

## THE PROVENANCE OF THE TERM "SAINTS": A RELIGIONSGESCHICHTLICHE STUDY

Stephen Woodward\*

We do not read very far into the NT before it becomes apparent that in its journey from the OT era the term "saints" (*hagioi/qdšm*) has experienced a revolution in its customary usage.<sup>1</sup> OT writers characteristically apply the title to celestial beings rather than to men. To be sure, apart from two OT books—Daniel, where the title is used eschatologically seven times, and Ps 34:9, where the term is employed cultically—the designation occurs 16 more times in eight books and without exception refers to celestial beings.<sup>2</sup> This trend continues in intertestamental literature though, interestingly, the usage is slightly more fluid. The designation refers approximately 31 times to heavenly beings and 15 times to the redeemed. For at least two reasons, however, this statistic needs to be qualified. First, many occurrences in QL are obscured due to lacunae and contextual uncertainty and so could not be listed in the above totals. Second, the term is not developing in all areas of Judaism. Rabbinic writers use the term on only three occasions (=men), while Philo and Josephus do not employ the designation at all. Nevertheless it is clear that intertestamental usage follows the OT pattern though there is some increasing fluidity in usage.<sup>3</sup> Surprisingly, however, NT

\*Stephen Woodward is chairman of the department of NT languages and literature at Winnipeg Theological Seminary in Otterburne, Manitoba.

<sup>1</sup>Some of the material developed in this article is drawn from my doctoral thesis accepted by the University of Aberdeen in 1975: *The Background and Meaning of the Term "Saints" in the Pauline Epistles* (henceforth *Saints*). Based on this material, other articles are forthcoming.

<sup>2</sup>Exod 15:11 LXX (MT "majestic in holiness"); Deut 33:2; Ps 89:5, 7; Job 5:1; 15:15; Prov 9:10; 30:3; Hos 11:12; Zech 14:5; Dan 4:13, 17, 23; 8:13 (twice). Ps 16:3 and Deut 33:3 are textually corrupt and so obscure. For reconstructions see T. H. Gaster, "An Ancient Eulogy on Israel: Deuteronomy 33:3-5, 26-29," *JBL* 66 (1947) 53; D. Kidner, *Psalms 1-72* (London, 1973) *ad loc.* M. Noth, *Gesammelte Studien zum Alten Testament* (München, 1957) 274-290, argued that as we now have it the text in Daniel 7 does not represent the original since its use of "saints" does not accord with characteristic ("celestial") OT usage (excepting Ps 34:9!). However, as C. H. W. Brekelmans, "The Saints of the Most High and their Kingdom," *OTS* 14 (1965) 305-329, rightly observes, there is no record of an angelic kingdom on earth in Biblical or intertestamental literature. We should add that Noth's thesis can only be sustained by practicing violent excision and reinterpretation (cf. 7:27) of the text. Noth was later followed by L. Dequeker, "Daniel VII et les Saints du Tres-Haut," *ETL* 36 (1960) 353-392, and C. Colpe, "The Son of Man," *TDNT* 8, 422. See J. Collins' remarks on the unacceptability of taking such liberties with the available evidence, "The Son of Man and the Saints of the Most High," *JBL* 93 (1974) 50-66. Even if Noth were correct, moreover, this would not affect the fact of the term's transition in usage from OT to NT, only its timing.

<sup>3</sup>Discounting the usage in the Similitudes and Testaments (against Brekelmans, "Saints"), the term refers to celestial beings at least 16 times (7 books) and to human beings at least 8 times (6 books) in the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha. Heavenly beings: Tob 8:15 (Codd. AB); Sir 42:17; 45:2 (LXX); Wis 5:5; 10:10; *Jub.* 17:11; 31:14; 33:12; *Ps. Sol.* 17:49; 3 *Macc* 2:2; 1 *Enoch* 1:9; 9:3; 12:2; 14:23, 25; 81:5. Human beings: *Jub.* 2:24; Tob 12:15 (B); Wis 18:9; 1 *Macc* 1:46; 3 *Macc* 6:9 (A); 1 *Enoch* 93:6; 99:16; 100:5. The first six are more closely related to the cultic use found in Ps 34:9 than to the eschatologically colored concept found in Daniel. The last two texts resemble Daniel in their eschatological coloring, but since

writers characteristically—perhaps absolutely—apply the title *hoi hagioi* to men, not to celestial beings. Of 61 occurrences, only twice does it possibly refer to celestial beings (1 Thess 3:13; 2 Thess 1:10).<sup>4</sup> Obviously a wholesale reversal in characteristic usage such as this signals that an important conceptual reversal has occurred as well.

