

PURE SACRIFICE IN DIDACHE 14 AS JEWISH CHRISTIAN EXEGESIS¹

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Abstract

The central concern of *Didache* 14 is not so much the eucharist as the preservation of the purity of the community. A reading of this text as a form of *aggadah* in a Christian Jewish community, based on interpretation of a Scriptural text, reveals affinities with both the Dead Sea Scrolls and Rabbinic instructions. The tripartite structure of the text distinguishes between sins committed against God and sins committed against a fellow member of the community, followed by a Scriptural justification. While transgressions against God can be settled between God and the individual concerned (by sacrifice, prayer, fasting and good works), offences against the neighbour can only be settled with that person's public consent and by restitution (among other things by the restoration of honour). Reparation and reconciliation in the case of an offence against the neighbour must be obtained before an offering to God can be acceptable. The exclusion of offenders from the eucharistic meal of the *Didache* is based on a spiritualized understanding of temple purity as extended to the whole community in a fashion comparable to the Qumran *yahad* and the Pharisaic *haburah*.

1. Introduction

Many commentators on the *Didache* have regarded chapters 14-15 as a later interpolation into an earlier "church order".² The double reference to the

¹ An earlier form of the paper was given at the *Society of Biblical Literature* annual conference in Philadelphia in November 2006 and then given at the annual conference of the New Testament Society of South Africa in its current form in April 2007.

² So, for instance, Rordorf and Tuilier (1998, 53) see the text as "redactional" but from the same compiler they envisage for the rest of the text. Garrow (2004) allocates it to his third "Modifying Teacher" redactional layer. Milavec (2003, 574-577) argues for the integrity of the whole work and that rules concerning "confession" were delayed until after initiation to avoid discouraging converts, but his reasoning depends on his theory of the "pastoral genius" of an entirely oral tradition. Vööbus (1968, 77-78) argues against the idea of an interpolation

authority of “the gospel” in 15:3-4 seems to point to a redaction of the text at the time when the community rule was subordinated to the written gospel, since this kind of explicit reference is found only in 8:2, 11:3, 15:3, 4, passages which seem to bear the marks of interpolation. The reference to the eucharist as a “pure sacrifice” in ch. 14 might at first sight seem to support a later date, since it appears to promote an understanding of the eucharist at odds with the undeveloped liturgy and christology of chs. 9-10. Some have seen here the beginnings of the later Christian eucharistic theology, in which the elements of bread and wine are associated with the body and blood of Christ as an atoning sacrifice,³ something already seemingly present in Paul and the Synoptic account of the Last Supper (Wengst 1984, 53-4). However, the *Didache* nowhere refers to the cross of Christ, nor even to the death of Christ, either in the baptismal material of chapter 7-8, or its eucharistic prayers of chapters 9-10. Jesus is understood as son of David inaugurating the eschatological kingdom and child/ servant of God. The child/ servant (παῖς) christology may relate to the crucifixion since it is probably derived from the “suffering servant” theme of Isaiah, but, even so, it is not the death of Jesus as a sacrifice which comes into play. It is the undeserved suffering of the righteous which atones for the sins of the people of God. The same theology lies behind the insistence of the *Didache* that at the eschaton it is not *all* who will rise from the dead, but only the “holy ones” who will accompany the Son of Man coming on the clouds (Draper 1997; cf. Crossan 2003, 29-57)

A re-examination of this text against the background of Jewish Biblical exegesis may provide us with a different understanding.⁴ It is the product of a community which lived and breathed the world of first century Judaism (see Draper 2006). Klaus Wengst (1984, 34-35) argues that the text was composed after “the great divide” between Judaism and Christianity and gives the text a relatively late date on the base of its supposed dependence on Matthew’s gospel, but even he sees the text as strongly stamped by Jewish influence and literary borrowing. So, perhaps the reference to the

since it uses the same terminology as 9-10 and has the motive of introducing “the subject of the confession of sins and its significance in relation to the cultic life”.

³ E.g. P. Drews (1904, 53-79; Young 1979); cf. Giet who writes, “la θυσία, d’après le contexte, se confond avec la synaxe dominicale au cours de laquelle se fait la fraction du pain et l’action de grâces” (1970, 234).

⁴ This has proved to be a productive line of enquiry into this enigmatic early Jewish Christian text. Cf. the application of *halakic* principles to the *Didache* in Alon (1996, 165-19); van de Sandt (1992, 21-41; 2006, 173-92); van de Sandt and Flusser (2002); Tomson (2005, 131-41); Draper (2005, 223-43).

“pure sacrifice” in ch. 14 may have a different logic than is usually assumed. This paper examines the possibility that it reflects the use of traditions from an ongoing debate within Judaism before any final separation between Christianity and Judaism. A number of recent studies have shown that interpretation and application of the Torah by the early church is fundamental to works which have been (wrongly) categorized as Church Orders. Thus Charlotte Elisheva Fonrobert (2001) has argued that even the composition of the *Didascalia Apostolorum* in the fourth century could be seen as a “counter Mishnah for the disciples of Jesus” and that the boundaries between Judaism and Christianity were still fluid. She concludes, convincingly, that this text “can rely on the fact that midrashic argumentation is something that the audience is familiar with and would be willing to engage in and to accept as a means of persuasion or of being persuaded” (Fonrobert 2001, 508). Evan M. Synek (1997; 1998) has described the *Apostolic Constitutions*, which contain a redacted form of the *Didache* in Book VII, as a “Christian Talmud”. Most recently, Joseph G. Mueller (2007, esp. 379) has argued that the whole tradition represented by the *Didache*, *Apostolic Tradition* and *Didascalia apostolorum* constitutes “a self-consciously apostolic tradition that presents such rules as flowing from halakhic and aggadic interpretation of the OT”. This study will argue that this character can be seen especially in the instructions in *Did.* 14.

The governing principle in the instructions on baptism and eucharist in chapters 7-10 is ritual purity and the consequent holiness of the community.⁵ In ancient Israel, the concept of purity or *tohorah* relates primarily to the condition for the presence of God with his people and hence primarily to the temple. God’s holiness requires that Israel approach him in purity, as defined by the ritual law, and also by obeying the moral law associated with his covenant and set out in the Torah.

⁵ Vööbus (*Liturgical Traditions*, 75) rejects the idea that chapters 9-10 represent an *agape* meal which some scholars have made on the basis that they do not require confession like the “real eucharist” of chapter 14. He argues instead, that holiness is fundamental to both sections and that repentance is the means to achieve and sustain holiness. However, it is noteworthy that baptism is not connected with repentance in chapter 7 but rather with effecting a change of status, in which the participant takes upon her/ himself the divine Name, signifying entry into a new (covenantal) relationship with God. Repentance and, hence, sin understood as jeopardizing holiness and so as the grounds for exclusion, emerges first in 10:6, after both baptism and participation in the holy meal reserved to the baptised (9:5). In terms of the differentiation of ritual and moral purity suggested by Klawans (2000), discussed below, this seems to indicate that baptism relates to the removal of ritual impurity, while the concern in chapter 14 is moral impurity.

Concern for ritual purity underlies the instructions on the source and quality of the water (7:1-3) and the concern to exclude the impure (the unbaptised [9:5] and the sinful [10:6]) from the eucharistic meal. This is very similar to the concept of *tohorah* in the Dead Sea Scrolls, which extends the purity required of priests on temple service to its exclusive communities as a 'new Israel'. This was, in part, the consequence of viewing the community itself as the new temple, offering the atoning sacrifice of its life of suffering, purity and obedience (e.g. in IQS 8:4-10). While the rabbis recognized that *tohorah* applied properly only to priests in the temple service, it seems nevertheless that they sought to extend it in some respects to the pious communities assembled in the *haburoth*.⁶ The concern with *tohorah*, with creating and maintaining purity is taken up also in *Did.* 14, as we shall see. The passage raises many interesting questions, for instance about the origin and meaning of the "Lord's day of the Lord" and about the relationship of this weekly gathering to the prayers in 9-10, but the focus in this paper will be on the question of the "pure sacrifice".

