

Glossary of Terms for *Apostle on the Edge*

- Abraham** Founding ancestor of the Hebrew people. Paul asserts that because Abraham believed God's promise, he became the ancestor of all those who are righteous by faith.
- Age to Come** Phrase used to describe the future age of bliss promised to God's faithful. The Messiah was to come and bring an end to the Present Evil Age; and following the last judgment, he would usher in the eternal Age to Come, which would be characterized by the absence of sin, evil, suffering, and death.
- Agora** Greek word for "marketplace." Central place of commerce in ancient cities.
- Alexander the Great** Greek ruler who from 333–323 B.C.E. conquered many regions from Greece to India. As a result of his influence, Greek became the common language across a vast region in the ancient Mediterranean world.
- Antinomianism** A belief that one can live without law. Nomos in Greek means "law."
- Antiochus 4 Epiphanes** Despotic Syrian ruler who sought to force Hellenization on the Hebrew people. His brutal treatment of the Hebrews led to the Maccabean Rebellion.
- Antiquity** A term designating ancient times up to the beginning of the Middle Ages in 476 C.E.
- Aphrodite** Fertility goddess. Her worship was very popular in Corinth.
- Apantesis** Greek technical term for the loud and festive, formal reception of a dignitary into a city. Paul incorporates some of the imagery of such receptions into his description of the second coming of Christ in 1 Thess. 4–5.

- Apocalyptic** Title for works supposedly written to reveal the mysteries of the end times. It comes from the Greek word apocalypsis, meaning “revelation.” Apocalyptic documents are known for their use of bizarre imagery, angelic revealers, pseudonymous authorship, telling history as if it were prophecy, determinism, pessimistic view of history, cosmic battles between the forces of good and evil, and the triumph of God in the end.
- Apocrypha** Word means “things that are hidden.” The OT Apocrypha includes such works as 1–2 Maccabees (historical books), Wisdom of Solomon and Ecclesiasticus (wisdom books), Tobit (romance), and 2 Esdras (apocalyptic document). Catholics typically call these documents “deuterocanonical” (meaning second canonical—i.e., canonized later). Most Protestant denominations exclude them from the canon of Scripture and separate them into their own collection. Most early Christians included them among the books they called Scripture, because these works were part of the Septuagint.
- Aramaic** Language spoken in ancient Babylon (area of modern Iraq). When Hebrews were exiled in Babylon in the sixth century B.C.E., they learned to speak Aramaic; and when some returned to Judea from exile, they mostly spoke Aramaic instead of Hebrew. This remained true up through the time of Jesus and Paul.
- Ascetics** Christian group at Corinth who believed that spirituality is increased by denying physical pleasure to the body. They held a philosophy opposite from the Libertines, although both groups had a low view of the human body.

- Athena Athena was a warrior goddess who guarded Athens. She protected civilized life, the work of craftsmen, and agriculture. She was also known as a goddess of wisdom, and she was associated with the owl.
- B.C.E. “Before the Common Era.” Historically speaking, this abbreviation designates the same time as B.C. (Before Christ).
- Benjamin The Israelite tribe into which Paul (Saul) was born. He was from the tribe named after their ancestor/founder Benjamin, one of the 12 sons of Jacob (Israel).
- C.E. “Common Era.” Historically speaking, this abbreviation designates the same time as A.D. (Anno Domini = Latin for “in the year of the Lord”). It allows people from different faith traditions to speak of the same year without dealing with a Christian theological overlay.
- Cephas The Aramaic form of the name Peter. It means “rock” or “stone.” Peter (Greek Petros) also means rock or stone.
- Circumcision Minor operation to remove the foreskin from the male penis. Jews perform this operation on their boys when they are eight days old, and in Phil. 3:5 Paul states that this was true of himself. Romans viewed circumcision as a form of mutilation and frowned upon the practice. Jews saw it as an important sign of loyalty to God and to the laws of Moses. Many Jewish Christians in the first century insisted that all Gentile Christian men be circumcised in obedience to God’s covenant. Paul argued vigorously against Gentiles being subjected to this (esp. in Galatians).
- Communion Sacred meal celebrating the death and resurrection of Jesus. Also called the Eucharist. Among early Christians it involved eating a meal together, but over time the celebration became mostly symbolic, with participants receiving one bite

of unleavened bread and one sip of wine or grape juice. 1 Cor. 8–10 indicates that the church at Corinth had many problems with the selfish way in which some of the Christians there celebrated their communion meals.