Unfortunately, however, there has been no attempt<sup>5</sup> to offer a comprehensive explanation of the above development. Writers concentrate on only one aspect<sup>6</sup> of

they represent disembodied spirits who do not participate in the temporary (D. S. Russell, *The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic* [London, 1964] 291-292) kingdom on earth the semblance is tenuous. Both Similitudes and Testaments very likely owe their final forms to post-Christian influence. British and American scholarship is correct to discount their evidential value as pre-Christian representatives. For views see M. DeJonge, *The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* (Assen, 1953); R. E. Brown, "Apocrypha," *JBC* (London, 1968), 2. 540. The term occurs in the writings of the rabbis three times: *Mek.* Exod 14:15; *Num. Rab.* 5:12; *Pesiq.* 104a. All refer to men. Philo always uses *hagios* in connection with the LXX and frequently replaces the LXX *hagios* by *hieros*, e.g. the Scriptures: cf. *Op.* 77; *Som.* 1:33; temple: *Spec.* 1:66; *Mos.* 2:72 ff. Cf. *Saints* and E. Williger, *Hagios Untersuchungen zur Terminologie des Heiligen in den hellenisch-hellenistischen Religionen in Religionsgeschichtliche Versuche und Vorarbeiten* (ed. L. Deubner, L. Malten et al.; Giessen, 1922) 102. With respect to QL, lacunae occur in at least four passages (1QM 1:16; 1Q 36:1, 3; 1QM 18:2), and contextual uncertainty makes the identity of the "saints" unclear in seven more: 1QM 12:8-9; 1QH 4:24-25; 11:11-12; 4QFlor 1:4; CD 20:8; 1QSB 3:25-26; 4:23. The "saints" are clearly celestial beings in 16 places: 1QS 11:7-8; 1QM 10:11-12; 12:1, 4, 7; 15:14; 1QH 3:21-22; 10:35; 1Q22 4:1; 1QSB 1:5; 1QapGen 2:1. They clearly are men in 1QM 3:4-5; 6:6; 10:10; 16:1. Brekelmans would add 1QH 4:24-25; 4QFlor 1:3; 1QSB 4:23. Cf. O. E. Evans, *Saints in Christ Jesus* (Swansea, 1975) 24-28, who adds 1QH 4:25; 1QM 12:7-8. See *Saints*, 55-59, for literature and interaction. We shall say more on Qumran below.

<sup>4</sup>D. E. H. Whitely, *Thessalonians* (Glasgow/New York/Toronto, 1969) *ad loc.* makes this observation. In 1 Thess 3:13 the correct interpretation of the allusion to Zech 14:5 is central, and in 2 Thess 1:10 the influence of the near context (v 7, "angels of power") and the parallelism in v 10 need to be weighed. Most scholars accept that Zech 14:5 originally referred to angels, who accompany God's denouement. But *Did.* 16:7 (cf. v 6) understands Zech 14:5 to refer to men and may represent a more current Christian view of Zech 14:5 (cf. *Ascension of Isaiah* 4:14, "But the saints will come, whose spirits are clothed, and they will descend and be present in the world," with 1 Thess 4:14). In 2 Thess 1:10 the parallelism may indicate that the words *tois hagiois* are synonymous with *tois pisteusasain*. The latter interpretation seems to be demanded by the description of the believer's persecution in vv 5-7. In the future they will be "glorified" though now they are persecuted. Jude 14, we might add, departs from the titular *hoi hagioi* and has *hagias myriasin*, "holy myriads." For other more remote possibilities, see Col 1:12; Eph 1:18.

<sup>5</sup>E.g. Evans, *Saints*, 28; O. Procksch, "hagios," *TDNT* 1 (1933) 88-97, 100-15; L. Cerfaux, *The Church in the Theology of St. Paul* (tr. G. Webb and A. Walker, 1959), cf. p. 124; Noth, *Gesammelte*; Brekelmans, "Saints"; Dequeker, "Daniel"; R. Asting, *Die Heiligkeit im Urchristentum*, FRLANT 29 (ed. R. Bultmann and H. Gunkel; Göttingen, 1930); J. Collins, "The Son of Man and the Saints of the Most High," *JBL* 93 (1974) 50-66; J. Coppens and L. Dequeker, *Le Fils de l'Homme et les Saints du Tres-Haut en Daniel 7, dans les Apocryphes et dans le Nouveau Testament* (Louvain, 1961); H. Cremer, "hagios," *Biblico-Theological Lexicon of New Testament Greek* (Edinburgh, 1878) 34-52; H. Delehane, "Sanctus," *AnBoll* 28 (1909) 145-200; J. Dillersberger, *Das Heilige im Neuen Testament* (Kufstein, 1926); A. Fridrichsen, *Hagios-Qados* (Oslo, 1916); J. Hanel, *Die Religion der Heiligkeit* (Gutersloh, 1931); E. Issel, *Der Begriff der Heiligkeit im Neuen Testament* (Haarlem, 1886); H. Sebass, "Heilig," *Theologisches Begriffslexikon zum Neuen Testament* (ed. L. Coenen et al.; Wuppertal, 1967-1971), 2/1 645-657.

