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*Paul of Tarsus and the *gəzérāh šāwāh*:  
from rabbinic exegesis to citation strategy*

**ABSTRACT:** The paper addresses the relation between the *gəzérāh šāwāh*, which is an analogy-based argumentative strategy typical of rabbinic exegesis, and so-called combined citations, that is, combinations of disparate Old Testament passages into a single quotation. Although *gəzérōt šāwōt* and combined citations represent neatly different devices, a clear dividing line is not always traced in the literature, as both exhibit a few similarities. By examining some cases of combined citations in Paul's letters, I discuss the similarities and the differences between *gəzérōt šāwōt* and combined citations. The investigation reveals that Paul skillfully adapted the rabbinic technique into a citation strategy.

**KEYWORDS:** Rabbinic Hermeneutics, Combined Quotations, Composite Quotations, Old Testament, New Testament.

## 1. Introduction

This study explores a specific type of Old Testament quotations in Paul's epistolary, usually defined as mixed, conflated, composite, or combined citations (Stanley 1992: 53, Adams, Ehorn 2016, 2018)<sup>1</sup>, and its relation to the rabbinic hermeneutical technique known as *gəzérāh šāwāh* (גְזֵרָה שָׁוָאָה, henceforth GS), which is one of the midrashic methods of biblical interpretation and exegesis (Basta 2006).

Conflated citations consist in the juxtaposition or combination of disparate passages (usually two), which are merged into a single quotation. This citation strategy

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1. Stanley (1992: 53) distinguishes between mixed or conflated citations, in which a portion of one text is merged into the text of another, and combined citations, in which various passages are juxtaposed back-to-back. In this paper, I will not follow this distinction, which, though valid, complicates the question; rather, I will use the labels interchangeably.

is not limited to Paul's letters in the New Testament<sup>2</sup>, and a clear example is found in *Lk.* 4:18-19 (on which see Notley, García 2014: 353-356, Porter 2018: 63-68)<sup>3</sup>:

(1a) πνεῦμα κυρίου ἐπ’ ἐμέ οὗ εἶνεκεν ἔχρισέν με εὐαγγελίσασθαι πτωχοῖς ἀπέσταλκέν με κηρύξαι αἰχμαλώτοις ἄφεσιν καὶ τυφλοῖς ἀνάβλεψιν ἀποστεῖλαι τεθραυσμένους ἐν ἀφέσει κηρύξαι ἐνιαυτὸν κυρίου δεκτόν.

'The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.' (*Lk.* 4:18-19)

In this gospel passage, two Old Testament verses are combined, namely *Isa.* 61:1-2 (in (1b)) and *Isa.* 58:6 (in (1c)):

(1b) πνεῦμα κυρίου ἐπ’ ἐμέ οὗ εἶνεκεν ἔχρισέν με εὐαγγελίσασθαι πτωχοῖς ἀπέσταλκέν με ίάσασθαι τοὺς συντετριψμένους τῇ καρδίᾳ κηρύξαι αἰχμαλώτοις ἄφεσιν καὶ τυφλοῖς ἀνάβλεψιν καλέσαι ἐνιαυτὸν κυρίου δεκτὸν καὶ [...]

'The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the poor, to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to summon the acceptable year of the Lord and [...]' (*Isa.* 61:1-2, LXX)

(1c) διάλυε στραγγαλίας βιαίων συναλλαγμάτων ἀπόστελλε τεθραυσμένους ἐν ἀφέσει καὶ [...]

'Undo the knots of contracts made by force; let the oppressed go free, and [...]' (*Isa.* 58:6, LXX)

Looking at *Luke* in (1a), it is now clear that *Isa.* 61:1 opens Luke's quotation (πνεῦμα...ἀπέσταλκέν με / κηρύξαι...ἀνάβλεψιν), *Isa.* 58 is embedded (ἀπόστελλε τεθραυσμένους ἐν ἀφέσει), and *Isa.* 61:2 closes the passage (καλέσαι ἐνιαυτὸν κυρίου δεκτόν)<sup>4</sup>.

2. Other examples are found in *Lk.* 7:27 = *Mt.* 11:10 (discussed at length by Notley, García 2014: 357-362), *Acts* 2:25-28, and *Heb.* 7:1-25, which constitutes a disputed case (Basta 2006: 102, fn. 12).

3. The reference editions for the New Testament and the LXX are, respectively, Nestle *et al.* (2012) and Rahlfs, Hanhart (2006); the translations follow, respectively, the English Standard Version (accessible online: <https://www.biblegateway.com/versions/English-Standard-Version-ESV-Bible/>) and the NETS (Pietersma, Wright 2007). For the Hebrew Masoretic text, the reference edition is Benner *et al.* (2020), based on *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* and *Biblia Hebraica Quinta*, and the English translation is based on the Jewish Publication Society version (accessible online: <https://www.sefaria.org/texts/Tanakh>). The reference edition for *Hexapla* is Field (1875).

4. *Luke* exhibits a couple of differences from the LXX: ἀποστεῖλαι is paralleled by ἀπόστελλε in *Isa.* 58, and κηρύξαι is paralleled by καλέσαι in *Isa.* 61. These differences, however, are not relevant to the present purposes.

Cases of GS (which is discussed in detail in § 2) are widely acknowledged to occur in Paul's epistles, and scholars usually agree that his usage of the technique directly depends on rabbinic hermeneutics. Basta (2006: 85ff.) singles out and discusses in detail four instances, namely *1 Cor.* 3:18-20, *2 Cor.* 9:9-10, *Gal.* 3:10-14, and *Rom.* 4:3-8, which Moyise (2008: 19) considers «the most celebrated example» of GS in Paul. DiMattei (2008: 83-84) refers to *Gal.* 4:21-31 as to an instance of GS, and Stanley (1992: 195, fn. 42) points to *Rom.* 9:25-26, 11:8, 11:10, *1 Cor.* 15:54-55, *Gal.* 3:10, 3:13 (see also Ciampa 2018; on Paul in general, see also Koch 1986).

By contrast, with reference to Daube (1949, 1977), Hays (1989) denies the direct dependence of Paul's GS on rabbinic hermeneutics:

as David Daube has demonstrated, there is nothing peculiarly rabbinic about these rhetorical devices [GS and *qal waḥōmēr*; see § 2]. Furthermore, even when Paul does occasionally use such tropes in ways that bear a certain formal affinity to rabbinic practice, as, for example, in Romans 4, the material uses to which he puts Scripture differ fundamentally from those of the rabbis; his hermeneutic is materially informed by his Christian convictions much more than by some list of approved hermeneutical procedures. (Hays 1989: 13)

It is certainly true that Paul's use of Scriptures sometimes differs from the rabbis', and the apostle may have learnt rhetorical techniques in non-Jewish schools (Porter 1997: 535, Porter, Pitts 2008: 18-19, 35). However, the width and the sharpness of Paul's knowledge of Scriptures, also acknowledged by Hays (1989: 30), seriously support the idea that he studied those texts in rabbinic *milieux*, and that he was influenced, to some extent, by Jewish hermeneutics (on the relation between Paul and rabbinic Judaism, see § 3).

