

## The “Parting of the Ways” in the study of Christian Origins

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Since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the historians and theologians have viewed the origins of Christianity as a consequence of a process of separation between those who confessed Jesus as the messiah, and Jews who did not. In attempting to describe and account for this separation, scholars frequently resorted to familial metaphors, in which Judaism and Christianity were like a mother and her daughter, or siblings, in which they were like Jacob and Esau, the twin sons of Jacob. Since the latter decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, however, the metaphor that has dominated the discussion is the “parting of the ways.” Even those who critique the metaphor, seeing it as inadequately or even entirely wrong-headed, continue to use it. In this paper, I will examine the frame of reference of the metaphor, the diverse nuances and meanings attached to it, and its explanatory value in scholarship from the 1990s to the present.

To my knowledge, the first time the “parting” metaphor appeared in print was in the title of a book edited by F.J. Foakes-Jackson in 1912, entitled *The Parting of the Roads*. Some 22 years later, in 1934, James Parkes used “The Parting of the Ways” as the title of chapter 3 of his book, *Conflict between Church and Synagogue*,<sup>1</sup> but the metaphor did not otherwise appear in this book. It took until the early 1990s for the metaphor to become popular, through the work of James Dunn and others.<sup>2</sup> This metaphor still remains the most widespread way of referring succinctly to Christianity’s separation from Judaism.<sup>3</sup>

I argue that the “parting of the ways” metaphor reflects perspectives that did not arise from the primary sources as such, but from the intellectual context of its proponents from the late 20<sup>th</sup> to the present. There are two elements in particular that account for the development and ongoing appeal of this metaphor. One pertains to the historical events of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that shaped the consciousness of European and North American scholars and theologians. The two world wars, the War of Independence in the middle east, the partition of India, the Korean War, and the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, redrew the world map, as did the creation and dissolution of the Soviet Union. Anyone watching these events, whether close up and personal, or from the newspaper and news reports, would come away with the conviction that boundaries and identities are made and unmade through conflict. It is a short step from these observations to the idea that conflict is essential to the creation of new entities, and to allow this idea to shape the narrative of Christian origins and its attendant metaphors.

The second element that has shaped the “parting” metaphor pertains to the post-holocaust reckoning of the Christian churches about the role played by anti-Jewish teachings about supersessionism, the perfidy of the Jews, and the Jewish role in the death of Jesus, in preparing the ground for the Nazi program of extermination. An important result of this reckoning was the Vatican II document *Nostra Aetate*, which stated, among things, that “Although the Church is the new people of God, the Jews should not be presented as rejected or accursed by God, as if this followed from the Holy Scriptures;” and that “the Church, mindful of the patrimony she shares with the Jews and moved not by political reasons but by the Gospel’s spiritual love, decries hatred, persecutions, displays of anti-Semitism, directed against Jews at any time and by anyone.” Protestant churches also issued similar statements, and many

scholars of New Testament and early Christianity endeavoured to rewrite the narratives of the historical Jesus, Pauline literature, and Christian origins in ways that avoided or at least minimized their anti-Jewish overtones.

### **“Parting of the ways” as roadway metaphor**

At its core, the term metaphor denotes “the transfer of a concept endowed with a meaning derived from a specific context to another context.”<sup>4</sup> Metaphors can be found in every type of speech and discourse, from the everyday to the highly esoteric, and they are essential to the practice of historiography, as they are to most other fields from art history to zoology. Metaphors are both descriptive and generative: they provide concise descriptions of complex hypotheses or narrative, but they also push discourses in directions that they might not have taken based on the evidence alone. And metaphors often serve purposes that go beyond description. They often support ideologies, prejudices, and a range of unstated assumptions. For these reasons, metaphors must be evaluated, and accepted, modified, or discarded on the basis of what underlies them and how well they account for the evidence.

The “parting of the ways” metaphor has its source in the world of civil engineering, specifically, transportation planning. In its literal sense the metaphor refers to a single thoroughfare that splits into two roadways, each leading in a different direction. It is important to note that the metaphor does not refer to the people who travel these routes, but to the routes themselves. The metaphor therefore does not refer to the ways in which individual people constructed their identities as Christ-confessors, as non-Christ-confessors, as both or neither, but to the existence of two or more paths that individuals could take. Just as car drivers can take one road one day, and another road the next, so too can individuals, if they so wish, choose among these different roads on any given day, even if, like many of us, they tend to follow the same routes much of the time.