<sup>6</sup>Cremer, "hagios," argues that since *hagios* refers so infrequently to men in the OT, the NT title *hoi hagioi* should be traced also to the OT title used more frequently of men, *hāsīd/hosios*. This would solve the "frequency" problem, perhaps, but create other difficulties: (1) The two terms are not joined in the LXX or intertestamental literature. The LXX regularly employs *hagios* for *qḏs* and *hosios* for *hāsīd*. Further, in the Psalms of Solomon, for example, *hoi hosioi* presumably represents *hāsīdīm* since the Greek text has *hosios* where the Syriac text has *hasya*, the equivalent of the Hebrew *hāsīd*. (The Hebrew text is not extant.) (2) It is interesting that the NT (nor QL), apart from quotations from the canonical

the equation—that is, on isolating pre-NT texts in which the term refers to men.<sup>7</sup> Little attempt is made to locate the places and causes that provide some clue to the weakening of its celestial identification. And of course the latter omission practically precludes the detection of any vital correlative implications. Therefore since this is so, and since the term represents a major NT designation that surely indicates something of the first believers' self-understanding, we wish to trace something of the nature of this transition. Essentially we shall attempt to answer three questions: Where is there evidence of the change taking place? What influences are causing and assisting the said transition? How does an identification of something of the cause of the transition aid us to understand more precisely the nature of its result—that is, the conceptual focus and vigor of the NT designation?

We hope to demonstrate that evidence of this development can be traced particularly in Daniel and QL. Here the developing sense of the exaltation of the redeemed to heavenly status in the "kingdom" prepares the way for the NT's radical reorientation. In this respect the old distinction that angels stand nearer to God and so are holier than men is weakened significantly, and in the NT with the advent of Jesus' kingdom it is finally discarded.<sup>8</sup>

---

Psalms, does not employ *hosios* as a title for the new community. Surely if Cremer's argument were valid we should find at least one titular use. (With respect to *hāsīd/hosios* omission in the NT and QL see *Saints*, 131-151. We argue that the term *hoi hosioi* (a) was too closely identified with the Pharisaic tradition to be acceptable for either the sectarians or the NT and (b) did not fit their eschatological predilections as well as *qds/hagios*.)

<sup>7</sup>We agree that Daniel's "saints of the Most High" provides the basic "model" for the NT conception. We disagree that this NT adoption would supply the whole answer for the reversal in characteristic usage. (1) One cannot argue that the Danielic usage wholly explains the NT phenomenon since Daniel uses the term for both. Indeed, NT readers would hardly fail to notice that the book of Daniel greatly advances OT angelology. (2) If one wholly confines the transition arena to the Christian community, it is strange that the characteristic phrase in Daniel—"saints of the Most High" (four of six in Daniel 7)—does not occur in the NT. The designation here is the simple "saints," which is characteristic of intertestamental Judaism but not Daniel. This indicates development outside the Christian tradition. (3) Though Daniel was tremendously influential in intertestamental literature, it is noteworthy that its influence did not cause an immediate reversal in characteristic usage. This is true even in QL, which most likely was influenced considerably by the "prophet" Daniel and whose community self-image would have favored such a counter-motion (see below).

<sup>8</sup>Elsewhere we have questioned whether there exists a direct relationship between NT and QL "saint" concepts. Since the problem is too detailed to develop here, we simply sketch our findings. (1) The differences between the two concepts are too dissimilar to posit any direct dependence of one community on the other. The NT "saints," unlike the sectarian "saints," are not exclusivistic and rigidly "puritanical." (2) However, like NT believers it is likely that the sectarians were convinced that they fulfilled the Danielic prophecy of the "saints of the Most High." Consequently the QL provides an excellent sample of how Danielic material was being used in the environment (Qumran was less than twenty miles from Jerusalem). The men of Qumran held Daniel to be an inspired "prophet" (4QFlor 12:3-4 citing Dan 12:10, "written in the book of Daniel the prophet"). Indeed the first chapter of 1QM indicates that Daniel provides much of the inspiration for what follows in this remarkable battle manual of the end-times (cf. D. Lohse, *Die Texte aus Qumran* [München, 1964] *ad loc.*). Since the term "saints" occurs in 1QM for men at least four times it seems reasonable to believe that the *qdsim* in 1QM are patterned after the sect's interpretation of Daniel 7. (3) Further, the evidence suggests that it is also likely that the NT and sectarian communities are drawing on a similar—though not identical—Danielic "saint" tradition(s). It is true that the dissimilarities noted above preclude any direct dependence. But it is also true that the similarities with respect to eschatological ideas (especially the "realized" kingdom pointed out by Gärtner and H. W. Kuhn—we shall say more below) and the exaltation of the "saints" to heavenly status suggest a much closer relationship than mere concentration on the differences would allow. Indeed the