In this paper, purity will be understood as "a status, achieved by both moral integrity and ritual purification, which is required of Israel in order for God's holiness to reside among and protect them" (Harrington 2004, 8). Klawans, in his *Impurity and Sin in Ancient Judaism* (2000),⁷ has shown that two separate, parallel and related, systems of purity were in operation in the Hebrew Scriptures and continued to operate in Second Temple Judaism, namely ritual and moral purity, both of which could defile the temple. Ritual impurity arises from natural sources, such as childbirth, skin disease, genital discharge or dead bodies. They are not sinful if proper procedures are followed, but are contagious. Such impurity is always reversible by prescribed ritual acts. Grave moral sin, however, while not contagious, is long lasting or permanent, requires punishment and atonement and has no clearly prescribed remedy. It pollutes the holy land and hence the temple, revokes the covenant blessings and leads to exile. The three grave sins usually cited are idolatry, incest and murder, all of which defile morally but not ritually (Klawans 2000, 21-42). While the Rabbinic writings preserve

⁶ This was a widespread trend in the Second Temple period and may have been based on an interpretation of Exod 19:6. See Seidensticker (1959). Van de Sandt (2005) has already suggested this connection between the Qumran instructions and those of *Didache* 14.

⁷ I am grateful to John Clabeaux for his paper applying the work of Klawans to the *Didache*, given at the Society of Biblical Literature meeting Section on the *Didache* in 2004, "Purity Regulations in the *Didache*", and also to H. van de Sandt for taking up the issue of sacrificial language in his paper at the SBL session in 2007, "Why does *Did* 14 refer to the Eucharist as a "sacrifice"?". Both of these papers have influenced the present study.

the distinction between ritual and moral purity, the later writings from Qumran merge the two systems into one, while the earliest Christian writings seem to follow a middle path between them (Klawans 2000, 135-57).

If purity or *tohorah* is taken as a central goal of the instructions in *Did.* 7-15, then some of the questions which have been raised about the coherence of the text may perhaps be resolved. The Two Ways instruction in *Did.* 1-5, which was given as “the teaching of the Lord through the Twelve Apostles to the Gentiles”, was concerned with teaching moral purity, since Gentiles were regarded as susceptible to moral but not ritual impurity.⁸ However, in joining the Christian Jewish community, the Gentiles were also to some extent liable to purity regulations, just as Gentile servants and slaves of Jewish people in the land of Israel were—at least if table fellowship were to be preserved. Hence, *Did.* 6 calls for them to keep as much of the Torah (“yoke of the Lord”, 6:2) and food laws (6:3) as they are able, provided only that they keep “strictly” from eating food offered to idols (6:3). This provides the basis for the continuing instructions concerning purity in what follows (kinds of water, rules for fasting, maintaining purity of the table, etc.). Instructions concerning the provision from first fruits for prophets and teachers who have settled and are resident in the community (13:1-7) precede chapter 14, while instructions on the election of bishops and deacons and their relationship with prophets and teachers follow in 15:1-2. Then the focus shifts back to quarrels and difficulties in community relations in 15:3. There appears to have been considerable redactional activity here.⁹ Struggles over leadership of the community appear to have led to the disruption of an underlying and

⁸ Klawans (2000, 31, 135). The ethical table of the Decalogue forms the basis for this instruction, but other elements intrude, which are emphasized also in Rabbinic writings concerning moral purity: *porneia*, *eidololatria*, and *blasphemia* (see Draper 2008).

⁹ Most commentators argue that the old “charismatic” order of apostles and prophets was gradually being replaced by a new “settled” or “early catholic” order of bishops and deacons, beginning with Harnack (1908, esp. 319-8). Harnack was greatly influenced by the *Didache*, on which he had written an early and influential commentary, *Die Lehre der zwölf Apostel nebst Untersuchungen zur ältesten Geschichte der Kirchenverfassung und des Kirchenrechts* (1884). Niederwimmer (1996, 339), for example, states that, “Obviously the stages of development indicated here are none other than stages in the development of the “process of catholicization”, though at the time of the composition of the *Didache* this process had not been finalized.” In a number of articles (Draper 1995; 1998). I have argued that, on the contrary, the original and usual Jewish community officials of “elders/ supervisors” and “servers” was being threatened by, and taking steps to remedy, the growing power of prophets and teachers after the demise of the authority of “traveling apostles”.

coherent textual pattern. However, the key to it all is that quarrels are understood to endanger the purity of the community, and purity is usually discussed in the context of meals. Struggles over power and scarce material resources in the community, then, probably underlie the bulk of quarrels in the community of the *Didache*.

Niederwimmer's (1996, 194) contention that the real subject of the chapter is not the eucharist but internal community life, and the quarrels which disrupt it, seems to me to be correct. The actual quarrels in the community, with which the instructions are concerned, may well have related predominantly to quarrels between prophets and teachers and their supporters, on the one hand, and bishops and deacons and their supporters, on the other hand (15:1-2). The intensification of this conflict may then have led to further material on *correctio fraterna* (15:3-4), the rules concerning reproof and exclusion, because conflict is understood as impairing the purity of the community. If the last word on the relationship between prophets, teachers, bishops and deacons is the instruction found in the (written?) gospel, then the freedom of the prophets is constrained and the authority of the bishops (as interpreters of gospel?) strengthened to lessen the sources of the friction (Draper 1995).

2. "On the Lord's Day of the Lord"

The unusual expression κυριακὴν κυρίου has dominated discussions of the material in ch.14 of the *Didache*. The only partial parallel in the NT occurs in Rev 1:10 (κυριακὴ ἡμέρα) and it is the subject of considerable controversy as to whether it refers to Sunday or Sabbath. Most scholars simply take the *Didache* reference to point to Sunday worship (e.g. Niederwimmer 1996, 194). It has been taken by Audet (1958, 24-78)—who supposes an underlying ἡμέρα κυρίου which has been subjected to scribal glosses—and Rordorf (1968, 206-15) to refer to Sunday in conscious opposition to the Jewish sabbath.¹⁰ *Apostolic Constitutions* (VII.30.1) rephrases κυριακὴν κυρίου as τὴν ἀναστάσιμον τοῦ κυρίου ἡμέραν τὴν κυριακὴν φάμεν, and this certainly seems to be a deliberate attempt to correct the Jewish tendencies of its source, a redactional *Tendenz* which can be seen also in its revision of the "yoke of the Lord" and food laws in 6:2-3. Rordorf and Tuilier (1998, 64-5) argue that Ignatius' letter to the *Magnesians* 9:1-2 provides support for their

¹⁰ Most recently, Milavec (2003, 533) prefers, "And every divinely instituted day of the Lord", leaving the reference open.

position that it refers “sans doute” to Sunday in opposition to the Jewish Sabbath:

If then those who had walked in ancient practices attained unto newness of hope, no longer observing Sabbaths but fashioning their lives after the Lord's day (μηκέτι σαββατίζοντες ἀλλὰ κατὰ κυριακὴν ζῶντες), on which our life also arose through Him and through His death which some men deny—a mystery whereby we attained unto belief, and for this cause we endure patiently, that we may be found disciples of Jesus Christ our only teacher” (ANF).

Ignatius' rather tortuous expression here betrays an atmosphere of unresolved conflict. However, it is not so obvious that even here κυριακή refers unambiguously to an ordinary Sunday, rather than Easter.

