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Abstract

CHRISTIAN FREEDOM ACCORDING TO PAUL

By

David Harthill Campbell, B.A., M.Div.

This thesis is an exegetical survey of those passages in Paul in which the Apostle demonstrates his understanding of the freedom wrought in Christ, whether or not the idea of freedom is explicit or a member of the ἐλευθερία word-group is in evidence. The thesis is divided into three sections, dealing with Paul's understanding of freedom in relation to the law, to sin and to death. The first theme is subdivided into sections dealing with God's condemnation of sin in the law, His act of liberation in Christ, and the consequences of this act for the believer's life and freedom. Evidence is produced to show that the law plays a continuing positive role in the life of the believer, according to Paul. In Christ the believer is freed from the law's just condemnation, but freed for obedience to the law's righteous command. This freedom must be expressed in the form of obedience, not licence. In the second theme, freedom in relation to sin, a number of passages are examined in which the Apostle demonstrates his understanding of the nature and extent of freedom from sin as a result of the work of Christ. The thesis seeks to show the seriousness of the struggle against sin, and the way in which the believer, while receiving a genuine measure of freedom in Christ, fails woefully to live up to God's righteous standard shown in His law. Freedom from sin's dominion is freedom for obedience, and this obedience is to be expressed in the form of slavery to righteousness. In the final theme, that of freedom in relation to death, a number of passages are examined which show the same pattern of genuine but incomplete freedom in this area, and how the freedom from death given in Christ is real, though incomplete in this life, and should result in freedom for a life lived in obedience to God and to His righteous commands.

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By

David Harthill Campbell,B.A.,M.Div.

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A Thesis
submitted for the Degree of
Master of Letters
University of Durham
Department of Theology
1983

21. AUG. 1984

Thesis
1983 | CAM

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Declaration

None of the material in this thesis in its present form has been submitted previously for a degree in any educational institution. All of the material in this thesis is solely the product of the author's own research.

Acknowledgments

My sincere thanks to Reverend Professor C.E.B. Cranfield, for his invaluable and often sacrificial help at every stage in the preparation of this thesis; and also to Mrs Betty Ho Sang, for typing the final copy as an act of friendship.

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Introduction

The concept of the freedom granted to the believer through God's act of justification in Jesus Christ plays an important role in Paul's understanding of the Christian message. This, in our view, is because of the way in which it is so closely related to his understanding of the law, sin and death, and the ways in which these factors affect the Christian believer. The approach we have found most suitable for study of our theme, therefore, is to examine it with relation to these three factors. We shall see throughout our study that the Apostle is not greatly interested in freedom as a topic in itself, nor is he inclined to view freedom as an end in itself. Rather is his concern to portray freedom as freedom from a condition of disobedience to God and rebellion against His purposes, and as freedom for obedience to God and to His law, the standard of righteousness.

This is true whether the context in which the Apostle is speaking is that of the law, sin or death. In each of these areas, different aspects of his understanding of freedom are involved, yet, far from being unrelated, they form a coherent and balanced whole. Our study will clearly require therefore, an examination of Paul's views of the law, sin and death. We shall attempt throughout, however, to place the focus on what this means for the Apostle's understanding of Christian freedom. In so doing, we shall also show how the latter theme gives coherence to Paul's understanding of the law, of sin and of death, and the way in which these are interrelated.

Freedom in relation to the law

The longest portion of our study is devoted to the first theme, Paul's view of freedom in relation to the law. Paul's understanding of the law is one of the most significant but (often) least properly understood themes in his thinking. We shall approach this massive subject in a way which, we believe, serves best to illuminate the Apostle's understanding of freedom. From both a logical and chronological point of view, the best place to start (Section I of our study of freedom and the law) seems to be with the question of man's condition of slavery to sin and rebellion against God. Before there is any hint or possibility of freedom, man is in slavery to sin and death on account of his disobedience to God, who sets forth His righteous standard and condemnation of sin in His law (Rom 1:18-32,

3:9-20; see Section I, part A). The law shows that fallen man cannot fulfil God's righteous requirement through his own efforts, and so declares men slaves to sin.

After we have established that, without Christ, man is condemned to slavery, the question we must answer is how this condition of slavery - the absence or denial of freedom - is linked with the working of the law (Rom 5:13-14,20; 7:5; Gal 3:6-14,19-20,23-25; see Section I, part B). What is the interplay between the fact that the law seems to bring man's disobedience to light and in some sense to heighten it, and the fact that man is to be held accountable for his own sin and rebellion against the will of God, which is expressed above all in His law? Some commentators imply that the law itself is for Paul the cause or agent of sin. This view requires a response which takes into account the subtle interplay between the roles of the law and human sin in bringing about man's situation of slavery. That this situation is in some way related to the reality of the law's command and the way in which it confronts disobedient men is not to be doubted. What we shall discover, however, is that a more careful analysis shows a different picture of this relationship from that assumed by many commentators.

A further point deserving consideration is the way in which this aspect of the law's role is related to its other functions. Lack of ability to see the law's role here within the perspective of its overall function and purpose leads many writers into a distorted view of the law and its relationship to slavery and to freedom in Christ. In what way, however, are we to understand the law's role here, if that role is seen within the wider context of Paul's thinking? The final point to be emphasized in this connection is the way in which Paul stresses that genuine obedience to God is the only way in which God's judgement of sin will be lifted, for it is man's wilful disobedience which has led him into his tragic position of bondage. How this obedience comes about and what it means are questions we must face later in our study.

The interplay between slavery and freedom is linked by Paul in a number of places to the relationship between law and promise, and this point is examined in Section II of our discussion of freedom and the law. Freedom is promised, through God's covenant with Abraham, from the condition of slavery linked with the law (Rom 4, Gal 4:21-31). Here, however, we are confronted with a further problem: what distinction, if any, is to be made between the observance of the law as such, and the legalism of Paul's opponents (especially in Galatia), which he

so strongly condemns? Is the law, as some allege, to be seen almost as a demonic power, denying man freedom and opposing the promise, through which God wishes to bring freedom to man? Our contention will be that a correct understanding of the relationship between law and promise, and of the way in which this relates to the contrast Paul draws between slavery and freedom, can only be reached through clarifying the very real distinction Paul makes between the proper and improper use of the law. We must also shed some light on the errors of the Galatian Judaizers, with their exaltation of the law over the promise, and the way in which this false apprehension of the law's position contributed to their situation of slavery. Can the law, we must ask, even in holding men under sin, still in some way point to Christ? Our contention will be that a correct understanding of the role of the law in bringing men into bondage leads in turn to a proper appreciation of the positive relationship between law and promise.

So far, our focus has been on man's lack of freedom without Christ. The next stage in our discussion (Section III) involves an examination of Paul's statements concerning the significance of the redeeming work of Christ in bringing freedom to the believer. In Section III, part A, we examine the idea that the act of God in Christ brings freedom by ending the law's condemnation of man's sin (and thus ending his condition of slavery); see Rom 3:21-31; 7:1-6; Gal 2:15-21; 5:1-12. In what sense, however, is this ending of the law's role to be understood? Does it refer to the whole sphere of the law's authority, or involve only one aspect of its role? The answer to this will obviously follow to some extent the direction of the conclusions we have reached in our earlier discussions. A related question to be explored here is the nature of the law's true meaning and purpose. Does the Apostle see the purpose of God's act in Christ as in harmony with the purpose of the law, and, if so, in what sense? We shall argue that Paul sees a thoroughgoing concord between the purpose of the law and that of the work of Christ, in such a way that the law can somehow be said to be in harmony with God's purpose in Christ (see Gal 2:18-19), or even to be established through Christ's act of liberation (see Rom 3:31). We shall need to ascertain what Paul means when he says that the believer is discharged from the law or dead to the law (see Rom 7:1-6). Our task will be to support the assertion that a distinction is to be made between the work of Christ in ending God's just condemnation of our sin by the law, and the ending or

removal of the law as such. This will enable us to understand his positive view of the law's establishment in a natural and reasonable manner. We must also distinguish between freedom from a wrong understanding and use of the law - of which Paul definitely speaks - and a broader freedom from any further relationship with the law at all - which is another matter, and one to which we shall devote considerable attention.

The consequences of God's act in Christ so far as the believer is concerned are also noted in two texts (Gal 4:1-11; Col 2:6-23) in which the Apostle speaks of freedom from the στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου. As this theme, though related to the previous texts, seems to offer a number of different features, we examine it separately in Section III, part B. In this subsection, we shall consider the nature of the Galatian and Colossian στοιχεῖα -worship, the threat this posed to Christian freedom, and the response Paul makes to it. We shall consider the significance of various references which, many suggest, identify the στοιχεῖα in some way with the law (and cast both in a negative light). Because (in our view) this is not straightforwardly the case, we shall need to determine more carefully how the law and the στοιχεῖα are related, and what consequences this has for Paul's understanding of Christian freedom and of what freedom from the στοιχεῖα actually means.

In Section III, part C, we examine the implications for the believer's freedom of God's act in Christ with respect to the Jewish/Gentile barrier which, according to Eph 2:11-22, is linked with the Jews' relationship to the OT law. We take the view that this text, as the στοιχεῖα -texts, should be treated separately, for, although the law and the consequences of Christ's work in bringing freedom are in view, the question of freedom from the law's condemnation is not Paul's focus here. Rather is his aim, we believe, to show how Gentiles may become sharers in the promise with the Jews, and so attain freedom in Christ. We shall need to examine what implications this has for Paul's understanding of freedom and the law.

In Section IV, we turn to consider the positive purposes of Christian freedom in relation to the law. The central question here is how freedom from the law's condemnation is to be expressed in a positive way in the believer's life. Various issues are involved in answering this question. In what sense, for instance, is Christ the τέλος of the law (Rom 10:4; see 9:30-10:13)? In what way, if any,

does the law find positive fulfilment in the life of the believer? To whom is Paul referring in Rom 2:12-16,25-29, when he speaks of a genuine performance of the law? Are we to take Rom 7:7-25 as a portrayal of the believer struggling to obey God's law, and, if so, what does this say about the believer's relationship with the law? In Section IV, part A, we seek, by answering these questions, to establish some foundations for a proper grasp of Paul's understanding of the positive scope of Christian freedom, and how this in turn is related integrally to his understanding of the role of the law in the believer's life.

In Section IV, part B, we explore the theme of the positive scope of Christian freedom and the believer's position with respect to the law of God in relation to Paul's understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit (2 Cor 3; Rom 8:1-4). The Apostle sees the role of the Spirit as writing the new covenant on the hearts of men. What is this new covenant, and how does it relate to the old covenant? Paul contrasts the fading of the glory at the giving of the law with the abiding glory attending the coming of the new covenant. What does his opposition of γράμμα and Πνεῦμα in this connection mean in relation to Christian freedom? If Paul links the concept of the dead letter (γράμμα) with the old covenant, and the working of the Spirit (Πνεῦμα) with the new covenant, and concludes by identifying the work of the Spirit as the bringing of true freedom (2 Cor 3:17), does this mean that the Holy Spirit enables the believer to sever all relationship with the law and thus, for the first time, to gain true freedom?

We must seek to determine here what the Apostle actually refers to as fading, and what the significance of that fading is. We must also consider what the removal of the veil in 2 Cor 3 signifies. If it does not refer to the abrogation of the law, something else must be in view. Our contention will be that the working of the Holy Spirit, according to Paul, brings about an unveiling of the true sense of the law, and that, in line with what we have seen in our previous texts, the purposes of God (here expressed through the agency of the Spirit) are somehow to be aligned with the purposes of the law. This enables us to make sense of Paul's reference to a genuine fulfilment of the law coming about through the working of the Spirit (Rom 8:4), which in turn is based on the work of Christ in freeing the believer from the law's just condemnation (8:1-3). The central issue at stake is whether the Holy Spirit, as the bearer of freedom, replaces the law as an

authority in the believer's life, or whether the Spirit in some way enables a positive fulfilment of the law's demands. It is the latter possibility which, in our view, does justice to the text, and we shall seek to establish its validity.

The positive scope of Christian freedom in relation to obedience and the law is also discussed by Paul through his idea of love fulfilling the law (Rom 13:8-10; Gal 5:13ff). This theme, treated in Section IV, part C, has received various interpretations. Some suggest that in Christ the believer, freed from any relationship with the law, is set free to love. Love replaces the law, and becomes the standard for the positive expression of freedom in Christ. This view is similar to that noted above with reference to the role of the Spirit, i.e., the view according to which the Spirit replaces the law as the authority in the Christian life and thus brings freedom. If the latter view is to be questioned, then so must this one be. The matter we must consider here is how love, according to the Apostle, fulfils the law, and how freedom for love and freedom from the law's condemnation are related to each other. What, indeed, does love mean for Paul? How (if at all) is love related to the actual commandments of the law? In discussing these questions, we shall be able to make some further observations regarding the structure of Christian freedom according to Paul, and to see how the Apostle, in the light of the believer's present condition of weakness and proneness to sin, treats the possibility of freedom as an end in itself. If we are right in thinking that for Paul freedom is not an end in itself, can the voluntary relinquishing of it itself be a valid expression of true freedom? How does Paul view the possibility of freedom unstructured or unguided by any definite formulations (other than the believer's feelings or subjective assessment of the demands of love)? What is the relationship of love and the law to Christian ethics? The relationship of love and the law, properly understood, plays a crucial role in evaluating Paul's views on these subjects. Understanding the relationship of the command to love and the command to fulfil the law will help us to determine the proper significance of Paul's idea of the "law of Christ" (Gal 6:2), and why, according to Paul, the law's condemnation no longer stands against the believer who is manifesting the fruit of love (Gal 5:23).

Examination of these themes sets the stage for our discussion in Section IV, part D, of the limitations and proper exercise of Christian freedom. Under this heading we shall examine the positive scope of

Christian freedom with reference to passages where Paul discusses the need for the one who has been freed in Christ to exercise that freedom always with a view to the well-being of others. This is clearly related to the theme of love fulfilling the law, but takes one aspect of it and expands upon it. Two of the relevant texts are Rom 14:1ff and 1 Cor 8-10, where Paul discusses the relationship between the "strong" and the "weak" believers. How does Paul balance the genuineness and importance of the freedom the believer has received in Christ with the fact that concern for one's neighbour may seem to require a relinquishing of that freedom? We must also question the identity in these passages of the weak believers, and what it is they stand for. What is the nature of the concessions called for on the part of the strong believers? In what way, to what extent and for what purpose is their freedom to be sacrificed?

The answer to all these questions lies, in our view, in the way in which Paul understands the relationship between the possession of freedom and its proper exercise, and is also rooted in a correct understanding of what, for Paul, true freedom is. Here, as before, we shall find that Paul's understanding of the role of the law in the believer's life is of vital significance for a proper understanding of his thought. We must also consider the way in which Paul introduces his own example in 1 Cor 9:19ff, where freedom, slavery and the law are all discussed in the context of the sacrifice involved in the Apostle's own life and ministry. As in our discussion of freedom, love and the law, we shall discover that for Paul freedom cannot be considered as an end in itself, but must find its place within the wider context of love and service. We must also explore how the nature and exercise of the freedom the believer has now is affected by the present condition of his mortal life, and what implications this has for his need for objective standards of righteousness, which remind him of his tendency to rebel against God and call him constantly into deeper obedience.

The interplay of the external circumstances and limitations of the believer's life and his true inner possession of freedom is, indeed, a significant theme for Paul, and will also merit attention in this subsection. We shall consider passages in which the Apostle speaks of the believer's relationship to external authority, and how this affects the exercise of his freedom in Christ. What, for instance, are the implications of the institution of slavery for the man who has

received true spiritual freedom in Christ (see 1 Cor 7:17ff, Col 3:18ff)? Should the believer challenge his position of (earthly) slavery, or should he regard it as a matter of indifference (or even as something positive)? What does Paul think of the institution of slavery as such, in the light of his understanding of Christ as the One who brings true freedom? Other external factors also, however, have a bearing on the exercise of the believer's freedom. Among these are family relationships (Col 3:18ff) and the state (Rom 13:1-7). Proper conduct in each of these relationships is integrally related to proper exercise of the believer's freedom. To what extent, however, are these relationships comparable in Paul's sight to the institution of slavery? Do they all command a similar measure of divine sanction? Why, on any account, is the believer required to submit to external authority in such cases? Is this merely a concession to circumstances, or is there a deeper, spiritual reason, related to Paul's understanding of the nature of freedom in Christ? In answering these questions, we hope to give a further insight into the meaning and purpose of Christian freedom according to Paul, and how it is to be viewed within the context of his understanding of the significance of the law of God and the work of Christ.

In summary, therefore, the aim of the first part of our thesis is to explore the Apostle's understanding of Christian freedom as it relates to his view of the law of God. That this is a complex and multi-faceted relationship is evident from the scope of our discussion. The discussion could, no doubt, be approached from a different perspective or organized under different headings; some of the texts have bearing on aspects we have chosen to discuss in another section or subsection. Nonetheless, we believe that the approach we have taken offers a feasible and helpful way in which to consider the topic. Our aim is to have presented, by the conclusion, a thorough analysis of Christian freedom according to Paul as freedom from the law's condemnation and freedom for obedience to God and to His righteous standard in the law. Our intention is thus to show how freedom is at the same time freedom from the law and freedom for it. Only such a view, we believe, can adequately explain those passages where the Apostle speaks of man's condition of slavery, the law and the promise, man's being freed through the work of Christ, and the resulting task of exercising this freedom in a way which is true to its nature and purpose and shows faithfulness and obedience to the God from whom that freedom comes.

Freedom in relation to sin

The second portion of our thesis deals with Paul's understanding of freedom from sin. As with his understanding of freedom in relation to the law, it is Paul's conception of the encounter between a holy God and sinful and disobedient men which lays the foundation for his view of freedom from sin. Without Christ, man is in slavery to sin, and only through Christ's work is he freed from sin's tyranny. The fact of the believer's continuing proneness to sin, however, gives rise to a number of questions as to the form this freedom from sin takes. How can the believer be freed from sin, and still be subject to it? What limitations does his present, still-fallen condition place on his freedom in Christ? How does Paul portray the struggle of the believer who has been freed from sin, yet must fight against it? Finally, how does Paul's understanding of freedom and the law relate to his understanding of freedom from sin? These are the questions we must seek to answer here.

We shall begin by examining Rom 7:7-25, a text in which Paul deals with all of the above questions, and which is therefore foundational for our understanding of this topic. The passage has received widely divergent interpretations, the views expressed by commentators tending to reflect their overall understanding of man's position in relation to sin and the law. Does this text, which portrays a struggle the intensity of which is perhaps unparalleled in Paul's writings, speak of the situation of the non-believer or of that of the believer? Could the hold of sin depicted here represent the situation of the believer in Christ who has been freed from sin's domination? Could the non-believer, however, have such a consciousness of his position before God? What are we to make of the fact that the subject is said to be a slave to the law of God? In what way is this description influenced either by the account of the giving of the law or that of the Fall in Genesis? Our contention will be that the text speaks of the believer, yet not in a way that exhausts Paul's understanding of the Christian life or the Christian's battle against sin. The believer is indeed freed from sin, but is freed in order to fight back against its continuing hold on his present fleshly existence, and the battle must be seen within the wider context of Paul's teaching on the Christian life.

This latter task can be undertaken by studying Rom 6 and 8, where Paul relates this theme of freedom from sin to the act of baptism

and the work of the Holy Spirit. Here we see portrayed in different ways the reality of the believer's victory over sin. In what way, however, are we to understand Paul's assertion that through justification and baptism the believer has been freed from sin (see 6:7)? Some suggest that by this the Apostle refers to some form of sacramental sinlessness. How is this, however, to be reconciled with his understanding of the believer's present weak and mortal condition and with his continual call for obedience? The view that the receipt of the Spirit in Rom 8 involves some form of mystical rite effecting a magical change in the believer is subject to the same objections. Our aim must be to determine more carefully what the Apostle does mean by freedom from sin through baptism and the working of the Spirit, and how these factors affect the condition of the believer in his battle against sin. We must also attempt to see Rom 6, 7 and 8 within some reasonably coherent framework, given that it is highly unlikely that Paul would openly contradict himself in the midst of such a detailed and important exposition.

This involves us in discussing the relationship in Paul between indicative and imperative. Various questions occur in this respect. How can Paul command believers who (in his view) are free from sin to fight back against sin's attacks (see 6:12ff, 8:12ff)? Further, the nature of his commands assumes some kind of fixed ethical framework providing a basis for the obedience to which the believer is called. Is this framework to be identified with the law? The believer's condition is described as weak (see 6:19), and his obedience as a form of slavery (to righteousness; see 6:18). This implies that his freedom from sin is far from complete and that freedom is not a goal to be sought for its own sake. As we explore these points, we shall find many links with Paul's view of freedom in relation to the law. We shall see that Paul's view of freedom from sin is based on the same understanding which undergirds his view of freedom and the law - an understanding of the plight of man, his slavery to sin and utter dependence on the work of Christ, and the need for his freedom to be exercised in submission to the will of God and never to be regarded as an end in itself.

The themes of freedom and slavery in relation to the battle against sin are also treated in Gal 5:13ff. Here again, both the reality of the believer's freedom from sin and the need for him to struggle against it are portrayed side-by-side. The implications of

this interrelationship are important (here, as in the previous texts) for a proper understanding of the nature of freedom from sin as well as its purpose and direction. We shall also treat Col 3:1-17, where the same themes appear, though in a different theological context. Here Paul actually speaks of the believer's resurrection as a present reality, as opposed to his more cautious approach in Romans, where he refers to the resurrection mainly with reference to the future life. Does this mean that he takes a more "optimistic" view of the believer's freedom here than in Romans or Galatians? Here also, however, the characteristic imperatives appear.

In summary, our aim in discussing Paul's view of freedom from sin, is to show that this subject is treated from the same perspective as that of freedom in relation to the law. Paul's understanding of man's condition, the work of Christ and the law of God all play important roles. We hope to show in our examination how consistently the same understanding of these factors determines the Apostle's understanding of freedom, whether it be viewed primarily in relation to the law or primarily in relation to sin.

Freedom in relation to death

The final portion of our thesis is devoted to the remaining area in which Paul explores the theme of Christian freedom - that of freedom from death. Here we must determine whether the understanding of man's condition and Christ's work we have noted earlier in our study also determines Paul's views here. In what sense has the believer received a genuine freedom from death? In what way do the conditions of his present existence limit the reality of this freedom now? Does this aspect of freedom have the same kind of ethical consequences that are involved in Paul's treatment of the earlier themes? Is there evidence of a standard against which such positive exercise of freedom is to be measured?

Under the heading of freedom from death, we shall examine various texts, all of which manifest the same basic pattern and offer answers to the questions noted above (2 Cor 4:7ff; Rom 8:17ff; 1 Cor 15:12ff; Phil 3:10f, 20f; 1 Thess 4:13ff). We shall discover that two major points which are fundamental to Paul's treatment of freedom elsewhere are also of great importance here: the reality of the believer's freedom in Christ and the limited nature of this freedom in his present weak and mortal existence. We shall also explore the related

distinction Paul seems to make between freedom from eschatological death and freedom from actual physical death.

This freedom from eschatological death, however, has certain consequences in the believer's life. To begin with, the Apostle speaks of a genuine freedom from fear of physical death (2 Cor 5:1ff). What are the implications of this freedom from fear of death for the believer's present life? Our contention will be that Paul's understanding of this theme is closely related to the pattern we have noted earlier: freedom from the law's condemnation/freedom for obedience to the law; freedom from sin/freedom for slavery to righteousness. The freedom the believer has from eschatological death and his present freedom from fear of physical death should have certain positive consequences in his life as a Christian, and should spur him on to greater obedience as he lives in the light of the future hope of final victory over death. If the call to obedience (necessary because of the believer's weakness) appears again as a theme, then we can expect Paul once more to stress the preliminary character of the freedom the believer now has and the all-too-sinful nature of his present existence. This should (if our pattern holds) demonstrate once again the fact that freedom for Paul is never to be sought as an end in itself, but is rather to be seen within the context of love and service to God and to others. Our examination will need to show that these themes are indeed present in Paul's treatment of this topic.

Finally, our intention will be to show how the contrast Paul draws between the glory of the future life and the limitations of the present existence in fact highlights the gracious gift of God in Christ, and stresses that the exercise of genuine Christian freedom will always be affected by a proper appreciation of the believer's weakness and the need for him to use his life to serve God and others within the framework of slavery to righteousness and obedience to God's law.

It can be seen, therefore, that our aim is to show that the Apostle has a clear and consistent understanding of the freedom wrought in Christ and how it affects the situation of the Christian believer. The framework we have chosen to use to express Paul's thinking on this subject may not be the only possible one. It seems to us, however, to be a helpful and constructive way, perhaps, indeed, the best way in which to examine the meaning of Christian freedom according to Paul.

Freedom in relation to the law

Section I, part A

Introduction

We begin our study by examining how Paul lays the foundation for his understanding of God's judgment against man's disobedience and rebellion. This we shall do by looking at two texts at the beginning of Romans, 1:18-32 and 3:9-20. In these texts the Apostle sets forth God's indictment of human sin. This righteous judgment reveals the predicament of men in bondage to sin, and hence in a slavery from which there is no hope of human release. Slavery --deprivation of freedom -- is based on man's disobedience and his rebellion against God, on which the law's just condemnation is passed. Paul's portrayal of the human condition in 1:18-32 and 3:9-20 lays the basis on which his view of slavery and, hence, of freedom, is constructed. Following examination of these passages, we shall see (Section I, part B) how Paul more specifically relates slavery to the role of the law. We turn first, however, to Rom 1:18ff.

In Rom 1:16-17 Paul sets forth in nuce the theme of the whole letter, whose purpose is to explore the mystery of God's revelation in Jesus Christ, the revelation which has manifested God's righteousness, resulting in justification and freedom for the believer.[1] Before taking up the theme of God's act of justification in Christ and its implications for the believer, Paul must establish the guilt of all men before God, the very guilt which makes the redemption wrought in Christ (3:21ff) of supreme importance for all men in their relationship with God. This task is taken up by the Apostle in the section which stretches from 1:18-3:20, in which he addresses first the situation of all men (1:18-32), then that of the Jews (2:1-3:20). This exposition carefully outlines man's utter lack of freedom without Christ (3:9, 20). Through God's righteous judgment, expressed above all in the law, man receives the wrath of God, the reward for his rebellion and sin.[2] The revelation of God's wrath on mankind and the concurrent universal slavery to sin are portrayed in 1:18-32 and 3:9-20.

1:18-32: The revelation of God's wrath

The concern of the Apostle in the first section is to establish the guilt of all men before God because of their position of absolute disobedience to the law of God. The passage thus begins with language consciously parallel to the declaration in 1:17 concerning the righteousness of God. The revelation of the wrath of God accompanies the revelation of God's righteousness in the gospel.[3] Only in the gospel does the full meaning of God's wrath upon fallen man become clear.[4] This judgment of God is occasioned, however, not merely by man's present rebellion against God, but is rather the result of man's continuous rejection of his Creator throughout history.

This is made clear in vv. 19-23, where both the fact of God's self-revelation to man ἀπὸ κτίσεως κόσμου and man's wilful rejection of this knowledge (γνόντες τὸν θεόν, κ.τ.λ., vv. 21ff) are established, thus issuing in the total responsibility and guilt of man for his actions (εἰς τὸ εἶναι αὐτοὺς ἀναπολογήτους, v. 20)[5]. Paul's idea of divine self-revelation is not, however, to be seen as a product of Stoic or Hellenistic concepts of natural law, but rather is to be viewed against the background of OT and Judaic thought.[6] Paul declares that this revelation is real and meant to lead to a genuine knowledge of God; Michel comments that γνόντες τὸν θεόν (v. 21) "ist besonders stark und bezieht sich auf eine konkrete und lebendige Gotteserfahrung .... Gotteserkenntnis setzt also die Tiefe eines Verstehens voraus,

in der sich der Mensch schicksalsmässig mitbetroffen weiss."[7] It is, however, a revelation which has been universally rejected, to the extent that all true knowledge of the Creator has been obliterated (vv. 21-32). Man can always recognize God from His works, and the possibility of this knowledge, from God's perspective, remains as open as ever, as is indicated by the present tense of the verb καθορᾶν (1:20)[8] -- but this possibility, as H. Bietenhard points out, "faktisch wird ... nie und nirgends realisiert."[9] The aorists of vv. 21ff suggest that the reason for this failure to know God is rooted firmly in events of the past and this, along with the phrase ἀπὸ κτίσεως κόσμου (v. 20), seems to suggest a special stress on the Creation event.[10] It seems likely that the Genesis account of the Fall has played some role in influencing the Apostle's thought here. E. Käsemann's comment is instructive, "Dass die Geschichte des Falls sich in die Gegenwart hinein fortsetzt, ergibt sich aus 25, wo heidnische Schuld als Fall aus dem Stand der Geschöpflichkeit beschrieben wird. Es kündet sich ebenso in der Ablösung der präsentischen Form der Aussage durch die aoristische von 21a an, die nicht bloss rhetorisch ... gewertet werden darf."[11]

The reference may not be exclusively to the Fall, of course, as is seen by the echoes of Ps 105:20 and Jer 2:11, both referring to the failure of Israel to honour God and the concurrent fall into idolatry. This suggests that Paul is thinking not of the sinfulness of the Gentiles as such, but of Jew and Gentile alike -- fallen man as a whole.[12] Käsemann, however, notes that Paul cites these texts not so much to refer to the idolatry of Israel as to the Genesis account,[13] and it is interesting to note that Paul insists not only that a real knowledge is possible, but that it was once a reality.[14] M. Hooker, noting a number of lexicographical similarities between Rom 1 and Gen 1:20-26, suggests, "It would appear that Paul, in describing the idolatry into which man has fallen, has deliberately chosen the terminology of the Creation story."[15] All men, without exception, therefore, have rejected the knowledge of God they once had; διὸ (2:1) shows clearly that Jews as well as Gentiles are described in these verses.

In the fact that Paul insists that a real knowledge of God once existed, as in his use of the reality of the universal revelation of God as a polemical rather than an apologetic argument, lies an important aspect of his exposition of man's sin. Unlike Philo and some Hellenistic-Jewish literature,[16] Paul uses the idea that God can be (and has been) known as a basis on which to accuse the Gentiles (and Jews[17]) of rejecting Him, rather than as an apologetic device by

which the Gentiles might be persuaded to see the God of Israel as the God they themselves recognize in their daily experience of life (and religion). We may therefore agree with A. Feuillet that what we have here is not a series of abstract considerations on the present possibility of knowing God, but rather acknowledgment of a fact (the Fall) with all its consequences.[18] In this, Paul is in line with most Jewish theology, which dismissed any possibility of knowledge of God among the Gentiles (to whom Paul, of course, added the Jews -- when knowledge, that is, is understood in its fullest sense). Bietenhard points out that even where the Rabbis allow the possibility of some knowledge of God, this knowledge must come through the God who revealed Himself at Sinai and made Israel alone His people. The history of Israel, not Nature (however construed) is the means whereby God is revealed to the world.[19] Only Israel has received genuine knowledge of God: the Gentiles have twisted it hopelessly. U. Wilckens notes, "Die Motive natürlicher Theologie werden also in das heilsgeschichtlich-exklusive Selbstverständnis Israels integriert und dienen, zumal in eschatologisch-forensischem Kontext, der radikalen Unterscheidung von Gottlosen und Gerechten."[20]

Paul clearly stands in this tradition; any apologetic interest or sympathetic evaluation of the Gentiles' knowledge of God is totally lacking.[21] The Gentiles are instead brought face to face with the δικαίωμα τοῦ θεοῦ, God's righteous decree,[22] i.e. that those who live in such a way should die. Käsemann points out with justice that this is another indication that not speculative reasoning about God, but rather encounter with and submission to God's lordship is in view here.[23] Paul is not so much interested in a set of ordinances or rules (whether in relation to natural law or to Torah[24]) as in acknowledgment of the reality of the living God in His self-revelation to men, i.e. that " ... in their midst and all around them and also in their own creaturely existence ... God is objectively manifest; His whole creation declares Him" (Cranfield).[25]

3:9-20: Man's slavery to sin

In 2:1ff, Paul contrasts hypocritical and genuine obedience to the law. This he does in order to fashion his charge against the self-righteous Jew; see further our comments on ch. 2 as a whole in Section IV, part A. In 3:1ff, the Apostle brings his thought to a climax, showing how the Jew also is condemned by the righteous sentence of God's law. This highlights the fact that the judgment on human

sin and the revelation of God's wrath (1:18-32) is, indeed, universal; not even the Jew is exempt.

After a paragraph in which he affirms the genuine historical advantages of the Jew (3:1-8), the Apostle draws the argument he has developed in 2:1ff to a close with a declaration that these advantages do not include exemption from God's judgment on the failure of the Jew to fulfil the law's demands for an utterly holy life (3:9).[26] He supports this with a catena of OT quotations underlining man's abject fallenness and unremitting rebellion against God (3:10-18).[27] The last two verses of the paragraph (vv. 19-20) stand as a conclusion not only to the subsection 2:1-3:20 but to the section as a whole. They also provide a good point from which the Apostle can begin to speak of justification and the gospel as themes in themselves (3:21ff), and the place of the law plays a pivotal part in this transition.[28] Several important points need to be noted regarding this text.

(a) The word νόμος here undoubtedly refers to the entire OT Scripture; indeed, the quotations in vv. 10-18 are exclusively from the prophets and the writings -- yet are referred to as ὁ νόμος in v. 19.[29] The Rabbis in fact often used תורה as a designation for the entire OT Scripture.[30] This should add stress to the point we have made repeatedly that νόμος throughout the section refers primarily to the OT law, not to some undefined kernel thereof, and certainly not to some even less defined corpus of natural law or moral truth mediated through general revelation.[31]

(b) The phrase τοῖς ἐν τῷ νόμῳ λαλεῖ indicates that the basic reference of these two verses is to the Jews, as is natural, given that they provide the conclusion to Paul's indictment of the Jews in 2:1-3:20. It is natural to link τοῖς ἐν τῷ νόμῳ with ὅσοι ἐν νόμῳ (2:12) rather than with (οἱ)ὑπὸ νόμον (6:14-15), and thus to see the phrase as a simple reference to the Jews' possession of the law (the OT Scriptures). Lietzmann comments, "Das 19a ausgesprochene Prinzip beweist, dass mit der Klage v 10-18 nicht die Heiden, sondern nur die Juden gemeint sein können."[32]

(c) The second half of v. 19 thus means that, even as the privileges of the Jews (who, as a nation, might have been considered exempt from judgment) have now been proven nonexistent as far as the attainment of justification by works is concerned, the whole world (not just the Gentiles, of whose judgment Paul has spoken earlier) stands under God's wrath.[33]

(d) In v. 20a Paul takes up (διότι) the implications of v. 19 for the Jews and adds a further word of elaboration. The reason that those who possess the law still fall under sin (3:9) is that no one will be justified ἐξ ἔργων νόμου. This phrase is added by Paul to his apparent (there is no introductory formula)[34] quotation of Ps 143:2, for the purpose (as Cranfield suggests) of clarifying the Psalmist's statement "the intention of which was not to deny altogether the possibility of justification, but only (as is suggested by v. 2a) to deny the possibility of a man's being justified on the basis of his deserts."[35] Whether or not Paul intends to quote Scripture explicitly here, he does use the words he has added to fill out the sense of the Psalmist's despairing cry and to place it within the context of his own discussion of the failure of the Jew to live up to the standard of God's law.[36]

The ἔργα νόμου, therefore, represent the righteous demands of God's holy law, which the Jews have failed to obey. This view, however, is opposed by those who contend that the problem lies not so much in the failure to obey as in real but self-righteous performance, i.e. doing the works of the law as a means of self-justification. Commenting on 3:20, Bultmann asserts that not only can man not be justified by works of the law but that in fact he is not intended to be. Drawing on Gal 2:16 and 3:10, he suggests that justification by works and by faith are mutually exclusive, for "man's effort to achieve his salvation by keeping the law only leads him into sin, indeed this effort itself in the end is already sin."[37] Michel believes that the "works of the law" " ... sind hier die Werke, die der Mensch tut, um durch Erfüllung eines Gebotes vor Gott gerecht zu werden."[38] For Paul, continues Michel, the phrase is a negative one and is used in opposition to ἀκοὴ πίστεως (Gal 3:2); the Jewish Torah and the true will of God are opposed. He comments, "Die Tora, die der Jude zu erfüllen trachtet, ist die rabbinisch verstandene Gesetzeserfüllung (Halacha). Der eigentliche Gotteswille, den Jesus erfüllt (Rom 8,3) steht zu diesen 'Werken des Gesetzes' im Widerspruch."[39] Yet this, Michel comments, does not conflict with the positive statement of 2:13, "denn der durch das Gesetz gebotene und von Gott gewirkte Gehorsam ist nicht identisch mit den 'Gesetzeswerken' von Röm 3,20; im Gegenteil: die 'Gesetzeswerke' sind ein Ersatz des Menschen für den wahren Gehorsam."[40] Käsemann allows that Paul, like the Jews, conceives (in 2:6-11) of works required by the law as expressions of obedience to the will of God, yet he also insists that for the Apostle obedience to the law and obedience to Christ are mutually exclusive, because "(Paulus) ... echten Gehorsam in den Gesetzeswerken

nicht realisiert sieht." Hence, the "faktisch vorliegende und tradierte Gesetz" brings no true obedience but only human boasting and evil. According to Käsemann, if Paul had wished to refer here to law transgression rather than legal striving, he would have spoken not of works of the law but of the deeds of the pious.[41] Schlier, in like vein, asserts that Paul goes beyond the idea that none fulfil the law; his real point -- and one which is decisive for his presentation of the gospel -- is to be described thus, "Es meint also nicht, dass wir durch das Gesetz über das Bescheid bekommen können was Sünde ist, sondern dass wir durch das Gesetz die Sünde erfahren."[42]

This view, however, has serious deficiencies. One of the most consistent features of Paul's indictment of the Jews in 2:1-3:20 is, as we shall note, the charge that all have failed, without exception, to live up to the standard of God's law -- and therefore all stand under God's righteous wrath. God's means of judgment is the law, and His verdict is that none have succeeded in obeying its commands. That obedience to the law in this passage could be viewed as sinful is, therefore, out of the question. Paul states clearly that the one who does the law (2:13) shall be justified.[43] Even if one takes the latter verse as hypothetical (which we do not; see on Rom 2:12ff) it remains undeniably true that Paul is making there a positive statement about obedience to the law. This stress, as we shall see, is carried through the whole subsection 2:1ff (and, indeed, is applied to the Gentiles in 1:18ff). The supposition that the works commanded in 2:13 (note also κατὰ τὰ ἔργου αὐτοῦ, 2:6; τὸ ἔργον τοῦ νόμου, 2:15, etc.) and those referred to in 3:20 (where Paul is summing up what he has said in the whole subsection) are not only different but indeed categorically opposed to each other, seems to require undue credulousness on the part of the reader. It is highly unlikely the Apostle would suddenly -- and in the form of a summary statement -- redefine, indeed radically alter, what he has previously said about the law; see further on Gal 2:15ff,3:6ff and Rom 2:1ff.

It is generally agreed that the Rabbinic concept of the מעשי תורה or מעשי התורה lies behind Paul's phrase ἔργα νόμου.[44] According to the Rabbis, these indicated the concrete commands of the law which were to be obeyed (the "opera praeceptorum" of Syr Bar 57:2; see also Syr Bar 2:2, 14:12ff; 4 Ezra 7:77, 8:33, 36; Pirqe Aboth 6:9; Ps Sol 9:5, etc.)[45] and whose performance would be rewarded with justification. While the Rabbis were under no illusions that God's law was obeyed wholeheartedly and without fault by Israel (see esp. 4 Ezra 7:45, 8:34-36 and bSanh 101a, which stress that all have sinned and are thrown solely on God's

mercy),[46] the general tenor of their thinking is that though Israel has sinned it is still (and unalterably) God's covenant people, and God will always forgive its sin and grant fresh opportunities for repentance and renewed law obedience (cf. Wisd. ch. 11-15).[47]

The Rabbis' view of sin is based on their understanding of man as moved by two impulses or 'yetzers', the good 'yetzer' which (as the Jew is basically obedient to God) can almost be identified with the individual man, and the evil 'yetzer' over which righteousness can prevail through study of Torah and good works (though God's aid in this is not excluded).[48] Paul does not contest that Rabbinic view that man is called to obey God's law (see 2:6ff, 12ff, 25ff); indeed, he condemns the Jews precisely for not obeying that law (2:1ff, 17ff). This charge makes no sense at all except on the assumption that the law obedience called for has not been forthcoming. Paul does oppose the Rabbis, however, on their grossly inadequate conception of the seriousness of sin and of the consequences of disobedience to the law.[49] Even where something of the seriousness of Israel's sin does break into the Rabbinic consciousness, the judgment is tempered by the thought that the door to repentance is for the Jews (though not for the Gentiles)[50] always open. Against this backdrop Paul proclaims an end to the vain boasting of the Jew -- vain in the Apostle's eyes not because it was based on a genuine fulfilment of the law for which credit was then given to the doer, but vain precisely because the command of the law was never carried out in the first place. Wilckens comments, "das καυχᾶσθαι des Juden 2,17ff betrifft sein heilsgeschichtliches Privileg, nicht sein egoistisches Ziel einer durch eigene Leistung vor Gott erworbenen Gerechtigkeit. Man hat zu beachten, dass es gerade Paulus ist, der auf die Werke als einziges Kriterium einer Rechtfertigung des Gerechten insistiert, während der Partner demgegenüber durchweg seine heilsgeschichtlichen Privilegien ins Feld führt (2,12-29; 3,1ff), die Paulus ihm bestreitet."[51] The indictment of the Apostle is grounded not in the fact that the law can not be fulfilled, but rather that it has not been fulfilled.[52] Other texts where some variant of the phrase ἔργα νόμου occurs may or may not be able to throw light on our passage; our conclusions regarding the meaning here, however, must be governed by the clear contextual considerations we have noted.[53]

(e) Paul concludes by providing further elaboration (γάρ) of v. 20a in the assertion of v. 20b, διὰ γὰρ νόμου ἐπίγνωσις ἁμαρτίας. This statement, like the previous one, must be considered in context. Paul certainly does not mean that the law causes sin; nothing could be

further from the view he repeatedly voices in the section that the law expresses the righteous demand of God. What Paul does mean must be seen in the light of his purpose throughout the section: to prove the universally hopeless position of man before God. When man is confronted with the claim of God upon his life, says Paul, he is utterly unable to respond in obedience (preferring instead to follow his own desires), and therefore falls into sin's power. The law here, however, does not "call forth" sin in that it is the necessary occasion for its appearance. This view (which promotes the mistaken idea that the purpose of the law here is seen in negative terms)[54] is tenable only on the assumption that ἔργα νόμου refer to legalistic striving, i.e. striving which requires a law for it to come into existence. If, on the other hand, on the basis of the evidence we have adduced above, we see Paul's assertion in 3:20a as expressing the fact of the Jews' failure to obey the law, then this explicatory statement (20b) merely notes the consequence of this: that man, for the first time, is brought face to face with the (real but unrealized) fact of his own utter inadequacy and sinfulness before God.

Conclusions

1. All men, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether they have the law or not, stand under the judgment of God. The Scripture declares the inadequacy of fallen man's efforts to satisfy God's righteous requirement.
2. This righteous requirement is set forth preeminently in God's law. The law judges sin and brings man face to face with his hopeless predicament. It does so by confronting him with his failure to evidence genuine obedience to God's demands on his life, a failure by which man loses his freedom and enters into the bondage of sin.
3. Man has sinned not by obeying (or trying to obey) the law's commands, but by wilfully disobeying them, even if this disobedience comes in the form of hypocritical claims of obedience to the law.

Footnotes

1. See Ernst Käsemann, An die Römer, pp. 18ff; C. E. B. Cranfield, The Epistle to the Romans, 2 vols., I, 87ff.

2. In Section IV we shall see the contrast between this condition that man enters into when, enabled by the Holy Spirit, he begins to fulfil the law of God (see 2:12ff, 25ff and 3:31, 8:4, 13:8-10, etc.).

3. Note that γάρ relates the revelation of God's wrath to the revelation of His righteousness ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν mentioned in the preceding verse. Γάρ shows, therefore, that the revelation of God's wrath (1:18ff) makes it clear that righteousness cannot be attained any other way than ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν. See Cranfield, I, 106-8; Günther Bornkamm, "The Revelation of God's Wrath: Romans 1-3," in Early Christian Experience, p. 63. Otto Kuss, Der Römerbrief, 3 vols., I, 35, rightly stresses that here we have two sides of the same event, contra Hans W. Schmidt, Der Brief des Paulus an die Römer, 2nd ed., p. 32 who, though declaring that the revelation of sin is only possible in the deepest sense through the gospel, does not see the events of vv. 18ff as having any reference or relationship to the revelation of God's righteousness. Paul Althaus, Der Brief an die Römer, 10th ed., p. 17, suggests in like vein that the preaching of the gospel is not the preaching of wrath but of righteousness. Cranfield, however, points out that the revelation of God's wrath is not so much a reference to the "frustrations ... which result from human ἀσέβεια and ἀδικία" (I, 109; all future reff. are to vol. I) as it is a parallel to the revelation of His righteousness (v. 17) which is itself accomplished (πεφανέρωται, 3:21) in the gospel events, hence making 1:18 a reference to what is continually (ἀποκαλύπτεται) occurring in the proclamation of the gospel itself (see I, 109-10). Hence we cannot agree with Bo Reicke, "Natürliche Theologie nach Paulus," Svensk Exegetisk Årsbok 22/23 (1957-58), 157-58, that God reveals His wrath in nature and the OT law (as opposed to the gospel) and that God's wrath is only a secondary aspect of His righteousness. We concur rather with Kuss, I, 35, and Cranfield, I, 110, that the two revelations are two sides of the same event or two aspects of the same process.

4. Ulrich Wilckens, Der Brief an die Römer, 3 vols., I, 103, notes that, contra the view of Käsemann, who suggests man recognizes God's wrath only in the gospel (see Käsemann on 3:20b: "Ihr sentenziöser Charakter darf aber nicht dazu verführen, in ihr eine allgemeine Wahrheit zu erblicken, die auch vor Christus, nämlich eben durch das der Sünde überführende Gesetz erkannt werden kann ...", p. 84) Paul assumes that all, Jew and Gentile alike, know that what they are doing is wrong (even though they may not understand the seriousness of sin as rebellion against God) either through revelation in creation, 1:18-32, or the law, 2:1-3:20. What is not known apart from the gospel, though, is the "Unheilsfolge der Sünde" (I, 103). Realization of the true consequences of sin, however, cannot occur apart from a deeper understanding of sin than was previously the case, and in this sense Käsemann is right. See also Wilckens' comment, "Sofern freilich dieses Urteil des Gesetzes im Zusammenhang der Verkündigung des Evangeliums 'offenbart' wird (1,18), tritt zu der immer schon durch das Gesetz präsenten Anklage eine eschatologische Definität hinzu, die als solche erst im Kontext des Evangeliums zum neuen Ereignis wird" (I, 180). Cranfield states, " ... we do not see the full meaning of the wrath of God in the disasters befalling sinful men in the course of history: the reality of the wrath of God is only truly known when it is seen in its revelation in Gethsemane and on Golgotha" (I, 110). Note also Bornkamm's comment, " ... only now in the sign of the gospel is the lost world moved into the light of the 'final event', to which the previous history was directed ..." (p. 63); also Kuss, I, 56. It is important to remember, of course, that God's judgment on sin is already expressed in the degradation and decadence of man before and without

Christ; see 1:24, 26, 28 and A. Feuillet, "La connaissance naturelle de Dieu par les hommes," Lumière et Vie 14 (1954), p. 66.

5. Consecutive rather than final; see Cranfield, I, 116 contra Otto Michel, Der Brief an die Römer, 5th ed., p. 101. Heinrich Schlier, Der Römerbrief, p. 54, notes that a final sense would weaken the the meaning.

6. See W. D. Davies, Paul and Rabbinic Judaism: Some Rabbinic Elements in Pauline Theology, 2nd ed., pp. 27-31, who shows clearly the Rabbinic background to Paul's thought here. He notes that "the idea that God's existence can be derived from the mere contemplation of His works in creation is a familiar theme in Judaism" (p. 28) and cites Test. Naphtali 3:2-3. The strong emphasis on idolatry in Rom 1 is also a Jewish theme; note also how Paul uses themes from Wisdom 13 in 1:18-32 (in his condemnation of the Gentiles' sinful ways) -- but then turns the Jewish argument on its head in 2:1ff, showing how the Jews themselves have not been faithful to their own heritage and will thus be punished (contra Wisdom 15, which stresses that no matter how heinous the sin of the Jews might be, it will still be forgiven, for they are and remain God's covenant people). See also Ernst Gaugler, Der Brief an die Römer, 2 vols., I, 55.

7. Michel, p. 101. Cranfield, I, 116, comments, "A real self-disclosure of God has indeed taken place and is always occurring, and men ought to have recognized, but in fact have not recognized, Him."

8. See Cranfield, I, 114-15, who notes that the "point made is that the self-revelation of God here referred to has been continuous ever since the creation" (I, 114). This, of course, does not confine καθοράται to a presently-occurring phenomenon, but understands it as something which, having once begun (presumably at a definite point, i.e. Creation) now continues.

9. Hans Bietenhard, "Natürliche Gotteserkenntnis der Heiden? Eine Erwägung zu Röm. 1," ThZ 12 (1956), p. 287. See also Ethelbert Stauffer, New Testament Theology, pp. 87-89.

10. A. Feuillet, p. 74, comments, "En créant le monde, Dieu l'a en quelque sorte chargé de transmettre aux hommes un message, et s'il leur a donné l'intelligence, c'est précisément pour qu'ils soient capables de le déchiffrer." He also suggests (p. 68) that the three attributes listed in v. 20b (ἀΐδιος, δύναμις, θειότης) are specially linked with the spectacle of Creation.

11. Käsemann, p. 43.

12. Note the term ἀνθρώπων in 1:18. See Cranfield, I, 105-6, who notes that διό (2:1) links the self-righteous Jews with the sins of the Gentiles.

13. Käsemann, p. 41; he comments, "Der Schluss des Psalmverses mit dem Hinweis auf die Verehrung des goldenen Kalbes war für die Argumentation des Abschnittes zu speziell. Heidnischer Bilderdienst sollte allgemein getroffen werden, wie es in dem Verbot Dt 4, 15-19 geschieht. Pls hat sich jedoch nicht der Ausdrucksweise dieser Stelle, sondern der Schöpfungsgeschichte Gen 1,20-27 bedient, um das Zitat seinen Zwecken entsprechend zu vervollständigen ...." Feuillet, pp. 74-75, notes that the reference of the aorists must go back beyond the Jewish-Gentile division to the place where Paul

can speak of the Gentiles while thinking of the Jews in the desert; hence he is thinking of the Fall (which the Jews in their disobedience merely renewed). In our view, it is not far-fetched to see ἤλλαξαν τὴν δοξαν κ.τ.λ. (v. 23) as a reference to the glory once possessed but subsequently lost by the original man. Schlier, p. 54, draws a parallel to 3:23; see also Morna Hooker, "Adam in Romans 1," NTS 6 (1959-60), p. 305 on the Rabbinic tradition.

14. See Feuillet, p. 72, who notes that Paul goes beyond the Rabbis in this respect; see also Fernand Prat, The Theology of St Paul, trans. J. L. Stoddard, vol. I, pp. 195-96. For a good outline of the Rabbinic view, see Bietenhard, pp. 280-88, who also underlines how strongly the theme of God's revelation in Creation (perceived only by Israel, however) is rooted in Rabbinic thought, which itself draws primarily on OT sources and motifs. Where the Rabbis speak to the Greeks, they emphasize that knowledge of God comes only from Israel and is rejected by all others (even though they may use Greek terminology to express this). Paul's thought in Rom 1 is in line with the negative stress and also the OT emphasis of Rabbinic thought, contra natural law theories of the Greek philosophical world (pp. 285-88). The Rabbis believed that six commandments were given to Adam and a seventh to Noah. Though men were offered these commandments in Adam, they did not receive them. Some Rabbis believed all nations were offered the Torah, but that only Israel received it. One Rabbi asked how, if the Gentiles had not kept even one of the Noachic commandments, they could possibly receive the whole Torah? See Mekhilta 19:2, 20:2; Sifre Deut 33:2, etc. See also (15) below.

15. Hooker, p. 300; see pp. 300-304 for a listing of further resemblances in vocabulary and content. See also her later article, "A Further Note on Romans 1," NTS 13 (1966-67), in which she reaffirms her conclusions, and adds the suggestion that Paul has been influenced by the theme and language of Ps 106 as well. At this point we might note that the four points which, according to Bornkamm, p. 50, link Paul here to Stoicism (inferring from Creation God's existence; this inference involving a real knowledge; this knowledge demands obedience; the alternative to obedience is corruption) are all quite understandable within a purely OT context.

16. Günther Bornkamm, Paulus, 2nd ed., p. 133: "Doch redet Paulus nicht wie diese apologetisch-pädagogisch von einer Möglichkeit, zu der er in Reflexionen erst den Zugang eröffnen müsste, vielmehr von einer Wirklichkeit, die sich sofort anklagend gegen den Menschen wendet." Wilckens, I, 99, describes a favourite theme of some Hellenistic-Jewish apologetic literature, especially Philo, "Die Erkenntnis Gottes aus der Harmonie und Schönheit des Kosmos, wie sie besonders seit der mittleren Stoa in den gebildeten Kreisen gelehrt und gefeiert wurde, zielt darauf, dass der erkenntnisfähige, vernünftige Mensch in seinem Verhalten dem λόγος entsprechen kann und so 'weise' wird." This is in sharp distinction to other Hellenistic-Jewish literature (e.g. Sib Oracles, Letter of Aristeas, Test XII Patriarchs) and apocalyptic literature (e.g. Syr Baruch, Eth Enoch and the Qumran documents) which, while exonerating the Jews and holding forth for them the prospect of forgiveness through repentance, paint a dark picture of Gentile immorality and the Gentiles' doom (see Wilckens, I, 97-99). The latter approach is by far the more characteristic of Jewish thinking on the subject. Bietenhard, p. 279, points out

that even Philo considered that what Greek philosophers knew of God came from their reading of the law. H. P. Owen, "The Scope of Natural Revelation in Romans i and Acts xvii," NTS 5 (1958-59), pp. 137-38, notes (regarding supposed similarities between Wisdom 13 and Rom 1) that "Wisdom xiii is concerned with a knowledge that can be, but has not been, attained, for it considers Gentiles solely as idolaters and consigns them to unqualified ἀγνωσία; Rom i is concerned with a knowledge that both can be and has been attained, although it begins by stating that idolaters have suppressed this knowledge in their ἀδικία (v. 18)" (p. 138). See also Bornkamm, pp. 55-56; Kuss, I, 45, "Er spricht in seinen Briefen niemals von Heiden, die der ihnen also Menschen zugänglichen richtigen Gotteserkenntnis treu bleiben und durch gelebtes Leben gerecht werden, ebensowenig wie er etwa unrichtige und unvollkommene Gottesvorstellungen als Stufen auf dem Wege zu dem richtigen und vollkommenen Gottesbegriff ansieht ...."

17. Thus he breaks through the argument regarding the secure position of the Jews (see also 2:1-3:20).

18. Feuillet, p. 75; he, however, does not see here a direct reference to the Gen account, which for him speaks of rejection of a primitive revelation rather than perversion of rational knowledge. This point is also noted by John J. O'Rourke, "Romans 1:20 and Natural Revelation," CBQ 23 (1961), p. 305, who declares that ποιήμασιν cannot refer to the kind of intimate personal revelation of Gen 1. While, as Cranfield points out (p. 115 n.2, contra Reicke, p. 160) ποιήμασιν likely refers to God's physical creation and νοούμενα καθορᾶται to our act of physical seeing, this should by no means exclude a reference to the wilful rebellion in the Garden, particularly as Paul seems to view the refusal to exercise this "physical" sight properly as itself constituting the ("spiritually") guilty act before God, thus leading to man's downfall and degradation, both physically and spiritually (as the passage makes clear). O'Rourke's further objection (p. 305) that καθορᾶται cannot refer to a definite past event is not sustainable; see (7) above. The multiplicity of aorists in the subsection, referring to both human and divine actions (ἐματαιώθησαν, ἐσκοτίσθη, etc.; ἐφανέρωσεν, παρέδωκεν, etc.) point clearly enough to events of past history. While it is true that the revelation of God's wrath continues (as does man's disobedience), the text as a whole clearly points to past events as the ground for the present disarray. Feuillet admits (pp. 77-78) that Paul indirectly derives his viewpoint from Gen, which for him has "heilsgeschichtlich" importance, and is not just a symbolic account of continually recurring events. It is also difficult, in light of the vivid recounting of the Gen story in 5:12ff (not to mention allusions in 7:7ff) to believe that there is no echo of the same account in this earlier portion of the Epistle. This explanation makes much more sense than the suggestion of Owen, pp. 141-42, that Paul sees every Gentile as having at some time had insight into God's nature, which he subsequently suppresses (a viewpoint at odds with Rom 5 as well as Rom 1). See Hooker, p. 299.

19. Bietenhard, p. 287.

20. Wilckens, I, 100.

21. Edmund Schlink, "Die Offenbarung Gottes in seinen Werken und die Ablehnung der natürlichen Theologie," ThB 20 (1941), p. 10,

comparing Paul with those examples of Hellenistic-Jewish literature which viewed the situation of the Gentiles in a more positive light, notes that in Paul there is an attack on other religions, not an apology for them, judgment instead of praise, and, in place of a moral re-ordering of natural knowledge, an exposition of its perversity. Man (whether Jew or Gentile) is identified as a sinner under God's wrath (as in 3:9, 20).

22. "God's just ordinance or decree, the substance of which is indicated by the following ὅτι-clause ..." (Cranfield, I, 134), "die Forderung oder Satzung des Rechtes" (Käsemann, p. 47): contra Wilckens, I, 115, who identifies the δικαίωμα with the law: "Güt judisch weiss Paulus den in den Schöpfungswerken offenbaren Willen Gottes in der Tora ausgesprochen und empfindet so keinerlei Hemmung gegenüber dem Gedanken, dass auch Heiden in den Ordnungen des Kosmos Gottes Willen gewahren." One must caution against the too-easy identification of the word here with the same word in 2:26 and 8:4, an identification which must be resisted, for the contexts are different. Yet there are obviously points of contact.

23. Käsemann, p. 47.

24. "Die Erkenntnis Gottes bezieht sich nicht spekulativ auf sein Wesen, sondern auf seinen Herrschaftsanspruch und unsere damit zugleich erfahrene Geschöpflichkeit. Alle hier und überhaupt zu 1, 19ff auftauchende Missverständnisse hängen letztlich damit zusammen, dass man Offenbarung an die Heiden als objektiv vorliegend und rational deduzierbar versteht, sei es in einer 'Uroffenbarung', im Naturgesetz ... sei es in der Beziehung von δικαίωμα auf die Tora oder wenigstens auf die sogenannten 'adamitischen' und 'noachischen' Gebote ..." (Käsemann, p. 47).

25. Cranfield, I, 114.

26. On οὐ πάντως as "not altogether", "not in every respect", see Käsemann, p. 81; Cranfield, I, 190; Michel, p. 141; Schlier, p. 98; Hans Lietzmann, An Die Römer, p. 47 ("Antwort, 'nicht so schlechthin, denn trotz des v.2 Gesagten sind wir Juden in der Hauptsache mit den Heiden in gleicher Verdammnis'"); Franz J. Leenhardt, Epistle to the Romans, p. 95, who notes that "not at all" does not accord with v. 2a. Mistaken is Wilckens, I, 172.

27. Contra Karl Kertelge, "Rechtfertigung" bei Paulus: Studien zur Struktur und zum Bedeutungsgehalt zur paulinischen Rechtfertigungsbegriff, p. 71, who sees vv. 10-18 as confirming the judgment of 1:18-32, but who then admits the Jew is in view again in vv. 19-20!

28. See Schlier, p. 100, "Freilich ist die Hinzufügung von V 20 nicht einfach Ungeschicklichkeit oder auch Willkür, sondern sie dient der Einfügung von 1,18-3,19 in das eigentliche paulinische Evangelium und stellt diesen Abschnitt damit in das rechte Licht, gibt sozusagen den Schlüssel in die Hand, mit dem man auch ihn aufschliessen kann und soll. Es ist im gewissen Sinn die Fortsetzung von 1,17 und ermöglicht zugleich sozusagen als negative Basis die Aussagen von 3,21ff."

29. On νόμος as designation for the whole OT, see 1 Cor 14:21. See also C. K. Barrett, Epistle to the Romans, p. 70; Cranfield, I, 195; Michel, pp. 143-44; Schmidt, p. 62; Wilckens, I, 173 n. 469; Schlier, p. 99; Kuss, I, 108; Käsemann, p. 82 (who notes, however, that the OT "hat ...

seine Sachmitte in der Tora, als der Kundgebung des göttlichen Willens im strengen Sinne"); Rudolf Bultmann, Theology of the New Testament, I, 259 ("By νόμος ... Paul understands the Old Testament Law or the whole Old Testament conceived as law, except in a few passages where νόμος has the general meaning of norm or of compulsion, constraint ....").

30. See references in Strack-Billerbeck 2, 542; 3, 159, 462-63. See also Cranfield, p. 195; Michel, p. 144.

31. Kuss himself notes (I, 108) that ὅσα κτλ denotes the content of Scripture is in view here; see Käsemann, p. 82, "Schliesslich tritt hieraus, dass νόμος für Pls nicht eine allgemein gültige Norm, abstrakt 'Gesetzlichkeit' als solche, ist, sondern die konkrete Tora des Mose, die nur in der Beziehung auf die israelitische Geschichte ihren Charakter behält."

32. Lietzmann, p. 48. See also Andrea van Dülmen, Die Theologie des Gesetzes bei Paulus, p. 83; Kuss, I, 108; Cranfield, I, 192; Wilckens, I, 173 (" ... den Juden, die im Geltungsbereich der ihnen gegebenen Tora [2,12] leben."). Käsemann and Schmidt, on the other hand, seem to go a bit beyond the simple meaning of the text; Käsemann comments (p. 82), "ἐν νόμῳ bezieht sich auf den Gültigkeitsbereich des Gesetzes als heilsgeschichtlicher Grösse." Schmidt speaks of the law's claim on those living in its "Herrschaftsbereich" (p. 99). Both comments seem to suggest that the law is some kind of superpersonal tyrant (could a comparison with ὑφ' ἁμαρτίαν, 3:9, be implied?), whereas a simple historical statement is in view here. Käsemann does warn against a "mystical" interpretation, however (and see his comment cited in (31) above).

33. See Kuss, I, 108-9; Wilckens, I, 173; Barrett, p. 70; Schlier, p. 99; Cranfield, I, 196-97.

34. A direct quotation is seen here by Kertelge, p. 71; Michel, p. 144; Leenhardt, p. 97; Käsemann, p. 83; Cranfield, I, 197; Wilckens, I, 173-74. Kuss, I, 109, is uncertain. Lietzmann, p. 48, and Schlier, p. 100, see an allusion ("Anspielung").

35. Cranfield, I, 197.

36. See Kuss, I, 109. The suggestion of Schlier, p. 100, and Käsemann, p. 83, that the phrase represents the decisive element of the saying is perhaps too strong, as the Psalmist's cry implies this anyway. The phrase is important, however, in that it enables Paul to establish a direct verbal link between the OT Scripture (which he has just used to prove his case regarding the hopeless position of the Jews before God) and the Pauline gospel of justification by faith not works. See Schlier's comment cited in (28) above; also Michel, p. 144.

37. Bultmann, I, 264 (see pp. 263-64); also see his article, "Christus des Gesetzes Ende," in Glauben und Verstehen II, 40-41.

38. Michel, p. 144. See also Barrett, p. 70, who sees the reference here to "works done in obedience to the law and regarded as, in themselves, a means of justification."

39. Michel, pp. 144-45 n. 8.

40. Michel, p. 145 n. 9. This view is echoed by Kertelge, p. 71 n. 41, "Sie sind der Ausdruck einer menschlichen Selbstbehauptung, die sich dem eigentlichen Gehorsam gegenüber dem Heilswillen Gottes entzieht." Also Leenhardt, p. 96, "The law provides even an occasion for sinning ...."

41. Käsemann, pp. 83-84.

42. Schlier, p. 101.

43. See Wilckens, "Was heisst bei Paulus: 'Aus Werken des Gesetzes wird kein Mensch gerecht'?" in Rechtfertigung als Freiheit, I, 83. He notes the parallel to 5:12-21, where Paul speaks not of a (wrongly motivated) desire to fulfil the law, but rather of sin as transgression of the law (see our comments on 5:12-21).

44. See Käsemann, pp. 83-84; Schlier, pp. 100-101; Ridderbos, Paul: An Outline, pp. 170-71; Wilckens, I, 173 n. 471; G. Bertram, "ἔργον," TDNT II, 644-45.

45. See references in Strack-Billerbeck 3, 160-62.

46. See references in Strack-Billerbeck 3, 89, 156-57, and E. P. Sanders, Paul and Palestinian Judaism, p. 626 (Index s.v. "sin"). Wilhelm Mundle, "Zur Auslegung von Röm 2,13ff," ThB 13 (1934), p. 253, comments, " ... nicht das Bewusstsein sittlicher Vollkommenheit, sondern die Bereitschaft zur Busse der Eckpfeiler jüdischer Heilsgewissheit ist." The same thought appears in the Qumran literature, where the sinfulness of man (even of Israel) is repeatedly affirmed (see, for instance, 1QH 9:14-15; 1QS 11:12), though the existence of a righteous remnant justified through its own obedience is just as important to their thinking. See Wilckens, I, 174 n. 473; Sanders, p. 499 n. 56. George E. Ladd, Theology of the New Testament, p. 499, comments, "The righteous man, therefore, is not the man who succeeds in keeping the Law, but the man who intends to, strives to do so, and is repentant when he fails." This seems a good description of the Rabbinic view. Bornkamm, Paulus, p. 149, notes, "Doch darf der Gleichklang zwischen solchen und paulinischen Aussagen nicht über die tiefe Differenz hinwegtäuschen. Die jüdischen lösen sich niemals von dem einzigartigen Verhältnis Gottes zu seinem erwählten Volk und bedeuten in keinem Fall eine Infragestellung des Gesetzes als Heilsweg." See also George Foote Moore, Judaism, I, 520-21.

47. See William Manson, "Notes on the Argument of Romans," in New Testament Essays, ed. A. J. B. Higgins, p. 155.

48. On the Rabbinic view of the two 'yetzers', see Solomon Schechter, Aspects of Rabbinic Theology, pp. 242-90, esp. 255, 262, 264, 266, 270, 278, 282, 287. According to Schechter, though the Rabbis believed in the existence of both a good and an evil 'yetzer', they often speak only of the evil one, with the assumption being left that man himself, by his natural tendencies, represents the good 'yetzer' (see Jer Ber 7d; Ber 17a). Even the evil 'yetzer', however, being a creature of God, is not independent from God, is not entirely evil, and is a servant of man (Gen R 14:7; Ber 61a; Sotah 22a; Eccl R 3:11; Aboth de R Nathan 9a; Agadath Ber 1:4; Baba Bathra 16a; etc.). The 'yetzer' is in man's hands (Gen R 22:6; Ps Jon Gen 14:7) and the righteous have dominion over it (Baba Bathra 17a; Kidd 30b; Aboth de R Nathan 35b; Lev R 35:5). God sometimes makes sin impossible, but usually does not intervene

directly (Sukk 52b; Gen R 14:3, 27:4; Niddah 16b; Ex R 30;20; etc.). If a man guards himself three times against sin, God will henceforth guard him (Shab 104a; Pesikta Kahana 161a; J Kidd 61d; etc.) -- a good example of the contrast to Paul's understanding of grace and sin. See also Davies, pp. 20-24, for a discussion of the evil 'yetzer'. Hans J. Schoeps, Paul: The Theology of the Apostle in the Light of Jewish Religious History, tr. Harold Knight, p. 185, stresses that the Rabbis taught the absolute freedom of the human will, and that through study of the law man can free himself from sin. He notes, however, that some Rabbis, contemporaneous with Paul, suggested that the evil 'yetzer' was predominant and man basically sinful; this tendency can be seen in 4 Ezra and at Qumran (see pp. 185-87). On the other hand, the Rabbis (even those with a more pessimistic outlook) insisted on the possibility of repentance and renewed obedience to the law (which would then be rewarded by God); see pp. 175, 187.

49. Ladd, p. 447, "In the first chapters of Romans Paul's argument, which shuts up all men to sin, does not follow the line that their sinfulness outweighs their righteousness; it is rather that all men are guilty before a holy God because they have sinned. It is the fact of sin, not the degree of sin, that constitutes their guilt as sinners. Since a man is unable to render the perfect obedience required by the Law, 'no human being will be justified in his sight by the works of the Law' (Rom. 3:20)." See also p. 430. The Rabbis, of course, held that a man could be justified before God if only his good deeds outnumbered or outweighed his evil acts (see Ladd, p. 447). Mistaken, surely, is the view of Victor Paul Furnish, Theology and Ethics in Paul, p. 191, that Paul speaks not of obedience to the law but rather uses verbs such as φυλάσσειν (2:26), δουλεύειν (7:25), ὑποτάσσεσθαι (8:7), etc. (as opposed to ὑπακούειν) because " ... as long as the law is conceived as a formal code of moral obligations, it demands no more than formal adherence to specific requirements." Hence, the law must be ended, for " ... true obedience is not to be identified with a merely formal keeping of the law. Rather, it is the commitment of the whole man to God ..." (p. 192). What is a merely 'formal' keeping of the law? Why does Paul take the breaking of the law so seriously here? And why does he see the Christian as the one who can truly obey that law? What, at any rate, do all the verbs listed by Furnish imply if not obedience? Furnish, p. 193, founders on a false concept of the ἔργα νόμου (3:20) as "externalized ... measurable ... deeds" which necessarily lead their doer to a sense of self-righteousness. How far this is from Paul's meaning here we have seen. What, however, are these 'external' deeds? -- surely concrete obedience is what God requires; whether this involves the worship of God, personal morality, or an act of selfless love to one who is afflicted, a 'measurable' deed (whether in attitude or in action) is involved in response to God's 'externally' (objectively true) claim on us. Furnish, like Bultmann, misses the mark on this subject.

50. See (16) above. Albert Schweitzer, The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle, tr. William Montgomery, p. 178, notes that, after the Maccabaean period, universalism is almost entirely excluded from Jewish apocalyptic literature. Rather is the stress placed on conversion to Judaism (see Psalms of Solomon, Apocalpyse of Ezra, Apocalypse of Baruch). Even proselytes, however, as we have noted, were only accorded a second-class standing in the Jewish community.

51. Wilckens, I, 177.

52. Wilckens, I, 179, "Nicht unerfüllbar, sondern unerfüllt ist das Gesetz."

53. See Cranfield, I, 198. But see also van Dülmen, p. 32 n. 59 and Wilckens, I, 175-77, who bring many of the points we have noted to bear on the Gal texts. Wilckens also notes, I, 178, that the ἰδία δικαιοσύνη of Rom 10:3, Phil 3:9 must not be introduced into the discussion here, for this is a special case involving the reaction of contemporary Judaism to the gospel, i.e. a polemical exposé of Paul's previous zealousness for the law, which itself was an expression of his opposition to the gospel. The purpose of Rom 2, on the other hand, is to set forth the charge only against which the principle of justification by faith can be understood. The interpretation we have taken is clear even on the basis that Rom 2 speaks only of the unbelievers' failure to perform the law. When it is seen, however, that Gentile Christians are in the Apostle's mind (as we shall see in our examination of Rom 2: see Section IV, part A below), and that a real justification and a genuine fulfilment of the law is spoken of there (vv. 7, 10, 12-16, 25-29), it becomes even less likely that Paul would speak in 3:20 of the accomplishment of the works of the law as a negative phenomenon. Rather is he stating the simple truth that obedience to the law cannot win justification, for no one truly obeys the law. Even the Christian, whose fulfilment of the law is spoken of clearly (on our view) in Rom 2, is not accepted by God on account of this obedience (for he cannot fulfil the law any more than can the Jew or unbelieving Gentile) but rather on the basis of his justification through the work of Christ on the cross.

54. Schlier, for instance, interprets ἔργα νόμου as 'Gesetzesleistungen' (p. 101), which then allows him to see the law here as positively calling forth sin (of which there is no evidence in context), "Denn die Aussage, dass niemand aus Leistungen gegenüber dem Gesetz gerechtfertigt wird, wäre durch die Behauptung, das Gesetz lehre die Sünde bloss erkennen, nicht begründet. Dagegen hat es Sinn, zu sagen: Niemand wird durch Gesetzesleistungen gerechtfertigt. Das hat seinen Grund darin, dass das Gesetz das Gegenteil bewirkt. Es lässt die Sünde zur Erfahrung werden, es ruft die Sünde hervor." We must also reject as entirely erroneous the conclusion of Bornkamm, "Wandlungen im alt- und neutestamentlichen Gesetzesverständnis," in Geschichte und Glaube II, p. 107, "Wo immer Paulus seine Gesetzes- und Heilslehre entfaltet, stehen primär die vermeintlich Gerechten im Blick, nicht die Gesetzesübertreter und notorischen Frevler." His assertion, p. 108, that 3:20 ends the section by placing the stress not on man's guilt but "in das torakritisch abgewandelte Psalmwort" emphasizing the impossibility of law-engendered striving as a means of justification, stretches his credibility, to say the least, after all that Paul has said in 1:18-3:20 (and on Paul's use of the quotation from Ps 143:2 see (36) above and Cranfield, I, 197-98; Paul's purpose is clarificatory). Bornkamm admits that his interpretation puts 3:20 at odds with the "gut jüdische Vergeltungslehre" of 2:6-11, but resolves this by suggesting the previous verses are only "eine Station auf dem Weg," i.e. where Paul has not yet taken into account the actual effect of the law. We have seen, however, that 2:6-11 refer to present realities (and to man's position with respect to the gospel), not to some hypothetical situation in the past.

Section I, part B

Introduction

From our study thus far, we have seen that, through the law, God expresses His judgment on man's sin and rebellion. Man stands, therefore, under God's righteous condemnation in the law, and so in slavery to sin and to death. This aspect of the law's role in expressing God's righteous judgment is noted in a number of passages. In examining these texts, however, it is important to remember that in them the question of the role of the law is approached from one angle only, that of its righteous judgment on man without Christ. In this aspect of its functioning, the law undeniably removes from man any possibility of attaining freedom through his own efforts. It does so by declaring the utter inadequacy of these efforts as a means to establish a claim upon the righteousness of God. In his sinfulness and rebellion, man sinks ever more deeply into slavery. From this slavery the law brings no rescue. Indeed, its role is to sharpen the nature and consequences of man's rebellion against God, and thereby to cast him more hopelessly into despair. We shall examine in this sub-section a number of texts in which these themes are developed. In doing so, we should be mindful, however, that in these passages the Apostle's purpose is not to develop a full outline of his understanding of the law. We turn first to Romans 5:13-14, 20.

In Rom 5:12-21 Paul draws certain conclusions (διὰ τοῦτο, v. 12[1]) from what he has said in vv. 1-11 concerning the reality of Christ's work of reconciliation in the life of the believer. His principal intention is to focus on the significance of God's act in Christ (note the πολλῷ μᾶλλον theme, vv. 15ff) in bringing about this reconciliation; this he does by contrasting Adam's act of disobedience, resulting in the rule of sin and death (v. 12) with Christ's act of obedience, resulting in man's justification (v. 18).

It is to be expected that, in any discussion of the significance of God's act in Christ for men in their sinful disobedience to God, the theme of the law will be introduced, for, as we have seen (especially on 1:18-3:20) it is the law which sets forth the righteous standard of God, the standard against which human sinfulness is measured. Hence, we should expect that, in this section, even though the primary focus (as far as the subject of sin is concerned) is on Adam, Paul will make reference to that law which, more than anything else, makes clear the gravity and consequences of Adam's sinful act, as it is repeated in the lives of all who follow him. That this in fact occurs in vv. 13-14 and v. 20 should not, therefore, lead us necessarily to suppose that in these verses we find a statement concerning the entire significance or function of the law; rather are we to anticipate that the Apostle will say something concerning the law's righteous and God-given judgment on the sinful disobedience of men. We must guard, at the outset, against the tendency to see in these verses a self-contained statement expressing an exhaustive understanding of Paul's view of the law and the Christian's relation to it.

Rom 5:13-14

In v. 12 Paul recounts the story of the entrance of sin and death into the world through the disobedience of Adam, and relates this to the sinful rebellion of all Adam's descendants (ἐφ' ᾧ, v. 12d).[2] It is natural, then, that the subject of the law should be raised, as Paul relates the initial entrance of sin and man's fall into rebellion to the revelation of God's holy character in the law, which, for the Jew, represented God's ultimate judgment on that sin (though also at the same time his hope of freedom from that judgment through his own acts of law-obedience). Paul, however, has already made clear that none have in fact kept the law (or even been faithful to such revelation as has been vouchsafed to them; see 1:18-32), whose righteous judgment has therefore fallen on all men alike, both Jew and Gentile (3:10ff). The

question now arises as to how this judgment of God's holy law upon human sin relates to God's condemnation of man's initial act of rebellion, through which sin and death originally entered the world. This question is dealt with in vv. 13-14.

The conjunction γάρ, linking v. 13a to v. 12, shows that v. 13a stands as Paul's initial comment on this relationship and as his answer to the question of how sin could be in the world (i.e. in the form of actual sins -- πάντες ἥμαρτον) even when the law, which for the Jew gave God's ultimate and definitive judgment on sin, was not yet given. Paul defends his view of the universality of sin (πάντες) by reaffirming its reality even in the absence of law; v. 13b, therefore, clarifies the role of law in this situation.[3] This already cautions us against expecting a major statement here on the nature or role of the law. Paul's interest lies rather in the consequences of Adam's transgression, as repeated in the history of every man; he is concerned with the role of law only in that aspect of its existence in which it relates to the particular question of judgment upon sin.

The initial statement, ἄχρι γὰρ νόμου ἁμαρτία ἦν ἐν κόσμῳ, expresses the existence of real, personal sin before (and hence, irrespective of) the law. Sin should not pass unpunished simply because it occurs in the absence of law: this is the point of the verse.[4] Surely to be rejected is the view of Kuss that, though there were actual sins before Moses, these were not "als solche tödlich" (reckoned to death), as only the law can reckon sin to death.[5] Yet how can any form of "actual sin" not result in death? Adam's transgression resulted in death, and all have sinned after him, with the same result. What of Sodom and Gomorrah?[6] -- or even of Paul's own comments in 1:18-32? Kuss claims that Paul is not concerned with these here -- yet surely we are to credit the Apostle with some consistency in his thinking (as well as some knowledge of the OT!).[7]

The entry of the law, however, does make a difference. As the righteous and holy standard of God, the law is similar to the commandment to Adam, in that it too is a direct revelation of God to man. Disobedience to the law has the same character as disobedience to the original commandment -- yet this does not say anything negative about the law itself any more than it does about the Paradise commandment. Nor does it imply that the law brings a sentence of death which could not otherwise be reckoned (or that man has hitherto lived in a state of ignorance or even innocence, as some allege[8]). What is in fact said follows up the statement of 4:15: the law defines and clarifies

the extent and nature of (already-existing) sin to a degree not previously possible.[9] This is the meaning of v. 13b, ἁμαρτία δὲ οὐκ ἐλλογεῖται μὴ ὄντος νόμου.

Underlying this phrase, most probably, is the Jewish motif of the heavenly books in which is inscribed God's record of judgment. G. Friedrich points out that interpreters, from Chrysostom on, have traditionally tended to take ἐλλογεῖται too generally (i.e. death is reckoned only through law, while those before law die as a result of Adam's sin), whereas the real meaning is reflected in the OT accounts of the holy books (Exod 32:32-33; Isa. 65:6; Dan. 7:10), which theme becomes common in Jewish literature (En 63:9, 104:7, 108:7; P.Ab 2:1; Ap Bar 24:1), the NT parallel being found in Phlm 18. The reference is thus mercantile (see also P Ab 3:16, for reference to a merchant's reckoning book in which every item is registered). Hence, Paul refers to a "Schuldeintragung menschlicher Verfehlungen in die himmlischen Bücher," which is a particular function of the law (which makes manifest and records every transgression).[10] The presence of this motif is also noted by Schlier, who draws the conclusion that before Moses, sin 'in ihrer Grösse und in ihrer Qualität nicht in die himmlischen Bücher eingeschrieben (ist)."[11] The fact that sin and death rule over all men regardless of their exposure to the law (vv. 12, 14) means that this reckoning must be taken in a relative sense. Cranfield comments, " ... only in comparison with what takes place when the law is present can it be said that, in the law's absence, sin οὐκ ἐλλογεῖται."[12] The seriousness of sin becomes <u>fully</u> apparent and visible through the law (and, of course, through the gospel[13]). Bornkamm points out that sin's earlier reality is assumed; Paul is here pointing out "die Verschiedenheit ihres modus."[14]

Whether or not the motif of the heavenly books is in Paul's mind (Käsemann points out that the Jewish tradition refers to the final judgment whereas Paul speaks of judgment already occurring:[15] this fits well with 1:24ff; 5:12, 14), it seems clear that the explanation given above coheres with Paul's understanding of the role of the law in the history of Israel. A different explanation, however, is offered by Bultmann, who says that vv. 13-14 are an attempt by the Apostle to correct a gnostic 'Urmensch' motif he is using in the section (vv. 12-21) in order to show that the Christian life is a present reality (thus balancing the 'futurist' stress in vv. 1-11).[16] Two "Menschheit-Epochen" (a concept borrowed from a gnostic myth) are determined by the two 'Urmenschen', Adam and Christ, one of whom brings death and the other life. This motif Paul must correct to allow for the historical nature

of the Christian faith, and so he introduces personal responsibility for sin (ἐφ' ᾧ, v. 12d) and also 'heilsgeschichtliche' reflections on the role of law. The law, however, remains firmly wedded to the old aeon, even though it in some sense prepares for the new.[17] Bultmann comes to this view on the basis that, otherwise, v. 13 is "completely unintelligible," i.e. what sort of sin is it if it is not against a law? And how can it bring death if it is not reckoned?[18] We have seen, however, that for Paul sin can be counted without the law, as it is still sin against God's will (otherwise, neither Gentiles nor pre-Mosaic Jews would be under condemnation, whereas they are, according to 1:18-3:20). Also, the reckoning function of the law is not itself the source of the entry of death into the world (as 5:12 makes quite clear); man's sin, starting with Adam, is the source of death. K. Stalder notes that the law does not make the death punishment active, for sin and death are already fully present; rather does the law place sin in the right light.[19] We conclude, therefore, that v. 13 is perfectly intelligible as it stands, within the perspective of Paul's understanding of the role of the law. Indeed, it is far more likely that the 'Adam' motif is drawn from the widely-attested body of Jewish speculation on the subject, and even from the Genesis account itself. R. Scroggs argues that the various themes present in vv. 12-21 give no sufficient evidence for gnostic influence, and can more than adequately be accounted for by Paul's own theological interests, combined with the Jewish interest in Adam.[20]

Some interpreters, while not finding that the need to adapt gnostic teaching lies behind Paul's introduction of law here, feel that the subject is raised because sin would not otherwise receive its 'eschatological sharpness' or 'qualification'. E. Jüngel claims that, while Adam's sin (v. 12) and the sin of those under law (in his view, described in 1:18ff), have been noted, along with the 'eschatological' consequences (by which Jüngel appears to mean the pronouncing of God's judgment upon acts of sin), nothing has yet been said about those between Adam and Moses (as the law does not show that those between Adam and Moses have sinned).[21] Paul's goal, according to Jüngel, in vv. 13-14, is not to refute possible objections (as to, for instance, how sin would be reckoned without law -- in which case v. 14 would be Paul's response), but rather to explain how death came to all men. Thus (on this view) in v. 14 Paul draws the consequences from v. 13a, while in between (v. 13b) he has inserted an 'eschatological reservation' from his justification teaching. This 'reservation' "negatively qualifies

eschatologically" all Adam's side, i.e. the law shows the 'eschatological' consequences of sin and death (even where these occur when it is not present). Paul (according to Jüngel) thus demythologizes the gnostic myth, showing the true correspondence (between the 'Urmenschen') to be 'antithetical-eschatological' (rather than mythical) in nature. Therefore v. 14 must begin with ἀλλά (against the reservation of v. 13b) and the whole statement is drawn into the realm of Paul's justification teaching.[22]

This view obviously suffers from the need it exhibits to fit vv. 13-14 into the Procrustean bed of the gnostic schema, which theory assumes that the original (gnostic) material around which the passage is built is mythological and hence 'non-eschatological', and that the question of law is introduced to adapt the schema to Paul's teaching on sin and justification through faith in Christ. If, however, as we have seen likely, this is not the case, then we are able to take a clearer view of the text, which itself speaks plainly of God's ('eschatological') judgment both on the sin of Adam and on the sin of those who follow him. The law is not introduced simply as a means of asserting God's judgment on all human sin -- this judgment comes, says Paul, upon Adam and all who follow him even though the law does not enter into the picture at all! This makes much more sense of the relation of vv. 12-21 to 1:18ff, for this is precisely what the latter text also asserts.

On Jüngel's view, the law becomes merely the instrument for God's judgment, and this plays into the hands of those who see this passage as asserting that the law is bound to the old aeon and is thus, along with sin and death, one of the triad of powers from which the man justified by faith in Christ is freed. The text, however, says that God's judgment on sin comes regardless of whether the law is involved or not. And what is to be said of Jüngel's view that 1:18ff portrays the situation of man under law? Rather is it true that these verses show that the 'eschatological' judgment of God has already come (1:18-32) on those who are manifestly without the law of God (but who through revelation in creation are wholly responsible to Him for their own sin) -- the same as is meant by v. 14 (ἀλλά having the effect of stressing the universal and real nature of God's judgment regardless of what is said in v. 13b concerning the presence or absence of the law). This allows us to give v. 13b the perfectly natural signification suggested above. This also makes nonsense of Wilckens' statement that sin needs the law to take on its 'eschatological' significance as κατάκριμα.[23]

It is certainly true that the law, precisely because it gives graciously to man an unparalleled opportunity for obedience to God and a far deeper knowledge of God than ever had been possible hitherto, highlights the guilt of man and his utter failure to please God, and thus points up the justness and the seriousness of God's judgment on man. Surely, however, the point Paul wishes to make here is that indicated in v. 12, viz. that God's judgment is pronounced on man in that, through the sin of Adam, death has entered the world. This also gives the whole Adam/Christ parallel (or contrast) its particular stress.

Other observers mistakenly see this parallelism as indicating the law is merely a secondary episode or interlude in a world history dominated by the opposing forces of sin and grace (or life and death).[24] This again, however, mistakes Paul's brief allusion to law here as a major statement on the law's basic or even exclusive function (a function which, we note once more, could as well be predicated of the gospel). Jüngel, while mistaken in asserting that only the law's introduction makes the Adam/Christ parallel theologically possible (surely an inversion of the truth) is correct in seeing that Paul's motive here is not to restrict (einschränken) the place or role of the law by assigning it an in any way inferior status.[25] This matter will receive further treatment below.

Rom 5:20

The Apostle, having in the intervening verses (15-19) set forth the Adam/Christ theme within the framework of the πολλῷ μᾶλλον motif (possibly a reflection of the Rabbinic 'qal-wahomer' device[26]), refers once more in v. 20 to the role of the law. Again we see the subject introduced not with a view to making an exhaustive statement on the law's role, but rather, as in vv. 13-14, with the aim of making clear exactly what bearing the law has on the particular situation in question.