## I. THE BASIS OF THE OLDER DISTINCTION

The older distinction is understandable since celestial beings were regarded as especially holy because of their closer (cf. *1 Enoch* 14:23) proximity and relationship to the Holy One.<sup>9</sup> Hence in Ps 89:6-7 the angels are called "holy ones" because they constitute the heavenly council who surround God's throne: "Who among the heavenly beings is like the LORD, a God feared in the council of the holy ones, great and terrible above all that are around about him?" The very dwelling place of God is their home: "For the multitude of the holy ones is (with thee) in heaven, and the host of angels is in thy holy dwelling place to praise thy Name" (1QM 12:1). Yet as created creatures their holiness is but derived and so contrasted with God's own:<sup>10</sup> "Behold, God puts no trust in his holy ones, and the heavens are not clean in his sight" (Job 15:15; cf. Sir 42:17; *Ps. Sol.* 17:49). Here the technicality of the designation is suggested in that the celestial beings are "holy ones" though they are not exactly "saintly." It is their nearness to God that makes them the "holy ones." Hence the pious man's aspiration is that he might live as near to Yahweh as the angels: "And may the Lord give to thee and to thy seed, from among all flesh, to approach him to serve in his sanctuary as the angels of the presence and as the holy ones" (*Jub.* 31:14). Thus men exalt the celestial beings because they are believed to stand especially near to the Thrice-holy One of Israel and, consequently, to be the holiest of all God's creatures. In view of the above, it is not difficult to understand why men characteristically apply the term "holy ones" to celestial beings in the literature outside the NT.

## II. THE NEW "KINGDOM" AND THE WEAKENING OF THE OLD DISTINCTION

But particularly<sup>11</sup> in three places—Daniel, QL and the NT—the redeemed's

similarities are sufficiently similar to lead to the conclusion that both communities are drawing upon a fairly uniform Daniel-Überlieferung. If this is so, then the circle of transition that we are about to investigate is narrowed considerably (for a fuller discussion see *Saints*, 100-131).

<sup>9</sup>*1 Enoch* 14:23: "And the most holy ones who were nigh to him did not leave by night nor depart from him." For the viewpoint of the rabbis, see K. Kohler, "Holiness," *The Jewish Encyclopaedia* (ed. I. Singer; 1904), 6. 440; 1. cols. 585-586. The angels are fiery beings because of their close proximity to God. God's unapproachableness is symbolized by "fire." This "fire" passes on to the angels, who become fiery beings. Cf. *Lev. Rab.* 24:8.

<sup>10</sup>Concerning their origin see G. von Rad, section B, "ml'k," in "angelos," *TNDT* 1, 76-80, and the literature there cited on p. 74. A. Mertens, *Das Buch Daniel im Lichte der Texte vom Toten Meer* (Stuttgart, 1971) 63, believes that the term "gods" or "sons of God" found in OT and QL referred originally to Canaanite cultic deities. The fact that they refer to lesser beings in the OT and QL results from the *Entmythologisierung*-prozess arising out of Israel's strong monotheistic belief, p. 100. Cf. M. H. Pope, *El in the Ugaritic Texts* (Leiden, 1955) 14, who fails to make Mertens' significant observation.

<sup>11</sup>In terms of locating a force powerful enough to reverse the customary usage, the evidence in the Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha and rabbinic writings is difficult to assess. This is in part due to the fact that (unlike Daniel, QL and the NT) the evidence is so diffused and in part due to the fact that the contexts in which the instances occur offer no direct indications of why elsewhere in the same books the term is used also of celestial beings. We located some 11 occurrences that refer to men scattered over nine books (*Jub.* 2:24; *Tob* 12:15; *Wis* 18:9; *1 Macc* 1:46; *3 Macc* 6:9; *1 Enoch* 93:6; 99:16; 100:5; *Mek. Exod* 14:15; *Num. Rab.* 5:12; *Pesiq.* 104a). Is there a common thread? Evans suggests that late Judaism came to restrict the "holiness" concept to eschatological usage (*Saints*, 17-18, following L. Cerfaux, *The Church in the Theology of St. Paul* [1959] 124). He cites the great messianic hymn in *Ps. Sol.* 17 as evidence. There the adjective "holy" and the present participle "sanctified" are applied to the Messiah's people, while

new relationship to God in the "kingdom" has effected modification and ultimate reversal of the old characteristic application to angels.