It is not until the second century C.E. that unequivocal references to weekly Sunday worship can be found.¹¹ For all these reasons, the reference in the *Didache* remains an open question. N.L.A. Tidwell (1999), for instance, argues that the interpretation which sees κυριακή, as a reference to Sunday “has little or no foundation in the text” and has suggested instead that the expression κυριακὴν κυρίου represents a Semitic superlative of reduplication, in which the Name of God (the Lord [YHWH] rather than “the Lord [Jesus]”) marks out a special day. C.W. Dugmore (1962) has argued along much the same lines that the expression must refer to a special day, and points to a special Easter celebration in the community of the *Didache* as the underlying reference. If, as I have suggested the whole text has a baptismal orientation, then this connection with Easter/ *Pesach* would not be inappropriate.¹² However, if the expression were interpreted in a Jewish context, “the Day” would most naturally refer to the Day of Atonement, which is usually simply referred to as “the Day” (*Yoma*). Tidwell points out that the content of the passage does not really describe a Sunday service but is concerned with reconciliation with the neighbour, which would be most appropriate on the Day of Atonement.

3. Literary Structure

The short passage in *Did.* 14 is structured into three parts, which reflect the underlying thought pattern. In the first part, the text instructs the community

¹¹ For a balanced assessment of the evidence, see Bauckham (1982, 221-50).

¹² The connection of baptism with Easter is claimed especially for 1 Peter by Cross (1954) and more recently by Brooks (1974, 290-305). The same is argued for the background of the *Epistle of Barnabas* by Barnard (1961). This connection, however, remains speculative.

member joining the assembly to break bread and pray in the context of communal worship. Members are urged to confess their transgressions (παραπτώματα) beforehand so that the sacrifice offered by the community may be pure. In the second part, quarrelling members (πᾶς ἔχων τὴν ἀμφιβολίαν μετὰ τοῦ ἐταίρου αὐτοῦ) are forbidden to join the assembly so that the purity of the sacrifice may not be defiled. In the third, a scriptural citation is given in support of the two instructions from Mal 1:11, 14. The central principle is stated in each of the three parts (two positive statements framing a negative statement of the same principle): God requires that the community offer him a pure sacrifice:

- A. Κατὰ κυριακὴν δὲ κυρίου συναχθέντες
κλάσατε ἄρτον καὶ εὐχαριστήσατε
προσεχομολογησάμενοι τὰ πραπτώματα ὑμῶν
ὅπως καθαρὰ ἡ θυσία ὑμῶν ᾗ
- B. Πᾶς δὲ ἔχων τὴν ἀμφιβολίαν μετὰ τοῦ ἐταίρου αὐτοῦ
μὴ συνελθέτω ὑμῖν
ἕως οὗ διαλλαγῶσιν
ἵνα μὴ κοινωθῇ ἡ θυσία ὑμῶν
- C. Αὕτη γὰρ ἐστὶν ἡ ῥηθεῖσα ὑπὸ κυρίου
ἐν παντὶ τόπῳ καὶ χρόνῳ
προσφέρειν μοι θυσίαν καθαρὰν
ὅτι βασιλεὺς μέγας εἰμὶ λέγει κύριος

In the first part (A), the concern is expressed positively: confess your transgressions “so that your sacrifice may be pure”. The word *πάρπτωμα* (root sense, “a false step or blunder”, Liddell and Scott) is not common in the Septuagint, but is used extensively in Ezekiel in connection with the unfaithfulness of the people against God (Ezek 3:20; 14:11, 13; 15:8; 18:22, 24, 26; 20:27).¹³ This is likely also to be its main focus in the *Didache*, namely transgression against God (A), as opposed to sins against the neighbour (B), which are characterized equally specifically with the word

¹³ Baltz and Schneider (1993, 33-34) comment that in Greek literature outside the Judaeo-Christian corpus *πάρπτωμα* “refers to sin as individual (acts of) transgression (usually plural and usually against God)”. Cf. Michaelis (TDNT VI.170-3), who observes that only Mt 6:14 uses the word to describe offences against human beings. Note that this text in Matthew shows other parallels with the *Didache*. Even in Matthew the usage depends on its primary reference to offences against God in 6:15; the only other use of this in the Apostolic Fathers is *1 Clem.* 56:1, where it again refers to action contrary to the will of God rather than sins against the neighbour. In the *Didache*, the idea of sin against God as a “false step” would fit well with the underlying schema of the Two Ways, as Milavec notes (2003, 541).

ἀμφιβολία (root sense, “a state of being attacked on every side” and a derived sense of “ambiguity, doubt, confusion”, Liddell and Scott), even more rare in the Septuagint and awkward in this context.¹⁴ Milavec (2003, 533) rightly notes that the reference is in the singular, so that only one person is excluded: “If only one person is excluded, this must mean that the person excluded has somehow injured another by something said or done... All in all, therefore rendering the text as “having a conflict” . . . leaves open the result that the community would embrace the offended party and exclude the offender”.¹⁵ In other words, (A) concerns confession of transgressions against God as a source of impurity, while (B) concerns settling of quarrels between members of the community as sources of impurity. Both are required for the creation and maintenance of the purity of the community’s sacrifice as set out in (C). This opens up the question of the relationship of this paradigm to the distinction between ritual and moral purity systems outlined by Klawans. Do the transgressions against God relate to considerations of ritual purity (unintended offences which can be settled ritually), while the transgressions against the neighbour relate to questions of moral purity (intentional offences which require public restitution)?

3.1 Confession of Transgressions against God

It is not clear from the text at what point the confession of transgressions against God should be made, whether privately before the assembly or publicly in the course of it but before the meal. The Jerusalem MS reads *προσεχομολογησάμενοι* though it was emended to *προεχομολογησάμενοι* by Harnack and Funk. Most commentators agree that ‘confessing beforehand’ is the sense of the phrase and that the rarity of the verb has led to a scribal emendation. There is, in any case, a consensus that it refers to confession before the eucharist, but not whether it would occur before or during the assembly. Later church practice makes it seem natural to imagine it as part of a “liturgy”, but this is not necessarily the case here. Rordorf and Tuilier (1998, 68) cite the prayer of *1 Clem.* 60:2 as an exemplar of communal ritual confession, though the context in the letter hardly justifies this assumption. 1

¹⁴ Niederwimmer (1996, 197) argues that “these meanings of the word yield no sense in this passage. Here it must mean something like “quarrel””.

¹⁵ Milavec (*Ibid*, 533) also argues that the use of the word *ἑταῖρος* suggests outsiders to the community. One could point also to the instruction in *Did.* 2:7 *οὐ μισήσεις πάντα ἄνθρωπον*, but this is part of the general Two Ways tradition. Milavec’s suggestion that “A signal was thus given that the norms of the Way of Life applied to all persons, irrespective of their religious affiliation” seems to be going further than the text really warrants.

Clement asserts in 59:1 that the one who warns the disobedient bears no guilt for their sin. This is part of the Jewish tradition regarding *correctio fraterna*, as we shall see below. What follows is a rhetorical device designed by Clement to convince his hearers to change their behaviour and not a confession of any guilt on his part.

