

John P. Dickson

Mission-Commitment in Ancient Judaism and in the Pauline Communities

The shape, extent and background
of early Christian mission

Mohr Siebeck

Table of Contents

Introduction: The Search for Ancient Mission	1
1. Mission: yes or no?	1
2. Paul the missionary <i>par excellence</i>	4
3. The focus of the study	6
4. A definition of mission	7
Chapter 1. Winning the Gentiles: Mission and Missionaries in Ancient Judaism	11
1. The missionary mindset of ancient Judaism(s)	13
1.1. Jewish attitudes toward Gentile religion	13
1.2. The hope of Gentile conversion	15
1.3. Pilgrimage of the nations as vindication of Israel?	19
1.4. Pilgrimage of the nations and human agency	20
2. Evidence of Jewish missionizing	24
2.1. Evidence of Jewish proselytizing in Rome in 139 B.C.	24
2.2. Evidence of Jewish proselytizing in Rome in A.D. 19	26
2.3. Jewish mission in Romans 2:17-24?	31
2.4. The conversion of the house of Adiabene	33
2.5. Philo and the mission of the market-place (<i>Special Laws</i> 1.320-323) ...	37
2.6. The mission of the Jerusalem Pharisees (Matthew 23:15)	39
2.7. Saul of Tarsus: 'preacher of circumcision'?	46
3. Conclusion: mission and missionaries in Judaism	49
Chapter 2. Promoting the Torah: Mission-Commitment Amongst the Jewish Faithful	51
1. Mission-commitment as ethical apologetic	51
1.1. <i>Testament of Levi</i> 14.1-4	52
1.2. <i>Testament of Benjamin</i> 8.2-3	53
1.3. <i>Testament of Benjamin</i> 5.1-5	54
1.4. <i>Letter of Aristeas</i> 227	55
1.5. <i>On the Life of Joseph</i> 86-87	58
1.6. <i>Jewish Antiquities</i> 20.75-76	59
2. Mission-commitment as prayer	60
2.1. <i>Jewish Antiquities</i> 8.115-117	60
2.2. <i>On the Life of Moses</i> 1.149	62
2.3. <i>Special Laws</i> 1.97	63
2.4. <i>Letter of Aristeas</i> 227	66
3. Mission-commitment as verbal apologetic	67

3.1. <i>On the Life of Joseph</i> 85-87	67
3.2. <i>Jewish Antiquities</i> 20.34-35	68
3.3. 2 Maccabees 9:13-17	69
3.4. Horace, <i>Satires</i> 1.4.138-143	70
3.5. Mishnah 'Abot 2:14	71
4. Mission-commitment as public worship	74
4.1. <i>On the Life of Moses</i> 2.41-44	75
4.2. <i>Jewish War</i> 7.45	77
4.3. Tobit 13:3-6	80
5. Conclusion: mission in Judaism	84
Chapter 3. Heralds and Partners: The Structure of Pauline Mission ..	86
1. Paul, the gospel and his colleagues	86
1.1. The frequency of εὐαγγελ- in Paul	86
1.2. Gospel as dogma and activity	87
1.3. Gospel and Paul's commission	88
1.4. Gospel as missionary speech	88
1.5. Paul's colleagues and the preaching of the gospel	91
1.6. Conclusion: Paul, the gospel and his colleagues	94
2. Paul's converts as preachers of the gospel?	94
2.1. 1 Thessalonians 1:8	95
2.1.1. The meaning of ἐξηγέω	101
2.1.2. The reverberating proclamation of Paul in 1 Thessalonians 1:8 ...	102
2.2. Philippians 1:27	103
2.3. Philippians 2:15-16	107
2.3.1. The meaning of ἐπέχω	108
2.3.2. Philippians 2:16 as eschatological faithfulness	110
2.4. Ephesians 6:15	114
2.4.1. The meaning of ἐτοιμασία	118
2.5. Ephesians 6:17	120
3. Paul's converts as <i>partners</i> for the gospel	122
3.1. Philippians 1:3-5	122
3.2. 2 Corinthians 9:13	129
4. Conclusion: the structure of Pauline mission	131
Chapter 4. Heralds at Home: Evangelists and the Local Church	133
1. Evangelists of wider Macedonia	133
1.1. The famous brother: 2 Corinthians 8:18	134
1.2. 'Apostles of the churches': 2 Corinthians 8:23	135
2. Evangelists of the city of Philippi	141
2.1. Euodia, Syntyche, Clement, and the 'others': Philippians 4:2-3	141
2.2. The 'selection' of the Philippian evangelists	143
3. Evangelists of Rome: Philippians 1:14	144
3.1. The meanings of ἀδελφός	145
3.2. 'Brothers' as missionaries in the letter to the Philippians	147
4. Conclusion: local evangelists as representatives in mission	150

