AN ANALYSIS OF THE CONCEPT OF "PEACEMAKING THROUGH BLOOD" IN COLOSSIANS 1.20B: THE GRAECO-ROMAN AND JEWISH BACKGROUND

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Abstract

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In this work, I use insights from Conceptual Metaphor and Frame Semantics to demonstrate that the metaphorical expressions εἰρηνοποιήσας and διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου (Col. 1.20b) evoke conceptual frames from both the Graeco-Roman conceptual world and the Jewish one. The impact of the christological configuration of the concept of *peacemaking through blood* in Colossians lies precisely in the incongruity between its message and the familiar frames known to the Gentile/Jewish audience in Colossae. The thesis is divided into two main parts bracketed by an introductory chapter and a conclusion. Having presented my literature review and method in chapter 1, Part 1 of the thesis (chapters 2 and 3) investigates εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου (Col. 1.20b) against the Graeco-Roman conceptual world. In chapter two, I propose that the *pax romana* frame, strongly present in Asia Minor, constituted a key conceptual frame for the analysis of *peacemaking through blood* in Colossians 1.20b. In chapter three, I examine how the *pax romana* frame affects the reading of εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου in Colossians 1.20b and how it challenges the perception of reality of the first-century readers in Asia Minor. The second part of the thesis (chapters 4–6) addresses the question of what frames could have been triggered in the mind of a Jewish reader steeped in the Old Testament by the metaphorical language of reconciliation and peacemaking by human bloodshed in Colossians 1.20. I argue that the reconciliation language (Col. 1.20a) had the potential to activate the *rîb*-pattern frame while peacemaking through human bloodshed (Col. 1.20b) could have evoked the offering of the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 52.13–53.12—a passage located in the midst of *rîb*-passages in Deutero-Isaiah. Chapter 4 outlines the main elements of the Old Testament *rîb*-pattern whereas chapter 5 investigates Isaiah 53 within the literary context of Deutero-Isaiah. Chapter 6 argues that "reconciliation" metaphor in Colossians 1.20a had the potential to evoke the *rîb*-controversy frame whereas *peacemaking through blood* in verse 20b had the potential to activate the Isaiah 53 frame in the minds of the Jewish audience of Colossians.

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My greatest desire is to see God's Church benefit from this, my first hesitant attempt at an academic work, and that "…the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, [may] equip [us] with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen." (Hebrews 13.20–21, NIV).

Abbreviations

Abbreviations of biblical and other ancient writings follow the conventions in Billie Jean Collins *et al*., eds., *The SBL Handbook of Style: For Biblical Studies and Related Disciplines,* 2nd ed. (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2014) §8.3. Abbreviations of journals, series, and major reference works follow SBL Handbook, §8.4. Abbreviations of biblical editions and modem versions follow SBL Handbook, §8.2.1. The following abbreviations for series, grammatical or lexical resources, referenced in the text below, are provided here for the reader's convenience.

AJEC	Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity.
AJMS	Athens Journal of Mediterranean Studies.
AJPh	The American Journal of Philosophy.
BHGNT	Baylor Handbook on the Greek New Testament.
CCAW	Cambridge Companions to the Ancient World.
DOTP	Boda, Mark J. and J. G. McConville, eds. *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Prophets* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2012).
ECAM	Early Christianity in Asia Minor.
HABES	Heidelberger Althistorische Beitrage Und Epigraphische Studien.
HTA	Historisch Theologische Auslegung.
JATS	Journal of the Adventist Theological Society.
NA28	Aland, Kurt, Barbara Aland, Johannes Karavidopoulos *et al*. *Novum Testamentum Graece*, 28th ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2012).
NCCS	New Covenant Commentary Series.
NDBT	Alexander, T. Desmond and Brian S. Rosner. *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2000).
NIDNTTE	Silva, Moisés, ed. *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology and Exegesis,* 5 vols., 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014).
PCPS	Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society.
PNTC	The Pillar New Testament Commentary.

SBLECL	Society of Biblical Literature Early Christianity and Its Literature.
THGNT	Jongkind, Dirk, Peter Williams, Peter Head *et al*. *The Greek New Testament* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2018).
ZECNT	Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The "reconciliation of all things" in Colossians 1.20 has been the subject of one of the most extensive bodies of literature produced in New Testament studies. The text says, καὶ δι᾽ αὐτοῦ ἀποκαταλλάξαι τὰ πάντα εἰς αὐτόν, εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτοῦ, δι᾽ αὐτοῦ εἴτε τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς εἴτε τὰ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς.[1] Despite the close connection between the metaphorical expressions ἀποκαταλλάξαι τὰ πάντα and εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου,[2] the second phrase has received less attention. However, what happens if, instead of regarding Colossians 1.20b as say a "supporting actor" in the drama of God's reconciling work in Colossians, we acknowledge the importance of its rhetorical place in this verse and inquire into the richness of its metaphorical expressions and the imagery it might have evoked in the minds of its hearers in first-century Colossae? In other words, how does "peacemaking through the blood of his cross" in Colossians 1.20b help us understand the message of reconciliation in the letter to the Colossians?

In this thesis, I address the question of how *peacemaking through blood* (Col. 1.20b) was perceived by the audience of the letter to the Colossians as achieving the "reconciliation of all things" (Col. 1.20). My contention is that the uses of "blood" and "peacemaking" in Colossians should be understood against the specific socio-cultural backgrounds of both the Graeco-Roman community and the Jewish community which comprised the primary audience of this letter. In order to prove my hypothesis, I apply insights from cognitive linguistics, especially from frame semantics and conceptual metaphor theory in order to assess the potential "frames" that were possibly triggered by the author's use of the καταλλάσσ- word-group.

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[1] Greek quotes in this thesis are from the THGNT unless otherwise stated.

[2] I take participle εἰρηνοποιήσας as modal, thus: [he] reconciled all things *by* making peace through the blood of his cross (e.g., Harris, M. J. *Colossians and Philemon* [Exegetical Guide to the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991] 51).

1.1 Literature Review[3]

Most commentators believe Colossians 1.15–20 to be part of earlier traditional material reused by the author of the letter.[4] The participial phrase εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτοῦ in verse 20 is viewed by many as an editorial addition made to an earlier composition, thus either betraying Paul's influence—for those who dispute Paul's authorship—or representing Paul's own editorial hand in a pre-formed "hymn"—for those who argue for Paul's authorship.[5] However, either way, there is general agreement among commentators that, as the Poem stands,[6] the participial phrase elaborates the means by which the reconciliation of all things was achieved.[7]

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[3] Because of the narrow focus of my research on the metaphorical expression εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου (Col. 1.20b), I do not present here an assessment of the literature on "reconciliation" (ἀποκαταλλάξαι τὰ πάντα, Col. 1.20) *per se*, either in Colossians or in the New Testament in general. Although the material inevitably intersects at times, the focus of this study is on the relevant material on the phrase εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου. Bibliography on "reconciliation" can be found in most works cited here.

[4] For a concise helpful survey of the debate around the literary form of Colossians 1.15–20, see Gordley, M. E. *The Colossians Hymn in Context: An Exegesis in Light of Jewish and Greco-Roman Hymnic and Epistolary Conventions* (WUNT 228. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007) 5–26.

[5] E.g., Käsemann, E. 'A primitive Christian Baptismal Liturgy,' in *Essays on New Testament Themes* (trans. W. J. Montague. London: SCM Press, 1964) 149–68, at 152; Lohse, E. *A Commentary on the Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon* (trans. William R. Poehlmann and Robert J. Harris. Hermeneia. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971) 60, cf. n. 209; Lindemann, A. *Der Kolosserbrief* (ZBK 10. Zürich: Theologischer Verlag, 1983) 25, 30f; Hübner, H. *An Philemon, an die Kolosser, an die Epheser* (HNT 12. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997) 56, 63; Wolter, M. *Der Brief an die Kolosser; Der Brief an Philemon* (ÖTK 12. Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1993) 74, 86; Schweitzer, E. *The Letter to the Colossians: A Commentary* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1982) 83f; MacDonald, M. Y. *Colossians and Ephesians* (SP 17. Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2000) 66; Martin, Ralph. *Reconciliation: A Study of Paul's Theology* (New Foundations Theological Library. Atlanta: John Knox, 1981) 114–117; cf. Idem, 'Reconciliation and Forgiveness in the Letter to the Colossians,' in *Reconciliation and Hope* (ed. Robert Banks. Carlisle: The Paternoster Press, 1974) 104–24, at 113; Gnilka, J. *Der Kolosserbrief* (HThKNT 10.1. Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1980) 52–58; Pokorný, P. *Colossians: A Commentary* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1991) 60–62; Witherington III, Ben. *The Letters to Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on the Captivity Epistles* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007) 131f.

[6] For convenience, I will refer to Col. 1.15–20 as "Poem." I do not however believe this passage has all the formal properties of a poem, nor that of a hymn for that matter. Cf. Wright's proposal on the form of the passage (Wright, N. T. 'Poetry and Theology in Colossians 1.15–20,' *NTS* 36 [1990] 444–68).

[7] *Pace* Schweizer, *Colossians,* 55–90, who, in an attempt to reconstruct a potential original hymn with a well-balanced symmetry, identified four editorial additions made by the author of Colossians (v. 16, "εἴτε θρόνοι εἴτε κυριότητες εἴτε ἀρχαὶ εἴτε ἐξουσίαι"; v. 18, "τῆς ἐκκλησίας," and "ἵνα γένηται ἐν πᾶσιν αὐτὸς πρωτεύων;" v. 20, "εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτοῦ"), whose purpose was to correct the theology of the original composition. Thus, in his view, the statement εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτοῦ "clearly stands in contrast to that [reconciliation as being brought about by the indwelling of the fulness of God in Christ] (Schweizer, *Colossians,* 84); cf. Gordley, *The Colossians Hymn in Context,* 181–96. For an insightful concise analysis of Schweizer's arguments, see Barth, M. and H. Blanke. *Colossians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (trans. Astrid B. Beck. AB 34B. New York: Doubleday, 1994) 227–36. All such attempts at reconstructing an original form of the "hymn" are necessarily subjective. Although such intellectual exercise may be valuable for the studies of Christian origins, in this work I will deal with the text as it stands for I am interested in the exegesis of the letter to the Colossians, which means that I am "assuming that its author believed his shaping of the text to be reasonable and that (at least some of) his readers would understand his intent." (Hartman, L. 'Universal

The majority of commentators do not address the significance of the possible imagery activated by the metaphorical expression "peacemaking through the blood of his cross" for the study of the background of reconciliation in Colossians. Many only go as far as to explore the background of either "peace/making peace" or "blood," separately, or the phrase "blood of his cross" as a metonymy for Christ's death.

Accordingly, some commentators see the Old Testament eschatological hope of שָׁלוֹם as the idea behind "making peace" in Colossians 1.20. For instance, Douglas Moo states that "[t]his language picks up the widespread Old Testament predication that in the last day God would establish universal *shalōm,* 'peace,' or 'well-being;'"[8] and, "Colossians 1.20 teaches […] 'cosmic restoration' or 'renewal.'" The latter comment is based on the suggestion that "making peace" means "pacification" in the sense of "cosmic restoration." Similarly, Lohse adduces Isaiah 11 in connection with "cosmic peace" in our text.[9] He also argues that by adding διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτοῦ the author of Colossians "joins with the common Christian parlance of the blood of Christ as a reference to the vicarious death of Christ, yet he gives it a Pauline interpretation by the addition of the phrase 'of his cross.'"[10] Similarly, Aletti points to

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Reconciliation,' *SNTSU* 10 (1985) 109–21, at 110—cf. n. 5). Cf. Stettler, C. *Der Kolosserhymnus: Untersuchungen zu Form, traditionsgeschichtlichem Hintergrund und Aussage von Kol 1,15–20* (WUNT 131. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000) 267, 270; Pollard, T. E. 'Colossians 1.12–20: A Reconsideration,' *NTS* 27 (1981) 572–75, at 572f; Caird, G. B. *Paul's Letters from Prison: Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon* (New Clarendon Bible. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976) 174f; Aletti, J. N. *Colossiens 1, 15–20: genre et exégèse du texte: fonction de la thématique sapientielle* (AnBib 91. Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1981) 107f; Wright, 'Poetry,' esp. 444f, and *passim*; White, J. *Der Brief de Paulus an die Kolosser* (HTA. Holzgerlingen: SCM R. Brockhaus, 2018) 107f.

[8] Moo, D. J. *The Letters to the Colossians and to Philemon* (PNTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008) 136. Commentators who interpret peace in a similar way include Barth and Blanke, *Colossians,* 207; Dunn, J. D. G. *The Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (NIGTC. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans/Paternoster, 1996) 103; and Pao, D. W. *Colossians and Philemon: Zondervan Exegetical Commentary Series on the New Testament* (ZECNT 12. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012) 104. Barth and Blanke, *Colossians*, 217f, interpret "'creating peace' as a characteristic of the universal power of God, and which expect peace as an eschatologically messianic gift."

[9] Lohse, E *Colossians,* 60, n. 204, see 59–61; cf. Bruce, F. F. *The Epistles to the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians* (NICNT. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984) 74–76; Idem. 'Colossian Problems 2: The "Christ Hymn" of Colossians 1.15–20,' *BibSac* 141 (1984) 99–111, at 109f; Pao, *Colossians,* 104, mentions Isaiah (LXX 52.6b–7; 54.13) in connection with "cosmic restoration;" also Pokorný, *Colossians*, 89, for whom "the hymn may be influenced by Pauline theology," and "[w]hether or not they have been influenced by the Servant Songs of Second Isaiah (Is. 53.10–12; 2Macc. 7.30–38 […] 7.33) can no longer be determined with certainty." However, he does not present any arguments to support his claim. Pokorný goes on to say "[c]onspicuous is that, in the Servant Songs, we also read of the worldwide peace in the presence of God (Is. 52.6–10)." He also says that the insertion of "by the blood of his cross" might also be influenced by Pauline theology of the cross "tying into the tradition of the Lord's Supper and baptism;" (cf. Schweizer, *Colossians,* 84, n. 81; Lincoln, A. 'The Letter to the Colossians,' in *The New Interpreter's Bible* [Nashville: Abingdon, 2000] 601, also suggests that the combined imagery of "blood" and "cross" is a Pauline influence).

[10] Lohse, *Colossians,* 60, n. 209. Cf. Arnold, C. E. *The Colossian Syncretism: The Interface Between Christianity and Folk Belief at Colossae* (WUNT 77. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1995) 269, who also mentions "pacification" in passing; Wolter, *Kolosser,* 86f.

cosmic peace as reflected in Jewish eschatology as the undergirding idea of peace, mentioning Philo's *Specialibus Legibus* 2.190–92 in support.[11] Gnilka interprets the cosmic reconciliation in Colossians 1.20 in reference both to the Jewish eschatological promises of peace (such as Isaiah 9.5f, as well as Philo, *Spec. Leg.* 2.188–92) and the Hellenistic-Roman expectations of a Golden Age marked by universal peace (such as displayed in Virgil's Fourth Eclogue).[12] He goes on to argue that the reference to "blood of his cross" is rooted in the idea of "covenant of blood" present in the Lord's Supper tradition (Mark 14.24, and parallels).[13]

Unsurprisingly, the most cited background for the idea of "blood" (or "blood of the cross") in Colossians 1.20 is the Old Testament sacrificial system with its emphasis on atonement. For Beale, "making peace" and "through the blood" in Colossians 1.20 should be interpreted in connection with the imagery of Christ as the new temple in verse 19, within which "peace" means "cosmic restoration,"[14] and "blood" stands for the blood of sacrifice.[15] In this interpretation, Christ as the new temple is the place where reconciliation happens. Beale argues that the author views the concept of reconciliation as the beginning of the fulfilment of the Old Testament promises of Israel's restoration.[16] Colossians 1.20 is then interpreted in a parallel relationship with verse 16 (which presents Christ's co-creation role) meaning that "Christ's reconciling work is part of the creating of a new creation in which 'peace' dwells, a connection found in the OT and elsewhere in Paul and in the NT."[17]

Also stressing the Old Testament sacrificial system, Lohmeyer argues that Christ's death in Colossians 1.20 represents the ultimate atonement and takes the place of Yom Kippur.[18] Similarly, Meyer writes that "in Christ, by means of His ἱλαστήριον, through which God made peace (εἰρηνοποιήσας κτλ), the reconciliation of the whole has taken place…"[19] For Christian

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[11] Aletti, J. N. *Saint Paul, epître aux Colossiens: introduction, traduction et commentaire* (EBib 20. Paris: J. Gabalda, 1993) 112; see esp. Hartman, 'Reconciliation,' for an appreciation of possible Philonic influence on Colossians 1.20; also Lyonnet, S. 'L'hymne christologique de l'épître aux Colossiens et la fête juive de nouvel an,' *RSR* 48 (1960) 93–100; Pokorný, *Colossians,* 87f.

[12] Gnilka, *Kolosserbrief*, 74f.

[13] Gnilka, *Kolosserbrief*, 76.

[14] Beale, G. K. *Colossians and Philemon* (BECNT. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2019) 112.

[15] Beale, G. K. *A New Testament Biblical Theology: The Unfolding of the Old Testament in the New* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011) 545.

[16] Beale, *Biblical Theology,* 543–46—this is from chapter 16 (527–55), which is entitled "Inaugurated Latter-Day Reconciliation as New Creation and Restoration from Exile."

[17] Beale, *Colossians,* 110; cf. Idem. 'The Old Testament Background of Reconciliation in 2 Corinthians 5–7 and Its Bearing on the Literary Problem of 2 Corinthians 6.14–7.1,' *NTS* 35 (1989) 550–81.

[18] Lohmeyer, E. *Die Briefe an die Philipper, an die Kolosser und an Philemon* (KEK 12. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1961) 66–68.

[19] Meyer, H. A. W. *Critical and Exegetical Handbook to the Epistles to the Philippians and Colossians* (trans. John C. Moore, revised by William P. Dickson. Meyer's Commentaries on the New Testament. Edinburgh:

Stettler, the talk of reconciliation/peacemaking through blood in Colossians 1.20 evokes the ideas of the Jewish שָׁלוֹם and atonement through blood sacrifice by means of which the individuals who, on account of sin, are at enmity towards God find reconciliation.[20]

Among the commentators I have surveyed James Dunn interprets the imagery of Colossians 1.20 in a colourful and unique way. Having observed that the blood of Christ in Pauline usage more naturally refers to Christ's sacrificial death, he goes on to say that "here the imagery of warfare and triumph (2.15) suggests rather the blood of battle […] it [Christ's blood] is an instrument of warfare by which peace is achieved."[21] It is not clear what Dunn means by that—he does not elaborate on it—but he appears to be drawing on the imagery of *pax romana*.

Commentators have noticed that the well-known propaganda of *pax romana* is in fact another possible idea evoked by "making peace" in Colossians. Paul Foster, for instance, observes that "[t]he metaphor of 'making peace' may have had particular resonances in a Greco-Roman context given the imperial propaganda associated with the claims of *pax romana,* and claims by emperors such as Augustus to have been harbingers of divinely created peace."[22] Foster, however, is more careful than most commentators and goes on to observe that the imagery also finds a place in the Jewish world, with the expression "the blood of his cross" evoking sacrificial ideas.[23] Similarly, David Pao suggests that "making peace" might have evoked different things for the Jewish and the Gentile hearers. Whereas the expression might have evoked the idea of cosmic eschatological restoration of Isaiah in the Jewish minds, on the other hand, for the Gentile audience, it might have evoked "the political propaganda of the early imperial

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T&T Clark, 1875) 302, cf. 301–08. He does not, however, explore the possible backgrounds of εἰρηνοποιήσας. Cf. Stettler, *Kolosserhymnus,* 270–73.

[20] Stettler, *Kolosserhymnus,* 273–82. Similarly, White, *Kolosser,* 145–47; cf. Marshall, Horward I. 'The Meaning of "Reconciliation,' in *Unity and Diversity in New Testament Theology: Essays in Honour of George E. Ladd* (ed. Robert A. Guelich. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978) 117–32, at 126.

[21] Dunn, *Colossians,* 103–04.

[22] Foster, Paul. *Colossians* (BNTC. London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2016) 198; cf. Bruce, *Colossians,* 76, who interprets reconciliation towards the "powers" in Colossians as meaning "pacification" (or "subjugation") with reference to Col. 2.15. Although Bruce does not make it explicit, it is possible that he is referring to pacification as known in the *pax romana*; also Sumney, J. L. *Colossians: A Commentary* (Louisville: John Knox, 2008) 78; Wolter, *Kolosser,* 87f, who suggests that instead of the cosmic peace as in the Jewish New Year of Philo, *Spec. Leg.* 2.190–192, "[e]s ist aber wahrscheinlicher, daß in V 20 auf das Modell der Stiftung von Versöhnung und Frieden zurückgegriffen ist, wie es in hellenistisch-römischen Herrschaftstheorien begegnet."

[23] Foster, Colossians, 198. This is the same approach of Sumney, Colossians, 77f; cf. Harris, Colossians, 51; Wright, N. T. *The Epistles of Paul to the Colossians and to Philemon: An Introduction and Commentary* (TNTC. Leicester: IVP, 1986) 76; Witherington, *Letters*, 136; Hay, D. M. *Colossians* (ANTC. Nashville: Abingdon, 2000) 64; Moule, C. F. D. *The Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Colossians and to Philemon: An Introduction and Commentary* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962) 71, writes that Christ's death in this verse is viewed in terms of sacrifice "and possibly with associations recalling also the covenant of God with man."

period," namely, *pax romana*.[24] Foster and Pao are right in perceiving multiple possible backgrounds operating simultaneously in Colossians 1.20.[25] In the present work, I aim to explore and develop further the insights offered by these scholars.

Outside the area of commentaries, a few other works bear on the study of "peacemaking through the blood of his cross" in Colossians 1.20, and deserve a mention here.

In his dissertation *Peace and Peacemaking in Paul and the Greco-Roman World,* published in 2014,[26] Edward Keazirian sets out to "examine peace and peacemaking in the ancient Greek and Roman literature from the age of Homer to the mid-1st CE, including especially the Pauline epistles."[27] His goals were "(1) to identify the respective understandings of peace held by Paul and those within the Greco-Roman thought world; (2) to determine how Paul's understanding of peace may have differed from theirs, and (3) to discover what strategies and methods Paul used in resolving conflict among believers in his churches."[28] The latter reveals the somewhat more pastoral-ecclesiological aspect of his research which comes to the fore in the third part of his thesis, "Paul's approach to peacemaking and conflict resolution." His main contribution to the studies of peace in Paul is arguably his conclusion that "the Greco-Roman thought-world considered conflict the norm and viewed peace as a welcome, though temporary, respite from conflict, while Paul considered peace to be the norm and saw conflict as an intrusive and unacceptable aberration."[29] However, despite the title, as Michael Gorman observes in his review of Keazirian, he dedicates only four pages to the specific Roman context and he restricts his

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[24] Pao, *Colossians*, 104.

[25] Some commentators do not explore the background of "peacemaking through blood" in Colossians 1.20b mostly, but not always, because they take the expression in v. 20b to be synonymous with the reconciling act in 20a and place the focus of their interpretation in the former. These include Wilson, R. McL. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Colossians and Philemon* (ICC. London: T&T Clark, 2005) 154–59; McKnight, S. *The Letter to the Colossians* (NICNT. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018) 162–67, who highlights the missiological aspect of "making peace" as the "conquering of warring parties […] so that in the body of Christ one can discover unity among all [Col. 3.11]." (p. 165); Bird, M. F. *Colossians and Philemon: A New Covenant Commentary* (NCCS 12. Eugene: Cascade Books, 2009) 57; MacDonald, *Colossians,* 64; Martin, Ralph P. *Colossians and Philemon* (NCBC. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1973) 60f, who argues that the phrase was added by Paul to an original hymn mainly to counter gnostic ideas of redemption and reconciliation (cf. Martin, 'Reconciliation and Forgiveness,' 113–15), but he does interprets "the blood of his cross" as anchoring "Christ's work in his sacrificial death for sinners" (Martin, *Reconciliation,* 121); Lincoln, *Colossians,* 600f; Lightfoot, J. B. *Saint's Paul's Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon* (London: Macmillan, 1897) 158; Abbott, T. K. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary to the Epistles to the Ephesians and to the Colossians* (ICC. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1897) 220–24; Hübner, *Kolosser,* 62f; Lindemann, *Kolosserbrief,* 30f. Also, Arnold, *Colossian Syncretism,* 267–69.

[26] Keazirian, E. M. *Peace and Peacemaking in Paul and the Greco-Roman World* (SBL 145. Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2014).

[27] Keazirian, *Peace and Peacemaking*, 3.

[28] Idem.

[29] Keazirian, *Peace and Peacemaking,* 183.

analysis to the undisputed Pauline letters thus leaving room for expansion on his research.[30] Additionally, Gorman goes on, a second way in which the study of peace in Paul needs expanding is by giving more attention to the Old Testament שָׁלוֹם. Whereas I will deal with the Old Testament in the second part of this thesis, it is my hope that our analysis of the Graeco-Roman frame of *pax romana* in the first part will begin to address the Roman context.

Another potentially relevant work is Willard M. Swartley's *Covenant of Peace: The Missing Peace in the New Testament Theology and Ethics*. Swartley's book epitomises typical Mennonite teaching on peace, with its characteristic strong emphasis on the ethical aspect of it. *Covenant of Peace* aims at placing the theme of peace/peacemaking at the centre of the New Testament theology and ethics thus providing a corrective to what he refers as marginalization of peace in New Testament theologies and ethics.[31] Although he sets out to provide a canonical evaluation of peace in the New Testament, and even dedicates two chapters to Paul (he treats both Colossians and Ephesians as Pauline letters), he only mentions Colossians in passing—as an illustration or supporting argument—when it parallels, and occasionally advances, some argument built on other Pauline letters (mainly Romans and Ephesians). I find this "marginalization" of Colossians disconcerting for at least one principal reason: reconciliation/peace in Colossians 1.20 plays a key role in "peace-building"— one of Swartley's main arguments[32]— in the parenetic section of the letter (Col. 3.5–4.6). It seems to me that any study on the ethical/moral aspects of peace in the New Testament must deal with the parenesis of Colossians.[33]

In a "background study" such as ours, it seems worth taking note of Paul Foster's important warning against the pitfall of limiting Paul's cultural influence to the Jewish background, thus failing to recognise Paul's multicultural world.[34] In his words, a "prior decision to limit Paul's cultural sphere solely to the Jewish scriptures fails to take account of the multicultural world that Paul inhabited, and it ignores the variegated textual influences that may have shaped Paul's thought."[35] He goes on to say, and rightly so, that "[t]here is a tendency to dichotomize 'Jewish

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[30] Gorman, Michael J. 'Paul the Peacemaker?,' review in *The Expository Times* 126.9 (2015) 457–58, at 458.

[31] Swartley, W. M. *Covenant of Peace: The Missing Peace in the New Testament Theology and Ethics* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006) 4; cf. Appendix 1 (431–71).

[32] Cf. Swartley, *Covenant of Peace,* 191, 216–19.

[33] Not to mention Eph. 3–6 and Philemon.

[34] What he says about Paul is also true of other NT writers such as the author of Colossians.

[35] Foster, P. 'Echoes Without Resonance: Critiquing Certain Aspects of Recent Scholarly Trends in the Study of the Jewish Scriptures in the New Testament,' *JSNT* 38.1 (2015) 96–111, at 98. Foster credits such tendency to Hays' overall approach that "Paul repeatedly situates his discourse within the symbolic field created by a single textual precursor: Israel's Scripture." (Hays, R. *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* [Yale: Yale University Press: 1989] 15). For a response to Foster's article, particularly his critique of the search for OT allusions in Colossians, see Beale, G. K. 'The Old Testament in Colossians,' *JSNT* 41.2 (2018) 261–74.

background' and 'Hellenistic background,' as though these were entirely discrete entities with no overlap whatsoever."[36] Foster's criticism of such a monolithic approach to Paul's cultural background is relevant and perhaps even overdue. However, Foster's denunciation should be extended to both extremes for, on the other side of the spectrum, one finds those who treat Paul as some sort of Greek philosopher/writer, seemingly relegating any influence from his Jewishness to a bare minimum. For instance, Cilliers Breytenbach argues that the theological use of the καταλλάσσ- word group to refer to the reconciliation between God and human beings "is so rare that it can safely be regarded as a metaphorical mapping of non-religious terminology unto a religious domain."[37] He identifies the source domain of Paul's language (especially in reference to 2Cor. 5.18–20) in the Hellenistic and Roman polis-diplomacy,[38] with no cultic background.[39] In fact, he says, there is no need to speak of "reconciliation" as a Jewish idea, and "it is just as impossible to derive the concept from Deutero-Isaiah or Jesus's ministry."[40] Reflecting similar exegetical inclination towards the origin of the "reconciliation" talk in the Pauline corpus, Ralph Martin has argued that "'*Reconciliation' is the way Paul formulated his gospel in communicating it to the Gentiles*. The terminology is not restricted to the Old Testament-Judaic tradition; it has little if any cultic-forensic association."[41] Therefore, it is possible to argue that any limitations regarding the social-cultural influences in a letter such as Colossians, whether on the writer or on the readers, lead to reductionism and potentially curtail the interpreter's ability to consider the full impact of a given passage.

After a careful analysis of the material on Colossians 1.20, we may list the following conclusions: (1) there is no consensus on what imagery the author of Colossians might have evoked by εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτοῦ; (2) no major dissertation has explored at length either the Graeco-Roman or the Jewish conceptual systems behind the idea of *peacemaking through blood* in Colossians 1.20b; (3) the richness of the imagery evoked by the

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[36] Foster, 'Echoes,' 99.

[37] Breytenbach, C. 'Salvation of the Reconciled (with a Note on the Background of Paul's Metaphor of Reconciliation),' in *Grace, Reconciliation, Concord: The Death of Christ in Graeco-Roman Metaphors* (NovTSup. Leiden: Brill, 2010) 171–86, at 172. Breytenbach does use language from Cognitive Semantics for his analysis of metaphors.

[38] Cf. Breytenbach, 'Salvation,' 177f; cf. his fuller treatment of the sematic range of the καταλλάσσ- word group in Breytenbach, Cilliers. *Versöhnung: Eine Studie zur paulinischen Soteriologie* (WMANT 60. Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1989).

[39] Breytenbach, 'Salvation,' 177f; *Versöhnung,* 159–70, 193–215.

[40] Breytenbach, *Versöhnung,* 187; cf. 45–83. Breytenbach, *Versöhnung,* 191, briefly notices that "Die Versöhnungsvorstellung des Kolosserhymnus hat jedoch andere traditionsgeschichtliche Wurzeln." But he does not elaborate on the reconciliation in Colossians as his study focuses on the undisputed letters, Romans and 2 Corinthians.

[41] Martin, *Reconciliation,* 153 (italics original).

participial phrase εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτοῦ does not seem to be fully grasped solely by reading it against one possible background, but by assessing the variety of possible frames activated by the metaphorical expressions; (4) closely connected with the previous point, it seems clear that background studies of the biblical text are still dominated by an either/or approach aimed at determining *the* definitive background; and (5) no-one has applied insights from Conceptual Metaphor Theory and Frame Semantics as a means to assess the possibility of multiple backgrounds (frames) activated by the metaphorical expressions εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτοῦ in Colossians 1.20b.[42]

My thesis aims at providing a small corrective to such common "either/or" approach to the text by assessing both the Graeco-Roman and Jewish frames potentially evoked by the Colossians conceptualisation of *peacemaking through blood* (Col. 1.20b). Cognitive Linguistics insights on metaphor and frames help the interpreter to do justice to the "wider" world of the first century New Testament writer, an amalgamation of both Jewish and Graeco-Roman socio-cultural influences. Therefore, in what follows, I outline the relevant insights from Cognitive Linguistics that bear on the interpretation of our text.

1.2 Method: The Conceptualisation of Metaphor and Frames Semantics

A dramatic shift in the way we understand the process of meaning in communication has taken place with the rise of *Cognitive Linguistics* studies in the 1970s.[43] Some insights from this already well-established field can provide us with a way into the interpretation of the clause εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου in Colossians 1.20b.[44]

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[42] Although Breytenbach applies such insights in his analysis of the metaphor of reconciliation in 2Cor. 5.18–20 (Breytenbach, 'Salvation.').

[43] Some of the main works include Lakoff, George and Mark Johnson. *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980); Lakoff, George. *Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and Its Challenge to Western Thought* (New York: Basic Books, 1999); Fillmore, Charles. 'Frame Semantics and the Nature of Language,' in *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences: Conference on the Origin of Language and Speech* 280 (1976) 20–32; Idem. 'Frame Semantics,' in *The Cognitive Linguistic Reader* (eds. Vyvyan Evans, Benjamin K. Bergen, and Jörg Zinken. London: Equinox, 2007) 238–62; Langacker, Ronald. *Foundations of Cognitive Grammar,* 2 vols. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987); cf. Fauconnier, Gilles and Mark Turner. *The Way We Think: Conceptual Blending and the Mind's Hidden Complexities* (New York: Basic Books, 2002). For a useful summary of the interdisciplinary field of *Cognitive Linguistics*, see Johnson, Mark. *Embodied Mind, Meaning, and Reason: How Our Bodies Give Rise to Understanding* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017) 1–34.

[44] I am grateful to Dr Oscar Jiménez both for kindly sharing the manuscript of his then ongoing PhD research on the narrative of Ephesians 2.11–22 (now successfully defended, Jiménez, Oscar E. *The Narrative of Ephesians 2.11–22: Motion Towards Maximal Proximity and Higher Status* [PhD thesis; LST, 2020]) and for many an hour chatting about frame semantics and metaphors.

Through extensive research, cognitive linguists have demonstrated that metaphorical language is one of the most important elements of everyday communication. Contrary to what was thought hitherto, metaphors are now perceived not as a figure of speech mainly used for rhetoric purposes and poetic embellishment, but as a cognitive phenomenon through which we make sense of reality.[45] The figure of speech traditionally called "metaphor" is but the linguistic expression of a deeply embedded metaphorical system to which the semantic units are connected. Metaphor is thus a cognitive process in which elements of one domain (or frame) of experience, usually called the *source domain/frame,* are projected (or mapped) onto elements of another domain of experience, usually called the *target domain/frame*.[46] It not only lies at the conceptual level of thought, but it is also ubiquitous in quotidian conversations. One example often quoted is the LOVE IS A JOURNEY metaphor. English speakers quotidianly conceptualise *love* in terms of a *journey*. Examples abound: "it's been *a long, bumpy road*," "we are *spinning our wheels*," "this relationship is not *going anywhere*," "*where* are we?."[47] These are all ordinary and easily understood metaphorical expressions. When we say that "this relationship is not *going anywhere*," we are thinking of the more abstract, and consequently harder to grasp, frame (*love*) in terms of a more objective and easily grasped frame (*journey*). This reveals one of the main purposes of metaphors, that is, to help us conceptualise more abstract *frames* in terms of more concrete ones.[48] It could also be said that metaphors enable us to make explicit what is implicit.

We make sense of such metaphorical expressions because we conceptualise facts by integrating information from a complex conceptual network of frames embedded within our system of thought.[49] Thus, in interpreting a text, one should seek to identify the conceptual frames evoked

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[45] Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors;* see also George and Johnson. *Philosophy*.

[46] Cf. Lakoff and Johnson. *Philosophy*, 47; Kövecses, Zoltán. *Metaphor: A Practical Introduction,* 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010) 4–6. Cognitive linguists claim that there is "strong evidence that essentially all our cultural, abstract, and theoretical concepts derive their meanings" through metaphorical mappings (Feldman, Jerome A. *From Molecule to Metaphor: A Neural Theory of Language* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006) 199.

[47] For more examples, see Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors,* 44f; see esp. Lakoff, George. 'The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor,' in *The Cognitive Linguistics Reader* (eds. Vyvyan Evans, Benjamin K. Bergen, and Jörg Zinken. London: Equinox, 2007) 267–315, at 270–72.

[48] This is not to say that this is always the case. Eve Sweetser and Mary Therese DesCamp call this common representation of Lakoff's definition an "oversimplification," and suggest "it makes more sense to think of metaphor as typically conceptualizing a relatively *less intersubjectively accessible* domain or frame in terms of a *more intersubjectively accessible* domain or frame." ('Motivating Biblical Metaphors for God,' in *Cognitive Linguistic Explorations in Biblical Studies, Cognitive Linguistic Explorations in Biblical Studies* [eds. Bonnie Howe and Joel B. Green. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014] 7–24, at 10).

[49] Fauconnier and Turner, *The Way We Think*; Oakley, Todd and Esther Pascual. 'Conceptual Blending Theory,' in *The Cambridge Handbook of Cognitive Linguistics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017) 423–

by the use of particular *frame elements* in the pericope under investigation. *Frame* is commonly defined as "a script-like conceptual structure that describes a particular type of situation, object, or event and the participants and props involved in it."[50] In textual communication, the writer applies a frame by using "words recognized as grounded in such a frame."[51] These *frame elements* will then trigger the whole background context in the readers' mind based on which they access the meaning of the linguistic units. Fillmore notes that "to speak of one of its elements is to speak of the others at the same time. More carefully put, to speak of one part of a frame is to bring to consciousness, or to raise into question, its other components."[52] This is called the *Gestalt effect*.[53] This then highlights the importance of seeking for the meaning of utterances in the background[54] to which the reader is transported by the frames applied. Hence socio-cultural context is key to interpretation. To mention a rather obvious example, when Paul says to the Corinthians that "Christ, our Passover Lamb, has been sacrificed" (1Cor. 5.7), his readers (the Jewish community at least) are immediately transported to the cultic scenario of the Old Testament Passover ritual. In this example, Paul provides a few other elements of the frame, e.g., *leavened* and *unleavened bread*. However, the metaphorical language applied to Christ is only intelligible once the reader is familiar with the components of the *frame* from which Paul draws.[55]

As evidenced by the example above, what has been said about the metaphorical nature of language is also true of theological language. Over the centuries the issue of how one can talk

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48; see Evans, Vyvyan and Melanie Green. *Cognitive Linguistics: An Introduction* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006) 14f.

[50] Ruppenhofer, Josef, *et al*. 'FrameNet II: Extended Theory and Practice' 2010, 5 (https://framenet2.icsi.berkeley.edu/docs/r1.5/book.pdf; accessed December 2018).

[51] Fillmore, 'Frame,' 246. Within cognitive studies, these "words" are typically called *frame elements* (e.g., Sullivan, Karen. *Frames and Constructions in Metaphoric Language* [Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2013] 19).

[52] Fillmore, 'Frame,' 254.

[53] Fillmore, 'Frame,' 238. Elizabeth Robar defines *Gestalt effect* as "the constant quest of the human mind to impose meaningful organization on the input provided, even when significant portions must be provided by the mind because they are absent to the perception." (Robar, Elizabeth. *The Verb and the Paragraph in Biblical Hebrew: A Cognitive-Linguistic Approach* [Studies in Semitic Language and Linguistics 78. Leiden: Brill, 2015] 3).

[54] Idem.

[55] Building on Lakoff and Johnson's *Conceptual Metaphor Theory* (esp. as expounded in their *Metaphors We Live By*), Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner developed their theory of *Conceptual Integration,* or *Conceptual Blending*. They give a full account of their theory, with (too) many examples, in Fauconnier and Turner, *The Way We Think*. Their contribution to the idea that we conceptualise reality by constantly integrating a network of domains of thought was mainly to demonstrate how this is part of our everyday conversation, not something applied in specialised types of communication. *Conceptual blending* accounts for various cognitive phenomena. Particularly important for Biblical studies, perhaps, is its account of how new categories of knowledge are created, i.e., which aspects of human thoughts and imagination (cf. 'Rethinking Metaphor,' in *The Cambridge Handbook of Metaphor and Thought* [ed. Raymond W. Gibbs. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008] 53–66).

intelligibly about God, and even about whether or not such an enterprise is possible, has been a matter of extensive debate.[56] If one of the purposes of metaphors is to help us think of more abstract concepts in terms of more objective, concrete ones, then it should come as no surprise that metaphorical language takes pride of place in theology, whose task consists in describing ineffable realities.[57] In fact, one scholar writes that "there is no saving God without conceptual mappings that are metaphorical (cross domain)…"[58] That is to say, there is no literal,[59] or univocal, way of conceptualising God.[60] Here again examples could be multiplied but for now one example from a New Testament letter will suffice. Jesper Tang Nielsen has provided a careful analysis of "the cognitive structures in Galatians 1.4."[61] He applies insights from Cognitive Linguistics to explain how Paul integrates two unrelated traditional motifs to create a new and foundational theological idea. In his words:

> Paul draws on a common Hellenistic understanding of voluntary death but inserts it into an apocalyptic frame consisting of a radical opposition between this present world and a coming one. This combination is unseen in contemporary literature and results in the original notion of a voluntary death that causes an apocalyptic turn of ages.[62]

In Galatians 1.4, the first motif becomes *Christ's voluntary death for sin*, for which Nielsen suggests a few possible backgrounds: the Greek version of the Fourth Servant Song (LXX Isa. 53), the Old Testament concept of cultic sin offering, the martyrological tradition, and Classical

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[56] E.g., Gregory of Nyssa (3rd century CE), speaks of God as "that being which is above all being" and "He who is believed to transcend speech." (Gregory of Nyssa, *Commentary on Ecclesiastes, Sermon 7*). Archie Spencer convincingly argues that discussions of *analogical* language was formally instituted within the Christian tradition first by Augustine, cf. Spencer, Archie J. *The Analogy of Faith: The Quest for God's Speakability* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2015) 64–89.

[57] A crucial difference between the traditional view of "metaphor," with which Aquinas is aligned in his insistence on *analogy* (or *metaphor*, traditionally defined in terms of a linguistic phenomenon) as the only way one can talk about God, and conceptual metaphor theory is that whereas the traditional understanding holds that this sort of figurative statements are inadequate to articulate proper truth claims, for which one should resort to the use of "literal," propositional language, "[e]vidence indicates to the contrary not only that metaphors can make proper and irreducible truth claims, but that nearly all truth claims, at the very least, presuppose some underlying metaphorical or figurative conceptualization." (Masson, Robert. *Without Metaphor, No Saving God: Theology After Cognitive Linguistics* [Leuven: Peeters, 2014] 11); cf. Sanders, John. *Theology in the Flesh: How Embodiment and Culture Shape the Way We Think about Truth, Morality, and God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2016), esp. Part 3.

[58] Masson, *Metaphor,* 111 (italics removed).

[59] I mean by *literal* "a meaning which is not dependent on a figurative extension from another meaning." (Dancygier, Barbara and Eve Sweetser. *Figurative Language* [Cambridge Textbooks in Linguistics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014] 4); cf. Lakoff, G. 'The Meanings of Literal,' *Metaphor and Symbol* 1.4 (1986) 291–96.

[60] Cf. Sanders, *Theology,* esp. 3–10; Sweetser and DesCamp. 'Motivating Biblical Metaphors for God,' 7–9.

[61] Nielsen, Jesper T. 'The Cognitive Structures in Galatians 1.4,' in *Cognitive Linguistic Explorations in Biblical Studies* (eds. Bonnie Howe and Joel B. Green. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014) 145–68.

[62] Nielsen, 'Galatians 1.4,' 145.

Greek culture.[63] However, "neither of these proposed traditions matches the Pauline formulation completely. But *they may all be part of the cultural repertoire that constitutes the common background of Paul's idea*."[64] The second motif is rendered by Paul as *deliverance from the present evil age* (Gal. 1.4b), and is straightforwardly associated with the Jewish apocalyptic motif of *opposing aeons*.[65] Now, there is no known "overlap" of these two frames in written documents up to this letter, that is, a voluntary death, of any kind, triggering the inauguration of a new apocalyptic age. Therefore, the idea of Christ *giving himself for our sins* in order *to deliver us from the present evil age* (Gal 1.4), be it Pauline or pre-Pauline, cannot be understood as a "Christianised version of a traditional motif,"[66] but as a *nova* concept originated by the integration of two distinct structures into a new one.[67] It should be noted here that this is not some sort of special literary skill harnessed by gifted minds such as Paul's, but rather a common everyday experience in human communication.[68]

"Making peace" and "through the blood of his cross" are both metaphorical expressions. As such, they evoked frames, or scenarios, which were readily available to the readers' conceptual system, enabling them to make sense of the metaphors. However, one caveat is in order: unlike the example above, the concept of peace through bloodshed does overlap both in Jewish theologising and in the Graeco-Roman conceptual world. So, I will argue that the metaphorical expressions "peacemaking" and "blood of the cross" evoke frames from both the Jewish conceptual world and the Graeco-Roman one. The readers might have begun their comprehension of the message of εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου in Colossians 1.20b by contrasting the common threads of those frames known to them with the way the concept of *peacemaking through blood* in Colossians is presented as it is informed and shaped by the Christ event. The version of the message presented by Colossians is one that challenges the cultural and theological expectations which the audience, or discourse community,[69] had concerning *peacemaking through blood*. The impact of Colossians' christological configuration of

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[63] Nielsen, 'Galatians 1.4,' 149–52.
[64] Nielsen, 'Galatians 1.4,' 152 (italics added).
[65] Nielsen, 'Galatians 1.4,' 153–55.
[66] Nielsen, 'Galatians 1.4,' 155.
[67] For more examples of CL insights employed in Biblical studies, see Howe and Green, *Explorations;* cf. Sweetser, Eve and Mary T. DesCamp. 'Metaphors for God: Why and How Do Our Choices Matter for Humans? The Application of Contemporary Cognitive Linguistics Research to the Debate on God and Metaphor,' *Pastoral Psychology* 53.3 (January, 2005) 207–38. For examples in Systematic Theology, see Masson, *Metaphor*.
[68] Fauconnier and Turner, *The Way We Think, passim*.
[69] David Barton defines "discourse community" as "a group of people who have texts and practices in common." (Barton, David. *Literacy: An Introduction to the Ecology of Written Language,* 2nd ed. [Oxford: Blackwell, 2007] 75–76).

the concept of *peacemaking through blood* lies precisely in such incongruity between its message and the familiar frames known to the hearers. Our task will be to investigate which frames might have been activated in the minds of the implied readers by the writer's message as he combined the "peacemaking" and "through blood" metaphors to communicate his own theological teaching.

1.3 The Audience of the Letter to the Colossians

Since this study analyses frames from both the Graeco-Roman world and the Jewish one, a brief description of the social make-up of the church at Colossae is in order.

Colossae was situated in west-central Asia Minor, in the Lycus River valley. Its population was most likely diverse, made up of a majority of Gentiles but arguably with a considerable Jewish presence. It is widely agreed that the church to which Colossians was written reflected the diversity of the city's ethnic makeup. Evidence from the letter suggests that the audience was predominantly Gentile. For instance, the description of the believers' conversion reflects language more naturally associated with Gentiles (e.g., Col. 1.12, 21).[70] Similarly, the mention of the mystery among the Gentiles (Col. 1.27) and the list of vices in Colossians 3.5 "are more typically Gentile than Jewish." As we will show later in reference to the language of conversion, this does not necessarily exclude the presence of Jews among the addressees. As Dunn puts it, "[t]he implications of 1.12, 21–22; 2.13; and 3.11–12 in particular are that the presuppositional framework of thought for both writer and recipients focusses on Jewish covenantal distinctiveness and privilege…"[71] The writer's message in Colossians 3.11 that in Christ all ethnic and cultural distinctions become irrelevant lays emphasis on the Gentile-Jewish division with the first four couplets focusing on it (cf. 2.16).[72] This is reinforced by what we know of the Jewish presence in the region. For instance, Josephus (*Ant*. 12. 147–53) says that Antiochus III (241-187 BCE) transposed two thousand Jewish families from Babylonia and Mesopotamia, and resettled them in Lydia and Phrygia (c. 212-205/6 BCE). Trebilco estimates that "total

[70] Cf. Moo, *Colossians,* 26–28.
[71] Dunn, *Colossians,* 33.
[72] Cf. Dunn, *Colossians,* 223f. Even more emphatic on the Gentile-Jewish division than the formulation in Gal. 3.28 and 1Cor. 12.13. See also Arnold, *The Colossian Syncretism,* 195–98, and *passim*.

number of people probably exceeded 10.000."[73] Therefore, it seems clear enough that although the majority of the community was made up of Gentiles, the presence of Jews cannot be ignored.[74]

1.4 Colossians Authorship and Delimitations

Before proceeding, a few observations concerning the authorship of Colossians and the delimitations of this study are in order. First, although the present investigation does not depend on the Pauline authorship of Colossians, I will adopt James Dunn's authorship hypothesis as it seems to better account for both the similarities and dissimilarities between Colossians and the undisputed Pauline letters, as well as to do justice to the ongoing authorship debate.[75] After weighing up the evidence for and against Pauline authorship, Dunn proposes a third *via*, namely, that the letter was written by someone from the inner circle of the apostle, at his behest and with his approval, and written in such a way as to display strong characteristics of Pauline theology.[76] He suggests Timothy as a likely candidate, in which case we could perhaps describe the theology of Colossians as "the theology of Paul as understood or interpreted by Timothy."[77] He goes on to say that "if Timothy did indeed write for Paul at Paul's behest, but also with Paul's approval of what was in the event written (prior to adding 4.18), then we have to call the letter 'Pauline' in the full sense of the word, and the distinction between 'Pauline' and 'post-Pauline' as applied to Colossians becomes relatively unimportant."[78] Dunn's proposal provides a theoretical basis for my occasional references to Paul's undisputed letters when the parallels are clear enough to illustrate or clarify the primary text. Having said that, it seems appropriate to reinforce that the validity of my main arguments is in no way dependent on matters of authorship.

Secondly, it is necessary to note that this work is not a study of the (απο)καταλλασσ- word either in the New Testament or in Colossians, more specifically. Although, as already noted

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[73] Trebilco, P. *Jewish Communities in Asia Minor* (SNTSMS 69. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991) 6, cf. 12–16. Cf. Bruce, F. F. 'The Colossian Problems 1: Jews and Christians in the Lycus Valley,' *BibSac* 141 (1984) 3–15; Foster, *Colossians,* 10–16; Dunn, *Colossians,* 20–23.

[74] Cf. Wilson, Colossians, 8; Dunn, Colossians, 29, and *passim*; Moo, Colossians, 27;

[75] The Pauline authorship of Colossians is disputed mainly on three grounds: vocabulary, style, and theology. The debate is, however, still unresolved. For an analysis of the arguments for and against the authenticity of Colossians, cf. Pascuzzi, Maria A. 'Reconsidering the Authorship of Colossians,' *BBR* 23.2 (2013) 223–46.

[76] Dunn, *Colossians*, 35–39.

[77] Dunn, Colossians, 38.

[78] Idem; cf. Schweizer, *Colossians,* 23f; Stettler, *Kolosserhymnus,* 47f, 346f.

above, εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτοῦ (Col. 1.20b) elaborates on καὶ δι᾽ αὐτοῦ ἀποκαταλλάξαι τὰ πάντα εἰς αὐτόν in the first part of the verse, the focus of this research lies on verse 20b, namely, in the analysis of the possible frames activated by the metaphorical expressions in verse 20b and their rhetorical and theological import for the message of "peace making" in Colossians. Because of the narrow focus of my research, I will also avoid the debate on the literary form of the so-called "Christ-Hymn" (Col. 1.15–20) as much as possible.

This study is an investigation of the multiple frames possibly evoked in the minds of the implied readers by the metaphorical expressions εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου in Colossians 1.20b, and of the impact that the identification of such frames has on the interpretation of the text. It aims to make a contribution to our understanding of this unique phrase in the New Testament, a phrase often neglected by commentators and students of Colossians but which nonetheless plays a vital role in explaining the important theological concept of "reconciliation of all things" (Col. 1.20a) in the letter. To my knowledge, no major dissertation has been written on εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου in Colossians 1.20b.

Even with its narrow scope, our detailed analysis of the proposed frames of the *peacemaking through blood* concept in Colossians 1.20b aims at bringing clarity to the text by providing an in-depth analysis of both the Graeco-Roman and the Jewish cultural and theological influences. As for the Graeco-Roman frame, our thesis provides an in-depth analysis of how the *pax romana* propaganda, firmly established in Asia Minor, could have aided the Gentile audience in Colossae to grasp the meaning of the metaphors. Furthermore, the overall approach of our study will allow us to overcome the limitations of either/or types of exegesis and the fallacious dichotomy between Jewish and Graeco-Roman influences in the composition and reception of the message of Colossians while reaffirming the importance of rigorous historical and social studies for the interpretation of the New Testament.

As for the Jewish background, a number of scholars agree that there is a Jewish background behind the concept of *peacemaking though blood* even if, in most cases, this is only briefly assumed and mainly in reference to the mention of "blood of the cross." By approaching the metaphors in Colossians 1.20b from a Cognitive Linguistics perspective on conceptual metaphor and frames semantics, we are able to use more precise language to speak of the "script-like" scenarios that they could have activated in the minds of the Jewish audience, and to

propose a more specific frame for *peacemaking though blood* within the Jewish conceptual system. By proposing a Jewish frame for εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου this study also strengthens the case for situating the broader theme of "reconciliation" (Col. 1.20) within the Jewish world as well—in contrast to limiting proposals such as Breytenbach's who, as noted above, argued that Paul derives the language of reconciliation from the Hellenistic and Roman polis-diplomacy world, with no cultic background.[79]

Although this work will analyse both sets of frames (i.e., Graeco-Roman and Jewish) separately, there is no intention of driving a hard wedge between Hellenism and Judaism as if Jewish frames were only available to Jews and the Graeco-Roman ones to non-Jews. Driving a wedge between Hellenism and Judaism would be incongruous both with what we know of first-century Palestinian Judaism[80] and with the nature of the Colossian community depicted by the letter to the Colossians, which shows signs of a fair amount of syncretism.[81] Isolating the frames based on the broad (and somewhat fluid) categories of Graeco-Roman and Jewish audience allows us to focus on those frames more characteristically associated with each worldview and, consequently, more familiar to one group of readers or the other. Thus, although some frames would naturally be more familiar to either the Graeco-Roman reader or the Jewish one, it does not mean that there could be no overlapping between the two.

1.5 Structure of the Next Chapters

Our study will proceed as follows. The next five chapters are divided into two parts, corresponding to the analysis of Colossians 1.20b on the basis of the Graeco-Roman frame (chapter 2 and 3) and the Jewish one (chapters 4–6). Chapter 2 will provide an outline of the relevant aspects of the *pax romana* in order to show that the metaphorical expressions of *peacemaking* and *through blood* in Colossians 1.20b might have triggered the entire frame of *pax romana* in the minds of the Gentile readers thus equipping them to access the meaning of the linguistic units. Here I also discuss the evidence for the presence of *pax romana* in first-century Asia

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[79] Cf. Breytenbach, 'Salvation,' 177f; cf. his fuller treatment of the sematic range of the καταλλάσσ- word group in Breytenbach, Cilliers. *Versöhnung*.

[80] Martin Hengel's massive work, *Judaism and Hellenism: Studies in their Encounter in Palestine during the Early Hellenistic Period* (trans. John Bowden; London: SCM Press, 1974), is still the most comprehensive investigation of the pervasive influence of Hellenism on Palestinian Judaism since before Alexander the Great (c. 330 BCE). See also Barclay, John M. G. *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora: from Alexander to Trajan (323 BCE - 117 CE)* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998).

[81] Cf. Clinton Arnold. *The Colossian Syncretism*.

Minor with a view to demonstrating that the frame was available to the implied readers of Colossians.

Having outlined the main aspects of *pax romana,* chapter 3 will discuss how the *pax romana* frame affects the reading of εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου in Colossians 1.20b. I will argue for a conceptual and literary connection between Colossians 1.20 and Colossians 2.15, contending that the triumph metaphor in Colossians 2.15 complements the imagery of *cosmic peacemaking* of 1.20b and should be read alongside it. The chapter will conclude by suggesting three ways in which the combined imagery of Colossians 1.20b and 2.15 could have challenged the readers' perception of reality regarding *peacemaking through blood*.

Part 2 of this study (chapters 4–6) will focus on the Jewish frame. Chapter 4 will provide an outline of the main elements of the *rîb*-pattern in the legal procedures in the Old Testament, paying particular attention to the aspect of "reconciliation," in order to propose a Jewish background for the understanding of reconciliation within the legal semantic frame of divine controversy and, more specifically, for the understanding of "εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου" in Colossians 1.20b. I will argue that the Old Testament prophetic *rîb*-pattern is a "conceptual frame" widely reflected in the Old Testament to conceptualise the relationship between God and Israel, the disruption of this relationship, and its restoration.

Having outlined the proposed Jewish background, chapter 5 will assess the prophetic divine lawsuit in Deutero-Isaiah in order to lay the foundation for our subsequent analysis of linguistic and conceptual parallels between these chapters of the book of Isaiah and the message of reconciliation and *peacemaking through blood* in the letter to the Colossians.

Finally, chapter 6 will analyse the concept of *peacemaking through blood* in Colossians within its literary context in order to determine whether it had the potential to evoke the divine controversy frame, especially as seen in the Deutero-Isaiah frame, and how it affects the understanding of *peacemaking thought blood* by the Jewish audience of the letter. The chapter will conclude by suggesting three ways in which the combined imagery of Colossians 1.12–23 could have challenged the Jewish readers' perception of reality regarding *peacemaking through blood*.

The findings of our research and their relevance for our understanding of *peacemaking through blood* in Colossians 1.20b will be addressed in the concluding chapter (chapter 7). My thesis is

that the metaphorical expression “εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου” in Colossians 1.20b should be understood against the specific socio-cultural backgrounds of both the Graeco-Roman community and the Jewish community which comprised the primary audience of this letter.

Part 1:

The Graeco-Roman Frame

Chapter 2: *Pax Romana* as a Viable Graeco-Roman Frame

2.1 Introduction

According to conceptual metaphor theory, when the audience from Asia Minor heard the phrase εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου (Col. 1.20b) it would have evoked a number of conceptual frames, or *scenarios,* which enabled the hearers to grasp its meaning. My contention is that both the Graeco-Roman and the Jewish backgrounds, with their political, religious and philosophical frames, have an important role in our understanding of the nature of the peace achieved by Christ on the cross, as it would have been understood by the Colossians themselves. The author of Colossians therefore explores the common threads drawn from the two backgrounds in order to develop his own perspective on *peace through blood*. I first deal with the Graeco-Roman background in this chapter and the next, before moving on to the analysis of the Jewish background in the second part of this thesis.