Cosmos Greek word for the world or universe.

Dead Sea Scrolls Important collection of ancient manuscripts discovered in jars hidden in caves near Qumran on the northwest shore of the Dead Sea. These texts were apparently hidden by members of the Dead Sea Scroll community to protect them from destruction. The first manuscripts were found in 1947 by Bedoins who had no idea of their immense value.

Deutero-Pauline Designation for letters that scholars believe were written after Paul’s death by his disciples. “Deutero” means “second”—a second Paul (i.e., someone writing in his name). Most NT scholars consider 1–2 Timothy and Titus to be Deutero-Pauline, and many also believe that 2 Thessalonians and Ephesians and probably Colossians are as well.

Diaspora Judaism In the first century, more Jews lived outside of Palestine than in Palestine. These Jews were considered to be part of the dispersion, or Diaspora Jews. Their many synagogues provided ready places for Paul to begin his evangelistic efforts when he first entered a city.

1 Enoch An important apocalyptic document that provides insight into apocalyptic thinking and literature. It was popular reading in Paul’s day and contains information about messianic expectations of the time.

Eschatological The Greek word for “last” is eschaton, and eschatology is the study of last things. Eschatological people think that they are living in the last

times. Most early Christians were eschatological (e.g., Acts 3:24; 1 Cor. 10:11), believing that Christ would return from heaven in the very near future and judge the world.

Essenes Ultra-strict sect of Jews who placed immense value on rigid observance of the laws of Moses. They considered the Pharisees to be rather lax in their keeping of the commandments. They emphasized sharing of their goods with other Essenes, and some were celibate. Most biblical scholars believe that the Dead Sea Scroll community was composed of Essenes.

Expulsion edict of Claudius In 49-50 C.E., the Roman emperor Claudius ordered all Jews to be expelled from Rome because of rioting in the Jewish sectors of the city. This expulsion is mentioned in Acts 18:2. These riots quite likely happened as a result of Jewish Christians trying to evangelize the Jewish population of Rome.

Fate Greek goddess worshiped by many Gentiles who thought that this capricious deity was responsible for much that happened in the world.

Fertility Cults In the ancient agricultural world in which Paul lived, people were extremely concerned with fertility. Their lives depended on successful harvesting of crops and breeding of farm animals. Fertility cults typically practiced ritualized forms of sexual intercourse (cultic prostitution) as part of their worship of the fertility deities, whom they believed were responsible for reproduction.

Gamaliel Prominent Pharisaic scribe in Jerusalem whom Acts 22:3 claims was Paul's teacher.

- Gnosticism** The title Gnosticism comes from the Greek gnosis, which means knowledge. It was a syncretistic religion that fully developed after Paul's time. Knowledge of Gnostic beliefs was increased by the accidental discovery of ancient Gnostic manuscripts near Nag Hammadi, Egypt, in 1945. The Nag Hammadi texts show that Gnostics emphasized knowing by experience, not by rational processes. So although their beliefs show an extreme lack of logic, they were not bothered by this, for they considered logic to be part of the dark, evil, physical world. They focused on what they believed to be divine revelation and expressed no interest in historical realities. For a summary of their beliefs, see Chapter 15 on Colossians.
- God-fearers** Gentiles who were attracted to Jewish teaching about God and moral living, but were unwilling to become proselyte Jews because of the requirements of keeping the laws of Moses and being circumcised. These people formed an important core of Paul's Gentile converts to Christianity.
- Greek** Language spoken throughout the Roman Empire of Paul's day. Paul's letters were written in Greek. It is the language in which the NT documents were written.
- Hasidim** Hebrew zealots for the laws of Moses (in Hebrew Hasidim means "faithful ones"). They formed the backbone of the Maccabean army who fought for Israelite independence in the second century B.C.E.
- Hecate** Fertility goddess and protectress of witches.
- Hellenization** The process whereby people adopted Greek language and lifestyle. The word is derived from Hellas, the Greek term for Greece.
- Hebrew** Language spoken by the Hebrew people. Most of the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) were written in Hebrew.