The parting of the ways implies a single origin for what became two distinct entities, Judaism and Christianity. It does not, however, draw attention to the roads’ similarities nor does it imply any engagement – cooperation, tension, or rivalry – between them. There is nothing about a roadway that requires it to maintain any of the elements – number of lanes, width of lanes, number of exits, type of paving, presence or absence of rest stops – that characterized the thoroughfare from which it emerged or to which it runs parallel.

Despite its lack of complex resonances, however, the roadway metaphor has had a generative and productive role in the discourse on Christian origins. Anyone who drives along a major highway knows that diverging roadways are usually marked by fixed exit signs and off ramps. Unless there is construction or some other disturbance, as occurs all summer long in Ottawa and Montreal, these signs do not change from day to day or year to year. Similarly, the parting of the ways prompts or perhaps simply reflects the historians’ search for a specific date or event that marks the moment of parting. Just as offramps mark a gradual move towards the new roadway, there would have been a buildup to separation. Nevertheless, there remains a moment when the split becomes definitive and recognized by all parties.

The parting of the ways metaphor has much to commend it. It acknowledges the common origins of Judaism (whether we see those as rabbinic or pre-rabbinic or non-rabbinic) and what became Christianity. It also recognizes that Judaism, far from stagnating, continued to develop in its own distinct ways after the ways parted. And, in contrast to the familial

metaphors, the “parting of the ways” does not presuppose or imply the superiority of Christianity over Judaism. Rather, it suggests simply that Christianity went off in one direction, and Judaism in another, without necessarily implying that one way led to salvation and the other to a dead end.

Nevertheless, the metaphor is by no means problem-free. The roadway comparison implies that the development of a Christian movement independent of Judaism had to do precisely with two “isms” – two sets of institutions, beliefs, practices – that were as clearly set off from one another as two roads that diverge and then head towards two different destinations. This observation, in turn, presumes a unified and singular entity that we can call Judaism and another one that we can call Christianity. This presumption, however, flies in the face of the well-documented diversity within what we commonly refer to as early Judaism, as well as the diverse groups that laid claim to the label Christianity once it became widely used.

Second, the metaphor implies that, like two diverging roadways whose exit ramps are clearly marked, the ways between Judaism and Christianity parted at a single clearly definable point in time. This resonance pushes scholars to pinpoint a particular moment or at least a specific time period when the parting would have occurred. For James Dunn, whose work popularized the metaphor, the proposed time frame is between the first Jewish revolt in 66-74 CE and the Bar Kochba revolt in 132-35 CE. Dunn and many others argued that, as the Jesus movement grew rapidly through the influx of Gentile adherents, it also developed theologically in ways that were unacceptable and even threatening to the Jewish leadership.<sup>5</sup> Some versions of this scenario hold that the actual parting of the ways occurred when the “synagogue” expelled the believers in Christ from its midst.<sup>6</sup> This is a clear case in which the metaphor itself pushes the discourse: the spatial element of the metaphor’s source domain – the image of a road or highway – seems to require a temporal parallel in the metaphor’s target domain, implying a linear history of Christianity’s development. Our sources, however, suggest that the parting of the ways was an uneven and messy process, occurring at different times in different places and for different reasons.

On these grounds, some have suggested modifications to the metaphor. James Dunn made pointed use of the plural to counteract oversimplification.<sup>7</sup> Judith Lieu has suggested that we should think of a criss-crossing of muddy tracks rather than two clearly marked paths.<sup>8</sup> To Daniel Boyarin, the fluidity and variety in beliefs, practices, and identities in the early centuries suggested that far from separating into two ways, Judaism and Christianity constituted a continuous roadway with imperceptible boundaries.<sup>9</sup>

These modifications have their merits but they have not caught on widely. Rather, scholars often use the parting metaphor while at the same time emphasizing that they do not accept all of its resonances. Even those who are most committed to the metaphor will agree on the diversity of first-century Judaism and on the likely messiness of the process by which the ways parted. James Dunn, for example, noted that:

“The parting of the ways”, properly speaking, was very “bitty”, long drawn out and influenced by a range of social, geographical, and political as well as theological factors. On the one hand, we must beware of thinking of a clear or single “trajectory” for either Christianity or Judaism; and we should also avoid using imagery which necessarily implies an ever-widening gap between Christianity and Judaism. On the other hand, “Christianity” *did* emerge from a Jewish matrix, and “Christianity” and “Judaism” *did*

become separate and distinct, so that the basic image, “the parting of the ways,” is appropriate.<sup>10</sup>

According to Dunn, then, the metaphor still accounts for important evidence, even if it oversimplifies the situation. Most other proponents of this metaphor agree that the process of separation cannot be pinned down to one specific time, but they also assert that there was nevertheless a point at which the diverse Christ-confessing individuals and groups would have been seen by themselves and others as separate from Jews and their diverse groups or communities.

