

*'We worked night and day that we might not burden any of you'*  
(1 Thessalonians 2:9)

Aspects of the Portrayal of Work in the Letters of Paul,  
Late Second Temple Judaism, the Græco-Roman World  
and Early Christianity.

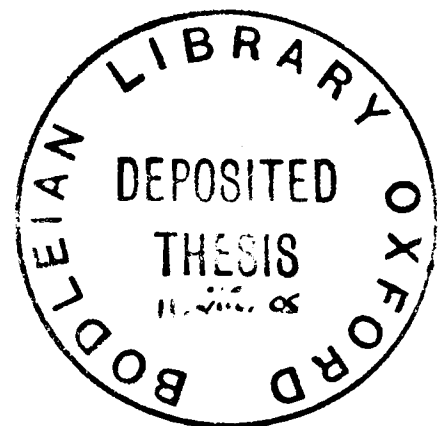
A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Theology  
in the University of Oxford  
For the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

By

Helenann Macleod Hartley  
Worcester College

Trinity Term, 2004 [ie 2005]

LTS 21.11.05



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**A study of the Portrayal of Work in the Letters of Paul, Late Second Temple  
Judaism, the Græco-Roman World, and Early Christianity.**

Helenann M. Hartley, Worcester College

D.Phil., Faculty of Theology

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In recent years, a prolific amount of books and articles on Paul have sought to bring Paul's life and theology into new light. This dissertation is an investigation into an aspect of Paul's life and thought which has remained little discussed in secondary literature, even when as of late, the social world of Paul has been in more focus – that of Paul's portrayal of manual work, and his use of the imagery of the workplace (ideas of toil, labour, weakness, slavery, economics, and so on). The thesis contributes to our understanding of what may have affected the portrayal of work in Paul's thought by surveying all the available evidence, and secondly, it concludes by way of providing a balance to the studies of Hock and others, that Paul's portrayal of work was derived from his Jewish heritage *as well as* his Græco-Roman context.

The first chapter introduces the subject, surveys previous research to demonstrate the need for the present study, and sets out the broader context of the literature to be examined. Chapter two considers the Jewish evidence. Two ways of looking at work are identified. Firstly, the portrayal of God as worker is examined and secondly, the portrayal of human work is discussed. These themes shape chapter three which discusses the Græco-Roman evidence, and Chapter four which examines the non-Pauline Christian material. Chapter five considers the portrayal of work in the Pauline letters, cross-referencing with the previous chapters where relevant.

The final chapter summarises the conclusions that are drawn from the evidence and outlines their implications for current scholarship in Paul.

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In recent years, a prolific amount of books and articles on Paul have sought to bring Paul’s life and theology into new light. Their focus has largely been upon Paul’s views about the Jewish law, issues of his own identity and, more recently, the use of sociological tools to examine Paul’s communities and his relationship with them. This dissertation is an investigation into an aspect of Paul’s life and thought which has remained little discussed by secondary literature, even when as of late, the social world of Paul has been in more focus – that of Paul’s portrayal of manual work, and his use of the imagery of the workplace (ideas of toil, labour, slavery, economics, and so on). It serves two purposes: (1) it contributes to our understanding of what may have affected the portrayal of work in Paul’s thought by surveying all of the available evidence, and (2) it concludes, by way of providing a balance to the studies of Hock, Malherbe and others, that Paul’s portrayal of work was derived from his Jewish heritage *as well as* his Græco-Roman context.

By ‘work’, I mean primarily both the instances where Paul uses the language of work and more particularly, the references to his own trade, rather than those passages which have (traditionally) been of more theological interest. By the latter I mean those instances where Paul refers to the observances (the ‘doings’, ἐργα) of the law, although the thesis undoubtedly overlaps with these areas, particularly in the area of ethical considerations relating to work as stewardship which certainly are ‘theological’. By bringing the issue of physical work into the

foreground, this study explores how Paul's portrayal of work sheds light both on his understanding of the gospel and mission, and on the assessment of how he used his Jewish inheritance in the practicalities of dealing with the communities he set up.

The primary evidence for the portrayal of work in Paul's time is found in a variety of genres and comes from a variety of social contexts. It includes writings from the Hebrew Bible, the LXX, the Dead Sea Scrolls, Philo and Josephus, the New Testament, Greek and Latin literary evidence, and the so-called 'Pseudepigrapha'. Material from the *Mishnah* and the Targumim is also considered, whilst giving due recognition to the question of date.

Since the overall evidence is scattered, it is hoped that the examination of material helps provide an analysis which allows for appreciation of the complexity, flexibility, variety and potential for development in Paul's portrayal of work. In order to allow for connections to be made between the different groups of evidence, each chapter seeks to assess the evidence under the two broad themes of 'divine work' and 'human work'. Within these larger sections, the material is further divided into sub-sections. Discussion of the evidence under these sections and sub-sections is accompanied by an assessment of the potential relationship between the two, and indeed the thesis argues with respect to the Pauline material that this relationship is of key importance when it comes to determining Paul's relationship to his Jewish and Græco-Roman contexts. With due care exercised so as not to conflate the extant evidence, it is hoped that the tracking of these main themes through the various chapters enables us to explore more fully the motivations that lie behind Paul's portrayal of work and its portrayal in his letters.

The first chapter introduces the subject and surveys previous research. The contribution of scholarship to a discussion of attitudes to work in the ancient world and to the study of Paul is discussed. Within the corpus of secondary literature, the most detailed

study that concentrates on Paul's work, describing him as an 'artisan-missionary', is that by Ronald Hock (*The Social Context of Paul's Ministry: Tentmaking and Apostleship* [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980]). Hock argues that Paul's physical work (the manner of which is derived from the reference in Acts 18:3 to Paul, Priscilla and Aquila as tentmakers – σκηνοποιοι) stands central to his apostolic identity, and that Paul's views on work are paralleled in the writings of ancient philosophers such as Dio Chrysostom. Thus Hock considers that Paul's view of work should be regarded 'not as expressing a Jewish regard to toil, or as arising from ecclesiological problems due to eschatology...but as reflecting Paul's clear familiarity with the moral traditions of the Greco-Roman philosophers' (p. 47). Whilst the attention Hock gives to the importance of the theme of work for Paul is accepted, the findings of this thesis challenge Hock's assertions by seeking to redress the balance of research away from a Græco-Roman philosophical one towards a reassessment of and engagement with extant Jewish and other non-Pauline Christian evidences which, in Hock's thesis, do not form part of his considerations. Thereby, it is hoped that this study complements Hock's work and sheds light on certain features which the Græco-Roman context does not illuminate.

Chapter two examines the evidence from a Jewish context. Two ways of looking at work are identified. Firstly, the portrayal of God as worker is examined. In contrast to Greek mythology, where the gods did not work, the Hebrew bible pictures God as a ceaseless worker (except that He rests on the Sabbath), both in a solitary manner (as with creation), and as a co-worker with people (such as portrayed in Psalm 121). The second theme that emerges is that of the portrayal of human work. The first image of human work stresses perfection (Gen. 2:15). A second concept is that of work as toil, the result of disobedience in Gen. 3:17-19. The picture of work that emerges is that of God's punishment of the man, where the dominant images are a ground that is cursed, thorns and

thistles as something with which people must contend, and the sweat with which one must perform labour in a world outside Eden. A further idea of work is the redemption of work in a fallen world. The prophecy of Isaiah, for example, paints a picture of a coming golden age in which work will have the fruitfulness and enjoyment it possesses in its ideal state (Isa. 65:2-13). The evidence analysed in this chapter indicates a variety of attitudes, both positive and negative. The variety of evidence is noted, including areas where there seems to have been particular interest and discussion in subsequent interpretations in late antiquity. In addition, the vocabulary of work used is analysed with respect to the overtones these words appear to carry, and to suggest why and how this can aid our understanding of attitudes to work.

Chapter three presents the evidence from the Græco-Roman context, specifically the late Hellenistic and early Roman periods. As with the previous chapter, two major themes are explored: firstly through a discussion of the writings of authors such as Hesiod, Aristotle, Cicero and Lucretius, light is shed on the relationship between work and the gods, and draws attention to the relevance of these texts to later interpretations in Paul's time. Secondly, analysis of evidence pertaining to the portrayal of human work is examined. This includes exploration of members of particular philosophical movements, such as the Stoics and Cynics, who advocated certain attitudes towards work. The theme of slavery is also explored in relation to this latter theme.

Chapter four examines the evidence from non-Pauline Christianity in the first century. The majority of this evidence comes from texts in the New Testament, particularly the four gospels. This chapter also examines relevant texts from outside the New Testament, namely the Gospel of Thomas and the Didache. Once again, as with the previous chapters, the evidence is analysed within the themes of 'divine work' and 'human work'. In the case of the

second of these themes, human work, with regard to the section on the synoptic gospels, this is divided into sub-sections that deal with the identity of the person or persons doing the work, or talking about work. The point of this is to assist in highlighting the cross-over in these texts between the idea of divine work and the activity of humans in the person of Jesus which is given a distinctly Christological meaning in the texts under examination. This is a particular feature of the Gospel of John.

Chapter five focuses on the evidence from Paul's letters. This chapter interacts with the previous three chapters to explore how Paul's Jewish identity shaped his attitude to work and why, when other options were available to him, Paul chose the example of 'working with his hands' as a means of self-support. Passages in the Pauline letters where Paul mentions his work are examined (1 Cor. 9:4ff; 2 Cor. 11:9; 1 Thess. 2:9, 11, 4:11, 5:4, 12; 2 Thess. 3:8). This thesis suggests that in one sense, while work belongs, for Paul, to the toil and labour of this life, it also nevertheless conveys the creative responsibility of human obligation before God and in partnership with God. In an excursus, the nature of Paul's trade is discussed with a view to determining whether this can shed light on our understanding of Paul's portrayal of work. The conclusion is that it does not.

The final chapter summarises the conclusions that are drawn from the examination of the evidence. This dissertation provides evidence that Paul's own trade, as well as his use of the imagery of the workplace should be situated within its complex context, taking into account Paul's Jewish context as well as his Græco-Roman context. Whether a self-supporting ministry is peripheral to or central to an understanding of Paul, it is nonetheless important to the extent that his attitudes to work can shed light on how the Jewish part of his identity informed the practicalities of relating to the communities he established. Of particular interest is the observation that work for Paul only becomes significant when it is

used in the service of the Gospel. In this way, Paul follows a distinctly Jewish notion of work as sharing in the creative work of God, *rather than* following the example of Jesus who gave up manual work. Viewed as a whole, whereas the view of Jesus (the Jew) may be summarised as a discouragement of work on the grounds that it interferes with religious enthusiasm, the view of Paul (the Jew) might be summarised as an encouragement to his communities to work as it would demonstrate their religious devotion. Paul adopted this attitude despite the fact that in the more hellenised environment in which Paul operated prejudice against manual work was more explicit than among less hellenised Jews. The categories Paul uses to express his views may reflect those of philosophers, but any comparison breaks down once we start to explore the essence of Paul's overall strategy. One of the main implications for current scholarship is to challenge the claims of Hock that Paul's portrayal of work does not draw on his Jewish context and to assert that the portrayal of work in Paul's letters is often ambiguous and ambivalent. A brief prospective for future scholarship on Paul is then offered.



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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Researching and writing a doctoral thesis is not a solitary activity. There have been many people here in Oxford and elsewhere whose support and help throughout my studies have been invaluable. For all of their time and energy I give most heartfelt thanks.

Firstly, I would like to offer immeasurable thanks to my co-supervisors: Professors Martin Goodman and Chris Rowland. Without their constant encouragement, brilliant insights and indeed patience, this thesis could not have been written.

Other scholars that have offered many useful insights include Dr. Gary Burnett, Dr. John Ma and Dr. Simon Price. In addition, Professor Beverly Roberts Gaventa deserves a special mention. Whilst a student at Princeton Theological Seminary, I took her class on Paul's letter to the Romans. Her many fascinating insights, and in particular, a lecture she delivered which discussed neglected themes in the study of Paul, enabled me to see Paul in a wholly refreshing light. I would also like to thank Dr. Holger Szesnat for sending me a copy of his article, 'What did the SKHNOPOIOS Paul produce?', and Professor Judith Kovacs for sending me information from her own research on later Christian commentaries on the letters of Paul.

Special thanks are due to Worcester College for all their support throughout my studies, in particular for a Martin Senior Scholarship and for the Wilkinson Junior Research Fellowship. I would like to thank the Provost, Mr. Richard Smethurst, and my College tutor Dr. Susan Gillingham in particular, for their advice and support. I am exceptionally grateful also to the Arts and Humanities Research Board for funding my doctoral studies.

There have been many friends and colleagues who have been on hand for advice and encouragement during my time in Oxford, particularly during the latter stages of the thesis. Dr. Francesca Stavrakopoulou has been such a wonderful friend and colleague over the past few years, and I am so grateful to her for our many conversations, and in particular, her comments on, and proof-reading of, the final draft. I would also like to thank the Dean of Worcester College, Dr. Peter Darrah for his support, and Dr. Robert Saxton who has been such a good friend in College. Thanks also to members of the New Testament Seminar, and the Seminar for the Study of Judaism in the Græco-Roman Period; additionally thanks to William Crawley, David Eford, Sally Norris, Chris Beall, Professor Kevin Cathcart, Fr. Dermot Tredget, Sr. M. Francis, and my father-in-law Fred, for his continued interest in my research.

My parents, James and Patricia Francis, have supported me in so many invaluable ways throughout all of my studies. A simple 'thank you' is not enough, and I am immensely grateful for everything that they have done for me. My father, himself a 'tentmaking' priest in the Church of England, fuelled my interest in the subject of this thesis, has been an inspiration in its writing, and throughout my research, I have benefited from our rewarding and stimulating conversations (usually over a coffee!), and e-mails. I am especially grateful for his comments on various drafts of the thesis and for his proof-reading of the final version. I hope this thesis is a fitting tribute to his own work and reflections on the subject.

Most importantly my husband Myles has journeyed throughout the past several years with me and has been a constant source of love and encouragement. He has so often enabled me to see things from a different perspective, to not get things out of perspective, and he now knows an awful lot more than most organists about ancient portrayals of work! I could not have reached this final stage without him and for that I am utterly grateful.

## ABBREVIATIONS

The abbreviations used in this dissertation follow the *Society of Biblical Literature Handbook of Style: For Near Eastern, Biblical and Early Christian Studies* (ed. P. H. Alexander, Society of Biblical Literature, 1997) pp. 58-162 with the addition of:

HJP.AJC for Emil Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ*  
Mss. for manuscripts

Among the most frequently used abbreviations in this dissertation are:

ABD	<i>The Anchor Bible Dictionary</i>
CBQ	Catholic Biblical Quarterly
JBL	Journal of Biblical Literature
JJS	Journal of Jewish Studies
JSNT	Journal for the Study of the New Testament
JTS	Journal of Theological Studies
LXX	Septuagint
NT	New Testament
NTS	New Testament Studies

# CHAPTER ONE

## 1.1 Purpose of this Study

This dissertation is an investigation into aspects of Paul's portrayal of work<sup>1</sup> in the context of Late Second Temple Judaism, the Græco-Roman World and Early Christianity.<sup>2</sup>

Among significant developments in Pauline scholarship in recent years has been an increased appreciation of the cultural, religious and political milieu of Paul's world. However, the complex dynamic impact of multivalent elements of Paul's social world has often competed for the attention of those who strive time and again to shed fresh light on Paul. A prolific amount of books and articles on Paul have sought in their own way to bring Paul's life and theology into new light. These have focussed largely upon Paul's views about the Jewish law, issues of his own identity and more recently, the use of sociological tools to examine the Pauline communities and his relationship with them.<sup>3</sup> In what sense then, can yet another study on Paul be justified? This present study presents a fresh perspective on an aspect of Paul which has remained surprisingly untouched by secondary literature, even when as of late, the social world of Paul has been in more focus – that of Paul's portrayal of work and his use of the imagery of the workplace (ideas of toil, labour, weakness caused by working, slavery, economics and so on). By 'work', I mean primarily both the instances

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<sup>1</sup> 'Work' in this study will be taken primarily to mean an 'activity involving mental or physical effort done in order to achieve a result' and 'such an activity as a means of earning income', as defined by the *OED* (Oxford: OUP, 2003). But this thesis also acknowledges the ambiguities of the term 'work' (particularly in its Greek and Hebrew meanings), and suggests that a rather more flexible meaning is ultimately desirable. The idea of a 'nine to five' occupational meaning is anachronistic. This thesis agrees with the conclusion of K. Grint in *The Sociology of Work* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998) p. 42, who comments, 'in essence, work is a socially constructed phenomenon without a fixed and universal meaning across space and time, but its meanings are delimited by the cultural forms in which it is practised ... generally, work might be any form of transformative activity, but what counts as work depends upon the social context within which that transformative activity occurs.'

<sup>2</sup> The terms 'Christian' and 'Christianity' are used throughout with caution, particularly with regard to the 1<sup>st</sup> century evidence. This issue is discussed by John Gager in his book *Reinventing Paul* (New York: OUP, 2000) p. viii.

<sup>3</sup> Such as W. Meeks' *The First Urban Christians* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1983); D. Horrell's *The Social Ethos of the Corinthian Correspondence*. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1996); J. Meggitt's *Paul, Poverty and Survival* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998).

where Paul uses the language of work and more particularly, the references to his own trade (the ἐργαζόμενοι ταῖς ἰδίαις χερσίν) referred to in 1 Cor. 4:12), rather than those passages which have (traditionally) been of more theological interest. By the latter, I mean those instances where Paul refers to the observances (the ‘doings’ ἔργα) of the law,<sup>4</sup> although the thesis will undoubtedly overlap with this area, particularly in the area of ethical considerations relating to work as stewardship which certainly are ‘theological’.

By bringing the issue of work into the foreground, this thesis explores how Paul’s strategy of work sheds light on both his understanding of the gospel and mission, and the assessment of how he used his Jewish inheritance in the practicalities of dealing with the communities he set up. Put another way, the aim of this thesis is to pay attention to Paul’s own approach to work in relation to his social and political contexts through an examination of his portrayal of work in a way that seeks to do justice to the complexity of his context as well as the varying contextual natures of his letters.<sup>5</sup>

Within the vast corpus of secondary literature, the most detailed study that concentrates on Paul’s work, describing him as an ‘artisan-missionary’, is that by Ronald Hock in *The Social Context of Paul’s Ministry: Tentmaking and Apostleship* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980).<sup>6</sup> Hock argues that Paul’s physical work (the manner of which is derived from the reference in Acts 18:3 to Paul, Prisca and Aquila as ‘tentmakers’ – σκηνοποιοί), stands central to his apostolic identity, and that Paul’s views on work are paralleled in the writings of ancient philosophers such as Dio Chrysostom.<sup>7</sup> Thus Hock considers that Paul’s view of work should be regarded:

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<sup>4</sup> For example, Gal. 2:16, 3:2, 5, 10; Rom. 3:20, 28.

<sup>5</sup> As well as paying attention to the sources of Paul’s thought.

<sup>6</sup> Also R. F. Hock ‘Paul’s Tentmaking and the Problem of his Social Class’ in *JBL* 97 (1978) pp. 555-64; ‘The Workshop as a Social Setting for Paul’s Missionary Preaching’ in *CBQ* 41 (1979) pp. 438-50.

<sup>7</sup> Aquila and Prisca are further mentioned as Paul’s ‘co-workers’ (τοὺς συνεργούς μου) in Rom. 16:3-5.

‘not as expressing a Jewish regard to toil, or as arising from ecclesiological problems due to eschatology ... but as reflecting Paul’s clear familiarity with the moral traditions of the Græco-Roman philosophers’ (p. 47).

Hock chooses to read Paul as a philosopher and as such, his portrait is consistent. But whether that aspect of Paul’s context is the one that actually influenced Paul, or is itself fully adequate to contain all that Paul might have said about work, or all that one might want to say about what Paul says about work, is another matter. Whilst the attention Hock gives to the importance of the theme of work for Paul is noted, the present study attempts to redress the balance of research away from a predominantly Græco-Roman philosophical one, towards a reassessment of, and engagement with, extant Jewish and other relevant non-Pauline material which do not form part of Hock’s considerations. There are other possible explanations of Paul’s portrayal of work and practice of a trade on which the Jewish evidence may shed light.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, the portrayal of ‘Jewish’ attitudes and ‘Græco-Roman’ attitudes as if they were homogenous groups of thought does not allow for a consideration of complexity, variety and flexibility in the source material. Thereby, it is hoped that this study will both complement Hock’s work and shed new light on certain features which the Græco-Roman context alone does not illuminate. Whether a self-supporting ministry is peripheral, or central, to an understanding of Paul, it is nonetheless significant in that his portrayal of work may shed light on how the Jewish part of his identity informed the practicalities of relating to the communities he established.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> The discussion of the problem of work in the Hebrew Bible, notably in Gen. 3:17-19 and in the Wisdom literature, and without doubt also in Judaism prior to Paul, may well have had an important impact in his thinking. For further discussion of these and other points, see Chapter 2.

<sup>9</sup> One of the methodological points that arises with some frequency is the limiting nature of the evidence. Often, studies of aspects of the social world of a particular author tend to take the literary remains of the ‘upper stratum’ as representing the views of the society at large. Thus, when it comes to examining the Græco-Roman evidence (and for that matter, items in Chapter 2 on the Jewish evidence), it is clear that there is a bias against manual labour. From this, Paul’s manual labour is unambiguously taken to be shameful and servile. Yet, as evidence examined in Chapter 3 suggests, there is an argument that manual labour was not so denigrated by all and it is incorrect to assume that society *as a whole* despised manual labourers. This is a criticism that can be levelled for example against P. Marshall in *Enmity in Corinth: Social Conventions in Paul’s Relations with the Corinthians* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1987) especially p. 172.

## 1.2 Methodology and Sources

It is the aim of this study to examine all the relevant extant literary data from the Hebrew Bible through to Rabbinic literature (concentrating on the *Mishnah*). Though many of these sources fall outside the time of Paul, their inclusion is important in that they allow us to place Paul within a trajectory of the portrayal of work in Judaism and early Christianity. Moreover, later sources may well contain traditions that date back to a much earlier period, as has often been argued with regard to the Rabbinic material.<sup>10</sup> The material to be assessed is, on the whole, drawn from texts where work is mentioned or where the imagery of work and/or the workplace receives recognition. The thesis is necessarily extensive in scope, since the evidence is found in a variety of genres and comes from different social contexts. The primary sources are the writings from the Hebrew Bible, the LXX, the Dead Sea Scrolls, Rabbinic literature (particularly the *Mishnah*), the Targumim, Philo, Josephus, the writings of the New Testament including the Pauline letters,<sup>11</sup> and the so-called ‘Pseudepigrapha.’<sup>12</sup>

Since the overall evidence is scattered, it is hoped that an examination of material will help provide a model in which to operate, which allows for complexity, flexibility, variety and potential for development in Paul’s strategy. In order to allow for connections to be made between the different groups of evidence, each chapter will seek to assess the evidence

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<sup>10</sup> J. Neusner’s article ‘The Use of the Later Rabbinic Evidence for the Study of First-Century Pharisaism’ *Brown Judaic Studies* 1 (1978) pp. 215-25, warned about the dangers of using rabbinic literature for studying the New Testament without a very careful consideration of dating, which caused New Testament scholarship to steer clear of Jewish sources. The argument used in this thesis with regard to the rabbinic material is, in the main, one of analogy rather than genealogy. The rabbis in the *Mishnah* are responding to the same sorts of key texts as Paul, in different circumstances of course and with often differing results. How the rabbis portray work in the *Mishnah* will be explored therefore with the intention of establishing a parallel with which Paul and his circumstances might be compared. For a view contra-Neusner, see D. Instone-Brewer *Techniques and Assumptions in Jewish Exegesis Before 70 CE* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1992). See also the same author’s ‘TRENT’ (Traditions of the Rabbis from the Era of the New Testament) project – <http://www.tyndale.cam.ac.uk/Brewer/Ppages/TRENT/>

<sup>11</sup> Taking with the majority of scholars seven letters to be authentically Pauline (Rom, 1 & 2 Cor, Gal, Phil, 1 Thess and Phmn). On this see R. Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (New York: Doubleday, 1997) pp. 406, 585-589. In addition, this thesis tentatively considers 2 Thessalonians to be a Pauline letter.

<sup>12</sup> It is not correct to view the Pseudepigrapha as a coherent corpus. These writings represent a vast variety of genres, come from different social contexts, have different transmission histories, and date from quite a range

under the two broad themes of ‘divine work’ and ‘human work’. Within these larger sections, the material will be further divided into sub-sections. Discussion of the evidence under these sections and sub-sections will be accompanied by an assessment of the potential relationship between the two, and indeed the thesis will argue with respect to the Pauline material that this relationship is of key importance when it comes to determining Paul’s relationship to his Jewish and Græco-Roman contexts. Thus this thesis suggests that Paul’s Jewishness provides his decisive conceptual matrix. With due care exercised so as not to conflate the extant evidence,<sup>13</sup> it is hoped that the tracking of these main themes through the various chapters will enable us to explore more fully the motivations that lie behind Paul’s strategy of work and its portrayal in his letters.

Before examining the evidence however, three preliminary considerations are made. Firstly, a discussion of previous scholarship regarding Paul and his work aims to set this study within the wider scope of scholarship. Secondly, a survey of the variety of portrayals of work in this period situates the evidence in this study within its larger historical context. Finally, a brief discussion of the outline of the thesis is given to orient the reader with the approach taken.

### 1.3 Survey of Previous Scholarship

The amount of secondary literature on Paul is immense.<sup>14</sup> It is not the intention here to summarise the multitude of issues that have arisen in Pauline scholarship. Rather, the

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of time periods. Care must be given therefore, in contextualising these documents before assessing the evidence they provide.

<sup>13</sup> On this tricky methodological point see the discussion by M. Goodman in ‘Jews in the Second Temple Period’ in *The Oxford Handbook of Jewish Studies* (Oxford: OUP, 2002), pp. 36-52, esp. p. 48.

<sup>14</sup> The following is by no means an exhaustive list but rather serves as a representative sweep of more recent studies of Paul. See for example, on the ‘pre-Christian’ Paul, M. Hengel *The Pre-Christian Paul* (London: SCM, 1991); M. Hengel and A. M. Schwemer *Paul Between Damascus and Antioch* (London: SCM, 1997). On Paul’s call/conversion, S. Kim *The Origins of Paul’s Gospel* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1982); A. F. Segal *Paul the Convert* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990); L. W. Hurtado ‘Convert, Apostate, or Apostle to the nations: the ‘Conversion’ of Paul in Recent Scholarship’ in *Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses* 22 (1993) pp. 273-

following section surveys previous scholarship in order to demonstrate: (a) what secondary literature has said about Paul and his manual work/working strategy, (b) where confusion has arisen, and (c) that there is a need for further research in this area.<sup>15</sup>

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284. On chronology, R. Jewett *Dating Paul's Life* (London: SCM, 1979); R. Riesner *Paul's Early Period: chronology, mission strategy, theology* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1998); On the biography of Paul, J. Murphy O'Connor *Paul: A Critical Life* (Oxford: OUP, 1996); C. J. Roetzel *Paul, the Man and the Myth* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1998). On his letters see particularly the series *Pauline Theology* 4 vols. Eds J Bassler, D. M. Hays and E. E. Johnson (Minneapolis: Fortress Press: 1991-1997). This series is representative of a drive to focus on particular letters and seeks to highlight distinctive contribution and characteristics of each. On Paul's thought and theology, C. K. Barrett *Paul: An Introduction to His Thought* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1994); J. Becker *Paul: Apostle to the Gentiles* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1993); C. A. Davis *The Structure of Paul's Theology* (Lewiston: Mellon Biblical Press, 1995); N. T. Wright *What Saint Paul Really Said* (Oxford: Lion, 1997); B. Witherington III *Paul's Narrative Thought World* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1994); E. P. Sanders *Paul and Palestinian Judaism. A comparison of patterns of religion* (London: SCM, 1977); Does this mean that there is no synthesis? Rather, several themes have been identified in Paul's theology, such as: Christ, God, Spirit, Eschatology, Righteousness and Faith, Ethics, Law. On Paul and the Law, E. P. Sanders (ibid. 1977); H. Räisänen *Paul and the Law* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1987); J. D. G. Dunn *Jesus, Paul and the Law* (London: SPCK, 1990); C. J. Roetzel 'Paul and the Law: Whence and Whither?' in *Currents in Research: Biblical Studies* 3 (1995) pp. 249-275. On Paul and his context see for example, W. D. Davies *Paul and rabbinic Judaism: some rabbinic elements in Pauline theology*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edn (London: SPCK, 1970); G. Theissen *The Social Setting of Pauline Christianity* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982); A. J. Malherbe *Social Aspects of Early Christianity* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983); W. Meeks *The First Urban Christians: the social world of the Apostle Paul* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1983/2003); F. Watson *Paul, Judaism and the Gentiles: a sociological approach* (Cambridge: CUP, 1986); V. Wimbush *Paul, the worldly ascetic: response to the world and self-understanding according to I Corinthians 7* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1987); A. Malherbe *Paul and the Thessalonians: the philosophic tradition of pastoral care* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987); P. Borgen *Philo, John and Paul: new perspectives on Judaism and early Christianity* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1987); G. Theissen *Psychological Aspects of Pauline Theology* [trans. J. P. Galvin] (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1987); J. T. Fitzgerald *Cracks in an Earthen Vessel: an examination of the catalogues of hardships in the Corinthian correspondence* (Atlanta, Scholars Press, 1988); A. Malherbe *Paul and the popular philosophers* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989); D. Seeley *The noble death: Graeco-Roman martyrology and Paul's concept of salvation* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990); D. Zeller *Charis bei Philon und Paulus* (Stuttgart: Verlag Katholisches Bibelwerk GmbH, 1990); J. Neyrey *Paul in other words: a cultural reading of his letters* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1990); M. Hengel *The Pre-Christian Paul* (London: SCM, 1991); J. M. G. Barclay 'Thessalonica and Corinth: Social Contrasts in Pauline Christianity' in *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 47 (1992) pp. 28-46; C. Gladd *Paul and Philodemus: adaptability in Epicurean and early Christian psychagogy* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995); D. Wenham *Paul: follower of Jesus or founder of Christianity?* (Cambridge, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995); N. Elliott *Liberating Paul: the justice of God and the politics of the Apostle* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995); J. Neyrey and B. J. Malina *Portraits of Paul: an archaeology of ancient personality* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996); B. Winter *Philo and Paul among the Sophists* (Cambridge: CUP, 1997); D. Boyarin *A Radical Jew: Paul and Politics of Identity* (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 1997); B. Young *Paul, the Jewish theologian: a Pharisee among Christians, Jews and Gentiles* (Peabody MA.: Hendrickson, 1997); J. Meggitt *Paul, poverty and survival* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1998); C. J. den Hayer *Paul, a man of two worlds* (London: SCM, 1998, trans. 2000); R. Wallace and W. Williams *The three worlds of Paul of Tarsus* (London: Routledge, 1998); J. Ashton *The Religion of Paul the Apostle* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2000); J. G. Gager *Reinventing Paul* (Oxford: OUP, 2000); R. M. Grant *Paul in the Roman World: the conflict at Corinth* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001).

<sup>15</sup> Naturally, any picture presented of Paul is set firmly within an awareness of broader issues such as the appropriateness of the use of the labels 'Jew' and 'Christian' (and 'Judaism' and 'Christianity' more generally), with regard to Paul, and the interaction between Judaism and Hellenism. It is indeed often the case that an understanding of these issues and terms lies at the heart of an interpretative stance; such implicit assumptions can be just as significant to discern as to what a text states explicitly. This thesis suggests that, on occasion the assumptions that lie behind previous studies of Paul and his work have not taken into account sufficiently both the complexity of Paul's context and the individuality of the various Pauline letters.

There are few books and articles that focus specifically on Paul and the nature of his work. The topic often occurs within wider discussions on Paul's social status but when it does, it usually receives only cursory acknowledgement. There has been some speculation as to the identity of Paul's occupation, particularly in commentaries on the book of Acts. This is particularly notable in earlier studies. In all the examples mentioned however, rarely is the significance or wider implications of Paul's manual work discussed. The exception to this is found in the work of Ronald Hock.

(a) *Early Studies*<sup>16</sup>

In earlier studies, discussion of Paul's work can be found predominantly in commentaries, typically in the case of Acts, in the context of understanding the meaning of σκηνοποιὸς (Acts. 18:3).<sup>17</sup> Characteristic of the portrayal of Paul in these early studies is a playing up of his 'religious' identity (represented as a 'history of doctrine approach' or *Dogmengeschichte*).<sup>18</sup> Such a portrayal tends to represent Judaism as a monolithic entity viewed in a negative light. More detailed discussion of aspects of Paul's social context such as his work therefore received little attention. Even the publication of a book entitled *The Story of the Tentmaker (St. Paul)* by W. W. Champneys in 1875 focuses on Paul's 'theology,' discussing his manual labour in the following brief paragraph:

'(When Paul arrived in Corinth) he soon found companions – quiet, harmless, and industrious Jews, named Aquila and Priscilla, who, suffering on account of the generally turbulent spirit of their countrymen, which the Roman Emperor Claudius ignorantly ascribed to the influence of Christianity, had been expelled by a recent edict, with all other Jews, from Rome. St. Paul, according to the excellent custom of his nation, had been taught a trade, that of tent-making; and his native province supplied the strong, thick durable cloth known as 'Cilician,' of which tents were commonly made. These Jewish refugees being of the same trade, he took up his abode with them, and earned his bread by the sale of his own work, to which he touchingly refers in I Cor. iv.12...' (p. 47).

<sup>16</sup> The studies discussed here are taken to be a representative sample of extant secondary literature. References to many of the studies that mention Paul's work can be found in the excursus to Chapter 5.

<sup>17</sup> A fuller discussion of the meaning of σκηνοποιός may be found in the excursus to Chapter 5, pp. 206-8.

<sup>18</sup> So for example, the work of F. C. Baur *Paul the Apostle of Jesus Christ: His Life and Work, His Epistles and Doctrine* 2 vols. (London: Williams and Norgate, 1873-75).

In the same year as this publication, E. H. Plumptre connects Paul's earning a livelihood (which he suggests Paul undertook as an example for others to follow) to:

'that new sense of dignity of mechanic labour which entered into the life of the Hebrew race, and yet more into that of the Church of Christ, and taught men to think of it, not as belonging to the bondage of the slave, but as part of the freedom of the free'.<sup>19</sup>

This, Plumptre argues, came from the Rabbinic saying: that he who does not teach his son a trade teaches him to be a thief (Kid. 29a, represented so Plumptre suggests by Hillel as a carpenter, and Jesus in the workshop). Plumptre continues,

'for the most part ... we think of the Apostle as taking his place simply among the *ouvrier* class, receiving his days wages for his day's work, abandoning altogether any advantages of his position which he had gained by inheritance or by his own exertions'.<sup>20</sup>

Plumptre examines the Acts 18:3 reference and stresses how Paul is represented here as working in *partnership* with Aquila and Prisca<sup>21</sup> who must have been, so Plumptre argues, wealthier than the average craftsman or woman, possessing a house which served as a meeting place for followers of Christ;

'with such as these, St. Paul worked on a footing of equality, contributing, we may well believe, in some small measure at least, capital as well as labour'.

Plumptre further suggests that a similar partnership is in operation with Philemon (vs. 18 and 19 in particular). The word 'partner' has an ambiguous meaning which can be taken to mean that Paul and Philemon were fellow inheritors of God's Kingdom, but here Plumptre suggests a more business-like understanding of the word. To this, Plumptre adds an analysis of Paul's collection strategy in his Corinthian correspondence. Perhaps most important of all, Plumptre acknowledges the significance of Paul's working strategy for an understanding of his 'character'.<sup>22</sup>

In a similar vein to Champneys, W. H. Boulton comments:

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<sup>19</sup> 'St. Paul as a man of business' in *The Expositor* 1 (1875) pp. 259-266. This quote from p. 259.

<sup>20</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> with regard to the meaning of *σκηνοποιός*, Plumptre follows the view that Paul worked with *cilicium*.

<sup>22</sup> p. 266: an appreciation of Paul's work can throw 'more light on the character and sagacity of the great Apostle' (p. 266).

'at the age of twelve it was customary for Jewish lads to be taught a trade. That of Saul was probably determined, to some extent, by the place where he dwelt. Cilicia was noted for its goats, from the hair of which a cloth was woven and used for tent-making. This was the trade which Saul of Tarsus was taught. The work was ill-paid, and consequently would provide but little for the Apostle's wants when, in after years, his hands ministered unto his own necessities, and to those that were with him (Acts. XX.34). At the same time, it was a mechanical process, and would leave the mind free. In this we have another indication of the divine providence which overruled the affairs of the Apostle, fitting him for his life's work...'<sup>23</sup>

An exception to this style of analysis is to be found in the work of A. Deissmann.<sup>24</sup>

Deissmann was predominantly interested in Paul's urban perspective,<sup>25</sup> in his experiences as a traveller,<sup>26</sup> and in many other aspects of his life, including his tent-making.<sup>27</sup> It is apparent that some of the ideas of Hock come directly from Deissmann's work. Deissmann suggests that Paul might have dictated some of his letters while in his workshop and that the large letters of Paul's own handwriting (Gal. 6:11) may indicate hands deformed by toil.<sup>28</sup>

Deissmann, like Hock, characterises Paul as 'the tentmaker from Tarsus'.<sup>29</sup> Unlike Hock however, Deissmann's assessment of this aspect of Paul stops here, and thereafter the matter of Paul's manual labour is pushed to the periphery.<sup>30</sup>

From this survey of earlier studies on Paul that contain mention of his work, it can be argued that there is not much of significance to be gained beyond the possible identification of the nature of Paul's manual trade.<sup>31</sup> Only E. H. Plumptre briefly acknowledges that there may be something more to Paul's working strategy than an identification of his trade.<sup>32</sup> On the whole, there is little acknowledgement of the complexities of Paul's context.

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<sup>23</sup> W. H. Boulton *The Apostle Paul: his life, labours and letters* (London: Sampson Low, Marston, 1929) p. 5.

<sup>24</sup> A. Deissmann *Light from the East: the New Testament illustrated by recently discovered texts of the Graeco-Roman world* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1927).

<sup>25</sup> pp. 71, 213, 227.

<sup>26</sup> pp. 35-40, 62-65, 88-89, 233-37.

<sup>27</sup> pp. 48, 235, 237.

<sup>28</sup> p. 49 and Hock's article 'The Workshop as a Social Setting for Paul's Missionary Preaching' *CBQ* 41 (1979) pp. 438-50

<sup>29</sup> pp. 6, 166 and Hock (*Social Context* p. 67), 'More than any of us has supposed, Paul was *Paul the Tentmaker*'.

<sup>30</sup> Thus Hock's evaluation of Deissmann's work (*Social Context* p.14), 'Deissmann still keeps Paul the *homo religiosus* at the center (sic) of his understanding of the apostle'.

<sup>31</sup> Discussed further in the excursus to Chapter 5.

<sup>32</sup> Plumptre also connects the Collection to Paul's working strategy.

(b) *Ronald Hock's Social Context*

Ronald Hock's doctoral dissertation and several articles have all been concerned with Paul and his means of livelihood.<sup>33</sup> An understanding of Paul's relationship to his work is seen by Hock as central to understanding parts of the Epistles, specifically those dealing with Paul's defence of and attitudes towards, his work. Hock states near the beginning of *Social Context* that his own work builds upon that of his teacher Abraham Malherbe, and Hans Dieter Betz, who have demonstrated, according to Hock, the importance of Cynicism for understanding Paul.<sup>34</sup> Hock also comments that it will be necessary in his study to use supplemental (Græco-Roman) sources, both literary and non-literary, drawing upon the 'wealth of information for social history' provided by Herondas, Chariton, Lucian, and Achilles Tatius; the weaver Tryphon; shoemakers Simon, Philiscus, Cerdon and Micyllus; and working philosophers Simon, Musonius Rufus, Dio Chrysostom and Demetrius of Sunium.<sup>35</sup>

In the second chapter of *Social Context*, Hock begins with a discussion of the meaning of σκηνοποιός. He favours leather-working and suggests that the title 'tentmaker' reflects a widespread tendency among artisans to use specialised titles, even though they made more products than such titles would suggest. Hock argues against the view that Paul learned his trade from his father which followed the Rabbinic maxim: 'Whoever does not teach his son a craft teaches him to be a robber' (T.Qidd. 1.11). Similarly rejected is the view that Paul learned his trade later, when a student of R. Gamaliel (Acts 22:3), again apparently following a later rabbinical ideal: 'Excellent is the study of the Torah together with worldly occupation

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<sup>33</sup> Hock has published three articles relating to this subject: 'Simon the Shoemaker as an Ideal Cynic'. *GRBS* 17 (1976) pp. 41-53; 'Paul's Tentmaking and the Problem of His Social Class'. *JBL* 97 (1978) pp. 555-64; 'The Workshop as a Social Setting for Paul's Missionary Preaching'. *CBQ* 41 (1979) pp. 438-50. In 1980, a version of his doctoral dissertation was published as *The Social Context of Paul's Ministry: Tentmaking and Apostleship* (Philadelphia: Fortress).

<sup>34</sup> *Social Context* p. 18

<sup>35</sup> *ibid.* p. 18.

(ררך ארין).<sup>36</sup> Hock rejects a Jewish influence upon Paul based on the above material, and turns elsewhere to explain when and how Paul learned his trade of tent-making. By placing Paul's experiences in a larger cultural context, Hock hopes that it will be possible to speak more accurately about Paul's experiences as an apprentice. Especially helpful in this regard, is the use of apprentices' contracts preserved on papyrus, whose typical features Hock argues can be paralleled outside Roman Egypt and whose applicability to first century Tarsus can be presumed.<sup>37</sup>

In Chapter 3 of *Social Context*, attention shifts to Paul's tent-making as it related to his life as an 'apostle of Christ'.<sup>38</sup> After a brief overview of the locations of Paul's work, in Thessalonica, Corinth and Ephesus,<sup>39</sup> Hock then proceeds to discuss, in detail, Paul's life as an 'artisan missionary' as it related to Paul's 'day-to-day experience'.<sup>40</sup> Hock uses Paul's own references to his work to provide 'a factual basis for the following reconstruction of Paul's daily life, using the parallel experiences of contemporary artisans and philosophic missionaries ... only then will Paul's daily life be seen in greater clarity and truer perspective'.<sup>41</sup> Hock's description of the hardships associated with Paul's manual labour leads him to the conclusion that, '...these experiences must have been doubly difficult for Paul who, though he shared the life of artisans, was by birth a member of the socially elite,

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<sup>36</sup> R. Hock, *Social Context* p. 22. On p. 24 however, Hock does assert that Paul would have begun his apprenticeship under his father at the age of thirteen. The point then is that Hock rejects the use of Rabbinic material to shed light on this.

<sup>37</sup> *ibid* p. 24.

<sup>38</sup> *ibid* p. 26.

<sup>39</sup> 1 Thess. 2:9; 1 Cor. 4:12 (Corinth and Ephesus); Acts 18:3; Acts 19:11-12; 20: 34 (Ephesus); 2 Cor. 12:14 (Corinth). Hock speculates further as to whether or not Paul may have worked earlier in Arabia and Damascus (Gal. 1:17), and in Syria and Cilicia (Gal. 1:21).

<sup>40</sup> R. Hock, *Social Context* p. 27f.

<sup>41</sup> *ibid* p. 27.

the very circles that maintained his social world'.<sup>42</sup> Hock subsequently presents examples of those 'traditional attitudes' and sees these attitudes as the backdrop for understanding Paul.<sup>43</sup>

As to the location of Paul's missionary activities, building upon an earlier article,<sup>44</sup> Hock argues that Paul made use of his workshop in the same manner as individuals such as Simon the Shoemaker, represented as the 'ideal-Cynic', embodying the Cynic virtue of self-sufficiency (αὐτάρκεια).<sup>45</sup> Further emulation of philosophical attitudes is found by Hock in Paul's so-called 'parænesis regarding work' in 1 Thess. 4:10b-12. Hock rejects an eschatological interpretation, namely, that the idleness in the Thessalonian congregation was caused by a belief in the imminence of the kingdom of God. Instead, Hock suggests that Paul's concern here is that the Thessalonians should conduct themselves in a seemly fashion (εὐσχημόνως) before non-Christians, and that they might also be in need of nothing (χρείαν ἔχητε)' (1 Thess. 4:12).<sup>46</sup> Such an apparent philosophical mode of argument is, in Hock's view, proof *against* the argument that here, and indeed in general, Paul is expressing what Hock describes as a 'Jewish regard for the value of toil'.<sup>47</sup>

In terms of how Paul's tent-making relates to his apostolic self-understanding, Hock points out that, although Paul's detailed and lengthy reflections arose only after his practice of plying a trade had been criticised by converts and rival apostles at Corinth, in fact, Paul's

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<sup>42</sup> *ibid* p.31.

<sup>43</sup> Thus Hock comments that Paul, in accordance with these 'traditional attitudes', not only found his tentmaking to be exhausting and toilsome (1 Thess. 2:9) ... but also perceived that in taking up his trade he had thereby enslaved himself (1 Cor. 9:19), and humiliated himself (2 Cor. 11:7). Paul's trade is also to be seen at least partially responsible for his being accorded no status (1 Cor. 4:10: ἄτιμος) and perhaps also as a cause of his being reviled (1 Cor. 4:12). (p. 35).

<sup>44</sup> 'The Workshop as a Social Setting for Paul's Missionary Preaching' in *CBQ* 41 (1979) pp. 438-50.

<sup>45</sup> Hock notes that Paul makes use of this word, in 2 Cor. 9:8. With reference to the example of Simon the Shoemaker, Hock further points out that not all Cynics would have followed Simon's example, 'the simple life advocated by Cynics, for instance, could be understood as making their plying a trade unnecessary' (p. 40). This phrase is used by Clement of Alexandria and is discussed by M. Hengel *Property and Riches in the Early Church* (London: SCM, 1974).

<sup>46</sup> So Hock comments, 'Paul's exhortation and attendant reasons are reminiscent of, and similar to traditions current in various Hellenistic moralists, though most notably in Dio Chrysostom', who also makes use of the phrases εὐσχημόνως and χρείαν ἔχητε in his oration *Euboicus* (*Social Context* p. 44).

<sup>47</sup> R. Hock *Social Context*, p. 44.

tent-making was incorporated into his apostolic self-understanding long before this.<sup>48</sup> In general, Hock sees Paul as a model for his congregation, specifically that Paul's tent-making exemplified the virtue of not being a burden to others (1 Thess. 2:19, cf. 4:12), that it probably expressed the love (or friendship) that Paul felt for his converts (1 Thess. 2:8, cf. 4:9), and that it perhaps even implied 'the political quietism that he expected of his churches' (cf. 1 Thess. 4:11).<sup>49</sup> A second way in which Paul understood his tent-making in terms of his apostleship is, for Hock, suggested by 1 Thess. 2:4-5, where Paul regarded his divine commission to preach as precluding any use of that commission for personal gain. Paul therefore disassociated himself from others who pretended to be philosophers.<sup>50</sup> For Hock, 'such then, are the ways that Paul reflected theologically on his tent-making, in so far as the evidence prior to the Corinthian epistles permits us to speak'.<sup>51</sup>

The final chapter in *Social Context* concentrates on the problems Paul encountered at Corinth. According to 1 Cor. 9:15 and 2 Cor. 11:10, Paul's matter of self-support was something about which he could boast, since, as an apostle, he was entitled to be supported. Others criticised him however, casting doubt over his authority as an apostle (1 Cor. 9:1-19; 2 Cor. 11:7-15; 12:13-16) (p. 51). Hock argues against the way in which secondary literature has viewed the debate at Corinth in terms of comparing Paul's (or his opponents') means of support to the Cynic practice of begging. Along with begging, there were in fact other means of support open to philosophers, namely charging fees; entering the household of a wealthy (and thus powerful) individual (patron); and working.<sup>52</sup> Paul's own affirmation of freedom is, to Hock, an unmistakable indication that he (Paul) understood the issue of

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<sup>48</sup> *ibid* p. 47.

<sup>49</sup> *ibid* p. 48.

<sup>50</sup> *ibid* p. 49.

<sup>51</sup> *ibid*.

<sup>52</sup> *ibid* pp. 52-58.

apostolic support in terms of the debate among intellectuals *generally* over the appropriate means of support.<sup>53</sup>

Hock's conclusion is thus: that there is (according to Hock) a scholarly consensus which may be characterised as follows: (1) the matter of Paul's working was due to his taking up a rabbinical ideal of combining the study of Torah with the practice of a trade; (2) Paul's view of work is therefore positive since he advocated a duty to work; (3) Paul's views should be compared with Jewish views rather than Græco-Roman views; and (4) that there is no consensus over the identity of Paul's trade.<sup>54</sup> In *Social Context*, Hock's aim was to argue *against* this consensus. Hock comments that, although Paul was proud of his work in that it allowed him to be self-sufficient, it was in fact, the source of much personal hardship and social humiliation. Paul's view of work was not Jewish, as is often assumed, instead,

'Paul's view, that one's occupation or trade should be seemly and should meet one's needs, was the same as the moral reflection of Græco-Roman philosophers like Dio Chrysostom'.<sup>55</sup>

For Hock, Paul's tent-making was then central to his life,

'more than any of us supposed, Paul was 'Paul the Tentmaker''.<sup>56</sup>

Hock makes a valuable contribution to the study of Paul and his work, and is right to call to attention Paul's context both in a general sense and with respect to the individual contexts of his letters. However, this thesis suggests that his understanding of that context leans too heavily in the Græco-Roman direction with a rejection of any potential Jewish influence on Paul which, so this thesis argues, leaves a gap in our understanding. Hock does not adequately address the issue of why Paul *chose* work as a means of self-support, particularly when there were other options available to him such as charging fees, entering the household of a wealthy patron or begging,<sup>57</sup> and when the option of work was perhaps the

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<sup>53</sup> *ibid* p.61. However, Hock does not address the question of why Paul chose the option of work.

<sup>54</sup> *ibid* p. 66.

<sup>55</sup> *ibid* p. 67.

<sup>56</sup> *ibid*.

<sup>57</sup> As was the norm amongst philosophers and discussed by Hock in *Social Context* pp. 52-59.

most problematic choice (as seen from the difficulties Paul encountered with respect to this issue in Corinth). Moreover, his representation of ‘a Jewish’ view of work is problematic. Other possible explanations of Paul’s working strategy such as the discussion of the problem of work in the Hebrew Bible (for example in Genesis 3:17-19, and in the Wisdom literature) and in Judaism prior to Paul may well have had an important impact on Paul’s thinking.<sup>58</sup> Furthermore, it is possible that the example of Jesus and his disciples may have affected Paul’s view of work.<sup>59</sup> A further difficulty comes from the emphasis Hock places on Paul’s identity in relation to his work. Paul was surely first and foremost an apostle, not a ‘tent-maker’? Paul’s manual work was, as this thesis argues, a means to an end, a way of serving the gospel. Moreover, Hock’s assumption of the ‘philosopher’ as a conscious model leads to superficiality in his conclusions about the relationship between ‘philosopher’ and ‘apostle’.<sup>60</sup> This thesis suggests a rather more complex interweaving of influences than Hock would allow for.

(c) *Studies that examine Paul’s manual labour with respect to his social status*

A feature of more recent studies on Paul is a focus on Paul’s social context and aspects of his identity, often with confusing results.<sup>61</sup> In such studies, it is not uncommon to find

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<sup>58</sup> The Jewish evidence is discussed in Chapter 2.

<sup>59</sup> In the sense that Jesus called the disciples away from actual physical work for the work of the coming Kingdom of God. Paul’s portrayal is different. See the evidence discussed in Chapter 4.

<sup>60</sup> As with all other groups, philosophers were certainly not an homogenous group in antiquity.

<sup>61</sup> That there has been, and continues to be, a fundamental difficulty with the interpretation of Paul is suggested by the prolific amount of books and articles on Paul published in recent years, which have sought in their own way to tackle the difficulties that theological agendas and assumptions create. Titles such as *Reinventing Paul* (J. G. Gager, Oxford: OUP, 2000); *Paul, a man of two worlds* (C. J. den Hayer, London: SCM, 1998, tr. 2000); *The three worlds of Paul of Tarsus* (R. Wallace and W. Williams, London: Routledge, 1998) have all in their own way helped to bring the study of Paul into a more critically aware arena, but at the same time the result is often conflicting ideas about who Paul is. What can be surprising is the level of certainty with which Paul is assessed and labelled. Secondary studies with titles such as *What St. Paul really said* (N. T. Wright, Oxford: Lion, 1997), and *Paul and Jesus: the true story* (D. Wenham, London: SPCK, 2002) are characteristic of this observation. Further to this, Paul is ‘a marginal Jew’, ‘an anomalous Jew’, ‘an apostate’, ‘a rabbi’, ‘a Christian’, ‘a Jew,’ ‘a Pharisee’, ‘radical’, and he is further blamed for views which condemn Jews, women, homosexuals, and so on. In a recent edition of *The Spectator* (31<sup>st</sup> January 2004), M. Parris wrote an article entitled: ‘The question that just won’t go away: is Sunday this week or next week?’ In it, he says: ‘as so often, St Paul seems to be the problem.’

mention of Paul's work as an indicator of his social status.<sup>62</sup> As there appears to be confusion regarding Paul's social status, this thesis considers whether some examination of Paul's working strategy might make a contribution to the debate by drawing to attention the complex nature of both the evidence and Paul's context.

One of the first scholars to make an explicit link between Paul's manual work and his social class was Ronald Hock in his 1978 article 'Paul's Tentmaking and the Problem of his Social Class' (*JBL* 97.4: 555-64). In this article, Hock devotes particular attention to the language Paul used in referring to his trade which, Hock argues, 'provides surer clues for ascertaining Paul's social class than does the simple fact of his having plied a trade' (p. 555).<sup>63</sup> Notably, in *Social Context*, he drops the central argument of this article, viz., that Paul was 'one from the socially privileged classes who when faced with finding support turned to a trade' (p. 563) in imitation of the Cynic philosophers who considered earning one's living by a trade to be compatible with philosophy. Instead, Hock, as already outlined above (pp. 11-14), proposes that Paul's stubborn insistence on earning his own way reflects the mentality of the 'true' philosopher in the Stoic-Cynic tradition who scorns 'false' philosophers willing to enter into the compromise of luxurious living with their hosts, while submitting

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In his arbitrary way, Paul started talking as though the Early Christian Holy Day had been switched from the Sabbath to the following day. He did not say why, but we can be pretty sure he was not relying on anything Christ said, or he would have cited him. It is a fair assumption that Jesus, a good Jew, observed Sunday (sic) as his Holy Day. Paul was vague however'. But does the problem lie more with the interpreter?

<sup>62</sup> Regarding Paul's social status there is considerable confusion. Paul is 'middle-class' (Mommson in Hengel *Pre Christian* p. 15); 'petty bourgeois' (Hengel *Pre Christian* p. 17); 'upper middle-class' (D. Tidball, *An Introduction to the Sociology of the New Testament* Exeter: Paternoster, 1983 p. 93); 'born with a silver spoon in his mouth' (E. Best *Paul and his Converts* Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1988, p. 10), 'upper-class' (G. H. R. Horsley *New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity* North Ryde, Ancient History Documentary Research Centre, 1989, vol. 5 p.19); 'a member of the higher-strata' (Theissen, *The Social Setting* p. 36); 'of the provincial aristocracy' (Hock 'Paul's Tentmaking' p. 562). W. Stegemann 'War der Apostel Paulus ein römischer Bürger?' *ZNW* 78 (1987) pp. 200-229, sees Paul as 'lower class', as do A. Saldarini (*Pharisees, Scribes and Sadducees in Palestinian Society* Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1989 pp. 139 and 141), D. Engels (*Roman Corinth: an alternative model for the classical city* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990 p. 314) and A. Deissmann (*Light from the Ancient East* London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1927, p. 317). E. P. Sanders (*Paul* pp. 10-11) comments, 'Paul's letters show him to be a man of what we would now call middle-class upbringing' and consequently, 'his poverty... was voluntary, and in Paul's letters we do not hear the voice of the lowest level of Græco-Roman society'.

<sup>63</sup> Thus examining the words ἐλεύθερος ('free') δουλόω ('to enslave'), and κερδαίνω ('to gain'), all from 1 Cor. 9:19. (pp. 558-9).

themselves to the slavery of being at the beck and call of a powerful patron. The philosopher who earns his own living may be subject to the law of labour but not to anyone's will.<sup>64</sup>

David Horrell in his book *The Social Ethos of the Corinthian Correspondence: Interests and Ideology from I Corinthians to I Clement* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1996) seeks to apply the sociological insights of a single sociologist, Anthony Giddens, to a single church as known through its correspondence in the first century. Horrell attaches considerable importance to Paul's manual labour, asserting that Paul thereby expressed his solidarity with the 'socially weak' majority of the Corinthian congregation and simultaneously incurred the disapproval of the 'socially strong'. Thus Horrell argues that Paul's own lifestyle, based on support through *demeaning* manual labour, was held out by Paul to the community as a model for their behaviour and this became a source of contention between Paul and those who held important social positions outside the Christian community. They not only rejected Paul's role as a person who was socially weak, but they were also alienated by Paul's refusal to accept financial support since it would have made him dependent upon them. Horrell sees Paul as engaged in a continuous struggle with the socially influential members of the community to thwart their socially superior position being translated into social dominance within the Christian community itself.

Finally Justin Meggitt's 1998 book *Paul, Poverty and Survival* has proved highly influential in determining the most recent discussions on the topic of Paul's social status.<sup>65</sup> Meggitt's

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<sup>64</sup> Part of the suggested meaning of 1 Cor. 9:1, 19.

<sup>65</sup> See in particular the rather vociferous review essay by D. B. Martin in *JSNT* 24.2 (2001) pp. 51-64; the more conciliatory review essay in the same journal (pp. 65-84) by G. Theissen and Meggitt's response to both (pp. 85-94). Also the article 'Social Conflicts in the Corinthian Community: Further remarks on J. J. Meggitt, *Paul, Poverty and Survival* *JSNT* 25.3 (2003) pp. 371-391. The discussion has been continued most recently by S. J. Friesen 'Poverty in Pauline Studies: Beyond the So-called New Consensus' *JSNT* 26.3 (2004) pp. 323-361 and, in the same journal by J. Barclay 'Poverty in Pauline Studies: A Response to Steven Friesen' (pp. 363-366). Barclay in particular remains sceptical as to how certain we can actually be about Paul's social status and/or that of his communities, 'I doubt we will ever be able to reach more than tentative and imprecise conclusions' (p. 365). In addition see the response of P. Oakes to Friesen's article (pp. 367-371). On a broader

focus in his book is on the material realities experienced by Paul and members of the Pauline communities, and their responses to this aspect of their urban context. His central argument is that the members of the Pauline communities, including Paul himself, were, like virtually all other inhabitants of the Roman empire who were not part of the political elite or their associates, living a rather precarious existence at subsistence or near subsistence level.<sup>66</sup> As a consequence of this, Meggitt argues for a rethink of the place of the theological and ethical motif that he calls ‘mutualism’ in Pauline literature. In this evaluation of Paul, his manual labour plays a key role in Meggitt’s argument. His assessment of Paul’s social status through the matter of his plying a trade leads Meggitt to conclude that,

‘there are no good grounds for qualifying (the) earlier estimation of Paul as a man who shared fully in the destitute life of the non-élite in the Roman Empire, and existence dominated by work and the struggle to subsist; someone who from his youth repeatedly experienced toil and hardship, hunger and thirst, exposure and homelessness’.<sup>67</sup>

But does Meggitt’s conclusion push the evidence too far in one direction, equating Paul’s situation with that of complete poverty? Paul’s use of imagery of work is, it can be suggested part autobiographical *and* part metaphorical. Paul’s use of the imagery of work is, so this thesis suggests, also influenced by hyperbole and irony, for which Meggitt’s study does not allow. In addition, although Wayne Meeks has defined social status as a phenomenon composed of several variables,<sup>68</sup> it is extremely difficult to measure this accurately. Consequently, confusion regarding Paul’s social status is inevitable and for the most part, ignores the subtleties and complexities of Paul’s context and the ways in which Paul shaped his writing to fit the varied and changing contexts of his communities. To try and use Paul’s manual labour as a tool to shed light on his social status without fully taking into consideration its nuances and complexities is problematic, to say the least.

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methodological point, see H. Szesnat ‘The concept of “class” and social-scientific interpretation of the New Testament – some observations on the analysis of Pauline Christianity within the society of the early Roman principate’ *Nederduitse Gereformeerde Teologiese Tydskrif* 38 (1997) pp. 70-84.

<sup>66</sup> See in particular p. 49 n. 43. and p. 50 n. 59.

<sup>67</sup> p. 96, based on a reading of 1 Thess. 2:9; 2 Thess. 3:7-8; 1 Cor. 4:11; 2 Cor. 11:27.

(d) *General studies of work within which significant discussion of Paul is included*

It is the aim of this thesis to incorporate discussion of Paul's working strategy into an examination of the portrayal of work in Jewish, other non-Pauline Christian, Græco-Roman evidence. There are two studies that examine work in a more general way that include significant discussion of Paul. Arthur T. Geoghegan's *The Attitude Towards Labor in Early Christianity and Ancient Culture* (Washington, D. C., 1945) as its title suggests, provides an account of the environment, the teaching, and the practice during the first centuries of the Church. Roughly one third of the book is taken up by a description of the environment in which Jesus and his disciples lived. Of particular interest is the Jewish attitude towards manual labour which the author tracks through the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament. As compared with the Greeks and Romans, Geoghegan argues that 'the leading attitude among the Chosen People was highly favourable',<sup>69</sup> although 'Hellenism with its scorn for labour was making its influence felt among the Jews'<sup>70</sup> Jesus and his followers provided what Geoghegan terms a 'supernatural' motive which would raise the activity of work above drudgery.<sup>71</sup> This was given especially by Paul but expressly as the teaching of Jesus. On various occasions, Geoghegan comments, Paul gave the motive for work 'with much vigour: self-respect, economic freedom, quietness of spirit, charity, the service of God and others. These he illustrated by his own example, plying a craft in order to earn his upkeep. He thus added to the tradition of the Jewish teaching especially by supplying higher motives'<sup>72</sup> This, the author argues, formed the basis 'for a new social programme which succeeding centuries were to work out more systematically and to apply ever more thoroughly until the face of

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<sup>68</sup> Meeks *First Urban Christians* pp. 53-55.

<sup>69</sup> *The Attitude towards Labor* p. 23.

<sup>70</sup> *ibid* p. 24.