We must therefore see the opening words of the verse, νόμος δὲ παρεισῆλθεν in a similar light to v. 13b, ἁμαρτία δὲ οὐκ ἐλλογεῖται, κτλ., i.e. Paul is making a simple and straightforward assertion regarding the fact that the law entered the scene at a later date than Adam's transgression and the 'unreckoned' sin that followed. Doubtful are the views of some who see in παρεισῆλθεν a direct linguistic parallel to Gal 2:4, οἵτινες παρεισῆλθεν κατασκοπῆσαι τὴν ἐλευθερίαν ἡμῶν, where the connotation of the word is undeniably pejorative. This view, held by Schmidt and Schlier,[27] which suggests that the law could be compared to the Galatian interlopers, is, as we shall see, clearly at odds with

Paul's view of the law and its divine origin (see especially on 7:12,14) and is rejected by most other commentators (partly on the basis that Gal 2:4 is the only other occurrence of the word in the NT, and the word need not have a negative sense in classical usage[28]).[29]

Many observers, however, while not seeing in νόμος δὲ παρεισῆλθεν a direct parallel to Gal 2:4, do believe that the statement conveys a negative view of the law's role, and they therefore link the verse to Gal 3:19, τῶν παραβάσεων χάριν προσετέθη, κτλ. Michel says that the fact the law has entered at a subsequent date means it is no legitimate answer to the quest for life,[30] while Käsemann claims the phrase indicates that the law is a 'Zwischenspiel', signifying "dass das Gesetz keine Anknüpfungsmöglichkeit für die Welt des Christus darstellt" and that the realm of sin and death (and law) is never made "zum Ort der neuen Geschichte."[31] A similar note is sounded by Kuss, " ... weit entfernt also, das Generalthema der Heilsgeschichte zu sein, ist es lediglich ein Intermezzo, ein Zwischenspiel, das selbstständige Bedeutung nicht hat."[32] Sanday/Headlam and C. A. A. Scott describe the law as a parenthesis or afterthought,[33] and Leenhardt makes the astounding statement that Paul is saying the law "was not foreseen in the original plan of God ...."[34] J. Cambier alleges that the law is only mentioned in v. 20 to show the superiority of Christ over Adam, and that the law "n'est pas un événement majeur dans l'histoire religieuse de l'humanité .... Non seulement la Loi ne constitue pas un changement dans la situation religieuse de l'homme, mais elle n'est qu'un épisode du premier régime et elle en a renforcé la nuisance."[35] A similar position is taken by many others.[36]

This view is based largely on the assumption that the succeeding ἵνα-clause gives the main reason for the law's existence. The law was given to multiply transgressions and thereby lead man into a situation of despair in which he would cry out for grace. Bultmann writes, "Thus, the Law leads into sin the man who has forsaken his creaturely relation to God and wants to procure life for and by himself; it does this in order to bring him back again to the right relation with God. This it does by confronting him with the grace of God which is to be appropriated in faith."[37] For van Dülmen, v. 20b gives the law's function and shows that " ... die Machtstellung des alten Aion selbst im Heilsplan Gottes liegt, von Gott bewirkt ist, damit der allgemeinen Heillosigkeit auch ein allgemeiner Zugang zum Heil in Christus entsprechen kann."[38] Kuss comments, "Paulus fügt das Gesetz als einen Multiplikator auf die Minusseite seiner heilsgeschichtlichen- und individuellen Heils- und

Unheilsrechnung ein ...;" the law leads into sin and thus shows the exclusive efficacity of the work of Christ in obtaining justification.[39] This view is shared by many others.[40]

Some, indeed, take the position that the law itself is inextricably linked to sin and death, and is thus to be seen as a 'power' or 'factor' of the old aeon, having no connection or affinity with the new era in Christ. For Käsemann, not only is the law not a way of salvation, "gehört vielmehr faktisch und nach seiner Wirkung auf die Seite von Sünde und Tod."[41] Bläser, in noting the final nature of the ἵνα-clause,[42] comments that the law, far from being merely the occasion for sin, was given with the express and exclusive purpose of increasing it: the law, by its very nature as γράμμα, brings death.[43] One of the clearest statements comes from van Dülmen, "Waren vor Christus diese Unheilsmächte dem Menschen in ihrem Herrschen nur als einheitlich und unterschiedslos erfahrbar, so erweist sich nun das Gesetz als der entscheidende Punkt, an dem sich Freiheit oder Versklavung an die unheilzeugende Einheit der Mächte Gesetze, Sünde, Freiheit und Tode entscheidet. Von hier aus gesehen, wird das Gesetz auch für die Zeit vor dem Glauben also ausschlaggebender Anlass allen Verderbens sichtbar. Diese Funktion, nicht seine Wesen, macht das Gesetz zur Unheilsmacht. Denn seine Heiligkeit bleibt für Paulus ausser Zweifel."[44] For Cambier, the law is "pratiquement dans le Camp du Péché,"[45] and Luz, describing 5:12-21 as the only place Paul speaks of 'Unheilsgeschichte' as such, says that the law becomes part of the 'Unheilsgeschichte' overcome by Christ; both Adam and the law are 'Chiffren' for the power of sin from which we are freed in Christ.[46] Kuss and Stalder, indeed, go so far as to distinguish between the law and the will of God. The law cannot alter the "ursprünglichen und fundamentalen Willen Gottes ...," according to Kuss;[47] Stalder says that, according to this section, man cannot obey the law because in it he cannot hear God's will, only a witness to it.[48]

In these views there is a certain element of truth. The law, as we have seen (3:20; 5:13-14; see also on 4:15) does lead man into a deeper knowledge of his sin and makes visible and tangible the serious consequences and nature of his rebellion against God. To see in this, however, a statement concerning the primary role of the law is, as we pointed out earlier, totally mistaken. Rather does this section itself make clear that death is brought about entirely by man's sin, and that this dilemma is only deepened by the law's arrival. That this deepening has occurred, however, is but a secondary function of the giving of the law -- which expresses, as we have noted, the holy and righteous

will of God and is given to man that he might obey it and thereby live a life pleasing to God (see 2:6-11, 12-16, 25-29). The law, as we shall see, bears witness to the righteous purposes of God in Christ (3:21) and is hence established (3:31) and fulfilled (8:4) in Him.

This point is made clear in Karl Barth's treatment of this text.[49] Barth notes that the effect of the law is not to create sin as such; rather does it express God's election of Israel -- the "optimum of God's good will."[50] In v. 20, Paul expounds the truth that Christ was fully subject to the law, stood in man's place and received the full brunt of God's wrath against sin.[51] From man's point of view, there is no way from Adam's sin to the grace made manifest in Christ -- but there is a way vice-versa: Christ fulfils the law and 'becomes' the second Adam.[52] Hence, continues Barth, the law does not in any way detract from the central theme of the section (Adam and Christ). Indeed, "To know what the Law means is rather the strongest, and, for Paul, the decisive proof that Adam is subordinate to Christ, and that our relationship to Adam is less essential than our relationship to Christ."[53]

The critique levelled at this view by Bultmann brings out the true basis of the negative understanding of the law's function held by the scholars noted above. Bultmann charges that while Barth rightly sees the entry of the law (v. 20) as the 'Anknüpfungspunkt' and 'Ausgangspunkt' of grace, he has misunderstood the nature of sin. Bultmann declares, "Der innere Zusammenhang von Sünde und Gnade ist jedoch nicht gesehen, wenn nicht als Höhepunkt bzw. als das eigentliche Wesen der Sünde die καύχησις gesehen ist. Daher ist die heilsgeschichtliche Sinn des Gesetzes nicht erfasst."[54] Yet the erroneous nature of this view we have already seen shown in our discussion of 1:18-3:20 (see also on 3:21-31) and, as Wilckens notes, the same is true here.[55] While it is without doubt true that man's sinfulness runs so deeply in his character that he will even try to claim a righteous status before God on the basis of his own imperfect and often improperly-motivated works of law obedience, the basic character of sin is transgression against the revealed law of God (which is certainly <u>not</u> distinct from the will of God, according to these Pauline texts!), and the further assertion of Bultmann that it is not the atoning work of Christ of which Paul speaks here but rather the triumph of grace over sin is intolerable -- what (for Paul) is the triumph of grace over sin if not that which is accomplished in the work of Christ on the cross (οὕτως καὶ δι' ἑνὸς δικαιώματος εἰς πάντας ἀνθρώπους εἰς δικαίωσιν ζωῆς, v. 18b; cf 3:25)?

In vv. 13-14 and again in v. 20 the law is not treated as a major theme (and so perhaps Barth's view of the importance of the law as it appears in this particular context is slightly overstated), yet it is not unrelated to the Adam/Christ parallel, which is the section's main feature, and Paul betrays no sense of awkwardness in introducing the topic. From what we have seen of Paul's view of the law we can conclude that here, as in 3:20 (see also on 4:15) we have a reminder that the law, by (graciously!) revealing the righteous will of God, does require a response, and brings God's righteous judgment on those who fail to obey its requirements. With this in mind, we can readily concur with Cranfield that, following the normal usage of classical Greek, "the most natural way of understanding παρεισῆλθεν here is surely to take it as a simple reference to the undisputed fact that the law was given at a later date than that of Adam's fall, namely, in the time of Moses. To refer to this fact is not, in itself, to say anything about the worth of the law depreciatory or otherwise."[56] This coheres well with what we have seen above concerning vv. 13-14, and with what we have seen in general regarding Paul's understanding of the law in Romans -- particularly with what is said concerning law and promise in ch. 4 (see our comments in loc.).

We may follow the view of most commentators in seeing one function of the law, in bringing the revelation of the righteous will of God, as making sin manifest: this much is clear from 3:20. But we must beware (as was the case with vv. 13-14) against attributing to the small ἵνα-clause, inserted into the discussion of another, albeit related, theme, a significance beyond its true bounds. This is why Cranfield notes, "The clause it introduces states not, of course, the whole purpose of God in giving the law but an important part of it -- an intermediate object, not the ultimate goal of the divine action."[57] Cranfield goes on to point out that the phrase πλεονάσῃ τὸ παράπτωμα here refers not only to the making manifest of sin particularly in the history of Israel, but also to the fact that sin, when committed against the revealed law, does take on the character of deliberate disobedience and in this sense is 'increased' (the third sense, that of man's response to the law manifesting itself as self-righteous endeavour, is not excluded).[58] In this sense we may agree with Wilckens that the law gives sin an "endzeitliche Vernichtungskraft" (though God's judgment certainly comes on all those who have sinned, with or without the law; see (18) above).[59]

There is a sense, then, in which God's judgment on sin is heightened by the giving of the law, and this facet of the law's working is

expressed in vv. 13-14 and v. 20. To take this, however, as the definitive statement regarding the function of the law is, surely, mistaken, as is the attempt to see here a portrayal of the law as one of the negative powers of the "old aeon", or as rooted totally in 'Unheilsgeschichte' (however this is defined!) and without any role in the new era, for none of which assertions is there any evidence in these verses. Such views are impossible to reconcile with Paul's understanding of the law as holy and righteous, and also ignores his positive statements regarding the role of the law in the Christian life (see on 8:4; 13:8-10; Gal 5:14, etc.). When placed in this perspective, it can readily be seen that according to the natural sense of the text, what Paul speaks of here is one aspect of the law's functioning which itself (v. 21b) is used by God for His own gracious purposes. Cranfield comments, "When this is realized, it is possible to see that the law, even in its apparently negative and disastrous effects is, for Paul, the instrument of the mercy of God; and the theological justification for insisting on a depreciatory interpretation of παρεισῆλθεν disappears."[60]

Rom 7:5

The same theme, the law's just judgment on sin, is dealt with in 7:5. Here again we must guard against a false isolation of the text from the wider framework of the Apostle's understanding of law and freedom. Many scholars, for instance, see here a statement that the law's role is exclusively negative, limited to sealing man's slavery to sin and depriving him of freedom. A correct understanding of the texts we have already examined in our study will aid us here.

The verse as a whole reads, ὅτε γὰρ ἦμεν ἐν τῇ σαρκί, τὰ παθήματα τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν τὰ διὰ τοῦ νόμου ἐνηργεῖτο ἐν τοῖς μέλεσιν ἡμῶν εἰς τὸ καρποφορῆσαι τῷ θανάτῳ. A sampling of the views of the scholars mentioned above is instructive. Leenhardt comments, "The old status was characterized by the nefarious influence of the law which had the effect of inciting man to sinful deeds, thus leading him in the way of death."[61] Schlier links the verse to 3:20, and suggests that the law calls forth sins.[62] Lietzmann sees sin and law being in an "ursachliche Zusammenhang," and that now "die neue Periode der Gesetzesfreiheit ist die der Gerechtigkeit."[63] Käsemann suggests that the παθήματα are activated through the law, and links this with the idea expressed in 5:20.[64] Kuss interprets διὰ τοῦ νόμου as meaning "with the help of the law,"[65] and Michel suggests that in this situation the law is of no positive value but becomes "eine verstärkte Bedrohung."[66] Althaus adds that sin is brought about not in spite of but because of the law.[67]

The difficulty with these assertions is that they tend to place the blame for man's predicament on something in the law itself, rather than on human sin, where surely, according to what we have seen hitherto in Romans, it belongs. According to Bultmann on v. 5, the actual aim of the law is to produce self-righteous boasting in man, which then leads him to a position of despair in which he is ready to acknowledge the grace of God.[68] Ridderbos, however, points out that the παθήματα here are not the strivings of man to produce his own self-righteousness but are rather deliberate acts of disobedience and transgression of the law itself[69] -- and it is this transgression which is so strongly condemned both by God and by the Apostle. This, however, shows that the relationship between law and sin presupposed by the writers cited above is not quite as they think. Kümmel is closer to the mark when he says that all that is shown here is that "das Gesetz irgendwie Ursache der παθήματα ist ...."[70] Even this, however, does not see things in the right perspective.

A better answer is found by adverting to two of the texts noted by writers cited above, viz. Rom 3:20 and 5:20. When we turn to these texts, however, we see a different picture to that supposed by these writers. In both texts Paul declares (as we have shown) that the law does indeed add to man's consciousness of sin (and righteousness) and hence, to the gravity of his disobedience (the same is true, of course, a fortiori, of the gospel). Instead of suggesting, though, that it is the law which is to blame, and that hence, the only solution is to remove the law from the picture, Paul insists (in the larger context, see 1:18-3:20) that it is because the law is wholly good and righteous that man is condemned for disobeying it, and that God's plan (according to 2:12-16, 25-29; 3:27, 31) is to bring man into a right relationship with the law through removing its condemnation upon him.

In light of what we have seen concerning 3:20 and 5:20 (as well as 4:15 and 5:13-14), it seems reasonable to suppose that the same kind of reality is described here, i.e. that the law brings about a deeper realization of the righteousness of God, and so leads in man either to greater wilful disobedience (greater because he knows what he ought to do yet is unwilling to do it) or even to deep hypocrisy in carrying out ordinances of the law in a superficial way so as to appear righteous (and even claim to be so) while spurning true obedience in the heart. The real cause of all this, however, is sin, not the law -- and hence 7:5 makes no ultimately negative statement about the law, but only underscores even more heavily the seriousness of man's rebellion against it.

It is the παθήματα which, according to v. 5, lead to the "bearing fruit for death," which are the source of condemnation. Even though they may have been stimulated by the law, they, not the law (always for Paul the righteous and just standard of God) are responsible for man's situation. It is, after all, the law which condemns the παθήματα -- how could the (righteous) law be said seriously to condemn itself?[71]

This understanding of the law's role in the exposing and condemnation of sin is not confined to Romans. We find the same themes set forth clearly in Galatians. Here, because of the fierce nature of the Apostle's battle against the Judaizers, the relevant points are stated plainly. We look first at Gal 3:19-20, 23-25.

Gal 3:19-20

The Apostle has spoken in vv. 15-18 concerning the function of the law in relation to the promise (on which see Section II of our study). Paul now enquires rhetorically concerning the role of the law.[72] It must not be assumed, however (see our comments on Rom 5:13 f., 20), that the ensuing statements will necessarily exhaust all the apostle has to say on this subject. More likely is it the case that, in framing his comments, he is responding to the particular needs and concerns of the situation at hand. With this in mind we may look more closely at the text.

The first affirmation here is that the law was added (προσετέθη) τῶν παραβάσεων χάριν. According to Betz, Paul's purpose here is to oppose the Jewish view that the Torah was given as a protection against transgression; rather does he argue that the Torah, far from preventing transgressions, produces them. In Betz' view, this 'particularistic' Jewish Torah, added at a later date, is to be contrasted with Paul's conception of the universal "Torah of God" (Gal 5:14; 6:2; Rom 7:12) and is here "radically devalued".[73] Schlier, linking the text to Rom 5:20, sees the law as " ... ein Nebenfaktor ... eine Interpolation ..."; he also takes the view that the law produces sin.[74] According to Schlier, law is that which is objectively opposite to righteousness in the divine plan; it always brings transgression to pass, and in this sense is the power of sin, i.e. " ... das, was die Sünde stark und vermögend macht, was sie imstand setzt, wirksame Sünde zu sein."[75]

In the 'belated' entry of the law Oepke (drawing on παρεισῆλθεν, Rom 5:20) sees a fatal similarity to the παρεισέρχομαι of the false brethren of 2:4.[76] Schulz observes that the law changes sin into

transgression, and deduces from this the secondary and temporary nature of the law: there is no positive value to the law when it is placed beside the gospel.[77] According to Bammel, προσετέθη indicates that the law is subordinate and supplementary to God's true covenant (the promise), whose fulfilment ends its validity.[78] The law, says Becker, has nothing in common with the promise; it only shows sinners as law breakers -- and so the statement here is exclusively 'abwertende' with respect to the law.[79] All these commentators agree that the law is a negative factor from whose power we must be freed in Christ.

There is, in our view, no doubt that Paul is speaking here of a function of the law which involves branding sin as conscious transgression and rebellion against God, thus bringing God's judgment against human sin more clearly into focus. This does not mean, however, that the law creates sin. Rather, as Mussner correctly observes, "Das Gesetz macht vielmehr die Sünde zur bewussten Übertretung ...."[80] That this is a genuine function of the law, though, does not mean that it is the law's only function. R. Bring notes that it is precisely in its function as a witness to the righteousness of God (a role it could not fulfil were it that which is 'objectively opposite' to God's righteousness, as Schlier would have it) that the law lays bare sin and thus 'increases' transgression.[81] Hence, continues Bring correctly, the law is " ... keine Grösse abgesehen von Gott, sondern ... ein Glied im Heilshandeln Gottes." The true law " ... steht in Verbindung mit dem Glauben, weil der Glauben Erfüllung des Gesetzes ist und sein Endziel bedeutet."[82]

We must remember that Paul is speaking in Galatians against Judaizers who have placed the law on a level superior to that of the promise, thus twisting, in Paul's eyes, the true purpose of the law. The Apostle must therefore seek to restore a balance and, in so doing, must inevitably point out the genuine limitations of the law -- which, by itself, on account of the sinfulness of man, will not lead to justification, but which serves a valid and necessary function in bringing transgression into focus and providing the clear ground for God's judgment on it. However, that the law and the promise are not to be sundered has already been seen in our treatment of vv. 6-14, which underlines further the point that in vv. 19-20 Paul is not offering his opinion on the exclusive purpose or significance of the law, but is rather pointing out features of the law which need elaborating in order to correct the errors introduced by the Judaizers.

This seems to provide a much more satisfactory view of the relationship between 3:19-20, on the one hand, and 5:14; 6:2, on the other,

than does Betz' conjecture concerning the 'particularistic' versus the 'universal' law, a supposition for which no evidence is given, and for which none appears in the text. Betz' view is necessitated by his (on our view) erroneous understanding of vv. 19-20 as conveying the exclusive function of the law. This then leaves him unable to account for other, equally clear references to different roles of the same law noted elsewhere in Paul (even elsewhere in Galatians). The same misunderstanding (as we see it) underlies Schlier's characterization of the law as a "Nebenfaktor" or "Interpolation". Paul does say that the law is not to supplant the promise -- but to take this as proof that the law is merely a secondary factor, and to draw from this (as does Schlier) the further conclusion that it is opposed to righteousness in the divine plan is surely mistaken. Is it not indeed possible that Paul uses 'law' here in a slightly limited sense, perhaps focussing on that aspect of it which, in a 'legalistic' sense, judges sin without mercy and holds men rigorously under the judgment of the all-holy God?[83] It can thus be seen how this aspect of the law's work -- not the law itself -- comes to an end in Christ (v. 19b). The relationship of law and promise, however, is far more complex than the simple either/or assumed by many commentators.

Further, to take the 'addition' of the law in v. 19 as in any sense analogous to the entry of the false brethren in 2:4, only on the grounds that παρεισέρχομαι occurs in 2:4 and Rom 5:20 (and not Gal 3:19!) is surely unjustified. There is no indication, pace Burton and Oepke, that προσετέθη here has any negative connotation: it is (we suggest) merely a chronological statement (and may refer to the law in the slightly more limited sense we mentioned above). That the law was added, notes Bring rightly, does not mean it was not added by God.[84] In sum, none of the commentators cited above has given any ground for their common assumption that in these verses the law is referred to in an absolutely derogatory or depreciatory sense.[85] Rather is Paul attempting, in the midst of a difficult and delicate pastoral situation, to correct an erroneous conception of the law's role in justification by placing it more carefully in its proper relationship to the promise.

Gal 3:23-25

The participle συγκλειόμενοι (v. 23) links v. 22 and v. 23 and leads into Paul's further metaphor of the παιδαγωγός. This should be seen in close conjunction with the preceding verses. It is clear that we are dealing here with a function of the law which, strictly speaking, is no longer operative for the Christian, who has found freedom in Christ

(οὐκέτι, v. 25). This indicates, as does ἄχρις ἄν (v. 19) and ἵνα ... δοθῇ (v. 22) that, with the coming of Christ, we are freed in Him from the just condemnation of the law -- an entirely Pauline theme. It must, however, be remembered that in no part of this section are we dealing with the exclusive function of the law, and taking note of this makes our examination of vv. 23-25 fairly straightforward.

Without entering into a lengthy discussion of the role of the παιδαγωγός in contemporary society, we can see that the reference here suggests the law's function of judging sin and holding men under the divine condemnation it justly expresses. It is unlikely that the παιδαγωγός-image is meant to suggest any kind of positive instruction in the sense of cultivating virtues or preparing men more easily to receive and recognize the gospel by improving their character.[86] This, however, involves a positive, God-ordained function of the law, in that the law had to watch that sin remained sin. Mussner notes, "Weil aber die Sünde nicht aufhörte, musste das Gesetz sein Amt immerzu beibehalten; es konnte nicht selber vom 'Zusammenschluss' aller unter die Sünde befreien."[87] Bring notes rightly that the Judaizers' error lay in assuming that men could use the law for the attainment of justification and true freedom, whereas the Apostle makes it clear that man's freedom has been lost through his wilful disobedience and can be regained only in Christ.[88] To be in Christ is to be free from the law's condemnation, and hence to be free to live for God. This, however, while underlining the law's role in bringing God's just verdict against sin, does not in any way exhaust its meaning or significance for the Christian.

There is, therefore, no basis for the view of Betz that Paul's use of the παιδαγωγός-image here "presumes a radical devaluation of the Law .... On account of this devaluation, the paidagogos becomes an ugly figure, comparable to Fate." Betz further links existence under the παιδαγωγός with existence under the στοιχεῖα (see on 4:1-11), yet tries to harmonize this with the (even for him) undeniable conclusion that for Paul the law is part of God's saving plan for men.[89] There is no evidence whatever for the totally alien intrusion of 'Fate' into the text (see also (66) above). Part of the misunderstanding comes from the mistaken idea[90] that these verses show the law has only a limited, negative function, whereas what is in fact demonstrated is a limited aspect of the fuller role of the law.[91] Rather should we listen to K. Berger, who points out that it is this limited aspect of the function of the law (condemnation of the sin of men standing outside the grace of God) which ceases with the coming of faith,[92] and it is hence in this restricted

sense that the text speaks of the Christian's freedom from the law. The statement of K. Kertelge that, according to v. 23, being under law is defined as living in 'Unfreiheit'[93] only makes sense if understood in the sense of living under the obligation to win justification through one's own performance of the law. Kertelge himself notes that being freed from the law in Christ (that is, as we would understand it, being freed from the law's just condemnation) does not involve a straightforward freeing from the law's commands.[94]

Gal 3:6-14

Our study thus far has made it clear that man's bondage does not come from anything in the law itself but rather from his sinful rebellion against God, which perverts the law and brings him under its just condemnation. In Gal 3:6-14, this argument is taken a step further. The Apostle shows that, even as the curse (κατάρα, v. 10) came upon man strictly because of his disobedience to the law, so obedience to the law would have resulted in a different outcome. The law, by pronouncing God's judgment on sin, has sealed man's condition of slavery. The implication here, however, is that the end to this slavery will come not through rejection of the law, but through admission of our failure to obey it and decision to embark upon a course of obedience. The passage thus points to the harmony of law and faith in the attainment of freedom through the promise. In the course of this exposition the Apostle develops the all-important distinction between true obedience to the law and human legalism. It is, indeed, through the law that the sentence of slavery is pronounced. However, it is through legalistic perversion of the law and lack of genuine obedience to it that man enters into disobedience and thus comes under the curse. Through his own efforts there is no way to freedom. It is his legalistic perversion of the law, however, not the law itself, which bars him from attaining true freedom. The law, while it pronounces divine condemnation (God's righteous judgment on human sin) should not be somehow identified with slavery or regarded as its source. This source as we have seen above and will see again here, is human sin.

After pointing out to the Galatians (3:1-5) that their receipt of the Holy Spirit came through the hearing of faith (ἐξ ἀκοῆς πίστεως) rather than legalistic misuse of the law (ἐξ ἔργων νόμου, vv. 2, 5), Paul now addresses them on their understanding (γινώσκετε, v. 7) of what the Scripture teaches regarding justification ἐκ πίστεως and ἐξ ἔργων νόμου. He commences by a reference to the situation of Abraham (vv. 6-9), then, through a catena of Biblical quotations, makes several

observations with a more general reference (vv. 10-13), concluding with a further allusion to Abraham (v. 14).

In vv. 6-9, citing Gen 15:6 and 12:3, Paul seeks to counter the conclusion drawn by his opponents that, as shown by the example of Abraham (considered by Jews as the model of faith and piety),[95] fulfilment of religious ritual (certainly circumcision, cf. 5:1ff; probably also observance of special days, cf. 4:8-11), rather than faith only, was necessary for justification.[96] Schlier points out correctly that Abraham's justification was brought about through an act of God's blessing (εὐλογεῖν), not through any act of merit (including his faith).[97] Therefore, it is Christians, even Gentile Christians (τὰ ἔθνη, v. 8) who are the true sons of Abraham, for they share his faith in the one God of Israel.[98] This, it should be noted, places Christians in a positive relationship with God's revelation to Israel in the law.[99]

We find a lack of clarity, therefore, in the view of Schlier that here Paul demonstrates that Scripture shows the "Heilsprinzip des Glaubens und das Unheil des Gesetzes."[100] Undoubtedly Paul wishes to indicate that Scripture teaches justification by faith: but what does Schlier mean by "das Unheil des Gesetzes"? In line with what we shall see in Gal 2 (and throughout Romans) we could only accept this interpretation if by it were meant that through the way of legalism can no man attain justification in God's sight. Surely there is no negative comment made here about the law as such. Indeed, it is the law itself which Paul cites (vv. 6, 8) to support (indeed, in a sense, to discover) the principle of justification by faith.[101] How can this signify "das Unheil des Gesetzes"?

Schlier's comment on v. 7 that here Paul opposes those who live ἐξ ἔργων νόμου and claim Abraham as father "auf Grund der Gemeinschaft in der Gesetzesleistungen"[102] can only be accepted with the same qualification. Surely to be doubted is the view of Betz that the example of Abraham shows (for Paul) that faith stands in opposition to Torah obedience, and that Paul has dissolved the 'uneasy union' of faith and works in Judaism (but what of Gal 5:6, πίστις δι' ἀγάπης ἐνεργουμένη?). There is in fact no condemnation here of any works or acts of obedience to the law. All that is said is that one is not justified merely by virtue of being circumcised.

V. 10, commentators are agreed, presents an "argumentum e contrario" in support of what has been said in vv. 6-9.[103] Whereas those who are the sons of Abraham receive the blessing of God, those who seek by self-righteous endeavour to win their own justification are under a curse, for they attain no genuine fulfilment of the law. Burton correctly points

out that ὅσοι ... ἐξ ἔργων νόμου are to be distinguished from οἱ ποιηταὶ νόμου of Rom 2:13 (a reference, we shall see, to Christian believers who in some sense have achieved a measure of genuine law obedience) who are to be justified. Those living ἐξ ἔργων νόμου, on the other hand, are " ... men whose standing and character proceed from (ἐκ) works of legalistic obedience to statutes."[104]

Many commentators, however, find the problem here lying with the works of the law themselves rather than man's misuse of them. Betz, after admitting that ὅσοι ... ἐξ ἔργων νόμου refers to those who rely on works of the Torah in order to gain their own justification, then suggests that the difficulty lies not with mistaken or wrongful human practices, but in the fact that the Torah was " ... not given to be faithfully obeyed as the law, but for the purpose of breaking it and generating sin."[105] After conceding that what Paul denies here is that the Jewish concept of works of the Torah can lead a man to the way of true Torah-fulfilment, Betz finds the reason in that the Torah was an inferior entity given for transgression, not to lead to justification and eternal life.[106] We would suggest that the two halves of Betz' reasoning do not cohere. Either the problem lies in man's attitude toward, or practice of, the law, or it lies in the law itself -- in which case man is not to blame. Why, then, however, has he come under God's curse (κατάρα)? Why is Paul's warning (v. 10) directed against human legalism -- and why does he use as a basis for this warning the authority of the law itself (even as he has used it to undergird the promise of blessing in vv. 6-9)? How, at any rate, can the Torah have been given for the purpose of breaking itself? No explanation for this assertion is offered by Betz. Deut 27:26, however, quoted here by Paul, itself warns that lack of genuine law obedience will result in God's curse.

Commentators generally take the view that man cannot attain justification through the law because the law sets up a target (πᾶσιν τοῖς γεγραμμένοις, κτλ.) which it is impossible to fulfil or reach: no one can obey all the law's commands, and so none can be justified. This view, while retaining the thought that the commands themselves originated with God, and recognizing that man, in his frailty, is utterly unable to satisfy all the law's righteous demands, can leave the way open for the blame for the situation to be placed, at least partially, on the law itself, and seems to underlie Schlier's contention that those who live by the principle of 'Gebotserfüllungen' are cursed. He interprets πᾶσιν τοῖς γεγραμμένοις κτλ. as referring to

the realm of the 'Geschriebenen' (as opposed, we are left to infer, to that of the 'spiritual').[107]

Becker claims that, according to Paul, Deut 27:26 indicates that the smallest transgression of the law brings a curse; hence, all are cursed, because true law-fulfilment is impossible (though he puts the blame for this primarily on human inability, secondarily only on the law).[108] According to Mussner, Paul does not have to add anything to the threatening Deuteronomy quotation, because the threat will work itself out anyway, as none can fulfil the law.[109] This implies, however, a kind of fatalism or doom to which man is committed on account of the law. J. Tyson reinforces this view by saying that the man living by law is trapped "because the law itself commits him to a series of impotent conditions" which cannot possibly result in justification.[110] Klein finds the problem in the nature of the law, i.e. that it involves doing rather than believing. For him, the law hinders faith not because of its partial fulfilment, but " ... weil es eine Existenzdimension einrichtet, in der das Leben das Produkt des Tuns ist ...."[111] This view, however, is already refuted by Mussner, who points out that ποιῆσαι is linked with the promise, not the curse, and it is the non-fulfilment of the law which is condemned.[112] Even he, though, claims that because none fulfil the law, the ποιῆσαι for Paul " ... zu einem unbrauchbaren Heilsprinzip wird und an seiner Stelle ein anderes Heilsprinzip gesucht werden muss ...."[113]

This view leaves these commentators with the problem that (as they concede) the Scripture itself clearly teaches the fulfilability of the law -- so Paul must interpret the Scripture here in such a way that he reverses its actual meaning. Van Dülmen states that Paul simply gives the text a meaning opposite to its own.[114] Oepke suggests that it is because Paul (not Deuteronomy!) judges by an absolute standard that he comes to a conclusion opposite that of the OT text.[115] This seems, however, to be a counsel of despair. How could Paul, respectful always of the authority of Scripture[116] and desiring here to use it as a proof by which to convince wavering Judaizers or Galatians, quote a well-known text only to give it a meaning opposite to that it clearly had?

A first step toward constructing a more reasonable solution is found in Berger's comment, "Das Gesetz bringt also nicht aus sich Fluch hervor, sondern nur sein Nicht-Erfüllung!"[117] There is nothing in the nature of the law itself, or of its commands, that brings a curse upon man. Only disobedience to the law brings this result. This much is in clear accordance with Deut 27:26. The fact that the law has never

been fully obeyed by man (and never will be) is to be explained by a defect in man, not in the law. We consider, therefore, that the phrase ἐξ ἔργων νόμου here, as in ch. 2, represents not any genuine attempt to fulfil the law's righteous demands, but rather refers to man's cynical and sinful perversion of the law into a means by which he may claim to have satisfied God's righteous requirements through his own efforts. The Deuteronomy text proves only that a curse rests on those who do not fulfil the law's demands; most observers, as we have noted, agree on this. If by a life lived ἐξ ἔργων νόμου, Paul means, therefore, a life lived not in genuine pursuit of fulfilment of the law, but rather in the perverted misuse of the law to gain justification (by which pursuit honour cannot possibly be given to God), he can justifiably use the Deuteronomy text to show that the legalists, by their misuse of the law, have clearly not succeeded in satisfying its righteous demands. This is why he states clearly that these legalists, who make such an issue of circumcision, do not in fact at all adequately fulfil the law's requirements (6:13).

It is very probable, in our view, that this sheds light on v. 10. Paul is arguing against people who require submission to circumcision as necessary for justification. Knowing, however, that they have made a mockery of most of the rest of the law's requirements, he uses Deuteronomy 27:26 to show up their woefully inadequate degree of fulfilment of the law. Even those measures they do fulfil are performed in a legalistic spirit. On this understanding, therefore, it is not genuine attempts at fulfilling the law which are condemned as inadequate (and thus culpable), let alone that the law, or its commands, are seen as defective or curse-bringing in themselves. In light of man's fallen and sinful condition, a perfect fulfilment of the law will never be forthcoming. Paul does, however, make the contrast here between genuine law-fulfilment, envisioned as possible both by himself and by Deuteronomy (possible, that is, not through our own efforts but only to the extent of human weakness aided by the grace of God; see Section IV below), and the self-righteous legalism of the Judaizers, which makes mockery of the law itself. This, surely, is why Paul cites the law <u>against</u> the Judaizers, and as in harmony with his own position.

This leads us to the conclusion that ἐξ ἔργων νόμου in v. 10 refers not to genuine works of law-fulfilment but to the legalistic endeavour contrary to the works the law itself commands. Burton justly observes that here is illustrated the truth that the principle of legalism leads logically to condemnation.[118] Bring comments, "Diejenigen Werke dagegen,

die als 'Werke des Gesetzes' bezeichnet werden, haben das Gesetz und Gott voneinander getrennt und das Gesetz zu einem Mittel der Selbstgerechtigkeit gemacht."[119] The law as such, notes Bring with justice, does not preach another righteousness than does faith: "Vielmehr wird gerade das, was die dem Gesetz innewohnende Absicht ist, mit dem Glauben und durch den Glauben verwirklicht."[120]

Paul continues his argument in v. 11, again opposing the paths of legalism (ἐν νόμῳ) and faith (ἐκ πίστεως). The thought here is an additional argument (δέ) for the position maintained in v. 10.[121] Again, following the interpretation we have adopted as the most reasonable, we may, with Burton, say that ἐν νόμῳ here is to be taken "manifestly in the legalistic sense."[122] In this case νόμος here is used in the same sense as ἔργα νόμου (thus pointing out ever more the need to distinguish between different uses of νόμος in Paul).[123] Hence, the simple assertion of the verse is that not the legalist, but the one living by faith, shall live.[124] We cannot accept, therefore, the contention of Schlier that here faithfulness to God's word, resulting in life, is opposed to striving to keep the law[125] -- unless, of course, such striving is understood as that legalism which does not genuinely fulfil the law at all. Similarly mistaken is Becker, who claims that Paul must show here the contrast between law deeds and faith -- but quite the reverse is true! Becker claims that the verse shows that " ... Gesetzesgerechtigkeit ist ein Fabrikat des Menschen, Glaubensgerechtigkeit eine ihm von Haus aus fremde Gabe."[126] What, again, Paul in fact shows is just the opposite: faith and true law deeds are in utter harmony, and both express the righteousness of God. Lack of faith, whether in the God revealed in the Torah or in the gospel, is cursed by God as much as lack of genuine fulfilment of the law!

The theme is continued and given further Scriptural illustration in v. 12. Understanding νόμος in the sense we have seen it to be taken in the passage as a whole, we see Paul once more contrasting legalism and faith, and supporting his contention by reference to the law. Interpreters who take νόμος to refer to the law as such take v. 12b as a clarification of what justification through the law would actually involve. This impossible means of justification, the argument continues, Paul opposes to the true justification, which is by faith, adverted to in v. 11 and illustrated by the Habbakuk citation. This interpretation, however, involves these commentators in attempts to account for Paul's apparent embarrassing citing of the Scripture against itself. H. J. Schoeps claims that Paul uses the thirteenth "middah" of R. Ishmael (that

two verses which apparently contradict each other must be reconciled by a third -- which he takes to be Gen 15:6, cited in v. 6)[127] Betz, however, points out that this "middah" was not known until the second century, and in any case requires the third verse to follow the first two, not to anticipate them. Betz argues that in fact the two verses are not contradictory: only the concepts they involve (faith and law) are.[128] But how can one so easily separate the (explicitly-quoted) verses from their respective contents? Mussner, similarly rejecting Schoeps' view, takes a bolder approach, states that the whole passage is built on the fact the two texts <u>are</u> contradictory (a view for which no support is given)[129] -- but how could Paul take such a view of Scripture, and how could he hope to retain any respect for his argument from the Judaizers (or even 'impartial' parties)? Why quote Scripture as an authority in the first place? Such a view is surely a counsel of despair.[130]

A more satisfactory solution is found if we pay more attention to Paul's wording here. Bring notes that ἀλλά, indicating the contrast between v. 12a and v. 12b, shows v. 12b to be parallel to v. 11, not a clarification of v. 12a. "Das Gesetz, wie es von den Juden verstanden wurde, also das Sinaïgesetz als in sich vollendete Grösse, ist nicht das Gesetz des Glaubens. In der Schrift steht vielmehr: derjenige, der das Gesetz erfüllt, erhält dadurch ewiges Lebens."[131] Hence, Paul cites Lev 18:5 to show that the law itself promises life to those who faithfully fulfil its commands. This demonstrates that true law-fulfilment and faith are not to be sundered, and is parallel in meaning to the Habakkuk citation in v. 11, thus bringing the whole range of Scriptural quotations thus far into perfect harmony.

What the law itself does oppose (why else would Paul continually appeal to its authority?) is the perverted legalism (ἐν νόμῳ, v. 12a) which is truly opposed to faith. Indeed, Bring may well be correct in his assertion that v. 12b, far from being a derogatory comment regarding the law, is an allusion to the perfect law obedience of Christ, which is then commented upon in v. 13.[132] Or, we might adopt Fuller's suggestion that Paul uses Lev 18:5 simply to show what genuine obedience to the law would truly consist of, in contrast to the Pharisaic legalism (v. 12a), which does not rest on faith. The declaration of Lev 18:5, therefore, continues Fuller, complies with the obedience of faith taught in the law, and so the quotation should be taken at face value.[133]

Interpreters taking a different position are forced to assume that Paul argues here against <u>doing</u> (rather than believing), whereas in fact (as we understand it) it is the <u>lack</u> of true law works he deplores.

Betz actually sees here a condemnation of those who do the works of the Torah, and Schlier claims that the law's problem is that its "Grundstruktur" is ποιεῖν rather than πίστις.[134] The curse then comes upon the ποιεῖν itself.[135] Yet surely the point of Paul's charge against his opponents is that they have in truth utterly failed to fulfil the law. Mussner notes on v. 10 that the ποιῆσαι is linked with the promise, not the curse; the curse comes upon the one who does not fulfil the law. "Es wird also eindeutig nicht jenem der Fluch angedroht, der die Gesetze 'tut' sondern im Gegenteil: dem, der sie nicht tut (nicht erfüllt)!"[136] The interpretation we have suggested resolves this and the other difficulties noted above, and harmonizes with what Paul has said hitherto in the section.[137]

V. 13 contains a Christological statement and Paul's final Scripture citation of the section. The curse God has brought on those who have wilfully rejected His law has been borne by Christ Himself, God's Son, who has thereby redeemed us from it.[138] Betz rightly points out that the curse has come upon those who seek justification through their own works, i.e. legalistically.[139] Lietzmann notes with justice that the curse lies on those who do not keep the law, not on Christ, who has willingly taken the curse upon Himself.[140] That this is the just judgment of God on those who have deliberately disobeyed Him is not to be denied.

Surely to be doubted is the view of Burton[141] that because (in his view) vv. 10ff refer not to the true judgment of God, which is by faith, but to the principle of legalism, release from the curse is not release from a divine penalty (for in v. 13 Paul reduces the argument of the Judaizers ad absurdum by showing that the penalty of legalism would, on their understanding, fall upon Christ)[142] but is release into a new realization of how God deals with men. The curse is a real curse insofar as it expresses the verdict of legalism, "but not in the sense that he on whom it fell was accursed of God."[143] We have already seen (see especially (118) above) the impossibility of Burton's view that the Scripture passages cited express merely a principle of legalism rather than the real and just judgment of God. With respect to v. 13, Berger notes that the law's curse is to be taken seriously because the law is from God.[144] In Galatians, notes Bläser, the law is the expression of God's holy will; Christ died to redeem us from God's actual curse on our sin.[145]

Commentators are generally agreed that Paul's thought here is that our freedom comes about through Christ, the One who alone has truly and perfectly, without any flaw or defect, fulfilled God's law (to which

action, as we noted above, Paul probably adverts in v. 12b), yet who voluntarily carries our sins for us and thus enables us to come to God through Himself, thereby removing from us the curse. Jesus' death was uniquely meritorious.[146]

Some scholars, however, reading into the verse an idea alien to it, assume that freedom from the curse of the law's condemnation somehow implies the end of the law, which is itself here considered a threatening or even hostile power. Freedom from the curse, according to Betz, is freedom from the law, which is now ended (for the Christian).[147] Schlier blames the law itself for man's predicament: "Das Gesetz macht das Dasein aller Menschen zum Fluch."[148] Elsewhere he comments, "Aber es ist klar, dass er an das Urteil und die Tat derer denkt, die in der Befolgung des Gesetzes Jesus an die Kreuz brachten. Der Messias selbst durch die Wirksamkeit des die Menschen in der Sünde täuschenden und tötenden Gesetzes gestorben."[149]

Oepke comments that to a degree Paul regards the law "als feindliche Macht Gott gegenüber ... Das Gesetz wirkt 'automatisch', 'mechanisch' im menschheits-, ja beinahe gottfeindlichen Sinn."[150] Yet there is no indication here that the law is anything other than that which expresses God's just judgment on sin. It is therefore to be fully identified with the counsel and character of God Himself. The confusion of these commentators stems from their identification of the law of God with human legalism. Hence, every reference to law must therefore express a negative judgment on the nature of the law itself, the final result being a tendency to identify the law and the curse, or even to suggest that the law itself killed Christ[151] -- and insofar as the believer is concerned, a definite assertion that he is freed not only from the law's condemnation, but from the law itself, which has now been abolished by Christ's death on the cross.[152] Of this, however, we see no indication at all in the passage. Indeed, Paul's attitude toward the law is highly favourable and, to the extent that it is evident behind his preoccupation with attacking the legalism of the Judaizers, gives every reason to suppose that he saw law and faith in harmony in the purposes of God.

The section is concluded in v. 14 with Paul returning to his original theme of the Abrahamic promise. He has, in the intervening verse, clearly demonstrated that the promise comes to those who live by faith, for whom Christ has purchased real freedom from the just judgment of the law. The blessing of Abraham therefore comes to the believer who, through faith, receives the Holy Spirit. Arguing particularly against the Judaizers, Paul insists that the blessing comes now also

to the Gentiles, though he would certainly say that it came on the same basis to any believing Jew. He does not mean to say that the Jews are excluded, but rather that the Gentiles, hitherto excluded, are now made sharers in the promise of God. Mussner notes that freedom from the curse involves a freeing from faith (and for the Holy Spirit).[153] Surely out of line, however, is the contention of Beyer that, according to this verse, as long as the law remains the Gentiles are sinners and under the curse.[154] Rather is it the case that, until men are freed from the law's just judgment on their sin, these things are true. Nothing is said, however, of the law disappearing, pace Lietzmann, who suggests on this verse that in Christ the curse dies out, and with it the law which pronounced it.[155] Of such a thought there is no indication in the text.

Indeed, this kind of idea would be out of place in a section which is undergirded almost entirely by references to that same law![156] In this section, therefore, Paul has offered a coherent exposition of how the blessing promised to Abraham has come to all men who believe in Christ and are thereby justified: and this he has done by appealing throughout to the authority of the law. Must not the law, therefore, be regarded as preaching faith and deliverance from legalism and the curse -- in short, as showing the way to freedom in Christ? This is the theme to which we now turn.

Conclusions

1. These texts do not themselves give a comprehensive portrayal of Paul's understanding of the role of the law in relation to Christian freedom. What they do indicate is that the law, as the righteous and holy commandment of God, defines and clarifies the extent and nature of (already-existing) sin to a degree not previously possible. That is to say, the seriousness of sin becomes first fully apparent in the law.
2. God's judgment comes on man because of human sin, and not in any way because of a genuine obedience to the law. Sin, not the law, is responsible for man's predicament. Judgment is already passed on the sin of Adam before the law has entered the scene at all. The law, precisely because it gives to man an unparalleled opportunity for obedience to and knowledge of God, highlights man's guilt and failure to live up to God's standard. The law does not of itself lead to sin, but (among other things) places sin in its true perspective.

3. The fact that the law entered later on the scene says nothing of the worth of the law, depreciatory or otherwise.
4. Man's failure, on account of sin, to fulfil the law's requirements, places man under the law's curse and harsh tutelage. This curse does not result from the nature of the law itself, but from the sinfulness of man, his utter and inevitable lack of ability to fulfil the law's demands and so live in a way pleasing to God.
5. The superficial adherence to the law observed by the Galatian Judaizers does not constitute genuine obedience to the law but is itself hypocritical transgression of its commands.
6. Human legalism of this nature is thus opposed to the law, which itself preaches the same righteousness as does faith.
7. True law-fulfilment is valued by the Apostle as something positive. It is the lack of true obedience to the law which he deplores, and which places man under the curse and in a condition of slavery. Man's freedom is lost because of his sin and transgression of God's law, not because of the law itself.
8. Freedom comes through Christ, who has genuinely fulfilled the law and borne the curse. Man will not be freed and receive the promise until he is released in Christ from the law's just condemnation of his sin.

Footnotes

1. See Cranfield, I, 271, who notes that the expression must refer backward, as "there is no following clause capable of picking it up." The reference is therefore to vv. 1-11. See also Kuss, I, 226; Michel, p. 186; Käsemann, p. 138; William Sanday and Arthur C. Headlam, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, p. 131; Wilckens, I, 314; Althaus, p. 54; contra Lietzmann, pp. 60-61; Robin Scroggs, The Last Adam: A Study in Pauline Anthropology, p. 77. The latter two see only an indefinite particle tying the two sections loosely together; yet this overlooks the clear links between vv. 1-11 and 12-21. Doubtful are the views of Schlier, p. 159, that the reference is to v. 11 only, and Schmidt, p. 97, that the reference is to v. 10. Leenhardt, p. 140n, is uncertain.

2. Most interpreters today reject Augustine's translation of ἐφ' ᾧ as "in quo" (part of his argument against the Pelagian insistence on man's freedom to escape the rule of sin in his own life), and thus take ἥμαρτον to indicate actual, individual acts of sin rather than simply participation in the primal sin of Adam. See Althaus, p. 54; Michel, pp. 186-87; Kuss, pp. 228-32; Lietzmann, pp. 61-62; Schlier, pp. 161-62; Käsemann, pp. 139-40; Sanday/Headlam, pp. 133-34; Cranfield, I, 274-79; Scroggs, p. 79; G. Bornkamm, "Paulinische Anakoluthe im Römerbrief," in Das Ende des Gesetzes, Gesammelte Aufsätze I, p. 84; Eberhard Jüngel, "Das Gesetz zwischen Adam und Christus: Eine theologische Studie zu Röm 5, 12-21," ZThK 60 (1963),

pp. 51-52; Jules Cambier, L'Évangile de Dieu selon l'Épître aux Romains, p. 235 (on the use of ἁμαρτάνειν in Paul). At the same time, most stress that Adam's sin has a real and negative effect on his posterity. Kuss and Michel suggest that ἐφ' ᾧ could well stand for ἐπὶ τοῦτο ὅτι; Paul is then saying that because Adam (actually) sinned, therefore his descendants have likewise (actually) sinned. This balances the consequences of Adam's act and that of the acts of the Greek, which, on the most obvious interpretation, would simply mean that death came to all because all sinned. A much less likely view is that of Schmidt, who sees θάνατος as the antecedent of ᾧ (rather than ἄνθρωπος being the antecedent, as in Augustine's view); this position is rejected by all others. For a good contemporary defence of the Augustinian view, however, see John Murray, The Imputation of Adam's Sin, as well as his commentary in loc. To be rejected, at any rate, is the view of Käsemann, p. 140, that there is an ambivalence in the text between doom and individual guilt. Paul surely does not speak of sin as anything but that for which we are personally responsible; Jüngel, p. 51, notes that Paul grounds vv. 12a-c in sin, not fate, and v. 12d refers back to 3:23 (see also Gerhard Friedrich, "ἁμαρτία οὐκ ἐλλογεῖται, Röm 5,13," ThLZ 77 (1952), pp. 524-25). Even the Augustinian view sees all men as personally responsible, albeit in Adam. Cambier's lengthy discussion, pp. 237-50) results in the rather tortured translation, "à cause de ce seul homme à cause de qui tous ont peché," which may express theological truth better than grammatical correctness. Paul's views are no doubt to some degree rooted in the Jewish concept of corporate personality (though far less likely is the view that a gnostic myth is involved; see (20) below). To be rejected, finally, is the ingenious but unlikely view of Friedrich W. Danker, "Romans v. 12. Sin Under Law," NTS 14 (1967-68), that ἐφ' ᾧ should be translated, "on the legal basis in terms of which ...." This surely strains the Greek, and assumes that νόμος, which does not appear until v. 13, is in Paul's mind here. Danker also assumes that in 2:12ff Paul speaks of the Gentiles as having the law, which, as we have seen, is precisely not the case -- though it is not disputed that they have some revelation of God's will (1:32).

3. If v. 13b rather than v. 13a is stressed, there is a derogation from the reality of sin spoken of in v. 12d, and pre-Mosiac sin is implied to be less serious, and hence less deserving of death (or less productive of death) than disobedience to the law. This, however, runs counter to the thrust of v. 12, which underlines the seriousness of sin for all Adam's descendants. See Cranfield, I, 282.

4. See Cambier, p. 252; Kurt Stalder, Das Werk des Geistes in der Heiligung bei Paulus, p. 274. See also Schlier, pp. 164-65; Wilckens, I, 318; Althaus, p. 54; Michel, pp. 187-88; Cranfield, I, 282; Karl Barth, Christ and Adam: Man and Humanity in Romans 5, trans. Thomas A. Smail, p. 26; Paul Minear, The Obedience of Faith: The Purposes of Paul in the Epistle to the Romans, SBT (2d ser) 19 (1971), p. 61.

5. Kuss, I, 233.

6. Friedrich, p. 524.

7. Also mistaken are Prat, I, 212, and Peter Bläser, Das Gesetz bei Paulus, p. 127, who see sin between Adam and Moses as attributable to original (Adamic) sin rather than personal sin. Prat says only that the law can punish sin by death, but, as the law was not given, death came as the punishment for Adam's sin, not personal sin (and

he adds that not all men have committed 'actual' sin!). Yet v. 12d says the opposite and, linked with v. 13a, suggests strongly that each man is responsible for his own death-producing sin (even though the sin is not committed ἐπὶ τῷ ὁμοιώματι τῆς παραβάσεως Ἀδάμ, v. 14). The view that only the law can declare or put into operation God's punishment counters the whole thrust of the passage (see also 1:18-32).

8. The heart of the seriousness of Paul's charge against man is removed by such views; see, for instance, Leenhardt, p. 145, who asserts that "since the fall of Adam, knowledge of the will of God having been suspended [but what of 1:18-32?], it is no longer admissible that there exists a purely personal sin and a real disobedience. The heirs of Adam are not in the same situation as Adam himself; their fault is not similar to his (v. 14b) .... But sin itself is not imputed to those who sin for the simple reason that they have been thrown into a situation so imperilled that their fault is, in the last analysis, much more attributable to their parents than to themselves (v. 13a)." Yet, as we have seen, v. 13a (much less 1:18-3:20!) does not at all give any grounds for adoption of such a view. Vv. 12d and 14a add further light. Much more sensible is the view of Cambier, p. 254, that, even though sins could not be noted as specific transgressions of specific commands in the way that is possible under the law, these sins are nonetheless just as real. This fits well with 4:15.

9. Michel, p. 187, speaks of the 'Kindheitsgeschichte' of man, during which there is the "allgemeine und spezielle Strafgerichte Gottes," whereas the law brings "der verschärfte Gerichtszustand über den Menschen." This is right, provided the concept of 'Kindheitsgeschichte' does not imply a period of 'childhood innocence'.

10. Friedrich, pp. 524-26. He notes that Midr Ps 1:12b refers to a 'Schuldverzeichnis' ( ]ʾ לוגס), which Dalman traced to ἐλόγιον (which word is not attested, however, though 'elogium' is), a record of offences committed by a criminal, upon which the judge bases his judgment. Friedrich thinks this corresponds to the Jewish idea.

11. Schlier, p. 165. See also Strack/Billerbeck 2, 170-73; 3, 121ff.

12. Cranfield, I, 282.

13. See Cranfield, I, 282.

14. Bornkamm, "Paulinische Anakoluthe," pp. 84-85. Surely doubtful is the view of C. H. Dodd, Romans, p. 82, that v. 13b signifies that sin "does not carry guilt, where there is no intention to act contrary to what is known to be right." Death is then explained by the fact that the "order of things" takes no account of man's perfectly valid excuses for his conduct. It is hard to imagine a view farther removed, on every count, from that of Paul. Also incorrect, surely is Denys E. H. Whiteley, The Theology of St. Paul, p. 81, who speaks of mere ignorant transgression.

15. Käsemann, p. 141.

16. Rudolf Bultmann, "Adam und Christus nach Römer 5, ZNW 50 (1959), p. 155.

17. Bultmann, "Adam und Christus," pp. 154-55.

18. Bultmann, Theology, I, 252.

19. Stalder, p. 274.

20. See Scroggs, pp. xc-xxiv; also pp. 17-22, for a treatment of the Jewish view of Adam and sin, and pp. 76-82, for further comments on vv. 12-21. Jewish theology balances the responsibility of Adam and that of his progeny; a similar trend can be seen in the Rabbinic understanding of the role of the evil 'yetzer' in causing men to sin -- see Schechter, pp. 242-62. See also Kuss, I, 269-71; Cranfield, I, 280-81; also Käsemann, pp. 140-41; Wilckens, I, 320 n. 1065. The opposite viewpoint (that of a strong gnostic influence in the passage) is also expressed in E. Brandenburger, Adam und Christus: exegetisch-religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung zu Röm 5.12-21. Bornkamm, "Paulinische Anakoluthe," pp. 83-85 (who also, however, admits a Jewish influence), takes a similar view, as (to a lesser degree) does Jüngel, p. 51.

21. Jüngel, pp. 52-53.

22. Jüngel, pp. 54-56.

23. Wilckens, I, 319. What, however, does Wilckens mean by such statements as " ... die der Sünde zukommende ὀργή aber spricht erst das Gesetz mit eschatologisch-forensischer Kraft zu" (I, 319)? In what sense is the word 'eschatological' used here? If in the sense of God's most solemn punishment of sin, is this indeed not what occurs with the entry of death? How does the law, while certainly 'highlighting' (in the sense we have indicated) God's judgment, make it 'eschatological'? And how can the (very real) judgment of v. 12 not be 'forensic'? -- though certainly the law adds a deeper understanding of the 'legal' nature of God's judgment on sin. Ulrich Luz, Das Geschichtsverständnis des Paulus, p. 200, notes rightly that pre-Mosaic sins are "eschatologically qualified" also (see 1:18ff), and asks why Paul would speak of pre-Mosaic sins bringing death if, without the law, the Adam/Christ opposition were impossible. Wilckens sees vv. 12-21 agreeing with 2:12-16 on the universality of sin and the law's judgment, but he again errs in thinking that the latter passage speaks of Gentile unbelievers (he views 2:12-16 as 'heilsgeschichtlich'-synchronic and 5:12-21 as 'heilsgeschichtlich'-diachronic, I, 320, but again -- what is meant by these terms?).

24. See, for instance, Brandenburger, pp. 201-3; see further on v. 20 (below).

25. Jüngel, pp. 56-57.

26. See Cambier, p. 211 n. 2.

27. Schlier, p. 177; Schmidt, p. 103. Leenhardt, p. 149, sees the tone as "somewhat pejorative." See also Brandenburger, pp. 248-50.

28. See Cranfield, I, 292.

29. Kuss, I, 240, and Michel, p. 192 n. 18, compare παρεισῆλθεν to εἰσῆλθεν (v. 12). See Wilckens, I, 328; Barrett, p. 117; Käsemann, p. 150; Cranfield, I, 291-92.

30. Michel, p. 192.

31. Käsemann, p. 150.

32. Kuss, I, 240.

33. Sanday/Headlam, p. 143; C. A. A. Scott, Christianity according to St. Paul, p. 43.

34. Leenhardt, p. 149n.

35. Cambier, pp. 199-200. See also p. 267 n. 2, " ... elle est un épisode dans l'histoire de l'humanité et qui n'affecte pas fondamentalement son orientation et sa valeur religieuse: le Christ seul compte."

36. Althaus, p. 56; Barrett, p. 117; Bornkamm, "Paulinische Anakoluthe," pp. 88-89; Dodd, p. 83; Gaugler, I, 136; Lietzmann, p. 65; Anders Nygren, Commentary on Romans, pp. 224-25; Stauffer, p. 94; van Dülmen, p. 170.

37. Bultmann, Theology, I, 265.

38. Van Dülmen, pp. 203-4; see also p. 201.

39. Otto Kuss, "Nomos bei Paulus," MThZ 17 (1966), pp. 218-19. See also Kuss, I, 240, 246.

40. Michel, p. 192; Schlier, p. 177; Althaus, p. 56; Schmidt, p. 102; Barrett, p. 118; Nygren, p. 227; Stauffer, p. 94; Minear, p. 61; Whiteley, p. 80; Furnish, p. 140; J. A. Fitzmyer, "St. Paul and the Law," The Jurist 27 (1967), pp. 24-25; Lucien Cerfaux, The Christian, p. 148; Ferdinand Hahn, "Das Gesetzesverständnis im Römer- und Galaterbrief," ZNW 67 (1976).

41. Käsemann, p. 150.

42. This point is generally agreed upon. See also Cranfield, I, 292, and I, 292 n. 7.

43. Bläser, pp. 134-37.

44. Van Dülmen, pp. 170-71.

45. Cambier, p. 267 n. 3.

46. Luz, pp. 204-6. See also p. 207, "'Nomos' führt dabei in die Tiefe der Sünde und entlarvt sie also Verkehrung von Gottes guter Gabe, d.h. als wesenhaft gegen Gott gerichtet. Das Verhältnis der beiden Denkformen zueinander ist am ehesten als unausgeglichenes Gegenüber und kontaktloses Nebeneinander zu kennzeichnen, das einer Harmonisierung gar nicht bedarf." The language is reminiscent of the comments of G. Klein noted on Rom 4 (see in loc.). See also Kuss, "Nomos," p. 219.

47. Kuss, I, 283.

48. Stalder, pp. 276-78.

49. Barth , Christ and Adam.

50. Barth, p. 28.

51. Barth, p. 33. See also Rom 3:25.

52. Barth, pp. 40-41.

53. Barth, p. 42.

54. Bultmann, "Adam," p. 164.

55. Wilckens, I, 329 n. 1104.

56. Cranfield, I, 292.

57. Cranfield, I, 292.

58. Cranfield, I, 293.

59. Wilckens, I, 329. See Cambier, p. 268 and p. 268 n. 2, who says that the law produced "une tension eschatologique chez ceux qui la connaissaient" (rather than that it gave an 'eschatological' quality to sin). Again, however, we must enter a query at the meaning of 'eschatological' in this context. If it is meant that the law, because declaring plainly the righteous decree of God, gives rise in the hearer to a keener sense of what is right (and hence of one's guilt in failing to obey), then we can agree. Why, however, is it necessary to describe this state of affairs as 'eschatological'?

60. Cranfield, I, 293.

61. Leenhardt, p. 179.

62. Schlier, p. 218.

63. Lietzmann, p. 73.

64. Käsemann, p. 181.

65. Kuss, II, 437.

66. Michel, p. 221.

67. Althaus, p. 72.

68. Bultmann, Theology, I, 267.

69. Ridderbos, p. 145.

70. W. G. Kümmel, Röm 7 und die Bekehrung des Paulus; rpt. in Röm 7 und das Bild des Menschen im NT, p. 42.

71. On this straightforward meaning of the text, see our comments on 3:20; 4:15; 5:13-14, 20. On 7:6 see Cranfield, I, 337-38.

72. Most commentators translate τί by "what?", though "why?" is also possible. See Albrecht Oepke, Der Brief des Paulus an die Galater, p. 114; Heinrich Schlier, Der Brief an die Galater, p. 151; Ernest de Witt Burton, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians, p. 187. Paul's intention is to expound, in some measure, the meaning and significance of the law.

73. Hans D. Betz, Galatians, pp. 165-67.

74. Schlier, Galater, p. 152.

75. Schlier, Galater, p. 153.

76. Oepke, p. 115.

77. Oswald Schulz, "Τί οὖν ὁ νόμος;: Verhältnis von Gesetz, Sünde und Evangelium nach Gal. 3," Th St u Kr 75 (1902), p. 26.

78. Burton, pp. 188-89.

79. Jürgen Becker, Der Brief an die Galater, p.42.

80. Franz Mussner, Der Galaterbrief, p. 246. Schulz and Becker (see above) are clearer on this than are Betz and Schlier. Schlier, Galater, p. 153, says that the law does not create sin, but does bring transgression to pass: " ... das Gesetz hat die Übertretungen als solche hervorgetrieben, indem es die Sünde sich in den Übertretungen ausprägen liess."

81. Ragnar Bring, "Der Mittler und das Gesetz: Eine Studie zu Gal 3,20," KD 12 (1966), p. 293.

82. Bring, p. 294.

83. See Calvin's conception of the "bare law" ("nuda lex") or "law apart from Christ" (see C. E. B. Cranfield, "St. Paul and the Law," in New Testament Issues, ed. R. Batey, p. 164).

84. Bring, p. 299.

85. See C. K. Barrett, From First Adam to Last: A Study in Pauline Theology, pp. 60-61: "A promise also is an interim arrangement, for a promise lapses as soon as it is fulfilled; the interimistic character of the law is thus not a disparagement of it. When the seed comes, both promise and law cease, in their old meaning." Yet Barrett still speaks of the outright abrogation of the law: "Law and promise, however, terminate in different ways, and the arrival of the seed who was to be both agent and recipient of the promise was the signal for the abrogation of the law" (p. 61). See also Andrew J. Bandstra, The Law and the Elements of the World: An Exegetical Study in Aspects of Paul's Teaching, pp. 122-23. We cannot agree with Bandstra, p. 129, that Paul's description of the role of the law in v. 19 amounts to a "negative judgment on the law."

Two more phrases in these verses, both of which are often taken as negative references to the law, and hence cast the law as that from which the Christian is freed in an absolute sense, must also be noted. Paul states (v. 19) that the law was given (διαταγεὶς) δι' ἀγγέλων and ἐν χειρὶ μεσίτου, which latter phrase he expands upon in v. 20. We shall deal with these two phrases in order.

Much controversy has arisen concerning the reference to ἄγγελοι. Schlier asserts that Paul is on the path of the gnostics (in their despising of the law) when he views the law as mediated -- a clear sign of its inferiority. In distinction to the gnostics, however, Paul does not see the law as demonic; insofar as it confronts Israel, however, it is understood as the claim of the angels who have decreed it (Schlier, Galater, p. 158). Oepke (noting, as does Schlier, that διά represents immediate source, in contrast to ὑπό, which indicates

ultimate source: Oepke, p. 116; Schlier, Galater, p. 156), warns against excluding God from the process. He comments, "Bei der Gesetzgebung schalteten die Engel relativ selbständig; nicht ohne Gott, gewiss; aber auch nicht in seinem Auftrage, eher unter seiner einstwillige Duldung" (Oepke, p. 116).

Beyer, however, takes a stronger line: "Paulus spricht offen aus, dass das Gesetz strenggenommen gar nicht Gottes Werk ist" (Wolfgang Beyer, Der Brief an die Galater, rev. Paul Althaus, p. 29). Paul, in Beyer's view, means not only " ... dass das Gesetz nur mittelbar von Gott stammt, sondern dass er es überhaupt nicht gegeben hat .... Es ist nicht sein eigenster Wille und eigenes Werk" (Beyer, p. 29). In H. A. A. Kennedy's view, the law becomes for Paul identified with " ... the realm of evil spiritual forces which dominates the present age ..."; hence, freedom in Christ is gained only through the law's total abolition (The Theology of the Epistles, pp. 45-46). Finally, Günter Klein asserts that the reference to angels shows not just that God is not the immediate source of the law but also contests the divine origin of the law as such: Moses (as μεσίτης) appears here as " ... Funktionär widergöttlicher Mächte" ("Individualgeschichte und Weltgeschichte bei Paulus," in Rekonstruktion und Interpretation: Gesammelte Aufsätze zum Neuen Testament, B z ev Th 50 (1969), pp. 209-10.

This argument, however, ignores the important distinction between διά and ὑπό, noted by Schlier and Oepke, and agreed to by most commentators (see also Karl Berger, "Abraham in den paulinischen Hauptbriefen," M Th Z 17 (1966), p. 56; Becker, p. 43). Even Hans Hübner (Das Gesetz bei Paulus, p. 28), making his point that God has nothing to do with the giving of the law (and that the angels are demonic beings) concedes that his argument flies in the face of the διά/ὑπό distinction. Betz points out that for Paul there is no evidence that the angels are regarded as evil at all; he agrees with Schlier and Oepke that the law plays a limited positive role in God's redemptive work (Betz, p. 169). E. Bammel cautions that any view sundering the angels from the purposes of God leads to a non-Pauline dualism; both the law and the promise were given by God (ἐδόθη νόμος, v. 21; ἐπαγγελία ... δοθῇ, v. 22); see Ernst Bammel, "Gottes ΔΙΑΘΗΚΗ (Gal. III.15-17) und das jüdische Rechtsdenken," NTS 6 (1959-60), p. 317 and p. 317 n. 4. As Lagrange comments, "S'il conclut [i.e. in v. 20] que la Loi n'était donc pas l'oeuvre de Dieu qui est un, il va contre la foi de tout Israel et de Paul lui-même; c'est une proposition marcionite qui rompt l'accord, soigneusement maintenu par Paul, entre l'A. et le N.T." (Marie-J. Lagrange, Saint Paul, Épître aux Galates, p. 85). Hence, in our view, there should be no question that, according to this text, the law comes from God and is part of His plan. Hübner, admitting that already ἄχρις ἄν (v. 19) indicates this, concedes that to take the angels here (as he does) as representing demonic powers means that we involve Paul in self-contradiction. His only solution to this is to suggest that our task is to understand Paul better than he understood himself (Hübner, p. 29)! This is surely a counsel of despair.

We would suggest that a more reasonable solution is arrived at by taking the circumstances in Galatia into account and seeing Paul as counteracting the Judaizers' excessive stress on the role of the law by pointing out simply (there is no particular stress on δι' ἀγγέλων: see Bammel, p. 317) that the presence of the divine angels at the giving of the law shows in some measure the standing of the law relative to the promise. Both, however, are the work of the one God, and Paul attempts here to place them in proper relationship to one another. Interesting is the thought of Bandstra,

pp. 151-55, that the angels are referred to because they are associated in OT and Rabbinic thought (and at Qumran) with the execution of God's judgment. Thus the thought here has nothing to do with gnostic dualism of any kind. See also pp. 156-57 for his view that the plurality of angels (as opposed to the Oneness of God) demonstrates the relative place of law and promise.

The same point can be made with respect to the discussion concerning the significance of the μεσίτης. Commentators are generally agreed that the reference in v. 19 is to Moses (Betz, p. 170; Hans Lietzmann, An Die Galater, p. 21; Berger, p. 56; Barrett, First Adam, p. 61; Bandstra, p. 150). Some, however, see a more general reference in v. 20 (Schlier, Galater, p. 161; Oepke, p. 117; Lagrange, p. 84). Most feel that the plurality represented by the μεσίτης refers to the fact that Moses is seen representing the angels (Schlier, Galater, p. 161; Oepke, p. 119; Mussner, pp. 248-49 n. 25; E. Kuhl, "Stellung und Bedeutung des altestamentliches Gesetzes im Zusammenhang der paulinischen Lehre," Th St u Kr 67 (1894), p. 129). Some, however, feel that he is representing the children of Israel (Bring, pp. 300-301; Bammel, p. 317). The understanding adopted by many interpreters of the phrase as a whole is reflected in Betz' comment, "Paul argues that anything that stands in contrast to the oneness of God is inferior. Since the concept of mediator presumes by definition a plurality of parties, it is inferior, and, consequently, renders the Torah inferior" (pp. 171-72). Schlier's statement is somewhat stronger, "Das Gesetz dagegen teilt für Paulus gerade den ... Wesenszug einer nur mittelbar zugängigen Offenbarung Gottes, deren eigentliches Wesen verkehrt ist. Es ist für Paulus freilich unheilvoll verkehrt" (Schlier, Galater, p. 162; Beyer, p. 29, suggests that the law, because it involves an agreement between two parties, places in question the omnipotence of God demonstrated in His sovereign giving of the promise).

We would agree that the reference to the μεσίτης, as that to the angels, probably indicates a desire on Paul's part to place the role of the law within a proper perspective, i.e. to lower it from a position above the promise and above Christ to which some had exalted it. To suggest, however, that this involves some gross defect in the law itself, or to state that the Apostle's goal here is to stress the law's 'inferiority' is to ignore the context and make Paul hopelessly self-contradictory. The point may simply be that in the Sinai covenant there are two parties, God and Israel (Israel, of course, being the inferior party), while in the giving of the promise there is only one. The recipients of the promise have no active role in the process. See Lagrange on v. 19, who notes, pp. 84-87, that if Paul means to say only that Moses represented a plurality of angels, the verse would be superfluous, as v. 19 has already indicated as much. He also points out that the fact that God used Moses to pass the law on to Israel says nothing as to whether the law is a merely temporary phenomenon. Least of all does it suggest that the law disappears when its mediator is replaced by Christ. Bring notes correctly that in vv. 15ff the law works with, not against, the promise (bearing in mind that only one aspect of the law's work is referred to here), and we must guard against the suggestion that Paul would have referred to any part of God's work as straightforwardly 'inferior' in relation to any other part. Rather, says Bring, is it the case that the Apostle here places in proper focus the relationship of law and promise in the attainment of justification (Bring, p. 302). We cannot, however, agree with his view that, according to v. 20, the law belongs not merely to Israel (ἑνός) but to all nations, as God is God of all (Rom 3:29), not just of Israel (Bring, pp. 300-302). This appears

to avoid the contextual evidence that Paul is trying to define more carefully the role of the law (or, rather, as we have noted, this aspect of the law's role). This is why he must guard (v. 21) against the implication that he may have been devaluing it in some broader sense. There does not seem to us to be any evidence for the introduction of the thought of Rom 3:29 here.

86. See Schlier, Galater, pp. 168-69; Mussner, p. 257; Lagrange, pp. 90-91; Beyer, p. 30; Burton, p. 199; Becker, p. 44; Bläser, pp. 155-56; van Dülmen, p. 47; Luz, pp. 191-92; Barrett, First Adam, p. 63; Bring, p. 304; Kertelge, p. 207. Schulz, pp. 30-40, has an excellent analysis, in which he shows that the function of bringing the knowledge of good and evil and of restraining sin are inextricably linked. The law shows us the just and righteous demands of God, yet also stands as His judgment on our disobedience to these -- for man never obeys the law. We might add that the same things could, in one sense, be said of the gospel, in that it too shows the difference between good and evil, and through it also God expresses His wrath (Rom 1:18ff) on sin and disobedience.

87. Mussner, pp. 255-56.

88. Bring, pp. 304-5.

89. Bring, pp. 177-78. For another view linking the Torah and the στοιχεῖα, see Hübner, p. 34 (again, no evidence is given). See our comments in Section III, part B below.

90. For which see Oepke, p. 120.

91. It is within this context only that we can accept Bläser's comment that " ... der Gesetzestand eine Ziel der Unfreiheit (ist)" (p. 156).

92. Berger, p. 57.

93. Kertelge, p. 207.

94. Kertelge, p. 206.

95. See Betz, p. 139; Mussner, p. 218; Oepke, p. 103. Schlier, Galater, pp. 127-28, points out that the Jews regarded Abraham's faith as itself involving an act of merit before God. Mussner, p. 213, notes that Abraham was considered the father of all Jews, the first Jew. See also our comments on Rom 4.

96. Mussner, p. 221, points out that throughout ch. 3 Paul opposes the thesis that one is not a son of Abraham unless circumcised. Paul says, of course, that faith is the all-important sign.

97. Schlier, Galater, p. 131.

98. Mussner, p. 217, notes that the link for Paul was that Abraham's faith was in the God who performs wonders and raises the dead and thus is just like the faith of the Christian. See also Berger, p. 50.

99. Mussner, p. 222, notes that ἐν σοί (v. 8) involves the Hebraic concept of corporate personality. Abraham is thus, pace Klein, more than an 'Individuum'; as the 'Stammvater', he is also 'eine Kollektivperson'. Klein, pp. 203-4, admits that here, as opposed

to Rom 4, Abraham is seen historically, not only as a timeless representative of faith (though see our comments on this in Rom 4): he is viewed "als kontingente Gestalt der Vergangenheit ... deren Vergangensein vor heutigem Glauben als solche theologisch belangvoll ist." Nonetheless the chronological gap "dient nicht etwa der Installation geschichtlichen Kontinuität als theologischer Kategorie, sondern gerade der Reduktion des historisch feststellbaren Geschichtsablaufs auf theologische Irrelevanz." The theological continuity between Abraham and faith in Christ, then, shows the link between Abraham and his sons has no historical aspect. Yet surely such a view is self-contradictory! See also Berger, p. 51 n. 7. To say, as does Becker, p. 34, that Abraham's fatherhood of believers has nothing to do with his fatherhood of Israel contains some truth: justification does not come from accepting circumcision or simply being a Jew. But Paul, here and elsewhere, by claiming Abraham, the first Jew, as the father of Christians, wishes to place Christians in historical and spiritual continuity with God's covenant promises in the OT.

100. Schlier, Galater, p. 127.

101. What are we to make of the view of Klein, p. 204, pp. 204-5, n. 87, that here Scripture is seen as a "contingent subject" distinguished from God and His actions? Rather is Scripture the true voice of God, appealed to here as authority for the validity of the gospel! See Oepke, p. 104.

102. Schlier, Galater, p. 129.

103. See, for instance, Betz, p. 144; Oepke, p. 105; Lagrange, p. 68; Burton, p. 163.

104. Burton, p. 164.

105. Betz, p. 145.

106. Betz, p. 146.

107. Schlier, Galater, p. 132.

108. Becker, p. 36.

109. Mussner, p. 225; see also Lietzmann, Galater, p. 19.

110. J. Tyson, "'Works of law' in Galatians," JBL 92 (1973), p. 428.

111. Klein, p. 206.

112. Mussner, p. 226 n. 65.

113. Mussner, p. 226.

114. Van Dülmen, p. 33.

115. Oepke, p. 105; see also Schlier, Galater, p. 133.

116. Ragnar Bring, "Die Erfüllung des Gesetzes durch Christus," KD 5 (1959), p. 5: "Je gründlicher man Paulus studiert, desto stärker wird man gewahr, wie er durch und durch in der altestamentlichen Tradition lebt, also in der Heilsgeschichte, von der das Alte Testament spricht."

117. Berger, p. 51.

118. Burton, p. 164. We cannot accept, however, his further contention that the following sentence (ὅτι γέγραπται κτλ.) does not express Paul's own conviction regarding the judgment of God but only the verdict of the law (whereas God judges on the basis of faith). "It is necessary, therefore, throughout the passage, to distinguish between the verdicts of law and the judgments of God, and to recognize that the former are, for Paul, not judgments which reflect God's attitude now or at any time or under any circumstances, but those which the legalist must, to his own undoing, recognize as those of the law as he interprets it, and which on the basis of his legalism he must impute to God" (p. 165). In his essay on 'law' (pp. 443-60) Burton claims that Paul distinguishes between the law as the revealed will of God and the 'legalistic element in O.T., isolated and set off by itself, that element which if it were expressive of the whole will of God would be simply a sentence of universal condemnation" (p. 452). He concludes, "Of law in the sense which is gained by isolating the purely legalistic element of O.T. and speaking of it by itself, Paul can say very different things from that which he says of the law as the will of God broadly and justly understood" (p. 452). There is certainly a measure of truth in Burton's analysis, viz. his distinction between legalism and law. But, as we have repeatedly seen, there is no justification for thinking that Paul would even have contemplated thus sundering the law (or regarding any part thereof as in any sense opposed to the character of God). The understanding of this text we have suggested is surely more natural and reasonable (and coheres better with Paul's view of Scripture); it quite adequately accounts for the contrast between ἔργα νόμου and the law itself, without going so far afield for solutions which are in themselves highly unlikely. For a view similar to that of Burton, see Bandstra, pp. 118-120.

119. Bring, p. 13.

120. Bring, p. 14.

121. Burton, p. 165.

122. Burton, p. 165.

123. See references given in Gal 2:15-21, footnote 43.

124. Daniel Fuller, "Paul and 'The Works of the Law'," West. Th. Journal 38 (1975), pp. 31-35.

125. Schlier, Galater, p. 133.

126. Becker, pp. 36-37.

127. Schoeps, pp. 177-78.

128. Betz, p. 138 n. 8.

129. Mussner, p. 228 n. 79.

130. And what are we to make of the view of Sanders, pp. 481-85, that Paul quotes Lev 18:5 only to disagree with it, thereby to show what is wrong with the law? Sanders believes that justification

through the law is wrong, in Paul's sight, not because man sins in trying to win acceptance in God's sight through his own works of merit, but simply because this would involve seeking justification outside of Christ. In other words, Paul's argument in Gal 3:11-12 is totally 'dogmatic'. It is because he has accepted the presupposition that only those who are righteous by faith will live that he rejects the thought that righteousness could come from the law. Hence Sanders comes to the staggering conclusion (p. 550) that the charge of legalism is not at the heart of Paul's argument against his opponents, but only his exclusivist soteriology. What is wrong with the law is only that it is nothing in comparison with Christ. "Doing the law" is wrong "only because it is not faith." Sanders admits, on the other hand, that for Paul doing the works of the law is in itself a good thing -- it is just that it is now irrelevant. "It is thus not first of all against the means of being properly religious which are appropriate to Judaism that Paul polemicizes ('by works of law'), but against the prior fundamentals of Judaism: the election, the covenant and the law; and it is because these are wrong that the means appropriate to 'righteousness according to the law' ... are held to be wrong or are not mentioned. In short, this is what Paul finds wrong in Judaism: it is not Christianity" (pp. 551-52). The truth, as we see it, is quite the reverse: far from seeing anything wrong with the 'fundamentals' of Judaism, it is these which Paul claims for the gospel. It is the false means used to win through to the goal which Paul so clearly condemns. Our argument thus far adequately demonstrates the unlikelihood of Sanders' amazing line of reasoning.

131. Bring, p. 16.

132. Bring, p. 15 n. 17.

133. Daniel Fuller, Gospel and Law: Contrast or Continuum?, p. 120.

134. Schlier, Galater, p. 134: "Das Gesetz hat es mit dem ποιεῖν zu tun. Stellt man das Leben auf das Gesetz, so wird es nur durch dessen Grundprinzip, das Tun, erlangt. Das Gesetz steht neben dem 'Glauben' als ein Grundfaktor menschlichen Daseins. Es hat aber seine eigene, in seinem Bereich unumgängliche Weise, das Leben darzureichen: das Tun dessen, was es fordert. Wo das Gesetz herrscht, da kann von Glauben nicht die Rede sein, sondern das handelt es sich auf alle Fälle um die Tat."

135. Schlier, Galater, p. 134: "Er ist nicht erst damit gegeben, dass das Gesetz quantitativ nicht ganz erfüllt wird, sondern schon damit, dass es überhaupt 'getan' werden muss, dass es sich bei ihm um ein Tun handelt, das auf eine Forderung des Gesetzes hin geschieht, also um ἔργα νόμου."

136. Mussner, p. 226 and p. 226 n. 65. See also Wilckens, "Was heisst bei Paulus," pp. 92-94, who notes that the stress throughout vv. 10-12 is on man's failure to produce the deeds of the law. Not the will to do the law is wrong, says Wilckens correctly, or law works, or even the desire to be righteous before God, for otherwise God's promise to give life through the law would be false.

137. Surely to be rejected is the view of George Howard, Paul: Crisis in Galatia, p. 58, that πίστις here refers to the faith or faithfulness of Christ (gen. subj.) which brings the blessing to all.

Howard concludes that Paul is not attacking legalism (which would then be contrasted with faith), but is underlining the sovereign nature of God's act in destroying the universal rule of law. However, we have seen clearly that legalism versus faith as attitudes of men are very much in question here -- and on the unlikelihood of πίστις Χριστοῦ (which does not even appear in the text) as gen. subj., see Kertelge, pp. 163-77, who shows that πίστις with gen. (i.e. Χριστοῦ) is to be compared to πίστις εἰς and πίστις ὅτι, and is hence gen. obj.

138. We take ἐξηγόρασεν to refer to release or freeing in a general sense, i.e. not as a terminus technicus borrowed from the Hellenistic practice of a deity emancipating slaves. See Betz, p. 149 n. 114; Mussner, p. 232; contra Schlier, Galater, p. 136. Mussner notes that ἐξαγοραζεῖν is never used in manumission texts; a simple act of freeing is probably in the Apostle's mind.

139. Betz, p. 149.

140. Lietzmann, Galater, p. 19.

141. Burton, pp. 168-71.

142. I.e., that legalism must say that Christ is a sinner -- but why so, if He has perfectly fulfilled the law?

143. Burton, p. 171.

144. Berger, p. 52. See also Oepke, pp. 107-9.

145. Bläser, pp. 219-20.

146. See Betz, pp. 149-51; Oepke, pp. 107-9; Becker, p. 38; Schlier, Galater, pp. 137-40; Mussner, pp. 231-34; Lietzmann, Galater, p. 19; Berger, pp. 52-53.

147. Betz, p. 151.

148. Schlier, Galater, p. 137.

149. Schlier, Galater, p. 139.

150. Oepke, p. 108.

151. See for instance Beyer, p. 27, "Der Weg des Gesetzes musste bis an Ende gegangen werden, bis dahin, wo die gesetzliche, also die höchste und ernsteste vom Menschen aus denkbar Frömmigkeit zur furchtbarsten aller Sinnlosigkeiten führt." He states that the law's power is broken over those " ... welche sich nicht mehr auf seine dem Menschen so grossartig scheinende, scheinbar seine Würde begründende und im Wahrheit verknechtende und zerstörende Macht verlassen, sondern sich Christus anvertrauen" (p. 27). Note also Schlier's comment ([149] above).

152. Betz, p. 151; Schlier, Galater, pp. 137-40; Oepke, p. 109; Beyer, p. 27.

153. Mussner, p. 235.

154. Beyer, p. 27.

155. Lietzmann, Galater, p. 19.

156. And surely to be doubted is the view of Howard: "The redemption of mankind was a redemption from the law's tyranny of division. The law, by its divisive power, suppressed the nations and kept Israel in isolation. Christ's unification thus was a redemption from the law in order to form a unity between Jew and Gentile. In this view, Paul's doctrine of justification by faith is the doctrine that God has included uncircumcised Gentiles into the kingdom as an act of divine faith to the promise given to Abraham" (p. 64). And on v. 14 he comments, "The faithful act of Christ had effect on both Jews and Gentiles, for the law had divided them into hostile camps. The dividing force of the law, holding back the unity which was destined to come, suppressed all men under the law. Christ's redemption from the law was a redemption of all men for the sake of unity; or, as the apostle puts it: 'In order that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles in Christ Jesus'" (p. 65). We have already noted ([137] above) the impossibility of Howard's idea that legalism and faith are not in view here, and also that πίστις (Χριστοῦ) must be taken as gen. obj., not subj. We have also made clear, with respect to v. 13, the reality of the curse as a curse on human legalism, that self-righteous endeavour which utterly fails to fulfil the righteous demand of the law. It is not the law, but the legalists, the perverters of the law, with whom Paul is disputing, i.e. those who would exclude the Gentiles from the blessing are the legalists, not the law itself. It is, in fact, the law which, according to this very passage, promises the blessing to the Gentiles! We have also observed, finally, that there is no evidence that in v. 14 Paul has in mind the end or abrogation of the law as a wicked or in any sense malevolent force. On all these counts, let alone the extraordinary assumption that Paul's doctrine of justification by faith consists solely in deliverance from ethnic barriers created by the law, we must regard Howard's view as unlikely in the extreme.

Section II

Introduction

For Paul, it is the promise to Abraham which, of all the parts of the Old Testament, most clearly and decisively points the way to freedom in Christ. So far, we have discussed God's judgment on man's sin and the particular role of the law in bringing this judgment to bear, thus confirming and strengthening the bondage in which man is held captive. This theme of the role of the law in pronouncing God's righteous judgment on sin and man's rebellion is also dealt with specifically from the viewpoint of the relationship of the law to the promise given to Abraham. If indeed the law declares God's sentence of condemnation on men, how is it related to the promise, through which God shows the way to freedom? We shall show that Paul's discussion of the relationship between law and promise demonstrates above all that the relationship of the law to Christian freedom is not restricted to the negative side, i.e. the confining of men in bondage until the coming of the promise. In the course of our discussion here, we shall begin to see a broader picture emerging, the fuller outlines of which will be developed later in our study. Paul deals with this theme in several texts; the first we shall turn to is Gal 3:15-18, 21-22.

