

## WEALTHIER SUPPORTERS OF JESUS OF NAZARETH

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### *Introduction*

There has been a persistent assumption that the supporters of Jesus of Nazareth came from the lower economic strata of society—not homeless beggars, but far from wealthy.<sup>1</sup> The view now common of the generally low economic status of the earliest Christians was popularized a century ago through the publications of Adolf Deissmann.<sup>2</sup> How widespread this understanding is can be illustrated from a recent semi-popular book that portrays Simon and Andrew as ‘largely illiterate’ men who had just finished working a night shift when they met Jesus for the first time; Simon was ‘a simple man’.<sup>3</sup> Also recently,

1. Acknowledgments: I thank the participants in a seminar at The University of New England in Armidale in August 2012 and those in a session of the 34th Conference of the Australasian Society for Classical Studies in Sydney in January 2013 for their perceptive and illuminating comments on a paper dealing with sections 2-5 below.

2. Especially *Licht vom Osten: Das Neue Testament und die neuentdeckten Texte der hellenistisch-römischen Welt* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 4th edn, 1923), e.g. pp. 5-8, 208-10, 336-38, 404-405; and *Light from the Ancient East: The New Testament Illustrated by Recently Discovered Texts of the Graeco-Roman World* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 2nd edn, 1927). This is a major purpose of *Licht* (see pp. 6-7 n. 1, 247-48). See Albrecht Gerber, *Deissmann the Philologist* (BZNW, 171; Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 2010), pp. 48-58, 453-54; cf. p. 559 (1897 lecture). Deissmann was probably influenced by his political association with Friedrich Naumann (see *Deissmann*, pp. 216-27); Gerber, ‘Protestantism and Social Liberalism in Imperial Germany: Gustav Adolf Deissmann (1866–1937) and Friedrich Naumann (1860–1919)’, *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 57 (2011), pp. 174-87.

3. Daryn Robert Graham, *The First Christians: Not Just Ancient History* (Sydney: Book Pal, 2010), pp. 55-56, 58, 231 n. cxxi. Another semi-popular book

Chris Forbes, in a cautious argument about the criteria for authenticity of the material in the Gospels, envisages that Jesus' 'followers were predominantly small farmers or landless rural workers'.<sup>4</sup> Gerd Theissen, another scholar who looks afresh at the evidence, sees 'the social context of the renewal movements within the Judaism of the first century AD' as 'not so much the lowest class of all as a marginal middle class'. They 'were threatened with debt and a decline in fortunes: farmers, fishermen and craftsmen'. Basically, he regards the earliest Christians as wandering charismatics who lacked possessions.<sup>5</sup> A lively book by John Dominic Crossan places Jesus and his family in the 'Peasant' class, or even lower (bottom 15%), the 'Artisan' class.<sup>6</sup> But it is possible to find others who think that some disciples, those engaged in the fishing trade, were 'men of substance who worked in family partnerships, owning several vessels and employing hired hands'.<sup>7</sup> And there were earlier scholars who saw some of the first disciples as belonging to the entrepreneurial classes. For example, Wilhelm H. Wuellner used materials collected in the large economic and social histories of the Hellenistic and Roman worlds to suggest that, in the fishing industry, while the hired workers remained poor, those who hired laborers were considerably higher on the economic scale, although left in the shade by those who provided finance or had contractual rights.<sup>8</sup> George Wesley Buchanan pointed to many teachings of Jesus that were directed at members of the upper class and

sees Jesus as a simple peasant (Reza Aslan, *Zealot: The Life and Times of Jesus of Nazareth* [New York: Random House, 2013], pp. xix, 34-38, 98, 103, 211, 229).

4. Christopher Forbes, 'The Historical Jesus', in Mark Harding and Alanna M. Nobbs (eds.), *The Content and Setting of the Gospel Tradition* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), pp. 231-62 (233).

5. Gerd Theissen, *The First Followers of Jesus: A Sociological Analysis of the Earliest Christianity* (ET; London: SCM Press, 1978), esp. pp. 10-14, 36, 38, 45-46 (quotations); Gerd Theissen and Annette Merz, *Der historische Jesus: Ein Lehrbuch* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 3rd edn, 2001), pp. 198-201, 203-207.

6. John Dominic Crossan, *Jesus: A Revolutionary Biography* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1994), pp. xii, 23-25, 103-107, 181.

7. J.R. Porter, *Jesus Christ: The Jesus of History, the Christ of Faith* (London: Duncan Baird, 1999), p. 43. See also Abraham J. Malherbe, *Social Aspects of Early Christianity* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 2nd edn, 1983), pp. 31-59, 118-19.

8. Wilhelm H. Wuellner, *The Meaning of 'Fishers of Men'* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1967), pp. 21-25; cf. pp. 45-61.

others that would cast him as a building contractor rather than a manual laborer.<sup>9</sup> Other scholars dismiss any thought of moderate wealth among the fishing families by pointing to the limited living-space in the houses excavated in Capernaum. But it is unlikely that ancient Galilean fishing families had the same sense of personal space as modern archaeologists would.<sup>10</sup>

It is generally acknowledged that the New Testament contains references to wealthy members of the Christian communities. The letter of James, for example, uses circumlocutions for wealthy Christians (as distinct from references to the wealthy as a class): the person who enters a Christian gathering in dazzling clothes and wearing a gold ring—contrasted with the destitute (πτωχοί)—and those with the capital to move to a particular city in order to conduct business and make money.<sup>11</sup> But there has been little recognition of the wealthier supporters of Jesus himself. The view that Jesus and his supporters were poor suits contemporary prejudices. Rather than speaking of Jesus

9. George Wesley Buchanan, 'Jesus and the Upper Class', *NovT* 7 (1964–65), pp. 195-209. He called for a study of the term τέκτων (pp. 202-203). E.A. Judge pointed out to Richard A. Batey 'the need to collect and analyse the uses of *tektōn* in the Greek papyri' in Richard A. Batey, "'Is not this the Carpenter?'"', *NTS* 30 (1984), pp. 249-58 (257 n. 2). See section 6 below.

10. Jonathan L. Reed, 'Archaeological Contributions to the Study of Jesus and the Gospels', in Amy-Jill Levine et al. (eds.), *The Historical Jesus in Context* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), pp. 40-54, says that the houses excavated in Capernaum and other villages in Galilee 'show that neither farming nor fishing put people in the higher tiers of the social pyramid' (p. 51). On the archaeological remains at Capernaum, see Stanislaw Loffreda, *NEAEHL* 1.291-96 and *OEANE* 1.416-19; Jonathan L. Reed, *Archaeology and the Galilean Jesus: A Re-examination of the Evidence* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2000), pp. 148-60. For a debate on personal space in another arena, the assembly place in Classical Athens, see Mogens Herman Hansen, 'Reflections on the Number of Citizens Accommodated in the Assembly Place on the Pnyx', in Björn Forsén and Greg Stanton (eds.), *The Pnyx in the History of Athens: Proceedings of an International Colloquium Organised by the Finnish Institute at Athens, 7–9 October, 1994* (Papers and Monographs of the Finnish Institute at Athens, 2; Helsinki: Suomen Ateenan-instituutin säätiö, 1996), pp. 23-33.

11. Jas 2.2; 4.13; cf. Roy Bowen Ward, 'Partiality in the Assembly: James 2:2-4', *HTR* 62 (1969), pp. 87-97 (95-97); cf. E.A. Judge, *Social Distinctives of the Christians in the First Century: Pivotal Essays by E.A. Judge* (ed. David M. Scholer; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2008), pp. 38-39, who identifies a Roman equestrian and big businessmen in the East.

of Nazareth as the Christ, Western church leaders often speak of introducing Jesus as though he was an ordinary person struggling financially, or as a friend in similar circumstances to their own. The slogan ‘What would Jesus do?’ that North American Christians put on bracelets and automobiles also takes Jesus to be a person like themselves.<sup>12</sup> This paper seeks to challenge the assumption that the first followers of Christ were mainly poor peasants. In challenging this common understanding, one needs to be cautious that assumptions in the ancient sources (such as the Gospels) are also not ignored.

### *1. Looking for Evidence*

The purpose of this paper is to tease out signs of wealth among Jesus’ supporters. In a recent article, Chris Keith argues that modern scholars cannot in the final analysis be sure of the Jesus of Nazareth whom they delineate, but they can get close to achieving that goal by understanding how and why early Christians came to view him as they did. The process is aided by advances in historiography and memory theory.<sup>13</sup> In particular, scholars have tried to develop tools in order to be more specific about the economic standing of (especially) Paul’s connections. However, the classifications of Steven Friesen, for example, involve many guesses, and it is unnerving to read that his seven categories of economic standing can be transformed into 120.<sup>14</sup> There is, moreover, a lesson to be learned from historians of Greece in the Archaic period, who have much more limited sources than students of the historical Jesus. The principle is to accept what the ancient sources say unless there is a reason for rejecting it.<sup>15</sup> Moreover, there are statements in the

12. See Stephen Prothero, *American Jesus: How the Son of God Became a National Icon* (New York: Farrer, Straus and Giroux, 2003), pp. 38, 302-303.

13. Chris Keith, ‘The Narratives of the Gospels and the Historical Jesus: Current Debates, Prior Debates and the Goal of Historical Jesus Research’, *JSNT* 38 (2016), pp. 426-55.

