

DAVID J. DOWNS

The Offering of the Gentiles

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David J. Downs

The Offering of the Gentiles

Paul's Collection for Jerusalem
in Its Chronological, Cultural,
and Cultic Contexts

Mohr Siebeck

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To Jen

Preface

This book is a lightly revised version of my doctoral dissertation, which was completed at Princeton Theological Seminary in 2007. A central claim of this monograph is that the apostle Paul discourages contributors to the Jerusalem collection from receiving public acknowledgement for their act of beneficence. If I violate this Pauline strategy in these acknowledgements, it is not to follow academic convention, but to express my sincere appreciation for those whose labor and lives have contributed to the publication of this project.

First and foremost, I would like to thank my *Doktormutter*, Beverly Roberts Gaventa, for her gracious support of and interest in this project from its earliest stages. This work began, in earnest, in her seminar on the Pauline Epistles during my second semester in the Ph.D. program at Princeton Theological Seminary. From that point, and even during a year-long sabbatical, she faithfully offered numerous helpful insights and critical comments on the chapters of this monograph in their various incarnations. Her example of rigorous scholarship, constant professionalism, and enthusiastic encouragement is one that I can only hope to imitate in my own career as a scholar and teacher. Ross Wagner kindly filled in as chair *pro tem* during my first year of research and even more kindly took time away from his own sabbatical in Germany to remain involved in this project until the defense of the dissertation. Clifton Black, who also served on my committee, offered invaluable assistance and sage advice on this and many other matters during the course of my doctoral studies. While I am incredibly grateful to all the members of my dissertation committee for their input, I should hasten to add that any errors or deficiencies in the present work are, of course, no one's responsibility but my own.

I would also like to thank Judith Gundry-Volf and Jörg Frey for reading this work and granting it the honor of being published in such a distinguished series as WUNT 2. Henning Ziebritzki and his staff at Mohr Siebeck were very helpful in bringing this manuscript into print. Moreover, I would especially like to thank Susan Carlson Wood of the School of Theology Faculty Publications Services at Fuller Theological Seminary for her assistance in preparing camera-ready copy of the manuscript; the Dean of the School of Theology, Howard Loewen, for providing funds for research assistance; and J. Matthew Barnes, a doctoral student at Fuller, for his work on the indices.

Princeton Theological Seminary was a delightful place to pursue graduate study, in large part because of the collegial environment maintained by its doctoral students. I would like to thank my friends in the Biblical Studies Depart-

ment, many of whom read and commented on earlier drafts of this material: Micah Kiel, Marcus Mininger, Troy Troftgruben, and Alice Yafeh. Jacob Cherian, now Vice President and Dean at Southern Asia Bible College, is especially to be thanked for sharing with me his own research on 2 Corinthians 8–9 and for his willingness to discuss economics and ethics in Paul. Gregg Gardner, a friend from the Religion Department at Princeton University, graciously read chapter three and offered many helpful comments and corrections based on his own expertise in ancient euergetism.

I am grateful for the community of All Angels' Episcopal Church in New York City, which taught me a great deal about the meaning of *koinōnia*. I would also like to thank Marianne Meyers Thompson, my mentor and now colleague at Fuller Theological Seminary, who first encouraged me to think about graduate work in New Testament, and four other “mentors” from my days as a student at Fuller, who consistently remind me of how Paul's gospel can be embodied in the life of the church (and on the basketball court): Jon Crantz, Ron Eckert, Josh Smith, and Jeremy Vaccaro.

My family has done more to support this endeavor than they will ever know. My parents, John and Donna Downs, and my brother Jared have always been a source of much laughter and love. Thanks also to my in-laws, Beth Truax and Bill Alzos, who welcomed me into their lives even before I had my driver's license. It has been a pleasure to have shared a church and a city with my dear friend and sister-in-law, Lauren Alzos.

Finally, I dedicate this study to my wife, Jen. Her love, companionship, and sense of humor have made this project possible. Moreover, her deep commitment to the task of caring for the poor and marginalized in her own vocation as a physician has challenged me to remember that an academic study of a gift for the “poor among the saints” is incomplete without a concomitant quest for justice and service in one's own context. She has enriched this study and my life in too many ways to count.