In Gal 3:15-18, 21-22 Paul develops his argument concerning the relationship between law and promise by discussing the significance of the chronological order in which they appeared. In examining these verses, we must remember that the Apostle is here combatting a misuse of the law in which it is exalted as a means to establish a claim upon God and thus to display one's own righteousness. Paul implies that the law, thus understood, becomes divorced from the promise, which issues from the grace of God and by which alone we are justified. His aim here, therefore, as we shall see, is not to depreciate the law, but rather to rescue it from a false understanding and wrongful use. It is from this perspective that we must view his comments regarding the relative 'value' of law and promise, and their respective relationship to freedom in Christ.[1]

Gal 3:15-18

Most interpreters agree that in vv. 15-18 Paul makes reference to some kind of will or testamentary provision,[2] quite possibly (though not certainly) the Jewish institution of "mattānāh bārî."[3] The Apostle's aim here is straightforward, and is summarized concisely by Betz: "He intends to render impossible the assumption that the revelation of the Torah on Mount Sinai could imply a cancellation of the promise made to Abraham."[4] Even as in human life (κατὰ ἄνθρωπον λέγω[5]) a will cannot be altered, neither can God's duly established promise to Abraham be annulled (ἀθετεῖ, v. 15; ἀκυροῖ, v. 17, both legal terms[6]) by the revelation of the law on Mount Sinai.

This does not mean, however, that Paul's aim here is to devalue the law. The promise itself is contained in the Torah,[7] and Paul has been careful to undergird his argument throughout with OT references (see our comments on vv. 6-14). The Judaizers, Betz points out correctly, were interested only in the law, and that as a means of self-justification.[8] Against this, says Betz, Paul wishes to focus on the promise. Abraham, to whom the promise was given, was justified by faith (as Paul has made clear in vv. 6ff), and now the Apostle adds the point (as he does in Rom 4) that this occurred before the Sinai covenant was even given.[9] This means that Abraham's way of attaining righteousness (by faith) cannot be rendered invalid by anything in the Mosaic law. However, this (surely) does not mean, as Betz asserts, that Paul thus "deprives the Sinai Torah of any significance."[10] Neither does it imply, as Schlier thinks, that "Verheissung und Gesetz widersprechen sich."[11] Schlier's assertion (on v. 18b) that God has decided for the

promise, not for the law,[12] suggests that the two are entities independent of God, who must then choose between them (for one and against the other) -- though Schlier no doubt sees correctly that v. 18b " ... jedes Verdienst, das der Leistung entspricht, ausschliesst."[13]

To be doubted, surely, is the view of Oepke that, according to v. 17, the law " ... als selbstständige, ja feindliche Macht Gott gegenübertritt."[14] This seems already to be excluded on the basis of Oepke's own observation (on v. 18) that Paul, opposing law and promise here to destroy the argument God might annul the first will through a second, is attacking the suggestion that God contradicts Himself.[15] The law, as Mussner points out, is not a demonic power, even though it is the subject of ἀκυροῖ (v. 17):[16] Paul's point is rather to oppose the view that the promise was destroyed because of anything that happened on Mount Sinai.[17] It is this positive aim we should keep in mind. E. Bammel points out that the alternative is a non-Pauline dualism.[18] In our view, the real point here is that noted by O. Schulz, who observes (on v. 18) that while Paul occasionally refers to God's gracious act toward the Jews in giving them the law, here he centres on God's gracious act in giving the promise.[19] All the more strange is it, therefore, that almost in the next breath Schulz asserts that God's graciousness can in no way be expressed by the law![20]

Once again we must distinguish between the law itself and its legalistic misuse. If we identify the law with legalism, we shall fall into the misunderstanding of H. A. A. Kennedy that law and promise are incompatible (Kennedy equates law and legalism[21],) and that Paul " ... seems to lose sight of any Divine purpose in that phase of the old order, and simply exults over its abolishment by Christ. The Law now appears to him as a positive barrier between the soul and God, which has had to be torn down."[22] Burton takes ἐκ νόμου (v. 18) as "substantially equivalent" to ἐν νόμῳ (v. 11) and thus sees law here (as he did with respect to vv. 6ff) as that legalistic system which has no part in the purposes of God.[23] This view is, as we have seen, untenable, and cannot be ascribed to Paul here any more than elsewhere. Paul is fighting against a position which, as we have noted, through its preoccupation with obtaining righteousness through the law, led to self-righteous endeavour and the claim to be justified through one's own obedience to the law -- an obedience which, in Paul's view, is woefully lacking. While νόμος in vv. 15-18 appears to refer straightforwardly to the Mosaic law (rather than to human legalism), it is human legalism (the conviction that man can be justified through his own works), not the law itself,

against which Paul is arguing.[24] Only when the law is seen outside of the purposes for which God ordained it does it become a threat to God's gracious promise (a thought elaborated on in vv. 19ff): when seen in the proper light, it is no threat at all. It is only in this limited sense that we can speak here of any 'devaluation' of the law. Cranfield observes justly, "In arguing against their perverse, excessive exaltation of the law Paul naturally has to attempt to reduce the law's importance, in the eyes of those who have been led astray, to its true magnitude. It is not that Paul desires, absolutely, in any way to disparage the law, but that, in relation to this false exaltation of the law, he is forced in some measure to depreciate it. To fail to make full allowance for the special circumstances which called forth the letter would be to proceed in a quite uncritical and unscientific manner."[25]

Gal 3:21-22

The rhetorical question of v. 21a, suggesting that Paul's readers may have inferred from his previous comments that he held the law in low esteem, is answered firmly in the negative.[26] Paul goes on (in vv. 21b-22) to outline the complementary roles of law and promise (or, more accurately, the complementary aspect of that particular role of the law which is in view here).

Occurrence of the particle ἄν gives an unreal character to v. 21.[27] Van Dülmen notes that the emphasis is not that the law brings no righteousness, but rather that it does not compete with the promise.[28] The reason for this lies not in the 'inferior' nature of the law but rather in the fact that, though the law was given for life, man has never been able to obey it (see v. 12).[29] The law was not meant to deceive or even to lead to death.[30] This opens the way for Paul to give (in v. 22) the true answer regarding this aspect of the law's purpose, viz. to declare God's just judgment on human sin and disobedience.[31] If we understand this clearly, we will recognize that, according to these verses, God did not give the law merely to place men in bondage and lead them to a condition of despair in which they would seek His grace, but that one aspect of the law's legitimate function is to declare God's righteous judgment on human sin -- a judgment which, because of the extent of man's wilful disobedience, is universal and (as is also made clear in Rom 3:9ff) inescapable. The fact that in v. 21 Paul makes some distinction between νόμος and ἐπαγγελία, even though the promise to Abraham is contained in the law, should alert us to the fact he is not making an exhaustive statement concerning his understanding of the law's purposes.[32] This

is extremely important for our understanding of Christian freedom in relation to the law, as these verses portray (συνέκλεισεν, and see on v. 23 below) the law as a jailer from whose authority we, through the gospel, are set free.

Bammel understands correctly that Paul's purposes here are positive, i.e. to solve the problem of affirming the constancy of God's will in different circumstances.[33] Surely this task is made much easier if we remember that these verses do not give an exhaustive summation of Paul's understanding of the role of the law. Burton falls into a trap here, in that he is forced to recognize from v. 22 that God Himself uses the law even though, on Burton's view, the law does not come from God or express His verdict on men. He resolves this by suggesting that Paul does not say here that law and promise are in any sense in agreement, but that they operate in separate realms and therefore do not conflict.[34] Yet if God uses the law (as described in v. 22) it must in some real sense express His judgment on men -- and if law and promise do not conflict, they must in some way be in harmony. If we bear in mind that elsewhere Paul assigns a positive value to the role of the law in the Christian life and links this to the fulfilment of the promise in Christ, the Apostle's meaning here becomes immeasurably clearer -- and we are not left to understand Christian freedom as simply a release from any further relationship with the law. In this sense we can agree with Beyer that, according to these verses, the law works with the promise; in holding men under sin, it points the way to Christ and to true freedom (with which it has a not altogether negative relationship).[35] This, however, does not exhaust the role of the law or its relationship to Christian freedom.

Gal 4:21-31

This theme is also dealt with in Gal 4:21-31. Here Paul illustrates the relationship of law and promise through the story of Hagar and Sarah and their children. Hagar is linked with the law and slavery, Sarah with the promise and freedom. A closer examination reveals, however, that it is not the law, but legalism, which the Apostle opposes to freedom here. The law, properly understood, is linked positively with the promise and the consequent attainment of freedom. In this text, as previously in Galatians, Paul turns to the law as the divine authority whereby his argument may be established.

In v. 21 most commentators see two different meanings assigned to νόμος. In v. 21a, it is seen to represent the law construed as a legalistic system, while in v. 21b it appears as a source of divine

authority. The phrase οἱ ὑπὸ νόμον θέλοντες εἶναι is thus taken to refer to the desire of the Galatians to place themselves under the bondage of the law construed as a means for justification through one's own obedience.[36] We have seen, on the basis of our conclusions thus far, that this corresponds to the false and twisted understanding of the law held by the Judaizers which the Apostle so vigorously condemns. We can therefore agree with other commentators that νόμος in v. 21a signifies a legalistic bondage constituting a powerful threat to the believer's freedom. To controvert the argument of his opponents, however, Paul turns to the law itself (v. 21b). Most interpreters agree, as has been noted, that a different understanding of νόμος is in view here. Schlier comments that, whereas in v. 21a the law as an institution is spoken of, here Paul refers to the Pentateuch. The two, he continues, are interrelated without being identical; the law points beyond itself and itself shows the divide between legalists and Christians.[37] Betz sees the opposition as being between the law and the wider Scripture (OT), interpreted allegorically (see vv. 24ff).[38] Mussner notes that those who wish to place themselves ὑπὸ νόμον have not, according to this passage, truly understood the law. He sees νόμος in v. 21a as indicating only a series of commandments, whereas in v. 21b it refers to " ... die Heilsgeschichte in ihrem Sinn aufschliessende heilige Schrift des alten Bundes."[39] Becker comments that a legalistic life (v. 21a) contradicts the law itself (v. 21b).[40]

We can see in these comments reasonable support for the contention we have adopted that in Galatians Paul argues not against the law itself, or even against its proper observance, but rather against that legalistic perversion of the law which transforms it into a system of merit and reward, a vehicle by which the legalist can attain justification through his own efforts. Paul argues strenuously that as all are sinners, none can in this way be justified, and indeed (see 6:13), that those who suppose differently do not themselves properly fulfil the law. The distinction, therefore, in v. 21, is between the false conception of the law held by the Judaizers and the true understanding of the law, in which it is seen as pointing to Christ.[41]

This provides the essential framework for a correct understanding of what the Apostle says in the remainder of this section. In vv. 22-23, he notes, on the authority of Scripture (the νόμος of v. 21b), that of Abraham's two sons, Isaac and Ishmael,[42] one was born in freedom and according to the promise, and the other in bondage and according to the flesh. Freedom thus becomes a central theme of the epistle, taking

up what has been said concerning faith, sonship and the promise, and leading into the exhortation to remain in liberty (5:1ff).

Following his presentation of the historical background in vv. 22-23, the Apostle now seeks to ascertain the significance of these events for his readers in their confrontation with the Judaizers (the importance of this contextual consideration must never be overlooked).[43] This he does by noting the 'allegorical' significance of the OT texts (ἅτινά ἐστιν ἀλληγορούμενα, v. 24). Interpreters differ on the precise meaning of ἀλληγορούμενα, but there is a measure of agreement that, contrary to, for instance, Philo, Paul does not intend by this device to deny or bypass completely the actual historical meaning of (in this case) the Genesis accounts (see Gen 16:15; 21:2, 9ff). Rather does he seek from them a deeper meaning than would be evident on ordinary inspection.[44]

A clear contrast is now drawn between the two covenants, that of Mt Sinai, bearing children to slavery (εἰς δουλείαν γεννῶσα, v. 24), and that of the heavenly Jerusalem which is free (ἐλευθέρα ἐστίν, v. 26). This much is clear, even though Paul's comparison is interrrupted by the insertion of v. 25. In this 'allegory', Hagar, the slave woman is identified first with Mt Sinai and then with the present Jerusalem (v. 25, taking the likeliest reading to be τὸ δὲ Ἄγαρ Σινᾶ ὄρος ἐστὶν κτλ.).[45] In Betz' view, the two covenants represent two 'world orders' decreed by God; Paul's purpose here "is clearly to discredit the 'old covenant' as the pre-Christian condition before salvation came." The children of slavery, he continues, belong to the "Torah covenant of Judaism" and are in slavery under the law.[46] Betz suggests that Paul creates the freedom/slavery antithesis here in order to make clear the opposition between Judaism and Christianity and so discredit his Judaizing foes.[47] Schlier asserts that the two covenants represent the old and new aeons, which are unalterably opposed: "Das jetzige Jerusalem ist ja nicht nur das mangelhafte oder auch zerstörte, im Prinzip aber unversehrte irdische Jerusalem, sondern es ist die Repräsentantin der Welt, die der Ordnung des Gesetzes, der Sünde und des Todes unterworfen ist. Demgegenüber ist das obere Jerusalem, das in der Kirche lebt, das auf dem Grunde der göttlichen Verheissung in Freiheit herrschende Reich."[48] On the mention of slavery here Mussner remarks, "Es ist die Knechtschaft der Sünde und des Todes, in die der νόμος, gegen die ursprüngliche Absicht des Gesetzgebers, 'geboren hat' ...."[49] Various commentators point out that Paul is opposing the Rabbinic view that it is the law and its study that leads to true freedom.[50]

We do not take issue with the view that the contrast here is between slavery and freedom, and that slavery is somehow identified with the law and freedom with God's act in Christ. We find it difficult, however, to agree that slavery and the law are inherently linked in the mind of the Apostle, i.e. that there is something in the law itself which results in bondage. Rather, as we have repeatedly seen, does the Apostle place the blame for the human condition clearly on human sin. Mussner possibly hints at this when he suggests that the slavery into which the law led does not represent the original purpose of the law-giver. Betz is even more to the point when he admits that the straightforward identification of Hagar with the law and Sarah with the gospel cannot be made here because it would not cohere with Paul's positive understanding of the law evidenced in 6:2.[51] To say, therefore, that Paul's aim here is to discredit the law (Betz) or to establish an unbreakable bond between the law, on the one hand, and sin, death and the earthly Jerusalem, on the other (Mussner and Schlier), does not do justice, surely, to Paul's intention here.[52]

Those who exalt the νῦν Ἰερουσαλήμ are the same individuals who are pressing the Galatian Christians to Judaize, on the basis that only through practice of certain legalistically-construed rites can they attain justification. Viewed in this light, the law (or, more accurately, in the Galatian context, the legalistic misinterpretation of the law -- the law viewed as a means to justification and thus exalted above the promise) is indeed an instrument leading to slavery from which we must be freed. On this understanding of the text, however, the Apostle is not opposing genuine acts of obedience to the law, but only that distorted view of the Sinai covenant which places it in isolation from the promise and thus misses its true significance.[53]

The last verses (28-31) underline the truth that only the one justified by faith, not the legalist trusting in his own acts, will receive the promise and the freedom God grants through it. Paul sets forth a clear choice between his way and that of the Judaizers. Betz suggests that the Galatians, if they opt for circumcision and observance of the Torah, thereby exclude themselves from grace and place themselves under the curse.[54] The Judaizers, who are identified with Ishmael,[55] are threatening to destroy the freedom of the Galatian church by replacing justification by faith with legalism. Circumcision and Torah observance (which, in the case of the Judaizers, does not in any way involve a genuine fulfilment of the law; see 6:12) is not condemned in itself, but only when exalted above the promise and considered a means

for self-justification. Becker comments justly that the law itself speaks against the Judaizers: " ... Christen als Erben der Verheissung verhalten sich 'gesetzesgemäss', wenn sie die Trennung von denen, die das Gesetz im legalistischen Sinn aufrichten, vollziehen."[56]

We conclude, therefore, that in vv. 21-31 Paul speaks of freedom from the bondage of the legalism which requires justification through one's own works, and warns the Galatians that only as those justified by faith in Christ can they be heirs of the promise to Abraham. Nothing is said against the law itself, only against the law understood in isolation from the promise and used in a wrongful and 'unlawful' sense as an instrument of legalism. This is the slavery (represented by the νῦν Ἰερουσαλήμ) into which the Judaizers would lead the Galatian Christians.

Rom 4:13-17a

That for Paul the law is positively related to the promise, and to the freedom to which it points, is also made clear in his discussion of the role of Abraham in Rom 4. Here legalism, not the law, is condemned, and the law is seen in close connection with faith and the promise. The law in itself, says the Apostle here, will not lead to freedom, but rejection of the law is not the way to possess the inheritance. The chronological aspect of the law-promise relationship again comes into play, though this time within the context of the life of Abraham. Hence, Paul speaks of circumcision rather than the law as such. The argument, however, runs along the same lines as in Gal 3 and 4.

Romans 4 applies the statement found in 3:27 concerning boasting, the law and faith to the case of Abraham.[57] Abraham, according to Rabbinic theology, found favour with God through his works (among which was included faith),[58] and was rewarded by receiving the promise of Gen 17:3-8, the outward seal of which was circumcision (Gen 17:9-14). The Jew, faced with the argument of Rom 3:21-31, would immediately point to the account of his προπάτωρ, from whom he would claim both natural descent and supernatural promise, as refuting the Apostle's argument concerning justification by faith. Paul's response to this is an exposition which takes Gen 15:6 as its starting point, and is designed to show that Abraham was justified by faith apart from works (vv. 2-8),[59] that this occurred before he was circumcised (vv. 9-12), and that this justification was not merited by fulfilment of the law but simply on the grounds of the righteousness of faith (vv. 13-17a). The last two sections of the chapter outline the positive nature of Abraham's faith (vv. 17b-22) and show the relevance of this faith to Christians (vv. 23-25).

This theme of Abraham's faith in God's promise (Gen 15:1-6), which occupies a central place in the chapter, is in vv. 13-17 directly related to the role of the law. Though the Mosaic law was not given until many years after the time of Abraham, the basis for discussion of its relation to the Genesis promise has been prepared in vv. 9-12, in which Paul examines the significance of circumcision in light of faith righteousness. Paul opposes the Jewish view that the blessing promised in Ps 32:1 applies only to the Jews.[60] His argument hinges on the fact that Abraham received the promise and was reckoned righteous before he was circumcised,[61] and that his status of righteousness and forgiveness before God (of vv. 3-8) was dependent not upon circumcision but solely upon faith. Here again, however, as in 3:1-4, circumcision is assigned a positive value in the plan of God, for Paul will not take the promise from Israel or dispute its 'Heilsgeschichte'.[62] Circumcision remains, as K. Berger notes, a pointer toward God's righteous command, whose significance is fulfilled (not emptied) by the manifestation of God's righteousness in Christ.[63] That circumcision is the sign (σημεῖον) or seal (σφραγίς) of righteousness means that its true significance can only be judged by the standard of faith.[64] Thus the righteousness of faith comes to all -- to the Gentile and also to the Jew who fulfils the true purpose of his circumcision by following in the faith of his father Abraham.[65] Hence, the Jew remains in a genuine relationship with Abraham κατὰ σάρκα (v. 1), but this relationship must be based on faith for the promise given to Abraham to be attained. Further, in the new relationship based on faith, the promise is accessible equally to the Gentiles and to the Jews.[66]

This theme, as we have noted, is in vv. 13-17a related to the question of the Mosaic law.[67] The preposition γάρ in v. 13 links this subsection with the preceding verse (and indeed, with vv. 9-12 as a whole), and indicates that dependence of the promise on law would preclude the reckoning of faith righteousness described in v. 12, i.e. its reckoning to believing Jews and Gentiles alike. The fulfilment of the promise is possible only, as Paul has argued in vv. 1-8, where the sinner recognizes his need and relies solely upon grace rather than his inadequate ἔργα νόμου (see on 1:18-3:20 and 3:21-31). Only by the instrumentality of the righteousness of faith (διὰ δικαιοσύνης πίστεως, v. 13) does the promise become a reality in the believing Jew or Gentile;[68] were the law to be the means of attaining the promise all would be lost, for man, as the Apostle has argued repeatedly in the epistle, does not properly obey the law and thus reach the life which it genuinely offers.[69] Thus Paul effectively refutes the Rabbinic assertion that Abraham

received the promise as a reward for his (prior) law fulfilment.[70] Viewed thus, v. 13 reinforces the argument of the chapter as a whole, i.e. that Abraham cannot be brought forward as an exception to the rule enunciated in 3:27-31, viz. that none is justified by works of the law and that all human boasting is thus excluded.

The statement of v. 13 is explained further (γάρ) in v. 14, which is best understood as suggesting that if the inheritance (the fulfilment of the promise) comes through reliance on works performed in obedience to the law (which obedience, far from being wrong in itself, is indeed commanded by God), then faith is rendered vain and the promise destroyed, for the one who relies on works constantly fails in his own endeavour and cannot reach the promise, which depends for its fulfilment on the righteousness of faith (made real in the believer's life by the confession of the inadequacy of his own works and the consequent renunciation of those works as the means of his justification).[71] This interpretation fits well with what Paul has said in v. 13 (and also in 3:21-31) concerning law- and faith-righteousness.

Surely to be rejected is the view of Sanday and Headlam that οὐ ἐκ νόμου refers to the "vassals of a legal system, such as were the Jews,"[72] where the blame for the situation seems to be placed on a defect in the law rather than on the culpability of the sinner (which latter view is, as we have seen, Paul's understanding). Also to be rejected is the idea that in v. 14 is expressed an intrinsic opposition between law and faith or between law and Christ (or what some call the 'Christ-event'). Kuss believes that Paul is supporting his statement in v. 13 concerning Christ as the seed by pointing out that if the promise came by law, the 'Christ-event' would be senseless; as the latter is not the case, then neither is the former.[73] It is unlikely, however, that σπέρμα in v. 13 refers to Christ,[74] and this view leaves unexplained why Paul would suggest such an opposition between law and the 'Christ-event' without providing any explanation. It becomes difficult to account for κεκένωται and κατήργηται, and v. 15 is rendered superfluous.[75] Indeed, in view of Paul's aim -- to provide a positive correlation between the OT narrative and righteousness by faith in Christ -- it is difficult to conceive such an antithesis being introduced at all. Paul does not (pace Kuss)[76] create an opposition between law and faith in these verses; rather is his concern to demonstrate that righteousness by faith upholds the law (3:31).[76a]

A similar mistake is made by Schlier, who comments, "Wäre die Leistung des auf sich selbst stehenden und so dem νόμος gehorchenden Menschen für die Eröffnung der eschatologischen Zukunft massgebend, wäre

aber nicht nur der Weg des Glaubens eine Illusion, so es wäre auch die ἐπαγγελία zunichte gemacht."[77] This appears to suggest that there is something inherently wrong in obedience to the law -- whereas Paul's view is that obedience to the law brings justification (2:13). What is wrong is not obedience to the law but disobedience to the law -- and only on this understanding of the verse does v. 15 make sense. The law and the promise are 'irreconcilable', Wilckens points out, only in the sense that none are justified by works,[78] and that therefore those who point to obedience to the law as the basis for inheriting the promise will be disappointed.[79]

This understanding is reinforced by v. 15, which is most naturally taken as an explanation (γάρ) of the statement in v. 14 that under the law no one can receive the inheritance (as the requisite ἔργα νόμου are not forthcoming). Therefore v. 15 explains that what the law does bring about is wrath -- the wrath of God upon man, for his failure to obey the law. Rabbinic theology held that the law was the bearer of the promise (2 Macc 2:17) and that, thanks to this function, it was known already to Abraham.[80] Käsemann notes that the law's fulfilment was the condition for the realization of the promise (see Apoc Bar 46:6), yet the pious Jew was aware of his own failure in this respect (cf. 4 Ezra 7:119, "Quid enim nobis prodest, si promissum est nobis immortale tempus, nos vero mortalia opera egimus").[81] Yet, as we have noted (on 1:18-3:20), the Jewish theologians repeatedly asserted that, in spite of all their sins, they (and they alone) would receive God's forgiveness. Paul argues forcibly here (as he does in 3:19-20) that this is not the case. Cranfield comments, " ... so far from the law's being something which a man might hope so adequately to fulfil as thereby to establish a claim on God, its actual effect, men being what they are, is to bring God's wrath upon them by turning their sin into conscious transgression and so rendering it more exceedingly sinful."[82]

Some (e.g. Michel, U. Luz) feel that a juridical rather than historical statement is in view here (in contrast to Gal 3:19), for the law was not given at the time of the promise. Paul, on this view, reverts to a polemic against the Jewish view of the law.[83] For Luz, the promise here is a word spoken in history by God, while the law is merely a "lebenstimmendes Prinzip", referring to a general truth and without specific reference to Abraham. If the statement is historical, says Luz, then v. 15b implies that there is no transgression before or after the law, which is impossible in context.[84] Yet, as we have noted, the point at issue here is the Jewish view that Abraham, who already

knew the law, was justified by works, and that, with respect to this situation, law and circumcision are very difficult to separate. The view of Luz is marred by the fact he has confused the special connotation of παράβασις (sin against a direct commandment) with the general notion of sin. The absence of παράβασις does not imply the absence of sin (see 5:12-21); indeed, Luz himself notes elsewhere the correct understanding, "Der 'nomos' qualifiziert eine Sündentat als 'parabasis' des Gesetzes und bewirkt so göttlichen Zorn."[85] Hence, there is no reason to separate 4:15 and 5:13.[86] Neither, however, are we to accept the contention of van Dülmen that the verse is completely 'heilsgeschichtlich', illustrating the opposition between the 'Unheilszeit' of law and the 'Heilszeit' of faith, and is not juridical at all.[87] Yet how can the subject of God's judgment not be juridical in nature? The full force of the law's condemning judgment is directed against sin. Van Dülmen's contention that the law's condemnation of sin is purely formal and that the law, far from properly exposing the nature of transgression, merely calls it forth, suffers from almost complete incongruity with Paul's statement here that the law's judgment on sin is real and effectual.[88]

The subsection is concluded by vv. 16-17a, which speak of the universality of the promise ἐκ πίστεως and κατὰ χάριν. The promise is said to be sure (βεβαίαν) for all the seed, not only those ἐκ τοῦ νόμου but also those ἐκ πίστεως Ἀβραάμ. In light of the parallel expression in vv. 11-12 it is best to see in the first phrase a reference to Jewish Christians (otherwise ἐκ τοῦ νόμου can only refer to Christ Himself),[89] and to understand in the second a reference to Gentile believers.[90] G. Klein, however, insists that οὐ ἐκ νόμου here must have the same meaning as in v. 14. On this view, Paul is merely stating that the promise is open to all, but in the process creates a distinction between Christians (Jews and Gentiles), with whom alone Abraham is connected, and "empirische Judenheit". Only faith through grace, however, will allow 'paganized Israel' to reclaim the promise (yet Klein admits that in v. 17a Jews are once again included in the descendants of Abraham).[91]

This view, however, has serious weaknesses. It is much more natural (in light of the similarity of structure and content) to connect v. 16 with vv. 11-12 than with v. 14, notwithstanding the occurrence of οὐ ἐκ νόμου in the latter. Klein's inability to see believing Jews described as οὐ ἐκ νόμου stems from his erroneous insistence on a complete separation between law and faith, the old and new covenants. Berger notes that the promise applies first to the Jews.[92] It is also

difficult to see how those who, on Klein's view, are not Christians, could be included in the seed of Abraham merely in the sense that the promise is open to them (even though they have not accepted its fulfilment in Christ). This stretches the natural meaning of the verse beyond recognition.[93] The whole interpretation appears to represent an attempt to impose Klein's distinctive views on 'Heilsgeschichte' on the passage. If 'Heilsgeschichte' is to be introduced into the discussion, it seems far more reasonable to adopt the conclusion of Wilckens, "Beschneidung und Gesetz sind durchaus integrierbar, wenn sie mit dem Glauben verbunden und unter seine Direktion gestellt werden. Die Beschneidung ist in der Taufe aufgehoben (V. 11) und das Gesetz nicht ausser Kraft gesetzt, sondern vielmehr aufgerichtet (3,31)."[94]

The subsection's concluding statement, that Abraham is the "father of us all", believing Jews and Gentiles alike, claims Abraham and the OT history (including promise and law) for the gospel, rooting these things firmly in the πίστις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, thus providing ample confirmation of the truths expressed in 3:27-31 (on which see our comments in Section III, part A). The point of ch. 4, therefore, as of our previous texts, is not only to stress the significance of the promise but also to underline the importance of the law by showing how it is linked to and confirmed by the promise. The positive relationship between law and promise precludes any conflict between the two, when the relationship is properly understood. The promise is found in the law, and in its fulfilment the law finds confirmation.

Conclusions

1. Paul is combatting in Galatians an undue exaltation of the law over the promise. As far as he is concerned, there is no conflict between the two when they are properly understood. The promise is itself contained in the law. The Judaizers are interested only in using the law as a means to achieve their own legalistic purposes.
2. The law is in no way a demonic power. Not law and promise, but legalism (legalistic perversion of the law) and promise are incompatible. Those relying on the law rather than on the promise are condemned not because of a genuine obedience to the law, but because they do not realize that man's sinful disobedience will never satisfy the law's demands. Only in the promise does man have hope of freedom and deliverance. Yet this freedom is freedom from legalism and sin, not the law. Paul appeals to the law to combat legalism and establish the promise.

3. The law expresses God's judgment -- but even in holding men under sin, it points the way to true freedom in Christ.
4. The law leads to slavery (and stands in opposition to the promise) only insofar as human sin twists it into a means for legalistic endeavour, thus utterly failing to satisfy its righteous demands. Paul does not condemn observance of the law in itself, but only when such observance is carried out in a legalistic spirit.

Footnotes

1. C. E. B. Cranfield, "St. Paul and the Law," in New Testament Issues, ed. R. Batey, pp. 163-64.

2. Hans D. Betz, Galatians, p. 155; Heinrich Schlier, Der Brief an die Galater, p. 143; Albrecht Oepke, Der Brief des Paulus an die Galater, p. 110; Hans Lietzmann, An die Galater, p. 20; Jürgen Becker, An die Galater, p. 39; Marie-J. Lagrange, Saint Paul, Épître aux Galates, p. 75; Karl Berger, "Abraham in den paulinischen Hauptbriefen," M Th Z 17 (1966), p. 55; Andrea van Dülmen, Die Theologie des Gesetzes bei Paulus, p. 36 n. 72; contra Ernest de Witt Burton, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians, p. 179, who argues for the meaning 'covenant', yet admits the thought throughout is of a legal nature.

3. Franz Mussner, Der Galaterbrief, p. 237; Ernst Bammel, "Gottes ΔΙΑΘΗΚΗ (Gal III.15-17) und das jüdische Rechtsdenken," NTS 6 (1959-60), pp. 111, who thinks a Hellenistic institution is in view. The advantage of the "mattānāh bāri," however, for our purposes is that it is the decree of a healthy man (not someone dying, which would scarcely be apposite with reference to God), it is unalterable (unlike, for instance, Greek or Roman wills, on which see Betz, p. 155) and it is widely attested in middle-eastern cultures as early as the first century AD. The testator retains the usufructuary rights during his lifetime; Bammel, p. 315, suggests this institution is represented in the NT parable of the wicked tenants. It is interesting also that, according to the Mishna and Talmud, this was the only way a non-blood relative could receive the inheritance (see Bammel, p. 315). However, it is possible that Hellenistic law is in view, as the Galatians may not have been familiar with this predominantly middle-eastern institution.

4. Betz, p. 158.

5. Betz, p. 154; Schlier, p. 143; Mussner, p. 236; Wolfgang Beyer, Der Brief an die Galater, rev. P. Althaus, p. 28; Becker, p. 39. There is no negative overtone to this phrase; see Oepke, p. 110; Schlier, p. 143; Mussner, p. 236.

6. Burton, p. 184; Betz, p. 158; Schlier, pp. 143, 148 n. 1, 2; Oepke, p. 110.

7. See Cranfield, "St. Paul and the Law," p. 164.

8. Betz, p. 158.

9. He counters (implicitly, as in Rom 4) the Jewish view that Abraham knew and obeyed various commands of the Mosaic law (see on Rom 4).

10. Betz, p. 158.

11. Schlier, p. 149.

12. Schlier, p. 150.

13. Schlier, p. 150.

14. Oepke, p. 113; see also Becker, p. 39, who states there is no relationship between law and promise " ... weil das Gesetz ausserhalb des an das Abraham-Christus-Testament gebundenen Segens steht. Das Gesetz ist ein Fremdkörper gegenüber den Grössen Glaubensgerechtigkeit, Verheissung, Segen, Geist." This kind of negative thought regarding the law is not at all in view here. Rather does Paul wish to clarify the law's relationship to the promise.

15. Oepke, p. 114.

16. Mussner, p. 241.

17. See Mussner, p. 241.

18. Bammel, p. 317.

19. Oswald Schulz, "Τί οὖν ὁ νόμος;: Verhältnis von Gesetz, Sünde und Evangelium nach Gal. 3," Th St u Kr 75 (1902), p. 18.

20. Schulz, p. 19.

21. H. A. A. Kennedy, The Theology of the Epistles, pp. 44-45.

22. Kennedy, p. 46.

23. Burton, p.186.

24. See Daniel Fuller, Gospel and Law: Contrast or Continuum?, pp: 199-201, who points out that by v. 15 Paul has already established that the Judaizers' way of understanding Abraham was wrong. Hence, in v. 17 and v. 18 he is not saying that the law is opposed to faith; "What he is saying is that even if the Judaizers were right and the law enjoined the doing of good works in which men can boast...," it could not annul righteousness by faith. Fuller proposes that, for argument's sake, Paul for a moment assigns the Judaizers' meaning to the law rather than his. On v. 18 Fuller comments, "So when one remembers early Rabbinics interpreted Abraham's life in terms of Pharisaic legalism, then it becomes understandable how the 'law' mentioned in Gal. 3:18 refers to the legalistic interpretation of it, even though the preceding verse had talked about the law given at Sinai." This interpretation is not far from what we have suggested concerning the narrower aspect of the law; if one aspect of the law's function is seen out of perspective, or if indeed the law as a whole is viewed outside its proper context, the law can be quickly interchanged for legalism.

25. Cranfield, "St. Paul and the Law," p. 163.

26. For comment on the use of μὴ γένοιτο in Paul, see on Gal 2:17. V. 22 must make a postive comment about God's relation to or use of the law; see Ulrich Luz, Das Geschichtsverständnis bei Paulus, p. 191.

27. See BDF, para. 360.

28. Van Dülmen, p. 46 n. 99 -- though we cannot agree with her comment, " ... Gesetz und Verheissung sind in ihrem Wesen so grundsätzlich verschieden, dass sie keinen Vergleichspunkt haben" (pp. 45-46).

29. Berger, pp. 56-57; Mussner, p. 251. See Peter Bläser, Das Gesetz bei Paulus, p. 154, who notes that the law has righteousness for its content, even as does the promise.

30. Mussner, p. 251.

31. See Mussner, pp. 251-53.

32. See Cranfield, "St. Paul and the Law,", p. 162. Surely to be rejected is the view of Betz, p. 175, that γραφή (v. 22), not νόμος (v. 21) represents "God's agent of salvation," Betz then describes γραφή as an "entity working almost like Fate" and says that νομός becomes a "mere tool" in the hand of γραφή . There is no evidence at all anywhere in Paul to suggest he held such a view of Scripture; any distinction here between the two terms may easily be accounted for by the fact the Apostle is dealing with 'law' here in a slightly narrower sense than elsewhere. Schlier, pp. 164-65, notes correctly that Scripture, the agreed authority for both Paul and his opponents, is the executor ('Vollstrecker') of God's will and operates in accordance with God's purpose. Note also that it is γραφή which shuts up under sin, not just νομός: that divine authority about which there is no ambiguity, the whole Scripture, and not 'just' the Torah. This should warn us against facile attempts to sunder law and gospel.

33. Bammel, p. 318.

34. Burton, pp. 193-96. Surely to be rejected is the odd view of Hübner that v. 21 (justification by law) represents the intention of the (demonic) angels and v. 22 that of God with respect to the law. We have shown the unlikelihood of the possibility that the angels are demonic beings. Surely a more reasonable solution is that the law, though in itself good and given by God, has not been obeyed by sinful men, and hence stands as God's judgment against them: this fully satisfies the exegetical needs of the text without resorting to extraordinary proposals for which there is little if any evidence.

35. Beyer, p. 30.

36. Schlier, p. 216; Mussner, pp. 317-18; Becker, p. 56.

37. Schlier, pp. 216-17, p. 217 n. 2.

38. Betz, p. 241.

39. Mussner, p. 318.

40. Becker, p. 56.

41. Mussner seems to support this view when he states that the "paradox" of the law is " ... dass sein heilsgeschichtlich-prophetisches Verständnis ein nur gesetzliches Verständnis der Tora in Frage stellt" (p. 318). Elsewhere, however, he describes the legalistically-understood law as " ... die das Leben bestimmende Norm des Alten Testaments ..." (p. 317), and appears to suggest that the law itself gives rise to both possible interpretations of its function ("heilsgeschtlich-prophetisch" and "gesetzlich"). It would seem more in harmony with the Apostle's thought (in line with what we have seen thus far) to place the blame on sinful men who wilfully misconstrue the law's purposes in order to suit their own ends. There is, of course, a sense in which the law itself could be seen to give rise to misinterpretation (see Cranfield, "St. Paul and the Law," p. 164, and our comments on 3:19ff), but this is quite different from attributing the problem, or part of it, to any defect in the law (which would mistakenly suggest that the law did not come from the hand of God; again see on 3:19ff). We might also note that it would be helpful were Mussner to define more carefully what he means by a "heilsgeschichtlich-prophetisch" understanding of the law, and how this contrasts with a legalistic understanding. Paul, surely, would see the contrast simply between a true understanding of the law (corresponding to what the law says about itself) and a false understanding (in which the law's true meaning and purpose are perverted).

42. He is not interested here in the existence of Abraham's other offspring; only these two are of significance for the matter in hand. See Betz, p. 242. Mussner, p. 318 n. 12, notes that Abraham's other sons would be included in the fate of Ishmael.

43. See Mussner, pp. 331-33 and our comments on vv. 28-31.

44. Schlier, pp. 218-19. See also Mussner, who notes (p. 320) that Paul is interested in both sets of events, i.e. those events involving the original cast of characters in Genesis and the present-day opposition between the disputing parties in Galatia and what they represent (the present and heavenly Jerusalems). Oepke, p. 148, suggests that typology would be a better category than allegory in which to classify Paul's method here. The critical point is that Paul never places the actual occurrence of the original events in question. Lietzmann, p. 30, also speaks of 'types'. Berger, pp. 62-63, points to the use of συνστοιχεῖ as an indication that a historical correspondence, not Platonic-type allegory, is being sought. See also Beyer, p. 38; Becker, p. 56.

45. For a listing of the textual evidence in favour of this reading see Burton, pp. 259-60. Some (e.g. Betz, pp. 244-45) feel that the key to understanding Paul's meaning here may lie in linking Ἄγαρ with the Aramaic "hadjar" ('rock' -- a word used of the mountains in the Sinai region). However, as Lietzmann, p. 31, points out, this would require the text to read ἐν τῇ τῶν Ἀράβων διαλέκτῳ. Moreover, how would the Galatians be expected to understand such a linguistic allusion (see Mussner, pp. 322-23)? Mussner, p. 323, notes (correctly, in our view) that the point of the comparison would then lie in the word itself, rather than in the fact of slavery. Schlier, pp. 219-20, feels that a strictly geographical allusion would be as hard for the Galatians to understand as a linguistic reference. Surely, however, they would be much more likely to have some knowledge of the existence and significance of Mount Sinai than of an obscure linguistic reference. Moreover, as Mussner, p. 323, points

out, Paul needs a geographical comment to bring the references to Hagar, Mount Sinai and the νῦν Ἰερουσαλήμ onto one level. Mussner, writes, " ... den Hinweis auf die Sinaidiatheke braucht er dabei notwendig, wenn der Zusammenhang mit der Nomossklaverei, unter der sich 'das jetzige Jerusalem' befindet, sichtbar werden soll. Ohne dieses Mittelglied des Sinaiberges wäre die allegorische Gleichung: Hagar=gegenwärtiges Jerusalem gar nicht möglich" (p. 323). The only problem is that Mount Sinai is in Arabia, but this objection, as Mussner notes, is parried by Paul in v. 25. Δέ in v. 25a should therefore be translated 'admittedly' and in v. 25b 'but' or 'nevertheless' (see further Mussner, p. 323). This solution seems to us to make best sense of the text.

46. Betz, pp. 243-44.

47. Betz, p. 246.

48. Schlier, p. 224.

49. Mussner, p. 321.

50. See Mussner, p. 324; Betz, p. 246. Betz, p. 247; Schlier, pp. 222-26, notes how Paul takes over the Rabbinic theme of the restored Jerusalem (see Is. 54:1) and applies it to the church (rather than Judaism, represented by the νῦν Ἰερουσαλήμ).

51. Betz, p. 249 n. 104. Yet elsewhere (p. 247) Betz portrays the conflict of the heavenly and earthly Jerusalems as that of law and gospel, flesh and spirit.

52. See also Beyer, p. 39, who says of the ἄνω Ἰερουσαλήμ: "Hier herrscht nicht das Gesetz, sondern die Freiheit -- Sara als die Freie ist das Sinnbild dafür --, und da die an Christus Glaübigen von diesem oberen Jerusalem als ihrer Mutter das Leben haben, sind sie die Freien." We find difficulty also in his statement, "Das Geschehen auf dem Sinai und der Zustand des gegen das Evangelium verstockten, den Heiland tötenden jüdischen Jerusalem liegen ihm auf einer Ebene" (p. 41). This does not, surely, (taking the earthly Jerusalem as a reference to the law) do justice to the Apostle's thinking here. Beyer (mistakenly, we believe) creates an absolute opposition between promise and law, linking the church exclusively with the promise and thus freeing it from any relationship with the law. But this goes far beyond what the Apostle says in Gal 4. Also unsatisfactory is the view of Becker, "In ihr [sc. the church] ist die Verheissung der Freiheit endzeitlich erfüllt. Das Gesetz steht im Widerspruch zu ihrer Lebensweise" (pp. 57-58). He bases this view (p. 57) on the premise that the church does not belong under the law; we would agree that the Apostle sees a sense in which this is true. Becker does not, in our opinion, however, understand that being freed from the condemnation that must come when we have to rely on our own works for our justification does not amount to the same thing as an outright opposition of law and gospel. Becker himself (p. 58) points out that the law, understood as promise, is in line with the gospel.

53. See Cranfield, "St. Paul and the Law," p. 155: "The covenant 'from mount Sinai', understood legalistically and without regard to Christ, bears 'children unto bondage....'"

54. Betz, p. 251.

55. Mussner, p. 332.

56. Becker, p. 58.

57. The chapter is not, therefore, merely a polemic against Jewish claims but a positive statement regarding the faith of Abraham and its relation to Christian faith; see Wilckens' comment, "... so wenig die paulinische Rechtfertigungslehre im ganzen ausschliesslich als antijüdische Kampflehre beurteilt werden darf, so wenig darf behauptet werden, dass Paulus in R 4 nur deswegen auf Abraham zu sprechen komme, weil ihm dieses Thema durch die jüdische Sicht Abrahams als Zeugen der Gesetzesgerechtigkeit vorgegeben war" ("Die Rechtfertigung Abrahams nach Römer 4," in Rechtfertigung als Freiheit, pp. 38-39). On this latter point see also Berger, p. 66 n. 30. This emphasis is in line with Paul's positive statements regarding the law in 1:18-3:20 and 3:21-31, and should warn against the assumption that vv. 13-17a represent a negation of the law, a statement of the Christian believer's absolute freedom in relation to the law. Surely to be rejected is the argument of Günter Klein, "Römer 4 und die Idee der Heilsgeschichte," Ev Th 23 (1963), p. 431, that the example of Abraham is adduced only because Paul, motivated by his Rabbinic training, feels the need to supply Scriptural proof for the theological point he wishes to make (which for Klein is the destruction of all historical differentiation between Jew and Gentile and the "profanising" of Israel's history; see Klein, pp. 427-29). Klein anchors his argument in a similar use of the OT at 3:21. For him, the δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ appears only with Christ (3:21), and all that went before is to be dismissed; the reference to the law and the prophets (3:21b) is hence superfluous (p. 425), the "Rechtfertigungsgeschehen" has no "Vorgeschichte" ("Die Zeit, da die Glaubensgerechtigkeit auf dem Plan ist, hat einen datierbaren Anfang, und es gab eine Zeit, da sie durchaus nicht auf dem Plan war: die Zeit ante Christum natum, -- präziser: ante Christum crucifixum," p. 427), and Abraham is discussed not as an example of the δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ, from which he is excluded, but simply because he cannot be left as a Jewish "Kronzeuge" (p. 431). This interpretation, however, is totally at odds with the use Paul makes of the law in 3:21-31, in light of which (positive) use it is much more reasonable to see ch. 4 as an important statement concerning the positive value of the OT revelation and its integral link to the revelation of the δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ in Christ; see on 3:21-31. To suggest that Abraham is excluded from the δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ is the view Paul opposes in Rom 4, not that which he upholds -- as the most cursory reading of the chapter reveals (v. 3, καὶ ἐλογίσθη, κτλ. sets the tone, which reckoning is explicitly linked with Christian faith, cf. vv. 23-25). See also Berger, p. 63.

58. For the Jews Abraham was justified by works (Jub 23:10; Yoma 28b; Qid 4:14; Mek Ex 14:15) and would boast before God (Jub 24:11; Sir 44:19ff). Even faith is a work of man which receives a reward, and for Rabbinic theology Abraham's faith was an act of law-fulfilment (Abraham knew and obeyed the law's demand even before it was given) which merited reward (1 Macc 2:52; Jub 14:6; Mek Ex 14:31). On this subject see, for a fuller discussion, H. L. Strack and P. Billerbeck, Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch, 6 vols, 3, 186-210. H. W. Heidland, "λογίζομαι," TDNT 4, p. 284, notes that the λογίζεσθαι κατὰ ὀφείλημα (4:4) reflects the Jewish understanding of λογίζεσθαι as a "reckoning to account" (i.e. in the Greek sense of the word), whereas Paul's λογίζεσθαι κατὰ χάριν is more faithful to the Hebrew חשב (denoting God's gracious action),

which the LXX translated with λογίζεσθαι, thus supplying the basis for the Rabbinic "merit of the fathers" theology (4, 290). See also Herman Ridderbos, Paul: An Outline of His Theology, p. 177, who notes that Paul "translates" the words of Gen 15:6 "into the juridical and legalistic way of thinking of late Judaism. Naturally, however, he remains in harmony with the tenor of the Old Testament pronouncement, which is dominated by the gracious character of God's intercourse with Abraham and not by the doctrine of merit of the later synagogue."

59. Yet note the comment of Ulrich Wilckens, Der Brief an die Römer, 3 vols, I, 263, that ὁ μὴ ἐργαζόμενος (v. 5) does not mean one who does not perform works, but rather one who sins in doing so and thus falls short (and so as a result confesses his utter inability to save himself, choosing to rely rather on God's justification in Christ). Rom 1:18-3:20 shows clearly that man's failure to fulfil the law, not his successful (though boastful) actual fulfilment, brings the curse. Hence, 4:4-5 must not be taken as indicating a rejection of ἔργα νόμου in principle. Again Wilckens comments, "Die sentenzhafte Formulierung von 4,4f, die der des Satzes 3,28, den 4,4f interpretieren soll, entspricht, darf nicht dazu verleiten, hier eine allgemeine, prinzipielle Ablehnung der Gesetzeswerke überhaupt als ἐργάζεσθαι im Sinne des 'Leistungsprinzip' zu Gunsten des Gratuitätsprinzip ausgesprochen zu finden" ("Was heisst bei Paulus: 'Aus Werken des Gesetzes wird kein Mensch gerecht'?" in Rechtfertigung als Freiheit, pp. 97-98.

60. Thus Paul is drawn into the discussion concerning circumcision, though his real interest is in the question of justification through works of law. Circumcision, when claimed by the Jew as a justifying work in itself, is inseparable from the question of justification through ἔργα νόμου. Though circumcision was given before the law, the two, for the Jew of Paul's day, are indissolubly linked; circumcision is commanded by the law (=the OT); see Otto Kuss, Der Römerbrief, 3 vols., I, 187 contra Berger, p. 70 n. 42. This tendency is reinforced by the Rabbinic view that Abraham knew the law (see on 2:12ff and Strack-Billerbeck 3, 204-6).

61. The Rabbinic view was that Isaac was born twenty-nine years after Abraham received the promise; see Strack-Billerbeck 3, 203. Rabbinic theology held that Ps 32:1-2 (cited in Rom 4:7-8) referred only to Israel. Paul, however, himself using Rabbinic hermeneutical tools ("gezerah shawah", the second of Hillel's rules of Scriptural interpretation), interprets the Psalm through Gen 15:6. See Otto Michel, Der Brief an die Römer, 5th ed., p. 160; Heinrich Schlier, Der Römerbrief, p. 126; Wilckens, I, 258; C. K. Barrett, Epistle to the Romans, p. 89.

62. Ernst Käsemann, An die Römer, p. 109.

63. Berger, p. 76.

64. See Wilckens, "Zu Römer 3,21-4,25: Antwort an G. Klein," in Rechtfertigung als Freiheit, pp. 62-63 n. 14; Berger, p. 76; Käsemann, pp. 109-110 contra Klein, pp. 432-33, who sees the whole aim of vv. 9-12 as the theological indifferentiating of circumcision and uncircumcision. On Klein's view, Paul reinterprets the OT text (Gen 17:10ff) in 4:11 by replacing διαθήκη by δικαιοσύνη, thus disposing of the OT covenant, which for Paul held no further validity, and creating a distinction between the non-repeatable

"soteriological" circumcision of Abraham and the ever-repeating "ethnographic" circumcision of Judaism (described by Klein as "ein wiederkehrendes Phänomen der Profanität," p. 433). Käsemann, p. 109, notes, however that διαθήκη is replaced merely because it is not useful to Paul's purposes here (to explicate the nature of δικαιοσύνη) and not because he is usurping the text; see also Wilckens, "Zu Römer 3,21," p. 62 n. 13. Kuss, I, 186, notes that Paul wishes not to destroy but to throw open the covenant to all nations. The covenant is established by God's reckoning δικαιοσύνη to Abraham, and hence circumcision is equally a seal of the covenant and of righteousness (see John Murray, The Epistle to the Romans, I, 138). Wilckens, I, 265, notes that "covenant" and "righteousness" designate an inner relationship of which circumcision is the outward sign. Therefore, the OT rite, far from being simply set aside, receives a new valuation in conjunction with faith. Paul's aim here is to demonstrate, by the example of Abraham, the true value of circumcision, not to show it up as an "ethnographic" or "profane" phenomenon. He wishes rather to reclaim circumcision from its Jewish misuse; his use of the Genesis narrative is designed to place circumcision as such within the perspective of Abraham's circumcision, not to separate the two.

65. In v. 12, the reference is to Jewish Christians, not to two groups, Jews and Jewish Christians. The second τοῖς is probably a primitive textual corruption; see C. E. B. Cranfield, The Epistle to the Romans, 2 vols., I, 236ff, who notes that vv. 11b-12 express the idea that " ... it was God's intention in causing Abraham to be circumcised that he should be the point of union between all who believe, whether circumcised or uncircumcised, being, on the one hand, by virtue of his having been justified while still uncircumcised, the father of all those who as uncircumcised believe, and, on the other hand, by virtue of the fact that he subsequently received circumcision, the father of all those who, being circumcised, are not only circumcised but are also believers." To see two groups of Jews indicated in v. 12, Cranfield continues, would destroy the whole sense of the passage. See also Schlier, Römerbrief, pp. 127-28; Michel, p. 167 n. 6, who adopts the suggestion that καὶ τοῖς is a corruption of καὶ αὐτοῖς (on which see Cranfield, I, 237 n. 5); Hans Lietzmann, An die Römer, p. 54; William Sanday and Arthur C. Headlam, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, p. 108; Wilckens, I, 266; Luz, p. 175; contra Jules Cambier, L'Évangile de Dieu selon l'Épître aux Romains, I, 171 n. 1; Käsemann, p. 110, who, however, himself notes that Paul's point here is that Christians (whether Jewish or Gentile) become the true circumcision (2:25ff) and that v. 12b refers to Jewish Christians. In light of Paul's linking of circumcision with righteousness in v. 10, and his positive evaluation of circumcision in 3:1-5 and 9:4-5 (where the "ethnographic" and theological are again related; see Hans Hübner, Das Gesetz bei Paulus, p. 51), as well as the fact that Käsemann's interpretation leaves Paul apparently ascribing the same relationship with Abraham to nonbelieving and believing Jews in v. 12a and 12b, this understanding is to be rejected. Also erroneous is the view of Klein that the addition of μόνον means that περιτομή becomes equivalent to ἀκροβυστία in v. 11b and "wie diese zur Bezeichnung eines Profanum" (p. 434); the new στοιχεῖον then becomes conclusive as Jewish Christians accept the merely "ethnic" significance of circumcision. Abraham's fatherhood of the Jews is destroyed, the ethnic link between him and the Jewish people is of no theological significance, and the history of Israel "wird radikal entheiligt und paganisiert" (p. 436). Wilckens, however,

points out that while the "Heiligkeit" of the Jews is, according to Paul, taken over by the church, the Jews do not thereby become one people among many, but are those who have fallen away from election and become unholy ("Zu Römer 3,21," p. 59). Precisely in 4:11-12 does Paul link empirical Judaism and faith, indicating that faith first gives true meaning to circumcision, which is placed in tension between two claims, obedience to faith righteousness and disobedience to it. The second, notes Wilckens, is "widergöttlicher Frevel", not (as in Klein's view) "profanisierter Paganismus" ("Zu Römer 3,21," p. 63).

66. See Cranfield, I, 238: "Both the placing of πατέρα πάντων τῶν πιστευόντων δι' ἀκροβυστίας before πατέρα περιτομῆς and also the qualification of the latter by τοῖς οὐκ ἐκ περιτομῆς μόνον, κ.τ.λ. have the effect of emphasizing the fact that it is faith, not circumcision, which is decisive. But, while recognizing that Paul is here concerned with a kinship with Abraham which depends on the sharing of his faith, we must be careful to avoid the mistake of concluding from what is said here that Paul intended to deny the reality of the kinship κατὰ σάρκα (cf. v. 1) with Abraham of those Jews who did not share his faith or that he believed that such Jews were altogether excluded from the promises ...." Note that τοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν in v. 12 still refers to Abraham's fatherhood of the Jews, as in v. 1; only in v. 16 are the Gentiles included -- πατὴρ πάντων ἡμῶν -- without the Jews being left out.

67. The phrase διὰ νόμου refers specifically to the Torah, as the context (in which the topic of concern is the distinction between Jews and Gentiles which is founded not on any law at all, but in particular on the law of Moses) must surely indicate; note also our remarks on 1:18-3:20 and 3:21-31 with respect to the primary reference of νόμος to the Torah, and that νόμος in 4:14-16 undoubtedly refers to the Torah. See Cranfield, I, 238; Wilckens, I, 269; Klein, p. 436; Käsemann, p. 113; Kuss, I, 187; Schlier, Römerbrief, p. 128 (who notes that νόμος is anarthrous only because of the preceding preposition); contra Sanday/Headlam, p. 110; Murray, I, 140-41, who refers to the "works of law which the law of commandment demands" but offers no grounds for his distinction between the "law of commandment demanding obedience" and the Mosaic law as the "most articulate and impressive revelation of the law of God." Surely such a distinction is entirely foreign to Paul, who knew but one Torah.

68. In light of v. 16, it is best to take σπέρμα as referring to Christians, not to Christ. The verse speaks of the justification of sinners through the righteousness of faith, which is scarcely apposite in the case of Christ. See Schlier, Römerbrief, p. 129; Käsemann, p. 113; Cranfield, I, 239; contra Kuss, I, 187.

69. It is possible to give διά in v. 13 a chronological (attendant circumstance) sense (the promise was given before the law), but in light of Paul's repeated references to the instrumentality of the law or of faith with respect to attaining righteousness (cf. ἐξ ἔργων νόμου, διὰ νόμου, 3:20; χωρὶς νόμου, 3:21; διὰ πίστεως, 3:25; διὰ ποίου νόμου, 3:27; ἐκ/διὰ τῆς πίστεως, 3:30, 31, which theme is followed up in 4:1-8), an instrumental meaning is more likely. Hence, the impossibility of justification through the law is not explained by the fact that the law came later than the promise, but rather by the fact that no flesh shall be justified through works of the law (3:20). The meaning is not that the

promise was not given through the instrumentality of the law, but rather that it is not thereby attained. Otherwise, law is sundered from promise, which makes mockery of Paul's previous statements in the epistle (see esp. on 3:27-31, which ch. 4 explicates); see Käsemann, p. 113; Luz, p. 183 (who, however, takes διὰ δικαιοσύνης πίστεως as signifying attendant circumstance); Cranfield, I, 238-39; contra Barrett, p. 94. To be rejected, therefore, is the inference drawn from the verse by Klein, i.e. that the change from pre-law era to that of law "brachte mithin keine kontinuierliche Heilsvermittlung, sondern ist theologisch als schroffe Diskontinuität zu beurteilen" (p. 437).

70. See Strack-Billerbeck 3, 186-210 and (59) above. The Rabbis, of course, held that Abraham knew (and obeyed) the law's demands even before it was given. See on 2:12ff.

71. Cranfield, I, 240; Lietzmann, Römer, p. 55; Paul Althaus, Der Brief an die Römer, p. 39.

72. Sanday/Headlam, p. 111. Also mistaken is the view of Klein (p. 437) that the phrase refers simply to the Jews as an "empirische Gemeinschaft." The question at issue here is the law, not "empirical" Judaism.

73. Kuss, I, 188.

74. See under (68) above.

75. (Οὐ γὰρ) διὰ νόμου (v. 13) should be interpreted along the same lines as (Οὐκ) ἐξ ἔργων νόμου (3:20; Gal 2:16, 3:10), i.e. as implying the failure of man to obey God's righteous law (not implying a defect in the law as such). Paul says that faith and the promise are destroyed if οἱ ἐκ νόμου are heirs (v. 14). This can only be so on the basis that none can receive the promise as none have obeyed the law. If through their own works οἱ ἐκ νόμου received the promise, Paul could not say that the law works wrath (v. 15).

76. Kuss, I, 188. According to Kuss (I, 189) God commands the taking up of His gift of faith, rather than seeking law obedience. But why? -- precisely because none shall be justified through ἔργα νόμου (3:20). This kind of view (that the law has nothing to do with faith) can lead (as in the case of H. A. A. Kennedy) to the understanding that the law is "untrue to something central in the nature and purpose of God" ("St. Paul and the Law," The Expositor, Series 8, 13 (1917), p. 353) -- surely a statement from which Paul would recoil (and does! -- cf. Rom 7:7; Gal 3:21).

76a. Edward P. Sanders, Paul and Palestinian Judaism, while correctly refuting the view of Bultmann that it is the effort itself to keep the law which leads man into sin, steps into the same error as Kuss in the alternative that he offers (pp. 489ff). Sanders believes that the promise cannot, according to Paul, be inherited through keeping the law, for this would exclude the Gentiles -- and this cannot be so, for God has appointed Christ Saviour of all. Also, if it is necessary to keep the law, faith is in vain and Christ died in vain. This argument holds only so long as we view "keeping the law" as the misguided efforts of Jewish legalists to achieve justification through their own efforts and without the true obedience of heart which God requires. Sanders see here, however (and

indeed in Rom 1-4 as a whole), a polemic against the law as such (a " ... negative argument against the law, which is contrasted with faith," p. 491). He suggests that faith is defined vaguely as the opposite of boasting and distrust, but is not presented by the Apostle in any clear positive sense, other than being described as man's entire response to justification in Christ. Hence, on his view, the argument of Rom 4 is only "formal and terminological" and the argument for faith is merely an argument against the law (p. 491). Against Sanders' view that the whole of Rom 1-4 is in fact a polemic against obedience to the law (see p. 490) may be noted the comments we have made in Section I, parts A and B, to the effect that it is sin (disobedience to the law) and not the law, which is to blame for man's predicament. We have also noted (in Section II) that, for the Apostle, law and promise are to be seen as working together in the accomplishment of the purposes of God. We shall also see, in Section III, part A (on Rom 3:21-31) and Section IV, part A (on Rom 2) that endorsement of the law, not polemic against it, is at the heart of these passages. It may be that Sanders is unable to distinguish between the law and its legalistic misuse by men, which is condemned by the Apostle (see Section III, part A). We might also point out that faith is never presented only in vague terms as a foil to the law. Rather, indeed, is faith related specifically to the act of God in Christ (Rom 3:21ff is hardly a 'vague' statement); and is seen to establish, not destroy the law (3:31). The creation of an opposition between faith and God's law is far from the Apostle's mind in Rom 4.

Sanders concludes that "Paul did not so much misunderstand the role of law in Judaism as gain a new perspective which led him to declare the law abolished" (p. 497). If justification comes only through Christ and the Gentiles must be included, then the law, so Sanders believes, must be utterly at an end: "It is the Gentile question and the exclusivism of Paul's soteriology which dethrones the law, not a misunderstanding of it or a view determined by his background" (p. 497). This analysis is unfortunately simplistic, we feel, and does not come to grips with the fact that Paul is carefully forging a positive link between law and faith all through the early chapters of Romans. It is certainly true that Paul's attitude toward the law (as toward all other things) is now fashioned by his understanding of Christ. See Mussner, p. 199 n. 40, " ... der Apostel gewinnt seine Sätze über das Gesetz erst in der theologischen Reflexion über Kreuz und Auferstehung Jesu. Hier allein hat seine Gesetzestheologie ihren Ursprungsort"; p. 219: Weil Christus für Paulus die Heilsmacht schlechthin ist, muss er neu und anders als der Jude über das Gesetz denken!" See also Jacques Dupont, "The Conversion of Paul, and its Influence on his Understanding of Justification by Faith," in Apostolic History and the Gospel, ed. W. Gasque and R. Martin, pp. 176-94. Sanders' view -- that the coming of Christ means the end of the law -- would seem to be most naturally linked with the view that the coming of the Messiah meant the end of the Torah. Yet Sanders himself (pp. 479-80) states that Paul " ... never appeals to the fact that the Messiah has come as a reason for holding the law invalid." See also Luz, p. 217. Paul's understanding of Christ in no way leads necessarily to the conclusion that Christ and the law are mutually exclusive. Sanders' comments suffer from a failure to distinguish between, on the one hand, what Paul says regarding the impossibility of attaining justification through one's own efforts apart from an attitude of genuine obedience enabled by the Holy Spirit, and, on the other, a disparaging of the law as such. There is a great deal of difference between the end of the law's condemnation, and the

end of the law itself. For the latter view we have discovered no evidence in Paul.

On Paul's concept of justification by faith as a positive, not negative development, see Karl Kertelge, "Zur Deutung des Rechtfertigungsbegriffs im Galaterbrief," BZ 12 (1968), p. 222, who shows that, while Paul's accent in Galatians is polemical, this arises out of the situation and not his concept of justification as such. In Galatians, and even more in Romans, Paul develops his concept of faith in a positive way: "Paulus kämpft im Grunde ja nicht gegen Judenchristen, sondern für die, wenn auch in sich differenzierte Einheit von Judenchristen und Heidenchristen: als der ökumenisch akzentuierte Ausdruck seiner Soteriologie."

On the positive relationship between Christ and the law, and the implications of this for Christian freedom, see our comments in Section IV, part A below.

77. Schlier, Römerbrief, p. 130.

78. See Cranfield, I, 240; Berger, p. 70; Wilckens, "Rechtfertigung Abrahams," p. 46 -- though his declaration elsewhere that κεκένωται and κατήργηται refer to the fact that the witness of the Scripture would be brought to nothing (I, 270) does not do justice to the force of Paul's argument (which is that the justification of sinners would itself be excluded, not merely that the witness of the Scripture would be destroyed).

79. Käsemann's suggestion (p. 114) that the question is of the promise's content, i.e. its universalism, which could not be reached through the law, equally misses the mark. The question at issue in Rom 4 is whether or not Abraham (as father of all believers) received the promise by works of law or by faith (and hence, whether those who wish to inherit the promise should seek it through their own works or through the righteousness of faith). Bläser, pp. 167-68, speaks vaguely of the "promise character" of the inheritance, and of the law and the promise as two different things, the law involving reward and the promise grace. Yet this again fails to understand what Paul says here and elsewhere concerning law obedience and righteousness. Surely to be discarded is the suggestion of Berger, p. 77, that, as the promise was from the beginning universal, the law was designed so that the promise could not come through it, for otherwise the promise would belong to Israel alone. Israel, according to Berger, is in possession of the promise, yet cannot fulfil the law, and so (presumably in line with God's plan) has embarked on the way of legalism and self-righteousness. This attribution of human sin to the divine plan directly counters Paul's own view in Romans. Similar to Berger's view is that of Ferdinand Hahn, "Das Gesetzesverständnis im Römer- und Galaterbrief," ZNW 67 (1976), p. 40, who suggests that according to 3:21-31, 4 the temporal priority of promise to law alone gives the law any meaning, and shows why the law could not lead to salvation. Why then, however, give the law at all? Note also that the temporal priority argument is not used here in the same way as in Gal 3. Victor P. Furnish, Theology and Ethics in Paul, p. 150, states only that the law's promise of life is empty because the promise rests on grace, and that law presupposes man is an 'achiever', which leads him to self-righteous works. This, however, does justice neither to 4:15 nor to Paul's concepts of law and sin.

80. See Strack-Billerbeck 3, 204-6.

81. See Käsemann, pp. 112-13.

82. Cranfield, I, 241.

83. Michel, p. 169.

84. Luz, pp. 183-84.

85. Luz, p. 188.

86. Contra Luz, p. 188 n. 198, who says that v. 15 is " ... eine grundsätzliche Feststellung, nicht eine geschichtliche Beurteilung einer bestimmten Epoche..." (i.e. as in 5:13), and that not ἁμαρτία but παράβασις (a 'specialized' form thereof) is involved. It is true that παράβασις is to be viewed as sin against a direct commandment, but to sever the two words entirely overlooks the fact that ἁμαρτία (5:13) is referred to as παράβασις (5:14). This παράβασις (sin against a direct commandment) is multiplied by the law's arrival (5:20, with which 4:15 is to be closely connected). Both texts (4:15 and 5:13) thus involve juridical and historical elements. Paul makes a genuine distinction between the time before and after the law, but we should be warned against simplistic attempts to divide history into various periods, including the attempt to characterize the time of the law as an "Unheilszeit" and that of faith as a "Heilszeit" -- "Unheil" for whom? And what of David (v. 8)? The "Zeit" of faith brings judgment (1:18ff) along with justification.

87. Van Dülmen, p. 92. Neither can we accept this writer's view that the law's condemnation of sin is purely formal -- surely 1:18ff speaks against this!

88. On the relationship of law and gospel in the full exposing of sin's true character (a related but not identical question), see Section I, part A, footnote (3). Also to be rejected, surely is the view of Wilckens, I, 271, that v. 15b is antithetical to vv. 13-15a, indicating that where there is no law, all is forgiven. This places far too much weight on δέ (which in context is more likely to be explicative than adversative), and misses Paul's point here regarding the effect of law in multiplying transgression. The absence of transgression does not, surely, mean that all is forgiven (see 3:9ff; 5:12ff)!!

89. Cranfield, I, 243.

90. Kuss, I, 189; Murray, I, 144; Cranfield, I, 242; Käsemann, p. 144. We understand οἱ ἐκ νόμου to indicate here, as opposed to v. 14, those who not only have the advantage of the law but who are also ἐκ πίστεως Ἀβραάμ. In this sense the believing Jew falls into both categories listed (see Schlier, Römerbrief, p. 131), though the second phrase, strictly speaking, refers to the Gentile believers.

91. Klein, pp. 437-39.

92. Berger, p. 70; see p. 71 n. 46, where he notes that in Gal 3, in which the element of bodily descent is not in view (in contrast to Rom 4), Christ alone is the σπέρμα. See also van Dülmen, p. 94.

93. Related to this is the view of Luz, pp. 174ff, that in v. 16 νόμος signifies the "national existence" of the Jews and πίστις the national existence of the Gentiles. Thus the ἐπαγγελία promised

to Abraham as "Heilsgut" in v. 13 is put in question by νόμος in v. 14, but is here confirmed. Luz, like Kuss, makes the mistake of interpreting v. 16 from vv. 13-14, and is therefore left with an untenable understanding of v. 16. How could the Jews, as a national entity, be part of the σπέρμα? And what place does this give to the believing Jews, who are excluded from both camps? What meaning do such concepts as the "national existence" of Jews and Gentiles have for Paul anyway?

94. Wilckens, I, 272. The whole chapter is a strong statement regarding the historical continuity of God's dealings with men, and it is undoubtedly true that, as Wilckens says, Paul presents Abraham here as the beginning of a historical chain which leads to Christ (see "Rechtfertigung Abrahams," pp 46-48). Abraham had faith that God would fulfil the promise made to him (vv. 17-22), and hence it is the same faith in God and in His promise as is exercised by Christians (vv. 23-25). Thus Paul can claim Abraham as a representative of faith (in the Christian sense). Wilckens comments, "Die Christen sind die, die Abraham damals als sein ungezählter Same verheissen waren, die in seinem Glauben eintreten und seine Rechtfertigung für sich erlangen sollten. Denn wie Abraham auf Gottes eschatologisches Heilshandeln vorauszuschauen und ihm alle Zukunft zuzutrauen hatte, so dürfen die Christen in seiner Nachfolge auf die nunmehr geschehene Erfüllung zuruckschauen und diesem vollbrachten Endhandeln Gottes ebenso alles zutrauen. Es ist also ein und derselbe Glaube ... der sich bei Abraham ganz in die Zukunft zu entwerfen, bei den Christen auf das geschehene Ereignis zu stützen hatte" ("Rechtfertigung Abrahams," p. 48); see also Wilckens, "Zu Römer 3,21," p. 70; Wilckens, I, 276-78. It must be noted, however, that Abraham and the Christian stand in a different position to the revelation of God's righteousness which, while demonstrated in the giving of the promise (and of the law! -- cf. 3:1ff; 9:4-5), comes to its fulfilment in Christ (hence the emphatic νυνί, 3:21). Karl Kertelge, "Rechtfertigung" bei Paulus, p. 193, notes that Abraham believed the promise, whereas Christians believe the fulfilment (though contra Kertelge, p. 194, Abraham is not used here merely as an illustration of the opposition of law and faith; this misses the whole significance of Abraham in Jewish literature as well as in this passage -- and postulates an unacceptable opposition between law and faith!). Paul seeks to preserve the validity of the Christian message with respect to the OT, and has no interest in wiping Israel -- or the law -- from God's plan (see Wilckens, I, p. 121) that Abraham and Christ are separated by Moses so that the promise is hidden in history and is only "eschatologically" visible (Klein, p. 435: the continuity is not "historisch aufweisbar"; Käsemann does note correctly that Abraham is not just an example or "Vorbild" but a part of God's plan corresponding to his end-time purpose, see p. 120). But what does "eschatologically visible" mean? And what (in Rom 4) is the evidence that Christ sunders Abraham and Moses? Israel's history, notes Hübner (p. 52), remains (according to Romans) "eine positive theologische Grösse..."; law and promise are seen under the perspective of God's gracious acts towards His people. Even Klein (p. 435) admits that in vv. 9-17a a historical aspect is introduced -- though he suggests only that Abraham thus becomes an "unverwechselbares Individuum einer kontingenten Vergangenheit" (historically relevant for faith but not in a continuity which is "das Produkt einer geschichtlichen Entwicklung"). But what does this mean? Klein's contention that elsewhere in the chapter Abraham is ued only "Beispielhaft" overlooks the fact that Paul opens the chapter by describing Abraham as ὁ προπάτωρ ἡμῶν

and closes it by linking Abraham's justification closely with that of the Christian believer.

Also incorrect is the view of Hahn, p. 40, that only the promise gives the law any meaning (for him the law is "eine höchst spannungsvolle Einheit und setzt als Ausdruck des den Menschen zum Handeln anleitenden Gotteswillens seinerseits die zuvor ergangene Verheissung voraus," p. 40). This implies, however, that with the fulfilment of the promise the law's significance is ended, and it reduces the law to a (seemingly meaningless) interlude. Hahn's explanation (p. 41) of 3:31 as a reference to the fact that the law is established because it contains the promise and is now, divorced from works, seen in its proper (subordinate) relation to the promise fails to answer the question of the law's significance and robs the statement of all force. The whole point of chapter 4 is, rather, to confirm, not destroy, the importance of God's law through showing how it is linked to the promise.

Section III, part A

Introduction

We have examined those texts in which Paul speaks of the role of the law in confining men under sin and the curse. We have also noted, however, that this is not the exclusive role of the law so far as Christian freedom or the Christian life is concerned. That our assertion is correct can be seen from those passages in which, as we saw, the Apostle related the law positively to the promise which points ahead to the coming freedom.

We now turn to examine what we consider to be the next stage, logically speaking, in Paul's thinking. This is represented by those texts in which he speaks primarily of the consequences, for the attainment of freedom, of God's act in Christ. He sees this freedom as being, in the first place, freedom from the sentence of condemnation brought about through the law. Our study of law and promise, however, has warned us against expecting that this will mean a straightforward release from the law's authority, as from the authority of a merely negative or restrictive power. Whether or not we are justified in thinking this will become clear from our examination of the relevant texts.

The first passage to which we turn is Rom 3:21-31. This text is significant not only because of its important position in the letter as a whole, but also because of the way in which it develops the thoughts of the previous section (1:18ff) regarding man's condition of slavery under the righteous sentence of the law, and does so in the light of God's act in Christ.

Following his lengthy exposition of the gravity and universal extent of man's sinfulness, and the consequent hopelessness of his position before God (1:18-3:20), Paul now delivers (3:21-26) a solemn and formal proclamation,[1] declaring that the redemptive act of God in Christ has brought about the deliverance from this situation which man himself was utterly unable to achieve. The section is highly important in the development of Paul's argument in Romans for the way in which it deals with many of the letter's most weighty themes. One of these is the relationship of law to the newly-manifested righteousness by faith through which man has been granted freedom from the tyranny of his godless and hopeless past, by means of the death and resurrection of Christ. The relationship of law and God's act of justification in Christ is mentioned in v. 21 and (at greater length) in vv. 27-31, which section is best taken as a clarification of the preceding verses, enlarging on the relationship of faith and 'boasting', and faith and ἔργα νόμου, in light of the justifying act of God in Christ.[2]

Rom 3:21-26

The words of v. 21, νυνὶ δέ, signal the decisive change in human history brought about by God's act in Christ.[3] This historical stress is underlined by πεφανέρωται,[4] and hence a contrast is drawn here between, on the one hand, man's powerlessness to save himself ἐξ ἔργων νόμου (stated in the preceding verse) and, on the other, the action God has taken in Jesus Christ to reveal His righteousness (the status of righteousness He confers on man by faith).[5] This act is brought about χωρὶς νόμου and is "witnessed (μαρτυρουμένη) by the law and the prophets." We must now examine the meaning of these two phrases.

(i) χωρὶς νόμου. P. Althaus declares that here God reveals Himself as "Der, der grösser ist als sein Gesetz";[6] Kertelge, stressing the πίστις/νόμος opposition in vv. 21-22, sees here an anti-law polemic.[7] Michel takes the phrase to mean that neither through human effort nor through the law can man be justified.[8] Wilckens suggests that the law's working ("Wirkung") is now abolished (though not the law itself), for while the law still operates, sinners cannot be justified.[9] Leenhardt believes that Paul is drawing here on the Jewish concept of the future (messianic) age, in which the law would be abolished, and is stating that this future-eschatological age has in Christ already arrived.[10]

It is clear, in our view, that the phrase in some sense takes up the thought of the preceding verse (20) and applies it to the new situation brought about by God's act in Christ. If this is so, the mention

of man's new status of δικαιοσύνη in v. 21 has its "Kehrseite" in v. 20, οὐ δικαιωθήσεται,κ.τ.λ., and brings χωρὶς νόμου into conjunction with (οὐκ) ἐξ ἔργων νόμου (v. 20), thus indicating the former phrase is an ellipsis for χωρὶς ἔργων νόμου.[11] We have already seen that in v. 20 Paul is stating the simple truth that law obedience cannot win man's justification, for no-one in fact truly obeys the law. It is unthinkable, therefore, that in the very next verse (which develops the 'positive' side of the truth expressed in v. 20) the Apostle intends to make a disparaging reference to law obedience, much less a complete setting-aside of the law. Rather, Paul points out (as in v. 20) the consequence of man's inability to keep the law, but now (as opposed to the preceding verse) moves on to discuss the significance for man's plight of God's act in Christ.

In the phrase χωρὶς νόμου Paul is stating no more than he did in vv. 19-20, i.e. that man has shown himself disobedient to the demands of God's holy law and cannot be justified. Now, however, a new factor, the δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ, has entered the situation. The consequences this may have for the law have not yet been stated. The views of Althaus and Kertelge are therefore to be considered highly improbable, as is the suggestion of Leenhardt -- nothing is said here regarding the disappearance of the law or its possible linking with a now-past "old age."[12] The conclusion of Schlier that this verse shows the law has nothing to do with the application of God's righteousness is, at the least, premature,[13] as is the comment by Wilckens regarding the end of the law's working (or, for that matter, his questionable distinction between the law and its working).

(ii) μαρτυρουμένη κ.τ.λ. Many commentators take the view that v. 21 shows how the δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ excludes the law (21a) while also remaining in a positive relationship with it (21b).[14] The nature of this 'positive relationship', however, is difficult to define, as most of these scholars understand v. 21a to indicate that the law's role is now finished and that it is henceforth absent from the scene. Michel speaks of a "Vorgeschichte" of God's righteousness, so that the manifestation of the latter in Christ is not alien to the Scriptures.[15] Schlier comments that the OT speaks beforehand of God's righteousness, promising that which has now occurred in Christ,[16] and Lietzmann states that this "righteousness by faith" was already known in the OT.[17]

Kertelge, however, objects to the attempt of these commentators to make sense of Paul's positive statement regarding the OT. He denies that the OT is a "Vorgeschichte", for its testimony, like its judgment

(3:10-20) becomes clear only in Christ.[18] Käsemann points to the "dialectical" nature of Paul's understanding of the law, which in its original intention was a witness to salvation but has confronted man only in his misuse of it as an instrument of legalism and self-justification, so that first Christian faith gives the law the character of promise; righteousness by faith "gibt der göttlichen Gabe im eschatologischen Rückblick erneut den Charakter des ursprünglichen Gotteswillens."[19]

All the commentators noted above admit a continuing positive role for the law -- a role dismissed by the same scholars in their comments on v. 21a. Most deal with this tension by assuming that in v. 21a Paul is speaking of the end of the law as a way of salvation,[20] while in v. 21b the Apostle, in good Rabbinic fashion, cannot escape appealing for Scriptural support (though Paul, on van Dülmen's view, shows his "concern" for the Scripture precisely by quoting it against itself![21]). Most interpreters feel that a total break in "Heilsgeschichte" would be unthinkable for Paul, with his Jewish roots and respect for the OT revelation. Wilckens notes correctly that the Jewish advantages listed in 3:2 are not removed in 3:9 (see also Rom 9-11), and that the λόγια of v. 2 are to be linked with v. 21b (though in the context of salvation in Christ and justification of sinners rather than of judgment). God's righteousness is not something 'new', but rather -- because it is God's righteousness -- something previously valid though only now manifested.[22] A real change is signified by νυνί, but the sense of God's righteousness is lost unless one sees the Christ-event as representative of the continuity of God's faithfulness.[23]

Some light is thrown on our problem, however, by the fact that v. 21a does not, as we have seen, speak of an end to the law. In addition, vv. 21a and b need not, grammatically speaking, be antithetical at all (note the absence of ἀλλά, and the participle need by no means have concessive force). Indeed, on our understanding of v. 21a, v. 21b appears as a perfectly natural supplement to v. 21a, describing further the way in which God, far from being "grösser als sein Gesetz" (meant in a way which implies a derogation of the law), has spoken and continues to speak through that same law, testifying to the righteousness of faith now made manifest in Jesus Christ.[24] Surely, if the Apostle was prepared to say (v. 21a) that the law was abolished (a view irreconcilable with much Rabbinic thought), he would be less than likely to evidence such a traditionalist concern for appealing to that same law for support -- and what would continuity in "Heilsgeschichte" mean were it to be marred by such a cataclysmic break?

The other question raised by the commentators noted above -- the sense in which the OT provides an explicit attestation to faith-righteousness contemporaneous to itself -- will be answered as we look at vv. 27-31; cf. ch. 4. For the moment, however, we may conclude that v. 21b is interpreted most naturally as supportive of rather than antithetical to v. 21a. Neither part of the verse furnishes us with a negative reference to the law: v. 21a, speaking of man's failure to keep the law, is indirectly positive (by condemning man for his disobedience), while v. 21b is more direct, relating the law positively to the newly-manifested righteousness of God in Jesus Christ. This freedom won in Christ, therefore, does not mean a simple doing away with the law; rather is there a positive relationship of some sort between this freedom and the law. We should not be surprised, therefore, that the next verses speak of the law's establishment.

Rom 3:27-31

This section, as we have noted, is a clarification of the theme of faith-righteousness introduced in 1:17 and discussed at greater length in vv. 21-26. The particular concern of the Apostle here is to show that boasting (καύχησις) is excluded not by a νόμος τῶν ἔργων but by faith, and that through this the law is established. Thus the law, as in 3:19-20 and 3:21, plays an important role, and it is this role we must elucidate.

v. 27. Here Paul states that boasting has been excluded (ἐξεκλείσθη -- probably a divine passive, a reference to the once-for-all act of God in Christ[25]), not through the law of works, but through the law of faith. Boasting seems here to mean a glorying in one's own works. Such a boasting, however, is in vain, for (see on 2:17ff, Section IV, part A) the supposed obedience to the law of the Jew is in fact a cover for wanton hypocrisy and disobedience to the law, and (according to 3:19-20, as we have seen) this lack of true obedience to the law means that none will be justified on this basis before God. Against this vain boasting the νόμος τῶν ἔργων has no effect. This is not because the law incites men to self-justifying acts and thus produces a true obedience to the law which then becomes the basis for boasting.[26] We have seen (on 3:19-20) that the Apostle would not adopt such an attitude toward the law. Rather is sin the problem (see on 3:9ff, 5:20, 7:5; Gal 3:19-20, 23-25 in Section I, parts A and B above). Man's sin is, as we have noted, found primarily in his disobedience to the law (see also on Gal 3:6-14). When man faces up to his true situation, he discovers that the law "shuts every mouth" (3:19).

What then does the Apostle mean by his description of the law here as τῶν ἔργων? At least five possibilities may be noted:

(a) The reference may be to man's wilful misunderstanding of the law as directing men to self-righteous endeavour.[27]

(b) Alternatively, the reference is to the law of God, but the boasting is not so much in 'self-justifying' works of obedience (which in fact are not forthcoming) as in one's personal (and privileged) identity as a Jew (which is thought to compensate for failure to obey the law fully). In this case, the thought is parallel to 2:17-24.[28]

(c) A third possibility, that the reference is to the OT simply as requiring works of obedience to God (the true function of the law), does not fit the context here, and is probably not, for the moment, in Paul's mind.

(d) We may also exclude, for reasons given above, the view of Bultmann that the law itself is intended to produce boasting and self-righteous endeavour.

(e) A final possibility, that not the law but only the 'principle' of works is referred to, is unlikely in view of Paul's consistent use of νόμος to refer to the OT law, and by the fact that the parallel reference to the νόμος πίστεως is probably a reference to the law (see below).

Two different ways of understanding the same law seem to be in view here. This leaves possibilities (a) and (b) open. While the latter accurately portrays the true significance of what is occurring (and thus fits well with the larger context), the reference in the immediate discussion is polemical,[29] and therefore a deliberate misunderstanding of the law appears to be in view. Certainly the position that Paul is in any way attacking the law here is, in context (see on 3:9ff, 3:21, and ch. 4; see also below[29a]) extremely unlikely.

We have noted that our identification of the νόμος τῶν ἔργων with the improper use of the law, rather than as a 'principle of works', is supported by the similar meaning of other occurrences of νόμος in Romans (see our comments on Rom 1:18-31, 3:9-20 in Section I, part A above, and on Rom 2 in Section IV, part A below; see also 3:28, 31 immediately below). We must, however, now look at the phrase νόμος τῆς πίστεως. Many commentators take νόμος here to mean 'principle' or 'rule',[30] and see the expression as antithetical to νόμος τῶν ἔργων, which is thus seen as the 'principle of works' (which is in fact identical to the Mosaic law). Schlier represents the majority view when he

says that Paul starts with the idea of νόμος (drawn from the discussion in context of the Mosaic law), but uses the word in its alternate signification as "Ordnung" (in the same way he refers to the law as an "Ordnung" in 7:21, 23 and 8:2), though 'law' and 'principle' are identical in content.[31] Käsemann actually insists that the reference is to the Mosaic law as such, in order to give greater effect to the antithesis (not only are 'works' and 'faith' opposed, but also 'law' and 'principle').[32] The νόμος πίστεως, on the other hand, represents the new regime of faith brought about in Christ,[33] and is by some scholars identified with the "law of the Spirit of life" (8:2) or the "law of Christ" (Gal 6:2), or even linked with Paul's description of himself as ἔννομος Χριστοῦ (1 Cor 9:21).[34]

Against this, however, is the view of G. Friedrich that not only νόμος τῶν ἔργων but indeed νόμος πίστεως refer to the OT law. Friedrich argues that the eleven occurrences of νόμος in 3:19-31 refer to the Torah (or Torah as representative of the OT) and that the texts cited by others to provide the framework for a Pauline teaching on the "Christian law" are unrelated and offer no support for such an affirmation.[35] While temporarily reserving judgment on the latter point (i.e. whether or not νόμος in the other texts has the same meaning as in 3:27), we may note that the evidence in favour of the former point is strong. In both 1:18-3:20 and 3:21 νόμος consistently refers to the OT law, i.e. either the Torah, or the Torah as representative of the entire OT.[36] While in its primary signification νόμος undoubtedly refers to the Torah as such, in 3:19-20 the reference is undeniably to the entire OT Scripture, and in 3:21 the phrase ὁ νόμος καὶ οἱ προφῆται refers, as did νόμος in v. 19, to the Scripture as a whole, and thus sets the tone for the section it commences.