### **“Parting of the ways” as divorce metaphor**

The roadways metaphor has generated considerable controversy, due in great measure to the problems discussed above. Although critics have identified some of the pitfalls and problems of the “parting” metaphor, in most cases, they have not focused as much on the metaphor *per se* as on tendency to date the “parting” to the late first or early second century. This dating, they argue, ignores the significant contact between (non-Christ-confessing) Jews and Christ-confessors in the early centuries of the common era and the capacity for seamless movement between these groups. For these reasons, they suggest that the parting could not have taken place prior to the Christianization of the Roman empire in the fourth century. This argument has gained considerable traction over the past two decades, in large measure due to the volume entitled *The Ways that Never Parted*, edited by Adam Becker and Annette Yoshiko Reed, based on a 2002 Princeton conference by the same name.

I must confess that this argument puzzled me for a long time. Although I agreed completely that the parting was a lengthy, complicated, and messy process that varied from place to place and from era to era, the criterion of social contact seemed off-base and irrelevant. Although its proponents sometimes described their approach as an argument against the parting metaphor, in actuality it was an argument only against the assumption that Jews and Christians had no social contact after the ways had parted. Yet no one, not Dunn or anyone else who proposed a late first century parting, ever said that parting meant the end to contact between Jews and Christians.<sup>11</sup> As Shaye Cohen bluntly states, “The notion of ‘the parting of the ways’ does not in the least suggest that Jews and Christians stopped speaking with each other, arguing with each other, and influencing each other....[Mutual reactions] neither prove nor disprove a parting of the ways. They prove only that Jews and Christians continued to speak with each other.”<sup>12</sup>

Eventually I realized that the social contact criterion did not arise from the evidence but from a different interpretation of the “parting of the ways” metaphor as such. Whereas the “early parting” scholars – those who dated the parting to the period between the revolts – understood the parting of the ways as a roadway metaphor, the “late parting” scholars – those who dated it to the fourth century or even later – took it as a divorce metaphor.<sup>13</sup>

The “divorce” register of the “parting” metaphor could theoretically imply an abrupt parting, like its “roadways” source domain. Perhaps the breakup between Judaism and Christianity, or Jews and Christians, can be compared to a blowup when one partner stalks angrily out of the marital home never to return. This nasty breakup would have occurred in the late first or early second century. Alternatively, the divorce metaphor could connote a gradual breakdown of relationship with many ups and downs, twists and turns, and leading eventually

to a partial or complete break in social contact by the mid- to late-first century.

These resonances affect two elements of the parting discourse. One is the shift in focus from two discrete pathways that we might call Judaism and Christianity, to the people who might travel on these pathways, those whom we might call Jews and Christians. The second, the criterion of social contact, follows from the first. In considering roadways, social contact is a non-issue, but when talking about relationships it looms large.

The divorce version of the parting metaphor has had very broad appeal amongst scholars who work on Christian origins. As with the roadways version of the metaphor, there is no hint of supersessionism here; everyone, no matter when or how they worshipped, was buffeted by the vagaries of Roman law and policy, and yet participated in a range of rituals and practices and maintained contact with one another. The metaphor also draws attention from the problematic abstractions and essentializing implied by the abstract labels “Judaism” and “Christianity” by focusing, instead, on Jews and Christians.

One should not downplay the importance of ongoing social contact in our understanding of Jewish-Christian relations from the ancient period to the present. Nevertheless, I argue that social contact should not be used a criterion for establishing the process by which a complex entity or set of entities we now call Christianity established an identity or identities independent of Jews, Jewishness, and Judaism. All the evidence suggests that Jews and Christians always remained in contact in the geographical areas where both groups were and are present. While some of that contact was certainly negative, there were always Jews and Christians who maintained positive personal or business relationships.<sup>14</sup> A clear example can be found in the presence of Jewish and Christian merchant stalls in close proximity to the Sardis synagogue in modern-day Turkey. The synagogue remains now visible are generally dated to the mid-fourth century, though some archaeologists would date them as late as the sixth century. In either case, however, the synagogue testifies to ongoing Jewish-Christian contact even in the period after Constantine.