<sup>71</sup> *ibid* p. 103. One cannot help but speculate on the influence here of a verse of George Herbert's poem *The Elixir*, 'A servant with this clause, makes drudgery divine: who sweeps a room as for Thy laws, makes that and th' action fine'

<sup>72</sup> *The Attitude towards Labor* p. 187.

society was transformed'.<sup>73</sup> Geoghegan's idealistic tone aside, one notable feature of his study is its willingness to engage with Jewish evidence as an aspect of Paul's context that shapes his portrayal of work and in particular, the relationship between Paul's work and a so-called 'divine' aspect.

Göran Agrell's *Work, Toil and Sustenance: An Examination of the View of Work in the New Testament, Taking into Consideration Views Found in Old Testament, and Early Rabbinic Writings* (Lund: Verbum, 1976) studies passages in the New Testament (in the Synoptic Gospels, Paul and the deutero-Pauline literature including Acts), concerned with work. They are illuminated by preliminary chapters on the treatment of the theme in the Hebrew Bible, the intertestamental writings and the early rabbinic tradition. These are included on the assumption that they represent views which are likely to have shaped the minds of early Christians. Agrell argues that the diverse interpretations of work in the New Testament reflect the ambiguity regarding work in Genesis 2 and 3. It is the eschatological outlook that determines the solution for the particular author. In examining the passages about work, Agrell asks of each three questions: (1) What is the relation between 'Man works' and 'Man serves God'? (2) What is the relation between 'Man works' and 'Man receives his sustenance?' (3) What is the relation between 'Man works' and 'Man toils/suffers?'. The questions correspond to the author's interpretation of Genesis 2 and 3. Paul, so Agrell comments, encountered Christians who probably sought to live along the lines of what the author terms a 'Q-tradition' in the community at Thessalonica and among the critics of his ministry at Corinth.<sup>74</sup> Paul's teaching, as seen in his own ministry, is that working to provide one's sustenance is necessary to avoid obstacles to one's service to God in the witness Christians must bear as they wait in expectation of the parousia.<sup>75</sup> Paul did not go so far as

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<sup>73</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>74</sup> *Work, Toil and Sustenance* p. 156.

<sup>75</sup> 1 Thess. 4:9-12; 1 Cor. 9:1-27.

to affirm work as direct service to God, but his support of it for the sake of the Gospel led, so Agrell argues, to more positive evaluations in the later Pauline tradition. One question that Agrell does not address in his study is: What is the relation between ‘the person works’ and ‘the person in relation to others’? Agrell’s own conclusions reveal the social relationships in the passages, and this present study will pay attention to the relationship between human work and divine work and the ways in which human work might be said to model that relationship.<sup>76</sup>

(e) *Summary*

This survey of relevant studies had three aims: to demonstrate (a) what secondary literature has said about Paul and his work (b) where questions have arisen, and (c) that there is still a need for further research in this area. There is no study that examines thoroughly Paul’s portrayal of work and that takes into account the complexities of Paul’s context and that of his communities. Attempts to use Paul’s manual labour as a means to an understanding of his social status have resulted in confusion. In addition there is no real clarification regarding Paul’s trade.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> One other study is H. Applebaum’s *The Concept of Work: Ancient, Medieval and Modern* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992), which seeks to compress into a single volume the parallel histories of work and ways of thinking about work in Western Europe. Essentially the book consists of summary accounts of varying lengths what various authors had to say about work since the days of Homer. Paul receives cursory acknowledgement on pp. 83-84. One point Applebaum’s study does highlight is the influence of the importance of work and labour in modern social theory, particularly since the time of Karl Marx and in the writing of Pope John Paul II (*Laborem Exercens*), which sought in part to correct some of the excesses of both Marxism and capitalism that were so hard on the worker. Although prior papal teaching focussed more on natural law arguments, Pope John Paul II grounded his understanding of work in a theological anthropology, thus for example people are created in the image of God and thus workers must never be thought of as just another business expense (John Paul II *On Human Work* [Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference, 1982], nos. 4.2, 7.2).

<sup>77</sup> Although identification of Paul’s trade is not entirely relevant to an understanding of his portrayal of work, it will none the less be included for the sake of completeness in an excursus to Chapter 5.

In particular, the question of the extent of the relationship between Paul's work and his Jewish context has resulted, in the case of Hock whose views remain highly influential, in a down-playing of the potential impact of his Jewish inheritance in favour of a Græco-Roman philosophical influence. While there can be no doubt that we must take seriously the Græco-Roman context of Paul's work, this cannot be done without also paying attention to the ways in which Paul constructs his Jewish identity in terms that correspond to, or indeed challenge Græco-Roman perspectives and values. Ignoring Paul's Jewish context runs the risk of producing a picture of Paul that does not do justice to the fullness and complexity of his context. This thesis suggests that Paul's Jewish context in particular was influential in his decision to use work as a means of support.

Thus, this study aims to make a contribution to Pauline scholarship by investigating Paul's strategy of work within the context of Late Second Temple Judaism *of which nascent Christianity was one part* and by countering the assertion of Ronald Hock that Paul's view of work had nothing to do with his Jewishness. Looking at the varied reasons behind Paul's work will, it is hoped, allow for a more balanced picture to emerge without privileging one group of material over another. Furthermore, it is hoped that this thesis may contribute to the discussion of issues concerning Pauline identity thereby demonstrating the significance of including Paul's working strategy without overstating its potential importance.

Next, a short discussion of the context of the portrayal of work in the Second Temple period is presented in order to understand the antecedents and contemporaneous situation of Paul and his working strategy.

## 1.4 Historical Context

Work is portrayed in texts from all periods of the Hebrew tradition from the Pre-Exilic down to the Book of Daniel and beyond.<sup>78</sup>

There is more than one Hebrew term for 'work'. Often this can result in ambiguity of meaning and this makes it difficult to find a precise definition of what work is. This is of some significance when it comes to an understanding of the possible influences upon Paul and of how Paul portrays work.<sup>79</sup> In the Hebrew Bible, the words most commonly rendered as 'work' are the verb <sup>80</sup>עשה and the nouns <sup>81</sup>מעשה and <sup>82</sup>מלאכה. In addition, there is the verb <sup>83</sup>עבד and its noun form <sup>84</sup>עבדה, the verbs <sup>85</sup>פעל and <sup>86</sup>ברא, and the noun <sup>87</sup>עמל. What will matter in each case is the context which gives the word its meaning.<sup>88</sup>

<sup>78</sup> For general summaries and surveys of traditions about work see X. Léon-Dufour (trans. P. J. Cahill) *Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, 2nd edn. (London: G. Chapman, 1995) pp. 671-676, and Applebaum (1992).

<sup>79</sup> As discussed in Chapter 5.

<sup>80</sup> In the Hebrew Bible, usually referring to the production or preparation of a tangible object, such as the tabernacle, the temple, the furnishings of the tabernacle or the temple, or the walls of Jerusalem (Ex. 31:4; 36:1; 1 Kgs. 9:23; Neh. 2:16). It is also used of God's activities as these are perceived by human beings (Amos 9:12; Isa. 28:21).

<sup>81</sup> This noun has a double meaning. On the one hand, 'something made, work' (Cant. 7:2), on the other, 'deed' (Isa. 59:6a). A common anthropomorphic figure refers to what God has created as the work of his hands (Job. 10:3; 14:15; 34:19; Ps. 8:6; 28:5; 102:25; 138:8; Isa. 19:25; 29:23; 45:11).

<sup>82</sup> The idea expressed by this word in the majority of cases in the Hebrew Bible is that of 'work entailing skill' as opposed to work entailing physical labour. Thus for example Ex. 28:13; Jer. 18:3. The term is also used in a more general sense to cover the whole spectrum of the idea of 'work' (Neh. 2:16).

<sup>83</sup> Without an object, this verb usually means 'to work'. In the Sabbath commandment (Ex. 20:8ff; Deut. 5:12f.) it is qualified more closely by the injunction to 'do all kinds of business'. With inanimate objects, the verb usually means 'to work on, develop, cultivate'. After Adam is no longer allowed to work and keep the Garden (Gen. 2:15), he must till the ground with great effort (3:23). With personal objects, the verb means 'to serve'.

<sup>84</sup> This term means 'to work' in the general sense and to work as secular or cultic 'service'. The reference can be to 'hard service' (Ex. 1:14; 6:9), to the work of the field (1 Chron. 27:26), or normal daily work (Ps. 104:23). The majority of occurrences involve cultic service (Josh. 22:27; Num. 8:11). The term never occurs with reference to foreign gods.

<sup>85</sup> When used with a human subject, the verb means 'to make, do' and is often accompanied by an object expressing either positive (Ps. 15:2; Zeph. 2:3) or more usually negative (Hos. 7:1; Job 34:32; Ps. 119:3; Mic. 2:1) actions. With God as the subject, the verb refers either to deeds in history or to anticipated, imminent intervention (Ex. 15:17; Num. 23:23b).

<sup>86</sup> This verb is used exclusively to denote divine creation (Gen. 1:1).

<sup>87</sup> This term occurs predominantly in wisdom literature, often with negative overtones (Job 7:3). In Ecclesiastes, the term denotes the ceaseless toil that characterises human existence (1:3; 3:9; 5:14-15).

<sup>88</sup> Cf. J. Barr *The Semantics of Biblical Language* (Oxford: OUP, 1961) and by the same author, *Studies on Semitic Lexicography* ed. P. Fronzaroli (Istituto di linguistica e di lingue orientali, 1973).

In order to understand the way work is portrayed in Paul's letters, it is important to be aware of the way in which work was depicted prior to Paul, and also the way in which work was portrayed contemporaneously with Paul in the wider Græco-Roman milieu. The obvious starting point then, is to examine the way in which work is presented in the Hebrew Bible (and the LXX), as being an important influence upon Paul's thought.<sup>89</sup> The portrayal of work in the Hebrew Bible may be divided into two separate but related categories: divine work and human work.<sup>90</sup> Firstly the portrayal of divine work. The Hebrew Bible pictures God as a ceaseless worker whose first great work was the work of creation (Gen. 1). Although that work exudes a creative delight, it is none-the-less work, rather than leisure, as suggested by Gen. 2:2: 'God finished his work which he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work that he had done'. The concept of work that emerges from Genesis 1 is that it is purposeful, creative and above all 'good'. God's work of creation provides a model and sanction for human work, and by involving the material world, it suggests that human work in the physical realm is likewise good.

God's work as creator is extended in Genesis 2 to a more providential plane. Here God 'formed man of dust from the ground' (2:7), planted a garden for him (2:8), watered the garden (2:6) and made a companion for the man (2:21-22). This theme of God working continues in other examples of evidence examined, such as in Ps 104:1-22, which gives us a picture of God as overall caretaker of creation; Ps. 121 tells us that God neither 'slumbers nor sleeps'; Ps. 107, a psalm that recounts some of God's acts of rescue, claims that God is known 'for his wonderful works to the sons of men'.

The second theme that emerges is that of the portrayal of human work. The first image of human work stresses perfection: work existed in a time of innocence in paradise. The

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<sup>89</sup> On this see C. D. Stanley *Paul and the Language of Scripture: Citation Technique in the Pauline Epistles and Contemporary Literature* SNTSMS 69 (Cambridge: CUP, 1992).

<sup>90</sup> These categories will be examined in more detail in the following chapters.

notion of work as part of God's perfect design is portrayed in Gen. 2:15, 'The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it'. Here human work is shown to have worth and dignity as a service to God and as something that gives purpose to human life. This view of work is implied also in Psalm 104, where in a celebration of the natural rhythm of day and night we read that 'man goes forth to his work and to his labour until the evening' (Ps. 104:23). A second concept is that of work as toil, the result of the disobedience in Genesis 3:17-19. This picture of work emerges from the punishment God pronounces on the man, where the dominant images are a ground that is cursed, thorns and thistles as difficulties with which people must contend, and the sweat with which one must perform labour in a world outside of Eden. Genesis 3:17-19 neither cancels God's command to work nor does it introduce work into the world. What is *new*, is the idea of work as *toil*, something that must be accomplished against the hostility of the environment. Part of the curse of work is its frequent fruitlessness, such as that found in Deut. 28:15-24. A further idea of work is the redemption of work in a 'fallen' world. Here we find pictures of work as having some of the qualities that it possessed in its paradise state. The prophecy of Isaiah, for example, paints a picture of a coming golden age in which work will have the fruitfulness and enjoyment it possesses in its ideal state (Is. 65:2-13). Among the details in this vision are people's enjoying 'the work of their hands' and not labouring 'in vain'. Ecclesiastes contains a fitting summary of the idea of work as it relates to human endeavour: if life is lived only at ground level ('under the sun'), work is a terrible toil, 'vain' and empty, a mere striving after the wind (Eccles. 2:18-23; 5:16-17). But in the God-centred passages, which offer a blueprint for finding enjoyment in life, one of the repeated images of enjoyment is human work, accepted as a gift from God (2:24; 5:18-19; 8:15; 9:10). This suggests a connection between the portrayal of God as worker and the work of human beings (the latter ideally modelling the former).

As an extension to the picture of God as solitary worker, there are examples of God as *co-worker* with people. A key text in this respect is Ps. 121: ‘Unless the LORD builds the house, those who build it labour in vain’. Implied is that God works through the human worker. A similar picture emerges in Ps. 90:16-17, which combines the prayer that God’s work will be ‘manifest to thy servants’ and the wish that God will ‘establish ... the work of our hands’. When the wall of Jerusalem was rebuilt under Nehemiah’s direction, Nehemiah offered a double assessment of his success: the work was accomplished because the people ‘had a mind to work’ (4:6), but the work was also accomplished ‘with the help of our God’ (6:16).<sup>91</sup> All this is in stark contrast to the prevailing portrayal of work in the wider Græco-Roman world. While it would be too simplistic to suggest that the Jewish portrayal of work is mostly positive and the Græco-Roman portrayal negative, the latter lacks the same close connection between divine work and human work.<sup>92</sup> Thus, this thesis argues that while Paul undoubtedly was influenced by Græco-Roman perspectives on work, in order to provide a complete picture within which to assess Paul’s portrayal of work, the extant Jewish evidence must be taken into account.

When it comes to examining other evidence, a considerable level of ambiguity regarding the definition of work and the words used to describe work is to be found. The authors of the LXX made interpretative decisions as they wrote their new text. Of particular interest to us is how the terms עשה, מעשה, מלאכה, עבד, עבדה, פעל, ברא and עמל are rendered in the LXX.<sup>93</sup> This may shed light on the sorts of interpretative meanings and overtones of meaning that the words took on and which thus may have been available to Paul. The most common

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<sup>91</sup> These and other texts are examined in more detail in Chapter 2.

<sup>92</sup> This is discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

<sup>93</sup> Information regarding the rendering of these words may be found in E. Hatch and H. A. Redpath et al., *A Concordance to the Septuagint and the Other Greek Versions of the Old Testament (Including the Apocryphal Books)* 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 1998). See also G. Kittel (ed.) *Theologisches Wörterbuch Zum Neuen Testament* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1932-3) / G. W. Bromiley (trans.), *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1964-76).

words for work, *עשה* and *מעשה*, are translated in the LXX by *ποιέω*<sup>94</sup> and *ἔργον*<sup>95</sup>; *מלאכה* is translated fairly consistently by *ἔργον*;<sup>96</sup> *עבד* is translated by *δουλεύω*<sup>97</sup> (but also by *λατρεύω*<sup>98</sup> and *λειτουργέω*),<sup>99</sup> and *עבדה* is translated by *λειτουργία*<sup>100</sup> (but also by *ἔργον*,<sup>101</sup> *δουλεία*,<sup>102</sup> *ἐργασία*<sup>103</sup> and *λατρεία*);<sup>104</sup> *פעל* is translated most frequently by *ἐργάζομαι*<sup>105</sup> (but also by *ποιέω*<sup>106</sup> and *πράσσω*);<sup>107</sup> *ברא* is translated by *κτίζω*<sup>108</sup> and *ποιέω*,<sup>109</sup> notably by the latter in its Genesis 1 context; *עמל* is generally translated by *μόχος*,<sup>110</sup> *πόνος*<sup>111</sup> or *κόπος*.<sup>112</sup> There are clearly a wide variety of words used to describe work and a good deal of ambiguity and cross-over between words used to describe divine and human work (particularly in the case of *ποιέω*<sup>113</sup> and *ἐργάζομαι*).<sup>114</sup> This is also the case in Græco-Roman literature. The resulting ambiguity in meaning is again of significance in our understanding of Paul's working

<sup>94</sup> Jos. 22:5; Ex. 20:9f., 30:25; Ps. 34[33]:15; Ecc. 8:11f.; Isa. 44:9; 46:6; Jer. 2:13. Hatch and Redpath *Concordance* pp. 1154-68; *TDNT* VI, pp. 458-84.

<sup>95</sup> Gen. 20:9, 40:17, 46:33, 47:3; Ex. 5:4, 13, 23:12, 16, 24, 28:6, 11, 14, 14, 22, 28, 35; Deut. 2:7, 15:10; Jos. 24:31; Ps. 61(62):12, 65(66):3, 89(90):17, 103(104):13, 106(107):24, 144(145):17; Hos. 13:2, 14:4; Isa. 2:8; Jer. 10:13. *Concordance* pp. 541-4; *TDNT* II pp. 635-51.

<sup>96</sup> Gen 2:2; Deut. 5:13, 14, 16:8; 1 Kgs 8:16; Neh. 2:6, 4:11, 15-17, 19-22; Pvs. 18:9, 24:42; Jer. 17:22, 24.

<sup>97</sup> Gen. 14:4, 15:14, 29:15, 18, 20, 25, 30; Ex. 14:5, 12, 23:33; Deut. 13:4, 15:12, 28:64; Judg. 9:28; 1 Kgs 8:8; Ps. 2:11, 71(72):11, 80(81):6, 101(102):22; Hos. 12:12; Isa. 19:23; Jer. 5:19, 13:10, 42(35):15. *Concordance* pp. 345-6; *TDNT* II pp. 261-80.

<sup>98</sup> Ex. 3:12, 4:23, 9:1, 13, 20:5; Deut. 4:19, 28, 12:2. *Concordance* p. 863; *TDNT* IV pp. 58-65. Often used with regard to cultic worship.

<sup>99</sup> Num. 4:24, 37, 18:6; Deut. 18:5; 2 Chr. 35:3. *Concordance* pp. 872-3; *TDNT* IV pp. 215-31.

<sup>100</sup> Ex. 37:19; Num. 4:24, 28, 33; 16:9; 1 Chr. 9:13, 19:28, 23:24, 26, 28.

<sup>101</sup> Ex. 2:23, 5:9, 6:9, 36:1, 3, 39:21; Num. 3:7, 8, 26, 31, 36; Deut. 26:6.

<sup>102</sup> Gen. 30:26; Ex. 6:6; Neh. 3:5, 5:18; Ps. 103(104):14; Isa. 14:3. *Concordance* p. 345.

<sup>103</sup> Gen. 29:27; 1 Chr. 26:8, 26:30; Ps. 103(104):23. *Concordance* p. 541.

<sup>104</sup> Ex. 12:25, 26, 13:5; Jos. 22:27; 1 Chr. 28:13. *Concordance* p. 863.

<sup>105</sup> Ps. 5:5, 14(15):2, 27(28):3, 35(36):12, 43(44):1, 52(53):4, 58(59):2; Pvs. 10:29; Hos. 6:9, 7:1; Isa. 44:15.

<sup>106</sup> Deut. 32:27; Isa. 43:13.

<sup>107</sup> Pvs. 24:55; Isa. 57:10. *Concordance* p. 1201; *TDNT* VI pp. 632-8.

<sup>108</sup> Deut. 4:32; Ps. 50(51):10, 88(89):12; Ecc. 12:1; Hos. 13:4; Am. 4:13; Isa. 45:7; Jer. 38(39):22. *Concordance* p. 795; *TDNT* III pp. 1000-35.

<sup>109</sup> Gen. 1:1, 21, 5:1, 2.

<sup>110</sup> Deut. 26:7; Ecc. 1:3, 2:10, 11, 18-22, 6:7. *Concordance* pp. 935-6.

<sup>111</sup> Pvs. 16:26. *Concordance* 1188-9.

<sup>112</sup> Ps. 9:28, 35; 24(25):18, 54(55):10, 72(73):5, 89(90):10, 93(94):20, 139(140):9; Jer. 20:18. *Concordance* p. 778; *TDNT* III pp. 827-30.

<sup>113</sup> A considerable number of the references to *ποιέω* in the LXX are to God's action, but human action is also referred to with the same verb (Gen. 14:2, 18:6, 21:8, 29:22; Deut. 22:8; Jos. 2:12; Pvs. 13:23).

<sup>114</sup> With reference to divine work: Ps. 30(31):19, 43(44):1, 73(74):12; Job 33:29; Isa. 41:4, 45:11. For human work see footnote 106.

strategy, particularly in the apparent cross-over between the themes of divine work and human work.

Lastly, a brief discussion of the approach taken to the evidence is provided to orient the reader.

## **1.5 Outline**

The evidence is examined in five chapters. Chapter 2 explores the Jewish material; Chapter 3, the Græco-Roman material; Chapter 4, non-Pauline Christian material; and Chapter 5 focuses on Paul's portrayal of work and his strategy of working in order to support himself and to provide a model for his communities to follow. At the end of chapter 5, there is an excursus, outlining the debate regarding the nature of Paul's trade. Within each chapter, the evidence is grouped under two themes: 'divine work' and 'human work'. The evidence in these themes is then divided into thematic subsections. The aim is to investigate what might have influenced Paul's portrayal of work and his strategy of working, and to situate Paul within a trajectory of debate about work and the variety of ways in which work is portrayed. Each chapter will have a summary conclusion section. Chapter 6, the final chapter, draws all these conclusions together, analyses them, discusses the implications for current scholarship, and offers some proposals for further research.

I have outlined the purpose of this study, the methodology that will be employed, the history of previous scholarship, which also demonstrated the need for this investigation, and lastly, the broader context of the evidence. The necessary groundwork has now been laid to proceed to an examination of Paul's strategy of work in the context of late second Temple Judaism and early Christianity.

## CHAPTER TWO

### Work in a Jewish Context

In this chapter aspects of the portrayal of work contained in Jewish sources will be examined. The purpose of the exploration of this material will be (a) to provide insight into the range of extant portrayals of work with which Paul might reasonably be compared, and (b) to support the suggestion that Paul, in his portrayal of work, was echoing the double aspect of work found predominantly in the Jewish evidence: divine work and human work.<sup>1</sup> This thesis thus assumes that the portrayals found in the Jewish evidence are not unimportant to Paul, and further suggests that the portrayals expressed within the texts must be taken into account if our picture of Paul's portrayal of work is to be a complete one. It is not possible to state with certainty what all Jews thought about work since the limitations of the evidence must always be borne in mind.<sup>2</sup> Given an appreciation of the varieties of Judaism in the period in question, we might suggest that the views expressed at least reflect what anyone could have thought about work. The evidence suggests that, although human work could be described as toil (with mostly negative overtones), this was accompanied by an idea of doing God's work, and modelling God's work in human terms (which could be portrayed in a positive way). Ultimately it is argued that this idea, of work as toil but of work in service of God, working with and directed by God, is foundational to understanding Paul's portrayal of work.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> As explored in Chapter 5.

<sup>2</sup> See Chapter 1, pp. 2-5.

<sup>3</sup> Further discussed in Chapter 5.

The chapter is divided into two sections which examine aspects of the portrayal of work: ‘divine work’ and ‘human work’. Each section is then divided into sub-sections, which will examine passages from the Hebrew Bible, followed by texts from the Septuagint, Josephus, Philo, the so-called ‘Pseudepigrapha’, the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Targumim, and the *Mishnah*.<sup>4</sup> During the time of Paul, the Hebrew scriptures existed alongside translations of those texts into Greek, the Septuagint (LXX), and possibly Aramaic, the Targumim. In addition, there existed alternative versions of the first five books of the Hebrew Bible, or sections thereof, such as *Jubilees*, the *Genesis Apocryphon*, the *Vita Adae et Evae*, and the Samaritan Pentateuch. The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century CE and their subsequent transcription and analysis, has further contributed to our understanding of the Hebrew Bible texts in the Second Temple period.<sup>5</sup> It cannot be guaranteed, however, that any particular passage has been accurately transmitted from Second Temple times through to the present, nor that it was treated as normative by all Jews at that time. In our overview of aspects of the portrayal of work from the Hebrew Bible, we shall therefore include all the extant versions and interpretations (where they exist in relation to a particular text) that would conceivably have been available to Paul in the first century.<sup>6</sup> This will enable us to construct as comprehensive a picture as possible. In the course of the chapter, each section and sub-section will be given a heading and each source will be examined through its extant versions and interpretations (where they exist).

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<sup>4</sup> See Chapter 1, p. 4, n. 9. The section on the *Mishnah* in this chapter is necessarily extensive as there are many references to work in this document.

<sup>5</sup> The Hebrew Bible as we have it today comes to us from the Masoretes of the Mediaeval period.

<sup>6</sup> Not wishing to argue that Paul had access to specific written documents, but that the attitudes and imagery contained in the texts might have influenced Paul.

## 2.1 Divine Work

A cursory glance at materials in the Jewish tradition reveals that God is portrayed as a ceaseless worker. From the evidence, two themes emerge: (1) *the work of God in creation*, and (2) *the work of God in history*. These themes are linked and at times overlap but it is possible to separate them as evidenced by the texts discussed below.

### 2.1.1 Work of God in Creation

The account of God's dealings with the world begins in Genesis with creation. The theme of God as creator is a particularly dominant one in the Jewish evidence and is relevant for an understanding of Paul's portrayal of work as he too uses the image of God as a master craftsman in his letters.<sup>7</sup> Although it has been suggested that the creation account of Genesis 1 reflects Egyptian influence,<sup>8</sup> it has many unique features too. Instead of divine combat and struggle among the gods, as depicted in the Babylonian *Enuma elish* and the Ugaritic Baal epic, creation according to the Genesis account is brought about peaceably and systematically by divine word and action.<sup>9</sup> Elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible, however, the struggle against chaos comprises a part of the *creative process* (Isa. 51:9b-10; 27:1; Ps. 74:13-14; Job 26:12), and this is a feature of Paul's thought; creation according to Paul remains in travail, 'groaning together' (ἡ κτίσις συστενάζει, Rom. 8:22).

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<sup>7</sup> In Rom. 9:21, Paul likens God to a potter, who, with one lump of clay, makes both 'a vessel for noble purposes and another for ignoble'. This image is suggested by a number of passages from the Hebrew Bible and related passages that depict God as a potter, such as Isa. 29:16; Jer. 18:1-11; and esp. Wis. 15:7, but the application is distinctive to Paul. The original creation of God is described as a product of God and the work of his hands (Rom. 1:20).

### 2.1.1.1 The Book of Genesis

The narrative of Genesis begins with the story of creation. Chapters 1:1-2:4a describe the creation of the world. God creates (ברא) the world by means of a command, from its 'formless void' (v. 2).<sup>10</sup> The creation of light and darkness (vv. 4-5) is followed by that of the heavens (vv. 6-8) and the waters (v. 9) and the dry land (vv. 9-10). From this, plants appear (vv. 11-12), the stars, the sun and the moon (vv. 14-16). Then life inhabiting the sea (v. 21) birds in the air (v. 21) and animals on the land (vv. 24-25). Man (אדם) is created after this (vv. 26-27), and finally, on the seventh day God rests (שבת) (2:2), having finished all the work (מלאכה) he had done.<sup>11</sup> This initial story of creation is followed by another narrative unit (2:4b-3:24), which focuses on two people, a man and a woman. Although in the context they are necessarily pictured as the *first* man and woman, they are perhaps portrayed as representatives of the human race. The garden of Eden is described, along with two particular trees in the garden – the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (2:9, 17), and the tree of life (2:9; 3:22). Four rivers are then mentioned (2:10-14). God, we are told, 'took אדם and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it' (לעבדה ולשמרה), and orders אדם not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. In the narrative, it is clearly contrasted with the curse in 3:17-19 and the exhausting work there.<sup>12</sup> The meaning of עֵבֶר is

<sup>8</sup> R. J. Clifford *Creation Accounts in the Ancient Near East and in the Bible* (Washington: CBQMS 26, 1994) p. 38.

<sup>9</sup> See W. G. Lambert and A. R. Millard *Atra-hāsis. The Babylonian Story of the Flood* (New York: Schocken, 1964).

<sup>10</sup> C. Westermann *Genesis 1-11: a commentary* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1984) notes that the original meaning of ברא was 'divide' or 'separate', echoes of Enuma elish, the introduction of the myth 'Gilgamesh, Enkidu and the Underworld', when heavens were set at a distance from heavens (pp. 86f.) Verbs attached to the action of God are ברא and עשה. The former is only used with God, and is given prominence in the chapter and in the concluding verses, 1:1; 2:3, 4, and in the creation of humans, 1:27 (3 times).

<sup>11</sup> Westermann *Genesis* p. 170 indicates that מלאכה is the usual word for ordinary work. This word is used three times for the creation of heaven and earth. The whole of 2:1-3 is directed towards humans, thus 2:3a is the conclusion of a whole. Special attention is given to the seventh day; it is holy and blessed precisely as the conclusion of the work of the previous six days and can only be understood in relation to them.

<sup>12</sup> The question, however, is how the contrast is to be interpreted: as between a lack of work and work, or as between work without toil and work with toil.

ambiguous. The verb עָבַד can mean 'work', with the accusative, 'to till (the soil)'; it is used for work done through somebody else, and of the forced labour of one in slavery. It can therefore also mean, 'work for someone as slave', 'serve' but it is also often used in religious contexts ('serve a god'), both of ethical or cultic service.<sup>13</sup> The meaning 'to serve', in both religious and non-religious contexts, is the most common one. When עָבַד does not mean 'serve' and is not used in a religious sense, it often has a neutral character, with no positive or negative connotations about the work to which it refers. Realising that אָדָם is alone, in the following verses, God forms animals and birds to accompany him (vv. 19-20). In 2:21-25, the woman (אִשָּׁה) is created, and creation is complete.

To understand how Gen 1-2:25, as well as any other Hebrew Bible texts, were being understood in the late Second Temple period, it is necessary to examine their interpretation in the various extant sources (LXX, Qumran, etc.) from that period. The same method, i.e., examining all the late Second Temple interpretations of Biblical texts where relevant and extant, will be employed throughout this thesis, even if the various sources are not marked out with headings.

*(i) The Septuagint*

In the LXX, the word for God's work in creation is 'ποίηω,' and this is employed consistently throughout Ch. 1. The use of ποίεω in particular is significant, since the author of this translation has deliberately made use of a term that is common to both human and

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<sup>13</sup> Of the approximately 285 occurrences in the Hebrew Bible, it is used 66 times of serving the LORD, 78 times of serving idols, and 21 times of cultic service, primarily that of the Levites and exclusively in Numbers. G. Agrell, *Work, Toil and Sustenance*, p. 9.

divine work. One might have expected the verb κτίζω (create) to render ברא.<sup>14</sup> For עבד in 2:15, the LXX has ἐργάζεσθαι which gives it the interpretation of work losing the ambiguity of the meaning ‘to serve’ (which can have a variety of meanings depending upon context) inherent in the MT.

*(ii) The Dead Sea Scrolls*

None of the extant Biblical fragments of Genesis from the Dead Sea Scrolls contain chapters 1-2:25. However, nine fragments known as ‘4Q422’ written in Hasmonaean characters contain a paraphrase of Gen 1-4, 6-9 and feature expressions relating to the creation of the world by God’s word. The short reference in fragment 1 says: ‘... [The heavens and the earth and all] their host He made (עשה) (by [His] word. [And God rested on the seventh day from all the work (מלאכתו) which He had made. And [His] holy spirit... [all the living and creeping [creatures]... [He put man on the earth to rule over it and to eat the fruit[s of the ground]...’<sup>15</sup> This interpretation follows the MT and bears witness to the consistent portrayal of God as worker in creation. The attestations of God’s work in creation in parallel scroll fragments strengthen this idea.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> However, as indicated in *TDNT* VI p. 458, in a Greek context, ποιέω often means the creative activity of the deity. Despite this, the word does carry with it a large degree of ambiguity.

<sup>15</sup> Original text by T. Elgvin and E. Tov in *DJD* XIII (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994) pp. 421-22.

<sup>16</sup> There are also close parallels between this text and 4Q304 and 4Q305 (4QMeditations on Creation Ab and B), 4 Q381 and 4Q504, frg 8.

(iii) *The Book of Jubilees*

Chapters 2 and 3 of the *Book of Jubilees*<sup>17</sup> describe creation. At the beginning of the chapter, the angel of the Presence speaks to Moses commanding him to write the complete history of the creation, ‘how in six days God finished all his works, and all that he had created and kept Sabbath on the seventh day and made it holy for all ages, and appointed it as a sign for all his works (vv.1-2a). The rest of chapter 2 follows the order of creation in the MT until the creation of the first human. Prior to this there is a speech by God appointing the Sabbath as a day of rest, ‘And He said unto us: “Behold, I will separate to Myself a people from among all the peoples, and these shall keep the Sabbath day, and I will sanctify them to Myself as My people, and I will bless them ... and I will bless the Sabbath day, that they may keep Sabbath thereon from all work”’ (vv. 19-21). There continues a reflection on the Sabbath in which we are told that ‘there (were) two and twenty heads of mankind from Adam to Jacob, and two and twenty kinds of work’ (v.23). What those kinds of work were, we are not told. The narrative then continues in chapter 3 with the creation of Adam and Eve. Thus Jubilees maintains the idea of the creation by God and highlights in particular its connection with the seventh day of rest. This playing up of the importance of the Sabbath day is significant because it is not found to the same degree in other texts.

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<sup>17</sup> The *Book of Jubilees* is a retelling of the narrative of Genesis through to Exodus 12, which is not unlike a number of texts found at Qumran, such as the Genesis Apocryphon. The presence of copies of *Jubilees* at Qumran, as well as a reference to *Jubilees* in the Damascus Document (CD 16:3-4) mean it dates to no later than around 100 BCE.

*(iv) Josephus*<sup>18</sup>

Josephus' *Antiquities* presents Jewish history from the creation through to his own day. In the *Ant.* I: 27 Josephus describes the creation of the world using the word ἐκτίσεν – God 'founded' the heaven and the earth'.<sup>19</sup> *Ant.* I: 33 describes in a manner similar to the Hebrew Bible and *Jubilees* how on the seventh day God rested from his labours, and observes the connection between that and the continued practice amongst Jews for resting on that day from toil (πινωυ) and calling it the Sabbath, a word which, as Josephus describes, 'in the Hebrew language means 'rest''.<sup>20</sup> Thus the continuing idea of God working through creation and resting from his work remains well into the first century with little variation. Josephus wrote in Rome in the latter half of the 1<sup>st</sup> century CE. His writings were intended for a Græco-Roman audience. Although elsewhere Josephus adapts aspects of his writing to fit his cultural milieu, here we have an example of a practice highlighted by Josephus (observing a day of rest from work) precisely because it was unusual. The justification for such a day of rest is linked to the divine working example in creation.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> The Jewish historian Josephus was born in Jerusalem in 37 CE and took an active part in the revolt against Rome (66-70 CE), providing an account of the events of the revolt in his *Jewish War* (written probably some time between 75-80 CE). His other extant works are the *Antiquities*, written about a decade after the *War*, which surveys the history of the Jews from their biblical beginnings up to the time of the revolt; the *Life (Vita)*, published shortly before his death, and which is an autobiographical account intended primarily to defend his conduct during the revolt; and *Against Apion (Contra Apionem)*, an apologetic defence of Judaism. Josephus' writings were preserved by Christians, interested perhaps in his possible references to John the Baptist, Jesus of Nazareth, and Jesus' brother James. Josephus' dates make him roughly contemporary with Paul, and thus while Paul himself would not have had access to Josephus' writings (given that Josephus did not start writing until after Paul's death), they shared a common heritage. See T. Rajak *Josephus. The Historian and his Society* (London: Duckworth, 1984).

<sup>19</sup> Josephus, *Antiquities*. Translated by H St. J. Thackeray. The Loeb Classical Library Vol. IV pp. 14-15.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 16-17

<sup>21</sup> Non-Jews were also aware of the practice of observing a day of rest. See Ovid *Remedia Amoris* 220, and Pompeius Trogus 36.2.14. These and other writers considered it highly unusual that Jews would not work for a whole day, which regularly led to accusations of idleness or stupidity or both. For this see M. Whittaker *Jews and Christians: Græco-Roman Views* (Cambridge: CUP, 1984) pp. 63-73. Idleness was treated severely in the Hebrew Bible for the simple reason that the lazy person has nothing to eat (Pvbs 13:4) and risks death from hunger (21:25). Nor does hunger stimulate the lazy to work (16:26). Idleness (if that is how we should interpret ἀτακτως), is a particular problem encountered by Paul in the Thessalonian community and Paul does not

*(v) Philo*

Another first century Jewish writer, Philo,<sup>22</sup> writes in his *On the Account of the World's Creation Given by Moses (De Opificio Mundi)*<sup>23</sup> a detailed discussion of the creation.<sup>24</sup> God is compared with a good craftsman (διὰ δημιουργὸς<sup>25</sup> ἀγαθός) '[building] a city of stones and timber, keeping his eye upon his pattern and making the visible and tangible objects correspond in each case to the incorporeal ideas'.<sup>26</sup> This aspect of God's work in creation is further discussed by Philo in his *Allegorical Interpretation of Genesis II., III. (Legum Allegoria)*. With reference to Gen. 2:7, Philo contrasts the earthy man, moulded of clay by the 'Divine Artificer', with the heavenly man, stamped with the image of God. Many of Philo's writings aimed to show the similarities between Jewish beliefs and Greek philosophy.<sup>27</sup> Philo often interpreted Biblical ideas allegorically. Thus it is not surprising that Philo views the events of

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hesitate to use this argument to show the aberration on those who refuse to work: 'let them no longer eat' (2 Thess. 3:10).

<sup>22</sup> The Jewish philosopher Philo lived in 1<sup>st</sup> century Alexandria. Like Josephus, his writings were preserved by Christians. The only certain date from his life comes from his account of the upheaval in Alexandria which started in 38 CE under the prefect Flaccus, during the reign of Gaius Caligula. The writings of Philo demonstrate that he had a fairly good knowledge of his surrounding culture, not least of the various philosophers and their ideas. The influence from the works of Plato, from Pythagoreism and Stoicism is especially prominent in his works. Philo's close relation to Judaism is clearly set forth in his writings; all of them are in one way or other related to the Torah. He further tells that he himself had been to Jerusalem 'to sacrifice and pray' (*Prov.* 2.64), and he scorns those who abolish the literal understanding of the Law in preference for a symbolical or allegorical interpretation (*Migr.* 92). On Philo and his context, see in particular D. T. Runia *Philo in Early Christian Literature. A Survey* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993); also by the same author *Philo of Alexandria. On the Creation of the Cosmos according to Moses. Introduction, translation and commentary* (Leiden: Brill, 2001); on rhetorical aspects of Philo's writings see M. Alexandre Jr. *Rhetorical Argumentation in Philo of Alexandria* (Brown Judaic Studies 322, Studia Philonica Monographs 2, Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999).

<sup>23</sup> Loeb Supplement I pp. 6- 137.

<sup>24</sup> Discussed in detail by Runia *Commentary* pp. 132-155.

<sup>25</sup> Also used of λόγος. God is also called a 'craftsman' (τεχνίτης). Philo's image of the architect became popular in later exegesis. Origen however states (in *Sel. Gen.* 12.97) that God is *unlike* an architect who needs several days to complete his work. See also Gen. R. 1.1: 'The Torah declares: "I was the working tool of the Holy One, blessed be He."' In human practice, when a mortal king builds a palace, he builds it not with his own skill but with the skill of an architect. The architect moreover does not build it out of his head, but employs plans and diagrams to know how to arrange the chambers and the wicket doors. Thus God consulted the Torah and created the world, while the Torah declares "in the beginning God created (1:1)," "beginning" referring to the Torah.'

<sup>26</sup> *On the Creation* 18. Loeb Vol. I.16-17.

creation and the idea of work allegorically.<sup>28</sup> Given Philo's proximity in time to Paul, he provides a useful comparison on how another diaspora Jew made use of the creation story and the theme of work, with very different results.<sup>29</sup>

### 2.1.1.2 Other Biblical Evidence

Further references to God's creative work are found in the prophetic writings, in Amos and Isaiah in particular. In 5:8, Amos describes how 'God made (עשה; LXX ποίεω) the seven stars and Orion, and turned the shadow of death into the morning, and made the day dark with night: that called for the waters of the sea, and poured them out upon the face of the earth'. By the time of the Exile, creation appears to become a motif of confidence in God's actions through history, thus establishing a link between the two themes, God working in history and God working in creation. Isaiah (40:12ff.) asks is not the stable, majestic and powerful work the guarantee of the power and faithfulness of God? God is praised for everything which is 'the work of his hands' in Isa. 19:25; 29:23; 45:11; 60:21. In the Psalms too, God is praised as the maker of the heavens (Ps. 19:2) and the earth (102:26). Thanks are due to God for his works (Ps. 145:10), the admirable beauty of which is acknowledged by Job (36:24f. 'remember to extol his work' פִּעְלוֹ). Conscious of being the work of God, human beings are to draw a genuine boldness from this certainty of faith, for God cannot reject his

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<sup>27</sup> Runia *Commentary* points out that it is hard to 'd disentangle the Greek philosophical and Hellenistic-Jewish roots of his (Philo's) thought' (p. 135).

<sup>28</sup> As can be see with regard to Philo's discussions about aspects of human work, p. 43f, below.

<sup>29</sup> For a comparison of Philo's technique regarding the creation story with the author of the Fourth Gospel, see C. M. Carmichael *The Story of Creation. Its Origin and its Interpretation in Philo and the Fourth Gospel* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996). For a discussion regarding Philo's Jewishness, see J.M.G. Barclay *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1996) pp. 158-176. For Philo and Paul, see Runia *Philo* pp. 66-74. In addition, H. Chadwick 'St. Paul and Philo of Alexandria' in the *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 48 (1966) pp. 286-307; and S. Sandmel *Philo of Alexandria: An Introduction* (New York, Oxford: OUP, 1979).

work (Job 10:3); but likewise, human beings must have a profound humility, for, as Isaiah asks, can a product say to its maker: I am not your work? (Isa. 29:16; 45:9).

### 2.1.2 Work of God in History

Throughout the Hebrew Bible (and this is also strongly prevalent in the writings of the New Testament), God is often described as being in control of events in history, and the verb frequently used in this context is עשה (in most cases translated in the LXX by ποίεω).<sup>30</sup> This is significant, in that work in this context tends to be described in human terms using a word that is as common to human actions as it is to divine actions. Thus, there is ambiguity. Although it might be difficult to describe God's work in any other way, it is none-the-less significant that the word used to describe divine work in history is a very common word used of human activities.

God's 'doing' is often characterised by abstract objects describing the nature of God's actions. God's work begins to show itself through 'actions and mighty deeds which nothing can equal' (Deut. 3:24, as perceived by the human being), such as the settlement in the promised land (Deut. 11:2-7, the signs and deeds that were done in Egypt to Pharaoh, to the Egyptian army, and to the Israelites in the wilderness). This is also expressed in the Psalms: God works in the liberation of Israel during the episodes in the desert where the people saw 'the works' (פעלי) of the LORD (Ps. 95:9), expressed in Ps. 66:3-6 with the entreaty to come and see the works of God (לכו וראו מפעלות אלהים נורא עלילה על-בני אדם). It is not enough to recall the past (Ps. 77:12f.), attention must also be paid to the present work of God (Ps. 28:5, where

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<sup>30</sup> Chapter 1 p. 26, footnote 94. The Dead Sea Scrolls remain entirely within the framework of the Hebrew Bible in terms of the vocabulary used and the meanings the words convey.

those who do not regard the works of the LORD or the works of his hands [LXX τὰ ἔργα τῶν χειρῶν αὐτοῦ], will be broken down and will be built up no more).<sup>31</sup>

That God does his work is the presupposition of human beings' reception of revelation and salvation. Just as creation brought the human race into being, so also its experience of God's redemption did not begin with human seeking or working, but with the work of God on humanity's behalf. 'The works of God' are therefore the works of redemption as well as the works of creation and these occur throughout the story of God's relationship with Israel.

God *does* 'great things' (Ps. 71:19; 106:21), and 'wonders' (Ex. 3:20; Ps. 72:18; 77:15 (14); 78:4; 86:10; 98:1; 105:5).<sup>32</sup> This is modelled too in human work, as in the case of Ex. 11:10 and Deut. 34:11, where at the LORD's command, Moses performs (עשה) wonders. God does wonderful deeds (Isa. 64:2[3]) and works 'vindication and justice' for all those who are oppressed (Ps. 103:6). Ezekiel in particular speaks of the LORD as executing judgements (5:10, 15; 11:9; 25:11; 28:22, 26; 30:14, 19).<sup>33</sup> Israel's enemies also execute God's judgement (Ezk. 16:41; 2 Chr. 24:24). In addition, 'the LORD' also executes vengeance (Judg. 11:36; Ezk. 25:17); Mic. 5:14[15]; Ps. 149:7. The LORD does nothing without revealing his secret through the prophets, we read in Amos.<sup>34</sup> In Am. 9:12 also it is the LORD who 'does this' (that is, brings events to pass).<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> The reference to what God has created as 'the work of his hands' occurs frequently: Job 10:3; 14:15; 34:19; Ps 8:6 [MT 7]; 28:5; 102:25 [MT 26]; 138:8; Isa 19:25; 29:23; 45:11. It is significant that this is the phrase used by Paul in 1 Cor 4:12 to describe his own working activities.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. also Deut. 11:3-4: 'signs and deeds'.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. also Ex. 12:12; Num. 33:4.

<sup>34</sup> Amos 3:7; cf. v.6 where עשה means 'inflict' a disaster.

<sup>35</sup> The prophet Jeremiah describes God's vengeance provoked by the inadequacies of human work in 25:14: 'For many nations and great kings shall make slaves of them also; and I will repay them according to their deeds and the work of their hands'. Similarly, in Jer. 32:30: 'For the people of Israel and the people of Judah have done nothing but evil in my sight from their youth; the people of Israel have done nothing but provoke me to anger by the work of their hands, says the LORD'; Lam. 3:64: 'Pay them back for their deeds, O LORD, according to the work of their hands!'; Hag. 2:14: 'Haggai then said, So is it with this people, and with this nation before

Several poetic texts describe God's governance of history as his 'work', using the word *פעל* (translated usually in the LXX by *ἐργον*).<sup>36</sup> On occasion, *פעל* appears in conjunction with *עלילה* and *מעלל* (Ps. 77:12-13[11-12], or with *מעשה* (92:5; 143:5). This terminology refers primarily to God's saving acts, particularly in connection with the Exodus. We read, for example, that Israel 'served' (*עבד*) the LORD until the death of Joshua, during the lifetime of the generation that had known all the work that the LORD did for Israel (Josh. 24:31; Jdgs 2:7); then came a generation that did not know the work (*מעשה*) the LORD had done (*עשה*) for Israel (Jdgs 2:10). In Isaiah however, this terminology refers to what the LORD is doing in the present or will do in the future (5:12) thus taking on board an eschatological dimension. For the author of Ecclesiastes, the concept of 'God's work' takes on fundamental significance: 'God has made everything suitable for its time...yet human beings cannot find out the work that God has done from the beginning to the end' (Eccl. 3:11); 'I saw all the work of God, that no one can find out the work that is done under the sun' (8:17; cf. 7:13; 11:5). 'God's governance is hidden from human eyes; it is unsearchable'. This is indeed the fundamental problem posed by Qohelet.<sup>37</sup> Furthermore, according to Pvbs 16:11, honest weights are God's 'work'; standard works were often authorised by a king, but the effort to maintain honesty in the matter of weights gives to them the authorisation of God.

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me, says the LORD; and so with every work of their hands; and what they offer there is unclean'; 2 Kgs. 22:17: 'Because they have abandoned me and have made offerings to other gods, so that they have provoked me to anger with all the work of their hands, therefore my wrath will be kindled against this place, and it will not be quenched'; 1 Kgs. 16:7: 'Moreover the word of the LORD came by the prophet Jehu son of Hanani against Baasha and his house, both because of all the evil that he did in the sight of the LORD, provoking him to anger with the work of his hands, in being like the house of Jeroboam, and also because he destroyed it'.

<sup>36</sup> Deut. 32:4; Ps. 44:2[1]; 64:10[9]; 90:16; 95:9; 111:3; Job 36:24.

<sup>37</sup> On this see further pp. 27-29.

As well as the ongoing work of God in history, the work of God in creation, both as an event and as a continuing aspect of the divine relationship to both human beings and the world, is a strong feature of the Jewish evidence.

## 2.2 Human Work

The first image of human work in the Hebrew Bible stresses what might be described as perfection: work existed (without toil and hardship) in the time of human innocence in Eden. Yet, as the texts demonstrate, this is an extremely short-lived ideal. By far the majority of the evidence is taken up with descriptions of people engaged in work which is described in both positive and negative terms. Notable, however, is the observation that work in and of itself is usually not condemned, it is the act of working that is seen as difficult and the ties of dependence that work typically brings upon the worker that are seen in a negative light. As such, work can be seen as slavish, and work by free people is complicated by an assumption that slaves worked.<sup>38</sup> A third idea of work in the Hebrew Bible is the redemption of work in a fallen world which is, on occasion, countered by an opposite portrayal of work as an activity of retribution. This section will examine the evidence under these three sub-sections.

### 2.2.1 Work as Perfection

The notion of work as part of God's perfect design for human life is captured in Genesis 2:15: 'The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden to till it (עבד) and keep it'.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> The imagery of the work of slaves is significant and represents an aspect of ambiguity with regard to work which is important to Paul, particularly in Philemon for example. On this see D. B. Martin *Slavery as Salvation: The Metaphor of Slavery in Pauline Christianity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990); and, C. S. Wansink 'Chained in Christ': *The Experience and Rhetoric of Paul's Imprisonments* JSNTSup (Sheffield: JSNT, 1996).

<sup>39</sup> The LXX has ἐργάζεσθαι.

In the *Jubilees* passage, Adam and Eve are said to have engaged in work *already* in Eden. Genesis 2 has been given an interpretation by which Adam gives names to all the animals and receives his wife *before* being placed in the garden of Eden (Jub. 3:1-7 corresponds to Gen. 2:18-25). There, so the text tells us, Adam and Eve were instructed by the angels how to work with the soil and they were in the garden tilling it for seven years (v. 15). Adam cultivated the garden and protected it from birds, wild animals and cattle; he gathered its fruit, which he both ate and stored up for himself and his wife. Work in Eden according to *Jubilees* (but not Genesis 2) is given an explicit meaning that it is required for sustenance. Thus, work has applicability beyond the act itself, it is not work for work's sake. This is a similar attitude to that of Paul; work is important on one level for Paul as it provides him with sustenance.

Josephus, in *Ant.* I: 46-49, recounts a similar ideal of work in a perfect state. Josephus tells us that God said: 'I had decreed for you to live a life of bliss, unmolested by all ill, with no care to fret your souls; all things that contribute to enjoyment and pleasure were, through my providence, to spring up for you spontaneously, without toil or distress of yours; blessed with these gifts, old age would not soon have overtaken you and your life would have been long'. Thus it appears that work in its sense of toil is not required, God will provide for everything.

The 'Garden' of Eden is compared with virtue in Philo's portrayal. Man is placed in the garden 'to tend it', that is, to give his whole mind to virtue. Regarding Gen. 3:17 – 'the farmer says, "I will sow, I will plant, the plants will grow, seeds and plants will yield crops, not only useful as affording food that we cannot do without, but so abundant as to give us enough and too spare"'. Once again, there is no hard labour involved. In his *Questions and*

*Answers on Genesis*,<sup>40</sup> concerning Gen. 2:15, Philo asks why does (God) place the man in Paradise for two things: to work and guard it, when Paradise was not in need of work, for it was complete in all things as having been planted by God, and was not in need of a guardian, for who was there to be harmed? Philo answers this question by describing the importance of the cultivation of the field and the guarding of the things in it lest they are ruined by either idleness or by invasion. But although Paradise was not in need of either of these things, so Philo comments, nevertheless it was necessary that he who received the supervision and care of it (that is the first man), should be an example to those who work in such circumstances. Thus, the work of the cultivator was to care for the garden, watering it, tending it, nurturing it, spading it, digging trenches, and irrigating it with water. Philo seems particularly influenced here by a high praise of agricultural activity generally, which was not uncommon in the Greek context in which he writes. The point seems to be, that writers were well aware of the idea of work as toil and that in an ideal state, work would be without hardship. But this of course was an ideal, one not readily sustainable and indeed Paul is clearly anxious in his portrayal of work to highlight its hardships as a reflection of the reality of the working condition.

### **2.2.2 General descriptions of work as both positive and negative**

In this section various portrayals of human work that place it in both positive and negative contexts are discussed. The evidence suggests that the view of work is often ambivalent and, at times, ambiguous.

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<sup>40</sup> R. Marcus (trans.) Loeb Supplement I.

### 2.2.2.1 The Book of Genesis

#### (i) Genesis 3:17

Despite the positive start in the creation narrative, work is given a negative description early on in the Hebrew Bible. Chapter 3 of Genesis contains the story of human disobedience, the results of which are intimately tied with the activity of work. Following the punishment placed upon the woman, the man is punished thus:

cursed is ground because of you; in toil (בַּעֲבוּרְךָ) you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth to you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground for out of it you were taken; you are dust and to dust you shall return.<sup>41</sup>

Work described here *in itself* is not regarded as a punishment, rather it is a natural activity. The cursing of the ground and the consequent harshness of agricultural labour (3:17-19) are the result of disobedience.<sup>42</sup> The final line of 3:19 ('You are dust and to dust you shall return'), does not imply that human mortality is the result of disobedience. This section has been described as an aetiology of work, recognition that the hardship of work needed explaining.<sup>43</sup> Josephus *Ant* I.46-49 writes on the Genesis passage, emphasising the curse as work done in 'toil and grinding labour' (πονοῦσι δὲ καὶ τοῖς ἔργοις τριβομένους).<sup>44</sup>

Regarding Gen. 3:17 (in his *Questions and Answers on Genesis*), Philo appears most concerned with the direction of God's curse rather than the content of the curse (as it focuses upon the activity of physical work). He asks – 'why does He (God) curse the serpent

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<sup>41</sup> E. A. Speiser *Genesis: Introduction, translation and notes* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1964) p. 27 on 3:17, the literal translation of which is 'eat your bread', Speiser translates it as 'earn your bread', that the effort described is in the producing of grain to be eaten, not in the eating of it. The word pair קִין וְדָרָר (thorns and thistles), occurs again only in Hos. 10:8, with the same meaning, overgrowth. 3:19: 'In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread'.

<sup>42</sup> For 3:17, the LXX has 'as you till it' (reading the third radical of בַּעֲבוּרְךָ as ט, so ἐν τοῖς ἔργοις σου).

<sup>43</sup> The various punishments imposed by God on the guilty (3:14-19) all have aetiological bases: serpents have no legs and are thought to 'eat dust' and bite human beings but are killed by them; women are attached to their husbands, suffer pain in childbirth, and also suffer from their husbands' domination. The idea of aetiology is discussed by G. von Rad *Genesis* (London: SCM, 1972) p. 23.

and the woman by referring directly to them and not do so similarly to the man, instead of placing it on the earth saying: 'Cursed be the earth for your sake; in sorrow shall you eat it; thistles and thorns it shall grow for you, and you shall eat the grass of the field; in the sweat of your brow shall thou eat your bread?' Philo reasons this by referring to the mind as a divine in-breathing, and 'God does not deem it right to curse it, but turns the curse against the earth and its cultivation. And the earth is of the same nature as the body of Man, of which the mind is the cultivator. When the cultivator is virtuous and worthy, the body also bears its fruits, namely health, keenness of sense, power and beauty. But when he is cruel, the opposite is brought to pass, for his body is cursed, receiving as its cultivator a mind undisciplined and imprudent. And its fruit consists of nothing useful but only of thorns and thistles, sorrow and fear and other ills, while thoughts strike the mind and shoot arrows at it. And the 'grass' is symbolically food, for he changes from a rational being to an irrational creature, overlooking the divine foods; these are those which are granted by philosophy through principles and voluntary laws.' Concerning Gen. 3:18, so Philo reflects, 'God uses the terms grass and bread as synonyms; the thing meant is the same. Grass is food of an irrational creature; and such is a bad man with the right principle cut out of him; irrational also are the senses, being part of the soul. But the mind striving to attain the objects of sense by means of the irrational senses, makes this striving not without toil and sweat. For exceeding painful and burdensome is the life of the foolish man, as he pursues with greedy desire all things that are productive of the pleasures and of all things that wickedness loves to bring about.' Regarding Gen. 3:23, Philo asks why does God now call Paradise 'delight,' when God drives the human out of it to till the earth, from which it was taken? The

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<sup>44</sup> *ibid.* pp. 22-23.

difference in agriculture is clear. When he was cultivating wisdom in Paradise, he took care of the cultivation of wisdom as if of trees, nourishing himself on its immortal and beneficial fruits, through which he became immortal. And when he was driven out of the place of wisdom, he was to practise the opposite, (namely) works of ignorance, through which his body is polluted, and his mind is blinded, and being starved of his own food, he wastes away and suffers a miserable death'. Philo, it seems, is motivated by a reflection on agriculture as an ideal form of working activity and uses this image to reflect on the working of the intellect. It is notable that Philo's perspective is quite unlike that of Paul. Even though Paul does not directly reflect on the curse upon work in Genesis, it is highly likely that it forms the basis of his portrayal of work which he describes as toilsome and laborious in 1 Cor. 4:12. It is not Paul's intention to reflect on the meaning of work in what might be described as a philosophical way, as Philo does.

The *Life of Adam and Eve (Vita Adae et Evae)*<sup>45</sup> describes how the first humans lived in paradise on 'angels' food' without needing to work. But when, after the fall, they had been driven from paradise, they had nothing to eat but animals' food.<sup>46</sup> They discovered therefore that they must repent if they were to be forgiven by God and receive something to live on. And when they had repented, God sent the angel Michael with seed; he showed Adam 'how to work and till the ground, that they might have fruit by which they and all their generations might live' (22.2). Work is thus seen to be in line with God's will not in the ideal,

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<sup>45</sup> The Greek and Latin versions of the *Life of Adam and Eve* narrate in Midrashic form episodes in the lives of Adam and Eve after they were expelled from Eden. Although no Hebrew text is extant, it is likely that an original did exist given the presence of many Semitic parallels. Various parallels between the *Vita* and Josephus' *Ant.* and 2 Corinthians, suggest that the *Vita* was composed at least somewhere between 100 BCE and 200 CE, with the first century CE favoured. See the discussion of M.E. Stone, *A History of the Literature of Adam and Eve*. B.J. Bamberger, 'Adam, Books of' *Interpreters Dictionary of the Bible* (Nashville and New York: Abingdon, 1961) 1: 44-45.

<sup>46</sup> This is similar to the question raised by Adam in the Targumim, see p. 48 below.

undisturbed creation, but in the state of affairs after the fall and repentance. As in Jubilees, in *Vita*, work was seen as existing to give sustenance, though here only outside paradise.

Like the LXX rendering of Gen. 3:17ff., it was work and not the soil which was cursed after the fall. In spite of the fact that man by means of work has the possibility of surviving, it is regarded as an affliction. Only by means of hard labour will the earth yield fruit. The same can be said of agricultural work in the view of Jub. 3:15f.

The *Targumim*<sup>47</sup> rendering of the Genesis 3:17f. passage (*Ps-Jon* and *Neof.*) largely follow the MT but add a discourse on the part of Adam who answered God's curse by requesting that human beings should not be like the cattle eating the herb of the face of the field.

Instead, Adam requests:

Let us stand up, and labour with the labour of our hands, and eat food of the earth; and thus let there be distinction before you, between the children of men and the offspring of the cattle.

This is significant in that, aside from the need to explain the harsh realities of manual labour, there is here recognition of the positive desire on the part of Adam to work, as long as the work can be distinguished from that of animals. Thus there is no doubting of the

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<sup>47</sup> The *Targumim* (*Onqelos*, *Neofiti*, *Pseudo-Jonathan*, as well as the fragmentary *targumim*) are not easily dated. *Tg. Onq.* is likely the oldest, with a date for its final redaction around the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> c. CE. The final redaction of *Tg. Neo.* Likely dates to the 4<sup>th</sup> c. CE. Suggested dates for *Tg. Ps-J.* vary from the time of Ezra down to the Crusades; it seems probable that it came into its final form in the 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> c. CE. Texts with such late dates might reasonably be questioned as sources of late Second Temple portrayals of work. However, the discovery of Aramaic translations of Biblical texts at Qumran much like the *Targumim* suggests that this type of translation may date to an early period. Moreover, we should note that by the 1<sup>st</sup> c. CE, Aramaic had become the vernacular of Jews in Palestine through to Babylon and beyond. Thus, it is prudent, bearing in mind the difficulties with respect to dating, to consider the evidence from the *Targumim* as perhaps containing traditions that go back to the late Second Temple period. See B. Grossfield *The Targum Onqelos to Genesis* p. 32. P. Alexander dates the Babylonian redaction to the 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> c. CE, 'Targum, Targumim' *ABD* 6:321; M. McNamara, *Targum Neofiti 1: Genesis* p. 45. P. Alexander agrees p. 323; M. Maher, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Genesis* p. 11-12. P. Alexander again concurs p. 322. R. Hayward, 'The Date of Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Some Comments' in *JJS* 40 (1989) pp. 7-30 argues that the evidence for such a late date is not compelling and should be reassessed. Regarding the Qumran *targumim*, fragments are 4QtgLev (4Q156), 4QtgJob (4Q157), and the more substantial, 11QtgJob (11Q10). Also noteworthy is the Genesis Apocryphon (1Q20), which is an expansion/interpretation of Genesis in Aramaic. *M.Meg* 2:1 says concerning the recitation of the Scroll of Esther during the festival of

reality and the necessity of work as divinely ordained, nor is there a playing down of the hardships associated with work.

(ii) *Genesis 4*

In Gen. 4, Cain is cursed because he murders his brother and is banished from arable land. Cain is told that when he tills the ground, it shall no longer yield to him its strength (v.12). The LXX maintains the same meaning as the MT. Philo (in his *Questions and Answers*) concerning Gen. 4.11 asks why does he (Cain) become accursed upon the earth? The earth is the last of the parts of the universe. Accordingly, if this curses him, it is understandable that appropriate curses will be laid upon him by the other elements as well, namely by springs, rivers, sea, air, winds, fire, light, the sun, the moon, the stars and the whole heaven together. Again, Philo's interpretation is unlike the sentiments echoed in Paul, who does not spend time reflecting on such philosophical aspects.<sup>48</sup>

(iii) *Genesis 9*

Gen. 9:20 declares, 'Noah was the first tiller of the soil. He planted a vineyard; and he drank of the wine, and became drunk...' <sup>49</sup> Wine here gives comfort, rest and festivity so that the toil of work is set aside temporarily. Philo is particularly interested in Noah's occupation as a 'husbandman'. In *Questions and Answers*, he asks what is the meaning of the words, 'Noah began to be a husbandman of the earth?' [Scripture] likens Noah to that first moulded earthly

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Purim, 'If he read it by heart, or if he read it in Aramaic or in any other language, he has not fulfilled his obligation'.

