered as an appropriate time for advance notice. Special meetings were called by giving at least one week's notice to all members. This may not have been the pattern always, as changes were made according to the need of the hour. However, all the decisions were in the hands of the missionaries who came from Britain for a limited period of service in Sri Lanka.

Normal Schools

The early documents regarding teacher training in the British period refer to an institution known as 'Normal School'. A Normal School is a school created to train the students, who received a recommendation from missionaries, to be schoolteachers. Its purpose was to establish teaching standards or norms. Most such schools were later called 'Teacher Training Colleges'. This was usually a programme of studies for men and women between 18 and 21 years of age. To qualify for entrance, the candidates had to have completed the sixth standard and have been a teacher in a mission school. Missionaries who came to Sri Lanka during this period introduced the concept to Sri Lanka as they maintained a large number of Schools in the country. However, the vernacular schools were set up mainly for introducing Christianity to the local people with a view to converting them. Therefore, the missionaries waived their policies according to their necessities and the requirements in the country.

Government Training Schools

Concurrently with the missionary schools, there were schools run by the government. These were the schools originally run by the VOC, now under the Anglican establishment. Their teachers, during the Dutch period, were trained in the Colombo Seminary till the end of the Dutch rule in Sri Lanka in 1796. However, the Colombo Seminary ceased to function in the British period while the government schools functioned on a low key. Under British rule, a Normal School was maintained in Colombo to train the school teachers. As a result of the reduction in government revenue due to the end of the first coffee boom in 1848 there was a drop in the education vote in the budget. The government was now placing less emphasis on vernacular education and the Normal School for the training of vernacular teachers was under threat. In 1823, the government assisted the Methodists to open a Normal school for the Training of teachers at Kollupitiya. In 1858, training of vernacular teachers became the sole responsibility of the Christian denominations. Nevertheless, Government Sinhala Training Schools existed from 1870, in the

main cities such as Colombo, Kandy, Bentota, and Udugampola. An English Teacher Training College was established in 1903.²⁴

In 1905, the Sinhalese Women Teachers Vernacular Training School of CMS, which had been started in a hired house in Colombo by Miss H P Phillips, was moved to Kotte under the superintendence of Miss K Gedge.²⁵ In 1930 there were three government teacher training schools and twelve aided teacher training institutions.²⁶ In 1942, when the country felt the effects of the war, the Sinhalese Branch of the Government Training College was evacuated to Peradeniya, and made use of the Colony buildings for two and a half years. Later, this college found permanent quarters at Mirigama.

General Education

Education in the English medium was the key to lucrative jobs in the country. Secondary education was provided exclusively in schools which taught in English. The recognized English medium teacher training institution was set up only in 1928 with 47 students. The more lucrative careers in government service or professions were in their hands. The swabhasha schools were free and taught little beyond the three Rs.²⁷ The government decision to enforce compulsory education in schools from the ages of five to fourteen was significant. An increasingly vocal Buddhist and Hindu opposition to the extension of the Christian

²⁴ K. H. M Sumathipala, *History of education in Ceylon, 1796-1965: With special reference to the contribution made by C.W.W. Kannangara* (Dehiwela: Tisara, 1968), 43.

²⁵ J. W. Balding, *One Hundred Years in Ceylon: Or, The Centenary Volume of the Church Missionary Society in Ceylon, 1818-1918*, (Colombo, Diocesan Press, 1922), 138.

²⁶ K. M. de Silva (ed.) *University of Ceylon: History of Ceylon*, vol. III, (Colombo: University of Ceylon Press, 1975) 473.

²⁷ The three Rs refer to the foundations of a basic skills-orientated education programme within schools: reading, writing and arithmetic. It came from the humorous spelling reading, 'riting, and 'rithmetic.

missionary school system led the Christians to concentrate largely on improvements of existing missionary schools, after 1920.²⁸

Since then, the administration of schools was organized under government supervision. In 1920, a new education ordinance was introduced. It was a reasonably comprehensive legal enactment on education in Sri Lanka. Methodists and Anglicans welcomed the proposed state-church partnership in education.²⁹

Throughout this period, the content of education in schools retained a strong academic bias. The cost was less as far as facilities for Sinhala-medium education was concerned. There was no agricultural or technical education. In 1901, a school garden scheme was initiated to make the swabhasha school a centre for practical and useful knowledge as well as mere book learning.³⁰ The farm school at Peradeniya was opened in 1922. It provided a one-year course in Sinhala.

A G Fraser

By the early 20th century, there were only two places for training of Sinhala teachers in a Christian atmosphere in the South: one at Richmond Hill under the Wesleyan Methodist Mission, and another at Kotte for women, under the CMS. Baptists and Salvationists who had Sinhala schools had training of teachers under individual missionaries. Each denomination trained their school teachers separately in their own institutions.

As noted earlier, the idea of an Interdenominational Teacher Training College was first put forward by Mr A G Fraser. As Principal of Trinity he desired to produce a complete individual,

²⁸ K.M. de Silva (ed.) *Sri Lanka: A Survey*, (London: C. Hurst and &Company, 1977) 406.

²⁹ C. V. S. Jayaweera, "Education Ordinance , No1 of 1920", in *Education in Ceylon: A Centenary Volume*, (Colombo: Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs, 1969),545-556

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 407.

which aim he sought to achieve in a variety of ways. The main outline plan for a vernacular Teacher Training Colony was proposed by him as far back as 1906.³¹ Almost from the beginning of his service at Trinity, Fraser had been active in planning for ways and means of presenting Christ in an indigenous and united manner to the people in Sri Lanka. An ecumenical Teacher Training School was an answer to this hope. Originally, his proposal was to make the Training Colony part of the Trinity College extension scheme. Eventually, it was realised that the project was adequately important to be treated as a separate entity.

Among his aims for the proposed Colony were the training of Christians in Sri Lanka to present “Christ that their hearer may realize Him not as a foreigner, but as the real and true fulfillment of all that is best and highest in their aspirations and in their past.”³² To achieve this purpose he recommended “the establishment of a good training college for Christian teachers in the vernacular and English; and creation of a ladder from the village school to the college with its possibilities of leadership.”³³ He believed that the hope for future of Christianity in Sri Lanka “lies with the native Christians”. Instead of employing the energies of the mission aiming at Hindus, Muhammadans, and Buddhists, he wished to build up a wise, eager, and indigenous Christian community.³⁴ He believed that it would be the best investment in terms of evangelising the Sinhalese.

Permission

The CMS conference in 1909 asked Fraser to draw up a report on the CMS work in Sri Lanka in order to frame future policies. In January 1910, he submitted his report to the CMS conference in Sri Lanka. It is he who indicated that the “Society’s work was

³¹ Balding, *Centenary Volume*, 85.

³² Referendum, 1.

³³ Referendum, 1.

³⁴ Quoted in Balding, *Centenary Volume*, 80.

hampered because most of its teachers and catechists were untrained.”³⁵ He proposed training for the young teachers and catechists which would improve the situation. For that purpose there was a need to establish a college or to organize proper training for the teachers. In July 1910, he published a pamphlet, “*The Key of the Missionary Campaign, the Training of Catechists and Teachers*”, indicating his plans.

In January 1911, he requested the Ceylon Conference of CMS to allow him to go to England and America to raise funds for starting a Training Colony.³⁶ He also reported that the Methodists and the Friends were anxious to join. Thereafter, the Sri Lanka Conference of the CMS gave authority to Fraser to look for land in the neighbourhood of Kandy.

The general plan of the Training College emerged from these discussions very clearly. The land and the buildings of the college should be under care of trustees of the communities in the scheme. The Training College Trust should be incorporated in London. Each denomination taking part in the project should have a hostel and warden’s quarters separately for their own use. A governing body from these should consist of three representatives from each denominational body involved. In addition to that, the Principal and the Anglican Bishop should be members of the Governing Board. The Governing Board would have the right to appoint staff. The participating communions can appoint staff for their own sections, but are subject to the approval of the Governing Board. The control of funds and the appointment of the Principal was the responsibility of the Governing Body. Participating communions could control funds for the upkeep of their own hostels. Most of Fraser’s proposals were implemented during the period of the PTC’s existence. However, there were occasions where his vision was threatened by some leaders of his own Church.

³⁵ W.E.F. Ward, *Fraser of Trinity and Achomota*, (Accra: Ghana University Press, 1965), 144.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, *Fraser of Trinity and Achomota*, 77.

Land

Alec Fraser was authorised by the CMS to visit the United States and Britain in February 1912 to make a fundraising tour for capital costs and for an endowment for the proposed Teacher Training College, most of which was collected in England. Some businessmen in Leeds, in particular, who were much interested in the project gave a large sum. His trip to America was not successful in raising funds. Although the initiative was taken by an Anglican, much of the money was raised from non-Anglican sources. It was, from the beginning, a joint scheme for which money was raised. He brought over £8,000. He returned to Sri Lanka in November 1912 at the time of the All Ceylon Missionary conference convened under the auspices of John R Mott.

The Select Committee, for considering the setting up of a training colony, met many times in 1913 and 1914 to work out the details. In August 1913, Alec Fraser was authorized by the Ceylon Conference of CMS to search for a suitable land in the neighbourhood of Kandy. In June 1914, he found a 20-acre plot of land, known as Rose Hill, in the vicinity of the Peradeniya railway station. Fraser considered that it was near enough to Kandy to preserve the connection with Trinity College. The presence of the Department of Agriculture³⁷ in the neighbourhood was considered an asset to obtain practical work on which much stress was laid. The price for the land was Rs. 43,000. Fraser's friends considered it a good bargain.³⁸ It had a large building which could initially accommodate the students and staff till permanent buildings were set up.

³⁷ Formalized agricultural education for middle level agriculturists began in 1916 at the School of Tropical Agriculture attached to the Royal Botanical Gardens at Peradeniya. This school offered practical agricultural training for agricultural teachers, student instructors, and headmen interested in agriculture in a professional level.

³⁸ *Fraser of Trinity and Achimota*, 76-81, Balding, *Centenary Volume*, 79.

Tamil Teachers

Rev A M Walmsley, in his Memorandum on CMS Sectional Capital Funds at the Training Colony, Peradeniya, states: "The original training Scheme contemplated the training of Tamil Teachers and Evangelists, both men and women, and it was so noted in the Draft Constitution of the Colony. This scheme was subsequently modified, as it was felt at the Colony to be impracticable. Min. 10 of Sectional committee held on August 28th 1924, definitely ruled out the training of both Tamil teachers and Tamil Evangelists".³⁹

The same report says: "Any sum in excess of this can be operated on by the CMS Conference or its sectional Committee for work at the Colony, or for other cognate purposes, like the Tamil training work at Jaffna".⁴⁰

Indigenous Expression

How missions coped with the reality in different contexts of other religions is one of the fascinating parts of the story of mission history in Sri Lanka. Fraser realized that the complaint in this period of emerging nationalism in Sri Lanka was the perception that Christianity was foreign and more specifically a Western religion.⁴¹ The main outlines of the Christian religion were directed from the countries of the West. The local management also was in the hands of those who were appointed by the mission bodies in foreign countries. There was no programme to assist the local Christians to take the leadership of their own faith in Christianity. The theologians in the West guided the Christian thinking even on behalf of the local Christians. On the other hand, there was growing nationalism nourished by the Hindu and Buddhist revivalism that depicted Christianity as a foreign body and unsuitable to Sri Lanka. Therefore, most far-sighted missionaries contemplated ways and means of making

³⁹ Diocesan Archives, Colombo, Document dates 10/1/28. the Rev. A.M. Walmsley, C.M.S., Hon. Chaplain, Ceylon Defence Force in 1924.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Balding, *Centenary Volume*, 80.

Christianity less Western in appearance. One solution in that direction was to equip the vernacular teachers to take a more responsible role.

Paul Gibson, writing in 1919 states: "Among the palm groves of the South, the growth of a nationalist spirit, good in itself, but which confounds Christianity with denationalization, has created a virile opposition to all mission work. Everywhere there is the same need for Christian teachers trained in the faith, fired with zeal, controlled by knowledge and tact, sustained by courage, and full of hope in a Christ who must conquer."⁴²

According to Fraser's proposal the training should "draw the students into closer touch with village life and with native thought and industry. It would include the study of the history of the island and Buddhism so that the student may be able to relate the learning to the thoughts of the people". Fraser shared the view of the Christian missionaries of this period that mass education through vernacular schools was a means of conversion.

Endowment Fund

Rev Fraser was concerned about the viability of the existence of the institution. He knew that funds available from the missionary organizations would be subject to change determined by the exigencies of the time. Therefore, he embarked on a programme of building an endowment fund set up by an institution in which regular withdrawals from the invested capital could be used for ongoing operations or other specified purposes. Since endowments for educational institutions were funded by donations, they were tax deductible for donors. Therefore, Fraser could approach his friends for the purpose.

All these things were done in a period when the CMS was considering retrenchment in their work in Sri Lanka. A E Dibben, CMS Secretary, wrote to inform Fraser of a seven percent cut in the CMS grant to mission schools. Fraser's reply was that he was

⁴² Gibson, *The Foreign Field*, (London , 1932) 218.

willing to give up the whole of the annual grant of Rs 1,000 to Trinity College, provided that the grants to native agents and village schools were not cut.⁴³

Spirit of Ecumenism

Regarding the principles that led to the foundation of the Colony, these are given by Paul Gibson in 1919 under the title, "An Experiment in Federation", contributed to Volume XIV of *The Ceylon Churchman*:

The great war has been the schoolmaster of the nations. Under its stern discipline they have learned to act on principles previously only agreed to in theory. The paramount necessity of victory has made it imperative to combine forces and act with a united front. The value of mutual trust and the importance of reinforcing the weak points of an ally, without recrimination, have been revealed. The Churches are in the process of learning the same lessons. A Common problem that faces warfare are not carnal, and though they seek to win over rather than to subdue, yet the experiences engendered of the war are pregnant with meaning for them.

The success that has attended the federation of the Church Missionary Society and the Wesleyan Missionary Society in Ceylon for the purpose of training teachers and evangelists is due to the exercise of the above principles. The Ceylon Training College has come into being during the war, and the minds of those responsible for it have both consciously and unconsciously been influenced by the lessons learned in world politics. The need of a united front is generally conceded. But stress must be laid on the need also of mutual recognition and spiritual equality. There can be no united front while any member discounts the value of his neighbour. The lamb tucked up inside the smiling lion is not

⁴³ Gorden Hewitt, op. cit., 174.

co-operation but its antithesis, and any attempt to absorb or, even worse, to patronize, is foredoomed failure.⁴⁴

Gibson's interest in education in the vernacular languages, his sympathy for nationalist aspirations, and ecumenism were not always popular among his fellow missionaries. It is reported that sixty missionaries, in Sri Lanka and abroad, petitioned the CMS headquarters in London to recall him. The Anglican Bishop of Colombo, Ernest Copleston (1903-1924), censured him for allowing ministers of non-Anglican denominations to preach at Trinity.⁴⁵

The Number of Protestant Mission Schools

At the time of making proposals for the Training College there were a large number of Sinhala Vernacular schools under the CMS, WMMS, BMS, and the Salvation Army. Each denomination trained their own teachers separately. In 1910, Protestant churches had the following number of schools and pupils. These numbers cover the statistics of the entire island.

Denomination	Number of Schools	Number of Pupils
American	131	12,433
Anglican	403	32,783
Baptist	30	2,561
Friends	21	1,047
Presbyterian	4	556
Salvation Army	2	1421
Wesleyan	348	29,192

Taken from: K H M Sumathipala, *History of Education in Ceylon*.

⁴⁴ *The Ceylon Churchman* (1920) 188-189.

⁴⁵ *Trinity College magazine*, (1911-1912) 6-8.

The need for trained school-teachers was felt in this period. Far-thinking Protestant leaders were now thinking in terms of ecumenism. It received a boost after the founding of the Ceylon Missionary Council comprising the Anglican, Wesleyan, and Baptist denominations. Under such circumstance the proposed training college had to be in an ecumenical setting.

Place

The Colony premises were acquired and opened in 1914 as an Anglican institution connected to Trinity College. As mentioned earlier, the PTC premises were known as Rose Hill Estate or German Watte, and originally contained 20 acres of land planted with tea and rubber. Subsequent purchases extended the area to about thirty-seven acres planted with tea, rubber and Coconut.⁴⁶ There was a German guesthouse run by an Italian named Dvacono, showing that the land already had some buildings on it. Some of the buildings could be immediately put to use for the college. The guesthouse building could be utilized as the Principal's bungalow. Mr D T Jayasinghe, the 'master builder' of Trinity College, was assigned to the Colony to oversee the erection of other buildings as required.⁴⁷ Eventually, several other buildings were added to the premises.

About the beauty of the place, Gibson writes in 1919: "To equip men and women for such work as this is the task entrusted to us by God at the Peradeniya Training Colony...a beautiful hill-top estate among the glorious mountains around Kandy. The situation is lovely beyond words. Our grounds are well covered with tea plants, and the stately coconut palms and rubber trees. All around the hill are mantled with the wonderful green foliage of the Tropics. Our full title is "The Ceylon Training Colony Ltd.

⁴⁶ Balding, *Centenary Volume*, 87. Wanasinghe, Op. Cit. 9.; *CMCR*, (1962): 34.

⁴⁷ Valessa Reimann, *History of Trinity College, Kandy*, (Madras: Diocesan Press, 1922), 170.

Some has aptly described us as a Limited Company with unlimited possibilities".⁴⁸

Hostels

PTC was a residential campus from the very beginning. Teachers and students resided on the premises. The idea of the residential college, whose purpose was to train men and women to teach, is comparatively new. Its beginning goes back to early years in England.⁴⁹ The Anglicans, who were the first to come, used the existing bungalow of the estate as the residence of students and the Principal. The original student body was only Anglican male. From the beginning, plans were there for the establishment of separate hostels for male and female students of each denomination.⁵⁰ The co-residence of staff and students was what made the culture of the Colony rich in social relations. The small and mixed student community enhanced the corporate ethic.

Fraser's original intention was for the Colony to be a co-operative venture of all non-Catholic Christian denominations.⁵¹ "Each faith will have its own hostel or rather its own village or hamlet in the large land of the Training Colony, and will provide religious services and lectures for the students of its own denomination, the Warden of the various hostels combining to form the teaching staff of the Colony and lecturing upon many subjects which are common ground".⁵² This plan did not fully materialise as the co-operation of other denominations was lacking at the beginning.

⁴⁸ J.P.S.R.R. Gibson, *Limited Company with Unlimited Possibilities*, 218.

⁴⁹ Elizabeth Edwards, *Women in Teacher Training Colleges, 1900-1960: A Culture of Femininity*, Routledge, 2000, 6.

⁵⁰ Beven, *A History of the Diocese of Colombo*, 295.

⁵¹ *Trinity College Magazine*, 1911-1912

⁵² *Referendum*, op. cit. 2.

The Principal's bungalow was the guesthouse which already existed. The women's hostel known as Laurie Hall was completed in 1916.⁵³ The men's hostel known as Ashley Hall was opened in 1917. The main teaching building, Fraser Hall, came up in 1918. There were houses for the married staff, a dispensary, and a building for the Evangelical department. Students of both denominations lived in the same hostel and ate, slept, and frequently worshipped together. When Salvationists and Baptists were admitted to the Colony they also got in to the same routine.⁵⁴

Management

The Training College was a co-denominational institution. The CMS and the WMMS in Ceylon federated for the work of the institution. The governing of the institution was in the hands of a special council selected by the federating churches. There was nothing in the constitution which in any way gave special rights or privileges to either church. The council was the governing body of the whole institution. Each society organized its own sectional committee and provided a Vice-Principal of whom one was elected Principal. A Council composed of representatives of the two missionary societies directed the policy of the institution, which had a CMS missionary, Paul Gibson, as its first Principal. The Colombo Diocesan Synod refused⁵⁵ even to discuss the constitution in its draft form, with the result that the CMS Conference undertook the duties of the 'federator' status of the Anglican Church. The CMS appointed its sectional committee. The Methodists also acted in a similar manner.

The constitution was intended to be transitional as the missionary societies had to formally ratify it. The approval of federation was under review from 1919 to 1932 in the Anglican Church. The transitional constitution lasted even into the 1940s as the dispute

⁵³ Balding, *Centenary Volume*, 87.

⁵⁴ Gordon Hewitt, op. cit. 190.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

between the CMS and the Diocesan Council could not agree on it. On the other hand, there was no dispute between the Methodist representatives of the Colony and the South Ceylon Synod, which dealt with Methodist ministry amongst the Sinhalese. The Methodist members of the federator committee of the Training College continued to be selected by the South Ceylon Synod.

Administration

Gibson, explaining the work of the PTC states: “The institution was governed by a joint Council, and everything on the compound was run jointly. The students work and play and take their food together. So also do they worship together, except once a week when, as members of their local church or chapel, they go there for public worship and Holy Communion. It is the natural federation of radically similars, and not the mere juxtaposition of essentially separates”.⁵⁶

The responsibility of the administration of the College was under the Principal, and regular staff meetings were held. The wardens of the hostels and Vice Principal shared a considerable part of the responsibilities. The Principal’s wife played a big role in looking after the girls and helping out when there were problems related to them.

The Anglican Federation

The Anglican Diocese of Sri Lanka was included in the Church of India, Burma, and Ceylon in 1930, and from 1948 the Church of India, Pakistan, Burma, and Ceylon, which continued until 1970. These changes affected the Anglican relationship with the PTC. The Federation was transferred from the CMS to the Diocese of Colombo in 1930.⁵⁷ With the unification, all Anglican work in Sri Lanka came under Diocesan control. The Anglican missionary

⁵⁶ J.P.S.R.R. Gibson, *Limited Company with Unlimited Possibilities*, 220.

⁵⁷ Gordon Hewitt, *The Problem of Success: A history of the Church Missionary Society, 1910-1942*, London: SCM Press, 1971, 175.

societies were incorporated in the diocesan management. The duplication of work under High Church and Low Church could not be continued any longer. Eventually, in 1931, the Parent Committee of the CMS expressed its willingness to accept the Diocesan Board of Management instead of the CMS Conference, which by then had ceased to meet as the local body responsible for the Anglican section. It was, therefore, proposed and accepted both by the Diocesan Council and the Council of the Training College that the Diocese should be associated with the Church Missionary Society as the Anglican Federator.⁵⁸

The Diocese was invited to take over the work of the Training Colony, which so far had been under CMS management. The question of non-Episcopal ministries had been under consideration in the Anglican establishment in England since 1931. The question of intercommunion at PTC, where Methodists also participated, was an issue at the time of winding up of CMS work in Sri Lanka. The Diocesan Council in 1931 was prepared to accept the federator position on the colony, on conditions which restricted the inter-communion. This restricted the communal worship so far practiced which was embodied in the Colony's constitution. Carpenter Garnier who opposed to inter-communion continued to be the Bishop of Colombo until 1938. The Bishop stated that he could only approve of the Colony if it had a separate chapel and a separate hostel for Anglican students. Such a change would have jeopardized the close fellowship and communion that the Methodists and Anglicans had enjoyed for nearly two decades.

There was an informal meeting at the CMS headquarters in London on 19th February 1931 to consider the Anglican Diocesan Council's proposal to have restrictive communal worship. A G

⁵⁸ In 1922, the Society split, with the liberal evangelicals remaining in control of CMS headquarters, whilst conservative evangelicals established the Bible Churchmen's Missionary Society. CMS assets in Sri Lanka were gradually transferred to the Diocese of Colombo.

Fraser and L G Gaster were present at this meeting.⁵⁹ As Gibson was unable to attend, he sent a letter stating that the proposal of the Bishop would contribute to a breach of trust with those who had contributed to the endowment if CMS handed over its responsibilities to the Anglo-Catholic Diocese of Colombo.⁶⁰ He further stated:

The wording and working of the constitution of the Ceylon Training Colony are an expression of the vital importance of this first axiom of federation. There is no authority that cannot be wielded by either society, and no office that is not open to both. So also there is no responsibility not equally shared. The chairman of the governing council can be Anglican or Wesleyan; the principal of the institution may be drawn from either body. The expenses of management are equitably shared, and the maximum of four votes on council may be attained by either federator on the payment of a fixed scale of capital.

There are two main ways in which a federated institution can be run. The underlying principle of the first is that of the juxtaposition of essentially separates, or in other words the agreement to work together of two parties, who feel that their differences are more important than their bonds of union, and who therefore keep their respective students as far apart as possible and set themselves primarily to safeguard their own particular interests. This method results in the hostel system where the students of the one church eat and sleep and worship together, only meeting those of the other Churches in the lecture hall.

The underlying principle of the second method of working is that of the brotherhood of those radically one. Under such a conception the students of both Churches live in the same hostel and eat sleep, and frequently worship together. The

⁵⁹ G.N. Premawardene, *An examination of Evolution of Architecture of Trinity College Kandy*, B.M. dissertation, Faculty of Architecture, University of Moratuwa, 1992. 55-57.

⁶⁰ Gordon Hewitt, op. cit. 193.

close touch of the lecture hall is cemented in the hostel. While there naturally must be denominational safeguards, to use the old word, yet these do not protrude and do not rank as the all-important factor, and the special religious heritage of a Church is grafted on to the strong common stock of brotherhood in Christ Jesus. This is the plan adopted in the training colony at Peradeniya.⁶¹

Gibson's letter was taken seriously by the CMS Council to ratify the existing policy of joint communion at PTC. Therefore, the institution continued to be co-denominational until the takeover by the Government in 1962.

Wesleyan Methodists

When the Peradeniya Training Colony was founded in 1914, only the CMS sent their students. It was from 1916 that the Methodist Church joined in. The constitution of the Federation for the Training Colony became effective from early 1917. The Council, which is the Governing Body, had representatives of the two missionary societies and it directed the policy of the institution. Though the understanding was to have two missionaries on the staff at any given time, this was not always possible.

The Richmond Hill Training School of the Wesleyan Methodist Mission was transferred to Peradeniya in September 1917. Miss Winifred A Murch, BSc¹ of the WMMS Women's Auxiliary joined the Colony to take charge of the women's side of the work in 1920. Training of Local Women Workers at Richmond College was transferred to PTC with her.

According to the constitution of the Training College, Rev A A Sneath, the first representative of the Wesleyan Methodist Church on the staff, was appointed Vice Principal in 1921.⁶² He

⁶¹ *The Ceylon Churchman*, XIV, December 1920.

⁶² *CMCR*, 1922, p.1. Rev. A.A. Sneath, MA, had served for ten years at Mfantsipim, a Methodist secondary school in Cape Coast,

was succeeded in 1922 by Rev W J T Small who remained at the Colony until 1926.⁶³ Rev G B Jackson of the Methodist Mission, who succeeded Rev Small as Vice Principal in 1926, became Principal in 1930 and remained in that position until 1941, when he was transferred by the Methodist Church to pastoral work in Matara.⁶⁴ Subsequently, he became the Chairman of the South Ceylon District. Thus, Rev Gibson of the CMS and Rev Basil Jackson of the Wesleyan Methodist Church were the longest serving missionaries of the Training Colony, and the contribution they made to teacher training in this country through the Training Colony is immense.

From that point on, the Training Colony Council consisted of the CMS and WMMS. When the CMS was absorbed into the Diocese of Colombo the Diocesan Council resolved to participate in the Council.⁶⁵ The capital share of WMMS was 40 to the CMS share of 60; this ratio continued in this period as well.

Baptists

The Baptists partially joined the federation in the late 1920s. Although the Baptists were not able to participate fully as a partner of the federating body, they continued to support it by sending their trainee teachers and at times providing teachers.⁶⁶ One of the Baptist missionaries, H J Charter, BA, BD, who served as the first Principal of Carey College in 1924, was on the tutorial staff of PTC from 1936 to 1940. He wrote in 1935: "At Peradeniya the daily 'Quiet Time' was a regular institution. Students and teachers went to the chapel for half an hour before classes began. We mostly sat on cushions on the floor, leaning against the wall or other support, and knelt for prayer, but each

Ghana. He was the principal of Richmond College, Galle from 1922 to 1940.

⁶³ *CMCR*, Oct. 1922, p.1.; *CMCR*, 1927, p.1

⁶⁴ Small, *History of the Methodist Church in Ceylon*, 371

⁶⁵ *CMCR*, 1929, 25.

⁶⁶ Small, *History of the Methodist Church in Ceylon*, 370

individual did as he thought best, dividing the time between private Bible reading and prayer. Women students did the same at another place".⁶⁷

The teacher trainees of the BMS continued to be sent to PTC. However, the numbers were not comparable with the Methodists or Anglicans. Salvationists also sent their teacher trainees to this institution. They had to pay a higher tuition fee as their denominations were not among federators who funded the maintenance of the College.

Government Support

The government treated the PTC in the category of State-assisted Denominational Schools. The Colony was grant aid, examined, and inspected by the government Department of Education. According to the tradition prevalent in England since the late 1880s, training colleges received maintenance grants from the state for each student. Government grants amounted to just over Rs 7,000 until 1929. The salaries of the teachers of Assisted Schools were paid by the government till the takeover in 1962. Until 1929, the government gave each student in the Training College an annual grant of Rs 100. In the wake of worldwide depression, the government withdrew its scholarship grant of Rs 100 per annum per student, in 1930.⁶⁸ Therefore, the Training College had to raise the fees paid by the students by Rs 60 to a maximum of Rs 160 per annum. The payment of fees had been burdensome to many students. As a result of the generosity of the churches, the College charged very much less from the students than other Assisted Training Colleges. Student teacher

⁶⁷ Substance of a paper given by H.J. Charter on June 18th, 1935, at the Annual Meetings of the Rawdon College Brotherhood.

⁶⁸ The Great Depression in the United Kingdom was a period of national economic downturn in the 1930s. It originated in the US in 1929 and spread to the other parts of the world. Britain's world trade fell by half (1929–33), the output of heavy industry fell by a third, employment profits plunged in nearly all sectors.

trainees received monthly salaries regularly from the government since 1959, as W Dahanayake,⁶⁹ who was the Minister of Education, ordered it. Thereafter, the economic difficulties of the students were reduced.

In 1962, writing about the last phase of the Training Colony, Rev Harold de Mel stated: "The grant paid by the state to the Training College annually never exceeded 2500 rupees. On the other hand the Anglican and Methodist churches have given double that amount to maintain the institution".⁷⁰ The government did not pay the minor staff, upkeep of the buildings, water and electricity service, etc.

The government gave the guidelines for the activities of the Training College in order to accept the certificates issued by the Training College. In the years after 1942, the entrance examination to PTC was conducted by the Government. The students' entrance requirements were also stipulated by the Education Department of Sri Lanka.