Even though the GS and conflated citations do not necessarily feature an intrinsic and mutual relation, a clear dividing line between the two is often not traced in the literature (Stanley 1992: 194-195), and instances of mixed citations are regarded as cases of GS *tout-court*, such as that in (1a-c) (Notley, García 2014: 353-356).

In this contribution, I attempt to shed light on the relation between combined citations and the GS, with specific reference to Paul's letters. In order to do so, I will discuss the main features of the GS in the rabbinic usage (§ 2) and Paul's Scriptures use and citation strategies (§ 3), and I will analyze in detail a few cases of conflated citations that occur in his epistolary, namely in *Romans* 9:25-26, *Romans* 9:33, *1 Corinthians* 15:54-55 and *2 Corinthians* 6:16 (§ 4). The investigation will reveal that the two strategies exhibit remarkable differences as well as unequivocal similarities (as already noted, in part, by Hays 1989), suggesting that Paul adapted the rabbinic exegetical technique into a quotation strategy.

## 2. Rabbinic exegesis and interpretative techniques: the *gazérāh šāwāh*

At least since Second Temple Judaism, the exegesis of Scriptures was not left to the free and subjective interpretative skills of the rabbis, but was based on a number of specific strategies, the so-called *middōt*: these represent «an inventory of *tropes*», which «provide a descriptive account of a repertoire of possible imaginative operations that can be performed on the text in the act of interpretation» (Hays 1989: 12, italics in the text; on *middōt*, see also Kern-Ulmer 2005, Basta 2006: 17ff., Stemberger 2013: 214ff., Hidary 2018: 174ff.).

The GS is one of the three main and oldest *middōt* (the other two are the *heqqêš* ‘correspondence’ and *qal wahōmér*, literally ‘simple and important’, an *a minori ad maius* argumentation; see Basta 2006: 21ff.) and occurs in more than 600 cases in the rabbinic literature (according to Basta 2006: 31)<sup>5</sup>. Numerous definitions of GS have been proposed (Basta 2006: 47-50) and the literal meaning of *gazérāh šāwāh* has been the object of debate, especially *šāwāh* (Basta 2006: 42-45): it roughly signifies ‘similar decision/decree’ or ‘equal/identical category’ (see Jastrow 1926), but it has also been termed otherwise, such as ‘textual correspondence’, ‘conclusion by analogy’, or ‘analogical conclusion’ (Basta 2006: 20, 26-27, 32).

The GS is employed to demonstrate a point by invoking the authority of Scriptures, and is frequently used about questions of complex solution, as *extrema ratio* when all other exegetic strategies failed (Basta 2006: 35). Essentially, the GS functions as follows: in order to solve theological or procedural problems, rabbis establish a parallel between different biblical passages that are characterized by the occurrence, in each, of similar or identical word(s) or phrase(s); on the ground of this analogical parallel, they build an argumentative line and draw conclusions by mere logical inference. For example, we can mention the case of rabbi Hillel and the question of the Passover sacrifice (Basta 2006: 19ff.), which represents the first explicit reference to the GS, found in both Palestinian and Babylonian Talmud (*yPes.* 33a, *bPes.* 66a). In brief, the Jerusalem Pharisees were uncertain whether the Passover sacrifice could be performed on a *Šabbāt*, and ask for advice to Babylonian rabbi Hillel, who solves the question by applying the above-mentioned *middōt* (*heqqêš*, *qal wahōmér* and GS). The GS is based on the occurrence of the same phrase, *bəmō ’ădō* ‘at its appointed

5. On the conceptual framework on which the *middōt* were grounded, see Mielziner (1968: 142ff.), Ouaknin (1986: 121ff.). As briefly observed in § 1, a few rabbinic interpretative methods have been argued to ultimately originate from Hellenistic rhetoric: Daube (1949, 1977) claims that the rabbis borrowed the GS and the *qal wahōmér*, and used them in the exegesis of the *Tōrāh*. This scenario is far from surprising, inasmuch as the interaction between the Jewish and Greco-Roman world in the I century has been long known: the linguistic and cultural Hellenization of the eastern Mediterranean and early Judaism is widely acknowledged in the literature, though variously evaluated (among others, see Lieberman 1950, Hengel 1989, Mancini 2013, Ong 2016). In this respect, Davies’ statement that «the lines between Hellenism and Judaism, by the first century, were very fluid» (Davies 1980: x) appears both representative and effective. On the GS technique addressed within the wider context of the Greco-Roman rhetorical tradition, among others, see Daube (1949, 1977), Porter (1997), Kern-Ulmer (2005: 270), Pulcinelli (2010: 277-278) Pitta (2011: 51), Hidary (2018: 174ff.).

time', in both *Num.* 9:2 and *Num.* 28:2 (example (2a-b)), which permits the analogical parallel.

(2a) *wəya 'ăśū bənē-yiśrā' ēl 'et-happāsah bəmō 'ădō.*

'The children of Israel shall perform the Passover **at its appointed time.**' (*Num.* 9:2)

(2b) *'et-qārəbānî lahmî lə iššay rēah nīḥōhî tišmərū ləhaqrîb lī bəmō 'ădō.*

'You shall keep my fire-offering, my food, my sweet savor, in order to present it to me **at its appointed time.**' (*Num.* 28:2)

Through simple logical reasoning based on this parallel, Hillel manages to solve the Pharisees' doubt, by positively answering their question. The inferences made by Hillel are not relevant here (for a thorough discussion, see Basta 2006: 22-23); what is important to remark is that the GS allows the interpreter to demonstrate a point by establishing an analogy between disparate Old Testament passages that feature the same syntagma.

However, the mere occurrence of the same phrase in the passages is not a sufficient trait for the GS to be properly elaborated. The parallel passages also have to exhibit the same situational or thematic context (Basta 2006: 41): both (2a) and (2b), for example, concern prescriptions on the performance of sacrifices. Therefore, the validity of the GS and the logical inferences it brings about depend on both formal and contextual parallelism: «la validità del ragionamento è direttamente proporzionale al suo rigore formale e alla sua consistenza strutturale» (*ibidem*).

By its own nature, the GS is a flexible technique and may permit loose interpretations of Scriptures. Loose interpretations, however, risk to result in arbitrary readings, and it also became conceivable that rabbis could force the text to say whatever they wanted to, or even misrepresent Scriptures (Basta 2006: 76-77): this concern is perfectly exemplified by rabbi Yose's admonishment that the GS can be employed to fulfill the teaching, but not to abrogate or question it (Basta 2006: 26). This is why, in Tannaitic times (I-II cent. CE; see Pérez Fernández 1997: 1-2), a number of restrictions were imposed to the GS usage, by restoring the three original rules; namely (Basta 2006: 78):

1. a GS can be elaborated *exclusively* on the basis of the Pentateuch (i.e. *Tōrāh*);
2. a GS can be elaborated *exclusively* on the basis of the Hebrew text;
3. a GS must be based on *perfectly identical* syntagms.