The obvious starting place for a study of peace/peacemaking in the Graeco-Roman world is in the much discussed *pax romana,* which encompassed a huge spectrum of social, political and religious aspects of life within the confines of the Roman empire. In what follows, I outline the relevant aspects of the *pax romana* in order to show that the metaphorical expressions of *peacemaking through the blood of his cross* in Colossians 1.20b could have triggered the whole background context of *pax romana* in the readers' minds thus equipping them to access the meaning of the linguistic units. In order to demonstrate that, I first present a brief overview of the *pax romana* to show that the *Augustan peace* was an important propaganda instrument of the empire with strong connections to the Roman religious understanding of the *pax deorum*. The Roman poet Catullus' poem 68.75–76 (first century BCE) is introduced as an illustration of the importance of the *pax deorum* in the Roman ideology and some passages in the writings of Philo of Alexandria appear to resonate with the imperial propaganda of *pax*.

Secondly, I examine the evidence for the presence of *pax romana* in first-century Asia Minor with a view to demonstrating that the frame was available to the primary audience of Colossians. My conclusion is that the whole conceptual frame of *pax romana* was indeed available to the first-century Asia Minor audience of Colossians, and that this in turn can aid our understanding of the message of Colossians as will be presented in the next chapter.

2.2 *Pax Romana*: A Brief Overview

The *pax romana* ("Roman peace"), or *pax augusta* ("Augustan peace"), was one of the essential elements of the Roman empire ideology.[1] As an imperial ideal and propaganda it meant internal peace and external security.[2] Its beginning is associated with the reign of Caesar Augustus, born Gaius Octavius (27 BCE–CE 14), whose rise to power marked the turning point between the late *res publica* and the beginning of a new Roman order which came to be known as the *Principate*—the *de facto* Roman Empire. Augustus took pride in the fact that he "had extinguished the flames of civil wars"[3] that for so long had devasted the late Republic, and made sure that the greater part of the Roman army was relocated mainly to the frontiers of the empire.[4] His principate was celebrated as a return to the "Golden Age" in which peace fares as a constant feature.[5] For two and a half centuries, *pax romana* would be integral to the ideal and propaganda of the Roman empire. As such it became a motif of art, coinage and literature.[6]

Caesar Augustus himself provides a first-hand account of the importance of the ideal of *pax* in the Augustan age in his *Res Gestae Divi Augusti,* which provides insights into the first *princeps'* ideology of empire. The three extant copies of Augustus' *Res Gestae* are from Asia Minor: Ancyra (both Latin and Greek versions), Pisidian Antioch (Latin version),[7] and Apollonia (Greek version). All three copies might have been associated with sanctuaries for the imperial cult.[8] The document is roughly structured in three main headings: (1) *honores* (the offices and

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[1] With Louise Revell, "ideology" here is not being used "in the narrow sense of political ideologies, but in the broader concept of beliefs about how the world should be organized." (Revell, Louise. *Roman Imperialism and Local Identities* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009] 13; cf. Galinsky, Karl. *Augustan Culture: An Interpretive Introduction* [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996] 80–140]).
The expression *pax romana* is first found in Seneca, *Clem*. 1.4.1–3 (55 CE).

[2] Cf. Wengst, Klaus. *Pax Romana and the Peace of Jesus Christ* (trans. John Bowden. London: SCM Press, 1987) 19–26; Goldsworthy, Adrian. *Pax Romana: War, Peace and Conquest in the Roman World* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2017) 9–18, *passim*.

[3] *Res Gestae* 34.

[4] Cf. Goldsworthy, *Pax,* 11–12, 168–72.

[5] Cf. Virgil, *Aen*. 1.280–90; 6.791–7; *Ecl*. 4; Ovid, *Met*. 15.833; Suetonius, *Aug*. 22; Horace *Epod*. 9; Horace, *Carm*. 1.37; for an analysis of the Roman Golden Age, cf. Galinsky, *Augustan,* 90–140; Evans, Rhiannon. *Utopia Antiqua: Readings of the Golden Age and Decline at Rome* (London and New York: Routledge, 2008); Zanker, P. *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus* (trans. Alan Shapiro. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1988) 167–83.

[6] Zangenberg, Jürgen. '"Pax Romana' im NT," in *Prolegomena, Quellen, Geschichte, Recht* (*Neues Testament und Antike Kultur* 1 (eds. Kurt Erlemann, *et al*. Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 2004) 165–68.

[7] It seems highly probable that the apostle Paul saw the sanctuary to Augustus, and possibly the *Res Gestae,* in Pisidian Antioch on his first journey (cf. Mitchell, S. *Anatolia. Land, Men, and Gods in Asia Minor, vol. 2: The Rise of the Church* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993) 9–10.

[8] Cooley, Alison E. *Res Gestae Divi Augusti: Text, Translation, and Commentary* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009) 7. For an analysis of the *Res Gestae* in the Anatolian cultural context, see Rubin, Benjamin B. '(Re)presenting Empire: The Roman Imperial Cult in Asia Minor, 31 BC–AD 68' (PhD thesis. University of Michigan, 2008) 117–39.

honours conferred to Augustus, 1–14); (2) *impensae* (expenditures, 15–24); and (3) *res gestae* proper (achievements, especially in war and peace, 25–35).[9] Two passages in particular illustrate Augustus' awareness of his role as the bringer of peace.[10] The first one is found in paragraph 12:

> When I returned to Rome from Spain and Gaul, having settled affairs successfully in these provinces, in the consulship of Tiberius Nero and Publius Quinctilius, the senate decreed that an altar of Augustan Peace[11] should be consecrated in thanks for my return on the field of Mars, and ordered magistrates and priests and Vestal Virgins to perform annual sacrifices there.[12]

Augustus returns to Rome from his military expedition in the west on the night of 3 July 13 BCE. The next day, 4 July, the *Ara Pacis Augustae* (commonly referred to simply as *Ara Pacis*) was commissioned by the Senate, and dedicated on 30 January 9 BCE.[13] The *princeps* considered the altar important enough to add this note in his *Res Gestae*. Wengst interprets the location of the altar on the Field of Mars as symbolic of the idea of a peace won on the battlefield.[14] This seems to be a plausible conjecture, especially considering that the mention of the *Ara Pacis* here is immediately followed by the description of the closing of the gates of the shrine of Janus, which introduces us to the second relevant passage in the *Res Gestae*:

> Our ancestors wanted Janus Quirinus to be closed when peace had been achieved by victories on land and sea throughout the whole empire of the Roman people; whereas before I was born, it is recorded as having been closed twice in all from the foundation of the city, the senate decreed it should be closed three times when I was leader.[15]

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[9] Paterculus, C. Velleius. *Compendium of Roman History; Res Gestae Divi Augusti* (trans. Frederick W. Shipley. LCL. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1924) 336. However, the three motifs are inextricably intertwined throughout the entire inscription (cf. Cooley, *Res Gestae,* 34f).

[10] Cf. also Wengst, *Pax,* 8.

[11] Pacis Augustae/Εἰρήνης Σεβαστῆς.

[12] *Res Gestae* 12.2; translations of the *Res Gestae* in this work are from the Latin inscription by Cooley, *Res Gestae,* unless otherwise stated.

[13] If the *Res Gestae Divi Augusti* has been dubbed "the queen of inscriptions" (Mommsen, Theodor. *Res Gestae Divi Augusti ex Monumentis Ancyrano et Apolloniensi* [Berlin: Weidmann, 1865] 247), the *Ara Pacis* has been considered "the most representative work of Augustan art." (Galinsky, *Augustan,* 141; cf. Earl, Donald. *The Age of Augustus* [New York: Crown Publishers, 1968] 113). The *Ara Pacis* is currently displayed in the Museo dell'Ara Pacis, Rome.

[14] Wengst, *Pax,* 11.

[15] *Res Gestae,* 13; cf. Suetonius, *Aug*. 22. The closing of the gates features in Virgil's "prophecy" of eternal peace (*Aen*. 1.291–6; cf. 7.607ff). The emperor Nero, who saw himself as the successor of Augustus (cf. Suetonius, *Aug*. 10.1; 12.3; 25.1) and the peace-maker of the new Golden Age, also closed the gates of Janus right after the submission of Tiridates, king of Armenia, in 66 CE (Suetonius, *Nero* 13.2).

The closing of the gates of the shrine of Janus symbolised a state of peace by cessation of armed hostilities in the Roman dominion.[16] Augustus boasts that before "he was born" the gates of Janus had been closed only twice. As noted above, the mention of the gate-closing ritual follows on logically from the description of the dedication of the *Ara Pacis* in paragraph 12, from which Galinsky concludes that "[t]he Ara Pacis thus is linked with the concept that peace is the result of the military victories which secure the *imperium Romanum* on land and sea: *cum per totum imperium populi Romani terra marique esset* parta victoriis pax."[17] The Latin quoted by Galinsky reflects the "ideology of *Pax Augusta* being 'pacification after military victory' rather than simply 'peace.'"[18] The *Res Gestae* leaves no doubt that Augustus' concept of "making peace" is that which is achieved through pacification of the Roman enemies by means of military victory (*parta victoriis pax*): "At the start of the *Res Gestae* proper (25–35), he returns to the theme of pacification on land and sea: "I pacified the sea …" (25.1);[19] and "I pacified the Gallic and Spanish provinces…" (26.2). The emphases on "sea" and "land" reflects the "terra marique *esset parta victoriis pax*"[20] of paragraph 13 above. "Pacified" renders the Latin *pacare,* the verbal cognate of *pax,* which has the semantic range of "to bring into a state of peace and quietness, to make peaceful, to quiet, pacify, subdue, soothe."[21] Reflecting this same conclusion, Cooley writes that "[t]he verb *pacare* may almost be regarded as a slogan of the regime […] together with its cognate noun *pax*, it encompasses the idea of pacification through military victory."[22] The ideal of peace was indubitably important to the Augustan propaganda as a whole. It is also worth noting that Augustus makes an implicit allusion in paragraph 13 to his

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[16] For a discussion of the shrine of Janus and the ceremony of closing its gates, see Syme, R. 'Problems about Janus,' *AJPh* 100.1 (1979) 188–212.

[17] Galinsky, *Augustan,* 141 (emphasis original); cf. Cooley, *Res Gestae,* 157.

[18] Cooley, *Res Gestae,* 158. Earl draws attention to the symbolism evoked by the location of the *Ara Pacis* near the Forum of Augustus. He remarks that the Forum represented, in the military sphere, Augustus' claim that his Principate was the legitimate successor of the Republic: "There Augustus was the great general, the servant of Rome's imperial mission, like Aeneas and the other heroes of old, following the duty imposed by heaven to fulfil the decree of Virgil's Jupiter: 'On the Romans I place no limits either of space or of time; I have given them imperial power without end.' The *Ara Pacis* is an altogether more subtle construction. But the peace and homecoming it proclaimed could not exist apart from the imperial mission of Augustus and Rome. Horace constantly returns to the theme that it was the military power of Rome and Augustus which assured peace and the Sybil in the sixth book of Virgil's *Aeneid* closed the great review of Rome's heroes with the words. 'Do you, Roman, remember to rule the nations with power (there shall be our arts) and to impose the ways of peace, to pardon the humbled and to destroy the arrogant in war.'" (Earl, *Augustus,* 116).

[19] My translation; cf. Suetonius, *Aug*. 98.2; Horace, *Odes* 4.5.19.

[20] Emphasis added. Augustus "pronounced no pacifist's creed but declared a warrior's achievement […] The *Res Gestae* places emphasis not on peace but on pacification." (Gruen, E. S. 'Augustus and the Ideology of War and Peace,' in *The Age of Augustus: Interdisciplinary Conference Held at Brown University Providence Rhode Island, 1982* [ed. Winkes, R. Louvain-la-Neuve: Art and Archaeology Publications, 1985] 51–72, at 54).

[21] Lewis and Short, 'Paco'. The Greek renders it by the εἰρην- word-group.

[22] Cooley, *Res Gestae,* 222.

birthday as the beginning of a new Age—a Golden Age of peace—which is well captured by the Greek rendering "αἰών" instead of "χρόνος."[23]

Reflecting on the new era brought about by Augustus, Velleius Paterculus celebrates the blessing of peace: "…[W]hen was the blessing of peace greater? The *pax augusta,* which had spread to the region of the east and of the west and to the bounds of the north and of the south, preserves every corner of the world safe from the fear of brigandage."[24] Writing in the days of the emperor Antoninus Pius, Aelius Aristides praises the state of affairs brought about by the Romans by saying that since the appearance of the Romans, "confusion and strife ceased, and universal order entered as a brilliant light over the private and public affairs of man, laws appeared and altars of gods received man's confidence."[25]

These two passages from the *Res Gestae* mentioned above are illustrative of two aspects of the *pax romana* that bear on our study: (1) such peace was secured by military victory; and its corollary, (2) it was a violent peace. The idea of *peacemaking though violence* finds resonance in the Colossians concept of *peacemaking through blood* in 1.20b, which is amplified by other potential points of contact with imperial ideology throughout the letter (e.g., 2.15); there is also another aspect: (3) inextricably connected to *pax romana* is the relation between *pax romana* and *pax deorum*. We should now turn to the consideration of these three aspects.

2.2.1 *Parta victoriis pax*: Peace Secured by Military Victory

The ideal of peace through the subjugation of enemies, or peace through victories (*parta victoriis pax*), in Augustus own words, was part of Rome's strong awareness of their divinely-bestowed duty. The words of Virgil's famous "prophecy" about the *Imperium Romanum* stands as Rome's imperial "mission statement." He makes Anchises say: "you, Roman, make it your task to rule the world (be these your arts), *to impose the custom of peace*, to spare the vanquished and to crush the proud."[26] Virgil is referring particularly to Caesar Augustus who was

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[23] Cf. Cooley, *Res Gestae,* 158. This notion was exploited by the Greek cities in Asia Minor seeking to establish a connection with the empire (see below).

[24] Velleius Paterculus, 2.126.3; cf. Strabo, *Geog*. 6.4.2 (all translations of Graeco-Roman literature are from Loeb unless otherwise stated).

[25] Aristides, *Rom. Ora*. 103; translations of Aelius Aristides' *Roman Oration* are from Oliver, James H. 'The Ruling Power: A Study of the Roman Empire in the Second Century after Christ through the Roman Oration of Aelius Aristides,' *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* 43.4 (1953) 871–1003; cf. Behr, C. A. *Aelius Aristides and the Sacred Tales* (Amsterdam: Hakkert, 1968) 88–90.

[26] Virgil, *Aen*. 6.851–53 (italics added). Translation from Loeb with modifications. Latin: tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento (hae tibi erunt artes), pacique imponere morem, parcere subiectis et debellare

destined to restore the Golden Age and whose territorial dominion would surpass that of Hercules and Bacchus.[27] Virgil makes the imposition of peace on conquered nations sound almost as if it were a blessing bestowed on the world by the Romans. However, the idea of an imposed peace on conquered nations already reveals the paradoxical nature of the Roman policy.

The prominence of military victory in stablishing peace also reveals the Roman mentality that the greatness of their empire would lie not in things such as oratory, science, or arts, for instance, but in war and their ability to govern over the nations ("this shall be your arts," "*hae tibi erunt artes*"). Accordingly, whereas from a Roman perspective the peace which they imposed on their enemies by means of military conquest meant the worldwide blessing of concord and harmony achieved and maintained by their rule, from the perspective of the conquered nations, it meant "subjugation." Again, this is plainly stated in the introduction to the *Res Gestae:* "Below is a copy of the achievements of the deified Augustus, by which he made the world subject to the rule of the Roman people."[28]

Examples of this imperial ideal abound in the literature. A few references suffice. In Livy 1.16.7, the first king of Rome speaks from heaven: "'Go,' said he, 'and declare to the Romans the will of Heaven that my Rome shall be the capital of the world; so let them cherish the art of war, and let them know and teach their children that no human strength can resist Roman arms.'" Moses Hadas summarises Livy's depiction of the Augustan ideal of what a *vir veres Romanus* is: "The Romans are, in a word, in the natural order of things children of destiny, lords of creation, fated to prevail over all other people."[29] Livy, like Virgil, reflects the "cosmic" scope of Rome's mission.

Elsewhere Virgil writes another "prophecy." This time he puts it in the mouth of Jupiter: "Then Romulus, proud in the tawny hide of the she-wolf, his nurse, shall take up the line, and found the walls of Mars and call the people Romans after his own name. For these I set no bounds in space or time; but have given empire without end."[30] In other words, the rule of the Romans over the world, and the accompanying establishment of the *pax romana*, is bound up with

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superbos. "To impose the custom of peace" translates *pacique imponere morem* (lit. "to impose custom to peace" or "to impose custom on peace"). The Oxford Latin course takes that to mean "to make peace customary." So "to impose the custom of peace" seems to capture the idea well (cf. Balme, M. and J. Morwood. *Oxford Latin Course, III,* 2nd ed. [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997] 183). I am grateful to Dr Peter J. Williams for his invaluable assistance with Latin.

[27] Virgil, *Aen*. 6.792–805.

[28] Rerum gestarum dívi Augusti, quibus orbem terra[rum] imperio populi Rom[a]ni subiecit.

[29] Hadas, M. *History of Latin Literature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1952) 230.

[30] Virgil, *Aen*. 1.275–79; cf. 7.98–101, 257f; 8.678–81, 714–23; Livy, *Hist*. 1.4.1.

divine fate in the imperial ideology. Plutarch praises the extraordinary success with which the Romans conquered his enemies which, for him, could only mean that the Roman people had been favoured by *Fortune*: "Trophy upon trophy arises, triumph meets triumph, and the first blood, while still warm on their arms, is overtaken and washed away by a second flood. They count their victories, not by the multitude of corpses and spoils, but by captive kingdoms, by nations enslaved, by islands and continents added to their mighty realm."[31] Likewise, Aelius Aristides, in the second century BCE, can speak about the *Imperium Romanum* that one "can no longer be amazed that the entire civilized world is ruled by one so great [i.e., the city of Rome]"[32] and that "[w]ars, even if they once occurred, no longer seem to have been real; on the contrary, stories about them are interpreted more and more as myths by the many who hear them[33] […] so great is your peace, though war was traditional among you."[34] And the first-century CE poet, Ovid, writes:

> The course of my song hath led me to the altar of Peace […] Come, Peace, thy dainty tresses wreathed with Actian laurels, and let thy gentle presence abide in the whole world. So but there be nor foes nor food for triumphs, thou shalt be unto our chiefs a glory greater than war. May the soldier bear arms only to check the armed aggressor […] May the world near and far dread the sons of Aeneas, and if there be any land that feared not Rome, may it love Rome instead![35]

Peace through victory is also well illustrated in Roman art. The *Ara Pacis* is arguably one of the most important examples. I have already noted above Galinsky's remark that the "Ara Pacis is […] linked with the concept that peace is the result of military victories which secure the *imperium Romanum* on land and sea."[36] This was the first monument built in the capital of the empire for the cult of *Pax*.[37] The remarkable decorative work on the *Ara Pacis* encapsulates the Augustan ideology. The altar is surrounded by a precinct wall emulating the shrine of Janus Quirinus.[38] The lower zone of the exterior walls displays floral scroll friezes (symbolising the

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[31] Plutarch, *Fort. Rom.* 323F.
[32] Aelius Aristides, *Rom. Ora.* 9.
[33] Aelius Aristides, *Rom. Ora.* 70.
[34] Aelius Aristides, *Rom. Ora.* 71a.
[35] Ovid, *Fasti* 1.709–18. cf. Cicero, who reflects the concept of peace through war and speaks of the ideal Roman statesman: "Wars should be undertaken only with the aim of living in peace and security; and when victory has been achieved, the enemy must be spared, unless he has shown that he is cruel and uncivilised." (*Off.* 1.35; cf. 1.74, 77, 80); Aristides, *Rom. Ora*; Horace, *Carm.* (for a helpful discussion of *Carmen Saeculare* and the NT in Georgi, Dieter. 'Who is the True Prophet,' in *Paul and Empire: Religion and Power in Roman Imperial Society* [ed. Richard A. Horsley. Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1997] 36–46).
[36] Cf. Galinsky, *Augustan,* 141.
[37] Cooley, *Res Gestae,* 156.
[38] Galinsky, *Augustan,* 146; Cooley, *Res Gestae,* 155. For an interesting virtual tour of the Ara Pacis, see the Museo dell'Ara Pacis website (http://www.arapacis.it/it/infopage/tour-virtuale-del-museo-dellara-pacis; accessed May 2020).

fertility and prosperity of the new age),[39] whereas the upper register is occupied by figural ones. The most impressive friezes are perhaps the ones on the south and north walls, both depicting a great imperial procession. The north side displays members of the priestly colleges, senators, magistrates and their families. The frieze on the south side comprises Augustus himself (leading the procession), his family, members of the priestly colleges, magistrates and officials. The direction of the procession is westbound, to the entrance of the altar: "The principal intent is to present the idea of the return of Augustus, the guarantor (*auctor*) of peace."[40] The actual annual sacrifice rituals are depicted in a small frieze on the top of the altar itself comprising animals and officiants in a sacrificial procession.

The west and east walls of the precinct contain four smaller reliefs. Together they represent different aspects of the *pax augusta*. The two friezes on the east side are particularly relevant here. On the left-hand side there is a matronly figure sitting on a rocky seat holding two infants in her arms (*figure 1*). Her identity is controversial, with some candidates being Tellus, Venus, Ceres, or Pax herself.[41] However, Galinsky has argued that one should not limit the figure to any one identity, and that pluralism of meanings is in fact an intentional goal of the entire monument: "…the pictorial program as a whole and in all its richness is the expression of the concept of *Pax Augusta* in all its ramifications […] The various images of the altar's decoration are meant to be viewed in conjunction with one another…"[42] Accordingly, this frieze should be taken in conjunction with the one on the opposite side which represents the goddess Roma (*figure 2*) sitting on a pile of weapons taken from enemies in war: "The viewer was meant to read the two images together and understand the message, namely, that the blessings of peace had been won and made secure by the newly fortified *virtus* of Roman arms."[43] The idea of *disarming* the enemies and consequent peace by subjugation perhaps resonate with Colossians 2.15 (see chapter 3 below).

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[39] Cf. Zanker, *Images,* 179–83. Writing on the ubiquity of imperial images conveying the ideas of allegiance and loyalty, Zanker, *Images,* 266, concludes that "[s]oon political symbolism could be seen on every imaginable object made for private use, indeed on virtually everything that could be decorated at all: jewelry (*sic*) and utensils, furniture, textiles, walls and stuccoed ceilings, door jambs, clay facings, roof tiles, and even on tombs monuments and marble ash urns."

[40] Galinsky, *Augustan,* 142.

[41] See discussion in Zanker, *Images,* 172–75. He thinks *Pax Augusta* is the best candidate; cf. Earl, *Augustus,* 115f.

[42] Galinsky, *Augustan,* 148. As Galinsky notes in footnote 14, this answer to Weinstock argument that the absence of an unequivocal statue of *Pax* means that the monument could not be the *Ara Pacis* (cf. Weinstock, S. 'Pax and the "Ara Pacis,"' *JRS* 50 [1960] 44–58).

[43] Zanker, *Images,* 175, cf. 175–79; cf. Galinsky, *Augustan,* 148.

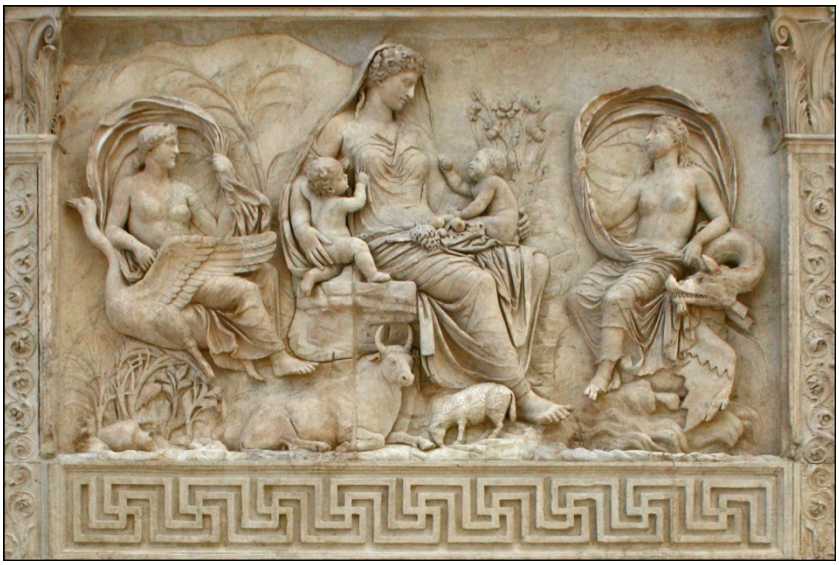

Fig. 1 – Matronly figure

Fig. 2 – Roma

The concept of peace achieved and maintained by victory is well represented in other important pieces of Augustan art, such as the cuirassed statue of Augustus from the Villa of Livia at Prima Porta,[44] as well as in architecture[45] and coinage.[46]

[44] Cf. Zanker, *Images,* 183–93; Galinsky, *Augustan,* 155–64.
[45] Cf. Galinsky, *Augustan,* 197–224.
[46] Cf. Wengst, *Pax,* 11f, and *passim*; Noreña, Carlos F. 'Coins and Communication,' in *The Oxford Handbook of Social Relations in the Roman World* (ed. Michael Peachin. Oxford: University Press, 2011) 248–68, at 256.

2.2.2 Violent Peace

Saying that the *pax romana* was peace produced by military victory amounts to saying it was a *violent peace*.[47] Tacitus shrewdly observes that "[a]fter that there had been undoubtedly peace, but peace with bloodshed."[48] Although he is here referring to the Roman nobility who were killed as a consequence of domestic political conflicts leading up to the new order of Augustus, his remark is symbolic of the nature of the *pax augusta* which would follow.[49] Examples of imperial violence in "crushing the proud" abound. A few examples suffice.

One instance of violent pacification was the practice of crucifixion, employed by the Romans not only as a capital punishment for high crimes but also as "a means of waging war and securing peace, of wearing down rebellious cities under siege, of breaking the will of conquered peoples and of bringing mutinous troops or unruly provinces under control."[50] One such use of crucifixion was made by the Roman general Titus in the infamous siege of Jerusalem in 70 CE.[51] Flavius Josephus writes about how Titus had possibly hundreds of captured Jews crucified "before the wall of the city" in an attempt to break the heart of the Jewish fighters defending Jerusalem, and cause them to surrender.[52] In a gruesome portrayal, Josephus says that the Roman soldiers "nailed those they caught, one after one way, and another after another, to the crosses, by way of jest, when their multitude was so great, that room was wanting for the crosses, and crosses wanting for the bodies."[53] When Titus' forces finally break into the city, their violence is described with similar hideousness: they [Titus' soldiers] "made the whole

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[47] One of Wengst's main thesis is that the meaning of Roman *peace* depended on the standpoint from which one experienced it. From the "above" perspective, i.e., the perspective of the Roman elite, *pax romana* was glamorous and advantageous. But from the "below" perspective, i.e., it was the peace of subjugation (cf. *Pax,* 7–11, and *passim*).

[48] Tacitus, *Annals,* 1.10.4.

[49] Goldsworthy, *Pax,* 169, gathers: "For all the talk of peace, Rome under his leadership [Augustus'] was almost permanently at war somewhere in the world, just as it had been under the republic." And Wengst, *Pax,* 17, 18: "[W]ars on the periphery were played down; they were hardly noticed […] Despite all the assertions to the contrary, the Pax Romana was not really a world peace. This peace, gained and secured by military force, had its limits at the limits of the Roman empire […] War on the periphery is almost unavoidable for peace gained and secured by military means."

[50] Hengel, Martin. *Crucifixion in the Ancient World and the Folly of the Message of the Cross* (trans. John Bowden. London: SCM, 1977) 46, cf. 49f, 84f. In connection with the overall object of this study, i.e., *peacemaking through blood,* it is worth noting here that the idea that crucifixion was a bloodless form of execution does not hold (cf. Hengel, *Crucifixion,* 31, n. 24; cf. also Josephus, *AJ* 19.94).

[51] For a useful summary of the siege of Jerusalem, see Smallwood, E. Mary. *Jews under Roman Rule: From Pompey to Diocletian: A Study in Political Relations* (Leiden: Brill, 1981) 316–27; cf. Rogers Jr., Cleon. L. *The Topical Josephus: Historical Accounts that Shed Light on the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992) 156–204.

[52] Josephus, *BJ* 5.446–51. Although Josephus consistently avoids ascribing any direct blame to his "hero" Titus.

[53] Josephus, *BJ* 5.451; cf. 5.289; 2.75, 241.

city run down with blood, to such a degree indeed that the fire of many of the houses was quenched with these men's blood."[54]

Another example is a widely-quoted passage from Tacitus in *Agricola*. In the leading up to the decisive battle between the Britons and the Roman forces led by his father-in-law Agricola, Tacitus makes the Caledonian leader Calgacus deliver a speech to the British troops in which he energetically criticises the empire. The speech contains a bitterly sarcastic remark on the Roman concept of *peace through military victory*. He says:

> But there are no other tribes to come; nothing but sea and cliffs and these more deadly Romans, whose arrogance you cannot escape by obedience and self-restraint. Robbers of the world, now that earth fails their all-devastating hands, they probe even the sea: if their enemy have wealth, they have greed; if he be poor, they are ambitious; East nor West has glutted them; alone of mankind they covet with the same passion want as much as wealth. *To plunder, butcher, steal, these things they misname empire: they make a desolation and they call it peace*.[55]

The passage is also widely misunderstood as if Tacitus was thereby voicing his own criticism of the *pax romana*, or the empire itself.[56] The speech, which is fictional,[57] is put in the mouth of an enemy of Rome. Whether we are here dealing with some sort of veiled criticism cleverly articulated by Tacitus is far from being straightforward.[58] Nonetheless, it represents a vivid, and accurate, portrayal of the perspective of those who happened to be the subjects of Roman imperial domination—what Wengst rightly calls the perspective "from below."[59] Reporting on Germanicus' campaign in Germany (14 CE), Tacitus says: "To extend the scope of the raid, the Caesar divided his eager legions into four bodies, and, for fifty miles around, wasted the country with sword and flame. Neither age nor sex inspired pity: places sacred and profane were

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[54] Josephus, *BJ* 6.404–08. It is worth noting Virgil's "mission statement" reflected in Josephus' account of a speech Titus gave to his troops right before their attack on Taricheae (Josephus, *BJ* 3.472–84, esp. 472f), also quoted by Wengst, *Pax,* 14f.

[55] Tacitus, *Agr*. 30.4–5 (italics added); cf. 30–32.

[56] But see Heilig, Christoph. *Hidden Criticism? The Methodology and Plausibility of the Search for a Counter-Imperial Subtext in Paul* (WUNT 392. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2015) 71f.

[57] Sailor, Dylan. 'The Agricola,' in *A Companion to Tacitus* (ed. Victoria E. Pagán. Blackwell Companions to the Ancient World. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012) 23–44, at 32.

[58] In fact, Tacitus seems to disapprove of Calgacus' criticism, cf. Sailor, 'The Agricola,' 32f. But cf. Laruccia, S. D. 'The Wasteland of Peace: A Tacitean Evaluation of *Pax Romana*,' in *Studies in Latin Literature and Roman History 2* (ed. Carl Derouxer. Collection Latomus 168. Latomus: Brussels, 1980) 407–11, who argues that the equation of *pax* and wasteland reflects Tacitus' own evaluation of *Pax Romana:* "In the *Agricola*, Tacitus has hit upon a salient fact about the *pax Romana:* its link with violence and devastation." ('Wasteland,' 408).

[59] Wengst, *Pax*, *passim*.

razed indifferently to the ground…"[60] Roman peace was a bloody peace achieved by violence and merciless "crushing of the proud."

2.2.3 *Pax Romana* and *Pax Deorum*

For the Romans, peace was closely connected to the *pax deorum* ("peace of the gods"):

> In the Roman mind *PD* meant the state of "peace" between the *populus Romanus* and their gods or described their "gracious obligingness" [1.20–22] [*sic*]. In the area of state religion it was the task of the *sacerdotes populi Romani* (Priests) and the magistrates to see to the continuation of this state by means of the correct execution and preservation of the prescribed cult activities and ordinances (such as the Vestals' requirement of chastity).[61]

The state of peace with the gods could be disrupted by various means, such as transgressions against divine norms[62] and errors of rituals;[63] when the gods were so offended, they would make their anger (*ira deorum*) known through *omens*, which could include disasters such as natural calamities and defeat in war.[64] In order to restore the *pax deorum*, one needed to know "what error or transgression had been committed, which deities had been offended and how they could

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[60] Tacitus, *Annals* 1.51.1.

[61] Linderski, Jerzy. 'Pax deorum (deum),' *Brill's New Pauly Online* (http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1574-9347_bnp_e911100; accessed April 2020). This is considered to be the traditional understanding of *pax deorum,* namely, that it was a *state* which could be ruptured and consequently needed restoring by means of expiatory rituals. Some scholars have now challenged such understanding. For Santangelo, *pax deorum* should not be considered a *state,* but "something that needs to be sought, requires a great deal of effort and attention, and must be conquered through ritual and persuasion." (Santangelo, F. '*Pax Deorum* and Pontiffs,' in *Priests and State in the Roman World* (eds. J. H. Richardson and F. Santangelo. Potsdamer Altertumswissenschaftliche Beiträge 33. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2011) 161–86, at 164, cf. esp. 162–68). In this interpretation, "prodigies signalled not that the *pax* had been broken, but that it was *needed*." (Satterfield, Susan. 'Prodigies, the *Pax Deum* and the *Ira Deum*,' *The Classical Journal* 110.4 (2015) 431–45, at 435). Such overly-nuanced definitions, however, might be a matter of hair-splitting. Nevertheless, either way my argument stands for the important point for this study is the widely accepted understanding that the Roman success depended on their having secured the *pax deorum*: "Finding the *pax* through ritual helped to avert danger and secure success […] As a matter of fact, the dogged pursuit of the *pax deum* was an important element in Roman self-understanding […] They earned their success through piety; it was the outcome of the difficult and laborious process of cultivating the gods and of tirelessly seeking the *pax deum*. Without their favour, the Romans were doomed to fail, as Sulpicius proved at the Allia; they did not possess the numbers, strength, cleverness, or talent to succeed on their own. With the gods' help, however, victory was always assured." (Satterfield, 'Prodigies,' 436, who, by the way, advocates the latter interpretation herself; cf. Cicero, *Nat. Deo*. 2.3.8; Livy 44.1.10; Polybius 6.56).

[62] Cf. Livy 2.36.6.

[63] Cf. Livy 6.1.12.

[64] Cf. Livy 3.6.5; 3.7.6; 3.8.1; 5.14.3–4; 24.10.6–11.1.

be reconciled."[65] The acts of reconciliation were either a ceremony of purification (*lustratio*) or rites of expiation (*piaculum*), including processions and animal sacrifices.[66]

A few examples suffice to show how appeasing the wrath of the gods (*ira deorum*), thereby securing the *pax deorum,* was essential to the Romans' ideology of success. Cotta the pontiff's attempt at a summary of the Roman religion in Cicero, *de Natura Deorum* 3.5, is worth quoting in full:

> The entirety of the *religio* of the Roman people is divided into rites and auspices, to which is added a third thing, namely whatever warnings the interpreters of the Sibylline books or *haruspices* issue for the sake of foreknowledge on the basis of portents and omens. I hold that none of these *religiones* should ever be neglected, and I have persuaded myself that Romulus and Numa laid the foundations of our state by establishing the auspices and rites, respectively, and that our state could never have become so great without the greatest appeasement of the immortal gods.[67]

Livy tells us that when a plague had broken out in 430 BCE, the afflicted population resorted to foreign superstitions and introduced strange sacrificial rites, to the extent that "as they beheld in every street and chapel outlandish and unfamiliar sacrifices being offered up to appease Heaven's anger [*piacula pacis deum exposcendae*]."[68] However, the "aediles were then commissioned to see to it that none but Roman gods should be worshipped, nor in any but the ancestral way."[69]

In 389 BCE, the *gens Fabia* was massacred on 18th July in the battle of the Cremera, and the reason for this was held to be that the Roman tribune Sulpicius Severus had not secured the *pax deorum*: "The consular tribune Sulpicius had not offered acceptable [*non litasset*] sacrifices on July 16 (the day after the Ides), and without having secured the peace of the gods [*neque inventa pace deum*] the Roman army was exposed to the enemy two days later."[70]

Lastly, during a war between the Romans and the Latins in 340 BCE, Livy records the saga of the two Roman consuls going to war:

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[65] Linderski, *Brill's New Pauly*.
[66] Rosenberger, Veit. 'Expiatory Rites,' *Brill's New Pauly Online* (http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/15 74-9347_bnp_e1 125050; accessed April 2020).
[67] Translation by Ando, Clifford. *The Matter of the Gods: Religion and the Roman Empire* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008) 105.
[68] On the link between *piacula* and *ira deorum,* cf. Cicero, *Leg*. 2.22.14; also *Nat. Deo*. 3.5.
[69] Livy 4.30.10–11.
[70] Livy 6.1.12 (translation from *Perseus;* I have however rendered *pace deum* as "peace of the gods" rather than "good will of the gods").

> There in the stillness of the night both consuls are said to have been visited by the same apparition, a man of greater than human stature and more majestic, who declared that the commander of one side, and the army of the other, must be offered up to the Manes and to Mother Earth; and that in whichever host the general should devote to death the enemy's legions, and himself with them, that nation and that side would have the victory.[71]

Having compared their visions, the consuls "resolved that victims should be slain to turn away the wrath of Heaven [*placuit averruncandae deum irae victimas caedi*]."[72]

In summary, the Romans believed that if they acted in accordance with the will of the gods, they would enjoy their favour. If, however, the gods were somehow offended, and religion as a whole was continuously neglected, the welfare of the *res publica* itself would be at stake.[73] The examples above illustrate one of the essential elements of the old Roman traditions which was a key concept of their ideology of success. Augustus was both part of that tradition and committed to restoring it.

Caesar Augustus soon understood that in order to secure the pacification of the entire world, by "land and sea," it was necessary first to secure the favour of the gods. The decades of disturbance and civil wars leading up to Augustus' victory at Actium was believed to be a consequence of the Romans' neglect of religion.[74] The religious restoration undertaken by Augustus would thus amount to the re-establishment of social and political order.[75] It is to this end that he set out to become the restorer of the *pax deorum*: "We shall not be very far wrong if we say that it was Augustus' aim to re-establish the pax by means of the ius […] the idea that unless the divine inhabitants were properly propitiated, they would not do their part in supporting the human inhabitants in all their doings and interests."[76] He was elected *pontifex maximus* in 12

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[71] Livy 8.6.9–11.

[72] For more examples, esp. in Levy, cf. Santangelo, '*Pax,*' 162–68.

[73] Cf. Cicero, *Har. Resp.* 9.19; *Rab. Perd.* 2.5; 5; Polybius 6.56.6–13; Valerius Maximus 1.1.8–9; Horace, *Odes* 111.6; 11.15.17–20; Livy 5.52.2–3; 6.40–41. Champion defines the *belief* of the Roman elite in their gods as "a genuine, collective conviction […] that Roman success, and indeed the city's very existence, depended on maintaining correct relations with the gods through orthopraxy, or exactingly accurate performances of religious ceremony, ritual and sacrifice." (Champion, Craige B. *The Peace of the Gods: Elite Religious Practices in the Middle Roman Republic* [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017] xiv–xv).

[74] Galinsky, *Augustan,* 288–94. Neglection of temples and shrines was a sign of such carelessness towards religion, which is the reason why Augustus was committed to repair them (*Res Gestae* 20.4; cf. 19, 21; Horace, *Odes* 3.6.1–8; Livy 3.20.5; 4.41.8). Cf. Price, S. R. F. 'The Place of Religion: Rome in the Early Empire,' in *The Cambridge Ancient History,* vol. 10, 2nd ed. (eds. A. K. Bowman, E. Champlin, and A. Lintott. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996) 812–47, esp. 820–47; Ogilvie, R. M. *The Romans and their Gods in the Age of Augustus* (Ancient Culture and Society. London: Chatto & Windus, 1969) 112f.

[75] The old religious traditions of the Romans are not only restored, but also restructured in order to accommodate Caesar Augustus at its centre (cf. Price, 'The Place of Religion,' 812f, 820–47).

[76] Fowler, W. Warde. *Religious Experience of the Roman People: From the Earliest Times to the Age of Augustus* (The Gifford Lectures for 1909–10 Delivered in Edinburgh University. London: Macmillan, 1911) 431;

BCE, and in such capacity he was responsible for maintaining the *pax deorum*.[77] As the bringer of peace, Augustus saw his own birth as the beginning of a new age of peace,[78] the fulfilment of Virgil's "prophecy" of a new golden age of happiness and plenty in the miraculous birth of the Virgilian child.[79] Livy praises him as the second founder of Rome, likening him to Numa, whose second closing of the gates of Janus Quirinus "the gods permitted our own generation to witness […] after the battle of Actium, when the emperor Caesar Augustus had brought about peace on land and sea."[80]

In fact, David Wick argues that a "deep and increasing anxiety about the state of *pax deorum* – both his and Rome's" was one of the major drives of Augustus in life.[81] Such angst was not Augustus' only, it was actually ingrained into the very fabric of the Roman identity and permeated every aspect of life, public and private, civic and military. Augustus' ideology is reflected in his massive programme of religious restoration, with the vast rebuilding of temples and new boost of religious representation in architecture, coinage, literature, and arts (e.g., the cult to *Pax* in the *Ara Pacis* in Rome).[82] In essence, this *Weltangst* was caused by the belief that the universe, and particularly each individual life, was governed by vengeful and capricious gods.[83] Accordingly, a certain feeling of "wanting," and even "depression," seemed to have

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Fowler captures well the concept of *pax deorum* by describing it as "the fundamental idea of the old Roman worship," the idea that "the prosperity and fertility of man, and of his flocks and herds and crops on the farm, and the prosperity and fertility of the citizen within the city itself, equally depended on the dutiful attention (*pietas*) paid to the divine beings who had taken up their abode in farm or city." (*Religious Experience,* 431; cf. 438.).

[77] Although he already had control of the religion aspect of the principate prior to his election (cf. Galinsky, *Augustan,* 294f).

[78] Cf. *Res Gestae* 13 (see comments above).

[79] Virgil, *Eclogues* 4.

[80] Livy 1.19.3.

[81] Wick, David. P. 'Augustus and the Problem of the Pax Deorum – A Case Study in Social & Religious Motives at the Birth of the Roman Empire,' *AJMS* 5.1 (2019) 1–10, at 5. Champion remarks on the *pax deorum* that "One would be hard pressed to come up with a conception more central to the ancient Roman commonwealth. All activities of the state religion were directed to this end." (Champion, *The Peace of the Gods,* xi).

[82] Writing on the meaning of Augustus' rebuilding of temples, Galinsky observes that "[t]he rebuilding, first and foremost, was a matter of signifying the return to stability. Roman religion was not a religion of salvation, but it was intimately connected with the civil order of the state. No question, as always in times of distress – and the preceding decades of internecine war were horrendous – people would wonder whether the gods had turned away from Rome or were punishing the city for its misdeeds; such sentiments are readily found in Roman authors, including the poet Horace." (Galinsky, K. 'Continuity and Change: Religion in the Augustan Semi-Century,' in *A Companion to Roman Religion* [ed. Jörg Rüpke. Malden: Blackwell Pub., 2007] 71–82, at 74). Cf. Price, 'The Place of Religion,' 820–47; Ogilvie, *The Romans and their Gods,* 112–23. For an enlightening analysis of Augustus' religious programme with particular emphasis on the periods between 44 and 28 BCE and after his election as the *pontifex maximus* in 12 BCE, see Scheid, John. 'Augustus and Roman Religion: Continuity, Conservatism, and Innovation,' in *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Augustus* (ed. Karl Galinsky. Cambridge Companion to the Classics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005) 175–93.

[83] For an overview of the nature of the Roman gods, see Ogilvie, *The Romans and their Gods,* 9–23.

overpowered Italy particularly in the period between Julius Caesar's assassination and the rise of Augustus.[84] In Fowler's words, "[i]t was essentially a feeling of neglected duty—of neglected duty to the Power and of goodwill wanting towards men."[85] Livy captures well such feeling in the preface to his History of Rome. He declares the aim of his account of Rome's early traditions to be that every reader would pay attention to

> what life and morals were like; through what men and by what policies, in peace and in war, empire was established and enlarged; then let him note how, with the gradual relaxation of discipline, morals first gave way, as it were, then sank lower and lower, and finally began the downward plunge which has brought us to the present time, when we can endure neither our vices nor their cure.[86]

This deep feeling of fear and anxiety in face of the divine (*Weltangst*) was not peculiar to the Romans' experience though. It was rather widespread in the Mediterranean world of the Hellenistic and Roman period.[87]

According to Fowler, the best expression of Augustus own feelings is Horace's *Carmen Saeculare* written both to celebrate and to be sung at the *Ludi Saeculares* of 17 BCE, and of which Fowler speaks as "practically his [Augustus'] own words"—it had been commissioned by Augustus himself.[88] "The poem asserts, in the context of prayers for divine support (*pax deorum*), the endurance of a state of peace for Rome, achieved through dominance over the world."[89] It proclaims the return of *fides, pax, honos,* and *pudor*.[90] The *Ludi Saeculares* celebration in 17 BCE publicly announces the beginning of a new epoch of peace of the Roman state and "sums up the workings of religion under Augustus and the subsequent persistence and transformations of the Augustan system."[91] In the hymn, Augustus is referred to as "descendant of Anchises and Venus" (*Anchisae Venerisque sanguis*).[92] "The following stanza (ll. 53–56 and 57–60) celebrate side by side Rome's military and moral superiority, and Augustus as the triumphant

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[84] Cf. Fowler, *Religious Experience,* 404f, cf. 428f.
[85] Fowler, *Religious Experience*, 405.
[86] Livy 1, *preface,* 9; cf. Livy 3.20.5; 4.41.8; Horace, *Epod*. 16; *Odes* 3.6; Sallust (e.g., *Bel. Cat*. 5.9; 10; 12); Cicero, *Nat. Deo*. 3.5; slightly earlier, Lucretius 2.1150–1174, and *passim*.
[87] For a concise and helpful analysis of *Weltangst,* see Lona, Horacio E. *Die Eschatologie im Kolosser – und Epheserbrief* (FB 48. Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 1984) 435–41.
[88] Fowler, *Religious Experience*, 431; cf. Günther, H-C. 'The *Carmen Saeculare,*' in *Brill's Companion to Horace* (ed. H-C. Günther. Leiden: Brill, 2013) 431–43; Cornwell, H. Pax *and the Politics of Peace: Republic to Principate* (Oxford Classical Monographs. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017) 121–54; White, P. 'Poets in the New Milieu: Realigning,' in *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Augustus* (ed. Karl Galinsky. Cambridge Companion to the Classics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005) 321–39, at 333.
[89] Cornwell, *Pax,* 124; e.g., lines 37–52.
[90] *Carm*. 57–58.
[91] Price, 'The Place of Religion,' 834, cf. 834–37; cf. Fowler, *Religious Experience,* 438–47.
[92] *Carm*. 50.

bringer of peace and the *curator morum*, the disciplinarian of Roman manners."[93] As Galinsky notes, religion was an essential element in the Roman ideology of success, going back to their very origins.[94] For the Romans, "religion is a response and alternative to chaos; it is an attempt to provide structure, order, and meaning, the very efforts that lay at the heart of the Augustan reconstitution of the *res publica* […] Religion and the Roman state had been intricately linked."[95] *Pax romana* and *pax deorum* are inextricably connected by a cause-and-effect relationship wherein the earthly blessings of peace and success are dependent on the state of the relationship between the *populus Romanus* and the gods. In other words, *pax deorum* is the necessary condition for *pax romana*.

Therefore, the emperor's rule of peace on earth was conditioned on the harmony of the gods in the heavenly places. Weinstock traces the origins of the association of the emperor and Pax in two directions:[96] first, the Hellenistic idea of the peace-maker which begins with Alexander the Great. Living in the *pax romana* times, Plutarch shares Alexander's and the Roman ideal of a world-state, a unified humanity under one god-sent ruler. He says that Alexander

> believed that he came as a heaven-sent governor to all, and as a mediator for the whole world, those whom he could not persuade to unite with him, he conquered by force of arms, and he brought together into one body all men everywhere, uniting and mixing in one great loving-cup, as it were, men's lives, their characters, their marriages, their very habits of life. He bade them all consider as their fatherland the whole inhabited earth, as their stronghold and protection his camp, as akin to them all good men, and as foreigners only the wicked; they should not distinguish between Grecian and foreigner by Grecian cloak and targe, or scimitar and jacket; but the distinguishing mark of the Grecian should be seen in virtue, and that of the foreigner in iniquity; clothing and food, marriage and manner of life they should regard as common to all, being blended into one by ties of blood and children.[97]

The second influence traced by Weinstock for the origin of this association is the Roman concept of *pax deorum*. Weinstock remarks:

> This *pax* is, like the terrestrial one, a 'pact' which can be obtained by prayers, sacrifices, lectisternia, votive offerings, and it is like the other not a pact among equals. The supremacy of the gods is acknowledged. And the 'peace' of the gods should bring an end to every sort of trouble, prodigies, disease, famine, dangers of war. The

[93] Günther, '*Carmen Saeculare,*' 442.
[94] Galinsky, *Augustan,* 288–331.
[95] Galinsky, *Augustan,* 288.
[96] Weinstock, 'Pax,' 49f.
[97] Plutarch, *Alex. Fort.* 1.6.329c-d; cf. 9.330e: "Therefore, in the first place, the very plan and design of Alexander's expedition commends the man as a philosopher in his purpose not to win for himself luxury and extravagant living, but to win for all men concord and peace and community [ὁμόνοιαν καὶ εἰρήνην καὶ κοινωνίαν] of interests."

> gods can also become active peace-makers on earth and such a superhuman role is given to Augustus…"[98]

On this association of the emperor and Pax, either as a genuine expression of admiration or a veiled criticism, in his *Encomium to Rome*, Aelius Aristides praises the greatness of Rome (under the emperor Antoninus Pius, second century CE) which superseded Alexander in becoming the world-state of a unified humanity now living under the peace and harmony brought forth by the Roman emperor.[99]

All this illustrates the understanding of a close connection between the peace and harmony brought forth by the Roman empire and the securing of the *pax deorum* which undergirds it.[100]

2.2.4 Other Relevant Elements of *Pax Romana*/*Pax Deorum*

a. The fetiales as peacemakers

The *fetiales* are closely related to the *pax deorum* and Roman military ideology. The *fetiales* were originally a Roman *collegium* of twenty priests of the Latin tribes concerned with aspects of international relations involving matters of declaration of war and peace treaty.[101]

The original ceremony dates back to the Latin tribes and was divided into three stages, *denuntiatio,* the *testatio,* and the *indictio*:

> When some incident had occurred such as the theft of cattle or property, first the *pater patratus* was sent with three other delegates called *fetiales* or *oratores* (Varro *ap*. Nonius, p. 850 L.) to demand restitution (*ad res repetundas*) and to give notice that if satisfaction was not given within 30 days action would be taken. This was the *denuntiatio,* or *rerum repetitio*. If satisfaction was not obtained the *fetiales* returned to the enemy after the 30 days to deliver a solemn *testatio deorum,* calling the gods to witness that wrong had been done them, and that their cause was legitimate. The Senate then met and decided on war, and their decision was confirmed by the people. On the 33rd day (32. 9 n.) a messenger was sent to cast a magical spear into the enemy's land in order to nullify his power. This third stage was the *indictio belli*. The whole ritual is designed to establish before the gods that the war is "just."[102]

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[98] Weinstock, 'Pax,' 50. Cf. Ovid, *Fasti* 4.407; *Met*. 832; Germanicus, *Aratea* 10–16; Virgil, *Aen*. 10.31.
[99] Cf. Aelius Aristides, *Rom. Ora*. 76–78.
[100] Cf. Seneca, *Clem*. 1.1.2; 1.3.3–4; Ps.-Aristotle, *Mund*. 5.396a32–6.401a11.
[101] For a useful overview, cf. Rich, J. 'The *Fetiales* and Roman International Relations,' in *Priests and State in the Roman World* (eds. James H. Richardson and Federico Santangelo. Potsdamer Altertumswissenschaftliche Beiträge 33. Stuttgart: Steiner 2011) 187–242; Ogilvie, M. R. *A Commentary on Livy: Books 1–5* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965) 127–36; Ramsay, W. 'Fetiales,' in *A Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities* (ed. William Smith. London: J. Murray, 1875) 530–31.
[102] Ogilvie, *Livy,* 127.

By the time of the Principate, the institution had faded out and long lost its political relevance. Roman territorial expansions made the traveling of the *fetiales* impractical, forcing changes in the ceremony. As a result, by the late Republic senatorial *legati* were responsible for communicating the declaration of war to Roman enemies—when Augustus performed the spear-throwing rite in 32 BCE, it took place in a piece of land at the temple of Bollona, in Rome, not at the enemy's territory.[103] This event also marked the re-instatement of the *fetiales,* which was part of Augustus' commitment to restore the old Roman traditions. He thus reactivates the *collegium,* now possessing religious functions only, and becomes himself a *fetial*.[104]

The relevance of the ritual of the *fetiales* is found in the importance of the "pious and just war" (*bellum pium et bellum iustum*)[105] for the preservation of the *pax deorum*.[106] Accordingly the Romans would seek to justify their wars with both the *ius* and the *fas,* both judicial and religious justification. The wrath of the gods could easily be provoked by unjust wars, thus breaking the *pax deorum*. The rituals of the *fetiales* were applied to ensure that the Roman wars were waged with the favour of the gods.[107] In other words, in order to secure the *pax deorum* it was necessary to make sure that the *ius fetiale* was duly fulfilled before a declaration of war could be issued.[108]

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[103] Cf. Ovid, *Fasti* 6.205ff.

[104] *Res Gestae* 7; cf. 15.9; Dio 50.4.4–5. For a critical evaluation of the transformations of the *fetiales* in the late Republic, cf. Wiedemann, T. 'The Fetiales: A Reconsideration,' *The Classical Quarterly* 36.2 (1986) 478–90.

[105] Cf. *Res Gestae* 26.3.

[106] Cf. San Vicente, J. Ignacio. 'La victoria como justificación del *Bellum Pium* y la *pax deorum*: el caso de Numancia,' *Arys* 11 (2013) 173–92; Brunt, P. A. *Roman Imperial Themes* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990) 305–8; cf. Cicero, *Off*. 1.33–41; Livy 39.36.12.

[107] Dionysius of Halicarnassus seems to believe that the reason behind the great success of the Roman empire was their careful observation of religious duties in war (cf. *Rom. Ant*. 2.72.3–4).

[108] Cf. Cicero, *Off*. 1.34–36; *Rep*. 2.31; 3.34–37. The classic description of the rituals is found in Livy, *History* 1.32.6–14; cf. Varro, *Ling. Lat*. 5.86; Dionisius of Halicarnassus, *Rom. Ant*. 2.72; 15.9. It was also their task to guarantee that the enemy was treated fairly.

B. O. Foster (Loeb) renders *sanguineam* in *hastam ferratam aut sanguineam praeustam* (Livy, 1.32.12) as "cornet wood" [this is most certainly a typo in Loeb; it should read "cornel wood"], whereas Canon Roberts (Perseus) translates it as "blood-smeared," which at first glance suggests that this could be relevant to a study of *peacemaking through blood*. Scholars are divided between these interpretations. Ogilvie, *Livy,* 135, argues for the former, and points out that the spear was supposed to be magic, not symbolic—both the iron and the cornet wood in the spear were thought to bear magic properties. Accordingly, *sanguineus* is taken to be "the adjective derived from the name of a species of cornel […] Cornel is frequently used as a wood for spears (Virgil, *Aen*. 3. 23 *et saep*) but for a magical spear the infertile species was employed because its effect was to render infertile and barren the enemy's schemes." (cf. Wiedemann, 'Fetiales,' 479). Rich, 'Fetiales,' 207f, however, rejects that interpretation and suggests that Livy's account is in agreement with that of Dio 72.33.3 where he describes the spear as αἱματῶδες. So, *sanguinea* in Livy should mean simply "bloody" (stained with blood). Its meaning, however, remains recondite. Wiedemann, 'Fetiales,' 482f, has challenged the existence of an archaic spear-throwing rite altogether; he argues that it is not attested before Augustus' time. Rich, 'Fetiales,' 206, agrees that the rite underwent extensive modification at the time of Augustus' re-enacting in 32 BCE, but he rejects Wiedemann's conclusion as too radical. The obscurity of this detail as well as the fact that its historical reality (if any at all) before Augustus' time is surrounded by so much

Dionysius of Halicarnassus translates *fetiales* with the Greek εἰρηνοδίκαι,[109] followed by Plutarch who renders it as "peacemakers and treaty-bringers" (εἰρηνοποιῶν καὶ σπονδοφόρων).[110] This reflects their attempt to find an accurate equivalent for the word in Greek and in so doing they cast emphasis on the role of the *fetiales* in treaty-making, peace-making and reconciliation.[111] Exploring ways to resolve controversies before resorting to war was indeed part of their duties.[112] According to Wiedemann, they "are, in origin, legal experts whose specific field is upholding peaceful relations between different Latin communities."[113] This is how Federico Santangelo summarises their role as "guardians" of peace:

> To an extent, therefore, Dionysius and Plutarch were right to say that the *fetials* were "judges" and "guardians" of peace. They were expected to judge the intentions of the adversary, and to rule whether war was in order. Although the answer could only be a "yes" or a "no," and the judgement might have often been straightforward, it was a judgement, and of the outmost importance. Moreover, they were "guardians" of peace, since they supervised the stipulation of treaties, and were expected to make sure that peace was not broken without respecting the rules and following a procedure that would ensure the favour of the gods on Rome's behalf. On the other hand, the prerogatives of the *fetials* were in many respects limited. There is no evidence that they had any part in deciding the terms of the *rerum repetitio*, or of the treaties they supervised and guaranteed. Moreover, decision on whether or not go to war was not theirs. Their task was only to make sure that war was properly declared, and therefore with a good legal case. This was also the safest way to ensure the support, or at least the neutrality, of the gods.[114]

Taken at face value, these descriptions of the *fetiales*' role might suggest that the Romans were interested in resolving controversies "peacefully" purely for the sake of peace as an ideal virtue. The reality, as always, was more complex. As widely recognised, politics and religion could not be neatly separated in the Roman state. Behind the Roman ideal of "peaceful relations" there was usually a presupposed power-relation at work, wherein Rome was the dominant party. As noted above, Roman wars needed to be justified both judicially—meaning that they had to be legally approved by the senate—and religiously/morally, namely, approved by the

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uncertainties (cf. Rich, 'Fetiales,' 207–9) caution us against making too much of it in the interpretation of Col. 1.20b, a document addressed to Asia Minor.

