

JACK J. GIBSON

Peter Between
Jerusalem and Antioch

*Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen
zum Neuen Testament 2. Reihe*

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Mohr Siebeck

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Peter, James and the Gentiles

Mohr Siebeck

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To My Soulmate, Marilyn

Thank you for making my life a storybook story
and to our precious daughter Rebekah,
we can't wait to meet you!

Preface

This monograph is a slightly revised edition of my dissertation, which was accepted on 31 March 2011 by the Faculty of the Department of New Testament at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School on March 31, 2011. I would first like to express my great appreciation for my supervisor Dr. Eckhard J. Schnabel. His dedication to excellence and his enduring patience is largely responsible for the production of this work. I am also thankful to my readers, Dr. David Pao, Dr. Willem VanGemenen, and Dr. Richard Averbeck. Their comments and suggestions made this dissertation far better than it ever would have been. Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to Professor Dr. Jörg Frey, for accepting this thesis for publication, and to Dr. Henning Ziebritzki and his editorial staff for their able and patient assistance as I formatted this manuscript for publication.

The Antioch incident of Gal 2:11–14 has fascinated me for fifteen years. Yet my study always left me wanting. The focus of scholarship on this incident has always centered on Paul. This is understandable, as our only recorded perspective is of Paul. Yet I kept circling back to Peter, trying to comprehend why he acted as he did. This study resulted in my master's thesis of 2007, an attempt to understand the role that the Antioch incident may have played in the development of Ebionite and Nazarene Christianity. By the time I was finished, I realized I needed to do more work on the Antioch incident if I was to fully grasp what happened on that fateful day. I also realized I needed to study the person of Peter much more if I was to understand his motivations. This monograph is the culmination of this journey. I would like to thank Dr. Moyer Hubbard and Dr. Clinton Arnold of Talbot School of Theology for their guidance as I underwent this preliminary stage of my study.

I praise God for the many blessings he has bestowed upon me. This includes surrounding me with loving family and friends; space permits my own mentioning a few. Jacob Rosenberg served as an invaluable sounding board throughout the writing process. Adam Johnson, Scott Harrower, and Jared Compton were all very supportive. I have the honor of being in one of the greatest families I can imagine. My parents have been fantastic examples of what it means to live a godly life; I owe everything to them! I have the most wonderfully loving and supportive wife; Marilyn has been

by my side every step of the way. And as we await the arrival of our daughter, Rebekah, we proclaim: “To God be the glory!”

Simi Valley, CA, 7 July 2011

Jack J. Gibson

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Chapter 1

Peter at Antioch

Following the martyrdom of Stephen, a great persecution of Christians¹ ensued (Acts 8:1b). Previously, the Christian church was primarily limited to Judea; with the persecution, large numbers of Christians spread throughout the surrounding provinces. Some of these Christians, all of whom were Jewish, began to evangelize Gentiles. Soon, mixed ethnic congregations began to form, the most significant of which was at Antioch (Acts 11:20–30). Jewish and Gentile believers in Christ both worshipped and ate together. Paul and Barnabas were at least two of Antioch’s principal leaders and it served as their base for missionary travels (Acts 11:19–25; 13:1–3).

Peter later arrives at Antioch (Gal 2:11–14).² Initially, he follows the established practice in eating with Gentiles. But then some men from James come and convince him to withdraw from open table fellowship. According to Paul, this was due to a “fear of the circumcision” and was contrary to Peter’s own beliefs. The other Jewish Christians at Antioch, including Barnabas, follow Peter’s example. Paul proceeds to publicly condemn Peter’s actions, arguing that Peter’s actions imply that “Christ died in vain” (Gal 2:21b).

No further details are provided for what is commonly referred to as the “Antioch incident.” But tantalizing questions remain. Who were these men from James? What was their message to Peter? What was the specific fear which led Peter to withdraw? Was Paul successful in convincing Peter? This dissertation attempts to answer these questions with the goal of establishing a stronger grasp of both the Antioch incident as well as the beliefs and motivations of Peter.

¹ While the use of the term “Christian” is anachronistic prior to its introduction in Antioch (Acts 11:26) and while the followers of Jesus in Jerusalem likely used alternate titles such as “the Way” to identify themselves (Acts 24:14, which Paul uses when defending himself before Felix) or “Nazarene” (Acts 24:5, where the term is used by Paul’s accusers to describe Paul’s sect), I will regularly use “Christian” to refer to any early follower of Christ following his resurrection.

² The exact chronology of this period of Paul’s life is controversial, especially with regards to whether the Antioch incident occurred before or after the Jerusalem council (Acts 15). This issue will be discussed in greater depth in chapter 5.

I. History of Research

This section will accomplish two tasks. It will begin with the role which the Antioch incident played in the historical reconstruction of Ferdinand Christian Baur in the first half of the nineteenth century, along with the legacy of this interpretation. It will then establish the range of interpretations on three central issues to Gal 2:11–14: the identity and purpose of the “men from James,” Peter’s reasons for ceasing to eat with the Gentile Christians in Antioch, and the outcome of the confrontation.

A. Baur and the Antioch Incident

In 1831, F. C. Baur presented his conception of the early church in his article on the various parties in the Corinthian church, in which he argued that early Christianity was divided into two opposing groups.³ One party, centered in Jerusalem around James (the brother of Jesus) and Peter, was legalistic and advocated the continued importance of Judaism. The second party, centered in Antioch around Paul, was universalistic and espoused the utter abrogation of the Mosaic Law and the replacement of Judaism.