*Daniel.* Before the coming of the "kingdom" in Daniel, there exists a certain remoteness between God and the redeemed. Though God is depicted as still ruling the "kingdom" of men (4:34-35), yet need continues for celestial "holy ones" to serve as his messengers and mediators (4:13-17; 8:13; cf. 8:15). The real government of the world apparently has been transferred to the "watchers and holy ones" (4:17) who constitute God's celestial council and who execute his decrees on earth.<sup>12</sup> The present age remains extremely wicked (chap. 7), and though God has not completely abandoned his control over the earth, yet the redeemed long for the eschatological day when God shall assume direct mastery over their oppressors. Until then, celestial war continues between God's celestial servants and their wicked counterparts. Indeed in Daniel such battle is carried out not in the actual presence of man nor in the presence of God, but in that spiritual "realm" that lies "between."<sup>13</sup> Hence messages take several days to reach earth from heaven (chap. 10). All this points to the fact that the Danielic writer pictures the days preceding the kingdom as a time in which there exists a certain remoteness between God and those who belong to him. So in passages that primarily concern the period before the coming of the "kingdom" the author fittingly confines the term "holy ones" to celestial beings (4:13, 17, 23; 8:13).

But the remoteness between God and man is greatly diminished with the coming of the eschatological "kingdom." With its inception, in effect the heavenly comes to earth—that is, though the origin of the "kingdom" and its genre are

the noun "sanctification" is used of glorified Jerusalem. Israel would be holy when the Messiah lived among them. Though Evans' view is appealing, the evidence reveals that it is too simplistic. (1) Of the 11 instances listed above, only two refer to the eschatological (*1 Enoch* 99; 100). (2) The passage that Evans cites does not employ the plural ("holy ones") but the more generalized descriptive singular ("holy people"). There is some question in our mind whether one can legitimately deduce the nature and usage of the special employment of the adjective (the titular) from an examination of its general usage. (3) This is further supported by the fact that late Judaism also uses the adjective cultically with no eschatological connotation—e.g., priesthood (*1 Macc* 2:54; cf. *Sir* 45:6); prophet (*Wis* 11:1); "people" (*Wis* 17:2; cf. *Jub.* 16:19 = "holy nation"; *3 Macc* 2:6, "holy people"); and for Jerusalem the "holy city" (*Ps. Sol.* 8:4; *1 Macc* 2:7; *3 Macc* 15:14; *Tob* 13:9; cf. *Jub.* 1:29). Thus an examination of the evidence does not support Evans' restricted contention. To the contrary, the evidence suggests that late Judaism employed the title in an "idealized" sense and that the said usage could be applied in several ways—e.g., cultically or eschatologically. This is proved by the above observation that 9 of the 11 instances refer to Israel's glorious past, either to the nation or to her great men (e.g., *Wis* 18:19, faithful Exodus Israel; *Tob* 12:15; *Mek. Exod* 14:15, her [sometimes larger than life] noble men). It is very likely that this somewhat romanticized usage reflects late Judaism's own aspirations for better days—days when she like Israel of old (and of the future) would find God much more directly involved in her situation as well (cf. *Jub.* 31:14). Is there any indication in all this of a force powerful enough to begin a reversal of the customary usage? Perhaps. If late Judaism's longings are suggested through her application of the term "saints" to her glorious past and future, then perhaps if those longings were realized—or thought to be near realization—we would have a force influential enough to reverse the older customary identification. She would then qualify for the ideal, and the conceptual counter-motion could then be activated. Unfortunately, due to the scattered nature of the data this exceeds the evidence. All that we can say is that the above usage has led to an exalted understanding of the term and that this understanding can be applied to the past or future. There is no doubt, however, that this elevated usage could serve as a ready tool for those sections in Judaism that believed that Israel's hopes were close to fulfillment.

<sup>12</sup>W. Eichrodt, *The Theology of the Old Testament* (Philadelphia, 1961), 1. 197. Cf. G. B. Caird, *Principlities and Powers* (Oxford, 1956) 11; G. Dellling, "archē," *TDNT* 1, 481.

