

More Faithful than an Ox:  
Paul's use of the Scriptures to objectify  
his Apostolic Faithfulness in Corinth<sup>1</sup>

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Fruit tastes better that you have picked with your own hands from the mother tree; water is fresher that you draw as it bubbles up from the actual spring; wine drinks better which you have drawn off from the cask in which it was first laid down. In the same way the Scriptures have about them some sort of natural fragrance, they breathe something genuine and peculiarly their own, when read in the language in which they were first written by those, some of whom took them down from those divine and sacred lips, and some bequeathed them to us under the influence of the same Spirit. (Desiderius Erasmus)<sup>2</sup>

An essay on Paul's use of the scriptures rests well in a volume commemorating the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first edition of Erasmus' critical Greek New Testament. Erasmus' joy when reading manuscripts for himself Paul experienced some 1,500 years earlier. While Erasmus understood Paul as a writer of scripture, Paul's scriptures were the Law,

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<sup>1</sup> An excerpt of this paper was presented at the SBL Central States Regional Meeting in St. Louis, 23 March, 2015. I wish to express gratitude for comments received there.

<sup>2</sup> J. K. McConica, R. A. B. Mynors and D. F. S. Thomson, *The Correspondence of Erasmus, Volume 3: Letters 298-445, 1514-1516* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976), 203.

the Prophets and the Writings.<sup>3</sup> And his citations of these betray a high degree of fluency and familiarity with the narrative of Israel's history. For Paul, scripture was personal.

Moisés Silva notes that though deciding what is exactly a quotation and what is only a verbal parallel or loose allusion can be fraught with subjectivity, writing, "there is a certain usefulness and convenience in using explicit citations as a starting point for further study."<sup>4</sup> David L. Baker observes that identifying the citations of the Old Testament in the New Testament is just the starting point; these citations must then be analyzed for correspondence along historical, linguistic, literary, sociological, psychological, ethical, philosophical and other lines.<sup>5</sup> I wish to suggest that in 1-2 Corinthians,<sup>6</sup> a matrix of

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<sup>3</sup> *Infra* it will be observed that Paul uses predominantly the Greek version of the scriptures. The scope of the present study does not include a thorough linguistic analysis of the traditions Paul quotes in 1-2 Corinthians but gives attention to select instances where he employs the scriptures to justify his apostleship. This study assumes that the Greek tradition Paul employs can be represented in Alfred Rhalfs, ed., *Septuaginta* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1979). For an analysis of the broader textual traditions available to Paul, see appropriate chapters in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (ed. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), and Florina Wilk, "Isaiah in 1 and 2 Corinthians," in *Isaiah in the New Testament* (ed. M. J. J. Menken and Steven Moyise; London and New York: T & T Clark, 2005), 133-58.

<sup>4</sup> "Old Testament in Paul," *DPL*, 630.

<sup>5</sup> *Two Testaments, One Bible* (rev. ed.; Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1991), 20. Baker is concerned primarily with the theological connection between the Old and the New Testaments (though any one point of contact involves investigating, to some degree at least, the broader matrix Baker sets forth). According to Baker, interpreters should observe the Old Testament's openness to future revelation, and then move on to analyze how the New Testament's authors applied those texts, fulfilling them.

<sup>6</sup> Some commentators do not categorically address the quantity of quotations of the scriptures in 1-2 Corinthians. Gordon D. Fee argues that the number of distinctly Gentile features of 1 Corinthians disqualifies recent proposals that Paul was actually attempting to correct wisdom speculation in Hellenistic Judaism (*The First Epistle to the Corinthians* [NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1987], 13-14). Yet, if 1 Corinthians is so Gentile-oriented, what would prompt Paul to cite the Hebrew Scriptures so regularly, and freely? Likewise, Murray J. Harris, in his summary of the theology of 2 Corinthians, references Paul's use of the scriptures just twice, under the heading "Salvation," where he cites the

historical, personal and pastoral motivations explain Paul's citations of the Old Testament.<sup>7</sup> Paul employs the scriptures not just because of their authority as God's word,<sup>8</sup> but also because of his faithfulness to God as an apostle of the new covenant—and his desire for the Corinthians to respond in kind. This thesis rests on three observations. In 1-2 Corinthians, Paul understands (1) the eschatological moment the scriptures foreshadowed to have arrived in Christ, addressing concerns of salvation history; (2) the scriptures to provide objective types and anti-types useful for illustrating his apostolic faithfulness,<sup>9</sup> addressing

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apostle's use of Jeremiah 31 and Exodus 34 in 2 Corinthians 3 (*The Second Epistle to the Corinthians* [NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005], 117). Though Fee and Harris respectively provide lucid analysis of the individual citations of the Old Testament as they occur in 1 and 2 Corinthians, the quantity of Paul's use of the scriptures in 1-2 Corinthians deserves more concentrated attention.

<sup>7</sup> Silva identifies 107 quotations of the scriptures in Paul ("Old Testament in Paul," 631), and Steve Moyise (*Paul and Scripture: Studying the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010], 3), identifies 104, noting that thirty-seven (one-third) are in 1-2 Corinthians.

<sup>8</sup> Christopher D. Stanley writes that in an illiterate culture, "a person who could read and quote from the authoritative Scriptures would have been greeted with considerable respect. Paul's facility in interpreting the holy Scriptures would have cast him in the role of a hierophant dispensing the sacred mysteries of God. His numinous pronouncements would have appeared to many as incontrovertible, since they were backed by the authority of the one true God. To people such as these, Paul's quotations from the Jewish Scriptures would have seemed the strongest of all his arguments, the trump card against all merely human argumentation" (*Arguing with Scripture: The Rhetorical Quotations in the Letters of Paul* [New York: T & T Clark International, 2004], 58). Peter Balla notes that "in all the cases when Paul quotes the OT, he does so in order to support what he is saying with an authoritative text...The OT has canonical authority for him, and he expects his readers to acknowledge that high authority" ("2 Corinthians," in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* [ed. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007], 753), a statement true of Paul's quotations of the scriptures in 1 Corinthians as well.