With his *Paulus, der Apostel Jesu Christi* (1845) and *Kirchengeschichte der drei ersten Jahrhunderte* (1853), Baur continued the development of his thesis. According to Baur, the discontent of the Hellenist widows over the “daily distribution” in Acts 6:1 was indicative of a deeper rift between the Hebrews and Hellenists. This schism was finalized with Stephen’s speech which Baur claimed demonstrated a complete break from the Law and Judaism.⁴ This speech resulted in a persecution of the church in which all were scattered “except the apostles” (Acts 8:1b). Baur claimed this persecution was perpetrated only against the Hellenistic Jewish Christians.⁵

³ F. C. Baur, “Die Christuspartei in der korinthischen Gemeinde, der Gegensatz des paulinischen und petrinischen in der ältesten Kirche, der Apostel Petrus in Rom.” *TZT* 4 (1831): 61–206. Republished in Ferdinand Christian Baur, *Ausgewählte Werke in Einzelausgaben* (vol. 1; ed. Klaus Scholder; Stuttgart: Frommann, 1963), 1–146.

⁴ Ferdinand Christian Baur, *The Church History of the First Three Centuries* (trans. Allan Menzies; London: Williams and Norgate, 1878–79), 44–46.

⁵ Any specific designation for the Jewish believers in Jesus in the first decades of the church is problematic. For further discussion, see, e.g. Albertus Frederik Johannes Klijn, “Study of Jewish Christianity,” *NTS* 20 (1974): 419–431; Bruce J. Malina, “Jewish Christianity or Christian Judaism: Toward a Hypothetical Definition,” *JSJ* 7 (1976): 46–57; Marcel Simon, *Le christianisme antique et son contexte religieux: scripta varia* (WUNT 23; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1981) 2:598–621; Raymond E. Brown, “Not Jewish Christianity and Gentile Christianity but Types of Jewish/Gentile Christianity,” *CBQ* 45 (1983): 74–79; Joan E. Taylor, “The Phenomenon of Early Jewish-Christianity: Reality or Scholarly Invention?” *VC* 44 (1990): 313–334; Matt Jackson-McCabe, “What’s in a Name? The Problem of ‘Jewish Christianity,’” in *Jewish Christianity Reconsidered:*

This led naturally to the Jerusalem church being composed solely of Hebraists. The Hellenists, on the other hand, carried their own Law-free Gospel to the Gentiles, creating a universal system in which both Jews and Gentiles lived together in complete equality.⁶

Baur contended that two separate missions and two separate gospels had been officially established in Gal 2:9, with James/Peter/John leading a mission to the Jews and Paul/Barnabas leading a mission to the Gentiles, “recognising that each party had a right to go its own way, separate from, and independent of the other.”⁷ However, this decision “did not arise from any root of conviction in their [James, Peter, and John] minds, and was out of harmony with their religious feelings.”⁸ This was demonstrated when men from James came to Antioch and “reminded Peter so strongly of the principles which were so rigorously upheld at Jerusalem, that he gave up sitting at the same table with the Gentile Christians. ... in drawing this distinction between the Jewish and the Gentile Christians he practically declared that he no longer recognized the latter to be on the same level with the former.”⁹ The refusal by Peter to acquiesce to Paul’s demand that he renew table fellowship with Gentiles resulted in Paul becoming estranged from the Jerusalem apostles, the Antioch church, and his missionary partner Barnabas.

The second era of the early church, according to Baur, was characterized by attacks upon Paul and his authority by representatives of the Jerusalem church. Baur cites the parties at Corinth (with some following Paul, others Peter, others Apollos; cf. 1 Cor 3:4) as evidence of this lack of unity in the early church. And, at the time, it was uncertain which perspective would prevail. However, the Jewish revolt of A.D. 66–70 changed all of this, leading to Baur’s third era of the early church in which the Law-based Gospel became marginalized (centered in the Ebionite community of Pella, formed from those Jewish Christians who had fled Jerusalem prior to the revolt as the result of a vision) and the rise to utter dominance by the Law-free Gospel taught by Paul and his associates.¹⁰

To understand Baur’s view of Peter’s role in the early church, it is necessary to understand how Baur interprets Acts. According to Baur, Acts

Rethinking Ancient Groups and Texts (ed. Matt Jackson-McCabe; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007), 7–38; Oskar Skarsaune, “Jewish Believers in Jesus in Antiquity – Problems of Definition, Method, and Sources,” in *Jewish Believers in Jesus: The Early Centuries* (ed. Oskar Skarsaune and Reidar Hvalvik; Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2007), 3–7.

⁶ Baur, *Church History*, 45.

⁷ Baur, *Church History*, 53.

⁸ Baur, *Church History*, 54.

⁹ Baur, *Church History*, 54.

¹⁰ Baur, *Church History*, 56–65.

should not be considered a reliable historical document.¹¹ He draws upon the absence of the Antioch incident in Acts as evidence:

The Acts of the Apostles indeed says nothing of all this [i.e., the Antioch Incident]. In a representation deviating so much from the truth as this account of the transactions at Jerusalem [Acts 15], there could indeed be no place for a scene like this; and for this reason not only does this discrepancy between the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistle to the Galatians become more apparent, but it also becomes indubitable that the silence of the Acts of the Apostles with regard to so public an occurrence, is an intentional one."¹²

Baur contends that Acts was actually an attempt by a representative of the Pauline “camp” to create a synthesis between the Pauline and Petrine parties.¹³ This “compromise” book presents Paul as more “Petrine” and Peter as more “Pauline.” For example, Paul agrees, at the request of James, to pay for four Jewish Christians to take a Nazarite vow, so that the people will know that Paul honors the Jewish laws and traditions (Acts 21:18–26). He also agrees to the Jerusalem Decree (Acts 15:19–21), being willing to bring it to Antioch (Acts 15:22). Peter, on the other hand, is presented as being given a divine vision which led him to conclude that the Gentiles could be accepted into fellowship without being circumcised, proclaiming this before the entire church of Jerusalem (Acts 10–11) and then reiterating this conviction at the Jerusalem council (Acts 15:7–11). Likewise, 1 Peter was written on behalf of the Pauline party, providing Paul’s letters with Scriptural authority.¹⁴ Consequently, according to Baur, much of what is written about Peter in the canonical New Testament is not truly representative of Peter’s actual beliefs or how he influenced his segment of the early church.

