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Holtz, Gudrun

Damit Gott sei alles in allem: Studien zum paulinischen und frühjüdischen Universalismus

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In her 2006 *Habilitationsschrift* at the Evangelisch-Theologische Fakultät of the Eberhard Karls-Universität in Tübingen, Gudrun Holtz examines and compares the relationship between particularism and universalism in the writings of Paul, Philo, and the Qumran scrolls. The latter two were chosen because they are typically regarded as Jewish extremes of universalism (Philo) and particularism (Qumran) and are therefore helpful in gauging the Jewishness of Paul's related concepts. Her main thesis is that Paul's universalism is neither non-Jewish (so Baur and Boyarin) nor exclusivistic, since, as the title of the book indicates with a quote from 1 Cor 15:28, in the *eschaton* "God may be all in all."

Following J. D. Levenson, Holtz offers a twofold definition of religious universalism: (1) it refers to the *present* "willingness to accept proselytes, that is, one that is willing or eager to extend its particularity indefinitely" ("Universalisierung"); and (2) it refers to a *future* hope where "human variety will disappear altogether or submit permanently to an all-inclusive structure" (8; "Universalismus"). The table of content reflects this two-part definition.

Part 1 (15–188) examines Paul (ch. 2), Qumran (ch. 3), and Philo (ch. 4) with regard to a possible "universalism as an eschatological goal." Holtz finds trajectories of universal salvation and damnation in Paul's thought. On the one hand, since death is universal,

including all of Adam's race (Rom 1:18–3:20; see pp. 18–25), grace cannot, according to the logic in Rom 5:17b (“so much more”) be less universal but must extend beyond believers to all people as well (29–33). Similarly, the liberation of “creation” in the *eschaton* (Rom 8:21) universalizes the freedom and adoption of believers even to unbelievers (41, *pace* Wilckens). In 1 Cor 15:20–28, the destiny of believers in relation to God's “enemies” is, on the other hand, “unclear” (49). A study of πάντες in Romans (33–35) qualifies Paul's thought in that he does not think here of “everyone without exception” but has people *groups* of Jews and Gentiles in mind (also 72). This universalism is balanced by faith as a necessary condition (1 Thess 1:9–10; 1 Cor 15:2; Rom 5:9–10; 1 Cor 1:18–25; Rom 1:16–17; 9:30–10:13; see 50–56) that “excludes [in Rom 9–10] the unbelieving part of Israel from eschatological salvation” (55). Holtz finds a resolution of universalism and particularism in Rom 11:25–36, which extends the privilege of salvation in the end even to that part of Israel that does not and will not believe in Christ (56–66). Although less explicit, similar hints with regard to the salvation of Gentile unbelievers can be derived from Rom 8:18–23 and 11:12b (71–72). Expressions of praise about God's universal salvation (esp. Rom 15:7–12; also Phil 2:9–11; see 72–86) underline the inclusivistic nature of God's grace. Holtz rejects again a notion of *apokatastasis pantōn* because Paul's “all” and “many” do not include every individual but refer to people groups (72). That also coheres with the final judgment of individual Christians as expressed in, for example, Rom 14:10; 2 Cor 5:10; 1 Cor 6:9–10; Gal 5:19–21 (66–71).

The literature of the Qumran community displays a rather complex spectrum of varied views by different authors (170). While early texts such as 1QS iv,2–14 and 1QH^a vii,15–24 tie a double outcome merely to moral behavior (90–93), 1QM I,1–9, xiv,4–12, and CD/4QD mention socially identifiable groups that will stand on opposite sides of the eschatological war. The “sons of darkness” are not only comprised of Israel's traditional enemies but include also Jews who do not follow the law as interpreted by the Qumran community (e.g., Pharisees). The “sons of light,” on the other hand, are the members of the sect (93–97). With regard to the eschatological judgment, the Qumran community differentiates, so Holtz, between the destruction only of its immediate enemies (see 4QpNah 3–4 iii,4–5; 1QM xvii,5–6; 1QSb iii,27–28) and the future rule over Jewish and Gentile survivors of the eschatological war (1QM vi,5–6; xii,7–18; xvii,6–7; 1QSb v,20–29; see 101–9). While the latter texts do envision a future for outsiders, they are nevertheless “thoroughly exclusivistic” (106). Texts that go so far as to express hope for all Israel (11QMelch ii; see 114–17) and even the nations (1QH^a xiv,10–13; 118–19) show inclusive trends that still do not reach a universalistic equality between insiders from Qumran and outsiders (119–20). Such an eschatological universalism is evident only in words of praise about God's future restoration as found in hymnic-liturgical Qumran literature (128–33) such as 1QH^a ix,27–31 or 4QBer^{a,b}. These disqualify views as simplistic if not inaccurate

(135–37) that understand Qumran’s eschatology as merely “dualistic” (Mattila, 136) or short of universal breadth (L. H. Schiffman, 136).