Chapter 5. The Eschatological Herald: Gospel and Authorization from Isaiah to Paul	153
1. 'Gospel' as authorized speech in Jewish traditions	153
1.1. Gospel as authorized speech in Isaiah 40-65	154
1.2. Gospel as authorized speech in post-biblical Judaism	156
2. 'Gospel' as authorized speech in the Jesus-traditions	159
2.1. Isaiah 61 in Q (Matt 11:2-6 / Lk 7:18-23)	160
2.2. Isaiah 52:7 in Mark 1:14-15	161
2.3. Gospel-heralding and the Messianic commission in Luke 4:17-18	164
3. 'Gospel' as authorized speech in Paul	165
3.1. The use of Isaiah 52:7 in Romans 10:15 and in Ephesians	166
3.2. Romans 10:15 and authorization for mission	170
3.3. Gospel and 'sending' in Paul	173
3.4. Authorized mission in Epictetus: a Greco-Roman analogy	175
4. Conclusion: authorized heralds and their partners	176
Chapter 6. Providing for the Gospel: Mission-Commitment as Financial Assistance	178
1. 'Maintenance' of missionaries	179
1.1. 1 Thessalonians 2:1-9	179
1.2. 2 Thessalonians 3:8	187
1.3. 1 Corinthians 9:1-18	187
1.3.1. The saying of the Lord: v.14	192
1.4. Maintenance: summary and conclusion	193
2. 'Sending' of missionaries	194
2.1. Προνέμω outside Paul	194
2.2. 1 Corinthians 16:6	196
2.3. 1 Corinthians 16:11	197
2.4. 2 Corinthians 1:16	197
2.5. Romans 15:24	198
2.6. Titus 3:13	200
3. Occasional missionary 'gifts'	201
3.1. The social context of the Philippian gifts	202
3.2. The nature and significance of the Philippian gifts	204
3.3. Gifts and the origin of Paul's 'no-maintenance' policy	208
4. Conclusion: mission-commitment as financial assistance	212
Chapter 7. Interceding for the Gospel: Mission-Commitment as Prayer	214
1. Prayer on behalf of unbelievers	215
1.1. Romans 10:1	215
1.2. 1 Timothy 2:1-10	216
2. Prayer for Paul's mission	219
2.1. 1 Thessalonians 5:25	219
2.2. 2 Thessalonians 3:1	220

2.3. Colossians 4:2-4	221
2.4. Ephesians 6:19-20	223
3. Conclusion to chapters six and seven: congregational commitment to the mission of Paul	226
Chapter 8. Not 'Leaving the World': Mission-Commitment as Social Integration	228
1. 'Mixing' with the immoral (1 Cor 5:9-10)	229
2. The missionary significance of banquets (1 Cor 10:31 – 11:1)	231
2.1. Social and cultic dining in Corinth	232
2.2. Alternative understandings of the social context of 1 Corinthians 8:7-13 and 10:1-22	237
2.3. Exegesis of 1 Corinthians 10:23-30	240
2.4. Exegesis of 1 Corinthians 10:31 – 11:1	249
2.5. The mission possibilities of dining	254
2.5.1. 1 Corinthians 10:31 – 11:1 and 'evangelistic outreach'	256
3. Conclusions: 1 Corinthians 10:31 – 11:1 and mission-commitment	259
Chapter 9. Adorning the Gospel: Mission-Commitment as Ethical Apologetic	262
1. A good appearance (1 Thess 4:11-12)	262
1.1. Lives of peace	263
1.2. Attending to one's own affairs	264
1.3. Working with hands	266
1.4. Missionary appearance	267
2. Displaying 'graciousness' (Phil 4:5)	269
2.1. The meaning of ἐπιεικής	270
2.2. Philippians 4:5 and 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12: a shared Pauline tradition	273
3. Walking wisely toward outsiders (Col 4:5)	275
4. Ethical apologetic in the secondary Epistle to Titus	278
4.1. Titus 2:3-10	278
4.2. Titus 3:1-8	283
5. Conclusion: mission-commitment as ethical apologetic	290
Chapter 10. Words of Truth and Grace: Mission-Commitment as Public Worship and as Verbal Apologetic	293
1. Mission-commitment as public worship (1 Cor 14:20-25)	293
1.1. Exegesis of 1 Corinthians 14:20-22: the Old Testament context	294
1.2. How is prophecy a sign unto believers?	295
1.3. The missionary significance of public worship	299
2. Mission-commitment as verbal apologetic (Col 4:6)	302
2.1. A missionary λόγος in Colossians 4:6	303
2.2. 'Αποκρίνομαι as verbal apologetic	306
2.3. 'Answering' in 1 Peter 3:15 and 'Abot 2:14	307
3. Conclusion to chapters eight through ten: congregational commitment to local mission	308

Chapter 11. Summary and Conclusions: Mission-Commitment in Ancient Judaism and in the Pauline Communities	309
1. Mission-commitment in Judaism	309
2. The structure of Paul's mission conception	310
3. Mission-commitment in the Pauline communities	312
Appendix A. Epaphroditus: Courier and Missionary?	315
Appendix B. 'ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΣΤΗΣ as Apostolic Analogue in Pauline Tradition and Beyond	318
1. 'Ο εὐαγγελιστής in a Greco-Roman inscription	318
2. The rise of the term in the Pauline tradition	319
3. Εὐαγγελιστής: teacher or missionary?	321
3.1. Acts 21:8	322
3.2. 2 Timothy 4:5	322
3.3. Ephesians 4:11	326
4. An 'office' of εὐαγγελιστής?	328
5. Εὐαγγελιστής and the Isaianic messenger	330
6. Εὐαγγελιστής and the colleagues of the historical Paul	332
7. Εὐαγγελισταί in the second century (A.D.)	333
8. Conclusion	336
Appendix C. Further Possible Examples of Mission-Commitment in Paul	337
1. Mission-commitment in 1 Corinthians 7:16	337
1.1. An apostolic exhortation to mission-commitment?	337
1.2. An example of congregational mission-commitment?	338
2. Possible examples of ethical apologetic in Romans 12	340
2.1. Romans 12:17	341
2.2. Romans 12:20-21	341
Bibliography	345
Index of References	377
Index of Modern Authors	404
Index of Subjects and Key Terms	409