Kuss indirectly concedes the force of this argument when he notes that, after ἐξεκλείσθη one would expect v. 28(as in v. 20, a reference to the Mosaic law) to follow immediately, yet the train of thought is disrupted by the insertion of v. 27b, which speaks not of the law, but (in Kuss' view) of two opposing principles. For Kuss, the νόμος πίστεως cannot refer to the law, for there is no parallel expression in Paul.[37] Yet the positive view of God's law we have seen evidenced in 1:18-3:20 (where the law is affirmed as God's righteous demand) and the similar tone set for this section in 3:21 (where a connection between the law and the righteousness of God in Christ is set forth) suggest that such a link between the law (properly understood) and faith is not only possible but is indeed to be expected (and this will be confirmed in

our examination of 3:31). F. Hahn notes that many phrases in vv. 21-31 (χωρὶς νόμου, χωρὶς ἔργων νόμου, ἐκ (διὰ) πίστεως) are not elaborated, so one must be very cautious in classifying νόμος πίστεως merely as a rhetorical expression.[38] The failure of commentators holding to the view that νόμος in v. 27 means 'principle' to demonstrate the existence in Paul of such a principle apart from the law (and note also their admission that the 'principle of works' is fully identical to the law!), and their refusal to take into account the positive relation between law and faith-righteousness, leads us to conclude that, according to v. 27b, the law not only shows that works-righteousness is impossible, but also preaches that men are justified by faith.[39]

This interpretation makes much more sense of Paul's positive evaluation of the privileges of the Jews (3:1-2, cf. 9:4-5),[40] his use of the Abraham account (Rom 4), and also his high estimation of the law (see on 1:18-3:20, also on 7:7ff, etc.). In addition, as Friedrich notes, it throws light on the image of Christ as the new "kapporeth" (3:25).[41] We may also note as reasonable Friedrich's suggestion that ποῖος (v. 27b) should receive its original meaning, and thus be rendered not "what different kind of law..." (ποῖος = τις), but rather "what nature of law...", i.e. what aspect or side of the law is involved (to which the answer is given: not the law as it commands works, but as it preaches faith). This, on Friedrich's view, yields the following parallels: χωρὶς νόμου (v. 21) = χωρὶς ἔργων νόμου (v. 28); μαρτυρουμένη, κ.τ.λ. (v. 21) = νόμος πίστεως (v. 27); διὰ πίστεως (v. 22) = πίστει (v. 28).[42]

We may now observe, with respect to the theme of the "Christian law", that the texts usually cited in support of this view (Rom 8:2; Gal 6:2; 1 Cor 9:21) may well not yield any support for the understanding of law as 'principle' here -- not because they are unrelated to 3:27, but rather on the basis that they also, like 3:27, refer to the OT law.[43]

v. 31. Here Paul says explicitly that the law has been established, not destroyed, through faith-righteousness. This statement provides further difficulties for those who say that the law has been ended or superseded in Christ (and has given way to the new era of "Christian freedom"). This problem receives attempted resolution in one of three ways, with which we shall deal in turn.

(i) Paul is said here to speak only of the judging function of the law. The just requirement of the law, as God's claim on man, is for the first time, in the gospel, recognized and acknowledged, and this brings sinners to realization of their utterly hopeless position before God. Righteousness

by law, says Nygren, opposed the law's meaning, which is to give men over to knowledge of their sin; hence righteousness by faith works in the same direction as does the law properly understood.[44] According to Althaus, the gospel establishes the law precisely in replacing it as "Heilsweg"; only the Christian gives the law its full honour, in his realization of the truth of its judgment and his belief in Christ, who was obedient to the law and who brings it to fulfilment (Rom 8:4).[45] This view takes v. 31 to be the conclusion to the preceding section, dealing with the theme of man's justification before God and God's claim on man, as spoken of in vv. 27ff, especially v. 28.[46] Therefore νόμος in v. 31 refers to the law as the requirement of God, rather than to the OT in a more general sense. This interpretation, however, cannot easily be reconciled with Paul's description of the OT law as the "law of faith" (v. 27), as witness to the righteousness of God (v. 21) and as purveyor of the righteous and eternal demands of God, which cannot be disposed of merely on the supposition that it is now replaced as "Heilsweg" by the gospel. Were this the entire scope of v. 31, it would scarcely do justice to ἱστάνομεν, let alone the positive language regarding the law in both 1:18-3:20 and 3:21ff.

(ii) Another view, supported by many commentators, takes v. 31 as the conclusion to vv. 27-31 (or even to vv. 21-31 as a whole), the reference being not to the entire OT, which would then be seen (in the Abraham and David narratives) to preach justification by faith, but rather to the Torah more particularly, which is 'established' in that, freed from the bonds of legalism, its true meaning as God's will becomes evident. This interpretation links 3:31 with 8:2 and Gal 6:2, and sees the law of Moses fulfilled in the "law of Christ". A. van Dülmen remarks that the law of Christ "ist nicht ein völlig neues Gesetz, sondern es ist das alte Gesetz, insofern es in seinem Wesen pneumatisch ist und deshalb nun im Aeon des Pneuma in Geltung steht. Das geistige Gesetz ist eingegangen in den νόμος τοῦ Χριστοῦ; während das Gesetz in seiner Bestimmtheit durch die Sarx aufgehoben ist."[47] The crucial difference is not so much in the change of law as the change of Aeon; now the law is ruled no longer by the killing γράμμα but by the life-giving Spirit: "Es ist dies das gleiche Gesetz, denn Christus bringt nicht ein neues Gesetz, sondern er bringt die völlig neue Bewertung des Gesetzes, einen neuen Horizont, eine neue Sphäre für das Gesetz. Christus unterbricht demnach nicht die Kontinuität der Heilsgeschichte, er schafft nur neue Kriterien und neue Kategorien ... Der Inhalt und grundlegende Wert der alten Heilstatsachen bleibt bestehen, aber ihre Gültigkeit, ihre Bestimmtheit liegt nur

einzig im Geist, dem Prinzip des neuen Aions."[48] However, van Dülmen continues, it is not the law nor any of its commands which brings death (any internal division of the law is "vollkommen unmöglich"); the distinction is between the spheres "in der es dem Menschen begegnet."[49] Only in the preaching of the gospel can the law appear as the "legitime Ausdruck" of God's will.[50] This means, however, that Paul's statement is (at the least) paradoxical, a point admitted (though not seen as a problem) by Schlier, who notes, "Zudem ist der Satz eine echt paulinische paradoxe Aussage, die in seiner Gesetzestheologie begründet ist und sich später in 8, 2ff klärt. Das Gesetz richten die Christen auf, indem sie es im Glauben an Jesus Christus, der Manifestation der Gerechtigkeit Gottes, abgelöst von sich selber, nicht mehr als Leistung, sondern in seinem ursprünglichen Sinn als Gabe des Willens und der Weisung Gottes erfüllen."[51] Hence for the Christian by faith " ... hat das Gesetz seinen ursprünglichen Sinn als die Gabe der Weisung Gottes und seine Kraft als heilsamer Wille Gottes wiedergewonnen."[52]

For Käsemann, however, the tension between vv. 27-30 (vv. 27-28 mark the end of the law, on the basis of Paul's understanding of the nature of faith, while vv. 29-30 do the same thing from a "heilsgeschichtliche" perspective[53]) and v. 31 is more serious -- if vv. 27-30 do indeed mark the end of the law (a viewpoint shared by most commentators), how then can it be said to be 'established' in v. 31? For Käsemann, the Torah of v. 31 can scarcely be linked with the νόμος πίστεως of v. 27 to produce a reference to the law as a summary of moral truth or the like (to parallel 8:2; Gal 6:2 and 1 Cor 9:21, etc.), a thought excluded by Paul's antithesis of law and faith.[54] This forces Käsemann to fall back upon the idea that v. 31 takes up v. 21 and acts as an introduction to ch. 4. The thought is not, however, that the law preaches faith, but that "der at.liche Gotteswille kann vielmehr erst sichtbar werden, wo der Nomos als Leistungsprinzip sein Ende fand."[55]

The problem with this view is clearly the tension it necessitates between vv. 27-30 and v. 31, a tension which arises out of the false understanding of v. 27 on which the view is based. To suggest that the 'paradoxical' character of the passage is the basis for this kind of tension is clearly an inadequate solution. Taking the logical implications of the view more seriously by separating v. 31 from the preceding and linking it with ch. 4 is, on our view (see (iii) below) to be rejected as an explanation of the passage's structure. An attempt to resolve the tension is made by Wilckens, who sees the basic difficulty lying in the contention that the "law of works" and faith are antithetical;[56]

vv. 28-30 are not polemical but merely underline the fact that the law's judgment is now ended. Through this, however, according to Wilckens, the law regains its original sense, i.e. to bestow life.[57] The law is in no way abrogated; rather, "zu seiner positiven Wirkung gebracht wird."[58] Even so, though, Wilckens must admit that it is not vv. 27-28 but rather vv. 29-30 and 4:1ff (dealing with the continuity of "Heilsgeschichte") which form the context for 3:31, which itself follows in the steps of 3:1-8.[59] Indeed, Wilckens suggests that v. 31b ought to be linked to v. 21b, the meaning being not that the law and its works are made possible through the Christ-event (as opposed to the covenant-renewal ideas of the Qumran sect), but rather that the "heilsgeschichtliche Bedeutung" of the law is established.[59a] If God is One (3:30) faith must be seen as the ratification of what Wilckens calls the "election history" (Erwählungsgeschichte); otherwise, the Christ-event is without reference to the election history and loses its universal significance, i.e. it cannot be revelation without the witness of the law and the prophets.[59b] This view, on the whole, fails in that it misunderstands Paul's affirmations regarding the law, especially in 3:19-20, 21 and 27-28 as primarily negative and polemical in nature, whose chief purpose is to demonstrate that works done in obedience to the law are wrong and bring only God's condemnation. V. 28, which is to be understood much as v. 20, is no more polemical or negative regarding the law than the positive statement of v. 27b, which it explains;[60] and in vv. 29-30 Paul appeals to the law against the arguments of his Jewish opposition, and in support of the law's integrity. Käsemann himself notes that in v. 31 Paul uses a Rabbinic formula to indicate the law's confirmation.[61]

The views cited above leave their adherents with very little room in which to suggest any positive purpose the law may now fulfil. Either (corresponding to [i]) the law's value is only in leading men to recognition of their sin (yet this not only fails to supply an adequate explanation for v. 31, but is quite at odds with everything Paul says about the law in 1:18-3:20 and 3:21ff), or (corresponding to [ii]) the law retains its authority, but only in a 'spiritual' sphere -- whose meaning, however, is grounded precisely in the mutual exclusion of the "law of works" and faith and in the end of the law and its supersession by the law of Christ. Even those commentators who, like van Dülmen, link the fulfilled law with the law of Christ (rather than opposing the two) later concede that the "individual commands" (or works) of the law are for Paul irrelevant (and indeed are abolished[62]) -- only the love

command any longer has significance. Christian obedience is expressed in works, but these grow out of the love command and have no relation to the law at all.[63] This seems little different from the position that faith (active in love) and law works are mutually exclusive. Even Wilckens, who comes closer to a positive evaluation of vv. 27-31 than the others (note also his understanding of νόμος πίστεως as referring to Torah) sees Paul's establishment of the law only in "heilsgeschichtliche" terms, and without regard to the law's content. Hence he finds no difficulty in maintaining a strict opposition between law and faith while seeing a reference to the Torah in v. 27b! The present significance of the law (which is Paul's concern here) is not dealt with by those supporting this position, a fact noted by Luz, who then draws the conclusion that the verse is an unclear "Zwischengedanken" in Paul's thought -- surely a counsel of despair.

(iii) Other commentators develop the point noted by Wilckens that v. 31 does not conclude ch. 3 (which deals with the righteousness of God, in which connection the law is secondary) but rather acts as an introduction to ch. 4, which clarifies the objection of v. 31 and develops the theme of the promise from the OT.[64] On this understanding v. 31 refers to the OT as a whole, confirmed in that it too is shown to preach faith.[65] The νόμος πίστεως is identified here as the ἐπαγγελία.[66] Bläser says that Paul knew the OT was not simply legalism; in fact, justification by faith is preached (and experienced) beforehand in the law and the prophets (3:21).[66a]

This view takes into account the positive evaluation of the law in v. 21 and fits well with Paul's use of the OT narrative in ch. 4 (and with his unitive understanding of the OT law). While on the whole its thesis, that the law preaches faith (which is linked closely with the argument advanced by Friedrich regarding the law of faith) may be accepted, some correction is needed. Several points may be made.

(a) If the positive function of the law, not only as noted in v. 21 but also in v. 27 (that the reference has this positive sense is missed by these interpreters owing to their failure to recognize the proper meaning of νόμος πίστεως) is kept in mind, the statement of v. 31 comes as no surprise.

(b) The summary nature of v. 31b (as a response to an objection) is not at all unusual in Paul (cf. 3:6ff, 6:1, where Paul uses the simple declaration μὴ γένοιτο, as in v. 31).[67]

(c) The objection of v. 31a is in fact suggested in the preceding section -- not by Paul's alleged abrogation of the law (v. 27b)

but rather by his exclusion of the Jewish misunderstanding of the law as the νόμος τῶν ἔργων -- the same misunderstanding represented in the objection of v. 31a.

(d) The phrase Τί οὖν ἐροῦμεν (4:1) is usually used by Paul to introduce a new topic, and οὖν itself,[68] while not fitting well at all as a demonstration of v. 31b, stands quite naturally when understood as introducing an objection to the statement of v. 27.[69]

(e) Καύχημα (4:2) shows that 4:1ff takes its theme from v. 27ff, not from v. 31; see also various phrases; ἐξ ἔργων (4:2), ἐλογίσθη αὐτῷ (4:3), and references to πίστις and δικαιοσύνη (4:3-6), which show the close bond between 4:1-6 and 3:27-31 as a whole.[70]

With these points in mind, it is possible to affirm that v. 31, and vv. 27-31 as a whole, do have as their primary focus the fact that the law, in its preaching of faith, is in harmony with the gospel, a truth which is then illustrated in ch. 4.

We are left, therefore, to understand v. 31 as the perfectly natural and expected conclusion to vv. 27-31 and, in a more general sense, to vv. 21-31. Paul's meaning, then, is that the law, in its preaching of faith, is confirmed by and in complete harmony with the righteousness of God made manifest in the gospel. While it is not yet clear what consequences this may have for the believer's life, or for the exercise of his freedom in Christ, it is evident from these verses that the act of God in Christ by which the believer has been set free from the sentence of condemnation pronounced by the law in no way means the rejection of the law's authority or relevance as such. Nor does this passage indicate that the freedom the believer enjoys in Christ is based upon a release from any further relationship with the law. We must now see how this theme is followed up in other passages.

Rom 7:1-6

The view we have taken with respect to Rom 3:21-31 is strongly challenged, however, by many commentators in their analysis of 7:1-6. Here, it is suggested, Paul asserts that through God's act in Christ, the believer has been freed from the law in such a way that he is separated from any further relationship with it. Indeed, the law itself may be said to have died (at least, so far as the believer is concerned). An examination of the Apostle's comments here, therefore, is required.

This paragraph, most commentators agree, is to be considered in close relation to what has been said in 3:20, 4:15, 5:13-14, 20 and 6:14; the immediate antecedent of the rhetorical question of 7:1 is probably

Paul's statement in 6:14, οὐ γάρ ἐστε ὑπὸ νόμον ἀλλὰ ὑπὸ χάριν.[71] In this case, 7:1-6 can be seen as clarifying what has been said in 6:14 with relation to the role of the law.[72] For Althaus, Paul wishes to explain the phrase ὑπὸ νόμον so as to show (in a way he has not done at 5:20) how the law is abolished for the Christian.[73] This latter suggestion -- that 7:1-6 portrays the abolition of the law for the Christian, who is now free (ἐλευθέρα, v. 3) to live for righteousness and in the Spirit -- is put forward by most interpreters as the salient feature of the section, and will occupy our attention as we examine the evidence.

The paragraph begins with the statement of v. 1 concerning the law, which is then illustrated in vv. 2-3 by use of the marriage example, and concluded (with application) in vv. 4-6.[74] The marriage example is thus used to illustrate the main theme of v. 1 -- that freedom is won through death, and that this death in some decisive way affects our relationship to the law.[75] That it is the OT law which is involved here is indicated already by the use of νόμος in v. 1, which, most interpreters agree (on the basis of context and Paul's use of the word), is a reference to the OT law (rather than to law in general).[76]

Many commentators, therefore immediately take the meaning to be that the Christian is severed, by the death of Christ, from his relationship to the law, whose authority over him has now come to an end. According to Kuss, the marriage example clearly shows Paul is speaking in v. 1 of the end of the law's validity for the believer; through death the believer has escaped the "Geltungs- und Machtbereich des Gesetzes."[77] Death, according to v. 1, ends the law's sway, declares Nygren; the Christian is set beyond the law's realm and is no longer ruled by it.[78] Kümmel notes that in v. 1 the stress is on the "Begrenztheit der Gesetzesherrschaft,"[79] and observes that the apparently abrupt change of subject at 7:1 is less surprising when one realizes Paul has already made various "abwertende Bemerkungen" regarding the law (3:20; 4:15; 5:13, 20; 6:14), without grounding them in any definite way.[80] Sanday and Headlam, with their slightly different understanding of νόμος in v. 1 (i.e. as referring to law in general), nonetheless arrive at much the same understanding of the text when they say that these verses show "the state of things to which Law belongs..." has been superseded by grace.[81]

Such views are, at the least, however, premature, for vv. 1-3 express nothing beyond what we observed above, viz. that the death which brings freedom effects a decisive change in our relationship to the law. The nature of this change -- and how it affects the role of the law in our lives -- is not yet clarified. Indeed, pace Kümmel, the Apostle,

as we have seen, has hitherto made no deprecatory remarks regarding the law, least of all in those texts to which Kümmel adverts. The matter becomes clearer as we turn to the conclusions Paul draws in vv. 4-6 from the principle stated in v. 1. We will begin by noting the arguments offered by the majority school (represented, for instance, by those scholars cited above) and follow this with a response and some alternative suggestions for interpretation of the passage.

In v. 4 Paul begins to draw the conclusions from the principle stated in v. 1 and illustrated in vv. 2-3. He starts with the assertion that the Christian has died to the law through the body of Christ in order that he might belong to Christ and bear fruit for God. Interpreters are, for the most part (and here we include representatives of all schools of thought), agreed that ἐθανατώθητε represents the death of the Christian and reflects the baptismal language of 6:2ff. (the passive form probably stressing the divine initiative),[82] while διὰ τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ refers to the death of Christ on the cross, which has provided the basis for our 'death'.[83] In what sense, however, has the Christian died to the law?[84] For Käsemann, the answer if clear: ἐθανατώθητε speaks not of a new understanding of Torah, "sondern ohne Einschränkung von ihrem Ende für den Christen seit der Taufe ... Eingliederung in der Herrschaft Christi und totale Trennung von der des Gesetzes fallen zusammen." In baptism, not only "die Tyrannei einer Idee der Legalität und moralischen Vergeltungsordnung" is done away with, "sondern die Tora als solche."[85] Such radical Torah-criticism, according to Käsemann, is the mark of Pauline theology, for Christian freedom is grounded in freedom from the law (understood in this radical sense as coming about through the entire abolition of the law).[86] Sanday and Headlam offer a similar comment, "This moral death of the Christian to his past also does away with the Law. The Law had its hold upon him only through sin, but in discarding his sins he discards also the pains and penalties which attached to them. Nothing can touch him further. His old heathen or Jewish antecedents have passed away; he is under obligation only to Christ."[87] Kümmel sees here Paul's first statement of proof that the Christian is freed from the law (in the radical sense), which statement Paul links with the thought of the law's "zeitliche Beschränktheit."[88] Cerfaux carries this as far as asserting the death of the law, "The Law comes to an end in Christ's death, and is there resolved mysteriously in the beginning of a new life. The Law dies with Christ, we are all dead to the Law, and we live with Christ."[89] The Christian, according to I. Beck, has died to the law and is freed from it as an "Unheilsmacht".[90]

H. Ridderbos offers a comprehensive comment on the situation in these words, "The law is here the menacing, fettering power. For that which lends sin its power is the law in its sanctions. As therefore 'to be under the law' and 'to be under sin' are synonymous denotations of the state of death and slavery of life outside Christ, so the dying of Christ for the churches signifies ... having escaped from its killing power.... The thought is thereby that as in Christ's death on the cross the church has died to the power of sin, world and law, in the resurrection of Christ it has been set at liberty for Another...."[91] Finally, we may note Prat's summary comment, "One thing is certain; it is that the Law is dead for the Christian, and that the Christian is dead for the Law. In other words, there is nothing in common between the Law and the Christian; and this is justice, for it was the auxiliary of sin and the flesh."[92]

It must be noted, however, that nowhere in Romans has Paul spoken of the law in such a manner. Far from being a nefarious power with a cruel hold upon man whose very being must be destroyed if a life of true freedom and obedience to God is to be attained, the law is pictured, as we have seen, in 3:21ff, as expressing nothing but the righteous will of God, is portrayed as preaching faith, witnessing to the gospel and being established through the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. Surely this is the framework within which our present paragrah must be interpreted -- unless we are to see in these verses an almost total contradiction of what Paul has said elsewhere on these matters.

How, then, are we to understand Paul's assertion in v. 4? It seems clear that Paul understood the law as the unchangeable expression of the righteous will of God, rejected by man at his own cost (see, for instance, 1:18-3:20, esp. 1:18-32). Owing to disobedience, none has been justified through the law (for none has fulfilled its righteous requirement, 3:20). Through the death of Christ, however, the law is established and is clearly in harmony with the gospel; this much we have seen through our examination of 3:21-31. The law does, to be sure, bring about a heightened consciousness of sin and indeed, increases sin's gravity (and even frequency), as 4:15, 5:13-14, 20, Gal 3:19ff indicate, but this is not its exclusive function (but is rather the outworking of its righteous nature as it confronts disobedient men). When Paul says in 7:1-4 that we have died to the law, and are freed from it through the death of Christ, he must be referring to the same realities spoken of in 3:21-31 where, as we have seen, man's justification is obtained χωρὶς νόμου, Christ having died for us to remove us from the position of having

to win justification through our own works. In other words, as we have noted with respect to that text, Christ died to free us from the righteous condemnation of the law -- and it is surely the same matter which is spoken of here.

We shall find this conclusion amply confirmed in our examination of 7:7-25 (where it is stated that the Christian is a slave to the law of God, v. 25b) and of 8:1-7 (which picks up the thought of 7:1-6, vv. 7-25 being in some sense an elaboration of vv. 1-6), where it is clearly stated by the Apostle that we are freed in Christ from the law's condemnation. The precise nature of the continuing relationship of the Christian to the law is not yet in view here, and ought not to be introduced -- and certainly not on the grounds of mistaken suppositions regarding what is said earlier in Romans concerning the law. K. Stalder notes that Paul never speaks of the law's abolition (it is linked inextricably with the gospel, according to 3:21); the law is indeed God's condemnation on sin, a condemnation which needs to be set aside -- and this can be done only through the body of Christ (on the cross). Our being freed from the law, however, continues Stalder, would have no meaning were the law itself abolished, for a law which could thus be abolished can give no serious (and eternal) judgment on sin.[93] Nowhere does Paul, echoes Murray, speak of the law's being put to death, even though he easily could have done so.[94] We must indeed be discharged from the law -- but in the sense that we must be freed from the need to win merit before God through our own (woefully lacking) works of obeddience. Cranfield notes that Paul speaks here of the death of the Christians, not of the law (even when, in view of the preceding illustration, the latter might have been expected).[95]

Our position, however, receives one further challenge. W. Diezinger claims that before the Christian can receive real freedom, the law must be removed as the norm or standard of his life. He turns to Rabbinic texts to justify the view that Paul here is saying just that, i.e. that the dead man is free from all the law's teachings and commands. What Paul says in the opening verses of Rom 7 concerning the death of the Christian to the law provides the basis for the baptismal theology of Rom 6. Diezinger asserts that Paul draws on the Rabbinic commentary on Ps 88:5 (LXX 87:5), which (in the LXX -- Paul's Bible -- and the Rabbis' text) reads προσελογίσθην ἐν νεκροῖς ἐλεύθερος. From this the interpretation is drawn (Shabbat 30a, 151b, Nidda 61b; a similar thought occurs in Pesiqta 200b, commenting on Job 3:19) that the dead man is free from any obligation to fulfil the law's commands.

Diezinger points to λογίζεσθε (6:11), ἐκ νεκρῶν (6:13) and ἐλευθερωθέντες (6:22), as well as to what is said in 7:4, as points of comparison. He also notes that the man of Ps 87 (LXX) descends into the λάκκος (v. 4), which he equates with the thought of dying and rising in baptism.[96] That Paul is reliant on this Rabbinic text is suggested also by Klausner, who describes it as a forced and casuistical conclusion, even though it is found in the Talmud.[97] The point is also commented on by Schoeps, who links it with what he views as Paul's understanding of history, in which two thousand years of "Tohuwabohu" is followed by two thousand years of Torah, which in turn is followed by the age of the Messiah, in which the law is abolished (Sanh 97b, Abodah Zarah 9a are cited as parallel Rabbinic authorities).[98] Thus the conclusion is drawn by Diezinger, "Als Toter ist der Christ nämlich frei von der anderen von Paulus hier primär ins Auge gefassten Macht, vom mosaischen Gesetz, dem stets Sünden in praxi erzeugenden 'Mechanismus', der den Menschen immer wieder als Fehlenden schuldig spricht und Gott dabei als den Heiligen erweist."[99]

All this, however, hangs on only one (or at most, two) OT texts, interpreted in a mere handful of (post-Pauline) Rabbinic statements. R. Banks points out that these Rabbinic texts (on the above interpretation) go against the overwhelming tendency of Rabbinic theology to stress ever more strongly the eternal nature of the Torah, and may well mean simply that the dead are unable to fulfil the law, i.e. that cessation of the evil 'yetzer' ends the possibility of acquiring guilt or merit through the Torah.[100] Furthermore, the (isolated) texts referring to the two thousand year period of the law are late (third century) and refer more to the coming of the Messiah than to the law's abolition. Banks' view is that no adequate basis is to be found "for the view that within the framework of a doctrine of the immutability of Torah occasional expectations of its modification or partial abrogation were to be found. Such alterations as were to take place only enhanced its authority and indicated that in the future it would be understood more accurately and observed more closely."[101] Similar conclusions are arrived at by E. P. Sanders.[102] We may also note that the use of λογίζομαι in Rom 6 is more likely influenced by use of the same verb in Rom 4, and is as such a part of Paul's justification teaching; ἐκ νεκρῶν is an obvious part of Paul's universal teaching on the death and resurrection of Christ (and its consequences in the lives of the believers). To equate the λάκκος (usually a dry pit or dungeon) of Ps 87:4 (LXX) with the baptistry of Rom 6 is surely anything but a self-evident conclusion. Even if we were to give more credence to Diezinger's proposal, however,

it would not necessarily mean anything more than accepting the idea that death effects a decisive change in our relationship to the law, i.e. that we are no longer under the necessity of fulfilling its commands in order to earn merit before God.

We may thus return to Diezinger's latter statement, quoted above, to make the point that freedom from the need to observe the law can only be interpreted, according to all Paul has said in Romans, in the limited sense of freedom from the need to justify oneself before God through works of law -- and this not because there is anything wrong in these works, but simply because we can never live the life of obedience that would issue in justification. To interpret Paul here as suggesting the Christian life is freedom from any need to regard the law at all is to make nonsense of his assertion in 1:18-3:20 that it is precisely because of such a life-style that the wrath of God has come upon men. The true positive purposes of this freedom in Christ will become apparent in the texts examined in Section IV of our study.

There is a hint of this latter theme already, however, in v. 4b, of which only bare mention was made earlier. Here Paul states that the positive aspect of our being freed from the law's condemnation is found in our belonging to Christ and bearing fruit for God; both clauses are probably dependent on ἐθανατώθητε.[103] The idea of fruit-bearing is most likely suggested by καρπός (6:22, where the fruit of Christian freedom is ἁγιασμός and, eventually, ζωὴ αἰώνιος; -- on which see our discussion of freedom from sin in Rom 6 below in [illegible] our study) and appears again in v. 5, where it is used negatively of life ἐν τῇ σαρκί (the same idea is expressed in 6:23 by the ὀφώνια τῆς ἁμαρτίας as the result of life ὑπὸ νόμον, see 6:14). In v. 6 an important statement is made concerning freedom and the law, and once more widely divergent opinions are expressed.

In v. 5 Paul describes life without Christ (ἐν τῇ σαρκί has this reference here)[104] as the time in which the "sinful passions stimulated through the law" bore fruit for death. Now, however, he continues (v. 6), we have been released (κατηργήθημεν) from the law, having died to that by which we were held (ἀποθανόντες ἐν ᾧ κατειχόμεθα) so that we might serve in newness of the Spirit, not in oldness of the letter. We have already discussed v. 5 above (Section I, part B). There are, however, two further points in dispute.

(1) v. 6a. Here Paul says that the believer is released from the law, having died to that by which he was held. Most scholars of all persuasions are convinced that ἐν ᾧ refers to the law.[105] Again, many

see here an outright severing of the Christian's relationship with the law. Schlier puts it bluntly, "Jetzt sind wir vom Gesetz fort vernichtet, von ihm gelöst und befreit"; in baptism we are freed "aus dem Gefängnis des Gesetzes."[106] For Käsemann, the freedom of the Christian is freedom from the Torah and its imprisoning fetters.[107] Nygren declares that the law belongs to the "old aeon" and is one of the powers of destruction,[108] and Althaus avers that the text shows that Christians are now free "von dem zur Sünde reizenden Gesetze und ihrem Gefängnis."[109] Sanday and Headlam comment that the Christian has no more relations with the law, for there is nothing left for the law to judge: "It was the old sinful life which brought man under the grip of the Law; when the sinful life ceased the Law lost its hold."[110]

Once more, however, we see in these views a mistaken placing of the blame for man's predicament on the law; the portrayal of the law as a power of the 'old aeon', bringing man under its iron grip of slavery, is quite out of line with Paul's understanding of the law in Romans as the expression of God's holy and righteous will. Sin brings us into the position in which we are enslaved and placed under God's righteous condemnation, and it is from this condemnation that we are now released (κατηργήθημεν). According to 1:18-3:20, it is man's disobedience to the law which brings him under condemnation; if the law were a destructive (and hence ungodly) power, it could not possibly bring God's righteous condemnation upon sin. It is from this condemnation that Christ has released us (3:21-31), so that the law is seen as preaching faith (3:27) and confirming the gospel (3:21), and is thus established by the gospel (3:31).

That this thought is indeed in the Apostle's mind here is shown by the fact that, after the intervening verses (7-25), which elaborate vv. 1-6, the idea is resumed in 8:1, Οὐδὲν ἄρα νῦν κατάκριμα, κ.τ.λ., and is linked in context, as in 7:6, to the work of the Holy Spirit (and also, of course, to the fulfilling of the law, see 8:4).[111] An example of the confusion into which mistaken thinking on this subject can lead is demonstrated in Reicke's understanding of freedom from sin in 7:5-6 as involving the abolition of the contrast between the flesh (the potentiality of sin, in his view) and the law, either by abolishing the flesh or abolishing the law. Thus for Reicke, the ideas 'law' and 'flesh' are so closely associated they become almost synonymous.[112] That this is but a parody of Paul's thinking here is almost immediately evident. The whole basis of the Apostle's condemnation of human sin in 1:18-3:20 is that the law is entirely righteous and unchanging. Abolition of the law

-- by disregarding its commands -- is what man has in mind, not God! The solution, according to 3:21-31, is God's dealing with our sin, not the law. For God to remove the law would be to remove His grounds for condemnation of our sin. Hence, abolition of the law, far from amounting to the same thing (or having the same effect) as abolition of sin, would lead to the justification of sin -- not its removal. Far from being synonymous with sin, the law is the true expression for God's condemnation of it, and if we are to come into a positive relationship with God, the condemnation of the law, under which we stand, must indeed be removed -- but not the law itself, for that would imply that the condemnation under which we stood, and which God removed in Christ, was not a real condemnation at all.[113] A similar misunderstanding to that of Reicke probably lies behind Paul's exclamation in 6:15 -- only removal of the law itself (probably the Romans' misunderstanding of Paul's teaching) would allow us to continue in sin. This misunderstanding Paul seeks to remove not only through his exposition of slavery to righteousness in vv. 15-23 but also through his clarification in 7:1-6 of the limited sense in which the Christian is freed from the law (i.e. from its condemnation), which theme of freedom he then develops further in a positive sense in 8:1ff.

(2) v. 6b. A brief foretaste of this positive exposition is provided in the phrase ὥστε δουλεύειν, κ.τ.λ., but our main focus here is on the contrast between Spirit and letter.[114] Many commentators see here a further negative reference to the law. Sanday and Headlam suggest that two distinct periods of history are in view: "The essential feature of the new state is that it is one of 'Spirit'; of the old state, that it is regulated by 'written law'. The period of the Paraclete has succeeded to the period which took its character from the Sinaitic legislation. The Christian life turns in inspiration from above, not on an elaborate code of commands and prohibitions."[115] The same theme of the "eschatological contrast of the two aeons" is echoed by Käsemann.[116] For Käsemann, freedom comes only through abolition of the law and its replacement by the Spirit: "Freiheit von den Gewalten des Todes und der Sünde konkretisiert sich in der Freiheit vom Gesetz, die, durch den Gesetz ermöglicht, auch nur 'im Geiste' festgehalten werden kann.... Die Präsenz des auferweckten Herrn in der Macht des Geistes tritt für ihn an die Stelle der Tora des Mose und heiligt die anders selbst in ihrer Frömmigkeit und Ethik unheilige Welt. Der Bruch mit dem Gesetz muss dort verkündet werden, wo die Rechtfertigung der Gottlosen die theologische Prämisse bleibt."[117] Schlier speaks of the

"Gegensatz des tötenden und verdammenden (weil immer die Sünde provozierenden) Gesetzes zum lebendigmachenden Geist"; he describes the γράμμα thus, "Das ist nicht anderes als der νόμος, der unser Gefängnis war."[118]

That this understanding is erroneous, however, can already be seen not only from the fact that only a few verses later Paul calls the law πνευματικός,[119] but also from the parallel text in 2:25-29. Käsemann himself links this text with 7:1-6, but fails to appreciate the significance of either passage. We shall see that in Rom 2 (Section IV, part A) Paul speaks clearly of the performance of God's law by Christians in the power of the Holy Spirit. In 7:1-6 Paul links the theme of the Spirit's enablement to the removal of the law's condemnation which, far from separating the believer from any association with the law, places him in a new -- and positive -- relationship to it. The Holy Spirit enables us to understand the law not merely as γράμμα (i.e. as a superficial code of commands a measure of obedience to which brings justification -- the legalist's view[120]) but as the 'pneumatic' (7:14) reality it truly is (and thus is the law established, 3:31, and written on our hearts, 2:15).

That Michel has seen something of this is evident in his comment, "πνεῦμα ist das charakterische Zeichen für das rechte Verstehen des Alten Bundes, während γράμμα als polemische Abgrenzung auf das Gesetz als aüssere Vorschrift, als Geschriebenes und Vorgeschriebenes hinweist."[121] Thus is Schmidt surely mistaken when he suggests that the contrast here is between the law as something outside of and alien to man and the Spirit as inner and grasping man in his entirety. From this Schmidt draws the conclusion that the Spirit now " ... macht des Menschen Innerlichkeit selbst zu einem Brief, zu einem Wort Gottes..."[122] -- a view totally at odds, as we shall see, with 2:25-29 as well as 2:15 (and Paul's view of the law in general). Only a law which expresses the righteous and eternal will of God can pronounce on disobedient men a just and real judgment; only through the work of Christ on the cross (διὰ τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ) can we be released (κατηργήθημεν) from this condemnation. What this means for the life of the believer will become clearer later in our study; whatever is involved, however, will, far from abolishing the law, rather bring the Christian into a new and positive relationship with its righteous standard.

Gal 2:15-21

The same theme, from a slightly different perspective, is dealt with in Gal 2:15-21 and 5:1-12. Here, the Apostle is fighting against the legalism of the Galatian Judaizers. To counter their teaching, Paul speaks in both of these texts of the true and false understanding of the law, in light of God's act in Christ. Through Christ, the believer is freed from the law's condemnation. Does this mean, therefore, that any form of obedience to the law constitutes for the believer a falling back into legalism? Should the believer sever all his links with the law in order to preserve his freedom in Christ? Many observers suggest that this is the thrust of these two texts. If this is indeed the Apostle's meaning here, it would seem to be in contradiction to his statements in Rom 3:21-31 and 7:1-6. We ought, therefore, to examine these passages carefully to see whether this is in fact the case. We commence with Gal 2:15-21.

In 2:15-21, the first passage in the epistle in which the subject of the law and freedom from its condemnation is dealt with, the Apostle lays the theological foundations for his attack on the conduct of Peter and Barnabas at Antioch. Following the Jerusalem Council (2:1-11), at which an unsuccessful attempt was made by unidentified Judaizers to destroy the freedom of the gospel (ἐλευθερία, v. 4), a further assault was launched on this liberty at Antioch, at the heart of which assault appears to have been the desire to subject Gentile believers to certain ceremonial aspects of the law. Throughout Gal 1 and 2, Paul defends the understanding of the gospel given to him by divine revelation; he does not merely assert his independence of the Jerusalem apostles.[123] This conception of the gospel and the true freedom it alone affords is now given a firm theological foundation in vv. 15-21.[124] Several points in the passage have bearing on the question of the Christian's freedom from the law's condemnation, and we shall comment on these in order of their appearance in the text.

Commentators are generally agreed that in v. 15 Paul and the Rabbis are on common ground. The Apostle asserts the genuine historical advantage possessed by the Jews in virtue of their being God's covenant people. Owing to God's election and mercy, the Jews are unlike the Gentiles, who are without the covenant promises or God's revelation in the law.[125] In this respect, the verse has strong affinities with Rom 3:1-4, 9:4-5 and also, as Oepke notes, with Rom 1:16.[126] Though some interpreters take the phrase as concessive,[127] there is no indication in the text that Paul introduces the idea merely as a gesture of politeness to the

Jew, then only to dismiss it out of hand in the very next verse.[128]

Klein points out that such a gesture at this critical stage in the discussion would be quite out of place -- and would mean nothing to Paul's Gentile readers anyway.[129] Instead, we should see here a recognition of something which is true as far as it goes, i.e. without reference to God's act in Christ.

The implications of what God has done in Christ are outlined, however (just as in Rom 3:21ff) in v. 16, where Paul states that man is justified not ἐξ ἔργων νόμου but only through faith in Christ (cf. Rom 3:21). Lagrange notes that δέ (v. 16) marks a pause denoting the distinction between purely Jewish and Christian viewpoints.[130] In light of the revelation of God in Christ, it is now apparent that by performing ἔργα νόμου no man will ever find justification before God. Indeed, it is by attempting to require these ἔργα νόμου of the Gentile believers that the Judaizers, in the same spirit as the interlopers of v. 4, have attempted to destroy the ἐλευθερία which for Paul is at the core of the gospel, and for which he fights so strongly in Galatians. It is important, therefore, to ascertain carefully the meaning of the phrase ἔργα νόμου.

The best suggestion seems to be that of Burton, who notes that νόμος is, throughout this section, used in the sense of 'legalism', viz. " ... divine law viewed as a purely legalistic system made up of statutes, on the basis of obedience or disobedience to which men are approved or condemned as a matter of debt without grace. This is divine law as the legalist defined it."[131] This, notes Burton, is one element of the divine law detached from others, by which detachment it is made to misrepresent the will of God and His real attitude toward men.[132] We may therefore follow Burton in viewing ἔργα νόμου as deeds done in a legalistic spirit.[133] The stress, then, is on man's failure to produce the true deeds of the law (not on some problem or defect in the law itself or its works considered as such). This, far from introducing a jarring note, coheres well with what we have seen of Paul's view on these matters in Romans, and accounts for the confession of Israel's very real advantages in v. 15.[134]

Kertelge notes that in the phrase ἔργα νόμου Paul is thinking not of works of the law as such, but of these works as an expression of the Jewish self-consciousness, i.e. of their claim before God to be found righteous simply by virtue of their possession (versus true performance) of the law.[135] Such ἔργα are done not in genuine obedience to the law but merely to establish a claim upon God. It is this self-righteous

attitude which Paul counters in v. 16. D. Fuller thus notes that " ... Paul is not repudiating Moses, but that legalistic frame of mind in which the Jews, for example, regarded their adherence to certain distinctives as making them superior to others and thereby earning God's favor."[136] Paul therefore confesses the genuine advantage of the Jews, but states that their perversion of this advantage (through the attempt to establish a claim upon God by self-righteous acts) has (v. 16) barred them from the justification granted only to those approaching God in humility and contrition. Van Dülmen rightly comments, "Paulus lehnt also nicht die Werke an sich ab, sondern mit Nachdruck die 'Werke der Tora', die nach jüdischen Verständnis gerecht machen."[137]

Betz asserts that in v. 16 Paul denies the Jewish doctrine of justification, which states that man can be justified only by doing the works of the Torah. What Paul specifically rejects here, we believe, is t view that man can be justified by such works done in an attitude of self-righteousness and prideful endeavour. This is probably what Betz implies when he comments, "In view of the controversy in Galatia, it should be noted that the denial does not imply that 'the works of the Torah' do not need to be done. Denied is only that they produce justification before God."[138] Mantries, through his own strength, to manifest obedience to the law of such a nature that he would establish thereby a claim upon the righteousness of God. It is important to remember, though, that it is not the works of the law as such, but the attempt to establish a claim upon God through performing them, which is condemned by the Apostle. This is noted by Schlier, "Natürlich sind mit den ἔργα νόμου nicht die ἔργα und auch nicht der νόμος in jeder Hinsicht preisgegeben, aber als ἐξ ὧν und δι' οὗ des δικαιοῦσθαι fallen sie dahin."[139] Surely to be doubted, however, is the view of Mussner that the ἔργα νόμου, referring to all the requirements of the Torah, are for Paul "ein religiöses Prinzip, das durch die in Christus eschatologisch aufgerichtete Gnaden- und Glaubens-ordnung ausser Geltung gesetzt ist."[140] That is, not only the Jewish claim, but the works themselves, are to be rejected. Mussner claims that the "Glaubensprinzip" replaces the "Gesetzesprinzip" and that for Paul faith and works are mutually exclusive. The "religiöses Prinzip", however, is surely that of self-righteous striving, and the "Gesetzesprinzip" not the law itself but rather the legalistic perversion of it. Possession of the law is for Paul an advantage (v. 15), whereas Mussner seems to suggest that merely having the law involves one in sin, in which case, as the law was given by God, God Himself would be to blame for the situation -- which is absurd (see

further on 3:19-22). Paul asserts here, therefore, no more than he does in Romans: that genuine law obedience is not forthcoming and that self-righteous legalistic endeavour will not justify a man before God. This fact will assume a high degree of importance in our examination of the latter verses of this section.

According to some commentators, v. 17 should be taken as an unreal conditional, with the ἄρα-clause expressing the logical consequence of the (absurd) premise. Betz says that for Paul Gentile Christians could scarcely be regarded as ἁμαρτωλοί (without the grace and salvation of God) -- especially if Jewish Christians would not be so viewed (v. 15).[141] According to Mussner, Paul rejects the idea that receiving justification in Christ involves becoming a "sinner",[142] a thought in which Beyer and Berger concur.[143] This view, however, has serious flaws. Oepke notes that where μὴ γένοιτο appears in Paul, the following pattern obtains: i) Paul's view is expressed; ii) a false consequence is noted; iii) this consequence is rejected; Paul's original view is elaborated, or the rejection is supported.[144] Lagrange points out that in Paul μὴ γένοιτο is always preceded by a question, not a statement,[145] a point noted also by Klein.[146] Burton notes that if εὑρέθημεν καὶ αὐτοὶ ἁμαρτωλοί were to be disputed, the sentence as a whole would read, "'Seeking to be justified in Christ, were we ourselves also to be found sinners, and is Christ accordingly a minister of sin?'"[147] We conclude, therefore, that μὴ γένοιτο denies not the premise of the argument (that Christians have been found ἁμαρτωλοί) but only the conclusion drawn from it (that Christ is a minister of sin).

What Paul means to say, therefore, is that, through the gospel, even Jews (καὶ αὐτοί must be seen in relation to καὶ ἡμεῖς, v. 16) discover[148] themselves to be not the pious, righteous people they thought they were (on account of their mere possession of the law and ostentatious practice of a few of its commands), but rather sinners in need just like the Gentiles. In this sense, the gospel brings about a new revelation which does not deny the previous advantages and privileges of the Jew, but declares that a new understanding of and response to the righteousness of God is now required. Even the Jews are found sinners (ἁμαρτωλοί must be linked with ἁμαρτωλοί, v. 15) when they make themselves dependent on grace. Klein comments, "Die Sündendienerschaft Christi kann dann nicht darin bestehen, dass er offenkundige Sünder gerecht spricht, sondern nur darin, dass im Glauben an ihn Menschen als Sünder in Erscheinung treten, die bis dahin als Sünder nicht festzustellen waren."[149]

In this case, v. 18 is best viewed as an argumentum e contrario providing support for what has been said in the preceding verse.[150] If our understanding of vv. 15-17 is correct, Paul is saying here that to return to the pursuit of justification through works of self-righteous legalism itself transgresses the law of God. This surely is the most natural way to understand the phrase παραβάτην ... συνιστάνω. Burton notes that παραβάτης is used to get rid of any ambiguity occasioned by ἁμαρτωλός: thus Paul shows the legalist has become a violator of the true intent of the law, and so the text is to be linked with Rom 3:21-31 (see also 8:4, and the teaching in Gal 5 on faith fulfilling the law;[151] see Section IV below).

We find, however, little ground for accepting the assertion of Betz that καταλύειν indicates the Torah has been dissolved,[152] or of Schlier that what Christ has destroyed is the Torah.[153] This thinking seems to manifest a confusion between Paul's condemnation of legalism as the perverted misuse of the law and his upholding of the law as such. The law, rightly understood, is disobeyed by the legalist, the clear implication being (in congruence with v. 15) that the law itself is to be regarded in a very positive light. Also mistaken is Mussner's view that Paul's meaning here is that Gentiles show themselves sinners if they declare their previous exercise of Christian freedom to be wrong. Rather is the Apostle's meaning that any return to legalism involves deliberate and direct transgression of God's law itself. The contention that what is meant here is that by allowing the law further validity the Gentiles must thereby come under its condemnation (it being the law's exclusive function to condemn) fails to take παραβάτης in its most natural and direct sense, and stems from the misunderstanding of ἔργα νόμου in v. 16 that we have dealt with above. This mistaken view, shared by many commentators,[154] would easily be avoided by a simple recognition of the fact Paul is speaking here in no way of the continuing 'existence' or 'validity' of the law, but of a return to the wilful misuse or perversion thereof (a point which some interpreters appear in some measure to realize, without drawing the proper conclusions[155]).

The correctness of our understanding is confirmed by Paul's next phrase, ἐγω γὰρ διὰ νόμου νόμῳ ἀπέθανον, ἵνα θεῷ ζήσω, v. 19a). At least five meanings have been proposed for this phrase:

(a) Paul died to the law through his own frustrated experience while under its authority. There is, however, no indication in Paul that such frustration played any significant part in his conversion; see on the contrary Phil 3:6 where κατὰ δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐν νόμῳ

(surely the kind of legalistic self-righteousness referred to here) Paul considered himself ἄμεμπτος. This solution today is not seriously entertained as a possible answer.

(b) The law led Paul into sin, and thus judged him and put him to death. This, however, runs counter to Paul's assertion that sin, not the law, killed him (Rom 7:13), and suggests that the law itself, unaided by human transgression, brought about sin -- which is impossible in the light of Paul's teaching on sin and human responsibility. Neither is this view held today.[156]

(c) Lagrange proposes that νόμος should be assigned a double meaning here, so that διὰ νόμου refers to the "law of faith" or the "law of Christ" (Rom 8:2, Gal 6:2). He cites Chrysostom, "Hoc dicit, quia per legem fidei mortuus est legi Moysis."[157] Van Dülmen and Bläser, however, argue that if Paul had wished to speak of the law of faith, the law of Christ or the law of the Spirit he would have done so explicitly.[158] We would further suggest that νόμος πίστεως (Rom 3:27) and (ὁ) νόμος τοῦ πνεύματος (Rom 8:2), as well as (ὁ) νόμος τοῦ Χριστοῦ (Gal 6:2) must not be considered in isolation from the Mosaic law (see our comments on these texts).

(d) A more widespread interpretation is that the phrase is to be linked with 3:13, and refers to the law's condemnation of Christ on the cross, through which judgments we have in fact been freed from its hold.[159] Commentators holding this view generally assert that this means the law is abolished for the Christian. In Oepke's view, Paul says here that "Für den Gläubigen ist das Gesetz radikal abgetan."[160] According to Mussner, the law no longer has any claim upon us.[161] The Christian is a dead man as far as the law is concerned; he has no further relationship with it.[162] Schlier and Mussner see the text as baptismal, i.e. referring to our participation in the death of Christ on the cross. They both make reference to Rom 6 and 7:1-6: through baptism, participation in the death of Christ, the law, which once had power over me, now has only a corpse.[163] In baptism, says Mussner, Christ becomes Lord in place of the law. Schlier says that the law, by pronouncing a curse upon Christ, has brought about the situation where through His body we can be freed from its hold.[164] Oepke, indeed, asserts that the law unlawfully condemned Christ and so is made unlawful itself. Through its own agency, it has taken Christ and the Christian out of the sphere of its influence (the world). "Sie sind durch die Auferstehung mit Christus in die obere, zukünftige Welt Gottes versetzt, in der Freiheit herrscht."[165] A critique of this view is offered under (e) below.

(e) Though this interpretation has many supporters, another holds for us more promise. Surely the most natural way of understanding v. 19a is to take it in conjunction with v. 18, of which it is explanatory (γάρ). Seen thus, the phrase ἐγὼ γάρ, κ.τ.λ. provides a perfectly logical and coherent commentary on παραβάτην συνιστάνω, the meaning being that the law itself, in its God-given meaning and intent, shows me that I cannot be justified through the way of legalistic perversion of that same law -- by which perversion I constitute myself a transgressor (παραβάτης). This necessitates a slight shift in meaning between διὰ νόμου (expressing the true meaning of the law) and νόμῳ (a reference to the law's legalistic misuse). It is worth noting that Greek has no word for 'legalism' as such,[166] and so the Apostle must use νόμος (along with various prepositions) to denote both the law itself and its legalistic misuse. Any reference to the end of the law, as the commentators noted above intend, would be quite out of line with what Paul has said in vv. 15-18, and it is unnecessary to import into the passage themes belonging to 3:13, or Rom 6, 7:1-6, when the emphasis here is on Paul's personal situation, not the atonement or baptism, however closely related these subjects may be.[167] Burton observes correctly that there is no link in the text to the theme of dying to the law through the σῶμα Χριστοῦ.[168] He also notes that it is not clear at all that Paul saw the law as demanding or causing the death of Christ. In 3:13 Paul says that the law curses sinners, and that Christ frees us from this situation, but Paul nowhere says that it is the law which brought Christ to His death.[169] With this judgment we agree wholeheartedly.

The view we have proposed, on the other hand, has none of these weaknesses. It offers the most direct and natural interpretation of the words, and is the only interpretation which does justice to the role v. 19a has as explanatory (γάρ) of v. 18. The law itself points in the direction of freedom (even if this happens only by virtue of God's act in Christ, bringing revelation that its wilful misuse is wrong). We die in Christ to its legalistic misuse, entirely in accord with what the law itself purposes. There is no justification, therefore, for the view of many commentators that the passage teaches that the law is somehow intrinsically inimical to the attainment of Christian freedom. Rather does Paul teach that the law itself is in harmony with the gospel in pursuance of this aim.

Paul concludes the section in v. 21 with the statement εἰ γὰρ διὰ νόμου δικαιοσύνη, ἄρα Χριστὸς δωρεὰν ἀπέθανεν. Schlier is quite correct in asserting that Paul teaches here that if justification comes by works

of the law (considered as legalism) then Christ died for nothing.[170] The law itself, as we have seen, teaches this. But what ground is there in the text for Mussner's declaration that the commands of the law have now been replaced by a closer relationship with God, that we cannot have both Christ and the law, and that Christ marks the true "Zäsur" in history (the two 'aeons' are split apart)?[171] What are we to make of Oepke's statement that the Christian now lives a higher life than that of the law, with which he has nothing more to do?[172] We have seen there is no evidence in the text for such views. Surely also to be questioned is van Dülmen's comment that in v. 21 is found an "absolute opposition" of faith and law.[173] Such assertions evidence an inadequate grasp of Paul's distinction between the law and legalistic self-righteousness, and do not begin to do justice to Paul's thinking here.

Surely the most reasonable way to understand v. 21 is, in line with the argument we have seen developed in vv. 15-20, to take διὰ νόμου as referring to that legalistic righteousness pursued by men contrary to the demand of the law itself, and which pursuit the law brands as transgression.[174] This provides a clear and straightforward conclusion to the section, in harmony with the themes Paul has developed throughout it. We shall now see how these thoughts are expressed in 5:1-12.

Gal 5:1-12

At Gal 5:1 the relationship of freedom in Christ and the law comes into even starker relief than in 2:15ff. The subject of freedom has been introduced by the Apostle in 4:21-31, but now, as Betz says, " ... he emphatically places it at the beginning of the section on ethical exhortation and thus in the center of the argument."[175] The Apostle has, at various points in the epistle, developed the theme of the Christian's relationship to the law and its just condemnation; now, however, he explicitly designates the condition of the believer as one of freedom, and does so in such a way that it appears as the goal of Christ's saving act.[176] This leads Betz to observe that ἐλευθερία " ... is the central theological concept which sums up the Christian's situation before God as well as in this world. It is the basic concept underlying Paul's argument throughout the letter."[177]

Freedom is stated to be the goal or the result of the work of Christ. Schlier comments, "Gemeint ist, dass Christus uns, indem er uns freigemacht hat, auch der Freiheit überantwortet hat, so dass wir nun in ihr 'stehen' und sie in ihm 'haben'...."[178] This implies, of course, that it is this condition of freedom which provides the context

for the believer to live in righteousness,[179] and so v. 1 is linked to the parenetical section in vv. 13ff (see our comments on that text). In our discussion of this theme we should always remember that, for Paul, freedom as an abstract concept or entity is not in mind. Rather, as Rengstorf notes, does Paul want to reflect on what makes freedom freedom, for while there is certainly "eine Befreiung zur Freiheit," there is also " ... eine Befreiung ... die für die Befreiten eben nicht bei der Freiheit, sondern bei neuer Sklaverei endet."[180]

The freedom spoken of in 5:1 is based on the cross and, as Schlier notes, is (as in 2:16) freedom from the hopeless situation in which we could be justified only through performing works of the law.[181] This is made explicit in v. 4, where the language of 2:15ff is echoed. We have seen that what the Apostle opposes there is that view which sees the law as an instrument by which men can attain justification. This Paul holds to be a vain hope, for no one truly obeys the law. We must surely reject, therefore, the comment of Oepke that what ἐλευθερία means here is freedom from the law as such.[182] What the Apostle declares we have been freed from is the illusion that we can attain justification through our own performance of the law -- a rather different matter from outright severance of any relationship with the law. This becomes clear in Paul's discussion of circumcision in vv. 2ff.

Paul states in v. 2 that to view circumcision as necessary for justification is wrong.[183] It is not circumcision as such which is condemned, only its acceptance as necessary for justification.[184] Christ has freed us from the curse which came on our attempts to win justification through our own works, so circumcision is of no value in attaining a right relationship with God.[185] For Paul, circumcision is the eternal ritual symbolizing acceptance of Judaism (and one to which Paul assigns a positive value in Rom 3:1, 4:11).[186] What the Judaizers appear to have been teaching is that circumcision is sufficient in itself, and does not entail a further performance of the works of the law. The Apostle, however, asserts that the acceptance of circumcision as necessary for justification destroys the sole efficacy of the work of Christ and, for him who chooses it, involves the need to perform the whole law (ὅλον τὸν νόμον ποιῆσαι, v. 3), because it entails acceptance of the principle that a man is justified through his own works rather than through the work of Christ alone. This is a concept anathema to Paul, and he opposes it throughout the epistle.

Paul, however, rightly points out (v. 3) that the law, understood as a means for justification, does require full obedience for the reward

to be attained. Such a view is tenable only on the supposition that the law is God's holy standard -- which is why it merits such obedience. He who seeks to be justified by his performance of the law must fulfil the law perfectly. For the Apostle, however, this is an impossibility; man's failure to win his own justification has led only to the curse (3:10). Paul's criticism of his opponents here, therefore, is based not on their supposed genuine obedience to the law (which is not forthcoming), but rather on the fact that they fail to take the law seriously, assuming that mere acceptance of circumcision will prove adequate for the reward to be attained. The Apostle points out in v. 3 that the law, as God's holy and righteous standard, requires far more than this. His assumption is that everyone who seeks justification through his own endeavours will fail to do (ποιῆσαι) the works of the law, and will thereby be cursed.

We see in this a thought parallel to Rom 2:25, where genuine circumcision is said to involve a true performance of the law[187] -- but this, as we shall see, is predicated there only of the Christian (though even his obedience is far from perfect). The Galatian Judaizers, therefore, by stressing circumcision while at the same time failing to produce true obedience to the law, make mock of God's holy requirements in the law. We must, therefore, disagree with various commentators who appear to find the fault here in the law rather than in man's misuse of it. Mussner and Schlier see the doing (ποιῆσαι) itself as wrong,[188] whereas in fact it is the nonperformance of the law which debars the Judaizers from receiving the promise. Becker sees circumcision here as, in Paul's view, superfluous.[189] There may be some truth to this (in the sense we have noted above) -- though, as Oepke points out, circumcision is not in itself seen in a negative light.[190] From this, however, Becker draws the conclusion that law and Christian freedom are inalienably opposed: "Beschneidung und Gesetz lassen sich also keineswegs als mögliche Heilskonkurrenz zur Freiheit in Christus auffassen, sondern sie sind Unheilsweg.... Meinen die Galater mit den Judaisten, Gesetz und Christus verbinden zu können, irren sie zutiefst. Beide schliessen einander aus."[191] Becker also states that the keeping of the law itself leads to the curse.[192] Paul nowhere, however, says that the law is not to be kept -- only that, if one tries to win justification through his own performance of it, he will find that performance totally inadequate in fulfilling God's righteous demands. Law and gospel (or law and Christ) are not to be so straightforwardly and without qualification opposed. The true answer lies in the work of Christ, through which

a true fulfilment of the law (or, at least, the beginnings of it) is a reality.

While it may be true to say (with Betz) that Paul does not share the Jewish concept of ethics as the prevention of transgression and fulfilment of the demands of a ritual code of law (though if by the latter phrase he intends a disparagement of the law we cannot concur), it is surely unreasonable to draw from this, as does Betz, the conclusion that for the Apostle there is no longer any law (or, in the ordinary sense of the word, any ethics).[193] A similar view seems to be taken by Schlier when he speaks of justification without law and a "gesetzesfreie Evangelium".[194] Schlier himself points out that love, according to vv. 5 and 14, works righteousness because it fulfils the law.[195] The confusion here stems, we believe, from the misunderstanding that Paul is setting aside the law itself when he condemns the Judaizers' abuse of it. In other words, what Christian freedom implies is freedom from the need to perform works of the law in order to win one's own justification -- and hence, freedom from the law's just condemanation on all who do not fully satisfy its requirements. This does not in any way imply freedom in a general sense from the law itself; nor does it mean the preclusion of a positive relationship between the believer and the law.

It seems to us, indeed, that freedom from the law's just condemnation of our utter failure to perform its righteous requirements implies freedom to perform (or, at least, to begin to perform) the law genuinely. This point is made by Moule, who criticizes those who see in this text only a negative portrayal of the law. He comments, " ... more important than whether the law is viewed as a code or as a necessary ground of obligation, is the question whether a man is trying to justify himself by keeping the law, or whether he allows law to be a medium through which God reveals himself."[196] He develops this view as a critique of the position of John Knox. Knox, arguing that Paul has declared the law to be abolished, suggests that this leaves the Apostle with no basis for any ethical exhortation and thus unable to deal adequately with the problem of the freedom into which the Galatians have been released.[197] Such a destructive view of the role of the law is not, however, Paul's position. In response to Knox's comments, Moule replies, "Thus, when Paul contrasts grace with law, he is not for a moment setting up some supposed gracious indulgence over against the absolute demands of God, in such a way as to relax these demands. On the contrary, he is declaring that the only realistic step towards meeting God's inexorable demands is to recognize them as frankly unattainable without the power of God; and

to recognize further, that to presume to try to attain them without God's aid is man's essential sin. It is not that grace abolishes law, but that dependence on grace, instead of the attitude of legalism, is the only way to fulfil God's law."[198] On this basis, we may surely doubt the view of Beyer that, according to v. 6, the only true morality before God, faith working in love, is to be opposed to desire to perform the works of the law.[199] Paul does not so disparage the law here as to oppose faith or love to true obedience to the law. What he does contrast, as we have repeatedly observed, is faith in Christ and that wilful misuse of the law which turns it into an instrument for legalism and sunders it from Christ. Paul's position in these verses, properly understood, lays the foundation for the positive view of law and freedom expressed in vv. 13ff (and other texts; see Section IV below) and is the only possible way, in our view, of reconciling what is said in the two sections (vv. 1-12 and 13ff).

This and the three other texts we have examined above point the way to an understanding of the relationship between law and faith (or law and gospel) in which Christian freedom is seen to be both freedom from the law's just condemnation and freedom for a beginning of true obedience to the law. This is the theme to which, after consideration of two intervening subtopics, we shall turn (Section IV).

Conclusions

1. God's act in Christ brings freedom from the just condemnation of the law for everyone who believes. This is because Christ has done what man, in his sinful nature, could not do -- satisfy the righteous demands of the law.
2. Through Christ's removal of the law's condemnation, its authority is not destroyed, but is for the first time truly established.
3. The law, when used as a means for man to achieve his own justification, results in vanity and futile boasting. This perversion of the law is opposed to its true meaning, in which it preaches faith. It does so by contrasting the righteousness of God with the sinfulness of man and pointing to Christ as the only solution for man's predicament. The law itself ends human boasting and legalism by setting forth the true standards of an utterly righteous God and by showing that legalism is wrong.
4. The Apostle's statement that the Christian has died to the law means that he has been freed from the law's just condemnation of his sin -- not that the law itself has died or has no further bearing on the

Christian's life. The believer is discharged from the law in the sense that he is freed from the need to win justification before God on the basis of his (totally inadequate) works of obedience to the law.

5. Paul condemns legalism, not the law. A return to legalism (in which the law is treated as γράμμα) itself transgresses the law. The legalist has become a violator of the true intent of the law. The Galatian Judaizers are criticized by the Apostle not for their obedience to the law but for their legalistic misuse of it.
6. Removal of the law's condemnation, and the consequent freedom attained in Christ, is linked by Paul to the role of the Holy Spirit in enabling the believer to see the law not merely as γράμμα but as a positive spiritual reality.

Footnotes

1. See Otto Michel, Der Brief an der Römer, p. 146; C. E. B. Cranfield, The Epistle to the Romans, 2 vols., I, 199; Heinrich Schlier, Der Römerbrief, pp. 102-3.

2. See Cranfield, I, 218 and Ernst Käsemann, An die Römer, p. 95 (who sees a polemical tone to the section), contra John Murray, The Epistle to the Romans, p. 122; Michel, p. 154; who consider that here Paul is drawing consequences from vv. 21-26, and also contra Jules Cambier, L'Évangile de Dieu selon l'Épître aux Romains, I, 146, who sees here a summary of the previous section. The section certainly does not summarize all the themes introduced in vv. 21-26, and neither does it merely draw the consequences of one or more of them, for it advances itself essential elements of the argument Paul is propounding. It is hence best taken as a clarification of something said earlier (not necessarily merely with respect to vv. 21-26, but rather taking into account all that has been said since 1:16 regarding faith, man's position without God, and God's redemptive act in Christ).

3. Most commentators agree νυνί here has a temporal, rather than simply logical force; see Schlier, p. 103; Franz J. Leenhardt, L'Épître de Saint Paul aux Romains, p. 98; C. K. Barrett, Epistle to the Romans, p. 72; Ulrich Wilckens, Der Brief an die Römer, I, 184; and also Wilckens, "Zu Römer 3,21-4,25: Antwort an G. Klein," in Rechtfertigung als Freiheit, p. 51; Michel, p. 147; Cranfield, I, 201; Otto Kuss, Der Römerbrief, I, 112 (who also points out that there is a certain logical antithesis to v. 20 -- this, of course, implies the historical or "heilsgeschichtliche" change brought about in Christ, see also Käsemann, p. 86). Karl Kertelge, "Rechtfertigung" bei Paulus, p. 73, and Wilckens, "Römer 3,21," p. 51, rightly contest Bultmann's view that the "now" of the preacher is referred to.

4. Michel, p. 147 n. 21; Cranfield, I, 201-1; Kertelge, p. 76.

5. See Cranfield, I, 91-99, 202, who notes, however (pp. 98-99 n. 1), that Paul's intention to focus on man's position of righteousness

as a gift of God "carries with it an indirect reference" to the righteous activity of God Himself. Opposed to this is Wilckens, I, 187-88; William Sanday and Arthur C. Headlam, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, p. 83; Kertelge, p. 75, who, however, admits that εἰς πάντας, κ.τ.λ (v. 22) stresses man's role. Close to Cranfield's position is Ulrich Luz, Das Geschichtsverständnis des Paulus, p. 168, who speaks of God's righteousness working in man (though not as an individual quality). Other commentators see a dual reference, i.e. to God's activity and to the status man gains as a result; see Kuss, I, 115-21, who stresses that in both 1:16-17 and 3:21-26 the divine initiative is all important. The latter point is, of course, accepted by Cranfield, who suggests, however, that the results of God's initiative in man are what Paul is interested in here, i.e. as opposed to man's vain hope of a righteous status without God's gracious intervention in Christ. This seems to be the point of Paul's argument here, and appears to be confirmed by v. 22, which refers to the righteousness of God which comes through faith in Jesus Christ. Barrett, p. 74, points out the faith is the visible expression of this righteousness. On πίστις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ as objective genitive see Michel, p. 148 n. 8; Cranfield, p. 203; Murray, pp. 110-11; Schlier, pp. 105-6. Käsemann, p. 88, points out that τὸν ἐκ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ, v. 26, gives strong support to this view. Cranfield, p. 98, points out (with respect to the parallel text 1:16), "It is extremely difficult to see how ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν can at all convincingly be shown to be a natural expression for Paul to have used, if he meant by δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ God's activity." Note also the stress on man's status in 3:20, which states the 'negative side' of 3:21.

6. Paul Althaus, Der Brief an die Römer, p. 32.

7. Kertelge, p. 74.

8. Michel, p. 148. This view is supported by John R. Walvoord, "Law in the Book of Romans," BibSac 94 (1937), p. 281, who translates χωρὶς νόμου as "(apart from) any moral law whatsoever." It is also clear from our discussion of 3:19-20 that the Torah is in view here, not "any moral law whatsoever" -- what would the phrase "moral law" have meant to Paul? Also wrong are Sanday/Headlam, p. 82, who take the phrase to refer not to a subordinate system growing out of the law but an alternative to the law "destined ultimately to supersede it (Rom x.4)."

9. Wilckens, I, 185-86. See Andrea van Dülmen, Die Theologie des Gesetzes bei Paulus, pp. 85-86, who says that judgment in the law's realm "no longer applies" and that the criteria of 2:12ff, 25ff, are hence no longer valid. See, however, our comments on ch. 2; van Dülmen's difficulties stem from an inadequate understanding of νόμος in Paul.

10. Leenhardt, p. 99n.

11. Rightly Murray, pp. 109-10; Schlier, p. 105; Cranfield, I, 201. For the close conjunction of vv. 20 and 21 see also Ferdinand Hahn, "Das Gesetzesverständnis im Römer- und Galaterbrief," ZNW 67 (1976), pp. 36-37.

12. See Leenhardt, p. 98 and p. 98n; see also Sanday/Headlam, p. 82. Wilckens, I, 185, points out that Paul's teaching is more complex than the Rabbinic view; Luz, p. 168, speaks of two present realities

manifested in the preaching of the gospel. Without doubt Paul speaks of a new era inaugurated by Christ, a situation in which man receives righteousness by faith and is freed from the law's just condemnation of his (totally inadequate) performance of its demands. Yet this by no means results in a setting aside of the law as such, or its identification as an "Unheilsfaktor", a "Faktor" of the old aeon. See Cranfield, I, 201, "To appeal to these words as evidence that Paul regarded the law as superseded and set aside by the gospel as something now out of date and irrelevant is surely perverse." The law as such (as opposed to man's sorry record of law-disobedience) is not here in question. Hence, to suggest, as does Cambier, that Paul's purpose here is "de nier toute actualité de la Loi dans la manifestation de la justice" (p. 68) seriously misses the point. Also mistaken is Nygren, pp. 146-49.

13. Schlier, p. 105. Wilckens' statement (I, 85ff) that, though the law has not been destroyed, its "working" has been abolished, is ambiguous, as is the view of van Dülmen (see (9) above).

14. See Hahn, p. 37; Kuss, I, 112; Michel, p. 148; Schlier, p. 105; Sanday/Headlam, p. 83; Wilckens, I, 185-86; Käsemann, p. 87-88. Most take ὁ νόμος καὶ οἱ προφῆται to refer to the OT as a whole; see Cranfield, I, 202; Kasemann, p. 87 (though see also Hahn, p. 37 n. 2). On ὁ νόμος καὶ οἱ προφῆται as a designation for the OT, see Cranfield, I, 202 n. 2.

15. Michel, p. 148; see also Wilckens, "Die Rechtfertigung Abrahams nach Römer 4," in Rechtfertigung als Freiheit, pp. 41-45.

16. Schlier, p. 105. Sanday/Headlam, p. 83, speak of a "duly foreseen development" of the OT. Kuss, I, 112, and Leenhardt, p. 98, are more vague.

17. Hans Lietzmann, An die Römer, p. 48.

18. Kertelge, p. 97.

19. Käsemann, p. 88.

20. Schlier, p. 105; Michel, pp. 147-48; Hahn, p. 37; Wilckens, I, pp. 185-86; Cambier, p. 68.

21. Van Dülmen, p. 86; see Kuss, I, 113.

22. Wilckens, "Römer 3,21," pp. 54-56. Surely to be rejected is the view of Günter Klein, "Römer 4 und die Idee der Heilsgeschichte," EvTh 23 (1963), pp. 424-27, that νυνὶ represents a completely new phenomenon, and that the righteousness of God has no "Vorgeschichte". This forces him to explain the reference to ὁ νόμος καὶ οἱ προφῆται as merely a Scriptural proof -- yet this begs the question (why is the insertion of a Scriptural proof necessary for Paul?), as well as completely misunderstanding what Paul has said about the law in context. Klein, p. 427, sees ἄνθρωπον (v. 28) as indicating the end of all Jewish-Gentile distinctions, i.e. as the "Entsacralisierung" and "Profanisierung" of Judaism; yet ἄνθρωπος can scarcely be given such weight (see Cranfield, I, 221 n. 4), and the statement concerning the righteousness of God can scarcely be reconciled with the passages noted in our comments (see also on Rom 4).

23. Wilckens, "Römer 3,21," p. 58.

24. Cranfield, I, 202, notes this means not only that the δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ is attested by the OT, but that "the OT is properly understood as witness to this righteousness..."; see Barrett, p. 73.

25. Cranfield, I, 219.

26. Contra Käsemann, p. 96; Rudolf Bultmann, Theology of the New Testament, trans. K. Grobel, 2 vols., I, 263-64; Bultmann, "Christus das Ende des Gesetzes," in Glauben und Verstehen, II, 40-41. Käsemann thus draws the mistaken conclusion that (as the law leads to self-righteousness and boasting) faith ends the law's work.

27. Michel, pp. 154-55, speaks of Israel's misunderstanding of the law which results in sinful self-reliance; he links this, however, with the ἔργα νόμου of v. 20 -- a misunderstanding of that phrase. See Cranfield, I, 220 n. 3.

28. See Wilckens, I, 246, who, (rightly) linking vv. 27-31 with ch. 4, concedes that Abraham (4:2) had works to boast of (but not before God), yet experienced the justification of sinners. Hence, the "heilsgeschichtliche" boasting is ended not by the end of the sin-inducing law, but rather where the Jew in faith believes that God justifies the sinner. Schlier, p. 116, sees καύχησις as referring to boasting in the law and circumcision as guarantees of justification (see also Leenhardt, pp. 108-9 for partial adoption of this view). Yet the view of Bultmann is not the only alternative to that suggested by Wilckens. The initial possibility, that of a wilful misunderstanding of the law, must also be considered. This avoids the attribution to the Apostle of an impossible view of the law, while taking account of the negative tone of Paul's remarks concerning the νόμος τῶν ἔργων in v. 27b. Nygren's attempt (Commentary on Romans, pp. 162-63) to combine two of the above possibilities (he admits the law does tend to bring down boasting, yet feels it leaves the door open for improvement, thus leading to further law works) is really a variant of Bultmann's position.

29. Käsemann, p. 96; Michel, p. 155.

29a. The objection lying behind v. 31a appears to indicate Paul has just (i.e. in v. 27) attacked the law, yet this objection more likely stems from a misunderstanding (as often in Paul; cf. the parallel passages 3:5-6, 6:1-2, where the disclaimer μὴ γένοιτο also appears) of Paul's attack on the mistaken view of the law taken by the Jew as an attack on the law itself. The objector himself is thus an example of the attitude criticized in v. 27.

30. Schlier, p. 116; Michel, p. 155; Kuss, I, 176; Sanday/Headlam, p. 95; Murray, pp. 122-23; Lietzmann, p. 52; Käsemann, p. 96; van Dülmen, p. 87; Cambier, pp. 149-53; Walvoord, p. 282; Stanislas Lyonnet, Quaestiones in Epistolam ad Romanos, p. 131; Eduard Kühl, "Stellung und Bedeutung des altestamentlichen Gesetzes im Zusammenhang der paulinischen Lehre," Theologische Studien und Kritiken 67 (1894), p. 128; George E. Ladd, Theology of the New Testament, p. 449.

31. Schlier, p. 116; see also Murray, p. 122. Van Dülmen, p. 87, stresses that the "principle of works" is fully identical with the Mosaic law.

32. Käsemann, p. 96. Barrett, p. 83, feels "principle" is too philosophical, and notes that in v. 28 the Mosaic law is in view, but in light of the parallelism he sees law in v. 27a as referring to that "religious system" -- usually (thought not exclusively) that of Judaism.

33. See, for instance, Schlier, p. 116 (faith as "Heilsweg"); Käsemann, p. 96 (faith as "eschatologische neue Ordnung"); Cambier, p. 155 (new régime of faith); Walvoord, p. 282 (principle of operation of faith); Sanday/Headlam, p. 95 (law is "the typical expression to the ancient mind of a 'constituted order of things'").

34. Michel, p. 155; Murray, p. 122; Cambier, pp. 150, 152; Lietzmann, p. 52.

35. Gerhard Friedrich, "Das Gesetz des Glaubens: Röm. 3,27," ThZ 10 (1954), pp. 404-8. He argues that in 8:2 the stress is on Πνεῦμα; νόμος is suggested only by the word-play of 7:23-25 and could be eliminated without any change in meaning occurring. In 1 Cor 9:21 Paul merely wishes to emphasize he is bound to the person of Christ, not to a law; and in Gal 6:2 Paul uses a phrase borrowed from early Palestinian Christianity against the Judaizers. We agree with Friedrich in his contention that no separate or recognizable "law of Christ" is referred to here or elsewhere by Paul. On our (differing) exegesis of Rom 7:23, 25, Gal 6:2 and 1 Cor 9:21 see our comments below in (respectively) Section IV, parts A, C and D. We take the positive references in Rom 7, and the references in Galatians and 1 Corinthians, to refer to the OT law.

36. There is, for instance, no positive evaluation of the prophets over against the law; see Käsemann, p. 87. Indeed in ch. 4 the theme of the ἐπαγγελία is taken from the Pentateuch. We therefore reject the distinction made by Lyonnet, p. 131, between the "oeconomia" characterized by works (v. 27) and the OT "oeconomia" which operates under faith (ch. 4). He bases this view on the suggestion that anarthrous νόμος may refer to the Torah but never to the whole OT. This assumes, however, that Paul could easily differentiate between the Torah and the rest of the OT (an assumption for which there is no evidence). It is more likely, as the vast majority of commentators hold, that the presence or absence of the article has little if any significance; see Friedrich, pp. 402-4 and Peter Bläser, Das Gesetz bei Paulus, pp. 1-30.

37. Kuss, I, 175-77; he also suggests Paul always opposes law and faith -- yet this is begging the whole question here. In fact, context indicates the contrary -- especially v. 21: Käsemann's supposition (p. 97) that any identification of the law with faith is excluded by ἐξεκλείσθη is equally without foundation. All that is "excluded" is the Jew's false boasting (v. 27a): the relationship of this boasting and the law is precisely what must be examined here. Cambier, p. 148, against both Kuss and Käsemann, correctly suggests that it is καύχησις to which πίστις is opposed (however much this might manifest itself in a false understanding of the law). Cambier, however, though admitting that νόμος in context must refer to the Torah, feels that a special, typically Pauline antithetical word-play is in view here. This assumption, however, is based merely on the view that v. 27 has nothing in common with v. 21, but rather gives the reason for v. 28, which sums up vv. 21-26 and speaks only of two religious epochs, eras or systems. Apart from the fact that v. 21 is thus seen in two (mutually-exclusive!) ways, it must be

maintained that from 1:18 onwards the OT law is firmly in view throughout, and it strains credulity to suppose that Paul could have meant "religious epoch" when he wrote νόμος or ὁ νόμος καὶ οἱ προφῆται.

38. Hahn, pp. 37-38.

39. See Cranfield, I, 220, who points to 9:31ff, 10:6ff.

40. Friedrich, p. 413, comments, "Die Beschneidung verkündigt -- recht verstanden -- die geschenkte Gerechtigkeit."

41. Friedrich, pp. 412-13.

42. Friedrich, p. 415.

43. See Wilckens, I, 245-46, who, however (unlike Friedrich), sees a direct contrast ("direkte Gegensatz") in v. 27b between the law of faith (=the law of God) and the (negatively-portrayed) law which requires works, and which is understood as the (false) ground of the Jews "heilsgeschichtliche" boasting (see above on v. 27a). The latter thought shows, however, that it is really the Jews' misunderstanding of the law which is in view in the phrase νόμος τῶν ἔργων, not some contradiction in the law itself. Wilckens' thought thus needs clarification here. On the (mistaken) identification of Torah as the "law of sin" in 7:21, 23; 8:2, see our comments on these texts.

44. Nygren, p. 166.

45. Althaus, p. 32; see Murray, p. 126 who, however, adds that just because no justification can be reached from the law does not render the law inoperative.

46. Althaus, p. 33; Murray, p. 125.

47. Van Dülmen, p. 223.

48. Van Dülmen, p. 223.

49. Van Dülmen, p. 224.

50. Van Dülmen, p. 87.

51. Schlier, p. 119.

52. Schlier, pp. 119-20.

53. See Käsemann, pp. 97-98. According to Käsemann, Paul boldly attacks the Rabbinic teaching on God (cf. Ex Rabba 29:4), in which creation and covenant are separated, and uses the Jews' own ideas against them. The principle of solus Deus implies that God is God of the Gentiles, and hence of the godless, and thus brings an end to all works of law.

54. Käsemann, p. 98, cites 4 Macc 5:25 contra Cambier, who says (p. 160), that the Aramaic antithesis "battēl-kayyēm," yielding the meaning "render invalid-give force to" is too juridical, viewing the law as a group of precepts. Cambier thinks the language is Hellenistic -- but this seems unlikely in light of the fact that a precise Rabbinic parallel is at hand, Cranfield, I, 223-24, indicates the

formula is used "to mean that what he has been saying about faith is not in any way inconsistent with the law but upholds it in the sense that it is thoroughly consonant with it."

55. Käsemann, p. 99.

56. Thus the tension between v. 27 and v. 31 is the same as that between v. 21a and v. 21b. See Wilckens, "Römer 3,21," p. 53.

57. Wilckens, p. 249.

58. Wilckens, p. 250.

59. Wilckens, pp. 249-50.

59a. See Wilckens, "Rechtfertigung Abrahams," pp. 41-42: "Das Gesetz in seiner 'Aufrichtung' als bezeugt das Christusgeschehen als Erfüllung der Erwählungsgeschichte Gottes" (p. 42).

59b. Wilckens, "Rechtfertigung Abrahams," p. 44.

60 Cranfield, I, 220-21.

61. See (54) above.

62. Van Dülmen, pp. 227-28.

63. Van Dülmen, p. 226.

64. Friedrich, p. 415; Bläser, p. 193; Lietzmann, p. 52. Cambier, pp. 157-59, agrees with this conclusion (he notes that Paul likes to confirm with Scriptural proof) but then finds difficulty relating this to his own understanding of the "law of faith" (v. 27), which refers to something quite different. Indeed, for Cambier, νόμος here does not mean the OT simpliciter but the OT as word of God (to which he opposes the OT as legal régime), i.e. which confirms the gospel. The problem here lies not only in Cambier's (unsubstantiated) division of the OT into two separate entities, but also in the fact that the qualified affirmation of the law which occurs in v. 31 does not appear to do justice to the phrase νόμον ἱστάνομεν. The distance from Paul's own thinking is shown by Cambier's suggestion that Paul would allow a "legitimate" καταργεῖν which would involve "la suppression des valeurs religieuses de l'AT propres à la première période du salut, lors de la mort et de la résurrection du Christ, comme aussi la suppression et l'anéantissement de tout ce qui, à la parousie du S. Jesus, n'aura pas été assume par le Christ et recapitulé par lui" (p. 161). Hence, there is an ambiguous note to Cambier's comment, "la justice de Dieu donne à l'Ecriture toute sa valeur divine" (p. 161). But what "value" is left? Surely such a thought would be rejected by the Apostle in the same way as that in which he deals with the objection of v. 31a.

65. Lietzmann, p. 52, comments, "Wir stellen seine bleibende Bedeutung fest durch den Nachweis, dass das Gesetz selbst den Glauben predigt." Leenhardt, p. 112, seems to have the same thing in mind when he comments on vv. 29-31 that the law shows Abraham to be the champion of justification by faith; he speaks of "the Mosaic law as a whole, the old system called to bear witness in favour of the new" rather than "what God commands, His general requirement." See also Michel,

p. 157, who says that Paul hears in the OT the voice of the gospel. Perhaps also to be included in this group is Kuss, who comments on this verse that the gospel is shown as "nicht anderes als den eigentliches Ziel auch des atl Gesetzes" (p. 178).

66. Friedrich, p. 415, "Im Grund ist mit beiden Worten dasselbe gemeint."

66a. Bläser, p. 193.

67. Cranfield, I, 223.

68. See Schlier, p. 119; Luz, p. 172.

69. See Cranfield, I, 223.

70. This is admitted by Friedrich, p. 415.

71. Schlier, p. 215; Leenhardt, p. 177n; Hans W. Schmidt, Der Brief des Paulus an die Römer, p. 119; Barrett, p. 135; Michel, p. 219; Althaus, p. 71; Murray, p. 239; Cranfield, I, 331-32; Werner Kümmel, Röm 7 und die Bekehrung des Paulus (1929); rpt. in Röm 7 und das Bild des Menschen im NT, pp. 7-8; Herman Ridderbos, Paul: An Outline of his Theology, trans. John Richard de Witt, p. 143. On the treatment of freedom and sin in Rom 6 see under our study of freedom in relation to sin below.

72. Michel, p. 219; Cranfield, I, 332; Kümmel, p. 7; Ridderbos, p. 143.

73. Althaus, p. 71.

74. Most interpreters agree that vv. 2-3 represent a simple illustration of the statement of v. 1 rather than an allegory which receives its interpretation in vv. 4-6; see Kümmel, p. 37; Cranfield, I, 333-35; Nygren, pp. 269-72; Käsemann, p. 179; van Dülmen, p. 103; Walter Diezinger, "Unter Toten Freigeworden: Eine Untersuchung zu Röm. III-VIII," Nov Test 5 (1962), p. 271. If the verses are an allegory, the Apostle's thinking is not at all clear for, while v. 2 seems to present the husband as the law and the wife as the Christian, and v. 3 speaks of the death of the husband, in v. 4 it is the Christian who has died. Dodd consequently describes Paul's thinking as confused and having gone "hopelessly astray" (The Epistle of Paul to the Romans, pp. 100-101). Sanday/Headlam suggest the husband represents the old self and the wife the new self, but this leads to a rather tortured understanding of the subject in v. 4 as "you, considered as your old self," and subsequently, "you, considered as your new self." Against Sanday/Headlam's view see Kümmel, p. 40. Cranfield, I, 335, notes that, had v. 4 been meant to introduce v. 3, οὕτως (a word "expressive of similarity or correspondence") rather than ὥστε (which draws a conclusion) would have been used. Against the idea of an allegory see also Murray, p. 240; Schmidt, p. 120.

75. Schlier, p. 216; Schmidt, p. 120; Käsemann, p. 180; Cranfield, I, 335; Murray, pp. 242-43; Kuss, II, 436; Nygren, p. 269; Diezinger, p. 271.

76. Lietzmann, p. 71; Kuss, II, 434-35; Michel, p. 219 n. 1; Barrett, p. 135; Murray, p. 240; Althaus, p. 71; Diezinger, p. 271 n. 1; Kümmel, p. 38 n. 1; Bläser, pp. 88ff; contra Sanday/Headlam, p. 172; Fernand Prat, The Theology of Saint Paul, trans. John L.

Stoddard, 2 vols., I, 225 n. 2. Käsemann, p. 179, objects that the Roman church was mostly Gentile, but Lietzmann, Barrett and Cranfield point out that Gentile Christians in the Roman church could reasonably be expected to have at least some knowledge of the OT law.

77. Kuss, II, 436.

78. Nygren, pp. 270-72.

79. Kümmel, p. 37.

80. Kümmel, p. 8.

81. Sanday/Headlam, p. 172.

82. Schlier, p. 216; Leenhardt, p. 178n; Käsemann, p. 179; Kuss, II, 437; Michel, p. 220; Althaus, p. 71; Kümmel, p. 37; Cranfield, I, 335.

83. Schlier, p. 217; Schmidt, p. 121; Kuss, II, 437; Cranfield, I, 336; Michel, p. 220; Murray, p. 243; van Dülmen, p. 134; contra Dodd, p. 102; Albert Schweitzer, The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle, trans. William Montgomery, p. 188 n. 1, who think that membership in the body of Christ (the church) is in view -- a position for which there is no supporting evidence in Romans.

84. For νόμῳ as dative of advantage (or disadvantage) see Cranfield, I, 336; BDF para. 188 (2).

85. Käsemann, p. 181.

86. Käsemann, p. 178.

87. Sanday/Headlam, p. 173.

88. Kümmel, p. 38.

89. Lucien Cerfaux, The Christian in the Theology of St. Paul, p. 150.

90. Irene Beck, "Altes und neues Gesetz: Eine Untersuchung über die Kompromisslosigkeit des paulinischen Denkens," MThZ 15 (1964), p. 129.

91. Ridderbos, pp. 210-11.

92. Prat, I, 227. See also Leenhardt, p. 178; Barrett, p. 137; Nygren, pp. 271-72; Schweitzer, p. 188; J. A. Fitzmeyer, "St. Paul and the Law," The Jurist 27 (1967), p. 30.

93. Kurt Stalder, Das Werk des Geistes in der Heiligung bei Paulus, pp. 287-88.

94. Murray, pp. 241-42.

95. Cranfield, I, 335.

96. Diezinger, pp. 271-76.

97. Joseph Klausner, From Jesus to Paul, pp. 496-97.

98. Hans J. Schoeps, Paul: The Theology of the Apostle in the Light of Jewish Religious History, trans. Harold Knight, pp. 171-72.

99. Diezinger, p. 270.

100. Robert Banks, "The eschatological role of law in pre- and post-Christian Jewish thought," in Reconciliation and Hope, ed. R. Banks, p. 178.