Philo’s most elaborate discussion of the *eschaton* (in *Praem.* 79–172) focuses mainly on the individual, not on the cosmic or the national (139). Yet his social conditions such as pogroms against Jews in Alexandria (38–41 C.E.), the erection of Caligula’s statue in Jerusalem’s temple, and his rejection in Rome (39–40 C.E.; 154, 158) did find expression in a future hope where Gentile nations participate (based on Lev 26 and Deut 28) only as defeated enemies ruled by virtuous and (therefore) victorious Israel (153; see *Praem.* 91–97). Later, in *Praem.* 171–172 Philo does envision that Israel’s future virtue and restoration will enable the nations’ *equal* participation in the new world (162). Non-Jews will convert to the Torah (*Virt.* 119–120; *Mos.* 2.44; 163–165) and unite with Jews as one humanity in peace. Thus national and universal hopes in Philo’s writings do not contradict each other (*pace* U. Fischer, 165) but connect via Israel and Torah.

A comparison of all three sources (ch. 5) reveals many similarities with varying degrees of emphasis (e.g., eschatological universalism; importance of human behavior; protology-eschatology typology; 169–75). But the focus on Israel and Torah distinguishes Philo and Qumran the most from Paul, who understands Christ as a *universal* eschatological ruler (“Paulus hingegen deutet Christus als endzeitlichen Herrscher durchweg universal...”; 176). Such an equal hope not just for Israel but also for the nations is also attested in other Jewish literature such as 1 En. 10:1–11:2, T. Jud. 24–25, Mekilta on Exodus 15:11 (Širata 8) (178–86) and demonstrates that the apostle’s eschatological universalism “is not an isolated phenomenon but is evident in Jewish tradition before, beside and after Paul” (187).

Part 2 (189–544) analyzes openness and boundaries regarding outsiders before the *eschaton* in all three corpora. Holtz finds a large part of Paul’s letters arguing that God’s salvation is not exclusively for Israel but extends to the Gentiles as well (ch. 6; 191–308). (1) Theological justification (192–232) is offered with the help of concepts such as justification by faith (Gal 2:11–18; Rom 3:21–4:12), the fulfillment of Abraham’s promise (Gal 3:16; Rom 4:13–17a), the calling of the church (Rom 9:24–29), and the reconciliation of the world (Rom 11:15; 2 Cor 5:19). (2) By naming “love” as the center of the law (Rom 13:8; Gal 5:14) and by using at least parts of the Decalogue for the basic instruction of pagans (Rom 1:18–32; 13:9), Paul shows that “the law” for Gentiles is in principle the same as for Israel, though its form differs (232–51). This notion of a “common ethic” agrees with Jewish traditions (see Jub. 7:20–21; Sib. Or. 4:24–39) that reach as far back as the second century B.C.E. (238–39). (3) Yet Paul also draws boundaries (251–78) between the church as insiders and Israel (Rom 9:30–10:21) and pagans (1 Cor 6:1–11; 8:1–13; 10:21; 7:39) as outsiders. He furthermore demands, in certain circumstances, the

exclusion of insiders, at least in the cases of sexual misconduct (1 Cor 5:11; I would add 2 Thess 3:6, 14–15) or heresy (Gal 4:21–5:1). His universalism is thus limited by an exclusivist-particularist component. (4) Holtz demonstrates (279–92) that Paul criticizes the Jewish identification of Torah with Israel by showing, *pace* Boyarin (292–308), the universal relevance of the law for Jews *and Gentiles* (e.g., Rom 3:19–21; 4:1–22; 13:9).