<sup>9</sup> Wilk concludes that "in every instance" Paul's use of Isaiah includes the broader literary context of the verse or phrase he writes into 1 and 2 Corinthians ("Isaiah in 1 and 2 Corinthians," 157). *Infra* it is noted that Paul demonstrates the same sensitivity when taking up texts from Jeremiah, Deuteronomy and the Psalms as well. I acknowledge that Paul's first readers in Corinth may not have been so

concerns about his own standing in Corinth; and (3) his response to God's revelation in the new covenant to be a model the Corinthians should follow,<sup>10</sup> addressing concerns for the church's response to God's revelation in Christ and the Spirit. Analyzing Paul's use of the scriptures in four select passages each of 1-2 Corinthians will bear this out.<sup>11</sup>

### 1 Corinthians

#### Isaiah 29:14 (LXX) in 1 Corinthians 1:19

The citation from Isa 29:14, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will hide the understanding of the prudent" (ἀπολῶ τὴν σοφίαν τῶν σοφῶν καὶ τὴν σύνεσιν τῶν συνετῶν κρύψω), in 1 Cor 1:19, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and I will set aside the understanding of the experts" (ἀπολῶ τὴν σοφίαν τῶν σοφῶν καὶ τὴν σύνεσιν τῶν συνετῶν ἀθετήσω),<sup>12</sup> is at one level superfluous. In the

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keen to the literary and historical contexts of the Old Testament texts he cites. Nonetheless, with Christopher D. Stanley, "Paul recognized and took seriously the limited biblical literacy of his audiences and framed his arguments in such a way that the illiterate members of his audience could have grasped his essential point without having to rely on others to explain to them how he was interpreting the Jewish Scriptures" ("Why the Audience Matters," in *As it is Written: Studying Paul's use of Scripture* [SBLSymS 50; ed. Stanley E. Porter and Christopher D. Stanley; Atlanta: Scholars, 2008], 155).

<sup>10</sup> By turning to the old covenant scriptures, "he (Paul) acknowledged the high value of the OT (which was holy Scripture for the Corinthians as well as for himself,) and at the same time he points to the higher glory of the new covenant" (Balla, "2 Corinthians,"). Similarly, Harris writes, "against the backdrop of challenges to his apostolic qualifications, Paul then affirms his God-given commission to be an agent of this new covenant" (*Second Corinthians*, 275).

<sup>11</sup> While the present study is concerned with Paul's use of specific Old Testament texts to defend his faithfulness as an apostle, it is recognized that in several instances Paul's personal defense statements lack reference to the scriptures (1 Cor 3:1-11; 4:1-5, 14-20; 2 Cor 1:12-22; 3:1-18). This study thus seeks to identify Paul's rationale for employing the scriptures at certain points to defend his apostolic ministry—when quotation of them appears materially unnecessary to his argument.

<sup>12</sup> Unless otherwise noted, all English translations of LXX are from NETS, and English translations of NA28, the Greek New Testament text used throughout, are from CSB.

preceding paragraph, Paul already establishes his faithfulness as an apostle vis-à-vis the Corinthians' tendency to posture behind this leader or that one. In 1 Cor 1:13, Paul places himself, perhaps hypothetically, in the mix stating, "Is Christ divided? Was it Paul who was crucified for you? Or were you baptized in Paul's name?" Paul writes that Christ sent him to preach the gospel (1 Cor 1:17). Clever words were not the basis of his ministry (1 Cor 17); indeed, his detractors thought his message foolishness (1 Cor 1:18). Paul's string of rhetorical questions in 1 Cor 1:20, "Where is the philosopher, where is the scholar? Where is the debater of this age? Hasn't God made the world's wisdom foolish?" follow seamlessly from his statement in 1 Cor 1:18. Why then in 1 Cor 1:19 does Paul quote from the scriptures, if the surrounding context establishes his faithfulness as an apostle?

It may be that Paul sees in Isa 29:14 an objective means of grounding his message, and therefore his apostleship, in reference to the story of Israel.<sup>13</sup> Isaiah challenged Judah's self-sufficiency and willingness to ally themselves with pagan nations in order to thwart the rising Assyrian threat. The inhabitants of Judah thought themselves wise in their crafty plans, but Isaiah considered them foolish. Isaiah said that the LORD would confound the wisdom of the wise in Judah—those who thought it best to make a pact with Assyria, or Egypt, to preserve their national identity.<sup>14</sup> They should rather have cast themselves at the mercy of the LORD, Isaiah notes. Perhaps Paul saw in Isaiah's statement

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<sup>13</sup> Richard B. Hays argues that Paul's Christological hermeneutic allows the apostle "to read Israel's Scripture as a mysterious prefiguration of the church, a story in which Christ's Gentile adherents can find their own story prewritten" (*Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989], 121).

<sup>14</sup> Lindsay Wilson suggests that 'True vs. False Wisdom' provides a frame for understanding the prophet's message, noting Isaiah's frequent contrasting of Yahweh's wisdom and the wisdom of those who considered themselves wise ("Wisdom in Isaiah," in *Interpreting Isaiah: Issues and Approaches* [ed. David G. Firth and H. G. M. Williamson; Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2009], 156). Wilson writes, "Isaiah 29:14 is sometimes used to argue that Isaiah could not be sympathetic to wisdom, as it predicts the end to the wisdom and discernment of the sages. However, this passage is entirely consistent with a high view of wisdom...The rebuke in 29:13-14 is not of all wisdom or all cultic worship; it is a critique of both cult and wisdom gone wrong" (*ibid.*, 157).

a warning also for the Corinthians—who themselves were guilty of seeking significance and security in worldly clout rather than the foolish message of the cross. Citing Isa 29:14 in 1 Cor 1:19, “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and I will set aside the understanding of the experts,” Paul heralds Isaiah’s message to the Corinthians, defending his faithfulness as an apostle via the objective message of the authoritative scriptures.<sup>15</sup>

### **Isaiah 52:15 (LXX) and 64:3 (LXX) in 1 Corinthians 2:9**

In 1 Cor 2:1-5, Paul describes his apostolic commission, stating that he came to the Corinthians with no other message save Christ crucified. This is the message of the mature, Paul argues, those who have eschatological eyes of devotion to God (1 Cor 2:6-8). In 1 Cor 2:9, Paul advances his faithfulness as an apostle through what may be a conflation of Isa 52:15 (LXX) and 64:3 (LXX).<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Wilk observes, “the quotation is significant for Paul in that it lends a scriptural basis to his argument: the foolish nature of the Gospel as preached by Paul (1:18), and hence his dispensing with eloquent wisdom and rhetorical skill (1:17), are in accordance with the scriptures” (“Isaiah in 1 and 2 Corinthians,” 137). Stanley notes that here Paul grounds his argument in a scripture that has God for its speaker and comments, “for an audience that reveres the God of Israel and his Scriptures, the effect of such a quotation could be profound” (*Arguing with Scripture*, 83).