May 2008
Fuller Theological Seminary
Pasadena, California

David J. Downs

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Abbreviations

In addition to the items listed below, abbreviations for collections of epigraphical inscriptions follow those provided in G. H. R. Horsley and John A. L. Lee, “A Preliminary Checklist of Abbreviations of Greek Epigraphic Volumes,” *Epigraphica* 56 (1994): 129–69. For epigraphical texts published after 1994, I have used the abbreviations found in the online database of Greek inscriptions maintained by the Packard Humanities Institute (<http://epigraphy.packhum.org/inscriptions>).

AB	Anchor Bible
ABR	<i>Australian Biblical Review</i>
AGSU	Arbeiten zur Geschichte des Spätjudentums und Urchristentums
AJPb	<i>American Journal of Philology</i>
AncSoc	<i>Ancient Society</i>
ANF	The Ante-Nicene Fathers
ANRW	<i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt: Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung</i> . Edited by H. Temporini and W. Haase. Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1972–.
ANTC	Abingdon New Testament Commentaries
ATDan	Acta theologica danica
ATbR	<i>Anglican Theological Review</i>
BCH	<i>Bulletin de correspondance hellénique</i>
BDAG	Bauer, Walter, Frederick William Danker, W. F. Arndt, and F. W. Gingrich, eds. <i>A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> . 3d ed. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2000.
BDF	Blass, F., A. Debrunner, and R. W. Funk, <i>A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> . Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961
BECNT	Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament
BETL	Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologicarum lovaniensium
Bib	<i>Biblica</i>
BibInt	<i>Biblical Interpretation</i>
BNTC	Black’s New Testament Commentaries
BTB	<i>Biblical Theology Bulletin</i>
BWSG	Beiträge zur Wirtschafts und Sozialgeschichte
BZNW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
CBQ	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CBQMS	Catholic Biblical Quarterly – Monograph Series
CGTSC	Cambridge Greek Testament for Schools and Colleges
CIG	<i>Corpus inscriptionum graecarum</i>
CIJ	<i>Corpus inscriptionum judaicarum</i>
CIL	<i>Corpus inscriptionum latinarum</i>
CJZC	<i>Corpus jüdischer Zeugnisse aus der Cyrenaika</i> . Edited by Gert Lüderitz and Joyce M. Reynolds. Wiesbaden: Reichert, 1983.
CurTM	<i>Currents in Theology and Mission</i>

EKKNT	Evangelisch-katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
<i>ExpTim</i>	<i>Expository Times</i>
HNT	Handbuch zum Neuen Testament
HNTC	Harper's NT Commentaries
HTKNT	Herders theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
HTR	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
HTS	Harvard Theological Studies
HUT	Hermeneutische Untersuchungen zur Theologie
ICC	International Critical Commentary
IG	<i>Inscriptiones graecae</i>
IGSK	Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien
IJO	<i>Inscriptiones judaicae orientis</i>
ILS	<i>Inscriptiones latinae selectae</i>
<i>Int</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
<i>JAC</i>	<i>Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum</i>
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JECs</i>	<i>Journal of Early Christian Studies</i>
<i>JETS</i>	<i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
<i>JHMAS</i>	<i>Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences</i>
<i>JJS</i>	<i>Journal of Jewish Studies</i>
<i>JNES</i>	<i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i>
<i>JR</i>	<i>Journal of Religion</i>
<i>JRS</i>	<i>Journal of Roman Studies</i>
<i>JSJ</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Periods</i>
<i>JSNT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
JSNTSup	Journal for the Study of the New Testament – Supplement Series
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament – Supplement Series
<i>JSP</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha</i>
<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
KEK	Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament (Meyer-Kommentar)
KNT	Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LHBOTS	Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies
LPS	Library of Pauline Studies
LSAM	<i>Lois sacrées de l'Asie Mineure</i>
LSCG	<i>Lois sacrées des cités grecques</i>
LSJ	Liddell, Henry G., Robert Scott, and Henry S. Jones, eds. <i>A Greek-English Lexicon</i> . 9th ed. Oxford: Clarendon, 1996.
MAMA	<i>Monumenta Asiae Minoris Antiqua</i>
NAC	New American Commentary
NEchtB	Neue Echter Bibel
<i>Neot</i>	<i>Neotestamentica</i>
NewDocs	<i>New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity</i>
NICNT	New International Commentary on the New Testament
NIGTC	New International Greek Testament Commentary
<i>NovT</i>	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
NovTSup	Novum Testamentum, Supplements
NSBT	New Studies in Biblical Theology
NTOA	Novum Testamentum et Orbis Antiquus
NTS	<i>New Testament Studies</i>