101. Banks, p. 184.

102. Scheitzer, p. 191, suggests that Jewish apocalyptic looked to the end of the law in the Messianic kingdom. E. P. Sanders, Paul and Palestinian Judaism, p. 479, notes, however, that there is no evidence that any element of first century Judaism held such a view. He comments, "There is no body of Jewish literature which expects the abolition of the law with the advent of the Messiah" (p. 496; see also p. 479 n. 25). He also notes that the Apostle " ... never appeals to the fact that the Messiah has come as a reason for holding the law invalid" (pp. 479-80). See also E. Bammel, "Νόμος Χριστοῦ, in TU 88 (1964), p. 122; Luz, pp. 217ff; J. Dupont, "The Conversion of Paul, and its Influence on his Understanding of Salvation by Faith," in Apostolic History and the Gospel, ed. W. Gasque and R. Martin, pp. 176-94; Franz Mussner, Der Galaterbrief, p. 173 n. 31; contra U. Wilckens, "Die Bekehrung des Paulus," in Rechtfertigung als Freiheit, pp. 19-21.

103. Cranfield, I, 336.

104. As opposed, for instance, to Gal 2:20, where it refers simply to earthly rather than heavenly life. See Schmidt, p. 121; Cranfield, I, 337; Barrett, p. 137; Michel, p. 221; Murray, p. 244; Kümmel, p. 42.

105. It is generally agreed that τούτῳ or ἐκείνῳ, which must be supplied as antecedent to ᾧ, probably refers to νόμος; note the parallel ἐθανατώθητε τῷ νόμῳ in v. 4. The (less likely) alternative would be to supply some such idea as the old man, the flesh, the whole situation portrayed in v. 5, etc., for which there is no evidence in context. See Kuss, II, 438; Kümmel, p. 42; Käsemann, p. 181; Bläser, p. 224; Cranfield, I, 338-39; van Dülmen, p. 106 n. 107.

106. Schlier, pp. 218-19.

107. Käsemann, p. 182.

108. Nygren, p. 276.

109. Althaus, p. 72.

110. Sanday/Headlam, p. 175.

111. See Cranfield, I, 338.

112. Bo Reicke, "The Law and this World according to Paul," JBL 70 (1951), 267-68.

113. See Stalder, p. 288.

114. The genitives Πνεύματος/γράμματος are probably appositive; see Sanday/Headlam, p. 176; Cranfield, I, 339.

115. Sanday/Headlam, p. 176.

116. Ernst Käsemann, "The Spirit and the Letter," in Perspectives on Paul, trans. Margaret Kohl, p. 146.

117. Käsemann, Römer, p. 183.

118. Schlier, p. 219.

119. See Cranfield, I, 339.

120. See Cranfield, I, 339-40, "'Letter' is rather what the legalist is left with as a result of his misunderstanding and misuse of the law. It is the letter of the law in separation from the Spirit. But, since 'the law is spiritual' (v. 14), the letter of the law in isolation from the Spirit is not the law in its true character, but the law as it were denatured."

121. Michel, p. 222.

122. Schmidt, p. 122. A similarly erroneous view is expressed by Richard N. Longenecker, Paul: Apostle of Liberty, p. 172, "The Christian lives his life no longer under a detailed code which regulates each particular action, but 'in the new life of the Spirit'. And thus he walks in liberty...." Also mistaken is Ladd, p. 503, " ... (The Christian is) dead to the old life, including the rule of the law.....Therefore we no longer serve God under bondage to a written external code but with the new life of the Spirit." See also p. 506, "The reason why the Law cannot make sinful men righteous is that it is an external code, whereas the sinful hearts of men need a tranforming inward power. The Law is a written code, not a life imparted by God's Spirit ...." This of course misunderstands the point Paul is trying to make in 2:15, 25-29, and 7:6, i.e. that, through the work of the Holy Spirit, the law is indeed written on our hearts (see also 8:4). Bultmann, Theology, I, 240, comments that the letter, which belongs to the sphere of the flesh, is the antithesis to the Spirit, and thus "serves man as a means for that effort to win 'righteousness' and 'life' by his own strength through 'works' -- that is, through what he accomplishes.... The Torah is 'letter' as the code of formulated and defined rules which can be discharged by performing definite acts corresponding to them." This is amply refuted by Ridderbos, p. 145, who notes (on 7:5), "One cannot explain these 'sinful passions' as the 'wrestlings' or 'labourings' of man to establish his own righteousness, without employing what is surely a very artificial and arbitrary interpretation.... The whole of the sin-producing effect of the law, as that is specifically described in Romans 7, speaks of the evil, sinful desire and act of transgression of the commandment ... not of the passion to establish a righteousness of one's own before God."

123. In this we follow the argument of George Howard, Paul: Crisis in Galatia, pp. 20-45. Howard suggests that the reason Paul underlines his lack of cont act with the Jerusalem church and apostles (which tends to conflict with the evidence of Acts that Paul had very real contact with the Jerusalem church) is not to demonstrate the legitimacy (independent of them) of his apostolic

calling, but rather to make clear that he did not share with them the full details of the revelation God had originally given him regarding his ministry to the Gentiles and their freedom from ritual aspects of the law until God gave him leave to do so (Howard takes κατὰ ἀποκάλυψιν to refer not to some heavenly vision or command, for which Paul would have used χρηματισμός or χρησμός, but to the original revelation of the gospel he received from God). This occurred at the time of the Jerusalem Council. Howard then takes the view that, while the Council accepted the validity of Paul's calling (now strengthened by years of fruitful ministry to the Gentiles), Peter, on coming to Antioch shortly afterwards, lapsed into his previous, long-held and cherished views.

While it is difficult to say where the original address to Peter in Gal 2 actually ends (on which see (124) below), it is clear, according to Howard, that vv. 15-21 contain the theological substance of Paul's response to Peter -- in which case Peter's lapse would have been viewed by Paul as having very serious consequences indeed, for in vv. 15-21 he defends what he sees as the very essence of the gospel. Howard thus accounts for Gal 1:11-12, τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, κ.τ.λ., as referring to the particular form of the gospel vouchsafed to Paul, i.e. the non-circumcision gospel to the Gentiles. Paul would never have claimed (as is indicated by his subsequent remarks about being a persecutor of the church) that he learned nothing of the gospel from any man. The reason Paul finds it necessary to go into such detail on the matter and on his relationships with the Jerusalem church is to account for the presence of Judaizers in Galatia, i.e. to show why there were Christians who, long after Paul's conversion and the beginning of his preaching ministry, were not entirely in accord with the message he was preaching (the reason being that he had only recently disclosed his full understanding of the matter to the Jerusalem church).

Any historical reconstruction of these circumstances is bound to be somewhat tenuous, but this rendering does offer some reasonable solutions, and tends to place Acts and Galatians in somewhat closer harmony than sometimes commentators have viewed them as being.

124. As was noted in (123) above, it is no easy matter to determine whether or to what extent vv. 15-21 constitute Paul's original address to Peter at Antioch. Some (e.g. Schlier and Lietzmann) feel only a general theological statement is involved. Mussner takes the view that there is a transition within the passage. Howard and Betz are uncertain, while Lagrange feels that the substance of what Paul said is reproduced (though possibly his address is to the Antioch leaders as a whole). Probably the most reasonable viewpoint is that of Burton, who views the section as a "continuation and expansion of Paul's address at Antioch, so stated as to be for the Galatians also an exposition of the gospel which he preached" (p. 116).

Without some substantive reference to the Antioch situation, which gave rise to the whole discussion, there would be an awkward and unaccountable gap between vv. 11-14 and 15-21. On the other hand, Paul is so obviously addressing the situation of the Galatian church that a mere reproduction of his address to Peter would be similarly out of place. Cf. Albrecht Oepke: "Die alte Streitfrage, ob die VV. 15-21 noch an Petrus oder schon an die Briefleser gerichtet seien, ist dahin zu entscheiden, dass Paulus sich zwar der Sache nach bereits mit an die Leser wendet, die Form der Anrede

an Petrus aber bis zum Ende des Kapitels beibehält" (Der Brief des Paulus an die Galater, p. 87.).

125. H. Schlier, Der Brief an die Galater, p. 88; Hans Betz, Galatians, p. 115; Oepke, p. 90; Jürgen Becker, An die Galater, p. 29; M-J. Lagrange Saint Paul, Épître aux Galates, p. 46; Günter Klein, "Individualgeschichte und Weltgeschichte bei Paulus," in Rekonstruktion und Interpretation: Gesammelte Aufsätze zum Neuen Testament, pp. 181-84.

126. Oepke, p. 90.

127. Mussner, p. 169; Ernest deWitt Burton, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians, p. 119. Oepke, p. 90. suggests that ὄντες should be understood, though Mussner points out that ἡμεῖς is linked directly with ἐπιστεύσαμεν (v. 16).

128. To suggest, as does Schlier, pp. 90-91, that the phrase has no significance, as it is relativized by v. 16, seems to give little credit to the Apostle's sense of logic: why then would he have made the assertion in the first place?

129. Klein, "Individualgeschichte," p. 184.

130. Lagrange, p. 47.

131. Burton, p. 120.

132. Burton, p. 120.

133. Burton, p. 120.

134. What are we to make of the view of Klein, p. 184, that v. 16 not only "relativises" but "destroys" v. 15?

135. Karl Kertelge, "Zur Deutung des Rechtfertigungbegriffs im Galaterbrief," BZ 12 (1968), pp. 214-15. See also van Dülmen, p. 23 n. 38, who notes that ἔργα νόμου refers to an orientation toward Jewish tradition, not the works required by God.

136. Daniel P. Fuller, "Paul and 'The Works of the Law'," West Th Journal 38 (1975), p. 39.

137. Van Dulmen, p. 24.

138. Betz, pp. 116-17.

139. Schlier, Galater, p. 92.

140. Mussner, pp. 168-69 and p. 169 n. 16.

141. Betz, pp. 119-20.

142. Mussner, pp. 176-77.

143. Wolfgang Beyer, Der Brief an die Galater, rev. Paul Althaus, p. 20; Karl Berger, "Abraham in den paulinischen Hauptbriefen," M Th Z 17 (1966), p. 49.

144. Oepke, pp. 91-92.

145. Lagrange, p. 49.

146. Klein, "Individualgeschichte," p. 186; Lagrange, p. 50. Klein, "Individualgeschichte," p. 189, notes that μὴ γένοιτο is used twelve times in Paul, but never to deny both main and subordinate clauses. The only exact parallel is Rom 3:3-4, where only the question clause is denied.

147. Burton, p. 128.

148. Klein, "Individualgeschichte," p. 187, notes that εὑρέθημεν indicates discovery of something hitherto unrecognized.

149. Klein, "Individualgeschichte," p. 191; see also Wilckens, "Was heisst bei Paulus: 'Aus Werken des Gesetzes wird kein Mensch gerecht'?" in Rechtfertigung als Freiheit, p. 89; Kertelge, p. 218. Klein, "Individualgeschichte," p. 192, says, "Ist aber diese Aufhebung nur wirklich sub specie Christi, wird also das Sündersein des Juden zur Realität nur für den und im Glauben, so ergibt sich die Frage von selbst, ob der Grund solchen Glauben nicht auch der Grund der erst in diesem Glauben zur Realität gelangende Sünde sei." We must guard, however, against the suggestion of an outright abolition (Aufhebung) by Paul of the Jewish advantages, for Paul still clearly sees the Jews as in a special position before God. Also to be regarded with great caution is Klein's view that Israel's history has been "paganisiert" or "profanisiert", so that the promise-fulfilment schema, insofar as it relates the OT and NT, is now negated. Klein asserts that the Jewish Christians could not deduce their conversion from anything in their pre-Christian existence (which, outside of Christ, seemed fulfilled), but now they recognize (εἰδότες) that "... was an sich überholbar bleibt, gleichwohl in Christus aufgehoben ist" (p. 195). Nothing, says Klein, but the sheer "Faktizität" of their conversion grounded their conversion. On Klein's misunderstanding of Paul's concept of promise and fulfilment see our comments on Rom 4 and Gal 3: 15-18.

150. Burton, p. 130; Klein, "Individualgeschichte," p. 199.

151. Burton, pp. 131-32.

152. Betz, p. 121.

153. Schlier, Galater, p. 97. Likewise Oepke, p. 93, speaks of the destruction of the law.

154. Betz, p. 121; Mussner, p. 179; Beyer, p. 21; Hans Lietzmann, An die Galater, pp. 17-20; Becker, p. 30; Lagrange, p. 50. Klein, "Individualgeschichte," p. 199, says that a service of sin can only be undertaken by Christians "... wenn sie das Gesetz wieder aufrichten, eine Instanz restituieren, vor der sich der Mensch immer nur - übertretend oder gehorchend - als παραβάτης erweisen muss."

155. Some, for instance, speak of reinstituting the law as the "Norm" in the sense of "Heilsweg", which then becomes the occasion for legalism -- in which case the Pauline doctrine of justification by faith collapses. So far as it is taken, this view is correct. See Schlier, Galater, p. 97 and Oepke, p. 92. The latter makes

an interesting distinction between the law as "demand" and the law as "fulfilled" in Christ -- but, sadly, fails to elaborate.

156. For a refutation of this view see Bläser, p. 225; Schlier, Galater, p. 99.

157. Lagrange, p. 62.

158. Van Dülmen, p. 25; Bläser, p. 226.

159. Van Dülmen, p. 24; Bläser, pp. 225-26.

160. Oepke, p. 94.

161. Mussner, p. 181.

162. Beyer, p. 21.

163. Schlier, Galater, pp. 98-99.

164. Schlier, Galater, p. 101: "Damit ist das Gesetz das Mittel geworden, durch das wir ihm selbst wider seinen Willen entstorben sind. Es hat Christus getötet, aber damit ihn und uns, die wir in der Taufe in ihn hineingenommen wurden, aus seinen Händen gerettet und lebendiggemacht. Fast klingt in dem διὰ νόμου νόμῳ etwas von der Ironie an, mit der der Glaubende dem blinden Wirken des Satans gegenübersteht, eine Ironie, deren Grund und Ursache freilich im Sterben und Auferstehen Christi liegt." See Mussner, p. 181.

165. Oepke, p. 95.

166. On this see C. F. D. Moule, "Obligation in the Ethic of Paul," in Christian History and Interpretation, ed. W. R. Farmer et al., pp. 392-93; C. E. B. Cranfield, "St. Paul and the Law," p. 157.

167. See Burton, p. 134.

168. Burton, p. 133. See also Lagrange, p. 52.

169. Burton, p. 134.

170. Schlier, Galater, p. 126.

171. Mussner, p. 185; he also states (p. 183) that the Christian is removed form the "Gesetzesäon", which is abolished. What meaning would this latter phrase have had for Paul, one wonders?

172. Oepke, p. 95.

173. Van Dülmen, p. 26.

174. See Burton, p. 140.

175. Betz, p. 255. On the place of 5:1 in the development of Paul's argument, see Burton, p. 270: "The sentence, without connective particle οὖν or γάρ to mark its relation to what precedes, constitutes a transition paragraph of itself, on the one side a summary of 4:21-31 ... if not also of chaps. 3,4 as a whole, and on the other an introduction to the exhortations of chap. 5. The article before ἐλευθερία is restrictive, referring to that

freedom from the law with which the whole epistle from 2:1 on has dealt...." See also Betz, p. 255.

176. Most observers take ἐλευθερίᾳ as either a dative of reference or a dative of goal or purpose. See Oepke, p. 155; Schlier, Galater, p. 229; Mussner, p. 342; Betz, p. 255; contra Burton, p. 271, who sees the dative as instrumental. On the question of the possible background of the phrase commentators are divided. Karl H. Rengstorf, "Zu Gal 5,1," ThLZ 76 (1951), pp. 659-62, suggests that the Rabbinic rule that a slave, once freed, may either remain free or become the slave of another (JGittin 4:4; Gittin 37b), lies behind v. 1. The Greek custom of emancipation of slaves through payment of ransom to a god would not involve the possibility of renewed slavery. Mussner, pp. 344-45, notes there is not sufficient evidence to establish that either is in view, and suggests that the thought may not be juridical at all; rather is the Apostle arguing ad hoc on the basis of 4:31. No sure answer, in our opinion, can be given on this matter.

177. Betz, p. 255. See Becker, p. 59: "Freiheit, das ist hier, auf einen Begriff gebracht, das ganze Anliegen der paulinischen theologischen Konzeption.... Freiheit heisst hier zugleich programmatisch die Freiheit von der Sünde (1,4), das Gerufensein unter die Gnade Christi und unter das Evangelium (1,6), Gerechtfertigtsein aufgrund des Glaubens an Christus (2,16; 3,8f), Geistbesitz (3,2. 14) und Sohnschaft (4,5). In dieser Freiheit sollen die Leser ihren Standort behalten."

178. Schlier, Galater, p. 229.

179. See Betz, p. 256: "Christian freedom is the result of Christ's act of having liberated those who believe in him .... but this result is stated as a goal, purpose, and direction for the life of the Christian."

180. Rengstorf, col. 659.

181. Schlier, Galater, p. 229.

182. Oepke, p. 155. Also unfortunate is Schlier's statement (Galater, p. 231), " ... das Gesetz lässt sich nicht mit Christus vereinigen." Such a comment does not do justice to the Apostle's position, and leaves the door open to a seriously mistaken view of it. Schlier again compares freedom from the law with freedom from the στοιχεῖα (Galater, pp. 230-31), viewing both as ungodly forces. This mistakes freedom from the law's condemnation with freedom from the law as such, with unfortunate consequences. Betz, p. 256, has a similar view. See our comments on 4:1-11. Also mistaken is Becker, pp. 59-60, who suggests that any relationship of the Christian with the law involves "erneute Knechtschaft".

183. See Beyer, p. 42; also Becker, p. 60. Paul is evidently referring to Gentile Christians who are circumcised because they see this as necessary for justification. It can scarcely refer to anyone at all who is circumcised; otherwise Jewish believers would be automatically excluded; see Burton, p. 275. It is unlikely, in light of Acts 22, that the Apostle would have condemned circumcision in itself, provided it was not seen as necessary for justification. We have noted that the Galatian church consisted predominantly of Gentiles, and for Gentiles to receive circumcision

would imply that it was necessary for justification. The case of Titus (2:3) may suggest, however, that Paul did not object to a Gentile Christian being circumcised if this meant he would be better able to evangelize Jews. When the element of constraint was involved, on the other hand, Paul refused resolutely.

184. Oepke, p. 156, takes this view -- which is hard to reconcile with his opinion noted in (182) above.

185. See Mussner, p. 346.

186. Betz, p. 258.

187. Beyer, p. 42; Schlier, Galater, p. 232; Becker, p. 61; Betz, p. 259.

188. Schlier, Galater, p. 232; Mussner, pp. 348-49, 361. We have previously criticized the concept of the so-called "ποιεῖν-principle". Beyer, p. 43, speaks of Paul's rejection of the validity of "striving" to perform works of law -- and it is true that legalism is condemned by the Apostle. Surely, however, it is ultimately the failure to produce works of the law which lies behind the Apostle's condemnation -- not the simple performance of the works themselves (which would, indeed, if performed perfectly, lead to justification).

189. Becker, p. 61.

190. Oepke, p. 155; also p. 157: "Es wird hier erneut deutlich, dass nicht Gesetzeswerke an sich für Paulus verwerflich sind."

191. Becker, p. 61.

192. Becker, p. 61.

193. Betz, p. 257.

194. Schlier, Galater, p. 236. See also Oepke, p. 157: "Weil aber ... 'Gesetz' und Christus sich grundsätzlich ausschliessen ... wie Tag und Nicht, wie Feuer und Wasser, darum bedeutet jeder Versuch, durch das Gesetz gerecht zu werden ... das Herausfallen aus der Gnade." It is not, however, an inherent fault in the law which causes the problem; if the law were obeyed, justification would come forth from it. The problem is in human sin and disobedience to God and His law. Even if Oepke refers to legalism rather than law, his use of terminology opens the door to misinterpretation.

195. Schlier, Galater, p. 233.

196. Moule, p. 391.

197. See John Knox, The Ethic of Jesus in the Teaching of the Church, pp. 86, 97, 102-3. A similar view is taken by Burton, who comments on the notion of obedience to the whole law (v. 3): "The freedom of the believer in Christ is not simply from the law's condemnation of him who does not obey its statutes, or from the law as a means of justification, but from the obligation to render obedience to these statutes. The Galatians are not simply not to seek justification by circumcision; they are not to be circumcised; they are not to do the whole law" (p. 275). Burton sees ὅλον τὸν νόμον as referring to " ... the whole body of OT statutes, legalistically

interpreted" (p. 275). This is right in the sense that the Judaizers' legalistic motives would presumably influence their attitude toward performance of any command of the law. Paul's words, however, should be taken at face value, rather than in this twisted sense; they thus should be seen to refer simply to the seriousness of the claim of God's law, a claim which cannot be evaded or satisfied by the pretense of human legalism. On v. 4 (κατηργήθητε ἀπὸ Χριστοῦ οἵτινες ἐν νόμῳ δικαιοῦσθε), however, Burton's statement that these words express "the apostle's thought that the adoption of legalism is the repudiation of Christ" is perfectly correct (p. 275). It is his confusion of law and legalism, and consequent misunderstanding of Christian freedom, which causes the problem. Also mistaken is Dupont, p. 189, who comments on v. 11 that the cross does away with circumcision and the requirements of the law.

198. Moule, p. 394.

199. Beyer, p. 43.

Section III, part B

Introduction

In two passages, Gal 4:1-11 and Col 2:6-23, Paul deals with another aspect of Christian freedom. As with the texts discussed in the preceding subsection (III, part A), what is in view is the freeing of the believer, through the work of Christ, from the slavery of the past. In this case, however, this slavery is spoken of as slavery to the στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου, and the freedom granted in Christ severs (or should sever) the believer utterly from any further relationship with the στοιχεῖα, which are seen as an exclusively negative phenomenon. Many observers identify the στοιχεῖα in some respect with the law, and draw the conclusion that Christian freedom brings the law's abrogation, an end to any role it might play in the believer's life.

If this is the case, there would seem to be a conflict with the view taken by the Apostle in the passages noted immediately above. Our aim here, however, is to examine the relationship between the law and the στοιχεῖα in these passages, and to show by such an analysis that (while there may be some connection between στοιχεῖα-worship and legalistic perversion of the law) there is no justification for identifying the law with the στοιχεῖα, or for seeing here a proclamation of the Christian's absolute freedom from any further relationship with the law. Freedom from the στοιχεῖα is a legitimate theme in the Apostle's thinking, but it should not be identified with his understanding of freedom in relation to the law.

Gal 4:1-11

In these verses Paul continues his consideration of the freedom won through Christ by contrasting it with the condition of slavery which previously characterized -- and again threatens to dominate -- the existence of the Galatian Christians. In vv. 1-3 he refers to the past situation of those whom he addresses, in vv. 4-7 to the significance of their freedom wrought in Christ, and in vv. 8-11 to the implications for that freedom of returning, by any route, to their former condition.

vv. 1-3

Paul introduces the chapter by referring to the previous condition of his Galatian readers.[1] Using terms borrowed from Greek (rather than Jewish) law, he describes their previous situation as that of a minor under guardianship,[2] enslaved (just as were the Jews, οὕτως καὶ ἡμεῖς) under the στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου. This condition of slavery (δεδουλωμένοι), the absence or denial of freedom, is related to the tyranny of the στοιχεῖα. Most commentators agree that the στοιχεῖα are to be identified with some form of demonic or evil spiritual power.[3] Betz sees them as the slave-holders from which we are freed in Christ, the demonic forces controlling the "evil aeon".[4] Oepke and others suggest that the heavenly bodies are thought of as personal demonic beings.[5] The Galatians, therefore, are thought of as being, before their conversion to Christ, in a position of slavery to supernatural demonic forces, whose nature is not here further specified. This deplorable condition, however, is ended by Christ, who brings freedom to the enslaved.

vv. 4-7

Paul now describes the consequences for those previously in bondage of the work of God in Christ. V. 4 is linked to the preceding by the thought of the adoption (υἱοθεσία) now bestowed on those formerly minors (νήπιοι, vv. 1, 3) and enslaved to the στοιχεῖα. Hence the thought of adoption here is practically equivalent to that of freedom.[6] This freedom has been brought about through the sending of the Son of God, born ὑπὸ νόμον to redeem those under the law. That γενόμενον ὑπὸ νόμον is in no way a pejorative reference to the law but refers rather to the simple conditions of human existence can be substantiated by reference to the parallel phrase γενόμενον ἐκ γυναικός.[7]

The purpose, according to Paul, of God's act is to be seen, in line with his comments elsewhere in the letter, as bringing freedom from the

condemnation of the law. This is God's righteous and just judgment on man's sin, and is not in any way to be confused or identified with slavery to the στοιχεῖα.[8] It is man's wilful disobedience to the law which has placed him under the authority of beings opposed to God and His righteous standards. That there is no ground for identifying the law and the στοιχεῖα can be shown as we examine vv. 8-11.

vv. 8-11

Addressing his Gentile readers again, Paul refers once more to their pre-Christian life as slavery. This enslavement to the ἀσθενῆ καὶ πτωχὰ στοιχεῖα (v. 9) is enslavement τοῖς φύσει μὴ οὖσιν θεοῖς (v. 8). The latter phrase indicates clearly that the στοιχεῖα are to be seen as some form of demonic beings.[9] It is not their existence, but their existence as divine, which is being questioned.[10]

A. Bandstra, however, argues that by στοιχεῖα Paul refers not to any supernatural entity but to two factors, the law and the flesh, so that the law is identified clearly as a negative, enslaving force. In support of this contention he adduces the argument that στοιχεῖα did not yet in the first century carry the meaning of supernatural beings and that, as στοιχεῖα represent an enslaving force, what more appropriate reference could the word bear than to the law and the flesh, the fundamental powers to which, according to Paul, men are enslaved?[11] For Bandstra, the reference to the observance of special days in vv. 9-10 indicates that Torah obedience is the danger alluded to there.[12] Another view linking the στοιχεῖα and the law is that of Bo Reicke who, while seeing the στοιχεῖα as personal beings, identifies them with the angels of 3:19, to whom Paul gives a negative significance in their capacity as guardians and trustees (ἐπιτρόπου καὶ οἰκονόμου) of the law.[13] Reicke recognizes the difficulty in attributing to Paul such a negative view of the law, but looks particularly to Rom 7:1-6 for support for the idea that law and flesh are so closely associated they "become almost synonymous."[14] The law serves as the opposite to sin, and to be freed from sin means the abolition of the contrast between sin, on the one hand, and law on the other. Hence, it is immaterial, continues Reicke, whether we regard justification as freedom from the flesh (and sin) or freedom from the law.[15] Finally, he suggests 1 Cor 10:10 (the Destroyer), 2 Cor 12:7 (the thorn in the flesh), Rom 13:1 (the ἐξουσίαι), 1 Cor 2:8 (the "rulers of the world") and Rom 8:35-39 (where the sufferings are the result of negative angelic forces working in conformity with the law) as texts linking angels with the law.[16]

We would say, however, with reference to Reicke's argument, that, on our examination of the evidence, there is no indication that the angels of 3:19 are in fact to be identified as evil spirits or demonic forces at all.[17] Further, as Bandstra notes, Paul nowhere speaks of being in bondage to the angels.[18] Our study of Rom 7:1-6 has shown that the negative view of law claimed for that passage by Reicke is not to be found there; Reicke's argument confuses freedom from law with freedom from the law's just condemnation (which itself by no means implies absolute freedom from the law). Finally, we may note that we find no link at all between angels and the law in any of the Pauline texts cited above in support of such a claim.

Neither, however, can we accept Bandstra's view, for his understanding that the law, according to Paul, is a negative, enslaving force rests on the same confusion which beclouds Reicke's view of Rom 7:1-6.[19] We have also seen that most scholars consider it highly probable that στοιχεῖα has a personal reference. This is reinforced by our examination of the parallel text in Col 2:20, where the reference is almost undeniably to personal beings.[20] K. J. Carl points out that, contrary to Bandstra's assertion, papyri from as early as AD 81 represent the στοιχεῖα as an occult force.[21] Bandstra also claims that the reference to days and months in v. 10 is a clear allusion to observance of the law. The activities described in this verse, however, seem an odd way to refer to normal Jewish practices, and πάλιν (v. 9) suggests a link between these customs and the Galatians' prior non-Jewish pagan observances. Betz suggests that Paul describes here the typical behaviour of religiously scrupulous people, referring to activities which are not exclusively Jewish, though known to Jewish circles. He points to apocalyptic groups and Qumran as more likely parallels to the practices of the Galatian Judaizers.[22] These practices, rather than reflecting any kind of orthodox observance of the law, would therefore seem to involve a sectarian or even syncretistic form of Hellenistic-Jewish religion, thus giving Paul the grounds for warning the Galatians simultaneously against a falling back into paganism and against Judaistic legalism.[23] This kind of legalism, then, would involve no genuine observance of the law, but rather a rigid insistence on adherence to certain aspects (for instance, circumcision, 6:13), combined with various calendrical rites having roots in Jewish sectarian or Hellenistic circles.

Schlier, indeed, makes the point that the traditional Jewish festivals were not observed outside of Palestine anyway,[24] so it is hardly likely that any form of orthodox Pharisaic practice is in view

here. Mussner suggests that the sectarian Judaizers (possibly aligned with apocalyptic or Qumran circles) centred their attention on calendrical observances, which verged on or perhaps involved worship of heavenly bodies (which for Paul would be idolatry -- hence the seriousness of the situation).[25] A persuasive presentation of the case linking the apocalyptic/Qumran stress on circumcision and calendrical rites with Hellenistic στοιχεῖα-worship is made by Carl, who concludes that the Judaizers represent a syncretistic effort to complete the work of Christ through these further observances.[26] Kertelge notes that legalistic observances, especially at Qumran and in apocalyptic Judaism, were stressed as a means to justification, against which Paul rightly asserts the priority of faith in attaining the promise.[27]

If this is indeed the case, then in no way can the Apostle be said here to be disparaging the law itself, or linking the law with the evil στοιχεῖα. It is clear that in these verses a gross misunderstanding and misuse of the law is depicted, a misuse originating probably in some form of sectarian Judaism or syncretistic circles.[28] That this mistaken approach is highly legalistic cannot be doubted -- and this provokes the Apostle to his expression of concern (v. 11) that the Galatian converts could be on the way to forsaking the freedom from the law's condemnation won in Christ. To be under the law's condemnation is to be removed from the promise of God, and those who take this path must inevitably find themselves under slavery to sin (see Rom 6:16), by whatever means (in this case στοιχεῖα-worship) this deplorable condition is reached.

This throws further light on our contention that it is a legalistic abuse of the law, not the law itself, which is the object of Paul's attacks in the epistle. Even the Judaizers have no interest in a genuine observance of the law, and promote only a legalistic perversion of it. Against this, Paul rightly asserts that true freedom is won and kept only through faith in Christ, which alone assures attainment of the promise to Abraham and a share in his inheritance.

We shall now seek to find confirmation for the view we have adopted through examination of the related text, Col 2:6-23, where Paul also speaks of freedom from the στοιχεῖα, but against a somewhat different backdrop.

Col 2:6-23

Many commentators see in these verses a strong statement concerning what the Christian has been freed from through the work of Christ.[29] Is

this attainment of freedom in Christ linked here by the Apostle[30] to the annulment of the law, with its previously binding rules and regulations (vv. 14, 16, 20ff)? What is the role in this of the στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου (v. 8)? How much can we know of the false teaching Paul is fighting in the letter? These are the questions we must attempt to answer if we are to understand correctly what the Apostle is saying here concerning Christian freedom.

1: The στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου

We noted (and rejected) in our study of Gal 4 the view that the στοιχεῖα there are to be identified with the law. Rather did we come to the conclusion that the στοιχεῖα are to be seen as enslaving demonic powers of a supernatural nature from whose authority we are freed in Christ. We believe that the same meaning should be assigned to the phrase here. Several reasons may be given.

a) The basic meaning of στοιχεῖα is "objects standing in a row." It thus came to refer, among other things, to the letters of the alphabet, the "elements of learning" and the basic elements of creation (earth, fire, water and air).[31] In later Pythagorean texts, however, the στοιχεῖα denote the life-giving elements of the universe. The purified soul ascends to the upper elements (the air, conceived of as the divine, immortal element); this is filled with supernatural spirit-power which must be reverenced.[32] In Hellenistic syncretism this teaching is 'mythologized', i.e. the στοιχεῖα are conceived of as living spirits. Gnilka refers to passages in the Hermetic and Isis cults describing the ascent of the soul.[33] Lohse offers a detailed study of various texts, and links στοιχεῖα-worship with worship of the stars.[34] Dibelius also shows how the στοιχεῖα came to be understood as supernatural powers.[35] Lohmeyer comments, "Die synkretistische Bewegung des Hellenismus hat beide Motive neben einander behalten; aber in ihr wird die mythologische Seite weit stärker betont, in welche die ganze orientalische Vielfalt göttlicher und halbgöttlicher Wesen, von 'Geistern' and 'Engeln' einströmt, die philosophische Seite erhält sich fast nur mehr als astrologische Spekulation."[36] Unlikely, therefore, is the view of Moule that the phrase refers simply to the "elementary" or "materialistic" teaching of the Colossians errorists.[37]

b) The στοιχεῖα appear to be identified with the ἀρχαί and ἐξουσίαι which are clearly personal and demonic in nature,[38] and have been overcome by Christ (v. 15). That the πλήρωμα belongs to Christ, not to any other power (v. 9) seems to imply a confrontation of personal

powers, i.e. Christ and the στοιχεῖα.[39] Paul opposes the dualistic views of the Colossians with the supremacy of Christ. Lohse notes, "The confrontation of the elements and Christ already indicates that they are conceived of as personal powers."[40] In Christ, notes Bornkamm, is the malevolent authority of the στοιχεῖα broken.[41]

c) The veneration of the στοιχεῖα is probably to be linked with the θρησκεία τῶν ἀγγέλων of v. 18, a reference to worship of supernatural beings.[42] Dibelius notes the importance of understanding ἄγγελος properly as a heathen, not Jewish or Christian word here.[43] This angel worship may well be related to oriental astrology and occultism.[44] Gnilka comments, "Die Engel wurden als schicksalsbestimmende Mächte angesehen und gefürchtet. An dieser Stelle rückt die Elementenverehrung in die Nähe der Astrologie und Magie."[45] Lohse sees angel worship and worship of the στοιχεῖα as fundamentally the same act, which v. 18 sets in the context of mystical rites and ceremonies.[46] Both Lohse and Dibelius point to use of the verb ἐμβατεύειν (attested in the mystery cults) as further evidence for their case.[47]

This reference to the worship of angels sets the Colossian heresy off from Judaism which, as Gnilka notes, clearly warns against any such practice.[48] Neither is it likely that there is any affinity to the Qumran belief that the heavenly worship of God by the angels is the model for human worship, and that man is able to participate in this heavenly worship through visions and exstatic experiences.[49] Both vv. 18 and 23 (where ἐθελοθρησκία refers to self-made worship), however, point to the act as something undertaken by men, and hence most commentators take ἀγγελῶν as an objective genitive.[50] Rather more likely is the view that angel worship was a feature of some brand of pagan or gnostic theology, and is thus to be linked naturally with στοιχεῖα-worship.[51] On ταπεινοφροσύνῃ (v. 18), Lohse comments, "It describes the eagerness and docility with which a person fulfills the cultic ordinances. For the 'worship of angels' demands this. The angels determine the course of the cosmos and consequently man's life as well."[52]

A somewhat different view is advanced by E. Percy, who suggests that the Colossian heresy has a basically Jewish background, subsequently influenced by Pythagorean and Neoplatonic speculation.[53] In view of the fact that Judaism would tolerate neither a worship of the στοιχεῖα nor of angels,[54] he postulates that the errorists did not advocate either practice, and that Paul's references are to what he himself believed the false legalistic and ascetic practices of the Colossians amounted to (i.e. rather than what they actually taught).[55] Percy

thus links the text with Gal 3:19, suggesting that for Paul all pre-Christian existence lay under the authority of the angels, who were responsible for the law. These are to be identified also with the ἐπιτρόπους and οἰκονόμους of Gal 4:2 (who in turn are identified with the στοιχεῖα of 4:3). This would explain Paul's references to the στοιχεῖα in Colossians.[56] In Percy's view, therefore, the Apostle teaches in both Galatians and Colossians that our freedom in Christ is based on our liberation from supernatural spiritual powers which, through the law (which was not a direct expression of the will of God), held us in bondage.[57] What the Colossian errorists were proposing (though they did not realize it) was a return to the authority of the angels or elements (Percy suggests Paul uses the latter phrase to underline the lowly position of the angels over against Christ). Any falling away from Christ implies a return to the previous condition of slavery. For Paul, the law is abolished, and along with it goes any influence of the angels or any need to follow ascetic or ritual practices.[58]

This view does not, however, appear to us to be well supported. Several reasons may be given:

(i) It is based on an understanding of Gal 3 and 4 which, as we have seen, is far wide of the mark. The Apostle in no way identifies the law with negative supernatural powers. Far from linking the στοιχεῖα with the divine angels of Gal 3:19, he associates them with the previous heathen practices of the Galatians. There is, at any event, no justification for the view that the law is abrogated because it is an imperfect expression of the will of God and belongs with the now-defeated powers of the old age.[59]

(ii) Also central to Percy's theory is the proposal that the Colossians knew nothing of the angels or the στοιχεῖα (which were introduced into the letter purely as a result of Paul's own understanding of the situation). In this case, though, surely the Apostle would have had to explain to the Colossians what he meant by these (to them) incomprehensible references? They could not be expected to have had a copy of Galatians available as a 'commentary' on their own epistle. In fact, the only natural way of understanding what Paul says either about the στοιχεῖα (or angels), or about the various ascetic and calendrical regulations is as a straightforward allusion by the Apostle to the errorists' own deliberately-adopted and fully-understood practices.

(iii) It may also be observed that there are some very great differences between Colossians and Galatians (see our comments on circumcision below). Whereas in Galatians there is a clear attack on the attempt to exalt the law and the advocacy of certain Jewish practices, in Colossians

these elements appear to be lacking (see our comments below on v. 14), and the background of the letter lies much more in Hellenistic syncretism (perhaps with Jewish overtones) -- as in some measure Percy admits -- than in Jewish legalism. The same theme of freedom is certainly in view in both letters, but the background against which Paul's discussion occurs in Colossians is quite different. Percy is certainly not justified in introducing the theme of the law (or its supposed abolition) merely on the basis of the common occurrence of στοιχεῖα in Gal 4:3, 9 and Col 2:8, 20 -- especially since, as we have seen, the reference to the στοιχεῖα in Galatians has to do chiefly with the pagan, not Jewish background of the Galatian Gentiles. Gnilka's comment is apposite: "Wahrscheinlich jedoch wird man für die Erklärung der Weltelemente mit dem jüdischen Hintergrund allein nicht auskommen, sondern auch 'heidnische' Vorstellungen berücksichtigt finden. Dies gilt a fortiori für die Philosophie des Kolosserbriefes, für den allein in dieser Hinsicht aufschlussreich ist, dass der Nomos überhaupt nicht erwähnt wird. Aber auch der Galaterbrief, der klar eine Auseinandersetzung mit dem jüdischen Nomos führt, betrachtet die στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου als etwas Heidnisches. Der Spitze der Polemik besteht gerade darin, dass die Übernahme des Gesetzes durch die Heidenchristen als Rückfall in das Heidentum abqualifiziert wird."[60]

The evidence adduced leads us to believe, therefore, that the στοιχεῖα are to be seen as supernatural spiritual beings whose worship is conducted within the framework of some kind of Hellenistic syncretism. Freedom in Christ is seen by the Apostle here as freedom from the στοιχεῖα. This is just as genuine a freedom as that preached to the Galatians by the Apostle. We can learn more, however, about what the Colossians' freedom is threatened by (and understand more of the contrast between Galatians and Colossians) by examining the references to the specific practices the errorists followed, viz. circumcision (v. 11) and food and calendrical regulations (v. 16, 20-23).

2: Circumcision

The reference made in v. 11 to circumcision might suggest Paul is facing a similar opposition to that put forward by the Galatian Judaizers. By stressing Christian baptism as the true rite of initiation, he is implicitly downgrading the Colossians' own practices. The situations faced by the two churches, however, are quite different. Whereas in Galatians the Apostle's adversaries are promoting an (albeit misguided) allegiance to the OT law, in Colossians he is confronted by

a brand of syncretistic teaching heavily influenced by various contemporary religious practices and beliefs. The law as such is not even mentioned in the letter.[61] Most commentators, therefore, agree that Jewish circumcision is not in view here. There is no evidence that circumcision is regarded here in its Jewish role as sign of incorporation into the covenant people. Rather is the practice linked to the individually-orientated "ascent of the soul" religious viewpoint with its various ascetic rules and regulations. Lohse notes, "There is no indication .. that, as in the communities in Galatia, circumcision was considered a sign of the covenant which required obedience to the OT law and effected entrance into fellowship with Israel's patriarchs."[62] Lohse points out that the references to the 'putting off' of the body (v. 11) probably refers to the initiatory rites observed in mystery cults.[63] It is quite possible, as some scholars note, that the presence of circumcision in the errorists' list of practices betrays some kind of Jewish influence, though this would likely involve a syncretistic or heretical brand of Judaism, one in which the Jewish meaning of circumcision had long since been subsumed by pagan practices and ideas.[64] Lohmeyer comments, "Sie [the Colossian heresy] scheint den Ritus der Beschneidung zu kennen; er bedeutet ihr freilich nicht die Zuordnung zu jüdischem Glauben und jüdischer Gemeinschaft, sondern stellt ihr die Abkehr von der Welt und dem menschlichen Leibe dar und Bildet den Anfang des Weges, auf dem asketische Satzungen den Einzelnen zur 'Erfüllung' weiter geleiten.... Darf man das annehmen, dann ist die Beschneidung ihres wahren Sinnes, der jeden Beschnittenen in ein heiliges Volk eingliedert, beraubt...."[65]

Circumcision appears as the beginning of the errorists' path beyond simple faith in Christ to true 'fulfilment' through the release of the soul from the material world and its ascent into the realm of the στοιχεῖα.[66] Circumcision does not, however, play the role here it did at Galatia, and this has a great deal to do with the fact the Apostle deals here with a highly syncretistic form of Judaism if a form of Judaism at all. Had circumcision been the the threat it was at Galatia, the Apostle would (as he does in Galatians) have mounted a direct attack on a wrong understanding of it.[67] Paul is probably combatting a rather different view of circumcision here. Masson points out, " ... si Paul se borne à déclarer la circoncision périmée pour des croyants baptisés, c'est probablement qu'elle n'était pas pour les hérétiques de Colosses la circoncision exigée par la loi de Moïse et la condition première de son observation. Il n'y avait pas derrière elle la prétention énorme des

judaïsants de Jérusalem. Elle était justifiée par la 'philosophie' des hérétiques et non par la Loi mosaïque."[68] The Colossian rite, therefore, while having Jewish roots, gains a different orientation in the context of the Colossian philosophy. Gnilka observes rightly, "Dieser Beschneidung wäre dann aber auch ein eigener, von der jüdischen Beschneidung sich unterscheidender Sinn zuzuschreiben. Denn ist es nicht erkennbar, dass ein solcher Ritus -- wie etwa im Galaterbrief -- als Verpflichtung auf das jüdische Gesetz angesehen wurde. Man darf vermuten, dass er ein ähnliche Funktion erfüllt haben könnte wie die Initiationsriten in den Mysterien, bei denen das Ablegen des alten Kleides, das Anlegen eines heiligen Gewandes, ein reinigendes Bad die Überwindung des sterblichen Leibes, die Erfüllung der Seele mit göttlichen Kräften und die Gewinnung der Unsterblichkeit darstellten...."[69] Through fulness in Christ, therefore, the Christian gains freedom from the need for such practices, which are an expression of slavery to the στοιχεῖα.

3: Food and calendrical regulations

So far as can be seen from the text, these regulations, mentioned in v. 16 and vv. 20ff, played a fairly important part in the practices of the errorists. They enabled the worshipper, by means of strenuous ascetic efforts, to purify his soul from contamination by the material world, and so to attain 'fulness'. This system is clearly dualistic. Lohmeyer's observation is cogent, "Dem Leib muss ein anderes Element zugeordnet sein, das nicht wie er der Welt, sondern eben den Elementen zugewandt ist; es kann dann kaum anderes sein als die Seele oder der Geist, welcher in der 'Abtötung des Leibes' frei und 'erfüllt' wird."[70] This links the Colossian heresy once more to the syncretistic practices and beliefs of the Hellenistic world.[71] Martin sees the regulations as expressing obeissance to the heavenly bodies and having nothing to do with particular Jewish elements.[72]

Many commentators point to the widespread occurrence in the Hellenistic world of such ascetic rites as fasting and observance of special times or seasons.[73] In respect to food, the Colossian regulations go beyond anything in the OT, which knows virtually nothing of drink regulations at all (except for the special case of the Nazirites). The Colossian teachers are not so much interested in the distinction between pure and impure foods as in total abstinence.[74] The prohibitions of v. 21 are not Jewish but pagan.[75] It is in the mystery cults that fasting and various food prohibitions become significant as a part of the individual's protection against heavenly powers and

authorities.[76] So far as the calendrical observances are concerned, all three terms noted in v. 16 (ἑορτή, νεομηνία, σάββατα) appear in the OT, but only σάββατα is distinctive to it. It may be that, as in the case of circumcision, concepts have been borrowed from Judaism and invested with more or less entirely different meanings. Certainly the motivation for such calendrical observances would bear little resemblance to that underlying any OT commands. Lohse observes correctly, "In ... Col ... the command to keep festival, new moon and sabbath is not based on the Torah according to which Israel received the sabbath as a sign of her election from among the nations. Rather the sacred days must be kept for the sake of 'the elements of the universe', who direct the course of the stars and thus also prescribe minutely the order of the calendar. By birth and fate man is subjected to the elements of the universe and must serve them by meticulous conformity to food laws and special times."[77] No idea of obedience to the law is involved here; rather are the errorists interested only in appeasing the heavenly powers.[78] This is in stark contrast to Biblical Judaism, where observance of the festivals is an expression of obedience to the God of the Bible and His gracious acts toward His people. Bornkamm (rightly linking Gal 4 and Col 2) comments, "Paulus nennt Kol 2:16 Neumonde und Sabbate, Gal 4:10 Tage, Monate, Zeiten, Jahre, jedesmal also Tage und Zeiten, die nicht unter dem Zeichen der Heilsgeschichte stehen, sondern unter dem Zeichen des periodischen d.h. dem Gestirnablauf entsprechenden Wandels der Natur; die στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου also geben ihnen Inhalt und Sinn."[79] We are able, therefore, to conclude with Lohse, "The 'philosophy' made use of terms which stemmed from Jewish tradition, but which had been transformed in the crucible of syncretism to be subject to the service of 'the elements of the universe'. It is this service which they are now supposed to express. Since the angelic powers are in charge of the order of the cosmos and the course of the stars, their sacred seasons and times must be observed and the regulations, codified in a list of taboos, must be followed."[80]

4: The meaning of v. 14

In v. 14 Paul describes the significance of the atoning work of Christ for man's bondage to the στοιχεῖα. In Christ is the believer freed from the hold exercised on him by the authorities and powers (see vv. 10, 15). At the centre of this act of freeing is the cancelling of the χειρόγραφον. In light of what we have seen thus far, it is unlikely the Apostle suggests here that Christian freedom is attained

through a setting aside of the law. Our supposition is borne out through a closer examination of the text.

The image of the χειρόγραφον may have been borrowed by Paul from the ancient practice whereby a debtor issued a certificate of indebtedness as an acknowledgment of his own debts.[81] Rabbinic theology often used this idea to describe the relationship between God and man.[82] The χειρόγραφον, therefore, informs us of man's state of indebtedness toward God.[83] The addition of the words τοῖς δόγμασιν explain why the χειρόγραφον is against us.[84] Whatever the precise grammatical structure is here, the meaning is fairly clear.[85] The written certificate accuses us because of the regulations or binding statutes it contains. Lohse is probably correct in his theory that the words τοῖς δόγμασιν " ... stand first in a position of emphasis in order to call special attention to the legal basis for the certificate's witness against us."[86] Gnilka may be right in asserting that it is not just the fact that the δόγματα are written on the χειρόγραφον which gives them their accusing power, but that " ... die Mächte, deren Kult propagiert wird, fordern die Einhaltung der Vorschriften ein und belasten bei Nichteinhaltung unser Schuldkonto."[87]

What, however, is the χειρόγραφον, whose removal in Christ has freed us from accusation? One thing is clear: it is highly unlikely that a reference to the law is involved. Several reasons may be given in support of this assumption:

(i) The context, as we have seen, militates heavily against any mention of the OT here. Whatever might have been the Jewish influence on the Colossian heresy, it is far overshadowed in its extent by that of Hellenistic syncretism (be it an early form of gnosticism, a mystery religion or merely some local amalgam).

(ii) Some commentators suggest the reference could be double-sided: for the Jew, it is the law; for the Gentile, that which he knows of God. In either case, it is the debt " ... acknowledged by the conscience of man and proved against him by his own signature...." (Moule).[88] The text, however, speaks of the abolition of something negative. The δόγματα are " ... things of the past which God definitely nullified," things which supplied the "legal grounds for our entanglement in a debt which we were unable to pay off" (Lohse).[89] The χειρόγραφον is now destroyed, along with the debt and the accusation. Hence the χειρόγραφον is no longer valid. Lohse comments, "The total destruction of the 'certificate of indebtedness' was accomplished when God nailed it onto the cross."[90] The participle ἐξαλείψας points to total destruction.[91]

Paul, however, nowhere speaks in such terms of the abolition of the law.[92] It is possible that the Apostle might be making a statement concerning the end of the law's just condemnation of our sin; this would be in accord with what we have seen elsewhere to be his views. In this text, however, if the reference is to the law, it would appear to refer to the destruction of the law as such. Far more likely is Gnilka's view that the text is linked closely with the thought of ending of the authority of the στοιχεῖα.

(iii) Paul almost never uses δόγματα to refer to the law's demands. The closest he gets is ἐντολή (five out of nine occurrences being in Rom 7:8-13, where, however, his use is determined by Gen 2:16). Schweizer notes correctly that, whereas νόμος is used over one hundred times in Paul, in Colossians the word is completely absent; only in Eph 2:15 (in the entire NT) is δόγματα used to refer to the OT commandments.[93]

(iv) A more reasonable suggestion (and one which coheres well with the points we have already made) is to link δόγματα with δογματίζεσθε (v. 20), and thus to see both as referring to the ascetic demands of the Colossian errorists.[94] These regulations may, at some points, have been influenced by OT commandments (understood in some perverted way) but were probably just as much, if not more, an expression of Hellenistic syncretism.[95] Schweizer links the δόγματα with Pythagorean rules.[96] If this is the case, the δόγματα (and the χειρόγραφον) are to be seen in a negative light, as expressing the accusation of the στοιχεῖα that man is unspiritual and fleshly. Martin notes that this fits well with gnostic views.[97] Paul (vv. 20ff) sees the regulations as demonic and declares that in Christ the claims of the στοιχεῖα, expressed in the χειρόγραφον, are destroyed and man is freed from their control.[98] This resolves the problem of how the Apostle could possibly be referring to the law as the instrument which held us in bondage and through whose destruction we are now freed in Christ -- a view utterly inimical to Paul's understanding of Christian freedom elsewhere.[99]

In Colossians, therefore, freedom is seen as freedom from the nefarious rule of the στοιχεῖα, demonic powers whose worship demands a variety of cultic observances whereby the soul is purified from fleshly contamination. Schweizer is quite correct in his assertion that the prevailing influence here is Hellenistic; the issue is <u>not</u> that the atoning work of Christ is put in question by advocacy of law observance or submission to circumcision as necessary (in the Galatian sense) for salvation.[100] Freedom in Christ means freedom from ascetic prohibitions

for the believer who has been raised in baptism (v. 11) and, in one sense, is no longer subject to the world and its dictates.[101] Man is freed in Christ from bondage to the elements. Schweizer remarks rightly that because in Christ the elements have lost their authority the Christian has been set free from their hold and can no longer be imprisoned by them.[102] This releases us into the positive expression of freedom, freedom for obedience to the will of Christ.[103] Gnilka asserts correctly, "Die neugewonnene christliche Freiheit wird aus konkretem Anlass als Entmachtung der Mächte und Gewalten, durch die sich die Häretiker haben in Bann schlagen lassen, erläutert."[104] Not only is man freed from the accusation of the στοιχεῖα; the very rule of the demonic powers has been brought to an end.[105] We are now free to live for God.[106]

Conclusions

1. The στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου are to be seen, in both Galatians and Colossians, as some form of demonic beings, whose reality is not connected with the law or with its true observance.
2. In Galatia syncretistic Judaism has combined elements of pagan worship with legalistic insistence on certain aspects of the law. Both the legalistic observances and the στοιχεῖα-worship are presented by the Judaizers as necessary for the believer to perform in order to complete the work of Christ.
3. The various rites and practices associated with the Colossian στοιχεῖα-worship suggest a background of pagan Hellenistic beliefs, rather than any form of Judaism. The χειρόγραφον, abolished by Christ, expresses the accusation of the pagan στοιχεῖα that man is unspiritual. It is not in any sense to be identified with the requirements of the OT law.
4. Both Galatians and Colossians present freedom from the στοιχεῖα as an important part of the freedom accomplished by the work of Christ. This freedom represents release from the need to win justification through any religious rites or ascetic practices which might be seen as needed to supplement the work of Christ. In release from these practices is the believer freed from the demonic hold of the στοιχεῖα.

Footnotes

1. See Beyer, p. 33. Whether the epistle was addressed to churches in N. or S. Galatia, the addresses are overwhelmingly Gentiles who have little knowledge of the Jewish law, and hence are easily susceptible to delusion regarding its true requirements or indeed the salvific efficacy of any particular rite or ritual; see Burton, pp. liiiff, who notes (p. liv) that the Judaizers laid stress chiefly upon circumcision, as this was the "initiatory rite by which a Gentile was adopted into the family of Abraham." Mussner, p. 8 and p. 8 n. 41, notes that 4:2, 5 show only that all, Jew and Gentile alike, are freed from the curse and condemnation of God's law through the death of Christ -- not that Jewish Christians were among the addressees. See also Oepke, p. 26.

2. Schlier, Galater, p. 189; Mussner, p. 267; Oepke, p. 128.

3. Betz, pp. 204-5; Schlier, Galater, pp. 189-92; Oepke, p. 130; Lietzmann, Galater, pp. 25-26; Becker, pp. 47-48; Reicke, pp. 261-62; van Dülmen, p. 49; K. James Carl, "The Pauline View of Christian Freedom in terms of the Enigmatic Phrase, the Stoicheia tou Kosmou, in the Epistle to the Galatians," Bangalore Theological Forum 9 (1977), pp. 33-43.

4. Betz, p. 204.

5. Oepke, p. 130; see also Lietzmann, Galater, pp. 25-26; Beyer, pp. 33-43.

6. Becker, pp. 48-49, notes that freedom comes with adoption; Paul speaks here of the "Sohnschaft der freien, nicht mehr unmündigen Gemeinde." For the link between freedom and sonship see also Mussner, p. 277 and Schlier, Galater, p. 197, "Er ist 'frei' als der durch Rechtsakt rechtlich dem Vater Verbundene."

7. Mussner, p. 270, p. 270 n. 20. See also Betz, p. 207 n. 51, who however, identifies it as a pre-Pauline fragment.

8. Hence, one cannot in any way identify genuine observance of the law with στοιχεῖα-worship, as seems to be indicated by Betz, p. 208.

9. Betz, p. 214. They are not gods but φύσει demons. See Oepke, pp. 138-39, and references under (3) above. Also see C. K. Barrett, From First Adam to Last, p. 63.

10. Schlier, Galater, p. 201; Oepke, p. 138.

11. Andrew Bandstra, The Law and the Elements of this World, pp. 58-61.

12. Bandstra, pp. 62-66.

13. Reicke, pp. 261-62.

14. Reicke, p. 267. Gerhard Delling, "στοιχεῖον," TDNT 7, pp. 684-85, does not identify law with the στοιχεῖα, but suggests that any relationship with either of them involves a falling back into "pre-Christian religion." Both Torah and στοιχεῖα are enslaving forces from which we are released in Christ. Delling links this with the supposedly derogatory statement made concerning the law in Rom 8:3. He fails to give any evidence, however, for his simplistic grouping of the Torah with the στοιχεῖα, does not distinguish between proper

and improper use of the law; and fails to see that no depreciation of the law is involved in Rom 8:3 (see Section IV, part B).

15. Reicke, pp. 267-68.

16. Reicke, pp. 269-72.

17. See Cranfield, "St. Paul and the law," p. 165.

18. Bandstra, p. 59.

19. Equally unlikely is the view of van Dülmen, p. 49, that the στοιχεῖα "... sind eine unbestimmte Gruppe von dämonischen Mächten, zu denen wohl Gesetz und Sünde ebensogut wie Gestirne und Elemente gehören."

20. See Oepke, p. 131; Schlier, Galater, pp. 191-92; also Eduard Lohse, Colossians and Philemon, pp. 96-98; Delling, pp. 670ff.

21. Carl, pp. 37-38.

22. Betz, pp. 217-18.

23. See Schlier, Galater, pp. 192-93, 204-6, who thinks sectarian Judaism the most likely source of the Judaizers' teaching. He cites Eth En 72-82 and Jub 6, and points to many texts in 1QM, 1 QS, and the Cairo-Damascus Covenant.

24. Schlier, Galater, p. 206.

25. Mussner, pp. 298-303.

26. Carl, pp. 35-41.

27. Kertelge, pp. 200-201.

28. This seems a better understanding of the situation than that of Barrett, From First Adam, p. 65, "The truth is rather that the law as Judaism knew it belonged to the age in which the elements ruled through destiny."

29. See, for instance, Lohse, pp. 122, 131; Joachim Gnilka, Der Kolosserbrief, pp. 143-44; Ralph Martin, Colossians and Philemon, pp. 89, 95-97; Ernest Lohmeyer, Die Briefe an die Kolosser und an Philemon, 11th ed., p. 127; Charles Masson, L'Épître de Saint Paul aux Colossiens, p. 130; Eduard Schweizer, Der Brief an die Kolosser, pp. 129-130.

30. On the authenticity of Colossians, see Charles F. D. Moule, The Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Colossians and to Philemon, pp. 13-14, who points out that, as Philemon was almost undoubtedly written by Paul,

> and as Philemon and Colossians are very closely linked, it is difficult to doubt the Pauline authorship of both letters. The main criteria are contents and vocabulary, any divergencies in which are explicable by circumstances; see Moule. References may also be made to the longer discussions in Lohmeyer, pp. 10-14 and Martin, pp. 32-40. Even those who deny Pauline authorship affirm the many distinctively Pauline features of the letter (see Schweizer, pp. 20-21). By far the fullest treatment is found in Edmund Percy, Die Probleme der Kolosser- und Epheserbriefe. After

an exhaustive study of stylistic and language considerations (pp. 18-66), he concludes that these factors weigh more for than against Pauline authorship. After an equally extensive examination of the theological content of the epistle (pp. 67-136), his conclusion is striking: "Das Ergebnis underer Analyse ist somit dies, dass die ganze Gedankenwelt des Kolosserbriefs in so hohem Grade durch und durch charakteristisch paulinisch ist, dass die Annahme eines anderen Verfassers als Paulus selbst als höchst unwahrscheinlich, wenn nicht ... als ganz unmöglich zu beurteilen ist" (p. 136). Moule, Colossians, pp. 13-14, points out that the Colossian heresy is easily imaginable in the Apostle's lifetime; see also Percy, pp. 137ff, for the same viewpoint. Lohse, who denies authenticity, admits, after his own examination of the evidence (pp. 84-91), that on grounds of language or style, no definite decision can be reached one way or the other. He also concedes (pp. 175-77) the close relationship between Colossians and Philemon, but suggests the author of Colossians has "borrowed" the list of names from Philemon so as to give the letter the appearance of apostolic authorship. How he could have written personally to the same churches and individuals Paul had known, fairly soon after Philemon itself was written, but (presumably) after Paul had passed from the scene -- and still thought the letter would appear authentic, stretches credulity. Most of the concepts and phrases peculiar to Colossians are no doubt the product of the Apostle's attempt to respond to the special circumstances and issues engendered by the Colossian heresy. Colossians was written to a church Paul did not know in order to combat false teaching -- and this, as Martin, p. 40, notes, probably accounts for any differences of style or theology. Martin, p. 40, concludes, "When these features are recognized, it may be affirmed that there is no serious obstacle in the way of an acceptance of apostolic authorship."

31. Martin, p. 10; Lohse, pp. 95-97. See also Gnilka, pp. 124-25; Moule, Colossians, pp. 90-91; Martin Dibelius, An die Kolosser, Epheser, An Philemon, 2nd ed., pp. 19-21, for accounts of the historical development of the word's usage.

32. Martin, p. 11; Schweizer, p. 104.

33. Gnilka, p. 127.

34. Lohse, pp. 97-98.

35. Dibelius, p. 20.

36. Lohmeyer, p. 104; see also Schweizer, pp. 103-4; Hans Conzelmann, Der Brief an die Kolosser, p. 190; T. K. Abbott, The Epistles to the Ephesians and to the Colossians, p. 248; Günther Bornkamm, "Die Häresie des Kolosserbriefes" in Das Ende des Gesetzes, pp. 141-143.

37. Moule, Colossians, p. 92.

38. Gnilka, p. 123.

39. Martin, p. 12.

40. Abbott, p. 190.

41. Bornkamm, p. 146.

42. Dibelius, p. 21.

43. For his extensive discussion of this, see pp. 28-29.

44. Martin, pp. 13-14.

45. Gnilka, p. 168.

46. Lohse, pp. 118-21.

47. See Dibelius, pp. 26-27; Lohse, pp. 119-21. Lohse identifies ἐμβατεύειν as a word used to describe entrance into the santuary where the rites were performed; ἑόρακεν refers to visions received during the rites. See also Gnilka, pp. 151, 168; he says (p. 168), "Mit ἐμβατεύω in 2,18 dürfte ein Mysterienterminus aufgegriffen sein, der das Betreten des Kultraumes, die Zulassung zum Kult bezeichnet." Moule, Colossians, pp. 104-6, points out, however, that the interpretation of this phrase is not entirely clear. It is true, however, that ἐμβατεύειν is used in the mystery cults, and we believe it is worth noting that those who most strenuously criticize the suggestion of a link with the mystery cults here have little to offer as alternatives. Moule, Colossians, pp. 105-6, resorts to the possibility of textual corruption, as do Masson, p. 135 and Percy, pp. 173-74. For a list of the textual conjectures suggested, see Lohse, p. 119 n. 38.

48. Gnilka, pp. 149-50; Lohse, p. 119 n. 36; Percy, pp. 149-55.

49. See Schweizer, pp. 122-23; Gnilka, p. 167.

50. Lohse, p. 119 n. 36; Schweizer, pp. 122-23; Martin, p. 15.

51. Gnilka, p. 150.

52. Lohse, p. 118.

53. Percy, pp. 138-43. He comments (p. 143), "Es scheint sich somit um eine judaistische Art von Christusglauben mit starken Einschlägen spätgriechischer Spekulation und asketischer Frömmigkeit gehandelt zu haben."

54. Percy, p. 159.

55. Percy, pp. 156-57. He comments (p. 167), "Wir haben es somit in der Aussage, die kolossische Irrlehre sei κατὰ τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου nicht mit einer auf den eigene Verkündigung der Irrlehrer gegründeten Feststellung über den Inhalt dieser Lehre zu tun, sondern nur mit einem Ausdruck für die eigene Bewertung des Apostels von dieser Lehre, der durchaus von der ihm eigenen Totalauffassung von der Welt und der Erlösung geprägt ist."

56. Percy, pp. 163-65.

57. Percy, p. 165.

58. Percy, pp. 165-67. His view is largely reflected in the comments of Masson, pp. 122-24.

59. Similarly mistaken is Bornkamm, pp. 147ff, who sees both Galatians and Colossians as reflecting a gnostic form of Judaism. He asserts

(p. 148), "Paulus selbst entnimmt dieser Gnosis Gal 3:19f den Gedanken, dass das Gesetz keine Offenbarung und Gabe des gnädigen Gottes sei, sondern aus der Hand der Engel stamme und durch einen μεσίτης vermittelt sei. Nur so wird es verständlich, dass er die judaistische Rückwendung unter das Gesetz ironisch eine 'Bekehrung' zurück zu den armen und schwachen στοιχεῖα nennen kann.... Die στοιχεῖα sind für ihn wie für die galatischen Judaisten die Gesetzesengel, nur dass für Paulus ihre Macht gebrochen ist, während ihr Herrschaftsanspruch für die Judaisten noch in Kraft ist." For a critique of this view see our comments on Gal 3 and 4.

60. Gnilka, p. 127.

61. Gnilka, p. 127.

62. Lohse, p. 102.

63. Lohse, p. 102.

64. Lohse, p. 102; Bornkamm, p. 145; Conzelmann, p. 190; Martin, pp. 12-13.

65. Lohmeyer, p. 6.

66. See Lohmeyer, p. 108.

67. Abbott, p. 250 and Schweizer, pp. 109-10, suggest the Colossians may not indeed have practised circumcision at all -- but Paul's mention of it here suggests the contrary.

68. Masson, p. 125 n. 4.

69. Gnilka, p. 133. See Lohse, p. 102, "Wherever 'circumcision' was understood as the 'putting off of the body of flesh' it is clear that one was far removed from the Jewish interpretation of circumcision and that the cultic act had assumed a meaning that by all means corresponded to the gnostic way of viewing the world. For precisely that is what is of concern: to flee the world, to discard the husk that binds one to the earth, and to open up the way to the heavenly homeland."

70. Lohmeyer, p. 5.

71. See Lohmeyer, pp. 5-6.

72. Martin, p. 12.

73. Lohse, p. 115; Lohmeyer, p. 121; Schweizer, pp. 119-20; Gnilka, p. 145.

74. Masson comments, " ... Paul n'avait pas en vue ici la distinction juive entre aliments purs et impurs, mais conformemént aux tendances ascétiques des hérétiques l'abstinence totale de viande et de vin, ou des jeunes répétés et réguliers" (pp. 130-1 n. 2).

75. Martin, pp. 96-97.

76. Gnilka, p. 145.

77. Lohse, pp. 115-16. He also points out (pp. 115-16 n. 11) that the lack here of any concept of obedience to the law clearly sets the Colossian heresy off from Qumran, where a stress on dietary and calendrical regulations was seen above all as an expression of obedience to the law. This understanding of the law's importance is entirely absent in the Colossian heresy. See Gnilka, p. 146, who notes that the Colossians' observance of days and times was motivated by astrological and magical considerations rather than the OT commands. See also Lohmeyer, p. 122 n. 2.

78. Martin, p. 90.

79. Bornkamm, p. 148. Conzelmann, p. 192, comments, "Die heiligen Tage des jüdischen Festkalenders feiern fröhliche Urstand, bezeichnenderweise aber nicht die Erinnerungstage der israelitischen Heilsgeschichte, sondern die Tage, welche mit dem Kreislauf der Gestirne zusammenhängen...."

80. Lohse, p. 116. Lohse may be correct in asserting a gnostic influence; see his discussion of this, pp. 128-29, p. 129 n. 118, pp. 129-31. Bornkamm, pp. 147, 150-53, speaks of Jewish gnosticism influenced by Iranian religion. See also Moule, Colossians, pp. 29-33, but note his cautionary remark, "But a wholesale equation of the Colossian error with the later gnostic systems is certainly a rash assumption" (p. 33). Percy, p. 177, notes that "Gnosticism" has become a catch-all term in NT scholarship " ... für alle synkretistischen Erscheinungen mit spekulativem Einschlag überhaupt im religiösen Leben der Spätantike...." He notes that, while there are some points in common, the Colossian heresy does not manifest the classical features of later Gnosticism. It may be more helpful to use the word "gnosticism" in the lower case and avoid the capital letter which would more strongly indicate identification with the later system.

81. Lohse, p. 108; Gnilka, pp. 137-38; Martin, p. 83; Lohmeyer, p. 115 n. 4; Schweizer, p. 115 n. 356; Moule, Colossians, p. 97.

82. Lohse, p. 108; Gnilka, p. 138.

83. For a rejection of the view, held by Lohmeyer, pp. 116-18, that what is in view here is a primordial pact between man and the devil (by which man agrees to serve the devil in exchange for undefined benefits), see Gnilka, pp. 138-39, Lohse, p. 108, p. 109 n. 103.

84. It is possible to take τοῖς δόγμασιν with χειρόγραφον and (understanding γεγράμμενον) to read, "the χειρόγραφον which stood against us, which, consisting/written in δόγματα, was against us." See Schweizer, p. 116; Lohse, pp. 108-10; Abbott, p. 255. A second alternative is to take τοῖς δόγμασιν with ὑπεναντίον ἡμῖν (i.e. as an instr. or causal dat.), and translate, "against us because of its δόγματα." This avoids the problem of having to supply the participle, but on the whole seems less natural. Unlikely is the view of some church Fathers that the phrase should be attached to ἐξαλείψας, and thus understood as a reference to the work of Christ (the referring to the main points of the gospel). See Schweizer, pp. 115-16.

85. Gnilka, p. 134 n. 107, notes that it makes little difference to the sense which of the first two alternatives (noted in (84) above) is chosen.

86. Lohse, p. 109. Martin, p. 83, translates, "legal demands".

87. Gnilka, p. 139.

88. Moule, Colossians, p. 98. Conzelmann, p. 191, also sees a double-sided reference (to the law and to gnostic prescriptions).

89. Lohse, p. 110, who points out (n. 117) that ὑπηναντίος occurs frequently in the LXX as a designation for enemies.

90. Lohse, p. 110.

91. Gnilka, p. 139: "Der Schuldbrief wurde ausgelöscht. Das Partizip ἐξαλείψας spielt kaum auf ein Durchkreuzen an, aber auf die vollständige Tilgung."

92. Martin, p. 83, contra Bläser, p. 215: "Es wird hier also wohl gemeint sein, dass das Gesetz mit seinen Forderrungen als ein uneingelöster und auch uneinlösbarer Schuldsein gegen 'uns' stand, als eine Urkunde, auf Grund deren Gott als Gläubiger -- er ist ja der Urheber des Gesetzes -- ein strenges Gerichtsverfahren anhängig machen könnte und würde. Und nun heisst es, Gott hat diesen Schuldsein ausgewischt, er hat ihn beseitigt, indem er ihn ans Kreuz heftete. Das Gesetz ist der Schuldsein; und so ist hier gesagt, dass nicht nur die aus dem Gesetze 'uns' erwachsende Schuld getilgt, sondern dass das Gesetz selbst aufgehoben, beseitigt worden ist." Bläser assumes, without any supporting evidence, that the change to the first person at v. 13b indicates suddenly that Paul is addressing Jews (whom he would regard as being under the law's judgment). This is surely an unlikely interpretation of the verse.

93. Schweizer, p. 116; Gnilka, p. 139.

94. Gnilka, p. 139; Schweizer, p. 116.

95. Gnilka, p. 153, comments, "Ihre [the Colossian heresy] Grundlage ist nicht das mosaische Gesetz, sondern heidnisches, mit Elementen der Mysterienfrömmigkeit gemischtes Wesen." See further pp. 167-69.

96. Schweizer, p. 116.

97. Martin, pp. 84-85.

98. Martin, p. 85.

99. Against Abbott's unlikely supposition (p. 257) that the law was that which was nailed to the cross (v. 15), Banstra, pp. 159-68, links the χειρόγραφον with the idea of a book of man's sins presented by an accusing angel -- an idea he finds in an early Jewish apocalyse. He suggests that the accusation is presented by the Satanic principalities and powers mentioned in v. 15, whom Christ has utterly defeated. He mistakenly links these powers, however, with the angels of Gal 3:19, and thus is able to introduce the idea of the law as the power of sin behind the δόγματα, thereby confusing the issue. G. Delling, "στοιχεῖον," TDNT 7, 685-6, links 2:20 with Rom 7:1-6 and states that both passages speak of a dying with Christ to the bondage of pre-Christian religion (whether conceived of as the law or the στοιχεῖα). There is a vast difference, however, in the limited way in which, according to Rom 7:1-6, the believer is freed from the law,

and the total freedom God wishes to give from the bondage of the στοιχεῖα ; on Rom 7:1-6, see Section III, part A above. That text, pace Delling, does not speak in any way of an absolute release from the law's authority.

100. Schweizer, p. 121.

101. Schweizer, pp. 126-27.

102. Schweizer, pp. 129-30.

103. See Schweizer, p. 130.

104. Gnilka, p. 143. Lohmeyer, p. 127, contrasts the two ways of reaching freedom, that of the errorists and that of Paul: "Sie suchen diese Freiheit, paulinisch gesprochen, dieses 'der Welt sterben' in immer strebenden Sich-Bemühen, dem Regeln und Riten dienen; ihnen bleibt daher ein 'Erdenrest, zu tragen peinlich.' Für Paulus gehört mit diesem Erdenrest auch ihr ganzes Bemühen der Erde und Welt an. Er weiss, wo das 'Sterben mit Christus' als göttliches Ereignis gesetzt ist, auch die völlige Freiheit von aller Welt vorhanden, die alle Riten und Regeln verbannt." See also Conzelmann, p. 195; Martin, p. 96.

105. Martin, p. 97. See Lohse, p. 122, who notes that for the Christian, having died in baptism to the στοιχεῖα , anything other than Christ which "might put forward a claim to lordship has lost its authority over him." See also p. 131, where Lohse emphasizes the link between forgiveness and freedom.

106. Though the freedom we have in Christ must inevitably, in this life, be expressed in an imperfect manner.

Section III, part C

Introduction

The theme of the believer's freedom from the slavery of the past appears also in Eph 2:11-22. Here again, as with the theme of freedom from the στοιχεῖα, an absolute deliverance from that to which the believer was in bondage in the past is in view. Once more, many observers identify the bondage of the past as a relationship to the law, a relationship which is thus no longer valid for the Christian, who has been totally freed from its authority.

As with the texts noted in the preceding subsection, however, there is here, we believe, a wrongful identification of the law with certain negative factors of the past. The matter is somewhat more complicated than was the case with our previous discussion, however, for some aspect of the law does appear to be involved. Our aim, though, is to show that Paul's theme here is a positive one (the inclusion of the Gentiles as sharers in the OT promise), not a negative one (disparagement of the law). This inclusion of the Gentiles, indeed, implies a positive evaluation of the law, whose benefits or privileges they are said to inherit. This theme is related, as can be seen, to our earlier discussion of the relationship between law and promise, and the observations we have made in that respect should be kept in mind here. The Apostle also implies in these verses, through the theme of the inclusion of the Gentiles, a genuine and abiding freedom in Christ from racial and ethnic barriers.

Eph 2:11-22

In this passage, which some commentators see as being of central importance to the letter as a whole,[1] the Apostle[2] describes how the Gentiles, once far from God and without hope, have been released from this bondage to become full sharers in the inheritance of God's own people. Though the word itself is not used, it is clear that the idea of the freedom won in Christ is once more at the forefront. We are not surprised, therefore, to find a reference to the relationship between the work of Christ and the law at the very centre of the passage (vv. 14-15).[3] Through our examination of the text, we hope to make clear how the theme of freedom is understood here in relation to Christ and the law.

It is clear from vv. 11-13 that Paul is addressing a Gentile audience.[4] Nonetheless, he clearly speaks from a standpoint which in no way downgrades his own Jewish roots or the privileges of Israel. The fact that he addresses the Gentiles as those who once were ἀπηλλοτριωμένοι τῆς πολιτείας τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ καὶ ξένοι τῶν διαθηκῶν τῆς ἐπαγγελίας shows that, in his view, there was a deficiency in their previous existence as Gentiles which owed to the simple fact that they were not Jews.[5] This, as we have noted before, is a good Pauline theme (see Rom 3:1-4, 9:4-5; Gal 2:15). The reference to circumcision here is thus not polemical, although the Apostle certainly criticizes the attitude of the Jew who mocks the uncircumcised Gentile;[6] to him the Jew, when standing only on the outward rite, is as much in the realm of the flesh (ἐν σαρκὶ χειροποιήτου, v. 11) as is the Gentile (τὰ ἔθνη ἐν σαρκί, v. 11). Circumcision, though, however much it may lead to boasting, is never condemned by the Apostle in itself.[7] It is true that χειροποιήτος probably has a depreciatory tone,[8] but this refers to the misuse or misunderstanding of circumcision by the Jews. In its real significance, linked with the πολιτεία τοῦ Ἰσραήλ and the διαθήκαι τῆς ἐπαγγελίας, circumcision, as Abbott points out, is "the sign of membership of the commonwealth of the people of God."[9] M. Barth asserts rightly that the external distinction created by circumcision, according to these verses, is not merely man-made but represents also " ... the demarcation of the first elect, the Jews, from other nations. This distinction was established in the history of God with mankind and is sanctified by no less an authority than God's decision and law."[10] The phrase probably also suggests the temporary nature of circumcision[11] -- though not, as Gnilka supposes,[12] its insignificance.

The relation of law to promise (and therefore also to freedom in Christ) is also underlined by the phrase διαθήκαι τῆς ἐπαγγελίας. The Apostle denies that the law is to be viewed as that which is hostile to God's purposes in bringing to fulfilment the promise in Christ. Rather do we have here the same thought as in Rom 4 or Gal 3 and 4; the law is seen to be in a positive relationship with the promise. Barth rightly observes, "The law gives to God's elect covenant partners directions on how to live and how to counter and avoid transgressions (Gal 3:19), but it does not annul its own presupposition and foundation: God's covenant-promise."[13] Israel remains the people to whom God gave the promise.[14] Already we see, therefore, that, although there is a sense in which the old distinctions have lost their validity, the law is not thereby annulled.[15] The law itself points to the Messiah: when Paul comments that the Gentiles were "without hope," he probably alludes to the Messianic hope, given in the law to the people of Israel.[16] He concludes (v. 13) by quoting the OT itself (Is 57:19) to show that through the work of Christ the Gentiles have been released from slavery into a true relationship with God.

The fact that the Gentiles must take account of Israel's genuine advantages in order to appreciate their own position[17] indicates that in vv. 11-13 the Apostle is speaking of Israel as the elect people and of circumcision as a genuine, God-ordained rite signifying membership in this group. Though the distinction may no longer operate in the same way, it nonetheless had a genuine place in God's plan. Finally, the observation may be made that while some aspects of the law (circumcision, for instance) may now need to be regarded in a new light, the law as such, in that it is related to the promise, should be seen to be in a positive relationship with the work of God in Christ described in vv. 14-16. To these verses we now turn.

Some commentators believe that Paul wishes in this section to stress the union of Jews and Gentiles in the church of Christ.[18] Percy, however, points out that the real theme, more carefully stated, is the admission of the Gentiles to the grace of God through the breaking down of the barriers which held them in bondage.[19] Of course, their consequent sharing in the inheritance with the Jewish Christians is also in view, but what the Apostle wants to emphasize is not so much the union of Jews and Gentiles in itself, but the condition of the Gentiles as a result of their being freed through grace into the inheritance of the people of God (from which they were previously excluded).[20] The situation of the Gentiles, before and after Christ, is portrayed

in vv. 11-13 and again in vv. 17-18 and 19-22. How this has come about is explained in vv. 14-16.

How are we best to understand the grammatical structure of this sentence? Most commentators agree that τοῦ φραγμοῦ is appositive, thus yielding the translation "the dividing wall" (Barth) or "die durch den Zaun gebildete Scheidewand" (Gnilka).[21] Abbott points out rightly that ἔχθραν is best taken as appositive of τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ. He gives several reasons for this:

(i) it can hardly be straightforwardly descriptive of the law (for this would totally contradict Paul's attitude toward the law);

(ii) this would leave ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ suspended between two nouns in apposition, though it has no relation to either;

(iii) καταργεῖν, which does not mean 'destroy' so much as 'to make of no effect', is not a verb appropriate to ἔχθρα.[22]

Barth points out, however, that whatever the grammatical relationship, the three concepts are meant to interpret one another.[23] The enmity has its origin in the separation between Jews and Gentiles which, in some sense, is linked here with the law.[24]

What, therefore, are we to make of the phrase τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν (καταργήσας)? Percy suggests that, as the enmity between Jew and Gentile is ended in the setting aside of the law, the law is thus to be seen as the basis of the enmity and is to be equated with the wall; through the death of Christ on the cross (ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτου) the law has been entirely removed, with the result that the Gentiles are admitted to the inheritance.[25] Percy links the thought of Christ's death in the flesh with the Rabbinic view that the law has authority over a man only so long as he is alive. Christ, as our representative, takes us into His death; therefore, the authority of the law is ended over us also. Thus ἕνα καινὸν ἄνθρωπον (v. 15) and ἐν ἑνὶ σώματι (v. 16) refer to our incorporation in Christ. The thought, concludes Percy, is that of Rom 7:4: through the death of Christ we have died to the law and to the old aeon. That the wall is destroyed means that the law, in all respects, is set aside.[26]

Percy's analysis raises several points:

(a) Rom 7:4 does not speak of a death of the law, but rather of our freedom in Christ from the law's just judgment on our sin. To use this text as a basis for such an interpretation of Eph 2 as that given by Percy is therefore inadmissible. Further reference may be made to our comments on Rom 7:1-6.

(b) It is very doubtful whether the Apostle refers by the phrases ἕνα καινὸν ἄνθρωπον and ἐν ἑνὶ σώματι to our participation in the death of Christ on Calvary. In light of the teaching of Ephesians on the church as the Body of Christ and the specific allusion in this passage to the participation of the Gentiles in the church (vv. 19-22), commentators almost unanimously understand these phrases ecclesiologically.[27] Certainly there are clear references here to the death of Christ -- διὰ τοῦ σταυροῦ (v. 16), for instance. Gnilka points out in this connection that this does not mean the body referred to is the crucified body of Christ, " ... sondern dass die Kirche, das ἕν σῶμα, sich dem Kreuzestod Christi verdankt."[28] Abbott points out that, were the human body of Christ referred to, we should expect ἐν τῷ σώματι αὐτοῦ in v. 16 rather than ἐν ἑνὶ σώματι (especially since ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ is used in v. 14).[29] Barth observes that " ... when in Eph 2:15 Christ is called creator and creates a person, then the term 'one new man' must mean a person distinct from Christ. No other person can be meant than the 'bride of Christ'."[30] Percy himself admits that both the thought of the church and that of the unification of Jews and Gentiles (and not just the admission of the Gentiles through the work of Christ) must also be in the Apostle's mind here, if only secondarily.[31]

(c) Percy suggests a simple equation of the "wall", the "enmity" and the "law". As we have seen, the three concepts are undoubtedly related, but some closer definition of this relationship is now needed. We must first try to shed further light on the meaning of τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ. Some suggest a reference is made here to the wall dividing Jews and Gentiles in the Jerusalem Temple.[32] Gnilka rejects this on the grounds that, by the time the letter was written, the Temple was in ruins;[33] this, however, presupposes non-Pauline authorship, which is by no means an assured conclusion. A more cogent point is made by Dibelius, who asks how the Gentile Ephesians would have understood such a geographical allusion.[34] Barth points out that the Greek words used are not those which were used of the Temple wall itself. It may be, he suggests, that the Rabbinic concept of the Torah (and oral law) as a wall lies behind Paul's comment here.[35] It is possible that the Apostle is thinking of divisive commandments or regulations of a ceremonial nature, whether Biblical or Rabbinic.[36] Barth observes rightly that the context offers the best hope for further definition.[37] On this basis, we can see that the wall is that which separates Jews and Gentiles from each other and from God; it involves enmity in these relationships; and it has to do with the law and its commandments expressed in statutes.

It seems likely, therefore, that Barth's idea of commandments or ceremonial regulations in some way linked with the law, separating Jews and Gentiles from each other and separating both from God, is indeed in view. We will offer further comment on this below in our observations on τὸν νόμον, κ.τ.λ.[38]

(d) The next point -- the significance of τὴν ἔχθραν -- can be dealt with briefly. We have suggested above that it is best connected with the previous phrase, and is to be understood appositively. The enmity is between Jews and Gentiles (v. 14), and between all men and God (v. 16). It stems from the division between Jews and Gentiles expressed in the law; so far, however, we have seen nothing which would support Gnilka's statement that the law caused the enmity[39] -- or for Percy's view that when Christ died, He destroyed the enmity by destroying the law.[40] The proper significance of τὴν ἔχθραν, as of τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ can only be ascertained by finding out the true meaning of the next -- and decisive, for our purposes -- phrase, τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν καταργήσας.

(e) Many commentators (as we have seen) take the phrase τὸν νόμον, κ.τ.λ. as a simple reference to the law's destruction. Equating the law with the enmity and the wall, Gnilka comments, "Denn durch sein Fleisch hat er das Gesetz zerstört. Von diesem Satz her klärt sich endgültig auf, was mit der trennenden Zwischenwand, die niedergelegt wurde, gemeint war: der Nomos."[41] Why, however, does the Apostle use such a prolonged and tortuous phrase instead of saying simply τὸν νόμον καταργήσας? Gnilka explains away the pleonastic formulation as follows: that the law is said to consist of a plurality of δόγματα, divided into individual commands (ἐντολαί) is characteristic of the style of the letter, but also makes clear " ... welche untragbare Last den Menschen mit diesem Gesetz auferlegt war."[42] Abbott's suggestion is scarcely more illuminating: he says that the law " ... consisted of ἐντολαί, and the definite form in which these were expressed was that of δόγματα, authoritative decrees."[43] These distinctions do not seem at all adequate, however, to explain Paul's choice of such a 'clumsy' (or very carefully chosen!) phrase here. We must look further.

A more satisfactory answer is already suggested by the idea noted in our discussion of the wall, viz. that particular ceremonial requirements dividing Jews and Gentiles are in view. This would explain the mention of circumcision in v. 11 and also point the way to an explanation of why Paul speaks here only of what Robinson calls the law so far as it was a "law of commandments" (and also why Paul uses what Robinson

terms the "guarding phrase" ἐν δόγμασιν.[44] If stress is laid solely on νόμος, not only is there no satisfactory indication as to why Paul unnecessarily and awkwardly expanded the phrase, but the resultant thought would, as Barth puts it, "flatly contradict" Paul's valuation of the law elsewhere.[45] It seems more reasonable, therefore, to suppose that the emphasis falls on the accompanying words. This cannot mean that the law is simply divided into parts (e.g., ceremonial and moral), one of which is destroyed and the other remains -- we have seen frequently that there is no basis for such a view to be found anywhere in Paul (or elsewhere in the NT or in Rabbinic literature).[46] We noted in our examination of Col 2:6-23 that δόγματα is not used in any other place in the NT of divine law or commandments. Neither, as Barth points out, is it used thus anywhere in the LXX.[47] Given that the oral law, codified in the Talmud and Mishna, was referred to in Rabbinic writings as a 'fence' around the Torah, is it possible that what is denoted here is the abrogation of the post-Biblical additions to the law? In this case, Paul sees Christ as doing away with Jewish misinterpretations of the law.[48] While this theory is attractive, it has no other evidence in Paul to support it, and it is not easy to see how the Gentile Ephesians could have appreciated the subtleties of such an argument. If the parallel to Rom 7:1-6 (and other Pauline passages dealing with freedom from the law's condemnation) is accepted, the Apostle may be speaking here of the end (for the believer) of the law's role of judgment, i.e. of the freedom of the Christian from the need to attain justification through his own works. While it is true that justification by grace and not works is referred to in 2:9, the parallel to Rom 7 is doubtful, for here it is Gentiles, rather than Jews, who are being addressed; and for the Apostle, the law's role of judgment is above all expressed in relation to the Jews (Rom 2:1ff, 3:19-20, etc.). We do not exclude this thought, but suggest that it is not all that is meant here.[49]

Our examination thus far has yielded two points: (i) that it is not the law simpliciter which is referred to here, but some partial aspect or nuance of it; (ii) that the stress is entirely on that aspect of the law which separated Jews and Gentiles, and kept Gentiles from inheriting the promise.