- Hebrews** The name of the northern Semitic peoples whose story is told in the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament)—the descendants of Abraham and Sarah. Also called Israelites or Children of Israel—named after Jacob (renamed Israel), the son of Isaac and Rebecca, the son of Abraham and Sarah. Under Roman domination, this group of people became known as Jews.
- Hetairai** Women whom wealthy Greek men employed as female companions (call girls) when they attended parties.
- Household codes** Summary statements of the responsibilities of household members, including husbands/fathers, wives/mothers, children, and slaves. See Chapter 15 on Colossians for details.
- Isis** Egyptian Mystery Religion savior goddess whose worship was popular in many areas of the Mediterranean world.
- Josephus** Important Jewish historian who was a contemporary of Paul. His works, including Jewish War and Antiquities of the Jews, are valuable for reconstructing historical events that occurred during the centuries leading up to the Christian era.
- Justification** Christians have put forward three basic options for Paul's meaning of this term: (1) pronounced righteous (i.e., although people are sinners, God views them as righteous and treats them as if they were such); (2) made righteous (i.e., God gives a new nature to Christians and literally makes them into righteous men and women by a powerful work of grace); (3) covenant relationship (i.e., Christians have entered into a covenant relationship with God).

- Koine Greek The common Greek vernacular that was spoken in most areas of the Mediterranean world of the first century. The conquests of Alexander the Great in the fourth century B.C.E. paved the way for this widespread use of Koine.
- Koinonia Greek word meaning “fellowship” or “sharing.” Often used by early Christians to describe their gathering together for worship and sharing a meal.
- Libertines Christian group at Corinth who believed that what people do with their body has nothing to do with their spirit. Their motto was “All things are lawful for me” (1 Cor. 6:12, i.e., “If it feels good, do it”).
- LXX Abbreviation for “Septuagint” (the Roman numerals for 70).
- Maccabean Rebellion Israelite revolt against Syrian occupation led by the brutal despot Antiochus 4 Epiphanes. An old priest named Mattathias began the revolt in 167 B.C.E. and soon thereafter died. Before dying he transferred leadership to his son Judas Maccabeus. See 1–2 Maccabees and Josephus’ Antiquities for details about this war of liberation.
- Messiah Term means “the Anointed One.” Chapter Four gives extended information on messianic expectations of Jewish groups of Paul’s day.
- Mishnah Written version of the oral traditions of the Pharisees. This authoritative collection of law and edifying stories was compiled under the leadership of Rabbi Judah around 200 C.E. The Hebrew word shanah means “to repeat,” and this reflects the mode of instruction and learning practiced by Pharisaic scribes and their students. “Mishnah” means “repetition.”

- NFNSNC Latin abbreviation found on many Roman grave stones. It means “I was not; I am not; I care not.” It reveals how skeptical many Romans were about any sort of afterlife.
- New Testament Apocrypha A collection of early Christian texts that were not included in the NT. They represent a variety of theological perspectives and literary genres.
- North Galatian Hypothesis Theory that Paul wrote Galatians to Christians living among the ethnic Galatian inhabitants of the region north of Pamphylia, Pisidia and Lycaonia (i.e., the central region of modern Turkey).
- Occasional writings A way of describing Paul’s letters that stresses the non-systematic nature of his correspondence. He wrote occasionally, as need dictated, to address specific situations in particular churches.
- Painful Letter Highly confrontational letter written by Paul and delivered by Titus to the Corinth church following the failure of the Painful Visit to bring about repentance among rebellious Christians.
- Painful Visit Paul’s confrontational trip to Corinth. After 1 Corinthians failed to bring about repentance and modified behavior among the rebellious Corinthian Christians, Paul left Ephesus and crossed the Aegean Sea to confront the rebels. The trip evidently ended in failure for Paul.
- Parousia Term used by Christians to refer to the second coming of Christ. The word means “coming” or “presence.”
- Pastoral Epistles Common designation for 1–2 Timothy and Titus.