OCD	<i>The Oxford Classical Dictionary</i> . Edited by Simon Hornblower and Antony Spawforth. 3d rev. ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.
PSB	<i>Princeton Seminary Bulletin</i>
ResQ	<i>Restoration Quarterly</i>
RevExp	<i>Review and Expositor</i>
RHPR	<i>Revue d'histoire et de philosophie religieuses</i>
RSPT	<i>Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques</i>
SBEC	Studies in the Bible and Early Christianity
StBL	Studies in Biblical Literature
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLRBS	Society of Biblical Literature Resources for Biblical Study
SBLSymS	Society of Biblical Literature Symposium Series
SBT	Studies in Biblical Theology
SD	Studies and Documents
SE	<i>Supplementum Ephesum</i> , herausgegeben von Michael Alpers und Helmut Halfmann (Universität Hamburg) in Zusammenarbeit mit John Mansfield (Cornell University) und Christoph Schäfer (Universität Regensburg), gefördert von der Deutschen Forschungsgemeinschaft. Hamburg, 1995.
SEG	Supplementum epigraphicum graecum
SIG ³	<i>Sylloge inscriptionum graecarum</i>
SNTA	<i>Studiorum Novi Testamenti Auxilia</i>
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
SP	Sacra pagina
SSEJC	Studies in Early Judaism and Christianity
STAC	Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum
STDJ	Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah
SVTQ	<i>St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly</i>
TANZ	Texte und Arbeiten zum neutestamentlichen Zeitalter
TDNT	<i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i> . Edited by G. Kittel and G. Friedrich. Translated by G. W. Bromiley. 10 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964–1976.
TLNT	<i>Theological Lexicon of the New Testament</i> . C. Spicq. Translated and edited by J. D. Ernest. 3 vols. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1994.
THKNT	Theologischer Handkommentar zum Neuen Testament
TPINTC	TPI New Testament Commentaries
TSAJ	Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WTJ	<i>Westminster Theological Journal</i>
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
ZNW	<i>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche</i>

Chapter 1

Introduction

Whether reflected in Paul's statements about support obtained from some of his churches (1 Cor 9:3–12; 2 Cor 11:8; Phil 4:10–20), in his vigorous refusal to request or receive compensation for his work from others (1 Thess 2:9–12; 1 Cor 9:8–18; 2 Cor 2:17; 11:7–11), or in his willingness to incur personal debts for the sake of a “beloved brother” (Phlm 18–19), the Pauline epistles are rich with information about the economic life of the earliest Christian communities. Perhaps not coincidentally, all of the undisputed epistles of Paul refer to financial transactions on behalf of the Pauline mission – while those letters deemed pseudepigraphical typically refrain from mentioning the funding of missionary work.¹ Clearly, pecuniary matters play an important role in Paul's letters to his churches. Pauline theology, therefore, cannot be dissociated from the seemingly mundane world of coins and credit.

One economic endeavor of signal importance for the apostle Paul was the relief fund that he organized among the largely Gentile churches of his mission in Macedonia, Achaia, and Galatia for the Jewish-Christian community in Jerusalem, a project commonly called “the collection for the saints” (ἡ λογεία εἰς τοὺς ἁγίους, 1 Cor 16:1).² It would be difficult to overstate the significance of this collection for Paul's mission as apostle to the Gentiles. That the organization and implementation of the relief fund demanded a considerable amount of Paul's time and energy over the course of a number of years is revealed in his comments about the project in 1 Cor 16:1–4; 2 Cor 8:1–9:15; and Rom 15:14–32. So portentous was the collection for Paul that he reports in Rom 15:30–31 his willingness to risk both his life and the possible rejection of his efforts by the Jerusalem church in order to deliver the funds personally to Jerusalem.