Principals

The main executive officer of the Colony was the Principal. Anglican and Methodist ministers held the post in turn. The Vice Principal was from the other denomination. His counsel was usually accepted by the incumbent Principal.

Work in the Colony

As there were short-term refresher courses conducted at the Training Colony before the intake of teacher trainees was received with the approval of the government, the Principal took up residence in October 1914 in the estate big bungalow which was the only building at that time in the estate. Students were housed and taught in rooms adjoining the Principal's quarters. By

⁶⁹ Mr. Dahanayake was a pupil of Rev. Small at Richmond College. He had a very cordial relationship with Rev. Small. It is likely that this relationship contributed to this gesture.

⁷⁰ *CMCR*, 1962, 35.

November 1914, six men of comparative youth were being prepared for confirmation. Four other men who were older were being trained as evangelists. In December, the first retreat for teachers and other Christian workers was held. It lasted one week of the year according to the scheme prepared by Fraser. As it was found to be successful, a similar training was attempted later. The teachers who had already had training in the Government Training College were given a short course in evangelism. In April 1915, a Bible study was held for Methodists and Anglicans.

At one time, A M Walmsley, who was on the tutorial staff of Trinity from 1906 to 1911, believed for some reason that he would very likely leave Trinity to take charge of the Training Colony when it opened. His expectations were not based on any agreement with Fraser, therefore it did not materialize.⁷¹

J P S Gibson

As the Training Colony was originally intended to be a part of Trinity College, its staff had a pivotal role in the early years of its establishment. The Training Colony's activities, however, were separated from Trinity from the start.⁷² In 1915, it was decided that Rev Paul Gibson, a teacher at Trinity College, was to be appointed as the first Principal.

Gibson arrived in Sri Lanka on 12th October 1908 in the company of Fraser and A C Houlder from England. He was recruited by Fraser in England.⁷³ He was to come with A G Fraser when the latter returned to the island after his furlough. Rev Gibson served from 1908 to 1914 on the teaching staff of Trinity College and went to England on his first furlough in 1914. Campbell and

⁷¹ Fraser, 84. A.M. Walmsley was a Cambridge graduate, and held a first class certificate from Borough Road Training College. Mrs. Walmsley was a science graduate and a first class certified teacher. A.M. Walmsley - Memorandum of 29th January 1930

⁷² *Trinity centenary Volume*, 1972, 72.

⁷³ *Fraser of Trinity and Achimota*, 98.

Saunders also arrived with Fraser in Kandy in November 1914. Gibson came one month later after his furlough.⁷⁴

He was a scholar of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, Medieval and Modern Languages Tripos⁷⁵ (Honours of Aegrotat), Harness Prizeman, Burney Prizeman, and Fellow of the Institute of Actuaries. Therefore, the Training College was to gain from his academic achievements and in many ways PTC was his creation. The missionary societies involved in the College did not interfere with his experiments such as joint communion services.

Rev Paul Gibson's appointment was subject to confirmation by the Governing Body of the Training College when it was formally constituted. However, those who were interested in supporting the Colony, the ABCFM,⁷⁶ the Friends, the Wesleyans, and the Dutch Reformed Church decided not to take part in the activities of the Colony. Therefore, the Peradeniya Training Colony began as an Anglican undertaking and as a result Gibson's appointment was easily ratified.⁷⁷

A G Fraser chose J P S Gibson as the first Principal and the Head of the Anglican section of the newly-formed Teacher Training College. He served in that capacity from 1914 to 1928.⁷⁸ His Principalship lasted almost fourteen years. He served in the period of formation of the College. Much of the activities of the College owe their origin to this period. He laid down the policy

⁷⁴ *Fraser of Trinity and Achimota*, 61, Balding, *Centenary Volume*, 81.

⁷⁵ The University of Cambridge divided the different kinds of honours bachelor's degree by Tripos. An undergraduate studying Medieval and Modern Languages is thus said to be reading for the Medieval and Modern Languages Tripos.

⁷⁶ American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM).

⁷⁷ *Fraser of Trinity and Achimota* 96

⁷⁸ Gordon Hewitt, op. cit. 184.

and principles by which the College has served for the rest of its existence.

It was Fraser who conceived the idea of the Training Colony and raised most of the funds necessary. However, it was Gibson who was responsible for its coming into being. He was the one who was responsible for "its predominant characteristics of simplicity and zeal".⁷⁹ It was he "who laid the foundation of its religious life in the morning quiet time and in united worship; and, who more than anyone, took the riches of Sinhalese culture and adapted them for Christian use."⁸⁰

Paul Gibson was appointed Principal of Ridley Hall, Cambridge, in 1927. He and his wife left for England in 1928, a few weeks before the opening of the chapel which he endeavoured to build. His tenure of office coincided with the period of the First World War and the period of post-war reconstruction. He left before the onset of the Great Depression in 1929. These events affected the funding for the College. His departure was a loss to the Colony. There was a period of crisis soon after his departure and the appointment of G B Jackson to the post of Principal.

Aims of PTC

The main aim of the Colony was the training of teachers for vernacular mission schools of the Protestant Churches. The Training College has been able to achieve a sense of brotherhood between teachers of different denominations and also between the leaders of the missions. This is not confined to those at work in the Colony itself but also those who have had common interest in the work of the Colony. The opportunity available in the Colony has been abundantly used to give attention to problems relating to missionary work and to work out practical matters for making Christianity a living force in village life.

⁷⁹ Beven, *A History of the Diocese of Colombo*, 296.

⁸⁰ Gordon Hewitt, *Op. cit.* 191.

The Colony has attracted the best available vernacular teachers in all the missions for the work of the training of teachers in the country.

Gibson and the Bishop⁸¹

Although Gibson was far from being an ardent Anglican in the traditional sense, he greatly enjoyed devising localized ways of sowing and reaping ceremonies, and procession and services for special occasion. He had a special worship service on Ascension Day which involved the whole community going to the top of a nearby hill, worshipping the exalted Christ there, and then returning to the city with great happiness. There was a deep vein of Protestantism in Paul Gibson's evangelical faith as in some traditional circles of the Anglican Church.

It is reported that "his distrust of traditional ecclesiasticism, combined with a passion for church unity, set him tragically on a collision course with Carpenter-Garnier," who was appointed Bishop of Colombo in 1924. "He adopted the Methodist custom of inviting 'all who loved the Lord' to receive Holy Communion when he was the celebrant, certainly during the pre-terminal staff retreats, and apparently at other times; and the corporate Sunday evening service as a modified form of Anglican Evening Prayer which he and the Methodist Vice Principal conducted in turn, with the other person preaching. The Bishop said that intercommunion in any form must stop and that the only form of corporate service for the whole Colony which he could authorize was one of an informal, prayer meeting type. Gibson's case was that since the chapel had not been consecrated for Anglican worship, its services were not under the Bishop's jurisdiction in the same sense as those of a parish church. The Bishop's case was that he had licensed Gibson as a priest within his diocese, and that he, therefore, owed him obedience in liturgical matters. It

⁸¹ Mark Carpenter-Garnier (1881-1969) was the Bishop of Colombo from 1924 to 1938. *The Times*, Thursday, Feb 14, 1924; pg. 15; Issue 43575; "Who was Who" 1897-2007 (London, A & C Black, 2007).

was the sort of confrontation between these two devoted and determined men which could have no happy outcome. Gibson's call to Ridley Hall, Cambridge, came at a time when the CMS ecclesiastical committee was anxiously looking for a solution. In November 1927, the Bishop wrote to the CMS headquarters saying that he must ask for a definite undertaking that Prayer-Book services would not be used in communal worship at the training colony."⁸²

There was a difficult period after the departure of Gibson. As the CMS did not appoint a Principal immediately because of the disputes with the Diocesan Council, work was disturbed from time to time by the want of a permanent Vice Principal. There were many temporary appointments for short lengths of time.⁸³

A C Houlder

After a short period, Rev Alfred Claude Houlder (BA, Oxf.), CMS Missionary, was appointed as Principal of PTC. The Rev A C and Mrs Houlder were at the Colony in 1928-9 and again in 1932-3. They had the support of an efficient Vice Principal. Mrs Houlder recalls that when her husband was appointed Principal in 1928, the Bishop told him very clearly that he must not follow Gibson's practice of disobedience to his Bishop. When he agreed to the proposal, the practice of intercommunion ceased. The Sinhalese staff and Miss R Overton felt this was going backward.

Rev Houlder came to Sri Lanka in 1914 and served at Trinity College, Kandy. He was later transferred to PTC. According to Jackson, Houlder was a person of less courage than Gibson to stand up to authorities in the Anglican Church.⁸⁴ Soon after his

⁸² Gordon Hewitt, Op. cit. 191.

⁸³ Kevin Ward and Brian Stanley, *Missionary Society and World Mission, 1799-1999*, London: Curzon Press, 1999, 28.

⁸⁴ Jackson, *Basil*, o.p. cit. 16n.; Percy Eldred Wickremesinghe, George Benjamin Ekanayake and Alfred Claude Houlder, *The Nugegoda*

appointment the practice of joint communion at the training Colony was abandoned.

Houlder took office at a time when Bishop Mark Carpenter-Garnier (1924-1938) was interfering with the CMS activities in the Colony. When Gibson left the Training College in June 1927, he wished to see that his successor would continue the practice of joint communion. The Bishop of Colombo insisted that the person appointed should promise not to allow inter-communion to take place in the chapel. The Bishop also proposed that the person who succeeded Gibson to the post of Principal should be an Anglican. He also stated that no one should use the Prayer Book to conduct a service in the chapel of the Training Colony unless that person was an ordained Anglican priest; and that "...no one except an Anglican priest could preach at such a service". There was a short, but difficult period as a result.

The Vice Principal, Basil Jackson, was not able to oppose the Bishop. Basil's view was that "It is a pity that it should be in the power of people outside the Colony, some of whom know nothing of it, to take away from the life of the Colony a service which has been the centre of corporate life of the staff".⁸⁵ Jackson was very sad that intercommunion was discontinued. He felt that the unity of fellowship was in danger. He stopped corporate communion of the staff at the beginning of each term. However, Basil's view was that "Corporate Communion is not an end in itself. It has been a very precious symbol of our unity in the Colony, but it is not worth preserving the symbol at the cost of that for which it stands".⁸⁶

Mission after ninety-one Years. With a record and retrospect of the Diocese of Colombo (1940).

⁸⁵ Jackson, Basil, 18.

⁸⁶ G.C. Jackson, *Basil: Portrait of a missionary*, (Colombo, 2004),

G B Jackson co-operated with the Principal who encouraged the growth of interest in Scouting and Guiding. The Colony in this period did much pioneer work in developing vernacular troops, and several times carried off All-Island prizes, particularly for Ranger work.⁸⁷

Rev A C Houlder had a difficult time as he had to promise the Bishop that he would be obedient to the Bishop regarding the running of the activities of the Colony. This was a critical period of the Colony's history as the Bishop's behaviour would disrupt the unity and cordial relations that the Methodists and Anglicans had so far. When the question of the ratification of the CMS work came up, the Bishop had felt that he could approve of the Colony only if it had a separate chapel and a separate hostel for Anglican students.

The news of the problem reached the Anglican authorities in London. The CMS conference concluded that no breach of trust would be involved over the administration of the Colony by handing over the administration of the Colony to a diocesan body. The CMS wished to retain the ownership of the property. However, the Diocese was allowed the use of property and the interest of the endowment. After these discussions in London on the issue of inter-communion, the Bishop was prepared to allow one chapel and to allow attendance of Anglican students at all corporate services except Holy Communion. Fraser, who was present at the meeting of the CMS committee in London, stated that inter-communion was not part of the constitution. The Methodist Conference acted cautiously during this period. Methodists, under the guidance of Jackson, were ready to accept the Diocese of Colombo as the Anglican federator in view of the safeguards already in the constitution of the training colony.

During this time A C Houlder introduced self-government in the men's hostel whereby the management of internal affairs, and to

⁸⁷ Beven, *A History of the Diocese of Colombo*, 298

a lesser extent, matters of discipline were entrusted to a Court of Honour elected by the students.⁸⁸

Basil Jackson

Rev Basil Jackson arrived in Sri Lanka in 1926 and accepted the position of Vice Principal of PTC. Before he became Principal in 1930, he had acted as Principal on a number of occasions when Gibson was away. Basil and Gibson had a very cordial relationship and shared many values in common. They worked together in complete confidence. When Gibson decided to retire, the CMS committee was planning to send their own man to be the successor. However, that did not last long as Houlder's tenure came to an end in 1929. Gibson nominated Jackson's name.⁸⁹ Both of them were interested in working together across denominational lines. They were disturbed by the rules that seemed designed to separate Christians in the name of denominational loyalty. Rev Gibson introduced the practice of sharing joint communion at the beginning and at the end of each term even though the denominational rule forbade this.⁹⁰ It was a joint communion service for all staff members and students. The fact that the rule of the Anglican Church did not approve such practices did not hinder Gibson; therefore, Jackson continued it.

Mrs Jackson came on May 24th 1927. She became a valuable asset to the running of the extra-curricular activities under the charge of the Principal. She took over the social services of the Colony. Dayanivasa, which Rev Jackson began, received her attention. The counselling of female students fell on her shoulders; and, the wives of other teaching staff and lady lecturers also helped in this. The work of the dispensary fell solely on her shoulders as she

⁸⁸ Beven, *A History of the Diocese of Colombo*, 299.

⁸⁹ G.C. Jackson, *Basil: Portrait of a missionary*, (Colombo, 2004)

11.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 15.

had taken a short course in medical work before she arrived in Sri Lanka.⁹¹

In 1940 Jackson was transferred by the Methodist Church to Matara to pastoral and evangelical work in that area. He later became the Chairman of the South Ceylon District of the Methodist Church.

The Jackson Era

The colonial administrative pattern began to change after the legislative reforms in 1931. The Donoughmore Commission proposed reforms which were implemented as the so-called Donoughmore Constitution, resulting in the abolition of the Legislative Council of Ceylon as the colony's legislature, and its replacement by a State Council in 1931. The first election to the State Council of Ceylon was held from 13 to 20 June 1931. This was the first election in a British colony using universal adult franchise.

Education was placed under the control of elected representatives. Education became free in government schools which held about 60 percent of the total number of schools in the country in 1942. The Executive Committee of Education was set up to exercise its powers to create new regulations paving the way for the establishment of a new system of education in Sri Lanka. The new system was expected to ensure that education was provided with equal opportunities for all children in the country, irrespective of social class, economic condition, religion, or ethnic origin. In 1942, a special committee was appointed with C W W Kannangara as chairman to report on the status of education in the country.⁹² Among the recommendations for providing "lasting value to the nation" given in the report, which was published in 1943, were that education should be free from

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 12.

⁹² K. M. de Silva, *A History of Sri Lanka* (London: C. Hurst, 1981), 472-474.

kindergarten to university. Vernacular education received a boost after 1944. Literacy went up to 70 percent in 1946. Education became compulsory between the ages of 5 and 13.

The Education Ordinance of 1939 made an attempt to bring the denominational schools under the control of the government. However, the Bill did not receive sufficient votes to be passed by the State Council.

Dress

There were changes taking place in the national culture of Sri Lanka during the first half of the twentieth century. The Sinhala Buddhist leader, Anagarika Dharmapala (1864-1933) wished to give a national appearance to the Sinhala Buddhist society.⁹³ Most nationalist leaders of the South were impacted by his teaching. One of the resolutions passed at the meeting of the First State Council in 1931⁹⁴ was that a dress reform was essential and that in the evolution of a national dress the cloth, which was a four to six-foot long white or coloured strip of cotton, for men and the sari for women should be the form.⁹⁵ During the principalship of Jackson, the teacher trainees were encouraged to attend classes in the national dress. Therefore, girls wore the Kandyan sari while male students wore the dhoti and kurta. Some scholars have stated that this was a “part of the process of coming to terms with nationalism”.⁹⁶ Thus, we can see the missionaries encouraging the use of “indigenous names, dress, as

⁹³ Dharmapala's advice was the Sinhalese man should not wear trousers like the fair Portuguese.

⁹⁴ This National Assembly was the first one elected under universal franchise granted by the Donoughmore Commission in 1929. Nira Wickramasinghe, *Dressing the Colonised Body: Politics, Clothing, and Identity in Sri Lanka*, London: Orient Longman, 2003, 14, 20.

⁹⁵ Personal File of 'Kannangara leaflet' quoted in Sumathipala, op.cit. 107. *The Ceylon Daily News* of July 7, 1931 has a symposium of view on dress reform.

⁹⁶ *Sri Lanka: A Survey*, 395.

well as the cultivation of native arts and crafts among the Christians.”⁹⁷

Before that, the dress of the male teacher trainees was the European jacket and a white cloth (or a tweed cloth on special occasions). Female students wore a long dress reaching to the ankles. The older generation of school teachers continued to wear this dress. National dress also gave way to trousers and shirt after the swabhasha medium was introduced to higher education in 1960. Before that, European dress was limited to those who could converse in the English language. Anyone who wore the European dress in that period was expected to be able to speak the English language.

J C Harvey

An Anglican priest, J C Harvey, succeeded Jackson. He had come to the Colony in December 1936. He was, simultaneously, the chaplain of the Holy Trinity Church, Pussellawa, during the period 1941-1945. The Vice Principal was H G Sanders for three years (1939-1942). After four years of ministry in Uva, he returned to the Training Colony and remained there for one more year. Thereafter, the Colony had only one missionary in charge.

Canon Harold de Mel

Canon Harold de Mel served as Principal from 1951 till the takeover of the Training College by the Government in January 1962. He was the first Sri Lankan Principal of the Training Colony. He was there when the Training College was taken over by the Government. He continued the traditions created by the previous Principals. However, he was able to move more closely with the students because of the fact that he was a Sri Lankan national.

Vice Principals

The post of Vice Principal was as significant as the post of Principal in the constitution of the Colony. Of the two

⁹⁷ *Sri Lanka: A Survey*, 395

denominations federated for the Colony one would be appointed Principal and the other Vice Principal. Therefore, when an Anglican was in the chair of the Principal, the Vice Principal was to be a Methodist. In the initial years there was no Vice Principal as the Methodists joined the Colony two years after the Colony was set up. The cordiality of relationship between the Principal and the Vice Principal was vital to the running of the institution. The far-sighted personnel who held these two posts enabled the institution to run smoothly, even though there were issues where the two parties did not agree.

Alec Sneath

Rev Alec A Sneath (1890-1948) served at the Training College for two years as Vice Principal. Before coming to Sri Lanka in 1921, he was the Headmaster at Mfantshipim College, Gold Coast (Ghana). He took over the reins of Richmond on 25th September 1922. He and Rev W J T Small exchanged places: Rev Small came from Richmond College, Galle, to the Training College, while Rev Sneath took over the principalship of Richmond College.

In a lecture given in 1921 in Kandy, Rev Sneath referred to what he called the “Dead Hand of Buddhism”. This impaired the susceptibilities of the Buddhists, and roused them to wage a violent campaign against the missionaries in the *Buddhist Chronicle*, a weekly Buddhist journal. Referring to the presence of missionaries in Ceylon, the question was asked: “Have the missionaries from Europe left their home because no one will listen to them?”, and missionaries were requested to quit Ceylon and to go back to their own people who were without a religion. In view of the vehement attacks that appeared in the local papers against the missionaries, it was felt that an expression of solidarity of the South Ceylon District Synod should be secured. This was done in 1923 by a resolution of confidence in the missionaries voted upon by the Ceylonese members of the Synod. The inability to communicate in Sinhala was a

drawback in Sneath's career at PTC. Needless to say, he could not maintain a close relationship with the students as a result.

W J T Small

W J T Small served in the capacity of Vice Principal from December 1922 to December 1926, mostly in connection with the Methodist responsibilities of the Training Colony. He served again from 1953 to 1962 as Warden in charge of the same responsibilities. There were two reasons which made Small decide to move to Peradeniya in 1922. One was that his wife fell sick in Galle. It was believed that her health would improve in the mild climate of Peradeniya. The second reason was that he desired to engage his time in evangelical work. However, he had to leave Sri Lanka owing to the continuing ill-health of his wife. During this time, the Principal of the Colony was Paul Gibson, with whom Small had a very convivial relationship.

Small's saintly character won him the love of the Colony community as well as that of the neighbours. His desire for evangelism is seen in the reports of his evangelical tours.⁹⁸ He organised social gatherings, and conducted dramas, excursions, and mountain climbs with students to improve fellowship among them. These activities were also used as practical lessons to inculcate Christian social ethics in the students.

By this time, he was well-known among the Methodist missionaries as a person who could work in the Sinhala language with fluency. During this period Rev W Reginald Taylor (b 1898), who arrived in Sri Lanka in 1924, was sent to Peradeniya for one year to learn Sinhala with the help of Small at the Training College.

⁹⁸ K.H. M. Sumathipala, *History of education in Ceylon, 1796-1965: With special reference to the contribution made by C.W.W. Kannangara* (Dehiwela: Tisara 1968)145.

It was during his second period at PTC (1953-1962) that Small prepared a concordance in Sinhala for the Sinhala Bible.⁹⁹ It became very useful for the students at the Training Colony as well as outside.

Evangelistic Tours

An important part of the training of evangelists was the evangelistic tours, which occurred several times a term. Following the final examinations of the teacher trainees, a considerable number of them joined the evangelism classes. Some of them took part in these tours. There are reports of Small accompanying students on evangelistic tours. On these tours, the students were exposed to different types of living in rural Sri Lanka. Four evangelist students from the Training Colony with their teachers, Lekamge, John Eagle,¹⁰⁰ and Small went on an evangelistic tour to Laggala, in 1923.¹⁰¹ During their visit to Laggala they discovered that "there is now no education whatever for girls in the district. The women are kept much in the background and marriage customs are lax."¹⁰² These evangelistic tours continued in the period of the next Vice Principal, G B Jackson, as well.

According to the testimony of Messrs D M Liyanage, D J E Karunaratne and I M E Fernando,¹⁰³ in some of these annual excursions, both male and female students took part. They went to Sigiriya, Alagalla, and even Batticaloa, in order to familiarize the students with the variety of cultures in Sri Lanka and create a close and cordial fellowship among the students. *CMCR* 1942 reports the drowning of two lady teacher trainees at the Dunhinda falls.¹⁰⁴ Every other year they were taken to a place in India. They went to Kanjipuram in 1959 where the students were

⁹⁹ Published in 1963 by CLS, Colombo.

¹⁰⁰ He was in charge of Kandy Methodist circuit from 1920 to 1925.

¹⁰¹ *CMCR* (1923): 97-99.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

¹⁰³ They were students in 1922 to 1923 period.

¹⁰⁴ *CMCR* (1948): 373.

hosted by a Methodist church. The lecturers were with the students. Therefore, they received good treatment while in India.

In Small's second tenure, he worked with Canon Harold de Mel. Small's wife had died in 1950 when he came to Sri Lanka for the second time. He continued the practice of evangelism by travelling to various places of the island. Unlike his first tenure, the second tenure was a period of serious challenge to Christianity in Sri Lanka. He had the sad experience of seeing the loss of the Methodist educational establishment that he contributed to build in Sri Lanka with the takeover of denominational schools and training colleges. In fact, most of his time in 1962 was spent on helping the smooth handing over of the assets of Richmond College, Galle, and the Teacher Training College to the Government.

Faculty and Staff

PTC had an academic faculty of international scholars, led by the Principal, who worked interchangeably with the colleagues appointed by the constituent churches. The Principal was assisted by a Vice Principal. At the time of the takeover of PTC by the government, the teaching staff included the Principal, five male and two female teachers. Two adjunct teachers were also in service.

Two indigenous personnel attached to the Training College deserve attention. One was Edward Samuel Peiris Lekamge. He embraced Christianity and was baptised in 1890 at a CMS school in Hanguranketha. Later, he was trained at the CMS Training Institute in Kotte. He was in one of the first batches of evangelism trainees. He joined the teaching staff of the Training College later. The other was Bezalel Patabendige who designed the structure of the Colony chapel and did its wood carvings.

Other than the missionary teachers, there was a complaint of inadequacy with regard to the academic standing of teachers. Many of them were not sufficiently acquainted with school

conditions and practice. The insufficient number of teachers meant that one lecturer had to play many roles. However, the fact that the staff was in residence at the Colony was important. The presence of women lecturers and missionary wives in residence at the Colony was also an advantage to the female students.

Students

As mentioned earlier, the first batch of male students of the CMS came into residence in 1915, for a refresher course for one term. The WMMS Training College in Galle was closed and the students were transferred to Peradeniya in 1917. The regular Men's Department was opened on 21st September 1917. On September 24th 1917, the first combined lectures for male and female students commenced. In 1918, the Training School had fifty-two students, including regular students, evangelists, and catechists. Twenty-eight regular students completed their training in 1922.¹⁰⁵ The students were expected to come into residence before they registered for classes.

The Dalton Plan of teaching was introduced to PTC in 1930. It was an educational concept that used as the model for teacher training in this period. It was created by Helen Parkhurst in 1914.¹⁰⁶ On 27th May 1920, a very enthusiastic article describing the working of the Dalton Plan was published in the *Times Educational Supplement*. It was inspired by the intellectual ferment at the turn of the twentieth century. The Dalton Plan completely restructured the secondary school day into subject studies, with students determining their own daily schedules. The aim was to achieve a balance between a student's talent and the needs of the community. The Dalton Plan was a method of education by which pupils work at their own pace, and receive individual help from the teacher when necessary. In 1922, the UK

¹⁰⁵ *CMCR* (1930): 183.

¹⁰⁶ Helen Parkhurst, *Education on the Dalton Plan* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Company, 1922), 15–16.

Board of Education gave official approval and many hundreds of schools in England adopted some form of the Dalton Plan.

The Principal, in his annual report in 1924 stated, regarding their method of teaching, that "it is an adaptation of the Dalton Method. As far as possible the students work by themselves under the guidance of the Staff. Leading questions are set and more active initiative and thought encouraged."¹⁰⁷ This method of education did not bring about the expected results. Therefore, it was abandoned.

In 1931, the curriculum of the Training College changed as a result of the proposals given by the Education Department of the Government. The extracurricular activities outside the time table were abandoned. The Dalton method which required leisure for private study was given up because of the difficulty of supervision. Most attention in the curriculum was given to teacher training and practical work relating to teaching in vernacular schools.

Female Students

Throughout the half century of its existence PTC made a valuable contribution by training female teachers with the same vigour it gave to the training of male students. In fact, more than one half of students of the Training Colony throughout this period were female. Their service in the classes at primary level was sought in all schools.

Teaching

The teacher trainees were given two years' training in a spiritual atmosphere. In addition, they were given three months of special study in the methods of evangelistic work and Scripture teaching. On the other hand, the students who were trained as evangelists

¹⁰⁷ Wanasinghe, op. cit. 11.

of the Methodist Church “were given three years training before they were sent out into the field”.¹⁰⁸

In 1936, the training course for teachers was extended from two years to three and this eased the pressure of an overcrowded curriculum. The *Church Record* says: “We have felt immediate benefits from it in the restoration of extra time table subjects like gardening to the curriculum. A number of small Literary, Scientific and Art Societies have begun to flourish in the new-found leisure”. The *Record* continues: “All the leaving men students qualified in the Scoutmasters’ District Training Course while at the Colony. The Women’s Ranger Company distinguished themselves by winning the All Island Challenge Cup in open competition with English and Vernacular Ranger Companies from all over Ceylon”.¹⁰⁹

Jackson reports in 1929 that “...thirteen Wesleyan students completed their training at the Colony, eight men and five women. One woman failed in the Government final Examination, and will be returning to the Colony for an extra year but the twelve successful students have been appointed to Wesleyan Schools. Requests for the appointment of 12 women teachers were received from Principals and Managers of Wesleyan schools. Those available were appointed to the most needed schools. Fourteen Wesleyan Candidates – 7 men and 7 women – have been accepted for training this year”.¹¹⁰

The classes were held from 8.00am to 4.00pm with a lunch break of one hour. Subjects in the Colony since 1950 were Sinhala, Arithmetic, Geometry, History, Geography, Hygiene, General Science, Principles of Education, Methods of Education, Psychology, and Kindergarten Teaching Methods. English was taught during five periods of the week. There were three grades

¹⁰⁸ Small, 370.

¹⁰⁹ *CMCR*, 1936

¹¹⁰ *CMCR*, 1929, 25.

of classes depending on the English proficiency of the student. Art, Kandyan Dancing, Agriculture, Handwork (rukkala), and Physical exercise began at 7.30am and continued for half an hour.

Criticism

Criticism of the Training College's overcrowded lecture programme, the lack of freedom for students to discover things for themselves, petty restrictions on male-female relationships were not without reason. There was also the opinion that the two-year course was not sufficient for students entering upon their training at 18 years of age. The frequently expressed charge in this period was that the Training Colony imposed a discipline on their students which was unsuited to young people of the age group 18-22. The restrictions were more prominent as this was a co-educational institution.

Entrance Qualifications

Up to the year 1942, the Training Colony had the freedom to select the candidates from churches as they wished. However, the Methodists and Anglicans had their own entrance examinations where Scripture knowledge and the knowledge of other subjects were tested. In addition to this, the local minister's recommendation had an influence.¹¹¹ These applications had to be supported by the recommendation of the Quarterly Meeting of the Methodist Synod.

The students were admitted to the normal direction of the Training College by each federating body according to their own choice in the early years before the Entrance Examination conducted by the government was introduced. The Colony Entrance Examination was held in July each year. In addition, Wesleyan candidates for training were required to take an examination in the 2nd Catechism. On their selection, they were expected to pay a certain amount of money per term. The syllabus for the Colony Entrance examination included General

¹¹¹ *CMCR*, 1929, p.33 - 33.

Scripture Knowledge, General Knowledge, Arithmetic, Sinhala Grammar, Composition, History, and Geography. The standard of the Colony Examination was similar to the Government Teachers' Preliminary Examination.¹¹² The candidates so admitted were bound to serve the Methodist Church as well as the Anglican Church, depending on the student's denominational affiliation, for a period of five years. They were required to go to whatever school the Church deemed to appoint them to on leaving the Colony. The first appointment was normally for a period of at least one year.¹¹³

Government Intervention

In 1942, the government insisted on a common examination for all training schools in Sri Lanka. There was a fear that the examination would enable non-Christians also to enter the Training Colony. In 1942, fifteen students not belonging to the federation churches were admitted to the Training Colony on the results of the entrance examination. They amounted to a quarter of the student population of the Colony at the time. In addition, the Government Training College also was evacuated in 1942 to Peradeniya Training Colony. The Government Training College functioned as part of the Training Colony for two and half years till the permanent buildings were ready at Mirigama.¹¹⁴

Practicing Schools

Peradeniya Teacher Training College had some practicing schools for teacher trainees to practice their teaching skills. These were the best of the ordinary public schools. The practicing schools were at Gatambe, Peradeniya, and Boyagama. It was a requirement for the teacher trainees to undergo a period of teaching practice. The lecturers of the College supervised the teaching activities of the students on the days they went to practicing schools. An advisory teacher from the Colony staff

¹¹² *CMCR*, 1929, 33.