B. The Antioch Incident in Recent Scholarship

Baur has had a pervasive influence on NT scholarship. It soon became common for the historicity of the Acts of the Apostles to be discounted, with attempts made to reconstruct a Pauline chronology on the basis of the Pauline epistles alone. One interesting, yet unlikely, thesis proposed by Johannes Munck suggests that Gal 2:11–14 occurred chronologically prior

¹¹ In contrast, Baur views Galatians as one of four Pauline epistles (along with Romans and the two epistles to the Corinthians) which “bear in themselves so incontestably the character of the Pauline originality, that it is not possible for critical doubt to be exercised upon them with any show of reason.” In Ferdinand Christian Baur, *Paul, the Apostle of Jesus Christ: His Life and Works, His Epistles and Teachings; A Contribution to a Critical History of Primitive Christianity* (London: Williams and Norgate, 1873–75), 1:256.

¹² Baur, *Paul, the Apostle of Jesus Christ*, 134.

¹³ Baur, *Church History*, 132–136.

¹⁴ Baur, *Church History*, 130–132.

to 2:1–10 and that Paul placed the Antioch incident after his account of the Jerusalem agreement because it provided the clearest demonstration of his independence from the Jerusalem leadership.¹⁵

The influence of Baur's thesis has not been limited to NT chronology; the entire field of the history of the first century church has been affected. While various elements of Baur's overall thesis have been questioned, his analysis of the Antioch incident of Gal 2:11–14 remained accepted by much of scholarship for more than a century. It is still common for scholars to assert that this incident led to a split between Jerusalem and Paul, though many would not view this split as complete as did Baur.¹⁶

Given the significance of Gal 2:11–14 in the formulation of New Testament history, it is surprising that the incident was somewhat neglected until recently. In 1983, James Dunn wrote a 55-page article in which he observed in his introduction that "there has been remarkably little detailed work done on the incident itself."¹⁷ Since then, this lacuna has begun to be filled;¹⁸ however, the major focus of recent scholarship has been on the topic of table fellowship within Second Temple Judaism.¹⁹ Paul and James receive significant attention; detailed analysis of Peter's role in Gal 2:11–14, however, is often minimal (though not entirely neglected). This is understandable, given the fact that only Paul's account of the incident has been preserved. Joachim Gnilka is certainly correct when he writes:

¹⁵ Johannes Munck, *Paul and the Salvation of Mankind* (trans. Frank Clarke; 1st English ed.; Richmond: John Knox, 1959), 100–134. Cf. Gerd Lüdemann, *Paul, Apostle to the Gentiles: Studies in Chronology* (trans. F. Stanley Jones; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 44–89.

¹⁶ See, e.g., Craig C. Hill, *Hellenists and Hebrews: Reappraising Division Within the Earliest Church* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992).

¹⁷ James D. G. Dunn, "The Incident at Antioch (Gal 2:11–18)," *JSNT* 18 (1983): 4.

¹⁸ Major studies on the Antioch incident include: Henricus Maria Feret, *Pierre et Paul à Antioche et à Jérusalem: Le 'conflit' des deux apôtres* (Paris: Cerf, 1955); René Kieffer, *Foi et justification à Antioche: Interprétation d'un conflit (Ga 2, 14–21)* (LD 111; Paris: Cerf, 1982); Dunn, "The Incident at Antioch," 3–57; Andreas Wechsler, *Geschichtsbild und Apostelstreit: Eine forschungsgeschichtliche und exegetische Studie über den antiochenischen Zwischenfall (Gal 2, 11–14)* (BZNW 62; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1991); Nicholas Taylor, *Paul, Antioch and Jerusalem: A Study in Relationships and Authority in Earliest Christianity* (JSNTSup 66; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992); Jacinto Núñez Regodón, *El Evangelio en Antioquía: Gál 2, 15–21 entre el incidente antioqueno y la crisis gálata* (Plenitudo Temporis 7; Salamanca: Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca, 2002).

¹⁹ E.g., Dunn, "Incident at Antioch," 10–21; E. P. Sanders, "Jewish Association with Gentiles and Galatians 2:11–14," in *The Conversation Continues: Studies in Paul and John in Honor of J. Louis Martyn* (ed. Robert Tomson Fortna and Beverly Roberts Gaventa; Nashville: Abingdon, 1990), 170–188; Bengt Holmberg, "Jewish Versus Christian Identity in the Early Church," *RB* 105 (1998): 397–425.

Die Rekonstruktion des Antiochenischen Zwischenfalls gerade im Hinblick auf das Verhalten des Petrus ist außerordentlich schwierig. Die wichtigsten Gründe hierfür sind folgende: Paulus spricht mit äußerster Knappheit. Er spricht mit emotionaler Anteilnahme. Er verknüpft seine damaligen Argumente mit denen, die er jetzt im Galaterbrief gegenüber seinen galatischen Gegnern vorbringt. Er erwähnt nicht die Argumente seiner Kontrahenten, Petrus und Jakobus.²⁰

However, given the importance of this episode for the history of the first century church, detailed analysis of both Paul and Peter is certainly warranted, even if our conclusions regarding the latter must remain somewhat speculative.

C. Survey of Scholarship on Major Issues within Gal 2:11–14

There are three issues regarding the text of Gal 2:11–14 which will be of great importance to this study. First, what was the identity and message of the men from James (2:12)? Second, why did Peter withdraw from table fellowship with the Gentile Christians at Antioch? Third, was Peter convinced by Paul's argument? Before proceeding, it will be helpful to establish the range of scholarly position on each of these three questions.