<sup>13</sup>H. Bietenhard, *Die himmlische Welt im Urchristentum und Spätjudentum* (Tübingen, 1951) 111, speaks of the "Gesetz des Entsprechung" between the heavenly and earthly world.

rooted in the heavenly realm, yet its sphere of execution primarily takes place on earth in the sphere of man: "Then the sovereignty, the dominion, and the greatness of all the kingdoms under heaven will be given to the saints of the Most High" (7:27; cf. 2:44). Consequently the coming of this "kingdom" brings God and the redeemed into the closest of relationships, for through<sup>14</sup> them God manifests his person and power upon the earth. The intensity of this relationship and empowerment is revealed in the application of the older angelic term "holy ones" to the redeemed. As noted, before the arrival of the "kingdom" earthly government apparently resides wholly in the hands of the celestial "holy ones" (4:14-17). But at its inception much if not all of the rule passes to the earthly "holy ones," and indeed little else is said of angelic rule in this period.<sup>15</sup> At the very least, this points to the fact that the author's attention is drawn to the pre-eminent role of men in the new "age." (They receive the glory, the dominion and the greatness [Dan. 7:14, 27].)

Thus with the coming of the "kingdom" there is a shift in rule; a shift in prominence—men are the royal regents of the "kingdom"; and a transition in terminological usage—men are now worthy to be called by the heavenly designation of the angels. In this respect the old distinction has been weakened significantly.

*Qumran.* Further development is found in QL. For the sectarians the nearness of the celestial community to the sect's earthly community results in their remarkable exalted self-consciousness. Indeed, the sectarians hold that such communal union signals that the eschatological "kingdom" has already broken in on them.<sup>16</sup> With respect to the term "saints," the force of this awareness further blurs the older distinction and further prepares the way for the new.

The development of the sect's exalted self-consciousness can hardly be understood apart from its OT cultic roots. Since in the OT God filled the tabernacle and later the temple with his presence, holiness was conceived as flowing directly from those places in growing concentric circles. Thus the temple was most holy, Jerusalem was the "holy city" and Israel was the "holy people." Because the temple served as the focus of holiness in Israel, those priests who served it were specially chosen by God, entrusted with the care of the holiness and purity of the nation, and required to meet personal standards not demanded of the ordinary Israelite.

The sectarians rejected the Jerusalem temple because they regarded it to be defiled by the illegitimate priests who presently served there (cf. CD 4:18; 5:6-7; 6:12-13; 1QHab 9:4-5). As Gärtner<sup>17</sup> points out, once the "focus of holiness" in Israel was transferred from the temple there arose necessarily the demand to establish a new one. Until then, in effect the sectarians were true priests without a temple.

<sup>14</sup>Cf. N. Porteous, *Daniel* (London, 1965) 116.

<sup>15</sup>Cf. Evans, *Saints*, 21, following Brekelmans, "Saints."

<sup>16</sup>H. W. Kuhn, *Enderwartung und gegenwartiges Heil in Studien zur Umwelt des Neuen Testaments* (ed. H. W. Kuhn; Göttingen, 1966), 4. 167. B. Gärtner, *The Temple and the Community in Qumran and the New Testament* in SNTSMS 1 (Cambridge, 1965) 93, notes that the "decisive eschatological war . . . was declared when the community was founded" and that this is the meaning of the fellowship between the two communities. Gärtner is commenting on 1QM 12:7-8.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., 15.

The new focus took its shape in the form of a new "holy of holies" (1QS 8:8), which consisted not of stones and mortar but of living human beings. Through meticulous observance of the rules and ordinances of the law, the community sought to re-establish the degree of holiness necessary to usher in God's eschatological forgiveness and favor<sup>18</sup>

for the community of the everlasting covenant that they may atone for all who are volunteers for the holiness of Aaron and for . . . Israel, and for those who join them to live in community and to participate in trials and judgments destined to condemn all those who transgress the precept (1QS 5:6-7).

That the "saints" at Qumran believed they had attained the said degree of holiness is evidenced by their self-designation: "house of holiness." In 1QS 8:5, 8 one reads that the society is a *byt qwdš ysr'l* and *swd qwdšym qwdšym* . . . the *m'wn qwdš qwdšym*. The community was convinced, therefore, that it formed the new "holy of holies" in Israel, "the company of infinite holiness for Aaron."<sup>19</sup>

So holy was this living "holy of holies" that the extraordinary occurred: Earthly and heavenly communities became "united." "God has caused them to inherit a share in the lot of the holy ones and has united their assembly with the sons of heaven" (1QS 11:7-8). "Thou hast cleansed a perverse spirit of great sin," writes the Qumran psalmist, "that it may stand with the host of the holy ones, and that it may enter into community with the congregation of the sons of heaven." Indeed this "realized" union with the celestial stood at the heart of their need for protection from defilement:

And let no person smitten with any human impurity whatever enter . . . to occupy a place in the midst of the congregation. . . . Let these persons not en[ter] to take their place in the midst of the congregation . . . for the angels of holiness are [in] their [congrega]tion. And if [one of] them should have something to say to the council of holiness [then] he shall be questioned privately; but that person shall not enter into the midst [of the congregation] for he is smitten (1QS 2:3-10).