¹¹³ *CMCR*, 1929, 33.

¹¹⁴ Beven, *A History of the Diocese of Colombo*, 301.

visited these schools to give practical help and advice. Two lecturers came to supervise the students practising their teaching in these so-called practicing schools. The students were expected to teach in the presence of their lecturers.

Social Mobility

The slow progress of social mobility for vernacular teachers was a consequence of government policy. Most of the students of the Training Colony came from the lower social classes. They were from manual labour or peasant class. The swabhasha teachers who passed out from the Training College were expected to teach a wide variety of subjects. Their classes were large and the facilities in the vernacular schools were poor. Compared to that the English teacher trainees were able to specialize in two or three subjects. The specialization meant they gained more prestige and a higher salary. They commanded a higher status in society because of their ability to communicate in the English language.¹¹⁵ The swabhasha educated were only able to occupy the lower levels of the occupational ladder. Therefore, they remained socially also in the lower ranks. The swabhasha teachers believed that they were being treated as second class professionals.¹¹⁶ In 1922, the Department of Education fixed the salary scale for teachers in vernacular schools. In 1927, the School Teachers' Pension Ordinance was introduced to provide for the teachers in denominational schools. The English trained teacher began at a salary nearly double that of a swabhasha trained teacher. There was a big gap between these two groups of teachers.¹¹⁷ The English teachers' pupils also came from influential families, thereby increasing the prestige of their teachers.

¹¹⁵ Howard Wriggins, 338; K.M. de Silva, op.cit, 330; Obeyesekere, *Buddhism Transformed*, 96.

¹¹⁶ Wriggins, 337

¹¹⁷ Hansard 1927, 918; Sumathipala, 191.

Regarding this disparity, C W W Kannangara made a statement to the State Council in 1944: "We have divided the population into two sections, one superior and the other inferior – one trousered and the other cloth-ed. We have two classes of society in this country divided by English education".¹¹⁸ The Kannangara Committee in 1943 stated: "The development of our educational system has resulted in two types of schools – one attended mainly by those who can afford to pay fees and the other attended by those whose means do not permit them to do so".¹¹⁹

The Peradeniya Teacher Training College was a vernacular educational institution. The students aspired to be teachers in vernacular Sinhala schools. The highest that they could aim till the introduction of Sinhala as the national language in 1956 was to be a headmaster of a Sinhala-medium school. The students with vernacular education could not aspire to hold white-collar jobs in this period.

New horizons for the Sinhala educated emerged during the period of agitation for swabhasha. The trainees of this institution also contributed to the clamour for the rightful place of the restoration of the local languages and culture in the country in the 1956 elections. The swabhasha teachers formed a powerful force in Bandaranaike's *Pancha maha balavegaya* (five great forces).¹²⁰ The Sinhala Only Bill was passed in Parliament in June 1956. The salaries of Sinhala-trained schoolteachers were brought to the same level as those of the English medium in that year.¹²¹

¹¹⁸ Hansard, 1944, 847.; Carlton Samarajiwa, "Unaided Schools", in *Education in Ceylon: A Centenary Volume*, (Colombo: Department of Education and Cultural Affairs, 1969), 735-744.

¹¹⁹ Quoted in Carlton Samrajiwa, op. cit. p. 740.

¹²⁰ K.M. de Silva, *A History of Sri Lanka*, 495.

¹²¹ Swarna Jayaweera 2010, op.cit.48

Evangelist Department

The Peradeniya PTC had a separate department for training evangelists.¹²² At the beginning, trainees included evangelists, students preparing for confirmation and a few others coming for short programmes. The male and female departments of the CMS Teacher Training College at Kotte were transferred in 1916 to the instituted Training Colony at Peradeniya.¹²³ From 1916, the Wesleyan Methodist Mission combined with the Church Missionary Society in maintaining this centre for the training of Sinhala-medium teachers and evangelists. In May 1916, the Women's Training School of CMS was transferred from Kotte to Peradeniya. Training of evangelists of the Methodist Church was also begun by Miss Annie Wightman at Richmond Hill, about 1912; and in 1925, this work was transferred to the Peradeniya Training Colony, and Miss Elsie Abayasekera, who had been on the staff of the Richmond Hill School for a number of years and had assisted in training work, was transferred to Peradeniya to take charge of the training of Women evangelists. She continued this work till 1934.¹²⁴

Even the teachers who were trained there often had some evangelistic content in their education. The Methodist Training Centre of female evangelists begun in 1912 at Richmond Missionary Compound was transferred to the Peradeniya Training Colony in 1925.

In 1929, five men and two women evangelists of the Methodist Church completed their training; they were all recommended by the Training College staff. They had had regular practical training on evangelistic tours to Laggala and other outstation locations and in the Dispensary of the Colony.¹²⁵ In 1939, there were eleven men and women professionally trained as evangelists at the

¹²² Jackson, *Basil*, 22.

¹²³ Balding, *Centenary Volume*, 58.

¹²⁴ W.J.T. Small, *History of Methodist Church in Ceylon*, 287

¹²⁵ *CMCR*, 1929, 25.

College.¹²⁶ Anglicans called them catechists. Methodists called them evangelists.

The Methodists conducted an examination for those whose names were supported by the recommendation of the Quarterly Meeting of the Methodist Synod. They were required to undergo a medical examination before they were finally accepted by the Synod. These examinations were held in November each year.

The Methodist candidates had to sit for an entrance examination. The subjects were Grammar and Language, History and geography, Arithmetic, Essay Writing, and General knowledge. In addition to this, their religious knowledge was also tested. This section was held separately for men and women. The knowledge of the Second Catechism was compulsory for both men and women.¹²⁷

Problems in the Evangelist Department

In the normal department no teacher is ever considered unless he is fully qualified by special training for the work, but in the Evangelist Department we have been content hitherto to make use of the services of unqualified men in the capacity of pupil teachers, or else to be content with a weekly visit from some minister resident in the neighbourhood.¹²⁸

The Evangelist Department trained Catechists, Evangelists, and Colporteurs, with the hope of supplying such candidates to the federating churches.¹²⁹ The department suffered due to the unavailability of suitable teachers. Jackson says, in 1930, that "During the last two years the Rev. D.F.R. Wijesinghe (CMS) has

¹²⁶ Jackson, *Basil*, 24.

¹²⁷ *CMCR* (1930): 32-35.

¹²⁸ Jackson's Memorandum dated 29/1/30 (available at the Methodist Archives, Colombo)

¹²⁹ *Ibid*

been coming for one day a week, but his duties in Gampola have made his visits very irregular of late...".¹³⁰ Therefore, he suggested that an arrangement be made with the Christian Council Literature Committee to obtain a person on a half-time basis to teach evangelism.¹³¹

Music

Music was an important component in the teaching of the Training College where evangelism played an important part. The teachers who passed out from the Colony had to teach every rural believing member to sing the congregational hymns of the church with meaning. It is believed that "couched effectively in music and sung in clear, distinct tones, the truths of God find ready lodgement in sincere hearts". This is important in the Sinhala culture where the tradition of using music for religious worship was not known. Writing in 1962, Rev Harold de Mel, the last Christian Principal of the Colony, stated:

These trainees were specially talented in music; with their help we were able to popularize Sinhalese lyrics. We also had an Orchestra of Stringed instruments, and two past students working in Kandy strengthened it. Our help was sought by the Kandy schools, churches and the University in singing lyrics. Several new lyrics were composed and published, some of them to Tamil tunes too. We have been able to broadcast on festive occasions and for the Christian half hour we produced a '*Geetha-natakaya*' or traditional opera. On the invitation of the Bishop, our orchestra played at the Kurunegala cathedral twice. At our last carol service there was a record gathering of all denominations, including seven Roman Catholic Brothers from Ampitiya Seminary.¹³²

¹³⁰ Ibid

¹³¹ Ibid

¹³² *CMCR* (1962), 24.

The Day's Work at the Colony

Regarding one day's work at the Colony, Gibson wrote:

We have planned out the training with each specified need in view. A lonely Christian life demands above all the power to meet God in silence. Hence meditation is encouraged, and the first half-hour of each day (6.45 to 6.15 a.m.) is spent in this form of worship. So often, we in England nearly knock at God's door in the early morning to tell Him we are starting and then rush off without Him. How different is the day spent in the sure knowledge of His accompanying presence! If there is power in our work at Peradeniya one at least of the causes is the silent period spent in Bible-reading and prayer.

The body must be kept fit: so after prayer comes drill. This not only gives health, but the efficient students get a Government certificate, which enables to teach drill and earn a special grant in the village school. The public prayers that follow are an expression of co-operate worship. Though in a lonely village it may be difficult to reproduce this, yet the memories of a hall spacious and beautiful re-echoing to the praise of many voices should be an inspiration in the days to come.

The Scripture lesson supplies the knowledge of Christian truth needed for one's own growth as well as for bringing others to Christ. We divide the scripture as we do other subjects. To the Entrance class the facts of the life of Christ and of the Old Testament history are simply taught. To the first year is given a general knowledge of the books of the Bible and of the development of the early Church. We try to take the second year very simply but deeply into the glorious heritage of our Faith and explain its fundamental truths to them.

The usual day's routine follows. Necessary class-teaching to enable them to obtain their Government Certificate as teachers. Routine work done by the staff, of whom I can say, with joy and gratitude that not one is working here merely for his or her salary. Our examination results have been excellent for some years, and we have received the praise of the

Educational Department, and increased grants. Praise is not so hard to get: increased grants are rarer.

It may help you to appreciate the solid work our staff have to do when I say that some students come hardly knowing how to add and multiply correctly, even though they have passed their eighth standard, and within three years we have to make them able to pass an equivalent to the Primary National Teachers Diploma. The Examination, of course, includes practical teaching and class-work as well as the theory of education, and a sound knowledge of usual elementary subjects.”¹³³

Games follow in the evenings. A teacher who cannot recreate his children, as well as teach them, should resign. Games keep our students fit, teach them discipline and control, and inculcate the elements of (co-operate) corporate effort so sorely needed in this land. While some play, others do agriculture. If the teacher of history and arithmetic can grow a better coco-nut and produce a finer rice crop, then he can truly guide the destinies of his village, and this is what he ought to do, and no less.

A great lack in all villages is the absence of the artistic. Here, as far as possible, we have decorated our buildings with Sinhalese work – painting and carving. The students learn to appreciate the best art of their country and once a week the opportunity is given to all in turn to learn decorative painting of wood or clay.

In these various ways we try to train them to meet with God and wait upon Him and to come forth to teach what they have learned and to develop in themselves and others all that makes for beauty and health of body, mind, and spirit.¹³⁴

¹³³ J.P.S.R.R. Gibson, *Limited Company with Unlimited Possibilities* 1921, 220

¹³⁴ Gibson, op.cit.. 219

Church Union

The fostering of a desire for a single united church in Ceylon, and along with this a better understanding in the case of each Mission of the principles for which each Society stands.

Regarding the ecumenical nature of the institution Rev Gibson reports: "This is not merely our estimate of ourselves, but the verdict of men who have travelled, visiting Missions in the East. One such traveller said that throughout a long tour he had heard much about re-union work, but here for the first time he saw it".¹³⁵

The Teacher Training College at Peradeniya has been considered to be a practical step taken towards church union in Sri Lanka.¹³⁶ This experiment led to the discussion between Ernest Copleston, the Bishop of Colombo, and the Chairman of the Methodist Church, Rev A E Restarick, regarding a possible union between the two denominations. The Synod of the Methodist Church in 1920 adopted a resolution to accept comity among the missions in Sri Lanka.

The erecting of the chapel at the compound of the Training College has also been regarded as a valuable contribution to the prospective church union discussions. Having been inspired by the experiment at the Training College, the Church leaders met at Trinity College, Kandy, to discuss the problems relating to the issues of Church Union. The moving force was Basil Jackson, the Principal of the Training College. They formed a society called Friends of Reunion. Basil Jackson proposed: "The Synod of the South Ceylon District requests the Provisional Synod to issue an invitation in the name of the Methodist Church in Ceylon."¹³⁷

As a result of the successful experiment of *PTC*, a notable event in 1922 was the Union of Teacher-Training for Women for Tamil-

¹³⁵ Gibson, op. cit. p.220.

¹³⁶ Kanagasabai Wilson, op.cit.48.

¹³⁷ Kanagasabai Wilson, op. cit. 49.

medium teachers. The first United Christian Women's Teacher Training College was begun in Vembadi. This union was of the Methodist, Anglican, and the American missionaries in Jaffna.

Ecumenical (Corporation) Cooperation

Rev Jackson wrote: "The Training Colony has always stood for certain ideals in the life of the Ceylon Church. In the first place, as a Union Institution it has sought to bring together students of all Protestant Churches in the Island, and without impairing their loyalty to their own church introduce them into the wider fellowship of the Church of Christ. Although opportunity is given for the specific teaching of their own Church, and students attend their own Church Service every Sunday morning yet the main current of the spiritual life and religious teaching is deeper than any denominational teaching or worship....Long after the students leave the Colony to go into distant and often remote corners of the Island, there is evidence of their loyalty to this larger fellowship, at once enriching and transcending their denominational loyalty".

There were special occasions with special celebrations. The students and teachers took part in an Easter celebration before the students went home for the Easter vacation. They got up at 4.00am, lit their candles and went on a procession to the top of the hill shouting hallelujah.

Pastoral Supervision

The Peradeniya Training Colony was a source of strength to the Kandy circuit of the Methodist Church. Pastoral oversight of the students at the Training Colony was the responsibility of the Kandy circuit, and arrangements were made for all Methodist students to attend the Sinhalese service at Kandy during term time.¹³⁸

¹³⁸ Small, *A History of the Methodist Church in Ceylon, 1814-1964*, (Colombo: Wesley Press, 1971). 350

Anglicans and Baptists had their own oversight of teacher trainees. The Baptist ministers at Kandy, Matale, and Beligodapitiya had a hand in the spiritual formation of these students. Anglicans were mainly under the supervision of the chaplain at Trinity College.

Foreign Dignitaries

Several foreign dignitaries on their visit to Kandy made it a point to visit the Training College mainly to see the chapel built according to Sri Lankan architecture. Among them was Rev G G Findlay, co-author of *The History of the Wesleyan Methodist Mission*. The Rev G G Findlay, DD, who at that time was the Professor of New Testament Language and Literature, Headingley College, visited PTC in 1922.

When the University of Ceylon was set up at Peradeniya in 1952 there was no facility for a residence of the Protestant Chaplain. Rev Somasiri K Perera (1931-2010) who was the first chaplain resided at the Training College, Peradeniya, while he was the university chaplain from 1955 to 1957. While at the Colony he took part in counselling and worship services.

Ecumenical

The Training College was the venue of many ecumenical gatherings of the Protestant Church. Christian conferences, holiday camps, Bible courses, training of evangelists were conducted regularly during the vacations.¹³⁹ In 1977, Rev Small said: "Peradeniya was a successful experiment in missionary cooperation, and during our four years there we practised full communion together, and there was a delightful sense of freedom. The Principal, Rev Paul Gibson, was an inspiring colleague, as was also Mr E S P Lekamge, Head of the Evangelistic Department. I am glad to have had those four years of experience

¹³⁹ CMCR, 1962, 34.

there which brought me into closer touch with our Sinhalese teachers and evangelists”.¹⁴⁰

Motto

Even the motto that Fraser selected showed an insight. Mottos are generally quick and short expressions capturing the purpose, mission, maxim, and the spirit of higher educational institutions. The PTC motto was “Victory through self-sacrifice” (Phil. 2:6–8). Christian texts such as those in Revelation depict victory through self-sacrifice. Most mottos in this period appeared in Latin or Greek. However, Rev Fraser introduced a biblical expression in Sinhala as the motto of the Training College. It was an indication of his desire to enhance Christian work in Sinhala.

PTC was, from the beginning, an institution to train Christian teachers who would serve as catalysts of dissemination of the Gospel in villages. Their motto displayed that spirit. Therefore, G C Jackson states: “...The Church continued to insist that all the staff of their schools should be Christians. They had no freedom to use the school as a means of direct evangelism, but by staffing them entirely with Christians they created in rural Ceylon, groups of Christians who were part of the local community”.¹⁴¹ “...At the same time, the Church hoped that since each school had a small group of Christian teachers who inevitably became part of the community, it might happen that the Church would grow here and there in rural Ceylon.”

Buddhist Reactions

PTC was considered by the missionary founders as a centre for evangelism. Therefore, missionaries who were interested in evangelism desired to come there.¹⁴² From 1921 to 1922, the Methodist representative in the teaching faculty of the Training

¹⁴⁰ *Darsana*, 1977, p. 8

¹⁴¹ Jackson, *Basil*, 13.

¹⁴² <http://richmondcollege.org/principals/small.html>

(retrieved: April 10, 2013).

College was Rev Alec A Sneath, who had served as the Headmaster of Mfantsipim School in Ghana from 1911 to 1918. He had a reputation of being an efficient administrator while at Mfantsipim. Alec A Sneath was the first Vice Principal of the Training College and assisted Rev Gibson, representing the Methodist Church. His publication entitled *The Dead Hand of Buddhism* created opposition from the Buddhists in the Kandy area.¹⁴³ As a result, Rev Sneath found it difficult to live in a Buddhist enclave like Peradeniya. He made a mutual arrangement with the Principal of Richmond College to exchange places, and took over the reins of Richmond College on 25th September 1922.¹⁴⁴

The arrival of Rev Small enabled the opposition to fizzle out. His associations with the Buddhists in the neighbourhood of Richmond Hill enabled him to deal with the Buddhists in Peradeniya in a cordial way. His conversational ability in Sinhala was an added advantage in the Teacher Training College where education was imparted in that language. Rev Small was aware that Buddhist opposition was nationalistic rather than religious.¹⁴⁵

The Old Students' Association

The students who passed out of the Colony kept in touch with the institution through the Old Students' Association. Each year there was a meeting and eminent educationists were invited to address the members.

In 1932, when Rev Houlder was acting as Principal there was a programme of discussions and talks for twelve days, from 27th August to 9th September, at the Training Colony for the passing-

¹⁴³ *CMCR* (1919): 111; Sneath, "The dead hand of Buddhism," *The Buddhist Chronicle* (December 12, 1923): 6ff.

¹⁴⁴ From the Peradeniya Training Colony he changed places with Rev. Small as Principal of Richmond College, Galle. Mr. & Mrs. Sneath moved to Richmond on 25th September 1922 and left Ceylon at the end of February 1939.

¹⁴⁵ Stanley Bishop, "Retrospect and Prospect," *CMCR* (1926): 29.

out students. Besides the twenty-eight regular students who had just finished their training, there were seven evangelists and four catechists of the WMMS. There were six Bible teachers of the CMS and several members of the Colony staff present. Among the speakers were Rev Restarick (WMMS), H J Charter (BMS), and Miss Evelyn Karney (CMS).¹⁴⁶ The tradition of conducting courses for alumni of the PTC was sporadically undertaken with the help of teachers from the Colony as well as outside. Jackson tried to conduct the holiday refresher courses for alumni on a regular basis. It did not continue after his departure, despite the fact that the experiment was successful.

Women

Peradeniya Teacher Training College was a mixed school. For the first time men and women students were taught together in the same class and worshipped together from the first joint worship service.¹⁴⁷

Single-sex education and religious education in the division of education along gender lines as well as religious teachings on education have been traditionally dominant in Sri Lanka. There was some progress in female education since the beginning of the nineteenth century. It initially tended to be focused on the primary-school level and was related to the upper sections of society. As women's employment and education was recognized as valuable very early in the British period there was a need for female teachers. In 1921, the female literacy rate was 50 percent among Christians while the rate for Buddhists was 17 percent.¹⁴⁸ From the beginning, PTC had female students. As noted earlier, the female section of the CMS teacher Training College was transferred to PTC in 1916.

¹⁴⁶ *CMCR* (1932): 173.

¹⁴⁷ Beven, *op. cit.* 297.

¹⁴⁸ Walter Nubin, *Sri Lanka: Current Issues and Historical Background* (New York: Nova Science Pub Inc., 2003), 167.

Gibson states: "...we are co-educational. Men and women are trained together; the classes are joint, and, what is most remarkable of all, there are Singhalese women teachers taking joint classes of men and women. I believe this is unique in India and Ceylon, if not in the East generally. The results are highly satisfactory. There is careful organization and supervision, and there has been no trouble. The men learn to respect the women students and teachers, and also are forming ideas as to the kind of girl best suited to become a teacher's wife, so that later marriage will be more than a mere lottery. The threat of holding up to ridicule the next love letter discovered has prevented any further undue waste of time in that direction".¹⁴⁹ Edward Fernando reminiscing about his life at PTC in the 1959-60 period stated: "Although there was cordial and friendly relationship among both sexes love affairs were not allowed. If there were such affairs they did not express in public. Some couples have got married after they left the Colony".

Special Worship Services

There was another special service to celebrate seed sowing and harvesting, which was known as 'beating the bounds'. Jackson made the Harvesting Service "... based upon the harvesting ceremonies used in every Sinhalese village in that period, only instead of the element of fear and propitiation of evil spirits, it has been made a service of praise and thanksgiving".¹⁵⁰ Students carried the sheaves of paddy with songs of thanksgiving and the beautiful rhythmic chant of Sinhala 'kavi' to the threshing floor.¹⁵¹

Beating the bounds is an ancient custom observed in some English and Welsh parishes. A group of old and young members of the community would walk the boundaries of the parish, usually led by the parish priest and church officials, to share the knowledge of where the boundaries lay, and to pray for

¹⁴⁹ Gibson, *Ceylon Churchman* (1929): 220.

¹⁵⁰ Wanasinghe, *op. cit.* 11.

¹⁵¹ *CMCR* (1928): 94

protection and blessings for the parish lands. They walked round the parish, striking certain points with rods. This was a large procession, headed by the clergyman, that would beat the bounds over a period of two days. These traditions taken from England were amalgamated with local traditions to present an indigenous Christian form of celebration.

There was also a special programme of worship for the out-going students. This was known as the valedictory service. It was held after their final examinations and before leaving PTC for employment. A closing or farewell statement or address delivered by a special guest was a significant part of the graduation ceremony. Each student was blessed by the Principal and the Vice Principal on this occasion.

Indigenous

In the establishment of the Training Colony, even before the Methodists entered the scene, Rev A G Fraser showed much vision in selecting a site, pronouncing the intention of the Colony. He identified twenty acres of land at the Peradeniya Junction because of its proximity to the local agrarian community: "The training was to be such as would draw the students into closer touch with village life and with native thought and industry". It would include "instructions in teaching and preaching, the study of the history of the island and the tenets of Buddhism, that students may relate their teaching to the thoughts of the people".

The Training Colony did not deviate from the objective of the founding fathers with regard to conversion of the non-Christian masses. PTC did instill in the minds of the teachers who underwent training there that "being a Christian does not require the rejection of everything that was national and embracing everything that came from the west". The Colony stood for indigenization of the Church. Basil Jackson wrote that an ideal of the Colony was "that of a truly Sinhalese Church, preserving and adapting that which is good in the life and worship of the older churches of the west, but not afraid to go forward into new paths

and to express the worship of God in forms and services which are natural and truly expressive of the emotions of the worshippers.”

The students who went through the Training Colony in such an environment were expected to undergo total development of ‘Heart, Hand and Head’. When educational psychologists speak of development of cognitive, affective, and psycho-motor skills, they also refer to the development of these three domains on which Jackson insisted.

A great deal of off-the-job techniques, too, were adopted in teacher development at PTC. Mention has already been made of the activities of the Old Students Association in organizing seminars and discussions on wide-ranging topics which would have broadened the outlook of PTC alumni in the field. In 1930, the SCD organized a Vacation School in Matara for teachers of village schools. Seventy-five teachers attended the course though it was held during school holidays. It aimed at giving teachers some basic training in teaching as well as providing an opportunity to receive Christian teaching and experience Christian fellowship. Church records also speak of the Teachers’ Conference held from time to time in places like Galle, Colombo and Kandy, at which eminent scholars addressed the teachers.¹⁵² In these gatherings, the alumni of PTC were the driving force.

Social Services

Social service was part of the student curriculum. In 1931, the students made a special contribution when the area around the Colony was affected by serious floods, caused by the swelling of the Mahaveli River due to heavy rain, in May. All available resources of the Colony were devoted to helping and caring for the neighbours. The Peradeniya Methodist vernacular school was

¹⁵² Number 1922 (*CMCR* [1922]: 173).

situated on the banks of the Mahaweli Ganga, and was washed away by floods in 1837.¹⁵³

There was a regular flow of poor individuals who came to seek help from the missionary teachers on a daily basis. They usually came very early in the morning before the day's work began.

Dispensary

From 1927 to 1950, there was a dispensary in the Training Colony. It was a place where the neighbours could come for medical treatment. It was one of the chief tasks assigned to the Principal's wife. Mrs Sandy Jackson had undertaken a course of studies in First Aid which covered simple nursing before she arrived in Sri Lanka. Basil Jackson's letters to his wife in England shows that they administered vaccinations against smallpox in this dispensary.¹⁵⁴ Mrs Jackson spent two days a week to attend to the patients at the dispensary. The malaria epidemic of 1934-35 was devastating to the neighbourhood of the Colony. It gave an opportunity for extensive social work among the people. In December 1934, when the malaria epidemic was severe in the area, the staff and students played a major role in providing relief. The Colony logbook reads: "The Principal was responsible for the temporary hospital opened at Yalagoda in close proximity of the Colony. This dispensary was active during the floods in 1933, 1940 and 1941. During the widespread epidemic of Malaria in 1934 there were 104 patients who were offered residential facility for a short period in the Dispensary. Evangelist students and second year women students made a house-to-house visitation, distributing quinine and attending to the sick. An emergency meeting of the Village Improvement Society¹⁵⁵ of the

¹⁵³ W.J.T. Small, *A History of the Methodist Church in Ceylon, 1814-1964*, 72. (Hereafter *HMC*).

¹⁵⁴ Basil Jackson's letter 6th February 1926. (Quoted in G.C. Jackson, *op. cit.* 9)

¹⁵⁵ The Village Improvement Society was formed in the village mainly at the suggestion of the PTC students to deal with the emergency situation.

Gangapalata was called to organize relief". It is reported that about 300 patients were treated for Malaria at the dispensary, Relief Centre at the Colony and by the same team of students and teachers of PTC at Gelioya. There was a visit of a government official to the Relief Centre in this period to oversee the work. "He promised a grant of Rs. 75 and medicine. Dispensary referred to here is the one run by the Colony for the benefit of the village in the vicinity."

Mission Compound

A mission compound is a group of buildings and related formations used primarily for Christian missionary work. They are separated from the rest of the neighbouring community for purposes of safety and security. A normal mission compound included a church, gardens, learning halls, dormitories and fields. A missionary who was involved in evangelism, offered support through education, healthcare and economic development. The mission compound was helpful in the co-ordination of their work. The Training Colony was somewhat similar to a mission compound although it was an ecumenical institution. The missionaries often requested the Colony to offer shelter to persons from remote villages who were interested in Christianity but were rejected by their families.

Dayaniwasa was a part of the mission compound. It was an idea of Rev Jackson to help the new converts to prepare for baptism. It was opened in 1939, and served as a little hostel. It was a converted rubber store, which the Colony opened at the premises as an experiment in the training of those who wished to learn the Christian faith. It is said that the inspiration for this came from Evelyn Karney's "House of Joy" at Talawa.¹⁵⁶ Dayaniwasa started with one candidate. Later the numbers increased. There were seven men in residence in 1940.¹⁵⁷ Jackson says that "they vary in their antecedents. One is an illiterate, one is something of a

¹⁵⁶ Beven, *A History of the Diocese of Colombo*, 299.

¹⁵⁷ *CMCR*, 1930, p.395

pundit. One was the driver of the gospel van, another was a Buddhist priest. One comes from the jungles of the North-west Province and another from Colombo. All these inmates found asylum at Dayaniwasa. However, they had to work hard by doing manual work. They did the work in the household and additional work necessary for the institution to go on. Although there was reluctance at the beginning, in the end all were ready to do their share of work. A part of the day was spent in the field. The large paddy-field in the Colony compound was useful for this purpose. Two hours or more were spent in the class room.”¹⁵⁸ Dayaniwasa lasted two and half years. It was meant for male candidates only. Twenty men passed through the institution during these years. A hostel for women was opened in 1939 the same year as the male hostel. However, it lasted less than one year. The lack of suitable staff and students brought its premature demise.

The authorities of the Colony wanted it to be self-supporting. The Dayaniwasa type of work was revived later, making use of the experience gained. Some of those who passed through the institution kept in touch with the Colony. Several of them showed a real desire to do evangelistic work.¹⁵⁹

This work of providing asylum to new converts in the mission compound continued until the time of the takeover of PTC by the government. In the last three years there were two ex-Buddhist monks receiving Christian instruction while living in the compound.

Sports Activities: Scouting

From the beginning, physical exercise formed a significant part in the Training College curriculum. Scouting for boys and guiding for girls were compulsory. Houlder and Jackson greatly encouraged the growth of interest in these two activities. The Colony did much pioneer work in developing vernacular troops and

¹⁵⁸ *CMCR*, 1937, 8.

¹⁵⁹ Beven, *A History of the Diocese of Colombo*, 300.

therefore carried off all-island prizes for Ranger work several times.¹⁶⁰

Girl Guides was an important area of training. Mrs Jackson was in charge of the Guide Company of the Colony in the 1930s. It is said to have been the first swabhasha one in the country. In 1936, the PTC Rangers won the All Ceylon Rangers Challenge Cup in open competition with the Ranger companies from the rest of the country.

Volleyball was a popular game among the male students while netball was the game available to the female students. In the evenings, the boys played volleyball. The volleyball team had been visiting the Remand Jail in Kandy from the early 1930s.¹⁶¹ There were volleyball tournaments where outsiders were invited to play at the Colony. The students of the Colony were also invited outside to play volleyball tournaments.