If, therefore, the Apostle is saying that it is a partial aspect of the law's role which is now ended, he must be referring to that aspect of the law which designated the Jews as God's covenant people and promised them life if they were obedient to it. There is nothing in the passage -- or elsewhere in Paul -- to suggest that what is

involved here is the Mosaic covenant insofar as it is the divinely-ordained law of God expressing God's eternal character and purposes. In Christ, the same law, insofar as it contains the promise (v. 12) is truly fulfilled. Two aspects, therefore, of the law are referred to. Only that aspect in which God's promises are strictly limited to the Jews is superseded in Christ. Now, by God's own choice and fully in line with the promise He has made in His law, the inheritance has come to the Gentiles also. That the law is fulfilled in Christ means an end to the need to win justification and forgiveness through those particular cultural and historical features (expressed, for instance, in the sacrificial system) which, in all their fulness, separated the Jews, designating them a holy people to God. This aspect of the law, expressed here by the phrase τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν became a wall, a cause of enmity, not because of the law itself, but because of the arrogance of the Jews, who boasted in their possession of it while not obeying its precepts (see Rom 2:1ff). For Paul, the sacrificial aspect of the law is still valid as a witness to Christ, requiring not literal obedience but obedience by faith in Christ. Even so, the ceremonial aspect of the law, which previously separated Jews and Gentiles, should also be understood in relation to Christ, who fulfils the law and in whom is freedom from all racial and cultural barriers. The law, in its holiness, was designed to keep God's covenant people separate from the pagan world around about. In Christ is the law fulfilled and its holy precepts made the standard for all who believe in Him. The ceremonial regulations, insofar as they now separate Jew and Gentile, no longer require literal obedience. That this does not mean that Paul thought of Christ as abolishing the law is indicated clearly enough by 6:2-3, as Cranfield points out.[49a]

To the Jews, Paul stresses that God's revelation in Christ shows that this attitude of boasting must be rejected (Rom 3:27-31) and that justification is through faith in Christ alone (Gal 2:15-16) -- the old way is not to be returned to (Gal 2:18). Writing to the Gentiles, however, Paul's aim is to demonstrate that this means the way is now open for them also to receive the promise, not through assuming the yoke of circumcision (on the premise that a man can only be justified through works of the law he himself has performed) but rather through receiving the merits of the death of Christ on the cross (v. 16). That which separated Jews and Gentiles and which, because of their disobedience to it, had been a cause of stumbling even to the Jews (Rom 9:30-10:13) now receives its true fulfilment in Christ. Percy, therefore, is

gravely mistaken when he assumes that in these verses we have a statement of the Christian's absolute freedom from the law, which has now been totally set aside. The "guarding phrase" τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν -- which may not in itself even be intended in a negative sense -- points to the true understanding of the text, in which freedom is indeed promised: freedom to enter into the inheritance of God's people and the covenants of promise (v. 12). All racial and ethnic barriers to sharing in freedom in Christ are demolished. From beginning to end, the passage, far from proclaiming the end of everything God had vouchsafed to Israel in the law, is concerned with the positive declaration that the Gentiles have now been included in that same inheritance (vv. 11-13, 19-22). Only that which had specific reference to the historical people of Israel in their unique relationship with God is now changed -- and this occurs in order that the blessing of Israel, far from being annulled or destroyed, might come also to the Gentiles.[50]

Conclusions

1. The author's aim here is not to denigrate the law, or the advantages of the Jews, but rather to show how the Gentiles may now become sharers with the Jews in the promise, itself contained in the law.
2. Far from involving a straightforward abolition of the law, this text speaks of a setting aside (by God's own purpose, fully in line with the promise He has made in the law) of certain ritual and ceremonial aspects which have been used in a legalistic way by the Jews as a barrier by which the Gentiles could be prevented from sharing in the promise.
3. Thus seen, the passage can be understood in light of our comments both on the relationship between law and promise (II) and on the contrast in Paul between law and legalism.
4. A genuine freedom from racial and ethnic barriers to equality before God is implied in this text.

Footnotes

1. See Hans Conzelmann, Der Brief an die Epheser, p. 98: "Mit diesem Abschnitt gelangen wir in das theologische Zentrum des Briefes"; also M. Barth, Ephesians 1-3, p. 275: "Eph 2:11-22 is the key and high point of the whole epistle." Dibelius, pp. 59, 63, describes the theme of the unification of Jews and Gentiles spoken of in 2:11ff as the "Leitgedanke" of Ephesians.

2. It is impossible for us to enter here into a detailed discussion of the authenticity of Ephesians. Some commentators (e.g. Gnilka,

Conzelmann, Dibelius) take the view that the epistle is the product of a later hand than that of the Apostle. Gnilka, pp. 13-18, sees the main barrier to authenticity as being the theological development evident in the letter. The concept of the universal church and the more advanced church structure (lacking the charismatic dimension of the genuine Pauline letters) point to a date later than Paul's lifetime. Dibelius, pp. 63-65, sees the problem lying in the relationship between Ephesians and Colossians. Similar terms are used in both letters (giving Ephesians the appearance of authenticity), but have a different meaning in Ephesians. For instance, αποκαταλάσσειν, which in Colossians designates something which happens to the relationship between God and man, is used in Ephesians with regard to the relationship between Jew and Gentile. He also points to the differing use of κεφαλή and σῶμα. Conzelmann, after examining the evidence, states, "Fasst man alle Beobachtungen zusammen, so legt sich das Urteil nahe, der Brief sei von einem Schüler des Paulus verfasst, in dem das Erbe des Meisters mit ungewöhnlicher Kraft lebendig ist" (p. 88). Is there any significance, however, in the use of αποκαταλάσσειν to describe the relationship between Jew and Gentile, rather than that between God and man? Surely the former is the direct result of the latter, and the two are closely related. Dibelius admits that, though there are differing uses, the writer also uses both κεφαλή and σῶμα in the same sense as in Colossians. Conzelmann's conclusion reveals the exceedingly close connection (even on his view) between Paul and the writer of Ephesians.

Barth, pp. 41-50, suggests that any distinctive doctrinal features can be explained by Paul's emphasis in Ephesians on the church -- what Barth calls the "social character of God's work" (p. 45). Barth also notes that it is the individualistic/existentialist interpretation of Paul's other letters by some commentators, rather than any genuine differences of substance between the various epistles, which leads them to the view that Ephesians could not possibly be Pauline. Abbott, pp. ix-xx, suggests that some of the themes particularly noticeable in Ephesians (particularly that of the church as the Body of which Christ is the Head) can quite easily be seen as developments of earlier Pauline thinking rather than an alien intrusion into the Pauline corpus. This view is elaborated, with references to the other Pauline epistles, in B. F. Westcott, Saint Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians, pp. xxxiii-xxxvi. Of especial value is the massive work of Percy, who examines carefully the various lines of objection to Pauline authorship. He asserts that Colossians (which he takes as Pauline) and Ephesians are undeniably from the same hand, and that it is impossible to understand Ephesians as a post-Pauline fiction. There is no evidence in the letter, asserts Percy, of any particular goal (needing apostolic sanction) which might conceivably have been in mind, were the letter being written by a Christian in the post-apostolic era (p. 442). Percy concludes that all the themes of Ephesians are understandable on the basis that the letter " ... vom Apostel an Gemeinden innerhalb seines Missionsgebiets, mit denen er aber bisher nicht in persönlicher Berührung gestanden hat, geschrieben ist" (p. 446). Both Percy, pp. 454ff, and J. A. Robinson, St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians, pp. 11-12, take the letter to be a circular one, addressed by Paul to the churches in the province of Asia. For a further defence of authenticity, reference may also be made to P. Benoit, "L'Horizon paulinienne de l'Épître aux Éphesiens," in Exégèse et Théologie, vol. 2, pp. 53-96. This is a thorough discussion.

We do not wish, in light of some of the queries raised concerning authenticity, to rely on this text as a principal support for our thesis argument, but do consider it worthwhile, in light of the not inconsiderable evidence for authenticity, to treat the text as Pauline. If, as we take to be the case (see below), Ephesians manifests a substantially similar view of freedom and the law as that evidenced in the other Pauline epistles, then our argument is in no way hindered (even if Ephesians is found to be non-Pauline) -- and the case for authenticity is further strengthened.

3. Percy, pp. 279-80, sees vv. 14-15 as giving the key to the true understanding of the passage as a whole.

4. Joachim Gnilka, Der Epheserbrief, pp. 133-34; Conzelmann, p. 99; Barth, p. 131: " ... those addressed in Ephesians are all of Gentile origin"; Percy, pp. 278-79.

5. Gnilka, Epheser, p. 133.

6. Barth, p. 254. According to Robinson, p. 158, οἱ λεγόμενοι is not depreciatory, as would be the phrase "so-called" in English. Barth, p. 254, notes that in the Bible the name by which something is called expresses " ... its essence and dynamic presence rather than an arbitrary attribute," and so the translation "so-called" is not appropriate.

7. Barth, p. 255.

8. Abbott, p. 56, says that word refers to "a merely external and artifical thing." Gnilka, Epheser, p. 134, notes that the word always has a negative ring int he NT. See also Barth, p. 255.

9. Abbott, p. 56. This is how Paul comes to his positive evaluation of circumcision in Rom 2:25-29 (but note also his condemnation there of those who trust in that which is merely external). See also Col 2:12.

10. Barth, p. 255. Conzelmann, p. 99, comments, "Ihr Vorrang als Volk der Verheissung bleibt dabei anerkannt."

11. Robinson, p. 158.

12. Gnilka, Epheser, p. 134: "Die Beschneidung war also vorläufig, ja belanglos."

13. Barth, p. 258. See also Westcott, p. 35.

14. As Gnilka, Epheser, p. 134, admits.

15. Gnilka, Epheser, p. 134, speaks of a new election " ... die das Alte zwar aufhebt, aber nicht in seinem Verheissungscharackter." Later, however, he tries to explain away ἀπηλλοτριωμένοι τῆς πολιτείας, κ.τ.λ. by the comment, "Mit der Verheissung ist auf das Lebensprinzip Israels hingelenkt. Nicht das Gesetz, die ἐπαγγελία, war die theologische Grundlage seiner Existenz" (p. 135). Yet he admits that the promise " ... wurde in διαθῆκαι wiederholt bekräftigt" (p. 136). Gnilka's proposals seem an unjustified attempt at sundering promise and law, or Christ and law. Abbott, p. 58, admits that the Mosaic covenant is included in the διαθῆκαι

but his additional comment ("though it was primarily νομοθεσία") is quite gratuitous and without support in the context.

16. Barth, p. 259.

17. Gnilka, Epheser, p. 134, admits this.

18. Dibelius, pp. 59, 63; see under (1) above. Gnilka, Epheser, p. 132, comments, "Die universale Kirche aus Juden und Heiden als die geschichtliche Verwirklichung der Erlösung ist das Thema dieses Abschnittes."

19. Percy, pp. 278-79: "Nach VV. 11ff ist das Interesse des Verfassers vielmehr dies, die Grösse der den Adressaten zuteil gewordenen göttlichen Gnade hervorzuheben, indem sie, die ehemaligen Heiden, die also solche ganz ausserhalb der religiösen Gemeinschaft, der das Heil verheissen war, standen, jetzt in Christus gleichen Anteil mit den Juden an dem verheissenen Heil erhalten haben."

20. See Conzelmann, p. 99. Barth, p. 179, also notes that Paul wishes to stress the acceptance of the Gentiles.

21. See Barth, pp. 263-64; Gnilka, Epheser, p. 140; Abbott, p. 61; Westcott, p. 37; Conzelmann, p. 99.

22. Abbott, pp. 61-62. See also Gnilka, Epheser, pp. 140-41.

23. Barth, pp. 282-83.

24. Gnilka, Epheser, pp. 140-41, links ἔχθραν with the preceding, but comments that, according to the writer, " ... hatte die Feindschaft in der durch das Gesetz bedingten Abkapselung des Volkes der Juden ihre Ursache" (p. 141). See also Dibelius, p. 53.

25. Percy, p. 280.

26. Percy, pp. 280-82.

27. Gnilka, Epheser, pp. 141-45; Abbott, p. 66; Dibelius, pp. 59, 63; Barth, p. 309.

28. Gnilka, Epheser, p. 144.

29. Abbott, p. 66.

30. Barth, p. 309.

31. Percy, p. 284.

32. Robinson, pp. 160-61.

33. Gnilka, Epheser, p. 140.

34. Dibelius, p. 53.

35. See Barth, pp. 284-85; also Gnilka, Epheser, p. 140. See also (36) below.

36. Barth, pp. 284-85.

37. Barth, pp. 286-87.

38. A further suggestion is made by Gnilka that the writer has taken over an already existing hymn (which some commentators take to be gnostic, though Gnilka sees it as Christian) referring to the breaching of a mythical cosmic wall by the redeemer. The writer of Ephesians reinterprets this in Pauline categories, introducing "heilsgeschichtlich" references to the death of Christ, the law and the cross (see Gnilka, Epheser, pp. 147-52). According to Gnilka, the "cosmic man" becomes the church, the reunification by Christ of the two spheres (heavenly and earthly) becomes the unification of Jews and Gentiles, and the cosmic wall separating the spheres becomes the law (Gnilka, Epheser, pp. 150-51). This hypothesis presupposes either a straightforwardly gnostic background to the hymn, or a Christian background heavily influenced by gnostic concepts. There is no evidence, however, for the existence of any such gnostic concepts before the second century; see Barth, pp. 12-18, 183-210, 285-87; see especially pp. 201-3 on the gnostic redeemer and the cosmic wall. He points out (p. 286) that OT and Rabbinic sources quite adequately account for the concepts used by Paul here. See also Gnilka, Epheser, p. 140 n. 6; Percy, p. 280 n. 34. Gnilka himself admits the decisive difference that the gnostic redeemer broke through the wall to take those already of his nature back into the heavenly sphere, whereas here the redeemer pacifies the whole κόσμος (pp. 149-50). Conzelmann, p. 100, after first suggesting a gnostic background, takes up the remainder of his discussion noting the many divergences from gnostic thought! After all is said and done, however, it is the intention of the writer of Ephesians in which we are interested, and Gnilka, through his theory of "heilsgeschichtlich" interpolations, arrives at more or less the same conclusion as Barth: "Die Wand, die ursprünglich kosmische Bedeutung gehabt haben dürfte und die Mauer bezeichnete, die die Welt Gottes hermetisch von der Welt der Menschen abtrennte, wird vom Verf. auf das mosaische Gesetz bezogen" (p. 140). He also alludes (p. 140) to Rabbinic references to the Torah as a fence.

39. Gnilka, Epheser, p. 141.

40. Percy, p. 280.

41. Gnilka, Epheser, p. 141.

42. Gnilka, Epheser, p. 141. A similar thought is expressed by Westcott, p. 37, "The addition ἐν δόγμασιν defines the commandments as ... specific, rigid, and outward, fulfilled in external obedience...." One might well inquire, however, why any command of God should not be thus; "take up your cross and follow Me" is most certainly specific and rigid, and demands external obedience! Some further clarification of thought is needed here.

43. Abbott, p. 63. See Robinson, p. 161: " ... a code of manifold precepts, expressed in definite ordinances...."

44. Robinson, p. 64.

45. Barth, p. 287.

46. See also Barth, pp. 287-88.

47. Barth, p. 288.

48. For this suggestion see Barth, pp. 288-89.

49. See Barth, p. 307, who comments, "Eph 2:15 affirms, therefore, that the law has lost its validity as a barrier between insiders and outsiders and as a sentence of death. It need hardly be added that together with these two legitimate temporal functions of God's law, all arbitrary uses of the law are also condemned and abrogated. Eph 2:15 elucidates the words of Eph 2:9, 'not [as a reward] for works lest anyone boast about himself.' The obnoxious use made of the law by self-righteous braggers of Jewish origin and by their imitators among the Gentiles is declared invalid by the same stroke."

49a. See Cranfield,II, 860-61.

50. On this theme see Barth, pp. 290-91, 306-7.

Section IV, part A

Introduction

In our study thus far, we have observed that, according to Paul, all men stand under the righteous judgment of God. This judgment is expressed in the law, which shows sin in its true light and demonstrates our utter inadequacy to meet God's righteous standards. Through the work of Christ, however, to which the law bears witness, the believer has been freed from the law's just condemnation. We have noted repeatedly that this does not mean for the Apostle that the believer has been freed from relationship with the law, or that the law has become an irrelevance or even a hostile power as far as the believer is concerned. Rather is the law seen as in harmony with the promise and for the first time truly established in Christ. We have not thus far developed the latter theme, and so now must look to see what kind of place Paul sees for the law as a result of the freedom won from its just condemnation. This new role of the law, as we shall see, has a weighty significance for our understanding of Christian freedom.

A good place to start, in our view, is Rom 9:30ff. Here Paul deals not only (as before) with the failed efforts and legalism of the Jews, but speaks of a way in which the law itself is to be positively related to the freedom won in Christ. Our understanding of this text is rejected by many and needs careful substantiation. The fundamental question we must answer here is whether Christ is the goal or the termination of the law (10:4). In examining this question, we shall begin to see how Paul conceives of the positive exercise of Christian freedom. Freedom is conceived of not only as freedom <u>from</u> something, but also as freedom <u>for</u> something else. We shall show how this positive exercise of freedom is closely related to the place of the law in the believer's life. We shall then confirm this understanding through consideration of various other texts and related themes. First, however, we turn to Rom 9:30ff.

In 9:1-29 Paul has spoken of the disobedience of Israel and the inclusion of the Gentiles from the perspective of God's election and purposes. In 9:30ff, the Apostle seeks to define more closely the nature of Israel's disobedience, the rebellion which has prevented her from attaining the freedom from God's just condemnation of sin. Freedom from the law's condemnation is related to the work of Christ in bringing about righteousness. On our view, however, the OT itself is shown here to preach justification by faith and point to the work of Christ. Paul's goal here, we believe, is to demonstrate that Christ Himself is the goal of the law, and that freedom from the law's condemnation is freedom to enter into a positive relationship with the law. We shall examine three major areas in which our text has given rise to dispute, and seek to show what the Apostle's true meaning is in each.

9:30-33

Many commentators see in this passage an opposition of righteousness by faith and righteousness by law. Gentiles (ἔθνη: some, not all[1]) have attained a righteousness by faith, whereas Israel, seeking to be justified through the law, has not (on the view of these interpreters) reached that righteousness (vv. 30-31). Lietzmann says that εἰς νόμον (v. 31) is used only on rhetorical grounds, i.e. on account of the structural parallelism of vv. 30-31:

ἔθνη ... μὴ διώκοντα δικαιοσύνην, κατέλαβεν δικαιοσύνην ....

Ἰσραήλ ... διωκῶν νόμον ... εἰς νόμον οὐκ ἔφθασεν.

What is really meant, says Lietzmann, is εἰς τελείωσιν νόμου, or more precisely, εἰς δικαιοσύνην.[2] Much the same thought is assumed by Sanday/Headlam, who see νόμος δικαιοσύνης as referring to a "... rule of life which would produce righteousness."[3] Other commentators disagree, stating that νόμος in v. 31 must have its primary reference in the Mosaic law. Käsemann and Michel see νόμος δικαιοσύνης as referring to the law insofar as it promises righteousness; εἰς νόμον οὐκ ἔφθασεν is viewed as signifying a failure of the Jews to arrive at the law's true goal.[4] Käsemann notes that here, as in 3:21, the law is seen as a witness to righteousness; it has, however, become "inaccessible" ("unzugänglich") and twisted into a call for self-righteous striving, and so its goal has been missed.[5] In fact, says Käsemann, the use of νόμος in v. 31 is not merely rhetorical (pace Lietzmann), but is a deliberate characterization of Jewish piety, i.e.

legalism.[6] This "dialectical" view of νόμος leads Käsemann ultimately to agreement with Lietzmann that the true goal being sought after in v. 32 is δικαιοσύνη (or δικαιοσύνη ἐκ πίστεως) rather than νόμος.[7] Other scholars take a similar line.[8] H. W. Schmidt suggests that νόμος δικαιοσύνης refers to Jewish legalism and self-righteous striving; for the Jew, the law is the only way to righteousness. According to Schmidt, the stress in v. 31 is on νόμος.[9] K. Berger suggests that in vv. 30-33 the law has the exclusively negative function of preventing Israel from attaining righteousness, in order that the Gentiles might be included in God's saving plan.[10] For van Dülmen, v. 32 suggests that any form of justification through the law is excluded: the stress is not on faith as opposed to works (or justification by works), but faith as opposed to the law itself. According to this view, there is nothing wrong with the ἔργα themselves; it is not the command to do works which is wrong -- it is the command itself.[11] For these commentators, therefore, freedom from the law's condemnation means severance for the believer from any further relationship with the law, i.e. a total freedom from the law. In place of any link with the law, the believer has a relationship by faith with Christ.

This analysis of the text, however, is, from our point of view, unsatisfactory. Three points may be noted.

(a) The parallelism in vv. 30-31. There is clearly an "antithetical" element in the structure of these verses. The example of the believing Gentiles who have attained righteousness (v. 30) is opposed to that of the Jews (v. 31). The whole point of the contrast, however, lies in the success of the one group (and failure of the other) in reaching their respective goals, and the force of the contrast is lost (indeed the thought becomes meaningless) if the goals pursued are not the same.[12] That νόμος δικαιοσύνης refers to a "principle of righteousness" is highly unlikely, in view of the overwhelming tendency in Paul to use νόμος for the Mosaic law (especially in the context of Rom 9-11!) -- and this is generally agreed upon by commentators.[13] If this is the case, it is hardly likely that the second occurrence of νόμος in v. 31 has a different referent.

Cranfield, noting that the νόμος δικαιοσύνης is the law which promises (rather than requires) righteousness,[14] points out that (after the use of δικαιοσύνη in v. 30) δικαιοσύνην νόμου and δικαιοσύνην, rather than νόμον δικαιοσύνης and νόμον, would have been expected had Paul wished to refer to righteousness as such, and that the text as it

stands is thus of some significance for the meaning of the Apostle here.[15] Surely we must hesitate before inferring here that Paul is thinking simply of δικαιοσύνη. If the device of hypallage is in evidence, says Cranfield, why does Paul not repeat the phrase in full in the main clause, or at least use δικαιοσύνη by itself instead of νόμος?[16] If, however, νόμον (v. 31b) refers to the Mosaic law which promises righteousness, then the meaning is clearly that it is the law which should have been, but has not been, attained by Israel. The possibility that νόμον δικαιοσύνης or νόμον are negative references to legalism should be excluded.

According to Bläser, the objection that Israel already has the law can be discarded, for it forgets that Paul speaks of a struggle in which, while Israel "has" the law, it yet stands against it (as a "Forderung", achievement of which is Israel's goal). Bläser comments, "Das aber, was das Gesetz fordert, ist die Gerechtigkeit."[17] Not to obey the law, therefore, is not to obey righteousness. To make the expression stronger, i.e. to stress the non-achievement of the goal, Paul speaks deliberately of the law, rather than simply of righteousness.[18]

Paul uses νόμος here, therefore, as Cranfield notes, because he wants to show "... that the law had been given to Israel to aid it in its quest for righteousness before God." Though Israel "... had actually been pursuing specifically that very thing which was the way appointed for them to lead them to that righteousness ...," somehow they have "... failed altogether to grasp its real meaning and to render it true obedience."[19] The slavery into which man has fallen, therefore, is due to man's sin, not to anything in the law -- indeed, it is due to disobedience to the law.

(b) v. 32. That this understanding is correct is borne out by examination of v. 32, which supplies the reason for the failure of v. 31.[20] This failure is not in the wrong action (in which case a new verb, other than anything supplied from the context, would have to be construed) or goal (in which case a new object would be needed), but in the wrong manner (the verb and object are easily and naturally supplied from the context, thus explaining their omission here, where Paul's elliptical grammar emphasizes his point).[21] The meaning of the ὅτι-clause, therefore, is that Israel failed because it failed to pursue the law (νόμον) through faith, but did so as if it were attainable by works.

This meaning coheres perfectly well with what we have noted with respect to v. 31, and indeed is the only interpretation which fails to do damage to the grammatical structure of the clause. The cutting edge of the text, therefore, is contained in the phrase ὡς ἐξ ἔργων. This shows, says D. Fuller, that the way Israel sought to fulfil the law "... by serving God with works in which she thought she could boast ... was totally fanciful and subjective. This way was not prescribed at all by the concrete Mosaic law but was in fact proscribed by it. The 'as it were' ... signified that the idea of serving God by works in which men could boast stemmed from a subjective, fanciful notion which the Jews read into the Mosaic law without the slightest encouragement to do so."[22] Barrett draws the same meaning out of the verse, i.e. that the law demanded obedience on the basis of faith rather than works. He points out the basis of the Jewish misunderstanding: "Thus, on the one hand, the law ... presents itself as a collection of holy, righteous and good precepts, each requiring obedience for which in return a reward is promised; on the other hand, the law rightly understood calls for a response not in terms of such ἔργα but of πίστις, by which alone man can truly achieve the law."[23] There is a possible element of self-contradiction, however, in the latter quotation. We have seen that it is not the ἔργα which for Paul are wrong -- these represent, as Barrett says, the righteous precepts of God. What is condemned by the Apostle is the attempt to establish a claim upon God through performing the ἔργα. Genuine performance of the ἔργα νόμου (see on Rom 2 below) is approved of, not frowned upon, by the Apostle. The contrast for Paul (as we noted in Section III, part A) is not between ἔργα and πίστις, but between justification ἐξ ἔργων and justification ἐκ πίστεως, where the preposition denotes the basis on which response to God occurs. That is, response may express genuine obedience to God, based on the understanding that justification is founded solely on the work of Christ, or it may express the belief that one can make a claim upon the righteousness of God through one's own works. Christian freedom, therefore, is not freedom from the obligation to obey the law, but is rather freedom from the slavery into which man had fallen owing to his legalistic misuse of the law, and freedom for a positive response to the law's requirements.

Justification by faith is the aim of the law, and so Israel failed to obtain the righteousness required by the law. Hence, says F. Flückiger, the legalism of the Jews is not "... als die rechte, dem Willen des Gesetzes gemässe Gerechtigkeit anzusehen. Wenn Israel des Gesetz nicht erreichte, weil es nicht aus Glauben, sondern aus Werken gerecht werden wollte, dann kann das

'Erreichen des Gesetzes' bzw. die vom Gesetz gewiesene Gerechtigkeit nur die Glaubensgerechtigkeit sein, und die jüdische Werkgerechtigkeit ist gar nicht das, was Gott mit dem Gesetz will -- sie berüht auf einem Missverständnis des Gesetzes."[24] Israel, therefore, ought to have pursued the law ἐκ πίστεως. This means, Cranfield observes, responding "... to the claim to faith which God makes through the law," accepting the law's criticism of one's life (recognizing that one can never so adequately fulfil it as to put God in one's debt), receiving God's mercy and forgiveness, and loving Him humbly and obediently.[25] The illusory nature of Israel's hope -- that it could so fulfil the law as to put God under obligation to itself -- is underlined by ὡς, which, as most commentators point out, stresses the subjective and unreal attitude of the Jews.[26] The law, notes Fuller, is the objective standard in v. 32, and so the conclusion is inescapable "... that that standard taught nothing but faith and the obedience which flows from faith."[27]

(c) The coherence of vv. 30-32a with vv. 32b-33. The interpretation we have indicated thus far to be the most reasonable also enables us to see the argument flowing on quite naturally into vv. 32b-33. It is possible that the "stone of stumbling" (the citation is a combination of Is 8:14 and 28:16, LXX) may indeed refer to the Torah itself (ἐπ' αὐτῷ, v. 33), i.e. as preaching the righteousness of faith.[28] Cranfield notes, however, that the reference is probably to the Messiah.[29] This, of course, in no way suggests an opposition between Christ and the law, for it is the OT itself which Paul cites as preaching Christ. Such a citation would jar heavily in context had he just previously been making negative comments regarding the law. If, on the other hand, the law itself (and under νόμος Paul can, of course, make reference equally to the prophets and/or writings; cf. 3:10-19, etc.) is seen as preaching faith, it is in effect seen as preaching Christ. Hence, stumbling over the true significance of the law (vv. 31-32) and stumbling over Christ (v. 33) amount to one and the same thing.

Only such an interpretation, we believe, makes adequate sense of the text, and points the way to a correct understanding of 10:1ff.[30] The meaning of the text, therefore, is that believers are freed from the just condemnation of the law only through the righteousness of faith -- which is itself the true meaning of the law. This indicates, of course, that, far from being released from the law as such (as God's holy and righteous demand upon their lives), believers are now freed to

attain (or begin to attain) a measure of obedience to it. This is the very obedience which was sadly lacking in the Jews, who pursued but did not attain the true righteousness of the law, made available only through faith in Christ. This suggests that believers, as those who have understood the true significance of the law as itself representing the righteousness of faith, are now made free to live for obedience to that law, i.e. to live in obedience to the One it proclaims. This becomes even clearer as we look at the next verses.

10:1ff

Although at 10:1 Paul begins a new thought, it is one very much linked to the thought of the preceding verses. The latter verse of ch. 9, indeed, serves as an outline or summary (thematic) statement, which is now developed in ch. 10.[31] In vv. 2-3 the Apostle refers to the Jews' zeal for God. This zeal, however, is tragically unaware of the righteousness of God and seeks only to establish its own righteousness (ἰδία δικαιοσύνη). In the light of vv. 30-33, we can say with assurance that what is involved here is the thought that the Jews rejected the righteousness both of the law and of Christ in favour of a pursuit of legalism leading (as they supposed) to justification. Israel, according to vv. 2-3, refused to submit to the righteousness of faith taught by the law[32] -- and therefore refused to submit to Christ, whom the law preached. Barrett notes correctly that 10:3 expounds 9:32a, i.e. Israel attempted to establish its own righteousness, and so failed to accept God's law in faith.[33] The fact that Israel, in refusing to submit to Christ, has rebelled against the righteousness of God (10:3) is explained (γάρ) in v. 4 by the phrase τέλος γὰρ νόμου Χριστὸς εἰς δικαιοσύνην παντὶ τῷ πιστεύοντι.

Many interpreters take this important statement of Paul's to mean that Christ has initiated a new "era" or "aeon" of freedom, in which believers have nothing more to do with the bondage of obedience to the law, being now released into the freedom of the new "era" or "aeon". A central point here is the meaning assigned to τέλος. Many take this to indicate "end" in the sense of "termination" or "abrogation". Käsemann, for instance, declares that Christ has ended the law, which perverted God's will by itself leading to the quest for justification through one's own works. There is now, he asserts, a change of lordship; in principle, there is righteousness only in the realm of faith, not law, for only Christ enables us to recognize and fulfil the true will of God.[34] Nygren declares that in Christ the law's domination is ended; now, without

the law, righteousness is revealed and given to all who believe.[35] According to Dodd, "Christ must have put an end to the law, for otherwise 'righteousness' would not be available for every believer."[36] A similar view is taken by others.[37]

Käsemann, however, though believing that τέλος means "end/termination", admits that the word can equally mean "goal/aim" or "fulfilment", and that only the context can decide.[38] Wilckens, indeed, believes that τέλος here does mean "goal", the idea being suggested by διώκειν (9:30-31 -- a contention summarily dismissed, but without evidence, by Käsemann[39]). He defines this, however, in such a way that the law's role is seen only as the demonstration of sinfulness -- and even this role is now ended.[40] We agree that use of διώκειν points toward the idea of "goal", but suggest that a more positive content is suggested by the concept of purpose than Wilckens has in mind; we have noted (Section I, part B) the inadequacy of the view that the law's role is only the demonstration of man's sinfulness. Käsemann is surely correct in suggesting that context must dictate the meaning of τέλος. Our examination of the preceding verses, however, suggests, surely, that his interpretation of v. 4 is in error. Both 9:31-33 and 10:2-4 attempt to answer the same question: why has Israel not attained the righteousness of God? The earlier verses answer this "negatively": it has not believed in Christ, whom the law preached. The latter verses answer it "positively": it has striven after its own righteousness.[41] We can thus see a certain "parallelism" between vv. 3 and 4. Israel has submitted neither to the righteousness of God (v. 3), nor to God as the righteousness of the law (v. 4). The Jews would have attained the true righteousness of the law had they believed in Christ (v. 4) or had they striven after true righteousness (v. 3).[42] Whether or not we follow this parallelism exactly, it is true to say, pace Käsemann, that the image of a goal being pursued is prominent from 9:30 onwards, and we have seen that vv. 30-33 make clear that the law itself, in its true meaning, is the proper object of pursuit (by means of the righteousness of faith) as much as is Christ -- to suggest that τέλος cannot mean "end" in the sense of "termination" without throwing the whole passage into serious self-contradiction.

Some commentators, however, try to combine the idea of "termination" with that of "goal" or "fulfilment". Leenhardt sees vv. 2-4 as showing that the law is an instrument of the promise in that it tries to convince man that God alone can give what He said he would give. Thus, the γάρ in v. 4 explains that in rejecting Christ the Jews have rejected

God's righteousness to which the OT bore witness. So Christ, says Leenhardt, is certainly the law's goal -- but also its termination, for because the law attests faith, Christ fulfils its underlying intention and supersedes it.[43] Barrett takes a similar view: "Christ puts an end to the law, not by destroying all that the law stood for, but by realizing it."[44] Barrett refers, by analogy, to the discarding of an instrument after it has achieved its purpose; hence, according to v. 4, "Christ is a new initiative on God's part not open to the self-righteous, self-justifying works response that the law had by its very nature invited."[45] Can the analogy of an instrument (something quite separate from the one who uses it), however, do justice to the idea of the commands of God as part of His self-expression? Barrett thus wavers between upholding the righteousness of the law and implying that by its very nature it invites a response of self-righteousness.[46] He concludes, "The best law and the greatest zeal have resulted only in failure. It follows that though a law may serve a temporary ... purpose in a useful way, regulating a nation's life and keeping inhumanity in check, it cannot be a permanent or final manifestation of the way of God and of his dealings with men; its purpose is negative ... the final truth is the mercy of God for all.... The usefulness both of law and of natural election are terminated by the ministry of Jesus."[47] Hence, for Barrett, τέλος signifies an historical process ended in the ministry of Jesus.[48]

A similar view is taken by R. Bring, who states that, while the law is directed toward Christ, its task is simply to judge. It has fulfilled its function in judging the One who took upon Himself the sins of the world; thus it has, through Him, led to the removal of the curse, and freedom for the believer. Christ, therefore, is the law's fulfilment and goal, but also its termination.[49] Bring, like Barrett, wavers between affirming the law's uprightness, and suggesting that it somehow of itself leads into sin. He says, "Die Gerechtigkeit, die das Gesetz fordert, kommt nämlich aus Glauben, nicht aus ἔργα τοῦ νόμου. Dieser Ausdruck meint das Leben nach der Thora, ein Leben, das sich ganz nach den Vorschriften der Thora richtet. Merkwürdig ist nun, dass Paulus sagt, dass das Leben nach diesen nicht dahin führt, dass man Gerechtigkeit erreicht. Sehr häufig sagt er, dass die Thora nicht zur Gerechtigkeit führt."[50] Bring is right in his assertion that the attempt to seek justification ἐξ ἔργων νόμου leads to sin. Is he correct, however, in interpreting this as living according to the commandments of the law? This ignores the distinction we have seen Paul makes between the righteous nature of the ἔργα νόμου themselves and the

legalistic perversion of these commandments expressed by the Apostle in the phrase ἐξ ἔργων νόμου.

We must question, therefore, whether this ambivalent view of the law, reflected in the understanding of τέλος as both "goal" and "termination", does justice to the thinking of the Apostle here. For we have seen no indication that, in his view, there is anything defective in the law itself which leads to the quest for justification by works. Rather is the law in 9:30ff entirely identified with the righteousness of faith and preaching of Christ, and (if freedom comes through the preaching of Christ) with true freedom. If the law, no less than righteousness by faith and Christ, is now attained through God's sovereign initiative, then it can scarcely in any sense be abolished or ended, any more than can righteousness by faith or Christ Himself. It is indeed true (as we have seen in Section III, part A above) that in Christ we are freed from the law's condemnation, but there is no indication here (or there) that we are freed from the law itself. Rather would it appear that, for the first time, we are freed to be in a positive relationship with the law, being no longer subject to the pursuit of self-righteousness, which for so long kept us from realizing or reaching the law's true purpose in our lives. The difficulty with the position of those who maintain a "dual" meaning for τέλος is shown by the inconsistency it exhibits in attributing to Paul both the view that the law preaches the righteousness of faith and the view that the law is somehow itself responsible for man's desire to be justified through his own efforts. Those holding this position do not seem to us to have adequately accounted for this inconsistency.

We take τέλος, therefore, to mean "goal" and/or "fulfilment". In Fuller's words, the Jews rejected God's righteousness both in the law and in Christ because Christ and the law "... are in such a continuum that to repudiate the one is to repudiate the other. In other words, Christ is the completion of the law in that, as himself a revelation from God, he embodied in all his teaching and work a pure expression of the righteous standard of God found in the law."[51] Paul's primary goal in 9:30ff is to show that the Jews have misunderstood the law, which in every sense aims at and is directed toward Christ.[52] This excludes (as we have noted) the meaning "termination", and suggests that that of "goal" or "fulfilment" is more likely. Cranfield comments, "The Jews in their legalistic quest after a righteous status of their own earning have failed to recognize and accept the righteous status which God was seeking to give them; for all along, had they but known it, Christ was

the goal and meaning and substance of that law which they were so earnestly pursuing, and the righteousness to which the law was summoning them was all the time nothing other than that righteousness which God offers to men in Christ."[53] That there is no conflict between Christ and the law means that freedom in Christ may also be said to be at the heart of the law, and should bring the believer into a positive relationship with the law.

10:5-8

Further confirmation for the point of view we have taken comes from a proper understanding of these verses which, according to most commentators, provide an exegetical basis for the statement of v. 4.[54]

According to Käsemann (who holds that, according to v. 4, Christ and the law are mutually exclusive), vv. 5 and 6-8 form a sharp antithesis, in which Paul contrasts the two kinds of righteousness, righteousness by works and righteousness by faith.[55] Moses, the view runs, demands works, faith requires only receiving the Word. The killing demand of the law is abolished by the freedom of the gospel: freedom and the law are utterly opposed. In v. 5,[56] claims Käsemann, the righteousness of the law represented by Moses "... fordert die Leistung und verheisst zeitliches und ewiges Leben einzig ihrem Täter."[57] In v. 6, on the other hand, Käsemann continues, the original meaning of the passage quoted (Deut 30:12) is totally destroyed (on the basis of the hermeneutical principle, accepted by Paul and by contemporary Judaism, that Scripture must be interpreted eschatologically[58]), so that what was in Deuteronomy ascribed to the law itself is now predicated of faith righteousness, which opposes the law. This leads Paul to see two antithetical principles at work in Scripture: "Mögen Lev 18,5 und Dt 30,11ff der gleichen Tora zegohören, so sind die für Pls vom Inhalt her zu trennen, wie der Same Abrahams nach dem Fleisch vom demjenigen nach der Wahrheit in 9,6ff getrennt wurde.... Ist die Verheissung Abraham als dem Empfänger der unmittelbaren göttlichen Zusage, das γράμμα jedoch Mose als dem Mittler des vom Judentum missverstandenen Gesetzes zugeordnet, kann in 6ff. nicht mehr 'Mose', sondern nur die Glaubensgerechtigkeit sprechen."[59] Hence for Paul (according to Käsemann) the God of the OT covenant cannot be the God of the cross but only the God of the law, which calls the "pious" to works of self-righteousness.[60] Both Lev 18:5 (cited in v. 5) and Deut 30:11-14 (cited in vv. 6-8) are part of the OT Scriptures; hence, the γράμμα (v. 5)/λέγει (vv. 6-8) distinction is to be found in Paul's "dialectical" understanding of Scripture. The Scripture, when

linked with the law, is γράμμα, and is ended by Christ (which explains why Paul does not quote large parts of the OT). When linked with the promise, however, the Scripture is πνεῦμα and is directed "eschatologically" toward faith righteousness. The "entscheidende Kriterium" in all of this is the "Rechtfertigungsbotschaft".[61]

A similar view of vv. 5-8 is taken by others. In Michel's view, Paul paraphrases Lev 18:5 so that it refers no longer to God's commands (as it does in the original) but to the "righteousness" which comes from observing the law (understood in a negative sense).[62] This "law-righteousness", says Michel, man must avoid. In v. 6, he continues, Paul takes the words of Moses regarding the law and refers them instead to righteousness by faith. This he does on the basis of a Christological/eschatological interpretation of Scripture.[63] In referring Deut 30:11ff to Christ, Paul stresses that Christ, not the law, has brought justification; the subject of λέγει in v. 8 is undoubtedly personified faith righteousness, as in v. 6.[64] Schmidt argues that in v. 5 Paul describes "... die der Gesetzeserfüllung erreichbare Gerechtigkeit und zeigt, dass sie ihr Prinzip nicht im Glauben, sondern im Werk hat."[65] The Apostle, says Schmidt, could never have written v. 5 himself: even suggesting that the possibility of life might come from fulfilment of the law would for him be unthinkable. Rather does he discuss the matter from a Jewish standpoint in order to make the antithesis clearer, showing that works, not faith, are the principle of fulfilment of the law.[66] Many other interpreters repeat some or most of these arguments, taking a similar view of the text.[67]

In response to this, several points may be made:

(a) It is highly unlikely that Paul would seek such contradictions in the Scripture, indeed that he would seek to set the Scripture against itself. Through his Scriptural proofs he is attempting to convince his readers of his high regard for Scripture and its authority, binding as much on him as on his opponents.[68] The view that Paul practised "eschatological hermeneutics" in the way envisioned by Käsemann and Michel is totally unproven, and highly improbable, in view of Paul's reverence for the Scripture and his conviction that, were they but honest, his opponents could clearly see the same significance in the OT passages as he did himself. Contemporary Jewish groups (especially at Qumran) certainly practised unusual methods of Scripture interpretation, but never did they attempt to divide Scripture and set it against itself. To do so would have ruined any force Paul's argument might have had with his Jewish opponents.

(b) It is also inconceivable that Paul would make such comments about Scripture and the law so soon after indicating that the law preached the righteousness of faith and that its content is Christ. The fact that Käsemann's view (and that of others) is based on an inadequate understanding of the preceding verses weighs heavily against accepting their conclusions here. Particularly important in this regard are the observations made above on v. 4.

(c) Neither is it likely that Paul would turn the original sense of Scripture so entirely on its head. The context of Lev 18:5 is a warning against idolatry: God's laws (which are to be obeyed) are contrasted with the laws of the degenerate pagans.[69]

(d) It is doubtful that in either v. 6 or v. 8 it is "personified faith righteousness" (as opposed to the law or Scripture) which is speaking. Justification by faith may indeed be personified, but it is justification by faith as found in the law which is in view. Paul's point is that it is precisely in the law that justification by faith is found. Cranfield comments, "What is especially noteworthy here is the fact that it is in the law itself, in Deuteronomy, that Paul hears the message of justification by faith."[70] Both Käsemann and Michel have, in this respect, turned the meaning of the passage on its head.

(e) On the suggested antithesis between γράφει and λέγει, Cranfield comments rightly, "That a theologically significant contrast between γράφει in v. 5 and λέγει in v. 6 (hinting at the opposition between γράμμα and πνεῦμα) was intended by Paul strikes us as very improbable."[71]

(f) The contention of Schmidt that the righteousness of the law has its principle in works by which men seek to justify themselves before God is in clear contradiction to 9:31-32, where Paul states that the Jews' inability to attain the true righteousness of the law was precisely because they mistakenly pursued it on the basis of works; see our comments on Rom 2 below. That life does not come to men through the law is not because of a defect in the law, but rather because of human sin. The life the law promises, however, does come through the genuine fulfilment of the law in Christ, which in turn enables a genuine measure of obedience to the law in the life of the believer. These themes we shall see further developed later in our study.

(g) If vv. 5 and 6-8 were opposed to each other, we would expect the grammatical construction μέν ... δέ. Only δέ, however, is found (in v. 6; see further below).[72]

(h) V. 5 is linked to the preceding by γάρ,[73] which suggests, on the basis of what we have seen concerning the preceding verses, that

v. 5 will make a (further) positive statement concerning the relationship of Christ and the law.[74]

The most likely interpretation of v. 5, on our view, is that it refers to a genuine keeping of the law and a genuine gift of life.[75] Any other interpretation would be entirely out of harmony with the passage -- as well as with what we have observed earlier in our study concerning what the Apostle says in Romans about the law and our freedom in relation to it. Paul is not opposing Moses, but is countering the Jews who have failed to render genuine obedience either to the law or to Christ.[76] In v. 5, Paul cites Moses (respectfully) in order to show how to receive life and attain true freedom. The fulfilment of the OT text takes place in the life of the believer in Christ, as we shall see more clearly in our comments on Rom 2 below (and also in the following subsections of Section IV). Given the close link with v. 4 (γάρ), it is probable, however, that not just the believer, but preeminently Christ, the One who rendered perfect obedience to the law, is in view here (especially as Gal 3:12, with its similar quotation of Lev 18:5, deals with Christ's fulfilling the law by taking the curse on Himself). Thus γάρ links v. 5 with the thought of Christ as the true goal of the law (τέλος νόμου). In this case, v. 6 draws the conclusion for the believer: Christ is the answer. Through faith in Him we find life and a true fulfilling of the law.[77] In this sense is every believer now enabled to (begin to) fulfil the requirement of v. 5. Against the legalistic misunderstanding of the Pharisees, Paul cites Moses, who himself (cf. 9:30-33) preaches faith. We have noted that ὁ ποιήσας ἄνθρωπος refers, above all, to the One who kept the law perfectly. In that, through His act of obedience, those who put their faith in Him are enabled to begin to fulfil the law, a secondary reference to every believer is involved here. In this sense, we may agree with Bring's comment that ὁ ποιήσας ἄνθρωπος is "... derjenige, der zu dem rechten Gehorsam des Gesetzes gelangt ist als einer, der den wahren Inhalt des Gesetzes verstanden hat, in ihm lebt, ihn in rechter Weise vollbringt, was man vom Volk Israel nicht sagen konne."[78] Bring points out rightly that is is not Paul, but his modern interpreters, who have distorted the OT: "Ein moderner Betrachter sieht vielleicht im Alten Testament ein Dokument einer Gesetzesreligion, aber das tut Paulus nicht."[79] Paul is here correcting, as we have noted, the Jewish misconception that righteousness comes from one's own legalistic efforts: only in Christ is the OT truly fulfilled (vv. 4-5).[80]

The correctness of this interpretation is confirmed by an examination of vv. 6-8, in which the Apostle, far from seeing faith as in opposition to the law, reiterates what he has said in the preceding verses, i.e. that the OT preaches faith.[81] Faith obedience, which is not to be distinguished from genuine obedience to the law, is the true fulfilment of the law, as these verses now show. The words which introduce the quotation in v. 6 (μὴ εἴπῃς) are borrowed from Deut 8:17, 9:4, texts which (in context) assign all the initiative in the giving of the law to the mercy of God, thus speaking against Paul's opponents, who wish to establish their own righteousness. A. Feuillet remarks justly, "Ainsi donc les textes mosaïques eux-mêmes, correctement interprétés, témoignent en faveur de la thèse de l'Apôtre, dont la polémique n'est dirigée que contre les interprétations erronées des judaïsants."[82]

Paul's goal in vv. 5-8 is to support (exegetically) his assertion concerning Christ in v. 4. It may be, as Fuller suggests, that Paul cites Deut 30 in order to avoid any possible Jewish misunderstanding of his citation of Lev. 18:5 in v. 5, which is his summary statement of what genuine righteousness of the law means.[83] By quoting Deut 30, Paul is opposing the Jewish misunderstanding of the law as involving the doing of great feats in one's own strength, a misconception Deuteronomy itself clearly opposes. By replacing ἐντολή with Χριστός, Paul shows as clearly as possible that the righteousness of the law is identical with the righteousness of faith. Fuller comments, "Since the wording of the law can be replaced by the word 'Christ' without loss of meaning, Paul has demonstrated that Moses himself taught that Christ and the law are all of a piece."[84] Paul interprets Deut 30, therefore, we believe, in its true light, i.e. in the light of the idea that the law itself is a gift of God's grace.[85] That the ῥῆμα τῆς πίστεως of Deut 30:14 is identified by Paul with the gospel itself shows, as Cranfield says, "... that it is Christ who is the substance and innermost meaning of the law."[86]

Our examination of this passage brings us to the conclusion, therefore, that Paul's intention here is to link the righteousness of the law (properly understood) with the righteousness of faith, and so with Christ. Far from declaring the end of the law and consequent freedom or release from any further relationship with it, as many commentators suppose, the Apostle shows that true understanding of and obedience to the law, which Israel failed to attain through its legalism and perversity, has now been reached through the righteousness of faith (9:30-33), through Christ who is the goal of the law (10:4), who has truly fulfilled it

(v. 5), and through whom now true obedience to the law is possible, for the first time, for all those who put their trust in Him (vv. 6-8). Freedom from the law's condemnation, through justification by faith in Christ, means, therefore, nothing other than freedom for genuine obedience to the law and genuine obedience to Christ, the goal and substance of the law.

In this passage, therefore, Paul has shown that Christ is the substance of the law and that, in principle, freedom from the law's condemnation and freedom for obedience to the law are to be linked. Our intention now is to show, by examining Rom 2 and 7:7-25, how the Apostle speaks in more detail of the Christian life in terms of a positive relationship with the law of God, and in the process defines freedom in Christ as freedom for obedience to God's law. In the subsequent parts of this section (IV, parts B and C), we shall go on to consider this same theme of the Christian's freedom for obedience to the law from two more specific aspects, in relation to the working of the Holy Spirit and the command to love, bearing in mind that these are but different ways of approaching the same theme of the Christian's freedom for obedience. Further practical applications are then drawn in the concluding subsection (IV, part D), in which we examine how Paul views the proper exercise of Christian freedom (in the light of the principles he has already set forth) in a number of contrasting situations.

We have already examined Paul's remarks in Rom 1:18ff, 3:9ff (Section I, part A above) concerning the sinfulness of man in his rebellion against God, a rebellion which has brought God's judgment on every human being without exception. In ch. 2, the Apostle seeks to discredit the self-righteous attitude of the Jewish legalists, showing them that they too stand under God's judgment. He demonstrates their true situation to them, however, by contrasting their conduct with that of another group -- ἔθνη who keep the law's requirements and are rewarded accordingly. As Paul's point in 1:18-3:20 as a whole is to set forth the universal sinfulness of all men, his comments in ch. 2, indicating an apparent exception to this rule, clearly require examination. Here he portrays the situation of people who stand in a positive relationship with the law of God and hence (as all others are still under the slavery of sin and the law's condemnation) must be those who have been freed in Christ from God's righteous judgment in the law. Paul's aim here, therefore, is to demonstrate, by showing what a life of true freedom, properly exercised, really means, the depth of their slavery to those who think

they are free but in reality are not. Thus understood, the passage illustrates the truth of the conclusions we arrived at in our examination of 9:30ff.

Many commentators, however, hold an understanding of this passage which would yield radically different conclusions so far as our apprehension of Christian freedom in relation to the law is concerned. After we have established the case for our understanding of the first portion of the passage, therefore, we shall examine alternative positions carefully before building the case for the major part of our conclusions.

Although this section may be divided into several paragraphs, there is general agreement that the reference throughout is primarily to the Jews, though they are not named until 2:17.[87] In 2:1-11 Paul exposes the hypocrisy of the self-righteous judge (vv. 1-5) and expounds the principle of impartial judgment according to one's works (vv. 6-11). In 2:12-16 he relates these issues to the law and its possession; in 2:17-24 he elaborates on the contradiction between the preaching and the conduct of the Jews; and in 2:25-29 he links his theme to the question of circumcision. This then necessitates an affirmation of the Jews' true advantages (3:1-8) which, however, is followed by a closing paragraph reverting to the central theme of God's unbending judgment on all men because of sin (3:9-20); we have already commented on these verses. Our interest here is with those passages (2:6-11, 12-16, 25-29) in which the Apostle discusses the relationship between fulfilling the law and receiving God's eternal reward.

2:6-11

This first passage, itself a part of the paragraph consisting of vv. 1-11, deals with the theme of eschatological or eternal reward. Many commentators, rightfully seeing in the entire section 1:18-3:20 a description of the revelation of God's wrath on all men, view any reference to God's justifying act in Christ as out of place here.[88] Several other possible explanations are offered. Lietzmann suggests that Paul argues from a pre-Christian position "der keine Glaubensgerechtigkeit kennt und ein Urteil auf Grund der eigenen Leistungen erwartet."[89] That is, he aims to reduce the idea of works-righteousness to the absurd here, and the situation portrayed in vv. 6-11 is therefore hypothetical, i.e. it presumes (a) that there is no gospel, and (b) that the law can be fulfilled. Kuss suggests that the purpose of the passage is the levelling of Jewish claims;[90] what Paul says here refers to the situation before and without Christ (though in light of

Christ), and in fact all are without hope. The eschatological gifts (vv. 7, 10) cannot be reached through works. Paul's strong positive language in these verses can be explained by the fact that the Apostle "im Formulieren den Teilzweck für einen Moment aus dem Auge verliert und mit Farben malt, die strenggenommen allerdings nur für den durch Christus herbeigeführten neuen Äon passen."[91] Leenhardt also agrees with the view that Paul here describes the situation of man before grace; what the Apostle envisages here is "the conduct of a humanity responding to God's general revelation, of a humanity unaware of the drama of the fall, and consequently acting outside the sphere of all juridical questions and all preoccupation with merit."[92] Yet one may question how Paul, so shortly after painting a picture of man's utter rejection of God's revelation, could now portray the action of at least a portion of that humanity in the language of vv. 7 and 10. It is also difficult to conceive the vivid words of the Apostle here as referring to merely hypothetical events.[93]

A different solution is therefore sought by Wilckens, who suggests that the Apostle, though seemingly allowing two alternatives (honour and wrath) in fact views all men as being (factually) in the situation of v. 5; vv. 7 and 10 are added for rhetorical effect.[94] There is nothing in the text, however, to suggest that the positive assertions of vv. 7 and 10 are any less descriptive of actual situations than are the corresponding negatives of vv. 8 and 9. This leads Schlier to declare that Paul views "das Moralische im Lichte des Evangeliums und der Geschöpflichkeit..."[95] The created order itself imposes a demand on man to which he must respond in obedience. The ἔργα referred to, continues Schlier, must be distinguished from Jewish legal striving and in fact involve deeper than moral concepts.[96] This interpretation, however, leaves the not inconsiderable problem of defining the nature of these "works": could Paul have viewed the works of man without Christ in such a favourable light as to suggest they merited or would be rewarded by eschatological (eternal) salvation?[97] The various terms used by Paul here to describe the reward given to good works (δόξα, τιμή, ἀφθαρσία, εἰρήνη) are clearly messianic and eschatological, i.e. referring to God's gift of eternal life and justification.[98]

Käsemann suggests that though Paul has taken over the Jewish theme of justification according to works, he has radicalised it and made the lordship of God central.[99] Even this "radicalising", however, seems not to appease Käsemann's doubts, and he thus goes on to suggest that "wie in c.7 die nichtchristliche Welt aus christlichem Aspekt gesehen

wird"[100] and that indeed, though the theme of Christ as the fulfilment of the law is not yet in view, the teaching here of justification according to works must somehow be understood from the perspective of justification by faith. God is still the judge who will shatter every illusion of human self-sufficiency at the last judgment, and accepting God's justification of sinners in Christ is man's only hope;[101] "der Glaube selber steht auf dem Spiel, wenn Gott die Illusionen richtet."[102] Yet even this does not (to us) appear to do justice to the point that the language used here can only refer to explicitly Christian conduct, and there is no basis either in this text or elsewhere in Paul for assuming that the Apostle could here be referring to the conduct of unregenerate pagans disguised as (or in the form of) the good works of the Christian believer, which are enabled solely by the power of the Holy Spirit. Far more likely is the view that Paul is in fact introducing the theme of the fulfilment of the law in the life of the Christian.[103]

Cambier is therefore led to describe these good works as "la pratique de la justice chrétienne vécue dans le concret." He continues, "Il n'est pas étonnant de voir que le jugement de Dieu selon la vérité est décrit par Paul à l'aide de critères et de caractéristiques chrétiennes...."[104] It is very difficult to avoid agreeing with Cambier that the conduct described in vv. 7 and 10 is that characteristic of Christian faith alone. It is not surprising, therefore, to find H. W. Schmidt linking the ἔργον ἀγαθόν with faith in Christ, which alone is a work pleasing God.[105] There seems every reason for accepting Cranfield's assertion that in vv. 7 and 10 Paul is referring to the conduct of Christians "as the expression of their faith."[106]

We may therefore take the text as a whole (vv. 6-11) as a description (similar to 6:21-23; 8:12-13) of the alternatives open to all men, Jew and Gentile alike, as they are confronted with the gospel; and thus, the old dividing line between the two groups, along with any exclusive claim the Jew might have made to salvation is destroyed.

2:12-16

Paul continues his attack on the Jews' conception of their own privileges by turning his attention to the very heart of the matter: possession of the law. The Apostle's central point in this paragraph is the destruction of any claim that mere possession or knowledge of the law brings with it the guarantee of God's blessing and justification.[107] Once again, he accomplishes his task by discussing the

relative position of Jew and Gentile and establishing the true criterion for God's blessing -- genuine obedience to the law. In this and the next section we will set forth the views held by the great majority of commentators in modern times before proceeding, in succeeding sections, to outline our own conclusions.

Most contemporary commentators see here an attempt by Paul to bring to insignificance the Jewish claims regarding possession of the law. In this attempt Paul first asserts that such a factor is of no avail in averting the judgment of God, which comes upon all men without distinction (vv. 12-13, taking up the theme of v. 11). Then, however, he takes his case further by adducing the case of various pagan Gentiles who, though not having the law, are nonetheless found in some way (and, perhaps more so than the Jews) obedient to its demands. This view overturns the position of Augustine (a position which held sway through the time of Thomas Aquinas and was also widespread in eighteenth and nineteenth century Protestant theology[108]) to the effect that Gentile Christians are in prospect here; this stand was developed by Augustine in his anti-Pelagian writings to counter the view that non-believers could be saved by their own efforts (see De spiritu et littera 26:43-28:49 [CSEL 60, p. 196]). The attack on the Augustinian position comes at several points, with which we shall deal in order of their appearance in the text. We divide our discussion into three subsections, dealing with vv. 12-13, 14-15 (with various subheadings) and 16. Following this we present our response to the points raised and arguments made.

(1) vv. 12-13.

These two verses are seen as setting forth the ground for God's sentence of condemnation on men regardless of race. If all are to be judged by the same standard (as described in vv. 6-11) all must have the same knowledge of God and hence be responsible before Him.[109] Barrett comments, "The law of Moses is the plainest statement (outside the Christian revelation) of the claim of God upon his creatures, but the claim is independent of the statement of it, and failure to acknowledge the claim can never be anything other than culpable."[110] In v. 13, Paul portrays the Jewish point of view in which justification depends on works.[111] Interpreters generally take the references to law in v. 12 to indicate the Torah,[112] but divide as to whether the law of Moses is referred to in v. 13; some feel that the anarthrous state there suggests that a law similar to but not identical with the Mosaic is in view,[113] while others, detecting a Rabbinic background to

the text, see the reference as being to the law of Moses.[114] Perhaps the best comment is that of Käsemann, who notes that in the paragraph as a whole the Torah is identified with the law of God, and hence the lack of article in v. 13 is without significance. The word can stand for a "norm", but the Torah never becomes one norm among others (or else the Gentiles would not be described as ἄνομοι, v. 12).[115]

(2) vv. 14-15

Interpreters belonging to this school are, of course, agreed that ἔθνη here refers to some (not all)[116] unbelieving Gentiles, for the ἔθνη here are said not to have the law[117] whereas Gentile Christians are certainly not without the OT law or love as the fulfilment of the OT law.[118] Further, Paul uses ἔθνη far more often to refer to Gentiles in general than to Gentile Christians;[119] also, it is argued, he would never speak of Gentile believers as keeping the law.[120] Finally, a sustained reference to Gentile Christians would be out of place in a section (1:18-3:20) devoted to exposition of God's wrath on sinful men.[121] It is agreed that a real, not hypothetical situation, however, is envisaged here.[122] Beyond these points on which there is general consensus, though, several differences of opinion arise regarding proper understanding of the text. We shall deal with these points in order.

(a) φύσει τὰ τοῦ νόμου ποιῶσιν. Commentators are in strong agreement that φύσει ought to be taken with the following rather than preceding phrase.[123] There is disagreement, however, as to the word's actual meaning here. Many take it as an indication (one of several in the context) that the Stoic concept of natural law has influenced the Apostle here.[124] Köster suggests that φύσει ought to be understood in these terms (the Gentiles perceive in their φύσις that which is the mystery of their φύσις);[125] Kuhr translates "auf Grund der angeborenen Beschaffenheit, der Naturanlage, des Wesens."[126] These commentators see in φύσις a reference to a more or less coherent system of natural law or revelation by which the Gentiles are able to arrive at knowledge of God's will.

Others, however, deny any Stoic influence, and prefer to see in the word a link with the OT concept of God as Creator.[127] Paul may use a term borrowed from popular philosophy, comments Kuss, but he relies chiefly on the OT idea of God as the Creator of φύσις.[128] There is no other form of "sittliche Ordnung" than the Mosaic law: "Aber eben was in der Schrift expressis verbis in seiner Fülle, in seinem ganzen Umfange dem Juden zugänglich wird, ist dem Heiden 'von Natur' ... durch

das mit ihrer Schöpfung in ihrem Menschenwesen mitgegebene sittliche Normbewusstsein zugänglich."[129] Even if man's knowledge of God is distorted, continues Kuss, the distortion is not enough that all natural moral norms are lost if one is without knowledge of the Torah.[130] Leenhardt says that in Paul φύσις "suggests the given nature of some one, his special characteristics, and not nature in general and the universal law."[131] In Leenhardt's view, Paul means to say that the pagan "acts on his own initiative spontaneously, apart from any special revelation such as was granted to the Jew."[132] Whether or not these commentators see a hellenistic influence they do, however, agree in assigning to φύσει a note of emphasis and seeing in it a reference to a definite extra-Biblical revelation stemming from man's creation or created nature (and hence present in nature, whether nature is conceived of in Hellenistic or Biblical terms, i.e. as a relatively independent entity or as a reality linked inextricably to God's creative act).

By this revelation the nonbelieving Gentiles are enabled τὰ τοῦ νόμου ποιεῖν. Scholars generally agree that this means that the Gentiles sometimes (ὅταν) obey various commandments of the Torah, even though they are not familiar with the law of Moses as such. Käsemann's comment is representative, "Es handelt sich vielmehr, dem ὅταν entsprechend, um die in konkreter Situation begegnenden Forderungen des Gesetzes ... die als solche keineswegs erkannt zu werden brauchen.... Es ereignet sich eben immer wieder, dass die 'Gesetzeslosen' den Willen des Gesetzes faktisch erfüllen...."[133] Riedl, however, sees the Gentiles as fulfilling only a part of the law; "... sie erfüllen nicht (sachlich) die gesamte im Gesetz des Moses schriftlich niedergelegte göttliche Sittennorm, sondern nur ein Teil davon," i.e. the moral part, for the Gentiles were not obligated to do the rest.[134] Against this, however, Barrett notes correctly that Paul never distinguishes between the moral and ritual law.[135]

This view is opposed by R. Walker, who sees τὰ τοῦ νόμου as referring to "das dem Gesetze Zugehörige," i.e. the totality of that which pertains to the law, rather than something specific in it. The Gentiles, on Walker's view, do that which corresponds to the nature of the law as such -- they sin (cf. 1:18-32), for in Romans sin is "die essentielle Eigenheit des Gesetzes."[136] Against this position (apart from its sheer grammatical unlikelihood), however, may be adduced the consideration that according to Rom 7:7, 12-14, 25 sin is linked expressly with the flesh in opposition to the law, which is holy,

just and good (see also our comments on 3:20 below). The context certainly appears to indicate a genuine law obedience (however this may be construed) on the part of the ἔθνη; indeed, this positive emphasis is vital to the accomplishment of Paul's aim here, i.e. to shame the Jews by stressing the (in some sense) virtuous behaviour of the Gentiles.

(b) ἑαυτοῖς εἰσιν νόμος. This phrase describes the result of the events pictured in v. 14a. Michel interprets it in the light of Paul's missionary and apologetic task, as if the Apostle were saying to the Gentiles, "mit eurem eigenen höchsten Selbstbewusstsein seid ihr unmittelbar dem Anspruch Gottes verhaftet.[137] Paul states that "das mosaische Gesetz reicht so weit in die Menschheit, dass es auch im Heidentum zur Norm und zum Wahrheitskriterium werden kann."[138] According to Michel, this norm or knowledge of God in the "inner man" probably reflects Paul's reduction of Torah to the love command and echoes the Greek motif of the νόμος ἄγραφος, which was taken up in Hellenistic Judaism.[139] Kuss declares that though the Gentiles have no knowledge of the written law, they do know the moral demands underlying it and hence have "praktisches Wissen von den Vorschriften und Verboten des Gesetzes;" they do not know the text but do know "die vom Text gemeinte Sache."[140] According to Käsemann (who, however, doubts that Greek influence can be proven[141]) the phrase (a strengthening of v. 14a) implies neither that the Gentiles are themselves a law nor that they have "in verschiedener Weise" the Mosaic law, but rather the truth is expressed "dass auch die Heiden den transzendenten Anspruch des göttlichen Willens erfahren und sich darin --weder 'das' noch 'ein'-- Gesetz werden." Hence they stand not in identity with, but in a "gewisser Analogie" to the Jews: "Sie verspüren, dass der Mensch in Frage gestellt und von ausserhalb seiner selbst her gefordert wird, und tuen es paradoxerweise gerade in ihrem Inneren."[142] Against this is Walker's view that νόμος here must in context refer to the Mosaic law, rather than to some reduced kernel thereof (Kuss[143]) or to some analogous law (Michel, Käsemann, Bornkamm[144]); hence, the Gentiles themselves become identified with the Mosaic law.[145]

(c) v. 15a. It is clear that v. 15a continues the thought of the preceding verse, οἵτινες indicating that the subject of v. 14 is still in view.[146] Two points are of concern here, the meaning of τὸ ἔργον τοῦ νόμου, and the possibility that the clause as a whole is a deliberate reference to Jer 31:33, the messianic text dealing with the new covenant referred to by Paul in 2 Cor 3.

Commentators are agreed that τὸ ἔργον τοῦ νόμου resumes τὰ τοῦ νόμου of v. 14 and in some sense refers to the demands made by the Mosaic law.[147] Michel stresses continuity rather than contrast in defining the relationship of the ἔργον τοῦ νόμου to the law; he comments, "Diese Forderung wird beim Heiden eine andere Gestalt annehmen, sie ist aber in der Bedeutung und im Inhalt mit dem mosaischen Gesetz identisch." Therefore what we have here is not an independent (of God) lex naturae but rather Paul speaks "von einer vorgegebenen Norm Gottes ... die Tun und Schicksal des Heidentums bestimmt."[148] Some scholars, pointing to the singular ἔργον, feel that a concrete act (rather than the multiplicity of acts suggested by τὰ τοῦ νόμου), involving some reduction of the OT law, is in prospect; Schlier refers to love,[149] Lietzmann and Kuss to a "core" (Kuss suggesting the Decalogue).[150] According to Wilckens, though, the singular merely focusses on the content of the Torah (rather than on its individual commands),[151] and there is thus no distinction at all between v. 14 and v. 15a.[152] Käsemann agrees that the reference in general, but suggests that what is involved is "die jeweils vom Gesetz verlangte konkrete Tat" and that otherwise (i.e. if one assumes a "core" law) it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that Gentile Christians are in view.[153] Leenhardt notes that holding, on the other hand, that the entire law is in question here leads to similar results; hence he concludes, "By means of this formula Paul suggests that the Gentile has a certain knowledge of the law, not perfect and complete (for this would imply the fulfilment of Jeremiah's prophecy) but none the less real: he knows in truth what the law commands, without knowing that it is God who commands it, and also without knowing the nature of the God who commands it."[154] Over against all these views is that of Walker, who refers to the ἔργον as "das Entscheidende am Gesetz": even though they do not have the law and prophets or the Rabbinic teaching, the Gentiles do have the decisive factor, the ἔργον, which Walker links with the law's function of bringing man's sinful doom upon himself.[155] Against this, however, is all the contextual evidence which seems to indicate that something positive, an advantage of some sort, is in view (though see further the discussion in (e) below).

The second point in v. 15a is the question of a possible suggestion by Paul that in the events here portrayed the messianic prophecy of Jer 31:33 is being fulfilled. Most reject this, on the basis that the Greek motif of the νόμος ἄγραφος, already in view in v. 14, lies also

at the root of Paul's assertion here. There is a general concession, however, that the wording here is reminiscent of the prophetic text, G. Bornkamm says that the phrasing is borrowed from Jeremiah, though not the meaning,[156] a view echoed by Kuss.[157] F. Kuhr speaks of a formal verbal likeness[158] and Wilckens of a "wörtliche Anklang".[159] All these commentators, however, see a vast difference in meaning between the two Biblical texts. For Kuss the contrast is between "ein wunderbares eschatologisches Eingreifen Gottes" and "Funktionen, Fähigkeiten und Begabungen des Menschen als Menschen...."[160] Paul does not mean to imply that a genuine justification by works is spoken of here, but rather speaks "von einem auf Gott züruckgehenden Normbewusstsein des Heiden."[161] Kuhr contrasts the picture in Jeremiah of an "eschatological covenant" by which God renews His people miraculously and enables them to right conduct with the man portrayed in Rom 2 who does the work from his own nature and where the νόμος ἄγραφος is "die dem Menschen auf Grund seiner menschlichen Natur eignende Fähigkeit zum sittlichen Handeln." If Paul had meant to refer to Jer 31, "denn hat er jedenfalls die Jer-Stelle umgedeutet, und sie der Vorstellung vom Naturgesetz dienstbar gemacht."[162] Several commentators point to a difference between this text and the others (1 Cor 11:25 and 2 Cor 3:3) in which Paul makes explicit reference to the Jeremiah passage. Kuhr and Wilckens note that in 2 Cor 3:3ff the new covenant is one of the life-giving Spirit as opposed to the dead letter (the written Torah).[163] Wilckens also notes that the Jeremiah text was never used apologetically in Hellenistic Judaism in the sense of a νόμος ἄγραφος,[164] while Kuhr points out that in both Greek and Hellenistic Jewish thought the concept of a law written in the soul is not unknown.[165]

Against this view, however, other scholars (who nonetheless hold that the ἔθνη are nonbelieving Gentiles) do see a reference to the OT text here. J. Riedl asserts that though the question here, as in 1:19-20, is of the natural capabilities of man, we have in 2:15 a typical "eschatological" treatment. The last judgment is referred to in 2:5, 16, 27 and so "Paulus spricht nämlich in 2,15a von einer sog. uneigentlichen Verwirklichung der Jeremiasverheissung, und nicht von der eigentlichen Verwirklichung, die dem NT vorbehalten ist. Diese uneigentliche Verwirklichung, findet sich überall, wo ein begnadeter Mensch (=Nicht-Christen) das Gesetz erfüllt, sei es ein Jude, der sein Mose-Gesetz erfüllt, oder wie hier, ein Heide, der nach dem Naturgesetz lebt, das Paulus, identisch mit dem Wesenkern des mosaischen Gesetzes

bezeichnet hat ... Paulus hier hellenistiche Gedankengänge 'theistisch' vorträgt."[166] Hence, through this "Herzensinschrift" God gives the Gentiles who fulfil the law "auch die entsprechende Gnade dazu Kraft eine uneigentlichen, vorausgenommenen Vollendung der Jeremiasverheissung."[167] The idea (of revelation) is the same as in 1:19 but the reference there is to the great majority of disobedient Gentiles.[168]

(d) v. 15bc. The question at stake here is Paul's mention of the conscience. Most commentators are agreed that the use of συνειδήσεως is another sign of Greek influence, and hence a further indication that Paul is speaking here of a natural revelation of God to nonbelieving Gentiles. Michel suggests that for Paul (influenced by Hellenistic Jewish thought rather than by Greek thought directly) the conscience yields basic distinctions between right and wrong and thus makes one responsible to God.[169] For Bornkamm conscience in Paul acts as a judge of one's actions (note the first function listed in v. 15c is accusation); this comes from Greek and Roman popular philosophy (including Philo) and, though the extent and exact nature of the influence is not clear, there is no doubt that the content of the verse is derived from a "vorgeprägter, nichtchristlicher Tradition."[170] On the other hand, continues Bornkamm, it is not a merely natural or human concept, for it does not stand as final authority but rather points to God.[171] Kuss notes that Paul gives the concept a new meaning within the framework of a personal God and salvation through Christ; here, however, the question is of an "Instanz" in the experience of every man, in which his thoughts and deeds meet with an external standard, presenting him with the demands of a moral law.[172] This moral law cannot be easily delineated; it is not identical with the OT law but is in agreement with it at points. It may be something like the Decalogue or a "core" with which the Torah agrees (this is in line with Kuss' view that Paul reduces the OT law to a Christological kernel or core).[173] Leenhardt, however, suggests that the Apostle is influenced far more by OT and Jewish thought than Greek or Stoic concepts,[174] and Käsemann, while noting with interest the various parallels from Greek and Roman literature in which meditation and introspection figure prominently as functions of the conscience, suggests that the primary role of the conscience here is that of a witness to the confusion (v. 15c) into which man is thrown when confronted by the righteous demands of God.[175] Käsemann thus rejects the contention of B. Reicke[176] that συνειδήσεως in 2:15 refers to <u>consciousness of</u> accusing or defending thoughts (τῶν λογισμῶν, κ.τ.λ. being taken as gen. obj. governed by

συνειδήσεως).[177] There is otherwise general agreement that v. 15c is dependent on (and explicative of) v. 15b.[178]

(e) The significance of vv. 14-15 for natural law and the justification of the ἔθνη. It is necessary at this stage to note the conclusions commentators have drawn from their examination of these verses, with particular reference to the question of God's acceptance or rejection of the (on this view) unbelieving Gentiles on the basis of the natural revelation or natural law to which (again on this view) they have been exposed. We thus postpone temporarily discussion of v. 16, which is interpreted fairly closely along the lines laid down by the position adopted with respect to vv. 14-15.

In spite of the many positive assertions these verses make regarding the Gentiles (statements whose force, as we have seen, is generally noted), some interpreters feel that there is no question here of actual justification or saving faith. Kuss states that whatever is said of the Gentiles here, they stand under "(eine) grosse Minuszeichen". In Paul's thinking, all stand under God's wrath and justification is impossible without Christ.[179] In 1:18-32, Kuss continues, Paul paints a picture which is universally true; there are no Gentiles who, for instance, mix idolatry with upright moral standards. No one can reach the eternal rewards of 2:7, 10 without Christ (in these verses Paul leaves his goal behind momentarily to introduce subjects which, properly speaking, belong only to the new era in Christ). Paul merely wishes to establish the principle nullum crimen sine lege; the case of the Gentiles is introduced only to put the Jew to shame and destroy his presumed advantages -- in truth the Gentile is equally responsible before God (he also knows the law) and is in no better position to win justification for himself than the Jew.[180] Kuhr suggests that Paul's primary aim is not merely to demolish Jewish claims but indeed to establish Gentile responsibility: because they know the law they are answerable to God for their actions -- and hence guilty, for God's judgment on sin is inescapable and universal (1:18-32, 5:12-21).[181] Even their good works lead to death, remarks Schlier.[182] Bornkamm says that Paul's mention of the conscience comes from his interest not in the existence of an inner judge in the Gentile mind but "allein die durch das Gewissen gegebene Bestätigung des auch den Heiden nicht vorenthaltenen Gottesgesetzes."[183] For Käsemann, possession of the νόμος ἄγραφος merely places the Gentile in the same position of responsibility and judgment as the Jew.[184] Paul goes far beyond the Jewish reckoning of Gentile

sin through the Adamitic or Noachic commandments (see 4 Ezra 3:33-36) when he says that the Gentiles have the law written on their hearts.[185] The same theme is echoed, of course, by Walker, who views the whole section as a negative statement; for him, the work of the law is to bring men under the rule of sin, and to do the works of the law simply means to sin, to do that which is appropriate regarding the law's working.[186]

Other scholars, however, see a more positive reference here, Michel notes that the events of 2:14-16 are no fiction, and that here the Apostle sets forth clearly a picture of positive law obedience -- difficult thought this may be to reconcile with 3:20.[187] P. Althaus avers that the description of 1:18-32 is not complete; in ch. 2 Paul draws attention to "die unleugbare Wirklichkeit des 'natürlichen', ausserbiblischen, vorchristlichen Ethos" and to the existence of a natural inclination toward the good "der auf ein 'Naturgesetz' zurückweist."[188] Wilckens refers to "exceptions" from the massa perdita; Paul, for him, is clearly speaking of an actual situation, and so the passage must be understood concretely -- Gentiles actually do what the law requires by nature.[189] Cambier, however, goes further, stating that these verses contrast the obedient Gentile with the Jews who endeavour to obey but cannot do so because they have been placed within a system which throws man back upon his own efforts and leads inevitably to failure; hence, the ἔθνη here are in a situation analogous to that of Abraham in Rom 4,[190] and vv. 14-15 describe the conduct of Gentiles "qui non seulement connaissent les exigences de Dieu mais qui les vivent dans la pratique."[191]

Riedl notes that if the case of the Gentiles is adduced as a strong argument against exclusivist Jewish claims on God's blessing, this implies that a genuine measure of that blessing must rest upon the Gentiles, "nam quid prodesset paganis, si in ultimo iudicio se ut mere possessores, i.e. 'auditores' legis naturalis Deo praesentarent, cum factores legis tantum iustificabitur...?"[192] Riedl sees only two possibilities as philologically possible, viz. complete or occasional fulfilment of the law, but the supposition of occasional law fulfilment would, as has been noted, constitute no strong argument against Jews who were quite prepared on their own to concede as much to the Gentiles.[193] The Gentiles, however, continues Riedl, have shown true obedience to the law, and thus are justified before God. That the Gentiles have the law is proven from their acts of positive law fulfilment, Riedl observes, thus neatly reversing the significance given their acts by those upholding

the opposing position.[194] From this Riedl draws the conclusion that "die geschichtliche Stellung des Menschen zu dem erkannten Willen Gottes als Norm des sittlichen Verhaltens das ewige Schicksal entscheidet."[195] Further, vv. 14-15 must be thus linked to v. 13, for otherwise a great rupture in the line of reasoning would be occasioned. In light of Paul's thought generally, it is much easier, says Riedl, to view the verses as a "vorausgenommene Erfüllung" of the Jeremiah prophecy,[196] as for Paul the works of vv. 14-15 could scarcely be purely natural (accomplished without the aid of divine grace). The Gentiles, like Abraham, receive God's grace without direct exposure to the gospel (though not without Christ) and hence are enabled to fulfil the law.[197] This point is affirmed by S. Lyonnet, who notes that there can be no question here of salvation through human works; rather, Paul is speaking of a true justification of unbelieving Gentiles by grace, "... quando Paulus asserit 'factores legis iustificari' (v. 13b), non supponit eos iustificari ex ipsa legis observatione, cum lex non sit medium iustificationis ... attamen negari nequit agi de vera iustificatione...."[198] We may conclude by noting that it can readily be seen that there is a substantial divergence of opinion in this matter as a whole, and this division is reflected in the various understandings of v. 16.

(f) v. 16. Many commentators deal with the unexpected change of tense here by postulating a short pause between vv. 15 and 16, the meaning of the latter verse being that the Apostle's presentation of the events, as noted in vv. 14-15, will be shown to be true in the final judgment. That which is hidden in history (τὰ κρυπτά) will become manifest, as God judges according to inward rather than outward factors.[199] What will become clear, according to Kuss, is not only that the advantages of the Jews are non-existent but also that the Gentiles fully know the law and are therefore just as guilty as the Jews.[200]

The attempt to solve the problem of the tense change through the supposition that vv. 14-15 constitute a parenthesis and that v. 16 should be joined directly to v. 13 is discarded by most exegetes on the basis that it represents far too long a break to be grammatically likely,[201] and that the thought of v. 13 expects no further elaboration.[202] Reicke's view that one ought to read κρίνει instead of κρινεῖ, and should thus understand the word as a simple present tense (rather than, as could also be possible, a present with future meaning) loses credibility on account of the close resemblance of the verse to vv. 5-6, ἐν ἡμέρᾳ ὀργῆς

καὶ ἀποκαλύψεως δικαιοκρισίας τοῦ θεοῦ, κ.τ.λ., where the thought is clearly of the future judgment.[203] Schlier notes the lack of evidence for any primitive textual rearrangement (e.g., 12, 13, 16, 14, 15), which would, in any case, give the whole passage a rather peculiar structure.[204] A more likely view, and one held by many commentators, is the suggestion that ἐνδείκνυνται should be taken as a present with future meaning (the process referred to in v. 15 describes what will occur at the final judgment),[205] though this is opposed by Bornkamm, on the ground that v. 15 is joined very closely to the preceding verse, which refers clearly to present events.[206]

Bornkamm himself suggests that v. 16 is a gloss, as its reference to the Pauline gospel is out of place here. For Bornkamm, the futurist orientation of the passage is sufficiently established on the strength of the present saying of v. 15 (which for him, as for Kuss, points to God's judgment on the Gentiles) and would only be weakened by an unexpected reference to the gospel, a reference which would threaten the position of the law in this passage as "Gerichtsnorm".[207] This position, though advocated also by Bultmann,[208] has no textual evidence in its favour,[209] and is attacked by Käsemann and Wilckens on the ground that the thought expressed in v. 16 is crucial to the point being made in this paragraph. According to Käsemann, vv. 14-15 speak in themselves only of the existential conflict in man, but not yet of the objective truth of God's future judgment which will destroy all human illusions.[210] Man's judgment is first made clear in the gospel,[211] and this gives v. 16 its indispensable place in the argument.[212] Walker asserts that v. 16 is the "Interpretament" which gives force to vv. 6-15, which do not describe mere "Erfahrungstatsache" but are "eschatological" realities which cannot be understood without the concept of a final judgment (this interpretation seems to understand "eschatological" as if it referred to any event in life viewed sub specie Christi, and hence in reality is not far removed from Käsemann's position).[213] On Walker's view, as on Käsemann's, v. 16 brings into clear relief the hopelessness of man's position before God (a view shared also by Kuss, Bornkamm and others).

Cambier and Riedl also see v. 16 as an integral part of the paragraph, but view it as an indication that God's righteousness will in the final judgment be granted to the Gentiles. According to Riedl, the "Gesetzestat" and "Gewissenszeugnis" will find recognition on the last day, for "die geschichtliche Stellung des Menschen zu dem erkannten Willen Gottes als Norm des sittlichen Verhaltens, das ewige Schicksal

entscheidet."[214] The same thought is expressed by Cambier, "la lumière de la loi intérieure et les indications de la conscience mettent les païens sur le même pied que les Juifs devant le jugement final de Dieu...."[215] To these two must be added the voices of other commentators who, as we have seen, see a real measure of Gentile law fulfilment and possibility of justification here. Thus, although there is a general measure of agreement on the authenticity of the verse and its importance to the paragraph as a whole (however its precise relationship to v. 15 be defined), interpreters are not united as to whether the events referred to therein will bring doom to all, or whether some, through a positive law obedience described in vv. 12-15, may yet be saved.

We have now set forth the views taken by the great majority of modern exegetes with respect to 2:12-16. Although there is considerable difference of opinion on various matters, one common theme is stressed: Paul's basic aim here is to comment on the condition of certain unbelieving Gentiles with respect to God's revelation in nature (outside the specific revelation given to the covenant community of Israel), and to use this portrayal as a means whereby the Jews may be confronted with their failure faithfully to obey God's law. Although we agree with the latter point, we find the rest of the interpretation unsatisfactory. Our intention now is to demonstrate that the understanding of the passage we prefer not only provides a more reasonable explanation of the text itself, but also enables it to be seen as harmonious with what we have noted to be the Apostle's view elsewhere of Christian freedom in relation to the law of God.

These verses (very closely linked with the preceding; note γάρ, v. 12[216]) carry through the theme of God's impartial judgment of Jew and Gent set forth in vv. 6-11, in which, as we saw earlier, Paul contrasts the position of man with and without Christ. The Apostle's aim throughout the section (2:1-3:20) is to establish God's accusation against the Jews, who have relied on their covenant privileges to guarantee justification, even in face of their continual disobedience to God's law. To this end Paul now depicts the situation of ἔθνη (some, that is, not the entire group of Gentiles, see(116) above), whose law-keeping compares favourably with that of the Jews. In fact, the paragraph as a whole seems to represent an application of what has been said in vv. 6-11 (summed up in v. 11), with special reference to the question of the law; a chain of four occurrences of γάρ in vv. 11-14 (followed by οὕτινες, v. 15) links v. 11 with the preceding verses and vv. 12-16 with v. 11.

Given Paul's habit in Romans of dividing men into two camps, one obedient to God and the other hostile to Him (e.g. new and old man, first and second Adam, those who live κατὰ Πνεῦμα and those who live κατὰ σάρκα, etc.), which antitheses seem already to find expression in 1:16-17 (the theme statement of the letter);[217] and given the close link between vv. 12-16 and the verses immediately preceding that paragraph (verses which give clear expression to this custom of the Apostle's), it seems reasonable to assume that the same kind of division (i.e. those justified and accepted by God v. those not in this position) is in view here (expressed in terms of Jews and Gentiles). In this case, the ἔθνη here represent God's people of the new covenant -- Christians.

For Paul, particularly in light of his contention throughout the entire section, 1:18-3:20, that none can be saved by works of the law and in view of the unremittingly negative judgment on Jew and Gentiles alike he makes therein, it is very difficult to see how anyone other than the Christian, who alone for the Apostle through the Spirit fulfils the law (8:4) and produces the fruit the end of which is eternal life (6:22-23, cf. 2:7, 10) could be in mind in these verses. Paul's portrayal of the Gentiles' sin in 1:18ff alone makes mockery of the views of those interpreters who speak of a Gentile righteousness (Althaus), of a high self-consciousness which responds positively to innate moral standards (Michel), or of exceptions from the "massa perdita" (Wilckens), as Walker and others rightly see. Even less likely are the extravagant claims by Cambier, Riedl and Leenhardt that the unbelieving Gentiles earn God's justification through their works, a thought so far removed from the clear declarations of the Apostle in 1:16-17, 1:18-3:20, 3:21-31 so as to make him look quite incoherent in his thinking. The parallel drawn to Abraham overlooks the fact that in Romans Paul presents the Patriarch as an example of justification by faith, and as a participant in God's saving plan which operates throughout the history of Israel, whereas he pictures the Gentiles (1:18-32, 11:11-32) as excluded from that plan until the coming of the gospel and the manifestation of God's righteousness in Christ (3:21).