14. Steven J. Friesen, ‘Poverty in Pauline Studies: Beyond the So-Called New Consensus’, *JSNT* 26 (2004), pp. 323-61; Bruce W. Longenecker, ‘Socio-Economic Profiling of the First Urban Christians’, in Todd D. Still and David G. Horrell (eds.), *After the First Urban Christians: The Social-Scientific Study of Pauline Christianity Twenty-Five Years Later* (London: T. & T. Clark, 2009), pp. 36-59 (45 n. 16).

15. Gil Davis, ‘Dating the Drachmas in Solon’s Laws’, *Historia* 61 (2012), pp. 127-58 (132 n. 28).

Gospels that are made in passing, without any perceptible theological intent. Thus, the story of the large catch of fish on the Sea of Tiberias after the resurrection is told as a miracle. That underlying implication is conveyed by the *πλῆθος* (large number) of fish preventing the seven disciples from hauling the net (Jn 21.6). The specific figure of 153 fish later in the account (21.11) is an example of eyewitness detail that is unnecessary. It is consistent with the miracle interpretation, but it can be regarded as superfluous detail preserved by communal memory of an actual event.<sup>16</sup>

Some guidance comes from papyrological evidence for economic arrangements in the eastern Roman empire, although we must be alert to the possibility that Egypt was economically or socially different.<sup>17</sup> Dominic Rathbone argues that there is little evidence for poverty in Roman Egypt of the first to the third centuries. But he is aware that there is little evidence from the huge city of Alexandria, second only to Rome, to which poverty-stricken people probably drifted, as they did to Rome. He suggests that the situation for *widows* was not as bad as scholars have stated. However, men were looking for wives in an even younger age-bracket. As he says, ‘women were less likely to remarry after the age of thirty-five.’ Making village communities pay the poll-tax for villagers who could not pay certainly implies a sufficiently high proportion of poor people to force a change in the law. Other scholars, such as Seán Freyne, freely use papyrological and other Egyptian evidence. As Peter Arzt-Grabner points out, the growing number of papyri found outside Egypt confirms that people in Egypt were using similar formulations to those elsewhere in the Roman empire. A related point is that quite a few papyri found in Egypt deal with situations in provinces beyond Egypt.<sup>18</sup>

16. For a strong statement made generations ago on the reliability of the fourth evangelist when a detail is mentioned that is quite ‘incidental and irrelevant to his overriding theological purpose’, see J.A.T. Robinson, ‘The New Look on the Fourth Gospel’, in Kurt Aland et al. (eds.), *Studia Evangelica 1: Papers Presented to the International Congress on ‘The Four Gospels in 1957’ Held at Christ Church, Oxford, 1957* (TU, 73; Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1959), pp. 338-50 (346).

17. Some offices were certainly distinctive (cf. nn. 39-40 below).

18. Dominic Rathbone, ‘Poverty and Population in Roman Egypt’, in Margaret Atkins and Robin Osborne (eds.), *Poverty in the Roman World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 100-14 (quotation from p. 102). For Rome, see Keith Hopkins, *Death and Renewal* (Sociological Studies in Roman History, 2; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 207-11; Seán Freyne, *The*

Initially in our search for signs of moderate wealth, we might note that a long-standing investigator of the papyri concluded that fishing families and carpenters ‘occupied a prosperous space in town society’.<sup>19</sup> In Egypt, the central government controlled the issue of leases for fishing and the sale of fish. A lot of money was paid over.<sup>20</sup> In P.Wisc. 1.6.14-16, 20-23 (210–11 CE), two pots of thrissa fish and six pots of *garum* (see below), or possibly of pickled fish, are handed over at the point of agreement on the fishing rights, while the rest of the rent will be paid in silver drachmas at the end of the lease.<sup>21</sup> In the long account P.Oxy. 49.3495 (second century CE) terms for pickling indicate catches of fish that are set aside for pickling (and so no money changes hands at this point).<sup>22</sup> There is also literary evidence for abundance of fish in

*Jesus Movement and its Expansion: Meaning and Mission* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014), ch. 3; Peter Arzt-Grabner, “‘Neither a Truant nor a Fugitive’: Some Remarks on the Sale of Slaves in Roman Egypt and Other Provinces”, in Traianos Gagos (ed.), *Proceedings of the 25th International Congress of Papyrology, Ann Arbor July 29–August 4, 2007* (Ann Arbor, MI: American Studies in Papyrology, 2010), pp. 21-32 (e.g. ‘the long lasting theory of a “Sonderfall Ägypten” is ... no longer valid’ [p. 21]); M. Rostovtzeff’s studies (used by Wuellner) found the Egyptian evidence generally compatible with that of other areas of the eastern Roman empire (*The Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World* [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1941]; and *The Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire* [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2nd edn, 1957]).

19. Peter Parsons, *City of the Sharp-Nosed Fish: Greek Papyri Beneath the Egyptian Sand Reveal a Long-Lost World* (London: Phoenix, 2007), p. 103.

20. Allan Chester Johnson, *Roman Egypt to the Reign of Diocletian* (ESAR, 2; Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1936), pp. 317, 335, 348, 374-78, 552-53; Raphael Taubenschlag, *The Law of Greco-Roman Egypt in the Light of the Papyri: 332 B.C.—640 A.D.* (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 2nd edn, 1955), pp. 664-66. Although there are gaps in the text, SB 16.12495 (first century CE) shows a civic official seeking to control where fish is sold: the owner of a workshop processing fish (ἰχθύα) has tried to have women sell them away from the city ‘in one of the oases of the Western Desert’ (Michael Sharp, ‘The Food Supply’, in Alan K. Bowman et al. [eds.], *Oxyrhynchus: A City and its Texts* [Graeco-Roman Memoirs, 93; London: Egypt Exploration Society, 2007], pp. 218-30 [221-22]). Johnson (*Roman Egypt*, pp. 377-78) gives P.Tebt. 2.329 (139 CE) as an example of large amounts of money (1 talent 1100 drachmas of silver [ll. 15-16, 23]) given by fishers as a deposit.

21. The text was revised from the photograph by J.R. Rea, who later published the four fishing licences in P.Oxy. 46.3267-3270 (‘P.Wisc. 6 Revised’, *ZPE* 12 [1973], pp. 262-64).

22. ε(ἰς) ταριχίαν, 127; τα(ρι)χ(ία), 89, 112, 133, 143.

Egypt (e.g. ‘all kinds of species of fish, incredible in number’, with ‘an unfailing number for salting’). Lake Moiris alone provided a catch worth a talent of silver each day as it flowed out into the Nile, such that the people engaged in the salting operation could scarcely keep up with the work.<sup>23</sup> Such preserved fish products were ‘widely spread’ in the ancient world.<sup>24</sup> The lust for ‘those delicate pickled fish from the Nile’ is evident in Loukianos, *The Ship or The Wishes* 15 (second century CE).

*Garum*, a kind of sauce made from the salted livers of fish, was a valuable product that was apparently widely sold in the Roman empire.<sup>25</sup> It is already mentioned (οὐδὲν ... τοῦ ταριχηροῦ γάρου, ‘none of the pickled sauce’) in a fragment (606 Radt) of Sophocles (fifth century BCE), and its enormous spread in the Mediterranean is clear from Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* 31.94 (first century CE), where the provinces of Mauretania, Africa, Baetica and Asia are mentioned. In P.Oxy. 54.3749 (319 CE), the guild of *garum*-sellers (γαροπῶλαι) at Oxyrhynchus declares a price of 28 denarii for one sextarius of fish-sauce. In Diocletian’s edict on maximum prices (301 CE), fish sauce (*liquamen*, γάρου) sells for up to sixteen denarii per Italian pint and salted fish for six denarii per Italian pound.<sup>26</sup> Moreover, archaeologists see a big demand for *garum* as well as olive oil in the large-scale production of *amphorae* in Central Tunisia (province of Africa).<sup>27</sup>

23. Herodotus 2.149.5; Diodorus Siculus 1.36.1 (quotations), 1.52.6. On fishing in Egypt, see Maria Carlotta Besta, ‘Pesca e pescatori nell’Egitto greco-romano’, *Aeg* 2 (1921), pp. 67-74.

24. Andreas Gutsfeld, ‘Fischspeisen (und Meeresfrüchte)’, *DNP* 4.529 (‘weit verbreitet’).

25. P. Grimal and Th. Monod, ‘Sur la véritable nature du “garum”’, *REA* 54 (1952), pp. 27-38; Robert I. Curtis, *Garum and Salsamenta: Production and Commerce in Materia Medica* (Studies in Ancient Medicine, 3; Leiden: Brill, 1991).

26. A daily wage in this later period may have been about 25 denarii (Simon Corcoran, *The Empire of the Tetrarchs: Imperial Pronouncements and Government AD 284–324* [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996], p. 228). The edict is most easily consulted in Tenney Frank, *Rome and Italy of the Empire* (ESAR, 5; Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1940), pp. 305-421 (322-23, 328-29).

27. David J. Mattingly et al., ‘Leptiminus (Tunisia): A “Producer” City?’, in David J. Mattingly and John Salmon (eds.), *Economies beyond Agriculture in the Classical World* (Leicester-Nottingham Studies in Ancient Society, 9; London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 75-84. For fish-farming in the Roman empire, see Geoffrey Kron, ‘Animal Husbandry, Hunting, Fishing, and Fish Production’, in John Peter

Martin Hengel drew attention half a century ago to the references to Mary of Magdala and other women, who supported Jesus (section 4 below), as eyewitnesses.<sup>28</sup> More recently, Richard Bauckham has gone much further in accepting the Gospel accounts as eyewitness testimony. His book has provoked much discussion, and some consideration should also be given to psychological research on eyewitness memory and selective reporting.<sup>29</sup> But many of the minor differences between Gospel accounts can be explained as consistent with the kinds of discrepancies that occur when a group of witnesses report on what they saw with—sometimes—differing emphases. Thus, it is a mistake to interpret Mark's account of the fishermen (Mk 1.16-20) as indicating that Andrew and Simon did not own a boat and so stood in shallow water to cast their nets, whereas James and John fished from a boat.<sup>30</sup> This passage should be interpreted along with the parallel accounts in Mt. 4.18-22 and Lk. 5.1-11 to conclude that the two sets of brothers owned boats (and were, indeed, business partners). But we should also not conclude that eyewitness accounts provide blanket confidence in

Oleson (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Engineering and Technology in the Classical World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 206, 211-13.