Caste Barriers

The education at the Training College cut across caste barriers in a period when caste was regarded as a distinctive social unit. By this time, the increase in literacy had contributed to the relaxation of caste barriers in the low country of Sri Lanka. People of different castes were brought into one classroom and one boarding house where they had to interact with each other. In 1908, writing about the work of Trinity College, Fraser says: "The Boarding principle has not yet been tried in Ceylon in its completeness".¹⁶² His view regarding the boys of Trinity College was also applied to the proposed PTC. He stated that the youth of the country should be given an extended view of life and instilled with a sense of responsibility. The boys from all parts of the country should be educated together in a large boarding establishment. Then they could be trained in such a manner as to

¹⁶⁰ Beven, *A History of the Diocese of Colombo*, 299.

¹⁶¹ *CMCR* (1933): 31

¹⁶² *Extension of Trinity College, Kandy Ceylon*, 28.

be a credit to themselves and set before their people a high ideal of national responsibility.¹⁶³

It is generally accepted that “the Christian mission schools in Sri Lanka helped to reduce caste consciousness, ameliorated the plight of the under-privileged, and in general emphasized the ideal of equality”.¹⁶⁴ Caste was a social concern in the Sri Lankan society in this period. Caste prejudices were there among students even though it was not overtly seen. Most Christians of the Protestant churches came from the status of secondary castes in the low country such as Karawa, Salagama and Durava. However, there were a few from the Goyigama caste as well. Some Anglican and Salvationist teacher trainees who came from the Rambukkana area belonged to the Batgama caste. The students of these communities could use the dining table and classrooms without any complaint of discrimination. By contrast, in the same period, the problems caused by the caste system made it difficult for non-Vellala people to sit together with the Vellalas even in the Christian educational institutions in the Jaffna Peninsula.¹⁶⁵ The Training Colony was a great success where missionaries were able to bring together so-called high castes, secondary castes, and low castes into one dining-hall. Cordial and lasting friendships were developed in the period as they lived in the fraternal fellowship of the Colony.

Basil Jackson commends this regard of Bezalel Navaratne, who was the wood carver and designer of the PTC chapel, saying: “Years passed by, and the family developed in Christian grace and service. At one time the question arose as to giving hospitality to some ‘low caste’ person. Bezalel at once offered. When the

¹⁶³ Ibid., 28.

¹⁶⁴ Brian Holmes, *Educational Policy and the Mission Schools: Case Studies from the British Empire* (place: Rutledge Library, 2013), 105.

¹⁶⁵ J.V. Chelliah, *A Centenary of English Education: The Story of Batticotta Seminary and Jaffna College* (Tellipalai: American Mission Press, 1922), 3-4.

visitor left he gave us a picture; from inside of the family life, which made us praise God for the Christianity it revealed. It is hard enough in western circles to make an unfamiliar guest perfectly at home, it is harder in the East.”¹⁶⁶

Chapel

The chapel was the main place of religious expression at the Colony. The students were expected to attend chapel service even before a special building for the chapel was built. All students came to the chapel after breakfast for a time of prayer and meditation. The Bible held an important place in the sermon delivered at this time. There was a prayer session before releasing students for sleep. This was done at the hostels.

An appeal was made in 1923 by the Principal of the Training Colony, Rev Paul Gibson, for a Chapel. He proposed two conditions for the project in order to maintain the ecumenical nature of the institution. One was that it should not be “consecrated”. The second was that the Bishop of Colombo should cooperate with the Chairman of the Wesleyan Methodist Church at the opening ceremony.¹⁶⁷

Missionaries usually built beautiful worship centres which were often not compatible with the climate and culture of the country. They were almost exact copies of denominational churches in their home countries. Critics of the missionary movement have dismissed much of the Protestant mission movement as cultural and religious imperialism and therefore harmful to the presentation of the Gospel. This may be a debatable issue. Nevertheless, one can easily see attempts made by a few visionaries to read the writing on the wall. In this atmosphere, the chapel built at the Teacher Training College is unique in many ways.

¹⁶⁶ *CMCR*, 1930.

¹⁶⁷ *HMC*, 371.

Trinity College's Chapel was built at the same time as that of the Training Colony. The same people, more or less, were involved in the planning of the two chapels. Initial plans for these chapels were drawn up during the time of Rev A G Fraser (1904 – 24) who had been planning a new chapel for Trinity College. The design and the construction work of the chapel was done in 1922 by Rev Lewis J Gaster, the Vice Principal of Trinity College at the time.¹⁶⁸ The chapel that L J Gaster was asked to design was an inter-denominational one. Its design made it possible for both Methodists and Anglicans to worship together. According to Beven: "The Chapel, as it stands today, is the product of many minds and hands, but its primary conception of a Christian church in the style and idiom of the Kandyan Country was Gibson's".¹⁶⁹

They received ideas from the Royal audience hall of Kandy and Embekke Devale as well as the ruins in Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa.¹⁷⁰ In the building of the chapel, symbols of Christian faith have been incorporated. This can be seen in the carvings of the pillars. The chapel of the Training Colony followed the same design as it was done under the inspiration of Rev A G Fraser at Trinity. As mentioned earlier, the Trinity Chapel as well as the Training College Chapel were designed by Gaster: one of stone, taking after the Anuradhapura style, and the other of wood, adopting the Embekke Style.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁸ L. J. Gaster came to Sri Lanka in 1910. He served as assistant chaplain, Master and Vice Principal at Trinity from 1910. Before that he had been teaching at the CMS St. Mark's Training College. He had his studies at an art College in London. His wife Harriet (Hobson) had been working for the CMS in Kotte since 1908. Beven, *A History of the Diocese of Colombo*, 297; Balding, *Centenary Volume*, 81.

¹⁶⁹ Beven, *A History of the Diocese of Colombo*, 297.

¹⁷⁰ *Trinity Centenary*, 78; John F. Butler, "Nineteen Centuries of Christian Missionary Architecture," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 21, no. 1 (Mar., 1962): 3-17.

¹⁷¹ Harold de Mel, *Confidential Report: On Training College Chapel in 1973* (Available at the Theological college of Lanka archives), 2.

Dedication

The construction work on the Colony chapel was planned in 1923. The foundation stone was laid on 4th July 1924.¹⁷² The foundation stone of the Chapel was jointly laid at a simple service by representatives of the two main denominations that federated. Rev A S Beaty of the Methodist Mission and the Rev A G Fraser of the CMS, together, declared the foundation stone to be “well and truly laid”.¹⁷³ The structural work began in September 1924. Fifty-eight wooden pillars, each of a single log of wood cut from the forest, were erected in 1926. The structural work was completed for the dedication service to be held on 25th June 1927. The building was declared open by Rev A G Fraser of the CMS and Rev A E Restarick of the WMMS.¹⁷⁴

The work of the chapel continued even after dedication. The carving of most of the pillars had to be completed. This was done by Bezalel and his son, with some outside assistance, at the chapel after fixing the pillars. The work continued from 1927 to 1936. The aisle in the church was completed with funds raised on the occasion of the thanksgiving service in 1935. The money was raised mostly from the contributions of past students.

Gibson left the Colony in 1927 before the completion of the chapel. He was able to see the partly completed chapel when he came to Sri Lanka on a visit in 1935. Mr and Mrs Gibson paid a special visit on 6th January 1936, on the occasion of the dedication.

The silver jubilee was celebrated in 1939. The funds collected on that occasion were used for the building work of the vestry.¹⁷⁵ These special celebrations were occasions to raise funds to improve the structure of the chapel.

¹⁷² *Trinity College, Kandy, centenary number 1872-1972*, 77.

¹⁷³ *HMC*, 370.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁵ *Beven, A History of the Diocese of Colombo*, 299.

The Training Colony Chapel stands as a monument of this ideal, the indigenization of the Church. This and the Trinity College Chapel may be the first occasions when national architecture was used for Christian churches. They are successful adaptations of traditional indigenous architectural forms in buildings of Christian religious worship. According to Jackson: "From the beginning it had two ideals, of a United Church of Christ, and of a National Church of Christ, which have found their prime expression in the building of our Chapel".¹⁷⁶

In this venture, the typical architecture of the Kandyan Period was used for the first time in the building of a Christian church. Basil Jackson stated with regard to the completed chapel: "Departing from all conventions of ecclesiastical architecture, and taking as our model the best of the magnificent heritage of art and architecture of the old Kandyan Kingdom, we have designed a chapel which is at once adapted to the climate of the country and to the conception of beauty of those who will use it. There has been no servile imitation. As in the services, so in the building the designs and architecture of the country have been adopted and adapted, the symbols of the Christian Faith having been incorporated in the carving of the pillars and in the plan of the building".¹⁷⁷

Anglicans were satisfied with the structure of the building. The apsidal east end was good from the Anglican point of view as it was wider than the sanctuaries which followed the monastic tradition. The Lord's Table of well-chosen teak wood was suited in proportion to the structure of the building. Benches were set up in the nave of the chapel. On special occasions mats were laid on the floor by pushing back the benches.

Before the chapel was built, the Anglicans and Methodists attended separate Sunday worship services at their own

¹⁷⁶ *CMCR* (1928): 94.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

churches. However, on other days students worshipped together in the Colony. "When the design was agreed on, even when the building operations commenced, nobody could be sure that the project was practicable for there was no precedent by which to go and no contractors could tender for a building that had not been attempted of centuries".¹⁷⁸ Thus, the two chapels were constructed in a spirit of adventure.

Bezalel

"The man primarily responsible for the design and decoration of the chapel, without whom the conception must have remained a dream, is Bezalel Pata Bendi Muhandiram, a Sinhalese artist of the first rank".¹⁷⁹ Bezalel and his son, Paul Navaratne, were able to put the ideas of the CMS missionaries into practice.¹⁸⁰ Bezalel had become a Christian while employed as a teacher of pottery painting at the Colony five years before he was assigned this work. "Since then he devoted his time to the creation of a new art, expressive of the new faith he had found, and his work, while remaining true to the conventions of Sinhalese art, is infused with a new spirit such as has characterised the art of every age of religious revival." Bezalel's knowledge and skill and devotion made possible the realization of that long-cherished dream. Gibson requested Bezalel to carve the pillars and furniture for the chapel. He was also asked to teach art in the Colony. The style of art was traditional Sinhalese design inspired by the Temple of the Tooth and Embekke Devale. The last pillar was carved in 1936. "The traditional motifs carved on the pillars of the chapel form a

¹⁷⁸ *Trinity Centenary Volume*, 78.

¹⁷⁹ According to Beven he was appointed by the government to take charge of the decoration of the Ceylon Pavilion at the Wembley (Beven, *A History of the Diocese of Colombo*, 299).

¹⁸⁰ *Catholic Messenger Newspaper* (05th Feb 2012).

witness and a source of inspiration to the nation.”¹⁸¹ Bezalel died on April 8, 1937, soon after the completion of the Chapel.

The Chapel does not have walls, therefore, it is an open structure. It has a low platform. The location is on a hill far from the residential areas. Therefore, the sound of the music and worship does not disturb the neighbourhood. It did not have a bell tower.

Sunday Worship

In the '50s the Methodist students were supplied a bus by the Ceylon Transport Board to go to Kandy. This was because of the respect for Rev Small. The other denominations did not have that facility. The students of the other denominations went to several places on Sundays. Their times of travel varied. Therefore, it was not possible to provide a special bus for them. However, the Penideniya bus station was less than 500 metres distance from the PTC, therefore students could get buses easily if they timed it well.

Life in the Training Colony

The first Principal of PTC, Gibson, says:

First half hour of every day is spent communally in silence, as we wait on God, read His Word, and put our needs before Him. Drill follows, and then prayers in the main lecture hall. A hymn and prayers in collect form are the expression of our corporate sonship. The scripture lesson is the first on the time table, and the vast amount of truth that we all have to learn as Christians in quiet is sufficient to provide subject matter, without dealing there with controversial and ecclesiastical problems.”

The strains of *Let's Breathe God's Air Freely* in the voices of the students, both men and women, however different in ages may be, seem to reverberate every morning at the

¹⁸¹ Frederick Medis, *The Church of Ceylon: A History, 1945-1995*, (The Diocese of Colombo, 1995) 58.

break of day, as they jump out of their beds for organized physical jerks lasting thirty minutes. In the meantime while rota of women students with flowers in hand make their way to the chapel, and keep themselves busy in cleaning the sanctuary, the pews and floor.

Within another half an hour, i.e. 7.00am, well groomed students, one hundred and twenty in number in long procession enter the House of God for morning devotion. Forty minutes of varied spiritual exercises seem to be hardly sufficient even to catch the glimpse of the holiness of God and to obtain vital spiritual nourishment so necessary for the day's work. Usually after the period of silence a hymn of praise or a lyric is sung followed by a psalm and the reading aloud by an individual of the daily portion of scripture as given in Bible Reading Fellowship Notes, which incidentally are used by all students; the introduction of this booklet has been of immense value. In quiet the notes are read and meditated upon, or occasionally series of five minute talks are given as an aid to meditation. Every member of staff is given the opportunity once a week to conduct this service. At the end of it prayers are offered, particularly for past students working in different provinces taking an area or two each day, thus maintaining the link in Christ between the past and the present. After the general assembly and roll-call the lectures go on from 7.45 a.m. to 3.00 p.m., with a tea interval at 9.45 and break for lunch at 11.30. Before and after meals one would hear ringing through the air of the compound a hymn of Grace or of Thanksgiving sung by men and women together.

Outdoor activities such as games, national dancing and gardening, scouting and guiding keep the students occupied till 5.30 p.m. on three days of the week. Wednesday afternoon is devoted mainly to the meeting of different societies which vie with one another for pride of place. In addition to routine work, Art society holds exhibitions and literature as Dramatic society tries to produce plays and concerts. Very recently a play, based on the Independence poem, was written. History and Geographical Society

arranged educational tours which requires a good deal of co-operative planning, especially if such excursions take a few days at a stretch. The Colony Magazine is the combined effort of all societies.

On Friday evening denominational classes are conducted by Ministers of different branches of the Church. Church of Ceylon students and Methodists meet separately. Baptists and Salvationists may join the others – a certain amount of Christian instruction is imparted, in addition to Biblical work done during lecture hours. Each set of students gets, however, only two periods of Scripture a week. Under the existing circumstances at the Colony no more provision could be made for this all-important aspect of Christian Education. This definitely points to what may be termed spiritual vacuum within the College life. At least one more Minister with living faith willing to give religious instruction “on a level of technical competence equal to that demanded in other subjects of the curriculum” is urgently needed. On Sunday morning students join the respective parishes in Kandy for worship. In the afternoon a united Service is held in the Chapel. By 7.00 p.m. students assemble in the hall for hymn practice or for community singing. After dinner joint family prayers are conducted in the dining room itself whilst on week days except Wednesdays dormitory prayers are said before they retire by students themselves.

Lecturer in charge of Hostels gets the opportunity to say prayers with the students in mid-week. From day to day routine we may turn away to consider other Christian avenues open in the Colony. Each term begins usually with a Quiet day, with a few thought-provoking Christian addresses interspersed with intercession and quiet time.

Two of the most enjoyable and inspiring Services that should regularly be held every year are the Service of beating the bounds and Harvest Festival. In the Service of beating the bounds, which is usually held in February, the students divide themselves into two sections and with palms in hands go in opposite directions along the Colony

boundary singing hymns and saying the appropriate prayers at different places. Having gone right round the compound visiting every building the students repair to the Chapel at dusk with oil lamps on their palms and final thanksgiving is offered to God.

At Harvest Festival last year the students who cultivated the field gathered round the paddy field with sickles in hand: prayers were said and the first sheafs (sic) of corn cut out by the Principal were handed over to the women students who wore three small hanging mats with them, while the men students in a procession carried the mats to the Chapel, and the leaders hung them in Chapel and an appropriate hymn of thanksgiving was sung. Thus an opportunity was given to Christianize the age-long Sinhalese custom of offering the first fruit to God. A good deal has been done to foster a keener interest in agricultural pursuits on scientific lines with the help of the Departmental officers. A fairly big vegetable garden is being opened up by the students themselves.

The methods adopted not only help the students to learn facts about the Bible and habits of the devotional life and to be ambassadors on behalf of Christ in the villages to which they ultimately go as Christian teachers. But also to make them valuable among our people, who normally seek their counsel. To quote a report of Rev A G Fraser who saw the first vision of the Colony about forty years ago, "that is in this training of men (and women) to be useful and sympathetic to the life and needs of their own communities lies the secret of national education. A man is denationalized by his education when it makes him out of place and useless among his own people. He is nationalized by it just in so far as it tends to make him understand, and be useful to them".¹⁸²

¹⁸² This portion is taken from *Ceylon Churchman*, Vol. XLV (1950): 497-500.

War Years

In 1942, when the country felt the effects of the war, the Sinhalese Branch of the Government Training College was evacuated to the PTC campus, and made use of the Colony buildings until the end of the war, for two and a half years. Later, this College was transferred to permanent buildings newly set up at Mirigama. The trainees of the Government Training College who temporarily used the PTC campus found the training at PTC different from theirs. They were impressed by the cordial fellowship prevalent amongst the Christian inmates of the campus.

The introduction of universal franchise in 1929 and the election of 1931 gave political power of the country to those who received the majority of votes. The 1940s were difficult days for Christian schools. In November 1943, the Special Committee on Education of the State Council had a discussion for the future takeover of assisted schools and training colleges. In view of this, the PTC was challenged either to expand considerably accommodating non-Christians as well or to give up its work of training teachers altogether. The war situation and the impending elections before Independence stalled the Education Bill. Therefore, the Church's decision was in favour of continuing the work at PTC as long as possible.

Opposition

The Buddhist majority continued to view the Christian minority as a privileged group with vested interests.¹⁸³ They were adamantly against the survival of the denominational system in education. Buddhists wanted to eliminate what they considered the main instrument of conversion to Christianity. According to them, the denominational school system was the basis for Christians to enjoy many privileges. They argued that the mission schools depended on government financing, while the majority of the pupils in most schools were non-Christians. They also indicated

¹⁸³ G. C. Mendis, *CMCR* (1947). 33.

that the Christian denominations avoided recruitment of non-Christians to the teaching staff in their schools while the salaries of the teachers were paid by the government.

There were opinions expressed in the Christian camp as well with regard to the wisdom of maintaining a large establishment of schools where non-Christians were the majority. Some Christian leaders argued that although the schools began as instruments of conversion that purpose had been pushed to the background. Now that conversion was not the main aim of these schools, there was no necessity to continue having so many of them where the Christian presence was marginal.

At the time of national independence, over 86 percent of school children received education in swabhasha. A few of them qualified to be teachers in the swabhasha medium. It was the highest that a swabhasha teacher could aspire to through swabhasha education.¹⁸⁴ Critics argued that in Christian schools, indigenous culture was tolerated, but the attitudes, values and beliefs of the management were not sympathetic to it.¹⁸⁵ This “charge that the church established schools in order to further its work of bringing the light of the Gospel to the people of Ceylon”¹⁸⁶ is entirely true and the missionaries accepted it. Conversion was purely a voluntary affair in this period.

Takeover

The nationalist social and cultural movements which began in the last decade of the nineteenth century set in motion a reaction against the privileged position of Christian denominational organizations in the predominantly non-Christian country. The Buddhist relationship to Christians underwent momentous changes after the introduction of universal franchise in 1931 and reached its nadir after national independence in 1948. With the

¹⁸⁴ K.H.M. Sumathipala, *op. cit.*, 202.

¹⁸⁵ K.H.M. Sumathipala, *op. cit.*, 210.

¹⁸⁶ Jackson, 1955, *op. cit.*, 1.

establishment of the rule of the majority, Buddhism sought to re-establish itself as the prominent religion of the land. It took a number of measures to enhance the stature of Buddhism in the land and to address some perceived grievances Buddhists had against the colonial powers. In this process they attempted to limit the influence of the church in its excessive power in areas of education.

The Minister of Education of the State Council, C W W Kannangara, vehemently distrusted the denominational system of education even though his primary and secondary education as well as his training as a teacher had been in Christian schools.¹⁸⁷ He stated, in 1943, in the State Council: "If the teachers of the future are not to be brought up in a free atmosphere with opportunities for mixing with one another, irrespective of race, caste or creed, their training, I am afraid, will be narrow". The teachers "should not be segregated in denominational training schools. The products of denominational training schools are to be sent out as teachers into denominational schools. They will never imbibe the spirit of tolerance and sympathy for the other man's point of view, which are qualities so essential in a teacher".¹⁸⁸ The Christian hierarchies had become a powerful factor in the political and economic field of the country.¹⁸⁹ Kannangara said that this country is a country of minority rule and it looks as if none of the Christians can insist on justice being done to them".

The plan to take over the assisted schools was there from the time the government of Mrs Bandaranaike came to power in July 1960. She promised in the election manifesto that the SLFP government would nationalise all the denominational schools once they came to power. The newly-formed government was very keen in keeping that promise. When the Christian leaders

¹⁸⁷ Sumathipala, op. cit., 163.

¹⁸⁸ Sessional Papers XXIV (1943), 167.

¹⁸⁹ Sumathipala, op.cit., 167.

realized that plan, there was a proposal to set up the Ecumenical Theological College of Lanka at the Peradeniya Training Colony Campus. Thereby, teacher trainees and divinity students could fellowship together. That proposal did not materialize because the Christian leaders were vacillating in taking a decision; and thereby lost a valuable location with a magnificent chapel.

The SLFP election manifesto at the 1960 July election declared that the assisted schools would be vested in the state on their coming to power. Accordingly, the Schools Takeover Act was passed in Parliament with a majority of 60 members. Only the UNP and the Federal Party voted against it. By the Assisted Schools and Training Colleges (Special Provisions) Act No 8 of 1961 the administration and ownership of these institutions were vested in the Department of Education. The Teacher Training College at Peradeniya was taken over by the Government of Sri Lanka under the powers granted to the Department of Education by the Parliament. The new status of these denominational schools in the educational structure was further defined by the Assisted Schools and Training Colleges (Supplementary Provisions) Act, Sessional Paper V of 1962.¹⁹⁰ There were 17 denominational teacher Training Schools at the time of the schools takeover in 1962.¹⁹¹

The Mission's involvement with the Training Colony ended when the government took over the institute in 1962 under the Assisted Schools and Training Colleges (Special Provisions) Act. At the time of the takeover by the government, the Anglican

¹⁹⁰ Sessional Paper VIII of 1961 (Colombo: Government Press, 1962).

¹⁹¹ 2649 schools were taken over by the government. Among them there were 1181 Buddhist, 688 Roman Catholic, 446 Protestant, 310 Hindu and 24 Muslim schools. 54 schools became non fee levying private schools. The existing 15 schools which had opted out of the free education scheme continued to function as private schools (Jayaweera, 49).

Principal was Rev Canon Harold de Mel, and the Methodist Warden was Rev W J T Small. The teaching staff, including the Principal, was five males and two females. There were two adjunct teachers as well.

The last batch of trainees sent out in 1961 was 50, with an equal number of men and women. In the year 1962, there were 107 students in the Colony. The number of first year students was 56 and second year was 51. The total number in the work force at the Colony in 1964, two years after the takeover, was 25. Even under the government control, the Training College continued to function as a Teacher Training College till 1965 when it changed over to train specialist English teachers.¹⁹²

Contribution to the Formation of the Theological College of Lanka

The Training College grew to be the forerunner of the Theological College of Lanka in ecumenical co-operation and contextualisation of Christianity in a Buddhist environment. In fact, the formal decision to set up the Theological College of Lanka coincided with the termination of the Christian management of PTC.¹⁹³ Rev Jackson, who served as Principal of the Training College, and who later spearheaded the discussions to set up the Theological College of Lanka, saw the working of the Training College as the example for ecumenical co-operation in educating clergy.

The PTC lasted forty-eight years under the management of the Christian Church. It trained all the formally qualified schoolteachers of the schools managed by the Protestant Churches in the Sinhala medium. In addition, the Colony provided a good percentage of Sinhala-speaking evangelists, catechists and colporteurs to Methodist and Anglican churches. These teachers

¹⁹² Wanasinghe, Printed document available at Methodist Archives, Colombo, 12.

¹⁹³ Somaratna, *Origins of the Pentecostal Mission*, (Nugegoda: Margaya Fellowship, 1996) 73.

who were trained in a supervised religious atmosphere generally had higher standards of ethics and went in for teaching as a Christian ministry. They were able to impart Christian values and ethics to their pupils in rural schools. Therefore, the impression in that period was that the pupils and products of missionary schools were disciplined with high ethical values. The Christian character of the institution gradually disappeared after 1962. The traditions which were upheld for nearly fifty years petered out.

CONCLUSION

During the fifty years of its existence, PTC made an immense impact on education and training in the country. Looking back at the work of the Training Colony and the teachers produced at this institute one could see that the Church, working under many constraints, provided the education system of the time with a well-balanced and well-equipped set of teachers to serve in many remote parts of the country. The disciplining of teacher trainees in vigorous social life, expressed itself in activities of many kinds, and social work improved their self-esteem while it benefitted the neighbouring communities. They were appointed to vernacular schools and served villagers who could not pay for the education of their children. If not for the services provided by these teachers, many of the rural children of that time would not have received any education.

There is criticism regarding many shortcomings in the system introduced by the missionaries. Critics have stated that the missionaries ruined the existing cultural values of Sri Lankan people. Nevertheless, one should remember that the trainees of PTC were trained not merely for a profession which ended in receiving a wage. As embodied in their College motto ("Victory through self-sacrifice"), they were sent out as messengers of a noble purpose to serve people. While the teaching component of their training was significant, they were given a thorough training to formulate their character so that they would be examples of Christian ethical values.

Appendix

List of Principals	Period
J P S Gibson (MA, Dip. Ed.)	1914-1928 (Anglican)
A C Houlder (MA, Dip. Ed.)	1928-1929 (Anglican)
G B Jackson (MA, Dip. Ed.)	1929-1941 (Methodist)
J C Harvey (MA, Dip. Ed.)	1941-1944 (Anglican)
C M Peiris (acting)	1944-1947
C Ratnayake (acting)	1947-1951
Harold de Mel (BA, Dip. Ed.)	1951-1962 (Anglican)

Vice Principals	Period
Alec Andrews Sneath (MA (Manch))	1921-1922 (Methodist)
W J T Small (BA, MA)	1922-1926 (Methodist)
G B Jackson (MA, Dip. Ed.)	1926-1929 (Methodist)
A C Houlder	1932-1933 (CMS)

Wardens	Period
H G Sanders	1929-1942 (Methodist)
C L Abeynaike	1942-1949 (Anglican)
C B Gogerly	1949-1953 (Methodist)
W J T Small	1953-1962 (Methodist)

Anglican Bishops of Colombo	Period
Ernest Copleston (DD)	1903-1924
Mark Carpenter-Garnier (DD)	1924-1938
Cecil Horsley (MA, DD)	1938-1947
Rollo Graham Campbell (DD)	1948-1964

Chairmen of the South Ceylon Methodist Synod	Period
W H Rigby	1916-1917
A E Restarick	1918 and 1919
W J Noble (Acting)	1920
A E Restarick	1921; 1922-1923; 1926-1929
A S Beaty	1930; 1931-1933
H R Cornish	1934

Chairmen of the All Ceylon Methodist Synod	Period
S. George Mendis	1950-1952; 1953-1954
James S. Mather	1955 -1959
Fred S. de Silva	1960-1962; 1963-1964

**THE CITY, THE SHIP, AND THE TOWER:
READING THE BABEL STORY THEOLOGICALLY
AND AS A NARRATIVE IN ITS CONTEXT**

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INTRODUCTION

The Tower of Babel has perplexed the readers and commentators for thousands of years. While serving as a perfect parable for the need for communication,¹ it has left commentators confused as to why the builders of the Babel Tower were punished. The narrator of the book of Genesis does not give the reasons clearly as he does in other stories such as The Fall, The Exile of Cain, and The Flood. In each of these narratives, a reason or sin such as disobedience, murder, and violence are respectively presented as justification for the ensuing judgement. What then was the sin of Babel? Christian tradition has taken the sin of Babel as man

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¹ As the perfect parable for the need for communication it has been used even in Software Engineering books, to cite but one example Frederick P. Brooks Jr, referring to the Tower of Babel, concludes that the reason for large software projects to fail is the lack of communication, *The Mythical Man-Month: Essays on Software Engineering*, 20th Anniversary Edition (Delhi: Pearson Education Asia, 2001), 74.

challenging God (vertical), while the Jewish tradition see the sin as failure to scatter and fill the earth (horizontal).² Interpreters have held many different views as to why God judged Babel, the most prominent of which are:

1. Pride (Hubris)^{3,4}
2. Not filling the earth (Disobedience)⁵
3. Violence⁶
4. Cultural Diversity⁷
5. To encourage religious pluralism⁸

² P. J. Harland, "Vertical or horizontal: The Sin of Babel," *Vetus Testamentum* 48 (1998): 515-533.

³ According to Theodore Herbert only one medieval scholar moved away from the pride-punishment theme. See, Theodore Hiebert, "The Tower of Babel and the Origin of the World's Cultures," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 126, no. 1 (2007): 29-58.

⁴ Some have even seen this as a criticism of Solomon - referring either to the hubris underlying the desire for a - name, or to the failure to see that one's house and name consist of a people and not a temple. See, David Noel Freedman, *Anchor Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1992).

⁵ Walter Brueggemann, *Genesis, IBC* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1982), 99-102.

⁶ W. Creighton Marlowe, "The Sin of Shinar (Genesis 11:4)" *European Journal of Theology* 20, no. 1 (2011): 29-39

⁷ Theodore Hiebert has argued that the whole point of the story is to show the cultural diversity of the world and how the different languages and cultures came about. See responses from others: André Lacocque, Whatever Happened in the Valley of Shinar? A Response to Theodore Hiebert, *Journal of Biblical Literature* 128, no. 1 (2009): 29-41 and John T. Strong, Shattering the Image of God: A Response to Theodore Hiebert's Interpretation of the Story of the Tower of Babel *Journal of Biblical Literature* 127, no. 4 (2008): 625-634. Theodore Hiebert also doesn't do justice to the phrase 'making a name'.

⁸ 'God's replacement of one language with many is interpreted by Ashkenazi to mean the replacement of a single, dominant, exclusive religious consensus with religious pluralism'. See, Byron L Sherwin, "The

This article will try to put the Babel incident in its theological background and as a narrative within the context of Genesis 1–11 and especially against the backdrop of the Flood. It will analyse Babel as one of three building projects, the other two being Cain’s city and Noah’s ark. It will compare and contrast these three building projects and will analyse the peculiarities of the Babel project. In doing so, this article will provide new insight for accepting some of the more traditional reasons for punishment listed above, namely hubris and disobedience.