<sup>48</sup> Although the apocalyptic tone of this passage does resonate with Rom. 8.

<sup>49</sup> It appears to be an ideal to have a vineyard and enjoy its fruit and sit in peace under its shade (Gen. 49:11f; 1 Kgs. 5:5; 2 Kgs. 18:31; Hos. 2:20; Mic. 4:4; Amos 9:13).

man ... as for the deeper meaning, there is a difference between being a husbandman and a worker of the earth, wherefore, when the fratricide is introduced, it is said of him that he shall work the earth but not that he shall cultivate it. For symbolically the body is called "earth" (since) by nature our (body) is earthly, and it works basely and badly like an unskilled hireling. But the virtuous man cultivates like a skilled and experienced caretaker of plants, and the husbandman is an overseer of the good. For the worker-mind of the body, in accordance with its bodily (nature), pursues bodily pleasures, but the husbandman-mind strives to obtain useful fruits, those which (come) through continence and moderation; and it cuts off the superfluous weaknesses (that grow) around our characters like the branches of wide-spreading trees'. In a similar vein, concerning Gen. 9:20, Philo asks 'why did the righteous man first plant a vineyard?' '...the earth was dried up at the spring season, for the spring produced a growth of plants; accordingly, it was natural that both vines and vine-shoots were found that could flourish and that they were gathered by the righteous man ... both forms of nourishment, food as well as drink, He (God) alone bestowed (on man). But those (foods) which are for a life of luxury He did not keep for Himself nor grudge that they should fall into man's possession'. Philo continues his discussion concerning Noah in his work *On Husbandry*. Here, Philo describes a distinction between husbandry and working the soil. He describes literal gardening and 'soul-gardening' which tends to the Mind. As such a soul-gardener, Noah is contrasted with Cain who is a 'worker of the earth' in the service of Pleasure. This indicates a direction of thought which views the activity of work on a number of levels, actual physical work and what might be described as 'intellectual' work.<sup>50</sup> Philo presents other examples of opposites, for example the shepherd and the rearer of cattle.

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<sup>50</sup> There is an ambiguity here which is also operating in Paul's thought, particularly in Romans 8 and 14:23-30,

Philo in his *Concerning Noah's work as a Planter*, firstly deals with God's planting and then with humans learning to copy his work. The second part of the text deals with the vine-culture of Noah and the subject of drunkenness. God is called 'the Lord of all things ... the greatest of planters and the most perfect Master of His art' (II.I.2).

(iv) *Genesis 29-31*

The Jacob-Laban narrative contained in Genesis 29-31 provides evidence of the way in which the work of the day labourer was seen as an affliction and hardship. Jacob is not to work for Laban for nothing (29:15), but he must serve long to win Rachel (29:18ff, 27ff). When he later wants to leave and work for his own house, Laban bids him remain (30:26ff). By cunning and craft Jacob then takes over the best lambs of Laban's flock (30:31ff), which is interpreted as a sign of God's blessing over him (31:6ff). In a short speech to Laban, Jacob, according to the text, settles accounts with him (31:38-42, which includes the phrase '... God saw my affliction and the labour of my hands [LXX: τὸν κόπον τῶν χειρῶν], and rebuked you last night' vs. 42). In sum, work with livestock is here found to be an affliction and toil for four reasons: (1) Jacob worked for another, not himself (31:38; cf. 30:29f) (2) conditions were harsh: heat by day, chill and sleeplessness by night (31:40) (3) the wage was altered ten times and remained uncertain (31:41; cf. 31:7) and (4) Jacob's work was painstaking; he never let Laban bear the loss for animal casualties. On the contrary, Laban demanded of Jacob all that was stolen from the livestock. Agricultural work is usually praised in the texts and this story is an exception.

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for example.

### 2.2.2.2 The Book of Exodus

In Ex.1-6, the work that is seen as hard is slave labour. In 1:13-14, the dread of the Egyptians towards the Israelites is described as resulting in the Israelites' persecution, '... they made the people of Israel serve with rigour, and made their lives bitter with hard service, in mortar and brick, and in all kinds of work in the field; in all their work they made them serve with rigour'. In 5:4, Pharaoh asks Moses and Aaron why they would take the people away from their work.

Exodus, of course, contains the Decalogue with the command to rest on the seventh day and to keep it holy (20: 8-11): 'Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labour (עבד; LXX: ἐργάζομαι), and do (עשה; LXX: ποίεω) all your work (מלאכה; LXX: ἔργον); but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God; in it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your manservant, or your maidservant, or your cattle, or the sojourner who is within your gates; for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the seventh day and hallowed it'.<sup>51</sup> Work is positively commanded therefore, as long as it is balanced by rest as a reminder of God's work in creation.

In Josephus' *Con. Ap.* II. 174, he writes concerning Moses' legislative legacy: '...what meats a man should abstain from, and what he may enjoy; with what persons he should associate; what period should be devoted respectively to strenuous labour (ἐργων τε συντονίαις) and to rest...'.<sup>52</sup> In II. 234. Josephus continues, 'for even those practices of ours

<sup>51</sup> Note that in Exodus 16, work is limited by God's command. In 16:29 the noun שבת appears for the first time. The people are to be mindful of a time for rest (and thus sabbath rest is a recurrent theme in Ex. 20:8-11 and 31:12-17; cf. 23:12; 34:21; 35:2-3). This rest is not at the expense of daily needs – a double provision is to be gathered on the day before the sabbath so that daily needs are met (v. 5).

<sup>52</sup> Josephus, *Contra Apionem*. Translated by H. St. J. Thackeray. The Loeb Classical Library Vol.1. p. 362-363.

which seem the easiest others find difficult to tolerate: ... the abstention from work at rigidly fixed periods'.<sup>53</sup> Clearly, the habit of observing the Sabbath was an unusual one which Josephus felt he needed to explain. The presence of such an explanation in *Con. Ap.* is not surprising given its aim, to demonstrate the great antiquity and general superiority of Jewish traditions over those of the Greeks.<sup>54</sup> He continues in II. 291: 'Upon the laws it was unnecessary to expatiate. A glance at them showed that they teach not impiety, but the most genuine piety... [they] teach men to be self-dependent and to work with a will'.<sup>55</sup>

The writer Aristobulus, whose dates are placed anywhere between the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century CE and who has been variously identified as Jewish, Christian and Pagan, has comments preserved in Eusebius *PE* 13.12.9-16 Fragment 5.12.9, where he comments, 'following on from this is the fact that God, who made and furnished the whole universe, also gave us a day of rest – because of the toilsome life everyone has – the seventh day'.<sup>56</sup>

### 2.2.2.3 The Book of Leviticus

In Leviticus 9:7, the priests are to live on their 'work' with the sacrifices, and eat that which remains from them (Lev. 9:7; Deut. 18:1ff.). This idea, it can be argued, is important for Paul and may indeed provide influential for Paul's decision to work in order to support himself when there were other options available to him.<sup>57</sup> Leviticus 19:13 describes how work brings maintenance and that the day-labourer has a right to demand a daily wage (LXX:

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<sup>53</sup> *ibid.* pp. 386-387.

<sup>54</sup> See T. Rajak *Josephus* (London: Duckworth, 1983) pp. 225-9.

<sup>55</sup> *ibid.* pp. 408-409.

<sup>56</sup> C. R. Holladay *Fragments from Jewish-Hellenistic Authors*. Vol. 3 (Chico: Scholars Press, 1983), pp. 188-191.

<sup>57</sup> In particular, in Rom. 15:15-16, Paul refers to himself as λειτουργόν Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ εἰς τὰ ἔθνη, ἱεραουργούντα τό εὐαγγέλιον.

μισθός),<sup>58</sup> for his work.<sup>59</sup> Lev. 26:14-45 reports how the work of one who does not obey God will be hard and in vain. In both Lev. 26 and Deut. 28, a similar theme arises: one of the curses is that the labour and toil (עֲמָלָה Dt. 28:33; עֲמָלָה Lev. 26:20) of the Israelites will be without result.

#### 2.2.2.4 The Book of Deuteronomy

In Deut. 5:12-15, rest is presented as preferable to work. Work is ordained for six days and the seventh day is observed as a day of rest. It is interesting to examine the comparison with the bondage in Egypt. Thus the summary in Deut. 26:5-10 describes how the Egyptians inflicted cruel work (עֲבָרָה קָשָׁה) upon the Israelites, but that Israel cried out to the Lord who saw their suffering (עֲנִי) and travail (עֲמָלָה), brought them out of Egypt and brought them into the land flowing with milk and honey.<sup>60</sup> Here slave labour is explicitly called suffering and travail (עֲמָלָה LXX: μόχθος). Work is especially negative since at one's death, its results may be left to another who has not expended any effort.<sup>61</sup> Despite this negativity, earlier in Deuteronomy 8:17f., the Lord gives Israel the strength to acquire wealth. Work provides sustenance and diligence yields profit and wealth in Deut. 10:4f.<sup>62</sup> This is similarly the case in Deut. 11:10-15 (esp. vv. 14f) and in 16:14f, where it is said that the Lord will bless the Israelite in all his hands' work and in all his produce, and he will be filled with joy. Blessed work brings joy (cf. Deut. 26:10f; Lev. 26:3-13; Deut. 28:1-14), where one can assume that the blessed work is seen as something positive. But the positive in it is dependent on its

<sup>58</sup> This is the same word used by Paul in 1 Cor. 3:8, 14; 9:17,18.

<sup>59</sup> This theme is further developed in Chapter 27, which describes vows and tithes of livestock. It is also an important chapter about support for the priesthood.

<sup>60</sup> In Ex. 3:7f. the people are delivered from slavery to a land, in which they have not worked. See also Deut. 6:10-15; Josh. 24:13; cf. Ps. 81:6-8.

having characteristics distinguishing it from the work of Jacob for Laban and the Israelites in Egypt. The priests are to live on their 'work' with the sacrifices, and eat that which remains from them (as in Lev. 9:7; Deut. 18:1ff.). In Deut. 28, work and its result are cursed when done in disobedience.<sup>63</sup> Once again, as in Lev. 26, Deut. 28 reports that one of the curses is that the labour and toil (עֲמָלָה Deut. 28:33; כַּחֲסֵי־עֲמָלָה Lev. 26:20) of the Israelites will be without result. In Deut. 28:30 and 33, to work with a house or vineyard, but not to be able to benefit from it, is seen as a curse.

### 2.2.2.5 The Books of Kings

1 Kgs 5:13-18 describes forced labour for the building of the Temple under King Solomon. Chapter 9:15-23 describes a similar situation. In 2 Kgs 12:14f, work brings maintenance and the day-labourer has a right to demand a daily wage for his work.<sup>64</sup> 2 Kgs 18:28f. suggests that to be able to fully enjoy the fruits of one's efforts is often an ideal.

### 2.2.2.6 The Book of Psalms<sup>65</sup>

The Psalms portray both positive and negative aspects of work. In Ps. 8:7-9 humans are appointed to rule over creation.<sup>66</sup> In Ps. 104: 23-29 work is included in the order God has ordained for creation. This Psalm is notable for its similarities with Gen 1, which include the general order of creation and the use of vocabulary. The Psalm however ranges more widely

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<sup>61</sup> Deut. 28:30, 33, 51; Lk 12:2.

<sup>62</sup> Also 12:11, 24; 13:4; 14:23; 21:5; 31:10-31.

<sup>63</sup> Ps. 78:46ff.; 107:33ff.; 109:11; Job 5:5; 15:20ff.; 20:18ff.; 27:13ff.; 31:38ff., cf. Isa. 5:6; 34:13, Hos. 9:6

<sup>64</sup> Lev. 19:13; Deut. 24:14f; Mal. 3:5; cf. 2 Kgs 12:14ff; Jer. 22:13ff; Ezek. 29:18ff.

<sup>65</sup> Interpretation of the Psalms is not a straightforward exercise. The formalised structure, the use of rare words and the many metaphors, all contribute to the difficulty. J. Magonet *A Rabbi Reads the Psalms* (London: SCM Press, 1994) p. 3.

<sup>66</sup> This Psalm is used by Paul in 1 Cor 15:23.

in its description of the world. The verb ‘to make’ (עשה) and the noun ‘work’ (מעשה) occur at strategic places in the Psalm (vv. 4, 13, 19, 24, 31), and it has been suggested that beside the *inclusio* of vv. 1a and 35c (‘Hallelujah’ in 35d stands outside the Psalm itself), there is a concentric structure of vv. 1-4, 5-13, 24-30, 31-35, with vv. 14-23 forming the centre.<sup>67</sup>

Psalm 104 also recounts how the Lord by means of rain blesses work, and thus, together with man’s work provides sustenance (as with 65:10ff; 127:1; 147). By way of contrast, Ps. 90:10 sees all life as ‘toil and trouble’ (עמל ואון; LXX 89:10 κόπος καὶ πόνος).<sup>68</sup> This labour is the result of sin and transgressions (Ps. 90:8). There is therefore a divine judgement in life as labour and torment.<sup>69</sup> This pessimism ends, however, in v. 12ff with a prayer that life’s days will bring joy, and the Lord will promote ‘the work of our hands’ (מעשה ידינו v. 17; LXX τὰ ἔργα τῶν χειρῶν ἡμῶν),<sup>70</sup> echoing the words of Paul in 1 Cor. 4:12.

### 2.2.2.7 The Book of Job

Early on in Job the theme of work is introduced. In 1:6-12, the Satan joins the assembly of divine beings. In a rhetorical question, the LORD brings up Job’s name and vouches for his integrity. The Adversary however accuses Job of serving God because it suits his own agenda and so the Adversary proposes to put him to a test by removing all indications of divine favour: ‘You have blessed the work of his hands (מעשה ידיו/LXX τὰ ἔργα τῶν χειρῶν αὐτοῦ), and his possessions have increased in the land. But put forth your hand now and

<sup>67</sup> A. Anderson *Psalms 1-72, Psalms 73-150* (London: Marshall, 1972) p. 278. One of the Dead Sea Scrolls, 11QPs praises God as creator, which has clear affinities with Ps. 104 (both draw on themes from Gen. 1).

<sup>68</sup> Life at its best is labour (cf. Job 5:6f. that man is born to toil עמל) – can be interpreted as speaking about work

<sup>69</sup> Gen. 3:17ff.

<sup>70</sup> cf. Ps 127:2a.

touch all that he has...' (1:10).<sup>71</sup> The observation that work without divine help is without success is apparent in Job. 5:8f. The work of the slave labourer and day-labourer is seen as such toil in Job that it supplies a metaphor for the misery Job suffers (7:1-3). Job refers to sleepless nights occasioned by bodily sores infested with worms. The *Testament of Job* uses this idea to illustrate Job's willingness to bear his suffering with patience:<sup>72</sup> 'I for my part am a wretch immersed in labour by day and in pain by night, just so I might provide a loaf of bread and bring it to you' (12). The axiom at the beginning of chapter 7, it has been suggested, seems to be the author's transformation of a widespread ancient Near East mythic motif which is put in terms consistent with Job's situation. In the Atrahasis myth, for example, the ruling gods address Nintu, the goddess who created mankind, with the request: 'Create lullu (man) that he may bear the yoke, let him bear the yoke assigned by Enlil, let man carry the toil of the gods' (lines 195-197).<sup>73</sup> For Job it seems that to exist is to be enslaved and to be forced to toil<sup>74</sup> and in Job's transformation of this tradition (if that is what influences it), the emphasis moves from necessary service to harsh and arbitrary servitude. Humans are not liberators, but only the 'lackeys of the gods'.<sup>75</sup>

When Job, in 14:1-6, prays that man may enjoy the gladness a day-labourer derives from his day, it can be interpreted to mean that man is to be permitted to rest from his suffering as the day-labourer is glad for the short period of the day when its burdens are behind him and

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<sup>71</sup> In 27:7-31, that the ungodly man meets with success in his work is an exception.

<sup>72</sup> M. McNamara *Intertestamental Literature* 103-104 describes *Test Job* as having been found in four Greek manuscripts, in a fragmentary fifth-century Coptic manuscript and in a Slavonic version, which is reconstructed from three manuscripts. The original language and place of composition are uncertain. It could have been composed either in Palestine or Egypt. Some assign the original composition to the first century BCE, others to the first century CE. Use of the LXX suggests that it was certainly written after 250 BCE.

<sup>73</sup> W. G. Lambert and A. R. Millard *Atra-hāsis* cited in N. C. Habel *The Book of Job* (London: SCM Press, 1985) p. 157.

<sup>74</sup> Perhaps echoing Gen 3:17-19.

<sup>75</sup> Habel *Job* p. 157.

he is free from work. Complaint is made over the heavy work without the prospect of success.<sup>76</sup> The Sabbath command exists so that man needs rest; life cannot consist of constant work (Job. 3:13-19, 20-26).

### 2.2.2.8 The Book of Proverbs

The Book of Proverbs is presented as a guide to educate human beings in general, and the young in particular, in wise living (1:2-7). It can be divided into two main parts: a series of didactic discourses which are made up of parental instructions and speeches by 'Wisdom' in chapters 1-9, and collections of shorter sayings in chapters 10-31. Under the topic of work and laziness, the book of Proverbs has plenty to say. The writer recommends that one learn from an insect: 'Go to the ant, you that are lazy, consider its ways and be wise. Without having any master, or officer or ruler, it prepares its food in summer, and gathers sustenance in harvest' (6:6-8). Work done with God's wisdom is successful as with the wise wife in 31:10f,<sup>77</sup> and work done in obedience to God's will brings blessing (3:9f). Work without divine help is without success (10:22), and work done in disobedience is cursed along with its result (cf. 5:10 and 10:16). Proverbs contains frequent warnings against indolence. It is folly to be lazy, since the lazy one receives nothing to live on (6:6-11; 10:4f.; 19:15; 20:4, 13; 24:30ff.), whereas work provides sustenance, and diligence provides profit and wealth (10:4f.; 12:11, 24; 13:4; 14:23; 21:5; 31:10-31). Hunger forces the worker to work (16:26), whereas the completely lazy man is ironically said to lack the energy to eat (19:24); to desire to do absolutely nothing will bring death (21:25). For this reason, the wise man according to Pvbs

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<sup>76</sup> The same theme is found in Isa. 19:5ff; 49:4; 57:10; Jer. 18:1-12; 51:58; Ezek. 29:18ff; Mic. 6:15 and Job 3:13f; 9:29.

<sup>77</sup> Pvbs. 3:9f.; 10:16; 16:3.

23:4 does not toil to gain riches, for they are transient, and the effort put into gathering them can be meaningless.<sup>78</sup> Particularly interesting in Proverbs is the point made in 13:7f, that appearances can be deceptive. Although the point made in v.8 points to the advantage of having wealth, the second line is, literally, ‘a poor man does not heed rebuke’. Here, ironically the advantage lies with those who are poor. In v.11, wealth gained through manual labour is contrasted with the kind of wealth that is gained quickly. The first kind of wealth is substantive and enduring, while the latter is fleeting. Thus, although manual labour can be full of toil, there does appear to be a tradition of it maintaining an inherent sense of worth.<sup>79</sup>

### 2.2.2.9 The Book of Ecclesiastes

The Book of Ecclesiastes takes the form of a monologue spoken by a character called ‘(the) Qoheleth’ (teacher). We know little about the author, but the book’s language does include a number of Aramaic terms and loanwords from the Persian-era, and has certain characteristics which are more common in post-Biblical Hebrew than in the Hebrew Bible.<sup>80</sup> There are many contradictions in Ecclesiastes but some sense of continuity is possible to discern. The author of the book views the world as changeless, with humans unable to understand its workings which are conducted under a deliberate divine plan. The ideas in the

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<sup>78</sup> Investigation of the text of the LXX of Proverbs is fraught with difficulties due to the relatively free rendering of the MT. It may be that the Hebrew *l’orlage* differed a good deal from the MT, and that the Greek is a reasonably faithful rendering of its parent text. Or it may be a loose translation of a Hebrew text close to the consonantal text of MT. A third possibility is that LXX Proverbs is a non-literal rendering of a Hebrew text that is not itself close to MT. See J. L. Crenshaw *Ecclesiastes* (London: SCM Press, 1988) p. 13.

<sup>79</sup> See W. McKane *Proverbs: A New Approach* (London: SCM, 1970); J. Martin *Proverbs* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995); R. E. Murphy *Proverbs* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1998); C. Westermann *Roots of Wisdom: The Oldest Proverbs of Israel and Other Peoples* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1995).

<sup>80</sup> Since the work was apparently known to Ben Sira, a date between about the fifth and second centuries BCE seems desirable. The lack of a LXX version may indicate a date of composition in the latter second century BCE. The Greek ‘Ecclesiastes’ is probably the work of Aquila or his followers. The Greek title reflects an early attempt to translate ‘Qoheleth’, the original meaning of this name or title is uncertain, although it might be

book have prompted secondary literature to explore the relationship between Qohelet and Hellenistic philosophy.<sup>81</sup> It is worth noting in particular that the experience of pleasure seems to bear a significant similarity to Hellenistic popular philosophy, whose central purpose was to find a way to individual happiness by use of human reason alone. The Epicureans sought happiness through pleasure and freedom from fear, the Stoics through the shedding of desire and passions.

In Ecclesiastes, work and labour play an important role.<sup>82</sup> Within the observations contained in the book, many aspects of human labour are investigated, for example, striving after wisdom, seeking pleasure, doing justice and the fruits of labour. The words used for labour are עמל and עשה and their derivatives.<sup>83</sup> Guiding themes appear to be that labour cannot change anything (1:3-11; 3:1-11; 13:14-15); the labour of the wise is painful or a senseless undertaking (1:12-18; 2:12-17; 4:13-16; 6:10-12; 7:23-29; 8:16-17); it is not possible to enjoy the fruits of one's own labour (2:18-21; 5:9-16; 6:1-9); human labour is tied to an unjust world order (3:16-21; 4:1-3; 4:4-6; 9:9-15; 9:1-6; 9:11-12); every person needs help (4:7-

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connected with the ideas of 'summoning' or 'gathering'. See J. L. Crenshaw *Ecclesiastes* (London: SCM Press, 1988) p. 11.

<sup>81</sup> A number of scholars, for example M. Hengel *Judaism and Hellenism: studies in their encounter in Palestine during the Early Hellenistic Period* (London: SCM Press, 1981, 1 pp. 115-28), C. Whitley *Koheleth: his language and thought* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1979 pp. 165-75), L. Schwienhorst-Schönberger *Das Buch Kohelet: Studien zur Struktur, Geschichte, Rezeption und Theologie* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1997 pp. 251-332), and more recently, M. V. Fox *A time to tear down and a time to build up: a rereading of Ecclesiastes* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1999) have examined possible Hellenistic influences on Qohelet. Hengel for example sums up the traces of Hellenism in Qohelet in six points: the individuality of personality; radical criticism of the doctrine of retribution; the loss of a personal relationship between God and man; the insinuation of terms for destiny between God and man; the counsel of resignation and a *via media*; and the 'bourgeois ethic' (p. 126). Fox (*A time to tear down* p. 8) argues that Qohelet's particular attitudes need not have had an immediate 'source' in Greek philosophy in order to have shared some of the diffuse concerns and attitudes of various philosophies current in the Hellenistic age. On the social location of the authors of Wisdom literature, see R. N. Whybray 'The social world of the wisdom writers' in R. E. Clements [ed.] *The World of Ancient Israel* (Cambridge: CUP, 1989); J. Gammie & L. G. Perdue (eds.) *The Sage in Israel and the Ancient Near East* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1990).

<sup>82</sup> See the article by S. de Jong 'A Book on Labour: The Structuring Principles and the Main Theme of the Book of Qohelet' in *JSOT* 54 (1992) 107-116. Also M. V. Fox *A Time to Tear Down*.

12); labour does not make anyone happy (2:1-11; 2:22-23); the enjoyment of life has to be given by God (2:24-26; 3:12-13; 3:22; 5:17-19; 8:15; 9:7-10); God in the midst of human toil provides sustenance (2:24f; 3:17; 5:17ff; 8:15; 9:7-10; 11:1-8). Thus, although work is portrayed as being fundamentally difficult and often without success, crucially a connection with the divine appears to bring some worth to work. This is particularly important for understanding Paul's portrayal of work. It is not the case that Qoheleth views wisdom in a universally positive light: Qoheleth presents both positive (7:4, 5, 10, 11, 12, 19; 9:13, 15, 16, 17, 18; 10:1, 2, 10, 12), and negative assertions concerning wisdom (negative texts being 2:14-15; 2:16, 19, 21; 6:8). The tendency in secondary literature is to present Qoheleth as wholly negative, a tendency which some have sought to correct.<sup>84</sup> This may well have implications for an understanding of the portrayal of work in the Jewish evidence in general and with regard to Paul, that is to say, Paul's portrayal of work should not be viewed as wholly negative.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> In the following cases, עמל and עשה with their derivatives indicate human labour: 1:3, 9, 13, 14; 2:, 3, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 12, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24; 3:9, 12, 13; 4:1, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9; 5:14, 15, 17; 6:7, 12; 7:20; 8:3, 4, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17; 9:6, 9, 10.

<sup>84</sup> Notably M. V. Fox *A time to tear down*, and in *Ecclesiastes: the traditional Hebrew text with the new JPS translation* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2004).

<sup>85</sup> Thus M. V. Fox *Ecclesiastes* (New York: Jewish Publication Society, 2004) suggests that Qoheleth presents the idea that many things are worthwhile in life: moderate work and pleasure, love and friendship, gaining and using limited human wisdom, seeking to be righteous and 'fearing God and hoping for divine justice' (p. 37).

### 2.2.2.10 The Book of Nehemiah<sup>86</sup>

Offering an interesting comparison with Paul, in Neh. 5:1-19, the work of the governor Nehemiah was worth his maintenance, but he waived his right to be supported by the poor out of consideration for these people. This is analogous to the strategy of Paul, particularly in his Corinthian context in which Paul has to use a whole chapter (9) of his first letter to the Corinthians explaining why he has not made use of his right to be supported. He is ultimately supporting himself in order to relieve the burden from his community (in the case of the Corinthians so that they can direct financial worth to the collection). Instead Nehemiah participated in the building of the wall of the city. Neh. 6:16 describes the building of the wall around Jerusalem. In the prophets' proclamations of salvation, work done in righteousness will bring an abundance of material goods. The building of Jerusalem's walls is called by Nehemiah a good work (Neh 2:16, 18). Although in the song about work in Neh. 4:10, complaint is made over the heavy work without prospect of success, the success of the work that was achieved was done so because the people were supported by God (6:16), and had a mind to work (4:4).

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<sup>86</sup> The Book of Nehemiah is usually placed alongside that of Ezra. Although this work was separated into two books by Origen in the third century CE and Jerome in the 4<sup>th</sup> century CE, the division does not appear in Hebrew Bibles before the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Nehemiah is thought to be a leader of the Jewish community who returned to Judah after the Babylonian exile in the sixth century BCE. The book of Nehemiah recounts events in which the author was involved, such as the rebuilding of the wall in Jerusalem. The books of Ezra-Nehemiah present considerable textual difficulties. The principal textual witnesses, in addition to the MT, are both Greek: 1 Esdras, a paraphrastic rendering of the Hebrew-Aramaic text, and 2 Esdras, the literal translation of Ezra-Nehemiah in the LXX. See D. Clines *Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther* (Basingstoke: Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 1984); F. C. Fensham *The Books of Ezra and Nehemiah* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1982); H. G. M. Williamson *Ezra, Nehemiah* (Waco, Tex: Word, 1985).

### 2.2.2.11 The Book of Tobit<sup>87</sup>

In 2:11f. it is reported how Tobit's wife, Anna earned money by doing 'women's work' (weaving, v. 12). In 4:13, Tobit warns his son against idleness which brings loss and poverty. Chapters 5 and 12 contain instructions regarding the giving of wages, thus continuing a theme found with frequency in the Jewish evidence.

### 2.2.2.12 The Book of Sirach<sup>88</sup>

Work for a living as a way of serving God is attested to in Sirach 7:15, agriculture (ἐργασίαν) has been created by the Most High. The exhortation here not to hate agriculture seems to be addressed to the same group as in 7:20f, that is, to the slave-owners. Sirach regarded manual labour as divinely created even for them. In Sirach 17:1-11 we are told how the Lord created humans and gave them power over everything on earth, over four-footed creatures and birds (vv. 1-4). He gave humans reason, a tongue, eyes and ears, understanding and insight into the nature of good and evil (vv. 6ff), and the capacity to declare God's mighty deeds and praise his name (vv. 8-10).

Sirach sees the human's present situation, in which he must perform physical and spiritual work, as created by God. Both the positive and negative sides of work are traced by

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<sup>87</sup> C. A. Moore (1992) 'Tobit'. *ABD* VI: 591. The Book of Tobit recounts the story of Tobit son of Tobiel, who lived in Nineveh. Tobit describes how he had been a righteous Jew, observing the Laws of Moses. Tobit married Anna and with her had a son, Tobiah. The book has been variously dated from the 7<sup>th</sup> century BCE to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century CE. Most scholars now date it to somewhere between 225 and 175 BCE, after the canonisation of the Prophets as the word of God (14:4) and before the Maccabean period (13:11; 14:6-7)

<sup>88</sup> Also known as the 'Wisdom of Ben Sira' or 'Ecclesiasticus' (the Latin title). 'Sirach' is the name found on the Greek manuscript. Closely modelled on the Book of Proverbs, Sirach contains moral, cultic and ethical maxims, folk proverbs, psalms of praise and lament, and reflections and observations on life. Sirach is the work of a single author, Ben Sira, who wrote in Jerusalem during the second century BCE. Ben Sira was a professional scribe. In the foreword to his translation, the grandson writes that Ben Sira devoted himself to the study of the Law, the Prophets, and the other Writings. The traditional form of the book is based on the Greek translation made by Ben Sira's grandson, found in the LXX. Hebrew fragments are present at Qumran and Masada.

Sirach to divine creation. The author can thus maintain that agriculture is laborious (ἐπίπονον) and that it is created by God (7:15). In Sirach, metaphors and terms employed of ordinary work are used a number of times where an occupation with wisdom is discussed. In 6:18f., the son is exhorted to approach Wisdom as the farmer does the field, labouring in a short period in order to eat soon of its fruits. In 24:22, Wisdom invites all so inclined to come to her, promising that those who busy themselves with her (οἱ ἐργαζόμενοι) will not sin. In 24:30-34, Sirach speaks of his own labour (ἐκοπίασα v.34) with Wisdom. It involved work in instruction and in prophetic speech (v. 33), work which he could not carry on for his own benefit alone; for, like a canal which becomes a torrent and floods over, so his instruction in the Law must stream forth and reach others (vv. 31, 33f.). To be so occupied was for Sirach, more noble than any other work. This is most evident in the description of the scribe and the craftsmen in 38:24-39:11. Here the contrast between the scribe and the one occupied with manual labour is set forth. The latter turns his heart to that which affects his work; he devotes sleepless efforts to accomplishing his task. He has not the time, energy or disposition left for wisdom. Therefore the scribe, who devotes himself to wisdom, must have 'ample leisure' (ἐν εὐκαιρία σχολῆς 38:24). He gives his soul to studies in the law of God, turns his heart to the Most High in prayer, and devotes all his time to studying the scriptures (39:1-3).<sup>89</sup> Moreover, farmers and craftsmen have a completely different position in public life in Sirach's community than the scribe, for example the farmers and craftsmen cannot be

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<sup>89</sup> This is a context which may be important for understanding Paul and his context, and hints too at a debate which appears in the Rabbinic literature concerning the study of the Torah and its compatibility with manual work (M. Ab). This debate may well be influencing Paul's defence of his own manual labour in 1 Cor. 9. J. J. Collins comments that the contrast between the scribe and the artisan is analogous to an Egyptian satire, 'Satire on the Trades', the *Instruction of Kheti, Son of Duanf*, which was written in the early second millennium and copied repeatedly over the centuries (J. J. Collins 'The Wisdom of Jesus Son of Sirach' in J. Barton and J. Muddiman [eds.] *The Oxford Bible Commentary* (Oxford: OUP, 2001) p. 691. Although Sirach is more diplomatic, his tone is still condescending. See also HJPAJC Vol. II pp. 328-9.

consulted regarding important matters (38:33a), and they cannot give moral or legal instruction (38:34a). According to Sirach the one who cultivated his soil raised 'high his heap' (20:28);<sup>90</sup> both handicraft (Sir. 38:22) and work as a slave (33:25) were seen as providing sustenance (38:32, translated 'and they will not be strangers or wander about', that is, be poor, lacking sustenance).<sup>91</sup> In Sir. 29:21-25, the importance of having basic sustenance in one's own shelter and of not living by begging from others is emphasised. On the other hand, one must see to it that one enjoys the result of one's own work (not too extravagantly, 19:1), not allowing others to be the only ones to enjoy it because of meanness towards oneself. The one who is hard on himself cannot be kind towards others (Sir. 14:4f, cf. vv. 14f.)

Those occupied with everyday life are focused completely on their work, on doing their job; this is so to such an extent that 'their prayer' is said to be 'in their daily work' (ἡ δέησις αὐτῶν ἐν ἐργασίᾳ τέχνης 38:34d). Thus, according to Sirach work as a farmer or craftsman prevented one from serving God as directly as one who occupied himself with Wisdom and the study of the Law. Such a high assessment of scribalism does not however mean that Sirach saw the work of farmers or craftsmen as worthless – it was quite significant when seen in perspective. Every craftsman is wise (σοφίζεται) in what concerns his own job (38:31b); without his skills no city could be built up or function (38:32a). Moreover, the workers receive maintenance from their jobs, so that they need not wander around as strangers, seeking something to live on (38:32b). Besides all this, 'they maintain the fabric of this world (κτίσμα αἰῶνος στηρίσουσιν)' and pray for the material things they work with (38:34c). The work and prayer of the farmer and craftsmen are thus, according to Sirach on a different level

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<sup>90</sup> See Pvb. 12:1 and 1QS 10.15.

from those of the scribe, but on their level, they are something positive. But they are not for the one who genuinely wants to be wise, since he must be freed from manual work for a nobler task. Work of the humble and understanding, according to Sirach, brings results (10:26-11:1). In Sir. 31:22, it is said that the one who is prompt (ἐντρεχής) in what he does (ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς ἔργοις) will be protected from sickness.

The work of the ungodly is cursed in Sirach, the one who becomes rich by means of his meanness, and who imagines that he has rest (ἀνάπαυσιν) after his work, does not in fact know how long he can retain his goods before he must die and leave them to others (11:18f.). This according to Sirach, is a curse (12:16). Sirach viewed professions in commerce negatively since those so occupied could scarcely avoid sinning: the desire for profit was, according to Sirach a sin which inevitably worked its way in between one who sells and one who purchases (Sir. 26:29-27:2). Thus, for Sirach the desire for gain was something negative.<sup>92</sup> According to Sirach agriculture is laborious (ἐπίπονον 7:15 cf. 6:18f.) as well, of course, as slave labour. The latter fact is apparent in that it was regarded as obvious that a slave wanted to be free.<sup>93</sup>

Rest (ἀνάπαυσις) after work seems often to be regarded as work's goal (Sir. 11:17ff.; 31:3f.; cf. 28:16ff.; 51:27f.). Sirach saw, however, that work and repose were in a sense divided between the classes of society: the slave must be compelled to work so that his master may find rest (33:25f.). The rich man was seen to be able to find contentment in repose after his toil in gathering possessions (ἐν συναγωγῇ), whereas the poor man could not rest, since he would then suffer need (ἐπιδεῆς γίνεται 31:3f.). The poor man who worked for

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<sup>91</sup> Cf. Sir. 29:21-28, cf. Tobit 2:11.

<sup>92</sup> Cf. Sir. 31:5f.; 5:1ff.; 1 Tim. 6:9f.

<sup>93</sup> See the laws on slavery in Ex. 21:2; Dt. 15:12-15; Lev. 25:39-45; Jer. 34:8-18.

a rich man would be made a slave when he was needed, but otherwise was abandoned to his fate (13:2ff.). Stipulation that the worker has a right to a wage (Deut. 24:15) is alluded to in several places.<sup>94</sup> Especially Sirach stressed that the one who deprived the wage-earner of his hire shed blood (34:22).<sup>95</sup> The worker thus lived by his work for his employer.<sup>96</sup> The one who worked with Wisdom should also, according to Sirach, reap fruit (6:18f; 33:16ff.) and receive a wage for his labour (51:30). Here use is made of metaphors of work which are based on the obvious principle that the one who works should receive a wage and his sustenance in return.<sup>97</sup>

For Sirach, human work (for a living) is a way of serving God. Sirach appears to regard manual labour as divinely created, even for slaves (33:29). That work was regarded positively by Sirach can be seen in his regarding indolence as being as abhorrent as impurity (22:1f). According to Sirach 11:20f, human beings are to persevere in their work throughout life, to believe in the LORD, to be faithful to the covenant and to keep to their labour; and at Sirach 10:26-11:1, true, humble wisdom and ordinary work are related even if, to Sirach's readers, they were considered natural opposites.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> See also Tobit 4:14; Sir. 34:21f.; Aristeas 258f.

<sup>95</sup> Cf. Sir. 7:20, Baba Mezia 112a, James 5:4.

<sup>96</sup> That work should bring a wage is said also in Tobit 5:15f.; 1 Macc. 3:55f; connected with the laws of war in Dt. 20:5f., and cf. Judg. 7:3f.; 2 Macc. 8:13, and Enoch 104:1-5 – it is a heavenly eschatological reward

<sup>97</sup> Cf. Wis. 8:18; 2 Macc. 2:27.

<sup>98</sup> W. Bienert *Die Arbeit nach der Lehre der Bibel* (Stuttgart 1956) p. 152, sees in 10:27 a polemic against a Greek view which regarded philosophy as ethically nobler than physical work.

### 2.2.2.13 The Book of Wisdom<sup>99</sup>

According to Wisdom (9:1-4, 10-13 [1-18 as a whole]; 14a, 16-17), it was God who, by means of Wisdom, ‘artificer of all things’, gave Solomon ‘knowledge in diverse crafts’ (ἐργατειῶν ἐπιστήμη) 7:16, 22 (cf. Ex. 31:f; 35:30ff; 36:1; Isa. 28:23ff.). That this refers to various kinds of work is clear from Solomon’s prayer to God to send Wisdom to work (κοπιάση) with him (9:10). When Wisdom guides him in his tasks of judging and designing the Temple, his deeds (ἔργα) will be ‘acceptable’ to God (9:7, 11f.). In the Jewish circles represented by Wisdom, it seems that at least certain types of work were regarded as in line with God’s will. This was true not only of tasks done by the king, but also of everyday working for a living. Creation is also the subject matter in Wis. 9:1-3; 10f. There it is stated that God by means of his wisdom created man to master all creation and rule the world with holiness and righteousness (9:2f.); the commission to rule over creation was given after the ‘fall’ – work belongs to the postparadisaic order. Good work (ἀγαθῶν γὰρ πόνων), according to Wisdom, brings with it great fruit (Wis. 3:15); at the day of judgement, the righteous man will boldly stand in front of those who despised his labours (τοὺς πόνους αὐτοῦ Wis. 5:1). One other feature of Wis. 9 is that Wisdom is portrayed as labouring (ἔργα) at the side of God.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> The Wisdom of Solomon is an exhortatory discourse, interspersed with praise to wisdom. It is commonly held to be the work of a single author, writing in Alexandria after the conquest of Rome in 30 BCE. The first six chapters form an address to the rulers of the earth. They accentuate the necessity of wisdom as indispensable to rulers (1:6; 6:9-25). The second part of Wisdom (7-9:17) contains an address of King Solomon, relating how his life was guided solely by wisdom, and closing with a prayer offered by him to God that he might obtain her. E. G. Clarke *The Wisdom of Solomon* (Cambridge: CUP, 1973); P. Law *The Wisdom of Solomon* (Oxford: Lion, 1997); L. Grabbe *Wisdom of Solomon* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997); D. Winston *The Wisdom of Solomon: a new translation, with introduction and commentary* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1979).

<sup>100</sup> Wis. 9:15 reads: ‘for a perishable body weighs down the soul, and this earthly tent burdens the thoughtful mind’. This resonates with 2 Cor. 5:4, ‘For while we are still in this tent, we groan under our burden, because we wish not to be unclothed but to be still further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life’. In one sense perhaps work belongs (for Paul) to the toil and labour of this life (after the manner of the Wisdom

In the review of Israel's history in Wis. 10, it is said that the righteous Jacob received prosperity from Wisdom during his toils (μόχθοις) and that the fruits of his work (τοὺς πόνους αὐτοῦ) increased (10:10).<sup>101</sup> Honest labours bear great fruit also according to Wisdom (3:15; cf. 10:10, 17); the carpenter's work for example, was seen as resulting in a tool useful for daily life (13:11). In addition, Wisdom speaks of the slave labour of Israel's children in Egypt as 'toil' (κόπων αὐτῶν 10:17; δεινοῖς ἐκάκωσαν πόνους 'heavy labour', 19:16).<sup>102</sup> When in Wis. 17, the curses over Egypt in the time of Moses are described, it is said that the farmer, shepherd, and wage-earner were kept from their work by the curse of darkness, while the rest of the world remained in the light of day and continued undisturbed in their work (17:16, 19). Here undisturbed work is described as something positive. The one who early seeks Wisdom will not strain (οὐ κοπιᾷσει), and the one who stays awake at night for her sake will soon be free from anxiety (ταχέως ἀμέριμνος ἔσται [6:14f]).<sup>103</sup> In 14:2-7, since the construction of ships accorded with God's will, the ship was regarded as blessed in contrast with idols (13:11ff; 14:1, 8ff.). They were not the result of proper work, but rather, according to an ironical description of their origin in 13:11-14, the refuse of work's refuse. According to this passage, the production of a useful tool leaves a refuse used by the carpenter to cook food over.<sup>104</sup> He then carves the useless remains 'with the diligence of idleness (ἐν ἐπιμελείᾳ ἀργίας αὐτοῦ)' and forms it, 'by the skill of his indolence' (ἐμπειρίᾳ συνέσεως)' (variant found in mss. BS+ A), into an idol (vv.12ff.). Of those who despise wisdom, it is said that their toils are unprofitable (οἱ κόποι ἀνόνητοι) and their works useless (ἄχρηστα τὰ ἔργα αὐτῶν) (3:11). The

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passage); and also for Paul, work conveys the creative responsibility of human obligation before God (as informed by Torah).

<sup>101</sup> Perhaps this refers to the story of Jacob and Laban in Gen. 29-31. Sirach regarded agriculture as created by God (7:15); he saw the Lord at work also in the work of the doctor and pharmacist (38:1, 4, 7f., 14).

<sup>102</sup> Ex. 1-6.

one who produces an idol is as cursed as the image itself (14:8). The desire for gain when connected with the production of idols was condemned, however (15:11f.). All production of idols was, of course, evil work (13:11ff; 14:8f.) but it was regarded at its worst when done for profit by one who knew idols were powerless (15:7, 12f.).

#### 2.2.2.14 The Book of 1 Enoch<sup>105</sup>

The ideal in the Ethiopic Enoch (103-104) in regard to work seems to be that one would be entirely relieved of doing it. There it is said that, at the end of time, the righteous will receive glory, but sinners, punishment (103:3ff.). In this age the righteous have ‘toiled laboriously and experienced every trouble’, hoped to be the head<sup>106</sup> but become the tail, ‘toiled laboriously’ but not received satisfaction in their toil, been food for sinners and borne their heavy yoke’ (cf. Deut. 28:48) (103:9-11). When they longed to flee and be at rest, they found no place of escape (103:13); the rulers to whom they appealed only concealed the oppression of those who devoured them and did not remove the yoke of those who divided and murdered them (103:15). But in heaven the angels will remember them for good; they will receive a reward and ‘shine as the lights in heaven’ All their tribulation will come over ‘the rulers’ and the angels will give them joy (104:1-4). The ideal is thus here primarily that of finding rest, and escaping from heavy labour. It can thus be assumed that work is regarded in Enoch as so laborious that the ideal is rest and repose; but the ideal is to be realised

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<sup>103</sup> Cf. Mt. 6:25-34.

<sup>104</sup> Cf. Isa. 44:13f.

<sup>105</sup> 1 Enoch is a composite apocalyptic work representing numerous periods and writers. Some fragments of 1 Enoch have been found among the Dead Sea Scrolls (M. Abegg Jr., P. Flint, E. Ulrich *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible* T&T Clark: Edinburgh, 1999, p. 480-1, 20 mss all in Aramaic) which has led to a dating between the second century BCE and the first century CE.

<sup>106</sup> Cf. Deut. 28:13

eschatologically, in the company of angels. (cf also 1QpHab. 10.11: work against God's will is toil, עמל).<sup>107</sup>

### 2.2.2.15 The Dead Sea Scrolls<sup>108</sup>

In addition to the texts from the Scrolls already discussed, in 1QS 3.17f. God created man for mastery over the world.<sup>109</sup> In 1QH 17.19<sup>110</sup> not working could be equated with not obeying God's will. That the Sabbath should be kept free of work is enjoined in CD 10.18f.; one was not permitted to come to any decisions on that day regarding 'money and gain' One was not even allowed to speak of 'work (מלאכה) or labour (עבודה) to be done on the morrow'. On the Sabbath, one was not permitted to get angry with one's manservant, maidservant, or day-labourer (CD 11.12) or to assist an animal which gave birth or fell into a well (CD 11.13). Nor was any man who fell into water or fire permitted to be pulled out with the aid of a tool (CD 11.16f). Division of labour between the study of the law and other activity (to rotate amongst the community) seems to be in order in 1QS 6.6f.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> The same is true of 1 Macc. 14:6-15, which appears to be a hymn on the state of affairs that an ideal king in Israel can bring about. During the time of the Maccabee Simon, Judaea had peace. At that time, one could cultivate the earth in peace; it yielded its harvest, and the soil its fruit (14:4, 8). Then one carried on one's work undisturbed by any war (ἐποίησεν ἐρήμην ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς 14:11, 13). Here work belongs to a blessed state of affairs, and is clearly something positive.

<sup>108</sup> The Dead Sea Scrolls are not a single collection of scrolls found together in one place, but rather, numerous scrolls and scroll fragments found by the Dead Sea. Relevant scrolls to this thesis are grouped under this heading for convenience.

<sup>109</sup> According to Jos. *B.J.* 2.8.5 for the Essenes, work was described as an obligation.

<sup>110</sup> According to the reconstruction by G. Vermes *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968) p. 198.

<sup>111</sup> Philo (*Every Good Man is Free*) describes the Essenes, 'some of them labour on the land and others pursue such crafts as co-operate with peace and so benefit themselves and their neighbours' (76 p. 54-55 Loeb Vol. IX). 79 (p. 57) they reject slavery; observe the Sabbath (80-82), 'for that day has been set apart to be kept holy and on it they abstain from all other work and proceed to sacred spots they call synagogues' Identification of the Essenes with the authors of the Dead Sea Scrolls is widely assumed, but is by no means certain. See for

### 2.2.2.16 The Mishnah<sup>112</sup>

At the heart of Judaism lay the Mosaic Law (the Torah), whose scope and interpretation had given rise to such diversity within Judaism in the previous centuries. Fundamental to the authors of the *Mishnah*, compiled by R. Judah ha-Nasi in c. 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE, was this sense of the importance of the Torah and especially the relationship in practical terms that it implied with God. The centrality of the Law to the *Mishnah* has often prompted the attachment of the descriptive label ‘law code.’ What we find in the *Mishnah* is an attempt to explore various aspects of life activity – social and economic – as *affected* by the precepts of the Torah. The exploration of these areas and issues is given through observational rulings (*halakha*) which take the form of debates between various figures, some called ‘rabbi’, others simply identified by name or collectively, as in ‘the School of Shammai’ and ‘the Sages’ (החכמים), and often referred to in secondary scholarship as the *tannaim*. The *Mishnah* contains not so much prescriptions of behaviour (as a law code might typically be expected to do) but rather descriptions often in an abstruse way. Here we assume that what the text said presumably made sense to those exposed to it, that the descriptions were at the very least some sort of reaction to the way people were living. Furthermore, it can also be assumed that the observation that one was ‘not to do *x* or *y*’ (on the Sabbath for example) did not necessarily mean that one ‘could not do *x* or *y*’ (on any other day). Despite elements of the esoteric, the *Mishnah* does present a coherent theology for a Judaism that now survived without its Temple (destroyed in 70 CE) and its city Jerusalem (renamed *Aelia Capitolina* at the time of the Bar Kochba revolt – 132-135 CE). With regard to the former, emphasis is given in the

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example M. Goodman (1995) ‘A Note on the Qumran Sectarians, the Essenes and Josephus’. *JJS* 46.1-2: 161-166.

*Mishnah* to the reconstruction of the Temple ritual in the present tense, a sentiment akin to the over-striking of coins with depictions of the Temple during the Bar Kochba revolt but without the same explicit political overtones. Among the various notable features in the *Mishnah* is the enforcement of the purity laws contained in Lev. 11-15 with the additional focus on the purity of hands, a non-biblically based feature which may have something to do with the extent to which working practices which naturally involve the use of the hands form the basis of many of the observations contained in the *Mishnah*.

Although as a source the *Mishnah* comes from a time period considerably after that of Paul, it is still a useful source to examine in some detail as it can demonstrate how one group of Jews responded to the same types of evidence that are likely to have been available to Paul.<sup>113</sup> Moreover, the description of work in such detail further demonstrates the important role work played in the lives of the rabbis, both in terms of their self-support and also, so this thesis argues with the case of Paul, as an important aspect of a productive life in relationship to God. The historical context already alluded to is of further importance in the role it played in the resultant location of the development of the *Mishnah*. After the Bar Kochba revolt, Jews were ejected from Judaea (more particularly from the area in and around Jerusalem) and as a result migrated northwards towards Galilee, and it is here that Rabbinic Judaism flourished in the villages and major centres of Usha, Beth Shearim, Sepphoris and

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<sup>112</sup> The text of the *Mishnah* that is used throughout comes from the Albeck-Yallon edition (Israel: Bialik Institute and Dvir Co., 1952). All translations are my own.

<sup>113</sup> Mindful that Hock's rejection of Paul's portrayal of work being influenced by his Jewishness is based on a reading of the Rabbinic evidence in which Hock considers it inappropriate for use with Paul. It could be that the emphasis on work in the *Mishnah* forms part of a resolution of a long-standing debate on the topic of which Paul was a part. That is to say, the reasons why the rabbis might have valued work (aside from the obvious financial benefits) may be the same as for Paul in terms of work being a divinely exemplified activity and thus positive to a greater or lesser degree depending upon the context. The Rabbis have often been compared with philosophers, as has Paul. See the article by C. Hezser: 'Interfaces between Rabbinic literature and Græco-

finally Tiberias in the mid-third century. Thus, while the *Mishnah* is not written from an explicitly 'Galilean' point of view (whatever that might be) it is nonetheless reasonable to suggest that the observations made are based upon the individuals' contemporary geographical surroundings and that their fellow Galilean inhabitants could have at least understood the contexts under discussion. We should bear in mind that there are places in the *Mishnah* where it can be reasonably suggested that there is a degree of idealisation as the following might imply:

R. Meir said: Do not engage too much with business but occupy yourself with the Law...if you labour in the Law He has abundant reward to give you...(M.Ab. 4.10)

and

R. Meir says: A man should always teach his son an acceptable craft, and let him pray to him to whom riches and possession belong, for there is no craft where there is not both poverty and wealth; for poverty comes not from a man's craft, nor riches from a man's craft, but all is according to his merit...(M.Kidd. 4.14)<sup>114</sup>

as well as observations which occasionally may be stretching the limits of the rabbis' imagination.

Rather than focusing solely on their explicit observations (apart from where specific occupations and trades are mentioned, especially when they can be corroborated by external evidence as from archaeology, for example) if we try also to examine deliberately expressed attitudes in order to get at the implied society that lay behind them, this may prove a more responsible way of using the evidence.<sup>115</sup> So, the observation that

Rabban Gamaliel used to lend his tenants wheat to be repaid in kind when it was for sowing...(M.B.M. 5.8)

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Roman philosophy' in C. Hezser and P. Schäfer [eds] *The Talmud Yerushalmi and Graeco-Roman Culture*. (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000) Vol. 2 pp. 161-87.

<sup>114</sup> Hock rejects this as a possible context for understanding Paul's manual labour *Social Context*, p. 11.

<sup>115</sup> See H. Francis *The Portrayal of Work in the Mishnah* (Unpublished MPhil Thesis, University of Oxford, 2000).

suggests a system of land-owning and tenancy. One could also look to any halakhic issues which arise from particular types of work. For example:

If the workers (הברין) in the olive-press went in and out, and there was unclean liquid in the olive-press-building (בית הכור) and there was space enough between the liquid and the olives for their feet to get dry on the ground, they remain clean...(M.Toh. 10.2)

This text gives us a small insight into the production of olive-oil even if it may appear a rather obvious one, that the olives were pressed by workers in a building set aside for such a purpose and yet, this is information that can be checked by archaeology. Similarly, mention of foodstuffs grown (and presumably consumed) as in M.Kil. 1 which contains various references to the forbidden mixing or grafting of different plants, beans and vegetables, all helps in building up a picture of the sorts of production activities that were conceivably being pursued in Galilee during the second century.

All this leads towards a recommendation that the *Mishnah* should be treated as a reliable document in the sense that it is based upon observant reflections on every day life that were shaped by the need to deal with issues that those involved in work faced in the work-place. The authors of the extant Rabbinic literature were not historians, as we might imagine, in that they did not attempt to provide an historical narrative in the way for example Josephus does in his account of the first revolt against Rome. Yet it does not follow that Rabbinic documents like the *Mishnah* are devoid of a sense of history if we understand history as being made up of many different yet interrelated elements - social, legal, political, economic and religious. Given the normative character of *Halakhah*, the concern for determining the present by confronting it with the past (how do we live in accordance with Torah when there

is no Temple?) portrays a real awareness and concern with the legacy of history and does certainly not represent an ahistorical world view.<sup>116</sup>

Even just a casual glance through the *Mishnah* reveals that its authors were acquainted with a number of different working practices in industry, agriculture and the household. We know this both from objects referred to and from explicit statements made. The presentation of work practices and implements is made in order to discover the various working environments implied by the observations made.

The portrayal of work in the *Mishnah* contains descriptions of people working and the various tools they used and the environments in which they worked. In addition the *Mishnah* contains references to prayers for rain (presumably to help with the production of crops):

From what time do they make mention of 'the Power of Rain' (גבורת השמים)?...They pray for rain only near to the time for rain...If the first of Chislev was come and no rain had fallen, the court enjoins on the congregations three days of fasting...(M..Taan.1)

and the *Mishnah* has many references to the market-place (in general), some of which deal with practical difficulties encountered:

...If a camel laden with flax passed by in the public domain and its load of flax entered into a shop and caught fire from the shopkeeper's light, and so set fire to a large building, the owner of the camel is culpable... (M.B.K. 6.6)  
 ...he who pours out water in a public place, and someone was damaged by it, he [who poured it] is liable for the damages... (M.B.K. 3.2)  
 None may open a baker's shop or a dyer's shop under his fellow's storehouse, nor [may he keep] a cattle-stall [near by]...(M.B.B. 2.3)

The most obvious place to begin an investigation of the portrayal of work in the *Mishnah* is in tractate Shab.7.2 which lists the main types of work the individual should avoid doing on the Sabbath:

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<sup>116</sup> J. Neusner *The Mishnah: An Introduction* (New York: Ktav, 1989), comments, '...the *Mishnah* stands in contrast with the world to which it speaks. Its message is one of small achievements and modest hope (1)...The *Mishnah*

The main classes of work (אבות מלאכות) are forty save one<sup>117</sup>: sowing (הזור); ploughing (החורש); reaping (הקוצר); binding sheaves (המעמר); threshing (הרש); winnowing (הזורח); cleansing (הבורר); grinding (הטוחן); sifting (with a fine sieve) (המרקד); kneading (הלש); baking (האופה); shearing (the wool (הנוז את הצמר); washing (המלבנו); or beating (המנפצו); or dyeing (החובעו); spinning (הטווה); weaving (המיסד); making two loops (שתי בחי נידון); weaving two threads (האורג שני חוטין); separating two threads (הפיצע שני חוטין); tying (a knot) (הקושר); or loosening one (המחיר); sewing two stitches (שתי הפירות הקורע על מנת לחפור); tearing in order to sew two stitches (שתי הפירות החופר); hunting a deer (הצד צבי); and slaughtering it (שוהטו); or flaying it (המפשיט); or salting it (המולח); or curing its skin (המעבד את עורו); or scraping it (המוחק); or cutting it up (המחככו); writing two letters (אוחיוח); erasing in order to write two letters (שתי הכותב); building (הבונה); demolishing (הסותר); extinguishing (המכבה); kindling (המכבה); striking with a hammer (המכה בפטיש); carrying from one domain to another (המוציא מרשות לרשות)...These are the chief labours (אבות מלאכות).

Elsewhere in the *Mishnah* there appears the types of work a woman should do:

These are the works which the wife must perform for her husband: grinding (טוחנת) flour and baking (אופה) bread and washing (מכבשת) clothes and cooking (מבשלת) food and giving suck to her child (מניקה את בנה) and making ready his bed (מצעת לוע המטה) and working in wool (עשה בעמר). (M.Ket. 5.5).

Neither of these lists are absolute but they do give a good idea of the main types of work to which the *Mishnah* refers. What follows below<sup>118</sup> is a more detailed outline which is not

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contains no sustained narrative whatsoever, very few tales, and no large-scale conception of history. It organizes its system in non-historical and socially unspecific terms' (p. 150).

<sup>117</sup> Discussed in some detail by S. B. Hoenig 'The Designated Number of Kinds of Labor Prohibited on the Sabbath' in *JQR* 68 (1978) pp. 193-208.

<sup>118</sup> *Agriculture/Food Production*: besides the main types of farming field-activities (sowing, ploughing, reaping, binding sheaves, threshing, winnowing and cleansing crops) there is also mentioned 'weeding' (המנכש) (M.Shab.12.2). The references to workers in the fields, the hiring of labourers (at M.Peah 5.6; M.Maas 2.7 for example) and to tenants imply that a system of tenancy and land-ownership was in operation (see also the reference to R. Gamaliel cited on p. 5). *Olive / olive oil production* - olive (זית [B.H.]) trees and fruit M.Peah 3.1, 6.5, 7.1f., 8.1,3; M.Dem. 6.5,6; M.Kil. 6.5; M.Shebi. 4.5,9,10; M.Ter. 1.4,8,9, 2.6, 10.7, 11.3; M.Maas. 3.3, 4.1,3; M.Sh. 1.4; M.Hall. 3.9; M.Bikk. 1.3,10, 3.3; M.Shab. 2.2, 17.3; M.Kat. 2.1; M.Ket. 8.5; M.Ned. 6.7; M.Gitt. 2.3, 5.8; M.B.M. 5.7, 8.5; M.B.B. 3.1, 5.3,6, 10.7; M.Men. 8.3,4,5; M.Kel. 5.5, 12.8; M.Toh. 9.4,4,6; M.Maksh. 3.6) olive-press (בית הבר [crusher בקצב, small-press בורידה], described in M.B.B. 4.5 also mentioned in M.Shebi. 8.6; M.Maas 1.7; M.M.Sh. 3.7; M.Shab. 1.9; M.Hag. 3.4; M.Ned. 3.2, 5.3; M.B.M. 10.4; M.B.B. 1.6, 31, 4.4,5,7, 10.7; M.Shebu. 3.8; M.Kel. 12.3, 20.3; M.Toh.2.8f.; M.Zab. 4.7) oil 51 (שמן) used for lighting (M.Dem. 1.3), greasing utensils (ibid.) and in cosmetics (Pes. 3.1; eye-paint, M.Shab. 8.,3, 10.6; M.Makk. 3.6; M.Bekh. 7.3; M.Kel. 13.2, 16.8). *Wine production* - grapes (ענבים [B.H.]) M.Ber. 6.8; M.Dem. 2.5; M.Kil. 7.7; M.Shebi. 8.6; M.Ter. 1.4,8,9, 8.6, 11.3; M.Maas. 1,2,8; M.Sh. 1.4, 3.6; M.Hall. 3.9; M.Bikk. 3.1,3; M.Ned. 6.7, 11.5,6; M.Naz. 6.1,2; M.B.M. 5.7, 7.4; M.Eduy. 5.2; M.A.Zar. 4.2, 5.2; M.Ab. 4.20; M.Ker. 4.3; M.Kel. 2.3; M.Toh. 3.3, 10.5; M.Mikw. 7.3; M.Maksh. 5.11, 6.8; M.Uktz. 3.6.), wine (יין [B.H.]), libation wine (א.זר. 4.8, 5.1,2,7,8,9,10) also referred to in the context of a wine-press (נת) M.Peah 7.1; M.Dem.6.7; M.Kil. 5.3,4; M.Shebi. 8.6; M.Ter. 3.4, 8.9; M.Maas. 4.4; M.Sh. 3.6,13, 4.1; M.Shab. 1.9; M.Erub. 10.6; M.Hag. 3.4; M.A.Zar. 4.8,9, 5.11; M.Toh. 8.6, 10.5,8), upper wine-press (הנה העליונה) M.Maas. 1.7) trellised vines (ברליה) M.Peah. 4.1,2, 7.8; M.Kil. 6.1f., 7.3; M.Eduy. 2.4; M.Men.8.6), vines (הנפסים [B.H.]) M.Ber. 6.1; M.Peah. 1.5, 7.3,5; M.Kil. 1.8; M.Shebi. 4.6,10, 9.6; M.Maas. 3.9; M.Orl. 1.5,7;

meant as an exhaustive list but rather provides the main types of foodstuffs mentioned in the *Mishnah* so as to gain an impression of the varieties of work implied by their production.

Some words appear only once and their meaning is not often certain. Reasonable suggestions drawn from context can suggest meanings. In general however, it is best to keep to those types of work, foodstuffs and implements which can be reliably identified through either Biblical Hebrew or Greek.