28. Martin Hengel, 'Maria Magdalena und die Frauen als Zeugen', in Otto Betz et al. (eds.), *Abraham unser Vater: Juden und Christen im Gespräch über die Bibel* (Festschrift für Otto Michel zum 60. Geburtstag; AGSU, 5; Leiden: Brill, 1963), pp. 243-56.

29. Richard Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses: The Gospels as Eyewitness Testimony* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), esp. pp. 45-54. See the critiques and Bauckham's responses in *JSHJ* 6 (2008), pp. 96-105, 157-253; and *JSNT* 31 (2008), pp. 195-219, 221-35. For psychological research, see Judith C.S. Redman, 'How Accurate Are Eyewitnesses? Bauckham and the Eyewitnesses in the Light of Psychological Research', *JBL* 129 (2010), pp. 177-97; Dale C. Allison Jr, *Constructing Jesus: Memory, Imagination, and History* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010), esp. chs. 1 and 6; Robert K. McIver, *Memory, Jesus, and the Synoptic Gospels* (SBLRBS, 59; Atlanta: SBL, 2011); *idem*, 'Eyewitnesses as Guarantors of the Accuracy of the Gospel Traditions in the Light of Psychological Research', *JBL* 131 (2012), pp. 529-46.

30. Ekkehard W. Stegemann and Wolfgang Stegemann, *The Jesus Movement: A Social History of its First Century* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1999), p. 199. Preferable is the view of the scholar they criticize: Michael N. Ebertz, *Das Charisma des Gekreuzigten: Zur Soziologie der Jesusbewegung* (WUNT, 45; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1987), pp. 77-78. The Stegemanns (*Jesus Movement*, pp. 199-200) characterize the economic situation of the first disciples as 'modest, if not downright miserable' and the disciples generally as 'absolutely poor' (πτωχοί).



the historicity of the Gospel narratives. As noted above, we should be prepared to reject a particular detail in the written sources, if there is a good reason for doing so, just as much as we retain evidence when there is no good reason to reject it.<sup>31</sup>

## 2. *Partners and Hired Laborers in Zebedee's Fishing Business*

In the Markan account of the calling of four disciples by Jesus (1.16-20), there is evidence of wealth in the family of Zebedee. Possibly, his sons, James and John, are starting to run the business based on ownership of a boat by the family. But they are able to leave the hired laborers (μισθωτοί) in the hands of their father Zebedee and go off immediately to become followers of Jesus. Who are these μισθωτοί? Are they slaves rented out by a slave-owner, as in PSI 4.359 (see below)?<sup>32</sup> Are they free laborers who contract themselves to a business owner? The papyri help us understand their situation.

Some papyri from the Zenon archive of the third century BCE mention two entrepreneurs in the manufacturing and pitching of jars named Lysimakhos and Paesis.<sup>33</sup> Although they can be identified simply as 'potters' (κεραμεῖς, P.Lond. 7.2038.2), they engaged hired laborers (μισθωτοί) on a monthly basis (καταμήνιοι). A serious cashflow problem arose when an advanced payment was not made, and the hired laborers were without work for four days but were still paid on a daily basis (ll. 8-18). Part of the hold-up was that the business lacked a place (τόπος; ll. 3, 6-7, 17) where the workers could fire pots (l. 28).<sup>34</sup> As with

31. For a comparable statement on the authenticity of particular New Testament material, see I. Howard Marshall, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles* (ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1999), p. 813: 'Where there is no compelling case against the authenticity of the material, it should be accepted for what it is.'

32. For an introduction to slavery in the New Testament documents, see Jennifer A. Glancy, *Slavery in Early Christianity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).

33. On the Zenon papyri, see P.W. Pestman et al., *A Guide to the Zenon Archive* (Papyrologica Lugduno-Batava, 21; Leiden: Brill, 1981); and Claude Orrieux, *Zénon de Caunos, parépidèmos, et le destin grec* (Annales Littéraires de l'Université de Besançon, 320; Paris: Belles Lettres, 1985).

34. For τόπος as land where brick-makers or potters can carry out their vocation, see Tony Reekmans, 'Parerga papyrologica, III', *Chronique d'Égypte* 43 (1968), pp. 159-71 (160 n. 2).

Zebedee and his sons, Paesis and his sons operate the business together: they are recommended by another potter, Pettukamis, as useful skilled workers familiar with the clay of Philadelphia (P.Cair.Zen. 3.59500.2-7). Paesis elsewhere offers in company with Lysimakhos and others to superintend the pitching of jars (P.Cair.Zen. 3.59481). Although *μισθωτοί* and *καταμήνιοι* appear to be the same people in the petition (P.Lond. 7.2038), they are differentiated in the list of workers in P.Cair.Zen. 4.59751; moreover, the *μισθωτοί* are free laborers, distinguished from slaves (*παῖδες*).<sup>35</sup> In another papyrus from the archive, dated 252–251 BCE, a certain Phabis (PSI 4.359.4) says that a named *μισθωτός* who turns out to be a slave (*τὸ σῶμα*; l. 9) had gotten the donkey and bags ready, and absconded; the slave has been arrested and handed over to the police.<sup>36</sup>

Two words allude to the relationship between Zebedee's sons and the brothers Simon (Peter) and Andrew in the narrative of Luke 5: *μέτοχος* and *κοινωνός*. On the face of it, the two terms are interchangeable. The use of 'the other' in 'They signalled to their partners (*τοῖς μετόχοις*) in the other boat' (v. 7) suggests a settled arrangement. A formal partnership seems indicated also by the second term: 'astonishment had seized him [Simon] and all those with him at the catch of fish they had taken; similarly, James and John the sons of Zebedee, who were partners (*οἱ ἦσαν κοινωνοί*) with Simon' (vv. 9-10). In what sense are Zebedee and his sons 'partners' of the other two brothers Simon and Andrew?<sup>37</sup>

35. For vocabulary that can refer to slaves as well as children, see G.R. Stanton, 'Τέκνον, παῖς and Related Words in Koine Greek', in Basil G. Mandilaras (ed.), *Proceedings of the XVIII International Congress of Papyrology, Athens 25–31 May 1986* (Athens: Greek Papyrological Society, 1988), pp. 463-80; and Eleanor Dickey, 'Rules without Reasons? Words for Children in Papyrus Letters', in J.H.W. Penny (ed.), *Indo-European Perspectives: Studies in Honour of Anna Morpurgo Davies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 119-30.

36. For the *μισθωτός* Παυ[ῆς?] who absconded with the donkey, see W. Peremans and E. Van 't Dack, *Prosopographia Ptolemaica* 5 (*Studia Hellenistica*, 13; Louvain: Publications Universitaires, 1963), p. 112 no. 13652; for Phabis, apparently a fellow donkey-driver, p. 113 no. 13668.

37. J.Y. Campbell took *κοινωνός* in Lk. 5.10 to mean a regular business-partner, even though he took *μέτοχος* in 5.7 to mean those who at the time happened to be sharing in the work of fishing ('KOINΩΝΙΑ and its Cognates in the New Testament', *JBL* 51 [1932], pp. 352-80, esp. p. 362). In general, he took *κοινωνός* to be used in the New Testament as in Classical writers (p. 363).

In the papyri, *κοινωνός* is used of a partner in farming. An example is the undertaking, ‘I agree that I shall be your partner with a half share of the farming for the current 17th (year) of Hadrianus Caesar the lord’ (P.Flor. 3.370.2-5 [132 CE]).<sup>38</sup> Elsewhere three contractors release ‘our partner’ (*κοινωνῶ ἡμῶν*; l. 5) from the last year of a contract (P.Hamb. 1.69 [146 CE]). The term can also apply to a partner in the cultivation of a parcel of land leased from the government (for example, in the fragmentary P.Amh. 2.94.2 [208 CE]). In another document from the same archive (P.Amh. 2.100 [198–211 CE]), one of these partners, Hermes, son of Diogenes, takes a different man as *κοινωνός* (l. 4) in exploiting a lake of which Hermes is the lessee. The interchangeability of the two terms is illustrated clearly by their usage for colleagues in office, including in liturgies (compulsory services). A petitioner states in P.Wisc. 1.3 (257–59 CE): ‘with all my strength, together with my colleagues (*δμοῦ τοῖς κοινωνοῖς*, l. 3), I have exerted myself in order that they [the liturgies] were finished’. The other term is used in grain receipts and other documents, for example, in Stud.Pal. 22.127.5-9 (185 CE): ‘We, Neilos and my colleagues (*μέτοχ<sup>ω</sup>* [read <sup>οι</sup>]) as *sitologoi* (grain clerks) of the village of Apias ...’ (similarly, P.Turner 20.5-6 [113 CE] and P.Amst. 1.36 [second century CE]). P.Wisc. 1.36.4 (147 CE) uses *μέτοχοι* in speaking of ‘Heron and Satabous and their fellow *laographoi* of Theadelphia’.<sup>39</sup> Possibly, *μέτοχοι* is more general in the grain account that refers to ‘Pyrrhos and his companions’, but ‘colleagues’ is surely intended in the same document a few lines later: ‘to the *dekaprotoi* and their *μέτοχοι*’ (P.Wisc. 1.29 verso 1, 10 [third century CE]).<sup>40</sup>

38. Norbert Baumert restricts the partnership in P.Flor. 3.370.18 to the contract, but the phraseology in 2-5 (above) surely rules this out (*Koinonein und Metechein—synonym? Eine umfassende semantische Untersuchung* [SBB, 51; Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 2003], p. 258).