One might object to this approach, noting that these events occurred in three different *tôlêdôt panels*⁹ and it can be said with confidence that each of these panels is a self-contained unit. However, these panels assumed knowledge of the preceding panels. For example, the genealogy in Genesis 10:1 continues from where the genealogy in Genesis 5 stopped.¹⁰ Mark A Awabdy notes several literary features which show evidence of knowledge of the preceding panels:

One may contend that the *tôlêdôt* clause in Genesis functions as a literary device: recurrence of *tôlêdôt* clauses creates continuity, while the distinctive material, even form, of each *tôlêdôt* panel creates discontinuity. Continuity is doubly achieved as *tôlêdôt* panels always recount aspects of a progenitor’s progeny and as *tôlêdôt* clauses consistently, if always, demarcate literary units. Discontinuity is achieved as

Tower of Babel in Eliezer Ashkenazi's *Sefer Ma'aseh Hashem*," *Jewish Bible Quarterly* 42, no. 2 (2014).

⁹ Genesis is a book of accounts. The opening formula 'This is the account (*tôlêdôt*) of' is followed by the narratives of the main actor. 5.1-Adam, 6.9 -Noah, 10.1- the sons of Noah, 11.10 - Shem, 11.27 – Terah. The narrative sections that follow are often called panels or *tôlêdôt panels*. They are used as a device to demarcate literary units.

¹⁰ However, differences in genealogical continuity are there and have been noted by Mark A. Awabdy, Babel, Suspense, and the Introduction to the Terah-Abram Narrative, *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 35 no. 1 (2010): 3-29.

tôlêdôt panels differ in content from other tôlêdôt panels in one to seven (or more) ways.¹¹

Therefore, the fact that these events occurred in three different tôlêdôt *panels* doesn't mean that comparative elements in each tôlêdôt panel cannot be explored or that these panels combine together to make a greater narrative.

Cain's City

Cain is credited with building the first city: "Cain was then building a city" (Gen 4:17). It is important to understand these verses within the context of the greater Cain narrative.

The Lord had cursed him for killing his brother Abel. The curse went as follows:

1. "The ground will no longer yield its crops to you" (4:12)
2. "You will be a restless wanderer" (4:12).
3. Being chased out from the Lord's presence (4.14)

Thus cursed, Cain was afraid that whoever finds him would kill him¹² (Gen 4:14). God acknowledges Cain's fear and provides a remedy by putting a mark¹³ on Cain and promising that he would be avenged seven times. God promised Cain security.

¹¹ Ibid., 12

¹² According to the book of Jubilees Cain eventually died when his house fell upon him. 'He was killed by its stones, as he had killed Abel by a stone – by a stone was he killed in righteous judgment'. *Jubilees* 4. 31 In James H Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, (New York: Doubleday, 1985).

¹³ Sailhamer argues (John Sailhamer, *Pentateuch as Narrative*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992) that the city is the sign given to Cain – in the tradition of Cities of Refuge, one of his reasons being that it is preceded by the sign narrative. Same view shared by Joel N. Lohr, "So YHWH established a sign for Cain: Rethinking Genesis," *ZAW* 4, no. 15

Following this assurance from God it is interesting to see what Cain does next: “Cain lay with his wife...and she gave birth to Enoch” (Gen 4:17). So it appears that when threatened by death, the immediate thing Cain does is to make sure that even after death he will continue to live on by way of his offspring. He transmits his life to his children.¹⁴

When he is chased away from the presence of the Lord he goes on to build a city. He satisfies his desire for eternity by producing children and he satisfies his desire for security by creating a place that belonged to him.¹⁵ In a way, Cain built his own city of refuge.¹⁶ In this building of the city there was a sense of independence from God. Cain did not seek security from the Lord but from the world. He did not trust in God’s promises – as God had promised security. Cain named his city after his son. The city, therefore, becomes the combined symbol of his self-made security and legacy. We see the same trend in Babel – where they fear being scattered and want to make a name for themselves. “City is a mixture of pride and fear,” remarks Kass.¹⁷

(2009): 121. Bd., S. 101–103. However Cain was cursed to be a wanderer. So if God gave City as the sign then God would be contradicting himself.

¹⁴ Jacques Ellul, *The Meaning of the City* (Downers Grove: William B Eerdmans, 1977), 5, John Calvin also comes to the same conclusions in his commentary on Genesis. See his comments on 4.17. For a critical study of cities see Frick S Frank, *The City in Ancient Israel* (Montana: Scholars Press, 1977). This is the same thing that his father Adam did when he was cursed and chased away from the presence of the Lord. He was told that he ‘will die and return to the ground from which he was taken’. It appears that this is same with Hezekiah, who was given fifteen years life extension. He goes on to father Manasseh who was twelve years old when he became a king. Manasseh turns out to be the worst king that Judah has ever seen.

¹⁵ Ellul, *City*, 5.

¹⁶ Frick, *City*, 207.

¹⁷L.R. Kass, “What’s wrong with Babel?” *American Scholar* 58, no. 1 (1989): 41-60. While our approach has been to place Babel in the

The narrator does not define a city. It would have been too obvious to his ancient and even modern day readers. However, what is the definition of a city? One that has walls? A gate?¹⁸ Guards? A watchtower? Concentrated habitation? A well? While the narrator does not answer any of these questions, he gives us a hint. Maybe the most important attributes of this particular city – from the narrator’s point of view – is that it has a founder and it has a name. Cain founded it and he named it after his son. As we shall see, the emergent motif of making a name will recur again and again in the Genesis narratives. We are already starting to see similarities between this and the Tower of Babel where the Babelites wanted to make a name for themselves.

It is quite possible that the descendants of Cain lived in the city he founded – we see his descendants described after the description about the city. We see that the characteristic of the original founder lives on in the inhabitants of that city: in Genesis 4:23-24 we are presented with Lamech (5th generation from Cain) who continues the violence of Cain, confessing to a murder.

It is also noteworthy that in Cain’s descendants there are people who take pride in saying that they are from Cain: Tubal Cain (6th generation from Cain, Gen 4:22) means ‘offspring of Cain’. So their value system is different – they value what others despise.

events that happened before it, Kass’s approach is to place it in the events that happen after i.e. within the context of the Abraham narrative esp. his call. Mark A. Awabdy, “Babel, Suspense, and the Introduction to the Terah-Abram Narrative,” *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 35, no. 1 (2010): 3-29; also follows the same line of thinking – but he uses the Babel narrative to understand the Abraham narrative.

¹⁸ Gates and Walls are seen as the primary marks of a city. See Joel N. Lohr, So YHWH established a sign for “Cain: Rethinking Genesis,” *ZAW* 4, no. 15 (2009): 121. Bd., S. 101–103.

Cain's Line versus Seth's Line

Adam has another son in Abel's stead: Seth. It is interesting to note what happens when these two – Cain and Seth – have their own children. When Cain has a son, he is called Enoch, meaning 'to introduce or initiate'¹⁹. He names a city after him (Gen 4:17). When Seth has a son, he is called Enosh (Gen 4:26) meaning 'man', often associated with weakness and frailty.²⁰ Men began to call on the name of the Lord. One generation glorifies itself. Another glorifies God.

Then the narrator describes 'the account' of Adam's line in Genesis 5:1 as he had described Cain's line in Genesis 4:17-24. Notice that Seth's line is marked as Adam's line. Cain, Adam's firstborn, is completely ignored – i.e. Adam's line doesn't continue through Cain. It is as if Cain was also created on par with Adam. Cain's line is given separately. So when Cain killed Abel it was not simply a matter of sibling rivalry – it was an act of defiance against God and his parents. A loose comparison would be that of David's son Absalom sleeping with his father's concubines in public to convey a message: that he is no longer his father's son. He has become David's enemy. The message was that he doesn't relate to David as his father anymore. So Cain is now independent and becomes the seed of the serpent. I cannot but quote Robert Alter's observation that "the entire book of Genesis is about the reversal of the iron law of Primogeniture about the election through some devious twist of destiny of a younger son to carry on the line".²¹

However, what is striking is the fact that the narrator relates how the descendants of Cain became technologically advanced.²² The

¹⁹ *Anchor Bible Dictionary* on Enoch

²⁰ Victor Hamilton, *Genesis 1-17*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: William B Eerdmans, 1990), 142.

²¹ Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, 2 ed. (New York: Basic Books, 2011), 5.

²² If they lived in Cain's city this becomes one of the earliest examples of urbanization.

age of Seth's descendants is given but the age of Cain's descendants is not given. What is given includes only a few generations. So the purpose of the narrator seems to be to highlight these inventions:

Jabal: Father of those who live in tents and raise livestock

Jubal: Father of those who play flute and harp

Tubal: Cain Father of those who forged iron and bronze metals²³

Why did the narrator put this information here? Remembering that after the flood none of these people survived and whatever they invented survived simply because Noah or his family had learnt these skills somehow? One reason is that these men also made a name for themselves by inventing these technologies. This is to continue in the line of Cain and in the Tower of Babel.

The other reason is to do with what they invented. Raising livestock was something that was done by Abel – the slaughtered brother of Cain. It was Abel who was the father of those who kept livestock. Since he died, his trade did not continue. Could it be that Cain and his descendants not only kill, but also take the victims' very lives away from them? Could it be that Cain couldn't stand his brother Abel making a name for himself – actually God making a name for Abel by accepting his sacrifice – so much so that he killed him? And, his descendants made a name for themselves as being the 'first' by taking what belonged to Abel? He also is said to have introduced the nomadic lifestyle – something that Cain was supposed to follow – but eventually abandoned by building the city. In some sense, the nomadic

²³ Frick has identified these groups as 'guilds'. Guilds are craftsmen working in specialized production using a raw material. "Preindustrial city's economic organization is the guild system which pervades manufacturing, trade and services. Such guilds are peculiar to towns and cities, not to villages; only in the former are, full-time specialists to be found in numbers significant enough to warrant organization"(Frick, *City*, 129).

lifestyle promotes violence. It is easy for unsettled people groups to be violent towards other settled people groups.

The flute and harp are a part of celebrations (cf Gen 31:27). So it could have helped wild carnivals and celebrations.

Making of bronze and Iron tools would definitely have helped to increase violence.

Now all of these things are not bad in themselves. Livestock would have been used as an offering (as in Abel's case), flute and harp could be used (and actually were later used) for Yahweh worship (if Gen. 4:26 refers to a public worship then this certainly makes a connection), and of course iron and bronze tools could be used for many good things – including working the soil. However, the narrator may be trying to tell us that the descendants of Cain led the world to the pre-flood state, which angered Yahweh and brought about the flood as punishment. Violence was a major reason for the flood and the availability of iron and bronze tools would certainly have helped to increase the violence on a larger scale.

In Seth's line, we are presented with Enoch, who "walked with God," (Gen 5:21) and the righteous Noah. The contrast between the two groups is clear. Cain's descendants become known for their inventions and violence, while Seth's descendants are noted for their relationship with God. Self-reliance versus trust in God.

Noah's Ark

By the time we come to Noah's father, Lamech (a descendant of Seth) the world has become a 'difficult' place to live. Lamech laments his very existence and looks at his son as a comfort (Gen 5:29).²⁴ Very soon the world becomes a 'bad' place to live in.

²⁴ Perhaps the expectation was that he would somehow restore the same restful work that was envisioned for humanity before the fall (Gen 2.15) – rather than the back breaking work which has now

People are violent and having physical relationships with the wrong kind. It is then that the narrator begins the account of Noah. This time God entrusts man with a building project. God himself gives the exact specifications. This building project is to be based on God's word and His promises. His word is twofold: that everything on this earth will perish and that Noah and his family²⁵ will survive by way of the Ark.

God gives a very detailed description about the Ark in Genesis 6:14-16, and the narrator is careful to assert that Noah did everything that the Lord commanded (Gen 6:22; 7:5; 9:16). It was absolutely necessary for Noah to do everything that the Lord commanded just as he commanded.²⁶ For instance, if the size of the ship was different, he would not have been able to

become the norm. See "Paradise Lost Again: Violence and Obedience in the Flood Narrative," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 62 (1994): 3-18.

²⁵ In the case of Noah's wife, in Jubilees it is given as Emzara, his cousin (Jub. 4:33). Genesis Rabbah 23:3 identifies Naamah, the daughter of Lamech and sister of Tubal-Cain (Gen. 4:22), as Noah's wife. This is consistent with the rabbinic approach to identify unnamed biblical characters with pre-existing, named biblical characters.' So according to Jubilees the entire humanity came from Seth, but according to the Rabbinic tradition it came from Seth (on Noah's side) and Cain (on Noah's wife's side). Zvi Ron, "The book of Jubilees and the Midrash Part 2: Noah and the Flood," *Jewish Bible Quarterly* 42, no. 2 (2014): 103-113. If the latter was the case then it explains how very soon after the flood the seed of Cain takes root and controls Ham. For a survey of Noah traditions in the extra biblical literature see Dorothy M. Peters, *Noah Traditions in the Dead Sea Scrolls Conversations and Controversies of Antiquity* (Atlanta : Society of Biblical Literature, 2008), and Michael E. Stone, Aryeh Amihay, and Vered Hillel, *Noah and His Books* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2010).

²⁶ According to extra biblical book - *Sefer Harazim* – from the tradition of the Jewish magical literature – Noah was handed over a holy book by Angel Raziel from which he learnt to make the ship. Michael E. Stone, Aryeh Amihay, and Vered Hillel, *Noah and His Books* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature 2010), 23.

accommodate all the animals; if he used different materials or did not coat it with pitch inside and outside maybe the water would have started to come inside the ship. The fact that he did what the Lord commanded is repeated to show that he indeed was a righteous man and was walking with God (Gen 6:9). In contrast to the other building projects in Genesis, this one was done in obedience to the Lord's word. Noah gets a mention in the hall of fame in Hebrews 11 because he trusts God's word and starts to build. So Noah's story is actually a contrast to that of Cain. Whereas Cain built the city out of insecurity and unbelief in God's word Noah built the Ark because he believed the word of God.

The description about the Nephilim (Gen 6:4) says that they were the men of renown. The word for 'renown' is the same word as for 'name' (*shame*). So these Nephilim also made a name for themselves. How did they make a name? It is said that they were the heroes of old. The word for heroes (*gibbor*) is the same word used of Nimrod in Gen 10:8.²⁷ It can also be translated as a mighty warrior (as it has been in most versions). How does one become a mighty warrior? By unleashing a saga of violence and becoming known as someone who cannot be beaten or killed. Violence. This is the main sin for which God decided to punish mankind. So Nephilim were making a name for themselves by violence.²⁸

²⁷ Some have identified Nimrod also as a Nephilim, see Robert S. Kawashima's Essay on Sources and Redaction In Ronald Hendel *Reading Genesis, Ten Methods* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 58.

²⁸ Note that in chapter 6 there are two pronouncement of punishments. First, immediately after the mention of sons of god, Yahweh says that Man's days will be 120 years. Then comes the mention of the wickedness of mankind and then comes the second pronouncement – I will wipe mankind through the flood.

When Noah comes out of the Ark,²⁹ God blesses him and his sons and commands them to increase and fill the earth. He does it twice: in Genesis 6:2 and in Genesis 6:7. He assures that the fear of them will fall upon the wild animals – he promises this as a reassurance to fill the earth – so even when they go to uninhabited territories the animals will not harm them because the animals will now fear the humans.

He also inaugurates capital punishment.³⁰ This would further encourage people to fill the earth, as people would fear killing, because the punishment for murder would be death itself. One of the fears people had when they break away from the tribal structure to venture into new territories is that they will be killed by strangers. This was Cain's fear when God cursed him to be a wanderer on the earth.

This was also a way of making sure that the earth would not return to its pre-flood state, because the main sins for which God punished them through the flood was violence (Gen 6:11, 13). So now having capital punishment was a way of curbing the violence. A law was in place – probably the first law.

God also establishes a covenant with Noah, promising that He would never again destroy all living creatures by the waters of the flood.³¹ We need to understand the decisiveness of this promise

²⁹ Some have wondered why a man so righteous in the eyes of God that he was spared of all the people of the earth behaved so indecently after coming out of the ark – in drinking wine and laying naked. One interesting suggestion is that he was having Post Traumatic Stress Disorder after seeing the whole world destroyed and turned to alcohol as an outlet - Something very common in people with PTSD. Steven Luger, "Flood, Salt and Sacrifice: Post Traumatic Stress Disorders in Genesis," *Jewish Bible Quarterly* 38, no. 2 (2010).

³⁰ It is noteworthy that Cain was not given the capital punishment.

³¹ This will be a problem for those who argue for a local flood. As there have been many floods after this promise by Yahweh - which

that has been attested by a covenant to understand the Tower of Babel. In Isaiah 54:8-10 we read:

“In a surge of anger I hid my face from you for a moment, but with everlasting kindness I will have compassion on you,” says the LORD your Redeemer. “To me this is like the days of Noah, when I swore that the waters of Noah would never again cover the earth. So now I have sworn not to be angry with you, never to rebuke you again. Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken nor my covenant of peace be removed,” says the LORD, who has compassion on you.

To show how much He loved Israel and how certain the promise of His everlasting kindness to Israel was, God refers to the waters of Noah³². We see how much God valued the covenant He made with Noah. He uses this as the measurement scale. To paraphrase His words: “You see how I have kept my promise. There has never been a flood so as to annihilate the entire human race³³. That is because I promised Noah. In the same way I am now making a promise to you. Just like the promise to Noah has been kept this promise too will be kept”. It is an irony that God, even when dealing with the chosen nation, refers not to the covenant He made with Abraham nor to the covenant at Sinai but to the covenant he made with Noah – the father not particularly of Israel but of all nations. “These were the three sons of Noah, and from them came the people who were scattered over the whole

destroy entire populations. So it doesn't mean that God's promises are void. But the promise was of a different nature. The whole earth won't be destroyed *again* as it was destroyed during Noah's time.

³² The flood could symbolise the exile and Noah could symbolise the reminiscent people of the exile. Frank H Polak, “The Restful Waters of Noah,” *JNES* 23 (1995): 69-74

³³ Alec Motyer concludes that the equivalent of ‘the waters of Noah has passed. Judgment has fallen the punishment that brought peace to us 53.5...Thus the anger of God is totally allayed’ (Alec Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah, An Introduction and Commentary* [Downers Grove:InterVarsity Press, 1993]).

earth,” (Gen 9:19). In the account of Adam, the descendants of Seth and their ages are listed (Gen 5), and in the account of Shem, Ham and Japheth, countries that came from them are listed³⁴ (Gen 10). So just like Adam becoming the father of the human race, the three sons of Noah became the fathers of nations.

The next episode ‘account’ is that of Noah’s sons – Shem, Ham and Japheth – which starts in chapter 10. Note the positioning of these genealogies³⁵ in the primeval history: in each case it is listed before the punishment. To highlight this point, the parallels between Cain’s story and Noah’s story³⁶ are noted in Table 1:

Table 1: Comparison between Cain and Noah

Cain’s Story	Noah’s Story
Family Disintegration (Cain killing Abel)	Ham desecrated Noah ³⁷

³⁴ Thomas Brodie sees a parallel between the post flood events and creation. See Thomas Brodie, *Genesis as Dialogue, A Literary, Historical and Theological Commentary* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001). Robert W.E. Forrest sees a parallel in the fact that God created man out of the dust of the earth and that Noah was a man of the ground. For a comparison between creation and the flood narratives see Robert W.E. Forrest, *Paradise Lost Again*, 8.

³⁵ One interesting thing to note in these chronologies is that Noah lived until the time of Abraham.

³⁶ There is another similarity between Adam, Cain and the flood narratives. In each of those stories, God either expels or destroys man (kind) to protect the earth (Robert W.E. Forrest, *Paradise Lost Again*, 7).

³⁷ What exactly was Ham’s sin? Several views have been offered 1. Voyeurism – traditional view. 2. Castration – Ham castrated Noah, rabbinic view 3. Paternal Incest – Ham sexually abused Noah 4. Maternal Incest – Ham had relations physical with his mother. The last view is based on the fact that to see the mother’s nakedness is to see the father’s nakedness (Lev 18.14), the word uncover can mean sexual intercourse (Lev 20.17), the imagery of the vineyard is often associated with heterosexual intercourse (Gen 19.30-38, Songs 1.2), the curse on Canaan – Ham had union with his mother and Canaan was the fruit of

Cain's Story	Noah's Story
Curse on Cain	Curse on Canaan ³⁸
Account of Adam's line (Gen 5)	Account of Noah's sons (Gen 10)
Genealogy of Gen 5	Genealogy of Gen 10
Description of the incident that causes the punishment	
Violence in Gen 6	Building of the Tower of Babel in Gen 11
Judgement: Flood	Judgement: Confusion through Languages

While the Genealogy in Genesis 5 happened before the flood in narrative time as well as in real time, the genealogy in Genesis 10 happens in real time after the Tower of Babel incident, which is described in Genesis 11. As we shall see, this is quite common in Genesis.

the union. See John Sietze Bergsma and Scott Walker Hahn, "Noah's Nakedness and the Curse on Canaan (Genesis 9:20–27)," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 124, no. 1 (2005): 25–40. However this view doesn't explain why they went backwards and covered the father's nakedness. There is no reason to assume that their mother would still remain there – it was Noah who was drunk. And in the case of Reuben the narrator was very explicit. Gen 35.22. Even the euphemism in Gen 49.4 – 'went up to my bed and defiled it' (KJV) – is very indicative. So if such an incest had happened here it is not unreasonable to expect the narrator to be more explicit. Moreover abusing one's own mother (not stepmother) doesn't have any parallels in the Bible. So it is best to take the scriptures at face value and take the traditional meaning.

³⁸ Why should Canaan be cursed for his father's sin? Several views have been offered: 1. Canaan was involved in Ham's sin – he too went and saw Noah's nakedness 2. Since God blessed Noah and his sons Noah cannot curse Ham 3. A mirroring punishment – Ham Noah's youngest son sinned against him so Ham's youngest son, Canaan is cursed 4. Ham embodies and personifies the character traits of his descendants (Wenham, *Genesis*, 201).

Genesis 10 prepares us for the Tower of Babel incident, after which they are scattered to these lands and territories— according to their language. So language now plays an important role. Not only did it stop people from building the tower, but it also helped to define national territories. The narrator chose to explain what happened first and then tell us why it happened. The Babel incident shows how the sons of Noah became nations; and, the purpose of this in turn is to show how the curse on Canaan could be fulfilled³⁹.

Gordon Wenham notes the fondness for seven-numbered lists in Genesis 10. Japheth's sons total seven as do his grandsons, etc., while with some minor adjustments the nations that descend from Shem, Ham and Japheth total seventy.⁴⁰ This does not mean that the Tower of Babel created only 70 languages. Traditionally, seventy means a large group. So it is better to take it as a large number of nations. The ones that are mentioned here are the major people groups known to Israel and with whom Israel had some kind of relationship.⁴¹ In the table of nations, the order of Noah's sons is reversed, making a climatic effect for Shem.⁴² The list begins with Japheth, with whom Israel had the least amount of contact. They are handled first and briefly. Later, the descendants of Ham are treated: the Babylonians, Egyptians (the Mizraim of Gen 10:6 are actually Egyptians: the same word is used for Egypt in other places), and the Canaanites – the most notorious neighbours of Israel⁴³. Finally, the Semites are described – the ancestors of Israel herself. This pattern of describing the non-elect (or non-righteous) before the elect is common in Genesis: Cainites before Sethites (Gen 4-5), Esau (Gen 36) before Jacob (Gen 37-50).

³⁹ Wenham, *Genesis*, 215.

⁴⁰ Wenham, *Genesis*, 213.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 214.

⁴² Nahum Sarna, *Understanding Genesis* (New York: Schocken, 1970) 68.

⁴³ Wenham, *Genesis*, 214.

Peleg

In Genesis 10:25 we come to the much discussed Peleg: “In his time the earth was divided”. Various opinions⁴⁴ have been given as to the meaning of the text.⁴⁵ Since the Babel incident is narrated soon after this, I think it is safe to take it as meaning the people of the earth. The people of the earth were divided during Peleg’s time by the Babel incident. Although the word to divide (*pawlag*) is not the same as disperse (*poots*) it still can be used of confusing speech⁴⁶.

In Genesis 10, the genealogy is given through Peleg’s brother Joktan. In chapter 11, the genealogy is carried up to Abraham through Peleg. The narrator seems to be making an important

⁴⁴ Some of the views are: 1. Division of languages 2. Continental drift 3. Canalization see David M. Fouts, “Peleg in Gen 10:25,” *JETS* 41, no. 1 (March 1998): 17–21, Although continental drift is a modern theory claims have been made that Jewish interpreters held this view long before, see Joshua Backon, “For in those days the Earth was divided: Classic Jewish sources for a Physical Division of the Earth,” *Jewish Bible Quarterly* 37, no. 2 (2009).

⁴⁵ Continental drift theory i.e. continents which were a one big land mass at one time split into various continents. The claim is that it happened during the time of Peleg - explains how kangaroos got to Australia after the flood. However if that were the case the mere moving of the continents itself would have caused massive floods – that would have wiped the face of the earth (Bodie Hodge, *Tower of Babel, Cultural History of our Ancestors* [:New Leaf Publishing Group, 2013]). Hodge gives the 2004 Tsunami that hit many Asian countries – including Sri Lanka as an example – this was caused by the movements of the plates underneath. Pangaea and the continental drift theories are modern day theories. The biblical writers did not know about such theories. Our theory is very simple - people would have migrated to these lands and would have taken the animals with them. Genesis 10.5 talks about maritime people – so they built similar ships that of Noah and migrated to distant lands – maybe to places like Australia. The knowledge about ship building comes from Yahweh himself. Since Noah’s three sons were involved in ship building, that knowledge would have been passed to the later generations.

⁴⁶ Wenham, *Genesis*, 231.

distinction here. Not only did the languages come into play and people were scattered but also two great lines of humanity diverged even from the sons of Shem; the same distinction is being made as that of Cain and Seth. One line of people make a name for themselves and for the other God Himself will make a name. In the call of Abraham, God promised to make his name great.⁴⁷ While the Babelites tried to make a name for themselves by staying in the same place, God made a name for Abraham by asking him to live a nomadic life. God promised two things to Abraham that Cain and the Babelites tried to produce by themselves – a name and a nation. As a matter of fact, God promised more to Abraham: they wanted to *make a name*, God promised to make his name *great*, they wanted to make a *city*, God promised Abraham a *nation*. “Abraham completes the rejection of Babel and heads off to find Gods new way”.⁴⁸ One kind of people tried to make a name for themselves by disobedience: the other made a name for themselves by obedience.

The Tower of Babel

As per our thesis, the Tower of Babel must be understood in the background of the Flood. The Babelites thought of the tower as a way to escape a future flood. The height of the building was supposed to give them security. The “tower reaching to the heavens”: in the Flood story we see the word ‘heavens’ again and again (Gen 7:11, 19, 23; 8:2), so maybe they thought that by building a tower reaching to the heavens they could escape a flood. Again, rather than trusting the promises of God, mankind embarks on its own journey of finding security. We have seen the same pattern in Cain and in Noah (contrast).

God had set His bow in the clouds (*awnan*) as a reminder of his promise that He would not destroy the earth by a flood. Yet the humans are now reaching the heavens (*shawmeh*) with a tower

⁴⁷ Sailhamer, *Pentateuch*.

⁴⁸ Kass, *What's wrong with Babel?*

that maybe touching the clouds, where the bow of God is set as a reminder of his covenant. They fear the floods. They also disobey God's command to scatter and want to make a name for themselves.

So the motives behind the tower deserved punishment. This time God did not judge the world by destroying it. Humans may not believe the promises of God. God remembered His promise. Instead of destroying the human race again by a flood, He judged them by confusing their language. While the Tower of Babel stands primarily as a monument of human arrogance it also stands as a witness to God's faithfulness. Even when the human race – as a whole – was independent of Him, He still was faithful to His promises. The Tower of Babel did for each individual language group what the Flood did for Noah – give them a fresh start.

Parallels exist between the Flood and the Babel incidents. In both, God is said to *see* the plight of mankind. In both, the judgement is of a global scale. Violence was the reason that God brought the flood and there could be an allusion to violence in the Babel incident (especially if we connect Nimrod with the Tower of Babel, see the section on Marlowe). In both, the judgement comes after the building project has progressed (Noah, it is completed; Babel, probably not completed); in both, there is an allusion to making a name for oneself – In Noah's story the Nephilim had made a name for themselves and in the case of the Babelites it was their expressed intention. In the following section we look at the Babel incident in detail.

Analysis of the Tower of Babel Incident

The 'now' of Genesis 11:1 connects it with the main line of narratives back in Genesis 9 – the interlude in Genesis 10:1-32 had been taken to narrate the genealogy. Since the narrator does not refer to any of the clans or tribes – which he just finished describing in Genesis 10 – he refers to the Babelites as 'the whole world' and 'men'. This is another proof that the table of nations in

chapter 10 happens after the Tower of Babel incident. It is the entire (not yet divided) human race – as one corporate entity – which is building this tower.

They say two things:

1. Come let us make bricks and bake it thoroughly⁴⁹
2. Come let us build a city with a tower

Notice that it talks about a two-step construction process. First, the bricks are made and burnt and *then* the city and the tower is built. This two-step construction process seems to be consistent with other Ancient Near Eastern texts, for example, in the Akkadian *Enuma Elish*⁵⁰, tablet VI, lines 55-64:

When Marduk heard this,
Brightly glowed his features, like the days:
Like that of lofty Babylon, whose building you have
requested,
Let its brickwork be fashioned. You shall name it the
sanctuary.

The Anunnaki applied the implement;
For one year they moulded bricks.
When the second year arrived,
They raised high the head of Esagila equalling Apsu.

⁴⁹ Sheila Keitter has seen an allusion between the words ‘come let us’ used here and the words of the Pharaoh in Exo 1.10. She sees a motive of pride and arrogance and translates Exo 1.10 as ‘Come let us deal shrewdly with Him’ so that the primary target is not Israel but their God. She also sees a thematic similarity between the use of bricks and tar in both places. Sheila Tuller Keiter, “Outsmarting God: Egyptian Slavery and the Tower of Babel,” *Jewish Bible Quarterly*, 41, no. 3, (2013).

⁵⁰ There are similar parallels between the Tower of Babel and other Ancient Babylonian stories. George Smith presented some tablets to the British museum which indicated about a building, a destruction at night and confounding of speech. See *The Chaldean Account of Genesis*, George Smith, 1880 accessed online.