1. Identity and Message of the "Men from James"

The identity of the "men from James" (Gal 2:12) is greatly debated. There are some scholars who suggest that these individuals were not actually sent by James, but simply came from Jerusalem.²¹ However, the majority of scholars agree that James commissioned these men to speak on his behalf to Peter. For example, Hans Schoeps identifies "the false brothers" of Gal 2:4 with "the men from James" and with the "ardent law-observers" of Acts 15:5; in his view, they are the forerunners of the later Ebionites.²²

²⁰ Joachim Gnilka, *Petrus und Rom: Das Petrusbild in den ersten zwei Jahrhunderten* (Freiburg: Herder, 2002), 101.

²¹ Albrecht Oepke, *Der Brief des Paulus an die Galater* (2d ed. THKNT 9; Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1957), 57; Hans Lietzmann, *Die Briefe des Apostels Paulus, an die Galater* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1971), 84; Heinrich Schlier, *Der Brief an die Galater* (12th ed.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1971), 83. Jost Eckert, in *Die urchristliche Verkündigung im Streit zwischen Paulus und seinen Gegnern nach dem Galaterbrief* (Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet, 1971), 195–196, argues that ἀπὸ Ἰακώβου should be interpreted as indicating the authority by which they came to Antioch, and not simply their geographic origin. Markus Bockmuehl, *Jewish Law in Gentile Churches: Halakhah and the Beginning of Christian Public Ethics* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000), 72 n. 100, believes that these men were not actually commissioned by James, "but nevertheless claimed to address the Gentiles as official spokesmen of the Jerusalem church."

²² Hans Joachim Schoeps, *Paul: The Theology of the Apostle in Light of the Jewish Religious History* (trans. Harold Knight; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1961), 67–68, 74–75.

Raymond Brown suggests that “the men who ‘came from James’ (2:12) ... may even have been unconverted Jews rather than Jewish Christians.”²³ August Strobel connects the men from James to the same group of Jewish Christians who were agitators in Galatia.²⁴ Gerd Lüdemann contended that they were members of the “circumcision group” feared by Peter.²⁵ Lothar Wehr suggests that Peter desired to preserve the unity of the church by compelling the Gentiles to take on “signs of Jewish identity.”²⁶

It is likewise prevalent for scholars to see a direct connection between the Jerusalem agreement in Gal 2:9 and the goals of these “men from James”, though there is significant disagreement as to the exact nature of this connection.²⁷ A separation motif is common amongst many scholars. For example, Walter Schmithals holds they were demanding complete separation between Jewish and Gentile Christians, afraid that Peter’s open table fellowship could lead to the complete abandonment of the Law within Jewish Christianity, and believing there should exist a strict separation between Jews and those Gentiles who did not keep the Law.²⁸ According to Dunn, the men from James asserted that the Jerusalem agreement demanded that Jewish Christians “live like Jews”, and that this required a

²³ Raymond Edward Brown, Karl P. Donfried, and John Henry Paul Reumann, *Peter in the New Testament: A Collaborative Assessment by Protestant and Roman Catholic Scholars* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1973), 27 n. 58.

²⁴ August Strobel, “Das Aposteldekret als Folge des Antiochenischen Streites,” in *Kontinuität und Einheit* (ed. Paul-Gerhard Müller and Werner Stenger; Freiburg: Herder, 1981), 84.

²⁵ Gerd Lüdemann, *Early Christianity According to the Traditions in Acts: A Commentary* (trans John Bowden; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1989), 39.

²⁶ Lothar Wehr, *Petrus und Paulus, Kontrahenten und Partner: Die beiden Apostel im Spiegel des Neuen Testaments, der apostolischen Väter und früher Zeugnisse ihrer Verehrung* (NTAbh 30; Münster: Aschendorff, 1996), 69. Cf. Philip Francis Esler, *Community and Gospel in Luke-Acts* (SNTSMS 57; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 88; Scot McKnight, “A Parting Within the Way: Jesus and James on Israel and Purity,” in *James the Just and Christian Origins* (ed. Bruce Chilton and Craig A. Evans; NovTSup 98; Leiden: Brill, 1999), 100. Dunn, “The Incident at Antioch,” 30–31, contends that this view does not comport with the meaning of Ἰουδαϊζῶ (Gal 2:14) and is contrary to the preceding Jerusalem agreement (Gal 2:1–10). Cf. Sanders, “Jewish Association,” 171.

²⁷ Günther Bornkamm, *Paul* (1st U.S. ed.; New York: Harper & Row, 1971), 46, argues that Paul believed Peter and James were contravening the Jerusalem agreement, but that this was not the actual intent of Peter and James.

²⁸ Walter Schmithals, *Paul and James* (trans. Dortha M. Barton; SBT 46; London: SCM, 1965), 64–69. Cf. Hans Dieter Betz, *Galatians: A Commentary on Paul’s Letter to the Churches in Galatia* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979), 108; Charles Kingsley Barrett, *Freedom and Obligation: A Study of the Epistle to the Galatians* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1985), 13; Eckhard J. Schnabel, *Early Christian Mission* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 2:1003–1004.

separation from the ritually impure Gentile believers.²⁹ Similarly, Magnus Zetterholm suggests that James did not believe there was any change in the status of Gentiles with the coming of Christ: they should still be considered God-fearers with the halakhic regulations regarding social intercourse between Jews and Gentiles being maintained. Hence, the men from James convinced Peter that the Jewish and Gentile Christians ought to form separate commensality groups.³⁰ Bockmuehl proposes that James believed that since Antioch was part of the biblical land of Israel, the Jewish Christians should maintain their Jewish identity so that they would participate in the eschatological blessings upon Israel promised by Jesus.³¹ Gnilka, echoing the thoughts of many scholars, contends that the men from James asserted that the Jerusalem agreement meant that Peter, as an apostle to the circumcision, was responsible for making sure the Jewish Christians did not reject traditional Jewish customs, and thus should not be eating with impure Gentiles.³² Richard Bauckham suggests that the decision by Jewish Christians that separation from Gentile Christians was necessary was due to the former's belief in the general "moral impurity of Gentiles."³³