Rordorf and Tuilier also point to ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ in the parallel passage in *Did.* 4:14:

[Ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ] ἔξομολογήσῃ τὰ παραπτώματά σου
οὐ προσελεύσῃ ἐπὶ προσευχῆν σου ἐν συνειδήσει πονηρῶ

However, this cross-reference does not clarify the situation, since there is a textual problem in the passage. Only the eleventh century Jerusalem MS (H54) has ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ, while it is omitted in the *Apostolic Constitutions*, as well as in the witnesses to the underlying Two Ways source in *Barn.* 19:12 and the *Epitome* (the whole section is absent from the *Ecclesiastical Canons*, while the Latin *Doctrina apostolorum* has only the second half of the saying and omits the whole clause ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ ἔξομολογήσῃ τὰ παραπτώματά σου). Niederwimmer (1996, 113, 196), following Harnack (1884, 17), sees ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ as most likely a redactional insertion by the Didachist into the Two Ways source, which would make it even more important as evidence of the community's practice. However, since the *Apostolic Constitutions* is using the *Didache* itself directly, while *Barnabas* and the *Epitome* are independently reflecting the underlying source, their agreement makes it likely that “in the church” is a secondary gloss in the manuscript H54, reflecting later liturgical practice of general confession in the liturgy. It is implausible to argue that its absence in the *Apostolic Constitutions* is because it “apparently no longer thinks of a public confession before the assembled community” (Niederwimmer 1998, 113), when the later practice moves precisely towards such a “general confession”. Secondly, the whole passage is framed in the second person singular characteristic of catechetical instruction in 4:14, which seems to point in its context to individual rather than communal practice, while 14:1 is framed in the plural.¹⁶

The underlying thought in 4:14 is, however, related to 14:1. How could the individual believer approach God in prayer if his or her conscience is

¹⁶ Milavec (2003, 536) rightly observes, “public confession was neither implied nor necessitated” in relation to personal sins against God, except in connection with the offering of a sacrifice in the temple.

polluted by transgressions? Purity is as much the underlying condition of worship for the individual as it is for the community.¹⁷ Nevertheless, it is the gathered community which constitutes the spiritual temple in which prayers provide a spiritual sacrifice and not the individual members on their own. When individuals come together to the communal assembly to break bread and give thanks, they must come with a clear conscience so as not to defile this spiritual sacrifice offered by the community. A close parallel occurs in the Epistle of James, a text which shares important features with the *Didache*, where the community (plural) is urged: ἐχομολογεῖσθε οὖν ἀλλήλοις τὰς ἀμαρτίας καὶ εὐχεσθε ὑπὲρ ἀλλήλων ὅπως ἰαθῆτε (5:16). The parallel would be even more striking if the reading of the Majority Text were taken in which τὰ παραπτώματα replaces τὰς ἀμαρτίας in James. It could be that the individual confession of transgressions prior to the assembly was reaffirmed by corporate confession of transgressions against God in the assembly.¹⁸ Such communal confession of sins was practiced in the annual covenant renewal ritual in the *Manual of Discipline*:

The priests shall recite the just deeds of God in his mighty works, and they shall proclaim all his merciful favours towards Israel. And the levites shall recite the sins of the children of Israel, all their blameworthy transgressions and their sins during the dominion of Belial. [And all] those who enter the covenant shall confess after them and they shall say: “We have acted sinfully, [we have transgressed, we have si]nned, we have acted irreverently, we and our fathers before us, inasmuch as we walk [in the opposite direction to the precepts] of truth and justice [...] his judgment upon us and upon our fathers; but he has showered on us his merciful favour for ever and ever.” And the priests will bless all the men of God’s lot who walk unblemished in all his paths and they shall say: “May he bless you with everything good, and may he protect you from everything bad. May he illuminate your heart with the discernment of life and grace . . .” (1QS 1:21-25).

It is not inconceivable that such a general ritual confession of sins against God could have taken place in the *Didache*. However, it should be noted that this kind of confession in the *Manual of Discipline* is for the sins of the covenant people as a whole and does not include the individual’s personal transgressions of the Torah. It relates to the blessings and curses of the

¹⁷ See the troubles of Aseneth in *Joseph and Aseneth*.

¹⁸ Milavec argues that “the text itself ... favors an audible and individual confession of specific failings when assembling prior to celebrating the eucharist” (2003, 543), but this seems to go beyond the text itself, by reading 4:14 and 14:1 together and then insisting that the singular verb of 4:14 overrides the plural verb of 14.1. This ignores the fact that 4:14 is drawn from the Two Ways source and that “in church” is a gloss, as we have seen.

covenant as these impact on the people of Israel. By joining the sectarian community, the individual acknowledges the historical culpability of Israel and relies on God's mercy towards penitent Israel. Personal transgressions of Torah place the member under the curse of the covenant and hence exclusion from the community in the same way as an outsider:

However, his spirit will be obliterated, the dry with the moist, mercilessly. May God's anger and the wrath of his verdicts consume him for everlasting destruction. May all the curses of this covenant stick fast to him. May God segregate him for evil, and may he be cut off from the midst of all the sons of light because of his straying from following God on account of his idols and his blameworthy obstacle. May he assign his lot with the cursed ones for ever (1QS 2:14-17).

The idea of a weekly confession of sins against God is not on the horizon here, but rather something similar to the ritual of the Day of Atonement (which may have provided the occasion for the annual ritual at Qumran).

3.2 Confession of Transgressions against the Neighbour

The requirement that anyone involved in a quarrel with their neighbour should be excluded from the eucharist of the community is clearly related to the instructions concerning reproof in 15:3:

ἐλέγχετε δὲ ἀλλήλους μὴ ἐν ὀργῇ ἀλλ' ἐν εἰρήνῃ
ὡς ἕξετε ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ
καὶ παντὶ ἀστοξοῦντι κατὰ τοῦ ἑτέρου
μηδεὶς λαλείτω μηδὲ παρ' ὑμῶν ἀκουέτω
ἕως οὗ μετανοήσῃ.

Here the text envisages the attempt to resolve quarrels between members over community leadership with a reproof given to the offending party by the injured party designed to bring about an apology [and restitution perhaps] "not in anger but in peace". However, if the offending party will not listen, it has consequences for the whole community, since they must shun the person, neither speaking nor listening to him or her until he or she repents. This fleshes out what is implied in 14:2, where quarreling members are prohibited from gathering for the communal meal. In this case we note again that only the guilty member is placed under such a ban in the hope of forcing her or him to repent and not both.

The concept of reproof (ἐλέγγετε) has a long history in the interpretation of Lev 19:17, a key text in Jewish community life, as van de Sandt (2005) has rightly pointed out in his interpretation of *Did.* 15:3-4. He draws on the seminal article of James L. Kugel (1987), who shows that there are two different trajectories in Jewish understanding of the injunctions from Leviticus, which draw out the implications of its difficult wording. Lev 19:17 has three parts (my translation):

- A. You shall not hate your brother or sister in your heart;
- B. you shall surely reprove your neighbour,
- C. and you shall not carry sin because of him or her

The two trajectories draw different but related inferences from the Scriptural text. The Wisdom tradition (found, for instance, in Sir 19:13-17 and *TGad* 6:1-5) emphasizes the importance of not hiding one's anger or hatred, but telling it to the guilty party in a non-aggressive way in order to achieve reconciliation in the community—lest the person become more stubborn and the offended party draws down guilt on him/ herself. The second “judicial” tradition (found, for instance, at Qumran in 1QS 5:24-6.1; CD 9:2-8 and in Rabbinic literature in *Sifra* and *TgJon* to Lev 19:17) sees reproof as a part of the legal process designed to notify the person of her/his guilt and also provide evidence if the matter goes to court. In this case, the guilt to be avoided is bringing a person to court out of vengeance or hatred, concealing one's knowledge of the offence so as to heighten the person's humiliation and punishment. Van de Sandt points out that the later Rabbinic judicial process, the *hatra'ah*, requires that a person be reprovved before he or she commits the offence, rather than after, in order for the person to be found guilty. To commit an offence after being warned makes one culpable.

Van de Sandt demonstrates that Matt 18:15-17 follows the “judicial” trajectory, with its three stage process of reproof in private, followed by reproof before witnesses and finally accusation in court, even though its context seems to imply the Wisdom trajectory.¹⁹ He argues that *Didache* 15:3 follows, on the contrary, the Wisdom trajectory stressing love and reconciliation and hence could not be borrowing from Matthew.²⁰ However, the *Didache* draws on and interprets Lev 19:17 three times, never with a

¹⁹ Cf. Duling (1999) who argues that a social scientific analysis of Matt 18:15-17 reveals various stages in the formation of the Matthean community.