When discussing the regulations in Qumran, Holtz wants to correct a common understanding among many scholars (e.g., Schiffman) according to which the “sectarian” theology prescribed the separation from all Jews outside the community in order to live in “splendid isolation” (376; see 374–78). While there is a self-image as the remnant of Israel (CD I,4–5) with exclusive rights to the covenant promises (310–18), the covenant was nevertheless intended for “all Israel” (ב[ו]ל ישראל, CD xv,5–xvi,6), which will join the group either by individual conversion to their way of life (CD xv,17–20; 318–29) or by corporate “expiation for Israel” (330, with Knibb; see 1QS viii, 1QSa i). Later text traditions (“späterer Textformen,” 332), as in 4QS^b ix, 4QS^d i, 4QD^a 11, 1QS i–ii, and CD ii–vii, do use the concept of *covenant* to separate the sect from Israel (332–45), yet that does not prevent the community from efforts to include new members, as especially evident in CD/4QD and 1QS/4QS (345–56). There are harsh rules that reflect a strong sense of protecting Judaism and “a high degree of national consciousness” (369, with Baumgarten). The right to full membership is extended only to male adults who are physically and mentally healthy (348). These are subject to temporary or permanent exclusion from the community (1QS vi–vii; 4QD^a 10 i–ii) in case of transgressing the group’s codex of behavior (e.g., mentioning God’s name, complaining against a leader) or maintaining contact with apostates and outsiders (350–56). Members of the community may not eat with Jewish people opposed to the group (אנשי העול, “men of injustice”) or take anything from them unless it is paid for (1QS v,14–17; 4QS^b ix). They are forbidden to teach the opponents and should hate them instead with “eternal hate” (1QS ix). 4QMMTa 3–8 prohibits members from eating with or marrying Gentiles. Food products are not to be sold to non-Jews (CD xii). Members should stay away from Gentiles on a Sabbath (CD xi). Yet the same “sectarians” should support the socially weak outside of the community (widows, orphans, the poor), and while proselytes may not be married (4QMMT^c iv), they are still protected by some halakah (CD vi, xi; 366–67).

Philo’s primary *apologetic* interests in his writings aimed at strengthening Jewish confidence in a Gentile environment (379 n. 1) and at refuting Gentile opposition against Judaism (379, 404–5, 507). Both goals are achieved by a “departicularizing and denationalizing of Scripture and religion in the interest of their universalization” (379). Philo does so in *Spec.* 1–2 through a universal interpretation of especially cultic Jewish regulations such as Sabbath, feasts, and circumcision (404, 408–51). While expanding their meaning and significance, Philo never reduces the need for actually doing the law,

including the ritual stipulations (405). Consequently, Israel's distinct nobility by birth (e.g., *Deus* 150) has to be confirmed by moral and religious virtue (e.g., *Spec.* 1.51; 453), a condition that extends the same "nobility" (εὐγένεια) to Gentile proselytes (esp. *Virt.* 187–227; 452–61), who thus become part of the new "constitution" (πολιτεία; 462–73). This openness to the Gentiles denies neither Israel's particular privilege as "the most-loved by God among the nations" (ἔθνῶν τὸ θεοφιλέστατον, *Abr.* 98; 473–86, here 474) nor Philo's justification of Mosaic legislation that differentiates between Jews and Gentiles (*Spec.* 4.13–19; 2.71ff.; 3.29; 486–90). The only grounds for excluding a member is the denial of monotheism (*Spec.* 1–2; 490–97).

A comparison of all three texts (ch. 9) reveals that none promotes a universalism before the end of the world. They show, rather, various attempts to extend the group's particularity to outsiders. For Philo and Qumran, Gentiles have to accept the whole law, including circumcision, in order to join the community (506–12). While Paul concedes the practice of Jewish traditions for Jewish Christians (Gal 4:8–11; Rom 14:5–6), Gentile Christians in Galatia are told explicitly not to keep them (512, 525). Philo and Qumran's proselytes enter the *Jewish* community, but Paul's Jewish and pagan converts enter a "neue soziale Entität" (514) that requires new lifestyles for both. Yet on the whole there is no openness without boundaries (Paul, Philo) and no boundaries without openness (Qumran; 524), and many of Paul's universalist and particularist concepts have Jewish antecedents (537). The similarity between Paul and various forms of ancient Judaism disqualifies Sanders and Dunn's idea of one "covenantal nomism," which is "only *one* view of Judaism in antiquity" (543, italics original).