39. On *laographoi* (local officials concerned with census records and the poll-tax) and *sitologoi*, see Friedrich Oertel, *Die Liturgie: Studien zur ptolemäischen und kaiserlichen Verwaltung Ägyptens* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1917), pp. 179-80, 250-57; Naphtali Lewis, *The Compulsory Public Services of Roman Egypt* (Papyrologica Florentina, 11; Florence: Gonnelli, 1982), pp. 37, 47 (with key on p. 10).

40. On *dekaprotoi* (taxation officers acting for the central government in Egypt in the third and early fourth centuries), see Oertel, *Liturgie*, pp. 211-14, 432-33; E.G. Turner, ‘Egypt and the Roman Empire: The *δεκάπρωτοι*’, *JEA* 22 (1936), pp. 7-19; J. David Thomas, ‘The Introduction of Dekaprotoi and Comarchs into Egypt

In the Gospel accounts, boats are readily available to Jesus and his team. When he asks his disciples (οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ) to have a boat made ready for him so that the crowd would not crush him as he healed (Mk 3.9-10), it seems that the boat belongs to some of the disciples and that they will instruct slaves or hired laborers to get the boat ready. Later, a boat is quickly put at the disposal of the team when, because of a very large crowd, Jesus sits down in it to teach (4.1-2). Subsequent references to ‘the boat’ in Mark (5.2, 18, 21; 6.32, 45, etc.; 8.10, 14) seem to be referring to a boat used regularly in the mission. Sometimes, such as when Peter and six other disciples go fishing after the resurrection (Jn 21.1-3), ‘the boat’ is immediately available because they are at their base on the Sea of Tiberias. On other occasions, ‘the boat’ has brought the disciples to where they were, and it has taken them away again, such as on the trip to the region of the Gerasenes (Mk 5.1-20).<sup>41</sup>

There is another aspect of the call narrative in Luke 5 that is worth considering. What did people involved in a fishing partnership do when so many fishes were caught at one time that both boats began to sink (vv. 6-7)? Or what did the fishing partners and two or three other disciples do on the later occasion after the resurrection when a single boat was overloaded with 153 large fish (Jn 21.6, 11)? The solution was to take the fish to the salting factory on the western side of the lake at Magdala. The Greek place name *Taricheiai* indicates that there was a factory for salting fish (ταριχεῖον) here. This name is attested for the Nile Delta (both Pelousion and Kanobos arms) already in the fifth century BCE in Herodotus (2.15.1; 2.113.1), who also writes of preserving fish (ταριχεύειν, 2.77.4; ταριχευσις, 4.53.3).<sup>42</sup> The salting of fish caught in Egypt is indicated in papyri by the verbs ταριχεύειν and ταριχεῖν and by nouns for a salting factory (ταριχεῖον; P.Stras. 73.2

in the Third Century A.D.’, *ZPE* 19 (1975), pp. 111-19; Lewis, *Compulsory Services*, p. 21.

41. For details of the ports on the lake, see Mendel Nun, *Sea of Galilee: Newly Discovered Harbours from New Testament Days* (Kibbutz Ein Gev: Tourist Department, 3rd edn, 1992); cf. *Der See Genesareth und die Evangelien: Archäologische Forschungen eines jüdischen Fischers* (Biblische Archäologie und Zeitgeschichte, 10; Gießen: Brunnen, 2001), part 2.

42. In describing the southern coast of Spain at the turn of the millennium, Strabon (3.1.8, 140C) mentions factories for salting fish as key features at Menlaria and Belon. In the latter case, there are markets as well (ἐμπόρια καὶ ταριχεῖαι).

[third century CE]) and for a pickler of fish (ταριχηρός; P.Petr. 3.117(h) II.3 [third century BCE]).<sup>43</sup> Plutarch, closer to the time of the Gospels, uses ταριχοπώλης of a dealer in salted fish.<sup>44</sup> *Taricheiai* at Magdala is mentioned as a place for salting fish by Strabon (16.2.45, 764C). Seán Freyne may be right to suggest that the change from ‘the House of Fish’ (Migdal Nun) to ‘the Fish-Salting Centre’ (*Taricheiai*) can be dated to the third century BCE. However, the study of the Zenon papyri to which he refers scarcely mentions innovation in viticulture in lower Galilee. It would be better to rely on innovation in oil production.<sup>45</sup> It has recently been argued that the salting of fish by fishing companies opened up for them a market throughout the eastern Mediterranean and even in Rome.<sup>46</sup>

The Andrew-Simon-James-John-Zebedee partnership owned at least two boats. It is likely, but not certain, that their partnership provided ‘the boat’ that was readily available to Jesus and his team. The partners could be referred to either as μέτοχοι or as κοινωνοί. The manner in which μέτοχοι and κοινωνοί are used in very similar ways in the papyri encourages one to confirm that the two words are used interchangeably in the narrative of Lk. 5.1-11. Zebedee may have been older, but he was sufficiently active in the partnership to take charge of hired workers (μισθωτοί), whether slave or free, when his sons suddenly went off with Jesus (Mk 1.20). When there was an overwhelming haul, as on that occasion and in Jn 21.1-14, the obvious solution to dealing with a huge

43. The verb ταριχεύειν also occurs in an ostrakon in the Deissmann collection (see P.Meyer Ostr. 65.3 [third century CE]; and Albrecht Gerber, ‘The Deissmann Ostraca after 75 Years in Sydney’, *BurH* 47 [2011], pp. 21-34 [29-31]).

44. Plutarch, *Table Talks* 2.1.4 (i.e. *Moralia* 631d [vol. 4 of the Teubner edition]).

45. Seán Freyne, *Jesus, a Jewish Galilean: A New Reading of the Jesus-Story* (London: T. & T. Clark, 2004), p. 50; Victor Tscherikower (later Tcherikover), ‘Palestine under the Ptolemies (A Contribution to the Study of the Zenon Papyri)’, *Mizraim* 4-5 (1937), pp. 9-90, offers little support to Freyne at pp. 11, 45, 47 and 58-59. But the Zenon papyri show innovation in Egypt in other operations, such as arboriculture, crops and livestock. For a new industrial oil crop from the seeds of the opium poppy, see P.Cair.Zen. 2.59243; Dorothy J. Crawford, ‘The Opium Poppy: A Study in Ptolemaic Agriculture’, in Moses I. Finley (ed.), *Problèmes de la terre en Grèce ancienne* (Civilisations et Sociétés, 33; Paris: Mouton, 1973), pp. 231-46.

46. Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell, *The Corrupting Sea: A Study of Mediterranean History* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 2000), pp. 190-97, 576-77.

catch (πλήθος ἰχθύων πολύ; Lk. 5.6) for one or two boats was to have them salted at *Taricheiai* on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee. Such a procedure opened markets in the Mediterranean world to the partnership.

### 3. At Least One Apostle Owned a Slave

Among other signs in the Gospel narratives that some of the disciples of Jesus were well-off is his question, ‘Who among you who owns a slave that has been plowing or tending a flock will say to him when he comes in from the paddock ... ?’ (Lk. 17.7). The envisaged household has only one slave to prepare and serve dinner as well as work on the land. But since it is explicitly ‘the apostles’ (οἱ ἀπόστολοι) who make the request of Jesus in 17.5, we must conclude that some of Jesus’ inner circle owned a slave and sufficient agricultural land or flocks to employ a slave gainfully on plowing or tending livestock.<sup>47</sup>

Some scholars have been reluctant to come to this conclusion, presumably because of an assumption that the followers of Jesus generally, and the Twelve in particular, were poor. Hence, they have looked for ways to get around the conclusion by, for example, implying that sayings from various contexts have been assembled in Lk. 17.5-10. Thus, Joachim Jeremias argued that the opening of the parable, τίς δὲ ἐξ ὑμῶν, was normally addressed to opponents of Jesus or to the crowds. But his convenient list of occurrences in fact shows that opponents are specifically mentioned in 14.5 (par. Mt. 12.11) and 15.4, and crowds only in 14.28. Jeremias believed that ‘the crowd’ is a sound conjecture in 11.11 (par. Mt. 7.9). He regarded it as a possibility in our passage and in 12.25 (par. Mt. 6.27), and allowed only Lk. 11.5 as an exception.<sup>48</sup> We might rather conclude that τίς ἐξ ὑμῶν is addressed to the disciples in most of the Lukan occurrences (11.5, 11; 12.25; 17.7), but not in 14.28 (and to opponents in 14.5 and 15.4).<sup>49</sup> We would have

47. The parable is not discussed by J.A. Harrill, *Slaves in the New Testament: Literary, Social, and Moral Dimensions* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2006).

48. Joachim Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus* (London: SCM Press, 3rd edn, 1972), pp. 103, 158-59, 193.