²⁰ It has become something of a consensus in recent studies of the *Didache*, though not without protest. See the various studies in van de Sandt (2005).

verbatim quotation of the Septuagint text, and it is clear that both elements of community reconciliation and judicial process are present in the various redactional layers of the text. This can be tabulated in terms of the three elements of Lev 19:17: (A) prohibition on hatred, (B) reproof, (C) danger of incurring sin.

In 2:6-7, the command to reprove follows this order: avoiding taking evil counsel against the neighbour, which would incur sin (C), a prohibition against hatred (A), and reproof (B) is to be undertaken with prayer and love for the neighbour, lest the reproof should incur sin and fail in its object of building communal harmony:

οὐ λήψη βουλὴν πονηρὰν κατὰ τοῦ πλησίον σου
οὐ μισήσεις πάντα ἄνθρωπον
ἀλλὰ οὐς μὲν ἐλέγχεις
περὶ ὧν δὲ προσεύξῃ
οὐς δὲ ἀγαπήσεις ὑπὲρ τὴν ψυχὴν σου.

The importance of this text is not lost in the tradition. The *Ecclesiastical Canons* add οὐς δὲ ἐλεήσεις after οὐς μὲν ἐλέγξεις to emphasise the importance of having the right compassionate attitude in reproof, though it is unlikely to be part of the original Two Ways source. The *Apostolic Constitutions* recognizes the reference to Lev 19.17 and conforms the text of this saying to the Septuagint. The configuration here seems to represent the kind of Wisdom interpretation suggested by Kugel.

In 4:3, reproof (B) is closely associated with avoiding schisms in the community, and reconciliation is designed to deal with strife (A). However, the avoidance of “double mindedness” in this process seems also to keep alive the association of guilt with concealing one’s knowledge out of malice (C):

Οὐ ποιήσεις σχίσμα
εἰρηνεύσεις δὲ μαχομένους
κρινεῖς δικαίως
οὐ λήψη πρόσωπον
ἐλέγξει ἐπὶ παραπτώματι
οὐ διψυχήσεις πότερον ἔσται ἢ οὐ.

This saying represents the “judicial” trajectory traced by Kugel, since it is unjust judgment based on favouritism which incurs guilt. It is injustice which draws down guilt rather than the internalizing of hatred. These first

two “reproof sayings” reflecting the opposite trends of interpretation are both present in the underlying (and probably Jewish) source.²¹

Van de Sandt rightly observes that reproof (B) in 15:3 is concerned with avoidance of anger and hence sin (C), to preserve community peace (A) and not judicial process:

ἐλέγγετε δὲ ἀλλήλους μὴ ἐν ὀργῇ ἀλλ' ἐν εἰρήνῃ
ὡς ἔχετε ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ
καὶ παντὶ ἀστοξοῦντι κατὰ τοῦ ἐτέρου
μηδεὶς λαλείτω
μηδὲ παρ' ὑμῶν ἀκουέτω
ἕως οὗ μετανοήσῃ.

Yet, the consequences of the reproof could be exclusion from the community, which implies a judicial process. After all, some community process is implied in the decision as to whether someone is guilty and must be excluded and whether the person has satisfied the requirement of repentance leading to re-admission.

Clearly the community attributes great significance to resolution of quarrels between its members and presupposes some quasi-legal process whereby disputes can be adjudicated—hence the need to “judge justly” (κρινεῖς δικαίως) in *Did.* 4:3. The matter relates to the purity of its worship, and purity is at the centre of its cultic life. Niederwimmer (1998, 197) sees in ch. 14 a pollution sustained by the offering of the communal prayers understood as a “sacrifice of praise” if someone pronounces them with guilty lips: “It is stained if guilty persons speak it, but it is pure if their guilt is removed.... In any case, it is true that participation in the *θυσία* demands moral purity as ritual purity—and the prior purification by *exhomologesis* is intended in that sense”. However, the conflation of ritual and moral purity, which he suggests, needs further discussion in the light of Klawans study.

3.3 *The Implications of the Threefold Structure of Didache 14*

Returning now to the threefold structure of the instructions in *Did.* 14, we need to see whether the situation addressed by the positive instruction in

²¹ Most studies of the *Didache* since J.-P. Audet’s important study, “Literary and Doctrinal Relationships of the ‘Manual of Discipline’” ([1952] 1996), have accepted that a Jewish or Jewish Christian source Two Ways source lies behind the parallel material in *Didache*, *Barnabas* 18-20, *Doctrina apostolorum* and various other early Christian sources. Most recently see van de Sandt and Flusser (2002).

Section A is the same as that involved in the quarrel between members in Section B. I suggest not. The confession in A relates to *παραπτώματα*, hardly the best description of a quarrel. My initial suggestion, based on the use of this term in the Septuagint, is that the reference is to transgressions against God through minor transgressions of the (ritual?) Law, which would correspond to what are called in the Hebrew Scriptures *shegagah*, the inadvertent everyday transgressions of omission and commission, which do not amount to the kind of deliberate defiance of God's commandments *byad ramah*. The latter could not be resolved by mere confession (Num 15:30). The offence is viewed as a sin against God, who alone can absolve the guilty person. However the inadvertent sin is forgiven in God's graciousness more easily than sins against the fellow member of the community. God is always willing to forgive and even provides the means in the Day of Atonement and in the Guilt Offerings to deal with these sins against Godself. One's fellow human being, however, is the only one who can forgive transgressions against him or her, and they are not nearly so ready to forgive. So A and B relate to different kinds of transgressions. Is it because they relate to two different systems of purity, ritual purity and moral purity in Klawans terms? Not unambiguously. Section C then provides a Scriptural legitimation from Mal 1:11, 14 for the legal interpretation given in the first two sections.

The text provided diverges from the LXX with the addition of *καὶ χρόνῳ* after *ἐν παντὶ τόπῳ*. The text of the *Apostolic Constitutions* omits *καὶ χρόνῳ* to bring the citation into line with the Septuagint. Nevertheless, this reading has support in the Targum to the Minor Prophets (Gordon 1974), and is another sign of the continuity of the *Didache* with other Jewish interpretive communities. Wengst's claim (1984, 31, 56; cf. Niederwimmer 1998, 198) that the omission of *παντοκράτωρ* after *λέγει κύριος* reflects a Christian interpretation in which the "Lord" is the Lord Jesus, seems unwarranted (particularly since later Christian usage identified Jesus as the Pantocrator).

The text of Malachi is used as a proof text here, as widely in Hellenistic Jewish texts, because it sees the offering of a pure sacrifice in the Diaspora as bringing glory to the Name of God. This underlines the importance of the idea expressed in the eucharistic prayer after the meal (10:2), that the Name of God tabernacles in the hearts of the community (singly or corporately: *εὐχαριστοῦμέν σο ἰπάτερ ἅγιε ὑπὲρ τοῦ ἁγίου ὀνόματός σου οὗ κατεσκήνωσας ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ἡμῶν*). The same scenario is sketched in a negative sense by Paul in Rom 2:23-25, where a parallel text from LXX to Isa 52:5 (*τάδε λέγει κύριος δι' ὑμᾶς διὰ παντός τὸ ὄνομά μου βλασφημεῖται ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν*), which diverges from the Masoretic text, is used to support the contention that the conduct of the Jewish people has led to God's Name

being despised: τὸ γὰρ ὄνομα τοῦ θεοῦ δι' ὑμᾶς βλασφημεῖται ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, καθὼς γέγραπται.