Thus at Qumran the distance between heavenly and earthly communities has been reduced almost to the point of fusion, and this conviction has entered into the center of their self-consciousness. The sectarian society regards itself to be a divine "house of infinite holiness," a place of divine residence where earthly and heavenly saints have been united in one community.<sup>20</sup>

Since in a new way the redeemed and angels are now united in one most holy community and thus in the closest of relationships to God, the increasing fluidity of the term *qādōš* is not remarkable. The expression can be used of the men of the final war:

<sup>18</sup>Cf. 2:8; 8:6; 9:4; 11:14; 1QH 4:37; 17:12; 1QM 2:5; CD 3:18; 14:19; Lev 4:20. In all references cited here the verb is *kpr*, rightly translated in the OT "to make atonement," though its root meaning is "to cover." Though outward contamination could be cleansed by cultic ritual requirements, only the spirit of holiness could bring that inward cleansing. 1QS 2:24-3:7 illustrates the close connection of obeying the law with experience of the Spirit's cleansing (1QH 7:7).

<sup>19</sup>Cf. 1QS 3:7, where God's spirit of holiness is called the "spirit of the community."

<sup>20</sup>Cf. 1QM 12:8, "For the Lord is holy and the King of Glory is with us accompanied by his holy ones. The powers of the host of angels are among our numbered men" (cf. 19:1). In 1QM 10:10-11 the "saints" are said to "see the angels of holiness." 1QM 7:6: "No man who is in a state of uncleanness . . . shall go down to war with them, for the angels of holiness shall accompany their armies." Cf. 1QH 6:13.

Who is like thy people Israel, which thou hast chosen for thyself from all the peoples of the lands; the people of the saints of the covenant, instructed in the laws and learned in wisdom, who have heard the voice of Majesty and have seen the angels of holiness? (1QM 10:10-11; cf. 3:4-5; 6:6; 16:1.)

It can refer to angels:

God has given them to his chosen ones as an everlasting possession, and has caused them to inherit the lot of the Holy Ones. He has joined their assembly to the sons of heaven to be a council of the community, a foundation of the building of holiness, an eternal plantation throughout all ages to come (1QS 11:7-8; cf. 1QH 10:35; 1QSB 1:5).

Often it is impossible to decide whether the term refers to one or to the other or to both at the same time (1QH 11:11-12; 1QM 18:2; CD 20:8; 4QFlor 1:4).<sup>21</sup> To be sure, both are called "holy ones," both belong to the same "lot" (cf. Wis 5:5), and both are companions of one another (cf. *1 Enoch* 104:6).

Thus in QL with the destruction of those "spiritual distances" that formerly distinguished the greater holiness of angels from men's, the characteristic orientation toward celestial beings is being pulled from its traditional conceptual and terminological moorings. In this respect, the former rigidity of the older characteristic reference is evidenced undergoing further transition toward that usage found in the NT.

*New Testament.* Whereas in QL the *eschaton* to some degree had broken in upon men through the "house of holiness," in the NT the "kingdom" has broken in through the person of God's Messiah, Jesus. Of that the new messianic community was absolutely certain. The death and resurrection of the Messiah constituted accomplished facts.<sup>22</sup> Indeed, he presently dwelt in heaven, had sent the promised eschatological *pneuma*,<sup>23</sup> and was soon expected to return. Moreover, because in Jesus God is present, the coming of the kingdom meant the coming of the celestial society as well. Hence in the received tradition angels accompanied Jesus' first advent (Matt 1:20; 2:13, 19-20; Mark 1:13; Luke 1:19; 2:9; 22:43; John 1:51; cf. Acts 1:10-11), dwell presently with him in paradise, and will join him in his expected return (Matt 13:49; 16:27; 25:31; Mark 8:38; 2 Thess 1:7-8). There is little question, however, that the angels are equal to Christ. To the contrary, Jesus is "übergeordnet den Engeln" (cf. Mark 13:27; Heb 1:4 ff.; Phil 2:9-10).<sup>24</sup>

<sup>21</sup>Cf. T. H. Gaster, "Angels," *IDB* 1, 131-134, who identifies the "holy ones" as the "sainted dead" in 1QH 3:21; 6:14; 11:11-12; frag. 2:10; *1 Enoch* 104:6.