49. However, the sentences immediately after ὄχλοι πολλοί (‘large crowds’) in Lk. 14.25 are in Mt. 10.37-38 probably addressed to the Twelve, given τοὺς δώδεκα μαθητάς in 10.1, τούτους τοὺς δώδεκα in 10.5 and μαθητῆς in 10.24. Lk. 11.11, like

to conjecture that sayings to diverse audiences have been thrown together in Lk. 17.5-10 to avoid the conclusion that Jesus told the apostles a parable about the slave worn out from labors in the paddock.<sup>50</sup>

#### 4. *Women Supporting Jesus and his Disciples in their Mission*

The text in Lk. 8.1-3 reports on the arrangements for travel by Jesus and his party. The women do not merely accompany Jesus' disciples, but they provide for them (διηκόνουν αὐτοῖς; some MSS, including

11.5, follows on from τις τῶν μαθητῶν in 11.1. Also, Lk. 12.25 is said explicitly πρὸς τοὺς μαθητάς (12.22).

50. Paul S. Minear, 'A Note on Luke 17:7-10', *JBL* 93 (1974), pp. 82-87, while being adamant that the passage was addressed to the apostles, suggests that the application in v. 10 (think that 'we are unworthy slaves', etc.) was a later addition. But the whole pericope retains its integrity (see Rudolf Bultmann, *Die Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition* [FRLANT, 12; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 10th edn, 1995], pp. 184, 218-22; J. Duncan M. Derrett, 'The Parable of the Profitable Servant (Luke xvii.7-10)', in Elizabeth A. Livingstone [ed.], *Studia Evangelica 7: Papers Presented to the Fifth International Congress of Biblical Studies Held at Oxford, 1973* [TU, 126; Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1982], pp. 165-74; Kenneth E. Bailey, *Through Peasant Eyes: More Lucan Parables, their Culture and Style* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980], pp. 114-15 [who is, however, willing to concede that the apostles may not have owned slaves]; Jacques Dupont, 'Le maître et son serviteur (Luc 17,7-10)', *ETL* 60 [1984], pp. 234-39; Thomas Braun, 'Wenn zwischen den Zeilen ein Funke aufblitzt: Überlegungen zur Metaphorik lukanischer Gleichnisse im Anschluss an Paul Ricoeur und am Beispiel von Lk 17,7-10', in Ruben Zimmermann [ed.], *Hermeneutik der Gleichnisse Jesu: Methodische Neuansätze zum Verstehen urchristlicher Parabeltexte* [WUNT, 231; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008], pp. 468-81; Justo L. González, *Luke* [Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2010], pp. 199, 202-203; Craig L. Blomberg, *Interpreting the Parables* [Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2nd edn, 2012], pp. 352-54). On the meaning of ἀχρεῖοι (v. 10, 'we are slaves without credit'), see A. Marcus Ward, 'Uncomfortable Words IV: Unprofitable Servants', *ExpT* 81 (1969-70), pp. 200-201 (who sees the whole of 17.1-10 as integrated); Alfons Weiser, *Die Knechtsgleichnisse der synoptischen Evangelien* (SANT, 29; Munich: Kösel, 1971), pp. 113-14; Erich Klostermann, *Das Lukasevangelium* (HNT, 5; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 3rd edn, 1975), p. 173 (not 'wir sind unnütze' but 'armselige'), citing 2 Kgdms 6.22; John Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34* (WBC, 35B; Dallas: Thomas Nelson, 1993), pp. 842-43 ('owed nothing'); M.P. Knowles, 'Reciprocity and "Favour" in the Parable of the Undeserving Servant (Luke 17.7-10)', *NTS* 49 (2003), pp. 256-60 ('we can claim no credit').

Codex Sinaiticus, have ‘him’ [αὐτῶ]) ‘out of their own resources’ (ἐκ τῶν ὑπαρχόντων αὐταῖς).<sup>51</sup> There is a reference back to this situation at the end of Mark’s Gospel (15.40-41), where the women who watched the crucifixion from a distance are in two groups. The first comprises Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the younger and Joses and Salome. These three are said to have accompanied Jesus when he was in Galilee and ‘provided for him’ (διηκόνουν αὐτῶ—whence, presumably, the same reading has been installed in Lk. 8.3).<sup>52</sup> (The second group consists of numerous others who had come up with Jesus to Jerusalem.)<sup>53</sup> In line with their expenditure on Jesus in Galilee is the fact that it is these same three women who are said in Mk 16.1 to have bought spices—perhaps a considerable outlay—when business resumed after the Sabbath, in order to go and anoint Jesus’ body. In Lk. 8.2-3, the women who provided for the traveling team from their own resources are characterized as some who had been healed from evil spirits and infirmities. They are identified as Mary called Magdalene, Joanna, the wife of Herod’s manager (ἐπίτροπος), Chuza, Susanna and many others. Luke names the first two and Mary, mother of James, at 24.10. Some argue that, since Joanna belongs to Lukan redaction (‘Luke 24.10 adds her to Mark 16.1’), ‘it is problematic to claim a woman from the tetrarch’s court in Tiberias as Jesus’ disciple.’ However, ‘if the motif that these women financially supported Jesus and his followers is not anachronistic, it follows that they were not

51. τὰ ὑπάρχοντα is common in Luke: 8.3; 11.21; 12.15, 33, 44; 14.33; 16.1; 19.8.

52. See Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2nd edn, 1994), pp. 120-21. P.H. Boulton, who seems to be attracted to the reading αὐτῶ, argues for the retention of the specific sense of διακονεῖν of serving at tables, when the more general sense ‘to aid someone with one’s property’ is appropriate (‘Διακονέω and its Cognates in the Four Gospels’, in Aland et al., *SE 1*, pp. 415-22 [419-20]). Hans Conzelmann (*Die Mitte der Zeit: Studien zur Theologie des Lukas* [BHT, 17; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 5th edn, 1964], p. 41 n. 1) finds the usage of διακονεῖν at Lk. 8.3 anachronistic (i.e. belonging to the milieu of the later church), but the verb is not necessarily associated with διάκονος.

53. The two distinct groups are stressed by Anni Hentschel, *Diakonia im Neuen Testament: Studien zur Semantik unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Rolle von Frauen* (WUNT, 2.226; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), pp. 222-23.



simply rural peasants.<sup>54</sup> And they were genuinely among the disciples, since the two men in dazzling clothes at the tomb specifically asked them to remember what Jesus had said (Lk. 9.22), when only the disciples were present (9.18), and they did remember his words (24.6-8).<sup>55</sup>

What was involved, by way of accommodation, in such a tour? Sometimes people spent the night in the open. If we can treat the rather poetic narrative of Luke 1–2 as historical, then such was the case with the shepherds on the night of Jesus' birth (Lk. 2.8). The shepherds may have had to tolerate the cold if they were slaves, but Jesus, Peter, James and John evidently spent the night of the Transfiguration on the mountain, for they came down to the disciples on the following day (τῇ ἑξῆς ἡμέρᾳ; Lk. 9.37). Had they stayed longer, they would have constructed some shelters (σκηναί), presumably for themselves as well as for Jesus, Moses and Elijah.<sup>56</sup> There are references in passing to the use of houses by Jesus and his team. For example, after healing a boy with epileptic symptoms, Jesus enters a house (εἰς οἶκον; Mk 9.28), perhaps in one of the villages (8.27) of Caesarea Philippi. On the subsequent tour of Galilee (9.30), there was a dispute about who was the greatest, and Jesus spoke to them about it in the privacy of 'the house' (ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ γερόμενος; 9.33)—although in Capernaum, this may have been the house of Andrew and Peter or of Peter's in-laws. When Jesus set his face to go to Jerusalem, he sent messengers ahead to a Samaritan village 'to make ready for him' (Lk. 9.52). Although the use of δέχεσθαι in 9.53 has resonances of 'receiving' Jesus and God in another sense in an earlier paragraph (9.48), its primary reference here must be to a refusal by the Samaritans to provide hospitality in their homes (cf. 16.4) to one heading for Jerusalem and not to their holy mountain above

54. John E. Stambaugh and David L. Balch, *The Social World of the First Christians* (London: SPCK, 1986), pp. 103-104. Richard Bauckham identifies Joanna with the prominent apostle Junia of Rom. 16.7 (*Gospel Women: Studies of the Named Women in the Gospels* [London: T. & T. Clark, 2002], pp. 165-86).

55. Martin Hengel, 'The Lukan Prologue and its Eyewitnesses: The Apostles, Peter, and the Women', in Michael F. Bird and Jason Maston (eds.), *Earliest Christian History: History, Literature, and Theology: Essays from the Tyndale Fellowship in Honor of Martin Hengel* (WUNT, 2.320; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012), pp. 583-84.

56. For the view that the building of shelters was customary, see Eduard Schweizer, *Das Evangelium nach Markus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1967), p. 103.

Sychar (Jn 4.5, 20-21). The Commissioning of the Twelve and that of the Seventy-Two include instructions on what to do in ‘whatever house you enter’ (Mk 6.10; Mt. 10.12; Lk. 9.4; 10.5). As well as formal greetings, the disciples are to accept the sustenance offered<sup>57</sup> and not move from house to house. Hospitality in the houses of the village, then, was the normal expectation.