Having built a stage tower as high as Apsu,
They set up in it an abode for Marduk, Enlil, Ea;
In their presence he adorned it with grandeur.⁵¹

For the first year they moulded bricks and the second year they raised the high head of Esagila.⁵²

Making of the Bricks

They said to each other, "Come, let's make bricks and bake them thoroughly." They used brick instead of stone, and tar for mortar. (Gen 11:3)

The fact that the narrator has cared enough to mention about bricks and tar would pose a question of its purpose at two levels. One, on the suitability of the material (brick and tar) for this building project. Two its purpose at a narrative, literary level. Wenham comments that the narrator was trying to make a contrast between Mesopotamian building practices (brick and tar) and Israelite practices (stone and mortar). However it seems more likely that the contrast is between what they had used up until that time and what they are using now. Von Rad also seems to be agreeing with this view when he comments on the inventiveness of the crowd⁵³.

On the use of the stone, Von Rad observes that the narrator's point was that they were simply using the wrong materials – if they wanted a gigantic structure they should have used stones but they are using bricks. While this is possible it could very well be that they were far away from a stone quarry or a mountain.

⁵¹ James Pritchard ed., *Ancient Near Eastern Texts* (ANET), 3rd Edition, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969).

⁵² Allen P. Ross, "The Dispersion of the Nations in Genesis 11:1-9," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 138 (1981): 119-38. While some have claimed that what the Babelites built was the E-temen-anki (E-sag-ila was the sanctuary and E-temen-anki was the tower) founded by Herodotus others have disagreed (See *ibid.*, 123).

⁵³ Gerhard Von Rad, *Genesis*, 148.

They were in the *valley* of Shinar⁵⁴. Burning the bricks in fire would make them very hard and durable⁵⁵. And in this way all the stones would look the same way – just like the uniformity of the human race for which this city with the tower is a witness⁵⁶.

Baking the bricks would make sure that they can bear the crushing weight of tall structures. Working with bricks might look relatively easier than working with stone, because the stones will have to be *carved* to the required specification, but in the case of bricks they could be *moulded* to the exact size required. However, the bricks had to be baked ‘thoroughly’ often around 900 degree Celsius to 1000 degree Celsius heat. There could be a lot of waste due to over- and under-burning. The fuel (could be dry reeds or wood) consumption can be up to a quarter of the weight of the bricks.⁵⁷ So this is an expensive building material.⁵⁸ The use of tar or lime – could indicate a water resistant material (cf. Ex 2:3). This observation is further strengthened by the fact that in Ancient Near Eastern Architecture baked bricks as a rule were used in

⁵⁴ Whether Shinar = Sumer has been discussed and challenged. See Ran Zadok, "The Origin of the Name Shinar," ZA 74 (1984): 240-44.

⁵⁵ Allen S. Maller, "The City of Babel and Its Tower," *Jewish Bible Quarterly*, 40, no. 3 (2012): 171-173.

⁵⁶ 'The use of uniform bricks made it easier to construct giant building projects with much higher structures, and even a skyscraper-sized tower...Beyond this practical reason to use uniform, manufactured bricks, there was a powerful symbolic reason to use them as well. They did not want each stone to be a different shape and colour from all the other stones in order to symbolize their wish to unify themselves by teamwork expressed as highly organized conformist factory behaviour, as well as an all-encompassing common purpose' (ibid., 172).

⁵⁷ Gwendolyn Leick, *A Dictionary of Ancient Near Eastern Architecture* (Taylor & Francis e-Library: Routledge, 2003), s.v. Baked Bricks.

⁵⁸ John H. Walton also agreed that the building material was an expensive one, John H. Walton, "The Mesopotamian Background of the Tower of Babel Account and Its Implications," *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 5 (1995): 155-175.

parts of the building that were exposed to damp (in courtyards, bathrooms, drains, the revetment of ziggurats, foundation walls near rivers, etc.)⁵⁹. Even in the Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon, huge bulwarks of baked brick protected the wall at the places where the Euphrates entered the city.⁶⁰ While sun-dried bricks were used for common buildings such as houses, kiln-dried bricks were used only for prestigious buildings – such as palaces.⁶¹ Even Kathleen Kuiper agrees that mass production of baked bricks was a difficult task due to the scarcity of fuel.⁶²

According to the midrash when a person died, during the construction work people would not mourn but when a brick fell and broke they would weep.⁶³ This could be an exaggerated way of showing the value they placed on the bricks – as they made the bricks *before* they started the building. So if the brick is broken half way through it is difficult to make them again and will delay the building project. This again proves that baked bricks was an expensive material to use.

So the fact that the Babelites used the expensive water-resistant baked bricks – for the entire tower and not only for the damp exposed areas – shows how high the flood waters would have risen during Noah's time. It also shows the value these Babelites placed on this building project. If it was common building they wouldn't have used baked bricks and tar. This was their priced

⁵⁹ Leick, *Dictionary of Ancient*, s.v. Baked Bricks.

⁶⁰ Gwendolyn Leick, *Historical Dictionary of Mesopotamia*, 2nd Edition (Maryland: The Scarecrow Press, 2010), s.v. Babylon.

⁶¹ Don Nardo, *Greenhaven Encyclopaedia of Ancient Mesopotamia* (Farmington Hills: Gale, Cengage Learning, 2007), s.v. Building Materials and Method. Apparently there was even a month for sun-drying the bricks - 'The best time of the year for making sun-dried bricks was during the heat of summer. In fact, the first month of summer came to be known as "the month of bricks."'

⁶² Kathleen Kuiper, *Encyclopedia Britannica* (2011), s.v. Mesopotamia, The World's Earliest Civilization.

⁶³ Maller, *City*, 172.

product. The human race was creating its masterpiece in the Tower of Babel. Their *chef d'œuvre* which they went to great pains to create. They wanted to make sure that it would stand forever proclaiming their names. The narrator took the trouble to mention the material to make this point, which his ancient readers would have readily understood.

The view that the Babel tower was built at least partly to escape a future flood finds support in Josephus too. According to him, it was Nimrod⁶⁴ who rebelled against God and led others astray:⁶⁵ “He also said he would be revenged on God, if he should have a mind to drown the world again; for that he would build a tower too high for the waters to be able to reach! And that he would avenge himself on God for destroying their forefathers!”⁶⁶

Jacob's Ladder

Parallels exist⁶⁷ between Jacob's ladder (Gen. 28:11-22) and the Tower of Babel. In Jacob's ladder the angels were ascending and descending from heaven to earth. In the Tower of Babel, the human race was building a tower so that it could reach the heavens. The same two words – top (*roshe*) and reaching the

⁶⁴ For a study of Nimrod see K. van der Toorn and P. W. van der Horst, 'Nimrod Before and After the Bible', *Harvard Theological Review* 83, no. 1 (1990): 1-29, and Yigal Levin, "Nimrod the mighty, king of Kish, king of Sumer and Akkad," *Vetus Testamentum* 52 (2002): 3.

⁶⁵ *Antiquities of the Jews* 1.4.2.

⁶⁶ However there has been attempts to explain why Josephus might have 'rewritten' these stories, see Sabrina Inowlocki, "Josephus' Rewriting of the Babel Narrative (Gen 11:1-9)," *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 37 (2006): 2. Inowlocki explains that Josephus was influenced by the political climate of his own time. Zealots and of John of Gischala seems to have influenced his re-writing of Gen 11. According to Inowlocki Josephus particularly seems to have projected the character of John of Gischala onto Nimrod. However this is speculation at best.

⁶⁷ Sarna, *Genesis*.

heavens (Shamayim) has been used in both places.⁶⁸ Yet another allusion is the phrase ‘gate of heaven’ (Gen 28:17) in Jacob’s story. Jacob really thinks that the place is truly the gateway of heaven. In Akkadian, Babel means more or less the same – gate of the god or heaven. Jacob named that place as the house of God – Beth-el (house of el). The Babelites named the city as confusion – *Babel*. One story is a man-made attempt to reach heaven the other is God’s provision for Jacob to enter into a life of heaven.

However, it would not be wise to argue that the Tower of Babel was a ziggurat⁶⁹ temple built to worship a deity.⁷⁰ If that were the case, then that would have been commended by God and not punished. And, if the issue was that they were building it for the wrong deity then they would have been punished along those lines – for idolatry or other-God worship⁷¹. However, when God speaks about the tower the point is not idolatry (Gen 11:6-7). Furthermore, the earliest ziggurats consisted only of a clay brick

⁶⁸ The Esagila - the ziggurat completed by Nebuchadnezzar has been described by Herodotus - a 5th century Greek historian who is said to have visited Babylon. It is noteworthy that the meaning of Esagila is ‘the house whose head is raised up’. The name is somewhat similar to the Tower of Babel description – ‘reaching to the heavens’.

⁶⁹ Some 30 odd ziggurats have been found by archaeologists. For a survey see A. R. George, *House Most High: The Temples of Ancient Mesopotamia* (Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 1993) and the books by Andre Parrot.

⁷⁰ Some have argued that what they built was a ziggurat see John H. Walton, “The Mesopotamian Background of the Tower of Babel Account and Its Implications,” *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 5 (1995):155-175. For a critique of Walton see Phillip Michael Sherman, *Babel’s Tower Translated: Genesis 11 and Ancient Jewish Interpretation* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 60.

⁷¹ Sarna observes that polytheism started only after the dispersion of nations (Sarna, *Genesis*). In the book of Jubilees Abraham contends with his father for worshiping idols (*Jubilees* 88.1).

platform with a temple on it.⁷² A stage tower of several stages did not appear until the third millennium BC.⁷³ Moreover, early Sumerian inhabitants of Mesopotamia are thought to have come from the mountains of the east – so the ziggurats may have been an effort to construct a man-made mountain.⁷⁴ In case of the ziggurat, the inner core was built with unbaked bricks,⁷⁵ whereas the Tower of Babel was built with baked bricks.

To Build a City with a Tower

First it must be noted that the Babelites are not building a tower alone. They are building a city with a tower that reaches to the

⁷² The dating of the Tower of Babel would depend on the fact whether one sees it as a ziggurat or not. The use of the baked bricks would also help. Paul Seely dates it between 3500BCE-2400BCE, see Paul H. Seely, "The Date of the Tower of Babel and some Theological Implications," *Westminster Theological Journal* 63 (2001): 15-38. However his view is that the world had diverse languages even before the Tower of Babel incident (he appeals to archaeological and scientific – carbon dating –evidence to prove this). He argues that the biblical writers' knowledge of the then known world was limited and term *all the earth* was used relatively. However one cannot ignore the strong emphasis in Genesis 11.1,6 on *one language*. The whole point of the Etiology of the Babel narrative would be missed if there were languages before the incident. Given the choice, I would tend to go with the Biblical evidence rather than science or even archaeology. Also see discussions between Hugh Ross and Paul Seely in *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith*.

⁷³ Howard Vos, *Genesis and Archaeology*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1985), 44-45. The Ziggurats at Ur and Eridu are also said to have been constructed at the end of the third millennium BCE. See Stephen Bertman, *Handbook to Life on Ancient Mesopotamia* (New York: Facts on File, 2003). However it must be noted that this dating is open to challenge and criticism and doesn't hamper the main thrust of this article which is narrative and theological.

⁷⁴ Vos, *Genesis*, 44-45.

⁷⁵ Barbara A Somervill, *Empires of Ancient Mesopotamia* (New York: Chelsea House, 2010), 35.

heavens.⁷⁶ The phrase ‘reaching to the heavens’ definitely does not mean that the Babelites wanted to go into the habitation of the gods – like the Titans going into heaven to dislodge the gods (cf Homer, *Odyssey* 11.313ff).

The text doesn’t say:

Come let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may go into the residence of the gods and stay there...⁷⁷

Rather it says:

Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves; otherwise we will be scattered over the face of the whole earth.”

So their focus is not on heaven but on earth. They wanted to stay on earth.

Some have tried to argue that the major error was not building the city/tower but the attempt to live in one place. They try to justify it by saying that the punishment was not on the building but on the language so as to destroy the common bond that held

⁷⁶ Herman Gunkel’s claim that there are two parallel stories in this section one of city building and the other of tower building, one to do with scattering and the other to do with the confusion of the languages is now generally abandoned. See the works of Umberto Cassuto in his commentary on Genesis; Isaac Kikawada, in his paper entitled “The Shape of Genesis 11:1–9,” and Jan P. Fokkelman, *Narrative Art in Genesis*. Westerman in his commentary has some discussion too. For a renewed interest in Gunkel’s and his responder’s methods see Joel s. Baden, “The Tower of Babel: A Case Study in the Competing Methods of Historical and Modern Literary Criticism,” *JBL* 128, no. 2 (2009): 209–224. For review of source criticism see P.J. Harland, “Vertical or Horizontal: The Sin of Babel,” *Vetus Testamentum* XLVIII in his discussion of Uehlinger’s thesis, specially pages 516–521.

⁷⁷ For a discussion of the Hebrew constructions see Strong, *Shattering the Image of God*, 625–634.

them together.⁷⁸ While that is true, the tower came as an expression of human arrogance and pride. We must note that according to Gen 11:6-7 the languages were confused so as to stop the work on the building; the languages were not an end in themselves in the narrative. As someone said, everything that happens after the Tower of Babel happens to undo the effects of the Tower of Babel. It reaches its climax in the much observed Pentecost in the New Testament where God blesses all languages and all languages are virtually becoming one.

In the context of Genesis 1-11 and generally in the Bible, sin is never a physical challenge to God. Pride – for that matter all sin – is challenging God’s authority. Yet never physically – there is no story where someone went to heaven and tried to take his throne – even in the Garden of Eden the serpent promised that they would be like gods – NOT physically – but like gods in knowing good and evil. So the challenge is a moral one.⁷⁹ We challenge God not on the physical realm but on the spiritual or moral realm. That is what the Babelites were also doing. Their attitude challenged God Himself. So this is not the Jewish version of the Titan story.

The stated purpose of the Babelites is twofold:

1. Make a name for oneself
2. Not be scattered

Making a Name for Oneself

Erecting large building structures is an age-old way to make a name for oneself. Paul Borgman sees the attempts to make a name for oneself in the stories of Adam and Eve, Cain, Lamech and finally in the Tower of Babel.⁸⁰ He comments that this

⁷⁸ Ross, *The Dispersion of the Nations*.

⁷⁹ Even Isa 14.13-14 Cannot be taken literally to mean that Lucifer tried to take God’s throne. In the first place there is no throne which could sit the infinite and invincible God.

⁸⁰ Paul Borgman, *Genesis: The Story We Haven't Heard* (Grand Rapids: IVP Academic, 2001).

episode completes the rebellion Adam and Eve started. They build the tower and get scattered to the ends of the earth. From that point onwards God starts to deal with one chosen race – the descendants of Abraham.

What happened to the city that Cain built? It was destroyed by the flood. So this time they had to build something that could outlive a similar flood. A tower that reaches right to the heavens was the solution. Yet God had promised that He would not send a flood to wipe out the entire human race – and the entire human race was living in the same land mass more or less – so if a flood comes it would wipe out the entire human race – this was contrary to the promises of God. Rather than trusting God and His promises they go on to build a tower – hoping that in case of a flood their names would survive and possibly they too could survive.

Note the difference between the genealogies, which simply reads when X had lived this many years X became the father of Y; and the ones that say a son was born to X and X named him Y. In the latter case the name has a significance. In the case of Noah:

When Lamech had lived 182 years, he had a son. He named him Noah and said, “He will comfort us in the labor and painful toil of our hands caused by the ground the LORD has cursed.” (Gen 5:28-29)

Compare it with the other type of genealogies:

When Kenan had lived 70 years, he became the father of Mahalalel. (Gen 5:12)

This shows the importance the ancients placed on having a son to carry on their lives and the importance they placed on *naming* their children.

Not Be Scattered

How will the tower help to not being scattered? Let us not forget that they are talking not only about the tower but also about the

city. The tower was to be a part of this great city. So a city will help them to be in the same place. The tower helped them to make a name for themselves. Their twin motives are satisfied. At the end it was the city that got the name as Babel and not the tower.

Reaching the Heavens

While some have taken the words 'reach the heavens'⁸¹ simply to mean a very tall tower (Nahum M Sarna, Gerhard Von Rad, Theodore Hiebert), others (Gordon Wenham, Claus Westerman, Victor Hamilton, Bruce Waltke) have seen a special meaning – a threat to God Himself. While it cannot be taken literally, we do see a challenge to God. Westerman quotes Isaiah 14:13-14, where ironically, the prophecy is about Babylon itself:

You said in your heart, "I will ascend to the heavens; I will raise my throne above the stars of God; I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly, on the utmost heights of Mount Zaphon. I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.

Clearly there is some allusion. The Tower of Babel was a challenge to God Himself. In a way, a tower reaching to the heavens could be another form of expressing Eve's desire to become like gods. It was a way of saying we own this earth and will run it in any way we want: "We will not scatter to fill the earth as You commanded, we will stay in one place. Who are You to tell us what to do? We are interested in making a name for ourselves. In case You send a flood like the earlier one – we have our tower. The fact that You have promised that the flood will never come doesn't matter to us. We do not trust You. We trust in ourselves".

⁸¹ The Esagila - the ziggurat completed by Nebuchadnezzar has been described by Herodotus - a 5th century Greek historian who is said to have visited Babylon. It is noteworthy that the meaning of Esagila is 'the house whose head is raised up'. The name is somewhat similar to the Tower of Babel description – 'reaching to the heavens'.

God was angry that the 'sons of god' intermarried and had children with the daughters of men. Whatever the view one takes about the sons of god,⁸² it was the fault of the humans as it was the humans who were punished. So could this Tower of Babel be an effort to take the world to its pre-flood state – whereby again the sons of god can intermarry and have children with daughters of man? Could they have built the tower with the belief that it would make it easier for the sons of god to come down to earth?⁸³

⁸² Rabbi David Tzvi Hoffinann in his commentary catalogues the different interpretations given over the years to the term sons of Gods:

1) The *benei elohim* (sons of God) were celestial beings such as angels.

2) The *benei elohim* refers to the descendants of Seth

3) *Benei elohim* refers to certain people, then considered an elite class, either because of wealth or leadership qualities.

4) *Benei elohim* refer to the descendants of Cain who were of impressive physical appearance and technologically advanced (this is the view proposed by L Eslinger, "A contextual Identification of the *bene haelohim* and *benoth haadam*," *Journal for the Study of the OT* 13, (1979): 65-73.

5) *Benei elohim* refers to individuals who claimed to be Nephilim, demigods, "fallen from heaven" the abode of the gods, who ruled over others by virtue of either their physical strength or beauty or aggressive nature. These are the "tyrants" or "heroes" of mythology. Shubert Spero, "Sons of God , Daughters of Men?" *Jewish Biblical Quarterly* 40, no. 1 (2012), amongst other articles see Frank Jabini, "Sons of God Marrying Daughters of Man: An Exercise in Integrated Theology," *Conspectus* 14 (2012), (Journal of the South African Theological Seminary) for a survey of views and its application to modern church.

⁸³ I have taken the view that the sons of gods are angelic beings. As to the question whether it is possible for Angelic beings to have physical relationships with women see the incident at Sodom and Gomorrah, where Lot's neighbors wanted to rape his Angelic visitors.

God's Response

"But the LORD came down to see the city and the tower the people were building...come let us⁸⁴ go down" – is this talking about theophany or simply an anthromorphism? Since in other places theophanies are animated much more graphically I would tend to take this as an anthromorphism – making a contrast between men building a tower that *reaches* to the heavens and the Lord *coming down*.

God Himself talking about the one language leads to the plot of the story – the confusion of the language of the world. God sees three things as potential problems.

One people, one language,⁸⁵ nothing they plan will be impossible for them: "*..nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them*". How can God come to such a drastic conclusion simply because they built this tower?

1. This will keep the human race together in the same place. It will bring oneness: while this is not bad, evil things will also spread across the whole of humanity without any restraint, like a plague coming to a people who live together and destroying all of them. What was it that stopped the sins of Sodom and Gomorra from spreading to other places? We do not read that God destroyed other cities during that time as he destroyed these two cities. One important factor was the geographical separation. If not for the scattering in the Babel incident, maybe the whole world would have been like

⁸⁴ Some have seen the plural as a rhetorical allusion to the plurals of humanity in 11.3-4. Thomas A Keiser, "The Divine Plural: A Literary-Contextual Argument for Plurality in the Godhead," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*, 34, no. 2 (2009): 131-146. This is again a subject of debate and there is no consensus among scholars.

⁸⁵ Some of the ancient Christian commentators tried to explain that the original language did not survive. All of them got new languages. Andrew Louth, ed., *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture, Genesis 1-11* (Grand Rapids: IVP, 2001), 169.

Sodom and Gomorra. As the sin spread to the city, it would have spread to the whole world – as everyone was living in the same area. All the people would be committing the same sins. So God would have had to destroy all of them – just like the in the flood – which He promised He would not do again.

2. "...they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them"⁸⁶: we see an allusion to Genesis 6:5 where it says that every thought of his imagination was constantly evil. So when God says 'nothing that they plan' – He is talking about the evil things that they plan. God was not feeling threatened by the actions of the human race. He knew that if they were to continue like this eventually they would become just like the pre-diluvian humanity – deserving a much more severe punishment on a global scale. So God stopped them there, not allowing them to make any progress in the wrong direction. Note that during Noah's time, God did not punish the world by confusing the languages – as it wouldn't have made any difference. The people would have gone to the ends of the earth and been as violent as before. The pre-diluvian society was beyond salvation – and God did not want the Babelian society also to end up like the pre-diluvian society. God sees something that will eventually be far more evil than what it is now. A close parallel would be God's statement to Abraham in Genesis 15:16 – "the sin of the Amorites has not reached its full measure". God did not want the Babelites' sin to reach its full measure. Because if it did, that would lead God to judge them much more severely. My observation is further strengthened by the fact that the "now" of Genesis 11:6 ("now nothing will be restrained from

⁸⁶ Most commentators have referred to Job 42.2 where both the words occur – *basar* (impossible) and *zamam* (the related noun *mezimma*). They conclude that God's will alone could prevail without being thwarted by anyone. See Wenham, *Genesis*, 241; Hamilton, *Genesis*, 355.

them, which they have imagined to do,” KJV, translated as ‘then’ in NIV) means ‘from this point onwards’.⁸⁷

While this allusion is literary/thematic and not grammatical, we must note that the word for plan, *zamam* (Gen 11:6) is usually used with evil intent. It is also used in Deuteronomy 19:19; Psalm 17:3, 31:13, 37:12; Proverbs 30:32, and is associated with evil intent. In the prophetic books it is used of the Lord devising to punish the earth: Jeremiah 4:28; 51:12; Lamentations 2:17; Zechariah 1:6; 8:14.⁸⁸ Jeremiah 51:12 deserves a special mention as the Lord Himself now speaks about devising (*zamam*) and doing things against Babylon. In that passage, too, God talks about scattering the people of Babylon. This is because of what they had done to His covenant people and His temple. The noun (feminine) form of the word *mezimma* derived from the verb *zamam* occurs much more frequently: Job 21:27, 42:2; Psalms 10:2, 10:4, 21:11, 37:7, 139:20; Proverbs 1:4, 2:11, 3:21, 5:2, 8:12, 12:2, 14:17, 24:8; Jeremiah 11:15, 23:20, 30:24, 51:11.

Another verb form is *zimmah* or *zammah* –often translated as lewdness and associated with sexual sins. It occurs in Leviticus 18:17, 19:29, 20:14; Judges 20:6; Job 17:11, 31:11; Psalms 26:10, 119:150; Proverbs 10:23, 21:27, 24:9; Isaiah 32:7; Jeremiah 13:27; Ezekiel 16:27, 16:43, 16:58, 22:9, 22:11, 23:21, 23:27, 23:29, 23:35, 23:44, 23:48, 23:49, 24:13; Hosea 6:9.⁸⁹

In a way this is similar to the Tree of Life in the Garden of Eden. God made it unreachable to man saying that man should not live forever. This also is as an act of grace from the Lord. If Adam had eaten from the Tree of Life and entered into a non-dying state – an important death wouldn’t have happened in the history of

⁸⁷ Barry Bandstra, *Genesis 1–11: A Handbook on the Hebrew Text* (Texas: Baylor University Press, 2008), 570.

⁸⁸ The only two exceptions being Zech 8.15 and Prov 31.16

⁸⁹ Search done using *Strong’s Concordance Online*

mankind – the death of our Lord Jesus Christ – so no salvation would have been possible. If men do not die then the son of man also couldn't have died. The serpent would have struck His heel and He would NOT have been able to crush its head – on the cross and in resurrection⁹⁰.

So the building project comes to a halt and people are scattered all over the earth – the very thing they tried to prevent by building the tower happens. The different nations of the world are born.⁹¹ What God initially gave as a blessing (“be fruitful and fill the earth”) has now finally been fulfilled by a curse.

It must be noted that there is a connection between the sin and the punishment. This is the case with all punishments in Genesis. For example, the serpent who seduced Eve into eating the forbidden fruit will have to eat dust; Cain a farmer by vocation now becomes a fugitive and a wanderer. At Babel, too, the punishment comes on the one language – which according to the text is the main reason for unity for the human race; and the intention behind it – not to be scattered.⁹²

⁹⁰ Meredith J Kline, *Genesis: New Bible Commentary*, 3 ed.

⁹¹ There is some evidence in the extra biblical literature to trace the roots of each major civilization to the sons of Noah. For example Josephus states that ‘Now Joctan, one of the sons of Heber, had these sons, Elmodad, Saleph, Asermoth, Jera, Adoram, Aizel, Decla, Ebal, Abimael, Sabeus, Ophir, Euilat, and Jobab. These inhabited from Cophen, an Indian river, and in part of Asia adjoining to it.’ *Antiquities* 1.6.4. Ken Johnson in his popular style book *Ancient Post Flooded History* (Maitland, Florida: Xulon Press, 2004), traces some of these history.

⁹² P.D. Miller Jr, *Genesis 1-11 Studies in Structure and Theme*. JSOT Sup 8 (1978), cited in *Handbook of the Pentateuch*, Victor Hamilton. This was observed by the ancient preacher Chrysostom who saw the connection in Eve's punishment and Adam punishment and the punishment here. Louth, *Ancient Christian*, p168-169

The poetic devices, paronomasia and antithetical parallelisms that are prevalent in this section have been noted by Fokkeman. He sees a sound chiasmus.⁹³

L B N “let us make bricks”
N B L “let us confuse”

The reversal of the order of the sounds reveals the basic idea of the passage: the construction on earth is answered by the deconstruction from heaven; men build but God pulls down. The fact that God’s words are also in the form of man’s words (as cohortative) adds a corroding irony to the passage. God sings with the people while working against them.⁹⁴

So it started with Adam – a couple trying to gain independence and autonomy from God – now the whole world wants autonomy and independence from God and is punished in return.

Babel the Name

The narrator makes a word play between Balal and Babel. Akkadian word *bab-ilim* means ‘gate of God’ – the naval of earth where heaven and earth meet. So here is the narrator taking the gate of God and making it sound like confusion. This is a satire on Babylon and its culture. The narrator wanted to point out that although in the Babylonian language (Akkadian) Babel means ‘gate of God,’ in our language (Hebrew) it means ‘confusion’.⁹⁵

⁹³ A concentric symmetry or chiasmic structure (key terms recur in inverted order) in Gen. 11.1-9 and the parallel symmetry (key terms recur in identical order) in Gen. 11.31-12.5 has been noted by Mark A. Awabdy, *Babel, Suspense*, 19; his analysis is a modified version of Fokkeman’s analysis.

⁹⁴ Fokkeman, *Narrative Art in Genesis* (Oregon: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2004), 15.

⁹⁵ Anchor Bible Dictionary (1992), s.v. Babel

The narrator doesn't record the names of the builders or its leaders – (unless one associates Nimrod⁹⁶ with it: rather a loose connection coming from chapter 10).⁹⁷ It is also an irony that the Babelites who wanted make a name for themselves ended up making only one name for themselves – *Babel* – 'confusion'.

What was Wrong with Babel: A Response to Marlowe

In an excellent article on the Tower of Babel, *On the Sin of Shinar Genesis 11.4*, Creighton Marlowe comes up with an ingenious explanation.⁹⁸ His argument is that the sin of Shinar is neither human hubris nor union – staying in the same place. Rather it is violence. He goes onto to prove that the tower was actually a military siege tower. He connects the Babel story with Nimrod and argues that they captured the people who were living in the plain of Shinar, made them slaves, and forced them to speak their language (so according to him that's how it became one language). Using the 'evidence' from Genesis 10, Marlowe argues that the languages came into existence much before the Tower of Babel. The plan was to build a central 'pyramid' to ensure divine help and then to build a reputation strong enough to deter the would-be attackers. He interprets 'scattering' as being conquered and enslaved and being taken to other countries. The question of who will attack is irrelevant in his theory as the nations in Genesis 10 have already come into existence. God did not really create the different languages but rather did something to confuse and stop the building work.

I must admit that this truly is an ingenious interpretation. However, the basic flaw is his assumption that the languages and the nations existed before the Tower of Babel. It would be

⁹⁶ According to ancient commentators a war broke out after the confusion of languages and it is Nimrod who won the war and scattered the races to the ends of the earth. He then seized Babel and became its first ruler (Louth, *Ancient Christian*, 166-170).

⁹⁷ John Sailhamer sees the words name and scattering as two important words for this story (Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch*).

⁹⁸ Marlowe, *The sin of Shinar*.

erroneous to argue that the nations existed before the Tower of Babel simply because it is described in Genesis 10 which comes before the tower story in Genesis 11. Genesis is full of such constructions – in the creation story in Genesis 1:27, God creates man. And again in the second chapter the creation story is explained in detail – how man was formed out of the dust and that God breathed into his nostril. Based on this, we cannot argue that God created man twice. We cannot also argue that after creating the man in chapter 1, God kept him as a dummy without breath till chapter 2! So in the same token, Genesis 10 is just a summary of nations, and chapter 11 explains in detail how these nations came into being. Thomas Brodie has called this ‘diptychs’. And, he sees this in several places.⁹⁹ Turner also agrees that chapter 10 would fit better after chapter 11 chronologically but “the chronological order has been sacrificed for thematic connections between chapter 9 and 10”. The thematic connections being the Lord’s command to multiply and fill the earth and Noah’s curse on Canaan – so this chapter shows where the cursed people live.¹⁰⁰

Moreover, we cannot escape from the fact that there was only one language: Gen. 11:1 and 11:6. God Himself says that the earth had one language; in v9 God confused the language of *all the earth*. So what happened was done on a global scale and the results were also global.