In the intentions of the Tannaim, the application of these rules would again provide the GS with the necessary rigor<sup>6</sup>.

6. A fourth restriction was established, but it was not unanimously accepted: so-called *mūpneh* 'free, empty', by which the phrase triggering the analogy had to be superfluous to the overall sense of the passage(s): «solo questa sua ulteriore qualità, tale da risultare evidente già ad una prima lettura, infatti, poteva indicare con chiarezza la volontà interna alla stessa Scrittura di preordinare una successiva GS a tutto vantaggio dello studio dei futuri interpreti» (Basta 2006: 79-80).

Another important characteristic of the GS, which will turn out to be relevant to the upcoming discussion (see §§ 3-4), is the usual absence of conventional stylistic or formal elements that introduce its usage, or, as Basta (2006: 45) puts it, the absence of a formal framework («cornice formale»). Especially in the *ḥälākā*, i.e. the legalistic rabbinic literature, cases can be found in which the GS is introduced either explicitly or through less transparent textual elements, but in the vast majority of cases, and chiefly in the *haggādāh* (the non-legalistic rabbinic literature), the GS is used abruptly (Basta 2006: 46-47; on halakhic and haggadic literature, see Stemberger 2013: 198ff.). Most likely, the lack of conventional stylistic elements suggests that the audience easily managed to recognize a GS, as is expected of rabbis who were deeply familiar with Scriptures.

To sum up, the GS represents a pivotal exegetical technique in the rabbinic interpretative method and is characterized by the following relevant features:

- it is employed to solve problems or demonstrate points of theological character;
- it is based on the analogical parallel between two different passages, which have to exhibit the same situational or thematic background;
- it is triggered by the occurrence of identical phrases in each passage;
- ideally, the passages must come from the *Tōrāh* in Hebrew;
- most often, it is not introduced by any stylistic or formal elements.

In the following section, I will discuss the figure of Paul of Tarsus, with special reference to the quotation strategies that he employed in his epistles, in order to assess whether the rabbinic GS actually bears any affinities with Paul's conflated citations, and, if so, what these affinities are.

### 3. Paul of Tarsus: the use of Scriptures and citation strategies

Paul, or Saul (Hebrew *Šā'ûl*), was a Jew, born in Tarsus, Cilicia, a Roman citizen (*Acts* 22:26-27), almost certainly multilingual (native Greek speaker, Hebrew and/or Aramaic speaker), educated in his hometown as well as in Jerusalem, where he plausibly attended and studied in rabbinic environments (on Paul's multilingualism, see Nardi 2023 and the bibliography cited there; on Paul's education, see Porter, Pitts 2008): Paul of Tarsus is certainly one of the most prominent figures of Christianity, but he also offers a paradigmatic example of a Hellenized Jew. In fact, the close relation between Paul and Second Temple Judaism is widely acknowledged by scholars: the debt that the apostle owes to the rabbis emerges not only in the theological background, but also in the linguistic-stylistic features of his letters (among many others, see Davies 1980, Lincicum 2010, Bieringer, Pollefeyt 2012, Boccaccini, Segovia 2016, Nardi 2023)<sup>7</sup>.

7. An interesting point of contact between Paul and rabbinic thought and language concerns rabbi Yose's warning that the GS can be employed to fulfill the teaching of Scriptures, but not to abrogate it (see §

As is equally known to scholars, Paul's epistles are imbued with quotations from the Old Testament (Koch 1986, Stanley 1992, Porter, Stanley 2008, Kujanpää 2019). In what follows, I will focus on a few relevant questions, namely: the purposes and motivations for which Paul cited from the Old Testament; the main stylistic and formal characteristics of his quotations; the source text(s) of his citations. The discussion on these points permits to outline a general and tentative picture, which will be completed by the detailed analysis of a few cases of mixed citations (see § 4).

In the first place, why did Paul cite the Old Testament?

The Scriptures of Israel and discourse based on the interpretation of those Scriptures serve as primary intertextual context for virtually all Jewish religious literature and discourse of the first century. Most if not all forms of early Judaism were communities whose discourse was intertextually linked, both explicitly and implicitly, to Jewish scriptural interpretation (Ciampa 2008: 45)

Of course, Paul and the early Christians make no exception: «si preoccuparono di attingere all'autorità ed alla normatività della Bibbia ebraica per legittimare e confermare la bontà della loro visione teologica» (Basta 2006: 104; see also Allison 2013: 484, 500-502). So, in general, Paul refers to the Old Testament to justify what he preaches: after all, this is expected of people who still looked at themselves as Jews, and whose teachings, though partly innovative, needed to comply with Scriptures.

However, Paul might have used biblical citations also for another purpose, as suggested by Stanley (2008: 134-135; see also Stanley 1992: 17-18, 258-259, Kujanpää 2019): the apostle quoted the Old Testament so that his audience drew the conclusions that were functional to the points that he wanted to demonstrate, by often revising «the wording of the text so that it comports more closely with his argument» (Stanley 2008: 135; as we will see below, different wordings may be motivated otherwise). This claim might be corroborated by observing that Paul sometimes decontextualizes the biblical passages that he quotes: «a number of Paul's citations are used in a sense quite foreign to their original context» (Stanley 1992: 78; see also Moyise 2008: 22-23; decontextualization of cited scriptural verses is a common attitude in the New Testament: see Allison 2013: 498-500). This suggests that, at least in those cases, Paul is not really interested in what the passages actually teach, but, rather, in whatever benefit they may provide to his argumentation. Thus, on occasions, Paul may have invoked the authority of Scriptures to merely support his stances.

The second relevant question concerns the formal features of Paul's quotations. In his seminal work on Old Testament quotations in Paul, Stanley (1992) provides an in-depth examination of the apostle's citation strategies, and singles out a few significant points, which are worth being discussed here.

2). In *Rom.* 3:31 we read: *vóμον οὖν καταργοῦμεν διὰ τῆς πίστεως; μὴ γένοιτο, ἀλλὰ νόμον ιστάνομεν* 'do we then overthrow the law by this faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law' (similarly, see *Mt.* 5:17). Even though this parallel has been questioned (as Yose specifically refers to the GS, while Paul to other issues), the usage of the couple uphold vs. abrogate denotes a rabbinic cultural and intellectual background (Basta 2006: 28, fn. 19).

Stanley shows that the techniques and devices by which Paul cites the Old Testament are notably similar to those found in contemporary Greco-Roman texts, such as Strabo's *Geography* or a couple of Plutarch's *Moralia* (Stanley 1992: 267ff.). Essentially the same quotation strategies are also found in writings belonging to early Judaism (Stanley 1992: 292ff.), such as some Qumran scrolls (Stanley 1992: 296ff.), apocrypha or pseudepigrapha (Stanley 1992: 307ff.), and Philo's *Legum Allegoria* and *De Ebrietate* (Stanley 1992: 323ff.), in which, similarly to Paul, the author sometimes modifies the text of a quoted verse with the specific purpose of supporting his own argument<sup>8</sup>.