Alternatively, a number of scholars believe the men from James were offering the Gentile Christians the option to either be circumcised and become Torah-observant or to establish a separate community apart from Jewish Christians.³⁴ Yet still another viewpoint asserts that the men from

²⁹ James D. G. Dunn, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians* (BNTC; Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1993), 122; idem, "Incident at Antioch," 31–32; idem, *Jews and Christians: The Parting of the Ways, A.D. 70 to 135; The Second Durham-Tübingen Research Symposium on Earliest Christianity and Judaism* (Durham, September 1989) (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 172–176. Cf. Rudolf Pesch, *Simon-Petrus: Geschichte und geschichtliche Bedeutung des ersten Jüngers Jesu Christi* (Päpste und Papsttum 15; Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1980), 92; Hill, *Hellenists and Hebrews*, 126–142; Regodón, *El Evangelio en Antioquía*, 111.

³⁰ Magnus Zetterholm, *The Formation of Christianity in Antioch: A Social-Scientific Approach to the Separation Between Judaism and Christianity* (Routledge Early Church Monographs; London: Routledge, 2003), 160–61.

³¹ Bockmuehl, *Jewish Law in Gentile Churches*, 75–79.

³² Gnilka, *Petrus und Rom*, 103.

³³ Richard Bauckham, "James, Peter, and the Gentiles," in *Missions of James, Peter, and Paul* (ed. Bruce Chilton and Craig A. Evans; NovTSup 115; Leiden: Brill, 2005), 124–126.

³⁴ Ernest DeWitt Burton, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians* (ICC 35; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1921), 101–113, 257–259; Jürgen Becker, "Galater," in *Die Briefe an die Galater, Epheser, Philipper, Kolosser, Thessalonicher und Philemon* (ed. Jürgen Becker, Gerhard Friedrich, and Hans Conzelmann; NTD 8; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1976), 27–28; Paul C. Böttger, "Paulus und Petrus in Antiochien: Zum Verständnis von Galater 2:11–21," *NTS* 37 (1991): 81; John Painter, *Just James: The Brother of Jesus in History and Tradition* (Studies on Personalities of the New Testament; Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1997), 70;

James desired to impose the demands of the Jerusalem Decree upon the Antiochene Gentile Christians.³⁵

Along a different line of reasoning, Paul Achtemeier asserts that the Jerusalem decree was formulated at a conference unconnected to Gal 2:1–10 or Acts 15, did not include the presence of Peter, and that the first time Peter heard of this decree was when it was brought to Antioch by the men from James. It was Peter's decision to abide by this Decree which led him to withdraw from eating with the Gentiles. Achtemeier also proposes that James had decided to depart from the Jerusalem agreement of Gal 2:9, because of some sort of external or internal pressure.³⁶

Hans Conzelmann presents a similar argument, though he identifies the Apostolic conference of Acts 15 as the meeting which officially separated Jewish Christians from Gentile Christians: the Jews should continue to keep the Law while the Gentiles should refrain. One consequence was that Jewish and Gentile Christians would not be able to eat together. The men from James, then, are simply exhorting Peter to consistently follow this principle.³⁷

Arguing from the perspective of purity regulations in general rather than a specific ecclesiological agreement, Bruce Chilton argues that the "Jacobean circle" was proclaiming that the celebration of the eucharistic meal (which he believes was the type of meal that Peter had withdrawn from) was to be directly associated with Passover, and thus table fellowship with Gentiles during such a meal was to be strictly forbidden due to purity considerations.³⁸ Differently, Jürgen Becker maintains that the men from

Bauckham, "James, Peter, and the Gentiles," 126; Francis B. Watson, *Paul, Judaism and the Gentiles: Beyond the New Perspective* (rev. and extended ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 107, specifies that circumcision was not seen by James as a means of salvation, but as "essential for full church membership" and "the solution to this marginalization" caused by the problem of shared table fellowship between Jews and Gentiles.

³⁵ E.g., David R. Catchpole, "Paul, James and the Apostolic Decree," *NTS* 23 (1977): 440–443; Traugott Holtz, "Die Bedeutung des Apostelkonzils für Paulus," *NovT* 16 (1974): 23.

³⁶ Paul J. Achtemeier, *The Quest for Unity in the New Testament Church: A Study in Paul and Acts* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987), 52–53. Lietzmann, *Galater*, 108–109, agrees, specifically identifying the men from James who brought the Decree to Antioch with Judas and Silas.

³⁷ Hans Conzelmann, *History of Primitive Christianity* (trans. John E. Steeley; Nashville: Abingdon, 1973), 89; cf. Taylor, *Paul, Antioch and Jerusalem*, 109; Charles Kingsley Barrett, "Paul: Councils and Controversies," in *Conflicts and Challenges in Early Christianity* (ed. Donald Hagner; Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity Press International, 1999), 54, 62–63; idem, *On Paul: Aspects of His Life, Work and Influence in the Early Church* (London: T&T Clark, 2003), 93–94.

³⁸ Bruce Chilton, *A Feast of Meanings: Eucharistic Theologies from Jesus Through Johannine Circles* (NovTSup 72; Leiden: Brill, 1994), 102–105.

James represent one side of a “fight about the Law and the Gospel,” contending “the Antiochene Jewish Christians are not following the straight path of the Law “ but are instead following the Gentile Christians in using “another reference point, namely the truth of the Gospel.”³⁹

2. Peter’s Reasons for Withdrawing from Table Fellowship

Scholarship is likewise greatly divided over the reason Peter decided to withdraw from open table fellowship with the Gentile Christians. Paul describes Peter’s motivation as stemming from a fear “of the circumcision.” A survey of the relevant scholarship demonstrates that a scholar’s analysis of Peter’s motivation is largely dependent upon how this scholar identifies this group which Peter feared. Were they Jewish Christians? And, if so, should they be identified with the men from James? Or were they non-Christian Jews, specifically the Jewish population and/or leadership in Jerusalem?