<sup>16</sup> Fee suggests that “because no exact parallel is to be found in the OT, and because the citation appears to be complete in its present form, several alternative suggestions have been proposed,” and concludes that “most likely the ‘citation’ is an amalgamation of OT texts that had already been joined and reflected on in apocalyptic Judaism, which Paul knew either directly or indirectly” (*First Corinthians*, 108-09). Anthony C. Thiselton notes that Paul may have fused LXX texts of Isa 64:33 and 65:16, but could have had several extrabiblical texts in view (*The First Epistle to the Corinthians* [ed. I. Howard Marshall and Donald A. Hagner; NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000], 250-52). Hays writes that a number of texts from the latter portions of Isaiah likely came to Paul’s mind when writing 1 Corinthians 2 and concludes, “an allusion to this section of Isaiah would fit the general context in 1 Corinthians 2 very well indeed” (*First Corinthians* [Interpretation; Louisville: John Knox, 1997], 44). In *The Rhetorical Role of Scripture in 1 Corinthians* (Studies in Biblical Literature 15; [Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2005], 54-55), John P. Heil suggests that

In Isa 52:15, the prophet foretold the reaction the rulers of the earth would have on the day when God revealed His servant, “Thus shall many nations wonder at him; and kings shall keep their mouths shut: for they to whom no report was brought concerning him, shall see; and they who have not heard, shall consider” (οὕτως θαυμάσονται ἔθνη πολλὰ ἐπ’ αὐτῷ καὶ συνέξουσιν βασιλεῖς τὸ στόμα αὐτῶν ὅτι οἷς οὐκ ἀνηγγέλη περὶ αὐτοῦ ὄψονται καὶ οἱ οὐκ ἀκηκόασιν συνήσουσιν).<sup>17</sup> The kings, rulers and power-brokers opposing Israel would be surprised at what God would do to vindicate His people, their eyes and ears and minds would not believe it, the prophet writes.

Isaiah 64:3 (LXX; 64:4 [NETS]) is a part of Isaiah’s prayer for the restoration and renewal of Israel. The prophet dramatically proclaimed, “From of old we have not heard, neither have our eyes seen a God beside thee, and thy works which thou wilt perform to them that wait for mercy” (ἀπὸ τοῦ αἰῶνος οὐκ ἠκούσαμεν οὐδὲ οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ ἡμῶν εἶδον θεὸν πλὴν σοῦ καὶ τὰ ἔργα σου ἃ ποιήσεις τοῖς ὑπομένουσιν ἔλεον).<sup>18</sup> according to Isaiah, only the LORD of Israel is known as a God who rescues His people when they go astray; their own eyes and ears and minds have seen the failure of other gods.

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Isa 52:15 be included in the discussion of texts Paul has in view in 1 Cor 2:9, but concludes that here Paul “has brought together various formulations and concepts found in a number of different places in the OT” (ibid., 66).

<sup>17</sup> John N. Oswalt notes that in Isa 52:15, the rulers of the nations are said to be surprised at God’s intervention on behalf of Israel, left speechless at the greatness of what God had done for His people (*The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 40-66*, NICOT [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans], 380). Heil writes that Paul sees in Christ’s crucifixion the fulfillment of Isaiah’s suffering servant (*Rhetorical Role of Scripture*, 54). These observations underscore Paul’s apostolic message: Christ’s weakness on the cross, ironically, demonstrates God’s power—the very power compelling Paul to be faithful to his apostolic charge.

<sup>18</sup> Roy E. Ciampa and Brian S. Rosner note that, “Isaiah 64:4 concerns the uniqueness of God’s plan of salvation, which remains hidden” (“1 Corinthians,” in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* [ed. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007], 701). In the context of the quotation of Isa 64:3 (LXX) in 1 Corinthians 2, Paul argues that his apostolic ministry operates in accord with the revelatory work of the Spirit. Paul portrays himself as one faithfully co-operating with the Spirit in revealing what had been hidden, namely, God’s plan of salvation through the foolish message of Christ crucified.

It may be that in 1 Cor 2:9, “What no eye has seen and no ear has heard, and what has never come into a man’s heart, is what God has prepared for those who love Him” (ἃ ὀφθαλμὸς οὐκ εἶδεν καὶ οὖς οὐκ ἤκουσεν καὶ ἐπὶ καρδίαν ἀνθρώπου οὐκ ἀνέβη, ἃ ἠτοίμασεν ὁ θεὸς τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν), Paul has both prophetic contexts in view. Paul employs specifically the (1) sensory-perception, and (2) temporal imagery of phrases in Isa 52:15 (LXX) and 64:3 (LXX) to express God’s eschatological revelation of Christ and the Spirit. In the context of Isa 52:15, the prophet noted that the rulers of Israel’s enemies would experience the eye-opening, enlightening intervention of God’s servant on behalf of His people. Paul takes up this context in 1 Cor 2:6-8 noting that “the rulers of this age” (1 Cor 2:8)—both those responsible for the crucifixion of Jesus and the influential in Corinth—did not know the gospel of Christ, the message Paul faithfully proclaims by the Spirit. Likewise, Paul proposes 1 Cor 2:9b that “what God has prepared to show to those who love Him” (ἃ ἠτοίμασεν ὁ θεὸς τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν)—viz. eschatological salvation revealed via the cross and the Spirit—interprets the concluding, future-oriented phrase of Isa 64:4 (NETS; 64:3 (LXX), “thy works which thou wilt perform to them that wait for mercy” (τὰ ἔργα σου ἃ ποιήσεις τοῖς ὑπομένουσιν ἔλεον). Why did Paul refrain from lofty rhetorical practices adored in Corinth? He had no need of them. *Elocutio* could add little to God’s revelation in Christ and the Spirit—the new covenant message to which Paul faithfully labored.

In a culture concerned with knowledge and power, Paul notes that his persuasive skills were simply at the beck-and-call of the God’s new covenant revelation in Christ and the Spirit. Paul challenges the Corinthians to evaluate his apostleship accordingly, recognizing that he was only able to speak “spiritual things to spiritual people” (1 Cor 2:13). The age of the Spirit, Paul notes in 2 Corinthians 3, follows and exceeds the ministry of the old covenant. By employing the scriptures to defend his faithfulness as an apostle, Paul both reinforces the fulfillment of the old covenant in Christ, and establishes a model for how the Corinthians should respond to God’s revelation in the new covenant.

### **Deuteronomy 25:4 (LXX) in 1 Corinthians 9:9**

Paul begins his argument in 1 Corinthians 9 by listing the Corinthians themselves as Exhibit A of his apostolic faithfulness (vv. 1-



2).<sup>19</sup> In 1 Cor 9:3-7, he contends that as a legitimate apostle he has full rights of apostleship, including compensation of food and drink, and freedom to enjoy family life. Paul then raises the stakes of his argument. He notes that not only human logic but also Holy Scripture bears witness to the fact that a faithful worker expects to be remunerated from the profits of his labor. Paul cites Deut 25:4, “Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treads out the corn” (οὐ φιμώσεις βοῦν ἀλοῶντα),<sup>20</sup> as the specific scriptural warrant he has in view, writing in 1 Cor 9:9, “do not muzzle and ox while it treads out the grain” (οὐ κημώσεις βοῦν ἀλοῶντα).