Much working activity described in the *Mishnah* takes place in the field in an agricultural setting. The numerous references to the 'householder' imply that work was also concentrated in the home, or at least that the home provided the basis and that work was carried out nearby either in the fields or in the courtyard /market area (שיק M.Hall. 2.7); this term can also be read in generic terms as indicating 'out of doors') or it may be that the

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M.Sukk. 1.4; M.M.Kat. 1.1; M.Ket. 8.5; M.Naz. 6.1,5; M.Sot. 9.15; M.B.B. 2.12; M.Tam. 2.3; M.Midd. 3.8; M.Nidd. 9.11), vineyard (M.Kil. 4.1-9, 5.1-8) vat (בשרבה M.Shebi. 8.6). *Occupations mentioned which refer to agricultural/food production* include - baker (הנשרים [given in *Jastrow* as a 'baker of bread in moulds', 'a professional baker'] (M.Dem. 2.4, 5.1,2; M.Shebi. 8.4; M.Hall. 1.7, 2.7; M.Erub. 7.11; M.Pes. 2.8; M.B.M. 2.1, 8.6; M.B.B. 2.3; M.Eduy. 7.7; M.A.Zar. 4.9; M.Kel. 5.5, 15.2; M.Maksh. 2.8; M.Yad. 1.5), baking (אפה M.Pes. 3.4) rolling (out dough) (גזזה M.Hall. 3.1), kneading (גזזטה M.Hall. 3.1), wholesale merchant (הישנית M.Dem. 2.4) dealers in grain (מילר M.Dem. 2.4) miller (השוקן [B.H. טון to grind] M.Dem. 3.4) shopkeeper selling produce (החטה M.Dem. 2.4; M.M.Sh. 4.2; M.Betz. 3.8; M.Ket. 9.4; M.Ned. 4.7, 11.2; M.Kidd. 4.14; M.B.K. 6.6; M.B.M. 2.4, 3.11, 4.12, 5.4, 9.12; M.B.B. 5.8,9,10; M.Shebu. 7.1,5,6; M.Meil. 6.2,5; M.Kel. 29.5) labourers (השערים M.Peah 5.6; M.Dem. 7.3; M.Ter. 3.4; M.Maas. 2.7, 3.2, 3.3 [to tend to olives] M.Shab. 23.3. (See also the regulations concerning labourers in M.B.M. 7 which suggest that there were many labourers seeking work on a temporary basis. The rhythm of the agricultural year was such that at certain times such as the harvest, more labourers would be needed.) ass-drivers (החצרים M.Dem. 4.7, M.Ket. 5.6) provision-dealer (הפישון M.Dem. 5.6), butcher (שבה [B.H.] M.Betz. 3.7; M.Kidd. 4.14; M.Sanh. 6.4; M.Hull. 5.4, 7.1; M.Maksh. 2.9). *Crafts and Industry*. Mentioned occupations: craftsmen (האומנים M.Ber. 2.4) clothes dealers (שוכרי כותה M.Kil. 9.5) tailors (החורפין [B.H. 'to sew together'] M.Kil. 9.6; M.Shab. 1.3; M.Pes. 4.6; M.B.K. 10.10) weavers (הנדרין M.Kil. 9.10) dyers (הצובע [B.H. [צבע] M.Shebi. 7.3; M.Shab. 1.6; M.Pes. 3.1; M.B.K. 9.4; M.B.M.5.6; M.B.B. 2.3; M.Eduy. 7.8; M.Kel. 5.5, 8.8, 16.6, 24.10; M.Mikw. 7.3), bleachers (השוכן M.Shab. 13.4), spinners (הטוה M.Shab. 13.4), washermen (המבנים M.Kil. 9.10; M.Shab. 1.8,9, 20.5; M.Pes. 4.6; M.B.K. 10.10; M.B.B. 2.1; M.Kel. 23.4; M.Par. 12.9; M.Zab. 4.7; M.Uktz. 2.6), blacksmith (M.Kel. 14.3, 16.6, 17.17, 29.6) potter (היוצר M.Shebi. 5.7; M.Maas. 3.7; M.Hag. 3.5; M.B.K. 3.4, 5.2; M.B.M. 5.7; M.Kel. 2.4, 8.9; M.Ohol. 16.2; M.Par. 5.6; M.Toh. 7.1; M.Mikw. 9.2,7), glass-blower (זוכיח M.Kel. 8.9), well-digger (ביר M.Shebi. 8.5), building (בנה [B.H.] M.Shab. 12.1) builder (M.B.K. 9.3; M.Kel. 14.3; M.Mikw. 9.6), bath-house keeper (ביתן M.Shebi. 8.5; M.Meil. 5.4; M.Kel. 8.8, 17.1; M.Zab. 4.2), barber (שפר M.Kil. 9.3; M.Shebi. 8.5; M.Shab. 1.2; M.Pes. 4.6; M.Kat. 3.2; M.Kidd. 4.14; M.Kel. 13.1, 15.3, 24.5), coppersmith (הישרה M.Ket. 7.10), shoemaker (הרצענים M.Pes. 4.6), tanning/leather-work use of summach (האיג [shrub yielding leaves which are dried and ground], tanners (היוס M.Shab. 1.8; M.Ket. 7.10; M.Kel. 15.1, 26.8), tax-gatherer

'householder' is simply a term designating 'an adult male Jew'. Housing areas might also have encompassed the threshing floor (הגורן M.Peah. 1.6, 2.5, 5.8) and the wine/olive press. As for the markets themselves, various festivals [of the gentiles] (איריהן של עובדי הכבים M.A.Zar. 1.1) feature along with observations of when one should and should not conduct business. A bread shop receives a mention (הפלטן M.Dem. 5.4), and tannery (בורסקי M.Shab. 1.2, 3.2; M.B.B. 2.9). The *Mishnah* suggests tanneries should be situated within a space of fifty cubits from the town and in alignment with wind direction due to the smell exuded, (M.B.B. 2.9). Individuals such as barbers and carpenters may have travelled around to customers and worked in their homes.

The *Mishnah* often makes a distinction between the public domain (רשות הרבים, probably inferring the market-place) and the private domain (רשות היחיד, the house) and suggests different regulations concerning work done in these areas (in M.B.K. 6 for example:

...The baking boards of bakers [in the public domain] are susceptible to uncleanness but those of householders [private] are not susceptible...(M.Kel. 15.2)

...What a carpenter takes off with the plane (מעורר) belongs to him; but [what he takes off] with a hatchet belongs to the householder. But if he was working in the domain of the householder even the sawdust belongs to the householder (M.B.K. 10.10)

From the portrayal in the *Mishnah*, usually we can assume that men are implied as being the main group of workers as craftsmen/labourers/householders or else as described by specific occupation. Women are mentioned as working in M. Shab.5. and elsewhere as cooking, baking, spinning, weaving and looking after children, essentially maintaining the household unit. They are mentioned in M.Shebi. 5.9 lending implements to their neighbour; M.Hall. 1.7 giving dough to the baker; M.Hall. 2.7 preparing to sell bread in the market;

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(מכסין M.Shab. 8.2; M.Hag. 3.6; M.Ned. 3.4; M.B.K. 10.1,2; M.Toh. 7.6), money-changer (על ירי אחרים) M.M.Sh.

M.Shab. 18.2 with children and in M.Ket. 6.1 anything found by a wife and the work of her hands belong to her husband). We should bear in mind however, that we cannot be entirely sure in the *Mishnah* when the authors are idealising. The occasional references which seem to step outside of a division of home and work outside do suggest that women's work could also take on a more public role (such as at M.Hall. 2.7 – the selling of bread in the market, and M.Ket. 9.4, the man setting his wife up as a shopkeeper [חנותיה]). The presence of slaves is alluded to,<sup>119</sup> but often their tasks are not defined and it can be assumed that for the most part their area of work was a mainly domestic one. It is interesting that the rabbis do not encounter halakhic problems in relations to slave-work; perhaps this can be explained by the chiefly 'private' rather than 'public' realm of activity? 'Bondwomen' are referred to albeit infrequently (השפחה M.Ket. 3.1), but again no specific task is mentioned. In a similar vein, freedmen are mentioned (M.Peah 3.8 בן חורין). There is no description of children working, they are referred to as being taught (M.Kidd. 4.13) and in the work environment itself in shops (M.B.M. 4.12, a shopkeeper should not distribute parched corn or nuts to children in case they will thereafter only come to him; M.B.B. 2.3, making a noise.) Gentiles are mentioned (in the fields, M.Peah. 2.7; M.Shebi. 5.9) and generally as labourers (see various references above which imply work done mainly in the fields).

Rather than reading into the *Mishnah* issues of Rabbinic authority, what *is* apparent from the observations is the way that the rabbis were in touch with the communities they were a part of and that once again it can be suggested that their observations form responses to

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4.2; M.Shek. 1.3; M.Kidd. 3.2; M.B.M. 2.4, 3.11, 4.6, 9.12; M.Shebu. 7.6; M.Eduy. 3.8; M.Meil. 6.5; M.Kel. 12.5).  
<sup>119</sup> M.Ber. 2.7, 3.3; M.Peah 3.8; M.Shebi. 8.8; M.Ter. 7.3, 8.1; M.M.Sh. 1.7; M.Bikk. 1.5; M.Pes. 7.2, 8.1; M.Sukk. 2.1,8,9, 3.10; R. Sh. 1.7; M.Yeb. 7.1,2,5; M.Ket. 3.7, 8.5; M.Naz. 9.1; M.Sot. 6.2; M.Gitt. 1.4,6, 2.3, 4.4,5,6,9; M.Kidd. 3.13, 4.7; M.B.K. 3.10, 4.5, 6.5, 8.3,4; M.B.M. 1.5, 4.9; M.B.B. 3.1; M.Sanh. 11.1; M.Shebu. 6.5; M.Eduy. 1.13; M.Hor. 3.8; M.Bekh. 8.7; M.Ker. 2.4,5; M.Yad. 4.7.

what they saw around them rather than prescriptions of behaviour to be adhered to.<sup>120</sup> The fact that the rabbis often comment that (ultimately) everything should follow local use might reflect their apparent willingness to be a part of the village or town they resided in (M.Pes. 4.1; M.B.M. 4.11, 7.1, 9.1; M.B.B. 1.1; M.Ned. 9.7). Often their discussion arose out of practical concern, as in M.B.K. 6.6 (concerning the flax-laden camel) or M.B.M. 4.12 (concerning the protection of the consumer), rather than forming their own communities. It is with this sense of inclusion that the rabbis made their observations about work. Work is neither praised nor condemned but rather is described as a regular part of daily life. Several comments in M. Abot reflect a debate about the study of Torah and its compatibility with manual work.<sup>121</sup> R. Nehorai refers to Torah study as one's labour (מלאכה) (M. Ab. 2.14-16); other statements in Abot encourage the student of Torah to minimise, if not eliminate, involvement in any labour other than Torah study (M. Ab 2.6; 3.4; 4.10). Thus work, though potentially important for the individual in terms of financial support, is a means to an end. The 'real work' as it were, is the study of the Torah. In this it is possible to see a parallel with Paul, for whom the 'real work' was arguably the preaching of the Gospel. Every day work was done in order to provide sustenance. The crossover is deliberately ambiguous.<sup>122</sup> It is

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<sup>120</sup> The rabbis were no doubt known and respected for their knowledge of Torah and it is reasonable to suggest that discussions could have occurred in the work-place itself, as Plutarch comments with regard to Socrates, who conversed with Simon the Shoemaker in the workshop. Despite the total lack of evidence, in such a setting, one might speculate that halakhic advice was given, such as that concerning the question of remarriage after the disappearance or death of the husband (M.Yeb. 16.4) and various aspects of divorce (M.Git. 1.5). We know the rabbis also related to others in personal matters such as supporting people materially and financially, for example in the story of R. Gamaliel lending his tenant farmers wheat (M.B.M. 5.8). In this case however, such a practice seems to have been an exception rather than the norm and that the very idea that R. Gamaliel was prepared to offer help was so unusual that it deserved a mention. See in particular, C. Hezser *The Social Structure of the Rabbinic Movement in Roman Palestine* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997).

<sup>121</sup> This is a debate which further emerges in later Rabbinic literature. See E. Diamond *Holy Men and Hunger Artists – Fasting and Asceticism in Rabbinic Culture* (Oxford: OUP, 2004) pp. 23-30. Interestingly, in later Rabbinic thought there developed an idea of accepting hardship in pursuit of sacred knowledge (B.Shabb. 83b). This can be compared to Paul's much earlier acceptance of hardship for the sake of the Gospel.

<sup>122</sup> As argued in Chapter 5.

noteworthy in the *Mishnah* that, general positive statements about work notwithstanding, specific craftsmanship itself is generally not praised, with the possible exception of work performed in the Temple<sup>123</sup> and the craftsmanship of God<sup>124</sup> (thus a continuation of a predominant theme in the Hebrew Bible).<sup>125</sup>

## 2.2.3 Work as Redemption and Retribution

### 2.2.3.1 The Book of Genesis

#### (i) *Genesis 5*

In Genesis 5, when Lamech was 182 years old, he became the father of a son, Noah, of whom it is said: ‘Out of the ground which the LORD has cursed this one shall bring us relief (נחם) from our work (מעשה) and from the toil (עצבון) of our hands’ (5:29). Thus, work involves suffering such that the human being needs comfort, rest and peace, a looking back to an ideal of work *without* hardship. For נחם, the LXX has ‘διαναπαύσει’, (which presupposes נחם ‘rest’, ‘allow to rest’), ‘in the midst of our labour and the toil of our hands (ἀπο τῶν ἔργων ἡμῶν καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν λυπῶν τῶν χειρῶν ἡμῶν), when we till the soil the Lord has cursed’ Philo (in Questions and Answers) on Gen. 5:29 asks how is it that at the very birth of Noah his father says, ‘This one will give us rest from our labours and from our sorrows and from the earth which the Lord God has cursed?’ Philo reflects on his problem by asserting that not idly did ‘the holy fathers prophesy’, and ‘although not always nor in all things, still at least for once and in one thing which they knew are they worthy of prophetic praise. And not idly is this too a symbolical example, for ‘Noah’ is a sort of cognomen of justice, by participation in

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<sup>123</sup> As in the fifth division of the *Mishnah*: Kodashim.

<sup>124</sup> Possibly indirectly, through references to the Creation in M.Meg. 3.6 and M.Hag. 2.1. Also in later Rabbinic sources: B.Zev. 64b; B.Yoma 47a-b for example.

which the mind gives us rest from the evil of labours and will give us rest from sorrows and fears, making us fearless and sorrowless'. Once again Philo is transporting the idea of work and rest in this context to the world of the mind, a higher activity than that of manual labour.

*(ii) Genesis 8*

This story is continued in Genesis 8 which recounts the events of the flood. After the flood has subsided and Noah and the ark are set upon dry land, God declares, 'I will never again curse the ground because of man ... while the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease'. Philo (in Questions and Answers) focuses on the words 'not again will I curse the earth' – 'it is not proper to add new curses to those already given, inasmuch as it is filled with evils', so he writes. It is striking that, after the curse placed upon the act of work, an idea of redemption is offered, that although work is a regular feature of life's activities, it is not condemned by God.

### 2.2.3.2 The Prophets

Another element in salvation is peace in the land which allows one to till (עבד) it, as highlighted by Jeremiah 27:11 (cf. Jer. 32:15, 25, 43f.). In the prophets' proclamations of judgement, the curse over work tends to be emphasised, such as at Jer. 3:24. Work without God, such as the building of Babylon's walls, will not abide (Jer. 51:58). Complaint is made over the heavy work without prospect of success (Jer. 18:1-12; 51:58).<sup>126</sup> Like Jeremiah 27:11, peace in the land provides the opportunity to build houses and plant vineyards (Ezek. 28:25f,

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<sup>125</sup> This is similar to the conclusion reached by Agrell *Work, Toil and Sustenance* p. 67.

<sup>126</sup> Likewise in Ezek. 29:18, the 'work' of Assyria and Babylon is referred to as that which happens without success.

cf. 36:33f). Israel at this time of salvation will be compared to the garden of Eden (Ezek. 36:9, 34). Salvation has the meaning that God provides the prerequisites so that the work of the people will yield sustenance (Ezek. 34:20-31; 36:7-11, 33ff.), thus liberation from labour is a part of the portrayal of salvation in a future sense, one which it might be suggested offers hope. In the meantime, work brings maintenance, human beings live by their work, and the day-labourer has a right to demand a daily wage for his work (Mal. 3:5; Jer. 22:13ff; Ezek. 29:18ff.).

The prophet Hosea echoes the theme that to be able to fully enjoy the fruits of one's efforts is often an ideal (Hos. 14:4-7). Salvation means that God provides the prerequisites so that the work of the people will yield sustenance (Hos. 2:4-23). Thus, although the time of salvation might be said to represent work as an unnecessary aspect, if work is required in some form, it will be rewarded with productivity as opposed to a hardship yielding no results. This is further reflected in Joel 2:18f, 4:18, where salvation again means that the work of the people will yield sustenance. In 1:10, Joel had recorded the poor state of the three traditional products of the land of promise: grain, wine and oil, as a result of the locusts. They were tokens of harmony between the LORD and his people, his blessing upon an obedient partner in the covenant. The promise of plenty to eat falls with little impact on the ears of an affluent society, but to a community that had struggled against famine and economic hardship and had seen pests destroying the result of laborious toil, it was a promise of life itself. Beyond this, in the time of salvation pictured in Joel 3:1f, the spirit will be given to all, including slaves, social distinctions will disappear, none in Israel will be forced to work for another. Work continues, but without ties of dependence that might make it difficult. Amos too depicts Israel at the time of salvation compared to the garden of Eden. Yet again, God

provides sustenance (Amos 9:13f). In Micah too, Israel at the time of salvation will be compared to the garden of Eden (Mic. 4:1-5). In the prophet's proclamations of judgement, the curse over work is emphasised (Mic. 6:15). Liberation from labour is a part of the portrayal of salvation (Mic. 6:15).<sup>127</sup> This relationship between work and salvation is an important part of Paul's portrayal of work in the sense that Paul values work as an important activity prior to the *eschaton* and as an important activity in the continuing age of salvation in which his communities are living.<sup>128</sup>

In Isa. 28:32-29 the farmer is taught by the LORD so that he can carry out his various tasks in the right order; in Isa. 54:16, the smith has been created by the LORD. In Isa. 32:15ff, in the prophets' proclamations of salvation, work done in righteousness will bring blessing. In Isa. 65:17-25, the chosen of the LORD will themselves eat the fruit of their hands' work (מַעֲשֵׂה), and will no longer toil (יָעַר) in vain. Particularly in Isa. 32:15-20, it is God's blessing and human work done in righteousness which provide sustenance, fertility and rest at the time of salvation. Human planting together with the rain God sends makes tree cultivation profitable (Isa. 44:14f). In the prophets' proclamations of judgement, the curse over work is emphasised (Isa. 5:5f, 7:23f.) The LORD's punishment of Egypt makes work fruitless (Isa. 19:5f.) Again, to be able to fully enjoy the fruits of one's efforts is often an ideal, (Isa. 36:16ff; Isa. 62:8f; 65:17-25.) Liberation from labour is a part of the portrayal of salvation. In Isa. 14:1-4a., complaint is made over the heavy work without prospect of success. This theme is found in Isa. 19:5ff.

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<sup>127</sup> Also in Zechariah 2:13.

<sup>128</sup> Particularly in the Thessalonian correspondence, as discussed in Chapter 5.

## Conclusion

In this chapter, evidence for the portrayal of work in a Jewish context has been investigated to determine whether there may be themes that emerge as common to the wide range of extant literature examined. Indeed, the portrayal of work and workers in the Jewish evidence shows considerable range. While much of the evidence discussed reveals a somewhat ambiguous and ambivalent portrayal, predominant are the themes of divine work and human work and the ways in which they are related. The theme of God as creator is important (as it is to Paul, who uses the imagery of God's work in Rom. 9:21), and is stressed at numerous times in the evidence examined. This is particularly the case in Genesis and in its subsequent versions where some of the ambiguities regarding divine work emerge (as with the LXX translation of *ברא* with *ποίησ*; Josephus in *Ant.* I.27 uses *ἐκτίσεν*). The theme of God as a worker in creation is further represented in the prophetic writings of the Hebrew Bible. The image of God being praised for everything which is 'the work of his hands' (Isa. 19:25; 29:23; 45:11; 60:21), is especially significant as this phrase may well have influenced Paul in his choice of expression to describe his own work (1 Cor. 4:12). Another theme that emerges in the evidence is that of God's work in history, not only in Israel's past but also 'in the present' (Ps. 28:5, where those who do not regard the works of the LORD or the works of his hands will be broken down and will be built up no more). This is closely related to the theme of revelation and salvation (Isa. 64:2[3]; Ps. 103:6, for example).

Alongside the theme of God's work is the portrayal of human work. Most of the evidence examined covers descriptions of people engaged in working activities of varying sorts (this is particularly the case with the *Mishnah*). The evidence represents portrayals of work that are both positive and negative. Usually, work in and of itself is not condemned,

but rather it is work as a 'slavish' activity which may be viewed in a negative light. This is the case with the way in which work is represented in the book of Exodus, for example. Human work is portrayed as related to God in that it can be blessed by God, as undertaken by those who obey God (Lev. 26:3-13; Deut. 28:1-4; Isa. 32:15-20; Am. 9:13f; Hag. 2:15-19), and cursed by God if done in disobedience to God (Gen. 4:11f; Lev. 26:14-45; Deut. 28:15-68; Isa. 5:5-7; 7:23-25; Mic. 6:15). Labour, although hard, can and should result in satisfaction and joy (Ex. 39:43; Neh. 2:18; Pvb. 31:10-31), however the Wisdom literature does stress that ultimately, work can be wasted because its results are fleeting (Sir. 2:11). For humans, work itself is a paradox. It is good in principle, as well as a necessity of life. In its most positive forms it is creative, enjoyable and purposeful. But it is also toilsome, and often frustrating and unproductive. In either case however, it is an arena within which the worker (as an individual and communally with others), serves God and participates in God's continuing creative work.

The evidence analysed in this chapter indicates, that although there is significant range in the portrayal of work, the double aspect of the portrayal of work remains consistent throughout subsequent translations and interpretations of the Hebrew text and in other examples from the Jewish evidence in greater and lesser forms right through to the *Mishnah*. This has important implications for an analysis of Paul's portrayal of work, as shall be argued in Chapter 5. The next step in our investigation is to assess evidence for the portrayal of work in a Græco-Roman context.

## CHAPTER THREE

### Work in a Græco-Roman Context

In the preceding chapter evidence for the portrayal of work in a Jewish context was examined. The evidence for descriptions of work in a Græco-Roman context will be considered in this chapter. A particular aim of this chapter is to ascertain what the prevailing attitudes towards work may have been in the period leading up to and during the time of Paul. The range of material eligible for consideration in this chapter is vast, covering both textual and archaeological examples, and presents a number of difficulties regarding the ways in which this material may be used for our investigation of Paul's portrayal of work.<sup>1</sup> One of the main problems is that our evidence for attitudes to work derives largely from the written records of élite groups. Thus the attitudes toward work and the conceptions of work that are portrayed will inevitably rely heavily upon the words of the leisured and intellectuals who were supported by the élite or the state. Further information about workers in Græco-Roman society comes from pictorial sources such as mosaics, wall-paintings and reliefs.<sup>2</sup> Not surprisingly the people who toiled every day to earn a living did not typically write down (if they could write) their perceptions about their jobs, or if they did, their records are not extant.<sup>3</sup> This does not mean however that there are no indications about what people who

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<sup>1</sup> Ideally, evidence from the early Roman 1<sup>st</sup> century CE might be regarded as the most helpful for understanding Paul's portrayal of work. With due caution however, this thesis does examine some earlier (and later) portrayals of work which may help to shed light on Paul's portrayal. This is a difficulty acknowledged by Hock, *Social Context* p. 18. As indicated in Chapter 1 (p. 10), Hock focuses solely on the Græco-Roman evidence in his interpretation of what Paul himself says about his work. Even though some of the material discussed in this chapter is of an earlier (and later) date to Paul, that it was written down, copied and discussed in the period up to and during the time of Paul (in the case of the earlier material), lends credence to the view that such material may have been influential in shaping prevailing portrayals of and attitudes to work.

<sup>2</sup> See below p. 102, for example.

<sup>3</sup> See W. V. Harris *Ancient Literacy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989).

worked thought about their work. However, the severe limitations of the evidence need to be borne in mind.

For the purposes of this study, the evidence to be examined will derive predominantly from the late Hellenistic and Early Roman periods, this being most relevant for shedding light on our understanding of Paul's portrayal of work. Where appropriate, particularly when it might help to explain the way in which later portrayals of work are depicted, earlier material will be discussed. The evidence in this chapter is organised by examining the material in the two main section-headings which drive the overall structure of the thesis: divine work and human work.

### 3.1 Divine Work

The religions of the Græco-Roman world were primarily and traditionally civic; that is to say the gods were those recognized by the state, either the Roman state or the local city-state. The priesthoods were reserved, in most instances, for the more prominent citizens, and at Rome the emperor himself expressed his religious function in the role of *pontifex maximus*.<sup>4</sup> For a considerable time a working relationship between Greek and Roman religions had been effected by means of an identification of Greek and Roman gods; Zeus was Jupiter, Hera Juno, and so on. The same kind of identification was made between local gods and Greek gods; when Lycaonians hailed Barnabas as Zeus and Paul as Hermes (Acts 14:12), presumably they had their native deities at least partly in view.<sup>5</sup> This tendency to amalgamate cults and gods was characteristic of the period. Though to a considerable extent it was resisted by Jews, there were those who used the term 'God most high' in a way which was at

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<sup>4</sup> F. Millar *The Emperor in the Roman World* (London: Duckworth, 1977) p. 62.

<sup>5</sup> I. H. Marshall *The Acts of the Apostles* (Leicester: Intervarsity, 1980) p. 87.

least ambiguous.<sup>6</sup> Papyri and inscriptions, along with literary documents, reveal the extent to which various, originally national, gods and goddesses acquired universality partly by being identified with others.<sup>7</sup> A conspicuous example is the Egyptian goddess Isis.<sup>8</sup>

One notable feature of Græco-Roman religion was that it was structured around a belief system in which the gods are depicted as intervening in human matters in a rather arbitrary way.<sup>9</sup> The gods were everywhere.<sup>10</sup> Manual work was an activity that the gods did not typically undertake. The writer Cicero<sup>11</sup> remarks that much is said about what the gods looked like and where they lived, about their houses and the exploits of their lives, but what, he asks, did they do?:<sup>12</sup>

You, Stoics, Balbus, also like to ask us what sort of life the gods lead, and how they pass their time. Their life in fact is the happiest one could conceive of, a life bountiful in all good things. God does nothing; he is not involved in any occupations, he does not undertake any tasks. He simply finds joy in his wisdom and virtue and knows with absolute certainty that he will forever enjoy pleasures both consummate and eternal. This is the god we should call properly happy; that god of yours seems truly overworked. For if the world itself is god – what can be less restful than to turn around the axis of the heavens with amazing speed, without any rest? Nothing can be happy unless it is at rest. But if some god or other is present within the world, who governs it and steers it, who regulates the courses of the stars, the change of the seasons, and the deviations and patterns of everything that exists, and who watches over land and sea to protect human life and human interests – what a tedious and laborious business (*negotia*) he is involved in. For we judge a life truly happy that has tranquillity of mind and a complete freedom from all duties'.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> J.-A. Shelton *As the Romans Did: A Sourcebook in Roman Social History* (Oxford and New York: OUP, 1998) pp. 359-360.

<sup>7</sup> *ibid* pp. 368-9.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid* pp. 400-4.

<sup>9</sup> See the various goings-on in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Ovid (43 BCE – 17 CE) was a Roman poet who wrote on topics of love, abandoned women, and mythological transformations. He wrote in elegiac couplets, with the exception of his *Metamorphoses*, which he wrote in dactylic hexameter in imitation of Virgil's *Aeneid* and Homer's epics. Ovid does not offer an epic narrative like his predecessors, but promises a chronological account of the cosmos from creation to his own day, incorporating many myths and legends from the Greek and Roman traditions. *Metamorphoses* begins with the transformations of creation and Prometheus metamorphosing earth into human beings and ending with the transformation of the spirit of Julius Caesar into a star. Ovid goes from one to the other by working his way through mythology, often in apparently arbitrary fashion, jumping from one transformation tale to another, sometimes retelling what had come to be seen as central events in the world of Greek myth and sometimes straying into odd bypaths. P. Jones and K. Sidwell *The World of Rome: An Introduction to Roman Culture* (Cambridge: CUP, 1997) pp. 339-40.

<sup>10</sup> See K. Hopkins *A World Full of Gods* (London: Phoenix, 1999).

<sup>11</sup> Cicero, 106 – 43 BCE.

<sup>12</sup> Cicero, *On the Nature of the Gods*. I.7.

<sup>13</sup> *ibid*. 1.19.50-53

For portrayals of 'divine work' we are dependent almost entirely upon a few written sources, often in the form of debates.<sup>14</sup> These sources must be used with care. How representative these debates are of general understandings regarding the relationship between gods and the sphere of work is certainly a tentative question. It is unlikely that the detailed contents of these debates, plays and other types of discourse would have been of considerable concern to the mass of workers in the Græco-Roman world. What might be possible to speculate about, however, is that the *general* understanding that prevailed was that the gods did not work, and that such a general understanding was given credence and was explained by the written debates which are extant. These debates at least demonstrate what it was possible to think and how that might be expressed. Thus the argument is essentially a circular one. Nonetheless, taken as a whole, it marks a stark contrast with the material examined in Chapter 2, where God is described as a ceaseless worker.

One way of examining this issue is through a debate which took place in the third century CE, between Origen and Celsus. Although it is somewhat late in date, it may well assist us in suggesting the nature of earlier discussions about this topic, as well as the observation that the idea of the God of the Judæo-Christian tradition as a ceaseless worker was unusual. Their argument concerned the pertinence of a story that ascribed to the creator a contradictory and unseemly use of time. Celsus poured scorn upon the notion of the divine expressed in the Genesis story. He stressed the paradoxical nature of a story that referred to the omnipotence of a god whom it also described as a figure who worked continually, and not just at the point of creation. Celsus argued that this god must live in the same element of time as mortals, and he accomplishes his work in such a human way that he becomes tired and has to rest.

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<sup>14</sup> M. Goodman comments, 'lack of challenge was one factor which discouraged the production of any sizeable theological literature to justify and explain pagan beliefs' in *The Roman World 44BC - AD180* (London and New

‘The scripture story of the origin of men is a fine naivety’, writes *Celsus*, ‘but the most ridiculous thing about it is that it divides the fashioning of the world into several days before there was any such thing as days! For if the sky was not yet created, nor the earth established, nor the sun revolving round it, how could there have been days? ... and besides, looking at things from a more elevated viewpoint, let us see whether it is not absurd that the first and very great God orders that such and such a thing be done, or such and such other thing, yet on the first day produces no more than one thing ... then after this work, like a very bad workman, he was overcome with exhaustion and needed to rest in order to recover’<sup>15</sup>

Celsus appears to stigmatise the apparent incoherence that creation, presented as an ongoing labour, can be undertaken by a divine being. This debate between two thinkers is somewhat theoretical, and it is uncertain what sort of impact, if any at all, it could have had upon society as a whole. It does at least demonstrate the sorts of difficulties that belief in a divine being who worked continually may have created. Not only that, but it shows how unique such a belief was in comparison with the great variety of other beliefs throughout the Græco-Roman world.

One aspect of working life that was ascribed to divine assistance was that of technological development.<sup>16</sup> The first step in such a development was seen as the intentional act of a supernatural being, Prometheus stole fire from Hephaistos and gave it to human beings together with the knowledge of the techniques essential to civilised life. One of the most striking presentations of the Prometheus myth was Aeschylus’ trilogy, of which only the first play and fragments of the second and third have survived. It was probably produced at Athens in the mid 450s BCE during a period in which there seemed to be a rise in debate regarding the origins of human development.<sup>17</sup> Thus, in *Prometheus Bound*,

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York: Routledge, 1997) p. 287.

<sup>15</sup> Origen *Against Celsus* 6.50, 60, 61, 62. See also Cicero *On the Nature of the Gods*, 34.

<sup>16</sup> There is a resonance here, amid all of the diverse views surveyed in this thesis, with aspects examined in Chapter 2, particularly in the Wisdom literature (p. 55f.) with the idea of God instructing the wise (especially in Wis. p. 67). However there is a tension in the Wisdom literature that the instruction of God to the wise in terms of the study of Torah as a higher work is superior to that of (God’s instruction concerning) the manual trades. So far as Judaism is concerned, the belief that knowledge in doing work is itself inspired is striking – not only as to serving God through work (as if it were a matter of vocation) but that the very knowledge or know-how in order to do work is itself God-breathed. This has resonances with Græco-Roman thinking but is perhaps less sustained.

<sup>17</sup> For this see A. Burford, *Craftsmen in Greek and Roman Society* (London: Duckworth, 1972).

Aeschylus presents a glorification of the techniques on which civilisation rested, and which Prometheus bestowed as benefits on humans. Prometheus speaks of his achievements as follows:

I am the huntsman of the mystery,  
 The great resource that taught technology,  
 The secret fount of the fire put in the reed  
 And given to man to serve his need...  
 I made man conscious and intelligent...  
 Mindless was all they did until I showed  
 The dubious rise and setting of the stars...  
 I was the first to yoke animals  
 In service of the strap...  
 (Of) those great utilities beneath the earth,  
 Copper and iron, silver and yellow gold,  
 Who before me dare claim discovery  
 Of these, unless a madman?<sup>18</sup>

Hesiod describes how human work was a consequence of the conflict between Zeus and Prometheus<sup>19</sup>. There is also a connection between religion and work in the Pandora myth. She is the goddess of the earth presiding over fertility. She is also an artifact, the work of the craftsman god, Hephaistos, and the weaving goddess Athena.<sup>20</sup> Fertility and work are both opposed to and complementary to one another.

As this discussion concerning the portrayal of divine work suggests, the idea of a divine being engaging in work was a highly unusual one. In the following section, we shall examine portrayals of human work noting, in particular, the absence of connection between the realm of the divine and that of the human with regard to the activity of work with one important exception: the gods could be portrayed as protecting work.<sup>21</sup> Whilst Paul might well have

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<sup>18</sup> G. Thomson *Prometheus Bound*. (Cambridge: CUP, 1932) p. 23.

<sup>19</sup> Hesiod *Works and Days* 29-62. In addition, *Works and Days* 303-311, 410-413: 'Both gods and humans are angry with one who lives an idle life, for by nature he is like the stingless drones who consume the labour of the honey bees, eating without working. Let it be your care to arrange your tasks in the right order, that your storehouses might be full of the season's food-stuffs. Through work men become wealthy in flocks and poverty, and in labouring hard they are much better-loved by the immortal gods. Work is not shameful; it is idleness that brings shame... Do not procrastinate until tomorrow or the day after tomorrow, for a shiftless worker does not fill his granary, nor does a procrastinator. Careful attention helps the work along, but the dilatory man is always wrestling with destruction'. See R. Hamilton et al *Hesiod's Works and days* (Bryn Mawr, PA: Thomas Library, 1988).

<sup>20</sup> Hesiod *Works and Days* 62-96.

<sup>21</sup> See below p. 103 and n. 61.

had affinities with aspects of this Græco-Roman context, this thesis argues that affinities, where they exist, rarely get to the core of Paul's portrayal of work and its motivations.

### 3.2 Human Work<sup>22</sup>

In order to understand the portrayal of human work, a suitable contextual narrative needs to be established. If Judaism provided Paul's decisive conceptual matrix, as this thesis suggests, the complexity of Paul's context needs also to be acknowledged. Græco-Roman portrayals of work may well have impacted upon Paul's thought either through him adapting aspects of those portrayals or reacting against the way in which daily work was organised and implemented. Nonetheless, an understanding of the wider context is essential. With the civil wars and the murder of Julius Caesar in 44 BCE, the Roman republic came to an end, and Caesar's successor Augustus shaped the Roman Empire from 27 BCE to 14 CE. For peoples subject to, or allied with, the Roman state, this change in the form of government did not make a great deal of difference, except that in the early years of the Empire, the power struggles which accompanied the decline of the republic seemed to have come to an end, and tax-collection by private companies, often accompanied by extortion, was replaced by tax-collection by civil servants.<sup>23</sup> Roman control over local affairs, including the pattern of daily work, in all probability remained much the same. The provinces were administered by Roman governors or, in some cases, procurators, whose authority was based on the power of

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<sup>22</sup> The portrayal of human work inevitably raises the issue of slavery. See P. Garnsey *Ideas of Slavery from Aristotle to Augustine* (Cambridge: CUP, 1996); and as it relates to Paul, see D. Martin *Slavery as salvation: the metaphor of slavery in Pauline Christianity* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1990).

<sup>23</sup> Jones and Sidwell, *The World of Rome*, pp. 52-63. R. M. Grant, *An Historical Introduction to the New Testament* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1963) pp. 41-2. There was a need for increased agricultural production in order to pay taxes.

legionary and auxiliary troops.<sup>24</sup> About twenty-four legions were stationed mostly at the frontiers of the Empire, where tensions could occur.<sup>25</sup>

The Roman social structure was complex but may be described broadly as follows. At the top of the social structure were the members of Roman senatorial families; below them came the equestrian order, followed by free men, freedmen, and slaves. This structure was relatively fluid, since membership in the two highest orders was based chiefly on property qualifications, and in our period many individuals became rich, partly through politics and partly through trade or ownership of real estate in a time when business was generally good.<sup>26</sup> Slaves were often able to buy their freedom; non-citizens could purchase Roman citizenship. This citizenship involved such rights as trial before Roman judges, not local ones, and appeal to the imperial court at Rome, as well as (occasionally) exemption from some local taxes.<sup>27</sup> Within the Empire, and even beyond its confines, a busy commercial life was going on.<sup>28</sup> Trade was primarily responsible for the development of an elaborate network of well-built roads and a system of shipping which made full use of the potentialities of the Mediterranean Sea. Communications among the various parts of the Empire were generally very good, and the papyrus letters found in Egypt suggest that even though there was no government postal service for private mail it was still possible to send letters without much difficulty.<sup>29</sup>

The distribution of the wealth produced by trade and commerce was extremely uneven, and wage rates for common labourers were low, often a denarius or drachma a day.<sup>30</sup> To

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<sup>24</sup> T. P. Wiseman (ed.) *Roman Political Life 90BC – AD69* (Exeter Studies in History, 7, 1985) p. 78.

<sup>25</sup> Such as Judaea, where indeed trouble did occur in the latter 1<sup>st</sup> century CE. See B. Campbell *The Roman Army 31BC – AD337* (London: Routledge, 1994) p. 127.

<sup>26</sup> K. Bradley, *Slavery and Society at Rome* (Cambridge: CUP, 1994) p. 39.

<sup>27</sup> C. Nicolet *The World of the Citizen in Republican Rome* (London: Duckworth, 1980) pp. 53-6.

<sup>28</sup> Cicero, *Speech in Defense of Fonteius* 11.

<sup>29</sup> Shelton, *As the Romans Did*, 167.

<sup>30</sup> A. Wilson 'Machines, Power and the Ancient Economy' in *The Journal of Roman Studies* Vol. XCII (2002) pp. 1-32; K. Hopkins 'Economic growth and towns in classical antiquity' in P. Abrams and E. A. Wrigley (eds.) *Towns in Societies. Essays in Economic History and Historical Sociology* (Cambridge: CUP, 1978) pp. 35-77. Hopkins makes the case for growth in 200 BCE – 200 CE, mostly concentrated in 0-200 CE.

some extent these low wages were due to the competition provided by slave labour; more significantly, free workmen were rarely organized, and the labour supply tended to exceed demand.<sup>31</sup> The low wage level was balanced, to a considerable extent, by a low price level for necessities and by government subsidy and/or price control. It can be suggested that, on one level, life for the lower and lowest classes was tolerable, especially in the absence of advertising and the invention of new products for mass consumption, but there can be no doubt about the harshness of every day life. It is difficult to be sure however, as the evidence does not lend itself to confirmation of such a suggestion either way. Certainly the balance between riches and poverty was a precarious one.<sup>32</sup> The rich were very rich, but their position was often insecure because of demands made upon them by emperors and other officials.<sup>33</sup>

For an examination of the portrayal of work, there are two main areas of evidence to consider: literary and archaeological. Literary sources make references to various occupations: plasterers and butchers;<sup>34</sup> cart-drivers, shoemakers and construction workers;<sup>35</sup> clothing-peddlers and wool-workers;<sup>36</sup> bakers, teachers and metal smiths;<sup>37</sup> public criers and money collectors;<sup>38</sup> cooks, factory workers, merchants and fish-sellers;<sup>39</sup> and cleaners, dyers and tailors.<sup>40</sup> Unfortunately, in their contexts, it is difficult to ascertain whether the jobs mentioned were filled by a free person or a freedperson, or even a slave.<sup>41</sup> Nonetheless, they are of use in that they at least give an idea of the sorts of work being practised. Sometimes

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<sup>31</sup> *ibid.* p. 178.

<sup>32</sup> Jones and Sidwell, *The World of Rome*, pp. 152-3.

<sup>33</sup> M. Gelzer, *The Roman Nobility*, tr. R. Seager (Oxford: Blackwell, 1969) p. 94.

<sup>34</sup> *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* 13.1983.

<sup>35</sup> Juvenal (end of the 1st c. CE-early second c. CE), *Satires* 3.232-248, 254-261, 268-314.

<sup>36</sup> *Satires* 7.215-243.

<sup>37</sup> Martial (40-100 CE) with regard to Spain and Rome, *Epigrams* 12.57.1-14, 18-21, 24-28.

<sup>38</sup> Horace (65 BCE-8 BCE) with regard to Italy, *Satires* 1.6.65-92.

<sup>39</sup> Cicero (106 BCE-43 BCE) with regard to Italy, *An Essay About Duties* 1.42, 2.25.

<sup>40</sup> Plautus (254 BCE-184 BCE) with regard to Italy, *The Pot of Gold* 505-522.

<sup>41</sup> A 'freeperson' was someone who was born free, while a 'freedperson' was an emancipated slave. See further below p. 113.

references to work appear in longer extracts such as Cicero in *De Officiis* which appears to match sentiments contained in M.Kidd. 4.14:

Abba Gorion of Zaidan says in the name of Abba Guria: A man should not teach his son to be an ass-driver or a camel-driver, or a barber or a sailor, or a herdsman or a shopkeeper, for their craft is the craft of robbers. R. Judah says in his name: Ass-drivers are most of them wicked, camel-drivers are most of them proper folk, sailors are most of them saintly, the best among physicians is destined for Gehenna, and the most seemly of butchers is a partner of Amalek...

Cicero, in *De Officiis* sets forth his views regarding his attitude to work and various occupations as follows:

Now in regard to trades and other means of livelihood, which ones are to be considered becoming to a gentleman and which ones are vulgar, we have been taught in general, as follows: First, those means of livelihood are rejected as undesirable which incur people's ill-will, as those of tax-gatherers and usurers. Unbecoming to a gentleman too, and vulgar, are the means of livelihood of all hired workmen whom we pay for mere manual labour, not for artistic skill; for in their case the very wage they receive is a pledge of their slavery. Vulgar we must consider those also who buy from wholesale merchants to retail immediately; for they would not get profits without a great deal of downright lying; and verily, there is no action that is meaner than misrepresentation. And all mechanics are engaged in vulgar trades; for no workshop can have anything liberal about it. Least respectable of all are those trades which cater for sensual pleasures: 'Fishmongers, butchers, cooks, and poulterers, and fishermen', as Terence says. Add to these if you please, the perfumers, dancers and the whole *ludum talarium* – loose songs and dances and bad music. But the professions in which either a higher degree of intelligence is required or from whom no small benefit to society is derived – medicine and architecture, for example, and teaching – these are proper for those whose social position they become. Trade, if it is on a small scale, is to be considered vulgar...<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Cicero was born in Arpinum, Italy in c. 106 BCE to a wealthy equestrian family; he died in 43 BCE. However scornful they might be of workers, the wealthy continued to employ their services and to purchase their products. Seneca also points out that Posidonius divided the arts into four types, of which *volgares et sordidae* are the lowest (*Epp.* 88.21). He gives no precise content to his category apart from explaining that it is *opifices* who practise these arts, which are manual and concerned with providing the necessities of life. Like Cicero, he calls them sordid, and adds the adjective 'volgaris'. Seneca's fourth category, the highest, is of *artes liberales*; Cicero too is contrasting *artificia* and *quaestus* which are *sordidi*, with those who are *liberales*: wage-earning is *illiberalis* and sordid; retailers and *opifices* are sordid; a workshop has nothing *ingenuum* about it. In the next paragraph (1.151) he admits that arts which demand intelligence or benefit others (for example medicine, architecture and teaching) may be honourable (*honestae*) for those of suitable social situation; wholesale trading may avoid the stigma of sordidness; farming is the worthiest employment for a free man. Both writers are claiming to define which employment is respectable for a free man, particularly a free-born man, both tend to define him narrowly as a gentleman. The usual philosophical or pseudo-philosophical reasons are adduced for ruling out various jobs: revenue-collectors and usurers are hated; wage-earners and selling labour, not skill, and, their wages put them at the disposal of the employer, as if they were slaves; retailers are mere unproductive middlemen and moreover, must advertise and so deceive the customer; workshops are just low; other trades may be despised because they minister to pleasure in various ways – fishmongers, butchers, cooks, poultry-fatteners, perfumers, dancers and 'the whole dice game'. These are Greek philosophical doctrines, relayed by Romans whose private lives and ordinary thinking were often on less lofty planes, but who would never have to ask themselves how they could earn an honest and respectable living. If we descend the social scale as far as Dio of Prusa (Chrysostom), who took an unusually favourable view of the dignity of labour, we find sympathetic advice to a man who might be under the necessity of earning a living. Jones and Sidwell *The World of Rome* pp. 333-4.

One immediate comment is that Cicero articulates a familiar theme from the extant evidence, and, that is respect for agriculture and the prestige for farming as a way of life. Cato, writing *On Agriculture* in the second century BCE said: 'It is from the farming class that the bravest men and the sturdiest soldiers come, their calling is most highly respected, their livelihood is most assured and is looked on with the least hostility, and those who are engaged in that pursuit are least inclined to be disaffected'.<sup>43</sup> The second idea from Cicero's statement is that all work which pertains to commerce, trade and manufacturing were deemed inferior by the aristocracy of Rome. Both the literary sources, such as that of Cicero and the legal texts, confirm the high status of agriculture and the low status of professional traders and craft workers throughout Roman history. Another type of literary evidence which is particularly prominent is that of manuals of agricultural practice such as those by Cato (234-149 BCE, Italian), Varro (116-27 BCE, Italian), Columella (1st century CE, originally Spanish) and Pliny the Elder (23-79 CE, Italian). The tone of these writings is that of an elite individual landowner giving advice to another, as can be seen in this extract from Varro:

All fields are tilled by men-either slaves, or free men, or both. Free men are either (1) those who till their own fields, as many poor people do with the help of their families, or (2) those who are hired when the major farming operations, such as vintage and haying, are performed with the assistance of hired free men, or (3) those who are working off debts. There are still many in this final class in Asia, Egypt, and Illyricum. With regard to all these classes of free men, I have to say: it is more profitable to work unhealthy areas with hired workers than with slaves. (*On Agriculture* 1.17.2, 3.)

And in this from Cato:

When you are thinking of purchasing an estate, remember three things: do not buy one just because you want it; spare no effort in examining it; and do not be satisfied with touring it just once, for a good piece of property will please you more every time you go to see it. Pay attention to how well the neighbours keep their farms: in a good district they are bound to be kept well. (*On Agriculture* I)

It can be argued that since these writings are from an elite perspective and as a result, are not representative of the populace as a whole, their use is somewhat limited. Furthermore,

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<sup>43</sup> I.4.

these documents were written as works of literature aimed at an educated elite and should be read as such.

The second body of evidence derives from archaeology, which, through fieldwork and excavation, can be carried out at a quite sophisticated level through the use of scientific techniques which enable us to study agricultural systems and technology placed against a knowledge of climate.<sup>44</sup> This then produces what can be reasonably expected to be an accurate understanding of the way in which for example, farming operated in a given area. Most of our information about workers in Roman society comes from pictorial sources - mosaics, wall paintings and reliefs. In contrast to the identity of the authors of the literary material, the people who worked to earn a living did not write down their feelings about their jobs. Archaeology cannot achieve certainty, as has already been pointed out, as its sites and artefacts are a sample and not even necessarily a representative one. Still, our task without the use of archaeological evidence would be difficult, if not impossible.<sup>45</sup>

Within the Roman Empire, there were, speaking on a very general level, two main areas of living - the city and the countryside.<sup>46</sup> The two were not mutually exclusive however: those in the city, elite and non-elite, needed what was produced in the countryside, on the land, and those on the land, including the land-owners, needed the city to sell to, although indeed, many farms were self-sufficient to a greater extent.<sup>47</sup> Generally speaking, the majority of the population living under Roman rule worked the land and were directly dependent upon it for their livelihood, and there was very much a prevailing ideology of a land-owning

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<sup>44</sup> See in particular G. Shipley and J. Salmon *Human Landscapes in Antiquity: Environment and Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996).

<sup>45</sup> On the use of archaeology, see M. Grant *The Visible Past: Greek and Roman History from Archaeology 1960-1990* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1990); N. Morley *Ancient History: Key Themes and Approaches* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000).

<sup>46</sup> S. L. Dyson *The Roman Countryside* (London: Duckworth, 2003) p. 1.

<sup>47</sup> P. Garnsey *Food and Society in Classical Antiquity* (Cambridge: CUP, 1999) p. 50.

aristocracy.<sup>48</sup> At best, the agricultural worker could earn enough to support a family, but when the harvest failed, the result was hunger, debt and even slavery or a move to the towns in search of work.<sup>49</sup> For the landowner, land was a fairly safe investment, particularly as farms often provided the neighbouring cities with food. In terms of labour options, a propertied individual had a number of options. One was the 'slave-estate' in which slaves made up the permanent labour force and management and temporary labour, free or slaves, was brought in at harvest time when extra help was needed.<sup>50</sup> Another option was for a landowner to lease his land and a tenant in turn could then employ slaves to work the land. The observation that the word for tenant, *colonus*, can also mean 'farmer' suggests too that some tenants might themselves have worked the land. One feature of the countryside in Roman Italy in particular, was that of the *villa*, the large farming estate. Examples include Hadrian's villa at Tivoli, the Villa Jovis, a private retreat on the island of Capri for the Emperor Tiberius and the villa at Oplontis near Pompeii. It is the villas that are in the minds of the writers of the agricultural manuals cited above.<sup>51</sup>

The methods by which the land was cultivated were broadly determined by variations of terrain and climate as well as the availability of labour.<sup>52</sup> Pliny expresses surprise in the following excerpt at the irrigation of particular fields which leads us to believe that it was the exception rather than the norm:

In the Italian territory of Sulmo, in the Fabian district, they irrigate even the ploughed land.  
(*Natural History* 17.250)

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<sup>48</sup> P. Garnsey *Famine and Food Supply in the Greco-Roman World: responses to risk and crisis* (Cambridge: CUP, 1988) p. 200.

<sup>49</sup> *ibid.* p. 52.

<sup>50</sup> This was the case in Italy and Africa, not in Greece, Asia and Judaea. Garnsey, *Food and Society* p. 67.

<sup>51</sup> J. Percival *The Roman Villa* (London: Batsford, 1988); W. L. Macdonald and J. A. Pinto *Hadrian's Villa and its Legacy* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995).

<sup>52</sup> P. Horden and N. Purcell *The Corrupting Sea: a study of Mediterranean history* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000) p. 49; Shipley and Johnson *Human Landscapes* p. 112.

Threshing techniques included the treading out of the corn with animals, and beating it out with wooden flails. The simplest method was the animal-drawn 'drag', a heavy board with flints embedded on its underside. The Romans extended the use of machines adopted from other cultures, for example the rough-bottomed sledge of the Greeks and the Carthaginian cart fitted with spiked rollers.<sup>53</sup> Fans, shovels and sieves used in winnowing were common to all agricultural communities.<sup>54</sup>

Grain mixed with chaff is separated by the wind. For this operation a west wind is considered best because it blows gently and steadily throughout the summer months; still, to wait for it is the sign of an indifferent farmer. So after it has been threshed the grain should be heaped on the threshing floor in such a way that it can be winnowed in any breath of wind. On the other hand, if from all directions the air is still for several days in a row, the grain should be cleaned in sifting baskets: this avoids the danger of losing the whole year's work should a devastating storm follow the protracted stillness of the winds. (*On Agriculture* 2.20.5).

The processing of the various food-grains and cereals into porridge or bread was a laborious task. Before the introduction of animal power into the milling process, the various operations were all carried out by hand, usually in the household setting using sieves, hand-mills, pestles and mortars.<sup>55</sup> The introduction of rotary motion into the process led to a succession of improvements in milling.<sup>56</sup> The first of these was the rotary hand-mill milling between a pair of round, flat stones now gave way to milling between an upper concave stone and a lower convex one. The sloping surfaces caused the grain to pass continuously between them without having to feed back the un-ground grain. Another type of mill was the 'donkey-mill' which consisted of a bell-shaped lower stone which remained stationary, whilst the hollow, hour-glass shaped upper stone was made to revolve around it through the

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<sup>53</sup> Columella describes a threshing floor as follows: 'If suitable, the threshing floor should be laid where it can be surveyed by the owner or at least by his steward. It is best paved with hard stone since the grain is threshed out quickly when the ground does not give under the blows of hoofs and threshing sledges, and the winnowed grain is cleaner and free from the pebbles and humps of earth that are usually produced from an earthen floor.' *On Agriculture* 1.6.

<sup>54</sup> K. D. White *Greek and Roman Technology* (London: Duckworth, 1984) pp. 62-3.

<sup>55</sup> T. Brown 'Barley cakes and emmer bread' in J. Wilkins, D. Harvey and M. Doban *Food in Antiquity* (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1995).

<sup>56</sup> K. D. White, *Greek and Roman Technology*, p. 47.

use of donkeys or horses. The grain was ground as it descended between the upper and lower stones, as the flour collected around the base.<sup>57</sup> The product of the process, regardless of the type of mill used, was a coarse-meal. The refuse had then to be removed by filtering the meal through a sieve.

The main types of cereal crops used for food throughout the Mediterranean were wheat and barley. Of the wheat, the most important species were called *far* (a coarse grain difficult to thresh, its husks needing to be removed by pounding) and *triticum* (the common type of wheat, its varieties called by Pliny the Elder 'hard wheat' (*triticum durum*) or 'soft' and 'common wheat' (*triticum vulgare*). From these types of grain important foodstuffs were produced porridge, leaven and various kinds of bread.<sup>58</sup> In most areas, bread-making was a household task, but in towns and probably in many villages bakers provided not only bread but also pastries and confectioneries.<sup>59</sup> Seneca, the Roman statesman and philosopher (4 BCE-65 CE) described the development of home-baking in Roman times, ending his account with the description of the invention of the baking-oven,

...and he made bread, which was at first baked in the warm ashes or on a red-hot tile, then ovens were gradually invented and other apparatus which depends on heat for its use...(Epist. Mor. XC,23).

During the early Empire, Italy formed the wealth-receiving part of the Empire with money entering its regions or to border areas where the army was stationed, as opposed to the middle circle provinces which were largely wealth-producing and tax paying. Pictorial information from Pompeii contains depictions of bakers, millers, dyers, fullers, smiths and metal workers, furniture makers, leather workers, jewellers and a surgeon.<sup>60</sup> The paintings in

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<sup>57</sup> *ibid.* pp. 64-5.

<sup>58</sup> T. Brown 'Barley cakes' p. 47.

<sup>59</sup> *ibid.* p. 52.

<sup>60</sup> J. R. Clarke *Art in the Lives of Ordinary Romans* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2003), especially Chapter 4: 'Everyman and Everywoman at Work' pp. 95-129. Clarke points out that, 'making an image that communicates the processes and products of a specific kind of work requires selecting and editing from a whole menu of possible representations; the decisions that the artist and patron make on what to show

the house of Vercundus and his wife, for example, clearly depict Vercundus' pride at his and his workers' activities. Interestingly, rather than avoiding a pictorial representation of their commercial activities, it seems that Vercundus and his wife instructed the artist to advertise to passers-by what they sold (cloth) and the processes involved in its manufacture. Crucially, such a visual representation suggests that there was no stigma attached to work, rather (under the protection of the gods),<sup>61</sup> it was to be celebrated.<sup>62</sup> Physical remains demonstrate that some appear to have fairly large premises, often with decorated homes to match those premises with a room acting both as a workshop and as a sale room. Outside 'the shop', in the 'market-place', we have evidence of goldsmiths, fruitsellers, perfume and ointment sellers, woodworkers, fishermen and others. From individual artefacts it is possible (especially from those bearing trade marks and inscriptions) to discover details of local industries. We know for example, that the inhabitants of Pompeii used imported tableware, from Arretium, Gaul and neighbouring towns.<sup>63</sup>

Speaking more generally of the Empire, most towns of any size would hold regular markets (*nundinae*) and in some cases had a permanent market building (*macellum*). Markets could also be held at smaller sites or on large estates, and there were also less regular fairs, often associated with religious occasions.<sup>64</sup> Such fairs are referred to in the *Mishnah* (M.A.Zar.1). The selling of goods took place often in the market buildings or in the area of

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the viewer – as well as how to show it – are revealing in a way that inscriptions and graffiti are not', p. 95. Nonetheless, as Clarke points out, interpretations of the pictorial representations of work need to bear in mind that for some, as with the case of the *praedia* of Julia Felix, the scenes of everyday life were clearly meant for wealthy viewers and not people who worked in the forum or elsewhere (p. 97).

<sup>61</sup> This may be deduced from the presence of Venus (the protector goddess of Pompeii), and Mercury (the protector of merchants and travellers). In one of the frescoes, Mercury carries a sack of money in his right hand: a symbol of the financial prosperity resulting from his guardianship over Vercundus's shop (*Art in the Lives of Ordinary Romans* p. 107). Also of interest are paintings in the carpenter's shop in Pompeii. The owner of the shop, it seems, wanted to proclaim his identity as a carpenter and at the same time invoke the deities (in particular, Daedalus) who safe-guarded his craft (op. cit. pp. 85-87).

<sup>62</sup> *ibid.* pp. 105-112.

<sup>63</sup> W. Jongman, *The Economy and Society of Pompeii* (Amsterdam: Gieben, 1988) p. 123. See most recently D. L. Balch 'Rich Pompeian Houses, Shops for Rent, and the Huge Apartment Building in Herculaneum as Typical Spaces for Pauline House Churches' *JSNT* 27.1 (2004) pp. 27-46.

the *tabernae* which had single rooms on the ground floor. These shop areas often had a balcony at the back which provided living space, along with an area for a workshop. The displays of goods often caused problems, blocking the streets, which caused legislation to be enacted:

The barber, innkeeper, cook, and butcher keep within their own doors. What was recently one great shop (*taberna*), is now the city of Rome again. (Martial 7.61).

Tensions associated with such arrangements, albeit on a smaller scale, are also reflected in the *Mishnah* (M. B.B. 2.3):

...A man may protest against [another that opens] a shop within the courtyard and say to him, 'I am not able to sleep because of the noise of the people going in and out'. He that makes utensils should go outside and sell them in the market. But none may protest against another and say, 'I am not able to sleep because of the noise of the hammer' or 'because of the noise of the millstones' or 'because of the noise of the children.'

Regarding the crafts suggested by the evidence from Pompeii, it is worthwhile to examine the practices of woodworking, pottery production, leather work and textiles.<sup>65</sup> Woodworking in the Roman period involved the use of tools such as saws, drills and chisels, and different kinds of joints, few of which survive. We do know from literary and pictorial records that wood was used extensively in the construction of buildings, boats, ships, carts, fortifications, tools, weapons, barrels, furniture and carvings.<sup>66</sup> Woodworking skills were highly developed, and specific types of wood were deliberately selected for different purposes, as suggested by Pliny the Elder:

...Elm keeps its rigidity most stoutly. For this reason it is the most suitable wood for the hinges and frames of doors, since it warps the least. Only it must be inverted, so that the crest is by the lower hinge, the root above...Fir is the strongest wood for uprights, also very suitable for roof eaves and for whatever sort of inlaid work one might want...Ash is the wood most easily worked for any purpose whatsoever...Citrus, turpentine tree, the different types of maple, box, palm, holly, holm, oak, elder root, and poplar are the principal varieties of wood cut into sheets and used as a veneer over another kind of wood...(Natural History 16.206-232)

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<sup>64</sup> J. M. Frayn, *Markets and Fairs in Roman Italy* (Oxford: OUP, 1993) pp. 28-9.

<sup>65</sup> On the textile industry in Asia Minor in general, see G. Labarre and M.-Th. Le Dinaret 'Les métiers du textile en Asie Mineure de l'époque hellénistique à l'époque impériale' in *Aspects de l'Artisanat du Textile dans la Monde Méditerranéen* (Lyon and Paris: Université Lumière-Lyon, 1996) pp. 49-116.

The range of woodworking tools matches to a great extent the types of tools used today (hammers, planes, saws, and so on). Before the Roman period came the use of iron as the primary metal for tools. The number of tools surviving from the period of our interest falls sharply due to the fact that iron is more likely to decay over time than the metals used in earlier times; some examples have been preserved, however. Most woodworking tools such as the axe, adze, saw, bow drill, and chisel consist mainly of a blade with one or more cutting edges and a block or handle with which the tool can be guided.<sup>67</sup> Saw blades occur not infrequently and show several developments compared with earlier tools. More often, the saw blade was held between wooden uprights connected either by a cross-bar above and below, or else the blade appears below a cross-bar. The earliest known planes come from Pompeii. Pliny was obviously familiar with them and notes how the plane could cut continuous shavings from fir planks instead of the chips removed from other tools. The potential problems of chips causing damage are referred to in the *Mishnah*:

If a man was splitting wood within a private domain and injured any one in the public domain... (M.B.K. 3.7)

Because textiles are so perishable, we need to rely upon literary evidence and some pictorial remains for information concerning the portrayal of this occupation. From these, we can tell that the main finished products of the textile industry were clothing, but cloth itself had various uses such as blankets, bags and sacks.<sup>68</sup> The manufacture of cloth consisted of three basic processes – fibre preparation, spinning and weaving; for fibre, the preparation varied depending upon the substance; wool for example was usually sheared in early summer. Impurities in long wool were removed using a flat iron comb with long teeth, while impurities in short wool were probably removed, by hand. Flax was harvested during the

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<sup>66</sup> W. L. Goodman *The History of Woodworking Tools* (London: Duckworth, 1976) p. 6.

<sup>67</sup> *ibid.* p. 9.

<sup>68</sup> J. L. Sebesta and L. Bonfante, *The World of Roman Costume* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1994) p. 24.

summer by pulling up the complete flax plants by hand.<sup>69</sup> The flax was then retted by soaking it in stagnant or slow-flowing water, after which it was dried, pounded with a wooden mallet and scutched (bending the flax over a narrow object and beating it to loosen the fibres).