[109] Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Rom. Ant.* 2.72.3–4; 15.9; 15.9.

[110] Plutarch, *Moralia* 4, *Rom. Quest.* 62.1; and εἰρηνοφύλακες in *Numa* 12.5. Similarly Appian, *Samn.* 5 (εἰρηνοδίκαι). Both Plutarch and Appian use Dionysius as their source for their writing on *fetiales*.

[111] Cf. Livy, 30.43.8–9; Suetonius, *Claud.* 25.12. However, "[n]one of these translations are known to have been used in official documents." (Santangelo, Federico. 'The Fetials and their *Ius*,' *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies* 51 [2008] 63–93, at 85).

[112] E.g., Dionysius of Halicarnassus 9.60; 10.23; Livy 4.30.13. For a discussion on the role of the *fetiales* as peacemakers, cf. Wiedemann, 'Fetiales,' 484–90.

[113] Wiedemann, 'Fetiales,' 487.

[114] Santangelo, 'Fetials,' 89.

gods. Although the religious element was present, the *fetial* rites provided the necessary justification for the Roman aristocracy, together with their allies, to carry on their own interests, more often than not through waging wars. Philip Souza offers a concise summary of this process:

> In order for the Roman people and their allies to be persuaded to cooperate with the military ambitions of the senatorial aristocracy, these wars had to be justified religiously, morally and practically […] Elaborate procedures were followed, including diplomatic and religious rituals presided over by a college of priests called *fetiales* to ensure that, in the eyes of Jupiter at least, the Romans were fighting a "just war" (*bellum iustum*). Modern scholarship has shown how hollow and disingenuous these justifications often were, coming as they did from an aristocratic leadership whose collective and individual interests were best served by the continuous prosecution of wars of aggression and expansion. Nevertheless they were effective in allowing the resources of the Roman state (*res publica*) to be mobilized for war under the direction of the aristocratic elite. By the Late Republic (133–31 BC) an ideology of war and peace had emerged according to which all of Rome's external wars were just ones, undertaken with the purpose of defending allies or answering aggression (whether actual or potential) by Rome's enemies. Their declared aim was always the imposition or restoration of a peace (*pax*) that was advantageous to the Romans and their allies. *Pax* was often achieved as the result of a war and the truce or treaty which was negotiated on its conclusion, but it might be obtained by direct negotiations without recourse to war.[115]

Even when the latter was the case, that only meant that the other party would have agreed to submit to Rome's terms. "Submission" of the enemy was the ideal of peace in the Roman deeply ingrained military mentality. *Parta victoriis pax* is Augustus' own definition of the Roman *pax* (*Res Gestae* 13).

As already mentioned, Augustus became a *fetialis* himself and used all his political shrewdness to exploit its symbolic potential. First, he "used it to declare a 'just' war against Cleopatra and Antony, and then he used it to seal the *pax Augusta* he had built. To take up the Greek translations suggested by Dionysius and Plutarch: after having 'ruled' about war, he was to 'defend' peace."[116]

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[115] Souza, P. '*Parta Victoriis Pax*: Roman Emperors as Peacemakers,' in *War and Peace in Ancient and Medieval History* (eds. Philip de Souza and John France. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008) 76–106.
[116] Santangelo, 'Fetials,' 91.

b. Catullus 68.75–76: An example of the importance of the pax deorum

"nondum cum sanguine sacrohostia caelestis pacificasset eros."

"...not yet had a victim appeased the lords of the heavens with sacred blood."

Gaius Valerius Catullus was a Roman poet of the first century BCE. He lived most of his adult life in Rome, where he enjoyed the best of the sophisticated society of the time. It was also in Rome where he became involved in an adulterous affair with Clodia, a powerful and unfaithful woman, whose fatal love would provide Catullus' poems with one of their most repeated themes.[117] She was given the pseudonym of Lesbia.[118] This brief analysis focuses on a few lines of poem 68.

Poem 68 is a Latin elegy[119] addressed to Catullus' friend Allius (or Manius). It is divided in two parts, 68a and 68b: (1) a letter in response to Allius' request (68a, lines 1–40), and (2) a poem composed in praise of Allius' kindness in helping Catullus in his love affair with Lesbia (68b, lines 41–160). In the words of a recent interpreter of Catullus, poem 68 is an "attempt, greatly affected by the death of Catullus' brother, to put the love affair with Lesbia into perspective."[120] The comparison of Lesbia with the mythological heroine Laodamia in lines 73–80 is particularly relevant for our study.

Catullus 68.73–80

Latin	*English*
[73] coniugis ut quondam flagrans advenit amore	[73] even as once Laodamia came burning with love
[74] Protesilaëam Laodamia domum	[74] to the house of Protesilaus,

[117] Catullus, G. *Catullus, Tibullus, Pervigilium Veneris* (trans. F. W. Cornish. LCL. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988) vii.

[118] See Fordyce, C. J. *Catullus: A Commentary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961) xiv-xviii for a brief analysis of Lesbia.

[119] See the commentaries for discussion on the unity and the function of *persona* in the poem. Even if Catullus is only the speaker, and not the poet behind the poem, its relevance for our study stands, as the date of composition is still maintained at about 57 BCE (see Sarkissian, John. *Catullus 68: An Interpretation* (Leiden: Brill, 1983) 4, n. 9.

[120] Sarkissian, *Catullus,* 7.

[75] inceptam frustra, **nondum cum sanguine sacro**	[75] that house begun in vain, **since not yet had a victim's sacred blood**
[76] **hostia caelestis pacificasset eros**.	[76] **appeased the Lords of heaven.**
[77] nil mihi tam valde placeat, Rhamnusia virgo,	[77] Lady of Rhamnus, never may that please me
[78] quod temere invitis suscipiatur eris.	[78] which is undertaken amiss without the will of our Lords.
[79] quam ieiuna pium desideret ara cruorem,	[79] How much the starved altar craves for the blood of pious sacrifices,
[80] doctast amisso Laodamia viro…	[80] Laodamia learnt by the loss of her husband…

Laodamia was the wife of the valiant Protesilaus who, according to Greek mythology, abandoned his bride on their wedding night to fight in the Trojan War. He was the first Greek to leap ashore at Troy and, as it happened, the first Greek to be killed in the war—hence his name.[121] There are different versions of the myth in Hellenistic documents. In one account, Laodamia is overpowered by sadness and commits suicide immediately upon hearing of the death of her husband;[122] in a second version of the myth, the gods of the underworld allow Protesilaus to return to his wife for a little while, and Laodamia's suicide is prompted by her husband's second departure.[123] Other accounts have a peculiar variation: Laodamia, on learning of Protesilaus death, makes a bronze image of her husband with which she has sexual relations. Her father finds out about the image and, determined to put an end to her mourning, destroys it by throwing it into the pyre. Laodamia, however, cannot endure the grief and throws herself into the fire and dies.[124] It is impossible to pinpoint which of these specific models, or any possible combination of them, Catullus had in mind when he penned poem 68.[125] Nevertheless, it is an altogether unique element of Catullus' account of the myth that bears on our analysis.

[121] Homer, *Il*. 2.798–704.
[122] Tzetz. *Chil*. 2.777–80; Paus. 4.2.7.
[123] Hyginus, *Fab*. 103; Servius, *ad*. *Aen*. 6.447. Lucian, *Dial*. *Mort*. 23; *Schol*. *Arist*. p. 671; Eust. *Il*. 325.
[124] Apollodorus, *Epit*. 3.30; Hyginus, *Fab*. 103; Eustathius. *Il*. 325; Tzetzes, *Chil*. 2.770–76.
[125] See Sarkissian, *Catullus,* 42–44. He argues that a reference to Laodamia's suicide in the flames is hinted at in Laodamia's description as *flagrans amore,* taken as a *double-entendre* (p. 19). This is disputed by Shipton, K. M. W. 'No Alternative to Ceremonial Negligence (Catullus 68.73ff),' *Symbolae Osloenses,* LXII (1987) 51–68, who points to *clearer* references to her suicide later in the poem (lines 81ff and 106ff; cf. Shipton, 'No Alternative,' 63, n. 9). If Sarkissian is right, there is here a hint at the variant which included the making of an image. Also, the description of Protesilaus and Laodamia's house as having been left *domos… inceptam frustra* is a reference to Homer's description "δόμος ἠμιτελής" in *Il*. II, 701 (cf. Fordyce, *Catullus,* 352). It is unlikely that Catullus depended on a single account of the story (cf. Sarkissian, *Catullus,* 43).

The traditional interpretation of lines 75–76, "not yet had a victim appeased the lords of the heavens with sacred blood,"[126] holds that for the Roman poet, the death of Laodamia's husband on the shore of Troy was ultimately a divine retribution for a neglect of a sacrifice of blood.[127] Such neglect incurred in breach of the *pax deorum*. Cattulus' explanation for Protesilaus' death is not found in any other extant account of the myth.[128] K. M. W. Shipton is a fine representative of the traditional position. He argues that the traditional interpretation of lines 75–76 is supported by two main arguments: (1) the immediate context; and (2) the novel presentation of the Laodamia myth.[129]

According to Shipton, Catullus' use of the myth reveals a different emphasis from that of Homer. Whereas the latter concentrates on the sorrow caused by the loss of Protesilaus, Catullus focuses on the idea of passion.[130] The description of the house as *inceptam frustra* in line 75 is crucial to understanding Catullus' goal. Shipton convincingly argues that the Latin phrase is not equivalent to the Homeric version δόμος ἠμιτελής.[131] He begins by noticing the fundamental role it plays in the literary structure of lines 73–78. *Inceptam* is balanced three lines further down by *suscipiatur* (78). This arrangement highlights the importance of the idea of new undertaking in this passage.[132] He then goes on to show that the Greek ἠμιτελής ("half-finished") in Homer conveys the idea of incompleteness, that is, the death of Protesilaus will cause their marriage back home to be incomplete. *Inceptam frustra,* on the other hand, can only mean that "the act of beginning the house did not achieve its purpose."[133] Thus, Catullus "does

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[126] *nondum cum sanguine sacro hostia caelestis pacificasset eros*. Translation by L. C. Smithers, org., *et al*. *The Carmina of Gaius Valerius Catullus* (Perseus Digital Library).

[127] This view has most recently been challenged by Thomas, R. F. 'An Alternative to Ceremonial Negligence (Catullus 68.73–78),' *HSCPh* 82 (1978) 175–8, who argues that sacrifice in this passage refers to the sacrifice of Iphigeneia. For a response, see Archibald Allen. 'Negligence in Catullus,' *Latomus* 45.4 (Octobre-Décembre 1986) 861–863; Sarkissian, *Catullus*. Even if Thomas were right, a case could still be made that a sacrifice of blood is necessary to appease the gods.

[128] Nevertheless, it remains uncertain whether this gloss is unique to Catullus. Only fragments of some documents which recount and develop the story have been preserved, leaving the question of whether or not any of them would have accounted for the same explanation, e.g., Euripides, *Protesilaus*.

[129] Shipton, 'No Alternative.'

[130] Shipton, 'No Alternative,' 52.

[131] Homer, *Il*. 2.701—Protesilaus' death is explained in lines 700–702: "His wife, her cheeks torn in wailing, was left in Phylace and his house but half completed [δόμος ἠμιτελής], and him a Dardanian warrior killed as he leapt from his ship by far the first of the Achaeans;" *pace* Thomas, 'An Alternative,' 176; Fordyce, *Catullus,* 352.

[132] Shipton, 'No Alternative,' 53.

[133] Shipton, 'No Alternative,' 52. *Inceptam* means "the beginning" or "the undertaking of some task;" *frustra* means "in vain," "to no purpose."

not link '*domum inceptam frusta*' with the death of Protesilaus. Instead, he links it with the completely new themes of sacrifice and of placating the gods."[134]

Shipton finds a parallelism between lines 73–76 and 77–78, which compares the Laodamia story with Catullus' response, respectively.

Catullus 68.73–76	*Catullus 68.77–78*
[73] even as once Laodamia came burning with love [74] to the house of Protesilaus, [75] that house begun in vain, since not yet had a victim's sacred blood [76] appeased the Lords of heaven.	[77] Lady of Rhamnus, never may that please me [78] which is undertaken amiss without the will of our Lords.

Each part contains three stages. In the Laodamia story (73–76), one finds (a) Laodamia's ardent passion (73); (b) the house is *inceptam frustra* ("begun in vain"); and (c) the gods have not yet received a sacrifice. Catullus' interpretation of the Laodamia story then is as follows: Laodamia and Protesilaus' ardent passion led them to rush into a new undertaking (*inceptam*) without first making the necessary sacrifice in order to obtain the approval of the gods; for this reason, their new undertaking was deemed in vain (*frustra*). The lack of sacrifice at stage (c) is the cause of the particular undertaking deemed vain at stage (b). Catullus' response parallels the three stages of the first part. All he wishes to do (in his relationship with Lesbia) is to avoid the sort of strong feelings that led the mythical couple to disaster. Catullus (a) wishes to avoid such strong feelings (77); (b) does not wish to take a reckless undertaking (78a); and thus, (c) wishes to be granted the gods' favour (78b). The story is interpreted in light of the Roman "traditional and inscrutable fate."[135] Catullus' concern is "with the general point that any undertaking, to avoid disaster, should have the gods' approval."[136]

Some elements of Catullus' account resonate with the expression "εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτοῦ" in Colossians 1.20b. (1) the Latin word for "appeased" in 76

[134] Shipton, 'No Alternative,' 53.
[135] Allen, 'Negligence,' 863.
[136] Shipton, 'No Alternative,' 62f, n. 2.

is *pacifico*, "to make peace;"[137] (2) sacrifice by blood is required in order to placate the gods. On explaining the lesson learnt by Laodamia, Catullus says: "How much the starved altar craves for the blood of pious sacrifices, Laodamia learnt by the loss of her husband" (79–80). Shipton notes that the present tense of *desiderat* in 79 indicates that the altar is still hungry and "*craves* for the blood" of a pious sacrifice, which is "provided" in the next line, that is, Protesilaus' own blood.[138] Protesilaus' blood is thus demanded in order to make amends for their previous neglect; and (3) the apotropaic function of the sacrifice is reinforced by Catullus' personal prayer to Nemesis, the goddess of divine retribution, in 77–78.

It is hard to establish whether or not Catullus' poems were ever read in Asia Minor, let alone whether the Colossians in particular would have been acquainted with them. There is actually no evidence, to my knowledge, linking Catullus' works to Anatolia. However, it is known that he had been to Bithynia, Northwest of Asia Minor, at least once in his lifetime, in 57 BCE[139] Fordyce asserts that "[o]nly one event in his [Catullus'] life can be dated with some confidence—his visit to Asia Minor, where he went [...] as a member of the *cohors* of the governor of Bithynia, C. Memmius,"[140] who was praetor in 58 BCE and ruled over Bithynia mostly likely from 57–56 BCE.[141]

Although one should not speak of a parallel relationship between Catullus and Colossians 1.20b, the former clearly stands as an echo of one aspect of the Graeco-Roman religious atmosphere in mid-first century BCE. It is reflective of one important function of sacrifices in the complex religious landscape of Imperial Roman, that is: the appeasing of the gods in order to gain their favour.

c. Deisidaimonia: the fear of the gods

As our comments on *pax deorum* have demonstrated, this deep feeling of angst over capricious gods, and the urge to please them in order to live a peaceful and successful life, were strong in the first century CE, and were also felt in Asia Minor. Such emotional religious turmoil (*Weltangst*) was widespread in the Mediterranean world of the Hellenistic and Roman period.

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[137] Glare, P. *Oxford Latin Dictionary* (2 vols. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982).
[138] Shipton, 'No Alternative,' 60f.
[139] Merrill, E. T., org. *Commentary on Catullus* (Medford: Harvard University Press. Bible Logos Software. Poem 10).
[140] Fordyce, *Catullus,* xii. Cf. Catullus, *Poems* 10.7, 10; 28.9; 31.5; 46.4.
[141] Fordyce, *Catullus,* xii.

The Greeks called this feeling of fear and anxiety in the face of divinity δεισιδαιμονία (*deisidaimonia*), which originally had a positive meaning ("piety"),[142] but came to be used derogatorily for "excessive fear of the divinity."[143] The Greek philosopher Theophrastus (c. 370–285 BCE) defined it as "cowardice in the face of the divinity."[144] In his essay entitled *Περὶ Δεισιδαιμονίας,* Plutarch argues that *deisidaimonia* is one of the two extremes resulted from ignorance regarding the nature of the gods.[145] The δεισιδαίμων is convinced that the deities are capricious and that they are the source of all sorts of adversities, such as illness, tragedies, death, etc.[146] For him, "he who fears the gods fears all things, earth and sea, air and sky, darkness and light, sound and silence, and a dream."[147] Writing about the pagan religiousness of the Imperial period, Robin Lane Fox says that there was "a common core despite the many variations in local practice. […] From Britain to Syria, pagan cults aimed to honour the deities and avert the misfortunes which might result from the gods' own anger at their neglect. […] Any account of pagan worship which minimises the gods' uncertain anger and mortals' fear of it is an empty account."[148]

Deisidaimonia was part of the religious milieu in first-century Asia Minor, and constituted one of the main motivations for people to seek the appeasement of the gods: "If there was an overriding motive that caused men to pray, it was not gratitude for services rendered, but awe and fear of what the gods might do if their cult was overlooked."[149] Perhaps the strongest evidence of the widespread sentiment of *deisidaimonia* in first-century Asia Minor comes from the so-called "confession inscriptions" which comprise a group of texts from Lydia and Phrygia spanning from the first to the third century CE.[150] The inscriptions betray the religious attitude

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[142] E.g., Xenophon, *Agesil*. 2.1–2, 8; Xenophon, *Cyrop*. 3.3.58; Aristotle, *Politics* 5.9.15; cf. Koets, P. J. *Δεισιδαιμονία: A Contribution to the Knowledge of the Religious Terminology in Greek* (Purmerend: Muusses, 1929) 5–31; Martin, Dale B. *Inventing Superstition: From the Hippocratics to the Christians* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004) 18–20.

[143] E.g., Theophastus, *Characters* 16; Plutarch, *Περὶ Δεισιδαιμονίας*; cf. Koets, *Δεισιδαιμονία,* 32–83; the lexeme was translated into Latin as *superstitio,* from which we get the English *superstition*.

[144] Theophrastus, *Charac*. 16.1: "δειλία πρὸς τὸ δαιμόνιον."

[145] Plutarch, *Δεισιδαιμονίας,* 164E, 165B. The other extreme is atheism (ἀθεότης).

[146] Cf. Plutarch, *Δεισιδαιμονίας,* 165C, 168E, and *passim*.

[147] Plutarch, *Δεισιδαιμονίας,* 165E.

[148] Lane Fox, Robin. *Pagans and Christians* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1987) 38; cf. Martin, *Superstition, passim*.

[149] Mitchell, *Anatolia,* 2.12.

[150] Angelos Chaniotis suggests that the most appropriate terms from these texts should be "records of divine justice" or "records of divine punishment." (Chaniotis, Angelos. 'Constructing the Fear of Gods: Epigraphic Evidence from Sanctuaries of Greece and Asia Minor,' in *Unveiling Emotions: Sources and Methods for the Study of Emotions in the Greek World* (ed. Angelos Chaniotis. HABES 52. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag Wiesbaden, 2012) 205–34.

Plutarch calls *deisidaimonia*,[151] and as we will see in the next chapter, it may well have played an important role in the false teaching threatening the community in Colossae.

d. Resonances of pax romana in Philo

It has been suggested that Philo appears to reflect the Roman ideology of the interplay between *pax romana* and *pax deorum* in his portrayal of cosmic peace.

The clearest reference to a *pax romana* ideology in Philo's writings is arguably *Legatio ad Gaium* 8 and 143–47. *Legatio ad Gaium* 143–47 seems to be a genuine piece of panegyric on Augustus[152]—in contrast to his overall critical evaluation of Gaius "Caligula."[153] Philo praises Caesar Augustus (the much more honourable predecessor of Gaius) and his programme of pacification of land and sea (cf. *Leg. Gai.* 143–46, "land;" 146, "sea"), celebrating the emperor as the "averter of evil" (ἀλεξίκακος, 144) and the "guardian of peace" (ὁ εἰρηνοφύλαξ, 147), as well as for a government of good order (147).[154] The context here is the contrast between the Augustus' rule and that of Gaius', who is criticised as an example of bad ruler, especially on account of his disposition against the Jewish community, which is why Philo exaggerates the attributes of Gaius' predecessors, such as Augustus, and highlights their policy of non-interference with the Jewish customs (e.g., *Leg. Gai.* 153–5; 311–18).[155] It is safe to conclude that Philo was not against the Roman empire as such, and welcomed aspects of its rule such as the benefits of the *pax romana*.[156]

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[151] Versnel, H. S. *Fluch und Gebet: Magische Manipulation versus religiöses Flehen?* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2009) 34f; cf. Pettazzoni, R. 'Confession of Sins and the Classics,' in *Essays on the History of Religions* (Pettazzoni, R; Leiden: Brill, 1954) 55–67, at 60–62; Mitchell, S. *Anatolia: Land, Men, and Gods in Asia Minor, vol. 1: The Celts in Anatolia and the Impact of Roman Rule* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2001) 191–95. For an analysis of the broader epigraphic corpus in Asia Minor pointing to similar conclusion, see Chaniotis, 'Constructing the Fear of God.'

[152] Cf. Philo. *On the Embassy to Gaius. General Indexes* (trans. F. H. Colson. Index by J. W. Earp. LCL. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1962) xi–xii.

[153] Philo, *Legatio ad Gaium* is a polemical document against Gaius (cf. Colson, *On the Embassy to Gaius,* xvi–xxvi; Reggiani, Clara K. 'I rapporti tra l'impero romano e il mondo ebraico al tempo di Caligola secondo la "Legatio ad Gaium" di Filone Alessandrino,' *ANRW* II 21.1 [1984] 554–86).

[154] Cf. Philo, *Leg. Gai.* 8, 15–19; *Fug.* 10.

[155] On Philo's attitude towards the Roman rule, cf. Barraclough, R. 'Philo's Politics: Roman Rule and Hellenistic Judaism,' *ANRW* II 21.1 (1984) 417–553, at 449–86. On Philo's presentation of Augustus, cf. Barraclough, *Philo's Politics,* 453f.

[156] Cf. Smallwood, E. Marry. *Philonis Alexandrini: Legatio ad Gaium* (Leiden: Brill, 1961) 158. As Smallwood reminds us, Philo's depiction of the blessings of peace and happiness during the reign of Tiberius (*Leg. Gai.* 8–10) is greatly exaggerated "in order to accentuate the misery which Gaius brought on the world." (Smallwood, *Legatio,* 158).

Elsewhere in Philo, ὁ εἰρηνοφύλαξ is twice applied to God himself (*Her*. 1.206 and *Spec*. *Leg*. 2.192). In the latter he combines ὁ εἰρηνοφύλαξ with ὁ εἰρηνοποιός, "τοῦ εἰρηνοποιοῦ θεοῦ καὶ εἰρηνοφύλακος:" "God the *peace-maker* and the *peace-keeper*." This comes in the context of the eighth of ten feasts Philo lists in *Specialibus Legibus* 2. The eighth is called Feast of the Trumpets (188–92). The sound of the trumpet is associated with war which, for Philo, is of two kinds: military and natural,[157] and both are caused by impiety (190f). He goes on to say that "the law instituted this feast figured by that instrument of war the trumpet, which gives it its name, to be as a thank-offering to *God the peace-maker and peace-keeper* [τοῦ εἰρηνοποιοῦ θεοῦ καὶ εἰρηνοφύλακος], Who destroys faction both in cities and in the various parts of the universe and creates plenty and fertility and abundance of other good things and leaves the havoc of fruits without a single spark to be rekindled."[158]

A third instance of God as the "peace-keeper" is found in *De Decalogo* 178, where Philo uses the verbal cognate "εἰρηνοφυλακέω:" "But it befits the Great King that the general safety of the universe should be ascribed to Him, that He should be the *guardian of peace* and *supply richly and abundantly the good things of peace* [εἰρηνοφυλακοῦντι καὶ τὰ τῆς εἰρήνης ἀγαθὰ πάντα… χορηγοῦντι], all of them to all persons in every place and at every time."[159] Here God is also called the "prince of peace" (ὁ μὲν θεὸς πρύτανις εἰρήνης).

In a footnote, Harry O. Maier says that Philo of Alexandria seems to reflect Roman imperial ideology in his "depiction of civil order mirroring cosmic concord" in *Specialibus Legibus* 2.188–92, *De Decalogo* 178, and *De Fuga et Inventione* 10.[160] Taken at face value, the references seem to support Maier's claim. However, when one looks at them more closely, as well as to Philo's wider writings, it seems as though Maier's analysis might be guilty of oversimplification. If by "reflecting" Maier means that Philo's conceptualisation of "cosmic harmony" springs from Roman propaganda, the answer seems to be negative. Although Philo's statements resonate with Roman imperial propaganda, it is unlikely that his idea of cosmic harmony ("civil order mirroring cosmic concord") are primarily borrowed from the Roman imperial ideology at this point.

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[157] I.e., "when nature [φύσις] is at variance with itself, its different parts attacking one another" (190).
[158] Emphasis added. Cf. Gnilka, *Kolosserbrief,* 75; Aletti, *Colossiens,* 112.
[159] Italics added.
[160] Maier, Harry O. *Picturing Paul in Empire: Imperial Image, Text, and Persuasion in Colossians, Ephesians and the Pastoral Epistles* (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2013) 71, n. 29.

To begin with, *Specialibus Legibus* 2.188–92 is not about the Roman empire. Philo's focus here is on God himself and his agents on earth. Although the depiction of an irenic scenario in 192 resonates with the ideals of *pax romana,* it does not follow logically that Philo's concept of cosmic harmony is in debt to the Roman imperial idea of civil concord resultant from *pax deorum*.

Philo's political ideas were heavily influenced by both the Greek philosophy (an amalgamation of Platonic, Stoic and Pythagorean ideas) and, not least, by the Hebrew scriptures.[161] For him, the ideal ruler is found in Moses (cf. *De Vita Mosis*),[162] who combines in himself not only the Platonic characteristics of an ideal ruler, namely, a philosopher-king, but also, three other faculties which Philo adds from the Old Testament, that is, legislative ability, high-priestly office, and prophecy.[163] The combination of Hellenistic and Hebraic attributes serves Philo's argument that "the riches in Hellenistic political aspirations were attainable with the Judaistic heritage."[164] So Moses is presented as the model which all rulers should seek to imitate. Perhaps adopting a Pythagorean notion, Philo argues that Moses not only sets good laws, but that he is a living law (νόμος ἔμψυχος).[165] The peace and harmony brought about by earthly rulers are a reflection of Philo's understanding of a natural law which both precedes and is synonymous with Moses' law.[166] Every time a ruler follows Moses' law, even unconsciously, the result is social-political peace and harmony: "So Moses' law was in accord with natural law and by it the harmony of the universe was both discerned and maintained."[167] Barraclough concludes his analysis of Philo's exposition of Moses as the ideal ruler and philosopher-king with the following words:

> The ideals of kingship—that the king embodies just law and knows the way of God—are realized in Moses, and no adequate comparison is possible with any known Gentile leader. The praise Philo bestows on Augustus and Tiberius is due largely to the desire to condemn Gaius (though he admires both rulers) and given

[161] Barraclough, 'Philo's Politics.'
[162] See also Philo, *De Iosepho,* where Joseph is presented as the ideal statesman.
[163] Cf. Philo, *Vit. Mos*. 2.2–7.
[164] Barraclough, 'Philo's Politics,' 487.
[165] Philo, *Vit. Mos*. 2.4; cf. 1.155–62; Philo, *Abr*. 5; 276.
[166] Cf. Philo, *De Iso*. 29–36. "Considering his espousal of Hellenistic philosophy, one is not surprised to find him relating his understanding of Mosaic law in this regard to the notion of natural law. Thus natural law preceded Moses' law because it produced the order essential for the functioning and beauty of the created world, and this legislated order is grounded in the design of the Divine Reason. The created world preceded man's institutions, and its order is that of "nature's right relation" functioning through divine law. Shifting to a Platonic key, Philo asserts that its order is the reflection of God's excellent model already existing in the realm of ideas and when divorced from this model, earth becomes chaotic. Thus the order of the created world is the prototype for the order that is guaranteed in a city through its constitution and law." (Barraclough, 'Philo's Politics,' 207, cf. 506–8).
[167] Barraclough, 'Philo's Politics,' 489.

> the audience for those documents in which their praises are sung, it would have been imprudent to compare such emperors unfavourably with the greatest ruler, Moses.[168]

Therefore, for Philo, Moses and his law are the pattern that need to be followed by every ruler. By following God's law as revealed by Moses's law a government enjoys peace and harmony: "The pattern for God's rule in human society is to be found in the Mosaic regulations, obedience to which produces peace and harmony amongst households, cities and nations. God's law as found in the Mosaic decalogue is synonymous in Philo's thought with natural law, and this summation of God's divine law is the fountain from which all other laws flowed."[169]

Writing mainly to a Roman audience, and being integrated in public affairs as he was, Philo carefully reflects Roman language and ideas in his writings. One example of such a phenomenon is found in his description of the disturbances precipitated by Gaius in *Legatio ad Gaium*. Philo says that peace and harmony, which the empire enjoyed at the time of Tiberius' death (*Leg. Gai.* 8), is disrupted by Gaius' illness (*Leg. Gai.* 15–18). The reason why peace and harmony are broken is Gaius' unrighteous conduct, which is actualized in his illness—both a consequence of his dissolute life and the factor which prompted him to even worse behaviour after this recovery as well as an ever-increasing hostility towards the Jews (*Leg. Gai.* 14–24, 34, 35, 59 and *passim*). One should, however, keep in mind both the Roman audience and the apologetic purpose of this document. The rhetoric on Gaius are exaggerated in order to highlight his shortcomings as a ruler.

For Philo, the virtues of peace, harmony, and justice brought about by just rulers are worthy of praise because of his reading of the Jewish scriptures, and "are realized in the pursuit of the ideal political life that Philo portrays in an eclectic absorption of various strands of Hellenistic political thought."[170]

Back to *Specialibus Legibus* 2.188–192, the one who both makes and keeps cosmic peace (τοῦ εἰρηνοποιοῦ θεοῦ καὶ εἰρηνοφύλακος) is the God of the Old Testament himself (192). He deals with both kinds of war, the military and the natural, which brings disasters and disrupt cosmic peace. The same emphasis on God is found in *De Decalogo* 178 where he is presented as the great King, the keeper of peace (εἰρηνοφυλακοῦντι καὶ τὰ τῆς εἰρήνης) and the Prince of Peace (πρύτανις εἰρήνης).

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[168] Barraclough, 'Philo's Politics,' 491.
[169] Barraclough, 'Philo's Politics,' 508.
[170] Barraclough, 'Philo's Politics,' 550; cf. Philo, *De Iso.* 29–36.

Philo interprets history through the lenses of his Jewish faith—and Hellenistic philosophy.[171] Although Philo reflects imperial propaganda in his talk of peace and peacemaking, the Old Testament scriptures seem to be the primary source of Philo's concept of cosmic harmony.[172] However, there is enough in Philo to conclude that these references do resonate with the *pax romana* propaganda. Philo seeks to integrate into and dialogue with the imperial Roman culture, especially in his address to Roman authorities (e.g., Legatio).

2.3 *Pax Romana* in Asia Minor: The Availability of the Frame

It is not enough to delineate some aspects of *pax romana* and assume that the Colossians, in the province of Asia Minor, were familiar with it. In order to establish the likelihood that the metaphorical language of *peacemaking though blood* in Colossians 1.20b triggered the frame of *pax romana* it is necessary also to demonstrate its availability to the inhabitants of Asia Minor. Therefore, I now turn to examine the presence of the *Roman peace* ideology in Asia Minor.

Klaus Wengst has argued that the Roman ideal of a new Golden Age of peace brought about by Caesar Augustus was not confined to the capital Rome. It was made felt in the provinces as well.[173] To illustrate this, he mentions two inscriptions from Asia Minor. The first one is the calendrical inscription of Priene (probably 9 CE). Its purpose was to celebrate the introduction of the new Julian calendar reform marked by the birth of Caesar Augustus. In response to a letter from the proconsul of Asia, Paulus Fabius Maximus, the league of the Greek cities in Asia passed the following decree:

> Decree of the Greek Assembly in the province of Asia, on motion of the High Priest Apolionios, son of Menophilos, of Aizanoi: whereas Providence that orders all our lives has in her display of concern and generosity in our behalf adorned our lives with the highest good: Augustus, whom she has filled with *arete* [virtue] for the benefit of humanity, and has in her beneficence granted us and those who will come after us a Saviour [σωτῆρα] who has made war to cease and who shall put everything in peaceful order; and whereas Caesar, when he was manifest, transcended the expectations of (all who had anticipated the good news), not only by surpassing the benefits conferred by his predecessors but by leaving no expectation of surpassing

[171] Cf. Gradl, Hans-Georg. 'Kaisertum und Kaiserkult: Ein Vergleich zwischen Philos Legatio ad Gaium und der Offenbarung des Johannes,' *NTS* 56 (2009) 116–38, at 129–32.

[172] On the contrast between Philo's depiction of Gaius and Moses (and Jesus in Revelation), see Bekken, Per Jarle. 'Philo's Relevance for the Study of the New Testament,' in *Reading Philo: A Handbook to Philo of Alexandria* (ed. Torrey Seland; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014) 226–267, at 252–55.

[173] Wengst, *Pax,* 8f.

> him to those who would come after him, with the result that the birthday of our God signalled the beginning of Good News for the world because of him [ἦρξεν δὲ τῶι κόσμωι τῶι δι᾽ αὐτὸν εὐαγγελίων ἡ γενέυλιος ἡμέρα τοῦ θεοῦ]; which Asia resolved in Smyrna…[174]

Helmut Koester says that "[a]ll these inscriptions result from the religio-political propaganda of Augustus in which the rule of peace, initiated by Augustus's victories and benefactions, is celebrated and proclaimed as the beginning of a new age."[175] Augustus is celebrated as the bringer of peace;[176] he is called a god and saviour (σωτῆρα) whose birth brought about a new era of peace, good news (εὐαγγελίων) for the world.[177] The inscription attests to the very early presence in Asia Minor of those aspects of the Augustan propaganda discussed above.[178]

The second inscription mentioned by Wengst is from Halicarnassus (c. 2 to 14 CE), and it celebrates the peace, concord, good order, and prosperity of humankind which resulted from the arrival of the god-like Caesar Augustus. This is presented within a cultic context:

> [Beginning is lost] …since the eternal and immortal nature of everything has bestowed upon mankind the greatest good with extraordinary benefactions by bringing Caesar Augustus in our blessed time, the father of his own country, divine Rome, and ancestral Zeus, saviour [σωτῆρα] of the common race of men, whose providence has not only fulfilled but actually exceeded the expectations of all. For land and sea are at peace and the cities flourish with good order, concord and prosperity – it is the prime crop of all good, as mankind, filled with high hopes for the future and high spirits for the present with festivals, dedications, sacrifices and hymns [...] and that a copy of this decree be inscribed and placed in the precinct of Rome and Augustus by the high-priest…[179]

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[174] Lines 30–41. Translation largely based on Danker, Frederick W. *Benefactor: Epigraphic Study of a Graeco-Roman and New Testament Semantic Field* (St. Louis: Clayton Pub. House, 1982) 217. For the full Greek text of the inscription and commentary in Latin, cf. W. Dittenberger. *Orientis Graecae Inscriptiones Selectae* (Supplementum Sylloges inscriptionum graecarum, 2 vols. Leipzig: Apud S. Hirzel, 1905) 2.48–60; cf. Evans, Craig A. 'Mark's Incipit and the Priene Calendar Inscription: From Jewish Gospel to Greco-Roman Gospel,' *JGRChJ* 1 (2000) 67–81.

[175] Koester, Helmut. *Ancient Christian Gospels: Their History and Development* (London: SCM Press, 1990) 4.

[176] Cf. Philo, *Leg. Gai.* 1.143–47 (above); Dio 44.49.2, where Julius Caesar is presented as ὁ εἰρηνοποιός.

[177] Roman soteriological expectation hailing Augustus as *saviour* (σωτήρ) began to develop early in the emperor's trajectory towards divinization (Galinsky, *Augustan,* 312f; cf. Virgil, *Eclogue* 1 and 4).

[178] Cf. Price, S. R. F. *Rituals and Powers: The Roman Imperial Cult in Asia Minor* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984) 53–62; cf. *Res Gestae* 24; Tacitus, *Annals* 1.2, where he says that before Augustus, the state of affairs was unpopular in the provinces where the Senate' administration had been discredited. Although obviously such honours celebrating the Age of Augustus are not peculiar to the province of Asia Minor, Philo attests to its ubiquity in *Leg. Gai.* 149–50.

[179] Translation from Braund, David. *Augustus to Nero: A Sourcebook on Roman History 31 BC–AD 68* (London: Croom Helm, 1985) 59, n. 123—with a small variation in line 9 (ἐλπίδας, "expectations" substitutes "prayers"). Cf. Hirschfeld, Gustav, ed. *The Collection of Ancient Greek Inscriptions in the British Museum,* IV (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1893) 63, n. 894.

As the Priene inscription above, this one also attests to the wide-spread presence of the Augustan ideal of peace in Asia Minor. Moreover, it also locates it within the sphere of the imperial cult in the eastern provinces ("a copy of this decree [should] be inscribed and placed in the precinct of Rome and Augustus by the high-priest"). This document bears strong similarities with the calendrical inscription of Priene above. Both exalt the birthday of Augustus as a turning point in human history; Augustus is celebrated as a god-like agent sent by Providence to save humanity; in both documents the Augustan Age is marked by peace, happiness, and prosperity. The relation between Roman propaganda and the worship of the emperor becomes an essential factor in the relationship between the eastern Greek provinces and Rome.[180]

Reflecting similar ideology and contemporary to the letter to the Colossians, the emperor Nero (54–68 CE) set out to align his principate with the ideals of Augustus himself.[181] Suetonius hints at how Nero purposefully connected his own actions to those of Augustus.[182] The Neronian poet Calpurnius Siculus reinterpreted Virgil's "messianic" fourth eclogue now in relation to Nero: "the Golden Age springs to the second birth" under a new prince,[183] whose reign would be marked by the rule of peace.[184] Like Augustus, Nero too could boast that the gates of the shrine of Janus were shut at this time.[185] Thus, following on the heels of Augustus, Nero is projected as the new bringer of peace. This is relevant to our study because it shows that the Augustan ideal of peace was still strongly ingrained within the emperor's own imperial ideology around the time the letter to the Colossians was written.

Another important piece of evidence pointing to the ubiquity of the Augustan propaganda in early first century Asia Minor comes from the Sebasteion, in Aphrodisias (c. 100 km away from Colossae).[186] Drawing on a long history of iconographic tradition of military triumph, the complex of Sebasteion dramatically displays "the divine appointment of the Julio-Claudian dynasty to pacify the peoples of the earth and bring them into a civil union mirroring divine

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[180] See below; cf. Price, *Rituals and Power*; also Zanker, *Images,* 297ff. For an analysis of the role of religion in Augustus' programme of propagation of the new order and the elevation of his own position, cf. Galinsky, *Augustan,* 288–331.

[181] Cf. Tacitus, *Annals* 13.4–5; On Nero's administration following the model of Augustus, cf. Noreña, Carlos F. 'Nero's Imperial Administration,' in *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Nero* (eds. Shadi Bartsch, Kirk Freudenburg, and Cedric Littlewood. CCAW. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017) 48–62.

[182] Suetonius, *Nero* 10.1, 12.3, 25.1.

[183] Calpurnius 1.33–45. Cf. Littlewood, Cedric. 'Post-Augustan Revisionism,' in *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Nero* (eds. Shadi Bartsch, Kirk Freudenburg, and Cedric Littlewood. CCAW. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017) 79–92, at 90–91.

[184] Cf. Calpurnius 1.54, 64; 4.84, 127, 146; on peace and the shutting of the gates of the shrine of Janus, cf. Lucan 1.60–64.

[185] Suetonius, *Nero* 13.2.

[186] Its construction stretched from Tiberius (c. 20 CE) to Nero (c. 60 CE).

harmony."[187] The so-called *ethnē* reliefs,[188] in the north portico,[189] represent Augustus' victories and expansion of the empire.[190] The reliefs display the personification of Barbarian subjects at various stages of subjugation and romanization. "The *ethne* are each personified as single, standing, draped women, each well differentiated by drapery and pose, and some by attributes no doubt intended to characterize that *ethnos*."[191] (*figure 3*) As Smith has cogently argued, these modes of representing conquest and war derive from the Roman triumphal art.[192] He goes on to say that "[t]he kind of peoples and places seen in the Sebasteion are an extension and an adjustment of the *gentes devictae*. First, they are multiplied because they are concerned with much more than just one campaign or triumph—they sum up the victories and frontier advances of a whole reign. Second, although they encompass conquest and victory, they also suggest peaceful incorporation."[193] The vast territory of the Roman empire is well represented by the peoples depicted in these reliefs,[194] thus symbolizing the cosmic extension of the Roman empire. Together they represent the global sweep of the empire which had managed to pacify and incorporate a diversity of *ethnē,* by land and sea, into the one Roman empire led by divinely descended Rulers.[195] Harry Maier calls the ideal represented by these panels "cosmopolitanism with power:"[196] "These monuments represented cosmopolitanism with power by representing dispersed people and political entities as belonging to a new multi-ethnic, multilingual and

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[187] Maier, Harry O. 'A Sly Civility: Colossians and Empire,' *JSNT* 27.3 (2005) 323–49, at 336. For detail analysis of the *Sebasteion* in Aphrodisias, see Smith, R. R. R. 'The Imperial Reliefs from the Sebasteion at Aphrodisias,' *JRS* 77 (1987) 88–l38; cf. Reynolds, Joyce. 'New Evidence for the Imperial Cult in Julio-Claudian Aphrodisias,' *ZPE* 43 (1981) 317–27; Idem, 'Further Information on Imperial Cult at Aphrodisias,' in *Festschrift D. M. Pippidi* (*Studii Clasice* 24 [1986] 109–17).

[188] Smith, R. R. R. '*Simulacra Gentium*: The *Ethne* from the Sebasteion at Aphrodisias,' *JRS* 78 (1988) 50–77, *passim*.

[189] There are thirteen reliefs of ἔθνη, or foreign nations, and three reliefs of Islands extant (out of possible fifty).

[190] Cf. Reynolds, 'Further Information,' 115. It is worth noting how the extant *ethnē* fit within one of the three categories of the Augustan imperial ideal of expansion, similar to the categories recorded in the *Res Gestae* 26–33: some *recovered*, some *defeated*, some *pacified* (cf. Smith, '*Simulacra,*' 59). This does not mean that the *Res Gestae* was used as a model for the nations represented in the *Sebasteion,* as cogently argued by Reynolds ('Further Information,' 116).

[191] Smith, '*Simulacra,*' 59.

[192] Smith, '*Simulacra,*' 71.

[193] Idem.

[194] See map in Smith, '*Simulacra,*' 56.

[195] The display of conquered personifications in the Sebasteion find resemblance in Roman monuments found elsewhere, such as the *Ara Pacis* (discussed above) (Smith, '*Simulacra,*' 72f). Smith concludes that "the inclusion of a series of *gentes* [in the Ara Pacis] shows how these representations could be taken as combining both conquest and pacific ideas. They represented the peaceful incorporation of new conquests." (Smith, '*Simulacra,*' 73). He lists four other relevant Roman monuments: the Pompey's theatre, the *Porticus ad Nationes*, the *Forum Augusti*, and the Augustus' funeral. They all predate the Sebasteion thus standing as possible models for the reliefs in Aphrodisias (cf. Smith, '*Simulacra,*' 71–75).

[196] An expression he borrows from Max Mühl, cf. Maier, *Picturing,* 85–93.

multicultural imperial mosaic, with the divinely-established emperor assuring its cohesion and stability."[197]

Fig. 3 – Ethnos of the Dalcians (a female figure with a bare breast and crossed arms in classical Roman iconography of conquered people)

Similar ideology of pacification through victory is strongly conveyed by the imperial reliefs on the third storey of the south portico.[198] They present the Julio-Claudian emperors together with their mythical ancestors, Aeneas and Aphrodisias. The middle storey contains representations for the Greek world.[199] Presenting the Roman emperors together with elements of the Greek culture and religion might have been intended to show certain continuity between the Roman empire (and its emperors) and the Greek world. The main theme of the imperial reliefs on the upper storey can be summarised as *imperial victory by Roman divine emperors*.[200] Two imperial reliefs are particularly relevant, and depict violent conquest. In the first one, the emperor Claudius is depicted subjecting Britannia (*figure 4*). Britannia is represented by a drapery female figure with a bare breast and unbound hair. Claudius holds her by her hair with his left arm,

[197] Maier, *Picturing,* 87.
[198] There are many more panels extant from the South Portico (c. seventy complete or fragmentary panels).
[199] Cf. Smith, 'Imperial Reliefs,' 96f.
[200] Cf. Smith, 'Imperial Reliefs,' 97f.

and with his right arm he is about to strike the final blow. A similar pattern is duplicated in a second relief dedicated to the conquest of Armenia by the emperor Nero (*figure 5*). Here however, Nero holds defeated and humiliated Armenia by her upper arm, given the impression that he is raising her. Perhaps this is meant to illustrate the incorporation of conquered Armenia into the Roman empire, as Nero indeed did: "we know that he will […] raise her up and embrace her in the Roman empire."[201]

Fig. 4 – Claudius and Britannia

Fig. 5 – Nero and Armenia

Both panels, Smith argues, are modelled on Greek mythology and have the emperors taking the place of Greek gods.[202]

As a matter of fact, the panels in both south and north porticos present the emperors from a Greek perspective, from which they are seen as *gods*. This is telling of the difference of perception/reception of Roman propaganda in Italy and that of the provinces, particularly those in

[201] Smith, 'Imperial Reliefs,' 119. See also his discussion on panels 1, 4, 5 and 8 which also depict imperial conquest with some variations.
[202] Smith, 'Imperial Reliefs,' 117, 119.

the Greek east. Whereas in the west, the emperor was the *civilis princeps,* and the Julian family is presented basically as the natural conclusion of the Roman history—as illustrated by the Ara Pacis[203]—, in the Greek east the Julio-Claudian dynasty are presented as gods, a natural continuation of the history of the Greek mythic gods, destined to subjugate the entire world —as illustrated by the Sebasteion.[204] Therefore, it is as "gods" that the emperors are conceptualised as the bringer of peace to the entire world.

2.3.1 *Pax Romana* and Imperial Cult

As it has become evident, all this is set in the religious context of the worship of the emperor. The connections between *pax romana* and religion is explained by the close relation between *pax romana* and *pax deorum*, as shown above. The imperial cult was a strong instrument for the propagation of the ideal of *pax romana,* especially in the provinces.[205]

As Wengst has argued, the peace, concord, security, and honour of the entire world is secured when the gods protect and sustain the Roman empire in the person of the emperor,[206] whom Seneca holds to be "the bond by which the commonwealth is united…" and whose death would mean "calamity" and the "destruction of Roman peace."[207] In the beginning of his *De Clementia,* Seneca speaks of the emperor Nero as the one "chosen to serve on earth as vicar of the gods;" he is "the arbiter of life and death for the nations," in whom rests the power to keep the world in peace and bring destruction at his "nod."[208] Earlier in the Principate, Augustus is hailed as the "father and guardian of the human race"[209] and "god on earth."[210] Virgil writes of Augustus, "O Meliboeus, it is a god who gave us this peace—for a god he shall ever be to me."[211] As we have already noted, despite such high praise, the Julio-Claudians were not viewed as "gods" among the Italian elite.[212] However, the high status conferred to the emperor was picked up by

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[203] See 2.2.1 above.
[204] Cf. Smith, 'Imperial Reliefs,' 88, 136f; Galinsky, *Augustan,* 322–26.
[205] Cf. Wengst, *Pax,* 46–51.
[206] Wengst, *Pax*, 47; cf. Pliny, *Paneg*. 72, 94; Aristides, *Rom. Ora*. 89.
[207] Seneca, *De Clem*. 1.4.1–2.
[208] Seneca, *De Clem*. 1.1.2, also quoted by Wengst, *Pax,* 47.
[209] Horace, *Odes* 1.12.49.
[210] Horace, *Odes* 3.5.1–3; cf. Ovid, *Met*. 15.832, 858–60.
[211] Virgil, *Eclogues* 1.6–8; cf. Virgil, *Georgics* 1.24–35.
[212] Cf. Price, 'The place of Religion,' 838, 839–41; although he was likened to a god in poetic language in Rome, Augustus studiously avoided making the same mistake that his adopted father Julius Caesar had made when he claimed to be divine (cf. Galinsky, *Augustan,* 312f; Idem, 'Continuity and Change,' 80–82). In 30 BCE, Augustus reacts against the idea of being worshiped as god (Dio 51.19–20), thus setting a general pattern whereby living emperors would not be conferred public honours as divine in Rome (cf. Scheid, 'Augustus,'

the Greek cities in the eastern provinces and readily assimilated into their long-lasting Hellenistic tradition of the ruler cult.[213]

It is perhaps by means of its religious aspect that the ideal of the *pax romana* left its strongest mark in Asia Minor. The Sebasteion represents the Roman emperors as natural successors of the Olympians and the Greek gods. A dedication inscription found in the propylon at the Sebasteion reads: "Ἀφροδίτηι, θεοῖς Σεβαστοῖς, τῶι δήμωι, to whom τὸ πρόπυλον καὶ τὰς ἐν αὐτῶι τιμάς are offered."[214] Joyce Reynolds concludes that "[w]hat was in the minds of the original donors, then, was, it would seem, a new precinct of Aphrodite, in which Augustus and his family were also to be honoured as *theoi*."[215] Both the Priene and the Halicarnassus inscriptions celebrate the Roman emperor as "god," "saviour" and the bringer of peace.[216] Tacitus tells us about a dispute among 11 cities in Asia Minor for the right to build a temple to Tiberius.[217] Smyrna wins the dispute on account of its historical loyalty to Rome and for having been the first one to erect an altar to the City of Rome.[218]

Simon R. F. Price has cogently demonstrated the pervasiveness and importance of the emperor cult in Asia Minor. Price's monograph, *Rituals and Power*,[219] is still the most thorough treatment of the subject. He has shown that in the first century CE the cult of the emperor was most popular in the provinces of Asia Minor.[220] His research has also debunked the old assumption

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182). This does not mean that Augustus was nowhere honoured as a god in Italy during his lifetime (cf. Galinsky, *Augustan,* 322), but those occasions constituted the exception. Furthermore, such a practice was neither official nor in line with the elite's inclinations.

[213] But see Price's nuanced analysis of the developments put in place by the Romans (e.g., Price, S. R. F. 'Rituals and Power,' in *Paul and Empire: Religion and Power in Roman Imperial Society* (ed. Richard A. Horsley. Harrisburg: Trinity, 1997) 47–71, at 52–55.

[214] Reynolds, 'Further Information,' 111. Translation: "To Aphrodite, the *divi Augusti,* and the people… the propylon and the honorary [statues] on it."

[215] Reynolds, 'Further Information,' 111; cf. 113f. The Aphrodisian Aphrodite was identified with the mother of Aeneas and, consequently, both with the mother of the Romans and, later, with the mother of the Julian gens (cf. Reynolds, Joyce. 'The Origins and Beginnings of Imperial Cult at Aphrodisias,' *PCPS* 26 [1980] 70–84).

[216] In addition to these, a decree from the city of Mytilene on Lesbos confers some remarkable titles to Augustus: "That he should ponder upon his own self-esteem because it is never possible to match those honours which are insignificant both in accidence and in essence to those who have attained heavenly glory and possess the eminence and power of gods. But if anything more glorious than these provisions is found hereafter the enthusiasm and piety of the city will nor fail in anything that can further deify him." (IGR IV 39, translation by Price, *Rituals and Power,* 55).

[217] Tacitus, *Annals* 4.15, 55f. The cities were Hypaepa, Tralles, Laodicea, Magnesia, Ilium, Halicarnassus, Pergamum (which was ruled out for already having a sanctuary to Augustus), Ephesus, Miletus, Sardis and Smyrna (*Annals,* 4.55).

[218] Tacitus, *Annals* 4.56. Later in the first century (89–90 CE), Ephesus also establishes a cult of the emperor (cf. Friesen, S. J. *Twice Neokoros: Ephesus, Asia and the Cult of the Flavian Imperial Family* [Leiden: Brill, 1993]).

[219] Price, *Rituals and Power*. For a summary of his arguments, see Price, 'Rituals,' 47–71.

[220] Price, *Rituals and Power*, 4f, 20, and *passim*.

that the cult was merely a political manoeuvre seeking to establish links with and gain the favour of the imperial capital, with no religious meaning.[221] Price has highlighted the abundance of evidence for the imperial cult in Asia Minor stretching through the first three centuries of the empire[222] and coming from 180 communities throughout Asia Minor.[223] This does not, however, mean that it was ubiquitous in the region as there is much less evidence from the north and east.[224] Notwithstanding there is great "concentration of evidence extending from the west coast through the inland area of Asia down in a great arc to the south coast,"[225] which means that there is a substantial corpus of evidence from the entire region of Phrygia, where the city of Colossae is located, as evidence from both Hierapolis and Laodicea also indicates.[226]

Price has also highlighted the impact of the Roman propaganda on the cities through the transformation of the civic space. Not only temples and sanctuaries were built in prominent areas, but also imperial special spaces were made available in the porticoes on the main squares of the cities,[227] so as to make Roman presence virtually unmissable. Moreover, we know that since the erection of the Roman province in Asia in late second century BCE, the heavily Hellenised cities of the Lycus Valley received great numbers of Roman citizens who organised themselves into "associations."[228] This fact reinforces the reality of Roman presence in the region. Some 15 kilometres downstream the Meander from Colossae, Laodicea became an important city in the Lycus Valley,[229] which was also one of the Roman assize districts in Asia.[230] An inscription dated from the late Republic reveals the state of absolute loyalty required from the Laodiceans by the Romans (after Rome regained control of the region from the hands of Mithradates VI,

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[221] Price, *Rituals and Power,* xi, 15f; Price, 'Rituals,' 51f.

[222] "[T]hough with a concentration of documents prescribing the ceremonies in the first years of the empire." (*Rituals and Power,* 4).

[223] Price, *Rituals and Power,* 4; cf. his map V, xxiv; cf. 54–62, 78–100; also his useful catalogue of imperial temples and shrines in Asia Minor, 249–74.

[224] Price, *Rituals and Power*, 80.

[225] Price, *Rituals and Power,* 80; cf. his maps II–V, xxii–xxv.

[226] Cf. Price, *Rituals and Power,* 84. For the Roman emperor cult in the Lycus Valley, see Huttner, Ulrich. *Early Christianity in the Lycus Valley* (trans. David Green. AJEC 85. ECAM 1. Leiden: Brill, 2013) 59–66; there is evidence for the cult of Θέα Ῥώμη in Hierapolis from the imperial period, as well as games held in honour of the emperor at the time of Augustus (cf. Ritti, T. 'Due iscrizioni di età augustea da Hierapolis,' *Epigraphica* 41 (1979) 183–87); cf. Kearsley, Rosalinde A. 'Epigraphic Evidence for the Social impact of Roman government in Laodicea and Hierapolis,' in *Colossae in Space and Time: Linking to an Ancient City* (eds. Alan H. Cadwallader and Michael Trainor. NTOA 94. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011) 130–50.

[227] Cf. Price, *Rituals and Power,* 133–69; also Price, 'Rituals,' 61–64; cf. Price's chapter on the images of the emperor in *Rituals and Power,* 170–206.

[228] Huttner, *Lycus Valley*, 28.

[229] Huttner, *Lycus Valley,* 37f.

[230] Cf. Mitchell, Stephen. 'The Administration of Roman Asia Minor from 133 BC to AD 250,' in *Lokale Autonomie und römische Ordnungsmacht in den kaiserzeitlichen Provinzen vom 1. bis 3. Jahrhundert* (ed. Werner Eck. Munich: De Gruyter, 1999) 17–46, at 22–29; cf. Huttner, *Lycus Valley,* 37–41.

c. 85 BCE): "The people of the Laodiceans on the Lycus [honour] the people of the Romans, who have proven to be their saviour and benefactor [σωτῆρα καὶ εὐεργέτην] through their active benevolence toward them."[231] After the turbulence of the civil wars which also affected Asia Minor, '[t]he reign of Augustus finally brought peace (*pax* or εἰρήνη), which became a watchword through the province of Asia. The new figure of hope was also celebrated in the Lycus Valley; the veneration of his person found expression in religious rituals. Even more than the Hellenistic kings before him, he comported himself as 'prince of peace.'"[232]

2.3.2 Implications for Colossians

One can only wonder what the ruins of the old city of Colossae would reveal had the site been comprehensively excavated.[233] However, based on what we already know, Colossae was certainly a cosmopolitan city,[234] located at the gateway to and from Phrygia, which would have facilitated their familiarity with the wider Roman propaganda so heavily attested in both Asia Minor and, more locally, in Phrygia. The well-documented spread of imperial propaganda in Asia Minor certainly justifies Maier's statement regarding the audience of Colossians:

> [A] first-century Christian audience hearing the letter read aloud would immediately have recognized imperial-sounding themes, greeted as it was daily by ubiquitous imperial images—in market squares, theatres, baths, law courts, temples, households, on coins, on triumphal arches and public buildings, not to mention the many sacred precincts dedicated to the worship of the emperor and his family—celebrating the Roman order as a divinely ordained order representing a pacification of erstwhile hostile and ethnically dispersed peoples, brought by military might into a global *pax* by a divinely appointed emperor heading a moral, natural and spiritual renewal.[235]

The seemly ubiquitous presence of Roman propaganda in Asia Minor through various means such as the vibrant triumphal iconography, the worship of the emperor, literature (such as the copies of the *Res Gestae*), coinage, etc. suggest that the *pax romana* propaganda, a peace

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[231] Dessau, Herman. *Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae,* 3 vols. (Berlin, 1892/91) 33, translation from Greek by Huttner, *Lycus Valley,* 39f.