Deuteronomy 23-25 emphasizes that Israel’s success and vitality in Canaan depended in large measure upon their commitment to national purity. Perhaps nowhere would this be more prominent than in establishing strict boundary markers for entering the LORD’s assembly (Deut 23:1-8). Even common bodily functions needed to be dealt with in light of national purity (Deut 23:9-14). The pursuit of national purity unified all of Israelite life (Deut 23:15-25:19) and was to be demonstrated in just relations even to the degree that oxen were to be fed from the very grain they threshed (Deut 25:4).<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Stanley observes that by the time the audience would have heard/read 1 Corinthians 9, “(they) would have already encountered several passages in which Paul bluntly asserts his authority over the church at Corinth (3:1-3, 4:18-21, 5:3-5)” (*Arguing with Scripture*, 84).

<sup>20</sup> Duane L. Christensen notes that, technically speaking, if oxen are not muzzled while threshing, they tend to be less productive because they often stop threshing in order to eat; the abundant supply of food distracts the animal from its duty (*Deuteronomy 21:10-34:12*, WBC 6B [Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2002], 602). Nonetheless, it is likely that Paul has the broader scope of work and nourishment in view: the oxen that did the threshing should partake (though perhaps later) of the produce of their labor. “Presumably the prohibition against muzzling the ox was in order that it could eat from time to time; the animal should not be grudged sustenance when it was working on behalf of man” (Peter C. Craigie, *The Book of Deuteronomy*, NICOT [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976, 313]).

<sup>21</sup> Ciampa and Rosner suggest that since Deut 24:10-25:3 addresses care for the poor, with Deut 24:19-22 concerned specifically with care for sojourners, widows and orphans, the command to deal justly with an ox while it treads grain (Deut 25:4) has a higher level of contextual synthesis than might be recognized if it is viewed in isolation (“1 Corinthians,” 719-21). Alternatively, Hays points out that Deuteronomy 24-25 emphasizes the theme of justice in human

The command of Deut 25:4 provides Paul a special case via which he might objectify his faithfulness as an apostle of the new covenant. In 1 Cor 9:9 Paul notes the validity of Moses' command, but presents himself as one free from applying its benefits to his own situation. Although as an apostle Paul was justified in receiving compensation from his work, he tells the Corinthians that he would not use this authority if it inhibited his faithfulness as an apostle (1 Cor 9:12). Although the law of Moses commanded that an animal must be fed from the produce of its labor, "if the ox refuses to eat even though faithful in treading the grain for his master, so be it," summarizes Paul's use of the scripture.

I suggest that at one level Paul's citation of Deut 25:4 in 1 Cor 9:9 is unessential to his argument. Not only on the logical grounds just noted, but also in light of the fact that the principle of Deut 25:4 (one who works should be compensated from their work, at a time proximate to their labor) is established already through a series of rhetorical questions written previously in 1 Cor 9:7, "Who ever goes to war at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat its fruit? Or who shepherds a flock and does not drink the milk from the flock?"<sup>22</sup> In 1 Cor 9:9, Paul thus goes out of his way to use the scriptures, employing Deut 25:4 as an objective standard by which the Corinthians might judge his faithfulness as an apostle. Among the Corinthians, Paul was faithful even to the degree that he was willing to relinquish apostolic rights. And all of this was for their good, Paul goes on to make clear in 1 Cor 9:12-27. Ultimately, the use of Deut 25:4 in 1 Cor 9:9 establishes Paul as a model for how the Corinthians should behave as a church.

### **Isaiah 22:13 (LXX) in 1 Corinthians 15:32**

Isaiah's Woe Oracles in Isaiah 13-23 underscore God's jealousy for the trust of His people. The prophet presented God's yearnings for

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relationships, and notes that the command to deal justly toward a work animal in Deut 25:4, "sits oddly in this context" (*First Corinthians*, 151). He suggests that Paul may have taken up the peculiar literary placement of the oxen command, seeing in the scripture something beyond (merely) a stipulation to care for work animals.

<sup>22</sup> "Paul bolsters his apostolic right to receive food to eat from his Corinthian audience with a triplet of gnomic maxims in the form of rhetorical questions, each expecting a negative answer" (Heil, *Rhetorical Role of Scripture*, 138).

His people to repent and rely upon Him alone for deliverance. Like a disobedient child, Israel did just the opposite. Isaiah wrote, “on that day the Lord GOD of Hosts called for weeping, for wailing, for shaven heads, and for wearing of sackcloth. But look: joy and gladness, butchering of cattle, slaughtering of sheep, eating of meat, and drinking of wine—‘Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die!’” (Isa 22:12-13).<sup>23</sup> In light of the judgment to come, God’s people should have resisted such a worldly, natural, comfortable posture and turned to God for mercy and rescue.<sup>24</sup> Israel’s celebration of the hear-and-now demonstrated obduracy of heart.

Paul labels a phrase of Isa 22:13, “Let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we die” (φάγωμεν καὶ πίωμεν αὔριον γὰρ ἀποθνήσκομεν)<sup>25</sup> as

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<sup>23</sup> Indeed, as Mariusz Rosik [In Christ All Will Be Made Alive (1 Cor 15:12-58): The Role of the Old Testament Quotations in the Pauline Argumentation for the Resurrection (European Studies in Theology, Philosophy and History of Religions 6; Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2013), 169] notes, “the phrase ‘slaughtering of cattle and killing of sheep’ is double in nature: the first act indicates the intemperance of the people of Jerusalem. The mention of the other is ironic in its character. The customary diet did not contain much meat. The reason was simple. First off, the storing conditions were difficult, and secondly; the oxen were too valuable to easily decide on killing them. In the mention of killing sheep, the irony lies in the fact that in the face of the impending siege, the inhabitants of the capital should be aware that each dose of meat will be needed; meanwhile, they consume large quantities of food in a fun atmosphere.” John D. W. Watts observes that the celebration was fueled not because of past success, hope of victory or purity of faith, but just the opposite. Feasting, revelry and drunkenness characterized a celebration “all the more precious because it was not likely to last” (Isaiah 1-33, WBC 24 [Nashville: Thomas Nelson], 286).

<sup>24</sup> Rosik comments that “(Isaiah’s) call to repentance and trust in God remained unanswered. Instead, the people have turned to sort of an anti-answer” (*In Christ All Will Be Made Alive*, 169). Paul saw in Isaiah’s portrayal of the hopelessness in Jerusalem a foil of his apostolic faithfulness, his robust new covenant ministry fueled by the resurrection of Jesus.