4. Spiritualization of Sacrifice and Confession of Sins in the Dead Sea Scrolls

It is common cause that the spiritualization of the Jewish sacrificial cult began already in Diaspora communities as, for instance, in *T. Levi* 3:6 (Wengst 1984, 54 fn. 181; cf. Milavec 2003, 543-47)—though Hebrew fragments of this testament have been found at Qumran, so that it may not have been Hellenistic in origin. Philo of Alexandria gives a thoroughgoing philosophical and spiritual interpretation of the cult (e.g. *de Spec. Leg.* I.203; 248; 272), although he rejects the abandonment of the material temple cult itself. In the synagogues of the Hellenistic world the local communal worship came to play an increasing role in cultic life and no doubt came to compensate, to some extent, for the absence of the temple. Dibelius (1938, 32-41; cf. Wengst 1984, 56) makes use of this to argue that the eucharistic prayers of *Did.* 9-10 were already in use as prayers of the Diaspora synagogues very much in their present form, except for the “light Christianization” of the addition of “through Jesus your servant” to the eucharistic prayers. The Dead Sea Scrolls which are also to be dated approximately to the centuries before and after the turn of the era, on the other hand, offer more concrete evidence for the way in which the sacrificial cult of the temple could be spiritualized and appropriated in the worship and life of a first century Jewish community excluded from participation in the cult. In addition, one finds there the same kind of concern about the pollution of the cult by quarrels in the community (cf. Milavec 2003, 566-8).

Let us sketch in brief the relevant aspects from the *Manual of Discipline*. Those who enter the community after careful instruction in the Ways of Light and Darkness are admitted at a ritual of covenant renewal into a communion of knowledge, abilities and possessions (1QS 1:11-13; negatively framed in 2:25-3.6). They are purified by the atoning work of the community, cleansed by purifying waters and their sins removed by “the spirit of true counsel”. However, the new convert is not allowed to eat the pure food (*tohorah*) of the community until he²² has undergone a year of

²² It appears that only males were admitted to full membership of the Qumran community, though female bodies were also found buried there, and this assumption could be questioned. Philo in *De vita contemp.* describes an Essene-like group of Therapeutae in Egypt which had female members.

probation, nor is he allowed to drink the pure drink of the community until the end of the second year when his property is also merged with that of the community (6:13-23).

This communion of purity is understood as forming a spiritual temple, offering spiritual sacrifices (see Becker 1964; Gärtner 1965). This is especially clear in the passage from the *Manual* describing the foundation of the community:

When these things exist in Israel the Community council shall be founded on truth, like an everlasting plantation, a holy house for Israel and the foundation of the holy of holies for Aaron, true witnesses for the judgment and chosen by the will (of God) to atone for the earth and to render the wicked their retribution. It (the Community) will be the tested rampart, the precious cornerstone that does not ... whose foundations do not/ shake or tremble in their place. Blank It will be the most holy dwelling for Aaron with total knowledge of the covenant of justice and in order to offer a pleasant /aroma/; and it will be a house of perfection and truth in Israel in order to establish a covenant in compliance with the everlasting decrees (1QS 8:4-10).²³

At the heart of this spiritual temple lies the pure meal and pure drink of the community. While most of the concern in instruction concerning joining the community relates to sin against God (creation of purity), most of the instructions concerning community life relate to sin against fellow members of the community (maintenance of purity). Most importantly from our point of view, the instructions on community discipline with regard to the fellow members is given in the context of the maintenance of the pure meal and the pure drink of the community. The consequence of an offence against the fellow member or members of the community is exclusion from the meal, the purity of the community. The instructions on those who cause conflict in the community are usually framed as follows, in the first of the rules:

And these are the regulations by which they shall judge him in the scrutiny of the Community depending on the case. If one is found among them who has lied knowingly concerning goods, he shall be excluded from the pure food of the Many (*wybdylhw mtwk thrt hrbym*) for a year and shall be sentenced to a quarter of his bread (1QS 6:24-25; cf. 8:17-19).

The continued use of the terminology of *tohorah* in connection with the use of exclusion as a punishment for breaking the rules makes it likely that the

²³ All quotations and references to the Dead Sea Scrolls are taken from F. García Martínez, and E. J. C. Tigchelaar (1997-1998). The electronic form of the text has been used.

underlying rationale for this exclusion is the preservation of the purity of the meal. In this punishment, the guilty party is still provided with food—albeit drastically reduced—and allowed to continue living in the community but not to eat in the assembly, so that it is the meal in the assembly whose purity is safeguarded by his exclusion.

The meal is nowhere described as a sacrifice in the Scrolls. Nevertheless, the meals were certainly characterized by the kind of *berakoth* which we find in the *Didache*. In the *Messianic Rule*, there is an elaborate description of the pure meal in the eschatological time when the Messiah arrives:

After, [the Me]ssiah of Israel shall ent[er] and before him shall sit the chiefs [of the clans of Israel, each] one according to his dignity, according to their [positions] in their camps and in their marches. And all the chiefs of the cl[ans of the congreg]ation with the wise [men and the learned] shall sit before them, each one according to his dignity. And [when] they gather at the table of community [or to drink] the new wine, and the table of community is prepared [and] the new wine [is mixed] for drinking, [no-one should stretch out] his hand to the first-fruit of the bread and of the [new wine] before the priest, for [he is the one who bl]esses the first-fruit of bread and of the new wine [and stretches out] his hand towards the bread before them. Afterwards, the Messiah of Israel shall stretch out his hand towards the bread. [And afterwards, shall] bless all the congregation of the community, each [one according to] his dignity. And in accordance with this regulation they shall act at each me[al, when] at least ten m[en are gat]hered. (1QSa 2:17-22).

It is unclear whether this eschatological meal was already being practiced in the community or was envisaged as a future event, but it is likely that the meal as it is described here would be substantially the same as that already celebrated in the community. As is most likely the case also in the *Didache*, the meal itself is not a sacrifice, nor are its individual elements, but the eucharistic prayers almost certainly would have been understood as such. Prayer and observance of the Torah become the sacrifice offered by the community, which is efficacious for atonement:

When these exist in Israel in accordance with these rules in order to establish the spirit of holiness in truth eternal, in order to atone for the fault of the transgression and for the guilt of sin and for approval for the earth, without the flesh of burnt offerings and without the fats of sacrifice—the offering of the lips in compliance with the decree will be like the pleasant aroma of justice and the correctness of behaviour will be acceptable like a freewill offering—at this moment the men of the Community shall set themselves apart (like) a holy house for Aaron, in order to enter the holy of holies, and

(like) a house of the Community for Israel, (for) those who walk in perfection (1QS 9:3-6).

It is significant that the Qumran community also require an annual confession of sins at the covenant renewal ceremony (1QS 1:18-2.4). The priests bless God and recite his favours to Israel. As we have already seen, the Levites recite the sins of the people of Israel and the people confess their sins before receiving the blessing of the priests. It is not said when this great communal confession of sins takes place, but it is not unlikely that this may have taken place on the Day of Atonement, which was significant for the community it seems, since there is a passage which describes the Wicked Priest attacking the Teacher of Righteousness in “the house of his exile” on the Atonement:

Its interpretation concerns the Wicked Priest who pursued the Teacher of Righteousness to consume him with the ferocity of his anger in the place of his banishment, in festival time, during the rest of the day of Atonement. He paraded in front of them, to consume them and make them fall on the day of fasting, the sabbath of their rest (1QpHab 11:4-8).

Klawans (2000, 63-91) has argued, convincingly, for an evolution in the thinking of Qumran concerning purity and that the later Qumran texts, such as the *Manual of Discipline* and the *Habakkuk Peshar* merge the two systems of ritual and moral purity into one.

From this rather brief overview, we can see that the conception of the relationship of confession, purity, meal, spiritual sacrifice and community discipline in these texts from Qumran is not far removed from that which is reflected in *Did.* 14. This is not because the community of the *Didache* is somehow standing in an Essene track in the Israelite tradition, but because of a broader common understanding held by most, if not all, Jewish groups in the first century (Draper 1983). However, our study suggests that the *Didache* retains more of a distinction between ritual and moral purity, even if the two are brought into close connection.