[232] Huttner, *Lycus Valley,* 41.

[233] Cf. Standhartinger, Angela. 'A City with a Message: Colossae and Colossians,' in *The First Urban Churches 5: Colossae, Hierapolis, and Laodicea* (eds. James R. Harrison and L. L. Welborn. Atlanta: SBL, 2019) 240; Cadwallader, Alan H. and Cadwallader Trainor. 'Colossae in Space and Time: Overcoming Dislocation, Dismemberment and Anachronicity,' in *Colossae in Space and Time: Linking to an Ancient City* (eds. Alan H. Cadwallader and Michael Trainor. NTOA 94. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011) 9–47, at 9–11.

[234] Cf. Cadwallader, Alan H. 'A New Inscription, a Correction and a Confirmed Sighting from Colossae,' *Epigraphica Anatolica* 40 (2007) 109–18, at 116f.

[235] Maier, 'Sly Civility,' 326.

secured through violent conquering of enemies, would have been a strong frame readily available to the inhabitants of Asia Minor. That in turns makes the likelihood of its availability in Colossae highly probable.

2.4 Conclusion

In the first part of this chapter, I outlined some elements of the *pax romana* ideology with a view to showing that it constituted a key conceptual frame through which the audience of the letter to the Colossians might have accessed the meaning of the metaphorical expression εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου in Colossians 1.20b. I showed that the *Augustan peace* was an important instrument of the Roman imperial propaganda which, at its core, meant "peace through victory" (*parta victoriis pax*), so *peace through violence,* and the subjugation of erstwhile enemies. Closely connected to the concept of *pax romana* is that of *pax deorum* for*,* in the Roman ideology, *pax deorum* was nothing less than the necessary precondition for *pax romana*. To illustrate the connection, I introduced an analysis of the Roman poet Catullus' poem 68.75–76 in which he reflects on the need to secure the *pax deorum* through the offering of sacred blood. I also offered a brief analysis of relevant passages from the Jewish writer Philo of Alexandria in which he too seems to reflect *pax romana* ideology.

Having outlined the principal aspects of the conceptual frame of the *pax augusta*, I showed, in the second part, that the frame was readily available to the readers of the Colossian letter in first-century Asia Minor as evidenced by local inscriptions, architecture, literature, and the local nuances and adaptations of the imperial cult in the eastern province of Asia Minor. In light of the ubiquity of the conceptual frame of *pax romana* in Asia Minor as well as its availability to the readers of Colossians, it is my contention that the metaphorical expressions of *peacemaking* and *through blood* in Colossians 1.20b could have triggered the whole background context of *pax romana* in the readers' minds, thus equipping them to access the meaning of the linguistic units. These connections will be explored in the next chapter.

Chapter 3: *Pax Romana* and *Peacemaking Through Blood* in Colossians

3.1 Introduction

The discussion in the previous chapter has demonstrated the availability of the *pax romana* frame, a *peace secured through violence*, in Asia Minor.

In what follows, my concern is to examine how the *pax romana* frame could have affected the reading of εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου in Colossians 1.20b. The first step is to identify frame elements of the *pax romana* frame as well as other possible frames from the Roman world present in Colossians, with a view to showing that the cumulative weight of such literary devices heightens the probability of the *pax romana* frame being activated by the concept of *peacemaking through blood* in Colossians 1.20b. I conclude this section by proposing that the "triumph" frame in Colossians 2.15 provides us with the clearest Roman frame in the letter.

Secondly, I examine the "triumph" frame in Colossians 2.15 within the literary context of Colossians in order to show that the metaphorical expression functions as a rhetorical device employed to expose the pacification of τὰς ἀρχὰς καὶ τὰς ἐξουσίας as part of the cosmic reconciliation/peacemaking of Colossians 1.20. They are depicted as humiliated prisoners being led in triumphal procession by God in Christ.

Lastly, I analyse the connection between the "triumph" frame in Colossians 2.15 and εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου in Colossians 1.20b with a view to establishing how the "triumph" imagery (Col. 2.15) contributes to the activation of the *pax romana* frame in Colossians 1.20b. I propose that "triumph" in Colossians 2.15 complements the imagery of cosmic peacemaking of Colossians 1.20b in such a way that when they are read together—that is, within the rhetoric of Colossians—the Roman concept of "imposed peace," or "pacification by submission," is brought to bear on the concept of εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου in Colossians 1.20. I conclude by proposing three ways in which the combined imagery of Colossians 1.20b and 2.15 could have challenged the readers' perception of reality.

3.2 Identifying the Frames

As we demonstrated in the previous chapter, *pax romana* constituted a key element of the Roman ideology, being deeply associated with the rise of Gaius Octavius (turned Caesar Augustus) to the position of *princeps* of the *de facto imperium Romanum*. The good news of Augustus meant the ushering in of a new epoch, a new Golden Age of peace, happiness, and prosperity for the entire world.[1] However, the Roman "blessing of peace" meant different things for non-Roman *ethnē* since *pax romana* was *parta victoriis pax*,[2] a peace attained through the pacification of Roman enemies by means of military victories. It was, therefore, a violent peace imposed on those who refused to submit to the rule of Rome. In addition, for the Romans, no less for Augustus, *pax romana* was inextricably connected with *pax deorum* which was thought to be a necessary condition for the *pax romana*. They believed their success and welfare to be dependent on their securing the favour of the gods.

Accordingly, the frame elements of the *pax romana* frame could be outlined as follows:

Metaphorical expression: *peacemaking through violence*

(1) Subject of the *peacemaking* act: Rome/Emperor

(2) Object of the *peacemaking* act: Roman enemies

(3) Means: violence (bloodshed)

In Colossians 1.20b we find:

Metaphorical expression: *peacemaking through blood*

(1) Subject of the *peacemaking* act: God

(2) Object of the *peacemaking* act: God's enemies

(3) Means: blood of cross (violence)

[1] E.g., *Res Gestae* 13; Velleius Paterculus, 2.126.3; Aristides, *Rom. Ora*. 103.
[2] *Res Gestae* 13.

Scholars have noticed a number of resonances from the broader Roman imperial ideology in the letter to the Colossians.[3] Harry Maier provides a useful list: (a) the global reach of the gospel (e.g., Col. 1.6, 23, "the whole world"); (b) the imagery of "triumph" in Colossians 2.15; (c) the statement of a "universal reconciliation (ἀποκαταλλάξαι) on earth and in heaven and its celebration of Christ's 'making peace' (εἰρηνοποιήσας; Col. 1.20) with erstwhile enemies;" (d) the moral and natural renewal brought forth by Christ's exaltation (Col. 3.1, 10); and (e) the exhortation to "'let the peace of Christ rule [βραβευέτω]' in believers' hearts" (Col. 3.15).[4] The list of resonances with the empire gets considerably larger when other Pauline letters are taken into account.[5]

Frame Semantics uses a more precise language to speak about the "script-like scenarios" Maier has detected. Maier speaks of resonance (quite broadly) while some cognitive linguists refer to this as frame and frame elements. Accordingly, I argue that the cumulative weight of frame elements from the Roman world in Colossians heightens the probability of the *pax romana* frame being activated by the concept of *peacemaking through blood* in Colossians 1.20b. However, the strongest frames are arguably the *peacemaking through blood* (Col. 1.20b) and *triumphing over the powers* (Col. 2.15), especially when read within the wider literary context of the letter. In what follows, I first examine the "triumph" frame in Colossians 2.15, then I look into how it corroborates and amplifies the activation of the *pax romana* frame in Colossians 1.20b.

My proposal is that the "triumph" imagery in Colossians 2.15 complements the imagery of *cosmic peacemaking through blood* of 1.20b in such a way that, when they are read together—

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[3] See specially the publications by Harry O. Maier: 'Barbarians, Scythians, and Imperial Iconography in the Epistle to the Colossians,' in *Picturing the New Testament: Studies in Ancient Visual Images* (eds. Annette Weissenrieder, Friederike Wendt, and Petra von Gemünden. WUNT 2/193. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005) 385–406; Idem, 'Reading Colossians in the Ruins: Roman Imperial Iconography, Moral Transformation, and the Construction of Christina Identity in the Lycus Valley,' in *Colossae in Space and Time* in *Colossae in Space and Time: Linking to an Ancient City* (eds. Alan H. Cadwallader and Michael Trainor. NTOA 94. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011) 212–31; Idem, *Picturing;* Idem, 'Sly Civility.' Cf. Walsh, B. J. and S. C Keesmaat. *Colossians Remixed: Subverting the Empire* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2004).

[4] Maier, 'Sly Civility,' 325f.

[5] Maier, *Picturing,* 40. Maier breaks from the dominant "binary" approach to Paul and empire in recent scholarship in which Paul is interpreted as either outright anti-imperial (e.g., Walsh and Keesmaat, *Colossians Remixed*) or having nothing or little to say about the Roman empire (e.g., Barclay, John M. G. 'Why the Roman Empire was Insignificant to Paul,' in *Pauline Churches and Diaspora Jews* [WUNT 275. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011] 363–87). Maier combines post-colonialism approach with ideas of social theorists such as Michel de Certeau and Michel Foucault and presents a nuanced understanding of the intersections between empire ideology and Paul (he uses "Paul" for convenience as he assumes pseudepigraphy for Colossians, Ephesians and the Pastorals) in which Paul is seen as "neither for nor against the 'Roman empire' but a skilful negotiator of his imperial context." (*Picturing,* 33, *passim*).

that is, within the rhetoric of Colossians—the Roman concept of "imposed peace," or "pacification by submission," is brought to bear on the concept of εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου in Colossians 1.20. We now turn to examine the imagery of the triumphant God in Colossians 2.15.

3.3 God's Triumph in Christ: Colossians 2.15

3.3.1 Colossians 2.15 in Context

Colossians 2.15 is a striking statement of God's victory in Christ over τὰς ἀρχὰς καὶ τὰς ἐξουσίας and is located right at the heart of the polemical section of the letter (Col. 2.8–23). The imperative βλέπετε in verse 8 confronts the Colossians "with the alternative that demands of them a clear an unequivocal decision,"[6] namely, they ought to hold on to the apostolic tradition which they had already accepted (cf. v. 6), which is κατὰ Χριστόν (v. 8c), and reject the *philosophy* promoted by the false teachers which, in contrast, is κατὰ τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου (v. 8b), and which I take here to be personal evil spirits in a synonymic relation to ἀρχὰς and ἐξουσίας.[7] In the first part of the polemical section (vv. 9–15), the writer presents a

[6] Lohse, *Colossians,* 92.

[7] The meaning of στοιχεῖα in Colossians 2.8 and 20 has been a matter of endless debate. The word has a wide range of meanings (for a survey of the lexeme, see G. Delling, "στοιχέω, στοιχεῖον, κτλ," *TDNT* 9.666–87; for a historical survey from the Apostolic Fathers to mid-twentieth century see Bandstra, Andrew J. *The Law and the Elements of the World: An Exegetical Study in Aspects of Paul's Teaching* (Kampen: J. H. Kok, 1964) 5–30; also Lohse, *Colossians,* 96–99), and scholars are divided between three major interpretations. Bandstra, *Law,* 5–30, refers to these three interpretations as "Principial," "Cosmological," and "Personalized-Cosmological:" (1) A first group understands στοιχεῖα as referring to the "fundamental principles" of a teaching or doctrine, the elementary components of a particular area of study (*BDAG* s.v. "στοιχεῖον," 1.c); supporters of this view include Moule, *Colossians,* 90–92; Lightfoot, *Colossians,* 246; Thompson, Marianne M. *Colossians and Philemon* (Two Horizons New Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005) 52f; Hendriksen, William. *A Commentary on Colossians and Philemon* (London: Banner of Truth Trust, 1971) 109f; Wink, Walter. *Naming the Powers: The Language of Power in the New Testament, vol. 1: The Powers* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984) 76f (in ref. to Col. 2.20); Bandstra, *Law,* 68–72; Sappington, T. J. *Revelation and Redemption at Colossae* (JSNTSup 53. Sheffield: JSOP Press, 1991) 164–70. (2) Others interpret it as the "fundamental components" of the cosmos, the elements from which matter is composed (*BDAG* s.v. "στοιχεῖον," 1.b); some of its advocates are MacDonald, *Colossians,* 87–98; DeMaris, R. E. *The Colossian Controversy: Wisdom in Dispute at Colossae* (JSNTSup 96. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994) 52–53; Wilson, *Colossians,* 197, conceives the possibility of meaning interpretations 1 and 2; Pokorný, *Colossians,* 114; Schweizer, *Colossians,* 128–33; Dunn, *Colossians,* 148; Moo, *Colossians,* 190–93; Wink, *Naming,* 74–76 (in ref. to Col. 2.8); Smith, I. K. *Heavenly Perspective: A Study of the Apostle Paul's Response to a Jewish Mystical Movement at Colossae* (Library of New Testament Studies 346. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2006) 87. (3) Lastly, many a scholar contend that the lexeme here refers to personal "spiritual beings" (*BDAG* s.v. "στοιχεῖον," 2). Advocates of this view include Bruce, *Colossians,* 98–100—who suggests that the phrase τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου in this sense is an "original religious contribution" of the author (who he believes to be Paul); Lohse, *Colossians,* 96–99; Martin, *Colossians,* 10–14, 79; Harris, *Colossians,* 93; Wright, *Colossians,* 101–02; Lincoln, Andrew T. *Paradise Now and Not Yet: Studies in the Role of the Heavenly Dimension in Paul's Thought with Special Reference to his Eschatology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981) 114–115; Arnold, *Syncretism,* 159–66. The majority of English versions translate τὰ

reinstatement of Christ's primacy and sufficiency for the believers' spiritual needs. This stands as the theological foundation for his response to the threats posed by the *philosophy*. Believers are essentially reminded that as the "fulness" of the deity dwells in Christ bodily they too are made to share in such "fulness" by means of their participation "in him" (καὶ ἐστὲ ἐν αὐτῷ πεπληρωμένοι, v. 10a; cf. vv. 9–10); by their being in Christ the believers participate in his death and resurrection (vv. 11–12), as well as in his victory over both sin and the "powers" won through his death on the cross (vv. 13–15).

As has been observed by commentators, verse 13 marks the beginning of a new section which is indicated by the change of subject from "you" (vv. 11–12) to "he" (vv. 13–15)[8]—the subject of the verbs in these verses is most certainly God, who was mentioned in verse 12. Verses 13–15 proceed to describe the double accomplishment of God in Christ on behalf of the believers: (1) forgiveness of sins which results in new life with Christ (vv. 13–14), and (2) victory over the *powers* (v. 15). The author uses various metaphors in verses 13–15 to convey these two truths, and it is not clear how all the imagery are logically connected nor how the two main concepts they convey are related. More to the point, it is not at all clear how the "forgiveness of trespasses" in verses 13–14 is related to the "defeat of the *powers*" in verse 15, yet there seems to be a cause-and-effect relationship between them. It is safe to say that in the text of Colossians any relationship between them is simply assumed rather than explained. Lohse offers a helpful succinct comment on it. He writes about "the essential connection between forgiveness of sins and victory over the powers and principalities." He goes on to say that "both affirmations form an indissoluble pair…" and "where there is forgiveness of sins, there is freedom from the 'powers' and 'principalities.'"[9]

The conceptual connection between εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου in Colossians 1.20b and the "triumph" imagery in 2.15 would not come as a surprise to the

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στοιχεῖα as "spiritual powers" (e.g., ESV; NET; NIV; NLT; RSV; TNIV). The word appears 7 times in the NT (Gal. 4.3, 9; Col. 2.8, 20; Heb. 5.12; 2Pet. 3.10, 12). Whereas there is consensus as to the "principial" interpretation in Hebrews and the "cosmological" interpretation in 2 Peter, it is the Pauline use of the word in both Galatians and Colossians that is still debated. The context of Colossians seems to tip the balance in favour of a personal meaning, such as either the "cosmological" (in its religious version in which the elements, such as stars and moon, are viewed as spiritual entities), or the "personalised-cosmological" interpretations. In this thesis, I loosely refer to these evil spiritual powers as *powers*.

[8] E.g., Lohse, *Colossians,* 106; Moo, *Colossians,* 205; Pao, *Colossians,* 168. The emphatic position of the ὑμᾶς at the beginning of the verse also signals the shift of attention.

Scholars debate whether this section—or parts of it—is a pre-Pauline hymnic fragment (e.g., Martin, 'Reconciliation,' 116–24). But see Schweizer, *Colossians,* 135f; Sappington, *Revelation,* 206f, who argue that the author is responsible for its composition. Be that as it may, I shall focus on the text as we have it now.

[9] Lohse, *Colossians,* 106f; cf. Moo, *Colossians,* 215–16.

readers as a similar juxtaposition of "forgiveness of sins" and "defeated powers" is found earlier in the letter (Col. 1.13–14).[10] In chapter 1, the author further elaborates on the theme of redemption (v. 14) by means of the *reconciling/peacemaking through blood* metaphors in 1.20 whereby he presents the effective means through which the blessing of redemption is accomplished, namely, the peacemaking through Christ's blood on the cross. In other words, God rescued believers from their sins and from the grip of the powers by "reconciling all things to Christ, making peace through the blood of his cross." Colossians 1.13–14 shows that the cross is the place where both forgiveness and the *powers'* defeat take place (cf. Col. 1.20b and 2.14–15). Therefore, the cross-event provides the theological basis for the redemption statements in 1.12–13. As we will see below, this seems to be the case in 2.13–14 too.[11]

In Colossians 2.13–15, the theme of "forgiveness" as the means through which believers are made alive with Christ dominates verses 13–14 whereas "victory over the powers" is taken up in verse 15.[12] The believers' transition from death to life is presented by means of a "once-now" contrast (similar to Col. 1.21–22):[13] they were [once] dead, but [now] they have been made alive (συνεζωοποίησεν) together with Christ (v. 13). The finite verb συνεζωοποίησεν (v. 13b) is most likely modified by the participle χαρισάμενος: "…he made you alive with him, *having forgiven us all our trespasses*" (RSV).[14] Verse 14 elaborates on the assurance of such forgiveness by means of yet more vivid imagery "drawn from the legal world:"[15] the wiping out of the χειρόγραφον which stood against us and its being nailed on the cross.

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[10] On the basis of thematic similarities, Sappington, *Revelation,* 192–223, interprets Col. 2.12–15 in the light of 1.12–14. He offers an insightful proposal for the connection between "forgiveness of sins" and the "powers' defeat" present in both passages: for him, the participle ἀπεκδυσάμενος in 2.15a refers back to the wiping out and removal of the χειρόγραφον (v. 14a) and the "forgiveness of trespasses" (v. 13c). He concludes that like in 1.12–14, "it is divine forgiveness that rescues believers from the sphere of authority of the spiritual powers…" (*Revelation,* 212; cf. 221–23). However, I concur with Arnold, *Syncretism,* 285–87, that Sappington "overstates the case," and that it is indeed too restrictive to limit the defeat of the powers to the act of divine forgiveness. This might be in fact what the defeat of the *powers*' means in relation to human beings (i.e., by having their sins forgiven, believers are freed from the grip of these heavenly beings), but it is most certainly not what it means in relation to Christ (to whom the powers are subjected). Furthermore, it is not necessarily "logical" that the act of "disarming" the powers in 2.15a refers back to the acts of "forgiveness" and "wiping out" of the χειρόγραφον, as Sappington, *Revelation,* 212, argues (see the syntactical appraisal below).

[11] See more on the unity of these sections in 3.3 below.

[12] I take χαρισάμενος in v. 13c as a modal.

[13] Although the rhetorical construction ποτε…νυνί is lacking in the present verse it nonetheless retains the conceptual contrast (cf. chapter 5 below; also, Lohse, *Colossians* 106).

[14] As in Col. 1.13–14, there is a change on the object of the verbs in v. 13c from ὑμᾶς to ἡμῖν thus including both Jews (Paul and Timothy) and Gentiles into the blessing of "forgiveness of trespasses."

[15] Dunn, *Colossians,* 164.

The author takes on the issue of the *powers'* defeat in Colossians 2.15. Foster observes (rightly, in my opinion) that "[t]he four previous metaphors (Col. 2.11–14) depicted the changed sphere of existence of the Colossians before and after coming to faith in Christ. Here the focus returns to the spiritual forces that are opposed to the divine purposes."[16] Colossians 2.15 depicts the victory of God in Christ over the *powers* by means of the Roman "triumph" frame. The verse is structured around a finite verb (bold) bracketed by two instrumental participles (italics) describing the action of ἐδειγμάτισεν:

Colossians 2.15:

ἀπεκδυσάμενος τὰς ἀρχὰς καὶ τὰς ἐξουσίας

ἐδειγμάτισεν ἐν παρρησίᾳ,

θριαμβεύσας αὐτοὺς ἐν αὐτῷ.

The subject of the verbs is most likely God (as in the previous two verses).[17] The final ἐν αὐτῷ is ambiguous for it could refer either to τῷ σταυρῷ in verse 14 or to Christ. In favour of the former is the fact that τῷ σταυρῷ in verse 14 is closer to ἐν αὐτῷ. On the other hand, however, understanding the referent to be Christ maintains the consistency of the "in him" motif which runs through the entire passage beginning at verse 9.[18] In light of this, and combined with our interpretation of the subject as being God, I take ἐν αὐτῷ to be a reference to Christ.[19] Nevertheless, in light of the literary context, understanding ἐν αὐτῷ as a reference to Christ does not

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[16] Foster, *Colossians,* 275.

[17] Moo, *Colossians,* 213; Sumney, *Colossians,* 146; MacDonald, *Colossians,* 2000; Pao, *Colossians,* 172; Beale, *Colossians,* 201; Harris, *Colossians,* 109; Pokorný, *Colossians,* 135–42; Hübner, *Kolosser,* 84f; Wright, *Colossians,* 108f; McKnight, *Colossians,* 245; Foster, *Colossians,* 275f. It is worth noting that the passage displays the similar phenomenon found in 1.15–20 where God is introduced only in an oblique manner. This might be indicative of the author's intention to keep the focus of the readers on Christ. As in the former passage, the distinctions between the actions of God the Father and Christ's are kept somewhat elusive thus heightening the christological emphasis of the letter.

[18] Yet again a similar pattern is found in Col. 1.15–20.

To be sure, the referent of ἐν ᾧ in v. 12 is debatable. Although it could refer to τῷ βαπτισμῷ, I agree with those who argue that this is the fourth of a sequence of "in him" referring to Christ beginning in v. 9 (e.g., Dunn, *Colossians,* 160; Foster, *Colossians,* 267; Lohse, *Colossians,* 104, n. 73; Barth and Blanke, *Colossians,* 320–21; *pace* e.g., Harris, *Colossians,* 104; Pokorný, *Colossians,* 133; Moo, *Colossians,* 203; Wilson, *Colossians,* 205; MacDonald, *Colossians,* 100).

[19] Cf. Wright, *Colossians*, 114; Lohse, *Colossians*, 112; Dunn, *Colossians,* 145, n. 4; Moo, *Colossians,* 215; Foster, *Colossians,* 277; Arnold, *Syncretism,* 277, n. 97; *pace* Lightfoot, *Colossians,* 190, 192; Moule, *Colossians,* 102; Yates, Roy. *The Epistle to the Colossians* (Epworth Commentaries. London: Epworth Press, 1993) 53; Martin, *Colossians,* 88; Beale, *Colossians,* 203.

necessarily mean that the moment of God's triumph over the *powers* was other than Christ's crucifixion. It would be rather unexpected to interpret a reference to Christ at this point to mean anything other than what God has done in *Christ* (God's *agent*) on the *cross* (the *instrument*), which is the locus of God's destruction of the χειρόγραφον in verse 14.[20]

With God as the implied subject,[21] ἀπεκδυσάμενος should be interpreted with an active and transitive sense with τὰς ἀρχὰς καὶ τὰς ἐξουσίας as its direct object (cf. 3.9–10), meaning that God stripped/disarmed τὰς ἀρχὰς καὶ τὰς ἐξουσίας.[22] Moo draws attention to the fact that "[w]hen the related verb *ekdyō* is followed by a personal object in biblical Greek, the idea is always that 'someone stripped clothes off someone else.'"[23] The verb means either "strip off" (cf. v. 11; 3.9)[24] or "disarm,"[25] and both meanings fit the context well.[26] Moo argues that in the three times that the *ἀπεκδυ-* word-group is used in Colossians (i.e., 2.11; 2.15; 3.9) "the basic sense of 'taking off [clothes]' has the extended metaphorical sense of 'strip of power.'"[27] So, "by stripping [the clothes] off/disarming the powers, God *made a public display of them*" (ἐδειγμάτισεν ἐν παρρησίᾳ). The only other occurrence of δειγματίζω in the New Testament is in Matthew 1.19 where the idea is also that of "expose to public disgrace." As Harris has noted, if the lexeme already carries the meaning of "expose *publicly,*" then the adjunct ἐν παρρησίᾳ should maybe be rendered "boldly."[28] We could therefore paraphrase verse 15 as follows: "God made a [bold] public display of them [by] stripping [the clothes] off the powers [and by] *leading them in triumphal procession* in Christ on the cross." Here we are faced with

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[20] *Pace* Moo, *Colossians,* 215, who renders ἐν αὐτῷ as "in him," meaning "in Christ" and sees in it a reference to his resurrection and ascension. Moo adduces other Pauline letters in which victory over the powers are associated with Christ's resurrection and ascension (e.g., Eph. 1.20–21; Rom. 1.3–4). In Colossians, however, Christ's headship over the powers is never directly related to his resurrection. In Col. 1.16, Christ's supremacy over the powers is established on the basis of "creation;" later in that passage, the peacemaking of all things, whether on earth or in heaven (thus encompassing the *powers* of v. 16), was wrought on the cross; and in Col. 2.9–10 it is the indwelling of the fulness of the deity in Christ which confers him supremacy over the powers. The emphasis in 2.13–15, as in 1.20, is on the achievements of God in Christ on the cross on behalf of the believers (cf. Col. 2.14).

[21] Cf. Lohse, *Colossians,* 111f; Gnilka, *Kolosserbrief,* 143; Schweizer, *Colossians,* 151; Sumney, *Colossians,* 146; Harris, *Colossians,* 110f; Beale, *Colossians,* 201; Foster, *Colossians,* 275f; *pace* Lightfoot, *Colossians,* 189–91; Moule, *Colossians,* 100–2; for a summary of the options, see Harris, *Colossians,* 110f.

[22] Cf. *BDAG* s.v. "ἀπεκδύομαι," 2; *BDF* §316.1; M. Lattke, "ἐκδύω, ἀπεκδύομαι," *EDNT* 1.409; A. Oepke, "δύω, ἐκδύω, κτλ," *TDNT* 2.318–21; Lohse, *Colossians,* 111f; Harris, *Colossians,* 110f; *pace* Lightfoot, *Colossians,* 188f, with his famous "Nessus robe" analogy; Dunn, *Colossians,* 167; Bruce, *Colossians,* 10–13; Martin, 'Reconciliation and Forgiveness,' 118, n. 30.

[23] Moo, *Colossians,* 213f; cf. references in n. 109.

[24] Cf. *BDAG* s.v. "ἀπεκδύομαι," 1; Lohse, *Colossians,* 111f; Harris, *Colossians,* 110f; Foster, *Colossians,* 275.

[25] Cf. *BDAG* s.v. "ἀπεκδύομαι," 2; McKnight, *Colossians* 251; Pokorný, *Colossians,* 140; Arnold, *Syncretism,* 280.

[26] The former is however favoured by the majority of commentators. But see Moo, *Colossians,* 213f, who takes it to mean "strip off" and, "as an extension of meaning, 'disarmed.'"

[27] Moo, *Colossians,* 214.

[28] Harris, *Colossians,* 111; H. Schlier, *TDNT* 2.31.

yet another rare, and much debated, verb: θριαμβεύω. This is arguably the clearest metaphorical expression evoking a frame from the Roman world in the letter to the Colossians, to which we now turn.

3.3.2 The Roman Triumph

The ancient Roman ceremony of triumph is well-documented in history. However, a precise historical reconstruction is not straightforward for there seemed to be no one rigid procedure. With that in mind, and aware of both the advantages and pitfalls of such generalizations, Mary Beard proposes a helpful sketch of the "order of the ceremony:"

> The triumphal party assembled early in the morning on the Campus Martius (outside the sacred boundary of the city, the *pomerium*), from where the procession set off on a prescribed route that was to lead through the so-called "Triumphal Gate," on past the cheering crowds in the Circus Maximus, through the Forum to culminate on the Capitoline hill.
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> The procession was divided into three parts. The first included the spoils carried on wagons or shoulder-high on portable stretchers *(fercula);* the paintings and models of conquered territory and battles fought; the golden crowns sent by allies or conquered peoples to the victorious general; the animals that were to be sacrificed, trumpeters and dancers; plus the captives in chains, the most important of them directly in front of the general's chariot.
>
> The second part was the group around the general himself. He stood in a special horse-drawn chariot, sometimes expensively decorated with gold and ivory, with a phallos hanging beneath it (to avert the evil eye); his face painted red, he was dressed in an elaborate costume, a laurel crown, an embroidered tunic *(tunica palmata)* and a luxurious toga (originally of purple, *toga purpurea*, later decorated with golden stars, *toga picta*); and in one hand he held an ivory scepter, in the other a branch of laurel. Behind him in the chariot stood a slave, holding a golden crown over his head, and whispering to him throughout the procession, "Look behind you. Remember you are a man." His children went with him, either in the chariot itself if they were small, or on horseback alongside. Behind the chariot came his leading officers and Roman citizens he had freed from slavery, wearing "caps of liberty."
>
> The final part was made up of the victorious soldiers, wearing laurel wreaths and chanting the ritual triumphal cry of "io triumpe," interspersed with those ribald songs about the general himself.
>
> When they reached the foot of the Capitoline, some of the leading captives might have been taken off for execution; the rest of the procession made its way up to the Temple of Jupiter. There the animals were sacrificed to the god and other offerings were made by the general, before feasts were laid on for the senate on the Capitol,

> and elsewhere in the city for soldiers and people. At the end of the day, the (presumably exhausted) general was given a musical escort back home.[29]

While the vast majority of commentators agree that the frame evoked by θριαμβεύω in Colossians 2.15 is the Roman institution of triumph,[30] there is no scholarly consensus on the semantics of the transitive θριαμβεύειν in spite of many a proposal in the history of biblical interpretation, especially with regards to 2 Corinthians 2.14—the only other New Testament occurrence of the verb.[31] Although an analysis of the pragmatics of Paul's language in 2 Corinthians 2.14 does not concern the present work, the lexical analysis produced in its interpretation is relevant for our understanding of Colossians 2.15 inasmuch as both texts display the same syntagmatic relation, namely, θριαμβεύειν followed by a direct object.[32] Christoph Heilig has recently provided what Hafemann refers to as a "careful and definitive lexical and historical study"[33] of the transitive θριαμβεύειν in 2 Corinthians 2.14.[34] He proposes his own definition of the transitive θριαμβεύειν as "to cause sb. or sth. to move (before oneself) in a triumphal procession in order to display sb. or sth. to the watching crowd."[35] Heilig disputes Hafemann's conclusion that the "execution of prisoners" was an element of the semantics of the transitive θριαμβεύειν,[36] and concludes (in regard to 2Cor. 2.14b): "It seems advisable, therefore, to restrict the perception of the watching crowd in Paul's *triumph* metaphor to the humiliation of the captives and not to extend it to their execution."[37] As Heilig has argued, it is not at all clear

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[29] Beard, Mary. *The Roman Triumph* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007) 81f; cf. Plutarch, *Aemilius Paulus,* 32–34; Josephus, *BJ* 7.123–157.

[30] E.g., Foster, *Colossians,* 277; Dunn, *Colossians,* 168; Wilson, *Colossians,* 212f; Sumney, *Colossians,* 147; Martin, *Colossians,* 88; Gnilka, *Kolosserbrief,* 142f; MacDonald, *Colossians,* 104; Wright, *Colossians,* 114; cf. *BDAG* s.v. "θριαμβεύω;" G. Delling, 'θριαμβεύω,' *TDNT* 3.159–60; G. Dautzenberg, "θριαμβεύω," *EDNT* 2.155.

[31] The verb is fairly rare in Hellenistic Greek as well (cf. Heilig, Christoph. *Paul's Triumph: Reassessing 2 Corinthians 2.14 in its Literary and Historical Context* [BTS 27. Leuven: Peeters, 2017] 37–51, for a chronological table of occurrences).

[32] Furthermore, both texts present a similar parallel adjunct in the dative case: ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ (2Cor. 2.14), and ἐν αὐτῷ (Col. 2.15).

[33] Hafemann, Scott. 'Appendix Four: The Meaning of θριαμβεύειν in 2 Corinthians 2:14,' in *Paul: Servant of the New Covenant: Pauline Polarities in Eschatological Perspective* (WUNT 435. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2019) 162–64, at 164.

[34] Heilig, *Paul's Triumph*. For the most recent summary and discussion of the various options on offer, see chapter 2 of Heilig's *Paul's Triumph,* 25–116.

[35] Heilig, *Paul's Triumph*, 99.

[36] Heilig, *Paul's Triumph*, 242–45, 254, and *passim*; cf. Hafemann, Scott. *Suffering and the Spirit: An Exegetical Study of 2 Cor. 2.14–3.3 within the Context of the Corinthian Correspondence* (WUNT 19. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1986) 18–39. Hafemann's thesis has been highly influential since its publication. For a short summary of Hafemann's exegesis of 2Cor. 2.14, see Hafemann, Scott. 'The Comfort and Power of the Gospel: The Argument of 2 Corinthians 1–3,' in *Paul's Message and Ministry in Covenant Perspective* (Eugene: Cascade, 2015) 74–77.

[37] Heilig, *Paul's Triumph*, 254.

that the idea of *execution* of prisoners was an essential part of the rite.[38] Be that as it may, the consensus among these main interpretations is that the frame activated by the metaphorical expression of the transitive θριαμβεύειν is indeed that of the Roman institution of triumph,[39] which "throughout the history of Rome, asserted and reasserted the power of the Roman war machine and the humiliation of the conquered."[40]

To summarise it, Colossians 2.13–15 presents the twofold result of God's work in Christ on the cross on behalf of believers: (1) forgiveness of trespasses, as the means through which believers are made alive with Christ (vv. 13–14), and (2) victory over the "powers" (v. 15). The issue of the *powers* appears to have occupied a prominent position in the "thought-system" of the *philosophy* threatening the Colossians and this was most likely a reflection of the common feeling of *deisidaimonia* so widespread at the time.

Scholars have noticed the importance of *deisidaimonia* to understand the role of the *powers* in the Colossian *philosophy*. Clinton Arnold acknowledges that it was one of the elements in the syncretistic movement afflicting the community in Colossae.[41] He cogently argues that the Colossian *philosophy* represents a combination of Phrygian folk belief/magic (as seen particularly in the emphasis on invoking angels), local folk Judaism (as seen particularly in the dietary and calendrical observances), paganism (such as appears in mystery initiation) and Christianity.[42]

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[38] Beard, *Triumph*, 129f, remarks in regards to the practice of execution that "…the 'facts' are a much more fragile construction than they are usually made to appear. In this case, we find strikingly few examples of captives (more or less) unequivocally claimed to have been executed during the triumphal procession: apart from Simon in Vespasian and Titus' triumph, the list at its most generous comprises only Caius Pontius, leader of the Samnites in 291 BCE, pirate chiefs in 74, Vercingetorix in Caesar's triumph of 46, and Adiatorix and Alexander in Octavian's celebration of 29." Obviously, Josephus' account (and for that matter, the Arch of Titus—early 80s—in Rome) is of little relevance for an analysis of the text of Colossians as it is too late to have been influenced either the author's composition or the readers' reception of the metaphor.
In the case of Colossians, this assessment would be different if we could adduce evidence that either the writer or the readers in first-century Colossae had been somehow exposed to an instance of a triumph in which execution of prisoners was part of the procession, and that they were aware of this specific stage of the ceremony.

[39] To be sure, some scholars have suggested other sources for the θριαμβεύειν metaphor, but their hypotheses are less convincing, either on the basis of their background potential or explanatory potential (cf. Heilig, *Paul's Triumph,* 101–16, 141–43, for references and assessment of these proposals; for an outline of background potential and explanatory potential analyses, see Heilig, *Paul's Triumph,* 6–24; cf. Heilig, *Hidden Criticism,* 21–35).

[40] Beard, *Triumph,* 4.

[41] Arnold, *Syncretism,* 235–37; cf. Schweizer, *Colossians,* 80f; Wolter, *Kolosser,* 86f, who uses the term *Weltangst;* Oster, R. 'Christianity in Asia Minor,' *ABD* 1.945f; Gräbe, P. J. 'Salvation in Colossians and Ephesians,' in *Salvation in the New Testament: Perspectives on Soteriology* (ed. Jan G. van der Watt. NovTSup 12. Leiden: Brill, 2005) 287–304.

[42] Arnold, *Syncretism*, 243f, and *passim*. Arnold has offered one of the most recent, well-documented, explanation of the false teaching in Colossae that best accounts for all the variety of textual data found in the letter to the Colossians. The discussion over the identity of what the author of Colossians deems "philosophy" seems to be still far from settled — one wonders what excavations in the city of Colossae would yield. For the most recent survey of the various theories on offer, see Moo, *Colossians,* 46–60.

Arnold contends that the emphasis of the letter on hostile spiritual *powers* reflects the tendency in the first century folk belief towards *deisidaimonia,* which prompted the practice of magic for apotropaic purposes.[43] He draws attention to an inscription found in the Apollo temple in nearby Hierapolis which contains instructions from the Clarian Apollo as to how the city could appease the wrath of the Earth Goddess who was believed to have caused a deadly plague in the region (c. 162–166 CE).[44] Although this episode is about a century after the composition of Colossians, it reveals the lasting significance of *deisidaimonia* in the religious make-up of Asia Minor.[45] Furthermore, as Oster has proposed, other New Testament documents attest the same background, involved with the issue of *magic,* in the region, such as the Revelation of John, Ephesians (Acts 19), and Galatians.[46]

The repeated affirmations of Christ's superiority over the *powers* (2.9; 1.16), their ultimate defeat on the cross (2.15), and the consequent victory of believers over them by means of their identification with Christ (2.20) as well as the "worship of angels" in 2.18 all point to the Colossians' fear of and/or fascination for them (and even veneration, depending on how one interprets the genitive in 2.18).[47] God's victory in Christ over them in verse 15 is presented through the vivid colours of the Roman "triumph" imagery in which God is cast as the supreme Victor who, having conquered the *powers* in Christ on the cross, *has made a public display of τὰς ἀρχὰς καὶ τὰς ἐξουσίας by stripping [or disarming] them and leading them in triumphal procession in Christ*.[48] As we can see from Beard's description above, a triumph displayed both the glory of the *triumphator* and the humiliation of the captives being paraded.

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[43] Arnold, *Syncretism,* 235–37.

[44] Arnold, *Syncretism,* 129–31; cf. Chaniotis, 'Constructing the Fear of Gods,' 212.

[45] It is reflective of what some scholars call the Age of Anxiety, corresponding to the Antonine age (cf. Dodds, E. R. *Pagan and Christian in an Age of Anxiety: Some Aspects of Religious Experience from Marcus Aurelius to Constantine* [The Wiles Lectures. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965]).

[46] Oster, 'Asia Minor,' 1.946.

[47] The genitive τῶν ἀγγέλων in θρησκείᾳ τῶν ἀγγέλων could be either objective, i.e., "the worshipping angels," so, for instance, BDAG 9b, Lohse, *Colossians,* 118–19, Wolter, *Kolosser,* 146, Moo, *Colossians,* 227, Harris, *Colossians,* 121, or subjective, i.e., "the worship offered by angels," so, for instance, Francis, Fred O. 'Humility and Angelic Worship in Col. 2.18,' in *Conflict at Colossae: A Problem in the Interpretation of Early Christianity Illustrated by Selected Modern Studies* (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1975) 163–195, Dunn, *Colossians,* 180f, Lincoln, *Paradise Now and Not Yet,* 112, Barth and Blanke, *Colossians,* 345, Sappington, *Revelation,* 158f. Cf. Arnold, *Syncretism,* 90–95.

[48] In this structure, ἀπεκδυσάμενος could also have a temporal sense indicating a chronological sequence with ἐδειγμάτισεν, and θριαμβεύσας still understood as an instrumental participle modifying the main verb.

3.3.3 The Perception of the Metaphor: The Function of the Triumph Imagery in Colossians 2.15

As we have noted above, it is clear that the frame evoked by the metaphorical expression of θριαμβεύειν in Colossians 2.15 is the Roman institution of triumph. We need now enquire as to how the metaphor functions within the literary context of Colossians in order to establish its relevance for our interpretation of *peacemaking through blood* within the *pax romana* frame.

Our first step is to highlight the literary unity and continuity in Colossians between the opening and the letter body. It is widely recognised that the opening of Colossians is unusually extensive (1.3–2.5),[49] and that the letter body starts in 2.6 and runs through to 4.6. Colossians 2.6 functions as a "hinge" connecting these two parts of the letter, for it both summarises the content of the opening and sets the tone for what will be said in the body: Ὡς οὖν *παρελάβετε* τὸν Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν τὸν κύριον, ἐν αὐτῷ *περιπατεῖτε*.[50] It marks a change of tone from the indicative in the opening (παρελάβετε) to the imperative in the body (περιπατεῖτε).[51]

Colossians 2.8–15 picks up and elaborates further the message of redemption from chapter 1.12–20 as indicated by the parallels between the two passages, namely:[52] (a) expansion on the theme of forgiveness of sins (1.12 / 2.14); b) similar ποτε… νυνί contrast (1.21 / 2.13—the latter lacks the rhetorical construction ποτε… νυνί, but retains the conceptual contrast);[53] c) courtroom language (1.21–23 / 2.14);[54] d) emphasis on Christ's cross (1.20 / 2.14, 15); e) the emphasis on Christ's headship over the "powers" (1.16, 20; cf. v. 13 / 2.9–10, 15); f) the indwelling of God's fulness in Christ (1.19 / 2.9); g) the overall structure of the christological exposition by means of the emphatic "in him" motif (1.15–20 / 2.9–15); and h) the change from ὑμᾶς to ἡμῖν in 2.13–14 also reflects 1.12–14 where the author identifies himself with the Gentile readers as beneficiaries of the blessings of "forgiveness of sins" and "victory over the powers."[55] So there is much unity and theological continuity between these two parts of the letter.

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[49] E.g., Moo, *Colossians,* 175; Dunn, *Colossians,* 41, 136; McKnight, *Colossians,* 71; White, *Kolosser,* 50–52; Wright, *Colossians,* 44, 96.

[50] Italics added.

[51] This is not to say that there is a rigid division between indicatives (in the opening) and imperatives (in the body). The interplay between indicatives and imperatives is obviously more dynamic than such rigid divisions allow it to be.

[52] Cf. Moo, *Colossians,* 184.

[53] See chapter 6; cf. Lohse, *Colossians* 106.

[54] Cf. Dunn, *Colossians,* 164.

[55] See chapter 6.

Having established that, we are now in a position to assess the function of the "triumph" imagery in Colossians 2.15. One can only conjecture as to how the writer of Colossians came to know about the Roman triumph as well as the points of contact that made him think of it as a suitable metaphor of God's victory over inimical spiritual powers. Perhaps Heilig's suggestion regarding Paul in 2 Corinthians 2.14 also applies to the author of Colossians when he says that "it is very probable that when Paul first heard accounts of the Roman triumph, he recognised conceptual parallels between this institution and his beliefs about God's victory over evil and about his rule."[56] In support of this hypothesis is the fact that Christ's victory over inimical spiritual powers and his cosmic rule are two strong christological emphases of Colossians.

Perhaps more relevant in any analysis of frames is an assessment of which frames a given metaphorical expression could have triggered in the minds of the implied readers. The question here is: how did the first-century readers in Colossae make sense of the metaphorical expression? Although the probability that members of the community in Colossae had ever witnessed a Roman triumph is rather small (they took place almost exclusively in the capital Rome), given the spread of Roman propaganda in Asia Minor it is highly unlikely that they had never heard about a Roman triumph: "…the imagery would not have been at all unusual within the first-century setting in which Paul was writing. There is much to suggest that the idea of a Roman military triumph was well-known within the ancient world and, indeed, had been so for quite a long time."[57] Suetonius, *Claudius,* 17, suggests that governors of the provinces were invited to Rome by the emperor Claudius to "witness the sight" of his triumph ceremony in 44 CE upon his victory over Britain.[58] Furthermore, we have already demonstrated that the Roman ideology was widespread in Asia Minor (chapter 1). Augustus' *Res Gestae* was one piece of evidence adduced in that connection. There, the *princeps* himself boasts about the triumphs granted him by the Senate:

> *Twice I triumphed (ἐθριάμβευσα) on horseback and three times in a chariot, twenty-one times I was hailed as victorious general*; when the senate voted me more triumphs (θριάμβυς), I abstained from them all […] Because of my achievements

[56] Heilig, *Paul's Triumph*, 245.

[57] Kreitzer, Larry J. *Striking New Images: Roman Imperial Coinage and the New Testament World* (JSNTSup 134. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1996) 142; cf. Heilig, *Paul's Triumph,* 126: "It is reasonable to assume that the provinces were informed regularly about recent military success and this could have been reflected in honorary inscriptions and triumphal arches, which were especially impressive demonstrations of military powers." Beard, *Triumph,* 19, writes about how the glory of triumphs were memorialised in the literature by ancient historians, antiquarians, and poets, as well as in architecture and art which "played an important part in fixing the occasions in public consciousness and memory." (cf. Beard, *Triumph,* 44–46).

[58] Heilig, *Paul's Triumph,* 129–36, proposes this particular triumph as the one which influenced Paul in 2Cor. 2.14.

> or those of my deputies, which I successfully accomplished with auspicious omens both by land and by sea, the senate voted fifty-five times that sacrifices ought to be made to the gods. In fact, there were 890 of these days in accordance with senatorial decree. *In my triumphs (θριάμβοις) nine kings or children of kings were led in front of my chariot…*[59]

It is worth recalling that the three extant copies of Augustus' *Res Gestae* are from Asia Minor: Ancyra (both Latin and Greek versions), Apollonia (Greek version), and Pisidian Antioch (Latin version). Furthermore, we know that the temple of Augustus in Pisidian Antioch displayed three triumphal arches celebrating Augustus' triumphs.[60]

In light of all this, I propose that the "triumph" imagery in Colossians 2.15 functions as a rhetorical device employed to expose the utter powerlessness of the *powers* by depicting them as subjugated prisoners led in triumphal procession in Christ on the cross by the victorious God,[61] the military triumphator.[62] That being the case, the Colossians need not fear or/and be fascinated by such helpless *powers,* but are instead invited to participate in the procession as spectators. Triumphs were intended to display the glory of victorious generals. Conversely, they exposed the shame of the vanquished. By exposing the powerlessness of the *powers*, the author removes one of the core foundations of the *philosophy* threatening the community (which was κατὰ τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου, v. 8) thus fatally undermining its entire "thought system" and substantiating the earlier claim that it was a "hollow and deceptive philosophy" (v. 8).[63]

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[59] *Res Gestae* 4 (italics added).

[60] Robinson, David M. 'Roman Sculptures from Colonia Caesarea (Pisidian Antioch),' *The Art Bulletin* 9 (1926) 4–69, at 21. Beard, *Triumph,* 46, remarks: "The important fact is not that such arches regularly commemorated triumphs (though some did), but—in a sense, the other way around—that they used the imagery of triumphal celebrations as part of their own rhetoric of power."

[61] Writing about the humiliation of the those led in triumphal processions, Beard, *Triumph,* 133, says: "…it is not hard to imagine what the victim's experience might have amounted to, as the noisy crowd of spectators took pleasure in feeling that they had at last the upper hand over (in Cicero's words) 'those whom they had feared.'" Cf. Marshall, Peter. 'A Metaphor of Social Shame: ΘΡΙΑΜΒΕΥΕΙΝ in 2 Cor. 2.14,' *NovT* 25 (1983) 302–317, on the element of shame; also Foster, *Colossians,* 276f.

[62] *Pace* Carr, W. *Angels and Principalities: The Background, Meaning and Development of the Pauline Phrase* hai archai kai hai exousiai (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981) 60–66, who argues that τὰς ἀρχὰς καὶ τὰς ἐξουσίας refer to the Christ's heavenly host (therefore not the same as τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου in 2.8, 20, cf. 72–76), Christ's army, who march alongside Christ, the *triumphator,* as the victorious party celebrating a triumph. Carr's interpretation is picked up by Yates, Roy. 'Colossians 2.15: Christ Triumphant,' *NTS* 37 (1991) 573–91. Perhaps the most definitive argument against this view is that the semantic meaning of the transitive θριαμβεύειν does not support it. For a thorough critique of Carr's proposal, see Arnold, Clinton. 'The "Exorcism" of Ephesians 6.12 in Recent Research: A Critique of Wesley Carr's View of the Role of Evil Powers in First-Century AD Belief,' *JSNT* 30 (1987) 71–87. For a succinct critique of Yates' article, see Arnold, *Syncretism,* 282f.

[63] I take the construction διὰ τῆς φιλοσοφίας καὶ κενῆς ἀπάτης as a variation of Sharp's Rule (TSKS): accordingly, NIV: "through hollow and deceptive philosophy" (cf. Robertson, A. T. *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research*, 3th ed. [London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1919] 787).

The "triumph" imagery in Colossians 2.15 is more well developed than in 2 Corinthians 2.14 since it presents God's victory in a more spectacular fashion. The *powers'* humiliation in God's triumphal procession is further elaborated by the imagery of their being "stripped" (or "disarmed"). As we have shown above, the scene of draped and/or disarmed enemies who have been subjugated by the Roman empire was common in Roman propaganda representations such as those found in the reliefs at Aphrodisias[64] and on the Ara Pacis.[65]

Now we are finally in a position to analyse the connection between the metaphorical expression of "triumph" in Colossians 2.15 and that of εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου in Colossians 1.20b. Therefore, in the next section, I answer the following question: what is the rhetorical purpose of the combined imagery of *peacemaking through blood* (Col. 1.20b) and *triumphing over the powers* (Col. 2.20) within the wider literary context of the letter?

3.4 Christ's Peace and God's Triumph on the Cross – Colossians 1.20b and 2.15 in Context

As I said above, my proposal is that the "triumph" imagery in Colossians 2.15 complements the imagery of *cosmic peacemaking through blood* of 1.20b in such a way that, when they are read together—that is, within the rhetoric of Colossians—the Roman concept of "imposed peace," or "pacification by submission," is brought to bear on the concept of εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου in Colossians 1.20.

To be sure, the deduction that Colossians 2.15 somewhat complements the idea of cosmic reconciliation in Colossians 1.20 is not new. Connecting both texts, F. F. Bruce proposed that the reconciling act of Colossians 1.20 applies differently to human beings and to the evil spiritual powers:[66] "reconciliation applied to them [the *powers*] means more of what is understood as pacification, the imposing of peace, something brought about by conquest. There is thus a close association between the portrayal of Christ as Reconciler in the Christ hymn and the portrayal

[64] For instance, the reliefs of Claudius submitting Britannia (chapter 1, *fig.* 4) and Nero submitting Armenia (chapter 1, *fig.* 5).
[65] Roma (possibly) sitting on a pile of weapons taken from enemies defeated in war (chapter 1, *fig.* 2).
[66] *Pace* Wink, W. *Engaging the Powers: Discernment and Resistance in a World of Domination* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992) 73–85, esp. 82, who argues for the redemption of the *powers*; cf. Wink, *Naming,* 54f.

of Christ as Conqueror elsewhere in the letter."[67] Bruce's insight is correct, and he seems to have arrived at it on theological (logical) grounds. His logic seems to be something along the following lines: in light of Paul's general teaching on the subject, "reconciliation" cannot mean the same thing (i.e., salvation) both for humans (Col. 1.21–23) and for hostile spiritual powers (as per Origen);[68] Paul has elsewhere written about the saving work of Christ as denuding the hostile spiritual powers (Gal. 4.9);[69] Colossians 2.15 depicts them as being 'compelled to submit;'[70] therefore "peacemaking" towards the hostile spiritual powers in Colossians 1.20 must mean "pacification/subjugation."

Bruce's insight would have been strengthened had he discussed the relevance of the Roman frame of *pax romana*[71] in which the concept of "peace as pacification" is already present.[72] In all fairness, the focus of his analysis is on the semantics of ἀποκαταλλάξαι in verse 20a, rather than on εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου.[73] I intend to further Bruce's conclusion by proposing a stronger textual basis for it on the analysis of metaphors and frame semantics, according to which the "triumph" imagery in Colossians 2.15 follows and combines with the metaphorical phrase εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου (Col. 1.20b) to amplify the idea of God as a military *triumphator* establishing cosmic peace by both pardoning human individuals (Col. 1.21–23) and "destroying" hostile enemies (Col. 2.15).[74] Since εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου has the potential to activate the *pax romana* frame, which contains the element of "pacification by subjugation," it is not surprising that the author employed another Roman imagery to elaborate on the meaning of the reconciling act/peacemaking towards the *powers* in Colossians 2.15.[75]

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[67] Bruce, F. F. 'Colossian Problems 4: Christ as Conqueror and Reconciler,' *BibSac* 141 (Jan. 1984) 291–302, at 393.

[68] Bruce, *Colossians,* 75; Bruce, 'Christ Hymn,' 109.

[69] Bruce, 'Christ Hymn,' 109, n. 21. He is here building on Percy, E. *Die Probleme der Kolosser – und Epheserbriefe* (Skrifter Utgivna av Kungl. Humanistika Vetenskapssamfundet. Lund: C. W. K. Gleerup, 1946) 95.

[70] Idem.

[71] Or perhaps "unpacked" it, as Bruce seems to imply the frame when he writes about "pacification, the imposing of peace, something brought about by conquest."

[72] It is not clear from where he gets the idea of peace as *pacification* in "[t]his reconciliation of the universe includes what would otherwise be distinguished as pacification." (Bruce, *Colossians,* 76). Cf. Sumney, *Colossians,* 77f; Foster, *Colossians,* 198.

[73] Cf. Bruce, *Colossians,* 74–76.

[74] *Res Gestae* 2.2: "...those whom I could safely pardon, I preferred to preserve than to destroy." Augustus' claim reflects Virgil, *Aeneid*, 6.851–53: "you, Roman, make it your task to rule the world (be these your arts), *to impose the custom of peace*, to spare the vanquished and to crush the proud."

[75] This is close to Maier, *Picturing,* 68–71. However, Maier seems to press his imperial reading a little too hard when he says that "[a]t the heart of the letter is a theology that makes the death of Jesus a military victory over cosmic powers, through which they have been pacified and reconciled" […] "Triumph is the major key in which Paul composes his letter and the benefits of Christ's triumphal rule are the spoils the apostles

In such a framework, the interpretation of Colossians 1.20b and 2.15 could be presented as follows. Whereas on one hand *peacemaking through blood* (Col. 1.20b) means redemption for human beings who respond positively to the message of "the gospel" (1.21–23), on the other hand, as far as the powers are concerned, it means "pacification by subjugation."[76] On the cross, believers have their hostility towards God transformed into friendship; their sins are forgiven, and they are rescued from the kingdom of darkness. By the same act, the very same *powers* from whose kingdom believers have been liberated, are "disarmed," exposed to public shame, and led in triumphal procession by God in Christ (v. 15).

Commenting on Colossians 1.20b, James Dunn observes that the phrase "εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου" is almost a tautology in light of Colossians 1.20a.[77] He goes on to acknowledge that the phrase, however, "adds the richness of the Jewish concept of 'peace.'"[78] Most importantly, he suggests (a unique proposal as far as commentaries I have surveyed are concerned) that the combination of "blood" and "cross" here evokes imagery of war in which blood stands for "blood of battle." It is worth quoting him in full:

> …the combination of the elements ("blood" and "cross") and the present context put them at some remove from the more characteristic Pauline usage: the "blood" of

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promises his audience" (*Picturing,* 68) and, "[t]he reconciliation Colossians describes comes about through subjugation." (*Picturing,* 70). This seems not to be the case in Colossians, where God's reconciling act only means "subjugation" in relation to the *powers*. The most fundamental weakness in Maier's interpretation is perhaps that he assumes a strict parallel between Colossians and the Graeco-Roman understanding of earthly concord dependent on heavenly concord (*pax deorum* as the necessary condition for *pax romana*). With such assumption, he concludes that "Colossians deployed it [the Roman perspective] to show how the pacification of principalities and powers by the incarnate Son, Jesus, brought about a whole new order of peace and concord in his body the church." (*Picturing,* 70; cf. 71–82). But this is unwarranted. Despite resonances with the Roman perspective, cosmic reconciliation in Colossians does not seem to be modelled after the Roman *pax deorum*/*pax romana* pattern since in the former the pacification of the *powers* is but one aspect of reconciliation. In summary, we detect the following aspects of reconciliation in Colossians:

1. Reconciliation vis-à-vis Humankind = *friendship restored*
2. Reconciliation vis-à-vis the Powers
   a) Between the Powers and God = *subjugation*
   b) Between the Powers and believers = *powerlessness* (believers have been forgiven)

The peace of which Colossians speaks has indeed two dimensions: it is a divine (vertical) peace (Col. 1.21–23) whose outworking is social (horizontal) peace (Col. 3.5–4.6). But the problem of sin, rather than the *powers,* is the primary issue with which Christ's cross deals (cf. Martin, *Colossians,* 125f). Once the problem of sin is dealt with, "social harmony" is made possible (Col. 3.5–4.6). So much so that the emphasis of Col. 1.12–23 lies on the reconciliation (not pacification, like Maier suggests) of believers to God (vv. 21–23). Accordingly, the paraenetic section of Colossians (3.1–4.6) is developed from the perspective of the believers' rescuing from their state of sinfulness and their consequent pursue of a life of purity which is the outworking of their being redeemed (e.g., lists of vices believers should "put to death" in 3.5 [because of which the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience, v. 6], 8; and the list of virtues in 3.12). Maier misses altogether the cause-and-effect relationship between the "forgiveness of sins" and "victory of the powers" which, as we showed above, is already present in Col. 1.13–14 and later paralleled in 2.13–15.