In particular, Stanley notes two characteristics that are widely diffused in the Hellenistic and Jewish texts, including Paul. First, quotations are most often introduced by stereotyped and fixed phrases, systematically based on expressions selecting verbs of writing or saying, such as *λέγει* 'it says' or *καθὼς γέγραπται* 'as it is written' (the latter is so representative that it titles Porter, Stanley 2008). The second characteristic is the diffused freedom in the wording of the quoted passages, which, as seen, could be functional to the argumentative purposes of the author. However, with specific reference to Paul, different wordings may be motivated otherwise, and, namely, may depend on the reference text of the quotation<sup>9</sup>.

In fact, a widely debated question on Paul's citations is what the source text was (Stanley 1992: 37ff.). The vast majority of scholars agree that, in most cases, Paul cited from the LXX (among others, see Hays 1989: 16, Stanley 1992, Lincicum 2021: 530). However, since the LXX did not constitute a stable and monolithic set of books (see fn. 9), it is at least problematic to regard it as the "standard" reference text.

Despite this, although most quotations in Paul actually comply with the LXX (which justifies the centrality that scholars attribute to it), several citations diverge from it in a more or less substantial way. On occasions, different wordings may actually depend on Paul's personal reformulation of the LXX (this is particularly plausible

8. Stanley discusses in detail all the texts and their characteristic citation strategies, but he also provides useful summaries of the strategies found in each group of texts: for the Greco-Roman texts, see Stanley (1992: 290-291); for the Qumran scrolls, see Stanley (1992: 304-306); for the apocrypha or pseudepigrapha, see Stanley (1992: 321-323); for Philo, see Stanley 1992: (333-336).

9. The question of the citation compliance with the wording of the reference text is a fairly problematic point, as it lies on the flawed assumption that, for each text, there existed only one universally available version. As is well known, however, it is controversial whether a fixed and codified recension of the Old Testament existed in the Hellenistic-Roman period; moreover, the Greek books composing the LXX circulated in various versions at that time (among others, see Swete 1968, Stanley 1992: 42ff., Porter, Pitts 2008: 36-37, Allison 2013: 480, De Troyer 2013, Bons, Joosten 2023). In this respect, the claim by Porter, Pitts (2008: 37) is enlightening: «more than likely, the Greek text was dealt with in terms of individual books and their respective scroll(s) – it did not exist as a single volume until the dissemination of the codex in the second century CE. These scrolls were the result of two hundred years of scholarship by diverse translators in diverse times and circumstances. They, therefore, reflect different translational philosophies and should not be understood monolithically as a coherent textually stable tradition of Scripture readily available to most first-century Jews and Christians. Thus, as Stanley notes, it is highly unlikely that any one individual or establishment would have had access to the entire Jewish Old Testament in Greek».

when the differences are minimal, such as the presence or not of an article, or similar)<sup>10</sup>, but also other motivations may account for the issue (Stanley 1992: 8ff.) and need to be considered.

First, Paul may cite from a Greek source different from the LXX (on this thesis and its historical development in scholarship, see Stanley 1992: 12-16). Second, the source text may be the Hebrew Old Testament, translated into Greek by Paul himself: this hypothesis is acknowledged (among others, see Stanley 1992) and not limited to Paul's writings in the New Testament (Notley, García 2014), but is disputed and not easy to demonstrate. Moreover, Paul may quote from memory and may not remember the text perfectly (Stanley 1992: 16-17, Lincicum 2021: 529)<sup>11</sup>. Similarly to Paul's intentional interventions, memory quotation can account for minimal differences, but not larger citations that substantially diverge from the LXX. Finally, the text may feature mistakes developed in the transmission process: as early as 1724, Anthony Collins already «pointed out that the bulk of the differences between the present Greek and Hebrew manuscripts and the New Testament citations [...] reflect the kinds of errors that occur naturally in the course of transmission» (Stanley 1992: 10). Although a few different wordings might be attributed to copyists' modifications, in many cases the discrepancies are too numerous and substantial to be reasonably accounted for as errors.

To sum up, the discussion on Paul's usage of Scriptures has highlighted several relevant points, which can be synthesized as follows.

- Paul cited from the Old Testament for two chief reasons: legitimate and consolidate his theological view, by invoking the authority of Scriptures, and provide argumentation in favor of the points he wished to demonstrate.

10. For example, coordination is expressed by the particle δέ in *Rom.* 4:3 (ἐπίστευσεν δὲ Αβραὰμ τῷ θεῷ), whereas *Gen.* 15:6 in the LXX features the conjunction καὶ (καὶ ἐπίστευσεν Αβραμ τῷ θεῷ): this kind of discrepancies can be easily attributed to Paul's intentional intervention (on this citation, see Basta 2006: 96ff.).

11. Whether Paul cited by heart or from a written text is a widely debated question, and in both cases we can only rely on circumstantial evidence. In the first place, the huge mnemonic effort required by recalling Scriptures from memory should not surprise us, considering «the central role of rote memorization in the educational systems of antiquity (both Greco-Roman and Jewish), including examples of rabbis who could quote the entire Hebrew Bible from memory» (Stanley 1992: 16). Paul, who attended rabbinic schools, was probably familiar with this type of practice (Lincicum 2010: 21-58). Especially in the cases of combined citations, it is arguable that the author quoted from memory: if we assume that he quoted from a written text, we should imagine that he read a passage in one place and then looked for the other passage elsewhere on the scroll. Overall, this is a scarcely economic explanation; the procedure appears more immediate, if we assume that the author recalled by heart the passages to combine. On the contrary, Stanley (1992: 69ff.) argues that Paul quoted from written sources, possibly from a sort of anthology of *excerpta*, which he himself collected (see also Porter, Pitts 2008: 37). Combined citations support this thesis: «the skill with which these composite units have been knit together and adapted for their present use shows that it was no careless lapse of memory, but rather a conscious editorial hand that produced such sophisticated pieces of literary and rhetorical artistry» (Stanley 1992: 256).

- The quotation strategies that he used conform to the standards of his times, as found in both Hellenistic and Jewish literature. Two characteristics are noteworthy: the citations are most often introduced by explicit and stereotyped phrases; the wording of the citations often differs from the (supposed) source text.
- In most cases, Paul quotes from the LXX, but it is also possible that some of his citations are based on non-Septuagintal Greek translations, or even on the Hebrew text.

Given these premises, in the following section I analyze in detail a few cases of conflated citations in Paul's epistles, with special attention to all the issues that have been discussed so far, and with the purpose of comparing the characteristics of the rabbinic GS with Paul's quotation strategies.

#### 4. Cases of combined citations in Paul's epistles

The passages discussed in this section are *Romans* 9:25-26, *Romans* 9:33, *1 Corinthians* 15:54-55 and *2 Corinthians* 6:16. All these cases are characterized by explicit expressions announcing the quotation, namely: ὡς καὶ ἐν τῷ Ὡσηὲ λέγει ‘as indeed he [sc. the Lord] says in Hosea’ (*Rom.* 9:25), καθὼς γέγραπται ‘as it is written’ (*Rom.* 9:33), τότε γενήσεται ὁ λόγος ὁ γεγραμμένος ‘then shall come to pass the saying that is written’ (*1 Cor.* 15:54) and καθὼς εἶπεν ὁ θεὸς ὅτι ‘as God said’ (*2 Cor.* 6:16).