Given its importance for Paul's mission and theology, this subject has not received the scholarly attention it merits. Until recently, the only two monographs

¹ This point is made by Mark Kiley in *Colossians as Pseudepigraphy* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1986), 46–47.

² Unless otherwise indicated, all translations in this work are my own. Throughout this monograph, I shall use the term “Jewish-Christian” to refer to the believing community in Jerusalem. Although I understand that the term “Christian” is technically anachronistic when applied to Paul's period, scholarly convention still recognizes the usefulness of this designation. Similarly, usage of the term “pagan” to refer to individuals and/or groups that were neither Jewish nor Christian carries no negative connotations.

on the Jerusalem collection were Keith Nickle's dissertation *The Collection: A Study in Paul's Strategy* and the *Habilitationsschrift* by Dieter Georgi, *Die Geschichte der Kollekte des Paulus für Jerusalem*, written independently of one another in the 1960s.³ While this lacuna has been partially addressed by the publication of three more monographs on the collection in the last seven years, the Jerusalem collection is still a relatively under-explored area of New Testament research.⁴ In particular, focus on the historical and socio-cultural context of the collection has tended to obscure the theological dynamics of the relief fund.⁵ While hoping to contribute to both the historical and socio-cultural understanding of the collection, this book seeks also to explore the properly theological aspects of the relief fund for Jerusalem. Indeed, a central claim of the work that follows is that careful attention to the chronological and socio-cultural contexts of the Pauline collection for Jerusalem offers the promise of a much richer understanding of the place of the relief fund in Paul's theology. Therefore, the next three chapters of this monograph – which focus, respectively, on the chronology, the socio-cultural context, and the theology of the collection – aim to build off one another in such a way as to present a coherent picture of Paul's efforts to raise money on behalf of the “poor among the saints” in the Jerusalem church. First, however, it is necessary to locate this project in the context of previous research on the Pauline collection for Jerusalem.

³ Keith Nickle, *The Collection: A Study in Paul's Strategy* (SBT 48; Naperville, Ill.: Allenson, 1966); Dieter Georgi, *Remembering the Poor: The History of Paul's Collection for Jerusalem* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1992); trans. of *Die Geschichte der Kollekte des Paulus für Jerusalem* (Theologische Forschung 38; Hamburg: H. Reich, 1965).

⁴ The most recent contributions include Burkhard Beckheuer, *Paulus und Jerusalem: Kollekte und Mission im theologischen Denken des Heidenapostels* (Europäische Hochschulschriften 23; Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1997); Stephan Joubert, *Paul as Benefactor: Reciprocity, Strategy and Theological Reflection in Paul's Collection* (WUNT 2:124; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000); and Byung-Mo Kim, *Die paulinische Kollekte* (TANZ 38; Tübingen: Francke, 2002). See also Hans Dieter Betz's commentary *2 Corinthians 8 and 9: A Commentary on Two Administrative Letters of the Apostle Paul* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985); Verlyn D. Verbrugge, *Paul's Style of Church Leadership Illustrated by His Instructions to the Corinthians on the Collection* (San Francisco: Mellen Research University Press, 1992); Kieran J. O'Mahony, *Pauline Persuasion: A Sounding in 2 Corinthians 8–9* (JSNTSup 199; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000); and the section on the Jerusalem collection in James R. Harrison's *Paul's Language of Grace in Its Graeco-Roman Context* (WUNT 2:172; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 294–324; Jacob Cherian, “Toward a Commonwealth of Grace: A Plutocratic Reading of Grace and Equality in Second Corinthians 8:1–15” (Ph.D. diss., Princeton Theological Seminary, 2007).

⁵ For this point, see Beverly Roberts Gaventa, “The Economy of Grace: Reflections on 2 Corinthians 8 and 9,” in *Grace upon Grace: Essays in Honor of Thomas A. Langford* (ed. Robert K. Johnston, L. Gregory Jones, and Jonathan R. Wilson; Nashville: Abingdon, 1999), 51–62, esp. 53.

1.1 The Interpretive Context

In the history of scholarly study of the Jerusalem collection, four main interpretations of the offering have arisen.⁶ As we shall see, these interpretations are not necessarily mutually exclusive. A brief overview and analysis of the literature will provide a context for the present project by illuminating some promising avenues of investigation while at the same time exposing some interpretative dead-ends.