Taken to its logical conclusion, the use of social contact as a criterion would suggest, as the title of Becker and Reed’s volume, that the ways never parted. Yet it is hard to ignore the fact that Jews and Christians did come to see themselves as belonging to different groups and were unequivocally seen that way by others. To construe the parting of the ways as a divorce metaphor is, in effect, to confuse the roadways with the people who travel on them. We know that Christians participated in Jewish festivals well into the fourth century, because the church father John Chrysostom rails against them. Though I am not aware of any direct evidence, one might imagine that there were first or second century Jews attending synagogue on Saturday and church on Sunday. This does not mean, however, that they did not know or perceive that they were moving between two separate institutions or communities. The fact that individuals could move between two groups does not negate the existence of boundaries between those two groups. If it is possible for people today to make these distinctions, it is not unreasonable to assume that ancient people were capable of doing the same.<sup>15</sup> This suggests that the debate that is constructed by some of the contributors to the Becker and Reed volume is based not on different hypotheses concerning dating and criteria but rather on a confusing conflation of roadways and travellers.

### **Critique of the metaphor**

In light of these observations, the historical conclusions drawn from this metaphor are problematic. While it may be the case that the “ways” did not fully part until the fourth century, there is ample evidence that Jews and Christ-confessors were recognized as belonging to different groups long before the fourth century. Shaye Cohen argues that Christ-confessors not only differentiated themselves from Jews by the late first and early second centuries, but also that they were seen that way by Romans. After the destruction of the temple in 70 CE, Rome imposed a tax, called the *Fiscus Judaicus*, on all Jews, but by the end of the first century, the tax was levied only on those who openly lived as Jews, thereby excluding those who did not including Gentile Christians and perhaps many Jewish Christians as well. Roman persecutions of Christians in the second and third centuries did not target Jews, and Roman persecutions of Jews (after the Bar Kochba revolt in 135), did not target Christians. For Romans, Jews and Christian were distinct groups.<sup>16</sup> This does not mean that Jews and Christians ceased having social contact, nor does it mean that some Jews and Christians could or did not participate in each other’s festivals or rituals frequently or occasionally. It does suggest, however, that these practices and institutions were or were becoming widely recognized as separate.

In both versions of the parting metaphor, conflict plays a central role. In Dunn’s view, the separation occurred over differing interpretations of four key pillars of Judaism: monotheism, election, Torah, and temple.<sup>17</sup> There are New Testament interpreters who believe that Jewish authorities booted Christians out of the synagogue in the late first century, on account of their belief in Jesus as the messiah. All versions of the parting of the ways metaphor presume that the separation came in the aftermath, or as a consequence of, theological or other sorts of conflict.

The centrality of conflict in these narratives of Christian origins reflects the assumption that new national or religious entities and identities are established through conflict. This is not to say that theologians and historians were experts in or even conversant with political theory or military history. They would just have needed some awareness of 20<sup>th</sup> century history. Anyone who had paid the slightest bit of attention to their high school history classes and to world events of the 20<sup>th</sup> century would have learned that conflict almost always resulted in the redrawing of national boundaries and, often, the creation of new nations.

At the same time, the metaphor speaks directly to the desire of many post-Holocaust Christian scholars to avoid anti-Jewish or supersessionist narratives of Christian origins. The “parting of the ways” metaphor, is congenial to scholars living in open and diverse societies in what we call the West, countries in which Jews and Christians engage freely with one another and with those of other traditions as well. The experience of living in an open society reinforces the post-holocaust repudiation of antisemitism, the reclamation of Jesus’ Jewish identity, and the strong interest in second temple Judaism stimulated by the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

These social factors and attitudes propel scholars towards metaphors of mutuality that describe both Judaism and Christianity as active agents in the process that resulted in their differentiation. Not only did Christianity take some fundamental elements from Judaism, as we have seen, but also, in the eyes of most scholars, separation from Judaism was essential to Christianity’s own development. In the spirit of mutuality, some scholars, such as Daniel Boyarin, Alan Segal, Michal Bar Asher Segal, Yisrael Yuval, and others, want to argue that Christianity was constitutive of Judaism in the same way that Judaism was constitutive of

Christianity. To this point, however, I see no evidence for this claim prior to the rabbinic period, if then, but I believe that scholars of Christianity and of Judaism are motivated by the same impulse towards mutuality that fits with the post-holocaust spirit of reconciliation and rapprochement.