Those scholars who identify “those of the circumcision” with Jewish Christians tend to view Peter’s concerns as largely theological.⁴⁰ For example, Oscar Cullmann contends that Peter’s missionary credentials were “dependent on the Jerusalem church” which placed him “in a particularly painful dilemma.”⁴¹ Betz suggests that Peter feared losing his power base within the Jerusalem church.⁴² Rudolf Pesch suggests Peter’s recognition that he had not been upholding his part of the Jerusalem agreement resulted in “a bad conscience.”⁴³ Alternatively, while John Meier accents Peter as playing the role of the mediator, attempting to prevent any deep schism between the two sides represented by Paul and James by taking a middle road, and getting condemned by Paul for his troubles.⁴⁴ Gerhard Ebeling contends that Peter experienced personal doubts about whether it was permissible to eat with Gentiles⁴⁵ and George Howard insists that Pe-

³⁹ Becker, “Galater,” 28.

⁴⁰ An exception is Paul Gaechter, “Jerusalem und Antiochien. Ein Beitrag zur urkirchlichen Rechtsentwicklung,” *ZKT* 70 (1948): 43, who identifies the circumcision group with the men from James, but contends that Peter yielded simply to bring about peace with the men from James, and not because he was convinced that these men were correct.

⁴¹ Oscar Cullmann, *Peter: Disciple, Apostle, Martyr: A Historical and Theological Study* (trans. Floyd V. Filson; 2d rev. ed.; LA 21; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1962), 53.

⁴² Betz, *Galatians*, 109.

⁴³ Pesch, *Simon-Petrus*, 91.

⁴⁴ John P. Meier, “Part One: Antioch” in *Antioch and Rome: New Testament Cradles of Catholic Christianity* (ed. Raymond Edward Brown and John P. Meier; New York: Paulist, 1983), 41–42.

⁴⁵ Gerhard Ebeling, *The Truth of the Gospel: An Exposition of Galatians* (trans. David Green; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985), 114.

ter, Barnabas, and the other Jewish Christians were persuaded by the men from James that Gentile Christians must be circumcised.⁴⁶ Vincent Smiles refers to examples from the Gospels (Mark 8:29–32; 14:29–31, 66–72; Matt 14:28–30; Luke 5:4–8; John 21:7) as establishing a pattern of “impetuosity and fickleness” which accounted for Peter’s vacillation in Antioch.⁴⁷

Those scholars who identify “those of the circumcision” with non-Christian Jews lean towards a sociological explanation for Peter’s actions. For example, Gregory Dix suggests that Peter was concerned that rumors of Jewish Christians (and particularly himself) “fraternising with uncircumcised Gentiles” might lead to persecution of Jewish Christians in Jerusalem by other Jews. Hence he decided to temporarily modify his practice in Antioch.⁴⁸ Similarly, Heinrich Schlier believes Peter’s fear was well-founded because the men from James were publicly defaming Peter for his decision to eat with Gentiles.⁴⁹ Francis Watson presents a similar view; though instead of being concerned about the witness to the Jews by the Jerusalem church as a whole, Peter was specifically worried “that association with uncircumcised Gentile Christians would expose *him* to rejection and hostility from Jews to whom he preached” especially if this was perceived as a “public endorsement of ἀκροβυστία.”⁵⁰ Nicholas Taylor presents two possibilities for Peter’s decision: (1) persecution by other Jews and (2) Peter may have intended to cease eating with the Gentiles only for the duration of the visit of the men from James, so that they did not need to compromise “their own standards of observance.”⁵¹ Ben Witherington believes

⁴⁶ George Howard, *Paul: Crisis in Galatia: A Study in Early Christian Theology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 22–28.

⁴⁷ Vincent M. Smiles, *The Gospel and the Law in Galatia: Paul’s Response to Jewish-Christian Separatism and the Threat of Galatian Apostasy* (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical, 1998), 92–93; cf. Franz Mussner, *Der Galaterbrief* (HTKNT 9; Freiburg: Herder, 1974), 142, who adds that Peter felt guilty because he had been recognized by the Jerusalem agreement in Gal 2:9 specifically as a missionary to the Jews. Contra Eckert, *Die urchristliche Verkündigung*, 197; Böttger, “Paulus und Petrus in Antiochien,” 88.

⁴⁸ Gregory Dix, *Jew and Greek: A Study in the Primitive Church* (Westminster: Dacre, 1953), 43.

⁴⁹ Schlier, *Galater*, 84 n. 4. Marie-Joseph Lagrange, *Saint Paul: Épître aux Galates* (EBib; Paris: Gabalda, 1950), 43, agrees: “redouta-t-il leurs réclamations, dénonciations, indignations, clameurs.” Cf. Becker, “Galater,” 28; Wechsler, *Geschichtsbild und Apostelstreit*, 333–335.

⁵⁰ Watson, *Paul, Judaism, and the Gentiles*, 106–107 (emphasis mine). Cf. Sanders, “Jewish Association,” 186; though Sanders does not provide any specifics for the reason James may have been worried about Peter’s reputation, suggesting instead that extensive Jewish fraternization with Gentiles was generally suspect, “since close association might lead to contact with idolatry or transgression of one of the biblical food laws.”

⁵¹ Taylor, *Paul, Antioch and Jerusalem*, 132.