1.1.1 The Collection as an Eschatological Event

Since the publication of Johannes Munck's influential book *Paulus und die Heilsgeschichte* in 1954 (ET 1959) many interpreters, including Nickle and Georgi, have followed Munck's lead in reading the Pauline collection in light of Old Testament and early Jewish traditions concerning an eschatological pilgrimage of the nations to Jerusalem. The importance of this scriptural tradition for New Testament studies can probably be traced back to Joachim Jeremias's delivery of the Franz Delitzsch lectures in 1953.⁷ Here Jeremias argues that Jesus' views with respect to the Gentiles were shaped by a biblical tradition that the Göttingen professor called "*the eschatological pilgrimage of the Gentiles to the Mountain of God*."⁸ For Jeremias, who in his sketch of this tradition endeavors to eschew "all the questions and conclusions of modern historical and literary criticism of the Old Testament," the eschatological pilgrimage of the Gentiles to Zion was marked by five distinctive features: (1) the epiphany of God to the nations (Isa 2:2; 11:10; 40:5; 60:3; 62:10; Zech 2:13); (2) the call of God to all the peoples of the world (Ps 96:3, 10; Isa 50:1; 55:5; 66:19–24); (3) the response to that call, which results in a journey of the Gentiles (Isa 2:3; 60:5–14; 66:18–20; Jer 3:17; Mic 7:12, 17; Hag 2:7; Zech 8:21–23; 14:16); (4) worship at the world-sanctuary (Pss 22:28; 72:9–11; 96:8; Isa 19:24–25; 45:14, 23; 49:23; 56:7; 66:18; Jer 16:19; Zeph 3:9); and (5) the Messianic banquet on the world-mountain (Isa 25:6–8).⁹

⁶ See Scot McKnight, "Collection for the Saints," in *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters* (ed. Gerald F. Hawthorne and Ralph P. Martin; Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 143–47.

⁷ Joachim Jeremias, *Jesus' Promise to the Nations: The Franz Delitzsch Lectures for 1953* (trans. S. H. Hooke; London: SCM, 1958). The first German edition of Munck's *Paulus und die Heilsgeschichte* (Acta Jutlandica; Aarsskrift for Aarhus Universitet, Theologisk Serie 6; København: Universitetsforlaget I Aarhus, 1954) was published in 1954, but in it Munck draws on an earlier essay in which Jeremias had discussed "the eschatological pilgrimage of the nations to God's holy mountain"; see Joachim Jeremias, "The Gentile World in the Thought of Jesus," *JNTA* 3 (1952): 18–28.

⁸ Jeremias, *Jesus' Promise*, 57 (italics original).

⁹ Given the diverse pool of scriptural sources from which this collection of texts is gathered, one can justifiably ask whether the so-called eschatological pilgrimage tradition should even be considered a well-defined "tradition" within the Old Testament and early Jewish literature, especially considering Jeremias's admittedly uncritical methodology. The motif is, at the very least, concentrated in a select number of texts (Third Isaiah, Zechariah), and the picture that Jeremias

Building on the work of Jeremias, Munck claims in his treatment of the Pauline collection that, along with a large contingent of representatives from his Gentile churches (Acts 20:4; 1 Cor 16:3–4; 2 Cor 8:16–24), Paul undertook a final, perilous journey to Jerusalem as part of a prophetic missionary strategy intended “to provoke the Jews to jealousy, so that a certain number of them accept the Gospel and are saved; and the fullness of the Gentiles will bring with it the salvation of all Israel.”¹⁰ Citing Isa 2:2–4, Mic 4:1–2, and Isa 60:5, Munck asserts that the large group of Gentile delegates that accompanied Paul to Jerusalem – here Munck is dependent upon Acts – symbolized the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies that forecast the Gentiles flocking with gifts to Zion in the last days. This group also represented the “full number of the Gentiles” (τὸ πλήρωμα τῶν ἐθνῶν) about which Paul speaks in Rom 11:25.¹¹ Munck, therefore, sees a close affinity between Paul’s collection for Jerusalem and the apostle’s statements about the Gentile mission in Rom 11: “It is his intention to save the Jews by making them jealous of the Gentiles, who are accepting the Gospel in great numbers; and now he is going up to the stronghold of Israel, to the disobedient, as he calls them, with a representative company of believing Gentiles.”¹² Munck, then, appears to have been the first scholar to connect the collection with certain Jewish prophetic traditions that envision Gentiles bringing gifts to Jerusalem in the last days, although he does not attempt to explain how or where these scriptural traditions are reflected in Paul’s explicit discussions of the Jerusalem collection.