Both the roadway and divorce versions of the metaphor account for the similarities between Judaism and Christianity at the same time as they offer hypotheses for how, why, and when Christianity emerged from the matrix of second-temple and first-century Judaism. The mutuality implied in the metaphor provides a more irenic response to the anxiety than other theories, but the very impulse towards mutuality also betrays an anxiety that is not entirely resolved.

It is still worth asking, however, whether the “parting” metaphor – in either the roadway or the divorce version – corresponds to the sources and the facts as we know them. This question is not easily answered, due both to the paucity of evidence and to the ambiguity of the evidence that we do have. On the one hand, the parting metaphor acknowledges the commonalities between Judaism and Christianity, and the ideas, beliefs, texts, and values that Jews and Christians would have shared even in the early centuries of the common era. In this sense, one can say that it makes sense of the facts as we know them. Even if we cannot figure out exactly, when, how or why Christianity moved outside of a Jewish matrix, we can say with certainty that it began there, and that it retained some important elements that were acquired by its antecedent, the Jesus movement. On the other hand, it is crucial to understand that the “parting of the ways” is an inherently Christianity-centred metaphor. It intends to explain an aspect of Christian origins and to account for both similarities and differences between Judaism and Christianity.

The mutuality implied by the metaphor can be applauded as an antidote to supersessionism and anti-Judaism. But is it warranted by our sources? While we have ample evidence, for example, that Christian leaders such as John Chrysostom encouraged their audiences to distance themselves from non-Christ-confessing Jews, we have virtually no reliable evidence from the early centuries of the Common Era for a Jewish “parting of the ways” from Christ-confessing individuals or groups. Certainly the New Testament and patristic literature describe some Jews as objecting vehemently to the messianic claims about Jesus, and persecuting those who made such claims.<sup>18</sup> Given the rhetorical agendas of these texts, and the absence of corroborating sources from other sources, however, the Jewish side of this mutual process is difficult to document.

Of course, the absence of sources may not be meaningful. As the well-worn adage goes, absence of evidence is not evidence of absence, and in theory it is possible that relevant first-century Jewish sources may surface at some future point in time. But for now, we do not have much to go on. The massive oeuvre of Josephus contains but two scant references related to Jesus and at least one of those was probably not written by him at all. Rabbinic literature contains some references and allusions to Christians, and to Jesus, but these postdate all of the New Testament books. While significant for the history of Jewish Christian relations, they do not shed light on the historical light on the process of separation to which the parting of the ways metaphor refers.

## **Conclusion**

I would therefore urge historians to consider the possibility that the parting was not a mutual endeavour, nor were Jewish-Christian relations symmetrical. It is highly likely that most first and second century Jews did not know much if anything at all about Jesus and his followers, and that most of those who did know may not have cared. The Jesus movement may not have loomed large for most Jews until Christianity began to take hold and exercise political power in the Roman world.

This observation raises the possibility that while the stories built around the relationship between two protagonists called Judaism and Christianity, or two groups called Jews and Christians, may satisfy certain theological, polemical, or apologetic needs, they do not necessarily constitute plausible narratives that take all the evidence, and the absence of evidence, into account. Perhaps, then, the current metaphors and stories of Christian origins have given far too much weight to the Jewish role in the separation process. Indeed, perhaps the process by which Christianity became an entity separate from Judaism should not be conceptualized as a separation at all, but as an inevitable consequence of its growth, its demographic composition, and its institutionalization.

If so, we may entertain the possibility that the preoccupation with Jewishness in our Christian sources may not have to do with Jewish actions against Christ-confessors, but with the need to articulate an independent, and more detailed identity within the genres of the gospel, the commentary, and the homily, that were available for these purposes. We may posit that as the Jesus movement grew and developed, it had to disentangle itself from Jews, Jewish institutions and Jewish practices in order to develop an independent identity.

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<sup>1</sup> Parkes, James. *The Conflict of the Church and the Synagogue; a Study in the Origins of Antisemitism*. London,: The Soncino press, 1934.

<sup>2</sup> James D. G. Dunn, *Jews and Christians: The Parting of the Ways, A.D. 70 to 135 : The Second Durham-Tübingen Research Symposium on Earliest Christianity and Judaism (Durham, September 1989)* (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1992); James D. G. Dunn, *The Partings of the Ways between Christianity and Judaism and Their Significance for the Character of Christianity*, vol. 2nd ed (London: SCM Pr, 2006) ; James Douglas Grant Dunn, *Neither Jew Nor Greek: A Contested Identity*, vol. 3 of *Christianity in the Making* (Grand Rapids, Mich., Cambridge: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2015).