<sup>25</sup> Thiselton writes that in 1 Cor 15:32, “Paul now quotes words of despair about a life with nothing beyond the dissolution of personal existence as the end,” but goes on to propose that here Paul may cite an Epicurean (or hyperbolic anti-Epicurean) statement (*First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 1252). Wilk observes the possibility that Paul cited a Hellenistic slogan, but noting contextual links between Isa 22:11-14 and 1 Cor 15:29-34, concludes that Paul likely had in mind Isa 22:13 (LXX) in 1 Cor 15:32 (“Isaiah in 1 and 2 Corinthians,” 145). Rosik notes that though the idea of feasting and revelry before certain death, which Paul

an objective antithesis of his apostolic faithfulness. Godless eating, drinking and comfort were inconsistent with his commission as a messenger of the new covenant—and the concomitant persecutions, sufferings and resurrection hope. In Paul’s view, the resurrection of Jesus is to be understood as the eschatological reversal of the death of Adam, the ultimate display of God’s deliverance (1 Cor 15:20-22; cf. Rom 5:12-21). Countering skepticism about the bodily resurrection of believers, Paul employs Isa 22:13 in 1 Cor 15:32 writing that if the dead are not raised, “Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die” (φάγωμεν καὶ πίωμεν, αὐριον γὰρ ἀποθνήσκομεν).<sup>26</sup> Because of his personal confidence in the resurrection, Paul was enabled to live faithfully as an apostle—beyond the natural, comfort-seeking ways of those who would feast at the table while God’s word of judgment knocked upon the door.

Ciampa and Rosner observe, consistent with the findings of the present study, that “in one sense, Paul’s use of the OT here (Isa 22:13 in 1 Cor 15:32) is not critical, since the sentiment is widespread—note the words of the rich fool in Luke 12:19.”<sup>27</sup> Paul’s use of Isaiah 22:13 in 1 Cor 15:32 concludes the brief analysis of Paul’s use of the scriptures to defend his apostleship in 1 Corinthians. Here, as with Isa 29:14 in 1 Cor 1:19, Isa 52:15 and 64:4 in 1 Cor 2:9; and Deut 25:4 in 1 Cor 9:9, Paul at times goes out of his way to issue the scriptures as an objective witness to his faithfulness as an apostle of the new covenant. His methodology both reinforces the eschatological fulfillment of the old in Christ (an historical purpose) and provides the Corinthians a model for responding to God’s revelation to them (a pastoral motivation).

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cites specifically from Isa 22:13, may have been a popular saying in Corinth (*In Christ All Will Be Made Alive*, 183), in light of the fact that “Paul’s version perfectly agrees with the LXX, and the latter is also a very accurate translation from the Hebrew text (*ibid.*, 155), Paul employs Isa 22:13 to counter Corinthian heresy via his apostolic ministry. Fee observes the same and comments, “this is a verbatim citation of Isa. 22:13, and is surely intended as the logical alternative to his own kind of ‘daily dying.’ If there is no resurrection, he has argued, such a ‘death-facing’ life is without gain” (*First Corinthians*, 772).

<sup>26</sup> For various views about Paul’s understanding of a bodily resurrection, see the recent survey of positions in James Ware, “Paul’s Understanding of the Resurrection in 1 Corinthians 15:36-54,” *JBL* 133.4 (2014), 809-35.

<sup>27</sup> “1 Corinthians,” 746.

**2 Corinthians****Psalm 115:1 (LXX) in 2 Corinthians 4:13**

To a city enamored with power,<sup>28</sup> Paul makes clear in 2 Corinthians 2-4 that his apostolic ministry in the new covenant was not of himself. He writes, “now we have this treasure in clay jars, so that this extraordinary power may be from God and not from us...We always carry the death of Jesus in our body, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body” (2 Cor 4:7, 10). For Paul, hope in the resurrection compels faithful apostolic speech, even when forced to confront errors in the church. He argues in 2 Cor 3:3-16 that since in the old covenant era Moses was afforded a measure of boldness in directing the moral compass of God’s people, then he has no less as an apostle of Christ. Paul cites the giving of the law on Mount Sinai in Exodus 34 as precedence for a spiritual leader directing the ethical choices of those under his charge.<sup>29</sup> Ministering in the superior era of the Spirit, Paul presents himself as one having no less authority than Moses.

But because Paul suffered at seemingly every turn, his opponents in Corinth questioned his faithfulness as an apostle. “Would not God deliver more consistently one who was faithful in their charge?” they asked. To counter their indictment, Paul quotes from Ps 115:1 (LXX; 116:10 [NETS]) “I believed, wherefore I have spoken,” (αλληλουια ἐπίστευσα διὸ ἐλάλησα) in 2 Cor 4:13, “As we have the same spirit of faith in accordance with what is written, ‘I believed, therefore I spoke,’ we also believe, and therefore speak,” (Ἐχοντες δὲ τὸ αὐτὸ πνεῦμα τῆς πίστεως κατὰ τὸ γεγραμμένον· ἐπίστευσα, διὸ ἐλάλησα, καὶ ἡμεῖς

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<sup>28</sup> See Timothy B. Savage, ‘Power through Weakness: Paul’s Understanding of the Christian Ministry in 2 Corinthians’ (SNTSMS 86; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

<sup>29</sup> A broad analysis of Paul’s pejorative description of Moses’ old covenant ministry in 2 Corinthians 3 remains outside the limitations of the present study, but certainly has points of relation with it. Balla suggests that some in the Corinthian church may have thought Moses a greater minister of God’s will than Paul, the apostle of the new covenant inferior to Moses the leader of Israel in the old (“2 Corinthians,” 754). For a fuller survey, see Lind L. Belleville, *Reflections of glory: Paul’s Polemical Use of the Moses-Doxa Tradition in 2 Corinthians 3.1-18* (JSNTSup 52; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991).

πιστεύομεν, διὸ καὶ λαλοῦμεν).<sup>30</sup> Paul recognizes the psalmist as a companion of faithfulness, one whose ministry of bold speech established a precedent for the manner of his apostleship in the new covenant. Margaret Thrall, noting that Psalm 114 is a report of the psalmist's faith and plea to God for deliverance, suggests, "he (Paul) could have seen it also as a prefigurement of his own *proclamation* of the death and resurrection of Christ, more especially because this very proclamation was visually portrayed in his own experience of suffering and deliverance" (*italics original*).<sup>31</sup>

Stanley observes that though Paul's life situation reflects that of the psalmist expressed in the literary context of Ps 115:1 (LXX), the citation of the scripture phrase in 2 Cor 4:13, "does not serve as a 'proof' for a specific argument; in fact, its link to the preceding verses is so loose that the audience would likely have been puzzled by its appearance."<sup>32</sup> At one level, then, Paul did not need to quote the verse of scripture; though it provided a general reminder of salvation history established in the old covenant, Ps 115:1 (LXX) adds little materially to the logic of Paul's argument in 2 Corinthians 4. The present study observes that in 1 Corinthians, Paul goes out of his way to quote from the scriptures. Why? I argue that Paul does so (1) to show the historical fulfillment that has arrived in the new covenant, (2) to provide objective categories for