- Pesher** The term comes from the Aramaic p^eshar', meaning “interpretation” (the Hebrew pa'sher also means “interpretation”). The word is employed, for example, in Daniel’s explanations of the meanings of dreams (Dan. 5:15-17, 26; 7:16, etc.). Eschatological Jews used it as a technical term referring to the interpretation of ancient texts with reference to events happening to their own time. Because they believed they were living in the time immediately preceding the ushering in of the age to come, they concluded that all Scripture was written for their time. They thought that all Scripture referred in a veiled way to their situation, so they needed divine help to understand its secret meaning that was formerly hidden but now revealed to one of God’s special servants.
- Pharisees** The name apparently means “separated ones” (derived from the Aramaic peresh). An important Jewish sect of Paul’s day that placed considerable emphasis on faithfulness to the laws of Moses as interpreted by their more prominent members (famous scribes like Hillel and Shammai). Jesus came into sharp conflict with them over their oral traditions—called the “traditions of the elders.” Paul was raised and educated as a Pharisee.
- Praetorian Guards** Elite Roman troops stationed at important government centers around the Roman Empire, not just in Rome near Caesar. Acts 23:35, for example, uses Praetorio to describe Herod’s governor’s residence in Caesarea, on the sea coast northwest of Jerusalem.
- Present Evil Age** Term used to describe the present age, which is characterized by sin, evil, suffering, and death. It was to come to an end when the Messiah came to usher in the Age to Come.

- Pneumatikoi Greek word meaning “spiritual ones,” which some Corinthian Christians arrogantly used to describe themselves—viewing themselves as superior to other Christians. Paul calls them sarkinoi (“fleshly ones”) in 1 Cor. 3:1.
- Proselytes People who leave one form of belief to become members of another religious faith. For example, when polytheistic Romans converted to Judaism and sought to keep the laws of Moses, they became proselyte Jews.
- Psalms of Solomon Collection of poems apparently written by Pharisees between 60–30 B.C.E. Valuable source for understanding Pharisaic piety.
- Pseudepigrapha Title designating a collection of Jewish works that were written between 200 B.C.E. and 200 C.E. and are found neither in the Hebrew Scriptures nor in the Apocrypha. Pseudepigrapha means “falsely titled” and reflects the fact that these works are attributed to people who did not actually write them. Includes such works as 1 Enoch, Testaments of the 12 Patriarchs, Psalms of Solomon, Jubilees, and 4 Maccabees.
- Pseudonymity Writing using a false name (pseudonym). Apocalyptic writings nearly always were attributed to an important person who died long before the actual author wrote the work. There are also instances of letters that were written in someone else’s name. For a full explanation, see Chapter 17: Monsters in the Closet—The Problem of Pseudonymity.
- Redemption Word often used in the context of slavery. Slave owners commonly allowed slaves to receive their freedom if someone paid a price, a ransom, to compensate the owner for the value of the slave. This fee could be paid by a third party, or some slaves were allowed to save money until they were able to pay the amount

themselves. When slaves received their freedom, they were redeemed from bondage. Paul speaks of Christ's death on the cross as the ransom price paid to redeem sinners from their slavery to sin.

Sabbath Jewish day of rest. It begins at sundown on Friday and extends to sundown on Saturday.

Sarkinoi Greek word meaning "fleshly ones." Paul uses the term in 1 Cor. 3:1 and sarkikoi (also "fleshly ones") in 3:3 to assert that some Corinthian Christians are so spiritually immature that they cannot eat solid food but still need milk like babies.

Saul Paul's given name. We are not sure exactly when he began going by Paul.

Sadducees Prominent Jewish sect in the first century. They consisted of priests, and their members included prominent members of the priestly aristocracy. They believed that only the Pentateuch was inspired by God and authoritative for laws governing life. They placed primary emphasis on human choice in their theological views; and they did not believe in angels and demons or in afterlife.

Serapis Deity widely recognized as one who provided health and safety. Often in the health-wish sections of Greco-Roman letters the writer mentions praying to him on behalf of the one to whom the person writes.

Septuagint The main Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures (abbreviated LXX = 70 because of a story about the number of scholars involved in its translation). Especially as the early Christian movement expanded into Gentile regions, the LXX was the Christian Bible, for most converts could not read Hebrew.

Sicarii Jewish zealots who were assassins. They were called Sicarii ("dagger men"; see Acts 21:38) because of the daggers they used to murder people. Their tactic was

to mingle among crowds during festivals, stab prominent citizens in the back, and then disappear into the crowd.

Social-scientific approach A popular approach today among NT scholars who seek to understand the social norms of ancient Mediterranean cultures and interpret NT documents in light of such reconstructions. Honor/shame, patronage, corporate personality, marriage customs, etc. play prominent roles in these studies.

Soma—sema Greek expression that means “the body—a prison.” It expresses the view of some Greek philosophers that the body is the prison of the soul and keeps the soul tied to the physical world. They did not associate bodily existence with afterlife.