[76] Bruce, 'Conqueror and Reconciler,' 392.

[77] Dunn, *Colossians,* 103.

[78] Idem.

> Christ in Paul more naturally evokes the thought of his death as a bloody sacrifice (Rom. 3.25; 1Cor. 11.25; and cf. Eph. 2.13–18 with Heb. 10.19), whereas here the imagery of warfare and triumph (2.15) suggests rather the blood of battle. And in Paul the "cross" usually evokes thought of shame and embarrassment because of the shamefulness of death on a cross (1Cor. 1.17–18; Gal. 5.11; 6.12; Phil. 2.8; cf. Heb. 12.2), whereas here it is itself an instrument of warfare by which peace is achieved (see on 2.14–15).[79]

Although Dunn points us to his commentary on Colossians 2.14–15, he does not unpack the idea of "blood of battle" in either passage, nor explore *pax romana* as a viable frame either. I would like to develop his insight further by adding that εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου in Colossians 1.20b not only brings in the Jewish concept of peace, but it is in fact key to the Colossians message of cosmic reconciliation since it already includes in its frame the concept of "pacification by subjugation" (later applied to the *powers* in Col. 2.15). The verb ἀποκαταλλάσσω in Colossians 1.20a would have sufficed had the author wanted to convey solely an idea of reparation of a broken relationship between God and hostile parties, human and spiritual alike (cf. Rom. 5.1–11, 2Cor. 5.11–21, and Eph. 2.11–22). However, such was not the case. It is probable that in order to avoid misunderstandings regarding the nature of the reconciliation of "all things" (τὰ πάντα) with respect to hostile spiritual powers, he elaborates on Colossians 1.20a by adding εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου (Col 1.20b), thus opening up the possibility of new frames of thought to bear on the act of reconciliation.[80] Again, "peace imposed" (by force), or "pacification by subjugation," was an element of the *pax romana* frame, so, the addition of εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου (Col. 1.20b) opens up the possibility for the element of "pacification by subjugation" regarding the *powers* (τὰ πάντα, involving the *powers* in Col. 1.16 and 20c) might be triggered in the readers' minds. The reconciling act is thus linked to Colossians 2.15 both conceptually and linguistically through the *pax romana* frame. The combined reading of Colossians 1.20 and 2.15 is explicitly suggested by the pivotal role of Christ's "cross" in both passages.

In summary, εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ adds a singular nuance to the concept of reconciliation found both in the earlier Pauline letters (Rom. 5.1–11 and 2Cor. 5.11–21) and in Eph. 2.11–22. In the undisputed letters (Romans and 2 Corinthians), καταλλάσσω has to do with restoring the God-human relationship previously damaged by sin. It is not cosmic

[79] Dunn, *Colossians,* 103f.
[80] Cf. Martin, *Reconciliation,* 121f.

in scope as the object of the reconciling verb is human individuals only. As for the disputed letters, the emphasis of the reconciliation metaphor in Ephesians lies on social ethnic reconciliation, namely, the reconciliation between Jews and Gentiles who, having been made one new humanity in Christ, are brought into a new standing before God (cf. Eph. 2.15–18).[81] On the other hand, and uniquely, the object of the reconciling act in Colossians is τὰ πάντα (Col. 1.20a), which points to its cosmic scope (in the context of 1.15–20, it clearly involves both human beings and evil spiritual powers). In order to prepare the way for his explanation of how reconciliation affects the *powers* (Col. 2.13–15), the author adds a second metaphorical expression, namely, εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου thus expanding the idea of reconciliation to include that of "pacification through subjugation," which is picked up later when he addresses directly the issue of the *powers* in the polemical section (Col. 2.8–23).

3.5 The Transforming Power of the Metaphor

In the introduction of this thesis, I proposed that the readers might have begun their comprehension of the message of εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου in Colossians 1.20b by contrasting the common threads of those frames known to them with how the concept of *peacemaking through blood* in Colossians is presented as it is informed and shaped by the Christ event. The version of the message presented by Colossians is one that challenges the cultural and theological expectations which the audience had concerning *peacemaking through blood*. The impact of Colossians' christological configuration of the concept of *peacemaking through blood* lies precisely in the incongruity between its message and the familiar frames known to the hearers. In light of that, we now enquire into how the readers' perception of reality might have been challenged by the combined imagery of *peacemaking through blood* and "triumph" in Colossians. In what follows I propose three ways in which the author's metaphorical language challenges their perception of reality.

3.5.1 The Perception of the *Powers*: The Irony of Spiritual *Powers* Being Made Captives

In assessing the impact of the combined metaphorical expressions of *peacemaking through blood* in Colossians 1.20b and "triumph" in Colossians 2.15, we need to try and identify which

[81] To be sure Ephesians does display a somewhat similar emphasis with regard to the "recapitulation" of all things in Christ (Eph 1.10). However, the metaphor there is different: ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι.

frame elements are mapped onto the *Christ-on-the-cross* frame. Of course, we are now dealing with a more subjective, interpretative, aspect of our study. The language of Colossians 2.15 points to the following frame elements of the "triumph" frame:

(1) A *triumphator*: God

(2) Prisoners being paraded: the *powers*

(3) The place (stage) where the "triumph" takes place: in Christ (on the cross)

(4) Spectators are also implied: perhaps the "entire world" where the gospel is preached (Col. 1.23)

As already observed, the metaphor functions as a rhetorically powerful device to present the utter powerlessness of the *powers* by depicting them as humiliated prisoners being led in triumphal procession in Christ on the cross by the victorious God. The primary function of triumphs, however, was to display the glory of the *triumphator*. So here we have God's glorious superiority on display in his subjecting the *powers*. It is significant that the place of God's triumph in Christ is the "cross." The ultimate Roman instrument of shame, on which the rulers of this world exposed the Lord Jesus to a humiliating death, has been ironically co-opted by God to become the very stage where he parades the captive *powers* before the eyes of the world—for the gospel of the cross has been proclaimed "in all creation under heaven" (Col. 1.23). The metaphor invites the readers to identify themselves with the spectators. The humiliating defeat of the *powers* is thus made visible to a much larger crowd of spectators than that of all the Roman triumphs combined.[82]

This is a dramatic irony to those familiar with the Roman perspective on *pax deorum* as a necessary condition for *pax romana*. As noted in the previous chapter, for the Romans, social and political "peace" was closely connected with the *pax deorum*. Caesar Augustus believed that in order to secure the pacification of the entire world, he needed to secure the favour of the gods first. As the *princeps* (and later *pontifex maximus*) he saw himself as the restorer of the *pax deorum*, thus the "bringer of peace." In Catullus' poem (68.75–76), the ultimate reason for Protesilaus' death on the shore of Troy was the couple's failure to offer sacred blood in order to appease the lords of heaven. Colossians, however, adds a twist to such a thought system by implying that those heavenly beings from which the Romans sought favour in keeping the *pax*

[82] Wherever the gospel of the triumphant God is proclaimed (cf. Col. 1.23; also 1.5–6).

deorum, and by appeasing them when they incurred their wrath, are now themselves subjugated by a triumphator more powerful than any Roman general. In Christ, God is the supreme bringer of cosmic peace, Lord and saviour of the world. Peace has been achieved (and imposed) through the blood of Christ's cross (Col. 1.20b and 2.15). Contrary to appearances, the reality unveiled by the triumph imagery is that the one thought to be triumphed over (on the cross) was in reality the supreme *triumphator*.

Somewhat resonating with the Roman scheme of *pax deorum* leading to *pax romana*, the peace of Christ in Colossians also has two dimensions: it is a divine (vertical) peace (Col.1.20–23) whose outworking is social (horizontal) peace (Col. 3.1–4.6). However, cosmic peace is not secured by the appeasement of frightening and capricious Roman gods, but by the offering of Christ's blood on the cross (Col. 1.20b): the very stage where the *powers* thought they had decisively conquered the son whom God loves is in reality the *via* through which they are paraded in God's triumphal procession. Christ's blood is offered voluntarily as a compensation to God in order to secure the reconciliation of "all things."

3.5.2 The Perception of Themselves: From Captives to Conquerors

Perhaps the irony can be pressed a little further. In the beginning of his polemical section, the author of Colossians warns the readers against being "carried off as booty or as captive of war"[83] (συλαγωγέω) by the *philosophy*. The metaphor is also from the military world, and it conveys the idea that the *philosophy* can indeed deceive believers in Colossae and exert control over them as one would over slaves. The "language suggests the picture of prisoners being carried off with a rope around their necks, like the long strings of captives portrayed on Assyrian monuments. Such spectacles were a common occurrence when Roman armies returned from successful military expeditions."[84] So, in Colossians 2.15 the readers are informed that instead of picturing themselves as "captives" of such a "hollow and deceptive philosophy," which was κατὰ τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου, verse 8,[85] in Christ they should see themselves as

[83] *Louw-Nida* s.v. "συλαγωγέω;" cf. *BDAG* s.v. "συλαγωγέω;" *LSJ* s.v. "συλαγωγέω."
[84] M. Silva, "συλάω, συλαγωγέω," *NIDNTTE* 4.395.
[85] Col. 2.8–15 does not give us direct information about the *philosophy* (cf. Col. 2.16–23), rather it contains the author's response to it. In a chiastic arrangement, vv. 9–15 develops the οὐ κατὰ Χριστόν of v. 8 (the κατὰ τὴν παράδοσιν τῶν ἀνθρώπων, κατὰ τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου is develop in vv. 16–23). Col. 2.9–15 is framed by a double *inclusio* formed by ἐν αὐτῷ (vv. 9a and 15b) and ἀρχῆς καὶ ἐξουσίας (vv. 10b and 15a). It comprises the author's response to the threats posed by the *philosophy,* which is essentially christological, i.e., Christ's supremacy over the spiritual powers (vv. 9–10, 15) and his sufficiency for the believers' spiritual needs (vv. 11, 12).

spectators watching (in amazement and mockery perhaps) those very *powers* being paraded as captives in God's cosmic triumph in Christ. The *philosophy* has thus been decisively exposed for what it really was: hollow and deceptive.

Therefore, the believers' perception is switched from one of captives to one of spectators watching their once menacing spiritual rulers being led in triumphal procession. Furthermore, on account of their identification with Christ, believers share in God's victory over them and stand not only as spectators in God's triumph, but also as conquerors. The all-encompassing peace achieved on Christ's cross both secured the restoration of believers' relationship with God and the pacification of hostile spiritual beings that threatened them and their relationship with God in Christ.

3.5.3 The Perception of the Bringer of Peace: No Violence Towards Human Enemies

As the analysis in the previous chapter has highlighted, at the heart of the Roman concept of peace lay the idea of pacification by military victory. *Pax romana* thus was essentially *peace-making through violence*—towards their enemies.

When the community at Colossae heard Colossians 1.20b that God had reconciled "all things" by *making peace through the blood of Christ's cross,* the *pax romana* frame, with its key element of *peacemaking through violence,* could have been easily triggered in their minds. They were familiar with the Roman ruthless policy of "crushing" and subjugating defiant enemies. However, the message of Colossians 1.20 certainly subverts all they know from the Roman imperial perspective, for it says that God reconciled erstwhile enemies by εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου. By adding that God's reconciling act towards enemies was made by shedding the blood *not* of his enemies, but the blood of his very own Son, whom he loves (Col. 1.13), the author of Colossians radically subverts the expectations of raders who would have more naturally expected God's enemies (Col. 1.21; 3.6) to be "crushed." Admittedly, the idea of a "violent peace" is still present in the "Christianised" version of the frame in Colossians, for there is still "blood," and blood shed on a cross, no less. However, in God's comic peacemaking programme, he himself is the one whom, despite being Lord of all creation (Col. 1.15–17), suffers the blow in the person of his Son at the crucifixion. In other words, the violence which God's enemies were expected to bear, he took upon himself in Christ on the

cross. Through God's initiative, they have now been incorporated into God's kingdom not by force but, in a word, by "grace" (cf. Col. 1.6; see vv. 1–6).

However, it is also true that there is violence towards someone other than God himself in Colossians. When the motif of redemption is picked up later in the letter (Col. 2.13–15), the readers are given another piece of the jigsaw which enables them to visualise the full picture. It becomes clearer to them that there is indeed an element of "divine violence" which God, the cosmic bringer of peace, inflicts on his conquered enemies. Nevertheless, this element of God's cosmic peacemaking is reserved for the evil spiritual powers only, who are pacified and subjugated in Christ on the cross (Col. 1.20 and 2.15).

3.6 Conclusion

The goal of this chapter was to examine how the *pax romana* frame affects the reading of εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου in Colossians 1.20b and how it challenges the perception of reality of the first-century Asia Minor readers.

In the first part, I argued that the cumulative weight of metaphorical language possibly evoking frames from the Roman world in Colossians corroborates the potential activation of the *pax romana* frame being activated by the idea of *peacemaking through blood* in Colossians 1.20. I concluded this section by proposing that the "triumph" imagery in Colossians 2.15 provides us with the clearest Roman frame in the letter.

Secondly, I argued that the Roman "triumph" imagery in Colossians 2.15 functions as a rhetorical device employed by the author to expose the pacification of τὰς ἀρχὰς καὶ τὰς ἐξουσίας who are depicted as humiliated prisoners being led in triumphal procession by God in Christ.

Finally, I argued for a conceptual and linguistic connection between Colossians 1.20 and Colossians 2.15 based on conceptual metaphor theory and frame semantics, contending that the metaphorical expression of "triumph" in Colossians 2.15 complements the imagery of *cosmic peacemaking through blood* of 1.20b in such a way that when they are read together—that is, within the rhetoric of Colossians—the Roman concept of "imposed peace," or "pacification by submission," is brought to bear on the concept of εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου in Colossians 1.20 and is subverted in the process. My concluding proposal

is that the combined imagery of Colossians 1.20b and 2.15 could have challenged the readers' perception of reality regarding the standing of the *powers* vis-à-vis God (they are subjugated captives), the believers' own standing (they are conquerors, not captives), and God as the bringer of peace (who makes peace by suffering violence himself rather than imposing it on human beings).

Part 2:

The Jewish Frame

Chapter 4: *Rîb*-Controversy as a Viable Jewish Frame

4.1 Introduction

The burden of this thesis is that the metaphorical expression "εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου" in Colossians 1.20b had the potential to evoke frames from both the Graeco-Roman conceptual world and the Jewish one. When the audience in first-century Asia Minor, comprised of both Gentiles and Jews, heard the metaphorical expression εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου it evoked a number of such frames, or scenarios, which enabled them to understand its meaning. In order to grasp the full significance of the *peacemaking through blood* concept in Colossians 1.20b, we need to investigate which frames could have been activated by the writer's metaphors as he communicates his own theological teaching. Having examined the *peacemaking through blood* metaphor in Colossians 1.20b against the *pax romana* frame in the first part of this thesis, in the next three chapters I examine Colossians 1.20b against the *rîb*-controversy frame, a key element of the Jewish thought system which, I argue, is evoked by the language of reconciliation.

The key question we seek to answer in the next three chapters is the following: what frames could have been triggered in the mind of a Jewish reader steeped in the Old Testament by the metaphorical language of reconciliation and peacemaking by human bloodshed in Colossians 1.20? My hypothesis is that the reconciliation language (Col. 1.20a) had the potential to activate the *rîb*-pattern frame while peacemaking through human bloodshed (Col. 1.20b) could have evoked the offering of the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 52.13–53.12 (hereafter Isaiah 53)—a passage located in the midst of *rîb*-passages in Deutero-Isaiah. Closely connected with the Isaiah 53 frame is the Maccabean martyrology frame which stands as another potential frame for the Jewish conceptualisation of *peacemaking through blood* in Colossians 1.20b.

In this chapter I outline the main elements of the *rîb*-pattern by briefly summarising Pietro Bovati's robust analysis of legal procedures in the Old Testament,[1] paying particular attention to his chapter on "reconciliation," in order to present the Jewish background for the understanding of reconciliation within the legal semantic frame of divine controversy and, more

[1] Bovati, Pietro S. J. *Re-establishing Justice: Legal Terms, Concepts and Procedures in the Hebrew Bible* (trans. Michael J. Smith. JSOTSup 105. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1994).

specifically, for the understanding of "εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου" in Colossians 1.20b. Secondly, I argue that the Old Testament prophetic *rîb*-pattern is a "conceptual frame" widely reflected in the Old Testament to conceptualise the relationship between God and Israel, the disruption of this relationship, and its restoration.

It is my contention that understanding the reconciliation language within such a framework will provide a fresh way of understanding how the Jewish side of the audience in Colossae might have interpreted the connections between the metaphorical expressions of reconciliation and *peacemaking through human bloodshed* in Colossians 1.20.

4.2 *Rîb*-controversy in the Old Testament

In this section, I summarise Pietro Bovati's robust analysis of legal procedures in the Old Testament,[2] paying particular attention to his chapter on reconciliation. This summary aims to provide a framework of the proposed background against which to understand the message of *reconciliation/peacemaking through blood* in Colossians—the main elements of the Old Testament *rîb*-pattern—in order to provide linguistic and conceptual evidence for the element of reconciliation within the *rîb*-pattern frame.

Pietro Bovati carefully examines the legal procedures and vocabulary in the practice of justice in ancient Israel. Based on his analysis of the biblical Hebrew text, he suggests a fundamental twofold structure of Israel's legal procedures: a controversy involving two parties (the subject of the first part of his book); and the legal judgement *per se,* where a third party adjudicates the case (the subject of the second part of the book), or simply "bilateral" and "trilateral" contentions.[3]

[2] Bovati, *Re-establishing Justice*.

[3] To use Christian Stettler's nomenclature (Stettler, Christian. *Das letzte Gericht: Studien zur Endgerichtserwartung von den Schriftpropheten bis Jesus* [WUNT 2/299. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011] 33); also Prothro, James B. *Both Judge and Justifier: Biblical Legal Language and the Act of Justifying in Paul* (WUNT 2/461. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2018), who uses the expressions "bilateral contention" and "trilateral contention" extensively.

4.2.1 Quotidian Contentions

A controversy is a dispute between two parties over a perceived wrong on questions of law.[4] The Hebrew root ריב ("strive," "contend;" "dispute;" usually conveyed into Greek by the κριν-language) is the most commonly associated with controversy,[5] used both in cases where *rîb* is directed against someone or a group (an action "against" another party) and on behalf of another party ("to take over a case for [someone]," or "to defend").[6] However, controversies are represented by a range of other roots (e.g., שׁפט, יכח, קצף).[7]

Before a contention takes place, both parties enjoy a state of peaceable understanding between themselves. Then something happens to disturb their relationship, causing the offended party to launch an accusation against the other. The controversy begins when the claimant (the offended party) raises an accusation against the defendant (the accused party).[8] The offender is thereby required to admit guilt and acknowledge the other to be in the right. The parties can resort to witnesses/arbiters whose role is to back up their respective party's claims by declaring him or her to be in the right, as well as shaming the other party.[9] The defendant might respond to the accusation in one of two ways: (1) he or she can admit to being in the wrong,[10] in which case the controversy can be quickly resolved; in such cases, the accused is expected to confess the wrongdoing and, occasionally, make appropriate reparations,[11] to which the injured party might respond by granting pardon, resulting in the renewing of their relationship. If, however, pardon is withheld, the case might either be taken to a tribunal that will declare who is in the right and who is the wrong, or end up in physical clash/war; (2) the defendant might also refuse to acknowledge any wrongdoing,[12] in which case the controversy drags on. Bovati points out that the conclusion of a controversy is only reached "when there is agreement in a statement

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[4] Bovati, *Re-establishing Justice*, 30.
[5] Prothro, *Both Judge and Justifier*, 46; cf. Bovati, *Re-establishing Justice*, 39–61.
[6] Bovati, *Re-establishing Justice,* 39–42; examples of the former are Gen. 26.20; Exod. 17.2; Num. 20.13; Job 33.13; Ps. 35.1; Isa. 45.9; Jer. 2.9; examples of the latter are Deut. 33.7; Job 13.8; Ps. 43.1; Jer. 50.34; 51.36; Mic. 7.9.
[7] Bovati, *Re-establishing Justice,* 39–49, cf. 172; cf. Limburg, James. 'The Root ריב and the Prophetic Lawsuit Speeches,' *JBL* 88 (1969) 291–304.
[8] E.g., Gen. 44.5–6; Exod. 5.15–16; Judg. 2.2; 2Sam. 12.9. See Bovati, *Re-establishing Justice,* 62–71.
[9] Bovati, *Re-establishing Justice,* 80–83.
[10] E.g., 2Sam. 12.1–13; Ezra 10.10–11 (Ezra's word to the people reveals the quickest way to resolve the conflict); LXX Ps. 50.5–6 (for discussion and further bibliography on LXX Ps. 50 within the *rîb*-pattern, see Prothro, *Both Judge and Justifier,* 82–85).
[11] E.g., Gen. 20.14–16; 21.27; 32.21; 43.11; 1Sam. 25.27; cf. Job 33.24; Prov. 21.14; cf. Bovati, *Re-establishing Justice,* 137–39.
[12] E.g., Job 34.5–6; see Bovati, *Re-establishing Justice,* 113–17.

that defines justice in accordance with truth."[13] In seeking such agreement, a bilateral contention may end in one of three ways: recourse to tribunal, physical clash, or reconciliation.[14]

The episode between Jacob and Laban in Genesis 31 is a good example of a *rîb*-controversy:[15] the plaintiff is Laban who presents an "accusation" in the form of a question against Jacob, the defendant (vv. 26–28; 30). Jacob is accused of a double "theft" (גנב, vv. 26, 30) taking Laban's daughters away from him and stealing his gods, based on which Laban claims to have the right to punish him (v. 29a). Being unaware of his wife Rachel's misdeed, Jacob pleads innocence (vv. 31–32),[16] and calls for witnesses/arbitrators to attend to the evidence which Laban should produce (v. 32). As Laban fails to produce hard evidence (vv. 33–35), Jacob becomes "angry" and puts forward his "defence" by presenting a counter-claim (v. 36a: he "contended" with Laban: ריב/μάχομαι), also in the form of questions: "what is my transgression?" (פשׁע/ἀδίκημα) and "what is my sin?" (חטאת/ἁμάρτημα) (v. 36b). Based on past events (vv. 38–41), Jacob considers himself innocent, while Laban's silence functions as an admission of the facts presented in Jacob's defence.[17] The *rîb* between them is concluded by the stipulation of a peace covenant (vv. 44–54) in which God is called for both as a "witness" (v. 50) and as a "judge." (v. 53).

If the parties involved in the dispute fail to resolve it among themselves, "the contention is put before an official or sovereign external to the dispute ("judge")—whether the paterfamilias, elders at the gate, the king—to whom a controversy has been submitted."[18] This is now a trilateral controversy. As Bovati argues, taking the case up to a judge means that at least one of the parties refuses to acknowledge guilt.[19]

For the purposes of my study, the most important difference between bilateral controversies and trilateral ones is that whereas the ideal goal of a bilateral contention is ultimately the restoration of a broken relationship, that is, reconciliation—the controversy ends by way of forgiveness—the aim of a trilateral contention is not primarily the reconciliation of the litigants,

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[13] Bovati, *Re-establishing Justice*, 120f.
[14] Bovati, *Re-establishing Justice,* 121–23. See more on "reconciliation" in *rîb* controversies below.
[15] Esp. vv. 25–54; cf. Prothro, *Both Judge and Justifier,* 48f. See discussion of the text in Mabee, C. 'Jacob and Laban: The Structure of Judicial Proceedings (Genesis XXXI 25–42),' *VT* 30 (1980) 192–207. Cf. Bovati, *Re-establishing Justice,* 73, n. 18.
[16] Jacob elaborates on his *justification* of the first accusation in vv. 38–41.
[17] Mabee, 'Jacob and Laban,' 202f.
[18] Prothro, *Both Judge and Justifier*, 53; cf. Bovati, *Re-establishing Justice*, 176–84, 217–21, and *passim*.
[19] Bovati, *Re-establishing Justice*, 120f.

but the restoration of the order in the community by punishing the guilty—the controversy ends by sentencing the guilty.[20]

4.2.2 Divine Bilateral Contention

Both structures (bilateral and trilateral) are used to conceptualise the relationship between God and humankind. In bilateral theologised controversies, God has a case against Israel,[21] Gentiles nations (cf. Deutero-Isaiah[22]), or against individuals (e.g., Job[23]). This has been well-analysed in Biblical Studies in what has come to be known as the "prophetic *rîb*-pattern" or "covenant lawsuit," where God stands as a claimant, and sometimes a defendant, against Israel, Gentile nations, or an individual.[24] The dynamic of covenant lawsuit imagery is similar to that of quotidian ones, as Prothro summarises:

> Theological bilateral contentions generally present God as claimant and accuser, occasionally as defendant. The dynamics are basically the same as in quotidian contentions: the claimant brings a charge and demands restitution; claimant and defendant square off over the tort and summon friends or witnesses to their side, aiming at resolution. The primary difference between quotidian and theological bilateral

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[20] Bovati, *Re-establishing Justice*, 170, and *passim*; Prothro, *Both Judge and Justifier,* 55. However, see Köhler who speaks of the purpose of the legal assembly at the gate when adjudicating between two members of the community as the "organization for reconciliation" (Köhler, Ludwig. *Hebrew Man: Lectures Delivered at the Invitation of the University of Tübingen December 1–16, 1952, with an Appendix on Justice in the Gate* [trans. Peter R. Ackroyd. London: SCM, 1956] 156).

Examples of this *trilateral* scenario include Deut. 25.1–2; 2Sam. 15.2–4; 2Chr. 19.5–7. For a thorough analysis of the *trilateral* controversy, see Part 2 of Bovati, *Re-establishing Justice,* 167–387; cf. Prothro, *Both Judge and Justifier,* 53–56.

[21] Unless when analysing texts that specifically deal with either the northern or the southern kingdom, I will use "Israel" to refer to both.

[22] Cf. analysis of Deutero-Isaiah below.

[23] The book of Job constitutes "the most extended and profound view of the divine courtroom in the Hebrew Bible" (Kensky, Meira Z. *Trying Man, Trying God: The Divine Courtroom in Early Jewish and Christian Literature* [WUNT 2/289. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010] 39, cf. 39–59; cf. Newsom, Carol A. 'The Invention of the Divine Courtroom in the Book of Job,' in *The Divine Courtroom in Comparative Perspective* [eds. Ari Mermelstein and Shalom E. Holtz. BibInt 132. Leiden: Brill, 2015] 246–59; Gemser, B. 'The *Rîb*- or Controversy-Pattern in Hebrew Mentality,' in *Wisdom in Israel and in the Ancient Near East* [eds. Martin Noth and D. Winton Thomas. VTSup 3. Leiden: Brill, 1955] 135).

[24] Except when discussing academic nuances of specific scholars, I will use "prophetic *rîb*-pattern," "covenant lawsuit," and "divine courtroom" (adjectively) interchangeably.

For bibliographies and discussion, see Nielsen, Kirsten. *Yahweh as Prosecutor and Judge: An Investigation of the Prophetic Lawsuit (Rîb-Pattern)* (trans. Frederick Cryer. JSOTSup 9. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1978) 63–66; Kensky, *Trying Man, Trying God,* 29–31; Schoors, Anton. *I am God Your Saviour: A Form-Critical Study of the Main Genres in Is. XL–LV* (VTSup 24. Leiden: Brill, 1973) 176–89; Harvey, Julien. 'Le "rîb-pattern," réquisitoire prophétique sur la rupture de l'alliance,' *Bib* 43 (1962) 172–96; Prothro, *Both Judge and Justifier,* 43–104; Davidson, R. M. 'The Divine Lawsuit Motif in Canonical Perspective,' *JATS* 21, 1–2 (2010) 45–84; Gemser, 'Controversy-Pattern,' 120–37; Limburg, 'ריב,' 291–304.

> contentions is that God, even when claimant or defendant, remains the almighty judge of all the earth.[25]

Because God is the almighty judge, the relationship between God and his opponent in a legal dispute is essentially asymmetrical.[26] As Kirsten Nielsen has demonstrated, in a covenant lawsuit God acts as both the prosecutor and as the judge (e.g., Ps. 50.3–7).[27] Thus, God's argumentation, sentencing, and demands for restitutions cannot be gainsaid. As a result, any attempt at resolution of the conflict invariably depends on his own decision to initiate the action (Job 9.32; Jer. 12.1).

Prothro has provided an excellent analysis of the vocabulary and elements of divine contention.[28] In what follows, I provide a summary of his analysis while adding some of my own comments. The prophetic *rîb*-pattern between God and Israel will also be assumed throughout the summary below.

God announces his case (frequently marked by the Hebrew ריב) against Israel and the controversy is initiated.[29] Prothro notes that the legal overtones of a contention are made more prominent in the LXX Greek, with κρίσις (and occasionally δίκη) translating ריב (Amos 7.4; cf. Ps. 35[34].23): "God's contenting is his 'judging' (κρίνω, Isa. 19.20; 51.22; διακρίνω, Ps. 35[34].1)."[30] This is the reason why I frequently refer to the LXX in this study.

The language of "wrath" is frequently found in the context of covenant lawsuit.[31] Deuteronomy 32, whose primary form is the divine lawsuit,[32] is an important starting point as its overall framework and themes reappear in later stages of the Jewish writing. In this chapter, God's accusation is compounded with the language of "wrath" (vv. 16, 21–22), and in his contention against Israel God stands as their "adversary," as the "warrior" metaphor in verse 23 suggests

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[25] Prothro, *Both Judge and Justifier,* 63.
[26] G. Liedke, "ריב," *TLOT* 3.1232–37, at 1236. Cf. Stettler, *Gericht*, 33–34.
[27] Nielsen, *Prosecutor and Judge*. This is perhaps the only possible scenario in a monotheistic cosmology view (cf. Kensky, *Trying Man, Trying God,* 31–32, 39–59).
[28] Prothro, *Both Judge and Justifier*, 65–69.
[29] E.g., Jer. 2.9; Hos. 4.1, 4; 12.3; Mic. 6.2; Isa. 57.16; Ps. 103[102].8–10. But sometimes God is the *object* of the ריב (e.g., Job 9.3; 33.13; 40.2; Isa. 45.9). The middle-passive κρίνομαι frequently translates the *niphal* of שׁפט as well as ריב: e.g., Gen. 26.21; Isa. 50.8; Jer. 2.9.
[30] Prothro, *Both Judge and Justifier*, 65.
[31] Bovati, *Re-establishing Justice*, 50–55, 150–53.
[32] Wright, G. Ernest. 'The Lawsuit of God: A Form-Critical Study of Deuteronomy 32,' in *Israel's Prophetic Heritage: Essays in Honor of James Muilenburg* (eds. Bernhard W. Anderson and Walter Harrelson. London: SCM, 1962) 26–67, at 41–49; Sherwood, Aaron. *Paul and the Restoration of Humanity in Light of Ancient Jewish Traditions* (AJEC 82. Leiden: Brill, 2013) 107–112.

(cf. Lam. 2.4f).[33] Similarly, the languages of wrath and adversary are present in the disputation scenes of Isaiah. The LXX brings both ideas to the fore in Isaiah 1.24: "Therefore thus says the Lord, the Lord of hosts, Woe to the mighty [men] of Israel; for my wrath [θυμός] shall not cease against my adversaries [ὑπεναντίοις], and I will execute judgment [κρίσιν] on my enemies [ἐχθρῶν]." Here "adversaries" refer to the city of Jerusalem, God's own people[34] (cf. Isa. 42.25;[35] Jer. 2.4, 9, 29, 35). Furthermore, God's wrath is often expressed in the context of his role as a judge (e.g., Ezek. 7.3, 8; 16.38), and in the prophetic books it can be synonymous with "judgement" (e.g., Ezek. 20.34–37; Hos. 5.10; 11.9; cf. Mic. 7.9). The stronger legal imagery evoked by the κριν-language does not obliterate the relational characteristic of a conflict between two parties, "thus God's 'contending' can also be rendered as God's retention of wrath (Ps. 103[102].9) as well as his 'fighting' (μάχομαι) and waging war against Israel (Isa. 27.28 [*sic*])."[36] In such contexts, God stands as Israel's "enemy" (ἐχθρός) and "adversary" (ὑπεναντίος),[37] somewhat inverting the logic of Exodus 23.22, which says that if Israel remains loyal to YHWH, he "will be an enemy [איב/ἐχθρεύω] to your enemies and an adversary [צור/ἀντίκειμαι] to your adversaries."[38] In the legal dispute between Job and YHWH, Job finds himself in the position of God's enemy (13.24; 33.10, יב(וֹ)א/ὑπεναντίος) and adversary (19.11, צר/ἐχθρός).[39]

The wrath/adversary language is also found in later Jewish writings. An interesting instance of the adversary/friend language in the context of loyalty to the covenant is found in Jubilees 30.18–22. Recounting the narrative of Dinah's kidnapping and the revenge orchestrated by her brothers Simeon and Levi, the text says that Levi's acts of justice will be recorded on the "heavenly tablets" (v. 19); as a result, Levi himself has been recorded on the "heavenly tablets" as "a friend and just man" (v. 20); accordingly, all Israelites who remain faithful to the covenant will

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[33] The reference to "adversaries" in v. 41 is ambiguous. It could mean "Israel's enemies," "Israel themselves," or both. Cf. Biddle, Mark E. *Deuteronomy* (Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary 4. Macon: Smyth & Helwys, 2003) 480f; McConville, J. G. *Deuteronomy* (Apollos Old Testament Commentary 5. Leicester: IVP, 2002) 459. It is worth noting that the result of Israel's breach of the covenant gains eschatological and cosmic proportions in v. 22 (note also natural disruption in v. 24). On natural chaos in covenantal lawsuit scenario, cf. Hos. 4.1–3.

[34] Cf. Wildberger, H. *Isaiah 1–12: A Commentary* (trans., Thomas H. Trapp. Continental Commentaries. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1991) 69. For the *divine contention* framework of Isa. 1, see esp. Watts, John D. W. *Isaiah 1–33,* 2nd ed. (WBC. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2005) 17–41 (cf. chapter 4 below).

[35] On *rîb*-pattern in Isa. 42.18–25, see esp. Nielsen, *Prosecutor and Judge,* 70f.

[36] Prothro, *Both Judge and Justifier,* 66 (although Prothro has "Isa. 27.28," this is most certainly a typo; the correct reference should be 27.8).

[37] E.g., Isa. 1.24; 63.10; Jer. 30[37].14; Job 13.24; 19.11; 33.10; Mic. 2.8; Lam. 2.4–5.

[38] The covenantal overtones of the passage are reinforced in the LXX by the repetition of Exod. 19.5, 6 (and an addition to v. 5, "καὶ ποιήσῃς πάντα ὅσα ἂν ἐντείλωμαί σοι") in the beginning of v. 23.

[39] D. T. Lamb. "Wrath," *DOTP* 878–83, at 882.

also be recorded as "friends" (v. 21); conversely, those who transgress the covenant will be recorded on the "heavenly tablets" as "adversaries" (v. 22; cf. 36.10).

In the soteriology of Qumran, God has a dispute (ריב) with all flesh (CD I, 1–2; cf. Jer. 25.31) and especially against Israel (CD I, 13–18).[40] As the covenanters forsake God and violate the covenant, they incur God's wrath (CD I, 5, 18–21; II, 1–5). In short, several passages in later Jewish writings speak of God's judgement and wrath been provoked by the sins of the wicked (e.g., 1En. 91.7; Sir. 12.6; Ps. Sol. 4.1, 21; 2Bar. 48.17;[41] cf. 1En. 1.7, 9; 100.4–13).[42]

An essential element in divine contention between God and Israel is the Sinaitic covenant, the foundation upon which God's relationship with Israel is built. Deuteronomy 32 stands as an important text as it provides the context of the *rîb*-pattern, namely, rupture of the covenant (cf. Ps. 50).[43] Although every sin, regardless of its subject, incurs God's judgement, God's covenantal relationship with Israel "'aggravates her guilt' (cf. Amos 1.2–2.3 with 3.1–2)."[44] This is how Prothro summarises the Sinaitic logic:

> God agreed that if his already-redeemed people would live under their redeemer's lordship by carrying out communal justice and purity, God would prosper them agriculturally and militarily; but if not, God would bring plagues, famines, and military defeats to "discipline" his people and, if they remained unrepentant, to exile them (Lev. 26; Deut. 28–30). For this reason, as in Job […], the experience of calamity can be interpreted as a sign of divine wrath and contention. Indeed, one task of prophets was to proclaim current calamities as divine "rebukes" and call Israel to repentance and submission to God.[45]

As is the case with bilateral quotidian contentions, the goal of covenant controversy is reconciliation.[46]

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[40] Cf. Garnet, Paul. *Salvation and Atonement in the Qumran Scrolls* (WUNT 2/3. Tübingen: Mohr, 1977) 112, 87–97.

[41] This list of references appears in Prothro, *Both Judge and Justifier,* 108.

[42] For an analysis of the *rîb*-pattern in Second Temple Judaism, cf. Hartman, Lars. *Asking for a Meaning: A Study of 1 Enoch 1–5* (ConBNT 12. Lund: CWK Gleerup, 1979).

[43] Cf. Ernest. 'Lawsuit of God,' 26–67; Davidson, 'Divine Lawsuit,' 63f. This remains true regardless the date assigned to Deut. 32.

[44] Prothro, *Both Judge and Justifier,* 66; cf. Deut. 29.24–28; 31.16–29.

[45] See below; cf. Prothro, *Both Judge and Justifier,* 66f.

[46] Cf. Prothro, *Both Judge and Justifier*, 68f.

4.2.3 Reconciliation in *Rîb*-Controversies

The most important feature of Bovati's work for our study of reconciliation/peacemaking in Colossians is his analysis of the aim of a controversy between two parties.

The aim of a dispute is "to permit justice, i.e., agreement between the parties within a framework that expresses the enduring value of law;"[47] it aims at resolution. Of the three ways in which litigants may reach agreement, Bovati argues that (1) recourse to tribunal (thus initiating a trilateral controversy), and (2) war—physical clash, are inadequate. By imposing a sentence, the tribunal reveals the unwillingness (often unconscious) of at least one of the parties to acknowledge the truth—thus justice is achieved only by imposition; this is even more so in case of war, at the end of which "agreement is so 'un-wanted' by the conquered that it is fair to ask whether the controversy has really finished."[48] Bovati then goes on to argue that the third option, namely, reconciliation, is the ideal end of a controversy:

> Its peculiarity lies in the fact that it does not have recourse to a court of appeal (such as a tribunal) other than the disputants, nor does it put its trust exclusively in force in order to uphold the law (as in war); it is a complex act in which both disputants are involved—each uniquely—with the intention of re-establishing justice without constraints.[49]

Because a controversy is like a "crisis in interpersonal relations," the *ideal* goal of a *rîb*-controversy, Bovati argues, is to "*re-establish justice,* so as to promote a right relationship between all the members of the society,"[50] that is, reconciliation.[51] This is obviously not to say that all controversies arrive at reconciliation, nor that litigants are always motivated by such an ideal.

The structure of the juridical act of reconciliation usually contains three elements:[52] a request for pardon (by the guilty party), the granting of pardon (by the accuser) and an agreement

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[47] Bovati, *Re-establishing Justice*, 120.

[48] Cf. Bovati, *Re-establishing Justice*, 120–22.

[49] Bovati, *Re-establishing Justice,* 122. I would also like to suggest that, in a way reflective of the nature of God's covenant with his people (see below), the very nature of the social relations of the covenanted community of Israel presupposes reconciliation as the ideal (ultimate) end of any interpersonal controversy. Leviticus 19.15–18 is one concise example of ethical guidance for communal life in a context of legal contention (e.g., הוֹכֵחַ, v. 17; cf. G. Liedke, "יכח," *TLOT* 2.542–44) in which the prohibitions and principles of vv. 17 and 18 describe the basic inner disposition of the individual which should underlie all spheres of relationship within the community (vv. 9–18), including the legal one (vv. 15–16), in order to secure welfare and peace (cf. Prov. 10.12; Ps. 133.1).

[50] Bovati, *Re-establishing Justice,* 19 (italics original).

[51] Cf. chapter 4, "The Reconciliation," 120–66; also 90f; cf. Boecker, H. J. *Redeformen des Rechtslebens im Alten Testament,* 2nd ed. (WMANT 14. Neukirchen, 1964) 35.

[52] For a detailed analysis of the structure, see Bovati's chapter on reconciliation in *Re-establishing Justice,* 120–66.

reached (by both parties).[53] In a bilateral controversy, "what is sought after is not punishment but a right relationship with the other; the desire is that the accused should reform and live in a just relationship, not that the accused should be taken away in the name of some abstract principle of retributive justice."[54] Even the punishment that results from a *rîb* should be seen in the wider biblical context of a necessary means for the learning of wisdom.[55]

What makes reconciliation possible in such controversies is the confession of guilt by the party that is in the wrong. In such cases, the offender recognises the claimant to be in the right by confessing his/her own guilt, which can be done verbally, by gestures of submission or mere silence.[56] As we will see in the next section, the dynamics in divine lawsuit scenarios are similar.

4.2.4 Reconciliation in Divine Lawsuit

That reconciliation is the aim of theologised versions of *rîb*-controversies is first seen in that forgiveness and reconciliation are God's promises to those who submit and confess their guilt (e.g., Job. 33.15–27, 31–32;[57] Deutero-Isaiah).[58] The offer—sometimes a plea—of reconciliation is God's provision based on God's gracious disposition towards the covenantal people (e.g., Deut. 32.29–36; Ps. 50.22–23; Isa. 1.16–20; 43.14–21, 25; 44.22; Jer. 3.6–25; 4.14; Mic. 6.8).

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[53] Bovati, *Re-establishing Justice*, 120–66.
[54] Bovati, *Re-establishing Justice*, 90f.
[55] Idem.
[56] Bovati, *Re-establishing Justice*, 123–43.
[57] Elihu's advice to Job reflects the notion that the only appropriate response in a contention against God is submission, here marked by the gesture of "silence" (on the juridical meaning of "silence," cf. Bovati, *Re-establishing Justice,* 337–43).
[58] See analysis of Deutero-Isaiah below.
Nielsen writes about the "paraenetic" function of *rîb:* "Rîb's primary function is thus parenetic; the prophets do not prosecute their lawsuits merely to announce Yahweh's judgement, but because they wish to show that it is breach of Covenant that is the actual catastrophe. It is because the people have broken with Yahweh that their case has to end in condemnation and punishment" (Nielsen, *Prosecutor and Judge,* 59). However, the necessary conditions for repentance are present "when the people confess their sin and admit their need of help to Yahweh." (Nielsen, *Prosecutor and Judge,* 60; cf. Hos. 2.4–17; 4.1–3). Julien Harvey finds parallels between suzerain's letters to unfaithful vassals in Hittite documents and *rîb*-controversies in the OT, and argues for similar paraenetic function in both sources: as in the OT, a previous "covenant" between the parties is presupposed in the Hittite documents; and in case of breach of the covenant by a vassal, the king could either send a declaration of war or an *ultimatum* ("avertissement") stipulating the conditions to rectify the damage caused by the breach of the covenant and rebuild the relationship (Harvey, 'Le "rîb-pattern,"' 180, and *passim*; cf. Harvey, Julien. *Le plaidoyer prophétique contre Israël après la rupture de l'alliance: étude d'une formule littéraire de l'Ancien Testament* [Studia Travaux de Recherche 22. Paris: Desclée de Brower, 1967] 100–05).

This is even more so in covenant lawsuit scenarios, where the very nature of God's everlasting covenant with Israel—with its promise of steadfast love, or חֶסֶד (e.g., Deut. 5.10; 7.8–9, 12; cf. Exod. 34.6–7; 2Sam. 7.12–17; Ps. 89.28[88.29]; Isa. 54.8, 10; 55.3b)—constitutes the foundational reason why a controversy between God and his people always aims at reconciliation. The perpetual character of the covenantal divine-human relationship between God and Israel is well-stressed in the Old Testament (e.g., Gen. 17.4–8, 16–21; 2Sam. 7.12–17). Although the Mosaic covenant establishes the prerequisites to the maintenance of the relationship (e.g., Exod. 19.5–6; 34.27–28; but see Gen. 18.18–19; 26.5),[59] God's ultimate purpose of establishing his everlasting covenant through Abraham's seed (Gen. 17.6–8, 16; 21.12; cf. 2Sam. 7.12–16) will not be frustrated, not even by Israel's breach of the covenant and the punishment of exile (e.g., Deut. 30.1–6; cf. 29.14–15); in this case God's promises of deliverance remains for the remnant who respond with repentance (e.g., Deut. 32.36–43; Jer. 4.27; Mic. 7.7–20). The everlasting nature of the covenant is epitomised in the promise of the "new covenant" with its univocal element of "indestructibility" (Jer. 31.31–34; cf. Isa. 42.6; 55.3–5;[60] Ezek. 34, 36–37).[61] Therefore, God's faithfulness to his eternal covenant is at the basis of his redemptive initiative towards Israel, and stands as one of the tenets of the prophetic message.

As in quotidian contentions, what makes reconciliation viable within the disputation is s*ubmission* and *confession of sin*. Closely linked with the confession of guilt is a plea for pardon, usually expressed by lexemes belonging to the semantic field of prayer.[62] Looking especially at requests introduced by the phrase וְעַתָּה in prophetic-*rîbs*[63] (those between God and his people), Bovati categorises the motives for a request for forgiveness under two main headings, one located in the past and the other located in the future.[64] Instances of the former are episodes

[59] The means to obtain forgiveness, and consequent reconciliation, in case Israel disrupts the relationship with God through sin is prescribed at the very institution of the Mosaic covenant (Lev. 26.40–42; cf. Deut. 30.1–5; 1Kgs 8.33–36).

[60] In fact, the promise of "new covenant" is one of the emphases of Deutero and Trito Isaiah (e.g., 44.28; 49.6; 56.4–8; 66.18–24).

[61] P. R. Williamson comments: "The 'new covenant' will be both climactic and eternal. In some sense previous divine covenants culminate in the new covenant, for this future covenant encapsulates the key promises made throughout the OT era (*e.g.,* a physical inheritance; a divine-human relationship; an everlasting dynasty; blessing on a national and international scale), while at the same time transcending them. Thus the new covenant is the climactic fulfilment of the covenants that God established with the patriarchs, the nation of Israel, and the dynasty of David. The promises of these earlier covenants find their ultimate fulfilment in the new covenant, and in it such promises become 'eternal' in the truest sense." (P. R. Williamson, 'Covenant,' *NDBT* 419–29, at 427).

[62] E.g., Exod. 10.16–17; 1Sam. 25.24–25; Ps. 51.3–4, 5–6; Lam. 3.41–42; Bovati, *Re-establishing Justice,* 124–27.

[63] E.g., Exod. 10.17; 1Sam. 15.24–25; 2Sam. 24.10.

[64] Bovati, *Re-establishing Justice,* 129–32.

where someone held guilty, or acting on behalf of the guilty, recounts the narrative of God's "covenant" with Israel, or his former acts on behalf of his people, by which God is "reminded" of his very own nature, a faithful and forgiving God (e.g., Exod. 32.12–14; Num. 14.12–21; Jer. 14.7, 21; cf. also Deut. 32.27; Isa. 43.25; Ezek. 20.9; Neh. 9.32). As for the latter, in response to the pardon granted, the now forgiven party looks forward to the condition of removal of death that their pardoning has brought forth and goes on to express their praise to the "just party" (e.g. Ps. 51.16-17; 106.47).

Another means used to convince the "just party" to grant pardon is *intercession*, the supplication made on behalf of the guilty by an innocent. In Bovati's words, "intercession is the more effective the more it takes the criminal's part, shouldering the guilt and asserting total solidarity with the person and fate of the guilty."[65] One striking characteristic of intercessors in the Old Testament is that they are also "representatives of the prosecution […] who are sent to denounce and threaten appropriate retribution."[66] They, however, switch from the role of accusation (speech against) to that of intercession (speech on behalf of).[67] This double role makes the figure of the intercessor an important one in the process of making peace between accuser and guilty, as it represents some level of relationship between the estranged parties, thus preparing the way for reconciliation.

The request for pardon is often accompanied by some sort of *compensation* and gift for the wrong made.[68] The aim of such a gift is twofold: on one hand, it serves to make reparation for the wrong caused, and as such it should be something both pleasing in the eyes of the offended party and proportional to the misdeed; but it also signals a peaceful resolution to the conflict, as its acceptance by the innocent party symbolises his/her disposition to reach a peaceful resolution (Gen 32.21; 43.11; 1Sam. 25.27). However, in *rîb*-controversies between God and humans, compensation is made by means of "sacrificial victims (whose scent is 'pleasing' to

[65] Bovati, *Re-establishing Justice,* 132; e.g., Exod. 32.11–14, 30–32; 34.6–9; 1Sam. 12.23 (cf. Jer. 15.1); Neh. 9; Dan. 9.1–19; Amos 7.1–3.

[66] Bovati, *Re-establishing Justice*, 132.

[67] E.g., Moses in his confrontation with Pharaoh (Exod. 8.4; 9.28–29; 10.17–18), and with Israel (Exod. 32.11–14; 30–32; Num. 14.13–19; 21.7; Deut. 9.25–29); Samuel (1Sam. 12.13; Jer. 15.1); Jeremiah (Jer. 7.16; 11.14; 14.11); Amos (Amos 7.2, 5). In such cases, the intercession often takes not the form of *prayer*, but of *legal petitions*, by which God is *convinced* to decide one way over the other (see Kensky, *Trying Man, Trying God,* 22–28).

[68] E.g., Gen. 20.14–16; 21.27; 32.14, 19, 20–21; 43.11, 15, 25–26; 1Sam. 25.27. Cf. Bovati, *Re-establishing Justice,* 137–39.

God), and in more general terms to cultic acts that may be supposed to be a liturgical manifestation of conversion, reparation and the offer of reconciliation."[69]

As for the plaintiff, Bovati categorises the lexemes used to express the act of pardoning under three different, yet interrelated, semantic fields,[70] the most obvious of them being the forgiveness word-group (סלח, נשׂא, כפר [*Pi*], etc.).[71] A second word-group employed to express the idea of pardoning is that belonging to the semantic field of "wrath." As already noticed above the language of wrath belongs to the semantic frame of *rîb*. In the threefold structure of a *rîb*-controversy, "wrath" is often substituted for "accusation:"[72]

1) Acknowledgement of a misdeed
2) Accusation / *wrath*
3) Appropriate punishment

Another version of the same structure is,

1) Sin
2) *Wrath*
3) Punishment[73]

When confession of guilt is made by the defendant, however, one finds the following structure:

1) Crime
2) *Rîb*-accusation
3) Confession/supplication
4) Pardon

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[69] Bovati, *Re-establishing Justice*, 138.
[70] Bovati, *Re-establishing Justice*, 143–60.
[71] E.g., Gen. 18.24; 50.17; Deut. 29.19; Num. 14.19; Ps 65.4; Ezek. 16.63; Amos 7.2; Mic. 7.18.
[72] Bovati, *Re-establishing Justice,* 151, calls this "synonymous *substitution,*" that is, when "the lexicon of anger takes the place to be assigned in the juridical structure to the lexicon of the *rîb*" (e.g., Gen. 34.7–31; 39.19–20; Exod. 22.22–23; 32.9–10; Num. 11.1; Deut. 32.19). He examines the relationship between the vocabulary of "juridical contest" and "wrath" under three categories: (1) *parallelism* which may be considered synonymous (e.g., Isa. 41.11; 57.16; 66.15; Ps. 103.9; Jer. 2.35); (2) literary connection between the manifestation of wrath and the action of the *rîb* (e.g., Gen. 31.36; Neh. 5.6–7; Isa. 66.16; Amos 7.4); and (3) "synonymous *substitution*."
[73] E.g., Num. 11.33; 12.9; Deut. 6.15; 7.4; 11.17; Judg. 2.11–15, 19–22; cf. Bovati, *Re-establishing Justice,* 151.

In such a variant of the conflict-resolution process, the language of "appeasing wrath" (especially חלה (אֶת־)פְּנֵי [*Pi*]) as well as that of "cessation of wrath" (especially שׁוב [*Qal* or *Hiphil*] and נחם [*Ni*]) is often employed in the place of "pardon." The former is used in reference to the action of the supplicant (or their intercessor) to attempt to placate the accuser's wrath—that is, to obtain pardon—(e.g., Exod. 32.7–14//32.30–35; 2Kgs. 13.2–5; Jer. 26.19; Ps. 119.58; Dan. 9.13; Jer. 2.35; 4.8; Exod. 32.14; Jer. 18.18).[74] The language of "cessation of wrath," on the other hand, is employed in reference to the action of the plaintiff, who lets go of their indignation—analogous to "pardon being granted" (e.g., Deut. 13.18; Isa. 9.11; Jer. 2.35; Exod. 32.14; 2Sam. 24.16; Jer. 42.10; cf. Deut. 29.19; Isa. 54.8; Hos. 14.5; Mic. 7.18).[75] In such case, we have the following structure:

1) Crime
2) *Rîb*-accusation
3) Confession/supplication
4) Pardon / a. *Appeasing wrath* (supplicant/intercessor)
   b. *Cessation of wrath* (plaintiff)

"The cessation of wrath, in the dynamic of the juridical action, expresses a change that takes place in the accuser and which leads the accuser into a different relationship with the guilty party."[76] Prothro notes that "the offense over which one is angry is variously referred to as 'sin,' 'guilt,' 'iniquity,' etc., translated in the LXX by roots ἀδικ–, ἁμαρτ–, κακ–, ἀσεβ–, etc."[77] In summary, the appeasing of the offended party's anger is thus equivalent to the act of supplication for pardon,[78] and the giving way of anger is equivalent to pardon being granted.[79]

Lastly, the Hebrew also expresses pardon by expressions from the mercy semantic field. The vocabulary of clemency reveals the accuser's state of heart. The guilty party expects their adversary's compassion to overcome their anger, thus letting go of their wrath.[80]

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[74] Bovati, *Re-establishing Justice*, 150f.
[75] Bovati, *Re-establishing Justice,* 152f; cf. 50–55. Bovati, *Re-establishing Justice,* 151, also argues that, "[l]ike every supplication that seeks to obtain pardon, the action of placating is also accompanied by gestures of humiliation (Zech. 7.2; 8.21–22; 2Chron. 33.12) and is backed up by sacrificial offerings (1Sam. 13.12; Mal. 1.9)."
[76] Bovati, *Re-establishing Justice*, 152.
[77] Prothro, *Both Judge and Justifier*, 48.
[78] Cf. Bovati, *Re-establishing Justice*, 150.
[79] Cf. Bovati, *Re-establishing Justice,* 152; see 50–55; 150–53.
[80] E.g., Exod. 34.7; Hos. 1.6; Ps. 51.3; Dan. 9.9; Neh. 9.17. Bovati, *Re-establishing Justice,* 153–54.

The pardon thus prepares the way for the litigants to achieve reconciliation.[81] However, this is not to say that a *rîb*-controversy invariably ends with clear terms of peace and re-establishment of a previous relationship between the parties involved. Many factors can affect the outcome of such processes, often making the end of biblical controversies quite "ambiguous."[82] However, when the steps (1) crime, (2) *rîb*-accusation, (3) confession-supplication, and (4) pardon are taken in a *rîb*-controversy, reconciliation is the most likely end-result.[83] In such cases, the end of the controversy is agreed upon by both parties and signalled by the mere cancelation of the charges by the claimant, expressions of peace or the making of covenants.[84]

In light of the analysis above, I propose the following frame elements of *rîb*-controversies:

1) Crime/Sin
2) *Rîb*-accusation/Wrath
3) Confession/Supplication
    a. Plea for Pardon
    b. Intercession
    c. Compensation
4) Pardon
5) End of Enmity/Reconciliation

Summary: In this section, I presented the main elements of a *rîb*-controversy in the Hebrew Bible as outlined by Bovati with a special focus on its reconciliation element. The structure of theologised bilateral contention is similar to that of quotidian bilateral contention. More importantly, I showed that relational language (e.g., "wrath;" "enmity;" "forgiveness") is at home in the legal context of divine courtroom, thus stablishing a linguistic ground to analysing the reconciling act within the *rîb*-pattern frame. Due to the covenantal relationship between God and Israel, forgiveness and reconciliation are even stronger conceptual themes in prophetic divine controversy.

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[81] Bovati, *Re-establishing Justice*, 160f.
[82] See Bovati, *Re-establishing Justice*, 161.
[83] This is seen, for instance, in the offer of forgiveness and restoration in the prophets' message.
[84] Bovati, *Re-establishing Justice*, 161–66.

4.3 The "*Rîb*-Pattern" as a Conceptual Frame

In this section, I argue that the idea of *rîb*-pattern as a conceptual frame was widely used in the Jewish writings both in the Old Testament and the Second Temple period to conceptualise the divine-human relationship. This thus provides a basis for our analysis of the availability of the frame for the Jewish community in first-century Colossae.

4.3.1 *Rîb* Imagery Language in the Jewish Community: The Availability of the Frame

The use of contention language evoking both bilateral and trilateral frames is well attested not only in the Old Testament, but also in Second Temple Judaism and early Christian writings. Because this study is only concerned with one aspect of the whole frame, that is, the "end of enmity," and to avoid unnecessary repetition, I will highlight only those elements that bear on our analysis of reconciliation/peacemaking in Colossians.[85]

Gemser's analysis of the nature of the so-called *rîb*-pattern as a "frame of mind" is on point.[86] He cogently argues that the legal language we encounter in the Old Testament is not a mere linguistic phenomenon (or metaphor, traditionally defined as a stylistic device) extracted from one very specific legal scenario, or "formal *Sitz im Leben*" (be it the law administered at the city gate, cultic trials, or international law), but rather the linguistic expression of a conceptual frame[87] deeply embedded in the Hebrew's system of thought (what Gemser calls "category," or "frame of mind"—which in this study we are calling "conceptual frame"). Such a way of thinking accounts for the pervasiveness of courtroom motif throughout the Hebrew Bible.[88]

In an essay, Richard Davidson has provided a useful overview of modern scholarship on the prophetic lawsuit motif and its occurrence in the Old Testament.[89] In the last section of the article, he surveys the Old and New Testaments and proposes that "the covenant lawsuit is not only a (sub)genre, with a specific literary form and/or technical terminology (such as רִיב or שָׁפַט

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[85] For general surveys, see Kensky, *Trying Man, Trying God*. In chapter 3, Kensky also provides an informative analysis of the courtroom motif in Greek and Roman literature; Prothro, *Both Judge and Justifier,* 107–114.