Munck’s position was followed and expanded in two monographs on the history and theological significance of the collection, one by Dieter Georgi, the other by Keith Nickle. Like Munck, Georgi argues for an eschatological interpretation of the collection. Although Georgi highlights some differences between the pilgrimage tradition and Paul’s strategy, on the one hand, and posits a

paints does not represent the diversity of Jewish views on the Gentiles (see E. P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 1985], 213–18). For a more recent discussion of this tradition, see Terence L. Donaldson, “Proselytes or ‘Righteous Gentiles’? The Status of Gentiles in Eschatological Pilgrimage Patterns of Thought,” *JSP* 7 (1990): 3–27.

¹⁰ Johannes Munck, *Paul and the Salvation of Mankind* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1959), 301.

¹¹ For a thorough critique of the relationship between Israel’s “jealousy” and Israel’s salvation in Munck’s interpretation of Rom 11 (though regrettably without reference to Munck’s discussion of the Pauline collection), see Murray Baker, “Paul and the Salvation of Israel: Paul’s Ministry, the Motif of Jealousy, and Israel’s Yes,” *CBQ* 67 (2005): 469–84.

¹² Munck, *Paul*, 303. As Leander Keck (“The Poor among the Saints in the New Testament,” *ZNW* 56 [1965]: 126–27) observes, “Munck takes the oblique reference to the offering in Acts 24:17 (though he never says so), which says that the money was ‘for my nation,’ and couples this with Romans 9–11 in order to argue that the offering and the large delegation that brought it were designed ‘to save the Jews by making them jealous of the Gentiles.’ This desperate device fails on all counts, for not only is there no hint of Paul’s trip or of the fund in Rom. 9–11, but the entire construction stems from a steadfast refusal to believe what Paul himself says in Rom. 15:30f.”

development of Paul's conception of the project over the years of its organization, on the other, he also suggests a "provocative" purpose – fully in line with Jewish prophetic traditions – behind the delivery of the collection to Jerusalem by "a major delegation of non-circumcised Gentiles."¹³ This was, according to Georgi, a "symbolic act" that "simply had to revive in Jewish eyes the old concept of the eschatological pilgrimage of the peoples."¹⁴ Nickle, in his chapter on "The Theological Significance of the Collection," helpfully proposes an interrelation of three purposes behind the collection: "(1) the realization of Christian charity, (2) the expression of Christian unity, (3) the anticipation of Christian eschatology."¹⁵ In the last of these three sections, however, Nickle follows Munck in arguing that the collection was related to Paul's reversal of the common Jewish view of the *ordo salutis*. With a statement that reveals the influence of both Jeremias and Munck on his work, Nickle concludes his discussion of the eschatological significance of the collection with a salient summary of the prevailing paradigm:

The delegates from the contributing Gentile churches, who accompanied Paul to deliver the collection to Jerusalem, were the first-fruits of an expectation long associated in Judaism with the coming eschatological judgement of the world [he cites Munck in a footnote]. This was the expectation that all the nations would stream to Zion to worship the true God, the God of Israel [he cites Jeremias].... From his understanding of the role that the Gentiles were to fulfil in the scheme of redemption, Paul made an audacious alteration in the prevalent Jewish conception of the eschatological role of Jerusalem. The Gentile Christians, represented by the delegates from the churches, were to stream to Jerusalem, but not as the seekers and petitioners of Israel. They were coming as the true Israel of God, those already chosen by his grace to participate though faith in Christ in salvation. Further, they were coming to fulfil the function in the *Heilsgeschichte* assigned by the prophets to Israel. That is, they were coming to proclaim the salvation of God instead of to receive the salvation through the mediation of Israel.¹⁶

The theological vision of this paragraph – in particular its last sentence – is difficult to reconcile with the picture of the collection painted in Rom 15:14–32, where the Gentile churches of Paul's mission are depicted as inheritors of spiritual blessings through the Jewish saints in Jerusalem. That Paul understood his band of Gentile Christians as the "true Israel of God" hardly seems likely given his wrestling with God's faithfulness to Israel – in spite of Israel's rejection of the gospel – in Rom 9–11.¹⁷ In order for Paul's final journey to Jerusalem to

¹³ Georgi, *Remembering the Poor*, 119.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 118, 119.