If going by his own thesis God wanted to stop the violence – why stop the building? Why couldn’t He have the Babelites (or Nimrod) concede defeat? Even if the project used war prisoners as slaves, the point of the project was not to oppress. It was to erect a tower. Even without a city they still could have continued their violent reign. So if God was against violence and oppression he would have stopped the wars, not the building project.

⁹⁹ Brodie, *Genesis*.

¹⁰⁰ Laurence A. Turner, *Genesis, Readings: A New Biblical Commentary*, 2 ed (Sheffield: Phoenix Press, 2009).

CONCLUSION

This article looked at the Tower of Babel in detail and in comparison with Cain's city and Noah's ark. Cain and the Babelites did not believe the word of God, they did not think that what God had said was enough for their security and safety. They turned to buildings for their security. Noah took God at His word and tuned the ark into a monument of faith. Even when the Babelites did not believe in God, He still was faithful to His promises. The Tower of Babel stands as a monument of God's faithfulness to his promises.

SHALL I NOT DRINK IT?
A LINK BETWEEN SUFFERING AND LOVE FROM JOHN 18:11¹

VINODH GUNASEKERA

INTRODUCTION

In Matthew 18:11 we find Jesus referring to a cup that the Father gave Him. What was the cup that Jesus was referring to? How does the Old Testament and the New Testament develop the concept of a cup and the concept of drinking that cup? What can we learn from Him who spoke of drinking the cup down to its dregs because He knew that it was the Father who poured the cup? What is the link between suffering and love? These are some of the questions that this paper seeks to answer.

In Matthew 10:42, Jesus speaks of the rewards of anyone giving a cup of cold water to a little one and in Mark 9:41 about the rewards of anyone who gives a cup of water to one of His disciples. These cups are filled with water. The more general use of the phrase “cup of” in the Bible is figurative. Psalm 116:13 speaks of the “cup of salvation,” Isaiah 51:17 the “cup of God’s anger,” Isaiah 51:22 the “cup of reeling.” Jeremiah 16:7 the “cup

¹ So Jesus said to Peter, “Put the sword in the sheath; the cup which the Father has given me, shall I not drink it?” John 18:11 (RSV)

of consolation,” Jeremiah 25:15 the “cup of the wine of wrath,” Ezekiel 23:33 the “cup of horror and desolation,” 1 Corinthians 10:16 the “cup of blessing,” 1 Corinthians 10:21 the “cup of the Lord” and the “cup of demons,” Revelation 14:10 the “cup of His anger,” and Revelation 16:19 the “cup of the wine of His fierce wrath”. By these figurative uses of the word ‘cup’ in the Bible, three main themes emerge. These themes are: blessing, wrath, and suffering.

The Cup of Blessing

The first theme that emerges from the references to the cup in the scriptures is the theme of blessing. When the scriptures use the phrase the “cup of blessing” (1 Corinthians 10:21) or “my cup overflows” (Psalm 23:5), they are speaking of a cup that is consumed with thanks at the end of a meal. In the Passover feast the cup of blessing is the third of four cups required. The drinking of the cup of blessing was accompanied by a special word of thanks that was spoken over it.

The Jewish cup of blessing () corresponds to the cup of the interpretative saying (Mk. 14:23 par. Mt. 26:27; 1 C. 11:25; Lk. 22:20). At every meal when wine was drunk, the prayer of thanksgiving was said over this cup after the main meal. At the Passover this was the third cup. The relationship to this cup finds direct expression when the tradition calls the cup which Jesus proffered μετὰ τὸ δειπνῆσαι (1 C. 11:25; Lk. 22:20) τὸ ποτήριον τῆς εὐλογίας (1 C. 10:16, 21 ff.). The introduction to the interpretative saying (Mk. 14:23 par. Mt. 26:27) follows exactly the customary rite. He who gives thanks for all, after the required blessing, lifts the cup of blessing a hand’s breadth above the table (λαβών), and with his eyes fixed on the cup says on behalf of all the prayer of thanksgiving (εὐχαριστήσας). Then Jesus, though

contrary to custom, He Himself does not drink, circulates the cup among His disciples and speaks the words of interpretation.²

At the wedding in Cana of Galilee Jesus turned water to wine³ to serve it to the guests at the wedding (John 2:1-12). The headwaiter, possibly the equivalent of the toastmaster at today's weddings, exclaims to the bridegroom who was responsible for the wedding celebrations: "Every man serves the good wine first, and when the people have drunk freely, then serves the poorer wine; but you have kept the good wine until now". This was a cup of blessing. Songwriter Jim Croegaert expresses his thoughts about the joy of the groom when he tasted this last cup of wine at his wedding:

Tuning water to wine, that must have been a fine wedding
to be part of.
Mary did you think what this would be the start of?
When you gave a command to the servants to stand there
and be ready,
I would think the voice they heard was warm and steady.
Under the blue Galilean sky something was new, newer than
the wine they tasted.
Blessed be the groom, blessed be the bride,
Blest be the heart that worried not what might be wasted.
Did you see the groom's face when he learned that disgrace
had been turned to gladness?

² G. Kittel, G. W. Bromiley and G. Friedrich ed., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (TDNT)*, vol. 6 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964), 154–155 (Electronic edition).

³ The subject of the use of alcohol is a sensitive subject because of the way alcohol has caused much devastation in the lives of individuals, families and cultures. The primary way that the Scriptures use the term cup is for the consumption of water (as referred to in the paper from Matthew 10:42 and Mark 9:41). But the use of the cup for the consumption of alcohol is part of the imagery of the Bible. For a good article titled "The Bible and Alcohol" by Dr. Dan Wallace see, <https://bible.org/article/bible-and-alcohol> (accessed on July 20, 2014).

Mary did you laugh the moment he thought it was madness?

When they filled his own cup and he lifted it up was he nearly crying?

Unadorned joy no money will come close to buying.⁴

Paul's argument in 1 Corinthians 10 is that the cup of blessing that the church takes together is to symbolize unity and the love of the congregation for each other. Therefore, the biblical theme of the "cup of blessing" indicates praise and thanksgiving. However, in its use in the Lord's Supper, the "cup of blessing" had a far deeper meaning as well. There is an important sacramental aspect to the "cup of blessing" in its use in the scriptures. Some scholarly literature indicates that Jesus did not drink the fourth and last cup of the Passover meal. According to this view the last cup was the atonement itself, which He drank to the full. Therefore, when Christians participate in the Lord's Supper the drinking of the cup is not simply an act of thanksgiving; it is also sacramental.⁵ These include remembrance of redemption (1 Peter 1:18-19), the proclamation of Christ's death (1 Corinthians 11:26), examining oneself (1 Corinthians 11:27), remembrance of the new covenant relationship with God (Luke 22:20), an anticipation of the eschatological banquet in the world to come (Revelation 19:9), a meal of sharing in the body of Christ where all who partake are equal (1 Corinthians 10:16-17), and food symbolizing our constant need before God.

On the other hand, the eating and drinking to which Jesus summoned His disciples with the words of institution at the supper on the night before His death does not grant a portion in Him simply as table fellowship. This is an independent action separated from the rest of the supper. Jesus does not pronounce the blessing and then drink from

⁴ Jim Croegaert, *Water to Wine* (Evanston, Illinois: Rough Stones Music, 1994).

⁵ The word sacramental holds the idea of mystery, sacredness, ritual observance and covenant relationship

the same cup as His disciples. With the words of institution He hands them the cup. According to these words the redemptive dying of the Redeemer is represented by the drink. Physical drinking is thus sublimated for receiving the event of redemption. This drinking, as the accounts of the institution portray it, is sacramental.⁶

In order to understand Paul's reference to "the cup of blessing which is a sharing in the blood of Christ" (1 Corinthians 10:16), we need to understand the institution of the Jewish Passover. About 4000 years ago, the Jewish people were in bondage as slaves in Egypt. Since the Egyptians would not free the Israelites from slavery the Lord brought about a series of plagues on the land. The final plague was the death of the firstborn child in every home. There was only one way that the Israelites could escape this last plague. The Jews had to kill a male lamb without blemish and apply its blood on the doorposts and lintels of their houses. Only the houses that had the blood would be spared of this last awful plague. When the angel of death saw the blood on the doorposts he would *pass over* that house. The Jewish people were spared through the Passover of the angel and released from bondage from Egypt. As a symbol of this deliverance, God commanded them to celebrate the Passover every year. After that first Passover, until the time of Christ for 2000 years the killing of lambs was done in the Temple in Jerusalem.

By the time of Christ, it was estimated that every year during Passover 250,000 lambs were being slaughtered. On the Eve of the Passover, the lambs would be killed and the blood of each sacrifice offered before God on the altar. The priests stood in two rows before the altar holding a basin and when the worshipper would come and kill the lamb, the blood would fall in the basin. This blood would be poured at the foot of the altar. The meat of the lamb would be later eaten by the worshippers. The picture is of throngs of people in the temple; the bleeding of fighting

⁶ TDNT, 141.

animals waiting to be killed with the flash of the knife; the spurting of the blood; the priests in their spotless robes; the blood stained bowls; the splash of the blood against the altar; the blood stained altar. All the while the Levites are leading the people in the singing of Psalms. The killing of the Lamb foreshadowed in the Psalms was about the sacrifice of God Himself for the death of man, for the sins of man. This ceremony was foreshadowing a Lamb of God who would one day come and once and for all end the sacrifices and pay for the sins of man, past, present and future. Therefore, unlike this lamb sacrificed, God's sacrifice would never have to be repeated year after year.

The night that Jesus was betrayed by Judas was the night of the Passover. The Passover was going on in Jerusalem at that time. Jesus gathered His disciples in a room to celebrate the same feast in the same way that it had been celebrated for 4000 years. They ate the roasted lamb and at the end of the meal Jesus took the unleavened bread, broke it, gave it to the disciples and instead of the usual Passover blessing He changed the words altogether and said: "This is my body, broken for you". He distributed the wine and said: "This is my blood, shed for the forgiveness of your sin". In this act Jesus did something really drastic. He had taken the symbols of the Passover and changed them forever. No longer was it to be memorial of the deliverance of the Jews from Egypt. It was to be a memorial of the deliverance of humankind from the bondage of sin because He Himself was the Lamb that was to be slain. The saving of mankind was greater than the saving of the Jewish people because this Lamb was a greater lamb. He was a Lamb of flesh and blood; He was God Himself.

The rabbis tell us that the Passover Meal is ended by singing Psalms 115 to 118. Picture Jesus, His eyes lifted towards heaven with His disciples singing Psalm 118:24: "This is the day the Lord hath made, let's rejoice and be glad". Verse 27 of Psalm 118 says: "Bind the festival sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar. Thou art my God and I give thanks to thee. I exalt thee". Tears may have been running down Jesus' face when they sang that

part, knowing full well that He was the sacrifice that in a few hours was going to be bound to the altar and slain.

Shortly after the singing, Jesus is betrayed by Judas, arrested by the Jewish priests, tried by Pilate and crucified on the cross. The sun begins to sink on the horizon, casting long shadows on the mount where Jesus is crucified. The assembled groups of people would be standing there looking at the cross and the bleeding body of the Son of God while His blood comes out from His wounds. From His pierced hands and feet blood streams down this altar in the shape of a cross forming a red pool at the base of the cross. For three hours, Jesus had been hanging there despised and rejected by men as Isaiah prophesied: "Yet we considered Him stricken by God, smitten by Him and afflicted" (Isaiah 53:4). During those three hours on the cross Jesus had spoken only a few times and that very briefly. His voice was almost lost amidst the jeers and insults of His tormentors. As His breathing became harder, convulsing with pain, He cried out with a loud voice, "Father into Your hands I commit My Spirit" (Luke 23:46). This was when the Son of God drank to the final dregs the cup that He referred to in Matthew 18:11. It was finished. The work that He had come to do was accomplished. The Lamb had been slain.

Meanwhile in the temple, the Passover service was also on its way. Thousands of men with their lambs were thronging towards the place of sacrifice where death was inflicted on helpless animals. The priests were working furiously passing the blood, pouring it out on the altar and singing hymns of praise quite unaware that beyond the city gates the offering of God's own lamb had made all their sacrifices unnecessary. The price of all sins was paid by God dying on the cross. The true Lamb of God taken away had taken away the sins of the world.⁷ This is what

⁷ Some of the material about the Passover and the death of Christ has been adapted by an excellent sermon on 1 Corinthians 10 by Dr. Abraham Kuruvilla, delivered on June 10th 1996.

believers ever since that death have celebrated in the Lord's Supper. This is the background significance of the Cup of Blessing.

The Cup of Wrath

The second theme in the metaphorical use of the cup in the scriptures is the "cup of God's wrath". When the expressions of God's wrath in the Bible are considered as a whole, there are two aspects. The first aspect of God's wrath is in the form of external forces that show God's wrath. God's wrath is seen in the figurative use of elements such as fire (as in Isaiah 30:27) and flood (as in Hosea 5:10). The second aspect of God's wrath in the scriptures is experienced as an internal force when God makes people *drink* from the cup of His wrath as seen in Jeremiah 25:15ff. This kind of imagery of wrath working internal to people is also found in the book of Revelation when those who worship the beast will be made to drink of the wine of the wrath of God (Revelation 14:10).

The drinking of the cup of God's wrath would impact nations and people in the same way that becoming drunk with wine would impact a person. As we are told in Jeremiah 25:15 and following, the cup of wrath will cause nations to stagger and go insane through the sword that will come among them (Jeremiah 25:16). Those who drank of God's wrath became a ruin and a horror, an object of content and a curse (Jeremiah 25:17).

When considering God's wrath both as an external force like fire or flood and as an internal force that makes people become a curse, it is important to understand how God's wrath is consistent with His nature. The reason for God's wrath is His holiness and righteousness. Those who sin despise God's law and His love. Importantly, how does one reconcile between this wrath of God and His love? This question is addressed well by Stählin in his article in the Theological Dictionary of the New Testament:

Objections are continually raised against the thesis that the ὀργή θεοῦ (God's wrath) is an integral part of biblical

proclamation. They are chiefly based on belief in God's love. If God is truly love, He cannot be angry. But even prior to the NT it was realised that wrath and love are mutually inclusive, not exclusive, in God. In the NT as in the OT, in Jesus as in the prophets, in the apostles as in the rabbis, the preaching of God's mercy is accompanied by the proclamation of His wrath. Only he who knows the greatness of wrath will be mastered by the greatness of mercy. The converse is also true: Only he who has experienced the greatness of mercy can measure how great wrath must be. For the wrath of God arises from His love and mercy. Where mercy meets with the ungodly will of man rather than faith and gratitude, with goodwill and the response of love, love becomes wrath, cf. Mt. 18:34; Mk. 3:5; R. 2:5. In Christ mankind is divided into those who are freed from wrath inasmuch as they are ready to be saved by His mercy, and those who remain under wrath because they despise His mercy. This is what was proclaimed from the very first concerning Jesus by Simeon (Lk. 2:34) and John the Baptist (Mt. 3:12). This is how Jesus Himself regarded the operation of His word and work (cf. Lk. 20:18; Mk. 4:12). And He finally illustrated His divisive power by dying between two malefactors (Lk. 23:39 ff.).⁸

The cup of wrath experienced from the outside is distressing since forces such as fire and flood bring painful consequences. But the most difficult form of God's wrath to experience is internal. This is the experience of wrath that Paul speaks of in Romans. In Romans 1:26 Paul tells us that "God gave them over to degrading passions". This withdrawal of God is the most terrible aspect of the wrath of God. On their own, human beings stagger and ruin themselves. C S Lewis tells us that hell is locked from the inside.

Jesus tasted the cup of the wrath of God when He experienced the fire, flood, and withdrawal of God on the road of death that He

⁸ *TDNT*, 425.

undertook for us. Jesus has delivered us from the just wrath of God.

The apostolic *kerygma* relates deliverance from God's wrath inseparably to Jesus. Jesus is the One who already saves, 1 Th. 1:10. Jesus it is who will then deliver us from the wrath to come, R. 5:9. Only through Him can we have assurance that we are not destined for wrath, 1 Th. 5:9 f. Through Him we are already σωζόμενοι, as He is already the ρυόμενος. Salvation is both present and future in accordance with the dual character of eschatology. Why is deliverance from wrath bound up with Jesus? Because we are justified by His blood, reconciled by His death (R. 5:9 f.), which means that we are no longer under condemnation (8:1), no longer enemies (5:10). Or are we to say: Because Jesus tasted God's wrath for us? Various attempts have been made to show that we are to say this, especially on the basis of the scene in Gethsemane and the saying on the cross in Mt. and Mk.⁹

It is only in Christ that we see God's wrath and God's love intertwined as Jesus drank the cup of the wrath of God for the love God had for the world (John 3:16).

The Cup of Suffering

The third theme in use of the word 'cup' is along the lines of suffering. When the sons of Zebedee came with their mother to ask Jesus whether they could sit at His right and left, Jesus asked them whether they could drink of a cup that He was about to drink (Matthew 20:22). This was a reference to the suffering He was about to experience. When Jesus was praying in the Garden of Gethsemane He requested of God: "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me, yet not as I will but as You will" (Matthew 26:39). Again, a second and third time Jesus said: "My Father, if this cannot pass away unless I *drink it*, Your will be done" (Matthew 16:42). This prayer is recorded in Mark 14:36ff and Luke 22:42ff as well. In these instances, the drinking from the

⁹ TDNT, 445.

cup represents the suffering that God was about to bring into Jesus' life, and is therefore part of God's sovereign will.

When Jesus referred to "the cup which the Father has given Me" in John 18:11 at the time of arrest, He was referring to this same cup that He prayed about in Gethsemane, the cup of suffering. Yet by the time He was betrayed by Judas and the illegitimate arrest was under way, Jesus had made up His mind to drink the cup that the Father was already pouring out for Him. By this time, Jesus had accepted the cup of suffering in His heart and will. George Matheson writes about Jesus' acceptance of suffering as follows:

The cup which our Father giveth us to drink is a cup for the will. It is easy for the lips to drain it when once the heart has accepted it. Not on the heights of Calvary, but in the shadows of Gethsemane is the cup presented; the act is easy after the choice. The real battlefield is in the silence of the spirit. Conquer there, and thou art crowned.¹⁰

However, the most difficult part of Jesus' suffering had to do with the fact that He knew that His Father was sovereignly allowing it. He had known all along that He had to suffer and die. In Mark 8:31 He had taught His disciples that "the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed, and after three days rise again". When Peter tried to turn Him away from the road of suffering, in Mark 8:35, Jesus said: "For whosoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it". Luke the beloved physician records these same statements of Jesus in Luke 9:22ff. In the *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Goppelt puts it this way:

Materially, however, Jesus sees Himself confronted, not by a cruel destiny, but by the judgment of God. The ineffable sorrow and anguish (Mk. 14:33 f. par. Mt. 26:37 f. cf. Lk.

¹⁰ S. G. Hardman, and D. L. Moody, *Thoughts for the Quiet Hour* (Willow Grove, PA: Woodlawn Electronic Publishing, 1997).

22:44) which gives rise to the request that what is approaching might pass from Him is not fear of a dark fate, nor cringing before physical suffering and death, but the horror of One who lives by God at being cast from Him, at the judgment which delivers up the Holy One to the power of sin (Mk. 14:41 par. Mt. 26:45, cf. Lk. 22:53).¹¹

Yet the actual experience of that suffering by taking the darkness of every man into His own understanding was a cup that was almost beyond this Man who was born to save the world from sin. This cup of suffering that Jesus drank was intensified by two factors: His desolation from God and His bearing the depravity of man.

The Cup of Desolation

When Moses saw God's glory on Mount Sinai, the sight was so terrifying that he trembled with fear (Heb. 12:21). Yet that was God in covenant, God in grace. However, when Jesus looked up from the Garden of Gethsemane He saw His Father with His sword raised (Zech. 13:7; Mat. 26:31) ready to slay His Son. Although there would have been tears streaming down the Father's face, this sight was unbearable for Jesus because of the deep relationship that Jesus had always enjoyed with the Father. When Jesus was little He was about His Father's business (Luke 2:49); it was His Father who came to Jesus' baptism and said, "This is my beloved Son" (Mat. 3:17); much of Jesus' teaching was about the Father, about how His Father feeds the sparrows (Mat. 6:26), how His Father secretly rewards those who pray in solitude (Mat. 6:18), about how when the disciples prayed they should say "Our Father" (Mat 6:9) and how His brothers and sisters were those who did the will of His Father in heaven (Mat. 12:48). His knowledge of the Father was so intimate that Jesus said that "no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son wishes to reveal Him" (Mat. 11:27).

¹¹ *TDNT*, 152-53.

So when Jesus looked into the Father's face in Gethsemane the cup that He was asking to be removed was the abandonment of the Father Who was His life – this was a personal cup of suffering. This relationship that the Son enjoyed with the Father was from before even time began. Yet now, in this one poignant moment of time, Jesus knew that the Father would have to forsake the Son because the Son would become sin. Although in Gethsemane Jesus' cry was "Abba Father," at the cross He would be crying: "My God". Jesus, the last Adam would be standing before His God, to answer for the sin of the whole world (2 Cor. 5:12). This inner suffering of the Son was the abandonment by the Father in whose arms He had always been. This was the deeply personal cup of suffering that Jesus had to bear.

The Cup of Depravity

2 Cor. 5:21 says that Jesus who had no sin, was made sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him (cf. Gal. 3:1). The cup Jesus was going to drink involved becoming sin. On the one hand, Jesus had limited Himself in His incarnation. He had limited Himself in space, in power, in knowledge, and time since otherwise Jesus could not be killed. The most terrifying aspect of the cross was that Jesus had never sinned (2 Cor. 5:21). Jesus knew no sin during His incarnation and His pre-existence as God the Son. Because Jesus knew no sin He didn't know what horrors faced Him as He took on the sin of the world. So when Jesus became sin for us, it was a far deeper pain than any man has ever experienced. The wonder of the love of Christ for His people is not that for their sake He faced death without fear, but that for their sake He faced it terrified. Terrified by what He knew and terrified by what He did not know. Jesus took damnation lovingly.

CONCLUSION

In 2 Samuel 12 we find Nathan confronting King David with a story about a rich man and a poor man. In Nathan's description of the poor man he says (2 Sam. 12:3): "Now the poor man had nothing except one little ewe lamb.... It would eat of his bread

and *drink of his cup* and lie in his bosom, and it was like a daughter to him". The horror of the slaying of the lamb in Nathan's account was because of the closeness of the lamb to the poor man. This is portrayed by the lamb drinking of the man's cup and lying in his bosom.

The cup of blessing in a sacramental sense, as described above, the cup of wrath and the cup of suffering were all drunk by the Lamb of God who was once drinking from His Father's cup and lying in the bosom of the Father. It was Jesus' love for the Father that enabled Him to drink down to the dregs what was poured out in these cups. Jesus knew in His magnificent heart that it was the Father who was pouring out the cup. That is why in Matthew 18:11 Jesus told Peter: "Put your sword away! Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?" Jesus loved His Father. This love was such that nothing would take Him away from doing the will of His Father – not undeserved wrath, not unbearable pain and not even the unspeakable sorrow of abandonment. Such love could not be rewarded by anything less than resurrection – Jesus was the first man who was raised to life to never die again. This was the ultimate victory of love over suffering.

In early Christian writings the cup became a symbol of martyrdom. When Polycarp was arrested for being a Christian and told to denounce Christ, he replied: "Eighty-six years I have served Him, and He never did me any wrong. How can I blaspheme my King who saved me?" Polycarp was sentenced to be burned at the stake. Part of the prayer that he prayed as he waited for the fire to be lighted was: "I bless you that you have thought me worthy of this day and hour, to be numbered among the martyrs and share in the cup of Christ, for resurrection to eternal life." Just like his Saviour before him, the love of Polycarp for his Master enabled him to suffer for His name. The person who demonstrates such love instead of staggering in God's wrath becomes the beneficiary of God's transformation from the temporary to the eternal and from death to life.

GÉZA VERMES AND JESUS AS A GALILEAN CHARISMATIC HASID

PRABO MIHINDUKULASURIYA

Géza Vermes and the Third Quest

During the 1950s and 60s, many scholars were sufficiently convinced by Rudolf Bultmann's argument that NT writers were simply not interested in the historicity of Jesus' life. The Gospels, he claimed, were essentially inspirational stories for pre-modern communities shaped by their own internal concerns as well as tensions with other such communities. The Gospel material could certainly be sifted for layers of authentic or attributed 'sayings' of Jesus but, beyond that, a comprehensive rediscovery of Jesus' own aims and actions was now quite impossible.

All that changed, according to N T Wright, with S G F Brandon (1907-1971) and Géza Vermes (pron. *vermesh*) (1924-2013).¹ Brandon and Vermes fanned into full flame the embers of the 'New Quest' for the historical Jesus (1953-1967) which struggled against the dampening effect of Barthian and Bultmannian ahistoricism. Independently, Brandon and Vermes pioneered the ongoing 'Third Quest' by situating Jesus research firmly within a Palestinian Jewish context.² Brandon's portrait of 'Jesus the

¹ N.T. Wright, *Who Was Jesus?* (London: SPCK, 1992), 13.

² Joachim Jeremias (1900-1979) had drawn attention to Aramaic sources and was very much a precursor of this trend. For a fuller survey of the history of Jesus research, see James H. Charlesworth, Brian

revolutionary' generated excitement in the late 1960s, but soon proved unsustainable.³ Vermes, however, drew upon his enviable combination of theological training (he had trained as a Roman Catholic priest in his native Hungary before reverting to Judaism after settling in postwar Oxford) and firsthand knowledge of Second Temple Jewish literature (he had been the first scholar to write a doctoral dissertation on the Dead Sea Scrolls, followed by studies on Aramaic documents, etc.).⁴ When it was first published in 1973, the very title of his book *Jesus the Jew: A Historian's Reading of the Gospels* was thought to be provocative.⁵ In 1977, I. Howard Marshall wrote that,

Rhea and Petr Pokorný, eds., *Jesus Research: New Methodologies and Perceptions* (The Second Princeton-Prague Symposium on Jesus Research), (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2014); Craig Keener, *The Historical Jesus of the Gospels* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009), esp. 33-46. For the contribution of Jewish scholars in Jesus research see Donald A. Hagner, *The Jewish Reclamation of Jesus: an analysis and critique of the modern Jewish study of Jesus* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1997).

³ S.G.F. Brandon, *Jesus and the Zealots: A Study of the Political Factor in Primitive Christianity* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1967). For corrections of this view, see Brandon, "'Jesus and the Zealots': A Correction," *New Testament Studies*, 17 (1970-71): 453; Martin Hengel, *Victory Over Violence and Was Jesus a Revolutionist?* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2002; orig. published separately, Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971, 1975); Ernst Bammel and C.F.D. Moule (eds.), *Jesus and the Politics of His Day* (Cambridge: CUP, 1984).

⁴ Geza Vermes, *Providential Accidents: An Autobiography* (London: SCM Press, 1998/ Langham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1999; 'Obituary: Geza Vermes,' *The Economist* (May 18th 2013). Online: <http://www.economist.com/news/obituary/21578017-geza-vermes-jew-ex-priest-and-translator-dead-sea-scrolls-died-may-8th-aged> (accessed 13 May 2014); Philip Alexander, 'Geza Vermes obituary,' *The Guardian* (14 May 2013). Online: <http://www.theguardian.com/books/2013/may/14/geza-vermes> (accessed 13 May 2014).

⁵ 1st ed., London: William Collins Sons & Co Ltd., 1973; 2nd ed., Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981/London: SCM Press, 1983; 3rd ed., London: SCM Press, 2001.

It may come as a surprise that one of the most notable attempts to wrestle historically with the Gospels comes from the pen of a Jew, expert in the Judaism of the first century. G. Vermes has presented a Jewish portrait of Jesus the Jew, a book which is a strange combination of rejection of current scholarly opinions and advocacy of new hypotheses which demand careful scrutiny.⁶

The fact that mainstream scholarship (both liberal and conservative) has remained firmly committed to pursuing Jesus research within the context of Second Temple Palestinian Judaism is attributable, at least in part, to Vermes' abiding contribution. Over a period of four decades, he followed through on his seminal work with a series of publications in which he claimed to track how Nicene Christianity had meandered away from its original Jewish roots.⁷ Critics have observed that Vermes retained his original 1973 portrayal of Jesus the Jew throughout these later writings without significant revision. However, they charge that his methodology is weakened by a highly selective choice of sources and interlocutors.⁸ Vermes died in May, 2013 at the age

⁶ *I Believe in the Historical Jesus* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1977; republished, Vancouver: Regent College Publishing, 2004), 137.

⁷ Geza Vermes, *Jesus and the World of Judaism* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1983); *The Religion of Jesus the Jew* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993); *The Changing Faces of Jesus* (London: Penguin, 2001); *Jesus in His Jewish Context* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003); *The Authentic Gospel of Jesus* (London: Penguin, 2004); *The Passion* (London: Penguin, 2005); *The Nativity: History and Legend* (London: Penguin, 2006); *The Resurrection: History and Myth* (Doubleday Books, 2008); *Searching For The Real Jesus: Jesus, The Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Religious Themes* (London: SCM Press, 2009); *Searching for the Real Jesus*, London (London: SCM Press, 2010); *Jesus: Nativity - Passion - Resurrection* (London: Penguin, 2010); *Jesus in the Jewish World* (London: SCM Press, 2010); *Christian Beginnings: From Nazareth to Nicea* (London: Penguin, 2012/New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013).

⁸ See for example, Ben Witherington III, *The Jesus Quest: The Third Search for the Jew of Nazareth* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1997), 108-112; N.T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God* (London: SPCK, 1999), 91-

of 88 having shaped the course of historical Jesus research for years to come.

In this essay, I shall deal with only one of Vermes' methodological constants because it is arguably the most critical one. We may call it the 'Hanina parallel'. Specifically, I shall seek to demonstrate that the Hanina parallel fails to explain the particular contentiousness of Jesus the Jew. In other words, If Jesus exemplified the conventional pattern of a Galilean charismatic *hasid*, why was the response of contemporary Pharisaic movement and subsequent rabbinic orthodoxy so hostile to him? The answer, it will be argued, lies in the earliest Christian witnesses to Jesus' own self-identification, the very thing Vermes worked so hard to downplay.