Paul found patrons who offered hospitality in various cities, and some of them were women: Timothy’s mother in Lystra (Acts 16.1), Lydia in Philippi (Acts 16.14-15), Phoebe in Cenchrea (προστάτις ... τοῦ ἐμοῦ; Rom. 16.1-2), etc. The same may be true of Prisca, Mary and Junia in Rom. 16.3-7. Correspondingly, women of high standing who were devout (τὰς σεβομένας γυναῖκας τὰς εὐσχήμονας; Acts 13.50) could be turned against Barnabas and Paul. The women who supported Jesus and his team ‘out of their resources’ did not provide accommodation in their own homes for Jesus. Presumably, the traveling party received accommodation from supporters in many of the cities and villages they visited (cf. διώδευεν κατὰ πόλιν καὶ κώμην; Lk. 8.1). Certainly, the focus of Jesus’ mission was on nucleated settlements (ταῖς ἐτέραις πόλεσιν; Lk. 4.43). When refused hospitality at one Samaritan village, the entourage went on to another (Lk. 9.56). But the entourage of Jesus was large; that is why arrangements had to be made in advance if they were all to stay in a Samaritan village (ὡς ἐτοιμάσαι αὐτῶ; Lk. 9.52).

The use of τὰ ὑπάρχοντα may imply that these women paid for accommodation. However, we should also keep in mind the possibility that wealthy women could arrange accommodation for the entourage of Jesus on a reciprocal basis, not spending money directly but taking on an obligation for a reciprocal gift later.<sup>58</sup> ξένοι (for which scholars have found no better English equivalents than ‘guest-friends’ or ‘ritualized friends’) regularly stayed in the extended accommodation of people of similar wealth and social standing to themselves. Thus, in the Homeric poems, Diomedes tells the Trojan leader Glaucus, ‘I am a dear guest-friend (ξείνος φίλος) to you in central Argos, and you in Lykia, whenever I journey to their land.’ In Euripides’s play, *Alkestis*, Heracles says that he always stays with Admetos, king of Pherai, when he visits Thessaly. At the time of the play Admetos has had him accommodated out the back, so that Heracles will not disturb the funeral of

57. H. Preisker, ‘μισθός, κτλ.’, *TDNT*, IV, p. 698 n. 6.

58. Cf. Stambaugh and Balch, *Social World*, p. 64, on reciprocity.

Admetos's wife, Alkestis, when he has had too much to drink.<sup>59</sup> The female supporters of Jesus' team may have expended less in the villages, but entertained and provided hospitality to people of the same wealthy level as themselves on a later (or on an earlier) occasion.

Loan contracts in Greek papyri preserve the precise phrase ἐκ τῶν ὑπαρχόντων αὐταῖς ('out of their resources') used of the women in Lk. 8.2-3, apart from the use in the contracts of the generic masculine pronoun αὐτοῖς to refer to more than one borrower. The lender Marcus Antonius, according to one contract (P.Warr. 8.19-21 [86 CE]), 'shall have the right of execution on the acknowledging parties both individually and on whomever of them he may choose and on all their resources (ἐκ τῶν ὑπαρχόντων αὐτοῖς πάντων), as if arising from a legal judgment ...' The property to be seized can include a female slave and the children she may bear in the future. Thus, in P.Osl. 2.40.21-22 (150 CE), the borrower acknowledges that the lender can execute the right of recovery 'on me and on the slave Isarous and the offspring who will be borne by her and on all my other resources'.

The verb διακονεῖν is not common in the papyri, but apprenticeship contracts illustrate the kind of personal service ordered to be provided by the slave in Jesus' parable (διακόνει; Lk. 17:8). Thus, a weaver, Pausiris, apprentices his son, Dioskous, to learn the weaver's trade. The two parties agree that the boy, still under age, is 'to serve and do everything that he is commanded' (P.Wisc. 1.4.9-10 [53 CE]).<sup>60</sup> The use of διακονεῖν with the dative (αὐτοῖς in Lk. 8.3, αὐτῷ in Mk 15.41) is further illustrated by two attempts to arraign a youth named Panchrates (UPZ 19.5; cf. UPZ 18.23 [163 BCE]) who stole a *metretes* (34 liters) of olive oil from the Temple of Sarapis where the authorities had been persuaded by connections (οἱ γνώριμοι in 18.21; τῶν φίλων in 19.24-25)

59. *Iliad* 6.224-225; see the conventional stages of the Homeric hospitality scene in Steve Reece, *A Stranger's Welcome: Oral Theory and the Aesthetics of the Homeric Hospitality Scene* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993), pp. 5-39. Euripides, *Alk.* 542-567, 747-821; cf. G.R. Stanton, 'Φιλία and ξενία in Euripides' *Alkestis*', *Hermes* 118 (1990), pp. 42-54. On *xenia*, see Gabriel Herman, *Ritualised Friendship and the Greek City* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987); and Otto Hiltbrunner, *Gastfreundschaft in der Antike und im frühen Christentum* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2005).

60. As with the loan contracts, standard phraseology is used (here διακονοῦντα καὶ ποιῶντα πάντα τὰ ἐπιτασσόμενα αὐτῷ). See P.Oxy. 2.275.10-12 (66 CE) in George Milligan, *Selections from the Greek Papyri* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1910), pp. 54-58.

of the lad's mother to accept him in order that he might serve them (εἶνα δειακονεῖ ἡμῖν in 18.23; διακονεῖν ἡμῖν in 19.25).<sup>61</sup> The papyri thus illustrate the use of διακονεῖν for performing one's duties or waiting on someone at tables, which we have seen in Lk. 17.8, better than the more general sense of providing assistance for a group with money or in kind that the women of Lk. 8.3 provide. In the case of Martha (Jn 12.2; see below), the provision at the banquet might well be supervised by her, although actually carried out by slaves or clients.

### 5. Some Other Well-Off Associates of Jesus

Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus must have been followers of Jesus, because they were concerned to bury his body. Moreover, Joseph took the risk of requesting it from Pilate, the Roman *prefect*.<sup>62</sup> And the

61. For εἶνα δειακονεῖ ἡμῖν, compare ἵνα διακονέσσι ἰμῖν in a private letter, BGU 1.261.26-27 (second or third century CE?).

62. Mk 15.43 indicates by *τολμήσας* that Joseph's approach required courage. The term *εὐσχήμων*, 'reputable' (Mk 15.43), and Joseph's ability to use a rock-cut tomb close to the city, also point to wealth (R.T. France, *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary on the Greek Text* [Carlisle: Paternoster, 2002], p. 666. Mt. 27.57 calls him 'wealthy'. On Joseph, see Gerald O'Collins and Daniel Kendall, 'Did Joseph of Arimathea Exist?', *Bib* 75 [1994], pp. 235-41 [against John Dominic Crossan]; Matti Myllykoski, 'What Happened to the Body of Jesus?', in Ismo Dunderberg et al. (eds.), *Fair Play: Diversity and Conflicts in Early Christianity: Essays in Honour of Heikki Räisänen* [NovTSup, 103; Leiden: Brill, 2002], pp. 43-82; John Granger Cook, 'Crucifixion and Burial', *NTS* 57 [2011], pp. 193-213). On Nicodemus, see M. de Jonge, 'Nicodemus and Jesus: Some Observations on Misunderstanding and Understanding in the Fourth Gospel', *BJRL* 53 (1970-71), pp. 337-59; G. Renz, 'Nicodemus: An Ambiguous Disciple? A Narrative Sensitive Investigation', in John Lierman (ed.), *Challenging Perspectives on the Gospel of John* (WUNT, 2.219; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), pp. 255-83; Steven A. Hunt, 'Nicodemus, Lazarus, and the Fear of "The Jews" in the Fourth Gospel', in Gilbert Van Belle et al. (eds.), *Repetitions and Variations in the Fourth Gospel: Style, Text, Interpretation* (BETL, 223; Leuven: Peeters, 2009), pp. 199-212 (201-205). J. Zangenberg maintains that Nicodemus is not fully a Christian ("Buried according to the Customs of the Jews": John 19,40 in its Material and Literary Context', in Gilbert Van Belle [ed.], *The Death of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel* [BETL, 200; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2007], pp. 873-900 [877-78]). However, Nicodemus's public and expensive action in Jn 19.39-42, following the nasty threat of 7.52, does suggest adherence. Views like Zangenberg's were earlier repudiated by Richard Bauckham, 'Nicodemus and the Gurion Family', *JTS* 47 (1996), pp. 1-37 (29-32).

Gospel of John calls him a disciple (19.38). Nicodemus must come with slaves, since he has a heavy load of spices to carry (19.39), even if these are 12-ounce pounds—75 pounds would be equivalent to 33 kgs. Someone of Nicodemus's standing does not carry 33 kgs around. Moreover, we know from Mk 16.4 that the stone that had been rolled into the groove to close the entrance to the tomb was very large (μέγας σφόδρα).<sup>63</sup> Again, a task for a team of slaves. Finally, the quantity of spices is very large—clearly the purchase of a wealthy man.

It is sometimes suggested that Levi's tax counter (τελώνιον) was a toll booth, a collection point at the harbor for customs payments. Even if Levi is dealing with much smaller amounts of money than Zacchaeus (see below), he is able to honor Jesus with a lavish dinner (δοχὴν μεγάλην; Lk. 5.29). It is not just Jesus who is reclining at dinner; his entourage of disciples is there too. So are many of Levi's fellow tax-collectors. Indeed, there are more: the word 'others' in v. 29 corresponds to 'sinners' in v. 30; these 'others' are additional to the 'tax collectors' in each verse. Finally, there are 'scribes of the Pharisees' present, since it seems that Jesus at dinner was close enough to them to hear their disgruntled comment (Lk. 5.31). Just possibly, he may have heard about it later (the parallel accounts in Mk 2.17 and Mt. 9.12 begin 'When Jesus/he heard it'), but he spoke 'to them' (αὐτοῖς in Mk 2.17; πρὸς αὐτούς in Lk. 5.31), and so it is easier to envisage that this was a single occasion. If so, Levi has provided dinner for numerous others as well as for Jesus, the twelve disciples and perhaps other members of the traveling party, such as the women who supported him financially (see above).