Although wool and flax were the main types of textile bases, it is known from literary records in particular, that silk, cotton, hemp and asbestos were also used; the *Mishnah* informs us that camel's hair was used (M.Kil. 9.1). As this use of camel's hair mentioned in the *Mishnah* suggests, the particular types of material used varied from region to region. This is reflected in the following excerpt from Pliny the Elder:

The most praised wool is Apulian and the one that is called 'the wool of the Greek flock' in Italy, elsewhere Italian wool...Sheep are not shorn everywhere, since in some places the custom of plucking still exists. There are many types of colours...Spain has special sheep with black fleeces, Pollentia near the Alps has white, Asia has red fleeces that they call Erythrean, Baetica the same, Canosa tawny, and Tarentum fleece its own dark colour...(Natural History 8.190-93).

The process of spinning was particularly labour intensive and relied a lot upon manual dexterity using the spindle and distaff. The simplest form of distaff was a short forked stick, the prongs of which supported the mass of fibres to be spun. The spindle was a narrow rod of bone or wood with a symmetrical thickening near the lower end to wedge the spindle whorl which was made usually of stone, bone or pottery. As for weaving, the warp-weighted vertical loom was used throughout the Empire. It consisted of two wooden uprights with a horizontal beam across the top and a shed rod further down to separate even and odd numbered warp threads. This created the gap through which the horizontal weft thread was passed. A heddle rod brought the odd-numbered warp threads backward and forward to alternate the shed so that the weft could be passed through as a single movement. The vertical warp threads were weighted with stone or clay weights. Another loom that came into use during the Roman period was the two-beam loom, which was also an upright loom,

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<sup>69</sup> *ibid.* pp. 32-5.

but the warp threads were held in tension between an upper and a lower cloth beam. Such a loom was often used for tapestry weaving and in the later Roman period was probably confined to specialist workshops.<sup>70</sup>

Two further crafts were associated with textile production, dyeing and finishing (fulling). It was more usual to dye unspun fibre than yarn or finished cloth. Vegetable dyes were common, but lichens and shellfish were also used. Purple dye, often used by the Romans, was obtained from various sources such as lichens and shellfish (the *murex* shellfish in particular). Many dyes also required the use of a mordant, and so alum or iron salts were often applied beforehand. Cloth was finished by fulling, which involved treading it in a tub containing a solution of fuller's earth or decayed urine which removed grease and dirt; woollen cloth was sometimes bleached with sulphur, as is demonstrated by wall-paintings at Pompeii.<sup>71</sup>

Leather was an important material used for a wide range of objects such as saddles, shoes, tents, bags, buckets, jugs and some clothing.<sup>72</sup> The *Mishnah* mentions bags, aprons, cushions, mattresses (M.Kel. 16.4, 26.1f., also mentioning here their manufacture, stitching and sewing). The process whereby raw animal skins were converted into leather is called tanning. Again, the *Mishnah* refers to this process<sup>73</sup> and to tanneries.<sup>74</sup> The exact combination of processes depended upon what kind of leather was required. The raw hides had to be first treated to prevent decay which was usually done by salting, but hides could also be sun-dried or salted after drying. At the tannery, the hides were washed and lined, which made them more receptive to the tanning liquids and loosened wool and hair, which

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<sup>70</sup> J. P. Wild *Textile Manufacture in the Northern Roman Provinces* (Cambridge: CUP, 1970); R. J. Forbes *Studies in Ancient Technology* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1964) 4.2 pp. 98f.

<sup>71</sup> The *Mishnah* refers to boilers used by dyers (M.Kel. 5.5) and also to protective clothing worn by both dyers and flax-workers (M.Kel. 16.6).

<sup>72</sup> R. Reed *Ancient Skins, Parchments and Leathers* (London: Seminar Press, 1972).

<sup>73</sup> M.Shab. 1.8; M.Ket. 7.10; M.Kel. 15.1, 26.8.

<sup>74</sup> M.Shab. 1.2; M.Meg. 3.2; M.B.B. 2.9.

were removed by scraping off the top layer of the hide. The hide was then tanned by soaking it in a solution of wood and bark or alum and salt. After tanning, the leather underwent various processes (fulling) to produce colour, texture and surface appearance.<sup>75</sup> Evidently this was a rather smelly process as is suggested by the *Mishnah's* observation that tanneries should be set up only on the east side of the town to avoid the winds blowing odours into inhabited areas (M.B.B. 2.9). Also the following comment:

It once happened in Sidon that a tanner died and had a brother who was a tanner. The Sages say: She may say, 'Your brother I could endure; but thee I cannot endure'... (M.Ket. 7.10).

Likewise, this excerpt from the second century Artemidorus:

The tannery is an irritant to everyone. Since the tanner has to handle animal corpses, he has to live far out of town, and the dreadful smell points him out even when hiding...The vultures are companions to the potters and the tanners since they live far from towns and the latter handle dead bodies. (*Interpretation of Dreams* 1.51; 2.20).

Whereas textile remains are scarce, ceramics are perhaps the most prolific of archaeological remains.<sup>76</sup> No handbooks or lengthy technical discussions of pottery manufacture are extant in either Greek or Latin literature because, it is thought, of the common-place nature of the craft. Pottery vessels were used as tableware, in the kitchen and for storage and transport of goods. Most coarse pottery was made locally with a resulting divergence in styles throughout the Empire, while specialised wares were transported over long distances, including *terra sigillata* and those vessels made for the transport and storage of goods, such as amphorae. As well as pottery vessels, there was also a range of other ceramic goods such as figurines, candlesticks and lamps. Usefully, the finished products often retain information about their manufacturing process, a potter's signature or a factory's stamp. In

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<sup>75</sup> C. Mossé (J. Lloyd, trans.) *The Ancient World at Work* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1969) pp. 27-9.

<sup>76</sup> K. Greene *Interpreting the Past: Roman Pottery* (London: British Museum Press, 1992).

Italy for example, more than ninety per cent of finds are stamped which suggests a high degree of production organisation.<sup>77</sup>

This degree of production and organisation is associated in particular with *terra sigillata* ('stamped earthenware') which was mass produced between the first century BCE and the fourth century CE, not only in Italy but in other parts of the Roman Empire: North Africa, France and Germany. The plainer types became the common-ware of the majority, while the most elaborate figured pieces were the fine dinner-ware of the nobility as well as collector's items. It is thus highly likely that some production activities may have been conducted by craft specialists on behalf of workshops, or at least that large workshops might have allowed lesser ones the use of their facilities. The best evidence for such activities relate to the most important stage of manufacture – kiln firing. A series of inscriptions written on flat *terra sigillata* plates has been found at several production sites, especially in southern Gaul. Each inscription seems to consist of lists of pots arranged by size, form and number, set opposite personal names, many of which belong to potters well known from name-stamps found on other vessels.<sup>78</sup>

The following excerpt from Pliny the Elder gives a good idea of the variety and ubiquity of ceramic products in the Roman world and of the long-distance reputation and trade in fine wares:

Nor are we sated by the presence everywhere of pottery products, with jars devised to hold wine, pipes for water, flue ducts for baths, tiles for roofs, fired bricks for walls and foundations, and items turned on wheels, because of which King Numa set up a seventh guild for potters. Indeed, many even prefer to be buried in pottery tubs after death like Marcus Varro...The greater part of the human race uses pottery vessels. Among table wares, the Samian is praised even now. Arretium in Italy also holds high rank, and-for cups alone-Surrentum, Hasta, Pollentia, and in Spain, Saguntum, in Asia Minor, Pergamum. In Asia Minor, Tralles has its special products, and Mutina in Italy... (*Natural History* 35.159-161, 163).

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<sup>77</sup> D. P. S. Peacock *Pottery in the Roman World: an ethnoarchaeological approach* (London: Longman, 1982); W. V. Harris 'Roman terracotta lamps: the organisation of an industry' in *The Journal of Roman Studies* 70 (1980) pp. 126-45.

<sup>78</sup> W. V. Harris 'Roman terracotta lamps', p. 130.

Other areas of industrial-type manufacture included glass-making and metalwork.<sup>79</sup>

Glass vessels did not become inexpensive and common until the invention of glass-blowing in the first century BCE which allowed the production of elaborate shapes and transparent glass. The materials and procedures for making glass are straightforward and Pliny the Elder and Strabo (c.64 BCE - 21 CE) both give accounts of the invention of the technology.<sup>80</sup>

Phoenician workshops are among the earliest, and due to the cost of transport and the fragile nature of the product, workshops moved to locations near raw materials. Josephus however, notes that in the first century CE, the special sand from a beach near Ptolemais was being shipped out to glassworks by boat:

About two stadia distant from the city [Ptolemais] flows the stream Belus. The Tomb of Memnon stands on the bank, and nearby is a very remarkable spot 100 cubits [across] - a circular basin that produces sand suitable for making glass. Many boats put in here for the sand, and whenever they empty out the hollow it is filled up again by the wind... (*Bf* 2.189-190).

As with the production of ceramics, no handbooks of metal-working survive from antiquity. Information thus has to be gleaned from the odd references to metal-working in extant literature as well as from pictorial evidence. Several goldsmiths' workshops are known in Rome, for example, and a fresco from Pompeii depicts cupids at work in a goldsmith's.<sup>81</sup> Other evidence stems from the fact that goldsmiths were organised into guilds commonly called *aurifices* or *aurarii*.<sup>82</sup> Jewellery appears to have been the main product, including necklaces, rings, bracelets, earrings and pendants. Most objects were made from sheet gold, which was formed by hammering a gold ingot on an anvil. As well as hammers, stamps and cores were used along with moulds for beating and for casting, chisels and engraving tools

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<sup>79</sup> M. Newby and K. S. Painter (eds.) *Roman Glass: Two Centuries of Art and Invention* (London: Society of Antiquaries of London, 1991); M. Vickers 'Rock Crystal: the key to cut glass and diatreta in Persia and Rome' in *The Journal of Roman Archaeology* (1996) pp. 48-65; J. Price 'Glass' in D. Strong and D. Brown (eds.) *Roman Crafts* (London: Duckworth, 1976) pp. 113-132.

<sup>80</sup> Pliny, *Natural History* 36.190-194; Strabo, *Geography* 16.2.25.

<sup>81</sup> R. A. Higgins *Greek and Roman Jewellery* 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (London: Methuen, 1980); S. Nappo *Pompeii: Guide to the Lost City* (Italy: White Star, 2000) pp. 134-5.

<sup>82</sup> A. Calinescu (ed.) *Ancient jewelry (sic) and archaeology* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996) p. 26.

and tongs, scales and crucibles. The heat source would have been an open charcoal fire with bellows or blowpipe.

[He is culpable that takes out]...clay enough to fashion the [bellows]-hole of a goldsmith's crucible...or bran enough to put over the mouth-piece of a goldsmith's crucible... (M.Shab. 8.4)

The base of a goldsmith's anvil is susceptible to uncleanness, but that of a blacksmith is not susceptible... (M.Kel.17.17)

The cord that holds the balances of goldsmiths or dealers in fine purple... (M.Kel. 29.4)...a goldsmith's hammer (M.Kel. 29.6)

Another greater reason for its value is that use wears it away very little, while lines can be drawn with silver, copper and lead, and they dirty hands with matter that flakes off. Nor is another material more malleable or able to be divided into more pieces... (Pliny the Elder, *Natural History* 33.60-63).

Along with the various manufacturing occupations referred to above, other types of work are mentioned in literary sources and depicted in archaeological remains including steel production, welding, architecture, uses of applied chemistry, road construction and highway services, observations about vehicles and horses, urban planning, mapping, navigation, clocks, writing materials and book production and military technology which all featured to greater and lesser extents throughout the Roman Empire.<sup>83</sup>

Thus far, we have mentioned in passing the presence of slave labour in the Roman Empire. There is an enormous amount of literature, both primary and secondary, on this subject which is indeed a complex one, and, since the Roman Empire covered a large area, it is important to allow for the possibility of regional variations in slavery practices.

Furthermore, there were large numbers of slaves concentrated in Rome itself, in the Imperial household and in the civil service, as well as those individuals who owned substantial numbers, as we can tell from what limited records are extant. The large number of wars from the third century BCE onwards increased the number of slaves who came from all over the Empire. For legal purposes, the Romans divided slaves into two categories, those who

belonged to the city household (*familia urbana*) and those who belonged to the rural household (*familia rustica*), and within both categories, the variety of occupations undertaken was broad indeed.<sup>84</sup> They formed the majority of workers in mining, factories and private households. They were also owned by towns and cities to undertake public works such as road construction or the maintenance of aqueducts. The agricultural labour force was more complex, however, with large farming estates (in Italy) worked entirely by slaves existing alongside smaller farms worked by peasants or leased to tenants.<sup>85</sup>

The range of jobs held by slaves who usually worked in the country can be reasonably illustrated from a section of the sixth century CE *Digest* (33.7), admittedly rather late, discussing what was included in the legacy of a rural estate with its equipment, which was considered to be not only the implements used on the farm but also the workforce.<sup>86</sup> The range of occupations included the ploughman (*bubulcus*), ditcher (*fossor*), shepherd (*ovilio*), herdsman (*pastor*), water-carrier (*aquarius*), steward (*cellararius*), potter (*figulus*), fuller (*fullo*), miller (*molitor*), sweeper (*scoparius*), gardener (*topiarius*), the woolmakers who make clothes for the rural household (*lanificae quae familiam rusticam vestiunt*), a woman who is permanent custodian of a villa (*mulier villae custos perpetua*), a baker and barber intended to serve the needs of the rural household (*pistor et tonsor, qui familiae rusticae causa parati sunt*) and a slave skilled in the craft of a smith (*servus arte fabrica peritus*). In a similar vein, the first century CE writer Columella lists a variety of slave occupations in his work *On Agriculture*, including a ploughman (*arator* and *bubulcus*), tree-pruner (*arborator*), oil-drawer (*capulator*), mower (*faenisex*), ditcher (*fossor*), market-gardener (*holitor*), head shepherd (*magister pecoris*), reaper (*messor*), oilpress worker (*olearius*), trencher (*pastinator*), stable-keeper (*stabularius*), vine-dresser (*vinitor*).

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<sup>83</sup> K. D. White *Greek and Roman Technology* p. 59; D. Strong and D. Brown (eds.) *Roman Crafts* (London: Duckworth, 1976).

<sup>84</sup> K. R. Bradley, *Slavery and Society at Rome* (Cambridge: CUP, 1994) pp. 75-7.

<sup>85</sup> *ibid* p. 79.

We should bear in mind that Columella's views are reflective of his geographical context and so cannot be applied across the Empire. They at least show what it was possible for a slave to do, even if not all slaves undertook such tasks. In the domestic sphere a similar variety of occupations were undertaken by slave labour. The following occupations are mentioned with regard to the household of Livia, wife of Augustus (27 BCEf.): water-carrier (*aquarius*), silversmith (*argentarius*), goldsmith (*aurifex*), shoe-maker (*calciator*), craftsman (*faber*), wool-weigher (*lanipendus*), wetnurse (*nutrix*), midwife (*obstetrix*), dresser (*ornatrix*), female attendant (*pedisequa*), baker (*pistor*).<sup>87</sup> Apart from the agricultural and domestic spheres which may suggest that the occupations done by slaves were not unlike those that might be carried out by free citizens, there is evidence of slave labour in mines and quarries, often in appalling conditions, as the following excerpt demonstrates:

Around the frontiers of Egypt and the adjoining territory of both Arabia and Ethiopia there is a region which possesses many large gold mines, where much gold is gathered up with great suffering and expense...Those who have been handed over, a great number in all, and every one of them fettered by chains, keep busy at their work without ceasing...Thousands of the unfortunate creatures crush with a quarrying hammer the rock which has been loosened and is capable of being worked with moderate effort...Boys who have not yet reached puberty crawl through the tunnels into the galleries hollowed out in the rock and with great effort collect the ore which had been thrown bit by bit and carry it back to a place outside the mouth of the mine in the open air. (Diodorus of Sicily, b. 40BCE, *History* 3.12.-13.1).

In commercial life too, slaves were evident in activities such as shop-keeping, trading and banking. In fact, the only occupation that was barred to slaves was that of work in the army.<sup>88</sup>

Slaves became freedmen (*liberti*) or freedwomen (*libertae*) by being granted manumission (freedom) by their owner, or they could buy freedom. Formal manumission which took place before a magistrate granted the individual both freedom and Roman citizenship, when the master let the slave go (*manu misit*). Clients were free men who owed legally binding

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<sup>86</sup> *ibid.* pp. 62-3.

<sup>87</sup> *ibid.* pp. 65-6.

<sup>88</sup> B. Campbell, *The Roman Army, 31 BC – AD 337: A Sourcebook* (London: Duckworth, 1994) p. 16.

services to a patron, and freedmen automatically became clients of their former owners. They owed them obligations and often in this respect they continued working for them. Although they gained citizenship, freedmen were not eligible for political office. Any children born to them subsequently became free citizens and were themselves eligible for political office<sup>89</sup>.

The literary evidence mentioned above obviously contains more information about the working activities of men than women, and when it does mention women, it usually refers to upper-class women.<sup>90</sup> As a result, we know little about the working lives of ordinary women in the Roman world other than the assumed roles of supporting the home and family through the raising of children. As well as evidence of female slave occupations mentioned in the household of Livia, information may be gleaned from tombstones:

To Italia, dressmaker of Cocceia Phyllis. She lived twenty years. Acastus, her fellow slave, paid for this tombstone because she was poor. *CIL* 6.9980.

Psamate, Furia's hairdresser, lived nineteen years. Mithrodates, the baker of Flaccus Thorius, put up this tombstone. *CIL* 6.9732.

Aurelia Nais, a freedwoman of Gaius, sold fish in the warehouses of Galba. Gaius Aurelius Phileros, a freedman of Gaius, and Lucius Valerius Secundus, a freedman of Lucius, paid for this. *CIL* 6.9801.

Stranger, my message is short. Stand here and read it through. Here is the ugly tomb of a lovely woman. Her parents named her Claudia. She loved her husband with all her heart. She bore two sons. One of these she leaves on earth, the other she has buried under the earth. She was charming in conversation, yet gentle in manner. She kept house, she made wool. That is all I have to say. Go your way. *CIL* 6.15.346.

One of the earliest main emerging themes with regard to work in the ancient world is that perhaps obviously, it established a relation between the producer and the user, with the artisan and his skill existing for the sake of the user. Comments about this relationship set the scene for attitudes and debates that continued through to the time of Paul. The artisan's work is considered to be a service to others, a form of slavery and an activity unworthy of the truly free man. Herodotus, in 5<sup>th</sup> century BCE, alludes to the Greek attitudes towards the

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<sup>89</sup> K. R. Bradley *Slaves and Masters in the Roman Empire* (Cambridge: CUP, 1984) chapter 3.

manual crafts as held to be less worthy and speculates that this idea might have been borrowed from the Egyptians or the barbarians:

Whether the Greeks borrowed from the Egyptians their notions about trade ... I cannot say for certain. I have remarked ... almost all other barbarian hold the citizens who practice trades, and their children, in less repute than the rest, which they esteem as noble those who keep aloof from handicrafts, and especially honour such as are given wholly to war. These ideas prevail throughout the whole of Greece (2:166-7).

In most Greek city states in 5<sup>th</sup> century BCE, agriculture was highly valued and again, praise of agricultural pursuits becomes a strong theme. When Critobulus asks Socrates what trade he should follow, Socrates answers ‘agriculture and the art of war’.<sup>91</sup> In his *Life of Pericles*, Plutarch states: ‘when we are pleased with the work, we slight and set little by the workman’ (181-2). In his 4<sup>th</sup> century BCE work, *The Republic*, Plato has Socrates work out with Adeimantus an ideal and a real city (2.369-372). In the ideal city all the arts and trades are equally respected, because no man is self-sufficient and each man can practice only one art or trade. All occupations – farmers, house-builders, cobblers, weavers, traders and merchants – produce for their own needs as well as for others, and with the help of money, exchange to secure what is needed to satisfy bodily requirements. Each person plies the occupation and trade for which he is best suited. In the ideal city, peace reigns, since none are rich or poor and all persons and occupations are necessary and honoured. But such a city cannot exist. Glaucon and Socrates call it a ‘city of sows’ (372d). In the real city there are luxuries such as furniture, perfume and incense, courtesans and cakes, as well as painting, gold and embroidery. There are also other occupations – musicians, teachers, barbers, cooks and, above all, warriors. The art of war is as much an art as other crafts, with its tools, apprenticeships and training. In the real city there is hierarchy and conflict. In the ideal city, the life of labour can be honourable. This is not so in the real city. The body and soul is

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<sup>90</sup> See J-P. Morel, ‘The Craftsman’ in *The Romans* [ed. A. Giardina, trans. L. G. Cochrane] (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993) p. 225.

ruined so that one cannot lead the good and just life. Socrates, who liked to go to shops and chat with artisans,<sup>92</sup> shared this aristocratic view of the trades as shown in this passage from 4<sup>th</sup> century BCE Xenophon, who has Socrates declare that:

Those [arts] that are called mechanical are spoken against everywhere and have quite plausibly come by a very bad reputation in the cities. For they utterly ruin the bodies of those who work at them and those who are concerned with them, compelling them to sit still and remain indoors, or in some cases even to spend the whole day by a fire (*Oec* 4:2).

Plato, along with others in 4<sup>th</sup> century Athens, was critical of democracy. Unqualified people, he argued, were in charge of government. Socrates, Plato's mentor, argued that no artisan would try to practise his trade without proper training and preparation. Therefore, amateurs – those without specific training in the arts of government – should not be allowed to govern a city state.<sup>93</sup> For Socrates, according to Plato, the basis of the city was the division of labour and there should be no hindrance to a craftsman's work through too much wealth or too much poverty, since both wealth and poverty corrupt the craftsman.<sup>94</sup> With wealth, the artisan becomes careless and idle. With poverty, he cannot provide himself with tools, will produce shoddy goods, and will make those he trains, including sons, worse craftsmen, but the farmer was looked upon more positively, although he was still excluded from governing in the city state by Plato on the basis that farming did not allow for the time to train for government, and the farmer's work was necessary to aid the freedom of the governing class from work. Plato also argued that you could not be proficient at more than one pursuit.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> Xenophon *Oeconomicus* 4:1-4

<sup>92</sup> Plato *Dialogues, The Last Days of Socrates*, H. Tredennick (trans.) (London: Penguin Classics, 2003) p. 67.

<sup>93</sup> E. Wood *Peasant-Citizen and Slave: The foundation of Athenian Democracy* (London: Verso, 1988) p.143, 'the argument from the arts ... is at the centre of Plato's attack on democracy, joins with his view that a life free from the compulsions of labour and material necessity is a condition for virtue, as vulgar arts and crafts 'mutilate the soul' (cf. *The Republic* 495e).

<sup>94</sup> *The Republic* 421d.

<sup>95</sup> *The Republic* 374c.

Like Plato and others, the Athenian 4<sup>th</sup> century BCE Aristotle believed that only citizens should own land, and that one should have others work one's land so as to free the citizen to indulge in war, politics and the art of government. For Aristotle, music and contemplation were the highest ends of a cultivated man, and the pursuit of philosophy and the noblest pursuits could be mastered only by education and training which, in turn, could only be available to the man of leisure. Aristotle believed that there were two types of city state – democracy and oligarchy. The first was ruled by those who worked and the second was ruled by those who did not work. Aristotle identified the people, the *demos* by occupation:

So far as the people are concerned, one sort is engaged in farming; a second is engaged in the arts and crafts; a third is the marketing sort, which is engaged in buying and selling; a fourth is the maritime sort, which in turn is partly naval, partly mercantile, partly employed on ferries, and partly engaged in fisheries. ...A fifth sort is composed of unskilled labourers and persons whose means are too small to enable them to enjoy leisure; a sixth consists of those who are not of free birth by two citizen parents; and there may also be other sorts of a similar character (*Politics* 1291a21).

Unlike Plato, Aristotle accepted the idea that an individual could fulfil several functions in the state, such as working in the field and serving in the army. Of the various forms of democracy, Aristotle considered that the best type was the one based on farmers, 'such people, not having any great amount of property, are busily occupied; and they have thus no time for attending the assembly. Not possessing the necessities of life, they stick to their work, and do not covet what does not belong to them; indeed they find more pleasure in work than they do in politics and government'.<sup>96</sup> Beyond farmers and shepherds, Aristotle does not consider the other occupations as worthy:

'the other kinds of populace, which form the basis of the other varieties of democracy, are almost without exception of a much poorer stamp. They lead a poor sort of life; and none of the occupations followed by a populace which consists of mechanics, shop-keepers and day labourers leaves any room for excellence (*Politics* 1319a12).

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<sup>96</sup> *Politics* 1318b1.

Aristotle complains that city occupations permit such people to revolve around the market place and to attend the assembly, while the farmers and shepherds are scattered in the countryside and have no time to attend meetings. Aristotle would make a rule ‘that there shall be no meetings of the popular assembly which cannot be attended by all the inhabitants of the countryside.’<sup>97</sup> Aristotle’s devaluation of the manual arts and trade stem from his views on the art of acquisition and his concepts of use and exchange. For Aristotle, the household, with its production for use, was the arena of natural acquisition or that of the farmer and the owner of land. The polis with its production for exchange as the arena of the mechanic, the craftsman, the trader, and the money-lender, was unnatural because the end in view was money, not goods for consumption.<sup>98</sup> It is hard to assess whether this view (and that of Xenophon and Plato) was shared by the Athenian general populace. Socrates (and possibly Plato) believed that only a life free from the compulsions of work is a condition for a life of virtue and is, therefore, a precondition for good leadership and good government. The 5<sup>th</sup> century BCE Protagoras, on the other hand, believed that shoemakers and smiths, as well as a select few, are capable of sharing in the deliberations of government. In Sparta all work was despised and no citizen was allowed to engage in it.<sup>99</sup> In part this was the result of their military situation and the necessity to control a helot population that vastly outnumbered the citizens. On the other hand, Athenian society was strongly attached to the idea of democracy and freedom, and farmers and mechanics were permitted citizen status and voting rights. This had to have had some influence on attitudes toward the manual arts by those who practised them. Indeed, one of Solon’s laws required fathers to teach their sons a trade: Plutarch states that Solon ‘turned the attention of citizens towards the crafts (τεχναι) and ... brought the various trades (τεχναι) into credit and ordered the Council of the

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<sup>97</sup> *Politics* 1319a15.

<sup>98</sup> *The Politics* 7.1328b37-1329a.2.

Areopagus to examine how every man got his living and to punish the idle'.<sup>100</sup> Another law in Athens forbade people to reproach anyone with his poverty or the trade he exercised.<sup>101</sup> Pericles also declared during his famous 'Funeral Oration' that 'our ordinary citizens, though occupied with the pursuits of industry are still fair judges of public matters.'<sup>102</sup> Yet, in spite of laws against those who would degrade a person because of their occupation, the comic poets in 5<sup>th</sup> century BCE Athens poked fun at various politicians because of their manual occupations – Cleon, the tanner; Hyperbolus, the lamp-maker; and Cleophon, the lyre-maker.<sup>103</sup> In the law courts, opponents did not hesitate to stigmatise each other by reproaching each other for their manual occupations.<sup>104</sup>

Artisans as an organised social group apparently made a late appearance in the Greek world.<sup>105</sup> For a long time, their crafts were part of the household (as stated above). The Homeric poems speak of the blacksmith, the carpenter, the specialist in working leather and the potter. Literary sources, inscriptions and archaeological remains provide material for forming a picture of the artisan class at the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> century BCE and into the 4<sup>th</sup> century BCE. Concerning leather, for example, leather and hides were prepared in large tanneries.<sup>106</sup> Noted for their smell, tanneries were, not surprisingly, regarded as one of the most despised of the manual trades. Dyeing and fulling must have also smelled, but unlike tanneries, they were not excluded from the city. Xenophon remarks that the leather industry had specialists, with men's and women's shoes made in different shops. Not only that, but he saw places

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<sup>99</sup> H. Applebaum *The Concept of Work* p. 85.

<sup>100</sup> In Plutarch's *Life of Solon*, cited in H. Applebaum *The Concept of Work* p. 87.

<sup>101</sup> M. M. Austin, and P. Vidal-Naquet *Economic and Social History of Ancient Greece* (California: Univ of California, 1977) p. 180.

<sup>102</sup> Thucydides *The Peloponnesian War* 2.238.

<sup>103</sup> M. M. Austin and P. Vidal-Naquet *Economic* p. 172.

<sup>104</sup> *Speeches of Demosthenes* cited by Austin and Vidal-Naquet pp. 178-180; 344-345.

<sup>105</sup> The view of A. Burford *Craftsmen* p. 65 and H. Applebaum *Concept of Work* p. 98.

<sup>106</sup> J. W. Waterer *Leather Craftsmanship* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1968).

where some men did the cutting, others the sewing and still others the assembling of the shoes.<sup>107</sup>

In the Hellenistic world there was an apparent gulf separating the philosopher/inventor from the farmer/craftsman. It was expressed by Aristotle who lived at the time of Alexander and was his teacher for a while. Aristotle stated: 'It is noble not to practise any sordid craft, since it is the mark of a free man not to live at another's beck and call'.<sup>108</sup> Plutarch commends Archimedes, the ultimate scientist and inventor of the Hellenistic age, because he repudiated 'as sordid and ignoble the whole trade of engineering, and every sort of art that lends itself to mere use and profit; he placed his whole affection and ambition in those purer speculations where there can be no reference to the vulgar needs of life'.<sup>109</sup> The attitude of not wishing to work for someone else led to a vicious circle for the poorer citizens.<sup>110</sup> Refusing wage labour, they witnessed slaves and metics taking these jobs.<sup>111</sup> In terms of slavery, only in large cities, such as Alexandria, were there significant numbers of slaves in Egypt, who were mostly owned by Greeks.<sup>112</sup> There was free labour, but we do not know much about it.<sup>113</sup> Large workshops employed free labour. Harvest work was done by workers on contract who were paid in kind.<sup>114</sup> A particular feature of the Hellenistic world was an expansion of territory, horizons and outlooks. Citizenship, once carefully guarded and restricted, was now opened to foreigners. Populations became mobile and, in all probability, craftsmen as part of this. At the bottom of the Hellenistic social order were the

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<sup>107</sup> *Cyropaedia* VIII.ii.5.

<sup>108</sup> *The Rhetoric* 1.9 1367a32.

<sup>109</sup> *Life of Marcellus* 378.

<sup>110</sup> P. Garnsey *Food and Famine in the Graeco-Roman World* (Cambridge: CUP, 1983) p. 36.

<sup>111</sup> K. Dover *Greek Popular Morality in the Time of Plato and Aristotle* (California: Univ of California Press, 1970) p. 113.

<sup>112</sup> C. Westermann *The Slave Systems of Greek and Roman Antiquity* (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1955) p. 31.

<sup>113</sup> P. Garnsey (ed.) *Non-Slave Labour in the Greco-Roman World* (Cambridge: The Cambridge Philological Society, 1980) p. 3.

<sup>114</sup> P. Garnsey *Food and Famine* p. 34.

working populations, usually made up of the natives of the area. The two main philosophies of the Hellenistic Age were Epicureanism and Stoicism.<sup>115</sup> These sought to guide the individual, to show him and her how to live as a member of society, in accordance with nature's law, to achieve wisdom and virtue.<sup>116</sup> The Hellenistic Age also was a period of scientific development. Erastosthenes for example (287-212 BCE), estimated the size of the Earth's circumference; Archimedes worked out the value of  $\pi$  and made a reputation as a scientific theoretician.<sup>117</sup> Much of our information derives from Egypt, due to survival of papyri in the dry conditions, and this tells us that agriculture was the chief occupation of the population, peasants were strictly supervised and could not leave their place of residence. They were also subject to compulsory labour, however as producers they did receive certain protections.<sup>118</sup> One edict stated that those who work for state interests – including cultivators, beekeepers, brewers, woolweavers and clothmakers – could not have their land taken from them by fraud, nor could they have anyone quartered in their houses, nor could they have revenue collected unfairly from them (no. 210).<sup>119</sup> There is also the correspondence between Zenon and Apollonius.<sup>120</sup>

Hellenistic kings owned large numbers of slaves. In the civil wars between Ptolemy VI and Ptolemy VII during the first half of the second century BCE, captured slaves became booty of war, for example.<sup>121</sup> Slaves were often given dangerous jobs such as working in the mines, but others worked in the household economy, crafts, agriculture and on public works. Sometimes slaves were given quite respectable positions, such as keepers of the state weights

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<sup>115</sup> P. O. Kristeller *Greek Philosophers of the Hellenistic Age* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993).

<sup>116</sup> *ibid.* p. 10.

<sup>117</sup> J. G. Landels *Engineering in the Ancient World* (California: University of California Press, 1978) pp. 187-93.

<sup>118</sup> M. I. Rostozeff *A large estate in Egypt in the third century* (New York: Arno Press, 1972/22).

<sup>119</sup> A. S. Hunt and C. C. Edgar *Select Papyri*. 2 vols. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1934).

<sup>120</sup> M. I. Rostozeff *A large estate*.

<sup>121</sup> K. R. Bradley *Slavery and Society* p. 117.

and measures.<sup>122</sup> Archaeological evidence is particularly rich in the areas of mining and metallurgy – tools and implements have survived in large quantities, along with manufactured objects. There is also evidence of considerable public building activity which led to the emergence of theoretical writings on the art of building, which is known through the works of Vitruvius the Roman architect and engineer, who refers to them. Such building projects also employed many engineers and craftsmen.<sup>123</sup>

As already indicated above, Stoicism was the main philosophical trend of the Hellenistic period, along with Epicureanism.<sup>124</sup> Stoicism stressed that the universe is subject to rational explanations and is therefore itself a rational structure.<sup>125</sup> The rational faculty in man is something which human beings share with the universe, which is also rational.<sup>126</sup> Cosmic events and human actions are both of the same order – logos.<sup>127</sup> Thus nature, God and man are related as a result of being rational agents. Human rationality recognises this relationship between man and nature. Wisdom is a step beyond mere rationality. It is the harmony between all actions and the actual course of events.<sup>128</sup> Stoicism in its view of humanity, touches upon the nature of work. In a description of Stoicism by Diogenes Laertius, in his ten books on the *Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers*, the Stoic view of nature is presented as follows: ‘In the view of the Stoics, nature is a fire, acting by the rules of craftsmanship, and going on its way about the business of creation; that is to say, it is a breath or spirit which is in the likeness of fire and acts in the way of a craftsman.’<sup>129</sup> Stoic

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<sup>122</sup> T. Wiedemann *Greek and Roman Slavery* (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1981) p. 156

<sup>123</sup> J. P. Adam *Roman building: materials and techniques* (London: Routledge, 1999); Arrian (trans by Aubrey De Sulincourt) *Campaigns of Alexander* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1971) pp. 133-43; 41, 264, 346.

<sup>124</sup> A. A. Long *Hellenistic Philosophy: Stoics, Epicureans, Sceptics* 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. (London: Duckworth, 1986)

<sup>125</sup> *ibid* p. 45.

<sup>126</sup> *ibid*.

<sup>127</sup> *ibid* p. 46.

<sup>128</sup> M. Morford *The Roman Philosophers. From the time of Cato the Censor to the death of Marcus Aurelius* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002) pp. 23f.

<sup>129</sup> E. Barker (trans.) *From Alexander to Constantine, Passages and Documents Illustrating the History of Social and Political Ideas, 336 BC – AD 337* (New York: University Press of America, 1956) p. 29.

philosophy attributed a positive value to work. The Stoics saw work as a natural human occupation, which, unlike the Aristoteleans' beliefs, did not exclude one from living a virtuous and good life. Work was compatible with the moral order and a part of it. Such a view however, remained an ideal. In so far as philosophical theology was studied, it was regarded as a branch of either philosophy or rhetoric. Its relation to philosophy is obvious; not so obvious is the connection with rhetoric. But rhetorical training involved taking various 'theses' and either defending or opposing them, and one such thesis, commonly employed, was 'concerning providence'. A rhetorician's manual lists no fewer than seventeen arguments which could be provided in favour of providence, most of which assume the existence of God or the gods and proceed to providence by inference. One example argues for providence from the nature of the universe.

The nature of the universe testifies that in accordance with providence everything has taken place for the preservation of the things in the world: the times of the years receiving alteration according to the seasons, the rains and fruits taking place in the proper time, and the parts of the body also fashioned by nature for their preservation and safety.<sup>130</sup>

The resemblance of this argument to two sermons in Acts (14 and 17) is clear, and it may indeed not be unrelated to Paul's discussion of the unity of the body in 1 Corinthians 12.

The doctrine implied and stated in this idea was widespread in the Græco-Roman world, where poets, philosophers and legislators were regarded, especially by Stoics, as setting forth a consistent teaching.<sup>131</sup> Only the Sceptics argued in favour of the relativity of all human opinions, especially in matters of religion.<sup>132</sup> Combined with the common acceptance of belief in God or the gods was a strong stress on moral teaching.<sup>133</sup> The manifold variety of doctrines which could be encountered in early Greek philosophy and in the early Hellenistic

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<sup>130</sup> Xenophon *Memorabilia* (1, 4, 5-8).

<sup>131</sup> A. A. Long, *Hellenistic Philosophy. Stoics, Epicureans, Sceptics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986) pp. 123-7.

<sup>132</sup> *ibid* p. 97. See also R. W. Sharples, *Stoics, Epicureans and Sceptics* (London: Duckworth, 1996) p. 193.

age was abandoned (though to some extent revived in Gnostic circles),<sup>134</sup> and in its place came a fairly uniform teaching, largely Stoic in origin, which laid emphasis on the four virtues of justice, courage, sobriety and understanding, and was addressed by preachers to individuals.<sup>135</sup> The Stoics and others compiled lists of virtues and vices; they used short summaries of the duties of fathers to children and children to fathers, husbands to wives and *vice versa*, and masters to slaves and *vice versa*. They exhorted the individual to accept social responsibility; true inner freedom was to be found through and in this acceptance. In making these exhortations they developed what is called the 'diatribe', a lively moral address delivered in semi-conversational style.

During the time of the Roman Republic and the Rome Empire, heavy burdens were placed on those who had to labour on the land and in the workshop, creating a gulf between luxury-loving and leisure-loving rich, and the masses of farmers and urban dwellers.<sup>136</sup> The system of values granted prestige to wealth and work based on land, while wealth and work based on trade, money-lending, or piracy held the least prestige as an occupational activity.<sup>137</sup> The poor (whether peasant, slave or artisan), were looked down upon, no matter what their occupation. Once again, the farmer was most admired, and those who did manual work, particularly if they were slaves or hired workers, were least admired. The need for a labour force to perform her work was part of the political, social and military history of Rome. Occupations in Rome are perhaps better understood within the context of agriculture and the insufficiency of yield from the land, the smallness of industrial work, the poverty of minerals in Italy, and the increasing monopolisation of land by a minority. In addition, it is

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<sup>133</sup> *ibid.* p. 178.

<sup>134</sup> M. Morford *The Roman Philosophers* pp. 120-122.

<sup>135</sup> R. W. Sharples, *Stoics, Epicureans and Sceptics*, p. 36.

<sup>136</sup> H. Applebaum *Concept of work* pp. 93f.

<sup>137</sup> S. R. Joshel *Work, Identity and Legal Status at Rome: A Study of the Occupational Inscriptions* (Norman and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1992).

helpful to understand Italy as a consumer society that was dependent upon income from Imperial conquests.

In spite of the usefulness of crafts, an attitude of contempt for those who worked with their hands existed in Rome, as it had in Greece before it. On the latter, Lucian of Samosata who, after an apprenticeship to a sculptor, took up a career in forensics made the following statement: 'If you become a stone-cutter you will be nothing more than a workman, doing hard physical labour ... You will be obscure, earning a small wage, a man of low esteem, classed as worthless by public opinion, neither courted by friends, feared by enemies, nor envied by your fellow-citizens, but just a common workman, a craftsman, a face in the crowd, one who makes his living with his hands'.<sup>138</sup> Given the limitations of the evidence, it is hard to judge the extent to which the statements on epitaphs and inscriptions by tradesmen and craftsmen are representative.<sup>139</sup> They seem to share to some extent a positive attitude towards their craft, a certain confidence and an independence of mind.<sup>140</sup> Yet, how does it fit with the many statements of prejudice against the manual trades by Plato, Aristotle, Cicero and Seneca? Can the philosophers be spokesmen for their culture? Or did they only reflect the prejudices of the aristocracy? The answer is, perhaps, to steer a course in-between the various views.

Some thinkers, such as the 1<sup>st</sup> century BCE Roman Lucretius, were interested in how the crafts came into being. In his didactic poem *On the Nature of Things*, Lucretius set forth an evolutionary view as to how the arts and technology came into being – man first lived like a beast, his intelligence asleep, knowing neither social organisation nor proper shelter nor a regular means for providing food and clothing. Then came the discovery of fire and the overcoming of fear through its warmth and the gathering of several others to share it. With

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<sup>138</sup> Quoted by A. Burford, *Greek and Roman Craftsmen*, p. 12.

<sup>139</sup> S. R. Joshel *Work, Identity and Legal Status* p. 189.

this sharing and the realisation that they had to co-operate to preserve the fire came the foundation of social organisation. The need to communicate for the purpose of preserving the social organisation gave rise to human speech. The discovery of metal suggested the possibility of tools which, in turn, led to the arts of weaving, farming and carpentry. Thereafter, society became increasingly civil, with the rise of conventions and fine arts to crown man's achievement as a toolmaker and a founder of technology'.<sup>141</sup>

The 1<sup>st</sup> century CE Roman, Columella, provides the most complete information about agricultural work during the early Empire, along with attitudes to work held by the wealthy. Pliny the Younger (who lived during the more brutal years of the reign of Domitian, 93-96 CE, and later enjoyed the better times of Nerva and Trajan), was also an important commentator on agriculture. Pliny was a large landowner, and thus he was familiar with problems of agricultural work and management.<sup>142</sup>

Some evidence of attitudes to work from the point of view of the worker comes in epitaph citations on graves as indicated above, but also from pride in work and value of products suggested by labels. A 'tunny-fish' jar discovered in Carlisle, in the Northwest of England in 2002 attested to the apparent 'excellent quality' of the produce.<sup>143</sup> That some workers could achieve wealth is demonstrated in Pompeii with fine houses filled with paintings and marble statues owned by bakers, fullers and ceramic makers, who displayed the insignia of their trades; some belonged to the municipal senate. It should, however, be added that such examples are not the norm. In Petronius' *Satyricon* a young man of letters is put in his place by a freedman trader, who professes faith in himself and others similar to him:

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<sup>140</sup> See J. R. Clarke *Art in the Lives of Ordinary Romans* pp. 118-125.

<sup>141</sup> *ibid* p. 187

<sup>142</sup> Pliny's letters to Calvisius Rufus; Valerius Paulinus as cited in H. Applebaum *Concept of Work* pp. 138-139.

<sup>143</sup> On the jar is written: 'CONTINGVE; PENVAR; EXSCEL; SMLAV' ('Tunny fish relish from Tangiers, old'; 'for the larder'; 'excellent'; 'top quality'). It can be dated to c. 100CE. As reported in *The Daily Telegraph* July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2002. Inscription written down after a visit to its display in Carlisle Castle.

'I am a man among men. I walk with my head held high. I do not owe a coin (?) to anyone. I have never received a summons, and no one has ever said to me from the forum, 'Pay me what you owe'. I have been able to buy some land and save some money, and I support twenty people, to say nothing of my dog. Come with me to the forum and ask for a loan. You will quickly discover whether I have credit, despite my mere freedman's iron ring'.<sup>144</sup>

There are also examples of sculpture, which decorated the homes and gardens of the wealthy and which depicted conventional types: the Old Fisherman, the Ploughman, the Gardener, the Drunken Old Woman. The veins and muscles of the Old Fisherman stand out with such relief that it resembles an anatomical illustration.<sup>145</sup>

Work was however seen as an obstacle to leisure (*otium*). In *De Officiis* (I.42.150) Cicero describes the occupations of artisans: *sordidi*. As stated previously, except in a few systematic thinkers, such as Aristotle, work on the land does not incur contempt, which is directed only at the work of the artisan.

'even stout-hearted warriors cannot live without the aid of workers ... those who stock and cultivate the land', says Xenophon *Oeconomicus* (IV.15).

Also Aristotle, who elsewhere praises idleness, says (*Politics* 1318b.1),

'the first and best kind of populace is one of farmers; and there is thus no difficulty in constructing a democracy where the bulk of the people live by arable or pastoral farming'

Cicero in *De Officiis* I.42,

'none is better than agriculture, none more profitable, none more delightful, none more becoming in a free man'.

Concerning fishermen:

'And the most shameful occupations are those which cater to our sensual pleasures: 'fish-sellers, butchers, cooks, poultry-raisers, and fishermen'.<sup>146</sup>

There is evidence too for crafts as being hereditary and taught through apprenticeships: a papyrus from Oxyrhynchus<sup>147</sup> dated c. 25-26 CE, containing extracts from official

<sup>144</sup> A. Burford, *Greek and Roman Craftsmen*, p. 67.

<sup>145</sup> On display in the cast gallery of the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

documents of the reigns of Augustus and Tiberius, introduces us to a family of weavers at that town. Tryphon son of Didymus (evidently a weaver himself) had three sons who followed the trade, Didymus, Dionysius, and Thoonis. Dionysius' son Trypho, born in 8 CE, also became a weaver; we have receipts for his payment of the weaver's tax for the years 22-25 and 45-50 CE. The younger Trypho, who was twice married, had (at least) two sons, Apion and Thoonis. The elder, Apion, is on record as paying the tax in 56. The younger son, Thoonis, was born in 52 or a little later. In 66, Tryphon apprenticed him to another weaver, Ptolemaeus, son of Pausiron. In 52 Tryphon had secured exemption from military service on the grounds that his eyesight was impaired; by 66 it was probably worse.<sup>148</sup> A second relevant papyrus from Oxyrhynchus that is dated to 53 CE records an agreement between a weaver and a man who wishes his son to learn the weaver's trade:

Pausiris, son of Ammonius, and Apollonius, a weaver, son of Apollonius, have reached the following agreement:

Pausiris has given as an apprentice to Apollonius his son Dioskus, who is still under age, so that he may learn the weaver's trade, all of it, as he himself knows it, for a period of one year from the present day. And Dioskus shall work for Apollonius and do everything he is told to.<sup>149</sup>

One other writer to reflect on the topic of work was the Greek orator and popular philosopher Dio Chrysostom (c. 40/50 CE – after 110 CE). Born of wealthy family in Prusa in Bithynia, Dio began a career as a rhetorician at Rome, but soon fell under the spell of Musonius. He was involved in a political intrigue early in the reign of Domitian, and was banished both from Rome and from his native province, and spent many years travelling through Greece, the Balkans, and Asia Minor as a wandering preacher of Stoic-Cynic philosophy. He was rehabilitated by Nerva and became a friend of Trajan, but continued to

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<sup>146</sup> *On Duties* 1.42.

<sup>147</sup> Texts dating from the 1<sup>st</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> centuries CE, found in rubbish mounds at Oxyrhynchus, a city which flourished in Middle Egypt principally during the Roman period. Discovered by B. P. Grenfell and A. S. Hunt over a series of archaeological seasons beginning in 1897. See B. P. Grenfell and S. A. Hunt *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri* (London: Egypt Exploration Fund, 1898-1908). For the hereditary element in work, see S. B. Pomeroy, *Families in Classical and Hellenistic Greece: Representations and Realities* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997) pp. 141-160.

<sup>148</sup> C. H. Dodd *Essays in Early Christian Society* (London: Fontana, 1985) p. 32:

travel widely as an orator. He later retired to his family estates in Bithynia and became a notable in the province (he features in the *Letters* of Pliny as the defendant in a prosecution arising out of a public building contract).<sup>150</sup>

Of the eighty speeches attributed to him, two are actually the work of his pupil Favorinus. Many are display-speeches, but others, for example those delivered before the assembly and council at Prusa, deal with real situations.<sup>151</sup> His themes are varied: mythology, the Stoic-Cynic ideal monarch, literary criticism, popular morality, funeral orations, rhetorical descriptions, addressed to cities etc. He sees himself as a teacher of his fellow men, and his main ideas are the Stoic concepts of φύσις ('nature'), ἀρετή ('virtue'), and φιλανθρωπία ('philanthropy'). His language and style are Atticist, though he avoided the extreme archaism of some representatives of the Second Sophistic, and often aims at an easy, conversational style, suggestive of improvisation. Plato and Xenophon are his main models. Dio idealises the Hellenic past, and feels himself the heir to a long classical tradition, which he seeks to revive and preserve. Like his contemporary Plutarch, he reflects the attitudes and culture of the upper classes of the eastern half of the Empire, who were beginning to reach out to a share in political power.<sup>152</sup>

It is possible that Dio's views are influenced by Panaetius' treatise *On Appropriate Action*.<sup>153</sup> As for the free poor in the cities, Dio would have them follow occupations 'that are not unbecoming and implant no vice in the soul' (112), which must none the less provide an adequate livelihood. It is clear that Dio did not share the views of Plato and Aristotle; the

<sup>149</sup> Cited in J-A. Shelton *As the Romans Did*, pp. 111-2.

<sup>150</sup> M. Morford *The Roman Philosophers* p. 204.

<sup>151</sup> Two of Dio's speeches are addressed to the city of Tarsus (*Or.* 33 and *Or.* 34), and appear to come from his last years. Tarsus of Dio's day was highly prosperous (33.2), the largest city of Cilicia (34.7), full of splendid buildings (33.18). It had no acropolis (33.39) but lay in the middle of a very fertile plain (33.17, 24, 28). Its extensive territory stretched north to the foothills of the Taurus (33.2) and south to the sea (34.8). Among the many products of Tarsus' territory flax was particularly important, and the city contained a large number of linenworkers (34.21).

<sup>152</sup> *OCD* 3<sup>rd</sup>, edn. p. 470

latter pronounced all traders, artisans and hired labourers incapable of virtue (*Pol.* 1319 a 28), and both would have excluded them from political rights, whereas in a speech roughly contemporary with the *Enboicus*, Dio advocated the conferment of citizen rights at Tarsus on the linen-workers, and is not shocked that such rights are already enjoyed by dyers, cobblers, and carpenters.<sup>154</sup> In exile, Dio had adopted Cynic sentiments at times, making Diogenes his mouthpiece in advocating the simple life and in exalting *πονοί* for their own sake and *ἀντρουγία* as an ideal; idleness is most likely to ruin a man without sense, a slave is better off if kept busy, and the master himself ought not to be dependent on slaves, since nature has given him hands to work with, and so on. In the same spirit he now turns on its head the traditional contention that to work for wages makes a man dependent upon his employer and is inconsistent with freedom: if the poor are properly employed, he argues, they will supply what the rich need, lacking nothing for themselves (113).

In principle at least, Dio seems to be free from prejudices which were not peculiar to Plato and Aristotle but widely shared among the upper classes in both the Greek and Roman worlds. There is some force in an argument which suggests that in the Greek and Roman worlds respectively, traders and craftsmen did not always lack self-esteem and even public honour. But honour at least came to those who had acquired riches which permitted them to render valuable public services. When Lucian of Samosata left school, his family felt that he must contribute to their income by practising a craft, but they considered not only which craft he could most easily learn that would be sufficiently profitable, but also which would be suitable for a free man. Practical considerations indeed forced them to apprentice him to his uncle, who was a sculptor, although sculptors had no prospects of wealth or esteem at

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<sup>153</sup> P.A. Brunt 'Aspects of the social thought of Dio Chrysostom and of the Stoics' *PCPS* 19 (1973) pp.9-34.

<sup>154</sup> M. Morford *The Roman Philosophers* p. 207.

Samosata, where a Phidias would have been despised as a mechanic living by his hands.<sup>155</sup> Attitudes to artists varied; for example Seneca *ep.* 88.18 excludes painters and sculptors from practitioners of the liberal arts on the grounds that they are *luxuriae ministri*; Posidonius (*ibid.* 21f.) had perhaps described their arts as *ludicrae*, not *liberales*. Much later, Firmicus Maternus was to set the sculptor's art below the painter's and that of others engaged in *artes honestae et mundaе* (because it involved heavy and nasty manual labour).<sup>156</sup> Prompted largely by social ambition, Lucian contrived to escape and take up the profession of a sophist, which brought him large fees, reputation and ultimately a government post – but of course only exceptional talent made this possible. Originally his parents were doing precisely what Dio recommends the poor to do: select an occupation fitting for free men who were bound to depend upon the labour of their hands. Dio's discourse breaks off before he tells us what occupations the urban poor should choose; we have only a list, itself not necessarily complete, of those to be rejected. The final part of the speech reprobates brothel-keeping at great length.

Dio does not ban retail trade, and in view of what he said at Tarsus, we cannot be sure how far he held that all artisan work was damaging to one's physical body. His list of exclusions corresponds in part to conventional or philosophical views held by Greeks, but it also fits Roman social values; for example auctioneers and brothel-keepers were *infames* in Roman law (eg. *Dig.* III.2.1). His objection to acting, dancing and professional music-making may likewise represent traditional Roman prejudices. In the *Euboicus* itself he admits that he is condemning activities, dramatic and musical, which the Greeks regard as most important, but maintains that they are not for self-respecting free men, as they produce 'shamelessness' and pride in the masses, as well as other unmentioned evils. Dio's discourses that date from

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<sup>155</sup> Plut. *Per.* 2.1f. says that labour with one's hands on low objects attests indifference to higher things; hence no youth of noble nature would wish, because of admiration for their works, to be Phidias or Polyclitus any more than to be Anacreon, Archilochus or Philemon: none is worthy of esteem.

<sup>156</sup> H. Applebaum *Concept of Work* p. 167.

or after his exile are often coloured by Stoic ideas, though he never adopted a consistently Stoic position and remained capable of asserting that pleasure was the aim of all animals (LXVIII.3), contrary to old Stoic doctrine.<sup>157</sup> Dio claims that ‘investigation of kinds of labour and crafts and in general of a life that is fitting (προσηκουτός) or unfitting to decent people has proved to be intrinsically worthy of much very exact theory’ and that his discussion is ‘relevant to matters essential and suitable to philosophy’ (VIII.128).

Beyond doubt the practice of the Sophists in taking fees had long become common in the Greek world.<sup>158</sup> Isocrates did so, for instance, but in the *Antidosis* he skirts delicately around the subject and carefully avoids the term μισθός (he claims to take money, only because he had lost his patrimony, XV.161f.) and then only from foreigners, and they make him gifts in gratitude, 39f.; 164-6); moreover neither he nor any sophist has ever made a large fortune, 154ff.). His pupil Theopompus excused the master on the ground of his lack of means but boasted that he himself was able to devote his life to ‘philosophy and learning’ without resort to fees (FGH no. 115 F 25). There is evidence that the practice was not universal. There is no indication that Epictetus made any charge: he had a small estate (*Diss.* 1.1.10). Lucian and Plutarch still find it unworthy of a philosopher to make money from his doctrines.

## Conclusion

This chapter examined the evidence for the portrayal of work in the Græco-Roman material. Just as Adam and Eve were thrown out of the garden of Eden for eating the apple, so in the Greek myths, Zeus punished human beings for the wrong doings of Prometheus.

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<sup>157</sup> For example, Seneca *ep.* 121.8.

<sup>158</sup> H. G. Snyder *Teachers and Texts in the Ancient World* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000); G. W. Bowersock *Greek Sophists in the Roman Empire* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969) p. 26; E. Rawson *Intellectual Life in*

In both cases the result was that human beings had to earn their living through work. There is a recurring theme of respect for the farmer and the extolling of the dignity of agricultural labour, and of contempt towards those who had to perform manual work to gain their living. Many technological aspects were praised, however.

The evidence that has been examined in this chapter suggests that in the Græco-Roman context, it was not the actual activity of work which made labour despised, but the ties of dependence which were created between the artisan and the person who used the product which was manufactured. The ties between the worker and the one who directed the work was a key aspect of the dependence that was involved in most aspects of manual work.<sup>159</sup> To build one's own house or ship, or to spin and weave the material which was to clothe the members of one's own household was not shameful. But to work for another, in return for a wage, was seen as degrading. The peasant, it seemed, was much closer to the idea of self-sufficiency (αὐτάρκεια) which was the essential basis for freedom in the ancient world.<sup>160</sup> Disdain for manual work brought on by increase in slavery, glorification of labour (in the poems of Hesiod, for example), only appear to occur at a time when slavery was still in its very first stages. Yet, the problem of the evidence remains key, for we cannot be sure to what extent the views on work were shared by the general working populace. As we have seen, there is evidence to suggest that it was possible to maintain a sense of dignity about work. At best, then, the situation is ambiguous. Remarks made by Plato, Aristotle, Cicero or Seneca, revealing as they may be of the moralist's and philosopher's attitudes towards the crafts and the manual workers, do not necessarily tell us the whole story. Perhaps the one discernible difference lies in the widespread belief that continual work was something that

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*the Late Roman Republic* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1985); G. Anderson 'Sophists and their outlook' *ANRW* II. 33. 1. (1989) pp. 80-208.

<sup>159</sup> And may indeed explain Paul's insistence on his self-support.

<sup>160</sup> Paul uses this term at 2 Cor. 9:8.

the gods very definitely did not do. Instead, the gods were there to provide (only) protection and prosperity for the worker. This is a crucial difference from the material examined in Chapter 2.

The Greeks, like aspects of the evidence in Chapter 2, regarded work as a curse and a burden. Manual labour was most fitting for slaves. The cultural norms allowed free people to pursue warfare, large-scale commerce, and the arts, especially architecture or sculpture. The mechanical arts were deplored because they required a person to use practical thinking. Skilled crafts were accepted and recognized as having some social value, but were not regarded as much better than work appropriate for slaves. Hard work, whether due to economic need or under the orders of a master, was disdained.

It was recognized that work was necessary for the satisfaction of material needs, but philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle made it clear that the purpose for which the majority of human beings laboured was so that the minority might engage in pure exercises of the mind--art, philosophy, and politics. Plato recognized the notion of a division of labour, separating people first into categories of rich and poor, and then into categories by different kinds of work, and he argued that such an arrangement could only be avoided by abolition of private property.<sup>161</sup> Aristotle supported the ownership of private property and wealth. He viewed work as a corrupt waste of time that would make a citizen's pursuit of virtue more difficult.<sup>162</sup>

The Romans adopted some of their belief system from the culture of the Greeks and they also held manual labour in low regard. The Romans were industrious, however, and demonstrated competence in organization, administration, building, and warfare. Through the Empire that was established, Roman power was spread through much of the civilized

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<sup>161</sup> p. 115.

<sup>162</sup> p. 117.

world during the period from c.500 BCE until c.117 CE. The Roman Empire spanned most of Europe, the Middle East, Egypt, and North Africa and greatly influenced the Western culture in which the theoretical constructs underlying this study were developed.

Slavery had been an integral part of the ancient world prior to the Roman Empire, but the employment of slaves was much more widely utilized in Italy by the Romans than by the Greeks before them. Early on in the Roman system, moderate numbers of slaves were held and they were treated relatively well. As the size of landholdings grew, however, thousands of slaves were required for large-scale grain production on some estates, and their treatment grew worse.<sup>163</sup> Slaves came to be viewed as cattle, with no rights as human beings and with little hope of ever being freed.<sup>164</sup> For the Romans, work was to be done by slaves, and only two occupations were suitable for a free person: agriculture and large-scale business. Any pursuit of handicrafts or the hiring out of a person's arms was considered to be vulgar, dishonouring, and beneath the dignity of a Roman citizen.<sup>165</sup> Philosophically, both the Greeks and the Romans viewed the work that slaves performed and the wealth that free men possessed as a means to achieve the supreme ideal of life – human independence of external things, self-sufficiency, and satisfaction with one's self. Work was something that would degrade virtue, wealth was not directly related to virtue except in the matter of how it was used. The view of the Stoics that wealth should be pursued for the purpose of generosity and social good represented extremes of philosophical thought and even a picture that is more idealised than not.<sup>166</sup> The most accepted view seems to have been that pursuit of gain to meet normal needs was appropriate.

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<sup>163</sup> K. Bradley *Slavery and Society* p. 167.

<sup>164</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>165</sup> T. Wiedemann *Greek and Roman Slavery* p. 12.

<sup>166</sup> M. Morford *The Roman Philosophers* p. 114.

Where Paul fits into this picture is not immediately apparent. Clearly there are features of his working strategy that do appear to match aspects of the evidence examined in this chapter, notably the difficulties in working which Paul highlights in his letters.<sup>167</sup> In addition, Paul does seem to exhibit some similarities with the Greek and Roman philosophers.<sup>168</sup> Above all, the evidence analysed in this chapter indicates that there was a clear distinction between the activities of the gods and that of humans. Work done under the protection of the gods (as represented by evidence from Pompeii) was clearly a good thing. At the same time however, work was done usually in service of others, for one's own profit and /or in the service of the State. A note of caution is necessary however: it is hard with any certainty to determine what a 'Græco-Roman' attitude to work actually was, given the difficulties with regard to the extant evidence, not only that, but the variety of portrayals of work do not represent a fixed set of views. In the next chapter, portrayals of work in other non-Pauline Christian evidence will be examined to see what light may be shed on Paul's portrayal of work.

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<sup>167</sup> 2 Cor. 6:4; 2 Ths. 3:8. Often it is not clear whether Paul is alluding to the hardship of actual manual work.

<sup>168</sup> This forms the central aspect of Hock's argument in *Social Context*.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Work in a non-Pauline Christian Context

In this chapter, we shall examine non-Pauline texts from early Christianity. As with previous chapters, the aim of this discussion is to examine portrayals of work which Paul may have encountered or which might at least demonstrate what Christians could have thought about work and how they portrayed it, and with which Paul might reasonably be compared. The majority of this evidence comes from texts in the New Testament,<sup>1</sup> particularly the four gospels. This chapter will also examine relevant early texts from outside the NT, namely the Gospel of Thomas and the Didache. Once again, as with the previous chapters, the evidence will be analysed within the themes of ‘divine work’ and ‘human work’. In dealing with the second of these themes, human work, in the discussion of the synoptic gospels, this will be divided into sub-sections that deal with the identity of the person or persons doing the work, or talking about work.<sup>2</sup> The point of this is to assist in highlighting the cross-over in these texts between the idea of divine work and the activity of humans in the person of Jesus, which is given a distinctly Christological meaning in the texts under examination. This is a particular feature of the Gospel of John.

#### 4.1 Divine Work

The creative work of God does not feature as a dominant theme, and thus it might be possible to argue that God as creator is an idea taken for granted by the authors of the various texts.<sup>3</sup> Rarely is the word-group ποιέω used (as with the LXX) for God’s creative

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<sup>1</sup> The New Testament will hereafter be referred to as ‘NT’

<sup>2</sup> Another reason not to examine these texts separately is that due to the close relationship of the synoptic gospels, a considerable amount of material is shared between Matthew, Mark and Luke. The Gospel of John will be treated separately.