[86] Gemser, 'Controversy-Pattern.'

[87] As defined in Cognitive Linguistics.

[88] See examples on 125–28, especially in the Psalms cited on p. 128. This is yet another example of how the strides made in cognitive linguistic studies towards the understanding of the cognitive and linguistic mechanisms of language equip the Biblical scholar with a more comprehensive apparatus to approach the text. In the message of the prophets, the *rîb*-metaphor is applied to "a controversy in which Israel's God summons and accuses, threatens and decides against his chosen people." (Gemser, 'Controversy-Pattern,' 128f).

[89] Davidson, 'Divine Lawsuit.'

or דִּין), but constitutes a motif that suffuses the entire warp and woof of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation."[90]

Perceiving such ubiquity in the Old Testament, Walter Brueggemann writes his entire *Theology of the Old Testament* against the background of the lawsuit motif. In a methodological statement, he says, "I have focused on the metaphor and imagery of courtroom trial in order to regard the theological substance of the Old Testament as a series of claims asserted for Yahweh, the God of Israel."[91] For Meira Kensky, divine courtroom is "a deeply ingrained feature of the religion imagination of ancient Israel,"[92] and "a part of an overall worldview and cosmology, and not just an odd feature of the prophetic literature."[93] G. B. Caird remarks that the reason behind the Israelites' frequent recourse to forensic metaphor was that

> [T]he law court was the only context in which they experienced a systematic quest for the truth governed by rules of procedure. Truth, like justice, was for them something to be discovered and maintained in court. It was natural for them, therefore, to see through the lens of legal metaphor any attempt to arrive at religious truth.[94]

For Prothro:

> It [divine courtroom] provided a framework for expressing Israel's relation to God and the rupture and repair of that relationship. Thus, the conceptualization of God as claimant against his own appears in texts relating to individuals and occasionally with 'all flesh' (cf. Jer. 25.31; CD I, 1) and was retained in various forms of theological discourse throughout the Second Temple Period.[95]

Although the apostle Paul is perhaps the New Testament writer who most emphatically makes use of the courtroom imagery, with his emphasis on "justification," he is not the only one to have conceptualised the God-humanity relationship within such a framework. Andrew T. Lincoln has argued that the story of Jesus in the gospel of John is structured within the overarching framework of the cosmic divine lawsuit motif drawn from Deutero-Isaiah.[96] He concludes that

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[90] Davidson, 'Divine Lawsuit,' 70. His survey covers instances of the *divine lawsuit* motif in: (1) Pentateuch; (2) Psalms; (3) the Prophets; (4) various passages dealing with divine lawsuits conducted from the sanctuary/temple; (5) covenant lawsuit motif structuring or suffusing larger blocks of Scripture: (a) Job; (b) Isaiah; (c) Ezekiel; (d) Daniel; (e) Malachi; (f) Gospel of John; (g) Pauline Epistles; and (h) Revelation ('Divine Lawsuit,' 70–82).

[91] Brueggemann, W. *The Theology of the Old Testament: Testimony, Dispute, Advocacy* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997) xvi.

[92] Kensky, *Trying Man, Trying God*, 13.

[93] Kensky, *Trying Man, Trying God*, 30.

[94] Caird, G. B. *The Language and Imagery of the Bible* (London: Duckworth, 1980) 158.

[95] Prothro, *Both Judge and Justifier,* 63; cf. his bibliography in n. 5.

[96] Lincoln, Andrew T. *Truth on Trial: The Lawsuit Motif in the Fourth Gospel* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 2000). Cf. also Lincoln, Andrew T. 'A Life of Jesus as Testimony: The Divine Courtroom and the Gospel of

"[t]he lawsuit between God and the nations becomes a [lawsuit between] God and the world and provides the overarching framework within which Israel's controversy with God is now seen to be a part."[97] If one accepts the witness (pun not intended) of tradition regarding the author, provenance and audience of the gospel, that is, that John, one of the twelve apostles, wrote the gospel from Asia Minor to the churches of that region, then the fourth gospel would probably stand as evidence of actual, and extensive, use of the lawsuit-frame in the region to which Colossians was written. At the very least, however, Lincoln's robust analysis is one more piece of evidence in favour of Gemser's conclusion that the *rîb* motif was a Jewish "form of thinking and feeling, a category, a frame of mind." As for the Pauline epistles, I have already mentioned Prothro's dissertation on justification where he argues that the divine lawsuit motif lies at the background of Paul's justification theology.[98] In his monograph, *The Prophetic Lawsuit in the Book of Revelation*, Alan Bandy argues that the prophetic divine lawsuit, patterned after Deuteronomy 32, is integral to the composition of Revelation.[99] For him, "the prophetic lawsuit motif was an established prophetic subgenre as well as a common metaphor in the stock of biblical imagery."[100]

After a brief survey of the frequency of the courtroom motif in the Old Testament, Gemser concludes:

> These analogies and background of the *rîb*-terminology in the Hebrew Psalms, and its occurrence even where the distress of the psalmist clearly arises out of sickness (Ps. xxxi 10–13, xxxv 13–15, lxix 2 f., 15 f., 21, 27, 30), prove that the *rîb*-pattern is often, if not mostly, used metaphorically, although not as a purely literary style-motif, but rather as a form of thinking and feeling, a category, a frame of mind.[101]

Gemser's conclusions are true also of the prophets' use of lawsuit language.

In summary, in this section, I have argued that the Old Testament *rîb*-pattern is a frame of mind widely used in the Jewish writings to conceptualise the relationship between God and Israel, the disruption of this relationship, and its reparation. The conclusion that the *rîb*-pattern is a widespread category in the Jewish worldview justifies the argument that the Jewish first-

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John,' in *The Divine Courtroom in Comparative Perspective* (eds. Ari Mermelstein and Shalom E. Holtz. Biblical Interpretation Series 132. Leiden: Brill, 2015) 144–66.

[97] Lincoln, *Trial on Truth*, 46.

[98] Cf. Prothro, *Both Judge and Justifier*.

[99] Bandy, Alan S. *The Prophetic Lawsuit in the Book of Revelation* (New Testament Monograph 29. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2010) 11–23, and *passim*.

[100] Bandy, *Lawsuit,* 24.

[101] Gemser, 'Controversy-Pattern,' 128. Cf. Nielsen, *Prosecutor and Judge,* 23–25.

century writer and Jewish audience of Colossians had access to the same conceptual frame which might have informed his conceptualisation of *peacemaking through blood* in Colossians 1.20b.

4.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, I used Bovati's study of controversy as my main dialogical partner in order to lay out the main elements of a *rîb*-controversy in the Hebrew Bible, paying special attention to its reconciliation elements. I hold that the analysis above has demonstrated that it is highly plausible to ground the Jewish background of reconciliation theology on the legal semantic frame of divine controversy. Having done that, I, secondly, argued that the Old Testament *rîb*-pattern is a frame of mind widely used in Jewish writings to conceptualise the relationship between God and Israel, the disruption of this relationship, and its reparation. The conclusion that the *rîb*-pattern is a widespread category in the Jewish worldview justifies the argument that both the Jewish first-century writer of Colossians and his Jewish hearers in Asia Minor had access to such a conceptual frame, which might have informed their conceptualisation of the *peacemaking through blood* in Colossians 1.20b

It is my contention that the acknowledgement that *reconciliation* language belongs within such a framework will provide a fresh way of understanding the connections between "blood" and "peacemaking" in Colossians 1.20b.

Chapter 5: Courtroom Controversy in Isaiah and Maccabees

5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I showed that the Old Testament *rîb*-pattern is a frame of mind widely used in the Jewish writings to conceptualise the relationship between God and Israel, the disruption of this relationship, and its restoration.

In this chapter, I will assess both the prophetic divine lawsuit in Deutero-Isaiah and the Maccabean martyrology of 2 and 4 Maccabees in order to lay the foundation for later analysis of linguistic and conceptual parallels between these chapters of the book of Isaiah and the message of reconciliation and *peacemaking through blood* in the letter to the Colossians. Linguistic and conceptual parallels with Colossians justify the selection of these traditions for our analysis of frames. In order to do this, I will first present a brief overview of the importance of second exodus motif in Deutero-Isaiah employed typologically by the prophet to convey the main contours of YHWH's deliverance of captive Israel. Secondly, I will examine the divine lawsuit motif in Isaiah as a whole, and Deutero-Isaiah more specifically, given the significant concentration of *rîb*-pattern imagery in these chapters; then I propose a way of interpreting the elements of the overall framework of *rîb*-pattern in Deutero-Isaiah that might have been triggered in the minds of the Jewish audience of Colossians. In this reconstruction of divine lawsuit motif in Deutero-Isaiah, the violent shedding of the Servant's "blood" (metonymy for the Servant's suffering and death) can be construed as the material offering that makes the compensation needed for the forgiveness, and consequent reconciliation of Israel ("the chastisement of our peace is on him," Isa. 53.5), as well as for the restoration of the entire cosmos.

I will, finally, argue that the Maccabean martyrology (2 and 4 Maccabees) presents a further development of the Jewish conceptualization of the violent death of a righteous individual on behalf of the nation that bears on the understanding of *peacemaking through blood* in Colossians 1.20b. The Maccabean martyrology frame also has the potential to have been activated in the minds of the Jewish audience in Colossae by the metaphorical language of Colossians 1.20b.

5.2 Deutero-Isaiah: Considerations on Method and Delimitations

When it comes to the volume of secondary literature produced on a given document, Isaiah is indeed the Romans of the Old Testament. Similarly, the sheer volume of difficulties and controversies surrounding the book seems to render any attempt at a summary inadequate. Hence some consideration on both method and limitations is in order. The scope and purpose of this study preclude engagement with introductory matters such as the highly controversial date and unity of the book.[1] Furthermore, such issues have no bearing on the outcome of the analysis below, since my primary interest lies not on the interpretation of Isaiah *per se,* but rather on the hermeneutic employed by the New Testament writers in their own interpretation of the Old Testament book. In this regard, the evidence suggests that, (1) they understood Isaiah as a unit;[2] and (2) they read Isaiah christologically (or messianically, cf. Watts, lxxii), choosing selected passages from Isaiah in order to make sense of Jesus Christ's identity and work.[3] As for the limitations, given the significant concentration of *rîb*-pattern imagery in the so-called Deutero-Isaiah, we shall focus specifically on this section of the book.[4] Thus, this study is concerned to assess how the Old Testament book of Isaiah, in particular Isaiah 40–55, seems to have influenced the composition of the letter to the Colossians. More specifically, I intend to show that the metaphorical expression "making peace through the blood of his cross" in Colossians 1.20b had the potential to activate the entire scenario of Isaiah 53, within the wider context of Deutero-Isaiah, with its element of Isaiah 53.5, "the chastisement of our peace (שָׁלוֹם) was upon him."

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[1] These have already been discussed exhaustively in the best academic publications on Isaiah, especially from the end of the 19th century onwards.

[2] There is no evidence that any of them understood the book as a composite piece of literature. It would appear that the earliest challenge to the unity of the book comes from the 12th century CE, when Ibn Ezra, 1167, disputed the Isaianic authorship of chs. 40–66 (cf. Watts, *Isaiah 1–33*, lxvii). However, it was not until the rise of "Higher Criticism" in the 19th century that theories concerning the composition of the book became commonplace.

[3] E.g., Acts 8.26–40 (cf. Witherington III, Ben. *Isaiah Old and New: Exegesis, Intertextuality, and Hermeneutics* [Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2017] 178, n. 12, 37).

[4] I use the term "Deutero-Isaiah" for convenience, and I allow for some fluidity in both its length and level of coherence within the 66-chapters book of Isaiah. The reason to focus on these chapters is that although the *rîb* pattern appears throughout the entire book (see 5.4 below), it is particularly focal in chapters 40–55, hence my choice to focus on these chapters.

5.3 Israel's Deliverance as Second Exodus in Deutero-Isaiah

Israel's deliverance in Deutero-Isaiah is portrayed by means of exodus imagery, which has come to be known conveniently as the new, or second, exodus. Within the Deutero-Isaiah's reconfiguration of this narrative tradition, one finds a significant concentration of *rîb*-controversy imagery used to conceptualise the relationship between God and Israel, the disruption of this relationship—which resulted in the people being sent to exile—and its restoration.

The importance of the second exodus motif in Deutero-Isaiah has been recognised by many scholars.[5] For Muilenburg, "[t]he conception of the new exodus is the most profound and most prominent of the motifs in the tradition which Second Isaiah employs to portray the eschatological finale."[6] This was possible because, as Blenkinsopp has argued, "[t]he exodus is seen in the tradition as more than a once-for-all event. It came to have paradigmatic value as revealing the essential lines, the structure, of God's saving activity."[7] He goes on to say that "the exodus has […] become archetypal. It is seen as the primordial divine act containing within itself the revelation of the divine *dynamis*."[8] The exodus motif thus seems to provide a narrative substructure in Deutero-Isaiah on which the prophet presents God's work of deliverance of exile Israel from Babylon to Jerusalem. The allusions to the exodus tradition tell the story of

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[5] E.g., Anderson, Bernhard W. 'Exodus Typology in Second Isaiah,' in *Israel's Prophetic Heritage: Essays in Honor of James Muilenburg* (eds. B. W. Anderson and W. Harrelson. New York: Harper, 1962) 177–95; Idem, 'Exodus and Covenant in Second Isaiah and Prophetic Tradition,' in *Magnalia Dei: The Mighty Acts of God* (eds. F. M. Cross, W. E. Lemke, and P. D. Miller, Jr. New York: Doubleday, 1976) 339–60; Blenkinsopp, Joseph. 'Scope and Depth of Exodus Tradition in Deutero-Isaiah 40–55,' in *The Dynamism of Biblical Tradition* (eds. Pierre Benoit and Roland E. Murphy. Concilium 20. New York: Paulist, 1966) 41–49; Stuhlmueller, Carroll. *Creative Redemption in Deutero-Isaiah* (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1970); Hamlin, E. John. 'Deutero-Isaiah's Reinterpretation of the Exodus in the Babylonian Twilight,' *Proceedings: Eastern Great Lakes and Midwest Biblical Societies* 11 (1991) 75–80; Snaith, Norman. 'Isaiah 40–66: A Study of the Teaching of the Second Isaiah and Its Consequences,' in *Studies on the Second Part of the Book of Isaiah* (eds. N. H. Snaith and H. M. Orlinsky. VTSup 14. Leiden: Brill, 1967) 164–65. Among commentaries, see, e.g., Muilenburg, James. 'Introduction and Exegesis for Isaiah 40–66," in *The Interpreter's Bible* 5 (ed. G. A. Buttrick. New York: Abingdon, 1956) 381–773; Westermann, Claus. *Isaiah 40–66: A Commentary* (trans. David M. G. Stalker. London: SCM Press, 1969); Brueggemann, Walter. *Isaiah 40–66* (Louisville: John Knox Press, 1998; Baltzer, Klaus. *Deutero-Isaiah: A Commentary on Isaiah 40–55* (Hermeneia. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1999); Childs, Brevard S. *Isaiah: A Commentary* (The Old Testament Library. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001); Blenkinsopp, Joseph. *Isaiah 40–55: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB. New Haven, Yale University Press, 2002); Watts, John D. W. *Isaiah 34–66,* 2nd ed. (WBC. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2005).

[6] Muilenburg, 'Isaiah 40–66,' 602 (also quoted by Anderson, 'Exodus Typology,' 181).

[7] Blenkinsopp, 'Scope," 42. Similarly, Fishbane, Michael. 'The "Exodus" Motif/The Paradigm of Historical Renewal,' in *Text and Texture: Close Reading of Selected Biblical Texts* (New York: Schocken, 1979) 121–51, at 121: "[T]he 'exodus' motif emphasizes the temporal-historical paradigm in whose image all future restorations of the nation are to be manifest […] each generation looked to the first exodus as the archetypal expression of its own future hope." Cf. Anderson, 'Exodus Typology,' 182; Stuhlmueller, *Creative Redemption,* 60; Snaith, 'Isaiah 40–66,' 147–53.

[8] Blenkinsopp, 'Scope,' 45f.

the forthcoming return of the Israel's remnant from Babylon to Jerusalem in terms of a second exodus.

The list of allusions to the exodus motif in Deutero-Isaiah varies among scholars.[9] Anderson provides a useful summary of the basic motifs of the exodus history present in Isaiah 40–55, which are as follows:[10] (a) the promises to the fathers—which include the gift of the land (e.g., 49.8–12), the miraculous fertility of the "barren" Israel (e.g., 49.19–21; 54.1–3, cf. Gen. 28), and the mediation of saving benefits to the nations (e.g., 42.6–7, cf. Gen. 12.2f); (b) deliverance from Egypt (e.g., 51.9; 52.12; cf. Exod. 13.21f; 14.19f; 43.16f, cf. 14.28; 15.10, 21); (c) the journey through the wilderness (e.g., 40.3–5; 43.19; 48.21, cf. Exod. 17.2–7; Num. 20.8); there are no echoes of the journey to Sinai; however, "the revelation of the law is presupposed" (42.21, 24; 48.17f; cf. 51.7) and "[t]he new exodus also is accompanied by a new covenant, although different from the Mosaic covenant (55.3; cf. 54.10);"[11] and (d) the re-entry into the Promised Land (e.g., 49.8; 52.1).

The exodus paradigm undergoes substantial transformation throughout the Old Testament, and especially in Deutero-Isaiah.[12] David Pao's brief outline of the transformation of the exodus paradigm in Deutero-Isaiah is useful here, and I summarise it, while adding insights from other scholars, as follows.[13] In Isaiah, the exodus motif has been "eschatologised:" first, the "'Exodus' becomes a future event promised on the basis of God's action in the past."[14] This is mostly seen in the contrast between "former things" and "new things" (e.g., 42.9; 43.18–19; cf. 46.10). Here "the prophetic eschatology is based upon the premise: *Endzeit gleich Urzeit*;"[15] secondly, the exodus story is reformulated by combining it with the cosmogonic one (e.g., 50.2; 51.9–11).[16] The "new thing" is the "new exodus," and the "new exodus" is an act of creation.[17] Although the interpretation of the "old thing" and the "new thing" is debated in some texts,[18] it seems clear enough that in 43.18 the contrast between "former things" and "new thing" refers

[9] Cf. e.g., Anderson, 'Exodus Typology,' 181f; Blenkinsopp, 'Scope,' 45; Stuhlmueller, *Creative Redemption,* 66, cf. 272; Fishbane, 'Exodus,' 132–40.
[10] Anderson, 'Exodus Typology,' 182–84.
[11] Anderson, 'Exodus Typology,' 183f.
[12] Cf. Childs, Brevard. S. *Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testament: Theological Reflection on the Christian Bible* (London: SCM Press, 1992) 131.
[13] Pao, David W. *Acts and the Isaianic New Exodus* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000) 55–59.
[14] Pao, *Acts,* 56; cf. Anderson, 'Exodus Typology;' Blenkinsopp, 'Scope,' 46; Fishbane, 'Exodus,' 133.
[15] Anderson, 'Exodus Typology,' 185.
[16] Idem; cf. Blenkinsopp, 'Scope,' 47f; Anderson, 'Exodus Typology.'
[17] Cf. Anderson, 'Exodus Typology,' 184f; e.g., Isa. 40.12–31; 42.5; 44.24; 45.9–18; 48.7, 12–13; 51.12–16. See also Stuhlmueller, *Creative Redemption, passim.*
[18] E.g., 41.22; 42.9; 43.9.

to the original exodus event and the "new exodus."[19] The eschatological transformation of the exodus paradigm leads to the universalistic scope of the new exodus soteriology, which in turn triggers a redefinition of the "people of God," now extended to accommodate the Gentile nations also; it also introduces the issue of the "true Israel" (e.g., 49.6, 8; cf. 45.22–23).[20] Integral to the message of Deutero-Isaiah is the polemic against the god-idols of the nations.[21] As we have already discussed in the previous chapter, in the Isaianic new exodus, the supremacy of YHWH is demonstrated in the contrast between him and the nations with their god-idols. YHWH's verdict in his case against the god-idols is that they are "nothing" (e.g., Isa. 41.24; cf. 29; 42.18–25; 44.9–20), and that "there is no God but YHWH" who can deliver his people (e.g., Isa. 41.4; 43.10–13; 44.24; 45.5–7; 49.26). He is, therefore, able to rescue and rebuild his people.[22]

Blenkinsopp concludes that the Deutero-Isaiah's transformation of the exodus paradigm brought with it "a great deepening in the understanding of the divine activity in history, preparing for the New Testament interpretation of the final and central act of God in Jesus."[23] He goes on to say that "[i]t also brought with it a more profound insight into the nature of the covenant-God […] The exodus-God is, in the first place, God-for-Israel, redeemer and savior. But since Israel's mission, which could only be given to her in the suffering and estrangement of exile, is essentially for the world, he is also universal redeemer and savior."[24]

The exodus frame thus functions as an overarching frame used by the prophet to conceptualise the message of deliverance in Deutero-Isaiah within which one finds other frames, such as the more specific frame of *rîb*-controversy employed to conceptualise the relationship between God and Israel, the disruption of this relationship, and its restoration. We now turn to the examination of the *rîb*-pattern in Deutero-Isaiah.

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[19] Cf. Blenkinsopp, 'Scope,' 46.
[20] Pao, *Acts,* 57.
[21] Cf. Clifford, Richard J. 'The Function of Idol Passages in Second Isaiah,' *CBQ* 42 (1980) 450–54; von Rad writes that "the case [of anti-idol passages] in Deutero-Isaiah is different [from Habakkuk and Jeremiah], for here the polemic can be regarded to some extent as part of the total message of the prophet." (von Rad, Gerhard. *Wisdom in Israel* [trans. James D. Martin. Nashville: Abingdon, 1972] 179).
[22] Cf. Pao, *Acts,* 182–93.
[23] Blenkinsopp, 'Scope,' 49.
[24] Blenkinsopp, 'Scope,' 50.

5.4 Courtroom Controversy in the Book of Isaiah

In his two-volume commentary, John Watts treats Isaiah as a single literary unit he calls the "Vision of Isaiah."[25] He views its structure as a six-act drama enveloped by a prologue and an epilogue,[26] which "portrays a continuing confrontation between YHWH and his people."[27] The Vision of Isaiah is, for Watts, a "'covenant disputation' (ריב *rîb*). God, his prophet, and his people assess their relation within the covenant and beyond through the 'give and take' of courtroom disputation. The dialogue[28] is intended to clarify the issues and arrive at a solution."[29] He goes on to say that,

> The heart of the Vision is the case of Zion (ריב ציון *rib Zion;* 34.8), which begins in 1.21–31, reaches a climax in the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BCE (34.8–15), and is continued (chaps. 40–54) because a spokesman demands (34.16) that the scroll of YHWH (37.35) [*sic*] be read again. The people are accused of breaking covenant (esp. chaps. 1–4 and 63.7–66; cf. the Song of Moses in Deut. 32.1–43, which shows so many similarities to Isaiah, especially to chap. 1 and 63.7–65.16, that one is tempted to see it as a literary forerunner of the great prophetic book). YHWH's case is defensive in later sections (chaps. 40–54), but in the earlier portion of the book it is offensive: a case against Israel, Jerusalem, the land, and the major nations.[30]

Watts sees an "ongoing dispute" unfolding through the entire book of Isaiah, in which God stands against both the nations and Israel. Regardless of whether one agrees with his overall proposal to read Isaiah as a literary drama, Watts' study reveals the importance of the court-room imagery in Isaiah as a conceptual frame.

5.4.1 Courtroom Controversy in Deutero-Isaiah

Deutero-Isaiah has been recognised as marking a new development in the use of the *rîb* pattern. The German scholar Ludwig Köhler observed that the message of Deutero-Isaiah is structured

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[25] Watts, *Isaiah 1–33,* lxxiv, also lxxvii. On "Vision" as a genre, see pp. lxxxii–lxxxiii. All quotation in this study is from the second edition of Watts' two-volume commentary unless otherwise specified.

[26] This is a revised version of his earlier proposal made for the second edition of his commentary (2005). In the original edition of his commentary (vol. 1, 1985; vol. 2, 1987), Watts had proposed a twelve-act drama framework.

[27] Watts, *Isaiah 1–33*, lxxxvii; on Isaiah as drama, see esp. lxxxii–xcix. In the first edition of his commentary, Watts writes that "[t]he entire Vision is, in a way, an extension of Yahweh's complaint (chap. 1 [of Isaiah]) against his people and his city." (Watts, *Isaiah 1–33* [1st ed.] li). Notwithstanding the absence of same wording in the second edition, Watts' overall thesis of an "ongoing dispute" throughout Isaiah is both maintained and reinforced (e.g., esp. 2.503–21).

[28] By "dialogue" (or "discourse") Watts means the primary form of Isaiah's literature (cf. 1.ci).

[29] Watts, *Isaiah 1–33,* ci; cf. ci–cv.

[30] Watts, *Isaiah 1–33*, ci.

within the framework of a double trial: (1) YHWH against his own people; and (2) YHWH against the nations (and their gods).[31] Kensky agrees with Nielsen's analysis that both trials are, in essence, part of one only trial "in which Second Isaiah has God defending his past actions in destroying the land and sending Judah into exile."[32] Kensky goes on to say that Deutero-Isaiah displays "an important development in the use of the *rîb*-pattern as an overarching narrative framework, even within a series of oracles that are not narrative in nature."[33]

Deutero-Isaiah depicts Israel in the Babylonian exile, and the ordeals of such a predicament give rise to the accusation that YHWH has been unfaithful to the covenant. In the dispute, Israel is presented as the claimant levelling charges against YHWH, the defendant. In Isaiah 40.27, he is accused of injustice towards his covenantal people: "Why do you say, O Jacob, and speak, O Israel, 'My way is hidden from the LORD, and my right is disregarded by my God?;'" in 49.14, Zion complains that YHWH has forsaken them: "But Zion said, 'The LORD has forsaken me; my Lord has forgotten me.'" Essentially, Israel's question is: 'How can the unique God—sole Creator of the universe and sovereign in the world—forsake his own covenant with his chosen people and relinquish the control of history to the nations and their idols?" In Watts' words: "This is precisely what the Vision is about. It concerns the question of who steers the ship, who determines the direction of history, and who decides the role for God's people."[34] God's defence then has the purpose of establishing both his control over the idols of the nations regarding the events that have befallen God's people and his rights to act the way he did.[35] Hence the interconnected double-trial in Deutero-Isaiah: (1) God against the nations and their god-idols; and (2) God against his people. YHWH stands as the prosecutor in the former scenario, but seems to be presented more as the defendant in the latter as he addresses the people's accusation. However, as noted above, in theological controversies involving YHWH, he also takes the role of the judge.

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[31] Köhler, Ludwig. *Deuterojesaja (Jesaja 40–55) stilkritisch untersucht* (BZAW 37. Giessen: A. Töpelmann, 1923); cf. Kensky, *Trying Man, Trying God,* 28–39; Trites, Allison A. *The New Testament Concept of Witness* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977) 35–47.

[32] Kensky, *Trying Man, Trying God*, 37. Cf. Nielsen, *Prosecutor and Judge*, 62–73.

[33] Kensky, *Trying Man, Trying God*, 37.

[34] Watts, *Isaiah 34–66*, 626. Cf. Westermann, *Isaiah 40–66*, 58–60; Goldingay, John. *The Message of Isaiah 40–55: A Literary-Theological Commentary* (London: T&T Clark, 2005) 63–68; Watts, *Isaiah 34–66*, 626f.

[35] Cf. Nielsen, *Prosecutor and Judge*, 63. On the theodicy purpose of covenant lawsuit, see Harvey, *Le plaidoyer*, 165f.

a. YHWH and the idols on trial

The first of several controversy scenes between God and the nations comes in Isaiah 41.1–5 (cf. 43.8–13; 44.6–8; 45.18–25). In verses 21–24, YHWH tackles their god-idols head-on:

> [21] Set forth your case [κρίσις/ריב], says the LORD; bring your proofs, says the King of Jacob. [22] Let them bring them, and tell us what is to happen. Tell us the former things, what they are, that we may consider them, that we may know their outcome; or declare to us the things to come. [23] Tell us what is to come hereafter, that we may know that you are gods; do good, or do harm, that we may be dismayed and terrified. [24] Behold, you are nothing, and your work is less than nothing; an abomination is he who chooses you.

The question that begs an answer seems to be related to who is behind the rise of Cyrus (v. 25; cf. v. 2). However, this question reveals a more fundamental issue, namely "who is actually God?"[36] YHWH challenges the idols to lay out proofs of their deity: they should either predict the future or do something either good or harmful (vv. 22–23; cf. 43.9; 44.7; 45.21). Their silence amounts to an "acknowledgement of guilt" thus determining YHWH's final verdict on them: "you are nothing" (v. 24; cf. vv. 28–29; 43.10; 44.8).

The overall twofold conclusion is that the god-idols of the nations are nothing[37] and YHWH is the only God who has total control over history (e.g., 41.4, 25; 43.10c–11; 44.6, 8; 45.18, 21).[38]

b. God and Israel on trial

The second controversy scenario in Deutero-Isaiah is that of YHWH against Israel (Isa. 42.18–25; 43.22–28; 50.1–3; cf. 40.12–31; 45.9–13).

If, on the one hand, YHWH's disputation with the nations and their gods results in a reaffirmation of his sovereignty over the events of exile, his controversy with Israel serves to reaffirm his right to act the way he did. However, the difference between the two sets of trials runs deeper than that. The exile-event prompts Israel to question God's faithfulness to the covenant. In his defence, however, God exposes the real issue at stake: unlike the controversy with the

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[36] Cf. Schoors, *I am God Your Saviour,* 217.
[37] As are those who fashion them (Isa. 44.9).
[38] Cf. Isa. 37.20; 40.28; 45.5–7; 46.8–11; 49.23, 26; See von Rad, Gerhard. *Old Testament Theology*, 2 vols, (trans. D. M. G. Stalker. Edinburgh and London: Oliver and Boyd, 1965) 2.242.

foreign gods, His *rîb* with Israel was caused by idolatry and wickedness (Isa. 3.14–15; 59.2–15; 55.1–7),[39] ultimately, by breach of the covenant (cf. Isa. 42.24–25; 43.22–24; 50.1–2).[40]

Israel's violation of the covenant results in estrangement from YHWH (e.g., Isa. 1.4–9; 59.2); so God becomes their enemy and fights against them (Isa. 63.10; Isa. 1.24).[41] In the prophetic *rîb* of Deutero-Isaiah, Israel's punishment is presented as a *fait accompli* rather than a future threat: the exile is already the penalty for their transgression (e.g., Isa. 51.1; 59.1–2).[42]

The first of these trials is recorded in Isaiah 42.18–25. Israel accuses YHWH of covenantal unfaithfulness and indifference to their suffering, but the reality is that their perspective has been distorted by their own ignorance: Israel fails to understand either the reason for or the nature of their plight. So YHWH summons them for a dispute (v. 18).[43] God points out that Israel's "blindness" and "deafness" prevent them from realising the righteousness of his actions (vv. 19–20, 23).[44] A case for God's sovereignty over the events of the exile is then presented: Israel's ordeals result neither from God's indifference nor from weakness, but from his sovereign will (vv. 21–22). Verses 24–25 have God repeating that he has caused the exile himself, and Israel's guilt is plainly stated: the exile is the result of God's righteous wrath provoked by the sin of the nation.[45]

A similar dynamic is found in Isaiah 43.22–28.[46] Again YHWH justifies his actions against a despondent Israel.[47] The people are presented as the party who broke faith and are therefore in the wrong (cf. 50.1—even their cultic expressions of religion have been tainted by their sinful

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[39] Preuss, Horst D. *Old Testament Theology,* 2 vols. (trans. Leo G. Perdeu. London: T&T Clark, 1995-1996) 2.269; cf. Jer. 2.5–8, 13–25, 27b–36; 3.20–21; 5.1–5; Hos. 4.1–3; 5.1–7; Amos 2.4–8; Mic. 1.5; 2.1–3, 8–9; 6.3, 10–12, 16; 7.1–4; Mal. 1.8–14.

[40] Although this is not explicitly stated, the covenant is the underlying relational bond on which God's accusations—and judgement—against Israel is based; cf. Schoors, *I am God Your Saviour,* 188, and *passim*; cf. Nielson, *Prosecutor and Judge,* 65f; Scheuer, B. *The Return of YHWH: The Tension between Deliverance and Repentance in Isaiah 40–55* (BZAW 377. Berlin: de Gruyter, 2008) 130.

[41] LXX Isa. 63.10: "αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐστράφη αὐτοῖς εἰς ἔχθραν"—the meaning of "enemy" here is clearly active in reference to God, that is, *God's hostility towards human beings*. The idea of active hostility on God's part is reinforced by the warfare metaphor in the next line, "καὶ αὐτὸς ἐπολέμησεν αὐτούς." Cf. Jer. 30.14; Lam. 2.4–5; Deut. 32.23.

[42] Cf. Schoors, *I am God Your Saviour*, 197; Prothro, *Both Judge and Justifier*, 77f.

[43] Cf. Schoors, *I am God Your Saviour*, 77. Cf. Prothro, *Both Judge and Justifier*, 77f.

[44] Cf. Nielsen, *Prosecutor and Judge,* 70; Schoors, *I am God Your Saviour,* 77, observes that the "[t]he charge against Yahwe [*sic*] would be the same as the one quoted in xl 27: Yahwe [*sic*] is blind and deaf to Israel's burden and suffering."

[45] Cf. Nielsen, *Prosecutor and Judge,* 71. For a synonymic parallelism between the vocabulary of juridical contest and that of wrath, see Isa. 41.11; 57.16; 66.15; also Isa. 66.16 (cf. Bovati, *Re-establishing Justice,* 50f).

[46] Cf. Schoors, *I am God Your Saviou*r, 189–97.

[47] The accusation from which YHWH defends himself is probably revealed by the last sentence of v. 28. The people complained that God had "delivered Jacob to the utter destruction and Israel to reviling." (cf. Westermann, *Isaiah 40–66,* 130; see also Childs, *Isaiah,* 341; Schoors, *I am God Your Saviour,* 190).

attitude (43.22–24a; cf. 1.11–13).[48] In contrast, God's initiative and ultimate desire to restore the relationship with Israel is expressed with an emphatic statement: "I, I am he who blots out your transgressions [MT, הוּא מֹחֶה פְּשָׁעֶיךָ; LXX, ὁ ἐξαλείφων τὰς ἀνομίας σου] for my own sake, and I will not remember your sins" (v. 25). Verse 26 shows God summoning Israel to provide evidence of their righteousness. But there is no positive response to God's gracious[49] act of forgiveness. God's forgiveness in verse 25 is made even more radical by what comes next in verses 27–28, where Israel's sinful past is revisited. Alec Motyer writes that "[p]ossibly we may imagine a silence in court following verse 26 while the judge waits for the accused to make his defence. But in default of such the prosecution case continues and makes the possibility of verse 25 seem ever more remote."[50]

I have already pointed out that Israel's violation of the covenant is the ultimate reason behind their plight. In his defence against Israel's accusations, God has reaffirmed both his sovereignty over the events of exile and the righteousness of his actions. Two important observations for this study are in order here. First, Israel's plight is twofold: there is both a "physical (political) bondage" and, at its basis, a "spiritual bondage." Thus, Israel's predicament is not only that their sin has caused them to be cut off from Jerusalem but that it has also estranged them from God, leaving them in need of reconciliation. So, the narrative of Deutero-Isaiah presents Israel's liberation in such a way that God's act of redemption towards Israel encompasses both the physical and the spiritual dimensions of their condition. This is Scheuer's conclusion on the concept of deliverance in Deutero-Isaiah:

> [W]e can say that the notion of deliverance is prominent in this book, making a link between the political rescue from the exile in Babylon, and the spiritual rescue from sin and guilt, which leads to the re-establishment of the relationship between YHWH and Israel. The dual aspect of the redemption, indicated already in the second verse of the corpus (Isa. 40.2) where the prophet proclaims redemption from the exile, which is also redemption from the penalty for the sins of the people, seems to be also the task of the Servant (Isa. 42.7 and 49.6).[51]

But Deutero-Isaiah goes yet a step further by presenting the eschatological and universal consequences of Israel's redemption.[52] "What is done for Israel has intrinsic universal implica-

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[48] Schoors, *I am God Your Saviour,* 193, writes that "[t]he whole depth of Israel's sins is illustrated by the three terms the prophet uses to indicate them. Israel's sin consists in transgressions against Yahwe's [*sic*] law, against the clauses of the covenant (*hatta'â*); it comes from a wrong attitude towards him (*'āwōn*); it is a rebellion against the lord, the suzerain of the covenant (*peša'*)."

[49] God's offer is "for his own sake."

[50] Motyer, Alec. *The Prophecy of Isaiah* (Leicester: IVP, 1993) 341.

[51] Scheuer, *Return of YHWH,* 136; cf. Childs, *Isaiah,* 340f.

[52] Motyer, *Isaiah,* 289, captures well this double-redemption movement:

tions."[53]

Second, because of the covenantal nature of YHWH's relationship with Israel, the ultimate goal of his controversy against Israel is the re-establishment of justice and, consequently, reconciliation.[54] It is to this end that in these trial scenes the "blind and deaf" Israel is required to acknowledge that YHWH is in the right and to confess their sin.[55] Scheuer has drawn attention to the tension between confession and deliverance in Deutero-Isaiah and concluded that "the actions of YHWH and the reactions of the people are interdependent: both are equally required in order for the relationship between YHWH and the Israelites to be re-established."[56] Isaiah 43.25 is indeed an astounding statement of God's forgiving nature, especially in light of the complete absence of any evidence of confession on the part of guilty Israel.[57] But does Deutero-Isaiah have more to say about the means through which YHWH restores and transforms rebellious Israel? In these chapters it may be that the Lord's servant is appointed by YHWH to deal with people's guilt.

Claus Westermann has drawn attention to the wordplay on the verb עבד in Isaiah 43.23b and 43.24b: "I have not made you *serve* me (v. 23b, לֹא הֶעֱבַדְתִּיךָ), but you have made *me serve* (v. 24b, אַךְ הֶעֱבַדְתַּנִי).[58] He says that "[t]his key-passage for Deutero-Isaiah's proclamation contains an echo of the catchword of the servant songs (*'ebed,* from *'ābad*)."[59] He goes on to observe that in order to understand such a connection, one needs to realise that the idea of YHWH as a servant amounts to practical renunciation of Jewish monotheism wherein the concept of YHWH as the Lord is one of its core claims. He then concludes:

C¹ Promises of redemption (42.18–44.23)
  c¹ Release (42.18–43.21)
  c² Forgiveness (43.22–44.23)
C² Agents of redemption (44.24–53.12)
  c¹ Cyrus: liberation (44.24–48.22)
  c² The Servant: atonement (49.1–53.12)

[53] Motyer, *Isaiah,* 350.

[54] See chapter 4 above. YHWH has not abandoned his people. Westermann surmises that "the use of descriptive praise [in Deutero-Isa] has the specific function of answering the charges that the God of Israel had failed and had abandoned his people…" (Westermann, Claus. *Prophetic Oracles of Salvation in the Old Testament* [trans. Keith Crim. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1991] 65).

[55] E.g., 40.27; 49.14; 42.21; 43.25–26; Prothro, *Both Judge and Justifier,* 78 argues that here God "explicitly commands her [Israel] confession before being redeemed."

[56] Scheuer, *Return of YHWH,* 136; cf. esp. 44.21–22 (also 43.25–26); 55.6–7.

[57] In his book *The Forgiveness of Sins* (Cambridge: James Clarke & Co, 2016), Timothy Carter has shown that in the OT, God is predominantly the subject of the forgiving action. In line with Carter's conclusion, I will argue below that the work of the Servant, which culminates in chapter 53, is that which atones for the people's sin. Therefore, atonement and forgiveness are still YHWH's doing.

[58] Westermann, *Isaiah 40–66,* 131; cf. Goldingay, *Isaiah 40–55,* 215.

[59] Westermann, *Isaiah 40–66,* 131.

> Here in 43.24, this reversal of the natural relationship between God and man, in which God is lord and man God's servant, flashes out for just a moment. It fades again immediately, for in v. 25 God again acts precisely and decidedly as a master who can as such simply blot out Israel's guilt. However, what here is the momentary sounding of a note, is to be taken up again in the poems about the *'ebed,* the servant of God: there is to be a servant who, at God's behest, is to take the sins of the others upon himself.[60]

Goldingay highlights the connections between Isa. 43.25, 44.22 and 48.11 especially through the expression "for my own sake." Commenting on 44.22, he writes,

> It is apparently not the case that forgiveness depends on the offering of sacrifice. Yhwh personally and directly bears its cost. Isaiah 52.13–53.12 will take this issue further; there the power of Yhwh is revealed in a servant whose acceptance of suffering makes people's restoration possible. To combine this with the thinking of vv. 23–24, the NT will in due course see the cross as the definitive turning of the offering of a sacrifice to God by human being into the offering of a sacrifice by God for human beings.[61]

It is to the figure of the servant that we now turn.

5.4.2 Atonement in Deutero-Isaiah

Discussions on atonement theology are far from reaching any consensus in Biblical Studies scholarship. The scenario is not different in Isaianic studies. In what follows, I suggest one possible way of interpreting the atonement theology of Deutero-Isaiah is to consider it in light of the proposed framework of divine lawsuit motif. I have already pointed out above that Israel's deliverance is Deutero-Isaiah is portrayed by means of second exodus imagery. This broader narrative substructure is in turn filled with *rîb*-controversy imagery used to conceptualise the relationship between God and Israel, the disruption of this relationship—which led to the people being exiled—and its restoration. In what follows I will argue, more specifically, that the violent death of the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53 had atoning effect, and that his offer of אָשָׁם (Isa. 53.10) presupposes the shedding of "blood"[62] which serves as the "reparation" for guilty Israel in the broader context of God's contention against Israel in Deutero-Isaiah. Peace is thus achieved through blood (Isa. 53.5; cf. v. 10).[63] Although the lexeme "blood" does not

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[60] Westermann, *Isaiah 40–66,* 131f.
[61] Goldingay, *Isaiah 40–55,* 223f.
[62] Cf. Lev. 7.2, 14.
[63] On the importance of interpreting Isa. 53 within the canonical context of Isa. 40–55, Childs, *Isaiah,* 410, says: "…a diachronic dimension is not ruled out, but its relation to the present, shaped text is subtle and indirect. Independently, it does not provide the key to interpretation, but functions within the literary context of the

feature in the text, it is certainly presupposed by the imagery of violent death in verse 5 as well as by the offer of אָשָׁם in verse 10. Isaiah 53 is thus interpreted as presenting the imagery of a suffering, innocent atoning figure who bears the sins of others vicariously. My contention is that when "making peace through the blood of his cross" in Colossians 1.20b—which also conveys the idea of an innocent suffering figure who bears the sins of others vicariously—was heard by Jewish hearers steeped in Old Testament traditions, it had the potential to activate the entire frame of Isaiah 53, which in turn would have evoked the entire context of Deutero-Isaiah. As I argue below, evidence suggests that groups of pre-Christian Jewish writers were already interpreting Isaiah 53 in terms of an innocent suffering figure who bears the sins of others vicariously. Although not provable, a study of the topic in Jewish writings shows (see below) it is possible that Isaiah 53 also had some influence on the Maccabees' paradigm of an innocent suffering figure who bears the sins of others vicariously. The case is obviously different in the Christian era when first-century Christian Jews clearly interpreted Isaiah 53 in such terms and applied it to Christ (e.g., 1Pet. 2.21–25).[64]

5.4.3 The Role of the Servant

Deutero-Isaiah makes it clear that YHWH is a merciful God capable of forgiving Israel's sins. The problem, as Goldingay observes, "lies on Israel's side of the restoration of this relationship."[65] In the narrative of Deutero-Isaiah, Israel fails to live up to their calling to be a light to the nations (e.g., 42.18–25; 48.1–22). The people are unable even to realise their guilt, that their sin had caused their twofold plight (both political and spiritual bondage)—they are "deaf" and "blind" (e.g., 42.18–19) and cannot understand (e.g., 42.23, 25).

In the first of the Servant songs (42.1–4), the spirit-endowed Servant is given the task of establishing מִשְׁפָּט and תּוֹרָה. Goldingay comments that "[a]t 42.1–4 the preceding context had both identified the servant as Jacob-Israel and hinted that Jacob-Israel could not fulfil the task, a hint that would be confirmed later."[66] Whether or not the identity of the servant in the first Song could to some extent be taken to be Israel, it seems clear that Deutero-Isaiah transitions from

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larger corpus. Especially is this true for chapter 53, which provides a continuation of a lengthy prophetic narrative extending from chapters 40–55 and climaxing in the sequence that follows in chapters 49ff. God intervenes to end the exile and to usher in his eschatological reign."

[64] 1Pet. 1.21–25 only strengthens the case for the probability that first-century Christian Jews in other regions, such as Colossae, were already conceptualising Christ's death through the Isaiah 53 frame.

[65] Goldingay, *Isaiah 40–55,* 478.

[66] Goldingay, *Isaiah 40–55,* 474.

the more collective view of this figure in the first song to a more individual one from the second song onwards.[67] This individual figure is then tasked to do for Israel what they could not, namely, restore them to YHWH. This is highlighted by comparing Isaiah 44.21–22, 49.5, and 50.5–6, the first to the third Song respectively. In Isaiah 44.21–22, the prophet refers to the servant Israel/Jacob to whom YHWH declares the "blotting out" of their transgressions and urges them to "return to me" (שׁוּבָה אֵלַי, 44.22). In the second Servant Song, however, the individual figure of the Servant is then commissioned to do exactly that, namely, to "bring Jacob back" to YHWH (לְשׁוֹבֵב יַעֲקֹב אֵלָיו, 49.5[68]), and in this role he will face opposition and suffering which will lead to his dependence on YHWH's strength (50.4–9).[69] The Servant "represents Yahweh's מִשְׁפָּט in all its consequences before the nations (first and second Songs) and before Israel (third Song), and he thereby brings the 'servant' Israel back to Yahweh, though Israel acknowledges this only after the fact (Isa. 53.4–6; cf. the closing oracle in 53.11aβ–12)."[70] YHWH's redemption of Israel, and consequently the nations, is thus mediated by the Servant who makes reparation for the people's offence to YHWH. This brings us to the fourth Song (Isa. 52.13–53.12).

In the fourth Song, the Servant's role becomes explicitly one of *Stellvertretung*[71] (place-taking) and vicarious suffering. Discussing the Servant's vicarious suffering, Janowski says that Isaiah 53 "tells of this prophetic Servant's vicarious surrender of life,[72] thus taking the position *post mortem servi Dei* […] In him it became clear to the people of Israel that their own salvation was the *undeserving fruit of another's deed:* 'Surely *our* sicknesses—*he* bore them' (53.4aα)."[73] For Janowski, Isaiah 53 reflects two different perspectives on the actions of the Servant: (1) the "we" group (53.1–11aα); and (2) YHWH (52.13–15; 53.11aβ–12). God's perspective has prominence in the Song as it both opens it (52.13–15) and closes it (53.10–12). From the perspective of the "we," the Servant has failed his double task (53.1–3; cf. Isa. 50.4–

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[67] For a stimulating discussion of the identities of the "servant" outside and inside the Servant Songs in Deutero-Isa, see Janowski, Bernd. 'He Bore Our Sins: Isaiah 53 and the Drama of Taking Another's Place,' in *The Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 in Jewish and Christian Sources* (eds. Bernd Janowski and Peter Stuhlmacher. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004) 48–74, at 57–60.

[68] Also v. 6: "to bring back the preserved of Israel," וּנְצִירֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְהָשִׁיב.

[69] Cf. Goldingay, *Isaiah 40–55*, 473f.

[70] Janowski, 'Isaiah 53,' 59. Accordingly, he also observes that "the Servant's vicarious role begins not in the fourth Servant Song but already with Yahweh's choice of the Servant in the first Song."

[71] As defined by Bernd Janowski in 'Isaiah 53.' Cf. Bailey, Daniel P. 'Concepts of *Stellvertretung* in the Interpretation of Isaiah 53,' in *Jesus and the Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 and Christian Origins* (eds. W. H. Bellinger Jr. and W. R. Farmer. Harrisburg: Trinity Press, 1998) 223–50.

[72] I do not find Janowski's conclusion on the identity of the "servant" within the four Songs as the cryptic figure of the prophet "Deutero-Isaiah" persuasive. Be that as it may, my overall argument does not depend on this particular issue (cf. von Rad, *Theology,* 2.260).

[73] Janowski, 'Isaiah 53,' 59f (italics original).

9). The "we" figures are described by language reminiscent of the Psalms of Lament (e.g., Pss. 31, 41) and concludes that they are presented as enemies of the Servant. Although they originally assessed the Servant's work through the logic of the "action-consequences connection"[74] (53.2–3, 4b, 6a), "[t]hey now realise that the Servant's suffering was the consequence not of his but of their actions, the actions of others"[75] (vv. 4–6), which constitutes the breakdown of their original logic and amounts to the "we" figures' confession of guilt.[76] This is in tune with God's perspective of the events, from which YHWH himself is the ultimate cause of the Servant's vicarious suffering: "Yahweh caused the iniquity of us all to strike (הִפְגִּיעַ) him" (v. 6b), and "But Yahweh *planned* (חָפֵץ) to crush him" (10aα).[77] The Servant's vicarious death was according to YHWH's plan, and it made compensation for Israel's guilt thus preparing the way for their being reconciled to God (cf. 53.12).

The concept of *Stellvertretung* is strong in the fourth Song. Two particular verses come to the fore: God's declaration in verse 10 and the "we" figures' confession (vv. 4–6, esp. v. 4). When the "we" realise that what happened to the Servant was YHWH's plan, they have their perspective on the Servant's suffering shifted and go on to express their newly found realisation with language of "place-taking," as especially conveyed by the מִן language in verse 5:

> But *he* was pierced *for our* transgressions;
>
> *he* was crushed *for our* iniquities;[78]
>
> the chastisement of our peace (שְׁלוֹם) was upon him,
>
> and with his stripes we are healed… (v. 5)
>
> Surely *our* griefs *he* has borne,
>
> and *our* sorrows *he* has carried… (v. 4a)

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[74] German: "Tun-Ergeben-Zusammenhang" (see Janowski, 'Isaiah 53,' 49, n. 3).

[75] Janowski, 'Isaiah 53,' 64. Both Bailey and Janowski have noticed the striking similarities between this dynamic and both the disciples' and Paul's realisation of Jesus salvific work. Bailey says: "Israel was unprepared for the Servant's exaltation and in no position to recognize the representation of its own fate in his sufferings at the time when they were actually occurring, needing instead God's word to break in and provide this recognition only later. By analogy we may consider it likely that the disciples, whether or not Jesus had prepared them to think of his mission in terms of Isaiah 53, were not able to recognize fully the extent to which it was their own sins that were being borne up to the cross (see, e.g., 1Pet. 2.24) until later, after the granting of the Holy Spirit." (Bailey, '*Stellvertretung,*' 249).

[76] The change of perspective is triggered by YHWH's oracles (52.13–15 and 53.10–12); cf. Westermann, *Isaiah 40–66,* 262–64.

[77] On the translation of this rendering of חָפֵץ, see Janowski, 'Isaiah 53,' 65, n. 35.

[78] The LXX renders the "place-taking" idea by διά + accusative constructions.

…the Lord has laid on him the iniquities of us all (v. 6c)[79]

In verse 10, the Servant's entire task and suffering is summarised by the term אָשָׁם (v. 10b). Its most common translations are "guilt offering" (NIV), "sin offering" (NJB), "offering for guilt" (ESV), "offering for guilt" (ASV, RSV), or "atoning sacrifice." So, several scholars have argued that the term conveys a sacrificial imagery here.[80] As a "guilt sacrifice," the Servant's life is offered as an atoning sacrifice pleasing to YHWH.[81] If one accepts this interpretation, אָשָׁם could be construed as yet another element in the *inclusio* between 53.10–12 and 52.13–15, where 52.15 says that the Servant "shall *sprinkle* (נזה) many nations."[82] Another alternative is offered by Janowski who argues that אָשָׁם should be understood from its non-cultic contexts "in which—as in Genesis 26.10 and 1 Samuel 6.3–4, 8, 17, etc.—guilt-incurring encroachments and their reparation are the theme […] Its meaning is determined by the *situation of obligation arising from guilt,* in which the guilty person must provide material compensation to discharge this guilt."[83] In this view, the substitutionary (*Stellvertretung*) actions and suffering of the Servant mean that he bore Israel's sins by offering his life as אָשָׁם,[84] the means of wiping out guilt.[85] The action and suffering of the Servant are declared successful by YHWH (53.10c–12),[86] as it

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[79] Commenting on vv. 4–6, Childs remarks: "What occurred was not some unfortunate tragedy of human history but actually formed the centre of the divine plan for the redemption of his people and indeed of the world." (Childs, *Isaiah,* 415).

[80] E.g., Smith, Gary V. *Isaiah 40–66* (NAC. Nashville: B&H, 2009) 458; Blenkinsopp, Joseph. 'The Sacrificial Life and Death of the Servant (Isaiah 52:13–53:12),' in *Essays in the Book of Isaiah* (Blenkinsopp, Joseph. FAT. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2019) 186–97; cf. D. Kellermann, "אָשָׁם," *TDOT* 1.429–37, at 435.

[81] Cf. Fohrer, G. 'Stellvertretung und Schuldopfer in Jes 52,13–53,12,' in *Studien zu alttestamentlichen Texten und Themen (1966-1972)* (BZAW 155, 1981) 24–43, also quoted by Janowski, 'Isaiah 53,' 67; Motyer, *Isaiah,* 439–41.

[82] If this is indeed the correct translation of נזה. The argument that rendering it as *sprinkle* heightens "the cultic context of the passage that never actually surfaces to the foreground" (Childs, *Isaiah,* 412f) is a circular one. If אָשָׁם indeed connotes a sacrificial idea, then נזה would simply constitute another element of the imagery evoked in the poetic pericope. Another element that should be factored in is the suggestion made by several scholars as to the presence of "new Moses" imagery in Deutero-Isa as part of the larger "new Exodus" paradigm of deliverance. Gignilliat's conclusion is thus justified: "Though the thrust of Isaiah 52.13–53.12 does not hinge on the weight one gives to its cultic imagery, the echoes of the Moses tradition should allow the reader to catch the cultic overtones (Gignilliat, Mark. *Paul and Isaiah's Servants: Paul's Theological Reading of Isaiah 40–66 in 2 Corinthians 5.14–6.10* [London: T&T Clark, 2007] 80; cf. von Rad, *Theology,* 2.261f; Baltzer, *Deutero-Isaiah,* 21–22, at 393—who goes as far as to identify the Servant with Moses). Childs and Janowski's argument (below) for non-cultic language in Isa. 52.13–53.12 relies heavily on the hypothesis that the priestly material is later than the composition of Isaiah 53.

[83] Janowski, 'Isaiah 53,' 68f; cf. R. Knierim, "אָשָׁם," *TLOT* 1.191–95, at 192, (2); Baltzer, *Deutero-Isaiah,* 421; Childs, *Isaiah,* 418f.

[84] Cf. *BDB* §912; Westermann, *Isaiah 40–66*.

[85] Cf. Stettler, *Kolosserhymnus,* 282.

[86] Cf. Groves has argued for an atoning meaning of the Servant's work in the phrases "to bear guilt" (סבל עון) and "to carry sin" (נשא חטא) in Isa. 53.11–12 (Groves, J. Alan. 'Atonement in Isaiah 53: "For He Bore the Sins of Many,"' in *The Glory of the Atonement: Biblical, Historical and Practical Perspectives* [eds. Charles E. Hill and Frank A. James III. Downers Grove: IVP, 2004]).

was already announced in the "prologue" (52.13–15).[87] The opening formula "Behold, my servant…" in 52.13 connects the fourth Song to 42.1–4[88] where the task of the Servant is revealed.[89] Read together, the narrative shows that the Servant's mission is fully accomplished despite the opposition encountered along the way:[90] he had been despised by Israel (49.7, 4), beaten and mocked (50.6–7), but trusted YHWH (50.5, 9) and was finally vindicated and exalted (50.8; 53.10–12; 52.13–15). The success (שָׂכַל)[91] of the Servant consists in bearing the sins of many, and he has brought forth justice (righteousness) to them and saved both Israel and the nations (53.10b–13; cf. 42.4, 6; 49.5–6, 8).

In either interpretation of אָשָׁם, however, my argument that the offering of the Servant's life could be conceptualised as the "compensation" for guilty Israel stands. In either interpretation, the use of אָשָׁם presupposes the offering of innocent "blood." One possible way of understanding what אָשָׁם means is that of "compensation" (or "reparation," "restitution") for sin.[92] Jacob Milgrom argues that "the context of *'āšām* is a legal situation: damage has been done, and restitution is ordered,"[93] and then translates the nouns as "reparation, reparation offering." Writing about the theological conclusion of his findings, he says: "If the cause, the verb *'āšam* 'feel guilt,' leads to the consequence, the noun *'āšām* 'reparation, reparation offering,' then the feeling of guilt can only be the first step in seeking reconciliation with God. He also demands 'reparation' both to him and to the defrauded person before his expiation can be won."[94] Commenting on Isaiah 53.10, Janowski says: "In his actions and suffering the Servant takes up an 'alien' fate that has its full effect on him […] in order to release others from the evil consequences of their evil actions."[95] In such a dramatic "role reversal" the Servant fulfils his mission to save both Israel—to bring them back to YHWH—and the nations (cf. 52.14–15), as the contexts of the Songs make clear.[96] The "arm of the Lord" takes the initiative to save Israel by providing the right compensation for the people's sin in order to effect Israel's forgiveness.