In a last chapter (ch. 10), Holtz begins with a critical discussion of three studies on Paul's universalism. Martin Hengel finds in Paul the solution for the unresolved tension in ancient Judaism between universalism and particularism. But, according to Holtz, Hengel's view of Judaism is too monolithic, and she repeatedly refers to the Gospel of John as evidence for the exclusivity of the early Christian confession (549; also 561, 562). Similarly, Dunn's notion of a covenantal nomism overlooks "non-Pauline Jewish forms of universalizing" (552). According to Gerd Theißen Paul universalizes ancient Judaism whose focus on the law as a Jewish property with its "separatist function" (556) stood in constant tension with its universal impulse. However, Theißen's view of the law in ancient Judaism is "strongly influenced by the Pauline lens" (555) and neglects to consider Philo's universal understanding even of the ritual laws. When outlining Paul's particular foci (558–63), Holtz finds that the apostle's emphasis on mission is a "fundamental" difference between him and the "Judaism of his time" (558). In addition, "the ecclesiological integration of Jews and Gentiles despite different laws and lifestyles" (559) sets him apart from his Jewish contemporaries (559). Among the Jewish elements she counts the eschatological universalism, the relevance of Torah not just for Israel but

also for Gentiles, and exclusivistic-particularist traits that separate humanity not between Jews and Gentiles but between believers and unbelievers. Holtz finishes by pointing to 1 Cor 15:28 as an expression of Paul's eschatological universalism in which "God may be all in all." *Pace* Baur, Boyarin, and von Harnack, this hope relativizes the apostle's exclusive claims because God will demonstrate himself as the God of everyone, not just of the believers (564–65).

Holtz's study offers a welcome opportunity to reevaluate inclusive and exclusive features of Pauline theology in comparison with other early Jewish voices. The choices of Philo and Qumran, none of which were in direct contact with Paul, allow for a dialogue that lifts the apostle out of his immediate contacts and contexts and exposes him to a broader range of Judaisme. However, re-creating this imaginary dialogue by comparing similar concepts from very diverse ancient writings is a daunting methodological challenge. The brevity of a book review cannot do justice to the length and depth of Holtz's study, but the following two observations probe into a few areas of concern.

Has Holtz succeeded in demonstrating a Pauline eschatology that promises universal salvation even for unbelievers? Most Pauline scholars will find the evidence too thin and her exegesis too atomistic. Paul's goal in Rom 5:17, for example, is not to soften the antithesis between believers and unbelievers but to eliminate *ethnic* pride that keeps Jews and Gentiles apart. In Rom 4 Paul argues that Abraham is also the father of the Gentiles, and in Rom 5 he adds that Adam is also the father of the Jews, thus showing from Scripture (see 3:31) that there is "no partiality with God" (2:11) because there is "no distinction" (3:22). Holtz repeatedly and rightly insists that Paul has people *groups* in mind, but I believe she fails to bring the *ethnic nature* of these people groups, and thus Paul's historical context, to bear on the specific text.

Has Holtz succeeded in demonstrating a universalism in Philo that compares to that of Paul? If "universalism" begins with the "willingness to accept proselytes" (so Holtz with Levenson), then the answer is yes. But is that definition helpful in understanding the theory and practice of Philo and Paul in relating to outsiders? (1) Regarding the theory, Holtz seems to make the same mistake that she finds in Hengel, Dunn, and Theißen. While they might read Philo through the lens of Paul, she seems to understand Paul through the lens of Philo when proposing that Paul regarded the law for Gentiles in principle the same as for Israel (which is true for Philo). Paul's positive references to the "law" in general and to the Decalogue in particular are far different from Philo's elaborate attempt to justify the universal significance and practice of the Sabbath, Jewish feasts, and circumcision. In fact, Paul says that circumcision among Gentiles is antithetical to salvation in Christ (Gal 5:2; Phil 3:2–11). (2) Regarding practice, Paul invested his life in the active pursuit of mission to the Gentiles, while Philo "did not advocate a mission to

non-Jews but argued that those who turn to monotheism should be welcomed” (George E. Sterling, “Turning to God: Conversion in Greek-Speaking Judaism and Early Christianity,” in *Scripture and Tradition: Essays on Early Judaism and Christianity* [NovTSup 129; Leiden: Brill, 2008], 87). Paul was the strategic missionary who sought to convert Gentiles and build new churches. Philo, on the other hand, sought to defend the Jewish community in an Egyptian environment and disarm pagan arguments against Judaism. In the course of that effort he even defended legislation that maintained the national distinction between Jews and Gentiles. While there might be occasional conceptual overlap between Paul and Philo, their different social contexts deserve more attention in the reading of their writings than Holtz has demonstrated.

Despite these questions, Holtz’s study aims in the right direction. The discovery that Paul is more Jewish than previously thought fits right into the paradigm shift of Christian and Jewish studies on Paul since the late 1950s. Yet the challenge of identifying Jewish traditions and novel insights in Paul’s preaching remains.