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<sup>30</sup> Psalm 113 LXX is Psalms 114-115 in most English translations. Psalms 114-15 LXX represent Psalm 116 MT and the same in most English translations. Moyise offers three possible scenarios that might account for Paul's use of Ps 115:1 (LXX), in light of the broader context of the entire Psalm and especially the LXX's divergence from the Hebrew text: "first, the background was important for Paul but it is not why he is quoting the text; second, the background was important for Paul and he hoped that the Corinthians would perceive it; third, the background was not important for Paul since he has not made it explicit for the Corinthians" (Moyise, *Paul and Scripture*, 107). With Wilk ("Isaiah in 1 and 2 Corinthians," 157) and Stanley ("Why the Audience Matters," 155) noted *supra*, though Paul's first readers may not have known the literary background of Ps 115:1 (LXX), I suggest that Paul does, and that that context influenced his citation of it in 2 Cor 4:13.

<sup>31</sup> Margaret Thrall, *II Corinthians I-VII*, ICC (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1994), 341. Similarly, Harris suggests that, "if Paul knew the Greek text in this form (Psalms 114-15 LXX as Psalm 116 MT), the three words he quotes stand thematically at the head of the psalm" (*Second Corinthians*, 352).

<sup>32</sup> "Paul's 'Use' of Scripture," 147.

demonstrating his apostolic faithfulness in it, and (3) ultimately, to provide the Corinthians an example for Christian living. Paul's use of Ps 115:1 LXX in 2 Cor 4:13 follows the same pattern.

### Isaiah 49:8 (LXX) in 2 Corinthians 6:2

Isaiah 49-55 is a poetic, hopeful expression of God's jealousy for His people (noted *supra* in the analysis of Isa 52:15 in 1 Cor 2:9). During the days of Isaiah's ministry, and after, God's people felt like a wife that had been released by her husband (Isa 54:6). While the LORD was legitimately angry with Israel and sent her into captivity in Babylon, the prophet announced that the LORD would come to redeem them "with great compassion" (Isa 54:7). Determining the identity of the servant of the LORD in Isaiah 49 proves to be a difficult task. Whoever the exact referent, the text describes Isaiah himself as one who endured difficulty because of his faithful labor (v. 4) but also enjoyed promise of the LORD's faithfulness to him (vv. 5-6).<sup>33</sup> In Isa 49:8, the prophet announced the LORD's response to his difficulty writing, "In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I succored thee" (καίρῳ δεκτῷ ἐπήκουσά σου καὶ ἐν ἡμέρᾳ σωτηρίας ἐβοήθησά σοι).

In the background of Paul's thought in 2 Cor 6:2 is the fact that Isaiah's faithfulness did not lead to a life of ease. Rather, during his

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<sup>33</sup> Blenkinsopp, suggests that Isa 49:1-6, 50:4-9 and 52:13-5:12 provide a sketch of the prophetic office and read like a "prophetic martyr biography" (*Isaiah 40-55: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 19A, [New York: Doubleday, 2002], 118). Blenkinsopp's profile of the prophetic office reads like a biography of Paul, underscoring why Paul would have turned to Isa 49:8 as a basis for defending his apostolic ministry. Blenkinsopp writes, "the prophet is predestined for a mission before birth (49:1), lives his early life under the providence of God (53:2a), is equipped for a mission involving prophetic speech and instruction away from the public eye (49:2; 50:4a), and receives divinely revealed knowledge and guidance (50:4b). The mission is directed first to Israel (49:5-6a; 50:4a) and then to foreign peoples (49:6b). The sense of inadequacy and discouragement in the face of opposition (49:4a) gives way to the assurance of ultimate vindication (49:4b; 50:7-9). Opposition escalates into open abuse (50:6; 53:3), leading eventually to a violent death (53:7-12) (*ibid.*, 118-19)."

prophetic suffering, the LORD demonstrated His faithfulness to Isaiah.<sup>34</sup> Paul's citation of Isa 49:8 (LXX) in 2 Cor 6:2, "in an acceptable time, I heard you, and in the day of salvation, I helped you" (καὶρῶ δεκτῶ ἐπήκουσά σου καὶ ἐν ἡμέρᾳ σωτηρίας ἐβοήθησά σοι), thus coheres with the prophet's original life situation.<sup>35</sup> Wilk's comment that, "Paul has read Isa. 49:8 as a prophecy of his calling by God, understood as an act of mercy (2 Cor. 4:1) and grace (1 Cor. 3:10; 15:10 *et al.*) towards himself...Thus, Paul saw his own ministry as ambassador for Christ foretold in Isa. 49:4-8,"<sup>36</sup> captures the broader findings of the present study. Paul employs the scriptures of the old covenant to defend his apostleship, portraying his sufferings, like those of Isaiah, as marks of faithfulness. In so doing, Paul reinforces the historical fulfillment of old covenant in the new, and provides the Corinthians a model for 'taking up their own cross, as it were, following Paul's example of faithfulness even at personal expense.

### **Jeremiah 9:23 (LXX) in 2 Corinthians 10:17**

Paul's firm demeanor toward the Corinthians placed him squarely in line with the prophet Jeremiah. Among other prophetic figures, Jeremiah especially challenged the false security of Judah. The

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<sup>34</sup> Stanley writes that, "Paul's argument (if they accepted it) would have conditioned them to hear the voice of God not only in the text of Scripture, but also in the interpretive comments that surround it, since they were spoken by 'God's ambassador' (5:20)," (*Arguing with Scripture*, 104).

<sup>35</sup> Hays writes, "this passage (Isa 49:8 in 2 Cor 6:2) nicely illustrates the way in which Paul's apostolic self-understanding as Christ's ambassador (2 Cor 5:20) is woven together with an eschatological hermeneutic to produce startling new readings of Israel's Scripture...Paul understood himself as a Jew sent by the God of Israel to the world of Gentile 'outsiders' for the purpose of declaring to them the message of eschatological salvation promised in Israel's scriptures" ("The Conversion of the Imagination," 394). Moyise comments that Paul sees himself "in partnership with God, urging the Corinthians not to reject the ministry of reconciliation with which he is charged to preach" (*Paul and Scripture*, 95). Scott J. Hafemann labels Paul's use of Isa 49:8 in 2 Cor 6:2 "one of Paul's greatest assertions of his apostolic authority" ("Paul's Use of the Old Testament in 2 Corinthians," *Int* 52:3 [July, 1998], 252).