<sup>3</sup> *TDNT* 462.

work. God is κτίσας in Mt. 19:4 (ποίησας in certain manuscripts).<sup>4</sup> The author of Acts, quoting Ex. 20:11, describes God as having made heaven and earth and the sea and everything therein (4:24; 14:15). Revelation contains a very similar idea (14:7). The biblical theme of creation is also apparent elsewhere. When Jesus wants to describe the indissolubility of marriage he draws upon the imagery of Gen 1:27 (Mk. 10:6). Elsewhere in Mark's Gospel, in the apocalyptic narrative of chapter 13, God's work in creation is referred to (13:19). The other synoptic gospels do not draw upon this imagery in their parallel apocalyptic chapters (Matt. 24; Lk. 21:5-36). Other imagery of God's creative work from the Hebrew Bible occurs in passages elsewhere in the NT. In Stephen's speech in Acts 7:50, Isa 66:2 is quoted; in Paul's address in Acts 17:24, Isa. 42:5 is quoted.<sup>5</sup> A definite Christological slant is placed upon God's creative activity by the author of the letter to the Hebrews,<sup>6</sup> in 1:2, where the son is appointed as the heir of all things, 'through whom he also created the world' (ἐποίησεν is the word used here). Interestingly, in the fourth gospel, the word-group ποιέω is not used at all to describe the mediatorial role of Jesus in creation or of God's creative work.<sup>7</sup>

In Chapter 2, one feature of work that was both a divine and a human activity was work as an act of redemption or retribution.<sup>8</sup> This is a feature also of the NT with the emphasis on God's helping and redeeming activity. The Ἐποίησεν κράτος of Lk. 1:51 speaks of God's judgement and ποιέω in the sense of 'behave' in Mt. 18:35 refers to eschatological judgement.

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<sup>4</sup> In B,Θ the word is κτίσας. In κ,C,℞,D and *lat syn* the word is ποιησας.

<sup>5</sup> Some commentators view this train of thought as being stoic (M. Dibelius 'Paulus auf dem Areopagus' in *Aufsätze zur Ag.* 1953, 30-38). In Heb. 1:2, God is described ἐποίησεν τοὺς αἰῶνας; also Heb. 9:11 and 11:3). The letter to the Hebrews develops a dualistic line of thought in 12:27 when it describes what is shaken as made (πεποιημένων as 'merely made' in contrast to the βασιλείαν ἀσάλευτον).

<sup>6</sup> The letter to the Hebrews does not name its author. The reference to 'our brother Timothy' (13:23) perhaps supported the development of a tradition whereby authorship was assigned to Paul. Differences in style and vocabulary between Hebrews and the letters considered to be authentically Pauline make this identification of Pauline authorship difficult to sustain. The letter is known to 1 Clement and it is thought that Hebrews dates to the second half of the first century, probably between 55 and 90 CE. H. W. Attridge *Hebrews* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1989) pp. 4-5.

<sup>7</sup> Instead, the word-group ἔργον is used. On this see 4.2.2 below p. 154.

Similarly, ποιέω denotes God's saving work in combination with 'redemption' (λύτρωσιν) in Lk. 1:68, 'mercy' (ἔλεος) in Lk. 1:72, and 'that which is pleasing in his sight' (τὸ εὐάρεστον ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ) in Heb. 13:21. God makes the Gospel known to the Gentiles in Acts 15:17 and acts through Paul and Barnabas in Acts 14:27; 15:4 and 21:19. Indeed, God's work apparently surpasses all in Eph. 3:20. It further concerns individuals in Lk. 1:25 (Elisabeth) and 1:49 (Mary), and in Mk. 5:19 (the demoniac). In Rev. 21:5, God will make all things new. As with the evidence examined in Chapter 2, God 'does' signs (Acts 15:12), and wonders (Acts 19:11) through the apostles or through Jesus.<sup>9</sup>

## 4.2 Human Work

In the New Testament, the word 'work' with regard to human activity is used quite frequently.<sup>10</sup> However, it does not often appear to be used as meaning the activity of toil for subsistence.<sup>11</sup> Amongst the few direct uses of the word in this sense is Matt. 21:28 in the parable of the vineyard, and Lk. 13:14 where Jesus heals a woman on the Sabbath. There is also 1 Thess. 4:11, and 2 Thess. 3:10 which will be considered in Chapter 5. That there is not a great deal said about human work in the New Testament should perhaps not be surprising given the agenda of most of the authors of the texts who were concerned more with communicating what they saw to be the truth of the Gospel message and its

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<sup>8</sup> Pp. 11, 55-59.

<sup>9</sup> See Chapter 2, p. 38.

<sup>10</sup> ἐργαζομενοι occurs in the New Testament 41 times (on 18 occasions in Paul's letters), ἔργον occurs 169 times (68 in Paul), ἐργασία 6 times (4 in Acts and once each in Lk. and Eph.), ἐργάτης 16 times (on 10 occasions in the Synoptics; 4 times in Acts; and once each in Lk. and Eph.). *TDNT* 1149. The ποιέω word group is more interesting. Rarely does the New Testament use this word-group to denote God's creative activity; ποιέω is used by Jesus generally for the appointment of the disciples (Mk. 1:17 and par.) for example, and elsewhere also, discussed above. Words from the κόπος word-group occur most frequently in the letters of Paul.

<sup>11</sup> A. Richardson, *The Biblical Doctrine of Work* (London: SCM Press, 1952) pp. 30-31.

implications for the everyday lives of those who believed.<sup>12</sup> However, the subject of work is not completely ignored.

#### 4.2.1 The Synoptic Gospels<sup>13</sup>

Because the gospel of Mark<sup>14</sup> does not indicate who wrote it, we are dependent upon church tradition and reconstructive analysis to determine its origin. According to Papias, bishop of Hierapolis in the first half of the second century CE, quoted by the historian Eusebius, someone named 'Mark' wrote the gospel based on what he heard from one of Jesus' disciples, Peter.<sup>15</sup> This theory is not considered to be accurate, given the early church's wish to provide their writings with an authoritative credibility. Instead, it is suggested that Mark was formed from various sources, such as collections of sayings, parables and miracle stories, which were handed down as an oral tradition. Mark either recorded this tradition closely, or else, as is most likely, adapted it.<sup>16</sup>

The identification of Matthew,<sup>17</sup> one of the twelve apostles of Jesus, as the author of this gospel stems from early church tradition, again from Papias, bishop of Hieropolis.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> This marks an interesting contrast with the *Mishnah* where the world of work featured prominently in terms of how it affected the daily lives of members of the community.

<sup>13</sup> A brief glance at the three gospels of Mark, Matthew and Luke reveals that they have a close literary relationship. See M. Goodacre *The Synoptic Problem: A Way Through the Maze* (London: Sheffield, 2001); C. M. Tuckett 'Synoptic Problem' in *ABD* (New York: Doubleday, 1992) 6: 263-70.

<sup>14</sup> Among the many books and commentaries on Mark, for further introductory material, see D. Burkett *An Introduction to the New Testament and the Origins of Christianity* (Cambridge: CUP, 2002); *HJPAJC* rev. edn. (Vermees et al); W. R. Telford (ed.) *The Interpretation of Mark* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995); M. D. Hooker *A Commentary on the Gospel according to St. Mark* (London: A & C Black, 1992).

<sup>15</sup> Eusebius *Ecc. Hist.* 3.29.15.

<sup>16</sup> The explanation in Mark of various Jewish customs (7:2-4; 15:42), and the translation of Aramaic terms into Greek (3:17; 5:41; 7:11, 34; 14:36; 15:22, 34) suggests that Mark's audience were Gentile Christians. As to the location of both Mark and his audience, various places have been posited: Galilee, Antioch, Southern Syria and Rome. Mark uses a number of Latin words and sometimes explains a Greek word by giving its Latin equivalent (12:42; 15:16), a feature which has led to Rome being frequently identified as the gospel's location. An early dating of Mark, either shortly before or after the events of 70 CE, is based on chapter 13 of the gospel, which describes events connected with the Roman siege of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple.

<sup>17</sup> See W. Carter *Matthew: Storyteller, Interpreter, Evangelist* (Hendrickson, 1996); J. A. Overman *Matthew's Gospel and Formative Judaism: The Social World of the Matthean Community* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1991); W. D. Davies and D. C. Allison *The Gospel According to Saint Matthew ICC.* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988).

<sup>18</sup> Quoted in Eusebius *Ecc. Hist.* 3.29.16.

Papias' quotation however, speaks of Matthew writing in Hebrew (or Aramaic) and analysis of the Greek of Matthew indicates that it is not a translation of a Semitic gospel. Like Mark, the gospel of Matthew does not provide clues as to the identity of its author. The sources used in the gospel suggest that they derive from different Jewish-Christian communities. There are sayings in the gospel that emphasise the validity of the Law (5:17-48); Jewish customs are not explained (compare Matt. 15:2 with Mk 7:2-3; Matthew traces Jesus' ancestry back to Abraham in Matt 1:1). It seems that the author of 'Matthew' collected material from other communities in order to create a gospel to be read in his own church.<sup>19</sup>

Both the gospel of Luke<sup>20</sup> and the book of Acts begin with a preface addressed to 'Theophilus'. Since neither Luke nor Acts identify their author, we are once again dependent upon church tradition and internal evidence. Concerning the latter, the literary Greek style and use of vocabulary suggest an educated author. References contained in Acts identify the author as having travelled with Paul (where the narrative shifts from 'they' to 'we': 16:9-18; 20:5-21:18; 27:1-28:16), but the author may well have been using someone else's record at this point. Furthermore, the differences between Acts and the letters of Paul beg the question as to why a supposed travel companion differs in his account of Paul's missionary activities? Early church tradition identifies the author as the 'Luke' mentioned in Paul's letter to Philemon (vs. 24), and the letters to the Colossians and 2 Timothy (Col. 4:14 where Luke is called 'the beloved physician', and 2 Tim. 4:11.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Although some of the traditions contained in Matthew undoubtedly date to a period before 70 CE, the gospel itself was probably finalised several years later. Indeed, the possible reference to the taking of Jerusalem (22:7) suggests a date of somewhere between 80 and 100 CE. As for the gospel's place of origin, since Matthew was writing in Greek for an audience that consisted of both Jews and Gentiles (28:19), Antioch seems a likely contender and this is supported by an allusion made by Ignatius, bishop of Antioch (c. 115 CE).

<sup>20</sup> See P. F. Esler *Community and Gospel in Luke-Acts*. SNTSMS, 1987 57 (Cambridge: CUP); R. C. Tannehill *Luke*. (Abingdon NT Commentaries, 1996).

<sup>21</sup> References to the fall of Jerusalem in 70 CE in 19:41-44 and 21:20-24 lead to a dating of Luke after this event, somewhere between 80 and 100 CE. Luke's audience was most likely Gentile, since the main slant of the gospel, and that of Acts, is to demonstrate how Christianity became a primarily Gentile movement.

In discussing the portrayal of work in the Synoptic gospels, the varying agendas of the gospel authors need to be borne in mind. Of particular interest are the different ways in which the gospels portray involvement in the world and withdrawal from the world in terms of asceticism. Matthew's gospel presents a sustained process by which members of the community are transformed through response to Jesus' call for people to embrace God's kingdom.<sup>22</sup> In Mark's gospel, the picture is often contradictory. Jesus withdraws for periods of prayer (1:35; 6:4; 14:32-42) and commands those who would follow him to leave family (1:20; 10:28-29) and wealth (10:21), to be the slave of all others (10:43-44)<sup>23</sup> and even to deny themselves and lose their lives for the sake of the gospel (8:34-35). However, Jesus does not require his disciples to fast (2:18-19).<sup>24</sup> Luke in his gospel presents various dangers and disciplines of which believers in his community must be aware. One of these is the temptation posed by wealth, which Luke counters with the advocacy of self-denial which will contribute to a believer's ability to endure. Thus greed and arrogance characterise those who will not repent (16:14-15; 18:9-14). Luke portrays Jesus as teaching that his disciples must live a life characterised by the denial of the self (9:23).<sup>25</sup>

(a) *John the Baptist*<sup>26</sup>

<sup>22</sup> W. O. Kaelber 'Asceticism' in *The Encyclopedia of Religion* (New York: Macmillan, 1987) 441.

<sup>23</sup> The imagery of servanthood here is potentially contextualised by reference to Isaiah 53, although this is by no means certain. M. D. Hooker *A Commentary on the Gospel according to St. Mark* (London: A & C Black, 1991) argues that the link with Isaiah has been greatly exaggerated, though the theology of Isa. 40-55 as a whole is certainly in view (p. 247). Behind Jesus' saying here lies the idea that the Son of Man should be served. This is in keeping with the picture in Dan. 7 (vv. 14 and 27 in particular). See also C. K. Barrett 'The background of Mk. 10:45' in M. D. Hooker (ed.) *Jesus and the Servant: the influence of the servant concept of Deutero-Isaiah in the New Testament* (London: SPCK, 1959) pp. 74-9; and M. D. Hooker *The Son of Man in Mark* (Montreal: McGill University Press, 1967) esp. pp. 140-7.

<sup>24</sup> See the article by M. A. Tolbert 'Asceticism and Mark's Gospel' in *Asceticism and the New Testament* pp.29-48.

<sup>25</sup> Luke appears to share assumptions with philosophers, for example that there are 'sick' souls and 'well' souls. However, as has been pointed out, Luke's idea of how a person moves from sickness to health is rather different from that of the philosophers. Luke places a strong emphasis on the person of Jesus as effecting personal change. See the article by S. R. Garrett 'Luke as Advocate for Asceticism' in *Asceticism and the New Testament* 71-95.

<sup>26</sup> The primary sources for determining the history of John the Baptist are the NT (where John is mentioned in all four gospels and in the book of Acts), and Josephus in *Ant.* 18.5.2.

Described as a 'first century Jewish oracular prophet significant in the NT as a precursor to Jesus',<sup>27</sup> John the Baptist was an ascetic, and conducted a ministry in the Judean wilderness that involved a programme of teaching and baptism. In Lk. 3:12-14, when John the Baptist gives instructions regarding the fruits of repentance he preached, he does not call tax collectors and soldiers away from their jobs, but significantly, he demands that they remain at their professions, but that they practise them with righteousness.<sup>28</sup> Interestingly, it is those who are well provided for who must now share their resources; thus tax-collectors are not to exploit their authority and soldiers are not to abuse their powers. In Luke's Gospel, with a strong concern for social justice, John the Baptist likewise places ethical concerns at the heart of his message. In Lk. 4:10-14, John announces to the assembled crowd that 'he who has two coats, let him share with him who has none; and he who has food, let him do likewise'. John then instructs tax collectors that they should 'collect no more than is appointed you' (vs.13), that soldiers should 'rob no one by violence or false accusation' and that they should be content with their wages (v. 14). It is noteworthy that John's message seems to focus particularly on financial matters. In the manner of prophets from the Hebrew Bible, John asks the oppressors, as part of their baptism of repentance, to cease their oppression of the poor who are powerless against them.<sup>29</sup> Mark does not give us these details of John's message. Mark's focus is primarily on the person of Jesus, and John's ministry of preaching and baptising serves to emphasise that both his and particularly Jesus' ministry are the fulfilment of prophecy (1:2-3). Thus for Mark, John is viewed as Elijah (1:6; 9:11-13), who prepares the way for Jesus and announces his arrival as one greater than

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<sup>27</sup> P. W. Hollenbach 'John the Baptist' *ABD* III, 887. See also L. E. Vaage and V. L. Wimbush *Asceticism and the New Testament* (New York and London: Routledge, 1999).

<sup>28</sup> The author of Luke-Acts provides a distinctive portrayal of John the Baptist, particularly in the interweaving of the stories of the birth of John and Jesus. Indeed John is seen as the transitional figure between 'the law and the prophets' and Jesus Christ, the Son of God (Lk. 16:16). See W. Wink *John the Baptist in the Gospel Tradition* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1968).

<sup>29</sup> *ibid.*

himself. John himself is represented as provided for by God, living ascetically, free from need, living from what the desert gave (Mk. 1:6). His strategy is seemingly driven by an eschatological vision regarding the imminent arrival of God's kingdom.

*(b) Jesus*

Jesus does not offer a systematic reflection on work, rather an emphasis on the new kingdom that he was inaugurating. In this, it is hard to determine the place of work in the relationship between the believer and God and thus there is a contrast between the strategy of Jesus in this respect and that of Paul who positively presented himself and his means of self-support as a model for others to follow. Nonetheless, a glance through the synoptic gospel narratives does give the impression that Jesus is connected with the world of work in a number of ways: through his identification as a τέκτων, through his calling of the disciples *away* from their daily work, through his breaking of the Sabbath laws, and through his use of the imagery of work in a number of his parables.

Jesus was, in all probability, a carpenter (Mk. 6:3), but he did not identify himself closely with his craft.<sup>30</sup> The gospel authors however, seem not to approve of this.<sup>31</sup> The suggestion that he was a carpenter comes as part of an accusation made by hecklers. Matthew changes the line to read not that Jesus was a carpenter but that he was ὁ τοῦ τέκτονος υἱός (13:55), and Luke (and John) omits all mention of Jesus' manual work. G. W. Buchanan and R. A. Batey in separate articles suggest that Jesus worked not only in a wood-worker's shop in Nazareth but that he perhaps also worked in nearby Sepphoris.<sup>32</sup> Batey also calls attention

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<sup>30</sup> A point made by G. Theissen *Social Reality* p. 65.

<sup>31</sup> This dislike of Jesus as a manual worker could reflect a sentiment akin to Origen *Contra Celsum* vi. 36? Perhaps the gospel authors saw wisdom and mighty deeds as incompatible with being a carpenter?

<sup>32</sup> G. W. Buchanan 'Jesus and the Upper Class' *NovT* 7 (1964) 195-209; R. A. Batey 'Is this not the carpenter?' *NTS* 30 (1984) 249-58. S. Jackson Case 'Jesus and Sepphoris' in *JBL* 45 (1926) 255, proposed that Jesus and Joseph worked on the construction of Herod Antipas' capital at Sepphoris, given its close proximity to Nazareth. Further support for Jesus' trade comes from the image suggested of carpenters hewing logs for ceiling beams (Mt. 7:5).

to the Jesus traditions that may reflect the experience of a builder (Matt. 7:24-7; Lk. 13:4-5; Jn. 2:19).<sup>33</sup> G. Vermes argues that ‘carpenter’ is used in a metaphorical sense to mean ‘scholar’ or ‘learned man’.<sup>34</sup> In an article in *The Independent* (Friday 28<sup>th</sup> November 1997), ‘Jesus trades up from carpenter to surveyor’, C. Garner reports on research undertaken by Fr Giovanni Magnani, a lecturer in Christology at the Vatican’s Gregorian University in Rome, who suggests Jesus was a cultured middle-class businessman, with his own firm of builders and surveyors. In his book *Jesus and Master*, he suggests that the apparent scarcity of trees in Galilee meant that joinery would not have been a viable career choice. The Greek word τέκτων, used in Mt. to describe Joseph, did not mean carpenter, but rather was one level below an ἀρχιτέκτων, or civil engineer.<sup>35</sup> Despite this, there are no stories in the Gospels concerning Jesus’ work as an artisan, perhaps influenced by a desire to portray Jesus as ‘the redeemer of the world,’<sup>36</sup> or simply reflection of the circles within which Jesus moved (that is to say, outside of normal society).

In Matt. 11:28-30, Jesus appears to call those who labour to ‘refreshment and consolation’: ‘Come to me, all you who labour and are burdened (οἱ κοπιῶντες καὶ πεφοπιτισμένοι), and I will give you rest (κἀγὼ Ἀναπαύσω ὑμας). Take my yoke (ζυγόν) upon you and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart; and you will find rest (ἀνάπαυσιν) for your souls. For my yoke (ζυγός) is mild and my burden (φορτίον) light.’ Even if this is metaphorical language, in which the ‘working’ and ‘burdened’ refer to those weighed down by the law laid on them by the scribes (cf. Mt. 23:4), it is clear that work is regarded as a heavy strain – ‘yoke’ came to be a metaphor for obedience, subordination and

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<sup>33</sup> ‘Is this not the carpenter?’ p. 53.

<sup>34</sup> *Jesus the Jew* pp. 21-22, citing y. Yeb. 9b; y. Qidd. 66a and b. ‘Abod Za. 50b.

<sup>35</sup> But see the letter in the Church Times (January 9<sup>th</sup> 1998) from R. Bauckham, who argues that ‘(Jesus’s family were) most likely a fairly average peasant family, with the very simple lifestyle most peasants considered the norm.’ On this debate see also J. H. Elliott ‘Was Jesus an Egalitarian?’ [http://www.jesusarchive.com/Epistle/01-05/profile\\_may01.html](http://www.jesusarchive.com/Epistle/01-05/profile_may01.html), and B. J. Malina *The Social Gospel of Jesus: The Kingdom of God in Mediterranean Perspective* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 2001). See also K. Wengst *Humility: Solidarity of the Humiliated* (London: SCM, 1988).

servitude (Jer. 5:5, of the Torah); Wis. 6:30 (of Wisdom) 51:26 (of Wisdom); Ps. Sol. 7:9; 17:30 (the yoke of the Messiah); Acts. 15:10 (of the law); Gal. 5:1 (of the law). Concurrently, there is a suggestion that there is to be found in Jesus, on the one hand, a different, light work, on the other, rest from work. This work, seen in connection with Sir. 51:23-27 and the context in Mt (which in 11:19 speaks of Wisdom), can be interpreted as work with Jesus' wisdom as object (note that Mt. 11:28ff. is diametrically opposed to Sir. 33:25-27). In the latter text, the slave is to be kept from rest). As in Sirach a little work with Wisdom leads to rest, so too the mild yoke of Jesus and his light burden result in rest. The goal is repose, since work is toilsome. But the work to which Jesus calls, which probably here in Matthew is scribal work as a disciple (cf. Mt 13:52), is easy and mild in comparison with that with which the worker was burdened before. The toil of work will, according to the Synoptics, cease with the coming of the end-time. Then the Son of Man will surprise humans at their work (Lk. 17:28ff.; Mt. 24:40). Whether this means that work will vanish is not clear in the synoptic texts.

Jesus was of course aware of the world of work. Yet how much the images used in Jesus' parables reflect the point of view of an artisan or construction worker is open to question. Most of his parables draw on agricultural or pastoral scenes that were familiar to anyone living in Galilee. Jesus employs these references to make a spiritual point. Unfortunately, his references tend also to subvert or qualify any importance that might be found in work. However, there are some parables and sayings that reflect the experience and basic understanding of a builder: every one who hears and heeds the words of Jesus is likened by him to a wise man who built his house on a rock. In contrast, every one who hears his words and does not do them is compared to a foolish man who built on sand (Matt. 7:24-7; Lk. 6:46-49); Jesus calls special attention to the eighteen men on whom the

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<sup>36</sup> A. Richardson *The Biblical Doctrine of Creation* (London: SCM, 1952) p. 31.

tower of Siloam fell. He neither faults the builders nor the eighteen, but uses the event to challenge the popular doctrine of retribution (Lk. 13:4-5); when Jesus tells of a man who planted a vineyard, he mentions incidentally that the man built a tower as part of this project (Matt. 21:33-46); Jesus invited those who laboured and were heavy laden to come to him for rest (Mt. 11:30).<sup>37</sup>

Jesus is presented as Lord of the Sabbath and free from the Law (Mk. 2:28/Matt. 12:1-8; Lk. 6:1-5). The Lord for whose sake one can, according to Lk. 10:38-42, push work with worldly things to the side, can act against the prohibition of work on the Sabbath if it obstructs love for his neighbour. And, in the matter of man's rest from work, the Sabbath is in a sense replaced by the person of Jesus (cf. Mt. 11:28ff.). This is clearest in Lk. 13:10-17, where it is reported that Jesus heals a crippled woman on the Sabbath (vv. 10-13).<sup>38</sup> Jesus is then indirectly attacked by the leader of the synagogue who, with Ex. 20:9f. and Deut. 5:13 in mind, says to the people that there are six days on which one is to work; on these days, not the Sabbath, they can be healed (v. 14). Jesus answers that even on the Sabbath one unties one's ox or donkey from the manger and gives it water. How much more then must one not untie a daughter of Abraham from the bonds of Satan on the Sabbath (v. 15f).<sup>39</sup> Does this perhaps echo Gen. 2:1-3, the Sabbath being the perfection of the work of creation, and Deut. 5:13-15, a deliverance from bondage? The Sabbath is to exist for the sake of man, and not man for the sake of the Sabbath (Mk. 2:27). Jesus is thought by the Synoptics to be provided for by the Father, most often indirectly, through other people (Lk. 8:1-3; Matt. 27:55). Jesus accepts hospitality in Mk. 1:29f.; 2:15; 14:3; Lk. 7:36f; 9:51f.; 10:38; 14:1f). Jesus also provides for the crowd in its hunger (Mk. 6:35-44; 8:1-9). Here there are

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<sup>37</sup> Because of this, Justin Martyr understood Jesus to be a maker of ploughs and yokes (*Dialogue with Trypho* 88).

<sup>38</sup> It was not normally permissible to heal on the Sabbath, since healing was classified as work, but, if life was in danger, emergency treatment was allowed (M. Yoma 8.6). Jesus applies and extends this principle.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Jesus' replies in Mt. 12:11; Lk. 14:5, where the Jews' practice of drawing up animals who had fallen into a well on the Sabbath is spoken of.

associations with the miracle of the manna in the wilderness: Jesus gives to those who answer the message of his apostles (Mk. 6:7-13, 30-34), or come to him (8:1), a taste of the kingdom of God in the bread he provides.<sup>40</sup> Sustenance is given in the kingdom without toil.<sup>41</sup> The disciples are fed by those to whom they preach in Mk. 6:10 (cf. Matt. 10:5ff.; Lk. 10:5ff.), and must now distribute food to those who have come to Jesus as a result of their preaching (Mk. 6:41). Here there are associations with the thought of paradisiacal maintenance given without strain and independently of work.<sup>42</sup> The miracles of feeding are an indication that, when the Messiah comes, he provides even earthly sustenance. This is probably due to the import of the word 'bread' in Mk. 8:14-21; bread (in contrast with the leaven of the Pharisees and Herod) is a sign of the Messiah who is to come and who then gives earthly sustenance as well (cf. Matt. 16:5-12). In Jesus' teaching, the right of the worker to a wage is recognised (Matt. 10:10b/Lk. 10:7b). Work is regarded as normally existing for maintenance (Lk. 5:5; in order to live, one must work or beg, Lk. 16:3).<sup>43</sup>

With this, we should not assume that Matthew 6:25 is adapting and embellishing 'Q' which is found 'unadorned' in Luke.<sup>44</sup> Can we further assume that *μεριμνάω* can be

<sup>40</sup> Cf. associations with the sacrament of bread Mk. 6:41; 8:6; cf. 14:22.

<sup>41</sup> The shepherd does not allow his flock to lack anything and provides for it in the wilderness, Ps. 23.

<sup>42</sup> As discussed in chapter 2, pp.41-2.

<sup>43</sup> When Jesus tells the disciples to rely on the support of others, he does not show any interest in the fact that it is due to the work and labour of others that there is the wherewithal to support the disciples anyway. This emphasises the tight focus of Jesus in relation to the in-breaking of the Kingdom. This further marks a slight difference from Paul for whom the labour of others upon whom he may rely (for example, the Philippians) is part of his own awareness of wider ethical issues (cf. also 1-2 Thess), and the necessity of work to support oneself and not be a scrounger. Thus, Jesus is ethically minded *vis à vis* human activity (work) but is not concerned about the fact that human activity (work) is the foundation of the world's present existence (which is presumably passing away).

<sup>44</sup> On Matthew, W. D. Davies and D. C. Allison *Matthew* 3 vols. (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1988) p. 647f. See Ps. 127:2, Isa. 32:17; Heb. 13:5 ('Be content with what you have; for he has said: 'I will never fail nor forsake you)'). The idea of trusting God for everyday provisions is already expressed in the Jubilee legislation, where Israel is called to depend on the LORD's catering hand during the Sabbath year fallow (Lev. 25:18-24). Keeping of the sabbatical year is attested to in 1 Macc. 6:49, 53-4; 1QS 10.7-8; 1QM 2.6; Jos. *Ant.* 11.338-43; 14.202-10. See also Philo *Spec. Leg.* 2.198: 'We have gladly received and are storing the boons of nature, yet we do not ascribe our preservation to any corruptible thing, but to God the Parent and Father and Saviour of the world and all that is therein, who has the power and right to nourish and sustain us by means of these or without these' 'Do not be anxious,' which stands over the rest of the chapter, contains an imperative: there is no need for faithful disciples to fret overmuch about food and clothing. *Ψυχή* means 'earthly life', and the command represents something like what the Stoics called *αὐταρκεία* (1 Tim. 6:6; Clement of Alexandria *Paed.*

translated ‘to work’ rather than simply ‘to worry’? Μεριμνάω occurs five times, in Matt. 6:25, 27, 28, 31, 34. It refers primarily to a mental attitude, but it is possible that Jesus was telling his disciples not to put forth effort, not to work, save in preaching the gospel (cf. Mk. 6:8; 1 Cor. 9:14). Does Matthew think of μεριμνάω along with μερίζω? Connecting anxiety with division within the self, this would link 6:25 well with ἀπλοῦς of 6:22 and with the theme of serving two masters in 6:24. For ἐμβλέψατε εἰς τὰ πετεινὰ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ (Matt. 6:26), Luke has κατανοήσατε τοὺς κόρακας (Lk. 12:24). The last word here (κόραξ) is a hapax, ‘ravens’; is it possible that Matthew did not use this because ‘birds of the air’ often occurs in the LXX, and also the raven was considered unclean (Lev. 11:15; Deut. 14:14)? Perhaps the call to live like the birds of heaven had its inspiration in eschatological thinking, in the conviction that the end would be like the beginning – in Eden, Adam did not have to toil for food.<sup>45</sup> Since elsewhere Jesus seems to seek the recovery of paradisiacal conditions (19:3-9), the call for a carefree existence should perhaps be thus understood.<sup>46</sup> Regarding οὐ κοπιῶσιν οὐδὲ νήθουσιν (Matt. 6:28), it is possible to argue that behind the words for ‘toil’ (man’s work) and ‘spin’ (woman’s work) there lies an Aramaic word-play (עמל/עמל).<sup>47</sup>

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1.12.98, and Horace *Odes* 2.11.4-5. M. Hengel *Property and Riches in the Early Church. Aspects of a Social History in Early Christianity* J. Bowden trans. (London: SCM, 1974) points out the contrast between the scriptural learning of the Pharisees and the preaching of Jesus, which has a notable prophetic character (p. 24). Hengel comments that ‘Jesus himself did not come from the proletariat of day-labourers and landless tenants, but from the middle-class of Galilee, the skilled workers ... Jesus himself took for granted the owning of property in his immediate surroundings’ (op. cit.). See also M. Hengel *The Charismatic Leader and His Followers* J. C. G. Greig trans. (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1981). In addition, the work of G. Theissen is most relevant, particularly *The Gospels in Context: social and political history in the Synoptic tradition* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), and *Social Reality and the Early Christians: theology, ethics and the world of the New Testament* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1993).

<sup>45</sup> According to 2 Esdr. 1.19, and the Life of Adam and Eve 2-4, the angels fed Adam manna.

<sup>46</sup> V 28, the ‘flowers of the field.’ In the Hebrew Bible, the comparison of a human being to flower or grass is often employed to underline the brevity and fragility of life: (Isa. 40:6-7; Job 8:12; 14:2; Ps. 37:2; 90:5-6), here though the motif is turned around.

<sup>47</sup> H. D. Betz *Commentary on the Sermon on the Mount* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1995) comments that the Lukan parallel has its own nuances and is less tightly structured. The same can be said of the other parallels in *P. Oxy.* 655, the Coptic *Gospel of Thomas* and Justin *Apol.* 1.15 (p. 460). Anxiety was a popular theme in the Hellenistic and Roman Age, not simply as a result of political and socio-economic conditions, but also the consequence of a literary, philosophical and religious tradition. One reason for anxiety was seen in humanity’s fragile condition. Ancient literature attests this theme (eg Hesiod’s myths of Pandora and Cronus – according to *Op.* 65, Aphrodite puts into Pandora ‘cruel longing and cares that weary the limbs, ποθον αργαλειον και γυιοκορους μελεδωνας. ‘First the tribes of men lived on earth remote and free from ills and hard toil and heavy sicknesses which bring the Fates upon men ... but the woman took off the great lid of the jar with her hands and scattered all these

According to the parable in Matt. 20:1-15, the landowner (God) gives the same day's pay independently of what the labourers have done. This parable provides a good picture of the working life of a day-labourer of that time, but the payment of wages does not correspond to conditions in reality. That the worker receives pay for the whole day independently of his labour can perhaps be interpreted as indicating that the sovereign God gives wages according to need, not labour, where work for, and subject to, his kingdom (the work of the disciples in preaching, and so on) is concerned (Matt. 19:27-30, which precedes this parable deals with the reward of the disciples for following Jesus). Of Jesus himself, it is suggested in the Synoptics at several places, that he becomes tired from his activities (Mk. 4:38). When the crowd presses in on him so that he will heal the sick among them, he withdraws (Mk. 1:35; 6:31; Jesus and his disciples, according to Mark, on occasion do not have time even to eat, 3:20 and 6:31).

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and her thought caused sorrow and mischief to men'. (Only hope was left in the jar (*Op.* 90-95, LCL edition *Hesiod* trans. Hugh G. Evelyn-White; rev. ed.; 1936; reprinted 1982 London: Heinemann, p.9.) Descriptions of humanity's lamentable condition were handed down in the Platonic school and became a constant element of the so-called consolation literature (eg. Ps.-Plato *Epinomis* 973d-947a). Well-known summaries of this human condition are also found in Roman literature (Lucretius *De rer. nat.* 3.1046-75; 5.222-34). Hebrew has no exact equivalent for the Greek μεριμνάω (cf. Josh. 22:24; Jer. 17:8; 42:16; 49:23; Pvsb 12:25). The theme of anxiety is prominent in LXX wisdom texts. This literature also has exhortations not to worry (Pvsb 14:23; 17:12; Sir. 30:21-25; 31:1-4, for example), commendations of wisdom as freedom from worrying (Wis. 6:12-20; 8:9; 15:9 for example), and warnings in the form of lengthy descriptions of humankind's miseries (eg. Wis. 7:1-6; Sir. 40:1-11; Philo *Praem. Poem* 98-126). These ideas occur in the NT too (Mk 4:19//Mt. 13:22//Lk. 8:14; Mt. 10:19; Lk. 10:41; 21:34; 1 Cor. 7:32-34; 12:25; 2 Cor. 11:28; Phil. 2:20; 4:6; 1 Peter 5:7 (Ps. 55:23 LXX)). Also the issue of divine providence, although not addressed directly by the passage in Matt. and Lk, is present in concurrent discussions that treat similar material deal with this topic as well. It was the subject of debates between Stoics and Epicureans in particular (especially Zeno and Epicurus). On the debate and more generally see E. F. Sutcliffe, *Providence and Suffering in the Old and New Testament* (1953 London: Nelson). At the time of the NT, several texts summed up the state of the question: Philo's and Seneca's *De providentia* and several of Epictetus' *Diatribes*. Paul also touches upon the issue in Rom. 8:14-16, 28-30, 35-39; 1 Cor. 2:7-9; Phil. 2:12-13. The context in Lk differs – Lk 12 contains a speech of Jesus, given in part to his disciples, in part to the crowds. Immediately preceding Lk 12:22-32 is the parable of the Rich Fool (12:16-21), and following is Luke's version of the saying concerning treasures (Lk. 12:33-34//Mt. 6:19-21). P. 486: the future is a temporal concept that one may analyse into today and tomorrow. So long as one gazes anxiously at tomorrow one fails to lay hold of the problems of today, which always confront one. (Only if one is freed from this pointless anxiety can one concern oneself with today and its troubles. For Jesus' disciples, the search for the kingdom and righteousness of God (vs. 33) means freedom from the practical problems of the present. Such a possibility is opened up when the disciple of Jesus seeks after the kingdom and righteousness of God in the face of the plagues of the present day. G. Theissen *Social Reality* pp. 43-44 suggests that the life that Jesus asks his disciples to lead is one that can only be passed on through extreme living conditions.

Several times in the picture of working life given in the parables, a rather more negative side of work is presented. In Matt. 20:1-15 it is said that the work in a vineyard is hard and hot (20:12). The work of the sower and labourer in the vineyard often meets with failure and brings no results (Mk. 4:3-8; Lk. 13:6-9). The implication of Matt. 13:44, is that it is obviously better to find a treasure than to work.<sup>48</sup> That work can be laborious and without result is seen also in the narrative of the catching of the fish (Lk. 5:1-11). Simon says to Jesus that he and the other fishermen have toiled (κοπιᾶσαντες) the whole night, yet caught nothing. But, as the continuation of the narrative suggests, work led by Jesus can bring results.

*(c) The Disciples*

The call of Jesus to his disciples demanded a complete break with their past.<sup>49</sup> In Mk. 1:16-20; 2:14 the disciples are called away from their work.<sup>50</sup> There are indications in Mark's narrative however, that the break might not have been quite as sudden as this incident suggests, since throughout the next eight chapters of the gospel, Jesus remains in the vicinity of the brothers' homes, and a boat (presumably belonging to one of the fishermen) is always available (3:9; 4:1, 35; 5:21; 6:32, 45; 8:13). 'James son of Zebedee and John his brother', together with Peter, form the group of disciples most often mentioned by Mark, and

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<sup>48</sup> cf. Sir. 40:18.

<sup>49</sup> P. Brown suggests that Jesus saw the life of his own disciples in terms of a stark call to poverty (*Poverty and Leadership in the Later Roman Empire* [Hanover and London: The University Press of New England, 2002]). G. Theissen *Social Reality* pp. 33-59 describes how Jesus' sayings represent an ethic that is based on homelessness. Essentially, the call to discipleship means renouncing any permanent abode (Matt. 8:20 // Did. 11:8), excluding family ties (p. 38), and criticism of wealth and possessions (p. 39).

<sup>50</sup> In Mt. 4:18-20 where the disciples are called, Davies and Allison (p. 392) note the parallel with 1 Kgs. 19:19-21, Elijah's call of Elisha (1) Elijah is travelling (v. 19); (2) he finds Elisha who is ploughing with oxen (v. 19); (3) Elijah puts his mantle on Elisha, which is a sign of the call to prophetic office (v. 19); (4) Elisha, who responds, asks to kiss his parents first, and he slaughters oxen for a sacrifice (vv. 20-21); (5) Elisha follows Elijah (v. 21). Chrysostom notes the connection (*Hom on Mt.* 14:3). In the NT narrative, family and possessions are given up on the spot. In 1 Kgs. 19:19-21, the story of Elijah calling Elisha, the latter's engagement with his occupation is recorded: Elisha 'was ploughing'. Compare Mk 2:14: Levi was 'sitting at the tax office'. Note also Judg. 6:11-12; 1 Sam. 11:5; Amos 7:14-15. The disciples' work is essentially to be healing and eschatological

apparently closest to Jesus. Their response to Jesus' call is as immediate as that of the first two disciples: they sever their family ties, leaving 'their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men'. James and John are portrayed as being at a higher economic level than Peter and Andrew. The latter are fishing basically from the shore with leaded nets, whereas the former possess a boat and have hired workers, would fish by the dragnet method, and would harvest a much larger catch (see Lk. 5:6, 9; Jn. 21:6-11). This discrepancy may explain why John and James are those who ask Jesus for seats of honour in the kingdom (Mk. 10:35, where they are again identified as 'sons of Zebedee'). Their ownership of the boat and employment of hired workers in a vital industry are contrary to much contemporary description of Jesus' first followers as a band of itinerant peasants. They may be itinerant during Jesus' ministry, but they hardly represent the most economically deprived groups in Galilee.<sup>51</sup>

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proclamation, thus work performed was worthy of a wage (in this case, support) (see G. Theissen *Social Reality* p. 48).

<sup>51</sup> K. C. Hanson 'The Galilean Fishing Economy and the Jesus Tradition' in *BTB* (1997) 27 pp. 99-111, suggests that the importance of fish in Israel is signalled by several geographical names (W. H. Wuellner *The Meaning of Fishers of Men*. New Testament Library. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1967) pp. 28-33. Jerusalem had a 'fish-gate' (Neh. 3:3); the capital of Gaulanitus was Bethsaida ('Fishing Village' or 'Temple of the Fish-God'), located on the northern shore of the sea of Galilee (Mk. 6:45); and the Greek name for the town of Magdala on the western shore of Galilee was Tarichaea ('Processed-Fishville'). There are difficulties in interpretation caused by an evaluation of the Galilean economy based on a market economy. Fishing was an important part of Galilean economy in the first century. But it was not the 'free enterprise' which many readers of the NT passages may imagine. Even fishers who may have owned their own boats were part of a state-regulated, elite-profitting enterprise, and a complex web of economic relationships. Since fishing created 'product' and utilised the infrastructure, Herod Antipas and his Roman patrons (Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula) could benefit in numerous ways: selling fishing leases, taxes on product and processing (for example, taxes on shops and processing installations), and tolls on cartage and shipping. What we have is a political-economic and domestic-economic network of relationships (not *individuals* who 'go to work'). The Roman emperors became very wealthy because of their patronage position with regard to client-kings such as the Herodians who controlled the gathering of taxes and tributes of varying kinds. Josephus calls Herod Antipas a 'lover of luxury' (*Ant.* 18.245). One of the most interesting observations the gospels make about the John and Zebedee families is Luke's comment that they were a small scale collective/co-operative: '...they signalled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both boats ... For he [Simon] was astonished, and all that were with him, at the catch of fish which they had taken; and so too were James and John, Zebedee's sons, who were co-operative-members [κοινωνοί] with Simon' (5:7, 9-10a). Since it appears only in the Gospel of Luke, this description may be due to the evangelist's own experiences or interests rather than those of the fishermen. Yet there is evidence for fishing-guilds in Palestine in a slightly later period (*j.Pes.* 4.30d; *j.M.K.* 2.81b; *b.M.K.* 13b). A fishing co-operative in Asia Minor left an impressive stele dedicating the toll house for which the co-operative paid in 54-59 CE (R. Horsely 1989: 18-19, *New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity* Vol. 5. (Macquarrie: Ancient History Documentary Research Centre). Concerning the John-Zebedee co-operative, Horsely concludes that 'the families of Peter and Andrew, and of James and John, must have been of at least moderate means, since each owned a boat and other fishing equipment: furthermore, these families were able to release two sons for a three-year period (Mk. 1:16-20)' (1989: 110-11). But the evidence does not require any of this reconstruction. First, given the evidence of the Hellenistic and Roman-era fishing industries, it is at least

Concerning the portrayal in Matthew, the proclamation of 10:7 is not only the proclamation of Jesus' twelve but also the proclamation of Matthew's church.<sup>52</sup> In addition, there are differences between the Synoptics in terms of what the disciples are allowed to carry and not to carry. Davies and Allison make the following observations: (1) the permission to take sandals and staff (so Mark) is probably a secondary development required by the needs of Christian missionaries (or it could reflect Ex. 12:11 where the Israelites are, on the eve of the exodus, told to eat with 'your sandals on your feet and your staff in your hand') (2) if Lk 10:4 reproduces Q, then Mt has altered Q's arrangement to money (gold, silver, copper), wallet, clothing (tunics, sandals, staff) (3) the Matthean order, gold, silver, copper is according to value (cf. Jos. Ant. 8.76) (4) Matthew's arrangement seems to contain two small triads: gold, silver, copper, and tunics, sandals and staff (5) attempts to harmonise

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*possible* that the boats were actually owned by the brokers and used by the co-operative. Secondly, 'moderate means' is a useless and misleading category in a peasant society without a mercantile 'middle class'. Even if the families owned boats, this would say no more about them than it would about a peasant farmer who owned a yoke of oxen or a flock of sheep. Thirdly, how long the 12 were 'on the road' with Jesus is unclear in the gospels. Wuellner perceives that there were 2 'classes' of fishermen: those who did the actual work, and those who owned the boats and made the deals with the brokers (1967: 63). He refers to members of this latter group as the 'professional middle class fish catcher and fish trader' (p. 24), prosperous from their marketplace deals (p. 45). While he rightly points out that there were 'hired labourers', there is no reason to conclude that they were in a different 'social class' than the fishing families who owned boats. We see both working alongside each other in the gospels (eg. Mk 1:20). Hanson concludes that both of these groups were 'peasants' in the broad sense, since they both live from their work in the boats. The hired labourers are in a more precarious position because their work was likely seasonal; but that does not make the members of the fishing co-operative 'middle-class' entrepreneurs (pp. 45-63). Jeremias was also fond of the term 'middle-class' for anyone above a beggar, but the term is simply anachronistic. The ancient Egyptian observation that the fisher was 'more miserable than any (other) profession' was based on the combination of physical hazards (storms and crocodiles) in combination with fulfilling the fishing lease ('The Satire on the Trades', trans. Wilson 1969: 433-43, in *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*, 432-34, J. A. Pritchard ed. Princeton Uni. Press; also Plautus *Rudens* 290-305 for fishers as low status). If there were not a sufficient number of family members in the co-operative, the fishermen had to hire labourers to help; these labourers represented the bottom of the social scale in the fishing sub-system. In Mk. 1:19-20 we find Zebedee as a net fisher who not only has two working sons in the business, but hired labourers as well. For their work, fishermen needed resources from farmers and artisans, eg. for flax for nets, cut stone for anchors, wood for boat building and repairs, and baskets for fish. In 1986, an ancient fishing boat was discovered in the mud along the north-west shore of the Sea of Galilee, just north of Migdal (Magdala); it has been dated to approx. 40 BCE – 70 CE based on C14 testing, and adjacent pottery (S. Wachsmann 'The Galilee Boat' in *BAR* 14.5: 18-33; 1995 *The Sea of Galilee Boat: An Extraordinary 2000 Year Old Discovery*. (New York: Plenum). See also the article by J. Murphy O'Connor 'Fishers of Men: What do we know of the First Disciples from their Profession?' in *Bible Review* (June 1999) pp. 22-7, 48-9. See also S. Freyne *Galilee from Alexander the Great to Hadrian, 323 BCE to 135 CE: a study of Second Temple Judaism* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1998), and *Galilee and Gospel: collected essays* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000).

<sup>52</sup> Davies and Allison p. 169f. on 10:7f.

Matthew and Mark by urging mistranslations from Aramaic do not persuade (6) the Lukan prohibitions against taking silver and staff (9:3) may be from Q since they have parallels in Mt. 10:9f. (7) because the wallet typically contained bread, Matthew probably thought Mark's mention of bread redundant, and therefore omitted it. ἄξιός γάρ ὁ ἐργάτης τῆς τροφῆς αὐτοῦ: Lk. 10:7 has τοῦ μισθοῦ; otherwise there is agreement.<sup>53</sup>

Certainly, the mission charge has a complex development.<sup>54</sup> While Mark and Matthew only have one mission of the Twelve (Mk 6:6b-13; Mt. 10:1-15; Lk. 9:1-6), Luke has a second mission of the Seventy-two in 10:1-16. The mission charge in Mk and Q has often been the principal textual foundation for the portrait of Jesus as a wandering Cynic.<sup>55</sup> Unlike the affluent or those who practised trades to support themselves (Paul being the most obvious example here), the disciples of Jesus gave up everything.<sup>56</sup> G. Theissen argues that it is 'just by chance' that Paul was able to renounce his right to material support when he and Barnabas began their mission to cities.<sup>57</sup> In Theissen's view, we should also bear in mind the recurrent theme of philosophical tradition which states that the sage should take no payment

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<sup>53</sup> *ibid* p. 172.

<sup>54</sup> G. Theissen notes that the stories are certainly moulded by wandering charismatics (*Social Reality* p. 151). See also Theissen (*ibid.* pp. 46-9) on the transmission of tradition.

<sup>55</sup> But see Mt. 10:10 - the prohibition against taking a bag - cynics apparently traditionally carried bags (Epictetus, *Diss.* 1.24.11; Crates *Ep.* 16; 23; 28; Diogenes *Ep.* 7; 13; 46; Diogenes Laertius 6.13; Tatian *Or Graec* 25.1). Such an identification is problematic (J. R. Donahue and D. J. Harrington *The Gospel of Mark*. [Sacra Pagina Vol.2 p. 193) - Cynicism is rooted in the Socratic tradition. Its principal 'founding figures' were Diogenes of Sinope (404-323 BCE) and Crates of Thebes (4<sup>th</sup> c. BCE). It was less an organised philosophy than a critical perspective on the pretensions of others. It was characterised by an itinerant lifestyle, aphoristic teaching, and anti-establishment and anti-social behaviour. The travelling apparel of the Cynic closely resembles the directives in the mission charge in Q. Ps-Diogenes writes: 'When I had chosen in favour of this Cynic way, Antisthenes took off the shirt and the cloak I was wearing, put a doubled threadbare cloak on me instead, slung a satchel on my shoulder with some bread and other scraps of food, and put in a cup and a bowl. On the outside of the satchel he hung an oil flask, and a scraper, and then finally, he gave me a staff too' (30.3 - F. G. Downing *Christ and the Cynics: Jesus and Other Radical Preachers in the First Century Tradition*. Sheffield: Sheffield University Press, 1988) p. 47. Cynics are told to be anti-social. Lucian of Samosata (2<sup>nd</sup> c. CE) describes one of their practices: 'Seek out the most crowded places, and when you are there, keep to yourself, quite unsociable, exchanging greetings with no one, neither friend nor stranger' (Lucian *Philosophies for Sale* 10, in Downing p. 48). Both Mk 6:10 and Q (Lk. 10:5-8; Mt. 10:11-12) prescribe just the opposite.

<sup>56</sup> The idea of renouncing property for a religious cause has parallels with Stoics and Cynics, compare also Joseph and Aseneth 13: when Aseneth turns to the true God, she casts away all her fine food and clothing. Is the breaking of family ties to be regarded as an eschatological motif?

<sup>57</sup> G. Theissen *Social Reality* p. 52. This thesis suggests rather, that Paul's choice of work as a means of self-support was quite deliberate.

for his wisdom. It is true that Paul justifies his renunciation of support as something that has been imposed upon him by God, but, in Theissen's view, this must be relativised in light of Barnabas renouncing material support.<sup>58</sup> Nonetheless, the fact that Paul rejects Jesus' injunction regarding discipleship must be significant and requires explanation.<sup>59</sup>

The disciples' new 'work' becomes the proclamation of God's kingdom (Mt. 9:37f./Lk. 10:2),<sup>60</sup> noting in particular the eschatological motif of the harvest: the task of proclamation was a difficult one.<sup>61</sup> In another story of discipleship, that of Mary and Martha (in Lk. 10:38-42), there seems to be a conflict between the one who attends Jesus and his disciples (Martha vv. 38, 40 *διακονεῖν* probably 'waiting on tables'),<sup>62</sup> and the one who sits at the feet of Jesus and listens to his word. Martha, who is busy at work, asks Jesus if he does not care that Mary has left her alone to look after the housework. Jesus answers: 'Martha, Martha, you care for and trouble about many things but one thing is necessary. For Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her' (vv. 41f.) The occupation with the Word of God apparently has priority over the mundane everyday work (compare associations with *קרבן*, which in the Hebrew Bible has a meaning of support by means of that which is sacrificed at the altar, compare also 1 Cor. 9:13f.).<sup>63</sup> Work to support Jesus and his disciples is seen as sufficient, but more than this is not necessary and does not serve God; the account of Mary and Martha follows the parable of the Good Samaritan with its theme of receiving service – one must take God's service.

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<sup>58</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>59</sup> See Chapter 5.

<sup>60</sup> See above n. 50.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. Paul also uses the term *κοπός*.

<sup>62</sup> Cf. Acts 6.

#### 4.2.2. The Gospel of John<sup>64</sup>

The identity of the author of John's gospel is linked to the references to 'the disciple whom Jesus loved' who appears four times (13:21-26 at the Last Supper; 19:26-27, 34-35, at the crucifixion; 20:1-10, at the empty tomb; and at the end of the gospel, 21:1-8, 18-24). This last reference connects the disciple with the composition of the Gospel. Irenaeus, bishop of Lyons and writing c. 180 CE, names this disciple as 'John, the disciple of the Lord' (presumably John, the son of Zebedee, one of Jesus' twelve apostles). Irenaeus claims to have obtained this information from Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, who heard it from the apostles. The difficulty with accepting this view lies in the lack of evidence that John the Apostle ever lived in Ephesus. John's gospel is considerably more theological than the Synoptics, making it hard to argue that an eyewitness to the events of Jesus' life wrote the gospel. Thus John's gospel is to be treated as an anonymous work that arose amidst a community of Jewish Christians. The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls has shed valuable light on the nature of the gospel's origins. For example, both the Scrolls and the gospel contain elements of dualistic thought, expressed as a contrast between light and darkness/truth and falsehood.<sup>65</sup> The dating of the gospel is usually placed somewhere between 80 and 125 CE, the suggested date of the papyrus fragment (Rylands Papyrus 457) containing a few verses from chapter 18 (31-33 and 37-38).

In John's gospel, the word group ἐργον is specifically used to illustrate the unique activity of Jesus, which is inextricably bound up in the working of God. Jesus' presence in the world is the particular occasion for the works of God to be made manifest (9:3). John's gospel makes no reference at all to Jesus doing any trade. Instead, the portrayal of work

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<sup>63</sup> Similarly in Sirach.

<sup>64</sup> See J. Ashton *Understanding the Fourth Gospel* (Oxford: OUP, 1991).

<sup>65</sup> Both the Scrolls and the gospel contain similar phrases such as 'sons of light' (Jn. 12:36), and 'the Spirit of Truth' (Jn. 14:7; 15:26; 16:13). The dualism in John has led to its association with Gnosticism, the term used to describe a number of dualistic movements that arose in the second century CE and later.

rests in a more theological sphere. In 4:34-38 Jesus argues that his food is to do the will of him who sent him and to complete his work. Jesus continues, ‘Do you not say, “Four months more, then comes the harvest”?’ But I tell you, look around you, and see how the fields are ripe for harvesting. The reaper is already receiving wages and is gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. For here the saying holds true, “One sows and another reaps.” I sent you to reap that for which you did not labour (κεκοπιάκατε). Others have laboured (κεκοπιάκασιν), and you have entered into their labour (κόπον)’. In 5:16-17, Jesus runs into trouble by ‘working’ on the Sabbath: ‘Therefore the Jews started persecuting Jesus, because he was doing such things on the Sabbath. But Jesus answered them, “My Father is still working, and I also am working”’.<sup>66</sup>

In 6:27-35 Jesus commands his followers: “Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For it is on him that God the Father has set his seal.” Then they said to him, “What must we do to perform the works of God?” Jesus answered them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent.” So they said to him, “What sign are you going to give us then, so that we may see it and believe you? What work are you performing? Our ancestors

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<sup>66</sup> See C. H. Dodd ‘A Hidden Parable in the Fourth Gospel’ in *More New Testament Studies* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1968) pp. 30-40. Dodd calls this passage ‘one of the most important Christological passages in the Fourth Gospel’ (p. 31). The work of the Father is κρινειν and ζωοποιειν, and ‘the son’ exercises these functions in dependence on him (God). Interestingly, Dodd links this idea to the prophets: the disciples of a אב are called his ‘sons’ (1 Kgs. 13:11-13; cf. Amos 7:14) and they address him as אב (2 Kgs 2:12). In addition, there is a parallel in Wisdom literature where the address ‘my son’ is common (Pvbs 1:8; 2:1; 3:1). Although it is just as likely that there are other spheres of influence, Dodd argues that a more direct antecedent is the established principle that the father of a family was under obligation to teach his son Torah and also a craft. This is an important point in understanding Paul’s portrayal of work, since Hock’s rejection of a possible Jewish influence on Paul comes from his ascribing the tradition of a father teaching his son a craft to a later Rabbinic influence, whereas in actual fact, Dodd traces this to a much earlier line of tradition in the Hebrew Bible (pp. 36-7). B. Lindars *The Gospel of John* (New Century Bible, London: Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 1972) pp. 218-9, comments that while John confirms the principle that God’s work may override the Sabbath, he puts it in the form of a personal claim on the part of Jesus; C. K. Barrett *The Gospel according to St. John* 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. (London: SPCK, 1982) p. 256 notes that God is essentially and unchangeably creative (ἐργάζεται); what God does Jesus also does, therefore Jesus also ἐργάζεται; E. Haenchen *John* 2 vols. (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984) p. 248 argues that the notion that God cannot stop working and the notion of the Sabbath rest of God (Gen. 2:2) stands in tension, and that this led to various attempts on the part of the rabbis and Philo to reconcile the two. Gen. R. 8c for example describes how God’s activity in physical creation came to an end on the Sabbath, but not His moral activity.

ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’<sup>67</sup>

Then Jesus said to them, “Very truly, I tell you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.” They said to him, “Sir, give us this bread always.” Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.” In 9:4-5: “We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”<sup>68</sup>

There is also concern in John’s gospel for the relationship between the works of God and the person who has been exposed to the message of Jesus. The response that is called for by the message – that which means that a person’s works are done ‘in God’ (3:21) or that the person ‘does the works of God’ (6:28) is a response of belief in Jesus (6:29). The works of healing done through Jesus point beyond themselves. ‘Greater works’ will be done, first of all, in that Jesus will give life to those who believe (5:20f.) and second, in that those who believe will themselves do even greater works than Jesus has done (14:12).

#### 4.2.3 Colossians and Ephesians<sup>69</sup>

If, as is usually argued, Paul did not write Colossians, then it is difficult to know who wrote it or where it was written. It is possible that it was written in the late first or early

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<sup>67</sup> E. Haenchen *John* pp. 290-1; C. K. Barrett *John* pp. 287-9 on the parallel with Ex. 16 and the manna in the wilderness. Note that Paul uses the imagery of the manna in the wilderness at 2 Cor. 8:15 with regard to the Collection.

<sup>68</sup> Cf. B. Lindars *The Gospel of John* p. 343 on the play on the theme of light and darkness.

<sup>69</sup> The Pauline authorship of the letters to the Colossians and Ephesians is disputed. About a third of the words of Colossians appear in Ephesians. At the same time, the two letters sometimes appear to use the same word with a different meaning. For example, in Colossians the ‘mystery’ or ‘secret’ revealed by God is Christ (1:27), while in Ephesians it is the union of Gentiles with Jews in the body of Christ (3:4-6). On this point, it might be possible to suggest that the two letters had separate authors, one borrowing from the other at times. It is generally accepted that Paul did not write these letters, given the difference in style and vocabulary with the letters typically accepted as being authentic and they are usually dated somewhere in the late first or early

second century. Thus the author used the name of Paul to give the letter authority and drew on details from the letter of Philemon to create a plausible setting for the letter in Paul's lifetime. Of particular interest is the way in which the author pictures God's redemptive work in Christ. Out of love, God created (ἐκτίσθη) not just human beings but the whole world. In Christ, 'all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible' (1:16). Out of love for God, the author encourages his community to develop, maintain and enhance the world that God creates in Christ. God not only creates and sustains all things, but also through Christ 'God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven' (1:20). Yet despite this, the members of the Colossian community are told, 'Set your minds on things that are above not on things that are on earth' (3:1-2), which suggests a degree of detachment from the world in which daily work operates.

Although the letter to the Ephesians bears the name of its apparent destination, it is unlikely that the letter was written exclusively to the church in Ephesus.<sup>70</sup> The author, speaking as Paul writes to a church with whom he apparently had no personal contact. He had only heard of their faith and could only assume that they have heard of him (1:15; 3:1-3).<sup>71</sup>

In the second major part of the letter, 4:1-6:20 there appears a carefully worked out ethical teaching. In 4:1-16, the foundation is laid for an ethic in which the unity of the body is a focus. The Lord has given gifts to the church (apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers) in order to equip the saints for service (4:11f.). The ultimate goal is the attainment of unity of faith and knowledge. After further exhortations to live good lives, there follows in 4:25-5:20 a series of exhortations directed to the entire church, making clear

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second century at the latest. See E. Best *Ephesians* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993); M. Kiley *Colossians as Pseudepigraphy* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1986).

<sup>70</sup> Some mss omit the destination 'Ephesus'

<sup>71</sup> Since Paul spent two years with the church at Ephesus according to Acts 19:10, it does not seem likely that if he wrote the letter the community would not have heard of him.

the implications of laying aside the old nature and living according to the new faith in the fellowship of the church. In 4:28 there is an exhortation to work: 'Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labour (κοπιᾶτω), doing honest work (ἐργαζόμενος), with his hands (ταῖς [ἰδίαις] χερσίν), so that he might be able to give to those in need'.<sup>72</sup> The negative exhortation, 'not to steal', is followed by the positive, to work *instead* with one's own hands. The individual's previous life is transformed in God's image to work and to produce something good with their hands. 'ἐργαζεσθαι τό ἀγαθόν (ἔργον)' can mean both 'to do a good deed', that is to do something that might be considered as morally worthy, and 'to make a good product'. Since ἐργαζεσθαι is accompanied by 'ταῖς ἰδίαις χερσίν' it is likely that the latter meaning is implied here.<sup>73</sup> The motive is further extended beyond the idea of doing something good, to doing something good *for others*. There seems to be an inherent social value of work in this context.<sup>74</sup>

#### 4.2.4 The Pastoral Epistles

In 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus, the author, writing as 'Paul', exhorts and instructs two of his younger co-workers, Timothy and Titus. The author is evidently concerned to invest authority in church leaders who can address issues of divergence in the church. The letters' style, vocabulary, concepts and depiction of church organisation make it unlikely they were written by Paul.<sup>75</sup>

In 1 Tim. 4:12-6:2, Timothy is instructed as to how he must be on his guard (4:12-16), and how he is to relate to different age groups (95:1f.), to widows (5:3-16), elders (5:17-25),

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<sup>72</sup> The connection between κοπιᾶν and ἐργαζεσθαι implies an acknowledgement that work is done with hardship.

<sup>73</sup> This appears to match 1 and 2 Thess, where Paul tells the members of his community that he (and they) should not be a burden to others.

<sup>74</sup> Note that the soteriological transformation of the individual means becoming a good citizen, which is most unlike the message of Jesus.