Zacchaeus, however, is a much bigger fish. He is a chief tax collector and is explicitly described as wealthy (πλούσιος; Lk. 19.2). Nothing is said in Luke's account about others coming to dinner, but it is clear that Zacchaeus provides food and lodging for the whole entourage of Jesus. And, indeed, there must have been others at the banquet because people grumble about it. Surely, they were not merely standing outside Zacchaeus's home and commenting adversely. Zacchaeus shows his commitment to Jesus by his promise to him (πρὸς τὸν κύριον ... κύριε;

63. Eric M. Meyers and Mark A. Chancey make the point that the use of round sealing stones was limited to the social elites in this period (*Alexander to Constantine* [Archaeology of the Land of the Bible, 3; New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012], p. 177).

19.8) about munificence to the destitute and by his determination to give four-fold restitution to anyone from whom he has extorted.

The family of Lazarus and his sisters Martha and Mary (Jn 12.1-8) are also well-off. Again, at least the twelve disciples as well as Jesus are being accommodated, wined and dined. The cost (300 denarii) of the myrrh with which Lazarus's sister anointed the feet of Jesus is generally understood as a laborer's wage for a whole year. The division of expenditure between Lazarus and his sisters is not clear. But the cost of the perfume does seem to be attributed to Mary. And the same verb (*διηκόνει*; Jn 12.2) is used of Martha's 'serving' of Jesus (and his entourage) as is used of the women in Luke 8 who 'provided for them out of their own resources'.<sup>64</sup>

We have to conclude that Joseph of Arimathea and/or Nicodemus had slaves. So too did Levi and Zacchaeus for the staging of their banquets. And surely Lazarus was leaving the physical work of entertainment to his clients and/or slaves as he personally reclined at dinner with Jesus.

#### 6. *A Joseph and Jesus Building Construction Business?*

If some disciples owned a slave, and if the business of James, John, Andrew and Simon hired slaves or employed free men and women, is it possible to draw any conclusions about the economic standing of Jesus himself? On the basis of an ancient difference of opinion about Sophilos, the father of the fifth-century BCE tragedian, Sophocles (see section 1), Walter Bauer suggested that considerations of social status may have something to do with the variation in the Gospels' identification of Jesus or his father as *ὁ τέκτων*.<sup>65</sup> But the parallel is not exact. According to Mark, when there was astonishment and offense in

64. On Lazarus, see J.N. Sanders, "Those Whom Jesus Loved" (John XI.5)', *NTS* 1 (1954-55), pp. 29-41; Raimo Hakola, 'A Character Resurrected: Lazarus in the Fourth Gospel and Afterwards', in David Rhoads and Kari Syreeni (eds.), *Characterization in the Gospels: Reconceiving Narrative Criticism* (JSNTSup, 184; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), pp. 223-63; Philip F. Esler and Ronald A. Piper, *Lazarus, Mary and Martha: Social-Scientific Approaches to the Gospel of John* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2006), pp. 52, 75-76, 98-99, 103; Hunt, 'Nicodemus', pp. 205-12.

65. Walter Bauer et al., *Griechisch-deutsches Wörterbuch zu den Schriften des Neuen Testaments und die frühchristlichen Literatur* (Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 6th edn, 1988), p. 1613.

the synagogue in Nazareth at Jesus' teaching, wisdom and miracles, people asked, 'Is not this man the τέκτων, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon, and are not his sisters here with us?' (Mk 6.3). According to Matthew, the questions were in the form, 'Is not this man the son of the τέκτων, and is not his mother called Mary and his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? And his sisters—are they not all with us? Where, then, does he get all these things?' (Mt. 13.55-56).<sup>66</sup> The word that describes the occupation of Jesus occurs in the New Testament only in these two passages. There is a reason why questions about Jesus and about his father could both have occurred. In section 2 above (note also Mt. 4.21), we saw that Zebedee, the father of two of the partners, was involved in the business of James, John, Andrew and Simon. There could have been a comparable business operated by Joseph and Jesus, but it involved a construction business. Before Jesus left Nazareth and set up a base with his disciples in Capernaum (Mt. 4.13) at about the age of thirty (Lk. 3.23), some of his brothers might also have been involved in the business.<sup>67</sup>

That Jesus was more than a carpenter and joiner was already contemplated but dismissed by Chester Charlton McCown in the 1920s. It was discussed at length by Émile Lombard, who pointed to the need for a teacher of the law to have an income-producing occupation or some other means of support. There was also a Jewish tradition of passing on vocations from father to son. Greek literature, as he pointed out, provides evidence of τέκτων being used to refer to 'mason' as well as to 'carpenter'.<sup>68</sup> As early as Josephus, τέκτονες and οἰκοδόμοι are

66. The account in Lk 4.16-30 has the corresponding question in the form, 'Is not this man Joseph's son?' (v. 22). There is explicit rivalry between Jesus' πατρίς Nazareth (v. 16) and Capernaum (v. 23). R.L. Sturch believed that both Judaea and Galilee (rather than Nazareth) could be thought of as Jesus' πατρίς: 'The ΠΑΤΡΙΣ of Jesus', *JTS* 28 (1977), pp. 94-96.

67. Justin (*Dia.* 88.8) calls both Joseph and Jesus τέκτων. For a recent attempt to imagine the transition to Capernaum, see Reed, *Archaeology*, pp. 139-69.

68. Chester McCown, 'Ο ΤΕΚΤΩΝ', in Shirley Jackson Case (ed.), *Studies in Early Christianity Presented to Frank Chamberlin Porter and Benjamin Wisner Bacon* (New York: The Century Company, 1928), pp. 173-89; Émile Lombard, 'Charpentier ou maçon? Note sur le métier de Jésus', *RTP* 36 (1948), pp. 161-92, esp. 165-71. Earlier Hildebrand Höpfl allowed that the work of a carpenter often merged with that of an architect and builder in stone ('Nonne hic est fabri filius?', *Bib* 4 [1923], pp. 41-55 [44-45, 53-54]). But Paul Hanly Furfey continued to think

sometimes run together, as when he writes of skilled workers who were carpenters and builders being sent to construct a palace for David in Jerusalem (*Ant.* 7.66), and sometimes separately (*Ant.* 15.390). If τέκτονες can refer to small business entrepreneurs who construct buildings, canal walls or locks, plows, chariots and other items involving more than wood, it is easier to understand how the Greek word can refer to workers in stone (*War* 3.171, 173) and metals (*Ant.* 6.40) as well as wood.

The papyri from Egypt give some support to the idea that τέκτονες were not restricted to working with saws, hammers and nails, but might employ others in a construction business.<sup>69</sup> We have already seen (in section 2 and n. 34) that a place where a business such as a firm of potters or brick-makers can work is crucial. A land sale of the first century (P.Mich. 5.291.4-5) lists the western boundary of a walled block of land with two buildings on it as the workshops of the sons of Papontos the builder (υἱῶν Παποντῶτος [τέκ]τωνος [*sic*] τόποι). Again, it seems to be a business operated by a father and his sons. In a private letter (P.Oxy. 18.2190.49-51 [late first century CE]), a son advises his father to hand over a troublesome worker (perhaps a slave) to a τέκτων, where someone as young as he is could earn two drachmas a day. Clearly, a τέκτων is expected to employ people. In a business letter dealing with the recovery of sums of money (P.Ryl. 4.606.16-19 [late third century CE]), the writer says, ‘I have recovered the remnants from the builder: from his debt of 2000 drakhmai I got 1000 on account.’ Obviously, a builder could be expected to have a large reserve of funds. In a private letter, a certain Apollonius is told that, in his absence, thirty construction men (τέκτονες) were sent for in order to work on Trajan’s Canal, perhaps in constructing locks; they seem to be somewhat above

of Jesus as working-class at the end of his study of τέκτων (‘Christ as *Tektôn*’, *CBQ* 17 [1955], pp. 324-35).

69. In all periods, the most common usage of τέκτων is in lists where men are identified by their occupation. See, for example, P.Sarap. 76.8 (late first to early second century CE), BGU 7.1620.VIII.9 (first half of second century CE), P.Vars. 2.8.5 (second century CE), PSI 6.713.5-6 (third century CE), P.Osl. 3.144.18 (270–75 CE), P.Gron. 6.10-11 (fifth century CE?), P.Flor. 3.297.II<sup>verso</sup>.101 (sixth century CE), and, similarly, in a rock-cut inscription from Cilicia (SEG 28.1280 [261 CE]). Philo of Alexandria comments on this usage in a passage where τέκτων refers to a skilled shaper of pieces of wood: *The prayers and curses uttered by Noah on his return to sobriety* (§35-36). See *De sobrietate* in *Les oeuvres de Philon d’Alexandrie* XI-XII (ed. Jean Gourez; Les Éditions du Cerf, XII, p. 144).



the ἐργάται, ‘laborers’ (P.Oxy. 55.3814.4-6, 13-15 [third or fourth century CE]).<sup>70</sup>

Ninety years ago, Shirley Jackson Case argued rather unconvincingly that Jesus must have been influenced by visits to Sepphoris, only six kms north by north-west of Nazareth. He suggested that Jesus may have found work as a builder in the reconstruction of Sepphoris under Herod Antipas after its destruction by Roman forces in 4 BCE (Josephus, *War* 2.68; *Ant.* 17.288-289). Case’s specific suggestion was taken up by Batey, though he contemplated skilled workers at a basic level (such as stone cutters, masons, plasterers, carpenters and so on) more than higher-level construction people (such as city planners familiar with Hellenistic design and building contractors). He proceeded to consider the political, economic, religious and social influences of this Hellenistic city on Jesus’ trade as a carpenter and on Jesus himself. While he realized how offensive the ‘theater actors’ were in Jesus’ teaching, he felt obliged to argue that the theater of Sepphoris was built by Herod Antipas and not in the late first or early second century. Even if Antipas, through his education in Rome, is likely to have approved of Greek theaters and theatrical performances, we cannot be sure that he built this particular theater.<sup>71</sup> Reed, who, incidentally, assumes that

70. Later again, an account records a payment to a building contractor for work on the waterwheel serving the irrigated land of an orchardist (PSI 7.809.4-5, fourth or fifth century CE).