The suggestion of other commentators that Paul only speaks of the Gentiles here to establish their responsibility fits far better with what is said in 1:18ff but avoids the fact that throughout the paragraph (2:12-16) the Gentiles are portrayed repeatedly as those who not only know but do the law's demands (pace Bornkamm, Käsemann, Kuhr). The dilemma of these interpreters is reflected in the admission by Kuss that

the deeds described in vv. 14-15 are positive and do not bring condemnation, yet do not result in justification either. What, then, is Paul's point in speaking of them? The suggestion offered by Lietzmann, i.e. that the whole passage is hypothetical, is overwhelmingly rejected as having no basis in the text, which speaks clearly of real events.

The contention of most commentators that Christians cannot possibly be referred to here because the section (1:18-3:20) is concerned exclusively with man outside of Christ, Christians being mentioned first in 3:21ff, has already suffered a severe blow when it is seen that Christians are in fact in view in 2:7, 10 (where the contrast is precisely between Christians and non-Christians). It appears that the relationship between 1:18-3:20 and 3:21ff is not exactly as most scholars have understood it -- a possibility which should have suggested itself in the fact that Christians are without doubt mentioned in the main body of the letter as early as 1:16-17!

Commentators are correct in seeing vv. 12-13 as, before all else, showing that all are responsible before God for their actions and all will be judged. The reference to the future judgment in v. 13b, however, linked with similar allusions in vv. 7 and 10, suggests that not all men are to fall under God's condemnation. This point is clarified in v. 13, which declares that the doers of the law will be justified. The reference here can scarcely be to any others than those mentioned in v. 7 who, "by persistence in doing good seek glory, honour and immortality," those to whom God will grant eternal life (6:23). We do not go amiss in seeing the reference here as being to Christians -- those who, by the Spirit, fulfil the law's just requirement (8:4).[218] In accord with most commentators, we take νόμος here to refer either to the Torah, or to the Torah as representative of the entire OT; in light of the evidence adduced, it seems highly unlikely that any other idea could have been in the Apostle's mind. This point is of some importance in examining more closely the meaning of vv. 14-16. There are, as have been noted, several points in question in the interpretation of these verses. We divide our discussion into seven subsections.

(a) ἔθνη. We have noted (see (119) above) that Bornkamm's positive assertion that ἔθνη in Paul refers to unbelieving Gentiles is thrown in some doubt by Kuss' analysis of the relevant texts. F. Flückiger points out that in Romans (where the word occurs twenty times) ἔθνη always refers to Gentiles as non-Jews rather than non-Christians, and in at least four places (1:6, 13; 11:13; 16:4) it refers to Gentile

Christians.[219] The choice of the word to represent Christians here is best explained by the Ἰουδαῖος/Ἕλλην antithesis which runs through the first part of Romans and by the obvious point that in this subsection (2:1-3:20) Paul's aim is to demolish exclusivist Jewish claims -- how better to do it than by showing that the Gentiles have a share in God's blessing, a share all Jews do not necessarily have. The blessing is open to all on the same terms.

(b) τὰ τοῦ νόμου ποιῶσιν. We have observed that commentators are generally agreed that νόμος has hitherto referred to Torah (or the entire OT) and, as noted above, there seems no reason to assume any change in meaning here. Most feel that while the basic referent of νόμος in v. 14a is still the Torah, the "things of the law" which the Gentiles do are not the commands of Torah as such (which are heard and then obeyed) but are instead the demands of the law as they are (in some ill-defined sense) filtered through the lens of general revelation to confront the unbelieving Gentiles who have never even heard of the existence of the OT law, let alone its specific demands. This view, however, rests on the assumption that Paul moves from the concept of direct Torah obedience spoken of in vv. 12-13 to this quite different idea of certain Torah demands (which many commentators, as we have seen, easily reduce to an undefined core-requirement) mediated through general revelation and responded to by pagan Gentiles. Of this not inconsiderable change of thought there is, however, no evidence. Thus the action expressed in v. 14a appears to be an application or elaboration (γάρ[220]) of the principle expressed in v. 13 regarding the doing of the OT law, an obedience which results directly in justification (δικαιωθήσονται, v. 13b).[221]

Not only does this involve the ἔθνη of v. 14a in direct obedience to the OT law (as opposed to the unbelieving Gentiles of v. 12, who are described as ἄνομοι -- without knowledge of or obedience to the law[222]), it also states that they are to receive justification by God on the basis of their works. This for Paul is an unthinkable conclusion (cf. 3:9, 20) unless the ἔθνη are in fact Gentile Christians whose obedience to the law is enabled by the Spirit (8:4) on the basis of Christ's redeeming work (8:2-3), thus issuing in justification and final salvation (6:22-23).[223] Against the view of Walker and Kuhr (see (110) above) that v. 12 is the basis only for the negative side of vv. 6-11, thus removing the positive statements to the realm of the hypothetical (for 1:18-32 do not allow that any Gentile could escape falling into sin) and

that v. 12 in turn is the basis for vv. 13-14 can be objected that (i) vv. 6-11 speak, as we have seen, of a real future salvation which is in no way nullified by the negative statement of v. 12; (ii) their view assumes that the unbelieving Gentiles of 1:18-32 rather than Christians are in view in ch. 2 -- which is the very point at issue! (iii) v. 13 picks up the evenly-balanced tone of vv. 6-11 and speaks of a real justification, which then appears as a reality in v. 14a, even as in vv. 7, 10 (note also that though v. 12 is a negative statement, there is a neat balance between κριθήσονται (v. 12) and δικαιωθήσονται (v. 13)).[224]

It seems, therefore, that the ἔθνη in question in v. 14 respond to the law not in ignorance but in awareness of its claims, and that thereby they receive justification. Indeed, as W. Mundle points out,[225] what would be the force of Paul's argument against the Jewish exclusivists here if (following the nearly unanimous verdict of the majority school) all he says is that the Gentiles unknowingly fulfil a few of the law's demands, and that (following those in the majority school who see the passage speaking only negatively about the Gentiles) by this is shown only their responsibility before God and their just judgment by Him? Rabbinic scholars themselves did not dispute that the Gentiles had received a revelation from God[226]: 4 Ezra, which also laments lack of law obedience among the Jews, declares not only that Gentiles received the law but that some of them have kept some of its commandments -- and yet still comes to the conclusion that because of the power of repentance (enabling renewed law obedience) and because of their position as the covenant people, the Jews will be justified in the last judgment whereas the Gentiles will not.[227] If, even according to the Jews, everyone fulfils some commandments of the law, then, as Flückiger points out,[228] the doer/hearer opposition (which, as we have seen, exercises a strong influence on the paragraph) has no sense, and would scarcely cause the Jew to give up his own pride. Furthermore, if (as again we have observed) v. 14 is so closely linked to v. 13 that the justification spoken of in the earlier verse is attained through performing τὰ τοῦ νόμου, then, as Flückiger states, τὰ τοῦ νόνου must refer to the full work of the law.[229] The argument only makes sense if a revelation superior to that given to the Jews is in prospect, a revelation (and consequent law keeping) which puts to shame the Jews' attempts at law obedience. It is impossible that for Paul anything other than God's revelation in Christ could fit this description, impossible that anyone other than the Christian believer, enabled by the power of the Spirit, could fulfil the law in such a way as to put God's covenant people thus to shame.

(c) φύσει. The supposition that unbelieving Gentiles are in mind here is reinforced by some commentators through the suggestion that Stoic or Hellenistic concepts of natural law are used by the Apostle in this passage to show how Gentiles completely outside the flow of "salvation history" can know and obey God's law. We have already noticed, however, that there is considerable doubt on this question among scholars adhering to the majority position. Many of them reject the suggestion of Greek influence on the basis of insufficient evidence in the text; such evidence as there is suggests that the possibility of OT/Jewish roots is more likely. The understanding of φύσει is critical to the argument in favour of alleged Stoic influence. Even if (along with the majority of commentators) φύσει is taken with the following rather than the preceding phrase, it still seems unlikely that Stoic influence can be demonstrated. We have observed the agreement among many scholars that a Hebrew creation emphasis is far more likely to have influenced Paul than notions current in Greek popular philosophy. Further, it is highly unlikely that, so soon after issuing such a scathing denunciation of the entire Gentile world and of its utter rejection of God's revelation, the Apostle would then rely upon a notable example of that world's misguided efforts to seek God, in the form of a philosophy which emphasized the innate divinity of man (or at least his oneness with the All), in order to speak further of the Gentile world's response to the claims of God -- for Paul always the God of the Bible.

There is no hint here of any personalisation of φύσις, or any hint that it stands for a νόμος φύσεως. J. Souček, examining the use of φύσις in Gal 2:15 and Rom 11:21-24, suggests that it signifies what is "natural" in the sense of historically conditioned or determined; "... gewinnt der Begriff φύσις gewisse Momente des Gewohnheitsmässigen, soziologischen, geschichtlich Gewordenen...." In 1 Cor 11:14-18 and Rom 1:26-27, Souček continues, this is tied to God's act in creation.[230] This confirms the view taken by many of the commentators we have noted previously -- though they insist there is still some form of extra-biblical revelation here. Far from proving, however, that Paul is dependent on a Stoic natural law theory, the use of φύσις here does not give any indication at all that the Apostle is thinking here of <u>any</u> kind of general revelation (however conceived) outside of Scripture. For if φύσις has a "creation" emphasis, it has so only in the sense that it refers to us in our individual createdness, i.e. that which differentiates us from others. This point is well developed by Flückiger,

who notes that in other places where φύσις is used by Paul (Gal 2:15, 4:8; Rom 2:27; Eph 2:3, etc.), he uses the term antithetically, to designate the particular state or nature of the person(s) rather than their general human condition. Hence, φύσει signifies a "Kennzeichnung der individuellen Eigenart", and in 2:14 ought to be translated, "when Gentiles, as such...." If this is the case, the word is superfluous in our text, and could be omitted without affecting the meaning.[231]

While this interpretation seems the best way to make sense of φύσει if it is to be connected with the following phrase, it may well be preferable to link it instead with the preceding words, as is done by Cranfield, who translates, "... Gentiles which do not possess the law by nature, i.e. by virtue of their birth."[232] This does not greatly differ from the significance given to φύσει by Flückiger (the antithetical notion still being paramount, as the fact of individual differentiation is established above all by one's birth), but it does give it a more useful role in the text and also, as Cranfield points out, clarifies the meaning of the phrase νόμον μὴ ἔχοντες, indicating that while the Gentiles do now (in Christ) possess the law of God, they did not do so by birth, i.e. nationality (which thought would otherwise have to be inferred).[233] This also deals with the objection that Gentile Christians cannot be described as "not having the law". Even if, however, φύσει is taken with the following phrase, the Gentile Christians could still be described as οὐ νόμον μὴ ἔχοντες, in that they are not "by nature" (i.e. nationality) God's covenant people, but are only "grafted in" to the native stock, cf. Rom 11:17ff.

(d) ἑαυτοῖς εἰσιν νόμος. Most commentators, as we have observed, see in this phrase a further reference to the Greek motif of the νόμος ἄγραφος, though at the same time they admit that for Paul this unwritten law is firmly anchored in the Torah and subordinated to it. The consequent problem of attempting to relate these two laws (or defining the content of the unwritten law) leads to such arbitrary solutions as the existence of core requirements, reducing the Mosaic law to the love command, separating moral and ceremonial portions of the law, and so on -- though for none of these is there any real evidence; for Paul the law is indivisible.[234] Mundle makes the observation that for Paul νόμος is the Mosaic law "das ihm wie anderwärts Inbegriff göttlichen Willens, also auch aller sittlichen Normen ist."[235] Hence, as is generally conceded, the meaning of νόμος throughout the chapter must be controlled by the concept of what for Paul was the all-important law of God revealed

only to Israel (cf. Rom 9:4). Attempts to introduce into the passage thoughts of some law analogous to the Torah (similar in content but not identical), which supposition is grounded chiefly in the desire to see the passage as a reference to unbelieving Gentiles who follow a natural law (conceived of in Stoic fashion), fail for lack of evidence that any other than the Mosaic law is thought of here.

Rather more likely is the suggestion of Cranfield that Paul here does use a "stereotyped expression" drawn from Greek writers (used to refer to "the man of superior virtue who does not need the guidance or sanctions of external law") but that he employs it to clarify the situation of Gentile Christians who by birth do not have the law yet (through the power of the Holy Spirit) are enabled to come into genuine obedience to the law by themselves (without the natural advantages conferred by birth).[236] To take the phrase as anything much more than a stereotyped expression leads to difficulty in understanding how the Gentiles could themselves literally become a superpersonal natural law; to say, on the other hand, that they have "in themselves" such a law (the real implication of the majority view) cannot be justified by the Greek construction.[237]

(e) v. 15a. Virtually unanimous agreement is reached among interpreters that there is here a clear verbal reminiscence of Jer 31 (LXX 38):33 (διδοὺς δώσω νόμους μου εἰς τὴν διάνοιαν αὐτῶν, καὶ ἐπὶ καρδίας αὐτῶν γράφω αὐτούς), but any conscious application of this passage's import is rejected on the basis that Paul is speaking here of unbelieving Gentiles rather than Gentile Christians. Hence, he could not possibly have had the Jeremiah prophecy, which speaks of the messianic salvation community, in mind. As the evidence examined thus far gives little support to this latter assumption, we must reconsider the text on its own merits. Souček notes that while Paul does not always quote OT texts fully or exactly, he does take account of their meaning and context and, though he gives new significance to passages, he always does so with deliberate Christological goals in mind. Paul's entirely deliberate citation of this text elsewhere,[238] moreover, makes it almost impossible to consider "... dass Paulus all das Röm 2,15 vergessen und jene Worte nur zur Bezeichnung einzelner sittlicher Leistungen der an Christus nichtglaubenden Heiden verwendet hat."[239] Seen in this light, Cranfield's conclusion is well justified: "... the verbal similarity ... is so close that it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that Paul has the Jeremiah verse in mind."[240]

When the verse is seen as providing a clear reference to the messianic people of God's new covenant who alone, according to Paul, fulfil the law of God (8:4, cf. 13:8-10, Gal 5:17, 6:2), the tortuous explanations attempted by commentators to explain τὸ ἔργον τοῦ νόμου (which along with almost all others we take to mean "the work the law requires") either as concrete acts required on specific occasions, as a core teaching or as the moral law (all of which remain undefined), appear far less likely as the key to a proper understanding of the phrase than that view which sees here, as in τὰ τοῦ νόμου (v. 14), a reference to that genuine fulfilment of the law of God which comes about only in Christ. Cranfield explains the singular of the noun here by referring to 8:4: "In both cases the singular may be explained as intended to bring out the essential unity of the law's requirements, the fact that the plurality of commandments is no confused and confusing conglomeration but a recognizable and intelligible whole."[241]

(f) v. 15b. The central point at issue here is the degree to which Paul's understanding of συνείδησις is determined by use of the term in Hellenistic literature, particularly where, as in Stoic thought, it can be used to undergird a natural law theory. We have noted Kuss' observation that Paul develops the term within a Christological and theocentric framework, and thus provides it with a new meaning;[242] this observation appears well justified from an examination of the relevant Pauline texts. Other scholars, while maintaining the unbeliever is still in view here, also reject any Hellenistic influence and prefer to see an OT background for the word.[243] There seems no justification in the text for the view (expressed by Kuss) that the conscience presents the unbeliever with the demands of a coherent moral law whose genesis is outside Biblical revelation. Taking Kuss' other point (above) seriously we might, on the other hand, suggest that for the Apostle the conscience does have a genuinely Christological (or Christian) function (pace Käsemann, who sees only a negative witness function). It is thus one way among others (see, for instance, the idea of the "mind of Christ" or the "mind of the Spirit") by which, according to Paul, God communicates His will to the Christian believer. Where the believer's understanding of God has not reached mature levels, his conscience is described as weak (see 1 Cor 8:7, 11; 10:28-29). Even in Rom 2:15, conscience is described as being fraught with conflicting thoughts and emotions, for here as elsewhere Paul indicates that the believer is far from attaining a state of untroubled and holy bliss (note the similar

idea expressed regarding judgment in 2 Cor 5:10); a comparison may be made with 2 Cor 1:12.

Though the idea of "conscience" is drawn primarily from Greek sources rather than the OT (where there is no exact Hebrew equivalent),[244] Paul uses the term with reference to the Christian believer (see also 1 Cor 4:3-4),[245] and nowhere gives any indication he is thinking of an extrabiblical natural law. Cranfield throws light on the subject in noting that in Greek literature the term is basically popular rather than philosophical,[246] and hence is well suited to express an inner sense of right and wrong (given to the believer by God, according to Paul) rather than being, as in Stoic thought, a cornerstone for a highly developed theory of innate moral standards based on natural law. Further, there is no basis in the text here in question for a linking of συνειδήσεως with either the ἔργον τοῦ νόμου of v. 15a or τὰ τοῦ νόμου of v. 14[247] -- even if either of the latter expressions could be shown to express any natural law concept in themselves. Finally the fact that Paul seems to use the term with reference to Christian faith (note also the parallel between the use of συνειδήσεως in 1 Cor 8 and πίστις in Rom 14) lends even more support to the view we have taken that it is Christian believers of whom Paul is speaking in this paragraph.

(g) v. 16. Two alternatives for the interpretation of this verse have been offered; either (i) a short pause should be taken before v. 16, which states that the present events of v. 15 will be confirmed in the final judgment, or (ii) v. 15 and v. 16 both refer to the future judgment and should thus be taken together. Other alternatives (e.g. that v. 16 is a gloss or that the whole passage is hypothetical) command little support. It makes little difference for our contention which interpretation is adopted. It seems likely, however, on the basis that the two genitive absolutes should be taken as parallel, that there can be no difference of time between v. 15b and v. 16. The witness of the conscience, therefore, is the witness it will bear at the last judgment. This witness attests, however, to the fact that at the present time the ἔθνη show the work of the law written on their hearts.[248]

There remains, therefore, a clear reference to the last judgment,[249] and in view of what we have observed concerning this idea in vv. 6-11, it seems reasonable to see v. 16 as a resumption of this theme. This, then, is not a judgment apart from Christ (which even Bornkamm admits -- hence his vain attempt to pass the verse off as a gloss), but is rather judgment in Christ. As Flückiger observes, "... die Heilslehre ist nicht

ein zweites neben dem Gericht nach den Taten, sondern sie ist die Botschaft von der Rettung in diesem Gericht um seines Rettungswerkes willen."[250] This means that the judgment according to works, i.e. on the basis of observance of the law, is not abolished but is placed on a new footing in the gospel (surely the significance of κατὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιόν μου διὰ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ). This makes it even more certain that Paul's reference here and in the paragraph as a whole can only be to the Christian believer.

2:25-29

After an intervening paragraph (vv. 17-24), in which he sharpens his attack on exclusivist Jewish claims by showing the failure of the Jews to live up to the law's righteous standards (an exposition which shows the high regard in which the law is held by the Apostle[251]), Paul now takes up the theme of the relationship of the Gentiles and the Jews once again, only this time with special reference to circumcision, that particular aspect of the OT law which was held so important by the Jewish people.[252] In this paragraph, however, Paul uses even stronger positive language regarding the position of the Gentiles than he has done previously, and this has affected the interpretation of these verses even among those scholars convinced that Paul makes no reference to Christian believers until 3:21ff. We begin our discussion, as with 2:12-16, with a presentation of the views of the latter groups of scholars, following which we shall present our response. Our examination of the paragraph is divided into four parts, dealing with the verses in order.

(a) v. 25. In this opening verse Paul links the value of circumcision to faithful obedience to the law. He does not deny circumcision's power (a theme repeated in 3:1-4[253]) -- only that the circumcised man has through his circumcision alone fulfilled the law's demands. According to Michel, circumcision here is seen as a confirmation, not the basis, of God's promise.[254] Schlier notes that for Paul the performance of the law is extremely important and cannot be replaced by anything else (a viewpoint which the Rabbis would have shared), but the conclusion the Apostle draws from this -- that the disobedient Israelite is thereby removed from the covenant community -- would be unthinkable for any Jew.[255] Paul asserts that while circumcision indeed belongs within the history of God's dealings with His people, it is now replaced by the cross and faith in Christ (Kuss).[256] Käsemann points out that the

phrase used here to describe (by implication) the Gentiles' law obedience, τὸν νόμον πράσσειν , is stronger than the equivalent expression in v. 14.[257]

(b) v. 27. Here the abstract terms "circumcision" and "uncircumcision" are used concretely to refer to the Jewish and Gentile peoples.[258] Most interpreters see a real event (ἐάν, paralleling ὅταν, v. 14) in view here,[259] though the future λογισθήσεται indicates that the reckoning itself is something which will take place at the last judgment.[260] The δικαιώματα τοῦ νόμου are understood by most in much the same light as τὰ τοῦ νόμου (v. 14) and το ἔργον τοῦ νόμου (v.15).[261] Käsemann, however, notes a definite strengthening in the language of the passage, and feels that obedience to the whole law is in prospect: "Die Wendung τὰ δικαιώματα τοῦ νόμου φυλάσσειν in 26 charakterisiert eindeutig die streng am Gesetz festhaltende, Zugehörigkeit zur Heilsgemeinde bekundende Einstellung...."[262] He concludes from this "remarkable progression", however, that Paul advances (from vv. 13-16 to vv. 25-29) "...from what was in the first place a hypothetical case towards the description of an actually existing fact."[263] Paul would surely not concede such comprehensive law obedience to the Gentiles if he had not to the Jews, however, and the formula τὰ δικαιώματα τοῦ νόμου φυλάσσειν does not, for Käsemann, constitute a picture of Christian law obedience.[264] The question in v. 26b and the possibility entertained there for the Gentiles is fictitious -- and yet, the strengthening of the language prepares the ground for the description of an actual fact in vv. 28-29.[265]

Against this viewpoint, however, other commentators maintain that there is no need to see these verses as referring any less to actual fact than (in their opinion) do vv. 12-16. Bornkamm insists that Paul is still using the fact of occasional Gentile law fulfilment both to show the Gentiles' responsibility before God and to shame the Jewish exclusivists.[266] Kuss, however, seems to waver in his position; for him Paul is speaking throughout of real Gentiles but not of actual events -- though by this he means not actual cases of occasional law fulfilment but rather examples of the kind of complete law fulfilment which would merit God's justification.[267] H.W. Schmidt agrees that a real situation is in view, but asserts that in transferring everything from the ritual/cultic to the moral/spiritual realm Paul is demonstrating that Gentiles will be justified -- though the Apostle does this not on the basis of perceived Gentile virtues but from the perspective of the last judgment.[268]

(c) v. 27. For Käsemann, this verse, with its γράμμα-πνεῦμα (implied) antithesis, marks arrival at the chapter's climax. For Paul these terms express the opposition of old and new age and, together with the strong expression τοὺ νόμον τελοῦσα, draw the passage ever closer to portraying an actual situation in which God is justifying men.[269] Käsemann says that Paul identifies the γράμμα with the Mosaic law (as standing for the whole OT),[270] which he speaks of only positively here; δὶά is circumstantial rather than instrumental, and may even have the sense "in spite of".[271] Other commentators agree regarding the preposition[272] but divide on the new emphasis on old and new ages introduced by Käsemann. Riedl maintains that τοὺ νόμον τελοῦσα still refers to fulfilment of the natural law mentioned in v. 14, a view shared by Cambier.[273] Schmidt, however, draws a parallel to 2 Cor 3:6 and speaks of the work of the Spirit implied in 2:27 as "das entscheidende Neue", and Schlier says that Paul, using Christian terminology, passes unconsciously here to thinking of Gentile Christians.[274] Barrett notes that the law keeping mentioned here (which can neglect circumcision and yet fulfil the law) reflects not Rabbinic or any other form of Jewish belief but rather expresses the "new Christian conviction" which led Paul to a radical re-evaluation of the old faith.[275]

(d) vv. 28-29. In the concluding verses of the paragraph the division we have noted between the two groups of commentators comes to its height. According to Käsemann, Paul, drawing his conclusion from v. 27, here expounds the theme that the only true Jew is the Christian. The concluding phrase, v. 29c, is clearly "eschatological" and "confirms that the field of mere possibilities and hypothesis has given way to eschatological reality. The Torah no longer exercises any compulsion over those who have received the Holy Spirit .... The phenomenon of the true Jew ... is eschatologically realized in the Christian who has freed himself from Judaism, as from a characteristic of the old aeon and its piety."[276] Paul, continues Käsemann, uses the Stoic motif of inner as opposed to outer reality but interprets it through the OT/Jewish motif of heart-circumcision (as he does in Col 2:12 with reference to "(der) Taufe als der geistgewirkten Christusbeschneidung").[277] What until v. 28 was merely a possibility is now a reality, in the form of the Gentile Christian who fulfils the law through the Spirit (8:4) and thus becomes a member of the new covenant (2 Cor 3:6). Against the objection that Paul would not refer to the Christian as circumcised Käsemann states, "Das Gegenteil ist rightig. Nur so erhält der Zusammenhang Logik und

eine theologische Krönung. Die rhetorische Kunst des Aufbaus in unserm Kapitel gipfelt darin, dass erst der letzte Satz die Pointe bringt und die Intention des Ganzen enthüllt."[278] With this verdict Schlier agrees, noting that Paul uses the contrasting phrase ἐν πνεύματι οὐ γράμματι to refer exclusively to the Christian and thus sees the believer as fulfilling the law through the Spirit's power (8:4).[279] According to Michel, Paul is now thinking directly of the fulfilment of the messianic promise, "Damit geht der Gedanke auf das gegenwärtige Werk Gottes über, in dem sich die Verheissung verwirklicht...."[280] Wilckens also agrees that v. 29 brings the fulfilment of the Jeremiah prophecy (and hence explicit reference to the Gentile Christian). Vv. 25-27 do not serve as "positive examples of realized human possibilities"[281] but merely serve to outline the charge (against the Jew, who stands for all men); this "ethical" stress is broken, however, in v. 28, where the Holy Spirit is introduced.[282]

Against this, other commentators stand firm in the opinion that only unbelieving Gentiles are in view here. This leads to some difficulties: Kuss, noting that the strict γράμμα/πνεῦμα opposition does not (on his understanding of the two terms, see v. 27) fit here, must reduce the concept of πνεῦμα either to the attitude expressed in joyful obedience (versus compulsion through ritual demands) or to some reference to the reality of God's Spirit as spoken of in the OT.[283] Bornkamm admits that vv. 28-29 give a 'Vorausklang' of the gospel message, but denies that the Gentiles appear as God's chosen people; rather, "figurieren sie hier zur Beschämung der Juden als Hinweis darauf, dass Gott nicht auf das äusserefleischliche, sondern auf das verborgene-geistliche Wesen blickt. Paulus führt .. hart an die Grenze, wo er weiter nur als Christ, d.h. vom Geist, und zwar nicht nur als von einer eschatologischen Möglichkeit, sondern von dem Ereignis werden, der Wirklichkeit des Geistes reden kann (2:26-29)."[284] Riedl agrees that unbelievers are in view but, taking the passage as a positive evaluation of their position before God, sees here a "proleptic" fulfilment of the gospel. He comments, "In R 2,29 spricht Paulus aber noch nicht von der dauernden Erfüllung durch die neue Ordnung, sondern von einer gnadenhaft vorausgenommenen Erfüllung dieser neuen Ordnung, die überall dort eintritt, wo ein Heide, natürlich kraft der Gnade Gottes, das Naturgesetz erfüllt und von Gott dafür das eschatologische Lob erntet."[285] According to Riedl, in Rom 1:18-3:20 (especially 3:9, 20), Paul speaks of the impossibility of freedom from sin and of justification without Christ: but we cannot

suppose, he continues, that Paul believed no one had reached these goals before Christ -- the example of Abraham (Rom 4) shows otherwise.[286] In 1:18-32 Paul speaks in general terms of the Gentiles' sin, but this itself indicates there must be exceptions.[287] Cambier, in like vein, warns against "temporalizing" the work of Christ: Paul's point, he avers, is not that none are saved without receiving the gospel, but that none are saved by their own efforts.[288]

Once it is established that vv. 12-16 refer to the Gentile believer, there remains little doubt that the same verdict must a fortiori apply to this paragraph. Several reasons may be adduced for this conclusion.

The two paragraphs are clearly parallel, and stand as concluding segments of Paul's two-fold attack on Jewish privilege in the chapter (vv. 1-16, 17-29). There are a number of obvious links.

(i) The keeping (φυλάσσειν) of the law in v. 26 and the fulfilling (τελεῖν) of the law in v. 27 not only echo but indeed strengthen the statement regarding the doing (ποιεῖν) of the law in v. 14. The use of τελεῖν is particularly suggestive; cf. Paul's use of πληρόω (not dissimilar in meaning) in 8:4, 13:8 and Gal 5:14 (also ἀναπληρόω, Gal 6:2) -- all passages which are concerned with the performance of the law by Christian believers.[289]

(ii) It is surely reasonable to see in τὰ δικαιώματα τοῦ νόμου (v. 26) a reference (more strongly expressed, if anything) to the same claims of the law referred to in vv. 14 (τὰ τοῦ νόμου) and 15 (τὸ ἔργον τοῦ νόμου). Soucek notes that the action mentioned here is the same as the genuine fulfilment of the law by Christians referred to in 8:4, and is contrasted with the behaviour of the unbelievers noted in 1:32 (those who know the δικαίωμα but reject it)[290] -- though the content of the δικαίωμα is somewhat different in the latter text (albeit certainly linked to the law's demands).

(iii) That the same group is spoken of in both paragraphs is also indicated by the fact that the ἔθνη are described first as those μὴ νόμον ἔχοντα (v. 14), i.e. in the section in which Paul discusses the respective position of Jew and Gentile before the law, and then are referred to as ἡ ἀκροβυστία (v. 26), i.e. in the section in which Paul discusses the respective position of the two groups with regard to circumcision.

(iv) The theme of the inner/outer contrast evident in v. 15, where those who have the work of the law γραπτον ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις αὐτῶν

are opposed to those who have the actual tangible fact or law of circumcision, is resumed in vv. 28-29, where those who have the περιτομὴ καρδίας are contrasted with those who are circumcised in the flesh. The "Stichwort" καρδία, as Soucek notes, links the two texts.[291] It is also not unreasonable to link the ἐν τῷ κρυπτῷ Ἰουδαῖος (v. 29) with the reference to God's judging τὰ κρυπτὰ τῶν ανθρώπων in the last judgment (v. 16). The last judgment appears also to be referred to in v. 29 in the last phrase οὗ ὁ ἔπαινος,κ.τ.λ.[292]

In light of these strong parallels, as well as the fact that neither in vv. 12-16 nor in vv. 25-29 have we found support for any reference to natural law (rather are the references clearly to the OT law, conceived of by Paul as holy, just and good, cf. 7:12, 14), we must take vv. 25-29 as referring to the performance of God's law by Christians, enabled by the Spirit's power. This latter point receives further clarification in vv. 28-29. We have already noted that the existence of a very strong case for a reference in these two verses to the same motif of the new covenant inaugurated by the Spirit used by Paul in 7:6 and 2 Cor 3:6 (in terms which without doubt speak of the new life in Christ) has led many commentators, even among those who see the primary reference in Rom 2 to be to unbelieving Gentiles, to believe that the Apostle here is speaking of Christians (albeit in a preliminary or anticipatory fashion). The only real alternative is to contemplate that Paul would use language deliberately descriptive of the new covenant in Christ to speak of unbelievers, and this -- even if the unbelievers are put in a special class along with Abraham (of which there is no evidence in the text) -- is very difficult to accept.[293] The objection of Nygren and others[294] that Paul would never have spoken of the Christian as circumcised seems unsustainable when we realize that in these two verses (where he treats of the circumcision motif as relating to Jews and Gentiles) Paul is using the OT theme of the circumcision of the heart effected by the Spirit (Deut 30:6, also Ez 36:26[295]) in the same kind of way that he uses the OT theme of the law written on the heart in vv. 12-16 (where he deals with the theme of the law as relating to Jew and Gentile). The possibility of a substantive (rather than merely verbal) imitation or influence of Stoic concepts seems (as most commentators admit) highly unlikely, when placed against these clear OT themes. The clear references to the church as the "Israel of God" (Gal 6:6) and to Christian baptism as circumcision (Col 2:12) provide further weight to this argument.[296]

We conclude therefore that vv. 25-29, like vv. 12-16, refer to the obedience to God's law on the part of Christian believers (in this case, believing Gentiles). Here, therefore, we have a clear and sustained confirmation of our observations regarding Rom 9:30ff. The believer is, to be sure, freed from the law's condemnation, a condemnation which, as we have seen, brings him into a slavery from which there is no hope of human deliverance. This freeing through the work of Christ, however, is a freeing into a new, positive relationship with the law of God. Christian freedom, therefore, is not only freedom from the law's condemnation but is indeed freedom for obedience. This obedience, which is the expression of true freedom in Christ, is seen within the framework of obedience to God and His law. Thus in the Christian believer is there, for the first time, a genuine (albeit imperfect) manifestation of obedience to the law, an obedience modelled on the example of the One who alone rendered perfect obedience to the law, and thus freed the believer in Him from its just condemnation and sentence of slavery.

7:7-25

These observations shed much light on the proper interpretation of Rom 7:7ff. Though we shall examine this text later in some detail in our discussion of freedom from sin, a correct understanding of the text, insofar as it deals with freedom and the law, is already pointed toward by the passages discussed above (Rom 9:30ff, 2:1ff). On the basis of these texts, we would expect to find a positive relationship portrayed in these verses between the believer and the law of God, a relationship in which the law is seen as the framework within which a genuine obedience to God begins to be manifested and in which the law is seen as the righteous standard of God in the believer's life. There are three areas of interest to us in this section: Paul's statements concerning the law in vv. 12-14, his description of the conflict within the subject (vv. 15ff) and his summary statement (v. 25b).

Many scholars (as we shall see in our more detailed study of the text later) take the whole section to be descriptive of pre-Christian existence. These observers, however, must come to grips with Paul's undoubtedly positive statements concerning the law (vv. 12-14). Most take the view that Paul is saying that, while the law comes from God, its purpose is exclusively to call forth or multiply transgression, and hence to unmask sin in its true and dreadful colours. The law is spiritual, say Barrett and Schmidt, but is read or received only as

γράμμα, and hence perverted into the means whereby human legalism expresses itself.[297] According to Leenhardt, man has a fatal encounter with the law, which leads to the law's just condemnation coming on him and to his being held in slavery to sin.[298] Bultmann and Käsemann, indeed, argue that, according to these verses, the law's purpose is to lead men into thinking they can achieve their own righteousness, for only in such a condition (and faced with its results) are they adequately prepared to receive God's grace in the gospel.[299] Käsemann comments, "Für Pls ist die vorhandene Tora weder Gnade noch Hilfe, ihre Erfüllung nicht das Ziel, sondern der religiöse Modus menschlicher Selbstbehauptung, weshalb unser Text vom gefallenen und verlorenen Menschen, nicht vom Heilsstand spricht."[300] On this view, therefore, the law is an interim measure no longer needed when the promise has been fulfilled. As far as the Christian is concerned, the law is terminated and has no further role to play in his life.[301] In Christ the believer is freed from any relationship with the law, for the law is linked with sin and death and leads only into bondage.[302] Michel and Nygren identify the law as one of the factors of the "old aeon".[303] Michel comments, "Jedes Gebundensein an das Gesetz denkt im Rahmen der alten Weltzeit."[304] True freedom for the Christian, says Michel, is found in release from the law in the "new aeon"; the unbelieving Jew is condemned to bondage.[305] In other words, continues this view, now that the new era in Christ has dawned, the law has no more significance for the Christian. Nygren, indeed, identifying the theme of ch. 7 as freedom from the law,[306] sees the law as a destroying power,[307] and Michel declares that the authority or bondage of the law is always something to be overcome by the believer.[308] The law, on Barrett's view, has been perverted by men into a system of religion bringing only bondage, and thus has become the focus of man's rebellion against God.[309] The purpose of the law, therefore, is exclusively negative (to provoke transgression and allow sin to come to its full manifestation), and no return to its authority can or should in any way be contemplated by the believer.

On this view, the subject of the verses is pictured, according to vv. 15ff, as in some measure acknowledging the authority of the law, while at the same time rebelling against it. Taking the conflict as descriptive of pre-Christian existence, these commentators see the fight portrayed here as hopeless and futile. According to Käsemann, the battle is utterly lost; attempts to obey the law lead to utter failure.[310] Schmidt says that the verses speak of a total rebellion

against God, in which nothing good is brought forth.[311] The law, according to Bultmann, becomes a sign of rebellion.[312] The end of the conflict is slavery to sin, for obedience to God's standard is impossible (Leenhardt).[313] Some, indeed, suggest that this rebellion is God's purpose, in order to bring men into a position of total lostness and prepare them for grace: obedience to the law is itself sin.[314] These verses, therefore, indicate only the utter futility of the subject's battle against sin.

Adoption of this view leaves these commentators hard pressed, however, to explain v. 25b, which appears to speak clearly of a real service of the subject to the law of God (as well, of course, as a service to sin). Leenhardt, for instance, comments, "... 25b does not give a satisfactory summary of what precedes, for the man who expressed his opinion earlier, while approving the law of God, could not have said that he served it -- which would presuppose that he obeyed it."[315] Most commentators deal with this by taking the verse to be a gloss or by postulating a primitive textual rearrangement.[316] It is impossible, states Käsemann, that the unbeliever could be said to serve the law of God in his νοῦς: such a claim would represent only delusion.[317] Freedom in Christ brings freedom from the command to fulfil the law -- the command which none could truly satisfy.

Let us now carefully re-examine these texts in the light not only of the internal evidence but also of our overall findings concerning freedom and the law. In 7:7-12, the Apostle seeks to counter any impression he might have given in vv. 1-6 that the law is in itself in any way responsible for man's predicament or for the authority exercised in his life by sin.[318] Already in v. 7 Paul states that, far from being responsible for sin, the law is that thing which exposes sin's true nature. V. 12, as Cranfield points out, brings the "final and definitive reply to the question raised in v. 7a."[319] The law, not only as a whole, but in each one of its commands,[320] is holy, just and good. A greater contrast between the law and sin could not be drawn. If this is the Apostle's final answer to the question of the relationship between the law and sin, it becomes difficult to understand how so many interpreters forge such a strong link between the two, and even identify the law as a destroying power or power of the "old aeon". What is wrong with the view of the commentators noted above is their assumption that the just condemnation of the law on sin means that the law is in some way to be identified with sin or seen as leading men into sin.

We have seen, however, in our discussion of texts such as Rom 3:21ff, Gal 2:15ff, that this is an erroneous conclusion, and fails utterly to take account of the Apostle's distinction between law and legalism. Neither can we agree with the view (also noted above) that the law is superseded by the promise. Our study of texts such as Rom 4 has shown clearly that law and promise are not to be thus sundered. This leads us to believe, therefore, that these interpreters are reading Rom 7:7ff in the light of a mistaken interpretation of the Apostle's understanding of the relationship between Christian freedom and the law.

The relationship which does exist between the law and sin is more closely defined in v. 13 where, as many commentators quite correctly point out, the giving of the law can be said to bring about a situation in which sin is shown in its true colours. This statement of the Apostle must, however, be taken in conjunction with that made in v. 12. It is also linked with the thoughts expressed in 3:20, 4:15 and 5:13, 20-21. The same observation can be made as was offered in our discussion of those texts: this thought represents only one aspect of the Apostle's overall understanding of the law. It does not, indeed, as the following verses make clear, represent by any means what for Paul is the ultimate significance of the law.[321] V. 14 brings out the basis of the conflict which is described in the subsequent verses. The law is πνευματικός, but we are not -- or, at least, not in the sense that the law is, i.e. as that which is absolutely righteous and holy in its nature and origin. V. 14b (which could otherwise be seen as unreservedly negative) may be seen as a conscious contrast to v. 14a: the believer is seen to be sold under sin only insofar as his life is placed under the scorching light of the absolute purity and radiance of that law which comes directly from God Himself. This explains, therefore, the intense conflict pictured in the verses to which we now turn.

It is not true, therefore, to say that the law is itself πνευματικός but received only as γράμμα, and so leads only to death (as is the view of many). Rather is there a real struggle portrayed, in which a genuine measure of obedience, limited though it may be, is achieved by those who are not only πεπραμένοι ὑπὸ τὴν ἁμαρτίαν but also themselves πνευματικοί. The Christian, according to the Apostle, is not σάρκινος in the sense that the unbeliever is.[322] We shall see later on more clearly how these verses portray the Christian life. Even at this stage, however, we can see the Apostle portraying both the fleshly and the spiritual side of this life, thus reflecting the profound battle

within the believer. We have noted, in our examination of Rom 9:30ff and Rom 2, that through Christ the believer is for the first time brought into a positive relationship with the law. We shall see, as we turn to such texts as 2 Cor 3 and Rom 8:1-4, as well as Rom 13:8-10 and Gal 5: 13ff, something more both of the reality of the believer's obedience and the limitations on it imposed by his present mortal condition and ever-continuing sinful desires. This gives us good reason here, therefore, to see that these verses, far from depicting a situation of total defeat and despair, show that the battle against sin has for the first time been truly joined. We shall see this view amply confirmed when we look further at these verses in light of what they say concerning the believer's freedom from sin. It is the Christian, not the unbeliever who, as Cranfield points out, acknowledges the depth of his sin and resolves to fight against it: "Here battle is joined in earnest in a way that is not possible before a man is sanctified by the Holy Spirit. For in the Christian there is a continual growth in understanding of the will of God and therefore also an ever-deepening perception of the extent to which he falls short of it; and this growing knowledge and the deepening hatred of sin which accompanies it are not merely phenomena of the Christian's human psychology but the work of the Spirit of God."[323] It is the Christian who acknowledges the good and upholds the law (v. 16; cf. 3:31). This means that the law, which according to these verses is that which defines the good, becomes unreservedly the standard for the Christian believer in his life and conduct.[324]

Contrary to other interpreters, the battle is not lost according to these verses. As Cranfield rightly points out, τοῦτ' ἔστιν ἐν τῇ σαρκί μου (v. 18) qualifies ἐν ἐμοί and refers not to the whole man, but to the whole man as fallen.[325] The Christian is also, however, indwelt by the Holy Spirit. The conflict between willing and doing (vv. 18b-20), therefore, does not indicate a situation in which there is absolutely no performance of the good (which even for the unbeliever would be ludicrous). Rather does Paul make the observation that what the Christian "... actually does never fully corresponds to his will" (Cranfield).[326] Murray rightly notes that Paul is not making here a statistical statement; there is no reason to suppose that the subject portrayed here never did any good.[327] In fact, as Paul goes on to state, the Christian loves the law of God, and achieves a measure of obedience to it κατὰ τὸν ἔσω ἄνθρωπον (v. 22), i.e. in that he is enabled by the Holy Spirit (cf. 8:4). How could such a declaration

be made by the unbeliever? In his inmost desire (ἔσω ἄνθρωπος) the Christian delights in the law of God. Murray notes that this delight "... is not peripheral but belongs to that which is deepest and inmost in his moral and spiritual being."[328] The conflict lies, therefore, in the presence of the two νόμοι.[329] The νόμος τοῦ νοός μου (v. 23) should surely, on the basis of v. 22a, v. 25b and 12:2 be identified with the νόμος τοῦ θεοῦ (v. 22),[330] which, as elsewhere in Paul, is a clear reference to the OT law. The only alternative to the latter assumption is to take νόμος τοῦ θεοῦ with Käsemann to mean "... nicht das fixierte Gesetz, sondern den Gotteswillen in einer generellen Weise...."[331] We have seen that there is no indication that Paul knew of such a use of νόμος. Opposed to this law is the ἕτερος νόμος (v. 23; or the νόμος τῆς ἁμαρτίας, v. 23), with which the νόμος of v. 21 is probably also to be identified.[332] The Christian delights in, and in some measure obeys, the law of God, but is continually frustrated by the other law, which refers to the hold still exercised over us by sin.[333] Paul's point in using νόμος to refer to the other law is probably, as Cranfield suggests, to indicate that "... the power which sin has over us is a terrible travesty, a grotesque parody, of that authority over us which belongs by right to God's holy law."[334]

On the view we have adopted of the passage as a whole, therefore, v. 25b appears as a perfectly natural summary of the conflict described in vv. 15ff, and as a strong confirmation that this is a portrayal of the Christian life. Even those who deny that the verses refer to the believer's condition admit, as we have seen, that v. 25b stands as strong evidence to the contrary. As there is no evidence at all that the verse is either a gloss or a primitive textual rearrangement, we can point to it as an excellent summation of the battle depicted in the passage as a whole. The νοῦς, as Murray points out, represents the ἔσω ἄνθρωπος, "... that which he [the believer] most deeply and centrally is."[335] The verse expresses the tension in which the Christian lives, pulled by his own thoughts and desires to one side and the other, longing for final deliverance (cf. v. 24). These verses do not in themselves represent an exhaustive picture of the Christian life, but should be taken, in particular, with what is said in 8:1ff.[336] It is clear, indeed, that the two chapters have more in common than many have thought. While ch. 7, for instance, has its affirmation of the Christian's allegiance to the law of God, ch. 8 has its repeated admonitions (vv. 5ff) concerning the danger of the believer's reverting to a life lived κατὰ

σάρκα (see our comments on freedom from sin in Rom 8). What is clear, however, from our reading of 7:7ff, is that it is precisely the believer in Christ who, having been freed from the stranglehold of sin and the law's just condemnation, is now freed to enter into a new life of obedience to God's law. This obedience, far from being perfect, will reflect in its limited character the awful battle against sin which must be waged for the duration of this present existence. The believer is nonetheless freed to enter for the first time into a positive relationship with the law and hence to fight back with a genuine measure of success against the sin and rebellion which mark man's rejection of God and His law. This understanding of the passage is the only one which coheres with Paul's overall understanding of the relationship between Christian freedom and the law. It is, moreover, we believe, by far the most reasonable interpretation of the evidence afforded by the text itself. Thus understood, 7:7ff sets the stage well for Paul's comments in ch. 8 concerning the role of the law in the Christian life. This latter text we shall examine in our next section.

Conclusions

1. The righteousness of faith is itself the true meaning of the law. Israel failed to obtain this righteousness because it pursued the law as if by so doing it could make a claim upon God. This perversion of the law by legalism prevented Israel from understanding the true significance of the law or rendering it genuine obedience.
2. The believer is freed from the law's just condemnation through the righteousness of faith which is the law's true meaning. This means that freedom from the law's condemnation implies freedom to begin to fulfil the law on the basis of a proper understanding of its significance.
3. Christ is the goal, meaning and substance of the law. Christ Himself has fulfilled the law, and through Him the law finds a genuine (though imperfect) fulfilment in the life of the believer.
4. The supposed law obedience of the Jews is put to shame by the genuine obedience to the law manifested in the lives of pagans who have come to faith in Christ. These Gentiles show in their lives a genuine obedience ot the OT law enabled not by their own efforts but through the work of God in Christ.
5. This represents the fulfilment of the promise of Jer 31:33 that in the new covenant the law of God would be written on the hearts of believers.

6. Those (Christians) who genuinely fulfil the law -- even if they are Gentiles and not Jews -- have discovered the real meaning of the OT law, and can even be called the true circumcision. This fulfilment of the law is linked with the work of the Holy Spirit, and brings to reality the OT promise of the circumcision of the heart, effected by the Spirit.
7. The law, therefore, is the holy and righteous standard of God for the believer's life. It is the Christian who acknowledges and upholds the law, for he alone has received the freedom in Christ which enables him to fight back with a genuine (albeit imperfect) measure of success against sin. The battle against sin is truly joined for the first time in the life of the believer in Christ. This alone adequately explains the picture of intense conflict found in Rom 7:7ff, where the believer strives, against all the advances and attacks of sin, to attain a measure of obedience to the law of God. This obedience constitutes the framework within which Christian freedom operates.

Footnotes

1. On anarthrous ἔθνη as referring to some, not all Gentiles, i.e. to Gentile believers, commentators are generally agreed; see William Sanday and Arthur C. Headlam, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, p. 279; C. E. B. Cranfield, The Epistle to the Romans, 2 vols., II, 506; Otto Michel, Der Brief an die Römer, 5th ed., p. 320; and the translations of Ernst Käsemann, An die Römer, p. 267 and Hans W. Schmidt, Der Brief des Paulus an die Römer, 2nd ed., p. 171.
2. Hans Lietzmann, An Die Römer, p. 94.
3. Sanday/Headlam, p. 279.
4. Michel, p. 320 n. 5; Käsemann, p. 268.
5. Käsemann, p. 268.
6. Käsemann, p. 267: "... 30 und 31 bilden einen antithetischen Parallelismus wenngleich in 31 der Begriff νόμος den der δικαιοσύνη störend in seinen Schatten rückt, und zwar nicht aus rhetorischen Gründen ... sondern um die jüdische Frömmigkeit zu charackterisieren."
7. Käsemann, p. 267. This is reflected in his translation of v. 32: "... [Israel did not attain to the law] weil es nicht aus Glauben, sondern im Wahn aus Werken (lebte)." Similarly Michel translates, "Weil es [Israel] nicht aus Glauben, sondern aus Werken gerecht zu werden suchte" (p. 319). See also Lietzmann, p. 94.
8. C. H. Dodd, Romans, p. 163, and Paul Althaus, Der Brief an die Römer, 10th ed., p. 96, see righteousness as the goal in v. 32. See also C. K. Barrett, Epistle to the Romans, p. 194, but note that he takes

a different position in "Romans 9:30-10:21: Fall and Responsibility of Israel,"* pp. 108ff. Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., "Leviticus 18:5 and Paul: Do this and you shall live (eternally?)," JETS 14 (1971), pp. 25-26, comments that because Israel has made a law out of righteousness (νόμος δικαιοσύνης), setting up eternal standards as ends in themselves, the object of their labour has become the law from which righteousness should have come, and not righteousness itself. Kaiser claims that the νόμος δικαιοσύνης is identical with the ἰδία δικαιοσύνη of 10:2-3. He states: "... that external system which was anti-OT, anti-faith, and anti-Christian, is now called 'their own righteousness'...." (p. 26). *Monographische Reihe von Benedictina 3 (1977

9. Schmidt, p. 172: "... im νόμος scheint der Vorteil des jüdischen Gerechtigkeitsstrebens zu liegen, in ihm liegt aber auch den Grund für das Scheitern dieses Strebens."

10. Karl Berger, "Abraham in den paulinischen Hauptbriefen," MThZ 17 (1966), p. 86: "Vor Christus diente es der Nicht-Erlangung der Gerechtigkeit und damit der Bewahrung der Universalität der Verheissung, nach Christus diente es als Ursache für die Ausschliessung eines Teils der Juden der jetzt akuten Verwirklichung jener Universalität. Weil alle Menschen Abrahamskinder werden sollen, ist Israel das Gesetz gegeben."

11. Andrea van Dülmen, Die Theologie des Gesetzes bei Paulus, pp. 174-75: "Die Heilsunwirksamkeit des ἔργα νόμου bezieht sich also nicht auf ihren Charakter als Werke, sondern auf ihre Bestimmtheit durch das Gesetz."

12. See C. E. B. Cranfield, "Some Notes on Romans 9:30-33," in Jesus und Paulus, ed. E. E. Ellis and E. Grasser, p. 37 n. 4.

13. Cranfield, II, 507ff; Käsemann, pp. 267-68; Schmidt, p. 172; Michel, p. 321 n. 5; Barrett, p. 193; Peter Bläser, Das Gesetz bei Paulus, pp. 174-75; Ragnar Bring, "Die Gerechtigkeit Gottes und das alttestamentliche Gesetz: Eine Untersuchung von Röm 10,4" in Christus und das Gesetz, p. 43. Daniel P. Fuller, Gospel and Law: Contrast or Continuum, p. 72, suggests that νόμος means "principle" only at Rom 7:21, 23 and 8:2, but see our comments on these texts. Käsemann, p. 268, Barrett, "Romans 9:30-10:21," p. 110, link 9:31a with the law's positive function in 3:21.

14. Cranfield, "Notes," p. 37. See also Käsemann, p. 268; Michel, p. 321 n. 5; Bläser, pp. 173ff. If the law is seen as promising a righteous status, notes Cranfield, this balances with the thought of v. 30.

15. Cranfield, "Notes," p. 36, and also Cranfield, II, 507. Franz J. Leenhardt, Epistle to the Romans, p. 261 n. 1, considers the alternative meaning, i.e. that Israel lived according to the principle of pursuit of righteousness but did not reach righteousness, but notes that εἰς δικαιοσύνην would have been expected in this case.

16. Cranfield, "Notes," p. 37.

17. Bläser, p. 174.

18. Bläser, p. 174.

19. Cranfield, "Notes," p. 37.

20. Fuller, p. 71; Cranfield, "Notes," p. 38. The ὅτι-clause is an ellipsis; it is probably best to place a full stop after ἔργων, and to take προσέκοψαν as the beginning of a new sentence. See Cranfield,II, 508-9; Käsemann, p. 267; Sanday/Headlam, p. 280; Michel, p. 319; Schmidt, p. 171.

21. Fuller, p. 71; see also Bläser, p. 176 n. 139.

22. Fuller, p. 73.

23. Barrett, "Romans 9:30-10:21," p. 109.

24. Felix Flückiger, "Christus, des Gesetzes τέλος, ThZ 11 (1955), p. 154.

25. Cranfield, "Notes," p. 40.

26. Käsemann, p. 268; Cranfield, "Notes," p. 41; Cranfield,II, 510; Michel, p. 322; Schmidt, p. 173; Lietzmann, p. 94; Fuller, p. 73; Bläser, p. 176.

27. Fuller, p. 73. He also notes that if indeed the law taught justification by works, Paul could scarcely criticize the Jews for pursuing it on that basis! (p. 75) Bläser, p. 175, notes that Paul does not complain that the Jews see in the law a command to righteous living, but only that they try to fulfil this in such a way as to make a claim upon God.

28. Barrett, "Romans 9:30-10:21," pp. 111-12, points out that, though at 10:11 (πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων) ἐπ' αὐτῷ refers to Christ, Christ and Torah are linked positively in 9:31-32 as well as at 10:4.

29. Cranfield,II, 511-12.

30. Cranfield, "Notes," p. 41: "Having failed to take their own law seriously, they have been blind to its witness to Christ." He notes also that Israel's perversion of the law and rejection of Christ are closely intertwined, in Paul's view. Its seeking of righteousness by works blinded Israel to righteousness in Christ, and its failure to recognize Christ drove it deeper into legalistic perversion of the law (p. 42). No sudden shift of meaning, therefore, is required in the middle of v. 32: the same hardness of heart which led Israel to reject the law led it to reject Christ also. See Fuller, p. 84.

31. Cranfield,II, 505. See Michel, p. 324; Schmidt, p. 173; Sanday/Headlam, p. 282.

32. Fuller, p. 82.

33. Barrett, "Romans 9:30-10:21," p. 114.

34. Käsemann, pp. 272-73.

35. Nygren, p. 379.

36. Dodd, p. 165.

37. Althaus, p. 98: "... rein vom Ende des Gesetzes spricht Paulus in diesem gewaltigen Satze." Schmidt links the law and righteousness through the law, and dismisses both: "Christus macht dem Gesetz und der Gesetzesgerechtigkeit ein Ende...." For him, the law, understood here as in opposition to the new righteousness in Christ, is that power "... welche zur Werkgerechtigkeit verleitet und dadurch in Widerspruch zur Gnadengerechtigkeit bringt. Das prinzip einer solchen Religion der Selbsterlösung hat Christus radikal abgetan" (p. 175). Similarly, Michel comments that Christ is the "... eschatologische Ereignis jenseits des Gesetzes" -- the old era is over and the domination of the law at an end (pp. 326-27). On τέλος as "termination" see also Sanday/Headlam, p. 284; Lietzmann, p. 96, Ferdinand Hahn, "Das Gesetzesverständnis im Römer- und Galaterbrief," ZNW 67 (1976), p. 50.

38. Käsemann, p. 273.

39. Käsemann, p. 273.

40. See also Ulrich Wilckens, "Was heisst bei Paulus: 'Aus Werken des Gesetzes wird kein Mensch gerecht'?" in Rechtfertigung als Freiheit, pp. 100-101.

41. See Bläser, p. 177.

42. See Bläser, pp. 176-77.

43. Leenhardt, pp. 265-66 and 266n.

44. Barrett, p. 198.

45. Barrett, "Romans 9:30-10:21," p. 115. Yet note Barrett's comment on 2 Cor 3:6: "It was certainly not Paul's intention to suggest that the Old Testament law was merely a human instrument; it was, on the contrary, spiritual, inspired by the Spirit of God (Rom. vii.14)" (A Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, p. 112).

46. Barrett, "Romans 9:30-10:21," p. 119.

47. Barrett, "Romans 9:30-10:21," p. 120.

48. Barrett, "Romans 9:30-10:21," p. 121.

49. Bring, pp. 41-44.

50. Bring, p. 45. For a similar combination of two meanings, see Kaiser, p. 26, and A. Feuillet, "Loi ancienne et Morale chrétienne d'après l'Épître aux Romains," NRT 92 (1970), p. 794.

51. Fuller, p. 85.

52. See Cranfield, II, 519.

53. Cranfield, II, 520.

54. Cranfield, II, 520; Käsemann, p. 274; Schmidt, p. 175; Lietzmann, p. 94.

55. Käsemann, p. 275; "Der Gesetzgeber Mose tritt der personifizierten Glaubensgerechtigkeit gegenüber."

56. The reading placing ὅτι before τὴν δικαιοσύνην, rather than before ὁ ποιήσας, is to be preferred, on the grounds that the variant reading can probably be traced to Lev 18:5 (LXX). See Cranfield, II, 520-21; Michel, p. 327 n. 12; Käsemann, p. 275. Sanday/Headlam, p. 286, suggest that Gal 3:12 may be the source of the variant reading.

57. Käsemann, p. 275.

58. Käsemann, p. 276: "Für eine historisch-kritische Betrachtungsweise ist die Vergewaltigung des buchstäblichen Schriftsinnes in der Einleitung von 6 tatsächlich kaum zu überbieten."

59. Käsemann, p. 276.

60. Käsemann, p. 277.

61. Käsemann, p. 278.

62. Michel, p. 327: "Sie hat es mit dem 'Tun' zu tun, und dieses Tun lenkt den Blick des Menschen auf sein eigenes Vermögen: sie macht das zukünftige 'Leben' von dem Urteil über dies 'Tun' abhängig."

63. Michel, p. 329. He states that because Christ is the termination of the law (v. 4), "Man denkt weiterhin vom Gesetz her, während man nunmehr eschatologisch von Christus her das Schriftwort verstehen müsste" (p. 329).

64. Michel, p. 329.

65. Schmidt, p. 175.

66. Schmidt, p. 176.

67. Anders Nygren, Commentary on Romans, pp. 380-84; Dodd, pp. 165-66; Lietzmann, p. 97; Sanday/Headlam, p. 286; Althaus, p. 98; Hahn, p. 50.

68. Fuller, pp. 69-70.

69. See George E. Howard, "Christ the end of the law: the meaning of Romans 10:4ff," JBL 88 (1969), p. 334.

70. Cranfield, II, 522.

71. Cranfield, II, 522-23.

72. Flückiger, p. 155. Fuller, p. 67, notes that ἀλλά could also have been used to indicate a contrast, were that the Apostle's intention. On δέ see also Howard, p. 336, who notes that the particle often means simply "and". But see Cranfield, II, 522.

73. Cranfield, II, 520; Flückiger, p. 155.

74. As for the point that Paul never quotes large parts of the OT, we may equally well observe that there are many portions of it which he does cite. Indeed, here he quotes the Pentateuch itself to demonstrate that the OT preaches faith. No doubt if we had more letters of Paul we would have many more OT citations -- but the whole argument seems rather pointless, especially when no specifics are given, as is the case with Kasemann.

75. See Feuillet, p. 794, on Lev 18:5 as cited in v.5: "... la justice fondie par la seule pratique de la Loi a été véritablement voulu par Dieu avant la venue du Christ."

76. See Flückiger, p. 155.

77. Cranfield, II, 521-22: in which case δέ represents the "... contrast between the righteous status which Christ has won by His obedience, by His works, and the righteous status which men have through faith in Him" (p. 522). Even Wilckens, "Was heisst," p. 101, notes that the law's promise of life is not contested by the Apostle.

78. Bring, p. 41.

79. Bring, p. 52.

80. Unlikely, surely, is the view of Wilckens, "Was heisst," p. 102, who sees in v. 5 a description of the impossibility of fulfilling the law, and that now is opened (vv. 6ff) the way of faith, with the result that any further attempt to pay attention to the requirements or standards of the law is wrong. He states, "Und so tritt diese spezifisch nachchristliche Gestalt der Sünde als antievangelischer Judaismus zu den vorchristlichen Gestalten der Sünde als Gesetzesübertretung" (p. 102). Yet if Christ is seen as fulfilling the law (v. 5) and as its goal (v. 4), and if the righteousness of the law is realized to be identical with the righteousness of faith (9:30-33), then there is every reason to believe that a more faithful adherence to the law, not its rejection, is to be expected in the life of the believer in Christ.

81. Flückiger, p. 155, notes that v. 6 is directed against the Jewish misunderstanding mentioned in 9:30-33, i.e. that "... der Wille dieser Forderung des mosaischen Gesetzes die Selbstheiligung auf Grund eigener Werke sei.... Mose verlangt allerdings, dass man die vom Gesetz verlangte Gerechtigkeit tun müsse, um zu leben, aber diese Forderung wird nicht erfüllt durch übermenschliche Leistungen...." Improbable is the view of Sanday/Headlam, pp. 289-90, that these words are not a direct quotation of Scripture, but only a popular expression (expressing that which is easy as opposed to that which is impossible). Paul does not play around with the words of Scripture in such a fashion. Rather is his citation of Deut 30 a carefully planned link in his argument demonstrating that the righteousness of the law is identical with the righteousness of faith. Only when this is overlooked does the need to pursue such unlikely solutions arise. Bläser, p. 179, notes that the threefold τοῦτ' ἔστιν indicates Paul's exegetical procedure here. On this see Cranfield, pp. 523-24 (who cites examples from the DSS): "It is a special use, and reflects the exegetical terminology of Judaism."

82. Feuillet, p. 795.

83. Fuller, p. 85. He adds: "In order for Paul support the statement of 10:4 that Christ is such a continuation of the law that both convey the righteousness of God to those who respond to them in faith, he must be able to show that the law calls for a response, not of works in which man can boast, but of faith in which God receives the credit" (p. 85).

84. Fuller, p. 86.

85. See Leenhardt, p. 269.

86. Cranfield,II, 526.

87. On both points see, for instance, Cranfield, I, 137-39; Käsemann, pp. 48-50; Ulrich Wilckens, Der Brief an die Römer, 3 vols,. I, 121; Otto Kuss, Der Römerbrief, 3 vols., I, 60; Heinrich Schlier, Der Römerbrief, pp. 68-69.

88. Otto Kuss, "Die Heiden und die Werke des Gesetzes (nach Röm 2, 14-16)," in Auslegung und Verkündigung I, pp. 224-25, concludes that 1:18-3:20 can only be understood from 3:21ff, i.e. as a portrayal of the hopeless situation of man without Christ; see also Richard N. Longenecker, Paul: Apostle of Liberty, p. 121. See also under (118) below.

89. Lietzmann, pp. 39-40; see also Friedrich Kuhr, "Römer 2,14f und die Verheissung bei Jeremia 31.31ff," ZNW 55 (1964), p. 253.

90. A similar view is expressed by Michel, p. 117; Kuss, I, 64.

91. Kuss, I, 65.

92. Leenhardt, p. 78.

93. Cranfield, I, 146, notes, "... the plain future indicative is no encouragement to take these verses as merely hypothetical...." See also Althaus, p. 23.

94. See Wilckens, I, 130-31, and his conclusion that 2:1-11 prepares the ground for the universal sentence of condemnation of 3:20.

95. Schlier, p. 73.

96. Schlier, pp. 72-73.

97. Jules-M. Cambier, "Le jugement de tous les hommes par Dieu seul, selon la vérité, dans Rom 2.1-3.20," ZNW 67 (1976), pp. 192-93, says that ἔργον in Paul is used to describe God's work in Christ, the good works of the Christian, and human works of self-righteousness (as in Rom 3:20 -- but see our comments on that verse). Cranfield, I, 151-52, notes that attributing to Paul here the view that works lead to salvation involves the Apostle in an inconsistency "altogether too colossal and too glaring to be at all likely" (p. 152).

98. On the significance with respect to God's reward of eternal life of such terms as δόξα, τιμή, ἀφθαρσία, and εἰρήνη see Cambier, p. 193, "Δόξα καὶ τιμὴ καὶ ἀφθαρσία constituent donc le couronnement de la vie du fidèle, l'achèvement normal auquel parvient l'ὑπομονή.

À cette ligne de vie spirituelle, marquée par l'ὑπομονή et aboutissant à la glorieuse immortalité, Dieu accordera la vie éternelle, ζωὴν αἰώνιον." Cambier notes the similar antithesis of ζωή and ὀργή in Rom 6:22ff and Gal 6:8 (though one must note that ὀργή does not appear in these verses; however, the similarity of thought remains). According to Wilfried Joest, Gesetz und Freiheit: Das Problem des Tertius usus legis bei Luther und die neutestamentliche Parainese, 3rd ed., p. 171, Paul here speaks of a "volle Heilsentscheidung"; here "wird Gewinnen und Verlieren des Ganzen von dem Tatertrag des Lebens abhängig gemacht." For Joest, this implies a contradiction to the principle of justification by faith -- but he has not understood the significance of the verses fully. On the four Greek words and their significance, see also Cranfield, I, 147; Käsemann, p. 55; Barrett, p. 46; Felix Flückiger, "Die Werke des Gesetzes bei den Heiden (nach Röm 2.14ff)," ThZ 8 (1952), p. 28 n. 34.

99. "Rechtfertigungslehre und Gerichtsgedanke sind bei Pls also untrennbar aufeinander bezogen ... weil es in beidem um das sich am Geschöpf verwirklichende Recht des Schopfers als des Herrn der Schöpfung geht" (Käsemann, p. 52).

100. Käsemann, p. 53.

101. "Wenn Vergeltung nach den Werken nicht mehr im Sinn des von Pls bekämpften Judentums Anerkennung menschlicher Leistung, sondern endgültige Offenbarung der Herrschaft Christi im Gericht über alle menschlichen Illusionen bedeutet, steht der Glaubende gemeinsam mit Heiden und Juden unter dem gleichen Mass des gleichen Herrn ... ist das Gesetz des jüngsten Tages kein anderes als das ständig bereits gegenwärtig erfahrene 'Gesetz des Glaubens', nämlich Annahme und Bestätigung der Herrschaft Christi" (Käsemann, p. 54).

102. Käsemann, p. 54, who continues, "Im Vorgriff auf die folgenden Kapitel wird man schon hier sagen dürfen, dass echter Glaube die einzige menschliche Wirklichkeit darstellt, nicht aus der Illusion zu leben, weil allein er sein Heil in der Herrschaft Christi erblickt, es aus der Hand seines Richters und im bleibenden Stand vor dessen Angesicht empfängt, also als facultas standi extra se coram deo per Christum."

103. See also Ernst Gaugler, Der Brief an die Römer, 2 vols., I, 62; Althaus, pp. 23-24. Both, however, later assert that only unbelievers are in question in ch. 2.

104. Cambier, p. 193; see also his comment, "En effet, ὑπομονή désigne la vie chrétienne d'une manière tout à fait caractéristique, chez Paul" (p. 191). Barrett, pp. 46-47, appears to be thinking along much the same lines when he comments, "The reward, then, is promised to those who do not regard their good works as an end in themselves, but see them not as marks of human achievement but of hope in God." Werner Kümmel, Theology of the New Testament, trans. John E. Steely, p. 228, admits that the judgment of the Christian is also in view here, but thinks the tone is entirely negative, i.e. the Christian too may be condemned. But this overturns the clear sense of the passage -- and what of 8:1?

105. Schmidt, p. 45. But see Cranfield, I, 152, who notes there is no evidence elsewhere in Paul (and ἔργον occurs frequently in the

Pauline corpus) to indicate the Apostle would describe the act of faith itself as a "work". It is far more likely that Christian conduct (as an expression of Christian faith) is in view here.

106. Cranfield, I, 151. Mistaken, therefore, is the view of Dodd, p. 35, that v. 16 is the "... only definitely Christian (as opposed to Jewish) statement in the chapter."

107. See Cranfield, I, 153.

108. See Johann Riedl, Das Heil der Heiden nach R 2, 14-16.26.27, pp. 175-79.

109. Kuss, "Heiden," p. 231.

110. Barrett, p. 49. Rolf Walker, "Die Heiden und das Gericht: Zur Auslegung von Römer 2, 12-16," EvTh 20 (1960), p. 303, takes the position that v. 12 grounds only the negative side of vv. 6-11. He suggests (p. 304) that ὅσοι (v. 12a,b) does not, in light of 1:18-32, allow that some have not sinned. See also Kuhr, pp. 252-53.

111. Later, of course, on this understanding of the passage, Paul shows that no one will in fact be thus justified. For the Jewish background of the verse, see Riedl, pp. 195-96, Käsemann, p. 58. The Rabbis agreed that hearing the law was insufficient; see Wilckens, I, 132; van Dülmen, p. 75; Schlier, p. 77. Michel, p. 177, sees the verse as a "rabbinische Lehrsatz". Günther Bornkamm, "Gesetz und Natur: Röm 2.14-16," in Studien zu Antike und Urchristentum, 2nd ed., p. 99, suggests that an actual experience or situation is not in view here, only a legal rule regarding the final judgment; for Paul, there is no "empirische Menschheitsklasse" involved here (only in v. 14 is an actual situation at hand). For Rabbinic texts, see Pirqe Aboth 1:17ff, 3:9, 15, 17; Syr Baruch 46:4ff, etc., and texts listed in Strack/Billerbeck 3, 84ff.

112. See Schmidt, p. 47; Schlier, p. 76; Kuss, I, 68; Bornkamm, p. 100.

113. See Cambier, p. 198; Riedl, pp. 195-98; Sanday/Headlam, p. 58, who take the reference to be to the law of Moses, but "non quia Moyses sed quia lex."

114. Schlier, p. 77; Walker, p. 304; Michel, p. 117; Wilckens, I, 132-33.

115. See Käsemann, pp. 57-58; van Dülmen, p. 77, who comments, "Diese den Heiden erkennbare Norm beurteilt Paulus so ausschliesslich vom mosaischen Gesetz her, dass man nicht von einem eigenem Gesetz des Heiden sprechen kann." Joest, p. 142, says, commenting on 3:20, that for Paul there is only one 'relatio' between God and man, though it may be described in different ways. The existence and effect of the Gentiles' 'law' shows the Torah determines their situation also: "Die Tora Israels ist der Repräsentant, die heilsgeschichtliche Verdichtung, offenbar gemachter Name und Wesen der universalen Zornesmacht, unter der alle Menschen verschlossen sind auf Christus hin."

116. See Wilckens, I, 133; Käsemann, p. 58; Schlier, p. 77; Kuss, I, 69; van Dülmen, p. 76 n. 18; contra Walker, p. 304 who thinks the 'genus' Gentiles is in view here (cf. the statement "children

must obey," where "children" is indefinite but universal). Yet the Greek will not bear this easily.

117. See Kuss, "Heiden," p. 216 n. 9. There is general agreement that at least the first and third occurrences of νόμος in v. 14 refer to the Torah; see Bornkamm, p. 101; Schlier, pp. 77-78; Walker, pp. 304-8; Kuss, I, p. 68.

118. See Kuhr, p. 252; Althaus, p. 25; Kuss, "Heiden," p. 216 n. 9, 224-25 (cited in (88) above); Bornkamm, p. 109, who refers to Gal 5:22-23 as an example of Gentile Christians knowing and doing the law.

119. Bornkamm, p. 109, says that the expression is used by Paul to oppose Jews and Gentiles (as in 2:9, 20, 12), never Jews and Gentile Christians. According to Bornkamm, Paul opposes Jews and Gentiles in Rom 1:5, 13; 2:14; 9:24, 30; 11:11, 13, 25, etc.; Gentiles and Christians in Rom 10:20, 1 Cor 12:2; and Gentile Christians and Jewish Christians in Rom 16:4, Gal 2:12, 14. See also Kuhr, p. 252. But see Kuss, I, 71, who notes that ἔθνη is used by Paul to refer to Gentile Christians in Gal 2:12, 14; Rom 11:13, 16:4 and other places. He adds, "... in manchen Fällen ist die Bestimmung nach der einen oder anderen Seite hin schwierig."

120. See Käsemann, "The Spirit and the Letter," in Perspectives on Paul, trans. Margaret Kohl, p. 141: "The Gentiles cannot, being uncircumcised, fulfill the whole Torah at all.... the Gentile Christians ought not to be introduced into the argument prematurely, either. For the formula about 'keeping the precepts of the law' is simply not the mark of Christian obedience. The argument is therefore a hypothetical one to begin with."

121. See Kuss, I, 71; Kuss, "Die Heiden und die Werke," p. 216; Leenhardt, p. 83n; Kuhr, p. 254.

122. For ὅταν referring to actual situations, see Käsemann, p. 58; Walker, p. 305; Johann Riedl, "Salus paganorum secundum Rom 2," VD 42 (1964), p. 69; Helmut Köster, "φύσις," TDNT IX, p. 273 n. 20; Riedl, Heil, p. 222.

123. See, for instance, Wilckens, p. 133 n. 309, who sees φύσει as parallel to ἀνόμως (v. 12). Paul is contrasting the Jews who have the law with the Gentiles who do it, and indeed ἀνόμως, hence φύσει. See also Cambier, p. 200; Bornkamm, "Gesetz und Natur," p. 103; Kuss, I, 69; Schlier, pp. 77-78; Michel, p. 117.

124. See Wilckens, pp. 133-34, who notes that the Stoics felt man ought to conform written laws to the unwritten law of nature; the λόγος in man united with the λόγος in the All, and man thus lives in accord with nature (and hence according to the νόμος ἄγραφος, see on v. 15) and above all human ordinances. Philo identifies the νόμος φύσεως with the written Torah, and thus "... der gesetzestreue Jude (νόμιμος ἄνθρωπος) identisch ist mit dem stoischen Weltburger, weil beide πρὸς τὸ βούλημα τῆς φύσεως ihr Tun ausrichten...." (p. 134). According to this interpretation, Paul takes over the theme (though in modified form) and uses it for polemical rather than apologetic purposes. To the objection that the Stoics aimed at combining νόμος and φύσις, whereas Paul appears to consider them as antithetical, Bornkamm, p. 104 n. 19, notes

Paul stresses that the one νόμος (written and unwritten) is the same revelation in different forms, but the revelation to the Gentiles is understood by the Apostle against the background of the Stoic 'lex naturae'. Though for Paul (continues Bornkamm) φύσις is just an instrument, not an authority in itself, and though he does not identify it with the Mosaic law, nonetheless he has taken over Greek thought, and not just lexicographically "sondern durchaus in ihrem inneren Zusammenhang und ihrem sachlichen Gefüge" (p. 111). Kuhr, p. 256, cites Cicero, De leg I, 6, 18, "lex est ratio summa, insita in natura, quae iubet ea, quae facienda sunt, prohibetque contraria"; without a written law, one has "ratio profecta a rerum natura" (II, 4, 10). See also the extended discussion in Lietzmann, pp. 40-41.

125. Köster, p. 274 n. 229.

126. Kuhr, p. 255.

127. Kuss, I, 72-73, notes that φύσις and φυσικός in Paul always designate the relationship of man to his Creator. The "Schöpfungsordnung" is always in view; see Rom 1:26-27; 2:27; 11:21, 24abc, 1 Cor 11:14, Gal 2:15. For others who reject Stoic influence, see Schmidt, p. 48 (who translates, "aus eigenem, natürlichen Antrieb"); Schlier, p. 77 ("von selbst, aus sich selbst"); Walker, p. 305 (who speaks of a "vorgegebene Wirklichkeit und Disposition"); Stanislas Lyonnet, "Lex naturalis et iustificatio Gentilium," VD 41 (1963), p. 240 ("hoc scl. voce Paulus considerat hominem quatenus a Deo naturam suam accepit seu absque illo superaddito de quo in contextu agitur. Si ergo sermo est de necessitate gratiae, vox designat maturam hominis sine gratia; cum vero agitur de norma positiva agendi designat naturam hominis absque norma huiusmodi").

128. "Gott ist der Schöpfer der Physis und der Urheber der in ihr waltenden Ordnung, auch der mit ihr im Einklang stehenden sittlichen Ordnung" (Kuss, I, 73).

129. Kuss, I, 73-74. See also Dodd, p. 36.

130. Kuss, I, 69.

131. Leenhardt, p. 81n.

132. Leenhardt, pp. 80-81.

133. Käsemann, p. 58. See also Schlier, p. 78 (who sees τὰ τοῦ νόμου as a weakened form of the δικαιώματα τοῦ νόμου of v. 26); Kuss, I, 69 ("many things corresponding to the law"); Nygren, p. 123.

134. Riedl, Heil, p. 200.

135. Barrett, p. 51; see also Rudolf Bultmann, Theology of the New Testament, 2 vols., trans. Kendrick Grobel, I, 260.

136. Walker, p. 305.

137. Michel, p. 119.

138. Michel, p. 119.

139. Michel, pp. 119-20. Bornkamm, pp. 104-5, notes that for Plato, the citizen of the ideal state is without need of external laws; cf. Aristotle, Nichomachean Ethics IV, 1128a 31, where the free man is described thus, ὁ δὴ χαρίεις καὶ ἐλευθήριος οὕτως ἕξει οἷον νόμος ὢν ἑαυτῷ. Kuhr, p. 257, notes that the Greeks subordinated particular written laws of various states to an unwritten law applicable to all. This general line of thought was picked up by the Stoics and thereby made its way into Hellenistic Judaism. Thus Philo describes Abraham as οὐ γράμμασιν ἀναδιδαχθείς ἀλλ' ἀγράφῳ τῇ φύσει ... νόμος αὐτὸς ὢν θεσμὸς ἀγράφως (De Abr. 275-76, cited in Wilckens, I, 134). See also Käsemann, p. 59.

140. Kuss, "Heiden," p. 232.

141. "Ein durchschlagender Beweis dafür, dass sie von der grieschischen Anschauung aus verstanden werden musse, ist nicht erbracht und nicht einmal wahrscheinlich", Käsemann, p. 59.

142. Käsemann, pp. 59-60.

143. See Kuss, I, 68.

144. See Michel, p. 119; Käsemann, p. 60; Bornkamm, p. 101.

145. Thus the Gentiles come under the law's condemnation (Walker, p. 306). For Walker, the assumption that another law is in view is wrong, as it complicates the law concept unnecessarily and needs the unstated "Zwischengedanken" that this (analogous) law is identical in content with the Torah (which thought is nowhere evident in Paul). Hence, in v. 14b we have "ein totales, zentralpersonales Behaftetsein von der Tora" (p. 307). A simple knowledge of the Mosaic law would not bring Gentiles into the position of the Jews, who are so totally linked to the law they cannot escape without changing their personal identity. For the Gentile/Jewish parallel to fit, νόμος here must refer to the Torah and the Gentiles must be identified with it (pp. 307-8). Riedl, Heil, pp. 199-201, identifies the Gentiles with the law, but takes 'law' in the sense of a "göttliche Sittennorm" (see p. 10 above).

146. See Riedl, p. 201, for the view that οὕτινες indicates a characteristic "Eigenschaft" grounding a previous saying. Käsemann, p. 60, notes that οὕτινες links v. 15a with v. 14; he draws a parallel to Paul's use of the same word in 1:25, 32. See also Cranfield, p. 123, who notes that in 1:25 a fuller elaboration of something previously said is in view.

147. See Kuss, I, 69; Bornkamm, p. 106; Leenhardt, p. 81; Käsemann, p. 60; Wilckens, I, 134 n. 315.

148. Michel, p. 121.

149. Schlier, pp. 78-79, equates τὸ ἔργον τοῦ νόμου with ἀγάπη (Gal 5:14, Rom 13:8-10). Lyonnet, pp. 150-61* shows that various of the Fathers (including Augustine) spoke of a natural law among the Gentiles. This they reduced to either a negative or positive statement of the "golden rule". Lyonnet, pp. 150-51, 157-58, feels that Paul (in Gal 5:14 and Rom 13:8-10) similarly reduces the OT law to the love commandment (hence the singular ἔργον

* ("'Lex naturalis' quid praecipiat S. Paulum et antiquam Patrum traditionem," VD 45 (1967))

here). He adduces no further evidence, however, from Paul, and cites no Father earlier than Augustine. That this is not the Apostle's position in Gal 5:14 and Rom 13:8ff will be clearly seen from our discussion of these texts in Section IV, part C below.

150. Kuss, I, 75; Lietzmann, p. 40.

151. Wilckens, I, 134 n. 315.

152. See also Sanday/Headlam, p. 60; Bornkamm, p. 160. On the connection between v. 14 and v. 15a see also (146) above.

153. Käsemann, p. 60. Nygren, who resists all idea of natural law, also thinks here of man's obedience to God's revelation in concrete situations, i.e. as opposed to obedience to a natural law, according to which man has set principles on which he can act, whether he is in fellowship with God or not. "But Paul believes in God as living and ever active with man, even with the heathen, in life's concrete situations, showing him what is good and what is required of him.... He has written 'the works of the law' in their hearts so that, if they do otherwise in the concrete situation, they are aware that they have done evil" (pp. 124-25). Against this, however, it must be pointed out that in Romans Paul seems to view God's revelation as something which comes to all men (1:19-21) precisely in the form of objective standards. Käsemann is not quite so adamant, however, for he speaks of the demands of the law meeting men in the concrete situation (p. 58). His concern seems rather to be promotion of an "existential" understanding of the text, which would appear to explain his comment, "Es geht zudem Pls nicht um die Einordnung des Menschen in ein Ordnungsgefüge, wie naturrechtliche Konsequenz eines griechischen Verständnisses annimmt, sondern, wie sich aus 15 ergibt, um die Krise der Existenz" (p. 59). One wonders, however, whether Paul thought in such terms -- and what he would make of phrases such as "concrete situation", etc.? See also Bultmann, I, 261.

154. Leenhardt, p. 81. See also Barrett, pp. 52-53, who refers to the "effect" of the law, its "stamp upon their minds", over against the law itself. In the latter case, fulfilment of the Jeremiah prophecy would be implied.

155. Walker, p. 309.

156. Bornkamm, p. 107.

157. Kuss, I, 69.

158. Kuhr, p. 259.

159. Wilckens, p. 134. Käsemann, p. 60, however, denies that there is any echo of the Jeremiah text here.

160. Kuss, I, 69. Schlier, p. 78, contrasts the "geschöpfliche Dasein" of 2:15 with the "eschatologische Dasein" of Jer 31 (LXX 38):33. See also Cambier, p. 201, "... le contexte aussi demande à ce que l'on comprenne le sens obvie de païens qui vivent en tenant compte d'une disposition naturelle."

161. Kuss, "Heiden," p. 241.

162. Kuhr, p. 260. Cambier, though agreeing that the reference here is not to the "eschatological people of God", nevertheless links the text to 2:7 and 7:22ff and places a strongly positive emphasis on the works thus produced, "De même que la disposition intérieure, caractérisée par ὑπομονή, produit de bonnes oeuvres, 'la loi inscrite dans les coeurs la païens' leur montre les oeuvres à faire" (p. 201).

163. See Kuhr, p. 260; Wilckens, I, 134; Bornkamm, p. 107.

164. Wilckens, I, p. 134.

165. Kuhr, p. 259, who lists examples from Greek thought and from Philo involving ψυχή, ἔθος and διανοία.

166. Riedl, Heil, p. 203.

167. Riedl, Heil, p. 203.

168. Riedl, Heil, pp. 203-4; see also Riedl, "Salus," p. 69. Lietzmann, p. 40, suggests that Paul takes a friendlier position regarding the Gentiles here than in ch. 1, though this can be explained by the fact that in ch. 2 he is arguing polemically against the Jews.

169. Michel, p. 125. He draws a parallel to the Rabbinic concept of the two "yetzers" in the heart, and to Philo's belief that the human spirit (νοῦς) decides between good and evil (though these values are determined by the word of God). There is no adequate OT background for the concept (p. 124).

170. Bornkamm, p. 115 (see pp. 111-15). Kuss, I, 76-79, also refers to the Rabbis, and notes that Philo spoke of the conscience as the true man ruling the whole being, passing judgment on past actions though not looking ahead to future ones. He traces the concept from the Pythagoreans through Greek and Roman Stoicism into Hellenistic Judaism and Paul, the latter two of which were influenced by the "Zeitgeist". It is uncertain, according to Kuss, whether Paul got the concept from Greek philosophy directly, or through Jewish sources.

171. Bornkamm, p. 116.

172. Kuss, I, 79. This thought is echoed by Schlier, p. 79, who sees the conscience primarily as a witness to the claim of the law upon man. The heart is the place where the love-command is inscribed, and this is mediated through the conscience. See also Wilckens, I, 137, who sees the conscience as representing the requirement of the law and thus resuming the theme of vv. 14-15a. Schmidt, p. 50, says that, in contrast to the Jews, who tied God's revelation strictly to the Sinai covenant, "Paulus aber weiss ausserhalb der partikular-historischen und statuarischen Vergegenwärtigung des Gotteswillens in der Geschichte Israels noch von einer verborgen wirkenden, universal-spirituellen Kundmachung des Gottesanspruchs in der Gewissengeschichte der Menschen, freilich nur eschatologisch, erst am 'Tag Gottes' ganz erweisbar."

173. Kuss, "Heiden," p. 237; Schlier, p. 79 (see (172) above).

174. Commenting on the assertion that there is no parallel at all with Stoicism here, Leenhardt says, "If such an assertion goes too far, since the reality of conscience is a universal fact which the Stoics like every one else recognized, it is none the less true that the facts seem to suggest that 'the Pauline conscience is a ripe fruit of the Israelite ethic,' even if the popular currency of συνείδησις supplied the apostle with a word and an idea ready to be fertilized by revelation." (Leenhardt cites A. Bönhoffer, Epictet und das NT, pp. 82-83n.)

175. Käsemann, pp. 61-62. Käsemann writes that Paul speaks "... gerade nicht von dem Gesetz, das uns in ein metaphysisches Ordnungsgefüge und in Harmonie mit dem uns umgebenden All, in eine moralische Weltordnung ... oder auch nur ein natürliches Sittengesetz ... stellt, erst recht nicht von dem mit uns geborenen Recht oder dem uns leitenden sittlichen Ideal. Er weist vielmehr auf die grosse Störung hin, die denen widerfährt, welche in sich selbst einem von fremder Hand Geschriebenen begegnen und sich mit Selbstkritik wie Selbstverteidigung vor einem fremden Forum stehend vorfinden" (p. 62). He links this confusion with the deep inner division of the man of 7:7ff. The true situation of the unbeliever, however (as portrayed, according to Kasemann, either here or in ch. 7) "kann natürlich nur der Glaube verkündigend sagen" (but see our comments on Rom 7). See also Walker, pp. 310-11, who asserts that the conscience, rather than being an impartial judge, is primarily a witness of God having the function of showing the Gentiles they have sinned (and that the law is in their hearts -- in Walker's sense, that they are themselves the law, etc.), i.e. a completely negative function.

176. Bo Reicke, "Syneidesis in Röm 2, 15," ThZ 12 (1956), pp. 157-61, who grounds this thesis in the fact that Paul, having painted the picture of the Gentiles' utter lostness in 1:18ff, could not possibly have assigned a positive role to the conscience here (as part of a natural law theory). Reicke takes the text to refer exclusively to a consciousness of guilt with which the Gentiles were afflicted when confronted with the gospel (κρίνει/κρινεῖ, v. 16, being taken as present rather than future). It seems to us, however, that the whole framework of the passage indicates something more positive is in view; Paul's point here seems to be a comparison of the Gentiles with the Jews which places the former in a more favourable light than the latter. There is also practically universal agreement that v. 16 as a whole (as Reicke maintains in his article, "Natürliche Theologie nach Paulus," SEÅ 22/23 (1957-58)) refers to nonbelieving Gentiles precisely at the point of conversion. This theory does not hold the advantages of either the "Gentile" or "Gentile Christian" interpretation, for what one might term a settled situation is in view here, rather than a transitional stage from one position to the other. See further our comments below on the "Gentile Christian" hypothesis.