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[87] Cf. Groves, 'Atonement in Isaiah 53,' 61–89.
[88] The הֵן formula is also used to close the third song, bracketing the first three songs.
[89] Cf. Westermann, *Isaiah 40–55,* 258f.
[90] Cf. Westermann, *Isaiah 40–55,* 258f.
[91] Cf. Jer. 23.5.
[92] E.g., Lev. 5.15–26; Num. 5.6–8; 1 Sam. 6.3; cf. Kellermann, *TDOT* 1.429–37; Knierim, *TLOT* 1.191–95; Smith, *Isaiah 40–55,* 457f; Goldingay, *Isaiah 40–55,* 510–12; Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 40–55,* 354f.
[93] Milgrom, J. *Leviticus 1–16: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 3. New York: Doubleday) 327.
[94] Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16,* 345, cf. 339–78.
[95] Janowski, 'Isaiah 53,' 66.
[96] Idem. Commenting on Isa. 53.10, Childs, *Isaiah,* 418, writes: "Yet the point of the Isaianic text is that God himself took the initiative in accepting the servant's life as the means of Israel's forgiveness […] When seen in the light of the unfolding drama of God's plan to redeem Israel in chapters 40–55, the vicarious role of the

To summarise: in the courtroom controversy in Deutero-Isaiah, its dynamic is one where God stands against Israel and then for Israel against everything that is against himself and his people. When God emerges victorious, he makes arrangement for reconciliation, "this is the *promise* of having God as one's accuser."[97] In effecting such reconciliation, YHWH commissions his Servant for the task of establishing his מִשְׁפָּט to the nations and save both Israel and the Gentiles (49.6). The Servant's task is successful when his vicarious suffering and work offered as אָשָׁם (restitution) for Israel's sin is pleasing (יִשְׂבָּע) to YHWH (53.11), and Israel finally submits in confession (53.4–6).[98] The "reinstatement" of שָׁלוֹם is achieved by means of the vicarious death of YHWH's servant.[99] Its effects, however, are not limited to the YHWH-Israel relationship, but extended to the nations.

5.4.4 שָׁלוֹם in Deutero–Isaiah

At the heart of the "we" figures' confession there is a statement of peace restored: "the chastisement of our peace (שָׁלוֹם/εἰρήνη) was upon him" (53.5c). מוּסַר שְׁלוֹמֵנוּ (v. 5) is an objective genitive and so conveys the idea: "the punishment that won our peace."[100]

In the narrative of Deutero-Isaiah, שָׁלוֹם means "peace with God," the restoration of a disrupted relationship between God and Israel (or reconciliation) accomplished by the Servant's vicarious work; it includes the forgiveness of sins, the annulment of their consequences, and the re-establishment of righteousness that makes peace with God possible (cf. Isa. 32.17, 1; 48.18; 54.13–14; 60.17).[101]

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servant lies at the very heart of the prophetic message and its removal can only result in losing the exegetical key that unlocks the awesome mystery of these chapters."

[97] Prothro, *Both Judge and Justifier,* 78 (italics original): "The positive effect of these affirmations [of Israel's punishment], however, is that the God who is powerful and faithful to his threats to punish is also equally powerful to his promises to restore." Cf. Nielsen, *Prosecutor and Judge,* 76f.

[98] This dynamic of God's objective reconciliation and the need for the recipient's subjective response to it is paralleled in the NT message of reconciliation where although God has actively obtained reconciliation through Christ's sacrifice on the cross the individuals are also exhorted to respond to it in faith (cf. 2Cor. 5.18–20; Col. 1.20–23).

[99] Writing on the need of atonement through blood sacrifice as the basis of re-establishment of שָׁלוֹם between sinners and God in the OT and early Judaism in his analysis of the background of reconciliation/peacemaking through blood in Colossians 1.20, Stettler, *Kolosserhymnus,* 281, says: "Israels Feindschaft gegenüber Gott, die durch Israels Sünden entstand, wird also nach gemein-frühjüdischer Anschauung durch den Sühnekult (und nur durch ihn) überwunden; die Sühne schafft Frieden mit Gott, versöhnt Israel mit ihm." He mentions Isaiah 43.3f, 22–25, 52.13–53.12 in this context (*Kolosserhymnus,* 282).

[100] Cf. Westermann, *Isaiah 40–55,* 263f.

[101] Cf. Philip J. Nel. "שׁלם," *NIDOTTE* 4.130–35, at 132, 2.d, e; F. J. Stendebach, "שָׁלוֹם," *TDOT* 15.13–49, at 34.

The imagery of reconciliation in Deutero-Isaiah reveal the striking contrast between the passivity and proneness to rebellion of the "we" and YHWH's active initiative in bringing them home through the Servant's ministry: the "we" confess they had all gone astray, but "YHWH laid on *him* the iniquity of us all" (53.6), and "when he made *his* life an אָשָׁם, he will see *his* seed" (53.10). Israel had forfeited שָׁלוֹם by their unfaithfulness (48.18), and despite their being rescued from political captivity, still remained alienated from YHWH on account of their ongoing unfaithfulness: there is no שָׁלוֹם for the wicked (48.22).[102] It is in this context of spiritual alienation from YHWH (48.18)[103] that the Servant re-enters the narrative (49.1–6). שָׁלוֹם is what the people experience once YHWH removes his wrath from them (51.17), the condition of renewed relationship with YHWH. All the aspects of Israel's new standing, their call to holiness (52.1–2), the proclamation of eschatological peace (52.7), their redemption (52.9), and their exodus-like deliverance (52.11–12) are the result of the Servant's vicarious suffering and death (52.13, "Behold, my servant…"), "the chastisement of our peace (שָׁלוֹם/εἰρήνη) was upon him" (53.5c). Integral to the "good tidings" of YHWH's return to his people, future שָׁלוֹם is announced (52.7) and through the Servant it is accomplished (53.5).

The eschatological perspective of Deutero-Isaiah however expands the effects of Israel-YHWH reconciliation, giving it a cosmic scope: "[T]he dimensions in which Deutero-Isaiah speaks of the *šālôm* of Yahweh transcend the more obvious political vision of pre-Israelite prophecy of *šālôm*. The focus is on a new exodus, a fundamental new salvific event described in the categories of creation. Here *šālôm* has become an eschatological concept."[104] The future שָׁלוֹם proclaimed in 52.7 and accomplished by the Servant in 53.5c is confirmed and secured by a covenant of peace (54.10)[105] and enjoyed in their eschatological exodus-like return (55.12).

Thus, in a way it is possible to say that God reconciled Israel to himself, making peace through the blood (אָשָׁם) of his Servant.

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[102] Watts, *Isaiah 34–66*, 725.
[103] Brueggemann, *Isaiah 40–66,* 108f.
[104] Stendebach, *TDOT* 15.35.
[105] "The *bᵉrît šalôm* is, therefore, the promissory covenant of God given to his restored people as an eternal blessing and salvation." (Nel, *NIDOTTE* 4.132). Cf. Westermann, *Isaiah 40–55,* 275f.

5.5 Blood and Peace in The Maccabean Martyrology

The analysis of the Maccabean Martyrdom tradition below aims to show that the Jewish Martyrology as developed in 2 and 4 Maccabees displays a similar paradigm to that found in Isaiah 53, and thus stands as evidence that pre-Christian Jewish groups did indeed conceptualise the death of innocent suffering figures vicariously as a means to achieve reconciliation between God and his people. Given such a paradigm, which, combined with the widely acknowledged significance of the Maccabean martyrdom tradition for the study of Christ's death in the New Testament,[106] it provides a plausible frame for the study of "peacemaking through blood" in Colossians 1.20b. Moreover, the similarities between the Maccabean paradigm and that of Isaiah 53 suggest the possibility (although not provable) of the influence of the latter on the former.

5.5.1 Isaiah 53 and Vicarious Suffering between Deutero-Isaiah and the New Testament

Writing on the reception history of Isaiah 53 in pre-Christian Judaism, Martin Hengel (with the collaboration of Daniel P. Bailey) has concluded that "the demonstrated uses and echoes of this text are enough to suggest that traditions of suffering and atoning eschatological messianic figures were current in Palestinian Judaism, and that Jesus and the earliest Church could have known and appealed to them."[107] Although the focus of Hengel's essay is specifically the question of the messianic interpretation of Isaiah 53 in pre-Christian Judaism, his analysis bears on our survey of the Maccabean martyrology in that it reveals both the awareness of Isaiah 53 in pre-Christian Jewish writings, and also that some types of Jewish writings (especially the Hebrew [both MT and 1QIsa[a]] and Greek texts of Isaiah 53, but arguably also Daniel 11–12,[108] the

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[106] Scholars who interpret Christ's ministry and death as modelled on, or at least influenced by, the Maccabean Martyrology include McKnight, Scot. *Jesus and His Death: Historiography, the Historical Jesus, and Atonement Theory* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2005) 168–70, at 178f; van Henten, J. W. 'Jewish Martyrdom and Jesus' Death,' in *Deutungen des Todes Jesu im Neuen Testament* (eds. J. Frey and J. Schröter. WUNT 181. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005) 139–58; de Jonge, M. *Christology in Context: The Earliest Christian Response to Jesus* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1988) 179–84; Dunn, James D. G. *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006) 207–33; Grayston, Kenneth. 'Atonement and Martyrdom,' in *Early Christian Thought in its Jewish Context* (eds. John M. G. Barclay and John P. M. Sweet. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996) 250–63; Williams, Jarvis J. *Maccabean Martyr Traditions in Paul's Theology of Atonement: Did Martyr Theology Shape Paul's Conception of Jesus's Death?* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2010).

[107] Hengel, M. with Bailey, D. 'The Effective History of Isaiah 53 in the Pre-Christian Period,' in *The Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 in Jewish and Christian Sources* (eds. Bernd Janowski and Peter Stuhlmacher. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004) 75–146, at 76.

[108] Cf. Ginsberg, H. L. 'The Oldest Interpretation of the Suffering Servant,' *VT* 3 (1953) 400–04.

Aramaic Apocryphon of Levi 4Q540–541, and the *Testament of Benjamin* 3.8) did interpret the Servant of the fourth Song as an innocent suffering figure who bears the sins of others vicariously.[109] Hengel also notices the likely influence of Isaiah 53 on the Maccabean martyrology of 2 and 4 Maccabees. He writes that the idea of individuals dying vicariously is foreign to the Old Testament, with Isaiah 53 as "the only real exception."[110] Traditionally in the Old Testament, he goes on, individuals die because of their own sins. "But all this changed suddenly with the religious crisis under Antiochus IV and the Maccabean revolt."[111] As we show below, the motif of the vicarious death of the righteous is particularly strong in 2 and 4 Maccabees. Commenting on these books, Hengel writes that "Isaiah 53, as a unique text in the Old Testament, may have helped this development along, though at first the collective understanding stood in the foreground, and only certain aspects of the whole text exerted an influence. It also needs to be remembered, as already said, that the pre-Christian Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha contain almost no literal scriptural citations."[112] This last comment prepares the interpreter for the importance of allusions in the study of the material.

Hengel's analysis shows that the interpretation of the servant of Isaiah 53 as an innocent suffering figure who bears the sins of others vicariously can be found among certain Jewish groups at the time of the composition of 2 Maccabees—obviously even more so at the time of post-Christian 4 Maccabees. Even if the direct influence of Isaiah 53 on the Maccabean martyrology cannot be proved definitively,[113] textual and conceptual analyses of the sources do make such hypothesis highly likely.[114] For instance, writing on the "blending" of Isaiah 53 tradition and

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[109] Hengel, 'Effective History,' *passim*.

[110] Hengel, 'Effective History,' 93. Here he quotes K. Koch who described Isaiah 53 as the "erratischer Block" (Koch, K. 'Sühne und Sündenvergebung um die Wende von der exilischen zur nachexilischen Zeit,' *EvTh* 26 (1966) 217–39, esp. 237).

[111] Idem.

[112] Hengel, 'Effective History,' 96. Cf. Blenkinsopp, Joseph. 'The Suffering Servant, the Book of Daniel, and Martyrdom,' in *Essays in the Book of Isaiah* (Blenkinsopp, Joseph. FAT. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2019) 198–215, at 212–15. Given such overall emphasis in the Old Testament, it is easy to conceive how the authors of Maccabees, who have a rather pious Jewish agenda, would have found in texts such as Isaiah 53 and Daniel 11–12 justification for conceptualising the martyrs' death vicariously, on behalf of others. The emphases on the validity of Deuteronomy's tradition and the Hasmonean's commitment to the Torah are especially true of 2 Maccabees (cf. deSilva, David A. *The Jewish Teachers of Jesus, James, and Jude: What Earliest Christianity Learned from the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012] *passim*).

[113] But see Laato, Antti. *Who Is the Servant of the Lord? Jewish and Christian Interpretations on Isaiah 53 from Antiquity to the Middle Ages* (Studies in Rewritten Bible 4. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2013) 49–71, who dedicates chapter 3 of his study to argue that Isaiah 53 "played a major role in Jewish martyr theology during the Maccabean period and the later related texts (2 and 4 Maccabees)." (p. 52).

[114] Hengel, 'Effective History,' 76, comments: "It would indeed be strange if this unique text, Isaiah 53, had left no tangible effects over a period of more than 500 years during which the Jewish people were beset by heavy sufferings." Similarly, Blenkinsopp, 'Suffering Servant,' 209.

Maccabean martyrology "behind the early church's interpretation of Jesus death,"[115] deSilva says that "[t]he paradigm of the Maccabean martyrs, especially as developed in the trajectory leading from 2 Maccabees toward 4 Maccabees, reinforces such a reading of Isaiah 53 as the divine appointment of a righteous individual's death to be suffered on behalf of the people."[116]

5.5.2 The Second and Fourth Books of Maccabees

God's relation to his people is not directly conceptualised in the Maccabean literature within the *rîb*-pattern framework as outlined above.[117] However, it is framed by the same Deuteronomic covenantal theology whereby the people are justly punished on account of their unfaithfulness to the covenant (cf. Deut. 29–32).[118] Within such a framework, the martyrs' plight is ultimately a consequence of the people's guilt (2Macc. 7.18, 32, 37–38). However, their death is presented as both "innocent" and "voluntary:" having been given the option to avoid it by succumbing to the authorities' demands, they choose to die in obedience to God's law (cf. 2Macc. 6.18–20, 30; 7.2; cf. 4Macc. 6.28).[119] So, they offer "innocent" and "voluntary" lives to God on behalf of the disobedient nation in order to avert God's wrath and effect reconciliation

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[115] deSilva, *Jewish Teachers*, 171.

[116] deSilva, *Jewish Teachers*, 172.

Scholars have also found parallels to the Maccabean martyrdom tradition in the Greek concept of "noble death" (cf. Hengel, Martin. *The Atonement: The Origins of the Doctrine in the New Testament* [London: SCM, 1981] 9–31; Seeley, David. *The Noble Death: Graeco-Roman Martyrology and Paul's Concept of Salvation* [JSNTSup 28. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990]). Some go as far as to conclude that the Maccabean martyrology is "clearly modelled on the death of Socrates" (Collins, Adela Y. 'Finding Meaning in the Death of Jesus,' *Journal of Religion* 78 [1998] 175–96, at 181; cf. Finlan, Stephen. *The Background and Content of Paul's Cultic Atonement Metaphors* [SBC. Atlanta: SBC, 2004] 197), thus dismissing the arguably essential role of the OT in the development of the tradition. Although there might be some elements of the Greek "noble death" on the Maccabean martyrology, it is hardly its sole influence. The authors of Maccabees clearly connect the death of the martyrs with the OT tradition (Isaac, Daniel, and Daniel's three friends, for instance, cf. 4Macc. 16.16–23; 18.10–19). Furthermore, the influence of Deuteronomistic and Levitical sacrificial traditions on the Maccabean martyrology have been widely acknowledged. The Greek concept of the "noble death," therefore, should be seen, perhaps, as a "supporting background" (see deSilva, David A. *4 Maccabees: Introduction and Commentary on the Greek Text in Codex Sinaiticus* [Septuagint Commentary Series. Leiden: Brill, 2006] 140)—especially for the theological concept of vicarious death of innocent righteous as a means to achieve reconciliation between God and his covenantal people. deSilva, *4 Maccabees,* xiii, remarks that "[a]lthough well-acquainted with many topics of Greco-Roman philosophy […] the author's philosophy is the way of life and the values taught by the Torah, and his point of reference is always the Jewish Scriptures."

[117] The *rîb*-pattern might, however, be implied (see the motif of divine wrath in 2Macc. 7.38 and 4Macc. 6.22; see below).

[118] Cf. deSilva, David A. 'Martyrs and Martyrdom in Jewish Late Antiquity,' in *Encyclopedia of the Historical Jesus* (ed. Craig A. Evans. New York and London: Routledge, 2008) 386–93, at 387; Idem. *Jewish Teachers,* 160, and *passim*.

[119] Cf. Moore, George F. *Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era,* 2 vols. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1927) 548. The *voluntary* character of the Martyrs' death is seen in that they could indeed have avoided their fate had they chosen to transgress God's law (cf. deSilva, *4 Maccabees,* 138).

between God and his people (2Macc. 7.33; cf. vv. 30–38); we are assured that such an offer is effective (2Macc. 8.5). The connection between bloodshed and the principle of exchange of one life for the life of another (ἀντίψυχον, 4Macc 6.29; 17.22) is made through imagery from the Levitical sacrificial system, "both because it provides a means for describing reconciliation with God and because of the similarities between the ritual violence of sacrifice and the fate of Jewish martyrs."[120] Another element of the martyrs' paradigm is their hope of vindication through resurrection (2Macc. 7.9, 11, 14, 23, 29, 36).

The efficacy of the martyrs' vicarious death to reconcile God to his people is made more explicit in the later book of 4 Maccabees.[121] Two passages are particularly relevant. In 4 Maccabees 6.27–29, Eleazar is about to breathe his last when he says:

LXX 4Macc. 6.27–29	*RSV 4Macc. 6.27–29*
[27] σὺ οἶσθα θεέ παρόν μοι σῴζεσθαι βασάνοις καυστικαῖς ἀποθνήσκω διὰ τὸν νόμον	[27] "You know, O God, that though I might have saved myself, I am dying in burning torments for the sake of the law.
[28] ἵλεως γενοῦ τῷ ἔθνει σου **ἀρκεσθεὶς τῇ ἡμετέρᾳ ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν δίκῃ**	[28] Be merciful to your people, and let our punishment suffice for them.
[29] καθάρσιον αὐτῶν ποίησον τὸ ἐμὸν **αἷμα** καὶ **ἀντίψυχον** αὐτῶν λαβὲ τὴν ἐμὴν ψυχήν	[29] Make my blood their purification, and take my life in exchange for theirs."

The sequence in this short passage is straightforward: (1) Eleazar's death is "voluntary" ("though I might have saved myself," v. 27); (2) he asks God that his punishment (δίκῃ) may be sufficient (ἀρκεσθείς) on behalf of the nation (v. 28); (3) he then asks that his blood may purify (καθάρσιος) the nation (v. 29a); (4) Eleazar finally offers his life in exchange (ἀντίψυχον) for guilty Israel (v. 29b); (5) the result is that God would change his attitude towards the nation (v. 28a).[122]

[120] deSilva, *Jewish Teachers*, 165.

[121] 4 Maccabees was most likely written sometime between mid to late first century CE (deSilva, *4 Maccabees,* xiv–xvii). So, its import to the study of the NT letters lies in that it reflects a Jewish theological articulation of the effects of a righteous individual's death on the relationship between God and his people.

[122] Cf. deSilva, *4 Maccabees,* 147.

Similar language is used later in the book when the author provides a summary of the effect of the martyrs' deaths in 17.7–24. In verses 21–22, he says:

LXX 4Macc. 17.21–22	*RSV 4Macc. 17.21–22*
21 καὶ τὸν τύραννον τιμωρηθῆναι καὶ τὴν πατρίδα καθαρισθῆναι ὥσπερ **ἀντίψυχον γεγονότας τῆς τοῦ ἔθνους ἁμαρτίας**	21 the tyrant was punished, and the homeland purified — they having become, as it were, a ransom for the sin of our nation.
22 καὶ **διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τῶν εὐσεβῶν ἐκείνων** καὶ **τοῦ ἱλαστηρίου τοῦ θανάτου αὐτῶν** ἡ θεία πρόνοια τὸν Ισραηλ προκακωθέντα διέσωσεν	22 And through the blood of those devout ones and their death as an expiation, divine Providence preserved Israel that previously had been afflicted.

The most striking feature of this passage is the use of ἱλαστήριον in verse 22: "their death as a ἱλαστήριον." The controversy on the meaning of ἱλαστήριον (whether it means "propitiation" or "mercy seat") is extensive, and it is not within the purview of this study.[123] It might suffice to say here that either way, the effect of both the "propitiatory gift" and the "sacrifice of atonement" is fundamentally the same: God's wrath is averted and his disposition towards human individuals becomes favourable.[124] David deSilva comments on the "expiatory death" of the Maccabean martyrs that,

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[123] Cf. H.-G. Link, C. Brown, "ἱλάσκομαι, κτλ," *NIDNTT* 3.148–66, at 163–66; F. Büchsel, "ἱλαστήριον," *TDNT* 3.318–23; J. Roloff, "ἱλαστήριον," *EDNT* 2.185f; Morris, Leon. *The Apostolic Preaching of the Cross* (London: Tyndale Press, 1955) 125–85; Manson, T. W. 'ἱλαστήριον,' *JTS* 46 (1945) 1–10; Bailey, Daniel P. *Jesus as the Mercy Seat: The Semantics and Theology of Paul's Use of* Hilasterion *in Romans 3:25* (PhD thesis. Cambridge: University of Cambridge, 1999); Meyer, B. 'The pre-Pauline Formula in Rom. 3.25–26a.,' *NTS* 29.2 (1983) 198–208, at 206.

[124] deSilva, *4 Maccabees,* 251. However, Carter, *Forgiveness,* 64f, remarks that "[a]n analysis of the verb ἱλάσκομαι and its cognates in the Septuagint and other Jewish writings of the Hellenistic period reveals a perceptual shift in understanding how divine atonement works, inasmuch as ἱλάσκομαι and its cognates are freely used with God as the direct object of the verb to refer to appeasing, placating or propitiating God in a way that כִּפֶּר is never used in the Hebrew Bible. The concept of appeasement clearly lies within the semantic range of the Hebrew verb, as it is used in the sense of placating human anger in Gen. 32.21 and Prov. 16.14. Furthermore, there is no denying that it is the presence of divine anger that renders the making of atonement absolutely necessary, lest the people be consumed by it (Exod. 32.11–35; Num. 17.11 [16.46]; 25.10–13)." The use of the noun ἱλαστήριον in 4Macc. 17.21–22 seems to follow the same overall Hellenistic tendency. Commenting on the Hebrew verb כפר, Alan Groves concludes that [w]hatever the precise nuance of its mechanism, however, the result of atonement, was always to prevent or arrest the wrath of God from flaming out and consuming Israel while he dwelt in their midst" and that "[a]t times, this result may be expressed in terms of forgiveness, cleansing, consecration or redemption, but in each case the bottom-line connotation of the

> The connection between the violent shedding of blood ([4Macc.] 6.29; 17.22) and the exchange of a life for the life of another (*antipsychon*) resonates with the fundamental principle undergirding the Levitical sacrificial system, namely that the blood of sacrificial victims was provided by God for the sake of making atonement between God and God's people: 'as life, it is blood that atones for a life' (ἀντὶ τῆς ψυχῆς; Lev. 17.11).[125]

Thus, the conceptualisation of the martyrs' sacrifice as a beneficial death for others combines Levitical sacrificial language (4Macc. 6.29; 17.22; cf. Lev. 17.11) with the framework of God's covenant (2Macc 7.37–38; 8.5; cf. Deut. 29–32). The twofold result of the Martyrs' death is, (1) the change of attitude of God towards his people, from wrath to reconciliation[126] (2Macc. 7.33; cf. 8.5, 29) and deliverance (4Macc. 17.12); and (2) a return of the people to covenantal obedience (4Macc. 18.3–4).[127] H. Anderson has observed that "[d]octrinally, the most significant contribution of 4 Maccabees is the development of the notion that the suffering and death of the martyred righteous had redemptive efficacy for all Israel and secured God's grace and pardon for his people."[128] Although this is more explicit in 4 Maccabees, it is in fact a development on the same themes already present in 2 Maccabees.

Two important Jewish backgrounds have most likely informed the author of Maccabees' interpretation of the martyrs' death: (1) the development of the tradition of the violent death of the prophets (cf. Neh. 9.26);[129] and, (2) more relevant to our study, the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53:[130]

> That the death of an individual could atone for the transgression of the many remains a possible reading of Isa. 52.13–53.12, which to a later reader might appear to be spoken not by the Gentile nations of Israel but by sinful Israelites of a particular

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result is the same: preventing the outbreak of Yahweh's wrath. I am proposing, therefore, that atonement is best understood as made by an act that purifies something in such a manner that the outbreak of Yahweh's holy wrath is either arrested or prevented, whichever is appropriate in a particular situation." (Groves, 'Atonement in Isaiah 53,' 65, 67).

[125] deSilva, 'Martyrs,' 387f; cf. deSilva, *4 Maccabees,* 147f.

[126] Cf. Porter, Stanley E. *Καταλλάσσω in Ancient Greek Literature, with Reference to the Pauline Writings* (EFN 5. Córdoba: Ediciones El Almendro, 1994) 60f; this twofold effect is also reflected in Colossians (e.g., Col. 2.6).

[127] Commenting on 2Macc. 8, Schwartz says: "…this chapter begins to reap the benefit of the previous two: after the blood of martyrs caused God's wrath to turn to mercy (8.5), it is clear that the normal covenantal relationship is restored, according to which the devout Jews are protected by their all-powerful ruler, no matter how bad the odds. The point is made both by Judas' citation of examples from the past (vv. 19–20) and by the outcome of this story itself." (Schwartz, Daniel R. *2 Maccabees* [CEJL. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008] 323).

[128] Anderson, H. '4 Maccabees (First Century A.D.): A New Translation and Introduction,' in *OTP,* 2 vols. (ed. James H. Charlesworth. London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1983) 2.531–64, at 539.

[129] deSilva, 'Martyrs,' 388.

[130] deSilva, 'Martyrs,' 390f.

> righteous person within Israel whose suffering and death are made (by himself, 53.10b, and by God, 53.6b) and offering for the sins of the collective whole.[131]

The parallels between the Maccabean Martyrology and Isaiah 53 are apparent:[132] (a) the humiliation, suffering and death of the Servant (Isa. 52.14; 53.3) parallels the entire plight of the martyrs (esp. 4Macc.); (b) the idea that the voluntary death of a righteous person was effective in changing the God-human relationship (Isa. 53.4–6, 8, 10, 12b; 2Macc. 8.5); (c) related to the previous one, the idea of *Stellvertretung,* or the taking-place type of sacrifice (Isa. 53.4–6; 4Macc. 6.28–29); (d) the efficacy of the offering (Isa. 53.10b–11; 2 Macc 7.33, 37–38; 8.5; 4 Macc. 6.28; 17.22b); (e) the final vindication of the innocent martyrs (Isa. 53.10b–12; 2Macc. 7.9, 11, 14, 23, 29, 36); and (f) the proclamation of the innocent deaths' achievement (Isa. 53.12a; 4Macc.).[133] Furthermore, the same Deuteronomic tradition underlies both texts, wherein breach of the covenant leads to a strained relationship with God.

The cultic overtones of the martyrs' blood are conceptualised in both the second and the fourth book of Maccabees. In 4 Maccabees 6.29, blood is given a purifying essence, thus invoking sacrificial and cultic imagery. In 2 Maccabees 8.3, blood functions as a metonymy for the personal sacrifice offered by the martyrs. There Judas prays that God would "hear the blood that was crying unto him," echoing Genesis 4.10.[134] On the basis of the Deuteronomic tradition underlying the narrative of the Maccabees,[135] Schwartz suggests that Deuteronomy 32 might also be in the background of Judas' prayer here, particularly Deuteronomy 32.43, "for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries" (cf. 2Macc. 7.31–38). The message of reconciliation is thus presented in the context of the Deuteronomic tradition. In 2 Maccabees 7.6, the seven brothers encourage one another by quoting the second line of Deuteronomy 32.36: "'The Lord God is watching over us and in truth has compassion on us, as Moses declared in his song which bore witness against the people to their faces, when he said, '*And he will have compassion on his servants*.'"[136] (2Macc. 7.6, italics added). The first line of LXX Deuteronomy 32.36 contains the promise of God's judgement on his people "ὅτι

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[131] deSilva, *4 Maccabees,* 139.

[132] Cf. a similar list in deSilva, *4 Maccabees,* 148.

[133] For the relation between Isaiah 53 and the Maccabean Martyrology, cf. further Williams, *Maccabean Martyr,* 41f, 72–84; deSilva, *4 Maccabees,* 148; deSilva, 'Martyrs,' 390–92; Goldstein, Jonathan A. *2 Maccabees: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 41A. Garden City: Doubleday & Company) 293f.

[134] Gen. 4.10 is also quoted by Philo who interprets "blood" in reference to Lev. 17.11 as "the essence of life" (Philo, *The Worse Attacks the Better,* 47, 69, 79–80).

[135] On the Deuteronomic tradition in the Maccabees, see Schwartz, *2 Maccabees,* 21–23; deSilva, *4 Maccabees,* 134–37.

[136] This is a word-by-word quotation of LXX Deut. 32.26aβ: "καὶ ἐπὶ τοῖς δούλοις αὐτοῦ παρακληθήσεται."

κρινεῖ κύριος τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ." God's judgement is a consequence of his wrath aroused by the people's covenantal unfaithfulness (cf. Deut. 31.16–17, 29; 32.21). Thus, interpreting the allusion to Deuteronomy metaleptically, 2 Maccabees 7.6 reflects the pattern, (a) *God's negative disposition* (expressed by God's judgement presupposed in 2 Maccabees 7.6, but explicit in the original context of the quote) and (b) a change on God's disposition into a favourable one (expressed by the verb παρακαλέω). Schwartz translates παρακληθήσεται in 2 Maccabees 7.6 as he "is becoming reconciled."[137] Regardless of the translation in 7.6, the expectation of verse 6 is fulfilled in verse 33, where the words of the youngest brother reflect the same pattern "God's negative disposition/God's positive disposition," only now the first half is made explicit through the language of wrath, and the second element is an allusion to the same text of Deuteronomy 32.36. However, now, καταλλαγήσεται is substituted for παρακληθήσεται:

LXX 2Macc. 7.6	*LXX 2Macc. 7.33*
ὁ κύριος ὁ θεὸς ἐφορᾷ καὶ ταῖς ἀληθείαις ἐφ᾽ ἡμῖν παρακαλεῖται καθάπερ διὰ τῆς κατὰ πρόσωπον ἀντιμαρτυρούσης ᾠδῆς διεσάφησεν Μωυσῆς λέγων **καὶ ἐπὶ τοῖς δούλοις αὐτοῦ *παρακληθήσεται***	εἰ δὲ χάριν ἐπιπλήξεως καὶ παιδείας ὁ ζῶν κύριος ἡμῶν βραχέως ἐπώργισται **καὶ πάλιν *καταλλαγήσεται* τοῖς ἑαυτοῦ δούλοις**

In Schwartz' words: "The promise of reconciliation reappears in our v. 33, in the words of the seventh son—thus framing this chapter—and it also shows up again at 8.29; in both cases the fact of allusion to our verse is clinched by the fact that the reference to 'reconciliation' comes together, as in Deuteronomy, with terming the Jews God's 'servants' (δοῦλοι)."[138]

The use of καταλλάσσω to refer to the nature of the change affected by the sacrifice of the martyrs is yet another important contribution of the Maccabean Martyrdom tradition. This is relevant because for the first time the καταλλάσσ- word-group is used theologically to spell out the effects of the atoning death of righteous individuals who die vicariously on behalf of

[137] Schwartz, *2 Maccabees,* 296.
[138] Schwartz, *2 Maccabees,* 302f.

others, namely: it makes peace between God and his people for whom the martyrs died.[139] Although the influence of Isaiah 53 on the Maccabees cannot be definitively established despite the apparent parallels, it seems clear that both traditions share the same motif of the vicarious atoning suffering/death of an innocent figure(s) effectively resulting in the re-establishment of peace between God and human beings.[140] The καταλλάσσ- word-group is used in the Maccabees to convey concepts firmly grounded in Levitical and Deuteronomic traditions. Even if the influence of Isaiah is discarded, the reconciliation message of the Maccabees is articulated within the same framework of vicarious death of righteous individuals.[141]

In summary, the Maccabean literature shows that Jewish theologising had a place for the conceptualisation of the violent shedding of the blood of a righteous person being offered on behalf of (for the sake of) another, just as Colossians does (cf. 4Macc. was mostly likely written between late first century and early second century CE). The Maccabean tradition shows that Jewish writers at the time had already made the conceptual move from the effectiveness of "animal sacrifice" to the conceptualisation of the effectiveness and acceptability of a "human death" and its effectiveness in changing the God-human relationship. Although the influence of Isaiah 53 on the Maccabean martyrology is not provable, it could well have been an important staging-post on the way to such a paradigm shift.

5.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, I first showed that Deutero-Isaiah contains a set of courtroom controversies wherein God stands against his people and then for his people against everything else. But they both coalesce into one: the work of redemption brought forth by YHWH's Servant towards Israel proclaims YHWH's rights and sovereignty over history, both before Israel (by saving them) and before the nations (by defeating them together with their god-idols). Through the vicarious suffering and death of the Servant, universal redemption is brought about. In this

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[139] The use of καταλλάσσω in the Maccabees reflects the idea that individuals initiate the process of reconciliation in which the angered God (the offended party) is reconciled to human beings (the offenders) by having his wrath appeased with sacrifices (cf. Porter, *Καταλλάσσω,* 61f).

[140] This conclusion should caution the New Testament interpreter against ruling out a Jewish background to the concept of καταλλάσσ- in the New Testament on the basis of a lack of lexical parallels in the LXX (e.g., Breytenbach, 'Salvation,' 177f; *Versöhnung,* 159–70, 193–215). Such conclusion, in my judgement, is unwarranted.

[141] So perhaps Marshall, 'Reconciliation,' 129f, is right when he suggests that the Martyr tradition, especially as developed in 2 Maccabees, might have "provided the catalyst to the development of Paul's use of the category of reconciliation."

reconstruction of divine lawsuit motif in Deutero-Isaiah, the Servant's "blood" (metonymy for the Servant's suffering and death) can be construed as the material offering that makes compensation for the forgiveness, and consequent reconciliation of Israel ("the chastisement of our peace is on him," Isa. 53.5), and for the restoration of the entire cosmos.

Secondly, I argued that, similarly to Isaiah 53, the Maccabean martyrdom tradition also displays the motif of an innocent suffering figure who bears the sins of others vicariously. In the Maccabean literature, the blood of the righteous martyr is offered in order to do away with God's wrath and reconcile him to his people. I showed that the Maccabean tradition reveals that Jewish writers at the time had already made the conceptual move from the effectiveness of "animal sacrifice" to the conceptualisation of the effectiveness and acceptability of a "human death" and its effectiveness in changing the God-human relationship. Although the influence of Isaiah 53 on the Maccabean martyrology is not provable, it could well have been a key marker along the way to such a paradigm shift. In Colossians, however, the blood that does away with God's wrath is provided by God himself through the righteous "son whom he loves" in order to reconcile "all things" to him (the son).

Chapter 6: *Peacemaking Through Blood* in Colossians 1.20b: Christ's Cosmic Peace

6.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, we saw that Deutero-Isaiah contains a set of courtroom controversies wherein God stands against his people and then for his people against everything else. But they both coalesce into one: the work of redemption brought forth by YHWH's Servant towards Israel proclaims YHWH's rights and sovereignty over history both before Israel (by saving them) and before the nations (by defeating them together with their god-idols).

In what follows, I analyse the *reconciliation/peacemaking through blood* language in Colossians within its literary context in order to determine whether it had the potential to evoke the divine controversy frame, especially as seen in the Deutero-Isaiah frame, in the minds of the Jewish audience of Colossians. In order to do that, I first investigate the exodus frame evoked by the metaphors in Colossians 1.12–14 in order to show that it provides a narrative substructure which undergirds the author's discourse in Colossians 1.12–23. From that, I argue that the metaphors used in the text to describe God's work of deliverance could have evoked the overarching frame of exodus, as particularly displayed within the framework of Deutero-Isaiah—the so-called second exodus—, in the minds of the Jewish hearers of the letter.

Secondly, I explore the meaning of εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου in Colossians 1.20b within the proposed frame. I argue that the reconciliation language (Col. 1.20a) had the potential to activate the *rîb*-pattern frame while *peacemaking through human bloodshed* (Col. 1.20b) could have evoked the offering of the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53—a passage located in the midst of *rîb*-passages in Deutero-Isaiah. When the metaphors in Colossians 1.20 are thus conceptualised, Christ's blood might have occupied the slot of the gift, or compensation, offered for the wrong done, "the punishment that won our peace" (Isa. 53.5) and the אָשָׁם offering of Isa. 53.10. Closely connected with the Isaiah 53 frame is the Maccabean martyrology, one that is also another potential frame for the Jewish conceptualisation of *peacemaking through blood* in Colossians 1.20b.

I conclude by proposing three ways in which the combined imagery of Colossians 1.12–23 might have challenged the perception of reality of the Jewish community in Colossae.

6.2 The Thematic Structure of Colossians 1.12–23: A Brief Appraisal

The aim of this section is to show that the thematic structure of Colossians 1.12–23, as proposed below, contains enough frame elements from the Jewish theological thought system as to justify our hypothesis that the Jewish audience of the letter would have understood its message of *peacemaking through blood* in verse 20b through Old Testament frames and, more specifically, through the frame of Isaiah 53.

The thematic structure of Colossians 1.12–23 has been well summarised by N. T. Wright. Probing into the Jewish background of Colossians 1.15–20, Wright notes that "[t]he poem […] asks to be read in the light not merely of one particular branch of Jewish tradition (i.e. 'Wisdom'), but of the entire Jewish worldview of which the wisdom tradition was simply one of many facets."[1] He argues that the most prominent aspect of such a worldview is Jewish monotheism, what he calls "creational and covenantal monotheism." That is to say that, for Israel, the God creator is also the God redeemer: "there is one God; he made the world […] he is in covenant with Israel; and he will, in fulfilling that covenant, reclaim and redeem his whole creation from that which at present corrupts and threatens it."[2] Observing the exodus imagery in Colossians 1.12–14, Wright adds: "That this broad Jewish (and, specifically, monotheistic) religious tradition is the proper context for understanding Col. 1.15–20 is reinforced by the echoes of Jewish redemption-ideas in vv. 12–14, which evoke in particular the imagery of the Exodus."[3] In this chapter, I elaborate this further by arguing that the source of the exodus frame in Colossians is predominantly Deutero-Isaiah.

Wright goes on to observe—in my opinion correctly—that the thought of Colossians 1.12–23 "as a whole moves from redemption to creation and back again."[4] The centrality of the whole christological exposition lies indeed in redemption (that is, what God has done to solve humanity's predicament through and in Christ). The soteriological focus appears not only in the second part of the Poem (vv. 18–20) but also in verses 12–14: The Poem is bracketed by two

[1] Wright, 'Poetry and Theology,' 453. Cf. Moo, Colossians, 111–14, at 118.
[2] Idem.
[3] Idem.
[4] Wright, 'Poetry and Theology,' 454.

redemption-centred affirmations, one in the introduction (1.13–14), and the other in the second part of the Poem (vv. 18–20) and then in its application to the Colossians in verses 21–23. Morna Hooker affirms: "These verses [Col. 1.15–20], then, give us christological statements which back up the reality of what Paul has said about the Colossians' redemption in verses 12–14, a theme he takes up again in verses 21–23."[5] The "son whom God loves" (v. 13) is the one through whom the predicament of sinners, in bondage to spiritual powers and sin, is done away. The way the author of Colossians develops both the identity and the work of Christ in verses 15–20, assigning to him characteristics which in the Old Testament (no less in Deutero-Isaiah) are attributes of YHWH only, can be explained by what Wright calls "christological monotheism." He explains:

> This is the standard emphasis within regular Jewish monotheistic statements, and is regularly made the basis of a fresh understanding of the redemption which is envisaged. In Isa 40–55, for instance, which provides both in outline and in detail many good examples of the same kind of pattern, the overall emphasis of the writer is to remind Israel that her God is none other than the creator himself (and, conversely, that the creator of the world is none other than the covenant God), and thereby to evoke faith and hope.[6]

This kind of "christological monotheism" is also elaborated by Richard Bauckham for whom Colossians 1.15–20 displays what he dubs a "christology of divine identity:"[7] "…what the passage does is to include Jesus Christ in God's unique relationship to the whole of created reality and thereby to include Jesus in the unique identity of God as Jewish monotheism understood it."[8] This is indicated in the Poem in two ways: "One is the sixfold occurrence of the phrase 'all things' and the twofold reference to the heavens and the earth: these universal references are ubiquitous in the rhetoric of Jewish monotheism. They specify the unique relationship in which God stands to the whole of created reality, as creator of all things and Lord over all things."[9] Colossians 1.15–20 thus includes Jesus in these attributes of God's uniqueness, especially in God's relationship to the world as creator "when it makes him [Jesus] both the instrumental

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[5] Hooker, Morna D. 'Were There False Teachers in Colossae?,' in *Christ and Spirit in the New Testament: Studies in Honour of Charles Francis Digby Moule* (eds. Barnabas Lindars and Stephen S. Smalley. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973) 315–31, at 322. Also quoted by Moo, *Colossians*, 111.

[6] Wright, 'Poetry and Theology,' 454.

[7] Bauckham first published his ideas in the short, albeit groundbreaking, *God Crucified: Monotheism and Christology in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), and further advanced them in his *Jesus and the God of Israel: God Crucified and Other Studies on the New Testament's Christology of Divine Identity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008). The first chapter of the latter is a full reproduction of *God Crucified*.

[8] Bauckham, Richard. 'Where Is Wisdom to Be Found? Colossians 1.15–20 (2),' in *Reading Texts, Seeking Wisdom: Scripture and Theology* (eds. David F. Ford and Graham Stanton. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003) 129–38, at 133. Also quoted by Moo, *Colossians,* 111.

[9] Bauckham, 'Where is Wisdom to be Found?,' 133.

and the final cause of both the creation and reconciliation of all things: 'through him' and 'for him.'[10] Christ's divine identity is reinforced in the letter by expressions such as "all the fullness of deity dwells in him bodily" (Col. 2.9), which picks up from 1.19.

Therefore, if, as Wright and Bauckham argue, the above are distinctive characteristics of Jewish monotheism, it is arguable that Jewish monotheists would have interpreted the christological affirmations of Colossians in light of such worldview. As noted above, for Wright, "Isa. 40–55 […] provides both in outline and in detail many good examples of the same kind of" Jewish monotheistic emphases found in Colossians 1.12–23.[11] Bauckham has also argued that Isaiah 40–55 played the most significant role in shaping the New Testament writers' interpretation of Jesus.[12] He writes,

> For the early Christians, these chapters of Isaiah, above all, were the God-given account of the significance of the events of eschatological salvation which they had witnessed and in which they were involved: Isaiah's vision of the new exodus, the divine act of redemption of Israel in the sight of all the nations and for the sake of the nations themselves also, leading to, in the following chapters we call Trito-Isaiah [*sic*], the new Jerusalem and the new creation of all things.[13]

Commenting on the connections of Isaiah 52.13 with other Isaianic passages, Bauckham argues that "in the early Christian reading of Deutero-Isaiah, the witness, the humiliation, the death and the exaltation of the Servant of the Lord is the way in which God reveals his glory and demonstrates his deity to the world."[14] Although not as explicit as the Christ-hymn in Philippians 2.5–11, Colossians also displays a humiliation-exaltation pattern for Jesus, from death on the cross (Col. 1.20) to resurrection (Col. 1.18; 2.12) to exaltation at the right hand of God (3.1–4). Bauckham associates this pattern with Isaiah.[15]

These conclusions then strengthen our hypothesis that when the imagery of an innocent suffering figure bearing the sins of others vicariously (v. 20) was read within imagery of Jewish redemption-ideas such as the second exodus (vv. 12–14), and christological monotheism (vv.

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[10] Bauckham, 'Where is Wisdom to be Found?,' 134.
[11] Wright, 'Poetry and Theology,' 454.
[12] Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 33, cf. 33–59.
[13] Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 34.
[14] Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 35.
Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel,* 36, connects Isa. 52.13 with 6.1 and 57.15 through the principle of *gezērâ šāvâ,* and argues that "[i]f Isaiah 52.13 means that the Servant was exalted to share the heavenly throne from which God rules the universe, then it is readily connected with Psalm 110.1 […] Therefore two New Testament references to the exaltation of Jesus to the right hand of God combine allusion to Psalm 110.1 with allusion to Isaiah 52.13 (Acts 2.33; 5.31) and one combines allusion to Psalm 110.1 with allusion to Isaiah 57.15 (Heb. 1.3)."
[15] No-where, to my knowledge, does Bauckham explore this aspect of his proposal in the letter to the Colossians.

15–20), it had the potential to activate Isaiah 53 frame in the minds of Jewish readers—the only place in the Old Testament where the idea of an innocent individual dying vicariously is found (the "erratischer Block").[16] Steeped in the Old Testament as they were, they would have picked up on motifs so firmly ingrained in their monotheistic theological system. Because a frame is a category of experience or an event, these events might easily occur within other overarching frames or events. So, in this chapter, I argue more specifically that "reconciliation" in Colossians 1.20a evokes the *rîb*-controversy frame whereas *peacemaking through blood* in verse 20b evokes the Isaiah 53 frame, and both belong within the overarching second exodus frame evoked in Deutero-Isaiah. Having outlined the proposed thematic structure, we will now analyse Colossians 1.12–23.

6.3 Second Exodus frame in Colossians 1.12–14

The analysis below aims at both demonstrating that the metaphors in Colossians 1.12–14 had the potential to activate the Isaianic second exodus frame in the Jewish hearers and showing that the second exodus frame provides a narrative substructure which is the foundation of the author's discourse in Colossians 1.12–23.

6.3.1 Finding the Old Testament Story in Colossians

Despite the lack of explicit Old Testament quotations in our letter, an analysis of metaphors in Colossians reveals the importance of Old Testament frames for the theology of the letter. These metaphors tell a story that undergirds the author's message. In his analysis of the Old Testament allusions in Colossians, Fee detects a twofold pattern emerging "from the primary source of intertextuality at the beginning of the letter (1.12–14).[17] The pattern has to do (1) with the

[16] Koch, 'Sühne und Sündenvergebung,' 237.

[17] Fee, Gordon. 'Old Testament Intertextuality in Colossians: Reflections on Pauline Christology and Gentile Inclusion in God's Story,' in *History and Exegesis: New Testament Essays in Honor of Dr. E. Earle Ellis for His 80th Birthday* (ed. Sang-Won (Aaron) Son. London: T&T Clark, 2006) 201–21. Fee approaches the text from the perspective of authorial-intent, hence the search for potential allusions. On the other hand, by applying insights from frame semantics theory my approach is fundamentally reader-focused, hence my search for potential frames that the text could have triggered in the minds of the audience. Fee (among others) has detected the Old Testament story in Colossians 1. My task now is to assess how that story would have been perceived by the readers or, in other words, the impact of the author's language on the discourse community ("a group of people who have texts and practices in common," Barton, *Literacy,* 75–76). These two approaches are, in practice, not far apart, for, as argued by Jiménez, *Narrative of Ephesians 2.11–22,* 111, "[a]fter all, we want to know what the author intends the impact on his audience to be."

Colossians' own relationship to the biblical story, and (2) with the role of Christ in incorporating them into that story."[18] He concludes that,

> [E]ven though this letter is not replete with such echoes, these that do occur are hardly incidental. All of them are related either to their present misunderstanding of life in Christ or to how they should understand their life in Christ, and thus how they are a part of *God's new covenant story* and should not revert to the old.[19]

He also proposes a short list of the basic elements of the Old Testament which is used as a template to assess Colossians 1.12–14:[20]

(a) Creation;

(b) Abraham (with the promise of Gentile inclusion);

(c) The exodus (including both deliverance from bondage and gaining the inherited land);

(d) The giving of the law (especially Deuteronomy, with its anticipation of Israel's failure regarding the law);

(e) The kingship;

(f) Exile and the promised restoration (the eschatological consummation), which especially included Gentiles.

Fee claims that Colossians 1.12–14 displays allusions to five of the six elements (except d), either in the form of linguistic or conceptual echoes. The two elements that Fee sets out to explore (c. the exodus, and e. the kingship) are particularly strong allusions in these verses[21] and it seems clear that the author of Colossians is employing metaphors that evoke exodus imagery. I want to go a step further and argue that because the "exile" is an integral part of the plot of the story evoked in verses 9 through 23, namely, the Isaianic second exodus, it would most likely have been activated together with the *rîb*-controversy frame.[22] Integral to the exile story, in turn, is the concept of covenantal unfaithfulness, without which the exile would not have happened in the first place. The covenant is thus integral to the exile story, which therefore would most likely have been part of the second exodus frame. In the Colossians version of the

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[18] Fee, 'Intertextuality,' 201.
[19] Fee, 'Intertextuality,' 210 (italics added).
[20] Fee, 'Intertextuality,' 205.
[21] Both the "exodus" and the "kingship" allusions/echoes are detected by Beetham, Christopher A. *Echoes of Scripture in the Letter of Paul to the Colossians* (BibInt 96. Leiden: Brill, 2008); Beale, G. K. 'Colossians,' in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (eds. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007) 841–70; and Fee, 'Intertextuality.'
[22] Through a *Gestalt effect*.

story, the Gentile readers are included in a typological relationship to Israel in exile.[23] As I argue below, Colossians filters the exodus story through the eschatological lenses of Deutero-Isaiah, within which overarching frame the Colossians being reconciled to God can be construed as the "end of conflict" in a *rîb*-pattern scenario. The language of divine lawsuit permeates Deutero-Isaiah, where it is employed to describe the strained relationship between YHWH and his people Israel. The ultimate consequence of Israel's misdeeds is exile. The inevitability of exile as a consequence of Israel's unfaithfulness is integral to the institution of the covenant (cf. the song of Moses in Deuteronomy 32, where the celebration of the covenant is itself structured within a *rîb*-pattern framework).

In what follows, I present a brief proposal of the undergirding story in Colossians 1.12–23, namely, how God has rescued the Colossians, Gentile and Jews alike, from their spiritual exile making them part of "God's new covenant story;" then, secondly, I explore the meaning of the *peacemaking through blood* concept (Col. 1.20b) within the proposed narrative-structure in which the reconciliation language (Col. 1.20a) had the potential to activate the *rîb*-pattern frame while *peacemaking through human bloodshed* (Col. 1.20b) could have evoked the offering of the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53.

6.3.2 Exodus imagery in Colossians 1.12–14: Reconstructing the Story

Colossians 1.12–14 is part of a larger unit beginning in verse 9 and ending in verse 23. Verses 12–14 are an elaboration of the last element of the introductory prayer, the giving of thanks. The author prays that the Colossians might be filled with all the true and spiritual knowledge of God.[24] The purpose of this is that they might "walk" (περιπατῆσαι) in a manner "worthily of the Lord" (v. 10),[25] which is further elaborated by four participial phrases. The walk that is worthy of the Lord is one that (1) bears fruit in every good work (v. 10b), (2) increases in the knowledge of God (v. 10c), (3) is strengthened with the power of God's glory (v. 11a), and (4) gives thanks to the Father (v. 12a).[26] The mentioning of "thanksgiving" in the beginning of

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[23] Cf. Starling, David I. *Not My People: Gentiles as Exiles in Pauline Hermeneutics* (BZNW 184. Berlin: de Gruyter, 2011).

[24] The content of the prayer is marked by the ἵνα-clause: ἵνα πληρωθῆτε κτλ (v. 9a).

[25] The aorist infinitive (περιπατῆσαι) here can be either one of purpose or result. The context of prayer with longing for future desires may make purpose the more natural reading.

[26] Because of the "καί" connecting the first two participles, it is also possible to read them as two integrated parts of one element of the infinitive περιπατῆσαι, in which case we wind up with three rather than four elements. I fail to see the exegetical importance of a clear-cut division here; I am more inclined, however, to the four-fold structure.

verse 12 gives occasion to a series of statements about the status of the believers that brim with exodus references.

That Colossians 1.12–14 reflects the language of the exodus story has been noticed by several scholars.[27] The imagery are triggered by three metaphors: (1) share of the inheritance (τὴν μερίδα τοῦ κλήρου, v. 12); (2) deliverance (ῥύομαι, v. 13); and (3) redemption (ἀπολύτρωσις, v. 14).[28] Together they speak about what God has done in and for the believers in Christ. The story they tell undergirds the theological exposition of the letter. The words in bold below show the parallels:

LXX Exod. 6.6–8	*Col. 1.12–14*
[6] … ἐγὼ κύριος καὶ ἐξάξω ὑμᾶς ἀπὸ τῆς δυναστείας τῶν Αἰγυπτίων καὶ **ῥύσομαι** ὑμᾶς ἐκ τῆς δουλείας καὶ **λυτρώσομαι** ὑμᾶς ἐν βραχίονι ὑψηλῷ καὶ κρίσει μεγάλῃ	[12] ὐχαριστοῦντες τῷ πατρὶ τῷ ἱκανώσαντι ὑμᾶς εἰς τὴν **μερίδα** τοῦ **κλήρου**[29] τῶν ἁγίων ἐν τῷ φωτί·
[7] καὶ λήμψομαι ἐμαυτῷ ὑμᾶς λαὸν ἐμοὶ καὶ ἔσομαι ὑμῶν θεός καὶ γνώσεσθε ὅτι ἐγὼ κύριος ὁ θεὸς ὑμῶν ὁ ἐξαγαγὼν ὑμᾶς ἐκ τῆς καταδυναστείας τῶν Αἰγυπτίων	[13] ὃς **ἐρρύσατο**[30] ἡμᾶς ἐκ τῆς ἐξουσίας τοῦ σκότους καὶ **μετέστησεν εἰς** τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ υἱοῦ τῆς ἀγάπης αὐτοῦ,
[8] καὶ **εἰσάξω ὑμᾶς εἰς** τὴν γῆν εἰς ἣν ἐξέτεινα τὴν χεῖρά μου	[14] ἐν ᾧ ἔχομεν τὴν **ἀπολύτρωσιν,**[31] τὴν ἄφεσιν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν

[27] Although they do not use the language of "frames." E.g., Fee, 'Intertextuality,' 205–09; Beale, 'Colossians,' 848–50; Beetham, *Echoes,* 81–95; Dunn, *Colossians,* 77; Wright, *Colossians,* 60–64; idem, *Climax of the Covenant: Christ and the law in Pauline Theology* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1991) 109; idem, 'Poetry and Theology,' 453f; White, *Kolosser,* 99; Moo, *Colossians,* 103–05; Caird, *Letters from the Prison,* 171f; Sumney, *Colossians,* 56f; Barth and Blanke, *Colossians,* 188; Thompson, *Colossians,* 26f; MacDonald, *Colossians,* 51; Lohmeyer, *Kolosser,* 39, 49; Yates, *Colossians*, 11f; Estelle, Bryan D. *Echoes of Exodus: Tracing a Biblical Motif* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2018) 284f; Shogren, Gary S. 'Presently Entering the Kingdom of Christ: The Background and Purpose of Col. 1.12–14,' *JETS* 31 (1988) 173–80, at 176f; Canon, George E. *The Use of Traditional Material in Colossians* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1983) 17–19; Augustine, *Expositions on the Book of Psalms* (*NPNF*[1] 8.377), commenting on Ps. 78.28.

[28] Beetham claims that the exodus allusion meets two criteria (although he classifies it as an echo): (1) availability; and (2) word agreement and rare concept similarity (Beetham, *Echoes,* 82). They roughly correspond to Hays' first and second criteria (cf. Hays, *Echoes,* 29–32).

[29] On the "inheritance," additionally, cf. e.g., Num. 26.53–56; Deut. 10.9; 12.12; 14.27, 29 (the point of these texts is that although the Levites did not receive land as a "portion of inheritance," the other tribes did); κληρονομία *in lieu* of κλῆρος: e.g., Josh. 11.23; 18.7; 19.9; Sir. 44.23, 45.22.

[30] Cf. Exod. 12.27; 14.30; Judg. 6.9.

[31] Cf. the cognate verb λυτρόω used for God's redemption of Israel from Egypt: e.g., Deut. 7.8, 9.26; 15.15; 24.18; 2Sam. 7.23; 1Chr. 17.21; Neh. 1.10; LXX Ps. 73.2; 76.16; Isa. 63.9; Mic. 6.4; cf. Hos. 13.14 (both verbs used with an eschatological meaning).

δοῦναι αὐτὴν τῷ Αβρααμ καὶ
Ισαακ καὶ Ιακωβ καὶ δώσω ὑμῖν
αὐτὴν ἐν
κλήρῳ ἐγὼ κύριος

In Exodus 6, Yahweh promises to rescue (ῥύομαι, v. 6) and ransom (λυτρόω, v. 6) exiled Israel from the bondage of Egypt and lead them into the promised land, which would be given to them as their inheritance (κλῆρος, v. 8). The Gentile believers in Colossae are said to have been made fit by the Father to share in the inheritance of Israel (v. 12); like Israel, they too were in a spiritual exile, and were rescued by God from the kingdom of darkness and transferred into the kingdom of the son of the Father's love (v. 13), in whom they have redemption (v. 14). Notwithstanding the clear parallels above, it is highly unlikely that our author had one specific Old Testament text in mind—one needs only to recall how essential the exodus tradition is for the Jewish religion and how ubiquitous its language is in their scriptures.[32] Nevertheless, Exodus 6.6–8 is the programmatic statement in which the principal elements of the story[33] are first introduced. Another important element of the exodus tradition in the Old Testament is the development of the so-called "second exodus" motif, particularly prominent in the prophecy of Isaiah. With that in mind, one should probe into the particular context from which the New Testament writer is drawing his allusion.[34] Is he alluding to the context of the original event? Is he drawing on the general traditional motif or from a specific development in the history of its use in the Jewish scriptures?

a) Second Exodus: Isaianic Metaphors

In the context of Colossians, it is highly likely that the exodus motif is filtered through the eschatological lenses of the prophet Isaiah, especially from Deutero-Isaiah wherein the exodus paradigm is reworked by the prophet as he applies it to the restoration of Israel from the Babylonian exile.[35] A few textual elements point to this conclusion: (1) in addition to the language

[32] See Beetham, *Echoes,* 82; Beale, 'Colossians,' 848; cf. Keesmaat, Sylvia C. 'Exodus and the Intertextual Transformation of Tradition in Romans 8.14–30,' *JSNT* 54 (1994) 29–56.