<sup>36</sup> "Isaiah in 1 and 2 Corinthians," 152.



people of Judah thought the temple a spiritual fortress, surety that they could embrace pagan idolatry without serious threat of retribution from the LORD. Jeremiah interrogated the people of Judah with the word of the LORD saying: “do you steal, murder, commit adultery, swear falsely, burn incense to Baal, and follow other gods that you have not known? Then do you come and stand before Me in this house called by My name and insist: ‘We are safe?’” (Jer 7:9-10). Jeremiah provided the LORD’s response to his rhetorical question: “I am about to refine them and test them, for what else can I do because of my dear people? Their tongues are deadly arrows—they speak deception. With his mouth a man speaks peaceably with his friend, but inwardly he sets up an ambush. Should I not punish them for these things?” (Jer 9:7-8). In Jeremiah’s view of the situation, Judah committed idolatry and exalted in falsehood because they had forsaken the knowledge of God. In Jer 9:23 (LXX; 9:24 [NETS]) the prophet announced the jealousy of the LORD saying, “but let him that boasts boast in this, the understanding and knowing that I am the Lord that exercise mercy, and judgment, and righteousness, upon the earth; for in these things is my pleasure, saith the Lord,” ἄλλ’ ἢ ἐν τούτῳ καυχᾶσθω ὁ καυχόμενος συνίειν καὶ γινώσκειν ὅτι ἐγὼ εἰμι κύριος ποιῶν ἔλεος καὶ κρίμα καὶ δικαιοσύνην ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ὅτι ἐν τούτοις τὸ θέλημα μου λέγει κύριος).<sup>37</sup>

In 2 Cor 10:1-18, Paul presents his apostolic authority as the basis for disarming spiritual adversaries with the gospel of Christ. Some in Corinth had charged Paul of being a coward in person, but mighty when taking up his pen. Since he was planning to visit soon, he said, “I beg you that when I am present I will not need to be bold with the confidence by which I plan to challenge certain people who think we are walking in a fleshly way” (2 Cor 10:2). Paul’s demeanor among the Corinthians would be determined by their behavior, and the apostle hoped that in fact their every thought would be brought captive to the obedience of Christ (2 Cor 10:5). In any case, to the one accusing Paul of

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<sup>37</sup> In light of Jer 9:25-26, it may be that Judah boasted in circumcision, though uncircumcised in heart (John Bright, *Jeremiah*, AB 21 [Garden City: Doubleday, 1965], 78-80). James A. Thompson notes similarly that, “such a ritual performance could not deliver them (the people of Judah) from a divine visitation upon them for their evil deeds” (*The Book of Jeremiah*, NICOT [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980], 322).

doing ministry in a fleshly manner, he writes: “such a person should consider this: what we are in the words of our letters when absent, we will be in actions when present” (2 Cor 10:11). Paul was concerned that the Corinthians were yet too consumed with their place in the world, not their place in Christ. This caused them to overlook the contours of his apostolic faithfulness.<sup>38</sup>

As he had in 1 Cor 1:31, in 2 Cor 10:17 Paul again calls the Corinthians’ attention to Jer 9:23, writing “the one who boasts must boast in the Lord” (Ὁ δὲ καυχόμενος ἐν κυρίῳ καυχάσθω). Harris notes the differing contexts in which Paul quotes the warning from Jeremiah in 1 and 2 Corinthians, observing that the former counters boasting in human wisdom, while in 2 Cor 10:17, “its (the quotation of Jer 9:23 [LXX]) function is to counteract prideful boasting about someone else’s successful ministry.”<sup>39</sup> Paul would not boast in the ministry of another; he had no need for such artificial exaltation. In 2 Cor 10:12-16, Paul calls the Corinthians themselves and the Lord as witnesses of his faithfulness as an apostle, and employs Jer 9:23 in 2 Cor 10:17 to objectify his self-defense in the scriptures.

### **Deuteronomy 19:15 (LXX) in 2 Corinthians 13:1**

In the final section of 2 Corinthians, Paul yet turns to the scriptures to defend his faithfulness as an apostle. Setting forth his plan to visit the Corinthians, he writes that upon his arrival he hopes to see them living in submission to Christ, and would ready to confront any rebellious among them (2 Cor 12:14-13:10). Paul’s apostolic demeanor would not be lenient but firm—fully identifying with Christ—when he arrived to see if the Corinthians had met the demands that accord the

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<sup>38</sup> David A. Garland notes that Paul emphasizes God’s faithfulness writing, “Paul boasts in the Lord, whose commendation is the only one that counts. This boast in the Lord has nothing to do with Paul’s own pedigree or prowess. It has to do with what the Lord has accomplished through him. Artificial comparisons with others based on human criteria hardly compare with the work that Christ has done in and through him” (2 *Corinthians*, NAC 29 [Nashville: Broadman & Holman], 457). Nonetheless, in 2 Cor 10:12-18 cites his faithfulness to the Lord in the area of ministry the Lord assigned to him (v. 13) and the hope of future labor (v. 16) as defense of his apostleship.

<sup>39</sup> Harris, *Second Corinthians*, 725.

gospel. Paul's process for evaluating the Corinthians would not deviate from the precedent of judicial fairness established in Deuteronomy. Thus in 2 Cor 13:1, Paul writes that "On the testimony of two or three witnesses every word will be confirmed" (ἐπι στόματος δύο μαρτύρων καὶ τριῶν σταθήσεται πᾶν ῥῆμα), citing Deut 19:15, "by the mouth of two witnesses, or by the mouth of three witness shall every word be established" (ἐπι στόματος δύο μαρτύρων καὶ ἐπι στόματος τριῶν μαρτύρων σταθήσεται πᾶν ῥῆμα).<sup>40</sup>

In Deuteronomy 16-20, Moses emphasized that Israel was to be governed by justice.<sup>41</sup> Moses told the people that judges were appointed so that Israel would "pursue justice and justice alone," live and possess the land the LORD was giving them (Deut 16:20). The judges' work included both sentencing any prone to idolatry (Deut 16:21-17:7) and executing those who would rebel against a verdict (Deut 17:8-13). Under the rule of the judiciary, Moses forbade the people from taking vengeance arbitrarily—a principle underlying the establishment of cities of refuge (Deut 19:1-15) and various courtroom procedures (Deut 19:15-21).