Jesus the Jew: A Galilean Charismatic Hasid

The real strength of Vermes' contribution in *Jesus the Jew* was the cogency of his alternative portrayal of Jesus within 1st century Palestinian Judaism, until his violent end in Jerusalem. The weakness is that he ignored or glossed over contrary evidence by resorting to redaction critical devices so familiar in liberal-existential discourse. He was determined to show that he was "neither the Christ of the Church, nor the apostate bogey-man of Jewish popular tradition".⁹ Instead, Vermes argued, if the synoptic narratives are read within "the geographical and historical realities and...the charismatic religious framework of first-century Judaism" the historical figure that emerges is that of "Jesus the Galilean Hasid or holy man".¹⁰ He proposed furthermore that an analysis of "the New Testament titles of Jesus (Prophet, lord, messiah, son of man, son of

124. Reidar Hvalvik, 'Vermes, Geza' in Craig A. Evans (ed.), *Encyclopedia of the Historical Jesus* (NY/Oxford: Routledge, 2008); József Zsengellér and Károli Gáspár (eds.), *Rewritten Bible after Fifty Years: Texts, Terms, or Techniques?: A Last Dialogue with Geza Vermes* (Leiden: Brill, 2014).

⁹ *Jesus the Jew*, 17.

¹⁰ *Jesus the Jew*, 7.

God)...demonstrates that in their original meaning these describe exactly the kind of healer and teacher” encountered in his historical reconstruction.

Vermes began posing his thesis with a brief review of the synoptic account of Jesus’ life and work, particularly the passages describing his healings, exorcisms and teaching. He juxtaposed these observations with a stimulating account of the distinct socio-political setting of Galilee, and introduced the celebrated role in that religious milieu of a category of miracle-working holy men who modeled themselves especially after the prophets Elijah and Elisha and gained local repute for performing exorcisms and healings. These “Charismatics,” as Vermes labelled them, did not make up a formally organized sect, were deemed unorthodox in their practices and – though considering themselves within the bounds of Judaism – were generally regarded with wariness by those representing formal orthodoxy. Here Vermes arrived at a critical stage in his argument and sought to establish a plausible parallel between Jesus and this category of Jewish charismatics.

The representation of Jesus in the Gospel as a man whose supernatural abilities derived, not from secret powers, but from immediate contact with God, proves him to be a genuine charismatic, the true heir of an age-old prophetic religious line. But can other contemporary figures be defined in the same way? The answer is yes. Furthermore, far from digressing from the main theme of the present enquiry, it is *very pertinent* to a search for the real Jesus to study these other men of God and the part they played in Palestinian religious life during the final period of the second Temple era.¹¹

His choice of “contemporary figures” for this crucial historical parallel were Honi the circle-Drawer (1st cen. BC) and Hanina ben Dosa (1st cent AD), two charismatic hasids regarding whom fragmentary accounts are preserved in ancient Jewish

¹¹ *Jesus the Jew*, 69 (emphasis mine).

sources.¹² Vermes described the former as “the best known of these charismatics,” but conceded that he is “perhaps not the most important from the point of view of New Testament study”.¹³ However, the latter he upheld not only as “one of the most important figures for the understanding of the charismatic stream in the first century,” but also as offering “in a minor key...remarkable similarities with Jesus, so much so that it is curious, to say the least, that traditions relating to him have been so little utilized in New Testament scholarship”.¹⁴

Hanina ben Dosa

Rabbi Hanina ben Dosa appears in the rabbinic sources as a pre-70 AD figure who lived in Arav, a Galilean town situated about 10 miles north of Nazareth. He is once mentioned as being a disciple of Yohanan ben Zakkai and seems to have been connected albeit peripherally to the formal rabbinic establishment.¹⁵ He was noted particularly for his exemplary piety and uncommon closeness to God which produced behaviour that in some ways surpassed contemporary Pharisaic norms and therefore infringed particular rules of etiquette.¹⁶ Hanina’s espousal of poverty was seen by some of his peers as a mark of his devotion and, as we shall discuss later, he was occasionally linked with the name of Elijah

¹² With the single exception of Josephus’ reference to Honi (“Onias the Righteous”) in Ant XIV. 4, all other citations are from early rabbinic writings.

¹³ *Jesus the Jew*, 69.

¹⁴ *Jesus the Jew*, 72.

¹⁵ The section on Hanina (pp.72-78f) is condensed from a previously published journal article by Vermes entitled, ‘Hanina ben Dosa: A Controversial Galilean Saint from the First Century of the Christian Era,’ *Journal of Jewish Studies*, 23 (1972): 28-50; and 24 (1973): 51-64. These articles were reprinted as (ch. 10) ‘Hanina ben Dosa: A Galilean Contemporary of Jesus’ in Geza Vermes, *Jesus in the Jewish World* (London, SCM Press, 2010), 130-173.

¹⁶ See section on ‘Charismatics and Pharisees,’ *Jesus the Jew*, 80-82.

the prophet. Thus the formulaic eulogy ascribed to the Galilean Hasid in the Mishnah reads: "When Rabbi Hanina ben Dosa died, the man of deed ceased".¹⁷ Some of the anecdotal references recounting his efficacious prayers and miraculous deeds bear a striking resemblance to the miracles of Jesus, and are equated by Vermes to that effect.

For our present consideration it may be helpful to reproduce the rabbinic texts recalling the two most significant of these instances. The first involves Hanina's ability to heal from a distance:

Our masters have taught: It happened that when Rabban Gamaliel's son fell ill, he sent two pupils to R. Hanina ben Dosa that he might pray for him. When he saw them, he went to the upper room and prayed. When he came down, he said to them: Go, for the fever has left him. They said to him: Are you a prophet?

He said to them: I am not a prophet, nor I am a prophet's son, but this is how I am favoured. If my prayer is fluent in my mouth, I know that he (the sick man) is favoured; if not, I know that (his disease) is fatal. They sat down, wrote and noted the hour. When they came to Rabban Gamaliel, he said to them: By the worship! You have neither detracted from it, nor added to it, but this is how it happened. It was at that hour that the fever left him and he asked us for water to drink. (*bBerakhoth* 34b)

Regarding this account Vermes comments that "The cure from a distance of the centurion's servant (or the son of the royal

¹⁷ *mSot.*9.15; *tSot.* 15.5; *vSot.*24c; *bSot.*49b. Vermes notes the similarity of this description to that of Jesus as "a prophet mighty in deed and word" (Lk.24.19) and "a doer of marvelous deeds"(Ant. XVIII.5.2); *Jesus the Jew*, 79.

official)¹⁸ belongs to the same category and illustrates what seems to have been a recognized charismatic pattern”.¹⁹

The second story relates Hanina’s encounter with the queen of demons, which Vermes used to attest that Hanina was “venerated as a deliverer of persons in physical peril, in particular that caused by evil spirits.”²⁰

Let no man go out alone at night!’ Not on Wednesday nights, nor on Sabbath nights; for Agrath daughter of Mahlat and eighteen myriads of destroying angels are on the prow, and each of them is empowered to strike.

In former times she was seen daily. Once she met R. Hanina ben Dosa and said to him: ‘Had there been no commendation from heaven, ‘Take heed of R. Hanina ben Dosa and his teaching!’ I would have harmed you.’ He said to her: If I am highly esteemed in heaven, I decree that you shall never again pass through an inhabited place.’ She said to him: ‘please allow me in for a limited time.’ He then left to her Sabbath nights and Wednesday nights. (*bPesahim* 112b).

Having thus established a historical similarity, Vermes then applied it throughout *Jesus the Jew* as the primary corroboration of its central thesis; that the most reliable NT evidence concerning Jesus of Nazareth (selected according to his own criteria) can be correctly understood only within the category of Galilean charismatic Hasidism. For example, summing up his investigation of the titles of Jesus, Vermes asserted the priority of his own Christology over the prevalent Bultmannian model of Hellenistic mythologizing as follows:²¹

¹⁸ Mat. 8.5-13; Lk.7.1-10; Jn. 4.46-53.

¹⁹ *Jesus the Jew*, 75.

²⁰ *Jesus the Jew*, 76.

²¹ For other instances of Vermes’ criticism of Bultmann’s dogmatic historical agnosticism, see *Jesus the Jew*, 86, 106, 152, 177, 193, 205-6, etc.

Thus, if the Hanina parallel is given the attention it deserves, it may be argued that the greatest, and no doubt earliest, part of the Synoptic evidence concerning the divine sonship of Jesus corresponds exactly to the image of the Galilean miracle-working Hasid. The Hellenistic *Son of God* 'divine man' then appears not as an original element in the Gospel tradition, but as one super-imposed on a solidly established Palestinian Jewish belief and terminology. There is, in other words, no reason to contest the possibility, and even the great probability, that already during his life Jesus was spoken of and addressed by admiring believers as son of God.²²

Therefore, Vermes' concluding perspective of Jesus bore the predictable result of being significantly shaped by the very thing to which it was compared – the Hanina parallel. The closing paragraph of *Jesus the Jew* thus offered a 'historical' figure appended with a reductionist version of the titles attributed to him by the synoptic Gospels:

The positive and constant testimony of the earliest Gospel tradition, considered against its natural background of first-century Galilean charismatic religion, leads not to a Jesus as unrecognizable within the framework of Judaism as by the standard of his own verifiable words and intentions, but to another figure: Jesus the just man, the zaddik. Jesus the helper and healer, Jesus the teacher and leader, venerated by his intimates and less committed admirers alike as prophet, lord and son of God.²³

Critique of the Hanina Parallel: the Rabbinic Condemnation of Jesus the Jew

Vermes made no attempt to veil the fact that in his own lifetime Hanina ben Dosa met with the censure and antipathy of those who represented the religious establishment of Second Temple

²² *Jesus the Jew*, 209; cf. 90.

²³ *Jesus the Jew*, 225.

Judaism. Citing D Flusser, he stated categorically that, “Considering all the evidence available, this ‘inevitable tension’, indeed conflict, emerges as a fact”.²⁴ To account for this tension, Vermes suggested two reasons:

The first, though perhaps less important, lies in the Hasidic refusal to conform in matters of behavior and religious observance. The second reason springs from the threat posed by the unrestrained authority of the charismatic to the upholders of the established religious order.²⁵

And add the observation that,

It is hardly surprising that the stories concerning Honi and Hanina – not to mention Jesus – often contain an element of open or veiled disapproval when it is remembered that the entire rabbinic tradition has passed through the channel of orthodoxy.²⁶

To be sure, Honi had exasperated Simeon ben Shetah, the chief Pharisee of his time²⁷ and been stoned to death in 63 BC by the political supporters of Aristobulus II.²⁸ Nevertheless, subsequent rabbinic tradition accorded the Hasid an exalted place. A saying from the Midrash Rabbah, for instance, declares: “No man has existed comparable to Elijah and Honi the Circle-Drawer, causing mankind to serve God”.²⁹

Likewise, Hanina was implicitly charged with contracting ritual impurity and violating a biblical command by carrying the carcass of a reptile,³⁰ and inferred to have contravened a decision of the

²⁴ *Jesus the Jew*, 80.

²⁵ *Jesus the Jew*, 80.

²⁶ *Jesus the Jew*, 80.

²⁷ *mTaan*. 3.8.

²⁸ Josephus, *Ant.*XIV.24.

²⁹ Genesis Rabbah 13.7. See also *bTaan*. 23a

³⁰ *bBer*. 33a

sages by owning goats.³¹ Furthermore, the efficacy of his prayer was openly questioned by rabbinic envoys and, though obliged for the healing of his son, was described rather demeaningly by Yohanan ben Zakkai as a “slave”, whereas he himself was a “prince” before God.³² However, the honour bestowed upon Hanina in rabbinic literature is considerable. Two noteworthy sayings in praise of him are attributed to Rab (d. mid-3rd cent. AD), the great Babylonian *amora*:

Every day a heavenly Voice (bath kol) issued [from Mt. Horeb] and proclaimed, ‘The whole world is sustained on account of Hanina my son; but Hanina my son [is satisfied with] one kab of carob from one Sabbath eve to another!’³³

The world was created only for Ahab son of Omri, and for R. Hanina ben dosa: for Ahab son of Omri, this world; for R. Hanina ben Dosa, the world to come.³⁴

In stark contrast, the response of the same rabbinic establishment towards Jesus of Nazareth is one of unequivocal condemnation and rejection. In fact, Vermes himself admits in a separately published journal article on Hanina ben Dosa, that the reason for more material on the Hasid being preserved in the Babylonian Talmud than in its Palestinian counterpart – which was compiled in Hanina’s native Galilee – was probably because “the transmitters of the Hanina traditions *may have felt embarrassed by the similarities between his charismatic activities and those attributed to Jesus and his Jewish followers*, among whom a certain Jacob from the Galilean locality of Kefar Sekhaniah (or Sama), an acquaintance of Eliezer ben Hyrcanus, achieved definite notoriety in rabbinic circles”.³⁵ The traditions alluded to here are from *Tosefta Hullin* 2.22-24 which discusses

³¹ *bTaan.* 25a; *mBK.* 7.7.

³² *bBer.* 34b

³³ *bTaan.* 24b; cf. *bBer.* 17b; *bHul.* 86a.

³⁴ *bBer.* 61b; cf 17b; *bTaan.* 24b.

³⁵ *Journal of Jewish Studies* 24 (1973): 63-64 (emphasis mine).

the danger of defilement by contact with a min (heretic), and two stories are provided to illustrate the point. The first concerns Rabbi Ishmael (d.135 AD):

Rabbi Eleazar ben Dama was bitten by a snake. And Jacob of Kefar Sama came to heal him in the name of Jesus ben Pantera.³⁶ And Rabbi Ishmael did not allow him.

The story continues to relate how Eleazar disputed the decision but died before he could state his argument, whereupon Ishmael congratulated him on dying without “breaking the hedge erected by the sages”. The second story is about Rabbi Eliezer ben Hyrcanus (fl. Late 1st cent. AD). Puzzled as to why he had been accused of *minuth* (heresy), though shortly acquitted, it is suggested by his pupil Akiva that he might have heard something from a min and been pleased by it. To this Rabbi Eliezer replies, “By Heaven! You remind me. Once I was strolling in the camp of Sepphoris. I bumped into Jacob of Kefar Sikhnin and he told me a teaching of *minut* in the name of Jesus ben Pantiri, and it pleased me.”

Accounts such as these in the early strata of rabbinic tradition³⁷ make it very difficult to accept Vermes’ thesis that Pharisaic antagonism against Jesus was merely a superficial issue. If Jesus, as a charismatic Hasid, was merely an annoyance to those belonging to the mainstream of rabbinic orthodoxy why was he

³⁶ “ben pantera” (and variants) is used for Jesus in several rabbinic passages. Origen reports that 2nd cent. Jewish anti-Christian polemic charged that Jesus was the son of Mary and “some soldier called Panthera” with whom she had committed adultery (*Contra Celsum* 1.32).

³⁷ See (Ch. 3) ‘Jesus in Jewish Writings’ in Robert E. Van Voorst, *Jesus Outside the New Testament: An Introduction to the Ancient Evidence* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eardmans, 2000). For older discussions, see F.F. Bruce, *Jesus and Christian Origins Outside the New Testament*, 2nd ed. (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1984), 54-65; R.T. France, *The Evidence for Jesus* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1986), 32-39; E. Bammel, “Christian Origins in Jewish Tradition,” *NTS* 13 (1966/7): 317-35.

dealt with as an apostate and his teaching regarded dangerous? Unlike the charismatic Hasidim, Jesus is singled out for denunciation as a *mesith*, one who leads people astray by false and idolatrous teaching.³⁸ A passage discussing the Mishnah's requirement (*Sanh.* 6.1) that a public appeal must be made for any evidence in favour of a person condemned to stoning is illustrated by the following report:

It is taught: On Passover Eve they hanged Yeshu. For forty days beforehand a crier went out proclaiming, 'He is going out to be stoned, because he has practiced magic and led Israel astray. If anyone has anything to say in his defence, let him come and speak for him.' But they found nothing in his favour, so they hanged him on Passover Eve. (*bSanh.* 43a)

The charges of magic or sorcery and leading Israel astray corroborate NT evidence of similar accusations by Jewish leaders against Jesus (e.g. Mt. 9:34; 10:25; 27:63-64; Mk. 3:22). Yet another, somewhat bizarre, story is given in the context of a Mishnaic discussion of OT characters who have no place in the world to come. One is Gehazi whom, it is claimed, was repulsed by Elisha with both hands; likewise, "Rabbi Joshua ben Perahiah repulsed Jesus (the Nazarene) with both hands." This leads to the following account:

When king Jannaeus was killing our Rabbis, Rabbi Joshua ben Perahiah (and Jesus) escaped to Alexandria in Egypt.³⁹ When peace was restored, Simeon ben Shetah sent him a message: 'From me, the holy city (Jerusalem), to you, Alexandria in Egypt (my sister). My husband is living in you,

³⁸ For an interesting article on evidence in the gospels which may suggest that Jesus was excommunicated from the synagogue during his own lifetime in accordance with the Mosaic law relating to apostasy (Deut. 13), see D. Neale, "was Jesus a Mesith? Public Response to Jesus and his Ministry, *Tyndale Bulletin* 44, no. 1 (May 1993): 89-101.

³⁹ The reference is to massacres of his Jewish opponents by Alexander Jannaeus (103-76 BC) and the consequent flight of some of them to Egypt (Josephus, *Ant.* XIII. 383).

and I am deserted.' So he set off, and came to a certain inn, where he was given a warm welcome. He said, 'How lovely is this *aksania!*'⁴⁰ He (Jesus) replied, 'Rabbi, she has narrow eyes.' 'You scoundrel,' said R. Joshua, 'is that what you are thinking about?' So he sounded four hundred trumpets and excommunicated him. Many times Jesus came and pleaded to be allowed back, but he would not listen. But one day, when R. Joshua was reciting the *Shema*, Jesus came to him, and he decided to welcome him back, and made a gesture to him. Jesus, however, thought he was ordering him away, and he went and set up a brick and worshipped it. R. Joshua then appealed to him to repent, but he replied 'I have learned from you that no chance of repentance is allowed to one who sins and leads others into sin.' And a teacher has said, 'Jesus the Nazarene practiced magic and led Israel astray.' (*bSanh.* 107b)

Although this story contains an obvious anachronism (Rabbi Joshua lived in the 1st cent. BC) and is therefore historically implausible, it nevertheless reveals a vehement rabbinic antipathy towards Jesus. Contrary to his characteristic thoroughness Vermes never attempts to assess these rabbinic traditions for their undeniable significance in determining the historicity of Jesus' life and work. Vermes' neglect of extant rabbinic pronouncements on Jesus thus constitutes a serious flaw in his thesis. A flaw which he tried to defend in his sequel, *Jesus and the World of Judaism*,⁴¹ with recourse, not to the familiar Hanina parallel, but to yet another historical analogy.

⁴⁰ Meaning either 'inn' (as Joshua apparently meant it) or a 'female innkeeper' (as Jesus is alleged to have understood it, and thereby incurring the rebuke for his impure thoughts).

⁴¹ London: SCM Press, 1983.

Vermes' Defense: Absence of Correlation and the Jesus ben Ananias Parallel

In the 'Preface' to his subsequent work, Vermes wrote:

The most commonly voiced critical query concerns what appears to be for many an absence of correlation between the Jesus depicted here as a man steeped in Jewish piety and fundamentally non-political in his outlook, and the hostile attitudes towards him on the part of the representatives of Judaism (or at least some of them) and of Rome.⁴²

He attributed this criticism to "a misreading or misinterpretation of the evidence" and proposed that

Violent reaction by Jewish religious authorities towards one of their subjects, and their handing over of him to the jurisdiction of the Romans, do not necessarily imply that in their judgment a religious or political crime has actually been committed. The offence may have simply been irresponsible behavior likely to lead to popular unrest.⁴³

The cases cited on this occasion were those of John the Baptist⁴⁴ and "an apocalyptic 'prophet' also called Jesus" whom Vermes suggested, "provides an even more telling parallel".⁴⁵ According to Josephus, Jesus son of Ananias⁴⁶ was a peasant who appeared in Jerusalem during the feast of Tabernacles in AD 62 and began prophesying doom upon Jerusalem and the temple. Having failed to silence him with a severe beating and suspecting the influence of some supernatural power, the Jewish leaders reportedly brought him before the Roman governor. Albinus had him "flogged until the bones were laid bare" and released on the supposition that he was mad. However, for seven years and five

⁴² *Jesus and the World of Judaism*, viii.

⁴³ *Jesus and the World of Judaism*, viii.

⁴⁴ *Ant.* XVIII. 106.

⁴⁵ *Jesus and the World of Judaism*, viii.

⁴⁶ *BJ.* VI. 300-5.

months thereafter, throughout the war and during the siege, this Jesus continued his cry of “Woe to Jerusalem!” until having suddenly added “And woe also to me!” was immediately struck by a stone hurled from a Roman ballista and killed.

Vermes insisted that there was a *prima facie* similarity between the circumstances of Jesus son of Ananias and Jesus of Nazareth because on both occasions the Jewish authorities “were quite prepared to deliver the ‘troublemakers’ to the Romans,” and

In doing so, they protected themselves against the accusation of having neglected their duty, and at the same time saw to it that they were excused from having to pass and execute sentence in an embarrassing case which they no doubt would have preferred not to have encountered. The trial of Jesus son of Ananias ended in an acquittal on the grounds of lunacy, that of Jesus of Nazareth, a much more serious affair because of the actual affray which he caused in the Temple, and because of the suspicion that some of his followers were Zealots, led to a miscarriage of justice and to one of the supreme tragedies in history.⁴⁷

There is no disputing that the historical parallels of Hanina ben Dosa and Jesus son of Ananias to which Vermes so authoritatively draws attention provide helpful insights into the spiritual environment within which Jesus lived, especially with regard to how he would have been perceived by his contemporaries.

Yet these analogies are far from sufficient ‘evidence’ to demonstrate either that Jesus was merely a Galilean charismatic Hasid (however glorified), or that the hostile treatment he received from the Pharisees and Sadducees was simply a matter of political expediency (however tragic). Just as Vermes avoided the crucial issue of rabbinic material denouncing Jesus, not simply as an eccentric deviant, but a dangerous heretic, he fails to address the issue of why the Jewish authorities persisted in

⁴⁷ *Jesus and the World of Judaism*, ix.

demanding Jesus' execution even after Pilatus the Roman prefect was willing (as, indeed, in the case of Albinus with Jesus son of Ananias) to dismiss him after a severe flogging (Lk. 23.4-23).

In fact, Vermes' historical parallels raise more questions than they are meant to resolve. Even if Jesus' execution was, as Vermes suggested, an unfortunate incident from the point of view of the Jewish leaders, why did such a bitterly acrimonious attitude towards him persist after his death? Indeed, from all accounts it seems that though the religious establishment was clearly uneasy with John the Baptist during his lifetime,⁴⁸ no similar attitude is discernible subsequent to his death.⁴⁹ Thus the historical circumstances of Jesus' relationship with Pharisaico-rabbinic orthodoxy remain most comprehensible from the perspective of the synoptic Gospels. The consistent synoptic tradition that Jesus clashed with the religious establishment on theological grounds and that these acrid disputes particularly focused upon his own personhood and authority emerges as the most plausible approach to the evidence before us. And it is, of course, these very self-revelatory teachings of Jesus that Vermes tried incredibly hard to neutralize by means of an arbitrary style of redaction criticism⁵⁰ and *a priori* dismissiveness.⁵¹ His representation of Jesus as a superior charismatic Hasid has therefore been criticized by several noted scholars for its lack of

⁴⁸ Cf. Mt.3.7-10; 11.18; Jn. 1.19-27, etc.

⁴⁹ Cf. Mk. 11.29-32; Lk. 20.3-6, etc.

⁵⁰ See Vermes' acknowledgment of this criticism in *Jesus and the World of Judaism*, ix-x.

⁵¹ Vermes not infrequently takes an authoritarian stance over NT texts dismissing the clear intent of a given text without clear reasoning. To cite just one example, regarding Jesus' commendation of Peter upon his confession (Mt. 16.17), Vermes comments dryly, "Yet it is much easier to conceive that the saying was interpolated by the first evangelist to remedy an embarrassing situation than to account for its omission in the more primitive Marcan version... As the Marcan version stands, not only did Jesus abstain from approving Peter's words, but he possibly dissociated himself from them" (*Jesus the Jew*, 147).

coherence with material in the synoptic Gospels held by wide scholarly consensus to be authentic.⁵² These incongruities indicate a single foundational error which undermines Vermes' entire process of reconstruction: the inappropriate use of historical parallels.

Conclusion: 'Parallelomania' and Vermes' Presuppositional Error

In the Preface to *Jesus the Jew*, Vermes laid down his approach to the use of historical sources. Naming the primary Jewish texts from which he intended to derive the information required for his purpose, Vermes asserted that,

These sources will not be treated merely as a backcloth, however, but as witnesses. They will not be employed simply as aids in answering queries arising from the New Testament, but as independent spokesmen capable, from time to time at least, of guiding the enquiry, either by suggesting the right angle of approach, or even the right questions to ask.⁵³

This predispositional concern to formulate a referential framework for authenticating the gospel on the basis of Jewish sources was further clarified by him in a telling statement:

Instead of treating Jewish literature as an ancillary to the New Testament, the present approach will attempt the contrary, namely to *fit Jesus and his movement into the greater context of first-century AD Palestine*.⁵⁴

Here we reach the basis of Vermes' methodological orientation and find that it is tendentious. It is perfectly true that a correct

⁵² Howard Clark Kee, *Medicine, Miracles & Magic in New Testament Times* (Cambridge: CUP, 1986), 80-83; E.P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism* (London: SCM press, 1985). 170-72; Ben Witherington III, *The Christology of Jesus* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990), 153, 182f, 216, 236, etc.

⁵³ *Jesus the Jew*, 16-17.

⁵⁴ *Jesus the Jew*, 42 (emphasis mine).

understanding of the gospel narratives can be gained within their own historical context. It is also true that there is a subtle but important methodological difference between observing Jesus and his disciples interacting with other personalities and institutions within their *environment* as against their acting in detachment from their *background*. However, the discovery of historical similarities does not necessarily lead to the conclusion that Jesus was not really distinctive at all. As R T France cautioned: "To discover a 'parallel' to Jesus in the contemporary world is, for this school of thought, to 'explain' Jesus and his teaching, as derived from and reflecting what was already the common currency of his day".⁵⁵ Although Vermes was apparently conscious of this tendency and thus tried to dissociate the outcome of his study from this all-too-familiar brand of scholarship⁵⁶ he, nevertheless, follows through with his objective; inevitably committing the same grave error of historical reductionism that had flawed the credibility of scores of writers trying to assimilate Jesus into some religious or political category of their choosing.

⁵⁵ *The Evidence for Jesus*, 57.

⁵⁶ Vermes was careful to concede that, "The discovery of resemblances between the work and words of Jesus and those of the Hasidim, Honi and Hanina ben Dosa, is however by no means intended to imply that he was simply one of them and nothing more. Although no systematic attempt is made here to distinguish Jesus' authentic teaching... [this he promises in a subsequent work] it is nevertheless still possible to say... that no objective and enlightened student of the Gospel can help but be struck by the incomparable superiority of Jesus." But in attempting to describe this "superiority" Vermes indulged in the same sort of sentimental eulogizing that C.S. Lewis had perceptively ruled out of any serious discussion on Jesus as "patronizing nonsense." "Second to none in profundity of insight and grandeur of character, he is in particular an unsurpassed master of the art of laying bare the inmost core of spiritual truth and of bringing every issue back to the essence of religion, the existential relationship of man and man, and man and God..." (Ibid., 223-4).

To be fair, Vermes was quite aware of the pitfall. Rhetorically, at least, he was careful to make the distinction between similarity and indistinguishability.

The discovery of resemblances between the work and words of Jesus and those of the Hasidim, Honi and Hanina ben Dosa, is however by no means intended to imply that he was simply one of them and nothing more. Although no systematic attempt is made here to distinguish Jesus' authentic teaching... it is nevertheless still possible to say... that no objective and enlightened student of the Gospel can help but be struck by the incomparable superiority of Jesus.⁵⁷

Yet, as committed as Vermes chose to be to the interpretive construct of his making, he could not loosen by rhetoric what he was bound to by his methodology. In attempting to describe this "superiority" of Jesus, Vermes indulged in what C S Lewis had wearily called "patronizing nonsense"; that same pious sentimentalism resorted to by a long line of 'Old' and 'New Questers' who somehow felt obliged to attach a moralistic eulogy in the aftermath of their reductionistic decimation.

Second to none in profundity of insight and grandeur of character, he is in particular an unsurpassed master of the art of laying bare the inmost core of spiritual truth and of bringing every issue back to the essence of religion, the existential relationship of man and man, and man and God...⁵⁸

The most eloquent voice exhorting against this tendency among NT scholars and historians remains that of Samuel Sandmel, himself a Jewish rabbi and scholar of note. In a celebrated lecture entitled 'Parallelomania' he cautioned:

⁵⁷ *Jesus the Jew*, 223-4.

⁵⁸ *Jesus the Jew*, 224.

[...] I regard early Christianity as a Jewish movement which was in particular ways distinctive from other Judaisms. This distinctiveness is an intertwining of events in, and of theology about, the career of Jesus, whether we can recover that career or not, and the histories of his direct disciples and of later apostles, and what they believed and thought. Only by such a supposition of such distinctiveness can I account to myself for the origin and growth of Christianity and its ultimate separation from Judaism. If, on the other hand, the particular content of early Christianity is contained on and anticipated chronologically by the Dead Sea Scrolls and anachronistically by the rabbinic literature, then I am at a loss to understand the movement.⁵⁹

Thus while making a truly significant contribution to our understanding of 1st cent. Galilean popular religion and the Judaism of that period in general, Vermes failed to convince us on the main point of his thesis. Jesus of Nazareth bore remarkable similarities to contemporary charismatic *hadisim*. Yet in terms of the entire body of evidence, he clearly does not conform to that category as Vermes proposed. In conclusion, alongside Sandmel's caution, we would do well to heed the wisdom of R T France:

'Background' evidence must remain in the background, and must not be allowed to dictate the shape of the picture which emerges from the primary evidence of the gospels. Sometimes it will illuminate the nature of Jesus' ministry more by contrast than by assimilation. We must be prepared to discover in Jesus 'the man who fits no formula', and who transcends and challenges the patterns of first-century life and thought at critical points.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ *Journal of Biblical Literature* 81 (1962), 1-13.

⁶⁰ *The Evidence for Jesus*, 58. The quotation is from the title of the first main chapter of E. Schweizer, *Jesus* (Eng. tr. London: SCM Press, 1971).

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