Whereas the citations in *Rom.* 9:25-26 and *2 Cor.* 6:16 seem to be drawn upon the LXX, those in *Rom.* 9:33 and *1 Cor.* 15:54-55 exhibit significant differences from the LXX, and a better understanding of their wording will come from the comparison with the Hebrew text. First, I will address the cases that appear to come from Septuagintal sources.

The first citation to analyze occurs in *Rom.* 9:25-26 (Stanley 1992: 109-113), in which *Hos.* 2:25 and *Hos.* 2:1 are combined, and which is regarded as a GS by Stanley (1992: 195, fn. 42).

(3a) ὡς καὶ ἐν τῷ Ὡσηὲ λέγει· καλέσω τὸν οὐ λαόν μου καὶ τὴν οὐκ ἡγαπημένην ἡγαπημένην καὶ ἔσται ἐν τῷ τόπῳ οὗ ἐρρέθη αὐτοῖς οὐ λαός μου ὑμεῖς ἐκεῖ κληθήσονται νιοὶ θεοῦ ζῶντος.

‘As indeed he says in Hosea: Those who were not my people I will call my people, and her who was not beloved I will call beloved. And in the very place where it was said to them «you are not my people», there they will be called sons of the living God.’ (*Rom.* 9:25-26)

(3b) καὶ ἐλεήσω τὴν οὐκ ἡλεημένην καὶ ἐρῶ τῷ οὐ λαῷ μου λαός μου εἰ̄ σύ καὶ αὐτὸς ἐρεῖ κύριος ὁ θεός μου εἰ̄ σύ.

‘And I will have pity on Not Pitied, and I will say to Not My People «you are my people», and he shall say «you are the Lord my God».’ (*Hos.* 2:25, LXX)

(3c) καὶ ἔσται ἐν τῷ τόπῳ οὗ ἐρρέθη αὐτοῖς οὐ λαός μου ὑμεῖς ἐκεῖ κληθήσονται νιὸι θεοῦ ζῶντος.

‘And it shall be, in the place where it was said to them «you are not my people», they too shall be called sons of living god.’ (*Hos.* 2:1, LXX)

The combination of the passages appears not arbitrary, but based on the presence of the same phrase in both, which permits the same type of analogical parallel characteristic of the GS: the triggering phrase is οὐ λαός μου ‘not my people’, which is variously declined because of contextual reasons (accusative in (3a), dative in (3b) and nominative in (3c)). However, the passages do not share the same thematic background, since «what was once a promise of divine mercy toward wayward Israel has been transformed in Paul’s hands into a prophecy of Yahweh’s coming election of the Gentiles (those who once were “not my people”) to share in the benefits of his covenant» (Stanley 1992: 109): Paul adapted Scriptures to his own argumentative needs.

Formally, *Hos.* 2:1, which closes the citation, remains untouched, whereas *Hos.* 2:25 is heavily reformulated (despite this, the source text appears to be the LXX). In the first place, the difference between ἀγαπάω ‘I love’ in Paul and ἐλεέω ‘I pity’ in *Hos.* might be accounted for as different renderings of Hebrew *v-r-h-m* (מִתְּרָח) ‘to show pity, love’, but the variant καὶ ἀγαπήσω τὴν οὐκ ἡγαπημένην is attested in several LXX witnesses (Stanley 1992: 112), which may constitute Paul’s source text. The sentence also features a polar inversion: the sequence τὴν οὐκ ἡλεημένην...τῷ οὐ λαῷ μου in *Hos.* is reversed in Paul (τὸν οὐ λαόν μου...τὴν οὐκ ἡγαπημένην). Other minor divergences regard the modification of ἐρῶ into καλέσω, by which Paul echoes his own words in the preceding verse (οὖς καὶ ἐκάλεσεν ἡμᾶς, *Rom.* 9:24), and the omission of εἰ σύ: these changes allow Paul to smoothly embed the quotation into his text, resulting in a «condensed version of the original» (Stanley 1992: 111).

The second citation to tackle occurs in *2 Cor.* 6:16 (Stanley 1992: 217-221, Ciampa 2018: 164-167), in which *Lev.* 26:12 and *Ezek.* 37:27 are combined. The passage is in fact part of a wider quotation (*2 Cor.* 6:16-18), wherein various Old Testament verses are merged; however, the passages in *2 Cor.* 6:17-18 do not feature any common elements to the GS, differently from *2 Cor.* 6:16 (for a full discussion on *2 Cor.* 6:17-18, see Stanley 1992: 221-230, Ciampa 2018: 167-174).

(4a) καθὼς εἶπεν ὁ θεὸς ὅτι· ἐνοικήσω ἐν αὐτοῖς καὶ ἐμπεριπατήσω καὶ ἔσομαι αὐτῶν θεός καὶ αὐτοὶ ἔσονται μου λαός.

‘As God said: I will inhabit among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.’ (*2 Cor.* 6:16)

(4b) καὶ ἐμπεριπατήσω ἐν ὑμῖν καὶ ἔσομαι ὑμῶν θεός καὶ ὑμεῖς ἔσεσθέ μου λαός.

‘And I will walk about among you and will be your God, and you shall be my people.’ (*Lev.* 26:12, LXX)

(4c) καὶ ἔσται ἡ κατασκήνωσίς μου ἐν αὐτοῖς καὶ ἔσομαι αὐτοῖς θεός καὶ αὐτοί μου ἔσονται λαός.

‘And my encamping shall be among them, and I will be a god for them, and they shall be my people.’ (*Ezek.* 37:27, LXX)

The conflation of the passages, far from arbitrary, is based on the occurrence of the phrase καὶ ἔσομαι αὐτοῖς/ὑμῶν θεός καὶ ὑμεῖς/αὐτοί ἔσεσθε/ἔσονται μου λαός in both Old Testament verses: the minor formal differences do not affect at all the clear semantic equivalence of the phrase in each verse, nor seem to prevent the analogical parallel from being elaborated. Overall, the passages share the same situational context (God promising his presence among his people), but the perspective is partly different, because *Lev.* and *Ezek.* refer to the Jews, while Paul to the Christians: «the Pauline form of the passage is thus the product of a careful reshaping [...] to suit a particular argumentative context [...] under the influence of a thoroughly Christian view of existence» (Stanley 1992: 219).