5. Rabbinic Teaching on Quarreling and Sacrifice

Rabbinic thinking in the period of the Mishnah makes a distinction between offences against God and offences against a fellow human being. While God could and would forgive the penitent sinner (evidenced by repentance and good deeds) in cases where the sin offended against himself, forgiveness of the penitent sinner (whose penitence is evidenced by public apology and restitution), in cases where the offence was against a fellow human being,

depended on the agreement of the offended party. This became a particularly important issue with regard to the Day of Atonement, where an unattributed and unchallenged ruling of the Mishnah is that:

If a man said, ‘I will sin and repent, and sin again and repent,’ he will be given no chance to repent. [If he said,] ‘I will sin and the Day of Atonement will effect atonement’, then the Day of Atonement effects no atonement. **For the transgressions that are between man and God the Day of Atonement effects atonement, but for transgressions that are between a man and his fellow the Day of Atonement effects atonement only if he has appeased his fellow.** This did R. Eleazar b. Azariah (T1-2) expound: *From all your sins shall ye be clean before the Lord* (Lev 16:30)—for transgressions that are between man and God the Day of Atonement effects atonement; but for transgressions that are between a man and his fellow the Day of Atonement effects atonement only if he has appeased his fellow. R. Akiba said: Blessed are ye, O Israel. Before whom are ye made clean and who makes you clean? Your Father in heaven; as it is written, *And I will sprinkle clean water upon you and you shall be clean* (Ezek 36:25). And again it said, *O Lord the hope (mikweh) of Israel* (Jer 17:13); —as the *Mikweh* cleanses the unclean so does the Holy One, blessed be he, cleanse Israel (*m. Yoma* 8.9 Danby text; cf. *Sifra* Lev. 16:30 (32a); bold emphasis mine).

The Mishnah comments in another unattributed ruling in *Baba Qammah* on the case of a man who stole from a proselyte, swore falsely to him and then the proselyte died, ruling that he should repay the value plus a fifth to the priests and make the Guilt-offering to the Altar. In connection with the death of the offender, the Mishnah comments:

For if a man brought what he had stolen before he offered his Guilt-offering, he has fulfilled his obligation; but if he brought his Guilt-offering before he brought what he had stolen, he has not yet fulfilled his obligation (*m. BK* 9:12).

Unattributed and undisputed rulings are usually regarded as more ancient than those attributed sayings which bear the marks of controversy.²⁴ So too in the Babylonian Talmud, in an incident attributed to Gamaliel II (T1-2):

Come and hear [again]: ‘Bluria (Valeria) the proselyte put this question to Rabban Gamaliel: It is written in your Law, [she said], who lifteth not up the countenance (Deut 10:17), and it is also written, The Lord shall lift up his countenance upon thee (Num 6:26). R. Jose the priest (also called Jose the Pious, T1-2) joined the conversation and said to her: I will give you a parable which will illustrate the matter. A man lent his neighbour a maneh and fixed

²⁴ Klawans, *Impurity and Sin*, 132.

a time for payment in the presence of the king, while the other swore to pay him by the life of the king. When the time arrived he did not pay him, and he went to excuse himself to the king. The king, however, said to him: The wrong done to me I excuse you, but go and obtain forgiveness from your neighbour. So here: one text [Num 6:26] speaks of offences committed by a man against God, the other [Deut 10:17] of offences committed by a man against his fellow man (*b. Rosh Hash 17b*).²⁵

This ruling holds until it is changed by Rabbi Aqiba,²⁶ who was executed for supporting the Bar Kochaba revolt in 135 C.E., suggesting that the earlier ruling would have been known in the first century C.E., the period in which the *Didache* was also compiled:

[This explanation was generally accepted] until R. Aqiba came and taught: One text speaks of God's attitude before the final sentence, the other of his attitude after the final sentence!—Here too the case is that of an individual (*b. Rosh Hash 18a-18b*).

However, in a much later text, the ruling is still known, since R. Joseph b. Helbe (PA 3-4) is reported as interpreting 1 Sam 2:25 in similar fashion.

The offended party could refuse, and what then? Would the unforgiven person be excluded from participation in the rituals and benefits of the Day of Atonement for ever? R. Jose b. Hanina limits the number of times one should ask forgiveness to three; others were not convinced—Rab offended R. Hanina b. Hama on a trivial matter in the school and the latter refused his petition for forgiveness on thirteen eves of the Day of Atonement. The talmudic account suggests that the latter was motivated by professional jealousy and eventually forced Rab to leave for Babylon. There are many stories along these lines (e.g the story of R. Eleazar b. R. Simeon in *b. Ta'an 20a*; of R. Jeremiah and R. Abba in *b. Yoma 87a*; R. Joseph and Raba b. R. Joseph b. Hama in *b. `Erub 54a*). It may be this kind of problem which lies behind Jesus' teaching in the Q material in Matt 18:21-22 = Luke 17:4.

In any case, the second point to be made from the Mishnaic period is that the means of settling offences against God and offences against human companions is different. Repentance before God is a matter between the individual and God, which can be settled by repentance and in certain cases sacrifice (or alms and good deeds), while offence against the neighbour is a

²⁵ All quotations from the Talmud are from the Soncino text and translation.

²⁶ R. Aqiba is widely associated with the origin of the Mishnah, although not as its author since it probably only reached its final form in the third century C.E. The principle in the Mishnah is that the final decision goes with R. Aqiba (*we-kulhu `aliba deR. Aqiba*, *b. Sanh 86a*). For the evolution and problems of the Mishnah, see Strack and Stemberger (1991).

matter of public record and honour-shame,²⁷ which could be far more complicated to settle since it involved agreement and reparation.

We see this also in a statement attributed to R. Eleazar (c 270) in the ninth century composite text, *Pesiqta Rabbati*, which may draw on earlier tradition:

R. Eleazar has said, “It is generally held, that, if someone has openly wronged his neighbour, and wants to apologise to him after a certain time, the wronged person says to him, “You have wronged me openly and you wish to apologise among four eyes? Go and fetch those people in whose presence you wronged me; then I will be reconciled with you”. But God is not so: If a person forgets himself and curses God in the Market place, so this says to him, “Repent among four eyes and I will accept you”. (*Pesiq. Rab.* 163b)

It appears to me that a similar distinction is being made implicitly by *Didache* 14:1 and 2. For the purity of the assembly to be maintained, both kinds of offences need to be resolved by its members. Confession of offences against God, particularly I suggest the sins of ignorance or omission, must be made before the eucharistic worship of the assembly, whether before or during assembly of the community. In the history of the church, the confession ultimately ended up as a general confession made by the whole community before the commencement of the eucharist proper. However, offences against companions in the community could not be settled in the assembly, since they would involve restitution, public apology and the acceptance of the apology. The presence of quarreling members in the assembly thus implied the presence of unresolved guilt, which would profane the purity of the worship. The passage in *m. BQam* 9.12, which we have already examined, brings into play the legal principle of Lev 5:14-6.7 (cf. Num 5:5-10). This passage provides parallel instructions concerning transgressions of the “holy things of the Lord”, which requires the sacrifice of a ram, and instructions concerning transgressions of God’s instructions concerning the neighbour, which also mention the sacrifice of a ram. In other words, the process for atoning for sin against God and against the neighbour is different but not unrelated. Forgiveness for transgressions against God is connected with forgiveness for transgressions against the neighbour.

²⁷ Malina (1981) has rightly emphasized the importance of honour-shame culture in the ancient Mediterranean world, though I would argue that the nature of the honour-shame dynamics was not “pan-Mediterranean” but would derive its content from specific local cultures. What counts as an insult or as honour differs from culture to culture.