[33] E.g. LXX Deut. 7.8; 10.9; 13.5; Deut. 15.15; 24.28; 2 Sam. 7.23–24 (in the context of David king, also alluded in Col. 1.13), etc.

[34] See Beale and Carson, *Commentary,* xxiv.

[35] Cf. Beetham, *Echoes*; Beale, *Colossians,* 65, 72–74; Shogren, 'Entering,' 176f, n. 14; Arnold, *Syncretism,* 290f; Barth and Blanke see both the original exodus and the so-called second exodus motif reflected in Col. 1.12–14 (Barth and Blanke, *Colossians,* 188, 190–93). Discussing the exodus motif as the paradigm of redemption in the Jewish scriptures, Fishbane, 'Exodus,' 121, says that "the 'exodus' motif emphasizes the temporal-

of "deliverance" (ῥυ- language)[36] and "redemption" (λυτρ- word group) used in the original exodus narrative,[37] Colossians also speaks of "forgiveness of sins" (τὴν ἄφεσιν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν, Col. 1.14), as in the prophecies of deliverance from exile in Deutero-Isaiah;[38] (2) in speaking of Israel's "new exodus," Deutero-Isaiah uses the language of transposing them from "the darkness" to "light,"[39] which is also reflected in Colossians 1.12–13; and (3) perhaps the main reason to assume this reading is that Colossians reflects the eschatological emphasis of the Deutero-Isaiah's new exodus paradigm, as we have shown in the previous chapter.[40] The main emphases of the Isaianic new exodus[41] thus find expression in Colossians.[42] Although echoes of the original exodus, especially the blood of the lamb, could also have been activated in the minds of the Jewish hearers, on the basis of frame elements of the pericope, it seems reasonable to conclude that the Isaianic new exodus is most likely the frame through which Colossians filters those elements and the one which would have been dominant in the minds of the Jewish community.

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historical paradigm in whose image all future restorations of the nation are to be manifest […] each generation looked to the first exodus as the archetypal expression of its own future hope."

[36] E.g., Exod. 6.6; 12.27; 14.30; Judg. 6.9.

[37] Cf. n. 31 above. In Deutero-Isa, ῥυ- terminology is found in: LXX 44.6; 48.17, 20; 47.4; 49.7, 25, 26; 50.2; 51.10–11: ῥυομένοις καὶ λελυτρωμένοις; 52.9; 54.5, 8; and the λυτρ- terminology is found in: LXX 41.14; 43.1, 14; 44.22, 23, 24; 51.10–11: ῥυομένοις καὶ λελυτρωμένοις; 52.3; cf. 62.12; 63.9.

[38] See Isa. 43.25 (ἐξαλείφω, the only occurrence of this verb in the Pauline corpus is in Col. 2.14: "having blotted out the handwriting […] that was against us"); cf. 44.22 (ἀπαλείφω is synonymous with ἐξαλείφω in 43.25, and both render the Hebrew מָחָה; cf. 2Macc. 2.19; Dan. 9.24); 40.2. Cf. Pao, *Colossians,* 78. Isa. 44.22–24 brings the two ideas of "forgiveness of sins" (v. 22) and *redemption* (λυτρ- language, vv. 22, 23, 24) together, of which Col. 1.14 presents a concise statement: "ἐν ᾧ ἔχομεν τὴν ἀπολύτρωσιν, τὴν ἄφεσιν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν." The message of "forgiveness" is part of the *Steigerung,* or *heightening,* of the exodus paradigm in Deutero-Isa, of which Anderson, 'Exodus Typology,' 191, says: "The new exodus will be a radically *new* event. It will surpass the old exodus not only in wonder but also in soteriological meaning, as evidenced by the theme of divine forgiveness which runs through the whole of his prophecy, or by the extension of salvation to include all nations."

[39] Cf. Isa. 42.16; 49.9; 42.6b–7—the themes of "darkness" and "light" and "forgiveness of sins" appear together in Paul's description of his ministry in Acts 26.18 which in turn echoes language from Isa. 42.7 (several scholars have noticed the lexical and conceptual parallels between Acts 26.18 and Col. 1.12–14 (e.g., Barth and Blanke, *Colossians,* 186; Pao, *Colossians,* 74f; Moo, *Colossians,* 104; Shogren, 'Entering,' 175f); cf. LXX Ps. 106.10–14.

[40] "The conception of the new exodus is the most profound and most prominent of the motifs in the tradition which Second Isaiah employs to portray the eschatological finale." (Muilenburg, 'Isaiah 40–66,' 602).

[41] Cf. 5.3 above.

[42] That is to say that Colossians applies to Christ the same divine characteristics of Jewish monotheism which are so prevalent in Deutero-Isaiah. As Bauckham has argued, the uniqueness of YHWH is expressed both in relation to Israel (i.e., to whom God is revealed by his name YHWH, the recitals of his acts in history—especially the exodus, e.g., Exod. 20.2; Deut. 4.32–39; Isa. 43.15–17—and the revelation of his character—Exod. 34.6) and in relation to reality (i.e., that he is the Creator of all things and sovereign Ruler of all things, and both features are combined in Israel eschatological expectation) (Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel,* 7–11, and *passim*).

6.4 Deutero-Isaiah Frames in Colossians

At the beginning of this chapter we set out to inquire into possible frames which εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου in Colossians 1.20b could have triggered in the minds of a Jewish reader, thinking within the second exodus overarching frame. My proposal is that the metaphorical expression of "reconciliation" in verse 20a had the potential to activate the *rîb*-controversy, whereas *peacemaking through violent human bloodshed* in 20b had the potential to activate both the suffering Servant of the Isaiah 53 frame and the Maccabean martyrology one. The universal scope of such reconciliation strengthens our hypothesis that the frames triggered by these metaphorical expressions are from Deutero-Isaiah, with its overall emphasis on universal redemption.

The reconciliation metaphor in Colossians 1.20a, further elaborated by the participial phrase εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου (Col. 1.20), picks up from and advances the exodus-like redemption brought forth by God (vv. 12–14). As noted above, the thought of Colossians 1.12–23 "as a whole moves from redemption to creation and back again."[43] The believers' redemption (vv. 13–14) is now described as an act of reconciliation (ἀποκαταλλάσσω, v. 20b). As Barrett observes in his commentary on Romans, the meaning of the verb 'to reconcile' is determined by the noun 'enemies;' it puts an end to enmity, as 'to justify' puts an end to legal contention." [44] For that reason he affirms that "[j]ustification and reconciliation are different metaphors describing the same fact."[45] Although "the meaning of the verb 'reconcile' is [somehow] determined by the noun 'enemies'" also in Colossians 1.20 (cf. v. 21), as we showed in chapter 4, the language of conflict, such as "enmity,"[46] belongs in the semantic range of legal contention in the Old Testament. We have also seen that the Old Testament *rîb*-pattern is a conceptual frame widely used in Jewish writings to conceptualise the relationship between God and Israel, the disruption of this relationship, and its reparation, no less in Deutero-Isaiah.[47] So it is plausible to conclude that when the language of "reconciliation," meaning the end of enmity between God and sinners, is read by Jewish readers within

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[43] Wright, 'Poetry and Theology,' 454.

[44] Barrett, C. K. *A Commentary to the Epistle to the Romans* (Black's New Testament Commentary. London: A&C Black, 1991) 100; cf. Allen, Gregory J. *Reconciliation in the Pauline Tradition: Its Occasions, Meaning, and Functions* (Th.D. diss.; Boston University School of Theology, 1995) 36f.

[45] Idem.

[46] Also the language of "wrath" (cf. Col. 3.6)—although textually distant from chapter 1, Col. 3.5–8 pick up Col. 1.21 as it further elaborates on the believers' past experience of life. In fact, Col. 3.5–11 reflects the theme of new creation of chapter 1, with its emphasis on the creation of a new humanity through union with Christ (vv. 9–10) so that now all ethnic distinctions are superseded by their common new identity in Christ (v. 11).

[47] See chapter 5 above.

the Deutero-Isaiah overarching frame of Colossians 1.12–23, it could indeed have activated the *rîb*-controversy frame. In such script-like scenario, they would have conceptualised themselves as God's enemies in need of reconciliation.

Although the language of "enmity" and "alienation in verse 21 is more naturally applied to the Gentile readers,[48] the combined imagery of *rîb*-controversy frame together with Isaiah 53 frame within the overarching frame of the Isaianic second-exodus would conceptually place the Jewish reader within the same category of enemies of God as in a theological *rîb*-like disputation. The logic of the text supports this conclusion, as observed by Porter. He argues against limiting the scope of enmity to the Gentiles on the basis that such language cannot be used of Jews, and goes on to say that "[t]he argument here appears to encompass the time from before creation to the present (vv. 16–17), including the time of the church (v. 18), with reference to God's reconciling work affecting τὰ πάντα (cf. v. 20c). The author is circumscribing more than simply the gentiles but Jews and gentiles alike."[49] Furthermore, the Jews are included among those who are "rescued" (ῥύομαι) in verse 13 and enjoy redemption (ἀπολύτρωσις) in verse 14 (note the change of pronouns in verse 13 to ἡμᾶς). Therefore, the Jewish readers could very well have conceptualised redemption in Colossians 1.20 (now through the language of reconciliation and peacemaking) through the Deutero-Isaiah frame as the work of a Servant-like Jesus who offers compensation (through violent bloodshed) for the people's offence to God.

The combined metaphorical language of Colossians supports our hypothesis that Jewish readers would have conceptualised the narrative of their redemption in the Christ event in connection with the eschatological second exodus prophecies of Deutero-Isaiah. In Colossians, as in Deutero-Isaiah, the exodus functions as a narrative substructure through which the message of deliverance is presented. The message of reconciliation in Christ is the ushering in of the "new thing" prophesied by Deutero-Isaiah, the spiritual exodus, which encompasses both Jews and Gentiles alike (e.g., Col. 1.12–14; 3.11).

The effective means through which believers are redeemed, or reconciled to God, is through the violent bloodshed of Christ (Col. 1.20b).[50] In the context of Colossians 1.12–23, the metaphorical expressions *making peace through the blood of his cross* had the potential to activate

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[48] Moo, *Colossians,* 26–28.
[49] Porter, *Καταλλάσσω,* 181.
[50] The participle εἰρηνοποιήσας is modal (Burton §139, §141; Harris, *Colossians,* 51; *pace* Campbell, Constantine R. *Colossians and Philemon: A Handbook on the Greek Text* [BHGNT. Waco: Baylor University Press, 2013] 17).

the Isaiah 53 frame in which, in effecting reconciliation, YHWH commissions his Servant for the task of saving both Israel and the Gentiles (Isa. 49.6). In Isaiah 53, the Servant's task is successful when his vicarious suffering and work offered as אָשָׁם (reparation, or compensation)—that in itself presupposes the shedding of blood—for Israel's sin is pleasing (יִשְׁבָּע) to YHWH (53.11). Likewise, in the exodus-like redemption of Colossians 1.12–23, Christ's bloodshed on the cross in verse 20b is sufficient to secure the re-establishment of peace with God, and fills the slot of the compensation in this frame. As we have seen, in the narrative of Deutero-Isaiah, שָׁלוֹם means "peace with God," the restoration of a disrupted relationship between God and Israel (or reconciliation) accomplished by the Servant's work, an innocent suffering figure who bears the sins of others vicariously (Isa. 53.5). It includes the forgiveness of sins, the annulment of their consequences, and the re-establishment of righteousness that makes peace with God possible (cf. Isa. 32.17, 1; 48.18; 54.13–14; 60.17). Likewise, in Colossians 1.20b, theological peace means the restoration of a broken relationship between God and individuals accomplished by Christ's work, an innocent suffering figure who bears the sins of others vicariously. It includes forgiveness of sins and the annulment of their consequences (e.g., Col. 1.14; 2.13–14; cf. LXX Isa. 43.25). As in Deutero-Isaiah, the effects of God's reconciling act in Colossians are extended to include the nations. The universal scope of God's redemption promised in Deutero-Isaiah finds its fulfilment in Christ (cf. Col. 1.26–27; 3.11).

As we have already observed, the Poem displays a "christology of divine identity." The implied subject of both the infinitive ἀποκαταλάξαι and the participle εἰρηνοποιήσας is most likely God, via the circumlocution πᾶν τὸ πλήρωμα, v. 19—this *ad sensum* construction is informed by the parallel passage in 2.9.[51] In the words of Moule, "it appears that Christ is thought of as containing, representing, all that God is."[52] The pattern "humiliation-death-resurrection-exaltation" of this divine figure is well balanced even in Colossians 1, for the one who dies a violent and humiliating death (v. 20) is the same one who is raised from the dead in verse 18; later he is depicted in his exaltation as he shares the throne of God (Col. 3.1). Jesus Christ is thus presented at the lowest of his humiliation as he offers his life on the cross on behalf of sinners—the chastisement that brought the Colossians peace being upon him, as it were. But he was not left in the grave. He is raised from the dead (v. 18), and exalted to share the heavenly throne from which God rules the universe (Col. 3.1). If Bauckham is correct in his interpretation of

[51] Cf. Porter, *Καταλλασσω,* 172–75; Moo, *Colossians,* 131.
[52] Moule, *Colossians,* 169.

the humiliation and exaltation of the Servant of Isaiah 53,[53] then "the humiliation-death-resurrection-exaltation" pattern in Colossians might be yet another frame element strengthening the probability that a Jewish reader would interpret the innocent suffering figure who bears the sins of others vicariously in Colossians 1.20 in light of Isaiah 53.[54]

Blood and reconciliation undoubtedly feature in both the original exodus scenario (first Passover) and the eschatological one (implied by the Servant's אָשָׁם offering in Isa. 53.10). However, it is only in Isaiah 53 that we encounter for the first time in the Old Testament the concept of theological reconciliation and peacemaking by means of an innocent suffering figure who bears the sins of others vicariously.

As in Deutero-Isaiah, the relationship of those conceptualised as being "in exile" (spiritually) in Colossians is articulated in terms of a broken relationship in need of reconciliation, the re-establishment of peace (see 5.4.3). Israel had forfeited שָׁלוֹם by their covenantal unfaithfulness ("there is no שָׁלוֹם for the wicked, Isa. 49.22). Therefore, God stands against his people, an idea conveyed by the *rîb*-controversy imagery. Both in Deutero-Isaiah and in Colossians, God himself makes provision for reconciliation: in the former, the servant of the Lord is commissioned to re-establish מִשְׁפָּט and save both Israel and the Gentiles (compare 48.22 with 49.1, 6). YHWH himself is the ultimate cause of the Servant's vicarious suffering: "Yahweh caused the iniquity of us all to strike (הִפְגִּיעַ) him" (v. 6b), and "But Yahweh *planned* (חָפֵץ) to crush him" (10aα). The Servant's vicarious death was according to YHWH's plan, and it made compensation for Israel's guilt, thus preparing the way for their being reconciled to God (cf. 53.12). In prophetic lawsuit texts in the Old Testament, only God can "resolve the contention and on his own terms."[55] For that reason, Liedke categorises the dynamics of this *rîb* as "asymmetric."[56] Similarly, in Colossians, the means for reconciliation is provided by God who takes the initiative in the peacemaking process with individuals (Col. 1.19–20).[57]

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[53] Cf. n. 14.

[54] Furthermore, the sheer thought of "the fulness" of God dwelling in Christ as he dies on a cross might have been a distressing one to any pious Jew. If however, as I argue here, they made sense of Colossians 1 through Deutero-Isaiah frames, the humiliation, death, and exaltation of the Servant in Isaiah 52.13—which according to Bauckham "is the way in which God reveals his glory and demonstrates his deity to the world" (Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 35)— they would have a readily available frame through which to make sense of the christological affirmations in Colossians.

[55] Prothro, *Both Judge and Justifier,* 64; cf. Marshall, 'Reconciliation,' 126.

[56] Liedke, *TLOT* 3.1236.

[57] Cf. Porter, *Καταλλάσσω*.

Colossians thus follows Paul's innovative syntagmatic construction of the καταλλασσ- word group as found in both Romans 5.1–11 and 2 Corinthians 5.11–21.[58] That Paul gave an entirely unique twist to the meaning of καταλλάσσω—even as known in the Greek world usage—has been already demonstrated beyond reasonable doubt. Howard Marshall had suggested,[59] and Stanley Porter subsequently confirmed, that Paul's use of the καταλλάσσ- word-group is unattested in extant earlier Greek, that is, "Paul uses καταλλάσσω in the active voice with the offended and hence angered party in a relationship (i.e. God) as (grammatical) subject [either explicit or implicit] taking the initiative in effecting reconciliation between himself and the offending party."[60] Our study has demonstrated that such dynamic of theological reconciliation has a place in the Jewish conceptualisation of YHWH's relationship with his people, which should caution the interpreter against ruling out a Jewish background for New Testament concept of reconciliation. Thus, while I do not attempt to pinpoint the origin of Colossians talk of reconciliation, my investigation suggests that Deutero-Isaiah, and chapter 53 more specifically, provides a viable candidate.[61]

One wonders to what extent the emphasis in Colossians on realised eschatology was driven by a clear perception of fulfilment of the Isaianic new exodus. In Christ, the Gentile believers have experienced their own new, and definitive, exodus, and have already been placed in the spiritual promised land, "the kingdom of God's beloved son" (Col. 1.12–13).[62] The implied writer, Paul, a Jew, switches from the second person ὑμᾶς to the first person ἡμᾶς in verse 13: having said in verse 12 that *you,* the Gentiles, were made fit to share in the inheritance of God's people, he then goes on to include himself, and his co-writer Timothy, as objects of the action in verses

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[58] Porter, *Καταλλάσσω,* 166, commenting on the vocabulary of v. 20, says, "the vocabulary […] indicates at the least an author who knew well the Pauline material (if it was not Paul), and was not venturing too far from Paul's view of reconciliation and the very language he himself used to describe it."

[59] Marshall, 'Reconciliation,' 117–32.

[60] Porter, *Καταλλάσσω,* 16. Porter points out that the "one major difference from other Pauline usage" and both Colossians and Ephesians is that "the verb used [in the latter] is the prefixed form, ἀποκαταλλάσσω," which is also unattested in extant Greek documents before Colossians and Ephesians (Porter, *Καταλλάσσω,* 163).

[61] In regards to καταλλάσσω in 2Cor. 5.18–21: "Paulus hat von Deuterojesaja zwar nicht die Begriffe καταλλαγή und καταλλάσσειν empfangen - ihre religiöse Verwendung war ihm vielmehr im hellenistischen Judentum vorgeben (s. etwa 2Makk 1, 5; 5, 20; 7, 33; 8, 29). Wohl aber fand er bei Deuterojesaja die Sache bezeugt, die er mit diesen Begriffen sachgemäß zur Sprache bringt." (Hofius, O. 'Erwägungen zur Gestalt und Herkunft des paulinischen Versöhnungsgedankens,' *ZThK* 77 (1980) 186–99, at 196). More recently Beale, *Colossians,* 128f, has mentioned the possibility of Deutero-Isaiah as the background of reconciliation in Col. 1.20, 22. However, he only provides brief remarks in the "additional notes" section of his commentary. For Beale, Col. 1.20 should be interpreted mainly in connection with the imagery of Christ as the new temple in verse 19, within which "peace" means "cosmic restoration," and "blood" stands for the blood of sacrifice (e.g., Beale, *Biblical Theology,* 543–46; cf. my Literature Review in the introduction).

[62] On the idea of an "ultimate return from exile" in the N.T., see N. T. Wright. *The New Testament and the People of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992) 268–71, and *passim*.

13 and 14, thus including both Jews and Gentiles within the same story. God's action through Christ brings about the restoration of creation, or "new creation" (vv. 18–20);[63] universal reconciliation is thus a present reality (vv. 20, 22); believers already enjoy resurrected life with Christ (Col. 3.1);[64] by means of their being raised with the Lord, they are now a new humanity (Col. 3.9).

In summary, if we are correct to detect Isaianic second exodus imagery in Colossians, it would have evoked the entire script-like scenario to which the exile also belonged, and from which both Jews and Gentiles alike are rescued. Put differently, if the author is filtering all this imagery through Isaiah, the Colossians' being reconciled to Christ can then be understood as the "end of the conflict," the language widely used in Deutero-Isaiah to describe the people's strained relationship with YHWH. The resolution of the conflict was made possible through an innocent suffering figure who bears the sins of others vicariously (Isa. 53), and his offer of אָשָׁם (Isa. 53.10) which presupposes the shedding of blood which makes reparation for guilty Israel. Peace is then achieved through violent bloodshed of a righteous individual (Isa. 53.5; cf. v. 10). It is worth noting that the *rîb*-pattern is not peculiar to Isaiah's prophecy; it is also the framework within which Deuteronomy 32 both celebrates the blessings that would follow the people's faithfulness to the covenant stipulations and foretells the calamities—leading to exile—that would inevitably befall them in case of unfaithfulness. Therefore, it is highly probable that the *peacemaking through blood* in Colossians 1.20b would have activated—in the minds of the Jewish community familiarised with Deutero-Isaiah—the powerful message of Isaiah 53 with its promise of peace restored: "παιδεία εἰρήνης ἡμῶν ἐπ᾽ αὐτόν τῷ μώλωπι αὐτοῦ ἡμεῖς ἰάθημεν" (LXX Isa 53:5; cf. v. 10).[65]

6.5 The Maccabean Martyrology Frame in Colossians

Before we move on to assess the impact of the metaphorical language of Colossians 1.20b on the Jewish readership, we ought to consider how the Maccabean frame could have played a part in the understanding of our text. As I argued in chapter 5, the Maccabean martyrology (2

[63] Cf. Lincoln, Andrew T. and Wedderburn, A. J. M. *The Theology of the Later Pauline Letters* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993) 33f.

[64] But see future eschatology in 3.4, for instance.

[65] So, we might have in Colossians an instance of an early stage of the Suffering Servant Christology more developed in late writings such as 1Pet. 2.22–25. But see Bauckham's discussion of Phil. 2.1–11 in *Jesus and the God of Israel,* 37–39, and *passim*.

and 4 Maccabees) is closely connected with the Isaiah 53 frame by the concept of an innocent suffering figure bearing the sins of others vicariously. It thus presents a further development (or variation) on the Jewish conceptualization of the violent death of a righteous individual on behalf of the nation that bears on the understanding of *peacemaking through bloodshed* in Colossians 1.20b. As such, the Maccabean martyrology frame also had the potential to have been activated in the minds of the Jewish audience in Colossae.

Both documents (the Maccabees and Colossians) develop the idea of a righteous individual dying on behalf of others and in both "traditions" the violent shedding of the blood of a righteous person is presented as the means of reconciliation (2Macc. 8.3; 4Macc. 6.28–29; 17.21–22; Col. 1.20). Also in both traditions there is a hope of vindication through resurrection. In the case of the Maccabean martyrs, they hoped that their obedient death would be vindicated by God's raising them up from the dead (2Macc. 7.9, 11, 14, 23, 29, 36), whereas in Colossians, resurrection is a reality for Jesus Himself (Col. 1.8, 2.18; cf. 3.1–4).

On the other hand, however, it is widely known that the *reconcile/peacemaking through blood* metaphors in Colossians 1.20 differs radically from the Maccabean martyrdom tradition frame, for contrary to the latter, the main theological thrust of the καταλλάσσ- word-group in Colossians (as well as in all the other occurrences in the New Testament), is significantly innovative, as Porter has convincingly demonstrated.[66] That is, whereas in the Maccabees, God, the offended party, is "reconciled" by and to the offending party by means of "blood" and "righteous suffering and death," Colossians 1.20 follows the early Pauline theology whereby God, the offended party, is the subject of the reconciling act, thus initiating the process without human agencies.[67]

The dynamic in Colossians seems to be closer to that found in Isaiah 53, where the Servant figure is put forward by YHWH himself for the reconciliation of the "we" within the framework of second exodus imagery. YHWH, the offended party, is the one who initiates the whole process of reconciliation. In all three traditions (Isaiah 53, Maccabees and Colossians), the violent shedding of blood[68] is effective in establishing peace between God and human beings—although only Maccabees displays the idea of human beings initiating the reconciliation of God towards individuals. The reconciliation concept is already present in the overall message of

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[66] Porter, *Καταλλάσσω*; cf. Breytenbach, 'Salvation,' 277–80; Idem. *Versöhnung*, 188. Porter's thesis is built on the preliminary remarks by Marshall in 'Reconciliation.'

[67] Cf. Martin, *Reconciliation,* 105f.

[68] Presupposed in Isaiah 53 by the imagery of violent death in verse 5 as well as by the offer of אָשָׁם in verse 10.

restoration in Deuteronomy and amplified in Deutero-Isaiah, and it seem to have been picked up in the Maccabean literature. As for the New Testament, Paul's concept of reconciliation (cf. Rom. 5.1–11; 2Cor. 5.11–21) is replicated and developed in Colossians (as well as in Ephesians). The soteriological dynamic of Colossians, combined with allusions to the exodus story in Colossians 1.12–20 had the potential to make the righteous Suffering of the Servant in Isaiah 53 a strong and readily available frame to be evoked by the *peacemaking through blood* metaphor in Colossians 1.20b. Likewise the overall paradigm of the vicarious death of an innocent individual strengthened by the καταλλασσ- word-group had the potential to make Maccabean martyrdom a strong and readily available frame.

6.6 The Transforming Power of the Metaphor

In light of the above, it is reasonable to conclude that the language of *peacemaking through blood* in Colossians 1.20b had the potential to evoke the legal semantic frame of divine controversy especially drawn from Deutero-Isaiah. In the message of Colossians, Jesus Christ could have been conceptualised by the Jewish hearers as the "compensation" that opens the way to reconciliation (Isa. 53; Col. 1.20).

As we have postulated above, the metaphors might have triggered the whole script-like frame in which the people are found in estrangement from YHWH, and, as a result of their rebellion, estranged both politically and, most importantly, spiritually. So, I propose that *reconciliation/peacemaking through blood* in Colossians 1.20 could have activated in the minds of the Jewish readers the Isaianic eschatological portrayal of YHWH's conflict with his people, particularly the last phase of the process, namely, the end of conflict. In the prophet, Israel is vindicated by YHWH (justification language) in a context of *rîb*-pattern (53.11; 45.25; cf. 43.26; 50.8). Their being justified conceptually entailed God's forgiveness, which in turn achieved the restoration of Yahweh-Israel relationship, that is, reconciliation. In what follows I propose three ways in which the metaphor challenged the Jewish perception of reality.

6.6.1 The Cost of Peace

Both in Deutero-Isaiah and in the Maccabean martyrdom tradition, peace between God and the nation is mediated through the sacrificial death of a righteous substitute who offers a voluntary and innocent life to God on behalf of the nation. In both accounts, there is violence before there

can be peace; in both accounts, the conflict between God and individuals is dissolved by the price of blood. The effectiveness of blood sacrifices in keeping peace and/or reconciling sinners to God follows a discernible line of development from the Levitical animal sacrifice to the beginning of the development of a better sacrifice in later tradition (as the "sacrifice" of obedience in Ps. 40) to the notion of the effectiveness of a human life offered to God hinted at in Isaiah 53 and developed in the Maccabean martyrology.

Stanley Porter has provided a useful summary of the biblical concept of peace.[69] He observes that the Old Testament presents two distinct emphases concerning peace related to two distinct developments of Israel's history and tradition. First, there is the Levitical emphasis on peace with God through blood sacrifice. This is essentially vertical and cultic in nature. The essential element of the "peace offering" is the pouring of blood (Exod. 20.24; 24.5; 29.28; Num. 6; 7; Lev. 3–7; 9–10; 17; 19; 22–23). Blood draws "attention to the costliness of peace. Peace is not simply an empty wish; it is the result of a process that, in this instance, exacts the high cost of life."[70] Secondly, despite God's early provision of means to keep peace through sacrifice, Israel found themselves without "peace" on many occasions, and this is the emphasis found in the prophets, especially in Isaiah (cf. Isa. 9.4–7; 11.1–9; Deutero-Isaiah). In Porter's words: "Isaiah predicts the coming of a redeemer who will embody peace and bring it to the people; this will be the climax of Israel's history and the solution to their present difficulties."[71] It is likely that the Jewish community heard Colossians 1.20 as the fulfilment of the Isaianic promise of final restoration of peace between God and his people. "Blood" is that which makes compensation for the people's sins and opens the way to reconciliation between God and human beings.[72]

The impact of the message of Colossians on the Jewish audience in this regard is significant. The combined imagery of the metaphors represents Christ's blood as the definitive אָשָׁם offering, the ultimate death that won our peace. It is also likely that they could now put a face to the imagery of the Isaianic servant of chapter 53. If the Maccabean martyrology frame was available to them, Colossians 1.20 would have subverted their expectations concerning the appeasement of God's wrath, for contrary to the Maccabean logic, it is God himself who initiates the peacemaking process with offending sinners.[73] This in turn, points to another modification of the *rîb*-controversy frame, namely, now it is clear that God himself is the one who offers that

[69] Stanley Porter, 'Peace,' *NDBT* 682–83.
[70] Porter, *NDBT* 682.
[71] Idem.
[72] Cf. 2Cor. 5.18–21; Rom. 5.1–11; Eph. 2.14–17.
[73] As Porter, *Καταλλάσσω,* has demonstrated.

which makes (the definitive) compensation, i.e., Jesus Christ—"the definitive turning of the offering of a sacrifice to God by human beings into the offering of a sacrifice by God for human beings."[74] The effectiveness of the Christ's offer is also established and its effect is permanent—his work prospered (Isa. 53.10)—provided believers remain in the faith (Col. 1.23). There is no need for further offerings.

6.6.2 Double Effect of Redemption

In Deutero-Isaiah, redemption had a double effect (political and spiritual) seen in the people's plight towards God (spiritual bondage) and their bondage to the political powers of the nations with their god-idols. In the double controversy of God in Deutero-Isaiah, God contends with both Israel and the nations (and their god-idols). The end result of such controversies was ultimately peace (Isa. 53.5; cf. 48.22), the reconciliation of God's people—and the inclusion of Gentiles within this new, redefined, people of God—and the defeat of the nations with their idols.

As in Deutero-Isaiah, God's "rescuing operation" in Colossians also has a double effect: it means both the restoration of a strained relationship for God's people and the defeat of the spiritual powers (their "god-idols") who hold an undefined influence on believers (Col. 2.13–15). The believers are said to have been rescued from the dominion of darkness, and positively transferred to the kingdom of Christ (Col. 1.13). Christ's offering of his own blood was the means by which universal peace, the reconciliation of all things (Col. 1.20), was accomplished. God did it by reconciling "all things" to Christ, and Christ's supremacy over the present god-idols of the Gentiles is reaffirmed.

In the Jewish mindset, YHWH was sovereign over the god-idols of the nations. Now they learn that Christ also occupies the same position of pre-eminence and sovereignty. Like the message of YHWH's sovereignty over the nations with their god-idols in Deutero-Isaiah, the proclamation of Christ's supremacy over the *powers* in Colossians is a powerful message against the *Weltangst* that afflicted the Graeco-Roman societies over centuries of dealings with capricious deities.[75]

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[74] Goldingay, *Isaiah 40–55,* 223f.
[75] See chapters 1 and 2 above.

6.6.3 Universal Peace at Last

The universal scope of peace in Colossians reflects another characteristic of Deutero-Isaiah's peace for the "peacemaking" work prophesied by Isaiah has two aspects: (1) the restoration of cosmic harmony: eschatological salvation will result in the subjugation by God of all competing powers and the restoration of nature by the work of God and his messiah (e.g., Isa. 43.18–19; 65.17–25; cf. Isa. 11.1–9; Zech. 14.9; 2 Bar. 73.1; 1 Enoch 52.8–9), who is indeed called the "Prince of Peace" in Isaiah 9.6; and (2) the restoration of the God-human relationship. As we stated above, the lost peace (Isa. 48.22) is reclaimed and becomes a future blessing (Isa. 52.7) that is accomplished by the Servant (Isa. 53.5), secured by a covenant of peace (Isa. 54.10), and enjoyed by God's people in their eschatological exodus-like return (Isa. 55.12). Such is also the scope of peace in Colossians 1.20.

Commenting on Colossians 1.20, Barth and Blanke have suggested that the idea of the "establishment of peace" in the context of the Poem (1.15–20) may be connected to the themes of God's sovereignty through Christ over creation and the proclamation of eschatological peace.[76] Both themes find parallels in the Old Testament. First, the reality of שָׁלוֹם in the Old Testament is experienced within the Jewish monotheistic worldview wherein God, as the sole creator, is also the sole ruler of the universe, a motif which is also strong in Deutero-Isaiah. שָׁלוֹם is thus established on the premise of God's dominion over creation, his universal power. Secondly, peace is also an essential element in the eschatological proclamation of the prophets (cf. Isa. 9.5; Deutero-Isaiah; Mic. 5.1–4). Thus, peace is an expected element of the eschatological blessing. The divine contention framework in Deutero-Isaiah draws together both emphases as it presents YHWH as victorious in the contention scenes. As we have seen above, in Deutero-Isaiah, the supremacy of YHWH is demonstrated in the contrast between him and the nations with their god-idols. In Deutero-Isaiah YHWH's verdict on the god-idols is that they are "nothing" (e.g., Isa. 41.24; cf. 29; 42.18–25; 44.9–20), and that "there is no God, but YHWH" who can deliver his people (e.g., Isa. 41.4; 43.10–13; 44.24; 45.5–7; 49.26). He is, therefore, able to rescue and rebuild his own people. He is the Creator of all things and sovereign Ruler of all things, and both features are combined in Israel's eschatological expectation. So, the divine controversy of Deutero-Isaiah provides a fitting framework for our understanding of the theological scope of *peacemaking through blood* in Colossians 1.20.

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[76] Barth and Blanke, *Colossians,* 216.

It is possible that the Jewish community in Colossae understood the peace brought about by Christ's blood as the fulfilment of the cosmic restoration and universal peace prophesied by Isaiah whereby harmony is restored in the universe,[77] and individuals reconciled to God (Col. 1.20). The "consolation of Israel," God's "salvation which [he] has prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to [God's] people Israel"[78] is now a reality in Christ—peace at last.

6.7 Conclusion

In this chapter, I demonstrated that the "reconciliation" metaphor in Colossians 1.20a had the potential to evoke the *rîb*-controversy frame whereas *peacemaking through blood* in verse 20b had the potential to activate the Isaiah 53 frame in the minds of the Jewish audience of Colossians.

I first argued that the metaphors employed in Colossians 1.12–14 to describe God's work of deliverance could have evoked the overarching frame of exodus, as particularly displayed within the framework of Deutero-Isaiah—the so-called second exodus—, in the minds of the Jewish hearers of the letter. Then I argued that it provides a narrative substructure which undergirds the author's discourse in Colossians 1.12–23.

Secondly, I argue that the reconciliation language (Col. 1.20a) had the potential to activate the *rîb*-pattern frame, while *peacemaking through human bloodshed* (Col. 1.20b) could have evoked the offering of Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53—a passage located in the midst of *rîb*-passages in Deutero-Isaiah; both the *rîb*-controversy frame and the *peacemaking through human bloodshed* one belong within the overarching second exodus frame.

I concluded by proposing three ways in which the combined imagery of Colossians 1.12–23 could have challenged the readers' perception of reality. Namely, in regards to the cost of peace, the scope of redemption including both rescuing from sin and rescuing from evil spiritual powers, and the fulfilment of the Isaianic promise of universal peace.

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[77] Such is the scope of the reconciling act in Col. 1.20a, where τὰ πάντα includes everything that was created by God in Christ, including the subjugation of the spiritual powers, as made explicit by the all-encompassing qualification of the works of creation (Col. 1.16) and reconciliation (Col. 1.20c), and the statements of Christ's headship and triumph over the "powers" (Col. 2.10, 15).

[78] Luke 2.25, 30–31, in which NA28 identifies an allusion to Isa. 40.1; 49.13; 61.2 in v. 25 and to Isaiah 40.5; 42.6; 46.13; 49.9,6; 52.10 in vv. 30–31.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

My investigation of the concept of *peacemaking through blood* in Colossians 1.20b began by applying insights from Cognitive Linguistics, especially from conceptual metaphor and frame semantics, in order to assess the possible frames triggered in the minds of the implied readers by the metaphorical expression εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου in Colossians 1.20b. My hypothesis is that the metaphorical expression εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου had the potential to evoke various frames, or scenarios, available to the conceptual system of the readers, and which enabled them to make sense of the metaphors. I argued that the *peacemaking through blood* concept evokes frames from both the Graeco-Roman conceptual world and the Jewish one. The readers might have begun their comprehension of the message of εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου in Colossians 1.20b by contrasting the common threads of those frames known to them with how the concept of *peacemaking through blood* in Colossians is presented as it is informed and shaped by the Christ event. The version of the message presented by Colossians is one that challenges the cultural and theological expectations which the audience had concerning *peacemaking through blood*. The impact of the christological configuration of the concept of *peacemaking through blood* in Colossians lies precisely in the incongruity between its message and the familiar frames known to the hearers.

In the first half of this thesis (chapters 2 and 3), I analysed εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου (Col. 1.20b) against the Graeco-Roman conceptual world.

In chapter two, we found that the concept of *peacemaking through blood* had a strong parallel in the Roman ideal of *peacemaking though violence* of *pax romana,* key element of Roman imperial propaganda which encompassed a wide spectrum of the social, political and religious aspects of life. In essence, *pax romana* was a peace achieved through military victory (*parta victoriis pax*) and the subjugation of erstwhile enemies. Put differently, the Roman project of global pacification amounted to *peacemaking through violence*. Although, at face value, it might seem that the Romans valued peace over war (as the institution of the *fetiales* might at first suggest), they were driven by a strong military mindset for they believed they had been divinely commissioned to conquer and rule the world, "to impose the custom of peace, to spare

the vanquished and to crush the proud." (Virgil, *Aen*. 6.851–53). Another element of *pax romana* was its inextricable connection with *pax deorum* (the peace of the gods) for they held that there was a cause-and-effect relationship between securing the *pax deorum*—often having to appease the wrath of the gods (*ira deorum*)—and their earthly blessings of peace and success. *Pax deorum* was the necessary condition for the *pax romana*. A passage from poem 68.75–76 of the Roman poet Catullus exemplifies their belief in the necessity of securing the *pax deorum* by the offering of sacred blood to the lords of heaven. The religious experience of the Mediterranean world of the Hellenistic and Roman period was marked by a deep feeling of fear and anxiety in face of the divine (*Weltangst*). The Greeks called it δεισιδαιμονία ("excessive fear of the divinity"). The same imperial ideal is a constant theme in Roman literature, arts, architecture, and coinage and I have shown that such aspects of the imperial propaganda spread to the provinces (including Asia Minor), as evidenced in extant literature (copies of the *Res Gestae*), coinage, the imperial cult, iconography, and inscriptions. It was perhaps by means of its religious aspect that the ideal of the *pax romana* left its strongest mark in Asia Minor, especially given the widespread imperial cult in the province. Since the *pax romana* frame was readily available to the first-century Asia Minor readers of Colossians, not least in the Lycus Valley, it is reasonable to conclude that the metaphorical expression εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου could have activated this script-like frame of *pax romana* in their minds through which they accessed the meaning of the linguistic units. In such a scenario, *peacemaking through blood* in Colossians 1.20b might have evoked *peacemaking through violence* of the *pax romana*.

Having demonstrated the availability of the *pax romana* frame in Asia Minor, a peace secured through violence, chapter three examines how the *pax romana* frame might have affected the reading of εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου in Colossians 1.20b and the challenges it posed to the readers' perception of reality—especially the Gentile readers. I argue that the cumulative weight of frame elements from the Roman world found in Colossians corroborates and amplifies the probability of the *pax romana* frame being triggered by the *peacemaking through blood* concept in Colossians 1.20b. The analysis shows that the *triumph* metaphor in Colossians 2.15 provides the clearest frame from the Roman world, and functions as a rhetoric device in the letter aimed at exposing the pacification of τὰς ἀρχὰς καὶ τὰς ἐξουσίας who are depicted as humiliated prisoners being led in triumphal procession by God in Christ (Col. 2.15). This metaphor complements the imagery evoked by the *peacemaking through blood* concept in Colossians 1.20b by fleshing it out with the element of pacification by

subjugation vis-à-vis the *powers*. When read together—that is, within the rhetoric of Colossians—the Roman concept of "imposed peace," or "pacification by submission" of Colossians 2.15 is brought to bear on the concept of εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου in Colossians 1.20. So, a frame semantic analysis of the metaphors provides further textual basis for reading the metaphors as complementing each other within the overarching frame of *pax romana*. The metaphorical expression εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου thus expands the idea of cosmic reconciliation (Col. 1.20a) to include the idea of "pacification through subjugation," which is picked up later when the writer addresses the issue of the *powers* directly in the polemic section (Col. 2.8–23). Thus *peacemaking through blood* adds a singular nuance to the concept of "reconciliation" found both in the earlier Pauline letters (Rom. 5.1–11 and 2Cor. 5.11–21) and in Ephesians 2.11–22. I conclude the chapter by proposing three ways in which the readers' perception of reality could have been challenged. First, their perception of the *powers* was challenged by the irony of presenting these menacing spiritual *powers* as humiliated defeated prisoners, thus subverting the Roman *pax deorum*/*pax romana* paradigm. Second, the believers' perception is switched from that of "captives" to that of "spectators" watching their menacing spiritual rulers being led in triumphal procession. Lastly, their perception of a violent bringer of peace is challenged by the depiction of God who establishes peace not by "crushing" his enemies, but by enduring violence himself in the person of his son at the crucifixion.

The second part of the thesis (chapters 4–6) deals with the Jewish conceptual world and its bearing on the interpretation of *peacemaking through blood* in Colossians 1.20b.

In chapter four, I argued that the Old Testament *rîb*-pattern is a conceptual frame widely used in Jewish writings to conceptualise the relationship between God and Israel, the disruption of this relationship, and its restoration. A controversy is a dispute between two parties over a perceived wrong on questions of law. Before a contention takes place, both parties enjoy a state of peaceable understanding between themselves. Then something happens to disturb their relationship, causing the offended party to launch an accusation against the other. The controversy begins when the claimant (the offended party) raises an accusation against the defendant (the accused party). This dynamic characterises a "bilateral" controversy. If the parties involved in the dispute fail to resolve it among themselves, it can be taken up to a third party who will act as judge. In such case, the controversy becomes a "trilateral" one. I showed that the ideal goal of a bilateral contention within God's covenantal community is ultimately the restoration

of a broken relationship, that is, reconciliation—the controversy ends by way of forgiveness. Both structures (bilateral and trilateral) are used to conceptualise the relationship between God and humankind. In bilateral theologised controversies, God has a case against Israel, Gentiles nations (cf. Deutero-Isaiah), or against individuals (e.g., Job). This is called a "prophetic *rîb*-pattern" or a "covenant lawsuit." In a covenant lawsuit God acts as both prosecutor and judge and, as the supreme judge any attempt at resolution of the conflict invariably depends on his own decision to initiate the action.

In a similar way to bilateral contentions, the goal of "covenant controversies," that between God and his people, is reconciliation. In this scenario, God's case against Israel, for instance, can be expressed in terms of God's wrath against the nation, and God's forgiveness can be expressed in terms of the cessation of wrath. That reconciliation is the aim of theologised versions of *rîb*-controversies is first seen in that forgiveness and reconciliation are God's promises to those who submit and confess their guilt (e.g., Job. 33.15–27, 31–32; Deutero-Isaiah). Furthermore, the very nature of God's everlasting covenant with Israel—with its promise of steadfast love, or חֶסֶד (e.g., Deut. 5.10; 7.8–9, 12; cf. Exod. 34.6–7; 2Sam. 7.12–17; Ps. 89.28[88.29]; Isa. 54.8, 10; 55.3b)—constitutes the foundational reason why a controversy between God and his people always aims at reconciliation. In the conflict resolution process, the defendant may employ various means in their search for reconciliation, such as submission and confession of sin, plea for pardon, and intercession. An offer of compensation often accompanies the request for pardon—in prophetic *rîb* scenarios, this compensation is made by means of "sacrificial victims" or, more generally, "cultic acts." The lexemes used to express the act of pardoning on the plaintiff's part, on the other hand, are taken from three different, yet interrelated, semantic fields, namely, forgiveness, wrath, and mercy. In the threefold structure of a *rîb*-controversy, namely, 1) acknowledgement of a misdeed, 2) accusation, and 3) appropriate punishment, "wrath" is often substituted for "accusation." And when confession of sin is offered, the structure is 1) crime, 2) *Rîb*-accusation, 3) confession/supplication, 4) pardon, and 5) reconciliation, "wrath" may be substituted for "pardon." In such a framework, the appeasing of the offended party's anger is thus equivalent to the act of supplication for pardon, and the giving way of anger is equivalent to pardon being granted. The chapter also showed that the *rîb*-pattern was a widespread category in the Jewish worldview, a fact that justifies the argument that it could well have been part of the conceptual network of frames of the first century Jewish hearers of Colossians in Asia Minor, which enabled them to conceptualise the *peacemaking through blood* in Colossians 1.20b.

In chapter five I contend that Deutero-Isaiah provides a likely source of the theologised court-room controversy frame which could have been activated by the message of reconciliation through *peacemaking through blood* in Colossians 1.20b. I argued that the exodus frame functions in Deutero-Isaiah as an overarching frame used by the prophet to conceptualise the message of deliverance within which one finds other frames, such as the more specific frame of *rîb*-controversy employed to conceptualise the relationship between God and Israel, the disruption of this relationship, and its restoration. In the first set of controversies found in Isaiah 40–55, God has a controversy against the nations and their god-idols, God's final verdict being that the god-idols are "nothing" (e.g., Isa. 41.24), and that he, God, has sovereign control over history. In a second set of controversies, God contends against Israel on account of their unfaithfulness to the covenant. When the exile-event prompts Israel to question God's faithfulness to his covenant, God defends his right to act as he did by exposing Israel's real problem (cf. Isa. 42.24–25; 43.22–24; 50.1–2): Israel's unfaithfulness estranged the nation from God, so God becomes Israel's enemy and fights against them. The exile is a consequence of their unfaithfulness. The promise of the covenant, however, means that the ultimate goal of God's contention against Israel is the re-establishment of justice, and consequently, reconciliation. In one of many possible ways of interpreting the message of Deutero-Isaiah, I proposed that in initiating the process of reconciliation, YHWH summons the "Servant" to take on the task of establishing his מִשְׁפָּט to the nations and save both Israel and repentant Gentiles (49.6). The Servant's task is successful when his vicarious suffering and the work offered by him as אָשָׁם (restitution) for Israel's sin is pleasing (יִשְׁבָּע) to YHWH (53.11), and leads Israel to finally submit in confession (53.4–6). The "reinstatement" of שָׁלוֹם is thus achieved by means of the vicarious death of YHWH's servant ("the chastisement of our peace is on him," Isa. 53.5). By means of second exodus imagery, the effects of the Servant's work extrapolated the limits of the YHWH-Israel relationship, now extending to the entire cosmos with its promises of salvation for the nations (e.g., Isa. 55. 6–7) and of cosmic restoration (e.g., 55.12–13; cf. 65.17–25). The future שָׁלוֹם proclaimed in 52.7 and accomplished by the Servant in 53.5c is confirmed and secured by a covenant of peace (54.10) and enjoyed in their eschatological exodus-like, or second-exodus, return (55.12). Thus, in this proposed reading, it is possible to say that God reconciled Israel to himself, making peace through the blood (of אָשָׁם) of his Servant. In the last part of the chapter, I argued that, similarly to Isaiah 53, the Maccabean martyrdom tradition also displays the motif of an innocent suffering figure who bears the sins of others vicariously. I showed that the Maccabean tradition reveals that Jewish writers at the time had already made the conceptual move

from the effectiveness of "animal sacrifice" to the conceptualisation of the effectiveness and acceptability of a "human death" and its effectiveness in changing the God-human relationship. Although the influence of Isaiah 53 on the Maccabean martyrology is not provable, it could well have been a key marker along the way to such a paradigm shift. In Colossians, however, the blood that does away with God's wrath is provided by God himself through the righteous "son whom he loves" in order to reconcile "all things" to him (the son).In the final chapter I argue that the "reconciliation" metaphor in Colossians 1.20a had the potential to evoke the *rîb*-controversy frame whereas *peacemaking through blood* in verse 20b had the potential to activate the Isaiah 53 frame in the minds of the Jewish audience of Colossians. The combined metaphors employed in Colossians 1.12–14 to describe God's work of deliverance could have evoked the overarching frame of exodus, as particularly displayed within the framework of Deutero-Isaiah—the so-called second exodus—in the minds of the Jewish hearers of the letter. This provides a narrative substructure which undergirds the author's discourse in Colossians 1.12–23. As in Deutero-Isaiah, the relationship of those conceptualised as being "in exile" (spiritually) in Colossians is articulated in terms of a broken relationship in need of reconciliation, the re-establishment of peace. Israel had forfeited שָׁלוֹם by their covenantal unfaithfulness ("there is no שָׁלוֹם for the wicked, Isa. 49.22). Therefore, God stands against his people, an idea conveyed by the *rîb*-controversy imagery. Both in Deutero-Isaiah and in Colossians, God himself makes provision for reconciliation: in the former, the servant of the Lord is commissioned to re-establish מִשְׁפָּט and save both Israel and the Gentiles (compare 48.22 with 49.1, 6). YHWH himself is the ultimate cause of the Servant's vicarious suffering: "Yahweh caused the iniquity of us all to strike (הִפְגִּיעַ) him" (v. 6b), and "But Yahweh *planned* (חָפֵץ) to crush him" (10aα). The Servant's vicarious death was according to YHWH's plan, and it made compensation for Israel's guilt, thus preparing the way for their being reconciled to God (cf. 53.12). My contention is that when the Jewish audience heard of *peacemaking through human bloodshed* in Colossians 1.20, the reconciliation language (Col. 1.20a) had the potential to activate the *rîb*-pattern frame while *peacemaking through human bloodshed* (Col. 1.20b) could have evoked the offering of Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53, in which his violent death is offered as compensation to God for the people's guilt—a passage located in the midst of *rîb*-passages in Deutero-Isaiah. Both the *rîb*-controversy frame and the *peacemaking through human bloodshed* one belong within the overarching second exodus frame. I concluded by proposing three ways in which the combined imagery of Colossians 1.12–23 could have challenged the readers' perception of reality, namely, in regards to the cost of peace, the scope of redemption including both rescuing

from sin and rescuing from evil spiritual powers, and the fulfilment of the Isaianic universal peace.

This study leads us to affirm our initial hypothesis, that the metaphorical expression εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου had the potential to evoke various frames, or scenarios, available to the conceptual system of the implied readers, enabling them to make sense of the metaphors. Insights from Cognitive Linguistics on metaphor and Frame Semantics help avoid a flat, monolithic interpretation of Colossians 1.20, and thus enable our exegesis to take into account the multicultural world within which both the New Testament writer and his audience lived. The interpreter need not choose between backgrounds. As we have demonstrated, it is highly possible that multiple backgrounds inform the interpretation of a given text. Our exegetical approach does not diminish the importance of careful historical studies on the New Testament documents. Instead, it highlights its importance and complements it by attuning modern interpreters to frames they could otherwise have missed.

Our approach to Colossians 1.20 helps us overcome the limitations of traditional either/or types of exegesis which single out *the* one background of *peacemaking though blood* in Colossians 1.20b; that emphasis, combined with the ἀποκαταλλασσ- language in 1.20a, has led most commentators to assign a purely Graeco-Roman background to it. In this way I address the warning against such monolithic approaches to Paul and the other New Testament writers issued by scholars such as Paul Foster. Ralph Martin, for instance, suggested that "*'Reconciliation' is the way Paul formulated his gospel in communicating it to the Gentiles*."[1] However, our study has shown that the concept of reconciliation/peacemaking was integral to the *rîb*-controversy frame which was part of the Jewish conceptual/theological system. Consequently, the metaphorical language of Colossians 1.20 could have activated that frame in the minds of the Jewish side of the community in Colossae.

The identification of a Jewish frame in *peacemaking through blood* in Colossians 1.20 does not, however, dismiss the possibility that other frames from the Graeco-Roman world had also been triggered by the same language, as we have demonstrated in our analysis of *pax romana*. Gentiles not familiar with the Jewish conceptual/theological system would most likely not have thought of Isaiah when they heard about the concept of *peacemaking through blood*.

[1] Martin, *Reconciliation,* 153 (italics original). In contrast to "justification" which was aimed at communicating the gospel to the Jews.

Nonetheless, they could still make sense of the metaphorical language by means of the frames available to them.

Although the metaphorical language of εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου in Colossians 1.20b is intelligible to its readers on the basis of the frames it evokes, the Colossians concept of *peacemaking through blood* surpasses the meaning of the concept in both the Graeco-Roman understanding of *pax romana* and the Jewish *rîb*-controversy frame. Colossians' version of *peacemaking through blood* is informed and shaped the Christ-event. This christological configuration challenges the cultural and theological expectations of the audience and replaces them with something greater than anything they knew or could deduce from the frames with which they were familiar. The peace of Jesus Christ in Colossians transcends the known elements of the frames, augmenting virtually everything the hearers knew about *peacemaking through blood*. In other words, the peace which Colossians proclaims stands as the best option among the best alternatives available to the audience. Colossians exposes the peace of the *pax romana* as of an inferior, limited, kind. Whether or not the message of *peacemaking through blood* in Colossians was anti-imperial is debatable; but it was certainly "*supra*imperial," as Galinsky puts it in regards to Paul's gospel.[2] One could also argue that it was "*supra*cultural." On the other hand, the Colossian letter's *peacemaking through blood* also elevates the known elements of *peacemaking through blood* in Judaism, as Jesus Christ is presented as the one in whom the promise of the eternal peace of Isaiah's prophecies is fulfilled.

There are still much to be said about the backgrounds of *peacemaking through blood* in Colossians that has not been treated in this study. However, I venture to suggest that these findings have a bearing on some other matters.

Our study has revealed the possibility of various frames been activated by the same metaphorical expression in Colossians 1.20b. This approach shifts the focus of interpretation slightly from the author, who employed the metaphors, to the implied hearers who would have made sense of the lexical units through the frames available in their conceptual system. From this perspective, all the potential frames tiggered in the minds of the hearers are equally important for the cognition process. More work could be done on whether one cultural influence, either Jewish or Graeco-Roman, in the case of Colossians, might be the dominant source of the

[2] Galinsky, Karl. 'In the Shadow (or not) of the Imperial Cult: A Cooperative Agenda,' in *Rome and Religion: A Cross-Disciplinary Dialogue on the Imperial Cult* (eds. Jeffrey Brodd and Jonathan L. Reed. WGRW 5. Atlanta: SBL, 2011) 215–26, at 222.

writer's theologising based on the potential frames and possible narrative substructure evoked by the metaphors employed. As for Colossians, based on our proposal of a narrative substructure in 1.12–23, I wonder whether or not the writer's Jewishness (established on the basis of the implied writer of the letter, i.e., Paul and Timothy, and exegetical pointers such as the "we" and "you" language, as well as suggested by our analysis of a proposed narrative substructure in chapter six) occupies the foreground in his theologising. In this framework, it could be possible to argue that the implied authors seem to be so steeped in the Jewish scripture, that the Old Testament could arguably be the main source of their theological categories; their theologising is however of a dialogical kind, that is, the Old Testament categories are both reinterpreted in light of the Christ event and contextualised to the Graeco-Roman world that he inhabits. This consequently may impinge on the anti-imperial hermeneutics of the letter. Was it the author of Colossians' primary intention to counter the empire by his using of metaphorical expressions which found source frames in the Roman empire? Or was the gospel proclaimed in Colossians only "incidentally" anti-imperial rather than "anti-imperial by design"?[3]

It is also worth exploring further the missiological implications of our studies' results. If the metaphorical expressions such as εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτου in Colossians 1.20b have the potential to evoke frames available to its hearers, what are the implications of a study on the concept of *peacemaking through blood,* with its potential parallel with *peacemaking through violence,* on the proclamation of the peace of Jesus Christ in countries where Christianity is still met with institutional violence? During my three years living and researching at Tyndale House, in Cambridge, I have had the privilege of meeting many a scholar from all over the globe. Every time, without fail, I have had the chance to share my research topic with fellow researchers from places such as Hong Kong and Malaysia, I am taken aback by their reaction and great interest in contextualising the message of reconciliation and *peacemaking through blood* in the preaching of the gospel in the more hostile atmosphere of their own countries. Therefore, it seems relevant to ask question such as: how do people in places such as those receive the message of *peacemaking through blood*? How do they, as well as the many immigrant communities in the UK, along with people groups in continuous transit throughout the world, conceptualise the message? At the very least, one can argue that it is both a solace and an encouragement to know that the God whom we proclaim both under hostile

[3] As suggested by Snyder in Snyder, H. Gregory. 'Response to Karl Galinsky, "In the Shadow (or Not) of the Imperial Cult: A Cooperative Agenda,"' in *Rome and Religion: A Cross-Disciplinary Dialogue on the Imperial Cult* (eds. Jeffrey Brodd and Jonathan L. Reed. WGRW 5. Atlanta: SBL, 2011) 227–34, at 228.

circumstances and in societies trying to grasp core Christian concepts has himself endured violence and rejection in his making peace with humankind.

The present study of Colossians is also relevant to the many countries worldwide—such as Brazil—dominated by superstition and where fear of and fascination with the spirit world is part and parcel of the local worldview. In such contexts, Colossians' message of Christ's supremacy over spiritual powers through his subjugating them, as well as the all-encompassing peace that results, goes a long way to tackle superstition, fear, and anxiety. Like the community in Colossae, Brazilians, for instance, have no trouble believing in either the existence or influence of evil spiritual powers. The message of Colossians is as relevant to them as it was to the first-century inhabitants of Colossae.

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