<sup>75</sup> P. N. Harrison *The Problem of the Pastoral Epistles* (Milford, 1921); F. Young *The Theology of the Pastoral Epistles* (Cambridge: CUP, 1994).

and slaves (6:1f.). In the ordinances for widows in 5:3-16, the issue of work and support is raised. The passage is intended to limit the number of 'true widows' (vv. 3, 5, 16). Only the 'true widows' are to be honoured by being provided for, whereas the widows with children and grand-children are to be provided for by them. This pleases God. Verses 11-15 offer reasons for an age limitation. One of the reasons that young widows are to be excluded from widow status is that they 'learn to be idle' (ἀργαὶ μαυθάνουσιν), 'become gossipy' (φλύαροι) and meddlesome (περίεργοι) (v.13). In 1 Tim. 5:17f., instructions are given regarding the pay for the work of elders who are good leaders. Although τιμὴ also means 'honour', it is meant here in the sense of 'pay'. Leaders are to receive double-pay. It is not the case of pay for full-time work on behalf of the congregation, but of pay for efforts made in addition to ordinary work (cf. 3:4, 12; 5:17). The work is worthy of a wage.<sup>76</sup>

2 Tim. 2:1-13 is an exhortation to suffering with Christ and Paul. In vv. 3-7, Timothy is exhorted to suffer together with other preachers, in particular Paul. Timothy is to endure suffering as a soldier of Jesus Christ (v. 3). This is illustrated with three pictures (vv. 4-6): the efforts expended by the soldier, athlete and farmer in order to be rewarded for their efforts. The farmer who works hard (τὸν κοπιῶντα) must be the first to take the fruit (v. 6). The participle κοπιῶντα is emphasised, it is the one who works hard who has the right to a reward for his labour. The context of the passage suggests that it is a matter of following the apostle and Christ in suffering (1:8, 12; 2:3, 8-13).

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<sup>76</sup> As with Deut. 25:4, and see also Lk 10:7. On this see A. E. Harvey 'The Workman is Worthy of his Hire: Fortunes of a Proverb in the Early Church' in *Novum Testamentum XXIV*, 3 (1982) 209-221. 1 Tim. 6:3-21

#### 4.2.5 Hebrews and Revelation

In both the letter to the Hebrews, and in the book of Revelation, rest from work is seen as a goal, implying its hardship (Hbws 4:9f.)<sup>77</sup> Taken as a whole, Hbws 4:1-14 represent an idea of rest as a Sabbath celebration for the people of God.<sup>78</sup> In 4:1-13 a note of warning is sustained by specific reference to Israel's unbelief and disobedience (vv. 2, 6 and 11) and by a highlighting of the difficulties inherent in a community that is indifferent to God's actions (vv. 1 and 11-13). The expression 'my rest' which draws on Ps. 95:11 deliberately echoes the rest announced in Gen. 2:2. The prophetic announcement of another day in which the promise of entering God's rest would be renewed in Ps. 95:7b-8a addressed the community in their situation and supported an eschatological understanding of God's rest. Thus, the task of the community, in the view of the author of Hebrews, is to enter that rest through faith in God's word of promise and obedient response to the voice of God through Scripture (vv. 11-13).<sup>79</sup>

#### 4.2.6 The Gospel of Thomas

The Gospel of Thomas consists of some 114 sayings attributed to 'the living Jesus', many of which echo those in the canonical Gospels. According to the Preface, these sayings were written down by 'Didymus Judas Thomas'. The names 'Didymus' and 'Thomas' are synonymous: both mean 'twin', the former in Greek and the latter in Aramaic. In the

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contains remarks with regard to work's results (possessions) which suggest that working is positive but that one should not love money or trust in it, but keep it at a distance, trusting above all in God.

<sup>77</sup> Cf. Rev. 14:13. In addition, Revelation 21:4 and 22:1-3 suggest a goal of work without strain.

<sup>78</sup> See W. L. Lane *Hebrews 1-8* Word Bible Commentary (Dallas, Texas: Word Books, 1991) pp. 104-5.

<sup>79</sup> *ibid.* See also J. H. Wray *Rest as a Theological Metaphor in the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Gospel of Truth. Early Christian Homiletics of Rest* SBLDS 166 (Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1997). Wray (pp. 78-9) notes that work appears as a common theme in Hebrews with both positive and negative connotations. 1:10-12 (Ps. 102:25-7) praises God's creative work; 3:9 (Ps. 94[95]:9) indicates that God's works are not sufficient to prevent rebellion; 4:3-4, 10 – the culmination of God's work is not the heavens and the earth but the rest into which God entered on the seventh day. For the faithful, work (that is, good works on behalf of the community) functions to nurture and encourage the community so that all remain faithful to the end. In addition, see J.

synoptic tradition, Thomas is one of the apostles of Jesus (Mk 3:18). Several writings in early Christianity are attributed to Thomas: the Gospel of Thomas,<sup>80</sup> and the Infancy Gospel of Thomas, a collection of stories about Jesus' childhood.<sup>81</sup> 11:1-3 contains the story of Jesus helping Joseph with reference to their trade: 'When Jesus reached the eighth year of his life, Joseph was commissioned by a certain rich man to build him a bed, for he was a carpenter. When he went out in the field to a grove of trees, Jesus went with him. Cutting down two trees and shaping them with an axe, he put one beside the other. Measuring it, he found it shorter. When Jesus saw this, he said to him, "Put these two together so that the cut ends of both are even." Joseph, perplexed about what the child wanted, did as he was told. He said to him further, "Hold the short tree firmly." Wondering, Joseph held it. Then Jesus, taking hold of the other end, pulled its other cut end. He made this end too, even with the other tree. And he said to Joseph, "Do not be upset any longer, but do your work without hindrance." When he saw that, he was highly amazed and said to himself, "I am blessed that God gave me such a child.'"

Both works are pseudonymous. Two other texts, *The Book of Thomas the Contender* and *The Acts of Thomas*, relate traditions about Thomas himself. The Gospel of Thomas must be dated earlier than 200 CE, the date of the earliest manuscript (found at Nag Hammadi, written in Coptic). The date is estimated to be between 50 and 150 CE. Thus, it is possible that it may contain traditions about work contemporary to Paul. Some of the sayings in Thomas resemble those found in the gospels described above: for example, 'Blessed are the poor, for yours is the kingdom of heaven' (Thomas 54; cf. Lk. 6:20; Mt. 5:3).

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Laansma *'I Will Give You Rest': The Rest Motif in the New Testament with Special Reference to Mt 11 and Heb 3-4* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997).

<sup>80</sup> See M. Meyer *The Gospel of Thomas* (San Francisco: Harper, 1992); S. Davies *The Gospel of Thomas Annotated and Explained* (London: DLT, 2002).

<sup>81</sup> There are two main versions of this infancy Gospel, both in Greek, one shorter and one longer. Its date is uncertain but at least one story contained in it was known in the second century CE. See R. F. Hock, *The Infancy Gospels of James and Thomas: With Introduction, Notes, and Original Text Featuring the New Scholars Version Translation* (Westar Institute: Polebridge Press, 1996).

Other sayings are completely different however: 'Blessed is the man which becomes man when consumed by man; and cursed is the man whom the lion consumes, and the lion becomes man' (Thomas 7). Also, saying 58 reports that Jesus said: 'Blessed is the man who has suffered; he has found life'. M. Meyer argues that if this is a saying about those who work hard, as is likely, mention may be made of Pvbs 8:34-36, with its commendation of a person who continually observes the ways of Wisdom, or Sirach 51:26-27, with its injunction that one labour under the yoke of Wisdom, or perhaps even the Cynic author 'Crates'.<sup>82</sup>

#### 4.2.7 Didache

The Didache is the earliest known manual of church order, giving instructions for various aspects of Christian practice, such as baptism, the Eucharist, and support of church leaders. It reflects the practices of Judaic Christians in the late first and early second century CE.<sup>83</sup> The Didache mentions three different sets of Christian ministers: itinerant apostles and prophets, resident prophets and teachers, and resident bishops and deacons. It presupposes a situation in which itinerant ministers and other travelling Christians sometimes passed through the community. Such visits posed two problems: distinguishing true prophets from false, and abuse of hospitality.

The problem of abusing hospitality is of most interest in this context. The problem arose as some of these visitors used the name of Christian as an excuse to live freely off the community. The author of the Didache calls such persons 'peddlars in Christ' (εἰ δ' οὐ θέλει οὕτω ποιεῖν, Χριστέμπορος ἔστε 12:5) and gives guidance for recognising them. A visitor claiming to be an apostle or prophet was a false prophet if he stayed three days and asked for money (11:5-6, 12). A travelling Christian should, so the author writes, stay for no more than two or three days, and crucially, one who wished to settle with the community should

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<sup>82</sup> M. Meyer (1992) *The Gospel of Thomas: The Hidden Sayings of Jesus* (San Francisco: Harper, 1992) p. 92.

support themselves (12:2-3). It is not clear however, whether self-support by means of manual work is suggested. The author of the *Didache* seems to say that the community should support such individuals with the 'first-fruits of their produce'.<sup>84</sup>

## Conclusion

The examination of evidence in this chapter showed that the non-Pauline texts in the NT and elsewhere do not offer a systematic reflection upon work, and seem to present a somewhat ambivalent view of work. We should not expect them to present a systematic portrayal of work however. Taken as a whole, the view of work that is offered in the Synoptic gospels appears at times, strikingly at odds with the portrayal in Paul's letters. For both John the Baptist and Jesus, their central concern was to preach faith and repentance and not to be concerned about everyday work. Although Jesus himself was in all probability a carpenter, that does not seem to form part of his missionary strategy and clearly he does not identify in any way with his trade. The gospel authors for the most part appear to be embarrassed at Jesus' manual trade. Although Jesus' parables reflect knowledge of the world of work, and whilst it is true that Jesus called workers to be his disciples, it is also true that he asked them to leave their work in order to follow him (Matt. 4:18-22; Mk. 1:16-20; Lk. 5:1-11, 28). When Martha complains that Mary is not doing her fair share of the work, Jesus sides with Mary and rebukes Martha for worrying about many things (Lk. 10:38-42). Jesus urges his followers to carry no purse, bag or sandals but rather to live off provisions given by those they serve (Matt. 10:7-16; Mk. 6:8-11; Lk. 10:4, 8). Paul chooses to reject this model of discipleship, and the implications of this for our understanding of Paul's portrayal of work indicate that, if Paul does not follow Jesus here, we need to explore where his portrayal of work might come from. Jesus commends the lilies and birds of the field which do no work

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<sup>83</sup> K. Niederwimmer *The Didache: A Commentary* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1998) 3.

and yet are clothed by God. Therefore he warns that people should not worry about food or drink since God will provide (Lk. 12:22-33; 14:33; 18:22). Jesus reports that the prodigal son who squandered his inheritance is received with more exaltation than the son who worked 'like a slave' for his father (Lk. 15:11-32) and in another parable, Jesus sets up a dishonest manager as a paradigm of shrewdness (Lk. 16:1-9). In John's Gospel the idea of work is extended, and a clear link is made between the work of Jesus and the work of God: Jesus' presence in the world is the occasion for the works of God to be revealed (9:3) and when Jesus is no longer present that occasion will have gone (9:4). Jesus' life has no other purpose than to do the work God has given him to do (4:34). Because God 'the Father' works on the Sabbath, Jesus works on the Sabbath (5:16f.)

Outside the gospel tradition, the portrayal of work is mixed. There appears to be a general acknowledgment that work is necessary, and indeed a debate emerges with regard to the support of those who work on behalf of the church (in the Pastoral letters and the Didache in particular). Work is seen to be hard, laborious and even painful, evident from the relatively frequent occurrence of the verb *κοπιᾶν*, but perhaps clearest in the citation of what might be a traditional saying about work as an example of the suffering to be endured by leaders in their following of Paul (2 Tim. 2:6). Paul indeed uses this idea in speaking of his own missionary work and that of church leaders (1 Thess. 5:12). In Paul's case, *κόπος* appears to imply eschatological suffering too, and for Paul eschatological hope implies an element of rest from work (as with the letter to the Hebrews). It is to Paul's portrayal of work that we turn in the next chapter.

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<sup>84</sup> Likewise 3 John makes provision for itinerant preachers (vv. 6-8).

## CHAPTER FIVE

### Paul and Work

In this chapter we will explore Paul's portrayal of work. Each of Paul's letters will be examined with the aim of shedding light upon the varying aspects of Paul's portrayal of work and to demonstrate how all-pervasive the theme of work is for Paul. This chapter will seek to compare the portrayals of work represented in the Pauline letters, to try and determine what, if anything, Paul inherits from his context, in what ways he might differ, and why. The conclusion of the chapter posits the view that Paul's position on work was ultimately, like many other aspects of his life and thought, anomalous,<sup>1</sup> often ambiguous<sup>2</sup> and ambivalent.<sup>3</sup> Work for Paul was valuable, in as much as it enabled him to present his message to his communities without being a burden upon them. Paul presented himself as a model for others to follow, giving thanks to God for whom he worked and crucially *with* whom he worked. Thus this aspect of work was modelled by Paul himself in his relationships with others, notably his co-workers to whom he makes frequent reference. In attaching a value

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<sup>1</sup> The 'methodological cue' for this idea is drawn from J. M. G. Barclay's *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora. From Alexander to Trajan (323 BCE – 117 CE)* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1996). Chapter 13 of this book is entitled 'Paul: An Anomalous Diaspora Jew'. Here Barclay discusses Paul's Jewish identity as shaped by his surrounding culture and points out how Paul in his letters, despite being 'a highly assimilated Diaspora Jew... makes little attempt to express his new commitments in the terms or categories of Hellenistic culture... (and)... rarely attempts to effect any cultural synthesis with the Graeco-Roman world he sought to evangelize' (p. 387). Barclay presents what Paul effectively does do as a 'mutation of the Jewish tradition' (p. 395) and it is this that got him into trouble with his contemporaries. Barclay's arguments also appear in his article 'Neither Jew nor Greek?: Multiculturalism and the New Perspective on Paul' in M. G. Brett [ed.] *Ethnicity and the Bible*. Biblical Interpretation Series Vol. 19. (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996). There is a considerable amount of secondary literature concerning the Jews in the Diaspora. E. Gruen takes a more sceptical view over what may be deduced, 'The picture is woefully inadequate. For the majority of Jews dwelling in the diaspora, the sources are silent. Hence any conclusions must be hesitant and hazardous' *Heritage and Hellenism: the reinvention of Jewish tradition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998) 67. Concerning Paul, a balanced approach is taken by V. P. Furnish 'On Putting Paul in His Place' in *JBL* 113.1 (1994) 3-17. See also A. Asano *The Context and the Patterns of Community-Identity Construction: exegetical, social-anthropological and socio-historical studies in the Letter to the Galatians* (D.Phil thesis, University of Oxford, 2003).

<sup>2</sup> In the sense that, at times, Paul's usage of the vocabulary of work can be interpreted in a number of ways. The words for 'work' do not have single, obvious meanings. J. Meggitt notes the ambiguity in Paul's use of the words ἐργάζομαι and κοπιᾶω in particular (*Paul, Poverty and Survival* p. 88-9 n. 65).

of human work to the working activity of God, Paul was also implicitly challenging the notion of the routine and toil of work as part of the role of the individual in the life of the Roman Empire. Work was for and with God, and not only for the good of the imperial establishment.<sup>4</sup>

### 5.1 References to work in the Pauline Letters

In the letters of Paul, references to his manual work are concentrated in 1 and 2 Thessalonians, and in 1 and 2 Corinthians, although they are spread more broadly across his letters as a whole.<sup>5</sup> As well as places where Paul makes mention of his own manual labour, the imagery and vocabulary of ‘work’ occur throughout his letters deriving from the following word-groups: ἐργάζομαι, ποίεω, πράσσω, κοπιᾶω, and μόχθος. This will be examined in what follows, however it should be noted that the word-groups are themselves used in varying ways by Paul and this thesis will focus more on those passages that are relevant to Paul’s portrayal of manual labour.<sup>6</sup> The order of the letters below is determined by their dating.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> In the sense that Paul may well have had mixed feelings about his manual labour, particularly as it caused him so much difficulty with the Corinthians. Ultimately, however, true work was the work of the Gospel.

<sup>4</sup> Recent work on this topic includes R. A. Horsley (ed.) *Paul and Empire: Religion and Power in Roman Imperial Society* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1997). One of the other books in this area on which Horsley draws for two of his chapters is N. Elliott *Liberating Paul: The Justice of God and the Politics of the Apostle* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995). See also most recently R. Horsley (ed.) *Paul and the Roman Imperial Order* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International). N. T. Wright reflects on this in a lecture delivered to the Center for Theological Inquiry, Princeton (<http://www.ctinquiry.org/publications/wright.htm>).

<sup>5</sup> See Chapter 1 p. 1 n.1 for the definition of work used by this thesis.

<sup>6</sup> See Chapter 1 p. 1 for the differences between work as describing manual labour, and those instances of work-vocabulary which have been interpreted within a more (traditionally) theological realm.

<sup>7</sup> Paul’s letters appear in the New Testament in an order that seems to have been determined by their length; identity of destination (so 1 and 2 Corinthians appear together); and by the nature of their addressees, so that letters to congregations precede letters to individuals. By examining the letters in order of their dating, this thesis will also examine whether any development in Paul’s working strategy can be detected.

### 5.1.1 Galatians<sup>8</sup>

Although there are no direct references to manual work, there are references to work as an activity. In Galatians, Paul appears to be using the idea of work first and foremost in relation to the preaching of the Gospel. Significantly, it is work enabled and directed by God (2:8).<sup>9</sup> There are eight occurrences of the ἐργάζομαι word-group. On six occasions the word ἔργον appears in the context of ‘works of the law’ (2:16, three times; 3:2; 3:10); in 2:8, the word ἐνεργήσας is used with reference to God ‘who worked through Peter for the mission to the circumcised ...’;<sup>10</sup> in 6:4, ἔργον is used to refer to one’s individual ‘work’ or ‘action’<sup>11</sup> (‘let each one test his own work, and then his reason to boast will be in himself ...’); in 6:10, the present subjunctive ἐργαζομεθα occurs, (‘let us do good to all people ...’).<sup>12</sup> Of less importance, but noted for the sake of completion, are the four occurrences of the ποίω word-group: 2:10 and 5:3 contain the word ποιήσας, (2:10: ‘only they asked us to remember the poor, which very thing I was keen to do; 5:3: ‘I testify to every man who

<sup>8</sup> Paul’s letter to the Galatians is often called his most direct letter as it lacks the usual thanksgiving to God for the spiritual growth of the readers. The letter seems to have been occasioned by difficulties that had arisen in the community between Jewish believers in Christ and Gentile believers. Topics addressed include circumcision, the observance of Jewish festivals, and the observance of Jewish food laws. The destination of the letter is a topic for debate as it is not clear whether the recipients were part of the old kingdom in the north, or the new Roman province in the south. In terms of dating, the letter contains a certain amount of information which enable us to date it with reasonable confidence to the early date of 48-49 CE. G. W. Hansen *Galatians* (Downers Grove: IVP, 1994); J. Ziesler *Galatians* (EC. London: Epworth, 1992); F. F. Bruce *The Epistle of Paul to the Galatians* (Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1982); J. D. G. Dunn *The Epistle to the Galatians* (London: A&C Black, 1993); J. L. Martyn *Galatians* (New York: Doubleday, 1997); R. L. Longenecker *Galatians* (Dallas: Word Books, 1990). A more cautious view of an early dating as held by H. D. Betz *A Commentary on Paul’s Letter to the Galatians* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979) pp. 9-10, where he says that the historical situation which gave rise to the letter can be determined only generally, with the result that the letter can only be dated approximately (p. 11), ‘on the whole, an early date is more commendable than a late date...the years between 50 and 55 as the date of writing may be accepted as a reasonable guess’ (p. 12). For a rather different reading of the context of the letter to the Galatians, see S. Elliott *Cutting Too Close for Comfort. Paul’s Letter to the Galatians in its Anatolian Cultic Context* (London and New York: T & T Clark International, 2003).

<sup>9</sup> It is also worth bearing in mind that the Galatian church was involved in the Collection (1 Cor. 16:1-4, Gal. 2:8f.)

<sup>10</sup> The term ἐνεργέω is difficult to translate. W. Bauer *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity* R. Kraft and G. Krodel (eds.) (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971) renders the word as meaning ‘be at work’, ‘be effective’. It refers to God’s redemptive activity as a whole (see also 1 Cor. 12:6, ‘It is the same God who works (ὁ ἐνεργῶν) all in all’; K. W. Clark ‘The Meaning of ἘΝΕΡΓΕΩ and ΚΑΤΑΡΓΕΩ in the New Testament’ in *JBL* 54 (1935) pp. 93-101.

<sup>11</sup> Dunn translates ἔργον as ‘action’ here (*Galatians* p. 276).

<sup>12</sup> This form is attested by A B\* C D F G et al. The present indicative form ἐργαζομεθα is attested in A B3 L P etc.

receives circumcision that he is bound to do / keep the whole law”);<sup>13</sup> In 3:12, ποιήσας occurs in a quotation from the LXX of Lev. 18:5 [leaving out ἄνθρωπος] (‘the one who does these things shall live by them’); 6:9 contains ποιῶντες (‘let us not grow weary in doing good’). There is one occurrence of the κοπιᾶω word-group, in 4:11 where Paul expresses concern that his labour (κεκοπίακα) over the congregation has been in vain.<sup>14</sup> In addition, Paul’s use of the imagery of a ‘burden’ (6:5 ἕκαστος γὰρ τὸ ἴδιον φορτίον βαστάσει) contains overtones of divine judgement as well as of everyday life (which may include work).<sup>15</sup>

### 5.1.2 Thessalonians<sup>16</sup>

A theme in both 1 and 2 Thessalonians is that of the imminent parousia.<sup>17</sup> In the first letter, Paul encourages the community in the midst of their persecutions (2-3:13),

<sup>13</sup> Dunn translates ποιήσαι as ‘to obey’ (*Galatians* p. 220).

<sup>14</sup> H. Klein ‘Craftsmanship Assumptions in Pauline Theology’ in *Paul, Luke and the Graeco-Roman World* A. Christophersen, C. Claussen, J. Frey and B. Longenecker (eds.) (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002) pp. 94-101, observes that, when Paul says here that he fears he has laboured in vain, he reveals the concern of the craftsman that he has not made his product adequately enough and thus has caused unnecessary work for himself (p. 95).

<sup>15</sup> See D. W. Kuck “Each Will Bear His Own Burden” Paul’s Creative Use of an Apocalyptic Motif in *New Testament Studies* 40 (1994) pp. 289-97. Kuck argues that 6:5 should be seen within the context of 6:1-5. Whereas many interpretations of the passage have focussed solely upon the eschatological dimensions of Paul’s thought here, Kuck suggests that in this passage (as well as 1 Cor. 3:5-4:5 and Rom. 14:1-12), Paul ‘demonstrates that seeing one’s individual accomplishments in the light of God’s future judgment enables a person to contribute responsibly and positively to the health of the Christian community’ (p. 289). This is very similar to the focus in the Thessalonian correspondence, where the word ἀτακτος can mean ‘idle’ but more commonly carries the sense of having an irresponsible attitude (towards work), Paul’s point being that one’s place in the community carries with it certain obligations, such as working. In Gal. 6:4a Paul uses the word ἔργον. Here it means the work of ‘restoration’, bearing one another’s burdens, and avoiding behaviour which destroys the unity of the community. Kuck argues that, although this verse can be compared with Hellenistic philosophy, in the sense of self-examination, Paul has in this context something more precise in mind: the well-being of individuals in relation to each other (p. 293).

<sup>16</sup> The authenticity of 2 Thessalonians has been called into question. 2 Thessalonians has many verbal similarities to the first letter suggesting the possibility that a later follower of Paul modelled the second letter on the first. However one could argue equally that the similarities suggest that the same person, Paul, wrote both letters. Second Thessalonians also has a number of words and phrases that do not occur in other letters within the Pauline corpus. The main argument against Pauline authorship is the apparent discrepancy between the two letters concerning the day of the Lord. On balance, neither the arguments against Paul’s authorship nor the arguments for it are convincing and the authorship of the letter remains in dispute. 2 Thessalonians will be included in this assessment of Paul’s attitude to work with due caution as regards its authorship acknowledged. F. F. Bruce *1&2 Thessalonians* (Waco: Word, 1982); E. J. Richard *First and Second Thessalonians* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1995); A. J. Malherbe *The Letters to the Thessalonians* (New York: Doubleday, 2000).

<sup>17</sup> 1 Thess. 4:13-5:11; 2 Thess. 2:1-17 in particular. On this aspect of Paul’s thought see R. Jewett *Pauline Rhetoric and Millenarian Piety* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986) and by the same author ‘Jesus as the

encouraging them to lead lives worthy of the gospel (4:1-12), and dealing with the issue of the ‘day of the Lord’ (4:13-5:11). In the second letter, Paul again encourages the community in their suffering (1:1-12), refuting the idea that the day of the Lord had already arrived (2:1-12). In 3:6-15, Paul warns those who were not working; the non-appearance of the ‘day of the Lord’ had provoked consternation amongst the Thessalonian church and in some cases, a strong reaction which led members of the community to apparently stop working. Thus, Paul’s own work became a model for others to follow. After a brief overview of the occurrences of word related vocabulary, the most pertinent passages will be examined in more detail.

In the Thessalonian correspondence, the vocabulary of work that appears alludes to the world of manual labour. However, there are occasions where ambiguity arises (such as 1 Thess. 1:3). In 1 Thessalonians there are six occurrences of the ἐργάζομαι word-group. On two occasions the noun form ἔργον is used (1:3 [ἔργου] ‘...remembering your *work* of faith and labour...’; 5:13 ‘and to esteem them highly in love because of their *work*’). In 2:9 ἐργαζόμενοι is used to refer to Paul’s (and others) manual work, ‘we *worked* night and day, that we might not burden any of you’. In a similar vein, in 4:11 ἐργαζεσθαι refers also to some form of manual work (‘we exhort you brothers, to do so more and more, to aspire to live quietly, to mind your own affairs, and to *work* with your own hands’). The form ἐνεργηται is found in 2:13 to refer to ‘the word of God which is *at work* in you believers’. In 3:2 συνεργόν is used to refer to Timothy, ‘our brother and God’s co-worker’.<sup>18</sup>

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Apocalyptic Benefactor in Second Thessalonians’ in R. F. Collins (ed.) *The Thessalonian Correspondence* (Leuven: University Press, 1990) pp. 486-98.

<sup>18</sup> συνεργόν is attested by 1 2 B pc vg<sup>mss</sup>. The alternative διάκονον is attested by κ A P et al. See the article by D. J. Harrington ‘Paul and his co-workers’ in *Priests and People* 17.8 (2003) pp. 320-324. Harrington notes that Paul gave the title ‘co-worker’ (συνεργός) to many people in his undisputed letters: Prisca and Aquila (Rom. 16:9); Urbanus (Rom. 16:9); here at 1 Thess. 3:2 and Rom. 16:21 (Timothy); Apollos (1 Cor. 3:9); Philemon (Phm 1); Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke (Phm 24); Epaphroditus (Phil. 2:25); Euodia, Syntyche, Clement and others (Phil. 4:2-3); Titus (1 Cor. 8:23). As the related terms applied to Mark (‘who has worked hard among you’) and Tryphaena and Tryphosa (‘those workers in the Lord’) in Rom. 16:5, 12 indicate, there is no reason to limit Paul’s collaborators solely to those he described as συνεργοί (pp. 320-1). See also Ellis, E. E. ‘Co-Workers, Paul and His’ in *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters* G. F. Hawthorne and R. P. Martin (eds.) (Leicester:

There are four occurrences of the κοπιάω word-group. The noun form κόπου occurs in 1:3 ('...remembering your word of faith and *labour*...'), in 2:9 with regard to physical activity ('For you remember our *labour* [κόπον] and our toil...'), and in 3:5 ('our *labour* [κόπος] would be in vain...'). The verbal form κοπιώντας appears in 5:12 ('we beseech you, brothers, to respect those who *labour* among you and over you in the Lord ...'). Finally, there is one occurrence of the μόχθος word-group, in 2:9 ('for you remember our labour and our *toil* [μόχθον] brothers...').

In 2 Thessalonians, there are 6 occurrences of the ἐργάζομαι word-group. In 1:11 the noun ἔργον is used with respect to 'faith' ('to this end we always pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his call, and may fulfil every good resolve and *work* of faith by His power'). In 2:9, ἐνέργειαν is used with regard to the activity of Satan ('the coming of the lawless one by the *activity* of Satan will be with all power...'). The same form is found again in 2:11 with regard to God ('therefore God sends upon them a *force* of delusion, to make them believe what is false...'). In 3:10-12, the word-group is found three times with regard to physical working activity ('For even when we were with you, we gave you this command: If any one will not *work* [ἐργάζεσθαι], let him not eat. For we hear that some of you are living in idleness, busybodies, not doing any *work* [ἐργαζομένους]. Now such persons we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their *work* [ἐργαζόμενοι] in quietness and to earn their own living').

There is one occurrence of the κοπιάω word-group, in 3:8, referring to physical work ('... but with *toil* [κόπω] and labour we worked night and day...'). There is also one occurrence of the μόχθος word-group, in 3:8, referring to physical work ('... but with toil and *labour* [μόχθω] we worked night and day...').

1 Thess. 2:1-12

This passage describes the activity of Paul and his companions and makes use of a number of different images with direct reference to manual labour. Paul affirms the spirit of love in which they had come to the Thessalonians, denying that they had been wrongly motivated (2:3-6, 10); he asserts their care for the Thessalonians, as a mother to her child in 2:7f;<sup>19</sup> and as a father instructing his children (2:11f.).<sup>20</sup> Paul reports that they had laid no financial burden upon the Thessalonians for their maintenance (2:9). He stresses that his message and his personal authority cannot be separated, and asks the Thessalonians to remember the toil (κόπον) and labour (μόχθον) that he carried out ‘night and day’ to support himself whilst preaching.<sup>21</sup> Paul here uses the combination ‘τὸν κόπον ἡμῶν καὶ τὸν μόχθον’ (‘our labour and toil’) here, and on two other occasions, in relation to his activity of preaching the Gospel (2 Cor. 11:27; 2 Thess. 3:8).<sup>22</sup> These words represent an expression of the hardship and fatigue associated with work and it is possible that, in using this phrase Paul had in mind some of the references to activity carried out ‘night and day’ in service of God in the Hebrew Bible.<sup>23</sup> In the 2 Thessalonians passage, Paul applies the apostolic example to

<sup>19</sup> See B. R. Gaventa ‘Apostles as Babes and Nurses in 1 Thessalonians 2:7’ in *Faith and History in the New Testament: Essays in Honour of Paul W. Meyer* J. T. Carroll, C. H. Cosgrove, and E. E. Johnson (eds.) (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991) pp. 193-207; and ‘Our Mother St. Paul: Toward the Recovery of a Neglected Theme’ in *Princeton Seminary Bulletin* 17 (1996) pp. 29-44. Paul may well here be drawing on Num. 11:12, where Moses complains to God using similar imagery.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Isa. 66:13 and Ps. 103:13. See C. Wanamaker “Like a Father Treats His Own Children” Paul and the Conversion of the Thessalonians’ in *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa* 92 (1995) pp. 46-55.

<sup>21</sup> The phrase νυκτός καὶ ἡμέρας occurs elsewhere in Paul’s letters only at 3:10 and 2 Thess. 3:8. The same phrase occurs in 1 Tim. 5:5 (where the context concerns widows who pray night and day to God); 2 Tim. 1:4 (‘Paul’s longing *night and day* to see Timothy); Mk. 5:5 (describing the erratic behaviour of the Gerasene man); Also in the Hebrew Bible at Deut. 28:66; 1 Kgs. 8:29; Isa. 34: 10 and Jth 11:17 (the servant serving God *night and day*). Interestingly, in the LXX, the order is often reversed to ‘ἡμέρας καὶ νυκτός: Josh. 1:8; 1 Kgs. 8:59; 2 Chr. 6:20; Ps. 1:2 (and in the Hbw. meditating on the law ‘*day and night*’); Ps. 31:4 [LXX; Hbw 32:4]; Ps. 41:4 [LXX; Hbw. 42:3] (‘my tears have been my food *day and night*’); Ps. 54:11 [LXX; Hbw. 55:11]; Isa. 60:11; Jer. 8:23; Jer. 14:17; Lam. 2:18; 2 Macc. 13:10; and elsewhere in the NT, Lk. 18:7; Acts 9:24; Rev. 4:8 (‘and *day and night* they never cease to sing...’), 7:15 (‘and serve him day and night within his temple’), 12:10, and 20:10 (‘and they will be tormented *day and night* for ever and ever’).

<sup>22</sup> In the LXX a similar phrase ‘κόπους καὶ πόνους’ occurs at Jer. 20:18. In Paul, μόχθος always occurs with κόπος.

<sup>23</sup> See n. 21 above. On this important methodological point, see R. B. Hays *Echoes of Scripture in Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989) and C. D. Stanley *Arguing with Scripture. The Rhetoric of Quotations in the Letters of Paul* (New York and London: T & T Clark International, 2004). R. B. Hays makes the point that Paul’s practice of citation shows that he was acquainted with virtually the whole body of texts that were later acknowledged as canonical within Judaism (p. 30). Hays observes that the ‘volume of an echo is determined

the Thessalonians in order to give them a paradigm for their own conduct. The same function is implicit, in that it can be suggested that Paul is here laying the foundation for his words in 1 Thess. 4:11f. In the second half of 2:9, Paul builds upon what he means by his 'toil and labour': 'night and day working in order not to burden any of you, we preached to you the gospel of God'. The genitive cases of νυκτὸς and ἡμέρας do not necessarily mean that they worked continuously but rather that they worked both at night and during the day, and that both the work and the preaching were continuous activities. The present participle 'ἐργαζόμενοι' might imply that their working night and day was done simultaneously with their preaching of the gospel.<sup>24</sup> However, it is equally plausible that Paul (and others) worked either during the day or night in order to support his work for the gospel *outside* of the workshop. The importance of this phrase lies in the description of *both* working *and*

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primarily by the degree of explicit repetition of words or syntactical patterns, but other factors may also be relevant' (ibid.) Hays cites the example of 2 Cor. 4:6 which, he argues, contains an allusion to Gen. 1:3-5 even though it only explicitly echoes two words, 'light' and 'darkness' (p. 31). C. D. Stanley takes a more cautious approach (*Arguing* p. 47, 60-1), although he does agree with the allusions to the story of Creation in the Corinthian correspondence (p. 76).

<sup>24</sup> As Hock suggests in *Social Context* p. 41: 'he spoke of working and preaching in tandem'. See also his article 'The Workshop as a Social Setting for Paul's Missionary Preaching' in *CBQ* 41 (1979) pp. 438-50. A contrary view to this is presented by A. Malherbe *Paul and the Thessalonians. The Philosophic Tradition of Pastoral Care* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987). Malherbe believes that Paul probably carried on his mission from a private house such as that of Jason, not in the synagogue or the market-place, teaching as he worked at manual labour (p. 47). So also the arguments of L. Alexander: (2002) p. 238, 'The Philosopher in the home'. Paul has two options, (1) to use his own premises (and those of his associates) as a base for teaching, or (2) to seek the support of a patron. There is ample evidence for this in both Acts and the Epistles. Paul is depicted as working as a tentmaker in Corinth in partnership with Aquila and Priscilla (Acts 18:1-3), probably in a rented workshop; when the same couple turn up in Ephesus a few years later, there is no hint that the location they use for giving private instruction to Apollos is anything grander than their own shop (Acts 18:26). Paul himself speaks of 'the church in their house' (Rom. 16:3-5; 1 Cor. 16:19). Attracting the support of householders able to offer hospitality to the missionaries is an essential component of the mission's success: cf. Lydia's role in Philippi (Acts 16:15) and Crispus' in Corinth (Acts 18:8, C. was evidently a wealthy patron, described as an *archisynagogos*). The Pauline epistles mention other hosts where hospitality and patronage provided a base for Paul's missionary activities: Phoebe, described as a *προστάτις* (Rom. 16:2); Gaius, who acts as host (*ξένος*) 'to me and the whole church', and (p. 239) therefore presumably has a house large enough to accommodate a gathering of all the separate house-churches in Corinth (Rom. 16:23); Philemon and his wife who host a church in their house (Philemon 1). Both the private house and the workshop have precedents as locations for philosophical discourse. Paul's practice of supporting himself by working with his hands (Acts 18:1-3) has obvious echoes in the practice of the rabbis; but it is equally well-rooted in the anecdotal traditions which carry and form the Greek template of the philosophical life. A small but significant minority of Greek philosophers chose to work for a living, and are shown in tradition conducting philosophical debate in the context of a workshop or field. Some Hellenistic authorities traced this pattern of activity back to Socrates himself and his immediate circle. See J. Murphy-O'Connor 'Prisca and Aquila: Traveling Tentmakers and Church Builders' in *Bible Review* 8.6 (1992) pp. 40-51, 62; D. A. Moody 'On the Road Again' in *Review and Expositor* 92 Winter (1995) pp. 95-101.

preaching the gospel. Paul had adopted a missionary strategy that necessitated his working for a livelihood 'in order not to burden' any of his converts;<sup>25</sup> ἐπιβαρῆσαι alludes to Paul's physical labours and is indicative of financial or material support such as free food and lodging.<sup>26</sup> The refusal to take, let alone demand, support from those to whom he preached appeared to be a fundamental principle for Paul as he sought to avoid putting any hindrance in the way of potential or actual converts. It is possible to speculate that potential converts might have reservations about conversion if they believed that it would entail a financial commitment to Paul and his companions.<sup>27</sup> Paul's message of love and the self-sacrifice of Jesus might have further been viewed as incompatible with individuals who sought financial gain at the expense of those to whom they preached.<sup>28</sup>

A further explanation for Paul's work in this context is that when Paul and his companions arrived at Thessalonica there was no one there whom they could rely on for support. They might have sought hospitality from the Jewish community, but as their message involved that of inclusion of the Gentiles, it is possible that support from the Jewish community could not be relied upon. This passage ends with the incentive set before

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<sup>25</sup> R. Allen *Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or ours?* (London, 1968) p. 34.

<sup>26</sup> While Paul refused to burden those to whom he preached, once he had left, he was willing to receive support from churches he had founded. Phil. 4:16 indicates that the community at Philippi had provided him with financial support while he was at Thessalonica, although this was presumably not of a sufficient amount to enable him to stop working completely (as 2 Cor. 11:7-11 would suggest).

<sup>27</sup> See the critique by Lucian *The Runaways* 12, and *The Double Indictment* 6 as discussed by A. Malherbe *Paul and the Thessalonians: the philosophic tradition of pastoral care* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987) pp. 17-20. In his commentary on the letters (New York: Doubleday, 2000), Malherbe notes a comparison with certain philosophers exemplifying virtues such as self-sufficiency, by working at physically demanding trades (Ps. Soc. *Epistles* 12, 13 for example). The philosopher demonstrates 'by his own labour the lessons which philosophy inculcates – that one should endure hardships, and suffer the pains of labour with his own body, rather than depend on another for sustenance. What is there to prevent a student while he is working from listening to a teacher speaking about self-control or justice or endurance?' (Musonius Rufus, Fragment 11) (p. 161). Malherbe further comments on this passage in his article "'Gentle as a Nurse': The Cynic Background to I Thess. ii' in *Novum Testamentum* 12 (1970) pp. 203-17, arguing that the main thrust of this passage is precisely to present Paul as a philosopher who distinguishes himself to the public as a teacher (like Dio Chrysostom in *Discourse* 32.11). B. R. Gaventa *First and Second Thessalonians* (Louisville: John Knox Press, 1989) p. 25 disagrees however, arguing that 'the goals and convictions that undergird Paul's remarks... would not have been shared by the conventional Hellenistic philosopher'. Crucially, Paul affirms that he has been 'approved by God to be entrusted with the message of the gospel'. Thus, Paul's own manual work is inextricably bound up in his work for the Gospel which, in the context of the Thessalonian correspondence, carries with it a sense of eschatological urgency (note also the occurrence of θλίψις, 1 Thess. 3:2f. and elsewhere in Paul's letters).

<sup>28</sup> C. K. Barrett *First Corinthians* p. 207.

the Thessalonians that they are to 'lead a life worthy of God'. This may be linked with the Pentateuchal 'law of holiness' with its recurring phrase: 'you shall be holy; for I the LORD your God am holy' (Lev. 19:2). Here Paul encourages the Thessalonians to reflect the character of God and thus he speaks to the Gospel and not to the presuppositions of his culture.<sup>29</sup> The stage is now set for the passage in Chapter 4 discussed below.<sup>30</sup>

#### *1 Thess. 4:10b-12*

4:10b-12 forms part of 1 Thessalonians' second major section (4:1-5:24). This section includes teaching on the eschatological hope for those who have 'fallen asleep' (4:3-13-5:11) as well as exhortations in 4:1-12 and 5:12-24 concerning order in the church. 4:1-12 is often taken to consist of various exhortations, with 'holiness' (ἁγιασμός) as a unifying theme. A weakness in such a view is that 'holiness' is neither mentioned nor implied in the last part of the section (vv. 9-12). Verses 1f. form a general introduction to the exhortations. The Thessalonians are urged to conduct their lives (περιπατεῖτε) according to what Paul has taught them and in a manner appropriate to following the gospel. The subject of vv. 3-5 is clearly sexual impurity, however whether this theme continues into verse 6 is open to question. Although it is possible to read 'πράγματι' as a euphemism for 'sexuality', one could equally interpret this verse as an exhortation from Paul not to *exploit each other* in matters of

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<sup>29</sup> A. Malherbe *The Letters to the Thessalonians* pp. 160-1 argues that Paul does not follow a Jewish understanding of work, for similar reasons to Hock (that is, he defines what a 'Jewish understanding' might be in very narrow terms). Although Malherbe acknowledges the complexity of Paul's context, he does not allow for Paul's Jewishness to be in any way influential upon Paul when Paul speaks about his work. This thesis suggests that the importance of work described in the Jewish evidence examined in Chapter 2 does lead to the conclusion that, both positively and negatively, work involved a sense of creative responsibility on the part of the individual both to the community and to God (as indeed Paul calls God as a witness in v. 12).

<sup>30</sup> A question arises here why nothing is said in this passage about the financial help Paul received from the Philippians during his time in Thessalonica. In Phil. 4:15 and 16, Paul reminds the Philippians that when he left Macedonia after he had first preached the gospel there, only they communicated with him 'in respect of giving and receiving'. Perhaps the money sent from Philippi was not enough to support Paul and his companions in Thessalonica. Perhaps also Paul did not want to embarrass the Thessalonians by mentioning other gifts.

business.<sup>31</sup> The motivations for the admonitions of vv. 3-6a are given in vv. 6b-8: such sins are punished by God; the believers have been called to holiness; and the one who lives in defiance of these principles lives in defiance of God.

Maintaining the theme of exploitation, in the exhortations of vv. 3-12, matters of marriage and sexual relations (vv. 3-8) are placed side by side with material affairs and the means of making a living (vv. 9-12). The admonitions to abound (περισσεύειν) both in holiness (ἁγιασμός) (4:1-8) and in brotherly love (φιλαδελφίας) (4:9f.) correspond to Paul's desire in 3:12f. that the Lord may enable the Thessalonians to abound (περισσεύειν) in love for one another (3:12) and may strengthen their hearts to be faultless in holiness (ἁγιωσύνη) at the coming of the Lord (3:13). For this reason, Paul both desires that the Lord may cause the Thessalonians to abound in love and holiness, and exhorts them to do so.

In verse 11, ἡσυχάζειν means 'be quiet', 'be at rest', 'be silent'.<sup>32</sup> In the NT, the root of the word in its various forms is used of rest on the Sabbath from work (Lk. 23:56); of keeping quiet (that is, not speaking in opposition, Lk. 14:4; Acts 11:18; 21:14); of silence (Acts 22:2); and of a quietness almost synonymous with subordination (1 Tim. 2:2, 11f.). Ἠσυχάζειν here, combined with πράσσειν τὰ ἴδια can mean 'to live quietly' as opposed to engaging in political activity. This interpretation is supported by the fact that πράσσειν τὰ ἴδια is often used of private life where it means 'to manage one's own affairs', 'to take care of one's own tasks'. The third infinitive phrase, ἐργάζεσθαι ταῖς [ἰδίαις] χερσὶν ὑμῶν makes clear what is intended by 'look after your own business': work with your own hands. At the same time, it stands to some extent in apposition to ἡσυχάζειν. To work is, of course, the opposite of 'to be tranquil', 'to rest'. These two verbs together, balancing and

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<sup>31</sup> Malherbe does not follow this interpretation in his commentary (p. 232) on the grounds that the overall context of these verses must drive the meaning. The overall context of these verses may, however, be deliberately ambiguous.

<sup>32</sup> Liddell-Scott 1940: 779. In the LXX, it is used of peace in contrast to war and battle (Judg. 3:11, 30; 5:31; 18:9; 2 Chr. 14:1; Jer. 29:6f.; 1 Mac. 7:50; 9:57; 11:38; 14:4), political peace and security (Judg. 18:7, 27; Ezek.

complementing each other, show that the goal of Paul's exhortation is neither 'rest' as opposed to activity nor work as opposed to rest or laziness. Rather, it involves both being tranquil and working with one's own hands. Used absolutely, ἐργάζεσθαι means 'to work'. Otherwise it is used in the NT to mean 'to do (something)', 'produce', 'bring about', 'accomplish', and even 'earn' (as in 2 Thess. 3:12). Paul uses the phrase ἐργάζεσθαι ταῖς [ἰδίαις] χερσὶν ὑμῶν elsewhere only of his own work (1 Cor. 4:12). Here it is clearly used of manual labour. Verse 12 provides the purpose for the exhortation in v. 11. Two different motivations for working with tranquillity are mentioned. The first is that the Thessalonians may 'conduct themselves decently before those outside (περιπατήτε εὐσχημόνως πρὸς τοὺς ἕξω)'. It is linked primarily with the admonition ἡσυχάζειν καὶ πράσσειν τὰ ἴδια. Εὐσχημόνως means 'decently' or 'becomingly'. The related adjective is often used of the 'respectable' members of society (Mk. 15:43; Acts 13:50; 17:12). In 1 Cor. 14:40, the adverb is used closely with κατὰ τάξιν, referring to the harmony in a church where all is in place.<sup>33</sup>

The second motivation for the exhortation in v. 11 is that the Thessalonians will not need anybody's help (μηδενὸς χρεῖαν ἔχητε); it is linked primarily with the admonition ἐργάζεσθαι ταῖς χερσὶν ὑμῶν. Μηδενὸς means literally 'no one'. The Thessalonians are not to burden others in the church. Instead, each of them is to attain 'αὐτάρκεια', independence in respect to material goods.<sup>34</sup> Given that we have evidence of a problem with idleness (5:14

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38:11; Jer. 26:27), of personal security (Job 11:19; Pvs. 1:33; Job 3:13). In Lam. 3:26 it is parallel with waiting for the Lord's deliverance; and in Job 14:6, it is used of man's rest from work and hardship.

<sup>33</sup> A similar usage is found in Romans. The context in Romans 13: 11-13, with its metaphors of keeping watch, day and night, light and darkness, and the putting on of armour, parallels closely the context in 1 Thessalonians, especially the paraenetic section, I Thess. 5:5-8. In I Cor. 7:35, the subject is decency while one awaits the Lord, since the time is short and the readers must give themselves undividedly to the Lord. This contributes to the suggestion that the Thessalonians are urged to work with tranquillity in order that they may be respected by those outside the community for their conduct, and thus may act as effective witnesses for the gospel.

<sup>34</sup> While this word has as its primary meaning the idea of 'self-sufficiency', which is a common term in philosophy, Paul's own context must not be overlooked. For Paul any idea of self-sufficiency derived ultimately from the gift and purpose of God (through Christ – and indeed Paul – as the example). Paul stressed that the Christian αὐτός should not be in isolation; true αὐτάρκεια arises only when the ἄλλος has a share in it. An idea similar to this may be found in J. Meggitt *Paul, Poverty and Survival* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1998) p. 161, where Meggitt suggests the importance for Paul of an 'inter-community mutual ethic' in 1 Thess. 4:9-10 and in 2 Thess. 3:6-15. Thus the importance for Paul, of work. See *TDNT* Vol. 1 pp. 466-7.

and 2 Thess. 3:6-10) it seems reasonable to suggest that Paul was addressing a situation in the Thessalonian community. The imminence of the parousia is not an excuse for idleness and so being a nuisance and a burden to other people.<sup>35</sup>

*2 Thess. 3:6-15*

At the beginning of this section, Paul commands the Thessalonians to avoid members of the congregation who are living in 'idleness' (ἀτάκτως) and not in accordance with the tradition they received from him.<sup>36</sup> The word 'ἀτάκτως' appears again at v. 11, where Paul describes how various members of the community are behaving, and himself denies that he had behaved in such a way (in v. 7). It is quite clear from the associations of the word in vv. 6-15 that by 'idleness' Paul means 'not in accordance with the discipline of working and supporting oneself'.<sup>37</sup> This 'idleness' has been explained (as is suggested in the interpretation of the passage from 1 Thessalonians) as being rooted in the eschatological excitement produced by the parousia of Jesus. In this understanding, rejection of work and the usual

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<sup>35</sup> One might also suggest that encouraging all members of the community to work includes the upper strata of society who, as a rule, would not engage in any form of working activity typically expected of everyone else. Thus, under no circumstances is idleness to be tolerated. Hock (*Social Context* pp. 43f.) notes that, although eschatological notes surround this passage, at 4:6 and 4:13-18, and that eschatology formed a central theme of Paul's missionary preaching, such an influence 'need not be placed in the foreground. It is methodologically better to understand the exhortation to work primarily in terms of what the text explicitly says'. Hock instead relates the admonition to work to the need for the Thessalonians to live in a 'seemly fashion' (v. 12). True, Paul's precept on work is here echoed in Graeco-Roman moralists such as Dio Chrysostom (*Social Context* p. 44), however this tendency to 'echo' does not satisfactorily account for admonition being present in this letter in the first place. Although like Dio, Paul recommends working with one's own hands, the motivation that lies behind this statement is not arguably the same for Paul. It is an oversimplification to suggest that the motivations for the admonition to work are not at all religious but are drawn exclusively from civil and daily life, as Hock seems to imply. Similarly, the argument of W. Schmithals *Paul and the Gnostics* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1972, p. 73) that there was a gnostic heresy in Thessalonica makes far more of the evidence than is feasible. With regard to the meaning of ἀτάκτως, Clement of Alexandria seems to regard poverty as a major obstacle to an individual's development as a person (*Who is the Rich Man that Shall be Saved?* XI, discussed in B. Gordon *The Economic Problem in Biblical and Patristic Thought* [Leiden, New York, Köln: E. J. Brill, 1989, pp. 84-8]).

<sup>36</sup> The appeal to tradition is quite striking; as noted by Gaventa in *First and Second Thessalonians* p. 129. The phrase 'earn their own living' is perhaps best rendered as 'let them eat their own bread', which recalls Gen. 3:19, 'by the sweat of your brow you shall eat bread'.

<sup>37</sup> This is the more appropriate way of interpreting ἀτάκτως. The word means 'disordered' matter before creation in Philo *Op. Mund.* 22; in Jos. it is used often in a military sense, as in 'disorderly retreat' *B.J.* 3.113. In the LXX it occurs only in 3 Macc. 1:19 in the sense of an 'unseemly' waste of land (*TDNT* VIII pp. 47-8).

social order could be expected.<sup>38</sup> Another suggestion is that, underlying the order which Paul would like to be restored is the rule of work that originated in Genesis 3:17-19. It is possible that those refusing to work were appealing to the alleged re-establishment of the 'utopia' prior to the events of the Adam-Eve story.<sup>39</sup> Yet another view is that the idleness had nothing to do with end-time excitement, but was the result of the urban poor finding support within the social networks of Christ-fearers and then giving up work.<sup>40</sup> It is a further possibility that Paul, in writing to the mixed community of Jews and Gentiles (if that is the most likely make-up of the community at Thessalonica), could be picking up on an accusation levelled at the Jews that, because of their laws concerning work, particularly with regard to the observance of the Sabbath, they were being accused of laziness.<sup>41</sup> If this is the case, Paul could be developing his theme here with a hint of irony. Paul offers himself as a model for the community, inasmuch as he did not exhibit idleness when he was amongst them, but worked day and night so as not to be a burden on them. In v. 9, Paul notes that he had a right to be supported by the congregation, even though he did not exercise it, in order to offer them himself as a suitable model of imitation.<sup>42</sup> To follow Paul then, is to follow Christ.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> P. F. Esler *The First Christians in Their Social Worlds* (London: Routledge, 1994) p. 101.

<sup>39</sup> M. J. Menken *2 Thessalonians* (London: Routledge, 1994) pp. 130-3.

<sup>40</sup> R. Russell 'The Idle in 2 Thess. 3:6-12: An Eschatological or a Social Problem?' in *NTS* 34 (1988) pp. 105-19; R. Jewett 'Tenement Churches and Communal Meals in the Early Church: The Implications of a Form-Critical Analysis of 2 Thess. 3:10' in *Biblical Research* 38 (1993) pp. 23-42.

<sup>41</sup> Such as expressed in the slightly-later-than Paul writer Juvenal (b. 67 CE) in his *Fourteenth Satire*.

<sup>42</sup> Perhaps Paul's working 'with toil and labour' echoes the sentiment expressed in Ecclesiastes 9:10: 'Whatever your hand finds to do, do with your might; for there is no work or thought or knowledge or wisdom in Sheol, to which you are going'. Paul urged the Thessalonians to make the most of every day in the service of the gospel. Cf. 2:3ff. See also the arguments contained in R. Russell (1988) 'The Idle in 2 Thess. 3:6-12: An Eschatological or a Social Problem' in *NTS* 34: 103-119. Russell argues against what he sees as the 'traditional theological explanation – whether futuristic or realised eschatology – for the *Sitz im Leben* of the idleness' (p. 109). Instead, he suggests a 'sociological' reason: 'Paul urges these idle poor (who Russell argues formed the majority of the community), caught up as beneficiaries of Christian love, to work, being self-sufficient and constructive in their relationship with others' (p. 109). Probably the truth lies somewhere between the two (social and eschatological), particularly given the arguments of Esler in the book cited above note 38.

<sup>43</sup> Agrell points out that imitation of Paul is of a different character in 2 Thess. than elsewhere in Paul's letters. No reference is made in 2 Thess. to Paul's following of Christ; and the content of imitation differs. The model is used to moralise. In contrast to 1 Cor. 9, in 2 Thess., Paul's waiving of the right not to work is subordinate to the purpose of providing an example of working which is to be followed (*Work, Toil and Sustenance* p. 119).

### 5.1.3 Corinthians<sup>44</sup>

From a cursory glance through the Corinthian correspondence one would correctly deduce that these letters contain a number of pressing issues. Amongst these, the debate over Paul's apostolic leadership, his style and authority, plays a major role. In chapter 1, the problem of the various factions that had developed in the church is introduced. As a continuation of this theme, and immediately preceding the passage discussed below, we read that some of the Corinthians who were not part of Paul's group adopted a superior attitude toward Paul: he is foolish, they are not; he is weak, they are strong. In a similar vein, the questions surrounding Paul's apostolic authority appear again in chapter 9. In both passages, the issue of Paul's manual labour appears. Thus manual labour becomes intimately linked to Paul's apostolic identity. As with the section on the Thessalonian correspondence, we shall first provide an overview of the occurrence of work-related vocabulary (where most relevant) in the Corinthian letters, followed by more detailed comment on some of the most pertinent passages. This will include detailed comment on the Collection which, so this thesis argues, is intimately bound up with Paul's manual labour.

In 1 Corinthians, there are fourteen occurrences of the ἐργάζομαι word-group. The noun form occurs on eight occasions: 3:13-15 ('now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw – each man's *work* [ἔργον] will become manifest; for the day will reveal it, because it will be revealed with fire and the fire will test what sort of *work* [ἔργον] each one has done. If the *work* [ἔργον] which any one has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. If anyone's *work* [ἔργον] is burned up, he

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Yet the two are not mutually exclusive but rather relate directly to the overall contexts of the passages referred to. In 1 Cor. the issue is precisely confusion caused by Paul's waiving of his right to work; in 2 Thess. the issue is simply of community members not working, thus to paraphrase what Paul tells them: 'I work, you should do likewise'.

<sup>44</sup> Paul's letters to the Corinthians deal with a number of key topics: immorality; factions in the congregation; rich and poor; Paul's apostolic identity and the means of his support; and the resurrection, amongst other areas of concern. A. C. Thiselton *1 Corinthians* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2000); R. P. Martin *2 Corinthians* (London: SPCK, 1986).

will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire’); 5:2 (‘...ought you not rather to mourn? Let him who has done this [ἔργον] be removed from among you’); 9:1 (‘Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are you not my *work* [ἔργον] in the Lord?’); 15:58 (‘therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, solid, always abounding in the *work* [ἔργω] of the Lord...’); 16:10 (‘when Timothy comes, see that you put him at ease among you, for he is doing the *work* [ἔργον] of the Lord, as I am’). The form ἐνεργημάτων is found at 12:6 (‘...and there are varieties of *working*, but it is the same God who inspires them all in every one’). The noun συνεργός occurs twice: 3:9 (‘For we are God’s *fellow-workers* [συνεργοί]...’), and 16:16 (‘I urge you to be subject to such men and to every *fellow worker* [συνεργοῦντι] and labourer’). The verbal form can be found once, at 4:12 with respect to Paul’s manual work (‘...and we labour, *working* [ἐργαζόμενοι] with our own hands...’). Finally, the noun form ἐνεργής can be found twice, at 12:11 (‘all these are *inspired* [ἐνεργεῖ] by one and the same spirit...’), and 16:9 (‘but I will stay in Ephesus until Pentecost, for a wide door for *effective work* [ἐνεργής] has opened for me, and there are many adversaries’).

There is one occurrence of the πράσσω word-group, at 9:17 (‘for if I *do* [πράσσω] this of my own will, I have a reward...’), and there are two occurrences of the κοπιᾶω word-group, at 15:58 (‘therefore my beloved brothers, be steadfast, solid, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your *labour* [κόπος] is not in vain’), and at 16:16 (‘I urge you to be subject to such men and to every fellow worker and *labourer* [κοπιῶντι]’).

In 2 Corinthians, there are nine occurrences of the ἐργάζομαι word-group. Two of these are in noun form, 11:13 and 11:15 (‘...for such men are false apostles, deceitful *workmen* [ἐργάται] disguising themselves as apostles of Christ; ‘...their end will correspond to their *deeds* [ἔργα]’). The other seven occurrences are in verbal form: 1:24 (‘not that we lord it over your faith; we *work* [συνεργοί] with you for your joy, for you stand firm in your faith’), 4:12

(‘so death is *at work* [ἐνεργεῖται] in us, but life in you’), 5:5 (‘he who has *prepared* [κατεργασάμενος] us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee’), 6:1 (‘*working together* [Συνεργοῦντες] with him, then, we entreat you not to accept the grace of God in vain’), 7:10 (‘for godly grief *produces* [ἐργάζεται] a repentance that leads to salvation and brings no regret, but worldly grief produces death’), 9:11 (‘...you will be enriched in every way for great generosity, which through us will *produce* [κατεργάζεται] thanksgiving to God’), 12:12 (‘the signs of a true apostle were *performed* [κατεργάσθη] among you in all patience...’).

There are seven occurrences of the ποιέω word-group – 5:21 (‘for our sake He *made* him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God’), 8:10-11 (‘[And in this matter I give my advice: it is best for you now to complete what a year ago] you began only to *do* [ποιῆσαι] but to desire, so that your readiness in desiring it may be matched by your *doing* [ποιῆσαι] it out of what you have’), 11:12 (‘and what I *do* [ποιήσω], I will continue *to do* [ποιήσω], in order to undermine the claim of those who would like to claim that in their boasted mission they work on the same terms ...’), and 13:7 (‘but we pray God that you may not *do* [ποιῆσαι] wrong – not that we may appear to have met the test, but that you may *do* [ποιήτε] what is right, though we may seem to have failed’).

There are two occurrences of the κοπιᾶω word-group – 6:5 (‘...hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, tumults, *labours* [κόποις]...’), and 11:27 (‘...in *toil* [κόπω] and hardship...’), and there is one occurrence of the μόχθος word-group, in 11:27 (‘...in *toil and hardship* [μόχθω]...’).

### 1 Cor. 3

This chapter in 1 Corinthians is important in determining our understanding of Paul’s portrayal of work because Paul makes it clear that God is at work through him and thus he exhorts the Corinthians to be mindful of this fact. Paul makes use of a series of powerful

images to underline his point: he refers to the Corinthians as ‘infants’ whom he provided with milk because they were unable to take solid food (vv. 1-2);<sup>45</sup> then he employs the imagery of a field that is planted, watered and brings forth growth, with the aim in part, to present a sense of equality between his role and that of Apollos (v. 8) but with that, reminding the Corinthians that it is God who ‘gives the growth’. Crucially, Paul adds to this imagery the telling phrase in v. 9, ‘for we are God’s fellow workers;’<sup>46</sup> you are God’s field, God’s building’ (θεοῦ γὰρ ἔσμεν συνεργοί, θεοῦ γεώργιον, θεοῦ οἰκοδομή ἐστε and emphasised again at 16:16);<sup>47</sup> Paul continues with the metaphor of building, an image which drives the discussion of leadership in the following verses (10-15) with a distinctly eschatological slant.<sup>48</sup> Finally, in vv. 18f. (to 4:5), Paul brings in the idea of Wisdom. A. Thiselton comments, ‘on a merely human level ministers may appear less impressive than rhetoricians, like mere manual laborers, but in God’s eyes they are channels for the household management for the needs of his community: stewards or estate managers of the mysteries of God (4:1)’.<sup>49</sup> Taken as a whole, these verses provide a clear indication of Paul’s link between the realm of divine work and that of human work.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> See J Francis ‘As Babes in Christ –Some Proposals regarding 1 Cor. 3:1-3’ in *JSNT* 7 (1980) pp. 41-60. He states that ‘Paul is rebuking his readers not because they are babes still, and had not progressed further, but because they were in fact being childish, a condition contrary to being spiritual’ (p. 43).

<sup>46</sup> See also above, p. 172 n. 13.

<sup>47</sup> Thiselton *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* pp. 305-6, discusses the meaning of συνεργοί. He favours the translation, ‘fellow laborers who belong to God’ since, so Thiselton argues, ‘God has assigned them tasks; his is the work; to him (not to the applause of the addressees) they owe this primary accountability; he will pay their ‘wages’; for his sake they work on his field as those who toil in hard labour’ (p. 306).

<sup>48</sup> See J. Shanor ‘Paul as Master Builder. Construction Terms in First Corinthians’ in *NTS* 34 (1988) pp. 461-71; H. W. Hollander ‘The Testing by Fire of the Builders’ Works’ in *NTS* 40 (1994) pp. 89-104. Like the images of the field or the vineyard, the description of the community of believers as a building has a clear context in Judaism. Indeed, the image of ‘building up’ appears at various points in the narrative of the Hebrew Bible, most notably God appoints the prophet Jeremiah (whose own call might be compared with Paul’s) ‘to destroy and to overthrow, to build up and to plant’, Jer. 1:10).

<sup>49</sup> *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* p. 319.