Peter's actions were causing many non-Christian Jews to question Peter's Jewishness: "Peter was being a bad witness, and acting in conflict with the character of his calling."⁵²

Carsten Thiede takes a different approach. He contends that the Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians in Antioch were eating separately before the men from James arrived. Thus, when Peter was eating with Gentile Christians, he was not eating with Jewish Christians. The message of the men from James was that Peter was reneging upon his responsibilities, outlined in the Jerusalem agreement of Gal 2:9, to minister to the Jewish believers. Paul was concerned that Peter's actions might "cause a rift instead of allowing the gradual growing together of the whole church" as well as feared that he might lose his influence with the Gentile Christians.⁵³

Alternatively, Robert Jewett suggests that increased nationalism may have been an underlying cause of Paul's opponents in Galatians:

Jewish Christians in Judea were stimulated by Zealotic pressure into a nomistic campaign among their fellow Christians in the late forties and fifties. Their goal was to avert the suspicion that they were in communion with lawless Gentiles. It appears that the Judean Christians convinced themselves that circumcision of Gentile Christians would thwart Zealot reprisals.⁵⁴

In this article, Jewett does not extend his thesis to consider how this new situation may have affected the Jerusalem leadership or played a role in convincing Peter to withdraw from the Gentiles. Other scholars have made this connection;⁵⁵ none, however, provide much exposition on this hypothesis.

⁵² Ben Witherington, *Grace in Galatia: A Commentary on St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 153. Cf. Ronald Y. K. Fung, *The Epistle to the Galatians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 108.

⁵³ Carsten Peter Thiede, *Simon Peter: From Galilee to Rome* (Exeter: Paternoster, 1986), 166–167.

⁵⁴ Robert Jewett, "The Agitators and the Galatian Congregation," *NTS* 17 (1971): 205. Paul W. Barnett, *Paul: Missionary of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 147, makes a short comment which suggests he may concur: "Was it in this worrying time in Judea under Tiberius Alexander and Ventidius Cumanus that Paul's antircircumcision policies in the Diaspora began to be called into question by conservative, nationalistically minded members of the Jerusalem church? Believers in Judea were not insulated from the events in the wider world." Cf. Barnett, *Behind the Scenes of the New Testament: A History of New Testament Times* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1990), 172.

⁵⁵ Frederick F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Galatians: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 130; Donald A. Carson, "Pauline Inconsistency: Reflections on I Corinthians 9.19–23 and Galatians 2:11–14," *Churchman* 100 (1986): 31–32; Richard Longenecker, *Galatians* (WBC 41; Dallas: Word, 1990), xciii, 74; Longenecker, *Galatians*, xciii, 74; G. Walter Hansen, *Galatians* (IVP New Testament Commentary Series; Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1994), 62–64; Withering-

An influential voice who does attempt to expand upon Jewett's thesis is Dunn in an article in which he appeals to Jewish nationalistic zeal as a prime factor underlying Peter's decision in Antioch.⁵⁶ However, he does not distinguish between the era of the Roman prefects prior to the reign of Herod Agrippa I (A. D. 41–44) and the era of the Roman procurators afterwards. Why did the Jerusalem leadership (and James, in particular, assuming that it was he who sent men to Antioch in Gal 2:12) decide that it was problematic for Peter to eat with Gentiles when they had previously been in accord with Peter's declaration in Acts 11:1–18 that such action had been urged by God himself? If Dunn's presentation of the situation in Judea is correct, the decision by Peter to perform a *volte-face* in the midst of an unchanging socio-political environment is inexplicable. Jost Eckert cautions that such proposals are speculative, because our sources do not provide specific pressures which may have been felt by the Jerusalem church.⁵⁷ One of the goals of this thesis will be to strengthen the case that the situation in Jerusalem had indeed been altered by sociopolitical events such that Peter's actions in Antioch now became a matter of great concern to the mission of the Jerusalem church, whereas previously it had not been nearly as significant an issue.

Bo Reicke is one scholar who does attempt to answer this latter question about what may have served as the impetus for this new concern by James and Peter regarding increased nationalism. He contends that the relative political stability at the time of the Jerusalem council (which he dates to A.D. 48) allowed for a more moderate stance toward Gentiles and the Law. But with the rise of radical zealotry during the procuratorship of Antonius Felix and the resulting persecution against the Jewish Christians, it became

ton, *Grace in Galatia*, 155–156; Bockmuehl, *Jewish Law in Gentile Churches*, 74–75, 77. Stephen Anthony Cummins, in *Paul and the Crucified Christ in Antioch: Maccabean Martyrdom and Galatians 1 and 2* (SNTSMS 114; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), confusingly identifies the circumcision group with both Jewish Christians and Jewish non-Christians at various points in his argument. He initially suggests that they consisted of Jewish Christians who were concerned about the rise in Jewish nationalism and thus desired Peter to practice a Torah-observant lifestyle (pp. 176–178). However, he later writes that Peter may have been concerned with being disciplined by the local synagogue with a scourging similar to the ones Paul had suffered (p. 187).

⁵⁶ Dunn, "Incident at Antioch," 7–11, 32–35.

⁵⁷ Jost Eckert, "Paulus und die Jerusalemer Autoritäten nach dem Galaterbrief und der Apostelgeschichte," in *Schriftauslegung: Beiträge zur Hermeneutik des Neuen Testaments und im Neuen Testament*, ed. Josef Ernst (Munich: Ferdinand Schoeningh, 1972), 301 n. 84. Cf. Martin Goodman, *The Ruling Class of Judaea: The Origins of the Jewish Revolt Against Rome, A.D. 66–70* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 7–19; Hill, *Hellenists and Hebrews*, 130–131.

desirable to compel the Gentile Christians to keep the Law.⁵⁸ This interpretation, however, depends upon dating the Antioch incident to A.D. 52 at the earliest, a later date than most scholars of NT chronology would accept.