71. Shirley Jackson Case, ‘Jesus and Sepphoris’, *JBL* 45 (1926), pp. 14-22, esp. 17-19, 21. As Stuart S. Miller pointed out, ‘While Case’s study is suggestive, it is not based upon any concrete evidence’ (*Studies in the History and Tradition of Sepphoris* [SJLA, 37; Leiden: Brill, 1984], pp. 3-4 n. 14). Harold W. Hoehner later suggested that Joseph may have plied his trade as a carpenter in Sepphoris (*Herod Antipas* [SNTSMS, 17; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972], p. 85). See also Batey, ‘Is not this’, p. 251 (but note doubts at p. 255); ‘Jesus and the Theatre’, *NTS* 30 (1984), pp. 563-74; *Jesus and the Forgotten City: New Light on Sepphoris and the Urban World of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991), pp. 83-103 (cf. ‘Sepphoris: An Urban Portrait of Jesus’, *BAR* 18.3 [1992], pp. 50-62); ‘Sepphoris and the Jesus Movement’, *NTS* 46 (2001), pp. 402-409; ‘Did Antipas Build the Sepphoris Theater?’, in James H. Charlesworth (ed.), *Jesus and Archaeology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), pp. 111-19. See the doubts of Eric M. Meyers, [asorblog.org/did-jesus-celebrate-passover-in-sepphoris/](http://asorblog.org/did-jesus-celebrate-passover-in-sepphoris/) (accessed 1 June 2015). Thomas R.W. Longstaff wants to place Jesus in a thoroughly urban environment, but the lack of evidence that Jesus ever went to Sepphoris is a major obstacle to this view (‘Nazareth and Sepphoris: Insights into Christian Origins’, in Arland J. Hultgren and Barbara Hall [eds.], *Christ and his Communities: Essays in Honor of*

Jesus' followers were relatively young men of marginal status, argues that a city like Sepphoris would be treated with suspicion by villagers in rural Galilee because of the strain it imposed on agricultural practices without producing economic prosperity, and because of the high death rate in the cities (especially due to malaria). He believes Jesus had some extended family in Sepphoris.<sup>72</sup> But I doubt that devout Jews, and especially Jesus (with his message of humility), would have been associated with the grandiose building schemes of Herod Antipas and his promotion of himself in Sepphoris. It is far more than activities in Sepphoris to which I have drawn attention, such as games with naked athletes.<sup>73</sup> Herod's offensiveness to religious Jews was later shown in his murder of John the baptizer.

There is also support in literary sources of the first and second centuries for τέκτων as a building constructor. Admittedly, there are passages where the term could refer to a carpenter or cabinet-maker/joiner as we understand those words. For example, Marcus Aurelius refers to workshops where sawdust would be left by the

*Reginald H. Fuller* [AThRSup, 11; Cincinnati: Forward Movement, 1990], pp. 8-15). On archaeological investigations at Sepphoris, see Eric M. Meyers et al., *Sepphoris* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1992); Zeev Weiss, *NEAEHL* 4.1324-28; Carol L. Meyers and Eric M. Meyers, *OEANE* 4.527-36; Mark A. Chancey, 'The Cultural Milieu of Ancient Sepphoris', *NTS* 47 (2001), pp. 127-45; Meyers and Chancey, *Alexander*, pp. 269-80.

72. Jonathan L. Reed, 'Instability in Jesus' Galilee: A Demographic Perspective', *JBL* 129 (2010), pp. 343-65, esp. 344, 358-60, 363. Reed provides a balanced account of the debate over Jesus' alleged visits to Sepphoris (*Archaeology*, ch. 4).

73. G.R. Stanton, 'Hellenism', in Craig A. Evans and Stanley E. Porter (eds.), *Dictionary of New Testament Background* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), pp. 464-73, esp. 467-68. Mark A. Chancey sought to minimize Greek culture in Sepphoris, but the earliest surviving coins of the city, as his plates show, have Greek inscriptions ('Cultural Milieu', p. 132; cf. Yaakov Meshorer, 'Sepphoris and Rome', in Otto Mørkholm and Nancy M. Waggoner [eds.], *Greek Numismatics and Archaeology: Essays in Honor of Margaret Thompson* [Wetteren: Cultura, 1979], pp. 159-76, esp. 160). For a cautious assessment of Antipas's achievement, see Morten Hørning Jensen, *Herod Antipas in Galilee: The Literary and Archaeological Sources on the Reign of Herod Antipas and its Socio-Economic Impact on Galilee* (WUNT, 2.215; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2nd edn, 2010), esp. pp. 98-100, 148-49, 160-62, 184-86, 240-59. But Josephus says that Antipas restored Sepphoris so splendidly that it became the 'ornament of all Galilee' (*Ant.* 18.27).

τέκτων just as off-cuts would be left by the leather-worker (8.50.1). Typical products of the τέκτων in this sense are plows, yokes and couches.<sup>74</sup> Typical tools are the adze (σκέπαρνον) and axe (πελεκύς), as in Epictetus 4.8.4 and 4.8.7. But elsewhere in Epictetus, the τέκτων is clearly responsible for building the whole house (3.10.15). A builder gets his contract for a house and builds it (3.21.4). A τέκτων can work with timber (1.15.2; 3.22.20), but in Aelius Aristides's *On the Four*, the τέκτων sets stones in place (3.144 Behr). In Galen, too, τέκτονες is reasonably understood as 'builders' (*On the Doctrines of Hippocrates and Plato* 9.8.5). Many buildings would have stone as well as timber in their construction. And even the smaller products of a carpenter can involve the use of metals. Thus, wagons can have a metal hoop fixed to a wooden wheel, and plows can have a metal plowshare (ῥνις; *uomer*) fixed to the share-beam.<sup>75</sup>

While one might hesitate, on the basis of the Gospels alone, to conclude that Joseph and Jesus operated a father-son small business that constructed buildings, the non-canonical *Gospel of James* (second century CE) does not hesitate to say that Joseph's work was 'to construct buildings' (οἰκοδομῆσαι τὰς οἰκοδομάς; 9.3). When Mary was in the sixth month of her pregnancy, Joseph 'returned from his building projects' (13.1).<sup>76</sup> It is thus possible that Jesus and his father came from an entrepreneurial sector of society like the Zebedee-James-John-Andrew-Simon fishing partnership.

### Conclusion

The language of the Gospels indicates that these five men ran a business partnership that owned at least two boats. It employed hired

74. Justin, *Dia.* 88.8 (ἄροτρα καὶ ζυγά), speaking of Jesus himself; Maximus of Tyre 15.3 (ἄροτρον, σκίμπους).

75. See, for example, Georges Raepsaet, 'Landtransport', *DNP* 6.1098-1103; Kai Ruffing, 'Pflug, II. Klassische Antike', *DNP* 9.706-707; Helmuth Schneider, *Geschichte der antiken Technik* (Munich: Beck, 2007), pp. 32-35, esp. 33. This is what one would expect in the Levant, where swords may be beaten into plowshares (Isa. 2.4; Mic. 4.3) and vice versa (Joel 3.10).

76. See Ronald F. Hock, *The Life of Mary and Birth of Jesus: The Ancient Infancy Gospel of James* (Berkeley: Ulysses Press, 1997), pp. 1-40; Paul Foster, 'The Protevangelium of James', in Paul Foster (ed.), *The Non-Canonical Gospels* (London: T. & T. Clark, 2008), pp. 110-25. When introduced in 9.1, Joseph throws down his adze (σκέπαρνον).

laborers, although Mk 1.20 does not state whether they were slave or free. The mention of 153 fish in John (21.11) and the reference to nets beginning to break in Luke (5.6) point to huge catches which the business had to deal with as quickly as possible. The salting factory on the western shore of the lake enabled a business partnership such as this one to export fish to a considerable distance in the Mediterranean. A combination of passages from Mark's and Luke's Gospels enables us to build a picture of a group of wealthy women who supported the traveling team. As that entourage made its fateful journey to Jerusalem, the families of Zacchaeus and of Lazarus provided hospitality and accommodation. Moreover, Jesus engaged an audience of apostles by beginning a parable with the question, 'Who among you who owns a slave ... ?' One or more men and women within the inner circle of Jesus' supporters apparently owned a slave. Some of these historical details might be questioned, in particular, that Joseph and Jesus ran a building construction enterprise. We might also concede that Luke was more ready than the other evangelists to envisage Jesus as coming from a family that could afford to visit Jerusalem more than once a year (Lk. 2.22, 41). Luke might be interested, given his address to 'most excellent Theophilus' (1.3), in locating evidence for a respectable family and group of supporters for Jesus. The majority of modern scholarship has invested in a peasant Jesus and looks for supporting evidence or interpretations. But the vocabulary of the four evangelists makes it difficult to sustain a low economic status for the followers of Jesus. What clues there are point to some wealthier supporters.