The final part of the quotation is overall unproblematic (καὶ ἐμπεριπατήσω...μου λαός) and clearly comes from *Lev.* 26:12 (ἐμπεριπατήσω is uncommon in the LXX and a *hapax* in the New Testament; see Stanley 1992: 218). Most likely, ἐν ὑμῖν is omitted in Paul (ἐμπεριπατήσω ἐν ὑμῖν, *Lev.* 26:12), because the preceding ἐν αὐτοῖς makes any similar adjuncts superfluous. The opening of the citation arguably draws upon *Ezek.* 37:27, which is substantially modified: ἔσται ἡ κατασκήνωσίς μου ἐν αὐτοῖς ‘my encamping will be among them’ becomes ἐνοικήσω ἐν αὐτοῖς ‘I will inhabit among them’ (the Hebrew text does not help to shed light on this). Since the form ἐνοικήσω in the New Testament exclusively appears in the Pauline corpus, the change can be plausibly attributed to Paul (Stanley 1992: 219, fn. 132). Furthermore, we may attempt to account for this modification. The sociocultural perspective of the Old Testament is that of a nomadic people, who used to reside in tents<sup>12</sup>; by contrast, most Mediterranean peoples, who were having the gospel preached in the first century, were sedentary and used to live in houses (note that ἐνοικέω is etymologically related to οἴκος, οἰκία ‘house’). What Paul probably did, then, is to adapt the vocabulary to the sociocultural background of his audience (and his own).

The other cases examined below (*Rom.* 9:33 and *1 Cor.* 15:54-55) are characterized by noteworthy differences from the LXX, which can be accounted for with reference to the Hebrew text.

12. The idea of God dwelling among the Jewish people, expressed through lexemes related to tents, is also found in *Num.* 35:34 (καὶ οὐ μιανεῖτε τὴν γῆν ἐφ' ἣς κατοικεῖτε ἐπ' αὐτῆς ἐφ' ἣς ἐγὼ **κατασκηνώσω** ἐν ὑμῖν ἐγὼ γάρ εἰμι κύριος **κατασκηνῶν** ἐν μέσῳ τῶν νιῶν Ἰσραὴλ ‘and you shall not defile the land that you live upon, on which **I will encamp** among you, for I am the Lord, **encamping** in the midst of the sons of Israel’).

The first citation of this kind occurs in *Rom.* 9:33 (Stanley 1992: 119-125), in which *Isa.* 28:16 and *Isa.* 8:14 are conflated. Stanley (1992: 120, fn. 108) also alludes to the GS with respect to the embedding of a passage into another for argumentative purposes.

(5a) καθὼς γέγραπται· ἰδοὺ τίθημι ἐν Σιὼν λίθον προσκόμματος καὶ πέτραν σκανδάλου καὶ ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ’ αὐτῷ οὐ καταισχυνθήσεται.

‘As it is written: Behold, I lay in Sion a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.’ (*Rom.* 9:33)

(5b) ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ ἐμβαλῶ εἰς τὰ θεμέλια Σιων λίθον πολυτελῆ ἐκλεκτὸν ἀκρογωνιαῖον ἔντιμον εἰς τὰ θεμέλια αὐτῆς καὶ ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ’ αὐτῷ οὐ μὴ καταισχυνθῇ.

‘Behold, I will lay for the foundations of Sion a precious, choice stone, a highly valued cornerstone for its foundations, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.’ (*Isa.* 28:16, LXX)

(5c) καὶ ἐὰν ἐπ’ αὐτῷ πεποιθώς ἥς ἔσται σοι εἰς ἀγίασμα καὶ οὐχ ὡς λίθον προσκόμματι συναντήσεσθε αὐτῷ οὐδὲ ὡς πέτρας πτώματι ὁ δὲ οἶκος Ιακὼβ ἐν παγίδι καὶ ἐν κοιλάσματι ἐγκαθήμενοι ἐν Ιερουσαλημ.

‘And if you trust in him, he will become your holy precinct, and you will not encounter him as a stumbling caused by a stone, nor as a fall used by a rock, but the house of Jacob is in a trap, and those who sit in Jerusalem are in a pit.’ (*Isa.* 8:14, LXX)

The pivot of the conflation is the word λίθος ‘stone’, which also permits the analogical parallel between the merged verses. The citation begins with *Isa.* 28, goes on with the embedding of *Isa.* 8 (the discrepancies between *Rom.* and *Isa.* in these parts are discussed below), and ends by resuming *Isa.* 28, which is quoted almost *verbatim* from the LXX. The motivation for the embedding of *Isa.* 8 into *Isa.* 28 is suggested by Stanley:

whereas the original passage spoke of the “cornerstone” in positive, glowing terms, the context of Rom 9:33 demanded that the negative consequences of the divine action for those who refused to “believe” be spelled out as well. Rather than extending the quotation several more lines to include the negative pronouncements already present in Isa 28, Paul chose to introduce words from a similar “stone” passage in Isa 8 that would make the same point in clearer and more concise terms. (Stanley 1992: 120)

Paul, thus, does not really decontextualize the passages, but chooses those portions that match his argumentative purposes.

The differences between *Rom.* and the LXX in the final part of the quotation can be ascribed to Paul’s direct reformulation: καταισχυνθῇ is changed into καταισχυνθήσεται, and the double negation οὐ μή is reduced to sole οὐ (which appears more correct in Greek). The dissimilarities from the LXX in the rest of the citation are

noteworthy (ἰδοὺ τίθημι ἐν Σιὼν λίθον προσκόμματος καὶ πέτραν σκανδάλου), and, notably, the wording of *Rom.* is parallel to the Hebrew (Masoretic) text in (5d-e) (it may be useful to show again the relevant portion of *Rom.* 9:33, in (5a)). Therefore, although Paul's personal reformulation always remains possible, it appears more probable that the source text was either the Hebrew (translated by Paul himself, perhaps) or a Greek version closer to the Masoretic text than the LXX (Stanley 1992: 121-124).

- (5a) ιδοὺ τίθημι ἐν Σιὼν λίθον προσκόμματος καὶ πέτραν σκανδάλου καὶ [...]  
 ‘Behold, I lay in Sion a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense, and [...]’ (*Rom.* 9:33)
- (5d) *hinənî yissad bəšîyōn ’āben ’eben bōḥan pinnat yiqrat mūsād hamma’āmîn lō yāhîš.*  
 ‘**Behold, I found in Sion a stone**, a tried stone, a precious cornerstone of sure foundation; he that believes shall not make haste.’ (*Isa.* 28:16, Masoretic)
- (5e) *wəhāyāh ləmiqdāš ūlə ’eben neḡep ūləšûr mikšôl lišnē bāttē yiśrā’ ēl [...]*  
 ‘And he shall be for a sanctuary, **but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offense** to both the houses of Israel, [...]’ (*Isa.* 8:14, Masoretic)

The initial phrase of the quotation perfectly matches the Hebrew: *hinənî yissad* corresponds to ιδοὺ τίθημι, *bəšîyōn* corresponds to ἐν Σιὼν, and *’āben* corresponds to λίθον. Similarly, λίθον προσκόμματος and πέτραν σκανδάλου effectively reproduce the genitival relations encoded by the Hebrew construct chains *’eben-neḡep* and *šûr-mikšôl*; the preposition *lə-* ‘to, toward’ (ideally corresponding to εἰς or ἐπί) is omitted in Greek, because it is not necessary to the sentence semantics. Also note that, both in Hebrew and *Rom.*, the words from *Isa.* 8 are syntactically adjacent (*ūlə ’eben neḡep ūləšûr mikšôl*, λίθον προσκόμματος καὶ πέτραν σκανδάλου), while much linguistic material is interposed in the LXX (ώς λίθου προσκόμματι συναντήσεσθε αὐτῷ οὐδὲ ώς πέτρας πτώματι)<sup>13</sup>.