While Paul's ultimate concern was not defending himself against the charges of the Corinthians—although that he did (2 Cor 2:14-7:1)—but building them up (2 Cor 12:19), he nonetheless first needed to tear down their misconceptions about his apostleship. As he prepared for his third visit, he wrote, "I fear that perhaps when I come I will not find you to be what I want, and I may not be found by you to be what you want" (2 Cor 12:20). Paul's language casts his apostolic ministry in the guise of a trial lawyer, one ready to prosecute any who had not repented of their "uncleanness, sexual immorality, and promiscuity" (2 Cor 12:21). Paul's citation of scripture objectifies his judicial apostolic endeavors within the confines of redemptive history.<sup>42</sup> Paul thus quotes Moses' command of

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<sup>40</sup> Harris comments that while Paul's citation is essentially the same as Deut 19:15 LXX, it bears close resemblance to Jesus' statement in Matt 18:16b, ἐπι στόματος δύο μαρτύρων ἢ τριῶν σταθῆ πᾶν ῥῆμα (*Second Corinthians*, 906-07).

<sup>41</sup> J. G. McConville's observation that Deuteronomy presents a theology of mercy "for a people it knows to be already rebellious" ("Deuteronomy, Book of" in *DOTP*, 191), offers a rationale for Paul's citation of Deut 19:15 in writing to the church at Corinth.

<sup>42</sup> "Paul is applying the Deuteronomistic legal principle in a way that was typical of contemporary Judaism—to forewarn those suspected of an offense that they were liable to punishment. Paul is saying in effect, 'Sufficient and statutory

Deut 19:15 in order to substantiate via the scriptures his faithfulness in holding the Corinthians accountable for living in accord with the apostolic message he had proclaimed to them, and modeled for them.

### Conclusion

Moisés Silva writes that, “Paul must have seen his own ministry as integrally related to the work of the OT prophets, and in some sense even as its culmination.”<sup>43</sup> Analyzing Paul’s use of the scriptures in Romans 9-11, Ross J. Wagner suggests that Paul saw himself in concert with especially Isaiah, writing “faced with new opportunities for the Gentile mission and wrestling with the apparent inertia of the mission to Israel, Paul turns to scripture—notably Isaiah—in an attempt to make sense of this paradoxical situation.”<sup>44</sup> The present study suggests that Paul did the same in response to his paradoxical relationship with the Corinthians. To address their lack of adherence to the message he preached among them, Paul turns to the scriptures, finding fellowship with accounts of faithful men and beasts not only in the prophecy of Isaiah, but texts in Deuteronomy, Jeremiah and the Psalms as well. The fact that Paul at times goes out of his way to quote the scriptures when defending his apostolic faithfulness against Corinthian’ skepticism suggests that Paul views himself as an authoritative spokesman of God’s work in history, faithful as a prophetic apostle of the new covenant.<sup>45</sup>

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warning has been given to you Corinthians; punitive action is imminent” (Harris, *Second Corinthians*, 908).

<sup>43</sup> “Galatians” in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the OT* (ed. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), 786-87.

<sup>44</sup> *Heralds of the Good News: Isaiah and Paul ‘in Concert’ in the Letter to the Romans* (NovTSup 101; Leiden: Brill, 2002) 4.

<sup>45</sup> “Willk concludes that “the Isaianic references in his first and second letters to the Corinthians form an interpretative network that centers on Isaiah’s prophecy of Christ but is based on the prophecy of Paul’s calling” (“Isaiah in 1 and 2 Corinthians,” 158). Balla writes, “from Paul’s perspective, the OT law and the old covenant in Moses, their minister, were a prophetic foreshadowing of the new covenant and of Paul, a minister of the new covenant” (“2 Corinthians,” 760). Moyise “it would appear that Paul sees his own vocation as similar to the prophet of old, and perhaps also the servant of God in Isaiah 49” (96)

Paul would thus be free to cite the scriptures for a variety of reasons. I suggest that in 1-2 Corinthians Paul has historical, personal and pastoral concerns—and the personal form a bridge between the other two. Citing scripture provides Paul an objective basis for defending his faithfulness to God as an apostle of the new covenant. And in so doing, he assists the Corinthians in grasping (1) their eschatological situation, and (2) the manner in which they should respond to God's revelation in the new covenant. Because Paul had been faithful to his commission as an apostle of God's revelation in the new covenant, to speak of himself was to also reinforce God's work in redemption history and set a pattern of devotion to God that he hoped the Corinthians would follow. It is not an overstatement that if the Corinthians reject Paul's apostleship, they reject God. The findings of this study therefore rest comfortably in that happy tension of Biblical intertextuality.

First, Paul presents the eschatological, prophetic character of the Old Testament as having been fulfilled in Christ. Hays argues that Paul employs the scriptures to synthesize the apocalyptic eschatological moment of the church within the broader story of Israel, concluding that "if God was authoring the sacred story, then all the story's narrative patters must foreshadow the experience of the community that has now encountered the apocalypse of God's grace."<sup>46</sup> As an apostle of the new covenant, Paul has a unique perspective on God's eschatological work; in Christ the ends of the ages had come upon the Corinthians (1 Cor 10:11) and upon him. If the Corinthians were to enjoy spiritual renewal and hope, they would have to square their beliefs and practices exclusively with the new covenant he preached to them.

Second, to a church needing an example of faithful response to God, Paul's apostleship in the new covenant provides just such a model.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Hays, *Echoes of Scripture*, 105. Moyise writes similarly, "not only does Paul see the prophets as predicting such things as the inclusion of the Gentiles, Israel's unbelief and future salvation, he also believes that they speak to particular issues in the life of the Church...Paul's interpretation is driven by the belief that God's plan to redeem humanity is being realized in the church, a community of both Jews and Gentiles. It is his belief that God's *telos* is being realized here and now that characterizes his scriptural interpretations" (*Paul and Scripture*, 96).

<sup>47</sup> Stanley writes that, "The decision to include a quotation from the Jewish Scriptures seems to have been motivated in every case by the rhetorical needs of the developing argument" (*Arguing with Scripture*, 78).

Moyise observes that in the prophets specifically, Paul finds texts of scripture which help him to illustrate “the pattern of life God expects of the Christian community,” and continues, “this (Paul’s use of the scriptures for hortatory purposes) is most clearly seen in the Corinthian letters, where the focus is rather more on practical living than the intricate doctrinal debates of Romans and Galatians.”<sup>48</sup> References of hard-working oxen and quotations from the Prophets and the Psalms, provide Paul objective types and anti-types via which he demonstrates for the Corinthians his apostolic faithfulness in the new covenant, bidding the Corinthians to join him at the threshing floor.

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<sup>48</sup> *Paul and Scripture*, 86. Hetty Lalleman notes that in both 2 Corinthians and Galatians, Paul defends his ministry and casts himself as one in line with Jeremiah. (“Paul’s Self-Understanding in the Light of Jeremiah: A Case Study into the Use of the Old Testament in the New Testament,” in *A God of Faithfulness: Essays in Honour of J. Gordon McConville on His 60th Birthday* [Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies 538; London: T & T Clark, 2001], 111).