¹⁵ Nickle, *The Collection*, 100.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 138–39.

¹⁷ On the meaning of the phrase ἐν τῷ Ἰσραὴλ τοῦ θεοῦ in Gal 6:16 and the difference between this locution in Galatians and Paul's view of Israel in Romans, see J. Louis Martyn, *Galatians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 33A; New York: Doubleday, 1997), 574–77.

represent a fulfillment of pilgrimage texts, however, it was necessary for the apostle to have envisioned an “audacious alteration” of the Jewish eschatological pilgrimage tradition, an important facet of which (at least according to Jeremias) is that the journey of the Gentiles to Zion *follows* the restoration of Israel.

A good deal of the more recent literature on the collection has followed the lead of Munck, Georgi, and Nickle in viewing the monetary gift from Paul’s churches to the saints in Jerusalem in light of the eschatological pilgrimage of the nations to Zion.¹⁸ Perhaps the most thorough outworking of this position is Burkhard Beckheuer’s 1997 Göttingen dissertation *Paulus und Jerusalem*.¹⁹ Beckheuer, who views the collection from beginning to end in terms of the eschatological vision of Third Isaiah, places particular emphasis on Rom 9–11 and Rom 15:14–21 as passages infused with reference to the Isaianic pilgrimage of the nations. Since the so-called eschatological pilgrimage tradition represents one of the more positive strands of Jewish universalism in the Old Testament, this reading does present an attractive potential background for Paul’s mission to the Gentiles. Moreover, to the extent that certain passages (Isa 56:6–8; 60:1–14) actually portray the Gentiles bearing gifts as they stream into Zion to worship God in the holy sanctuary, the pilgrimage tradition would seem to correspond, at least on a broad level, with Paul’s efforts to transport a monetary contribution to Jerusalem, especially when it is assumed that a large contingent of delegates from the Gentile churches accompanied Paul to Jerusalem (cf. Acts 20:4).

There are at least three significant problems with the eschatological interpretation of the collection for Jerusalem, however. The first and most daunting is the absence of any pilgrimage texts in connection with Paul’s statements about the collection in 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, and Romans.²⁰ In an endeavor to dispel the view that the universality of Paul’s gospel had its origins in the eschatological pilgrimage tradition, Terence Donaldson, for example, has pointed

¹⁸ See Ben Witherington III, *Conflict and Community in Corinth: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 423. Scholars who interpret the collection as a fulfillment of the pilgrimage tradition include Roger D. Aus, “Paul’s Travel Plans to Spain and the ‘Full Number of the Gentiles of Rom. XI 25,’” *NovT* 21 (1979): 232–62; E. P. Sanders, *Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1983), 171; Victor P. Furnish, *II Corinthians: Translated with Introduction, Notes, and Commentary* (AB 32A; Garden City: Doubleday, 1984), 412; James D. G. Dunn, *Romans* (2 vols.; WBC 38; Dallas: Word, 1988), 2:874; F. F. Bruce, “The Romans Debate – Continued,” in *The Romans Debate: Revised and Expanded Edition* (ed. Karl P. Donfried; Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1991), 175–94; Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans* (BECNT; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998), 776–77; and Sze-kar Wan, “Collection for the Saints as Anticolonial Act: Implications of Paul’s Ethnic Reconstruction,” in *Paul and Politics: Ekklēsia, Israel, Imperium, Interpretation; Essays in Honor of Krister Stendahl* (ed. Richard H. Horsley; Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity, 2000), 191–215.

¹⁹ Beckheuer pays scant attention to the socio-economic aspects of the collection.

²⁰ For a more thorough assessment of the potential allusion to Isaiah 66 in Rom 15:16, see pp. 224–29.