On the semantic level, the difference between σκάνδαλον in *Rom.* (πέτραν σκανδάλου) and πτῶμα in the LXX (πέτρας πτώματι), paralleling Hebrew *šûr-mikšôl*, is noteworthy: while πτῶμα exclusively means ‘fall’, σκάνδαλον means ‘offense,

13. By contrast, the LXX is remarkably less faithful to the Hebrew: *hinənî yissad* ‘behold, I found’ is rendered with the circumlocution ιδού ἔγώ ἐμβαλῶ εἰς τὰ θεμέλια ‘behold, I will lay as foundations’; *bəšîyōn* ‘in Sion’ is rendered as if *sîyōn* were a genitive, (θεμέλια) Σιὼν ‘(foundations) of Sion’, corresponding to a supposed Hebrew construct state. Λίθου προσκόμματι ‘to a stumbling (caused by) a stone’ and πέτρας πτώματι ‘to a fall (caused by) a rock’ do not reproduce the genitive relations conveyed by *’eben-neḡep* ‘stone of stumbling’ and *šûr-mikšôl* ‘rock of offense’.

scandal' as well as 'trap, snare', thus matching the polysemy of *mikšōl*, which signifies both 'offense' and 'obstacle' (see Holladay 2000)<sup>14</sup>.

A final remark on this case. As observed above, the pivot of the conflation is the word 'stone' (λίθος). In Hebrew *Isa.* 28:16, the word for 'stone' is repeated twice ('āben 'eben)<sup>15</sup>, which provides the word(s) with a particular saliency and/or emphasis: such saliency may have facilitated the analogy on which the conflation is based. Though far from conclusive, this point may suggest that the Hebrew text could have been a better candidate as the quotation source than a non-Septuagintal Greek translation.

The last citation to examine occurs in *1 Cor.* 15:54-55 (Stanley 1992: 209-215, Ciampa 2018: 174-179), in which *Isa.* 25:8 and *Hos.* 13:14 are combined; this passage is considered a GS by Stanley (1992: 195, fn. 42, 214) and, implicitly, Ciampa (2018: 176).

(6a) τότε γενήσεται ὁ λόγος ὁ γεγραμμένος· κατεπόθη ὁ θάνατος εἰς νῖκος ποῦ σου θάνατε τὸ νῖκος ποῦ σου θάνατε τὸ κέντρον.

'Then shall come to pass the saying that is written: Death was swallowed up for victory. O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?' (*1 Cor.* 15:54-55)

(6b) κατέπιεν ὁ θάνατος ἰσχύσας καὶ πάλιν ἀφεῖλεν ὁ θεὸς πᾶν δάκρυον ἀπὸ παντὸς προσώπου.

'Death, having prevailed, swallowed them up, and God has again taken away every tear from every face.' (*Isa.* 25:8, LXX)

(6c) ποῦ ἡ δίκη σου θάνατε ποῦ τὸ κέντρον σου ἄδη παράκλησις κέκρυπται ἀπὸ ὀφθαλμῶν μου.

'O Death, where is your sentence? O Hades, where is your goad? Comfort is hidden from my eyes.' (*Hos.* 13:14, LXX)

Also in this case, the cited passages are not chosen arbitrarily, but their combination pivots on a lexical fulcrum: the word θάνατος 'death'. Alternatively, νῖκος 'victory' may be regarded as the key-word of this «rather loose instance of *gezera shawa*» (Stanley 1992: 214, italics in the text): its occurrence in the first part of the Pauline quotation, despite its absence in LXX *Isa.* 25, is discussed below; ἡ δίκη 'justice' in *Hos.* 13 is replaced with ἡ νίκη 'victory' in a few witnesses of the LXX (Stanley 1992:

14. Note that, while λίθος προσκόμματος is common to Aquila, Theodotion, ad Symmachus, their recensions attest translations of *šūr mikšōl* that are variously related to Paul's πέτραν σκανδάλου (Stanley 1992: 123-124): στερεὸν σκανδάλου (Aquila), πέτραν πτώματος (Symmachus and Theodotion). Καὶ λίθος προσκόμματος καὶ πέτρα σκανδάλου is also attested in *1 Pe.* 2:8, which may be due to Pauline influence.

15. 'āben ՚eben is the so-called pausal form of 'eben ՚eben. This device (on which see Joüon, Muraoka 2011: 96) is used to prescribe a stop in the recitation, which corresponds to either a comma or a semicolon in modern punctuation.

212), which might have been Paul's source text. However, the Old Testament passages are completely decontextualized and adapted to Paul's immediate purposes: *Isa.* 25 features a hymn to God; *Hos.* 13 contains a threatening speech uttered by God, who is angry at 'the iniquity of Ephraim', i.e. idolatry; in *1 Cor.* 15, Paul discusses resurrection and the immortality of soul after death, and legitimates his view by quoting Scriptures.

Paul's citation is clearly divided between *Isa.* 25 in the beginning (κατεπόθη ὁ θάνατος εἰς νῖκος) and *Hos.* 13 at the end. However, both exhibit substantial differences from the LXX, especially *Isa.* 25. On the one hand, it is hard to account for the divergences from *Hos.* 13, as there appear to be no significant hints that specifically point to Paul's personal reformulation or a Greek source different from the LXX, or even a direct translation from Hebrew (Stanley 1992: 211-215). On the other hand, as for *Isa.* 25, new insights may come from the comparison with the Hebrew text in (6d) (it will be useful to show again the relevant parts from both *1 Cor.* 15 and LXX *Isa.* 25, in (6a) and (6b) respectively).

(6a) κατεπόθη ὁ θάνατος εἰς νῖκος [...]

'Death was swallowed up for victory [...]' (*1 Cor.* 15:54)

(6b) κατέπιεν ὁ θάνατος ἰσχύσας [...]

'Death, having prevailed, swallowed them up, [...]' (*Isa.* 25:8, LXX)

(6d) *billa* 'hammāwet lānešah [...]

'He will swallow up death for ever, [...]' (*Isa.* 25:8, Masoretic)

I suggest that the divergences may be accounted for by assuming that the three texts represent as many interpretations (and, thus, translations) of the Hebrew consonant text (Masoretes' punctuation is a few centuries later than Paul), which appears as בַּל עַ הֲמוֹת לִנְצָחָה.