<sup>22</sup>Cf. 1 Cor 15:3-4, which represents traditional material handed down to Paul. Cf. even Bultmann, *Kerygma and Myth*, 1, 42, cited by Fuller, *The Foundations of New Testament Christology* (London, 1965) 142: "All that historical criticism can establish is the fact that the first disciples came to believe in the resurrection." Cf. further C. K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians* (London, 1968) 337 ff.

<sup>23</sup>R. Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament* (London, 1955), 1, 41; G. Strecker, "Christentum und Judentum in den ersten beiden Jahrhunderten," *EvT* 16 (1956) 461. As Jesus by the power of the *pneuma* signaled the irruption of the last days (Mark 3:28-29; Matt 12:28-29; cf. Luke 11:20), so the earliest Church regarded itself as the eschatological possessor of the *pneuma* of God. This is reflected by the early NT prophets (Acts 11:27-28; 21:10) and fulfilled the Jewish expectations of the *Endzeit*.

<sup>24</sup>H. Bietenhard, "Engel, Bote," *Theologisches Begriffslexikon zum Neuen Testament* (ed. L. Coenen et al.; Wuppertal, 1969), 1, 227.



Consequently, as the Messiah is "more than all the categories of angels, so is the believer with him."<sup>25</sup> As members and regents of this eschatological kingdom (cf. 1 Cor 6:2),<sup>26</sup> the "saints in Christ Jesus" (Phil 1:1) are brought into an extraordinary new relationship to God through the Messiah. For this reason, in the NT they, rather than celestial beings, are designated "the holy ones." Indeed the whole focus of holiness has shifted from God and the angels to the redeemed. In this respect it is significant that while God is infrequently called "holy" in the NT, the redeemed are so characterized extremely often. This is the reverse of the usage in the OT. Of course God's holiness is assumed. But the frequency with which NT writers apply the term *hagios* to men indicates that in their minds the holiness focus has been strikingly transferred from God's nature to man's new intimacy to him. It is the extraordinary effect of the "realized" kingdom on man's relationship to God that holds center stage. So, moreover, it is men who receive the Holy Spirit, not angels, and it is men who are supremely the co-inheritors of the kingdom in Christ. To be sure, angels continue to be regarded as "holy" (Mark 8:38) because of their close proximity to God. Men's holiness, however, is no longer measured by the old standard but by their relationship to Christ, who stands for them in a unique near relationship to the Father.<sup>27</sup> This shift of focus registers the impact of the "kingdom" on the status of men and explains why NT writers characteristically—perhaps absolutely—restrict the title to the redeemed, "the holy ones in Christ Jesus" (Phil 1:1).

### III. CONCLUSION

Above we argued that the transition evidenced taking place in Daniel and QL finds its completion in the NT. We traced the cause of the increasing momentum of this development to growing eschatological convictions common to certain sections of the environment. One final question remains to be answered: How does all this aid us to understand more precisely the vigor and theological focus of the NT designation? Several conclusions can now be drawn.

First, the NT term "saints" captures something of the heat or vigor of the "kingdom"-consciousness present in early Christian thought. Central to its genius is the emphasis that Christians are members of an extraordinary new reality, one whose force is of such magnitude that it has simply overpowered older thought forms and reversed the religious thinking of centuries. Second, the term illuminates the first Christians' extraordinary sense of their nearness to God. It is they who now characteristically constitute—and the article is important—"the holy ones." All this, of course, does not exclude secondary ethical implications that arise from the new reality. But in the main, the term focuses on the fact that in Christ men have been thrust into the final kingdom, ushered into the room of the Holiest, and graced with the unprecedented privilege of the companionship of

<sup>25</sup>G. Kittel, "angelos," *TDNT* 1, 85.

<sup>26</sup>Procksch completely misses the eschatological connotation of the NT term "saints." Probably this was due to his strong conviction that Daniel 7 refers to angels, not men. See his remarks on the use of the term in Revelation, *TDNT* 1, 109. However, Asting, *Heiligkeit*, *ad loc.*, and Owens, *Saints*, 28, among others, have called attention to it.

<sup>27</sup>Bietenhard, "Engel, Bote," 227.

the Celestial. In short, with respect to the self-consciousness of the earliest believers the NT reversal registers something of the shock of the inaugurated kingdom and the unprecedented Christian privilege of its aftermath.