<sup>3</sup> “The Jewish background of Christianity is now fully acknowledged, and the image of “the parting of the ways” is a common shorthand for the process of separation between Judaism and Christianity” (Early Christianity: Oxford Bibliographies, 2010)

“There is no need to interpret the image of ‘the *parting of the ways*’; in recent years the metaphor has become a convenient shorthand for speaking of the *separation between Judaism and Christianity* understood not as a T-junction but as a Y-junction – two channels separating from a common source.” (Judith Lieu, *Neither Jew Nor Greek*, 2005)

<sup>4</sup> Sabine Maasen and Peter Weingart, *Metaphors and the Dynamics of Knowledge* (London: Routledge, 2002), 30.

<sup>5</sup> This is the premise behind James Dunn’s works Dunn, *Jews and Christians*; Dunn, *The Partings of the Ways between Christianity and Judaism and Their Significance for the Character of Christianity*.

<sup>6</sup> James Parkes, *The Conflict of the Church and the Synagogue; a Study in the Origins of Antisemitism* (London,: The Soncino press, 1934), 77–81; S. G Wilson, *Related Strangers : Jews and Christians, 70-170 C.E.* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1995), 285-87. Dunn, *The Partings of the Ways between*



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*Christianity and Judaism and Their Significance for the Character of Christianity*, 238.

<sup>7</sup> Dunn, *The Partings of the Ways between Christianity and Judaism and Their Significance for the Character of Christianity*.

<sup>8</sup> Judith Lieu, "'The Parting of the Ways' : Theological Construct or Historical Reality?," *J. Study New Testam.* 56 (1994): 119.

<sup>9</sup> Daniel Boyarin, *Dying for God: Martyrdom and the Making of Christianity and Judaism*, *Figurae Reading Medieval Culture* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford Univ. Press, 2007), 9.

<sup>10</sup> Dunn, *Jews and Christians*, 367–68. Later, Dunn began to rethink the metaphor and proposed a textile image: "the process in which the parts of a garment pull apart over time, the threads that begin to break under the stresses of 'wear and tear'."

<sup>11</sup> Parkes, *The Conflict of the Church and the Synagogue; a Study in the Origins of Antisemitism*, 120. Dunn, *The Partings of the Ways between Christianity and Judaism and Their Significance for the Character of Christianity*, 235.

<sup>12</sup> Cohen, Shaye J. D. Cohen, "Ways That Parted: Jews, Christians, Jewish-Christians (ca 100-500)," in *From the Maccabees to the Mishnah* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2014), 232. See also Parkes, *The Conflict of the Church and the Synagogue; a Study in the Origins of Antisemitism*, 120.

<sup>13</sup> The divorce metaphor is itself a secondary use of the roadways metaphor to describe a rupture in the relationships between Jews and Christians.

<sup>14</sup> Jeremy Cohen, *Christ Killers: The Jews and the Passion from the Bible to the Big Screen* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).

<sup>15</sup> This is not to say that many do so, but in most synagogues I have attended in my life, in different locales, there have been one or two Christians who are present on Saturdays and who also, in some cases, provide financial support of the synagogue while maintaining their own Christian identities and practices.

<sup>16</sup> Cohen, 234-35. For detailed discussion of the Fiscus, see Marius Heemstra, *The Fiscus Judaicus and the Parting of the Ways* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010).

<sup>17</sup> James D. G. Dunn, *The Partings of the Ways between Christianity and Judaism*, 18.

<sup>18</sup> The most influential book in this regard remains J. Louis Martyn, *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003). For my critique of this hypothesis, see Adele Reinhartz, "The Johannine Community and Its Jewish Neighbors: A Reappraisal," in *What Is John?* (Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1998), 111–38; Reinhartz, *Cast out of the Covenant: Jews and Anti-Judaism in the Gospel of John*. For detailed analysis of *Birkat Ha-Minim* demonstrating that it could not have been operative in the first century, see Ruth Langer, *Cursing the Christians?: A History of the Birkat Haminim* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); Uri Ehrlich and Ruth Langer, "The Earliest Texts of the Birkat Haminim," *Hebr. Union Coll. Annu.* 76 (2005): 63–112.