The first word (בַּל) was interpreted by both the Masoretes and the LXX translators as a *piel* (causative and/or intensive form), namely *billa* בִּילָע, which regularly corresponds to κατέπιεν in the LXX. By contrast, κατεπόθη in *1 Cor.* corresponds to a *pual* form (passive to the *piel*), namely *bulla* בִּלְעָה. The second word הֲמוֹת does not differ in terms of punctuation, but syntactic value: in both *1 Cor.* and the LXX it is interpreted as the subject, while the Masoretes read it as an object. Given the absence of the direct object marker הָא, which would disambiguate, both readings are possible (the former might be facilitated by the usual VS order of Biblical Hebrew).

The third word לִנְצָחָה constitutes a more complex case. Masoretes' punctuation *lānešah* לִנְצָחָה 'forever' hardly relates to either ἰσχύσας or εἰς νῖκος. Biblical Hebrew *nēšah* may mean 'glory' (see Holladay 2000), and a phrase such as *lānēšah* לִנְצָחָה 'for glory' may somehow resemble Paul's εἰς νῖκος 'for victory'. However, and more significantly, Mishnaic Hebrew features a verbal root *vn-s-h* (נִצָּח) 'to be victorious, win, prevail, conquer, lead' (see Jastrow 1926), forerunners of which are already present

in Late Biblical Hebrew with the meaning ‘to oversee, be in charge’ (e.g. *1 Chron.* 23:4, *2 Chron.* 2:1): therefore, *לְנִצָּח* can be analyzed as the construction *lə-* ‘to, towards’ plus the infinitive construct of Mishnaic Hebrew *־נִשְׁׁחַת*, resulting in *linəšōāh* *לְנִצָּח* ‘in order to win, for victory’, in the *qal* stem (i.e., the simple, primary stem), or in the more common *piel* stem *lənasséah* *לְנִצָּחֵת*, which both thoroughly parallel Paul’s εἰς νίκος. Moreover, the construction can also express manner, ‘by winning’, which may underlie LXX ισχύσας (alternatively, ισχύσας may be a translation from Aramaic, as suggested by Stanley 1992: 210, fn. 101 and Ciampa 2018: 176, fn. 65). Therefore, the interpretation of the consonantic text with reference to the later Hebrew variety may shed light on the differences between the three passages<sup>16</sup>.

Since *1 Cor.* offers the earliest attestation of this non-Septuagintal reading of *Isa.* 25:8, it is conceivable that the interpretation may date back to Paul himself. However, Theodotion’s recension reads exactly the same, and those by Aquila and Symmachus bear some affinities to it (Stanley 1992: 210, Lincicum 2021: 530)<sup>17</sup>. It appears more likely, therefore, that both Paul and Theodotion drew upon the same Greek version, which may have influenced, to some extent, the translations of Aquila and Symmachus (Stanley 1992: 211).

To sum up, the main points that emerge from the analysis can be summarized as follows.

- Paul quotes from the Old Testament to either legitimate his own theological view or demonstrate a point with authoritative argumentation.
- Often, Paul re-elaborates the wording of the quoted passages and decontextualizes their original thematic or situational background, adapting the sense of the verses to his argumentation (with the notable exception of example (5)).
- Paul may merely juxtapose the cited passages, or merge them together with such literary artistry that the two may be not immediately distinguishable (as in example (5)). Moreover, the combination appears not arbitrary, but based on the presence of the same word or phrase in each passage.
- The citations may come from any Old Testament sections, not limited to the *Tōrāh* (although specific books are generally preferred, especially *Genesis*, *Deuteronomy*, *Isaiah* and *Psalms*; see Lincicum 2021: 530).
- The passages are usually cited from a Greek source, not necessarily the LXX, although a direct translation from Hebrew is possible for the case in (5).
- The citations are regularly introduced by explicit formal devices, such as the frequent phrase καθὼς γέγραπται ‘as it is written’.

16. The interference of Mishnaic Hebrew in Pauline Old Testament quotations is not unprecedented (Joosten, Kister 2010: 346ff.): for example, *Rom.* 9:17 features a citation in which «the classical Hebrew of Exodus was read in the light of later Hebrew» (Joosten, Kister 2010: 349). On this issue, see also Nardi (2025).

17. Namely: καταποντίσει τὸν θάνατον εἰς νίκος ‘he will overwhelm death for victory’ (Aquila); καταποθῆναι ποιήσεις τὸν θάνατον εἰς τέλος ‘you will make death to be overwhelmed to the end’ (Symmachus).

## 5. Conclusion

In this contribution, I have explored the relation between combined citations in Paul's letters and the rabbinic exegetical technique known as *gazérāh šāwāh*. The question is not a new one, and various cases of actual *gazérōt šāwōt* can be found in Paul (e.g. *Rom.* 4:3-8, or *1 Cor.* 3:18-20). However, combined citations and the *gazérāh šāwāh* are not always distinguished in a clear-cut fashion in the literature, and instances of the former are sometimes fully identified with cases of the latter. This overlap is improper: combined citations merely consist in the juxtaposition or conflation of different verses, while the *gazérāh šāwāh* consists in a complex reasoning based on logical inferences and grounded on the analogical parallel between two Old Testament passages, which can be exclusively established thanks to the presence of identical words or phrases in each passage.

However, the terminological ambiguity can be justified by the evident similarities that characterize both combined citations and *gazérōt šāwōt*: Paul invokes the Old Testament in order to demonstrate a point, which is one of the main reasons why the rabbis used the *gazérāh šāwāh*; besides, the combination of the quoted verses is based on the presence of the same word or phrase in each passage.

On the other hand, the analysis has also shown equally clear dissimilarities: the passages are cited within a different thematic or situational context from the original, and their sense is adapted to the new argumentative purposes; the quoted verses are regularly introduced by explicit stereotyped formulas (e.g. καθὼς γέγραπται), and do not exclusively come from the Hebrew Pentateuch<sup>18</sup>. However, the main and most significant difference, which allows us to clearly distinguish between *gazérāh šāwāh* and combined citation, is the absence of a logical reasoning developed on the grounds of the analogy between two Old Testament passages.

The analyzed cases, therefore, are not full-fledged *gazérōt šāwōt*, but contain something essential to the rabbinic technique: Paul weaves together disparate verses from Scriptures by applying a distinctive and constitutive feature of the *gazérāh šāwāh*, i.e. the presence of the same syntagm in each verse.

As Lincicum (2021: 529) observes, «it has become increasingly clear that the New Testament authors are, on the whole, Jewish readers of Scripture who perform the same sort of hermeneutical transformations evident elsewhere in Second Temple Judaism». Paul offers a representative example: he borrowed a rabbinical exegetical technique and turned it into a citation strategy.

18. The violations of Tannaitic restrictions (discussed in § 2) in Paul's *gazérōt šāwōt* are minimized by Basta (2006: 102): «queste limitazioni appartengono ad un periodo successivo, ragion per cui Paolo argomenta sulla base delle regole e dei principi che aveva in quel momento a disposizione». However, this may be debatable, because Paul lived in the Tannaitic period (roughly, I-II cent. CE), when the need for a stricter usage of the *gazérāh šāwāh* supposedly came to be felt. The restrictions themselves were certainly codified later, but it is arguable that Paul was not completely unaware of them.

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