1 Cor. 4:10-13

This passage appears in the context of Paul's defence of his apostolic style and leadership. Paul has been criticised in Corinth, and has been unfavourably compared to other leaders, both for his lack of honour and his non-appearance. Paul's riposte ridicules the Corinthians by describing his own ministry which has placed him in a vulnerable position (vv. 9-13), and asserts his authority, announcing his forthcoming visit (vv. 14-21). Paul's use of a list of hardships emulates a common rhetorical feature of Hellenistic philosophers, particularly Stoics and Cynics.<sup>51</sup> Included in his list of demeaning conditions is the fact that Paul works with his own hands (v.12). This could suggest that he is here arguing against an attitude harboured by the social elite, who saw manual labour as demeaning and slave-like. Thus, in a deliberate contrast, and arguably making use of hyperbole, Paul compares himself to the 'scum of the world, the dregs of all things'. Work for a living is clearly toil for Paul: it is κόπος. In an ironic twist, Paul demonstrates how he shares in the hardships of Jesus.<sup>52</sup>

1 Cor. 9

1 Cor. 9 is part of a connected discussion related to the proper attitude towards meat offered to idols (8:1-11:1). The dominant theme is freedom. Chapter 8 deals with freedom (to eat meat offered to idols) and the limitations placed on it by love for the weak. Chapter 9 seemingly interrupts the direct line of reasoning related to sacrificial food, as Paul presents himself as an example of one who, out of consideration for the weak, waives his freedom for

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<sup>50</sup> R. Hock in *Social Context* does not include any reference to this chapter of 1 Corinthians in his evaluation of Paul's portrayal of his work.

<sup>51</sup> For example, the ideal Cynic in Epictetus' *Diss.* 3.22.59, 95. Paul makes similar allusions elsewhere in the Corinthian correspondence (2 Cor. 4:8-9; 6:4-10; 11:23-33). A. Thiselton *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2000) pp. 365-371 discusses the debate surrounding the list of hardships. G. D. Fee *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987) p. 179 observes that while the list of hardships up to v. 12a reflects the standard features of deprivation and serves as a series of antitheses to 'filled, rich and reigning' (v. 8), 'the three antitheses of vv. 12b-13a go beyond the mere cataloguing of hardships to express his response to ill-treatment'.

<sup>52</sup> This point is observed by Barrett p. 111

their sake. He has abstained from his apostolic ἐξουσία so as not to hinder his mission or burden those to whom he preaches. Chapter 9 concludes with the danger of being found wanting at the judgement; 10:1-22 develops this thought further and warns against idolatry; and 10:23-11:1 returns to the argument of chapter 8: in principle, freedom is complete, but it must be limited by love for the weak. Within the frame of this context, chapter 9 might appear quite detached; here Paul's use of his ἐλευθερία and ἐξουσία are treated. The main point in chapter 9, seen in its context, is not so much an apology for his apostolate; it is used rather to show how one can and ought to abstain from one's freedom and privileges if the situation demands it.

In chapter 9, Paul first offers a detailed argument that he has the right to a wage for his missionary efforts. He has a right to a living (v. 14) in return for the service to God involved in his missionary efforts. On the one hand, the missionary, like everyone else who works, has a right to receive sustenance from that with which he works (vv. 7-12a); on the other hand, the preacher of the gospel has the same right as the priests to live on the gifts of others (vv. 13f.). Paradoxically then, one can say firstly, that mission work is worth a wage, and secondly, that the missionary has a right 'not to work (for his own living)'.

Paul asks, 'Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? are you not my workmanship in the Lord?'. His answer 'to those who would examine' him centres around the theme of the 'apostolic right'. (1) Do we not have the right to our food and drink? (2) Do we not have the right to be accompanied by a wife, as the other apostles and the brother of the Lord and Cephas?<sup>53</sup> Or (3) is it only Barnabas and I who have no right to

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<sup>53</sup> Considering this entire chapter is concerned with the issue of support, it is surprising that commentators on this passage fail to mention how this reference to a 'wife' fits into Paul's argument here. It is indeed possible that there may have been a 'right' that involved the wife requiring support along with the husband, and that she may have been expected to support her husband in his missionary endeavours. But could that support have been financial? According to T. Ket. 4:7: 'A man marries a woman on condition of not having to maintain her and of not having to support her. And not only so, but he may make an agreement with her that she maintain and support him and teach him Torah. There is a story concerning Yehoshua, the son of R. Aqiba, who married a woman and made an agreement with her, that she maintain and support him and teach him

refrain from working for a living? As demonstrated here, the issue of Paul's work is of central importance.

Verse 7 provides three examples of the worker's right to a wage; the second is an echo of a rule that, among others, the one who has 'planted a vineyard, but has not enjoyed its fruits', need not take part in battle (Deut. 20:6). The vine-dresser and the shepherd are to live on their work. All three examples are arguments based upon natural conditions, in contrast with the arguments in vv. 9f. which are based on the Mosaic Law. That the ox who treads must be permitted to eat is interpreted by Paul as applying to 'us', that is, people in general; thus the text says that the one who ploughs and the one who threshes ought to do so in the hope of sharing in the results of their work; this is applied (perhaps with deliberate humour on the part of Paul), in v. 11 to the work of Paul and Barnabas in preaching the gospel. If they have sown spiritual things amongst the Corinthians, it is not asking too much that they reap at least material things in return. In this sense of cultural inter-texture, Paul might be described as interacting with his Jewish diaspora heritage.<sup>54</sup>

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Torah...'. When R. Aqiba himself became wealthy, he paid tribute to his wife: 'He said to them: She bore a great deal of pain on my account for [the study of] the Torah' (ARNA 6 p. 29). How widespread this practice was we do not know, at the very least however it points towards the possibility that Paul could have had a wife who supported him financially. It is then significant that Paul rejects this as a means of potential support and places greater emphasis on his choosing to work to support himself. See J. Jeremias 'War Paulus Witwer?' in *ZNW* 28 (1929) pp. 321-23; E. Arens 'Was St. Paul Married?' in *BibTod* 66 (1973) pp. 1188-91; G. Bouwman 'Paulus en het celibat' in *Bijdragen* 37 (1976) pp. 379-90.

<sup>54</sup> See P. J. Tomson *Paul and the Jewish Law: Halakha in the Letters of the Apostle to the Gentiles* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1990) pp. 125-131. Tomson argues that Paul 'expounds his rights as an Apostle in connection with a halakhic saying of Jesus [Mt. 10:10; Lk. 10:7] developing the halakhic midrash on which the latter is based. Likewise D. I. Brewer '1 Cor. 9:9-11: A Literal Interpretation of "do not muzzle the ox" in *NTS* 38 (1992) pp. 554-65. He argues that Paul is using a literal, but Pharisaic, interpretation of this quotation in which 'ox' is meant to mean all labouring species, including human beings. That is, Paul is offering *halakhab* here, not allegory. Would Paul's audience have recognised this? Paul substitutes *kemoseis* for *phimoseis*. Neither word is common. Where the same verse is quoted in 1 Tim. 5:18, the verb of the LXX is used but the word order is changed. Perhaps Paul was not meticulous in quoting from the Hebrew Bible. See A. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* pp. 685-8, for a discussion of Paul's use of the 'Old Testament' here. Deut. 25:4 is essentially a rule for the protection of animals (Ex. 20:20; Pvsb 11:10; Jos. *Ant.* 4.233). See G. Dalman *Arbeit und Sitte in Palästina*, BFTh, 2, 29 (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, 1933), vol. 3, plate 15. The quotation is contrary to Paul's exegesis. Paul, however, expounds the statement according to the Hellenistic Jewish principle that God's concern is with higher things (Philo, *Spec. leg.* 1.260 – with regard to the regulations concerning sacrificial animals, 'For the law does not prescribe for unreasoning creatures, but for those who have mind and reason'. Loeb 7:251), *Ep. Ar.* 144), that accordingly the detailed prescriptions of the law are to be allegorically expounded. It may be that Paul's working at his trade is one way in which he sought to be the Jew to the Jew, since he was still preaching at least to some Jews and Jewish Christians. It was, arguably, the upper-echelon of

After the interruption in v. 12b, Paul supplies in vv. 13f. further arguments for his right to support. He refers to that which the Corinthians already know, namely, that those who serve in the cult live on the holy things, and those who serve at the altar share in what is offered there (v. 13). Paul carries the argument further in vv. 15-18. He repeats in v. 15 that he has not made use of his right to support and says that he has not argued in such detail for this right because he wants to be paid in future for his preaching.<sup>55</sup> In vv. 15-18, Paul supplies the reasons as to why he has not made use of his right and will not do so: 'Indeed, I would rather die than that no one will deprive me of my ground for boasting!'. The reason for his speaking of his behaviour as his *καύχημα* becomes apparent in vv. 16f. If he preached the gospel and, at the same time, was paid for it, he would have no *καύχημα*. For a necessity has come upon him, compelling him to preach the gospel; if he fails to do this, he will be punished by God (v. 16). Paul wins *καύχημα* when he preaches at no charge; this he was not compelled to do. Verse 17 explains the character of the proclamation of the gospel with new terms. 'For if I do this of my own will, I have a reward (*μισθόν*)'. *Μισθόν* corresponds to *καύχημα*. In this, Paul emphasises that the preaching of the gospel is no more motivated by pay than is slave labour.<sup>56</sup> Working for a living is thus not for Paul opposed to service to God, but it is rather a necessity for the apostle in certain situations in order to fully serve God without burdening others, whilst at the same time appealing to those who were engaged in manual work.<sup>57</sup> In this, Paul stands at odds with Jesus' message to his disciples in the

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Græco-Roman society that looked down on manual labour, including (if this is what Paul did), leather working (cf. Plutarch *Pericles* 2.1). Artisans and merchants themselves did not necessarily share this view, as their funerary inscriptions show (and other evidence generally examined in Chapter 3). Paul's identification as 'slave of all' (9:19) might place him in the lower category of society, perhaps deliberately so. See also T. Brodie 'The Systematic Use of the Pentateuch in 1 Corinthians' in *The Corinthian Correspondence Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensis* CXXV, R. Bieringer (ed.) (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1996) pp. 441-557.

<sup>55</sup> On boasting, see the work of S. Gathercole *Where is boasting? Early Jewish soteriology and Paul's response in Rom. 1-5* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 2002).

<sup>56</sup> Thus D. Martin, *Slavery as Salvation: the metaphor for slavery in Pauline Christianity* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1990) p. 133, who argues that Paul's imagery here is essentially paradoxical, and deliberately so.

<sup>57</sup> D. Horrell *Social Ethos*, quoting D. Martin, expresses this another way, 'the point of 1 Corinthians 9 is that Paul takes on manual labour *because* of, not in spite of his view that it is demeaning' (pp. 215-6).

Gospels. Paul rejects the Jesus 'halakhah' by referring to a separation between 'spiritual work' (v.11) and manual labour.<sup>58</sup>

Questions remaining from the above discussion revolve around the issue of how does chapter 9 fit into its context in the letter? Is it 'out of sorts' with what lies around it (chapters 8 and 10-11)? Is the key to see at the heart of chapter 9 a justification for Paul working? Or is the core to do with freedom and responsibility (following on from 8:13) with Paul's self-support as (an important) part of this core issue? In chapter 8, Paul introduces a discussion of idol worship (specifically the matter of food offered to idols), which echoes a wider theme within Judaism of anti-idolatry.<sup>59</sup> Related to this are various slogans (at 6:12ff; 8:1f. and 10:23ff). The rather unusual verse at 10:8 ('We must not indulge in immorality as some of them did, and twenty thousand fell in one day') is crucial here in that it shows that, for Paul, immorality and idolatry are connected. If we see Judaism's monotheism (for want of a better term) as contributed to by anti-idolatry, the outworking of practices relating to anti-idolatry are surely complex, given the variety of potential contexts (here, a Corinthian context) and thus the response would be adaptive. As chapter 8 suggests, themes of domesticity and food laws were important, but what seems to be crucial here is the effect of such themes in the arena of commercial relationships (and public socialising).<sup>60</sup> 10:8 appears odd in that Paul uses immorality in speaking about idolatry, but note how in 6:19, Paul moves from immorality to (implied) idolatry in speaking of the body as a temple. In other

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<sup>58</sup> A. Thiselton *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* p. 689, points out that Paul 'compares the hugely different scale of sowing and reaping merely earthly or material things with sowing and reaping the things of the Holy Spirit'. See further D. Horrell "'The Lord Commanded...But I Have Not Used...': Exegetical and Hermeneutical Reflections on 1 Cor. 9:14, 15' in *NTS* 43 (1997) pp. 587-603.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. Barclay *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora* p. 429: 'To define Jewish religious distinction simply as adherence to "monotheism" seems inadequate on a number of grounds. The term monotheism places the emphasis on a concept...and obscures the significance of cultic practice in defining acceptable or unacceptable religion...What concerned [writers like Philo] was...the *worship* of beings other than the one invisible Deity...Jewish distinction thus has to be defined more precisely, and in negative terms, as the rejection of an alien, pluralistic and iconic cult'.

<sup>60</sup> Indeed these very themes are of interest and concern to the rabbis in the Mishnah.

words, what is driving Paul's overall frame of reference is the church modelled on Israel and monotheism.<sup>61</sup>

Paul applies the overarching frame to the church and obedience to the Gospel. He is obedient in his proclamation of the Gospel: the Corinthian community are themselves the evidence. What matters to Paul is the fundamental aspect of obedience to the Gospel which has two facets: (1) it requires charity, and (2) it requires an adaptive response. Chapter 9 situates itself in the midst of this argument and is essentially about the adaptive response to the Gospel (including Paul's flexibility about self-support). Paul's freedom is thus an expression of obedience to God and considerateness towards the Corinthians.<sup>62</sup> Therefore, the external affairs of Paul in working for a living in the world are connected with internal affairs of the church (in its care for each other) and all this stands together under the one acknowledgment of God who is sovereign over both world and church in Christ, who is lord.<sup>63</sup>

### *2 Cor. 6:5(3-10)*

Paul assures the Corinthians that he has placed no 'obstacle' before them. He proceeds to list a catalogue of hardships not unlike those of Stoic and Cynic philosophers in demonstrating virtue and character. In this context however, Paul gives these traditional elements a *distinctive* meaning. He does not directly mention his manual work in this context, although the mention of labours could be indicative of passages elsewhere that mention his manual work as creating specific hardship.

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<sup>61</sup> That is to say, to deny God is to 'whore' after other gods and so idolatry equals immorality, and *vice versa*.

<sup>62</sup> An expression of Paul's 'vocation' as informed by love which the Corinthians are themselves blind to, in not making love the principle of their being the body of Christ.

<sup>63</sup> The way Paul adapts the Shema at 8:4ff. relating to anti-idolatry suggests that he had a broadly adaptive/flexible approach generally.

## 2 Cor. 8 &amp; 9

One important aspect of Paul's portrayal of work in the Corinthian correspondence comes from his plans for the Collection.<sup>64</sup> It is possible to suggest that Paul's work and the matter of the collection are intimately connected by the sphere of *euergetism*. The word 'euergetism' is derived from French classical scholarship, and describes the socio-political phenomenon of voluntary gift-giving to the ancient community. Recent study in this area has tended to focus on the *polis* – city, of which benefaction by wealthy citizens (including women) becomes a defining characteristic from the third century BCE onwards. This is attested by thousands of honorific inscriptions memorialising donors. Yet defining what 'euergetism' is, is not easy.<sup>65</sup> If it is a phenomenon, what might count as 'euergetism' and what might not? 'Euergetism' is not charity, although it undoubtedly paved the way for the emergence of bishops and wealthy lay Christians as local benefactors.<sup>66</sup> It is worth bearing in mind that Paul, while visiting Corinth, would have been surrounded by evidence of 'euergetism': statues and inscriptions throughout the city bore witness to an essential feature of ancient city life.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> As is the case with Pauline chronology in general, the question of the chronology of the Collection is vexing to say the least, and will not be treated in any detail in this thesis. Most scholars assume that the Corinthian correspondence can be dated to the early to mid 50s CE, with Romans being composed in Corinth (cf. Romans 16) sometime before 60 CE (see J. Murphy-O'Connor, *St. Paul's Corinth: Texts and Archaeology* [3d ed.; Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical, 2002], 151-74. For discussions of the time line of the collection, see D. Georgi, *Remembering the Poor* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1992), *passim* [esp. 128-37]; K. F. Nickle, *The Collection: A Study in Paul's Strategy* (SBT 48; Naperville, IL: Allenson, 1966), *passim*; Sze-kar Wan, 'Collection for the Saints as Anticolonial Act: Implications of Paul's Ethnic Reconstruction,' pp. 191-215 [193-96]; A. J. M. Wedderburn, 'Paul's Collection: Chronology and History,' *NTS* 48 (2002) pp. 95-110. An important piece of the puzzle of the Collection's chronology is how, if at all, Galatians fits into the scheme. Paul reports in 1 Cor 16:1 that he had given directions to the Galatian churches concerning their participation in the Collection. However, Galatians contains no specific instructions about the project and recently several scholars have questioned the assumption that the request of James, Cephas, and John in Gal 2:10, that Paul and his associates 'remember the poor,' refers to the Collection as such (J. D. G. Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998] p. 706, n. 170; Wedderburn, 'Paul's Collection,' pp. 96-101. For an intriguing argument that Gal 6:6-10 is an exhortation to participate in the Collection, see L. Hurtado, 'The Jerusalem Collection in Galatians,' *JSNNT* 5 (1979) pp. 46-62; other possible allusions to the Collection and its organization include 2 Cor 1:15-16 and 12:17-18.

<sup>65</sup> K. Lomas and T. Cornell *'Bread and Circuses': Euergetism and Municipal Patronage in Roman Italy* (London: Routledge, 2003).

<sup>66</sup> P. Brown *Poverty and Leadership in the Later Roman Empire* (Menaham Stern Jerusalem Lectures: Brandeis University Press, 2002) p. 27.

<sup>67</sup> See J. Murphy O'Connor *St. Paul's Corinth. Texts and Archaeology* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1983).

With regard to the area of euergetism, there are two items that pertain to the missionary strategy of Paul in the letters to the Corinthians: firstly, Paul's work, which it can be argued is a form of 'euergetism,' termed 'reverse' or 'indirect euergetism';<sup>68</sup> and secondly, the 'collection for the saints' (τῆς λογείας τῆς εἰς τοὺς ἁγίους) as that which enables 'euergetism' to occur in the Pauline Corinthian community.

The collection (ἡ λογεία) is mentioned by name only in one textual context: 1 Cor. 16. It is alluded to in 2 Corinthians in chapters 8 and 9, in Romans (15:25-28 and 31) and Galatians (2:1-10). It is in bringing the issue of work and the Collection into the foreground as aspects of 'euergetism', that we can explore how Paul's work and his plans for the collection shed light on both his self-understanding of the gospel and mission, and the assessment of how he used his Jewish inheritance in the practicalities of dealing with the communities he set up.

As suggested above, two themes that appear to dominate both 1 and 2 Corinthians are concerns surrounding Paul's own authority, and the apparently related issue of 'financial support'. As has been suggested, it is clear that many aspects of Paul's behaviour had caused some to doubt the validity of his apostolic status. Paul spends an entire chapter in 1 Corinthians (ch. 9) discussing this very topic, defending his actions. What seems to have caused particular offence to some members of the community is Paul's manual labour, (plying a trade as a 'tentmaker'), and in so doing, his rejection of more conventional means of support that would be expected of such a travelling teacher. Clearly, Paul's work caused him personal hardship, evidenced by the occurrences from the κοπιᾶω ('toil') word-group: There are two occurrences of this word-group – 2 Cor. 6:5 ('...hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, tumults, *labours* [κόποις]...'), and 11:27 ('...in *toil* [κόπω] and

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<sup>68</sup> Because Paul's work enables the community to enact euergetism; Paul himself does not provide money for the Collection.

hardship...'), and the μόχθος ('hardship') word-group of which there is one occurrence - in 2 Cor. 11:27 ('...in toil and *hardship* [μόχθω]...').

Several reasons for Paul working can be identified; three are highlighted here: (1) He did not want to be a burden on a congregation (1 Cor. 9:4ff; 2 Cor. 11:9) and wanted to be free of the ties of a patron-client relationship (2) Paul's work enabled him to follow the principle of offering the gospel 'free of charge' (1 Cor. 9:4) (3) Paul's work enabled him to embody the Christological significance of God's self-giving love (2 Cor. 8:9 – noting the 'economic' hint in the text: γινώσκετε γὰρ τὴν χάριν τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὅτι δι' ὑμᾶς ἐπτώχευσεν πλούσιος ὢν ἵνα ὑμεῖς τῇ ἐκείνου πτωχείᾳ πλουτήσητε). 'For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that for you he became poor, though he was rich, so that you might become rich through his poverty'.

By relieving the Corinthian community from the burden of supporting him financially, Paul is effecting what I would argue is a form of 'euergetism', to take the phrase in a literal sense. It is nonetheless an odd form of 'euergetism' and for this reason I call it 'reverse euergetism'. This has implications for the strategy of the Collection – the Collection and Paul's manual labour are intimately connected.<sup>69</sup>

ἡ λογεία', 'the collection', is found only in papyri and inscriptions, and only here, in 1 Corinthians 16, in the NT. It comes from λογεω 'I collect', a verb which again is found in papyri, ostraca and inscriptions, particularly from Egypt. It is used chiefly of religious collections for a god or a temple, just as Paul uses it of his Collection of money for the

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<sup>69</sup> For a reading of the collection in light of social conventions concerning reciprocity and benefaction, see S. Joubert, *Paul as Benefactor: Reciprocity, Strategy and Theological Reflection in Paul's Collection* (WUNT 124; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000). Joubert's work is insightful but problematic to the extent that he ignores the Jewish roots of the collection. For example, in commenting on Rom 15:25-32, Joubert writes, '[The collection] was a caritative project, but, at the same time, a project that was embedded within the reciprocal relationship marked by mutual obligations between [Paul], his churches, and Jerusalem. It was not a philanthropic undertaking, since charitable acts outside the framework of reciprocity did not exist in the ancient Mediterranean world' (p. 133). Here and elsewhere Joubert clearly minimizes (or ignores) the importance of charity within the Jewish tradition.

‘saints’ at Jerusalem. Out of the numerous examples from Egypt, one is selected here which is near in date to 1 Corinthians and which, as will be argued below, may shed light on aspects of Paul’s motivation behind the Collection. It was written on 4 August 63 CE, discovered at Thebes, and runs as follows:

Ψεναμουνης Πεκυσιος  
 λ  
 φεινησιος ομο Πιβουχι  
 Πατησιος χὸ Απεχω πα-  
 λ  
 ρα σου δ οβο την λογιαν  
 Ισιδος περι των δημοσιων  
 ενατου Νερωνος του κυριου  
 Μεσορη ια.

Psenamunis, the son of Pecysis,  
 Phennesis, to the homologos  
 Pibuchis, the son of Pateesis,  
 Greeting. I have received from  
 you 4 drachmae 1 obol, being  
 the collection of Isis on behalf  
 of the public works. In the  
 year nine of Nero the lord,  
 Mesore 11<sup>th</sup>.

There are other words that one might reasonably expect Paul to have used, such as derivatives from συντελέω, meaning a payment towards common expenses: such as a war, for example. This carries with it the idea of something more formalised and regular however, rather than a necessarily voluntary contribution. In addition, there are derivatives from ἐπιδίδωμι, meaning to contribute freely as a ‘benevolence’ for the purpose of supplying state necessities, such as the construction or restoration of edifices or public monuments; the construction of water systems or gymnasiums; for help in times of war and celebration; or for the supply of grain. Many examples of this are described by L. Migeotte in his book *Les Souscriptions Publiques Dans Les Cités Grecques* (Québec: Éditions du sphinx, 1992). There is one example from Migeotte’s book that stands out from the rest. A 1<sup>st</sup> century BCE

inscription from Rhodes describes the promise to provide for the increase of the people, rather than say, for the restoration of a building:

[Τοιδε επιεικως προ]ελομεν[οι τας τε των θεων τιμας και]  
 [το Ροδιων πληθος επαυξησιν λαμβ]ανειν επαγ[γειλαντο]  
 [δωσειν χρημ]ατα δωρεαν εις ταν επαυξησιν του πληθους  
 των πολιταν.

κτλ.

«Ceux que voici, ayant bien à cœur d'accroître les honneurs des dieux et le bien du peuple de Rhodes, ont promis de verser des fonds gratuitement pour accroître le bien du peuple des citoyens: etc.» (p. 108).

“Those who are here, being very intent to increase the honours of the gods and the people of Rhodes, promise to give as a gift to increase the general populace of the city. etc.”

There is a significant amount of reconstruction and one would need to study Migeotte's own text more closely to discover his reasoning behind the reconstructions. It may be that what Paul says about his Collection at least demonstrates the plausibility of Migeotte's reconstruction. Why this gift was required is not explicitly obvious. Migeotte suggests that it may have resulted from a sudden event that necessitated financial contribution, but more than that he says it is not possible to know.<sup>70</sup> If we take the inscription as it is, the reason seems to be that the gift was to increase the people of the city and the honours of the gods. Thus, despite the difficulties of the reconstruction mentioned above, the Rhodes inscription may provide a suitable model for the interpretation of Paul's Collection, and another explanation of the Collection that has not been stressed thus far in secondary literature.

Concerning the purpose of the Paul's Collection, four of the most commonly identified explanations are (1) Help for the poor. The traditional viewpoint has been that Paul wanted to help the poor Christians in Jerusalem as a demonstration of the love of God that the gentiles had found in Christ. In general, the Collection was charity in that it might create 'equality'. Paul could have been motivated by his Jewish piety and his desire to see economic

stress in Jerusalem alleviated.<sup>71</sup> (2) It is possible that Paul was motivated by a desire to promote unity in the church: just as there was one Lord, and one gospel, so there was one church. Paul wanted to show that his gospel was in harmony with the Jerusalem churches, and so a gift from his churches would demonstrate their thanksgiving to God for the covenant he had made with Israel.<sup>72</sup> (3) The Collection could be seen as almsgiving on the part of the Diaspora Gentile church and, as such, was seen as a substitute action for their sacrifices and circumcision.<sup>73</sup> (4) Finally, it has been suggested that the motivating factor behind the Collection was primarily *eschatological*, that the presentation of funds to the people in Jerusalem would provoke the nation of Israel to believe in the Messiah, for they would see in the giving of money the fulfilment of the promise that the Gentiles would bring gifts to Zion (Isa. 2:2-4 etc.). It is reasonable to suggest that Paul might have had more than one purpose in conducting the Collection, and that its purpose may well have taken on new understandings as time went on. What began as an act of kindness may well have, as a result of theological tensions, become an act of unity and eschatological provocation.<sup>74</sup>

The two features of the Rhodes inscription that appear to match the context of the Collection in Paul's letters are firstly, that the gift was strictly voluntary; it was neither a tax nor a loan; and secondly (in the reconstruction), that the aim was to increase the people and give honours to the gods. The idea that the Collection was a strictly voluntary contribution is clearly outlined in 2 Corinthians 8 and 9 where Paul informs the Corinthians of the example of the Macedonians.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> *Les Souscriptions* p. 345.

<sup>71</sup> D. Georgi *Remembering the Poor: The History of Paul's Collection for Jerusalem* (Nashville: Abingdon) p. 12; K. F. Nickle *The Collection: A Study in Paul's Strategy* (Naperville: Allenson, 1966) pp. 100-11.

<sup>72</sup> *ibid* p. 112-5.

<sup>73</sup> K. Berger 'Almosen für Israel' in *NTS* (1976-77) pp. 180-204.

<sup>74</sup> J. Munck *Paul and the Salvation of Mankind* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1959); Nickle *The Collection* pp. 129-42; F. F. Bruce 'Paul and Jerusalem' in *TynB* 19 (1968) pp. 3-25.

<sup>75</sup> The literary integrity of 2 Corinthians in its present, canonical form is a matter of intense scholarly debate. This thesis assumes that 2 Corinthians 1-9 (with the possible exception of interpolated material in 6:14-7:1) and 10-13 were originally two independent compositions. Of particular importance for this essay is the argument of some commentators that chapters 8 and 9 were also originally two distinct administrative letters (H. D. Betz,

‘We want you to know, brothers and sisters, about the grace of God that has been granted to the churches of Macedonia; for during a severe ordeal of affliction, their abundant joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. For, as I can testify, they voluntarily gave according to their means, and even beyond their means’ (2 Cor. 8:1-3).

Paul goes on to speak to the present (Corinthian) context in verses 12-15: ‘For if the eagerness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has —not according to what one does not have<sup>76</sup> I do not mean that there should be relief for others and pressure on you, but it is a question of a fair balance between your present abundance and their need, so that their abundance may be for your need, in order that there may be a fair balance. As it is written, ‘The one who had much did not have too much, and the one who had little did not have too little’ [citing a verse from Exodus, 16:18, concerning the manna in the wilderness] (2 Cor. 8:12-15). And Paul continues in 2 Cor. 9:5-10:

‘I thought it necessary to urge the brothers to go on ahead to you, and arrange in advance for this bountiful gift that you have promised, so that it may be ready as a voluntary gift and not as an extortion. The point is this: the one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work. As it is written, He scatters abroad, he gives to the poor; his righteousness endures forever.’ He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness’ (2 Cor. 9:5-10).

Although it is possible that the word *λογία* was used by the Corinthians themselves, Paul chooses his words for the collection carefully. Sometimes Paul refers to this ‘Collection for God’s people’ *in Jerusalem as a gift of kindness of generosity* (*χάρις*, 1 Cor. 16:3; and 2 Cor. 8:7); sometimes as *an act of service* (*διακονία*, 2 Cor. 8:4; 9:1, 12, 13); sometimes as bringing a

*2 Corinthians 8-9: A Commentary on Two Administrative Letters of the Apostle Paul* [Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985]). For a defence of the unity of these chapters, see V. Furnish, *II Corinthians* (AB 32A; Doubleday: Garden City, N.Y., 1984) pp. 429-433; cf. S. K. Stowers, ‘*Peri Men Gar* and the Integrity of 2 Cor. 8 and 9’ in *NovT* 32 (1990) pp. 340-48; J. Lambrecht, ‘Paul’s Boasting about the Corinthians: A Study of 2 Cor. 8:24-9:5’ in *NovT* 40 (1998) pp. 352-68; F. J. Matera, *II Corinthians: A Commentary* (NTL; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2003).

<sup>75</sup> In connection with this point, see B. R. Gaventa ‘The Economy of Grace: Reflections on 2 Corinthians 8 and 9,’ in *Grace Upon Grace: Essays in Honor of Thomas A. Langford* (eds. R. K. Johnston, L. G. Jones, and J. R. Wilson; Nashville: Abingdon, 1999) pp. 51-62.

<sup>76</sup> This expression reminds us of the standard expression in benefactor inscriptions referring to donations from one’s own means (*ἐκ τῶν ἰδίων*).

*blessing* (εὐλογία, 2 Cor. 9:5); and yet further as an act of *service to God* (λειτουργία, 2 Cor. 9:12). Along with this, in 2 Cor. 4:7, the gospel itself is a ‘treasure’ (“Ἐχομεν δὲ τὸν θησαυρὸν τοῦτον ἐν ὀστρακίνοις σκεύεσιν), and the issue of the Collection is interwoven with a basic reformulation of the gospel in 2 Cor. 8:9: γινώσκετε γὰρ τὴν χάριν τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ὅτι δι’ ὑμᾶς ἐπτώχευσεν πλούσιος ὧν ἵνα ὑμεῖς τῇ ἐκείνου πτωχείᾳ πλουτήσητε (‘For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that for you he became poor, though he was rich, so that you might become rich through his poverty’). In addition to the building up of the people, there is also a clear intent in the motivation behind the Collection, to glorify God:

‘You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity, which will produce thanksgiving to God through us; for the rendering of this ministry not only supplies the needs of the saints but also overflows with many thanksgivings to God. Through the testing of this ministry, you glorify God by your obedience to the confession of the gospel of Christ and by the generosity of your sharing with them and with all others.’ 2 Cor. 9:11-13.

Paul, it seems, is using a theme of ‘an economy of God’ and shaping it to speak to the practical financial dealings of his communities. The Collection is not a mundane chore of ‘maintaining’ the church in a routine sense, but of ‘maintaining’ others by passing on *freely received grace*, χάρις; by publicly expressing mutuality and reciprocity in *partnership*; and by *servicing* (διακονία) others. All of this brings *blessing* (εὐλογία) alike to the one who gives and to the one who receives. Likewise, Paul’s manual work is a deliberate relieving of the potential burden that would be placed upon the congregation and thus frees up funds to be used in the collection for the church in Jerusalem. Both, it may be argued, are in their own way an act of ‘euergetism’. The issue of finance is integral to Paul’s communities and thereby appears in all his major letters. Not only are there numerous explicit references to financial support, there are also considerable examples of images and ideas associated with economics, business and trading. Religion in Paul’s context was very much an economic phenomenon: it required money to function. Material representations of benefaction, such

as inscribed statues surrounded the community at Corinth, and Paul would surely have seen these during his eighteen-month stay. Of further significance is the interweaving in Paul's language of images specific to his gospel message. Paul prefaces his request by praising the Corinthians with regard to their spiritual gifts, in part as a means of making them more susceptible to his financial requests. Next, he reinforces the strategy by presenting the image of Jesus as one who by despoiling himself made others rich. Finally he lays out his request in terms familiar to the contemporary language of benefaction, suggesting that from any communal surplus of monies, they should give *out of what they could* (without despoiling themselves), to help the church in Jerusalem. If they should ever become needy, the community in Jerusalem would be able and willing to help them in return. To bolster his request, Paul cites Ex. 16:18 concerning the manna: 'The one who had much did not have too much, and the one who had little did not have too little'. The theme of giving used here and elsewhere in the Corinthian letters evokes an economic context of benefaction that is analogous to the inscription examined by Migeotte. At the root of both the inscription and Paul's strategy for the collection and his manual labour is the idea of 'wealth given', of increasing the people and of glorifying the gods.

The theme of 'glorifying God', particularly with regard to God's work, is a theme clearly echoed in aspects of the Jewish literature examined in Chapter 2. That God does his work is the presupposition of human beings' reception of revelation and salvation. Just as creation brought the human race into being, so also its experience of God's redemption did not begin with human seeking or working, but with the work of God on humanity's behalf. 'The works of God' are, therefore, the works of redemption as well as the works of creation, and these occur throughout the story of God's relationship with Israel.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> God *does* 'great things' (Ps. 71:19; 106:21), and 'wonders' (Ex. 3:20; Ps. 72:18; 77:15 (14); 78:4; 86:10; 98:1; 105:5). This is modelled too in human work, as in the case of Ex. 11:10 and Deut. 34:11, where at the LORD's command, Moses performs wonders. God does wonderful deeds (Isa. 64:2[3]) and works 'vindication and

2 Cor. 11:7-15 ↔ 12:13-16

Both of these passages reflect the recurring theme of Paul, that he has not been a burden upon his communities. Paul has refused financial support from the Corinthians and refers to his principle in the first passage ironically and with exaggeration by speaking of committing sin (v. 7), and robbing from other churches for the sake of the Corinthians (v. 8). Paul's refusal of financial support may have been related to his desire to avoid being a client of Corinthian patrons, but this may well have created tension and confusion on the part of the Corinthians at Paul's apparent non-conformity to the usual pattern of itinerant preachers. Paul makes it very clear in the first passage that he does not intend to change his approach.<sup>78</sup>

#### 5.1.4 Romans

There are twenty-two occurrences of the ἐργάζομαι word-group. Eight of these appear in the context of *works* [ἔργα] or *doings* of the law: 2:6; 2:15; 3:27; 3:28; 4:2; 4:6; 9:12; and 9:32 and as such do not impact directly upon Paul's portrayal of his manual work. Other

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justice' for all those who are oppressed (Ps. 103:6). Ezekiel in particular speaks of the LORD as executing judgements (5:10, 15; 11:9; 25:11; 28:22, 26; 30:14, 19). Israel's enemies also execute God's judgement (Ezk. 16:41; 2 Chr. 24:24). In addition, 'the LORD' also executes vengeance (Judg. 11:36; Ezk. 25:17); Mic. 5:14[15]; Ps. 149:7. The LORD does nothing without revealing his secret through the prophets, we read in Amos. In Am. 9:12 also it is the LORD who 'does this' (that is, brings events to pass). Several poetic texts describe God's governance of history as his 'work', using the word פִּעַל (translated usually in the LXX by ἐργον). On occasion, פִּעַל appears in conjunction with עֲלִיָּה and מַעֲלֵל (Ps. 77:12-13[11-12], or with מַעֲזָה (92:5; 143:5). This terminology refers primarily to God's saving acts, particularly in connection with the Exodus. We read, for example, that Israel 'served' the LORD until the death of Joshua, during the lifetime of the generation that had known all the work that the LORD did for Israel (Josh. 24:31; Jdgs 2:7); then came a generation that did not know the work the LORD had done for Israel (Jdgs 2:10). In Isaiah however, this terminology refers to what the LORD is doing in the present or will do in the future (5:12) thus taking on board an eschatological dimension. For the author of Ecclesiastes, the concept of 'God's work' takes on fundamental significance: God has made everything suitable for its time...yet human beings cannot find out the work that God has done from the beginning to the end (Eccl. 3:11); I saw all the work of God, that no one can find out the work that is done under the sun (8:17; cf. 7:13; 11:5). God's governance is hidden from human eyes; it is unsearchable. This is indeed the fundamental problem posed by Qohelet. According to Proverbs 16:11, honest weights are God's 'work'; standard works were often authorised by a king, but the effort to maintain honesty in the matter of weights gives to them the authorisation of God.

<sup>78</sup> With regard to the first passage, there are two features in the context suggested by R. P. Martin *2 Corinthians* (Waco: Word Publishing, 1986) p. 344: (1) the sophists justified taking money for their teaching on the ground

occurrences of the noun form are as follows: 2:7; 13:3; 13:12; 14:20; and notably, 16:21 ('Timothy, my *fellow-worker* [συνεργός]...'). The remaining occurrences of the word-group are in verbal form and are relevant: 4:4-5 ('now to one who *works* [ἐργαζομένω], his wages are reckoned not as a gift but as his due. And to one who does not *work* [ἐργαζομένω] but trusts him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as righteousness...'); 7:5; 7:15-21; 8:28 ('we know that in everything God *works* for good with those who love God, who are called according to his purpose...'); and 13:10.

There are eighteen occurrences of the ποιέω word-group, some of which attest to the importance of the creative work of God – 1:20, concerning the state of the world ('ever since the creation of the world his invisible nature, that is, his eternal power and deity, has been clearly perceived in the things that have been *made*' [ποιήμασιν]), 1:32; 2:13; 2:14; 3:8; 3:12; 3:27; 7:15-21; and, quoting Job 9:12, at 9:20 ('but who are you, a man, to answer back to God? Will what is moulded say to its moulder, 'why have you *made* [ἐποίησας] me so?'), 9:21 ('has the potter no right over the clay *to make* [ποιῆσαι] out of the same lump, one vessel for beauty and another for menial use?'), 9:28; 10:5; and 13:3-4.

### 5.1.5 Philippians

There are eight occurrences of the ἐργάζομαι word-group – 1:22 ('if it is to be life in the flesh, that means fruitful *labour* [ἐργου] for me'), 2:12 ('therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence *work* out [κατεργάζεσθε] your own salvation with fear and trembling'), 2:13 ('for God is at *work* [ἐνεργων] in you, both to will and to *work* [ἐνεργεῖν] for his good pleasure'), 2:25 ('I have thought it necessary to send you Ephaphroditus my brother and *fellow-worker* [συνεργόν] and fellow-soldier...'), 2:30 ('...and honour such men, for he nearly died for the *work* [ἐργου] of

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that if teaching was given freely it was worth nothing; but from another angle (2) Greek attitudes would make

Christ risking his life to complete your service to me'), 3:21 ('...who will change our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the *power* which enables him even to subject all things to himself'), and 4:3 '...*fellow-workers* [συνεργῶν]...').

## Conclusion

From this overview of Paul's portrayal of work, it is apparent that work plays an important role in his thought world.<sup>79</sup> While it has not been possible to cover all aspects of Paul's letters, let alone the many books and articles that have been generated on the subject of the chapters and verses examined, it is clear that Paul and his companions were clearly concerned not to live at the expense of their converts. Not wishing (or perhaps not able) to receive support from the Jewish community, they turned to manual labour. Yet there was more than a purely financial motive for such a move. Determining the possible motive(s) behind Paul's choosing to earn a living by manual labour has indicated that, first and foremost, Paul led by example: the gospel was to be given free of charge. Moreover, work was a necessary human activity decreed and indeed shared in, by God and in this line of thought, Paul encourages the Thessalonians for example, to lead lives worthy of the gospel. This means that there is no room for idleness or for an inappropriate attitude towards the responsibilities of work and, driven by an eschatological mind-set, before the end time can arrive, Paul decreed that people should be living in their normal state and upholding their normal status in the community.

From our examination, the following key areas can be identified which, it is suggested, drive Paul's portrayal of work: (1) Work (both manually and the work of the Gospel) is that

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Paul's habit of supporting himself by his trade difficult to justify.

<sup>79</sup> Indeed, it may be argued, a *legitimizing* function. See J. Francis 'Paul as working apostle: the role of biography in institutional legitimation' in *Tentmaking: Perspectives on Self-Supporting Ministry* J. M. M. Francis and L. J. Francis (eds.) (Hertfordshire: Gracewing, 1998) pp. 37-50.

which enables a sharing in the continuing activity of God;<sup>80</sup> (2) Paul's own work (and his adaptive response to the situation of the community) enables the community to give thanks to God appropriately (through the administration of the Collection);<sup>81</sup> (3) Work itself is a creative activity in the manner of the Wisdom tradition;<sup>82</sup> (4) Work is important before the age to come (the eschatological dimension) and, as part of this, incorporates toil, hardship and tribulation, and the appearance of weakness.<sup>83</sup>

This chapter would not go so far as H. Arendt in her comments on Paul and his work:

Paul, who has been called 'the apostle of labour'<sup>84</sup> was nothing of the sort, and the few passages on which this claim is based either are addressed to those who, out of laziness 'ate other men's bread' or they recommend labour as a good means to keep out of trouble, that is, they reinforce the general prescription of a strictly private life and warn of political activities.<sup>85</sup>

Neither however would this chapter go as far as R. Hock when he comments that Paul was 'Paul the tentmaker'. Paul neither expresses a positive view of work, nor a negative view. Rather, his view is ambivalent. Work for Paul *only becomes significant when it is used in the service of the Gospel*. In this way, Paul combines a distinctly Jewish notion of work as sharing in the creative work of God with an anomalous position of work as continuing the mission of Jesus (the work of the Gospel). At the same time however, Paul chooses to reject Jesus' instruction to his disciples, placing the emphasis firmly on the obligation not to be a burden upon his communities.

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<sup>80</sup> Represented most acutely in 1 Cor. 3. In this respect, Paul is most like the Johannine Jesus.

<sup>81</sup> A tentative link can be made between 1 and 2 Corinthians in this respect, allowing for difference of focus between the two letters whilst acknowledging that there must have been some ongoing running arguments in/with the congregation.

<sup>82</sup> Linked to the creative activity of work.

<sup>83</sup> As stressed in particular in the Thessalonian correspondence.

<sup>84</sup> By the Dominican Bernard Allo in 1914, *Le travail d'après St. Paul*.

## EXCURSUS

### A note on the meaning of σκηνοποιός

It is hard to avoid the debate surrounding the identification of Paul's trade. Although the nature of Paul's trade does not, so this thesis argues, add anything to our understanding of his portrayal of work (other than confirming that Paul was engaged in a manual trade), it is necessary to include an overview of the discussion surrounding his trade for the sake of completeness.

Perhaps the greatest problem with the identification of Paul's trade concerns the meaning of the word 'σκηνοποιός'. The only occurrence of this word is at Acts 18:3,<sup>86</sup> where it is also attributed to Aquila and Priscilla<sup>87</sup> (ἦσαν γὰρ σκηνοποιοὶ τῆ τέχνῃ).<sup>88</sup> Not only is the word σκηνοποιός a hapaxlegomenon in the NT, it rarely occurs anywhere else.<sup>89</sup> Not surprisingly, subsequent translators and interpreters of the word have debated its correct meaning.<sup>90</sup>

It seems reasonable enough to take the word in its literal meaning, 'maker of tents' and it further seems appropriate to understand the word in a broad sense,<sup>91</sup> rather than to

<sup>85</sup> H. Arendt *The Human Condition* 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1998) pp. 316-7.

<sup>86</sup> There are two textual emendations that are relevant here. Several mss read ἠργάζοντο instead of ἠργάζετο (including the original of Codex Sinaiticus, a corrector of Codex Vaticanus), although P74 retains it. In addition, only Codex Bezae Cantabrigiensis and Gigas liber omit the phrase ἦσαν γὰρ σκηνοποιοὶ τῆ τέχνῃ. It is possible that the phrase was omitted deliberately in order to avoid embarrassment over Paul's manual work.

<sup>87</sup> Luke uses the diminutive 'Prisca'.

<sup>88</sup> W. Michaelis *TDNT* (1971) p. 393 says that ἦσαν γὰρ σκηνοποιοὶ τῆ τέχνῃ cannot refer both to Priscilla and Aquila but he does not explain why. There is plenty evidence for female artisan workers (see M. R. Lefkowitz and M. B. Fant *Women's Life in Greece and Rome* [London: Duckworth, 1982] pp. 27-9, 169-71).

<sup>89</sup> See H. Szesnat 'What did the ΣΚΗΝΟΠΟΙΟΣ Paul produce?' in *Neotestamentica* 27.2 (1993) p 394 n.3.

<sup>90</sup> See R. Hock *Social Context* p. 20-1, 72 n. 5-8.

<sup>91</sup> That is to say as a building or structure without solid walls. This would include tents, but also canopies generally. Did Paul manufacture tents for the army? See for example C. van Driel-Murray 'New light on old tents' in the *Journal of Roman Military Equipments Studies* 1 (1990) pp. 109-37; J. McIntyre and I. A. Richmond 'Tents of the Roman Army and leather from Birdoswald' in *Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Archaeological Society* 34 (1994) pp. 62-90. P. Lampe 'Paulus-Zeltmacher' in *BZ* 31 (1987) p. 256-61, argues that it is unlikely that Paul, as a small artisan-worker, was producing tents for imperial legions. For the persuasive idea that Paul made tents in Corinth for the Isthmian games see O. Broneer 'The Apostle Paul and the Isthmian Games' in *The Biblical Archaeologist* XXV.1 (1962) pp. 2-31, esp. p. 5. Other information regarding tents can be

identify Paul as a ‘scenery maker’ for the theatre.<sup>92</sup> The issue then centres on the material that Paul would have worked with. Paul was from Cilicia, and one way of understanding the term is to take it to mean that Paul was a weaver who made tents from a rough cloth produced in Cilicia from goats’ hair (Lat. *Cilicium*) that was sometimes used for the purpose of manufacturing tents.<sup>93</sup> Three factors have made this particular interpretation questionable in the opinion of some (R. Hock included):<sup>94</sup> firstly, it appears that in Paul’s context, tents were made chiefly from leather; secondly, so the argument goes, it is hard to understand why Paul, a Pharisee, would have chosen weaving, which was a despised occupation, as his trade; thirdly, this view is not supported by early versional readings or by comments of the early church fathers, all which seem to indicate that Paul was a leather-maker of some sort.

An alternative to the *cilicium* theory is that Paul worked with leather. Hock argues that the use of the term ‘tentmaker’ may reflect ‘a widespread tendency among artisans to use specialised titles, even though they made more products than their titles suggest’<sup>95</sup> Thus Paul probably made a variety of leather products, including tents. Hock states, somewhat categorically, that ‘Tents were usually made of leather, and leather goods were associated with Cilicia’, but he does not provide any other evidence.<sup>96</sup> This argument is acceptable in so far as there seems little reason to doubt that Paul was involved in the manufacture of tents, possibly with leather, but beyond that we cannot be certain.

The third material that Paul might have worked with is textiles, such as cotton and linen.<sup>97</sup> This has been argued for in particular by P. Lampe on the basis of equating the

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found in C. H. Kraeling *The Synagogue. The Excavations at Dura Europos* (New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1979) pp. 118-25; For an understanding of the significance generally of tents in the Bible, see M. M. Homan *To your tents, O Israel! the terminology, function, form and symbolism of tents in the Hebrew Bible and the ancient Near East* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2002).

<sup>92</sup> Only one other Greek text apart from the NT (Acts) uses the word σκηνοποιός: Polux *Onomasticon* 7.189 (2<sup>nd</sup> century CE) calls those who made props for the theatre σκηνοποιοί.

<sup>93</sup> For references see R. Hock *Social Context* p. 72 n.9.

<sup>94</sup> H. Szesnat ΣΚΗΝΟΠΟΙΟΣ p. 396.

<sup>95</sup> Hock *Social Context* 21.

<sup>96</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>97</sup> H. Szesnat ΣΚΗΝΟΠΟΙΟΣ p. 398.

Greek σκηνή with the Latin *tabernaculum* (and σκηνοποιός with *tabernaculorum* fabricator), without any supporting argument, however.<sup>98</sup>

It seems most likely that Paul was involved in the manufacture of σκηναί, that is tents, canopies and other such items. The materials Paul worked with were probably varied. The assumption that Paul, a Pharisee (whatever that particular term means), would not have been involved in weaving seems a tenuous one. It is highly likely that Paul did learn his trade from his father, and thus the rabbinic injunctions to combine the study and teaching of Torah with the practice of a trade, and for a father to teach his son a trade, may well apply to Paul and in fact may represent the final resolution of a debate on this very topic.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> P. Lampe 'Paulus' p. 258.

<sup>99</sup> Contra Hock *Social Context*, who rejects the application of this rabbinic phrase to our understanding of Paul and his work (p. 22).

## CHAPTER SIX

### General Summary: Paul's Portrayal of Work

The purpose of this study was to contribute to our understanding of Paul's portrayal of work through an examination of aspects of the depiction of work in Jewish, Græco-Roman and non-Pauline Christian source materials.<sup>1</sup> Ultimately the aim was to determine whether aspects of the extant evidence could shed any light on the way in which Paul portrays work in his letters, and the reasons for his choosing work as a means of self-support.<sup>2</sup>

The examination of the evidence in chapters two, three and four was undertaken within two broad themes: divine work and human work. In chapter two, evidence for the portrayal of work in a Jewish context was considered. Indeed, the portrayal of work demonstrated considerable range.<sup>3</sup> Whilst much of the evidence simply noted the various types of work that human beings were engaged in,<sup>4</sup> a recurring theme was that of the description of divine work, in creation and history, a portrayal that at times seemed to be expressed in the realm of human activity.<sup>5</sup> Human work was showed to have been blessed by God,<sup>6</sup> undertaken by those who obey God (individually or communally),<sup>7</sup> thus carrying out God's work on earth, and cursed by God if done in disobedience.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This thesis took the meaning of the word 'work' in a rather broad sense, (p. 1 n.1).

<sup>2</sup> With the concurrent aim of balancing previous studies of Paul and his work, in particular research undertaken by R. Hock (see pp. 10-15).

<sup>3</sup> As summarised in the concluding section to Chapter 2, (pp. 85-7).

<sup>4</sup> For example, the description of slave labour in Exodus (pp. 51-2); descriptions contained in the Wisdom literature (pp. 55-60, 62-70) and particularly, the *Mishnah* (pp. 71-81).

<sup>5</sup> For example, the portrayal of God's work in Creation (p. 30f.), and at numerous points in the Psalms (pp. 39-41).

<sup>6</sup> As with examples contained in Deut. (p. 53) and the Psalms (pp. 54-55).

<sup>7</sup> Often expressed in the Psalms (pp. 54-55).

<sup>8</sup> As a consequence of the disobedience in Eden, for example (p. 44), and on Cain, for his murderous acts (p. 48)

Chapter three examined the evidence for the portrayal of work in the Græco-Roman material. An assessment of the portrayal of work was complicated by the nature of the extant source material. In particular, despite the apparent observation that the apparent prevailing attitude towards work was predominantly negative, some of the evidence examined suggested the opposite. Lacking in the Græco-Roman material was a linking of the realms of divine work and human work. Whilst the gods could watch over and protect the businesses of people who worked,<sup>9</sup> there was no overarching tradition of the gods themselves working ceaselessly.<sup>10</sup> Human work was usually done in the service of others, for one's own profit, and/or the service of the state.

Chapter four looked at portrayals of work in non-Pauline texts in the NT and elsewhere in early Christian literature. Whilst some of the evidence examined appeared to resonate with Paul's own portrayal of work,<sup>11</sup> perhaps most striking of all were the differences between the depiction of Jesus and work in the Synoptic Gospel traditions, and Paul's portrayal of work. Although Jesus, according to the traditions recorded in the gospels, worked at a trade, both his concern and the concern of John the Baptist was to preach faith and repentance and not to be concerned about everyday work. Jesus is portrayed as having looked forward to a paradisiacal state where human life is free from toil (Matt. 6:25-34), whereas Paul was somewhat scathing of such 'giddy apocalypticism' (2 Thess. 3:10).<sup>12</sup> Outside the Gospel tradition, the portrayal of work in early Christian writings was found to be mixed.

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<sup>9</sup> As portrayed at Pompeii, the house of Verecundus (p. 103 n.60).

<sup>10</sup> See the debate between Origen and Celsus (pp. 91-92), for example.

<sup>11</sup> For example, the portrayal of Jesus in John's Gospel (pp. 156-159), and in the letter to the Hebrews (p. 162).

<sup>12</sup> A phrase used by L. Houlden (ed.) *Jesus in History, Thought and Culture* (Santa Barbara, CA: Clio Press, 2003) pp. 887-9. Houlden, however, also says that Jesus' idea of a toil-free paradise state is similar to Paul's 'new creation' (2 Cor. 5:17), where everything becomes brand new (p. 888).

Work appeared to be generally acknowledged as necessary, and a debate emerges with regard to the support of those who work on behalf of the church.<sup>13</sup>

Chapter five looked at Paul's portrayal of work in his letters. Whilst the imagery and vocabulary of work are a pervasive influence on Paul throughout his letters, the Thessalonian and Corinthian correspondences in particular contained much useful material. From the examination of the material, it does not appear to be the case that Paul's portrayal of work develops from letter to letter, but rather, Paul's approach is an adaptive one.<sup>14</sup> In the Thessalonian community, the problem seemed to be that people were not behaving in a responsible way with regard to work, and were thus neglecting the well-being of the community. In the Corinthian community, Paul's choosing to work caused him problems in his credibility as an apostle.<sup>15</sup> In general, it may be deduced that for Paul, his own manual work was important in fulfilling and enabling his Gospel work. Through this, Paul made a wider claim about the relationship between the community and its place in society which touched on other issues such as idolatry and immorality.<sup>16</sup> The categories Paul used to express this showed some similarities with those of philosophers, but the chapter indicated that any attempt at comparison with philosophers does not fully engage with the driving force behind Paul's portrayal.

## 6.1 Summary of Conclusions

The conclusions drawn from this examination are made with an awareness that this thesis has sought to discuss only some aspects of the portrayal of work in the material

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<sup>13</sup> In the Pastoral epistles (pp. 161-162), and in the Didache (pp. 164-5), in particular.

<sup>14</sup> Very much dependent upon the situations of his communities.

<sup>15</sup> Hence the lengthy discussion on the topic in 1 Cor. 9 (pp. 186-191).

<sup>16</sup> Such as idolatry and immorality in 1 Cor. (pp. 190-191).

examined.<sup>17</sup> There was no consistent or comprehensive ‘Jewish’, ‘Græco-Roman’, or ‘early Christian’ view of ‘work’, but rather a number of key themes emerged which enabled some broad comparisons to be made between the various groups of evidence. Overall two main issues were involved in an understanding of the portrayal of work:

(1) The portrayal of divine work revealed some similarities and differences between the Judæo-Christian material and the Græco-Roman material, particularly concerning the relationship of the divine to the human portrayals of work.<sup>18</sup> Predominant in the Jewish and the Christian material was the expression of divine work through creation and history, a work that was ongoing, not merely a past event.<sup>19</sup> Often, the vocabulary and phrasing used to express the activities of God was distinctly human (particularly from the ἐργάζομαι and ποιέω word-groups).

(2) The portrayal of human work varied enormously throughout the evidence examined. At times the evidence described working activities, sometimes in great detail (as in the case of the *Mishnah*), on other occasions, specific attitudes to work, both positive and negative, could be discerned, both explicitly and implicitly. The Jewish and Christian material expressed close connections between human work and divine work whereas the Græco-Roman material on the whole confined that connection to the activities of the gods as protecting the worker rather than necessarily taking an interest in the activity of work.

Paul’s portrayal of work resonated with different aspects of his context, and most strikingly so with the Jewish evidence which may be demonstrated as follows: Paul presented his work as sharing in the work of God (most notably in 1 Cor. 3); his work was a

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<sup>17</sup> Focussing essentially on the relationship (or lack thereof) between the portrayals of divine work and human work.

<sup>18</sup> Despite there being more differences than similarities, both sets of material upheld an understanding of divine *protection* overseeing work (illustrated clearly in the House of Verecundus at Pompeii, and in the tradition of the Psalms, for example).

<sup>19</sup> A theme not present, to any discernible extent, in the Græco-Roman material.

continuation of the work of God through Jesus Christ (though only in the sense of continuing Jesus' sacrificial labours);<sup>20</sup> Paul explicitly rejects Jesus' injunction *not* to engage in manual work.

From an examination of the evidence, it is possible to surmise that, once he had embarked upon his activities of preaching and teaching, Jesus the Jew instructed his disciples not to work, as it interfered with religious enthusiasm, whereas Paul the Jew said, 'Do work, it demonstrates your religious devotion', this despite the fact that in the more hellenised environment in which he operated, prejudice against manual work was more explicit than among less hellenised Jews. The implication of this is that, for Jesus, although work features frequently in his parables with the idea that people doing various jobs serves as a focus on the coming Kingdom, it is that, *rather than* work itself, that is the bearer of the Kingdom. For Paul, the realm of actual manual work could not be separated from his work in the promulgating of the Gospel. At times, Paul's voice struggled to be heard and it is clear that for him, issues of authority mattered greatly. Bound up with this was his decision to work as a means of self-support and his interest in this topic was related more broadly to wider issues of the relationship of his communities to their surrounding society. It might be tempting to view Paul purely as a 'fix-it' person, but this loses sight of the broader issues upon which Paul touched, one of these being work.

This dissertation sought to make a contribution to our knowledge and understanding of the portrayal of work generally in the late Second Temple and early Christian period, and from this, how we might understand Paul's portrayal of work by surveying all the available evidence and analysing the ways in which divine work and human work are portrayed. The analysis of that evidence indicated that, while Paul undoubtedly has much in common with

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<sup>20</sup> 2 Cor. 8:9 is a good example of this (p. 191).

aspects of his Græco-Roman context, *it was his Jewishness which provided the decisive conceptual matrix for his portrayal of work.*

## 6.2 Implications for Current Scholarship

The results showed that Paul's portrayal of work and the reasons for his working in order to support himself are driven from an understanding of work in a Jewish context. If these results are accepted, then they have implications for a number of areas of study. Firstly, they re-enforce assertions by scholars such as R. Hock, D. Horrell, J. Meggitt and others, that an appreciation of Paul's manual work is important in our understanding of him. Secondly, they raise questions concerning the continuities between the message of Jesus as presented in the gospels and the teaching of Paul as presented in his letters.

In his section on 'foregoing the rights of an apostle', D. Wenham notes that 'Paul's reply is not to doubt the Lord's command, but to explain that there were good gospel reasons to renounce this "right" or "authority".<sup>21</sup> While indeed Paul had good reasons not to follow Jesus' instructions on the matter of support, he was also rather critical of those who did not work (2 Thess. 3:10), and it is not sufficient to explain away Paul's rejection of Jesus' words in such positive terms. Thirdly, there needs to be greater caution concerning a rush to force Paul into the mould of philosophers and with this, an appreciation of the complexities of all aspects of Paul's context. Finally by including in this study an examination of the Jewish material, this thesis has demonstrated the relevance of using this material in an attempt to further understand Paul's portrayal of work.

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<sup>21</sup> D. Wenham *Paul and Jesus. The True Story* (London: SPCK, 2002) p. 58.

### 6.3 Proposals for Further Research

Finally, I offer briefly some thoughts on the direction of future studies on the portrayal of work with regard to Paul and early Christianity.

Methodologically, there needs to be more work carried out on our understanding of Paul's relationship to his context, in particular, in the midst of numerous publications concerning the similarity of Paul and his thought with philosophers and philosophical schools,<sup>22</sup> a note of caution should be raised,<sup>23</sup> accompanied by a more detailed examination of their potential relationships or lack thereof.

Certainly, more work remains to be done on portrayals of work as they developed in later Christianity and rabbinic Judaism. For example, Tertullian,<sup>24</sup> in his *Apologeticus*, a defence of Christianity, argues that Christians were no different from other Roman citizens in their occupations and pursuits, that they shared many ideas in common with the Stoics, and had engaged in every form of honourable trade. In his treatise *De Testimonio Animae* he expressed his preference for the 'simple, rude, uncultured and untaught' whose habitat was the 'road, the street, the workshop'. Clement of Alexandria (in the latter half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE) preached that it was both healthy to work, and a means of becoming self-sufficient: 'Even the Architect and Lord of the Universe Himself takes a delight in working ... A good workman can accept the reward of his labour with assurance, but one who is idle

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<sup>22</sup> See for example, A. J. Malherbe *Paul and the Popular Philosophers* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1989); T. Engberg-Pedersen 'Stoicism in Philippians' in T. Engberg-Pedersen (ed.) *Paul in his Hellenistic Context* (Philadelphia: Fortress) pp. 256-90; by the same author, *Paul and the Stoics* (Louisville, KY.: Westminster John Knox, 2000).

<sup>23</sup> Rather along the lines of C. Hezser in her article 'Interfaces between rabbinic literature and Græco-Roman philosophy' in *The Talmud Yerushalmi and Græco-Roman Culture* C. Hezser and P. Schäfer (eds.) (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000) Vol. II pp. 161-87, where she comments, 'the relationship between Jewish piety and Stoic philosophy equals the relationship between the prophet and the philosopher. They have many similar traits, but in their innermost being they are different'.

<sup>24</sup> Born in Carthage c. 160 CE.

and shiftless cannot look his employer in the face'.<sup>25</sup> Some further exploration of the development of these themes would be very useful in evaluating the extent of Paul's influence on this topic. All these issues merit further consideration, particularly if progress is to be made on shedding new light on the increasingly complex issue of the so-called 'parting of the ways'.

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<sup>25</sup> J. B. Lightfoot *The Apostolic Fathers* 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1986), p. 40.

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