South Galatian Hypothesis Theory that Paul wrote Galatians to residents of the southern area of Roman provincial Galatia (area around Pamphylia, Pisidia and Lycaonia, which Paul visited on his first missionary journey). In Paul’s day the borders of the Roman province of Galatia extended from the Black Sea in the north to the Mediterranean Sea in the south.

Strabo Greek geographer who lived 64 B.C.E.-23 C.E. His writings provide valuable information about the areas in which Paul did his missionary work.

Suetonius Roman historian who wrote of Claudius expelling Jews from Rome following riots in the Jewish sectors.

Symposium Greek word for “drinking party” where males gathered socially to drink wine. Plato’s dialogue entitled Symposium recounts speeches given at a drinking party.

- Synagogue Word means “house of meeting.” These buildings were multi-purpose, used for worship, teaching, and other assemblies.
- Synagogue Discipline Public beating with a whip of a Jewish person who was found guilty of some offense viewed by the synagogue elders as meriting such punishment. In 2 Cor. 11:24, Paul states that he received such beatings five times (39 lashes), presumably for his proclamation of Jesus as the Messiah.
- Syncretism Effort to combine elements of various religious beliefs. Many people in Paul’s day were syncretistic, taking beliefs from a variety of sources and putting them together into bizarre thought systems (e.g., the ascetic heresy refuted by Colossians, which combined elements of Greek philosophy, Judaism, and Christianity).
- Talmud Collection of authoritative Jewish writings that consists of a large number of expansions to the Mishnah. Talmud means “teaching” or “doctrine.” It consists primarily of legal material (halakhah) but also has a large number of edifying stories (haggadah). In form a page of the Talmud has a section of the Mishnah, plus a collection of interpretive comments in Aramaic by various Rabbis (called Gemara = “interpretation”), plus haggadic materials. The Jerusalem Talmud was completed shortly after 400 C.E. The larger and more influential Babylonian Talmud (6,000 pages long) was written during the fifth and sixth centuries.
- Tarsus The city in which Saul/Paul was born. Located in the region that today is south eastern Turkey.

Task theology Theology that Paul produced in the process of performing his missionary work while addressing pressing matters of concern among the Christians to whom he wrote. Unlike modern statements of beliefs about God, salvation, afterlife, etc. that are written for general readership, task theology is a non-systematic explanation of whatever issue Paul needed to address at the time in order to accomplish the task at hand.

Taurololium A ritual in which a person was drenched by the blood of a bull while standing in a pit underneath the sacrificed animal. It was believed that the blood washed away the person's sins and caused the person to be reborn unto eternity.

Text criticism The attempt to reconstruct as closely as possible the original reading of a document. We do not possess any of the original NT documents—only a series of copies of copies, no two of which are identical. Prior to the invention of the printing press by Johannes Gutenberg in 1450, all biblical manuscripts were copied by hand, and this allowed many mistakes to be made in the transmission process. Text critics trace manuscript changes backwards through time from later copies to earlier copies in an effort to explain how the changes happened. Their goal is to produce a text that comes close to the original reading of each of the NT documents.

Thucydides Greek historian who lived ca. 472-395 B.C.E. In his History of the Peloponnesian War, Thucydides implemented what later came to be a widely used literary technique among Greek and Roman authors that we call the historical speech. This technique of having characters in a story serve as mouthpieces to express

what the author wants to say at key points in the narrative is used frequently in the Acts of the Apostles.

- Tithe** Practice among ancient Hebrews of setting aside ten percent of their agricultural produce to be used for extended family celebrations and for social concerns such as caring for orphans and widows. See, for example, Deut. 14:22-29.
- Tongues** Listed by Paul as one of the gifts of the Spirit in 1 Cor. 12–14. The Corinthian Christians were especially attracted to the exercise of this gift, often with very disruptive effects on their worship services. Paul gives directions in 1 Cor. 14 for proper exercise of the gift of tongues.
- Torah** Typically a title for the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Hebrew Bible, although sometimes it was used to refer to the Scriptures as a whole.
- Triclinium** The Roman dining room (called a triclinium) had three couches (each holding up to three people) on which participants reclined. Guests were arranged according to a rather strict hierarchy, and honorable women were sometimes present. Although participants focused on the food rather than the wine drinking, the central wine-mixing jar (krater) was still present.
- We-passages** Passages in Acts where the narration is set in first person plural form: “We” There is debate over whether these indicate where the author actually joined Paul on his missionary journeys, or whether they are simply part of a literary technique used to describe ancient sea voyages.