6. Literary or Traditional Relations with Matthew 5:23-26

It has long been noted that *Did.* 14 seems to relate strongly to Jesus' teaching in the Sermon on the Mount concerning the avoidance of anger as something which leads to or is associated with murder (Matt 5:23-26):

ἐὰν οὖν προσφέρῃς τὸ δῶρόν σου ἐπὶ τὸ θυσιαστήριον
 κάκει μνησθῆς ὅτι ὁ ἀδελφός σου ἔχει τι κατὰ σοῦ,
 ἄφες ἐκεῖ τὸ δῶρόν σου ἔμπροσθεν τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου
 καὶ ὕπαγε πρῶτον διαλλάγηθι τῷ ἀδελφῷ σου,
 καὶ τότε ἐλθὼν πρόσφερε τὸ δῶρόν σου.
 ἴσθι εὐνοῶν τῷ ἀντιδίκῳ σου ταχύ,
 ὡς ὅτου εἶ μετ' αὐτοῦ ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ,
 μήποτε σε παραδῶ ὁ ἀντίδικος τῷ κριτῇ
 καὶ ὁ κριτὴς τῷ ὑπηρέτῃ
 καὶ εἰς φυλακὴν βληθήσῃ
 ἀμὴν λέγω σοι, οὐ μὴ ἐξέλθῃς ἐκεῖθεν,
 ἕως ἂν ἀποδῶς τὸν ἕσχατον κοδράντην.

This special Matthean material has other links with the *Didache*, in that the saying on the “last farthing” is found in a different context in the collection of Jesus tradition in 1:6, relating to a different but still judicial process in connection with claiming support for the poor when not in need. Taking money from another member of the community on the false pretext of being in need would inevitably occasion quarrels. As so often, the connections between the two texts seem to indicate the same communal lifestyle: instructions about life style in the *Didache* turn up in a different context in Matthew as teaching of Jesus. We can leave on one side here the question of dependence.²⁸ However, we should note that there is a difference in focus, in that Matthew is addressed to the individual, whereas, as Giet (1970, 17) points out, the plural formulation of *Did.* 14:2 “let no one come together with you” and “your sacrifice” presupposes a communal setting.

In any case, the principle provided by Jesus in Matthew's text is that even a sacrificial offering in the temple may and should be interrupted if the person making the offering remembers that he has not settled a quarrel with his neighbour. The fulfillment of one obligation of the Torah may be suspended on the basis of the need to fulfill a greater obligation of the

²⁸ Though note Garrow's (2004) claim that Matthew is dependent on the *Didache*.

Torah. As Strack and Billerbeck's *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch* (1922) on Matthew makes clear, with many examples, this was not so contrary to the thinking of the Pharisees as is sometimes supposed. Jesus in Matthew and the author/ compiler of the *Didache* are building on a solid tradition, it seems.²⁹ So, for Jesus in Matthew's gospel, it is quite logical to break off the guilt offering in the temple to go and be reconciled to the offended party, since the guilt offering would in any case not be acceptable to God until the appropriate reparation had been made and accepted. The issue would have become even more urgent in the case of the Day of Atonement. The rabbis would not have disagreed with Jesus. It was a matter of common understanding, which is why the saying of Jesus has the force it does. The *Didache* is not speaking of sacrifices in the temple in Jerusalem, of course. But lying behind *Did.* 14 is an understanding of the community as a temple in which God's holy Name was dwelling (10:2), the Name for which the world was created (10:3), which could be profaned by either ritual or moral impurity, sins against God or sins against one's neighbour. Communal meals were thus a provision of "spiritual food and drink", to which only the holy could be admitted (9:5, 10:6).

It is significant also that the Lord's prayer in Matthew (6:9-13), close in wording to the prayer in *Did.* 8:2, makes the forgiveness of one's debts against God dependent on one's forgiveness of one's neighbour's debts. This seems to presuppose the kind of situation envisaged in *Did.* 14, where refusal to pardon one's neighbor would see her/him continue to be excluded from the community. However, if his own sins against God remain against him until he forgives his neighbour, this would bring impurity on him in turn and require that he, like the offending neighbour, be excluded from the pure meal of the Christian until he forgave.

7. Conclusion

This study has attempted to show that the short instruction in *Did.* 14 represents Christian Jewish *aggadah* on sacrificial atonement, underpinned by the interpretation of Mal. 1:11, 14. It distinguishes between offences against God (perhaps understood as ritual offences?) and offences against fellow members of the community (certainly understood as moral offences).

²⁹ Rordorf and Tuilier (1998, 69-70) point also to the similarities with Mark 11.25, where divine forgiveness is made dependent on human forgiveness, but this seems more remote from the world of the *Didache* than the Matthew parallel.

Both offences render offerings unclean, but, while unintentional offences against God may be settled by repentance and the spiritual sacrifice of communal *berakoth*, offences against fellow members of the community require public apology and restitution as well as sacrifice. The purity of the sacrifice offered to God thus requires that the reconciliation and restitution for offences against the fellow member of the community be made first. This is why the offenders are excluded from the “pure meal” or *tohorah* of both the Qumran and the *Didache* communities. Both communities understand their assemblies as constituting the eschatological temple of God which requires purity. Central to this is table purity (which had become important for the Pharisees also). The Qumran community also practised an annual ritual of communal confession followed by a priestly blessing, in the context of initiation, probably on the Day of Atonement. This cannot resolve the question of whether the “Lord’s Day of the Lord” in the *Didache* was an annual ritual of confession and blessing on the Day of Atonement (perhaps in the context of initiation), as suggested by Tidwell or at Passover/ Easter as suggested by Dugmore. However, it is an attractive suggestion, which is certainly consonant with the content of the chapter.

Secondly, the ruling in the *Didache* is supported by a Scriptural interpretation, which is particularly appropriate for a Jewish community living in the Diaspora. God’s name is to be honoured among the Gentiles because of the pure sacrifices which are offered by the community. The use of traditional Jewish hermeneutical techniques, themes and traditions does not appear superficial here, but rather an integral part of the thinking and common understanding of the community. This seems to me to support, at least *prima facie*, the contention, which can be established from other parts of the text, that the *Didache* is the rule of a Jewish Christian—or more correctly Christian Jewish—community, albeit one which is concerned to accept, socialize and integrate Gentile converts.

Modern Christian liturgies understand the General Confession to refer to ‘sin’ in the most general sense, including both the knowledge of or feeling of having wronged God and also knowledge of or feeling of having wronged the neighbour. Both are merged, for instance, in the words of the English Book of Common Prayer and its more recent successors. The result is often a sense that a person can apologize to God for some wrong done to another person and let it rest there. However, the *Didache* indicates that the early Jewish Christian church kept a separate focus on sin against God and sin against the neighbour, so that ordinary worshipers would have been aware of their need to abstain from the eucharist if they were in an unresolved quarrel with their friends, family or neighbours. They were aware that such a quarrel

was not a private matter, but defiled the purity of the whole community and its sacrifice of thanksgiving. It seems likely that the widespread practice of the Kiss of Peace prior to the eucharist was the outward liturgical symbol of the requirement to be reconciled to the companion, already in Paul (Rom 16:16; 1 Cor 16:20; 2 Cor 13:12; 1 Thess 5:26), in 1 Pet 5:14, and certainly in Justin's *1 Apol.* 65 (which shows other links with *Didache*):

Having ended the prayers, we salute one another with a kiss (ἀλλήλων φιλήματι ἀσπαζόμεθα παυσάμενοι τὸν εὐχον). There is then brought to the president of the brethren bread and a cup of wine mixed with water; and he taking them, gives praise and glory to the Father of the universe, through the name of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, and offers thanks at considerable length for our being counted worthy to receive these things at His hands (ANF).

So too the fourth century Cyril of Jerusalem writes, "The kiss therefore is the sign that our souls are mingled together and banish all remembrance of wrongs" (*On the Mysteries* V, Lecture 23, NF).

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