3. Did Paul Prevail at Antioch?

One final issue of importance regarding Gal 2:11–14 is whether Peter was convinced by Paul to return to his previous practice of eating with the Gentiles in Antioch. For much of Christian history, the consensus was that he did. Since Baur there has been a marked reversal. Most modern commentators assert that Peter continued his separation from Gentile table fellowship and that this was a primary cause for the split between Paul and Barnabas as well as the reason that Antioch is never mentioned by Paul in any of his subsequent letters.⁵⁹ John McHugh points to Rom 14:1–3, 15:1 and 1 Cor 9:20–22 as evidence suggesting that Paul was later convinced that Peter had, in fact, been correct.⁶⁰ Paul Gaechter concludes that Paul's argument in Gal 2:15–21 does not indicate "the expression of the victory..., but rather proof that his defeat had left behind a festering wound in his soul."⁶¹

On the other side of the issue, John Painter believes the evidence supports the conclusion that Paul remained connected to Antioch as a missionary, and contends that "the conclusion that Paul lost the contest arises from assumptions about the subsequent nature of Christianity at Anti-

⁵⁸ Bo Reicke, "Der geschichtliche Hintergrund des Apostelkonzils und der Antiochia Episode," in *Studia Paulina: In honorem Johannis de Zwaan septuagenarii* (ed. W. C. van Unnik, Jan Nicolaas Sevenster, and C. K. Barrett; Haarlem: Bohn, 1953), 179–184.

⁵⁹ E.g., Lietzmann, *Galater*, 108; Dix, *Jew and Greek*, 47; Schmithals, *Paul and James*, 76–77; Bornkamm, *Paul*, 47; Conzelmann, *History of Primitive Christianity*, 90; Mussner, *Galaterbrief*, 186–187; Bengt Holmberg, *Paul and Power: The Structure of Authority in the Primitive Church as Reflected in the Pauline Epistles* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980), 34; Meier, "Antioch," 39–41; Taylor, *Paul, Antioch, and Jerusalem*, 139; Anton Dauer, *Paulus und die christliche Gemeinde im syrischen Antiochia: Kritische Bestandsaufnahme der modernen Forschung mit einigen weiterführenden Überlegungen* (BBB 106; Weinheim: Beltz Athenäum, 1996), 127–28; Witherington, *Grace in Galatia*, 159; James D. G. Dunn, *Jews and Christians: The Parting of the Ways, A.D. 70 to 135: The Second Durham-Tübingen Research Symposium on Earliest Christianity and Judaism* (Durham, September 1989) (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 177–179.

⁶⁰ John McHugh, "Galatians 2:11–14: Was Peter Right?" in *Paulus und das antike Judentum: Tübingen-Durham-Symposium im Gedenken an den 50. Todestag Adolf Schlatters (19. Mai 1938)* (ed. Adolf von Schlatter, Martin Hengel, and Ulrich Heckel; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1991), 322–327.

⁶¹ Paul Gaechter, *Petrus und seine Zeit: Neutestamentliche Studien* (Innsbruck: Tyrolia, 1958), 253.

och.”⁶² In addition, Martin Karrer argues that there was no schism between Peter and Paul; the inclusion of “we” in Gal 2:15 indicates Peter’s agreement with Paul.⁶³

II. Methodology

As this thesis is primarily a historical study, it will investigate primary source material to elucidate the Antioch incident in Gal 2:11–14. It will focus upon Acts, Galatians, and Josephus’ *Antiquitates Iudaicorum*, *Bellum Iudaicum*, and *Vita*, but will also include other biblical passages relating to Peter (particularly in the Gospels) as well as Philo’s *Legatio ad Gaium* and Tacitus’ *Histories*.⁶⁴ As much of my thesis will rest upon the accuracy of the NT authors and Josephus as historians, historical accuracy will be considered throughout the thesis.⁶⁵

It is often the case that only a single perspective of a debate between two or more individuals was recorded (or is extant). In such instances, a text serves as a mirror of the viewpoints of the opposing individual or group.⁶⁶ This “mirror-reading” is both important and problematic. It is necessary in order to understand each party involved in a historical event, but it is often difficult to know how accurately the author of a text is re-

⁶² Painter, *Just James*, 72.

⁶³ Martin Karrer, “Petrus im paulinischen Gemeindekreis,” *ZNW* 80 (1989): 218; cf. Ragnar Bring, *Commentary on Galatians* (trans. Eric Wahlstrom; Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1961), 82; Schnabel, *Early Christian Mission*, 2:1005.

⁶⁴ Most of our knowledge about the history of first century Judea and Galilee, apart from the New Testament, comes from the works of Josephus. Philo discusses a relevant episode during the administration of Pontius Pilate in *Legatio ad Gaium*, 299–305. In *Histories* 5.9, Tacitus summarizes the entire history of Judea from its annexation by Pompey in 63 B.C. through the end of the procuratorship of Felix in A.D. 64 in a single paragraph.

⁶⁵ Tessa Rajak, *Josephus, the Historian and His Society* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984); Pere Villalba i Varneda, *The Historical Method of Flavius Josephus* (Leiden: Brill, 1986); Ada Rapoport-Albert, *Essays in Jewish Historiography* (History and Theory: Beiheft 27; Middletown: Wesleyan University, 1988); Colin J. Hemer, *The Book of Acts in the Setting of Hellenistic History* (ed. Conrad H. Gempf; WUNT 49; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1989); Gregory E. Sterling, *Historiography and Self-Definition: Josephus, Luke-Acts, and Apologetic Historiography* (NovTSup 64; Leiden: Brill, 1992); Klaus-Stefan Krieger, *Geschichtsschreibung als Apologetik: Bei Flavius Josephus* (Texte und Arbeiten zum neutestamentlichen Zeitalter 9; Tübingen: Francke, 1994); Alexander Mittelstaedt, *Lukas als Historiker: Zur Datierung des lukanischen Doppelwerkes* (TANZ 43; Tübingen: Francke, 2006); Zuleika Rodgers, *Making History: Josephus and Historical Method* (JSJSup 110; Leiden: Brill, 2007).

⁶⁶ John M. G. Barclay, “Mirror-Reading a Polemical Letter: Galatians as a Test Case,” *JSNT* 31 (1987): 378.