177. Käsemann, p. 61; see also Wilckens, I, 136.

178. See Käsemann, p. 61; Wilckens, I, 137; Kuss, "Heiden," p. 244. Schlier, p. 79, says that the thoughts of the conscience are brought to expression in the two-fold λογισμοί .

179. Kuss, I, 72. Nygren, p. 130, says, "In the last analysis whatever can be said positively about Jew and Gentile turns into something negative."

180. See Kuss, "Heiden," pp. 227-32. Nygren, p. 129, states that Paul does not speak of the Gentiles to praise their law fulfilment, but by reference to their occasional law-keeping he shatters the Jew's confidence that, because he has the law (and the Gentile does not), his standing with God is guaranteed. Kuhr, p. 254, says that vv. 12-16 are indeed an excursus designed to answer the question how God can just ἐν judge (=condemn) the Gentiles. Note, however, the doubts Kuss himself has about this position: even though Rom 2:14-15 does not indicate justification may be won by the deeds of Gentiles (any more than Jews), "... so verdient doch dieses Tun nach der in ihren Herzen eingeschriebenen Norm, das von dem mehr oder minder klaren Bewusstsein der Verantwortung vor einem 'göttlichen' Gericht bestimmt wird, jadenfalls keinen Tadel und wirkt als solche keine Unheil, so schwierig es auch sein mag, sein Verhältnis zu dem auf Grund von Glauben gewonnenen Heil begrifflich genauer zu fassen" ("Heiden," p. 236).

181. Kuhr, pp. 260-61. See Kuss, I, 72, "Für beide ... es ist ebenso sicher, dass sie Gottes Forederung gekannt, wie dass sie sie schuldhaft übertreten habe"; see also Kuss, "Nomos bei Paulus," MThZ 17 (1966), p. 220. Bornkamm, p. 107, says the point of the passage is to prove that all are under sin and are judged by the same norm. See also Bornkamm's comment, "Revelation of God's Wrath," Early Christian Experience, p. 70n.67), that it is impossible to speak of natural revelation without seeing it as a witness to God's law (i.e. as a call to obedience), of law without saying man is a sinner, and of sin without stressing the impossibility of deliverance -- except through the righteousness of faith which is now opened up through the gospel. Van Dülmen, p. 78, says Paul will not say the Gentiles have an inner relationship the Jews do not have, but rather makes the point that the distinction between the two is removed. All stand under wrath, and therefore all must have "die gleiche Kenntnis von Gottes Willen." See finally John F. Walvoord, "Law in the Epistle to the Romans," Bib Sac 94 (1937), p. 26.

182. Schlier states, "Es gibt kein lebenschaffendes Gutes in der Geschichte der Menschen." The most that can be said is "dass es in der sehnsüchtigen Tat des Guten die Welt in ihrem Verfall erhält." Through this, the world (against its own 'Tendenz') is prepared for grace. Driven out from Paradise, man can sustain this world "für die Umkehr an dem Ende, das Gott bestimmt" ("Über die Erkenntnis Gottes bei dem Heiden (nach dem NT)," EvTh 2 (1935), pp. 17-18).

183. Bornkamm, p. 115; see also the comments of Reicke cited in (176) above. On conscience as a purely negative witness, see E. Stauffer, New Testament Theology, trans. J. Marsh, p. 89.

184. Käsemann, p. 60, who comments, "Sie haben etwas der γραφή Analoges und sind darauf ansprechbar wie die Juden auf die von ihnen empfangene Tora. Sie können dem so wenig entfliehen wie sich selbst. Die Ausdrucksweise verfolgt also das gleiche Ziel wie die Anschauung vom νόμος ἄγραφος, nämlich den Menschen auf das ihn unbedingt Verpflichtende zu stellen."

185. Käsemann, p. 60. See also Strack-Billerbeck 3, 36ff.

186. See Walker, p. 305. We have already, however, noted the unlikelihood of this interpretation.

187. Michel, p. 123.

188. Althaus, p. 25.

189. Wilckens, I, 133. He says, however, "Wieweit er überhaupt konkrete Beispiele vor Augen führt und nicht vielmehr nur argumentativ den Fall heidnischer Gesetzeserfüllung setzt, geht aus dem Text nicht eindeutig hervor." See also p. 136, where he states that Paul's main theme is not justification of the Gentiles or their law fulfilment but rather the tearing down of the Jewish-Gentile barrier erected by the exclusivist claims of the Jews. He sees the mention of conflicting thoughts in the conscience as another indication Paul is not interested in speaking positively of the justification of the Gentiles here.

190. Cambier, p. 201. Cambier grounds this in Paul's missionary experience. At first, the Gentiles are hostile (1:18-32); then some believe, and so Paul designates them as God's chosen people in place of the Jews. In the course of this argument Paul inserts "en passant" (and to underline the Jews' condition) "le cas des païens qui, par une connaissance 'naturelle' de Dieu, c'est-à-dire prérévélée, inscrite par Dieu lui-même dans sa créature, peuvent s'insérer dans le plan de salut: cela sous-entend que cela se fait dans la perspective de la reconnaissance des droits de Dieu et donc dans un régime de grace et de la foi au Christ, anticipativement, tout come ce fut le cas d'Abraham" (pp. 203-4). Lyonnet, "Le ...Gentilium," p. 241, asserts that Paul calls upon the case of Gentiles "quos hodie nuncupare solemus 'bonae fidei'" to counter the Jews who believed they alone were justified. See also Riedl, Heil, p. 224.

191. Cambier, p. 204. This does not mean that all the law's requirements are fulfilled, "mais, dans une perspective qualitative, cet accomplissement dépouillé de toute καύχησις humaine et exprimant une totale soumission à Dieu; celui qui agit ainsi accueille en foi un salut de grace" (p. 204).

192. Riedl, "Salus," p. 69.

193. Riedl, Heil, p. 225.

194. Riedl, Heil, p. 205. The possession of the law means nothing, but "... wo wirkliches Gesetzes-tat vorliegt, beeinflusst sie bereits jetzt das ewige Glück des Menschen. Nun liegt bei den Heiden ein wirkliches 'Tun des Gesetzes' (τὰ τοῦ νόμου ποιεῖν) vor, was die Juden zwar nicht zugeben wollen, was Paulus aber aus der Praxis des Alltags unter den Heiden feststellt. Hätten die Heiden kein Gesetz, könnten sie auch nicht Gesetzeserfüller sein. Sie sind aber konkret Gesetzeserfüller, also müssen sie ein (Herzens-) Gesetz haben..." (p. 205).

195. Riedl, Heil, p. 206.

196. Riedl, Heil, pp. 223-24.

197. "Aber jeder mensch, der (wie Abraham) von Gott einmal aus der Versklavung an die Sünde befreit wurde, ist dadurch auch von Gott befähigt (im Sinne von Herzensgesetzes von R 2,15a, wenn er ein Heide ist), Gesetzeserfüller zu sein, bzw. zu werden" (p. 226).

198. Lyonnet, "Lex...Gentilium," p. 241.

199. See Schmidt, p. 49; Kuss, I, 71; Michel, p. 126; Schlier, p. 81 -- against his earlier view that ἐνδείκνυνται is present with future meaning, see "Über die Erkenntnis," p. 14 n. 8.

200. Kuss, I, 71.

201. See Kuss, I, 71; Bornkamm, p. 116.

202. See Schlier, p. 80. Bornkamm, p. 116, notes that if v. 16 continued the thought of v. 13 a direct reference to the always-valid law of God would be expected (contra Riedl, Heil, p. 205).

203. See Bornkamm, p. 116; Käsemann, p. 63. We have already noted the unlikelihood of Reicke's view that the reference in the passage is to the moment of conversion; see (176) above.

204. Schlier, p. 80.

205. Wilckens, I, 135-36; Leenhardt, p. 84n; Lietzmann, pp. 41-42; Käsemann, p. 63; Schlier, "Über die Erkenntnis," p. 14 n. 8; BDF para. 323.

206. See Bornkamm, p. 116.

207. Bornkamm, p. 144.

208. Bultmann, I, 217n. See also Bultmann, "Glossen im Römerbrief," ThLZ 72 (1947), cols. 200-201; Bornkamm, p. 117. Bultmann, "Glossen," col. 201, asks how a "jedermann sichtbare" phenomenon of the present can first be revealed on the day of judgment. Yet it is the truth of Paul's statement -- which is by no means evident to all men now -- which is to be confirmed. And it is Bultmann himself who continually speaks of faith as a phenomenon only "eschatologically visible"!

209. See Kümmel, Introduction to the New Testament, p. 222, and the commentaries in loc. A similar judgment applies to the view that καὶ δικαιωθήσονται has fallen out of the original text, and should be added before ἐν ᾗ ἡμέρᾳ; for a rejection of this view, see Bornkamm, p. 117; Cranfield, I, 160-61.

210. Käsemann, p. 63 -- who does, however, see a certain future reference in v. 15.

211. See Section I, part A, footnote (4).

212. Käsemann, p. 63: "Der Mensch ist darauf ansprechbar, aber keineswegs festlegbar. Erst Gott wird darauf festlegen."

213. Walker, pp. 312-13.

214. Riedl, Heil, p. 206.

215. Cambier, p. 204.

216. See Cranfield, I, 153.

217. See Flückiger, pp. 18-20.

218. E. P. Sanders, Paul and Palestinian Judaism, p. 516, comments, "If there is any passage in Paul that is aberrant, it is Rom. 2:12-16, but not because it mentions judgment on the basis of works. The curiosity is rather that it mentions righteousness by works...." Sanders feels that the solution lies in the future tense of v. 13, so that the reference is not to Christians being justified through faith in Christ but to whether or not they will be punished at the last judgment simply on the basis of whether or not they have sinned. Sanders puts the problem down to a conflict in Paul's own understanding of righteousness; usually it has to do with justification, but here it has to do with punishment. The Apostle's point is that all men, Jew and Gentile alike, stand on an equal footing before God and will be treated according to what they have done. This, however, is surely wide of the mark. There is no indication that righteousness here has any different meaning than elsewhere in Paul, and the Apostle is not interested merely in the issue of "punishment". Rather is his point that none -- not even the Jew -- can stand before the judgment seat of God unless he has been justified by faith.

219. Flückiger, pp. 26-27. Many of the texts cited by Bornkamm as references to unbelieving Gentiles appear really to refer either to Christians (Rom 9:30; 11:11, 13, 25) or to Christian and non-Christian Gentiles alike (1:5, 13; 9:24). In Rom 10:20 there is no reference to ἔθνη at all!

220. Cranfield, I, 155, comments, "The most natural explanation of the γάρ would seem to be that these verses are thought of as confirming v. 13b -- v. 13b, which might at first sight appear to conflict with the καὶ Ἕλληνι of v. 10, does not in fact do so, since those Gentiles who do the things the law requires stand in a real positive relation to the law (vv. 14b and 15a) and so may be regarded as included in the reference of οἱ ποιηταὶ νόμου in 13b."

221. See Cranfield, I, 155, "In its context in Romans this sentence can hardly be intended to imply that there are some who are doers of the law in the sense that they so fulfil it as to earn God's justification. Rather is Paul thinking of that beginning of grateful obedience to be found in those who believe in Christ, which though very weak and faltering and in no way deserving God's favour, is, as the expression of humble trust in God, well-pleasing in His sight."

222. See Cranfield, I, 153-54.

223. The theological difficulties engendered by the view that unbelieving Gentiles are thought of here are illustrated in the comment of Herman Ridderbos, Paul: An Outline of his Theology, trans. John Richard De Witt, p. 123, who, noting that the Gentiles have fallen

under God's judgment and are utterly hopeless without Christ, yet is forced to say, "Nonetheless, it may not elude us that in their deeds they are not only credited with a certain fulfilment of the law, but that they also have received in their hearts a notion from God of the requirement of the law and have put this into practice." Kümmel, Theology p. 176, admits that the Gentiles perform the works of the law, but in the next breath he says that this means "... that in actuality man does not grasp the possibility, given to him by God's creation, of existence in God's presence ...." How the fact that the Gentiles' actual obedience to God itself means they have failed to relate properly to Him is left unexplained by Kümmel. See also George Eldon Ladd, A Theology of the New Testament, pp. 565-66, who admits that (on his interpretation) "... these verses suggest theoretically that men can survive the day of judgment on the basis of good works." Not theory, however, but actuality is in view here. Worse still is Ladd's statement (p. 469) that "Romans 2:15 affirms that even Gentiles have the Law of God in some way written in their hearts; and so far as they obey the inner Law, they must be pleasing to God." Another self-induced difficulty is that of Kuss, who cannot understand how the Gentiles of this text are spoken of as doing the law and being themselves a law when the men who lived between Adam and Moses are said not to have had the law (5:13-14). He finds this puzzling, and concludes that Paul is not systematic in his thinking here -- but the problem is not with Paul in this case!

224. The suggestion of W. Mundle, "Zur Auslegung von Röm 2,13ff," ThB 13 (1934), p. 250, that the ἔθνη of v. 14 are to be identified with the Jews and Greeks described in v. 10 and with the πιστεύοντες of 1:16, i.e. as Christians, is rejected by Kuhr, p. 252, on the ground that (a) 2:6-11 is hypothetical; and (b) 1:16 and 2:10 are separated from 2:14 by 2:12, which allows only a negative judgment upon the Gentiles spoken of in vv. 12-16 and 25-29. We have already seen that Kuhr's first point is untenable and now we note that his second is also. Whether Paul wishes also to refer to believing Jews in 2:14 (who are clearly included in the group mentioned in 1:16 and 2:10) is doubtful -- but only because Paul's aim in 2:12ff (to destroy the claims of Jewish exclusivism) can most easily be attained by centring his attention on the case of the believing Gentiles only (the situation of believing Jews is discussed in v. 25a).

225. Mundle, p. 251. He also notes (p. 255) that if they are not to be justified, what is the point of their having the law? If this is the case, vv. 14-15 become superfluous. See also reff. noted in (130) and (131) above.

226. See references in Strack-Billerbeck 3, 36ff. See also W. D. Davies, Paul and Rabbinic Judaism, pp. 114-15, who discusses the close relationship of Paul's thought here to the Rabbinic concept of the Adamic or Noachic (Noachian) commandments given to the Gentiles. Some texts refer to as many as thirty such commands, though most agree there are seven. This leads Davies to conclude that Paul's thinking here is basically Rabbinic, though he borrows Greek terminology to express some of his ideas.

227. See references in Strack-Billerbeck 3, 89. See also Mundle, p. 253.

228. Flückiger, p. 27

229. Flückiger, pp. 28-29. He suggests that Deut 30:14 (quoted in Rom 10:8), where the deed is worked by God, may be the basis of our text. He notes that in Deut 29-30 ποιεῖν has the sense of full obedience.

230. Souček, pp. 107-8. He writes, "... (es) legt nahe, diese Ordnung [φύσις] als etwas der Welt und dem Menschen durch die Tat der göttlichen Schaffung Gegebenes anzusehen" (p. 108). "Zur Exegese von Röm 2,14ff," in Antwort (FS Karl Barth).

231. Flückiger, p. 32 (see pp. 31-33). See also Mundle, p. 252.

232. Cranfield, I, 156-57.

233. Cranfield, I, 157.

234. Walker, pp. 306-8, insists correctly that νόμος must refer to the Torah here. We have noted repeatedly that the primary reference of the word is to the Torah in this section, or to the Torah as standing for the OT as a whole. Nowhere is there any indication, as we have also noted, of any division within the law such as is supposed on the part of some commentators. Barrett, p. 51, observes that Paul never distinguishes between the 'ritual law' and the 'moral law', and Longenecker notes that the Rabbis made no distinctions within the law. He says that "there is no real reason for believing that Paul differed from contemporary Judaism in its insistence that the ceremonial and ethical aspects of the law together make up one indivisible whole" (p. 119). One may note also the thrust of Paul's argument against the Judaizers in Gal 5:3. See also Bläser, pp. 38ff, 63ff, for a further examination of Rabbinic sources. See also Fernand Prat, The Theology of St Paul, trans. J. L. Stoddard, I, 232: "... Paul did not make the distinction, so familiar to us today, between the ceremonial law and the moral law. For him the law forms one whole; it stands or falls together."

235. Mundle, p. 252 n. 4.

236. Cranfield, I, 157-58.

237. See Flückiger, p. 30 and p. 30 n. 39. Flückiger's assertion that this implies the Gentiles are without any law at all so that they have "autonomy" and "self-determination" as well as "die Freiheit der Entscheidung im Gegensatz zu jeder überpersönlichen Nötigung" (p. 30) is, however, surely erroneous in light of Paul's insistence (expressed in this passage) on the Christian's submission to (and fulfilment of) God's law. Paul's meaning in v. 15a is, rather, that the Gentiles do not by birth have the law, yet by grace are brought into true submission and genuine obedience to it (cf. 8:4, 7).

238. Cf. 1 Cor 11:25, 2 Cor 3:2, 3, 6, 14; 6:16.

239. Souček, p. 103. Mundle, p. 251, notes that this text was understood as messianic by the Rabbis; see references in Strack-Billerbeck 3, 89-90.

240. Cranfield, I, 159. It is interesting to note that some of the commentators whose views we examined earlier (see Riedl and Lietzmann in particular) do recognize a deliberate reference to the Jeremiah text here, though their solutions to the questions thus raised (for Riedl, that the unbelieving Gentiles can be included in the new covenant people of God; for Lietzmann, that the whole passage is hypothetical) are far less satisfactory than is the simple recognition that Gentile Christians are spoken of here.

241. Cranfield, I, 158.

242. See also the discussion of συνειδησις in Ladd, pp. 404-5, 477-78, who sees a reference to unbelievers at 2:15 but lists this as the only text giving evidence of such a use. Paul elsewhere prefers to use the word in connection with Christians.

243. In addition to authorities already cited, we may note C. Maurer, "σύνοιδα/συνείδησις," TDNT VII, 917, who observes that while for Rabbinic and Jewish literature conscience had a negative, accusing function only (see pp. 910-13), Paul adds the thought of a defending or acquitting role. This is because Paul sees man (and conscience) in light of God's pardoning act in Christ; we disagree, however, with Maurer's conclusion that the law is the chief accuser and is done away with in Christ -- rather are conscience and the law brought into positive relationship in the life of the Christian, as this passage shows. See also Davies, pp. 116-17, who speaks of a Hellenistic outward form but Jewish inner substance; Stoic terms are used to expound Jewish concepts (see further (226) above). See also the discussion in Longenecker, pp. 56-58. It is helpful to remember that in the Greco-Roman world, as in our own, the flow of ideas (and, even more, of linguistic terminology) was such that we cannot suppose even the Palestinian Jews to have lived in hermetically-tight isolation. This means also, however, that the intrusion of a particular word into one's vocabulary need not mean one has adopted all the connotations of that word or the idea it expresses; particularly is this true where cultures intersect and a free flow of communication occurs. Finally, the idea of conscience, for instance, is one common to most, if not all peoples in some form; just because Paul writes in Greek does not mean, however, any more than does the fact what he says concerning conscience may at some points agree with what various Greeks thought about it, that he has borrowed the word and all the connotations that go with it from Stoic philosophy and that we must interpret it in this light. See also (244) and (245) below.

244. Souček, p. 106 and Cranfield, I, 159-60, note the Hellenistic background.

245. This is noted also by M. E. Thrall, "The Pauline Use of ΣΥΝΕΙΔΗΣΙΣ," NTS 14 (1967-68), who, pointing out the undeniably Hellenistic tone of the term, suggests that Paul's distinctive (and expanded) usage results from his linking of conscience with the law and hence (for the Christian) with the mind of Christ, so that "... the approving judgement of conscience derives from, and is completely congruous with, the judgement of God" (p. 125). We reject her conclusion, however, that this passage suggests that conscience

exercises for the Gentile unbelievers a function similar to that the law performs for the Jew (see pp. 124-15).

246. See Cranfield, I, 159-60; he cites C. A. Pierce, Conscience in the New Testament. See also Longenecker, p. 58.

247. See Cranfield, I, 160.

248. See the discussion in Cranfield, I, 160-62.

249. In addition to other sources already noted, see Cranfield, I, 162.

250. Flückiger, p. 37.

251. Paul makes clear in this paragraph what he later echoes in 7:12-14 regarding the holiness of the law. Here the law is linked closely with the will of God, and the blame for the sorry state into which God's covenant people have fallen is placed (as in the texts noted in Section I, parts A and B above) squarely on the people's disobedience to the law, rather than on the law itself. Hence, we have here, as Schlier, pp. 86-87, notes, a positive reference to the law as the will of God. There is no support in this paragraph for the assertion of Sanday/Headlam, pp. 65-66, that the "... Law was a real expression of Divine truth, so far as it went." Rather is the law viewed as the indispensable and unchanging standard of God's truth. See also Michel, p. 128, "Dieser Wille bekundet sich in der Tora, denn Gottes Willen und Gesetz gehören eng zusammen." Even Schmidt, who thinks that Paul's real opinion is quite different from that expressed here (a view for which no evidence is given) admits (p. 51) that the Apostle does not question the Jews' belief that they have the fulfilment of all knowledge in the law. The shame into which God's Name has been brought is itself an indication of the seriousness with which any offence against God's holy standard must be judged. Schlier, remarks, "Jetzt muss Paulus dem Juden vorhalten, dass er, der mit Gott und seinem Willen so vertraut ist, der der Herold seines Gesetzes und so das Licht der Welt ist, der -- vergessen wir den Zusammenhang mit 2,1ff nicht! -- der Richter der Heiden ist, dass er durch seine Übertretung des Gesetzes den Namen Gottes bei den Heiden auf diese Weise entheiligt" (p. 87). The Rabbis themselves castigated the Jews for their disobedience to the law; see Strack-Billerbeck 3, 105-7, for examples. Even works such as 4 Ezra, however, which hold a highly pessimistic viewpoint regarding the Jews' faithfulness, still maintain that by repentance and renewed law obedience a remnant will be saved (a possibility denied, of course to the Gentiles); see 4 Ezra 7, 8. Paul takes up this attack on sin and sharpens it, showing that even the Jews will not escape; God's condemnation on sin is universal (see 3:9, 20).

252. "Die Beweisfuhrung von 12-16 wiederholt sich gegenüber dem neuen Thema und richtet sich gegen die fast selbstverständliche Annahme, dass die Beschneidung als solche rettende Kraft besitzt", Käsemann, p. 68.

253. Kuss, I, 97, notes regarding 2:25 and 3:1 that Paul does not deny the "heilsgeschichtlich" importance of circumcision (as a peculiar advantage of the Jews) but subordinates it to faith (see 4:9-12, and our comments there). Kuss notes that the value of circumcision

rests on obedience to God and fulfilment of His law. On Paul's positive assessment of circumcision in 2:25ff, 3:1ff, see also Hans Hübner, Das Gesetz bei Paulus: Ein Beitrag zum Werden der paulinischen Theologie, pp. 48-50.

254. Michel, p. 132. Schmidt, p. 54, appears to go beyond this (and the text) when he asserts that the covenant is broken by disobedience to the law because fulfilment of the law belongs to the OT sacrament as do Word and faith to the NT sacrament. Rather does Paul state here a general truth very simply and straightforwardly.

255. Schlier, pp. 87-88. He notes (citing Pirqe de Rabbi Nathan 29 (14d) and other texts) the Rabbis believed circumcision would save Israel in the Messianic era, even as did the Passover blood in Egypt. Wilckens, I, 155 n. 395 notes that Gentiles who kept all the law but were not circumcised were never recognized as Jews. See Strack-Billerbeck 3, 119-21.

256. See Kuss' excursus on circumcision in his commentary, I, 92-96.

257. Käsemann, p. 68.

258. Wilckens, I, 155 n. 398, notes, "Der Artikel ἡ ἀκροβυστία meint nicht die Heiden insgesamt, sondern erklärt sich im Gegenüber zu ἡ περιτομή." Both are used as "abstractum pro concreto" nouns.

259. See Schlier, p. 88; Schmidt, p. 54; Michel, p. 133; Wilckens, I, 160; Riedl, Heil, p. 209 n. 225 contra Lietzmann, p. 44; Kuss, I, 90. BDF para. 371 (4) refers to that which is experienced in general or concrete present circumstances. Van Dülmen, p. 82, wrongly supposes the verses are hypothetical because neither the circumcised not the uncircumcised can possibly fulfil the law; according to her, the Jew's circumcision is reckoned as uncircumcision (v. 26) and the reverse possibility (the Gentile's uncircumcision becoming circumcision) is not mentioned by Paul -- hence, all are condemned. Yet what is Paul talking about in vv. 27-29 regarding fulfilment of the law and the true circumcision (of the heart)? Van Dülmen has read her own exegetical presuppositions into the passage in order to reverse its sense.

260. See Schlier, p. 88; Wilckens, I, 155; Schmidt, pp. 54-55; Kuss, I, 90 (in spite of his view the passage is hypothetical!); Käsemann, p. 69, who points to κρινεῖ, κ.τ.λ. in v. 27 as proof.

261. See Schlier, p. 88, who cites Deut 30:16 and suggests the reference is to the righteous demands of the law. Barrett, p. 58, suggests the translation "righteous requirements," i.e. either a "complete performance of everything written in the law" (the old answer), or faith (the new answer in Christ). Barrett suggests that for Paul true obedience to the law does not mean fulfilling the "detailed precepts written in the Pentateuch" but rather "fulfilling that relation with God to which the law points ..." (p. 58). Riedl, Heil, p. 210, in line with his earlier view regarding τὰ τοῦ νόμου, refers to the "moral kernel" of the Mosaic law. But for a stronger view see Käsemann, p. 68, "Unter δικαιώματα ist wie in Dt 30,16 das Ganze der Tora gemeint ... das durch Rechtssätze bestimmt ist." Lietzmann, who views vv. 6-11

and 12-16 as hypothetical, naturally sees 25-29 in the same light. On v. 26 he comments, "Hier tritt besonders deutlich das Hypothetische dieser ganzen Ausführungen hervor. Pls sieht auch hier noch von der sonst für ihn feststehende Tatsache ab, dass überhaupt niemand das Gesetz erfüllen kann ... und setzt den Fall, ein Heide erfüllte es wirklich, wofür er ja v. 14.15 die theoretische Möglichkeit nachgewiesen hat. Er ist hier in der Stimmung zu sagen: ein Heide wird noch eher das Gesetz erfüllen als ihr Juden!" (p. 44).

262. Käsemann, p. 68.

263. Käsemann, "Spirit and Letter," p. 141. He does not, of course, mean that the events referred to in vv. 12-16 are themselves hypothetical (which would contradict the view he expresses in his Commentary); rather, he means that the possibility of justification in those verses is hypothetical -- no real justification will come out of the situation referred to there. See also Käsemann, An die Römer,p. 69.

264. Käsemann, "Spirit and Letter," p. 141.

265. Käsemann, "Spirit and Letter," p. 141.

266. Bornkamm, p. 110.

267. Kuss, I, 89-90.

268. Schmidt, pp. 56-57. See also Cambier, p. 207 n. 49, who declares that the events of v. 26 are no less real than those of v. 25.

269. Käsemann, "Spirit and Letter," p. 141;An die Römer,p. 69.

270. Käsemann, "Spirit and Letter," p. 143, "... what we call 'letter' is for Paul the Mosaic Torah in its written documentation, which is claimed by the Jews as saving privilege and which for Paul (as the essential portion and aspect of the Old Testament) is identical with Scripture as a whole." This ought not to lead one to the conclusion, however, that other parts of Scripture were for Paul superfluous or somehow secondary!

271. Käsemann, "Spirit and Letter," p. 143.

272. See Schmidt, p. 55; Kuss, I, 90; Wilckens, I, 155; Schlier, p. 88 n. 18; Lietzmann, p. 44; Michel, p. 134 n. 29.

273. Cambier, p. 208, "... le jugement se fait selon les oeuvres inspirées par la patience (=l'élan intérieur de vérité) et sans acception de personnes." Se also Riedl, Heil, p. 210; p. 214, "Auf den Besitz dieses Gesetzes schliesst er nach den Art der Juden nur aus der Erfüllung des Naturgesetzes."

274. Schmidt, p. 55; Schlier, p. 88 (he links 2:26 and 8:4, 2:27 and 7:6 and 2:29 and 2 Cor 3:6-7).

275. Barrett, p. 59, "He not merely had a new faith, and a new theology; in the light of these he came to the conclusion that the old faith --the Old Testament and Judaism--meant something different from what he had thought. It was not a closed system, complete in

itself, requiring only strict and unimaginative obedience; for those who had eyes to see it pointed forward to Christ, and the Gospel which was the power of God unto salvation-- for everyone who has faith."

276. Käsemann, "Spirit and Letter," p. 146. On 29c as future, see also Kuss, I, 92; Michel, p. 135; Wilckens, I, 158.

277. Käsemann, p. 70. He writes, "Nun wird nicht spiritualisierend von dem entnationalisierten, zum reinen Menschsein befreiten Juden, sondern eschatologisch von der Wirkung des heiligen Geistes gesprochen. Alle vorhergehende eschatologischen Aussagen sind darauf ausgeri chtet" (pp. 70-71). On the concept of circumcision of the heart, see 1QS 5:5, Jubilees 1:23 and Odes of Solomon 11:1-3. For a stress on the OT rather than Stoic background to this thought see also Wilckens, I, 156.

278. Käsemann, p. 71.

279. Schlier, pp. 89-90. For Schlier, Paul has finished with his "vorchristliche, moralische Argumentation" and from v. 25 on increasingly thinks of Gentile Christians rather than unbelievers (p. 91).

280. Michel, p. 135.

281. Wilckens, I, 160, "Das Gegenbeispiel des Heiden in VV 25-27 wird nur zur Profilierung der Anklage benutzt, dient aber nicht zum positiven Erweis beispielhaft realisierter menschlicher Möglichkeiten."

282. Wilckens, I, 160. For Wilckens, however, the Jewish convert to Christianity is primarily in view.

283. Kuss, I, 91. See also Kuhr, p. 253, "in geistiger Weise".

284. Bornkamm, p. 110.

285. Riedl, Heil, p. 211. See also Lyonnet, "Lex...Gentilium," p. 241; Althaus, p. 28, who refers to a "heidnische ... Rechtschaffenheit" which shames the Jews.

286. Riedl, p. 226.

287. Riedl, "Ṣalus," pp. 69-70, "Cum ibi Paulus de culpa theologica paganorum in genere agat, sequi videtur esse aliquos paganos qui in hanc culpam non tantum non delapsi sint, sed secundum cognitionem a Deo causatam vixerint et ideo vitam aeternam a Deo in ultimo iudicio sint assecuturi."

288. Cambier, p. 210, "Paul ... en fonction des données qui lui sont imposées par l'histoire sainte, et cela malgré la rigueur de sa thèse du salut par le seul Christ, l'étend à Abraham.... Si, dans le tableau des hommes pécheurs, tous menacés par la colère de Dieu, il y a des exceptions, comme cela est dit clairement pour Abraham c'est que, anticipativement, ils acceptaient le Christ, c'est-à-dire qu'ils se mettaient dans une situation religieuse qui attend le salut de Dieu seul."

289. This does not, of course, imply complete fulfilment of all the law's demands but rather denotes that genuine and God-centred obedience which is enabled only by the Holy Spirit in the life of the Christian.

290. Souček, p. 104.

291. Souček, p. 105.

292. Note the general agreement on the futuristic reference of this phrase among commentators cited earlier (see (276) above). See also Cranfield, I, 175-76. Note in addition the futuristic reference in v. 27 (κρινεῖ, κ.τ.λ.).

293. The various attempts to reduce the concept of πνεῦμα here are rightly rejected by most scholars (see our discussion of vv. 28-29 in the previous section). Note also Lyonnet's description of Kuss' efforts as "tentamina 'desperata'"("Lex...Gentilium," 241. See further Cranfield, I, 175 n. 3, who comments, "That πνεῦμα here denotes the human spirit is unlikely, since the inwardness of this circumcision is already adequately expressed by καρδίας. Moreover, in 7:6 and 2 Cor 3:6 (two other Pauline passages in which πνεῦμα and γράμμα are contrasted) πνεῦμα refers to the Holy Spirit."

294. See Nygren, p. 134.

295. Cranfield lists, in addition to these, Lev 26:41, Deut 10:16, Jer 4:4 and 9:26 (I, 175).

296. Thus the suggestion of Ladd, p. 538, who agrees believers are in view here but feels Jewish Christians alone may be mentioned, is unnecessary.

297. Barrett, p. 146; Schmidt, p. 129.

298. Leenhardt, pp. 190-91.

299. Käsemann, p. 193; Bultmann, 2, 264-65; Bultmann, Existence and Faith, trans. S. Ogden, pp. 135-36, 154. Bultmann comments, "It is ... God's good will that leads to man's death as a result of the 'sin' that inwardly dominates him" ("Romans 7 and the Anthropology of Paul," in Existence and Faith, p. 154).

300. Käsemann, p. 193.

301. Bultmann, 2, 268; Althaus, p. 83.

302. Althaus, p. 83.

303. Michel, p. 237; Nygren, pp. 296-99.

304. Michel, p. 237.

305. Michel, p. 237.

306. Nygren, p. 296.

307. Nygren, pp. 281-84.

308. Michel, pp. 239-40. He contrasts the freedom of the Spirit and the bondage of the law.

309. Barrett, pp. 140-42. See also p. 144: "Law and religion, which begin by drawing attention to the gulf that separates man from God, are shaped by men into a bridge across the gulf."

310. Käsemann, p. 196 -- though he sees the failure in a soteriological, rather than strictly ethical light; see pp. 194-95.

311. Schmidt, p. 130.

312. Barrett, p. 149: "Religion which, especially in its OT form, ought to keep man in a state of humble dependence before the Creator becomes (in its perverted form) the watchword of his revolt."

313. Leenhardt, pp. 192-93.

314. See V. P. Furnish, Theology and Ethics in Paul, p. 142: "Insofar as the law is served, insofar as man stands under the law at all, it becomes for him the agent of sin." See also citations in (299) above.

315. Leenhardt, p. 195.

316. See Käsemann, p. 204; Schlier, p. 235; Leenhardt, p. 195; Dodd, p. 114; Bultmann, "Glossen," col. 199; Ulrich Luz, Das Geschichtsverständnis des Paulus, p. 160.

317. Käsemann, p. 203.

318. See Cranfield, I, 341. One of the stumbling-blocks interpreters face in their analysis of our text is an inadequate understanding of vv. 1-6. Käsemann, for instance, turns to these verses as support for his view that in vv. 7ff Paul proclaims Christian freedom through the absolute abrogation of the law. Linking the two sections together, he comments that the proclamation in vv. 4-6a of the termination of the law through the coming of the Spirit prepares the way for Paul's assertion in vv. 14ff that the law is itself the instrument by which man is enslaved and from which he needs liberation. This liberation comes through the work of the Spirit; see pp. 202-3. Likewise, Bultmann, Existence, p. 153, says that in vv. 1-6 the link between law and sin is made clear in such a way that no one can say that the law "... could be preserved after sin has been brought to nothing. According to vs. 5, the law belongs with sin and leads to death. The man who has been freed from sin (ch. 6) is precisely the man who has been freed from the law, who has been placed in the status of 'the new life of the Spirit' (7:6)." This in turn forms the basis for his understanding of vv. 7ff. We have seen, however, in our discussion of vv. 1-6, that this is not what the Apostle says in those verses. What he does speak of is the end of the law's condemning role for the Christian. This, as we have noted, is a far different matter from assuming that Christian freedom means the end of the law as such. Indeed, the coming of the Spirit (7:6) enables a true understanding of the law. See also our comments on 2 Cor 3, Rom 8:1ff, 2:25ff.

319. Cranfield, I, 353.

320. Cranfield, I, 353.

321. See Cranfield, I, 355, who points out that this was not the whole purpose of God in giving the law "... any more than the fact that it was part of His purpose is sending His Son into the world that men's sin should be revealed in its true colours as enmity to God by the reaction which Christ's ministry of love would provoke means that God is to blame for the rejection and crucifixion of Christ."

322. Cranfield, I, 357.

323. Cranfield, I, 359.

324. See Murray, pp. 262-63.

325. Cranfield, I, 360-61.

326. Cranfield, I, 361.

327. Murray, p. 273.

328. Murray, p. 266.

329. See Murray, p. 265.

330. Cranfield, I, 363-64.

331. Kasemann, p. 197.

332. Cranfield, I, 362.

333. See Cranfield, I, 364.

334. Cranfield, I, 364.

335. Murray, p. 270.

336. See Cranfield, I, 357-58.

Section IV, part B

Introduction

The theme of Christ as the goal of the law (and of Christian freedom as freedom for obedience to the law) is further developed by Paul in at least two ways, both of which, we believe, have led to serious misunderstandings on the part of many commentators. The first such development is that in which the Apostle explains the relationship between Christian freedom, the working of the Holy Spirit and obedience to the law. Christian freedom is seen, on our view, as freedom, enabled by the Holy Spirit, for obedience to God's law. The believer, confronted with the righteous demands of the law, no longer faces the sentence of slavery resulting from his disobedience and rebellion, for this has been dealt with in Christ. The purpose of this liberation, however, is to enable the believer to begin a life of genuine (albeit imperfect) obedience to the law. This enabling comes through the working of the Holy Spirit in the believer's life.

This seems to us to be the best context in which to understand 2 Cor 3:1-18, which serves as a good point at which to begin our discussion of this theme. Here Paul seeks to demonstrate that the working of the Holy Spirit gives the key to the correct understanding of the old covenant, and opens the door to the proper, positive exercise of Christian freedom in the new covenant.

2 Cor 3:1-18

In this passage Paul again links the theme of Christian freedom to that of the Christian's relationship to the law. Most commentators divide the chapter into four subsections: vv. 1-3 (transitional, an introductory statement regarding Paul's vindication of his ministry); vv. 4-6 (Paul's office as minister of a new covenant); vv. 7-11 (contrast between the ministry of Paul and that of Moses); and vv. 12-18 (application to the present situation).[1] We shall use this division of the chapter as a convenient way in which to consider in order the points pertinent to our study.

vv. 1-3

There is strong agreement among commentators that a reference to the theme of the old and new covenants is already in view in v. 3, where the Apostle describes his readers as an epistle of Christ, written οὐ μέλανι ἀλλὰ Πνεύματι θεοῦ ζῶντος, οὐκ ἐν πλαξὶν λιθίναις ἀλλ' ἐν πλαξὶν καρδίαις σαρκίναις.[2] There is also agreement that Jer 38 (31):33 is in the Apostle's mind here, with its thought of the law written in the heart.[3] Bultmann suggests that what we have here is a straightforward contrast between hearts brought to life and the death-bearing Mosaic law.[4] According to Plummer, Paul declares here that what the law teaches is merely external and powerless, whereas what the Christian minister teaches is internal and life-changing.[5] There seems little doubt that Paul is contrasting the giving of the law to Moses and the establishing of the new covenant promised by Jeremiah. Neither is it to be questioned that in some sense the Mosaic law is viewed as something external, confronting men with the just requirement of God and with the reality of his own sinfulness.[6] It is important to note, however, that the Jeremiah text, as we saw in our examination of Rom 2, does not speak of the giving of a new law, but of the writing of the same law of God on men's hearts[7] -- a fact of which Paul can scarcely have been unconscious. We agree, therefore, with Hughes that it is "the selfsame law which was graven on tables of stone at Sinai that in this age of the new covenant is graven on the tables of the human heart by the holy Spirit."[8] This point is of vital importance if we are to achieve a correct understanding of the passage as a whole, and will be further touched upon below.

vv. 4-6

In v. 6 Paul takes up the idea of the ἐπιστολὴ Χριστοῦ (v. 3) and the theme of Jer 31 and expands upon them. The new covenant is characterised

not by γράμμα but by πνεῦμα. Most commentators (e.g. Plummer, Windisch, Goudge, Allo, Bultmann) understand by this that for Paul the law was and remains mere "letter", that which kills and condemns, while πνεῦμα, on the other hand, signifies the giving of the Spirit and establishing of a right relationship with God which was impossible under the law.[9] That which is merely written, states the view of these commentators is of no value for the attainment of life; thus we have here what Windisch calls "eine echt 'marcionitische' Antithese."[10] For scholars espousing this viewpoint, the law written on our hearts is more or less to be equated with the giving of the Holy Spirit.[11] Obedience to law, says Goudge, is now dispensed with; our relationship with God rests wholly on the giving of the Spirit.[12] There is also agreement that the γράμμα/πνεῦμα antithesis is not a question of the inner content as opposed to the outward form of the law (which would demonstrate a dependence on the Greek concept of the ἄγραφος νόμος for which dependence there is no evidence).[13] Rather is the opposition between two principles or powers, the law and the Spirit. According to Bultmann, "Das Gesetz ist die Macht, die, als Forderung begegnend, den Menschen in die Leistung aus eigener Kraft weist, der Geist die Macht Gottes, die, als Gabe begegnend, dem Menschen möglich macht, was er aus eigener Kraft nicht vermag...."[14]

In the view of these observers, therefore, we have here a clear disparagement of the law as that which is merely external and hard,[15] or even as a hostile power confronting men and leading them into sin and death.[16] Paul, indeed, appears to suggest, continues the view of the commentators noted above that the law is responsible for man's slavery. It kills, says Plummer, in that "it sends men along the road which leads to eternal death", its prohibitions at once "suggest the doing of what is prohibited." It sets up "lofty standards, which it does not help men to reach, and without which help they cannot reach. This takes the heart out of them, for they feel from the first that disastrous failure is certain."[17] Thus Plummer appears to place the blame for human failure as much (or more) on the law as on sin.

We have already noted, however, that for Paul (see v. 3, also Rom 3:31) the establishment of the new covenant and the attainment of Christian freedom (see v. 17) implies no such disparagement or abrogation of the law. Certainly we must take the γράμμα/πνεῦμα antithesis seriously, but surely a better way to understand it is to see here another reference to the perversion of the law by Paul's Judaizing opponents,[18] who see the law not as God's holy and righteous command

standing far above the righteousness of man, but rather as an instrument by which to gain justification before God solely on the basis of one's own efforts. This attitude of legalism, condemned by Paul also in Rom 2, is characterised both here and there as γράμμα (see comments on Rom 2:25-29) -- and it is this legalistic perversion of the law which brings man under God's just judgment (see Rom 3:9-20).[19] The law understood as γράμμα, i.e., in an "external and legalistic way" (Héring),[20] results only in bondage. Freedom in Christ (v. 17), therefore, is not to be seen within the framework of a "religion without law", but is rather to be understood from the perspective of a new relationship to God and His law along the lines of v. 3 (and Jer 31). Paul cannot mean, pace Plummer, that the law is in itself something evil or death-causing -- how could such a view be reconciled with the view the Apostle elsewhere (even in the height of the Galatian conflict) exhibits toward the law?[21]

There is, to be sure, a sense in which we can say that the law, as representing the righteous standard of God, necessarily judges men in their imperfection and disobedience (though so in fact, a fortiori, does the gospel!), and that men cannot hope to come into a right relationship with God without the giving of the Holy Spirit. In this sense we can say (as does Paul here) that the law as γράμμα kills whereas the Spirit (who, however, enables true performance of the law, see Rom 3:31, 8:4) gives life.[22] The law of Moses demands a total commitment man is unable to give, says van Unnik, and so he is condemned. But the Spirit is now given, and man is freed as he gains a true understanding of the old covenant.[23] Christian freedom, in van Unnik's view, is thus linked closely both to the OT and to the work of the Spirit.[24] This, as we shall see, provides the key to proper interpretation of this passage.

vv. 7-11

Windisch sees in these verses an attempt by the Apostle to deal with the anomalous ascription of δόξα to the old covenant; this Paul does by means of a "Christian midrash" on Ex 34:29-35, taking the text, with its mentions of the δόξα, and changing it into a proof for the negative nature of the old covenant.[25] Bultmann, while pointing out that vv. 7ff are closely linked to the context and could not, therefore, form a self-contained "midrash",[26] takes a similar view regarding the Apostle's aims here. According to Bultmann (and others), the glory of the old covenant (for Bultmann, the διακονία of Moses and the old covenant itself are identical[27]) is only mentioned to accentuate that of the new

covenant, and the old covenant is characterised as bringing death (v. 7) and judgment (v. 8), and as being a merely temporary phenomenon (v. 10).[28] Glory in the service of the old covenant, indeed, is thought by Windisch to be something evil, for the old covenant is a ministry of death (v. 7).[29] Both Windisch and Bultmann admit that δικαιοσύνη (v. 9) can also be linked with the old covenant (Rom 10:5, Gal 3:21 are cited), but this δικαιοσύνη they say, is never manifested, because the righteousness commanded by the law is never realized.[30] Bultmann likewise concedes that the glory of the old διακονία is real, as does Windisch (in spite of his view noted above!).[31] The characteristic of this glory, and of the Mosaic covenant is, on this view, summed up in the phrase τὸ καταργούμενον.[32] In comparison to the glory of the new covenant, that of the old is nothing: "Nichts bedeutet also die alte δόξα, weil die neue so überschwenglich ist...."[33] The old covenant, therefore, is τὸ καταργούμενον; it has come to an end.[34] Not only has the glory faded and disappeared, the whole Mosaic system has disappeared with it.[35] Allo declares, "... le transitoire ... n'est plus seulement l'éclat passager de la face de Moïse, mais tout le système de l'Ancienne Loi et sa gloire dont les rayons étaient l'emblème."[36] The view taken by these commentators on vv. 7-11 can best be summed up in Plummer's words: "These verses .... show what a revolution had taken place in the mind of St Paul since he had exchanged the Law for the Gospel. Christianity is so superior to Judaism that it has extinguished it."[37]

This view is based on the understanding that Paul, confronted by an OT text (one known also to the Rabbis and Philo[38]) stressing the glory of Moses' ministry, had to find some way of making this text compatible with his own belief that the law was abolished in Christ. This much is clear from the position of Windisch. At the least, Paul has to account for the presence of the δόξα at the giving of the old covenant, and he does this, says this view, by fitting it into the a minore ad maius framework, thus trying to emphasize as much as possible the greater glory of the new covenant.

Surely, however, a more straightforward and natural interpretation of the passage (and of Paul's understanding of the Exodus narrative) is possible. This can be obtained quite easily through approaching the text with the observations made regarding vv. 1-3 and 4-6 in mind. On this basis, the Apostle, far from having any need to explain away positive references to the law which might conflict with his own negative viewpoint, comes to the question of the giving of the law

with the understanding that the new covenant of Jer 31 is in fact the law written by the Holy Spirit on the hearts of men. That this work of the Spirit is even more glorious (cf. v. 18) needs adequate emphasis, but its relation to the original giving of the law is positive. Both διακονίαι were accompanied by glory, and -- surely the most natural understanding -- the glory of the first διακονία served as a pointer (not an inconvenient contrast) to the glory of the second.

Paul's recognition of the first διακονία as a ministry of death and of condemnation reflects his preoccupation with cutting the ground out from under the feet of the 'false apostles' who, like the Galatian Judaizers, exalted the law over the gospel. If we bear in mind that it is his apostolic ministry Paul is defending here, we can see that it is precisely the ministry of his opponents which is, above all, characterized as a ministry of death, for by the works of the law shall no man be justified before God (Rom 3:20, Gal 2:16).[39] When placed in the hands of sinful men, the law brings death and condemnation -- the righteous judgment of God on human sin. The law itself, however, just as much as the Holy Spirit, comes from God;[40] its inauguration was attended by divine glory, a glory surpassed only in the gospel ministry. Paul is able, therefore, to take the Exodus account at face value and give due honour to the ministry of Moses; his sole aim is to place this in proper perspective in relation to the ministry of the gospel. Cranfield points out correctly that it is not law and gospel as such which are being contrasted, but rather the two ministries, that of Moses and that of the Christian minister (particularly Paul).[41] What, therefore, is passing away (τὸ καταργούμενον, v. 11) is not, as some have suggested, the law or the old covenant, but is rather the διακονία of Moses at the giving of the law.[42] While in v. 7 καταργουμένην refers clearly to the δόξα on Moses' face, in v. 11 the intervening comments (focussing on the theme of the two διακονίαι) suggest a wider reference. Cranfield comments, "And the true explanation of the superiority of the glory of the Christian minister's ministry over that of Moses' ministry is not that the law which was given through Moses has been abolished, but that these two ministries are differently related to the ministry of Jesus Christ. Whereas Moses' ministry belongs wholly to the time of expectation, that of even the lowliest of Christian ministers belongs to the time of fulfilment, the time which is characterized by the fact that the work of Him who is the substance and the meaning of the law has been accomplished."[43]

On this view, we can understand how v. 9 fits into the pattern of Paul's thinking. If the διακονία τῆς δικαιοσύνης is taken to refer to the gospel as opposed to the law, then what is said here seems impossible to reconcile with Paul's view that in the gospel the law is established (Rom 3:31) and that the law is intended for righteousness (Rom 10:5, conceded by both Windisch and Bultmann) and is itself righteous (Rom 7:12, 14). On the other hand, if we see in διακονία τῆς δικαιοσύνης a depiction of the ministry of the Christian preacher as opposed to the ministry of Moses (or, better, of the Judaizers) then we can see how the gospel, properly understood, fulfils the law, for in the gospel the ministry of the legalist is ended and the law's righteous demand satisfied (Rom 8:4). Hughes comments, "Condemnation is the consequence of breaking the law; righteousness is precisely the keeping of the law. The gospel is not lawless. It is the ministration of righteousness to those who because of sin are under condemnation.... In accordance with the promises of the new covenant.... God's law is written on the believing heart and the power is granted .... to fulfil it."[44] Adopting this understanding of the text (with the proviso that only an incomplete, not a perfect fulfilment is in view) enables us to see vv. 7-11 as in harmony not only with Paul's view of the law as expressed elsewhere, but also with what the Apostle has said in the earlier verses of the chapter. That this understanding is correct becomes even clearer as we look at vv. 12-18.

vv. 12-18

Paul now makes specific applications to his present conflict with the Corinthian legalists.[45] The contrast of slavery and freedom runs strongly through these verses.[46]

In v. 13 the question of Paul's handling of the Exodus narrative comes again into prominence. Many interpreters see here a violent alteration of the sense of the OT text in order that it might be taken into the service of Paul's own presuppositions concerning freedom in Christ through the law's abrogation. According to Barrett, "It is very probable that Paul has modified the story in the light of his belief that the law was 'done away' in Christ."[47] He draws support for this from his understanding that τὸ καταργούμενον in vv. 11 and 13 refers to "the whole religious system based on the law."[48] Hence, according to Barrett, "Paul knows that the law, and the covenant inaugurated on the basis of it, great as they are, are nevertheless in process of being

done away."[49] The significance of the veil in the original account is clear enough, says Windisch: it shields the Israelites from a glory the appearance of which they could not bear (a thought picked up in v. 18 and applied, in a positive sense, to the gospel ministry), and it keeps the glory from being in any way profaned.[50] But Paul, according to Windisch, alters the significance of the veil, turning it into an instrument by which to shame the Jews and disparage the law. This he does by making the veil signify not the presence of the glory as such, but the ending of the glory.[51] What is shielded from the Israelites is not the glory, but its transitory nature; this veiling is seen by Windisch and others as the deliberate purpose of God.[52] Thus the radiance of Moses (originally a positive idea) is turned into a negative factor, and the (fading) glory signifies only the blindness of the Jews to the temporary nature of the old covenant.[53] Plummer notes that this does not mean Moses understood the vanishing to indicate the temporary character of the law; he merely wished the Israelites not to go on watching until the very end of the radiance. Rather, says Plummer, is it Paul "who makes the passing away of the glory a symbol of the transitoriness of the Law, and the veil a symbol of obscurity and concealment."[54]

We must again ask, however, whether a more straightforward and natural treatment by Paul of the Exodus account is not to be expected. Most of the difficulties disappear when it is realised that Paul does not approach the text with any idea that the law has been abolished in Christ; indeed, his comments here and elsewhere indicate the opposite. If this is the case, we should not expect the Apostle to undertake any disparagement of the law in his comments here; rather should we see him as seeking to put in proper perspective the relationship between law and gospel ministries. In vv. 12-13, therefore, we have a comparison of the διακονίαι of Moses and of the Christian minister. Whereas the Christian (v. 12) has the boldness to come into the presence of God (on the basis of Christ's redeeming work) and, as v. 18 will indicate, reflect His glory openly, those to whom Moses ministered did not have such free access to God's presence, and therefore could not stand to behold the reflected glory. The glory reflected in Moses is the same glory from the same God as that reflected in the Christian minister. The only difference is, as has been emphasized in vv. 7-11, that the reflection of this glory is καταργουμένη, whereas that of the glory of the new covenant is lasting. This, surely, represents no

disparagement of the law, nor does it involve any tampering with the Exodus passage. It does, however, put clearly the Apostle's perspective on the proper relationship between the two διακονίαι. The reflection of the glory on Moses' face is different from that on the Apostle's because of the different relation of their respective ministries to Christ.[54a]

What, then, does Paul mean in v. 13b (πρὸς τὸ μὴ ἀτενίσαι, κ.τ.λ.)? Surely Hughes' answer is the correct one: "We understand Paul to mean, therefore, that Moses placed a veil over his face so that the people might not gaze right to the end of the glory which was passing away, that is, that they might now behold it without interruption or concealment. It is the interruption and concealment of that glory, rather than its fading, with which Paul is not primarily concerned."[55] The reflection of the glory must be concealed right to the end of its manifestation, i.e. because it is the divine glory. In this case, εἰς τὸ τέλος indicates (just as it did in the original text, as Plummer notes) duration ("right on to the end"), rather than to the fact of the vanishing as such, which event reflects negatively on the law and so must be concealed.[56] The latter supposition represents the opposite of Paul's thinking here.

A telling point can be made from a comparison with v. 7 where, as Héring points out, Paul has a totally different (i.e. from that supposed for v. 13 by Windisch et al.) motivation for introducing the Exodus text.[57] There the Apostle states straighforwardly, and in absolute harmony with the Exodus passage, that the Israelites were unable to gaze on Moses' face because of the intensity of the divine glory; τὴν καταργουμένην is added not to suggest that the Israelites should not have looked at the glory because it was fading (such an interpretation of v. 7 would be absurd!), but simply in line with Paul's stress on the relative degrees of glory manifested in the two διακονίαι. In this case, we should take εἰς τὸ τέλος as more or less equivalent to τὴν καταργουμένην in v. 7. Hughes' proposal is amply vindicated. This also deals with the curious idea of Windisch that Paul makes of Moses (or God!) a deceiver, veiling his face to cover the sad truth of the matter (and to lead the Israelites into believing a lie, i.e. that the old covenant has not passed away; see below). Such a description of Moses would be as out of place in the Apostle's thought as the idea that the law is demonic. This means also that, pace Barrett, neither τοῦ καταργουμένου (v. 13) nor, as we have seen, τὸ καταργούμενον (v. 11) can possibly refer to the disappearance of the law as such. Cranfield

points out rightly that "... the contemporaries of Moses were in no danger of looking on the end of 'the whole religious system based on the law.'"[58] Rather is the reference to be taken, on the basis of the parallel to v. 7, to the fading of the glory on Moses' face.

Paul continues his discussion in v. 14. The Israelites' hearts, as in the days of Moses, are still hardened, and the same veil (τὸ αὐτὸ κάλυμμα) remains yet at the reading of the old covenant. Our first task is to determine the meaning of the participial clause μὴ ἀνακαλυπτόμενον, κ.τ.λ. The participle cannot be merely predicative (modifying μένει), because this would not account for the use of μή rather than οὐ.[59] Windisch notes that the similarity to the following verse (16) indicates that a new and independent thought is being expressed here.[60] This leaves two possibilities: either μὴ ἀνακαλυπτόμενον is an accusative absolute and ὅτι means "that" (rendering the translation "it not being revealed that in Christ it is done away"), or μὴ ἀνακαλυπτόμενον is to be referred to κάλυμμα and taken as causal ("it [the veil] is not lifted because only in Christ is it done away").

In our view, the second alternative is to be preferred. Several reasons may be given:

i) The accusative absolute occurs rarely, and would be awkward here;[61]

ii) The causal sense of ὅτι yields the best parallel to the thought of v. 16;[62]

iii) The participle fits most naturally with κάλυμμα anyway.[63] Plummer points out that it must almost necessarily refer to the veil, given the parallel in v. 18;[64]

iv) If an accusative absolute were in view, μὴ ἀποκαλυπτόμενον would be a much more appropriate choice of wording.[65]

What, however, is the subject of καταργεῖται? Some observers, seeing once more in the passage a disparagment of the law, conclude that the subject is the just-mentioned παλαιὰ διαθήκη. Bultmann notes that the old covenant is the ministry of death and condemnation, that which is referred to as τὸ καταργούμενον (v. 11).[66] Allo says that καταργεῖσθαι can only with difficulty be used of κάλυμμα,[67] and Kühl points to the use of καταργεῖσθαι with reference to the old covenant in vv. 7, 11 and 13.[68] We have seen, however, that τὸ καταργούμενον in vv. 7 and 13 refers to the glory on Moses' face, and in v. 11 to the ministry of Moses; in no way is the law pictured as being abolished. In addition, Windisch himself points out rightly that μὴ ανακαλυπτόμενον and the ὅτι-clause must have the same subject.[69] The parallel to v. 16, περιαιρεῖται

τὸ κάλυμμα, is thus carefully conserved. Hughes also notes that, were the old covenant to be the subject, we would have expected the verb to be in the aorist or perfect, rather than the present tense.[70] We take the veil, therefore, to be the subject of the verb here.

It then remains to ascertain the significance of the removing of the veil (vv. 15-16), which is inextricably linked to the attainment of freedom in vv. 17-18. We have seen already that Bultmann links the removing of the veil and the attainment of freedom to the abrogation of the law. This view, however, is based on his (as we have seen) incorrect understanding of the use of καταργεῖσθαι in vv. 7-13, of the phrases διακονία τοῦ θανάτου and διακονία τῆς δικαιοσύνης in vv. 7 and 9, and of the clause μὴ ἀνακαλυπτόμενον, κ.τ.λ. in v. 14.[71] Windisch, while admitting that the veil prevents the Israelites from seeing that the OT is fulfilled in Christ (understanding that the subject of καταργεῖται in v. 14b is the veil), nonetheless states that what the Jews are blinded to is the abrogation of the old covenant (this sheds some light on what he means by "fulfilled"!).[72] According to Allo, what the Jews cannot see is that the law itself teaches its temporary nature, and they are hence oblivious to the fact it has been abolished in Christ.[73] In Plummer's view, the Jews cannot see either the vanishing of the glory of the law, or the dawning of that of the gospel.[74]

On the basis of our examination of the passage, however, no grounds have been given for the assumption that the Apostle is speaking here of any such abrogation of the law. If such an idea is expressed by commentators, it has been imported by them into the discussion. Certainly the law is fulfilled in Christ -- and, without doubt, the "vanishing" of the glory of the ministry accompanying the giving of the law (not that that is the point of v. 13) is linked with the dawning of that of the ministry accompanying the proclamation of the gospel. Yet the fundamental significance of the veil must remain that of a shielding from the divine glory. Since the same glory is manifested in both διακονίαι, the only difference being that in one it is transient and in the other abiding, we should see here a positive connection between the two covenants, in which the glory manifested in the giving of the first comes to fulfilment in the giving of the second.

Some further confirmation may be gained from the fact that the Apostle states it is the same veil (τὸ αὐτὸ κάλυμμα) which remains to the present day over the hearts of the people of Israel when the old covenant ("Moses") is read. The veil is now transferred from the face

of Moses to the hearts of the people. The reason Paul can make such a ready transference is, as Hughes points out, because "... the placing by Moses of a veil over his face was in itself an action symbolical of the veil of rebellion and unbelief which curtained the hearts of the people from the true apprehension of God's glory."[75] This places the blame clearly where it belongs, on human sin -- and not on the plan of God, God's law, or Moses himself. This is quite consistent with what we have seen of Paul's understanding of the respective roles of sin and the law in the matter of human bondage. The veil, therefore, then and now, comes between the glory of God and the Israelites,[76] blinding them to the true purposes of God as revealed in the law (and hence, to the true meaning of the law). K. Barth justly observes, "Why do we not recognise what we could surely read in the law? The deception of sin lies just in the fact that, occupied from the start with asserting ourselves and looking after ourselves, we conceal from ourselves what is greatest, what is decisive in the law.... We conceal the healing and hallowing grace in order to strengthen, to extablish, to exalt, to exhibit ourselves...."[77]

This brings us back to the Jeremiah quotation, which Paul cites to remind the Corinthians that true freedom is reached only when God's law is written on men's hearts, when the veil of unbelief and legalism which perverts the true significance of the law is removed (and the law is, in a sense, freed to be itself). Oepke points out that this understanding of the text might seem "to suffer the weakness that the δόξα which Israel ought to see is that of Jesus Christ, not that of the OT God reflected in the face of Moses." But the answer for Oepke is ready to hand: "For Paul, however, there is no doubt that the redeeming God of the OT and the NT are [sic] one and the same. Hence the glory of Christ is to be seen also in the OT covenant when this is properly understood ...."[78] The veil, therefore, signifies above all the failure of the Israelites to submit to God's righteousness and obey His holy law, and is now expressed in their rejection of the only One who Himself fulfilled that law's demands (cf. Rom 8:1-4).

We are now in a position to deal with the final two verses (17-18). Here the Apostle makes reference to the work of Christ and of the Holy Spirit in relation to Christian freedom.[79] According to Windisch, v. 17 shows that freedom is "das Prinzip des Geistes" and is to be seen in opposition to the law, which is equated with slavery: freedom is freedom from everything hindering the knowledge of God and is thus

freedom from all the commands of the law.[80] In his view, freedom signifies Paul's revolutionary programme consisting of ending the validity of the law for the Christian believer (as opposed to the view of James 1:25, 2:12, which might be summarized, ὅπου ὁ νόμος, ἡ ἐλευθερία ἐστίν).[81] This freedom in Christ, continues Windisch, is illustrated in v. 18 by the phrase ἀνακεκαλυμμένῳ προσώπῳ, by which the believer is distinguished from Moses and the Israelites.[82] Other commentators likewise see Christian freedom here characterised as freedom from the old order (or aeon), i.e. freedom from all human restrictions and hence freedom from any further necessity to obey the law or any of its commands.[83] This freedom is not the "natural" freedom of the Stoics, or the freedom "from the body" of the gnostics, but is the freedom brought about by the Holy Spirit which breaks the enslaving authority of the law. Because the law is done away with through the Spirit, say these commentators, the Spirit is here linked with freedom.[84] Plummer comments, "Moses placed restrictions on external conduct; Christ transforms the inner life. Therefore to turn from Judaism to Christianity is to turn from the letter which enslaves to the spirit which gives freedom, and to welcome Christ is to receive in oneself the Spirit of the Lord."[85]

As we have noted, however, the context gives no indication that Paul is speaking here of any abrogation of the law. There is no justification, here or elsewhere in Paul, for introducing into this text the thought that Christian freedom means or is in any way defined as freedom from the law in the absolute sense, i.e. that the law no longer exists or has any bearing for the life of the Christian. This is not the point at all here. On the contrary, as van Unnik points out, what happens in the working of the Holy Spirit is that liberation occurs as a result of a true reading of the Old Testament.[86] The working of the Spirit gives the key to the correct understanding of the old covenant.[87] Cranfield comments, "The point of v. 17b we take to be that the law, when it is understood in the light of Christ, when it is established in its true character by the Holy Spirit, so far from being the 'bondage' into which legalism has perverted it, is true freedom...."[88] Thus Paul and James are seen to be in perfect harmony!

Freedom, therefore, means freedom from the wrongful use of the law as mere γράμμα, an instrument for human legalism. What the blinded intellect cannot see in the OT, the believer, enlightened as to its true significance, apprehends -- and this is none other than Christ Himself.[89] This view coheres perfectly with the thought, present

earlier in the chapter, of the law being written on men's hearts. We take Paul's concluding comments here, therefore, to refer to the freedom from human legalism and the bondage of sin (and from the law's just condemnation) which represents at the same time the writing of that very law on the hearts of men, thus enabling true obedience (though as yet in this life only in an imperfect manner) to the law of God. With the meaning thus elaborated, the text finds a strong parallel in Rom 8:1-4.

Rom 8:1-4

In this text Paul also speaks of the freedom wrought through Christ in relation to the working of the Holy Spirit in the believer's life bringing about the beginning of a genuine fulfilment of the law. No longer does the believer face only the law's condemnation; this has been ended in Christ. Now he is free -- but this freedom, as in 2 Cor 3:1-18, has a positive content. The believer is freed to fulfil the law's just requirement. This fulfilling comes about through the working of the Holy Spirit -- not, as many commentators supposed, through an opposing of the law and the Spirit in which the law is done away with and the believer set free from its hold. We must now show how we arrive at this understanding of the text.

In 7:7-25 Paul has argued (as we have noted) against the supposition (which might have been inferred from his comments in 7:1-6) that the law is in any way to be identified with sin. At 8:1, he returns to the theme of 7:1-6,[90] and in vv. 2-4 develops his thought further. An adequate appreciation of the link between 7:1-6 and 8:1-4 is, therefore, of great importance in arriving at a correct understanding of the latter passage.[91]

According to Leenhardt, 7:1-6 indicates that the law's régime is ended, and in 8:1 Paul continues this thought by making it clear that the authority of the law has been replaced by that of Christ.[92] The earlier passage, points out Schlier, has declared that the believer is dead to and therefore freed from the law through Christ, and now a new "Ordnung" (that of faith) has begun.[93] Barrett states that, because Christians have died to the law (as illustrated in 7:1-6) they now (8:1) can be said to have escaped judgment.[94] According to these commentators, therefore, freedom in these verses is defined by release from any obligation to keep the law, from which we have been discharged, according to 7:1-6.

We have seen, however, that the earlier passage speaks only of the freedom of the Christian from the law's just condemnation on sin. The point, indeed, of the lengthy clarification in vv. 7-25 is to guard against the inference that the law is of no further relevance for the Christian. We have amply outlined our view that vv. 7-25 speak of the continuing (and vital) role of the law in the Christian life. Failure to appreciate the significance of either vv. 1-6 or 7-25 vitiates any attempt to reach a proper understading of 8:1-4.

We take ἄρα (8:1) to refer to the theme of 7:1-6, that the law's just condemnation, having been borne by Christ, is now ended for the believer.[95] What is here proclaimed is that God has now (νῦν) acted in Christ to secure our freedom. Whatever the nature of this freedom is, it does not involve the end of the believer's relationship with the law. Indeed, as we shall see, in this passage the Apostle is at pains to point out that, through Christ, the law's real place in our lives is for the first time truly established and a measure of genuine obedience attained. This thought must be kept in mind as we look at vv. 2-4.

V. 2 is linked to the preceding verse by γάρ. It provides the basis for the statement of v. 1,[96] and elucidates 7:6b (ὥστε δουλεύειν, κ.τ.λ.). Most interpreters agree that neither occurrence of νόμος in this verse refers to the law -- what Paul is really contrasting is the working of the Holy Spirit and the working of sin and death.[97] The law is never referred to by Paul as the law "of sin and death",[98] and the latter phrase seems naturally to connect with what is referred to as the νόμος τῆς ἁμαρτίας (7:25) or the ἕτερος νόμος (7:23).[99] The reference to the νόμος τοῦ Πνεύματος τῆς ζωῆς seems best accounted for by the predominant theme of the section, the work of the Holy Spirit -- even though, as Cranfield notes, a parallel might be drawn to the νόμος τοῦ νοός μου (7:23) or the νόμος θεοῦ (7:25) which, as we have seen, refer to the law.[100] Cranfield points out, however, that it is the Holy Spirit and not the law who, according to v. 2, has brought freedom about, and so a reference to the law here seems unlikely.[101]

This does not stop many commentators, however, from making observations concerning the law based on this verse. Kuss suggests that two "Ordnungen" are in view here, one ruled by the Spirit and the other by sin and death, and that in the "neue Heilszeit" (νῦν, v. 1), the role of the law is ended.[102] According to Leenhardt, the text indicates that the law only brings sin to light; having found freedom in Christ, the believer discovers a new source of authority, and the

law's régime is ended. He comments, "The transitory dispensation of the law was intended to open to sinners a new possibility which is finally realized in the coming of Jesus Christ."[103] Käsemann, noting rightly that this verse places the theme of freedom at the centre of this discussion, declares that with the change of "aeons" the law is done away with. In light of the freedom wrought in Christ, one could only consider the law to have any continuing validity if it were reduced to its moral teachings -- but this is not how Paul views the law, says Käsemann (rightly). Hence, he continues, the Holy Spirit is said here to free the believer not only from sin and death, but also "... von deren Instrument, dem irreparabel pervertierten Mosegesetz."[104] The implications for Christian freedom are clear: "Gottes Wille wird allein durch den Geist erfahren. Es ist ein wesentliches Stück christlicher Freiheit, dass sie nicht unter einer nova lex steht, ihr Gehorsam sich nicht an der Tora, sondern letztlich allein am Kyrios orientiert."[105] Similar views are taken by several others.[106]

The text, however, says nothing about the abolition of the law or its replacement by the Holy Spirit. We have seen that the law itself is not referred to here. The Holy Spirit, on the other hand, does come into view, but is considered in opposition only to sin and death, not to the law. A genuine freedom (or beginning thereof[107]) has been brought about in Christ, but the relationship of the law and the Spirit in this freedom, whatever its precise nature, is bound (from what we have seen thus far) to be a positive one. Scholars who start from a mistaken understanding of both 7:1-6 and 7:7-25 must now read into 8:2 a whole series of ideas concerning the role of the law, a supposed "change of aeons" (with various wide-ranging implications) and an opposition between the law and the work of the Holy Spirit. On the understanding we have adopted of these texts, however, there is no need to introduce any of these unlikely views. What does Paul say here about freedom, the law and the work of the Spirit? We shall find some answers in vv. 3-4.

Most commentators are agreed that in v. 3 Paul states the truth that the law, in itself holy and aiming at freedom, is unable to bring men into that freedom, not because of any defect in itself but because of the weakness of human flesh (διὰ τῆς σαρκός). Sin thus uses the law as a means to achieve its own victory: the commandment which was righteous and good becomes the occasion for even greater rebellion against God.[108] Freedom from this dreadful condition God has now wrought through the sending of His Son (ὁ θεὸς τὸν ἑαυτοῦ Υἱὸν πέμψας,

κ.τ.λ.). From this, however, Käsemann draws a startling conclusion. He asserts that for the believer, the law's function is now ended. On this view, ὁ θεός is given a position of prominence precisely to emphasize that there is no bridge between the two "aeons" and to point to the fact that the Holy Spirit, far from making possible a proper understanding of or respect for the law's authority, actually replaces the law.[109] For such a view, however, we can find no support in the text. What Paul affirms here, very simply and straightforwardly, is the law's inadequacy as a means of justification outside of the grace of God. This inability came about because of man's rebellion against God and His law, a rebellion which utterly excluded any possibility that, through the law, he might attain justification before God. No comment is made here, however, which limits the law's authority to a previous "aeon". Neither is there any suggestion that in the new "aeon" (if such terminology is used), the Holy Spirit replaces the law. Most interpreters see that in these verses Paul is upholding the sanctity of the law and underlining the position of sin and the flesh as the true culprits.[110]

V. 4 expresses both the purpose and result of God's condemnation of sin, and so defines the meaning of the freedom mentioned in v. 2.[111] Many commentators, as we have noted, suggest this freedom involves liberation from any further relationship with the law. They see the purpose of the law only in executing God's judgment and bringing sin to light; now its authority and validity are ended, and the believer must look only to the Holy Spirit for guidance. What, however, on this basis, are we to make of Paul's statement here that the purpose of God's act in Christ is that, by the power of the Holy Spirit, believers should fulfil the δικαίωμα of the law? Nygren's assertion that the δικαίωμα is without content in relation to the law's demands and refers only to the bare fact that we are in Christ seems scarcely to do justice to the plain wording of the text, and is rejected by other commentators, who agree that the phrase δικαίωμα τοῦ νόμου refers clearly to some positive content or demand of the law which is fulfilled in Christ. Leenhardt limits the content of the will of God as expressed in the law to the revelation of sin[112] -- yet how could this δικαίωμα be said to be fulfilled in the believer' walking by the power of the Spirit? Surely the law reveals sin only by bringing out the absolute contrast between human sinfulness and God's holy and eternal will. Stalder points out rightly that the clear import of the text is that

through Christ "... sind wir befreit vom Fluch des Gesetzes und von der Macht der Sünde, damit wir nun frei seien für den gnädigen Anspruch Gottes."[113] If the law has been abolished for the believer, however, to what is the Apostle referring to here? Kuss considers that what is in view is "... der dem Ganzen des göttlichen Gesetzes zugrunde liegende Kern."[114] We have seen, however, that such a reduction of the law's content or demands would be for the Apostle untenable. There is for Paul no such "kernel", and Käsemann is quite correct in his assertion (noted above) that a dividing up of the law would have never been accepted by the Apostle.

A similar problem is faced by Stalder, who sees the δικαίωμα τοῦ νόμου as referring to the "concrete demand" of God, as opposed to theoretical or abstract commandments. He asserts that the written law only testifies to the will of God, and is not, for Paul, a direct expression of it. What, however, is the difference between a "concrete" demand of God and a "theoretical" demand of God? Could Paul have ever thought in such terms? If so, where is the evidence that he did? Only in the previous chapter has he clearly referred to the fact that the law expresses directly the holy will of God. There is, surely, no justification for a view such as Stalder's.[115] Käsemann states that the δικαίωμα τοῦ νόμου, whatever its content, cannot involve any claim of the law (which, on his view is, according to 7:1-6, ended for the believer). Neither, indeed, can it involve any fixed moral or ethical content -- which would, he says, entail a new legalism.[116] He does admit that δικαίωμα refers to a legal claim and πληροῦν to the keeping of a norm, and concedes that this cannot be reconciled with the view he takes of the text.[117] His solution -- that Paul took over an already existing formulation and applied it to the doing of God's will (thus accounting for the Apostle's supposed lack of clarity here) -- is, surely, a case of special pleading. There is no indication that Paul borrowed the phrase here, or indeed that he in any way disgreed with its clear contents.

The position which tries to balance the contention that the law has been abolished with the admission that v. 4 recognizes in some sense its continuing validity reaches its reductio ad absurdum in Althaus' suggestion that Christ ends the law, but not the divine command.[118] The command, says Althaus, is represented by the will to love; it has inexhaustible content but cannot be divided into specific admonitions.[119] The Christian ethic is an ethic of the Spirit; God's

command cannot be "... read off from a written document, an inherent scheme of law";[120] rather must we hear it anew every day in the concrete situation.[121] While such a view may be understandable as an expression of a modern system of ethics, it cannot be attributed easily to the Apostle Paul, with his concept of the holy and unchanging will of God expressed in written and unalterable form in the OT law.

We have pointed out that the inadequacy of all these views is based on their failure to understand either 7:1-6 or 7-25 properly. When it is appreciated that in these texts the Apostle refers only to the end of the law's just condemnation of our sin (1-6), and indeed expounds its significance for the Christian life (7-25), we can take what (as Käsemann points out) is the natural meaning of the words here and see in this verse a clear reference to the fact that, far from being abolished in Christ, God's law is truly fulfilled, through the working of the Holy Spirit. The sg. δικαίωμα (the legal requirement of the law) refers, as Cranfield notes, to the essential unity of the law's requirements, "... the plurality of commandments being not a confused and confusing conglomeration but a recognizable and intelligible whole, the fatherly will of God for His children."[122] Against the contention that in v. 4 the authority of the Spirit replaces that of the law, Lyonnet rightly asserts that Paul does not shun the commands of the law, and is in fact preoccupied with relating Christian freedom to the law.[123] He comments, "Il s'agit même là d'une préoccupation assez constante chez Paul. Plus il souligne la liberté chrétienne par rapport a la loi; plus il tient à montrer que sa doctrine, loin de 'détruire' la loi, au contraire 'l'affermit', la 'rend stable.'"[124]

The view we have rejected, apart from failing to take account of the proper meaning of ch. 7, must first see the law as abolished (vv. 1-3) and then, by an entirely artificial construct quite foreign to Paul's thinking on the subject, explain away the clear reference in v. 4 to the law's requirement being fulfilled as an allusion either to some undefined kernel of the law's teaching, or to some elusive divine command having no content known outside the experience of the "concrete moment". As a last resort, the text is explained away as an alien intrusion into the Apostle's thinking. Our understanding, on the other hand, based on what (as we have seen) the Apostle says in ch. 7, recognizes in vv. 1-3 an elaboration of what 7:1-6 says concerning the end of condemnation for the believer, but sees that in no way is the abolition of the law referred to in these verses. Our view also

acknowledges in v. 4 a statement (as in 7:7-25) concerning the continuing validity of the law as God's standard for the believer's life, whose requirement is fulfilled (or at least beginning to be fulfilled) in those who rest not on their own righteousness or resources, but rely only on the strength and power of the Holy Spirit. The recognition that our obedience is far from perfect and enabled only by the Spirit's power excludes (contrary to the suggestion of Käsemann) any possibility of a renewed legalism.[125] Understood in the way we have suggested, v. 4 gives us a clear insight into the positive purpose of the freedom wrought in Christ. We are set free from the law's condemnation, and hence, from sin's dominion. We receive this freedom, however, in order to put it into use in the service of righteousness. God's law provides the framework, therefore, within which our Christian freedom is to be expressed. Cranfield comments, "The law's requirement will be fulfilled by the determination of the direction, the set of our lives by the Spirit, by our being enabled again and again to decide for the Spirit and against the flesh, to turn our backs more and more toward the freedom which the Spirit of God has given us."[126] In his natural self, fallen man is hostile to God's law (as v. 7 makes clear). As a believer, freed through the work of Christ (vv. 1-3), the man thus redeemed must realize his calling always to turn away from the "freedom with respect to righteousness" (Rom 6:20) which expresses itself, through the mind of the flesh, in rebellion against God's law (8:7), and toward the true freedom which Christ alone gives, freedom to live in the power of the Spirit a life of obedience to God's law (8:4).

Conclusions

1. The new covenant is in fact the law written by the Holy Spirit on the believer's heart.
2. Sinful man, in his legalistic perversion of the law, could not understand the law's true significance. This inadequate understanding is characterized by Paul as γράμμα, and it is this perversion of the law which brings man under God's just judgment.
3. It is not the law itself, but rather the ministry of Moses at the giving of the law, which is spoken of by the Apostle as fading away. The comparison is between the ministry of Moses and that of the Christian minister, not between the law and the gospel.
4. The Israelites were shielded from the glory at the giving of the law because of the intensity of the glory, not because the glory

was passing away and merely ephemeral. The veil blinds the Jews to the true significance of the law, and is removed in Christ through the working of the Holy Spirit. The removal of the veil, far from indicating the abrogation of the law, points to the law's taking up its rightful place in the life of the believer who has found freedom in Christ. The ultimate result of the working of the Holy Spirit is that liberation occurs in the true reading and understanding of the old covenant.

5. This working of the Holy Spirit brings about the freedom from the law's condemnation the law itself could not achieve on account of the sinfulness of man.
6. The Holy Spirit, however, far from replacing the law as a source of authority, enables the law's true fulfilment. Freedom from the law's condemnation, therefore, is freedom for obedience to the law.
7. The working of the Holy Spirit is thus linked not only with the attainment of Christian freedom, but equally with the true fulfilment of the law. This is so because true freedom comes about in a genuine fulfilment of the law, enabled by the Holy Spirit.

Footnotes

1. Some combine vv. 1-6 and 7-18 (or 1-11 and 12-18), but see the same smaller divisions within the two larger ones.

2. Alfred Plummer, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Second Epistle of St Paul to the Corinthians, p. 82; Philip E. Hughes, Paul's Second Epistle to the Corinthians, pp. 88-90; H. L. Goudge, The Second Epistle to the Corinthians, p. 25; R. H. Strachan, The Second Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians, p. 80; Hans Windisch, Der zweite Korintherbrief, 9th ed., p. 107; E-B. Allo, Saint Paul, Seconde Épître aux Corinthiens, 2nd ed., p. 81; Heinz D. Wendland, Die Briefe an die Korinther, 11th ed., p. 154; Rudolf Bultmann, Der zweite Brief an die Korinther, 10th ed., pp. 75-77; C. K. Barrett, Second Corinthians, p. 109.

3. See references in (2) above. Jer 38 (31):33 reads: ὅτι αὕτη ἡ διαθήκη, ἣν διαθήσομαι τῷ οἴκῳ Ἰσραὴλ μετὰ τὰς ἡμέρας ἐκείνας, φησίν κύριος· Διδοὺς δώσω νόμος μου εἰς τὴν διάνοιαν αὐτῶν καὶ ἐπὶ καρδίας αὐτῶν γράψω αὐτούς.

4. Bultmann, pp. 75-77; similarly Wendland, p. 154, who sees an opposition between law and Spirit.

5. Plummer, p. 82. Strachan, p. 80, opposes the spiritually-orientated new covenant and the legally-based old covenant.

6. Hughes, p. 90.

7. See Cranfield, "St Paul," p. 159, "There is no suggestion in Jer. 31.31ff of a new law to replace that given through Moses: the

suggestion is rather that the same law of God -- 'my law' (Jer 31:33) -- will be given in a new way. What is looked forward to is not the abolition of the law, but its true and effective establishment."

8. Hughes, p. 90. See also Cranfield, "St Paul," p. 159; Willem C. van Unnik, "La Conception paulinienne de la Nouvelle Alliance," in Littérature et Théologie Pauliniennes, p. 115, linking the Jeremiah text to Lev 26:12, Ez 36:2ff and Joel 2, points to the theme of the restoration of the original promise on condition of obedience.

9. See, for example, Windisch, p. 110. Barrett, p. 113, is more cautious; he says that the law points in the direction of human achievement (as the means of justification).

10. Windisch, p. 110. So strongly does Paul oppose γράμμα and πνεῦμα says Windisch, that we can deduce from this that the new covenant had not yet assumed written form at the time.

11. Windisch, p. 110; Bultmann, p. 80. A typical comment is that of Wendland, p. 155, "Der Geist aber ist die Macht des neuen Lebens .... So trägt die neue Heilsordnung durch und durch pneumatischen Charakter als das 'Gesetz' des Lebensgeistes in Christus Jesus, das die Macht der Sünde und des Todes zerstört. Gesetz und Geist stehen sich demnach als tötende und als lebenschaffende Macht gegenüber."

12. Goudge, p. 26. Allo, p. 85, takes the view that it is the "spirit" of the law (rather than the Holy Spirit) which is in view here (and elsewhere in the passage), but that even in preaching the spirit of the law it becomes evident that the actual substance of the law is done away with: "Il appartient à Paul de prêcher et répandre l'esprit de la Loi, épanoui dans une Loi meilleure qui abroge ou dépasse les prescriptions littérales de l'autre, lesquelles ont été seulement préparation et ont fini leur temps." Most interpreters take the reference to be to the Holy Spirit, and this is a much more likely view, given Paul's understanding of the work of the Spirit in relation to the fulfilment of the law (cf. Rom 8:4), and in light of the influence of Ez 11:19 and 36:26 on the text here. The forced nature of Allo's interpretation becomes especially apparent at vv. 17-18. See on this Goudge, p. 28.

13. Plummer, p. 87; Bultmann, p. 80; contra Windisch, pp. 111-12. See also our comment on Rom 2:12ff.

14. Bultmann, p. 80.

15. Speaking of the law, Allo, p. 85, comments, "... malgré leur origine divine, ces textes peuvent demeurer froidement étrangers aux profondeurs de l'âme, qui obéit à leurs prescriptions extérieures comme à une consigne dont le but et la plénitude de sens lui échappent." For a similar view, see Strachan, p. 81. Plummer, p. 87, puts the case very strongly: "The old put forth a written code of duty, so onerous as to kill hope and love.... But experience has taught St Paul that the embrace of the law has now become deadly. It is effete and cannot adapt itself to the new conditions. It is purely external.... It makes heavy demands, but it gives nothing."

16. Bultmann, p. 81: "Die Begründung spricht den Gedanken des Paulus aus, dass der Gesetzesweg notwendig in den Tod führt, da das Gesetz als fordernde und an die Leistung des Menschen appellierende Macht, bzw. sofern es das eigene Vermögen des Menschen ist, in ihm die σάρξ, bzw. die in der σάρξ schlummernde Sünde weckt, wodurch der Mensch notwendig zum Übertreter des Gesetzes wird; sei es durch die Übertretung konkreter Gebote, sei es durch falsche Erfüllung um der καύχησις willen."

17. Plummer, p. 88.

18. It is almost certain that Paul's opponents in 2 Corinthians were Judaizers of some sort, proponents of legalism, exalting the law above the gospel. Against the suggestion that Paul's opponents were gnostics, see Allo, p. 85, who comments, "... ce sont bien plutôt ... des gens qui judaïsent, ne comprennent pas le nouveauté de l'Évangile, et n'en introduisent que timidement les données materielles, a l'ombre de l'Ancienne Loi, comme s'il n'en était qu'un supplement. Ceux-là accusaient Paul de ne pas faire a Moïse la place d'honneur qui revient à ce maître des prophètes...." John W. Drane, Paul: Libertine or Legalist?, pp. 105-7, feels that the Judaizers (or at least Hellenistic Jewish missionaries) are the problem in 2 Corinthians (as opposed to 1 Corinthians, where he allows for the possibility of gnostic influence). An extended defence of the view that Judaizers were Paul's opponents is offered by Goudge, pp. 28-31. On the presence of Jewish Christians in the church at Corinth see Drane. Plummer, xxxvii, notes that Paul's opponents claimed to be true Jews (and that he was not, 11:22), ministers of righteousness (11:15) who insisted on the law, while he ignored it. Against the supposition that gnostics were involved, Plummer, xl, states, "... it is almost startling to be told of Jewish Christians who assailed St Paul as a dangerous teacher because he did not go far enough in throwing off the yoke of the Law. In that case would it have been necessary for him to declare so passionately that he was just as much a Hebrew ... as any of them? ... In all his vehement language about them he nowhere accuses them of being libertines who by their antinomian doctrines were undermining the moral law .... The contrast drawn in ch. iii between the transient character of the old dispensation and the permanence of the new, looks like an indirect condemnation of the teaching which Judaizers had, with much success, been giving to the Corinthians."

19. Cranfield, "St Paul," 159, writes, "The contrast here between 'the letter' and 'the spirit' (better 'the Spirit') we take to be a contrast not between the Old Testament law which is written and a spiritual religion which knows no law, but between the legalistic relation of the Jews of Paul's time to God and to His law and the new relation to God and to His law established by the Holy Spirit and resulting from Christ's work."

20. Jean Héring, The Second Epistle of Saint Paul to the Corinthians, trans. A. W. Heathcote and P. J. Allcock, p. 23.

21. See Hughes, pp. 96-97.

22. This is the view of Hughes, p. 94: "The difference between the old and the new covenants is that under the former that law is written on tablets of stone, confronting man as an external

ordinance and condemning him because of his failure through sin to obey its commandments, whereas under the latter the law is written internally within the redeemed heart by the dynamic regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, so that through faith in Christ, the only law-keeper, and inward experience of His power man no longer hates but loves God's law and is enabled to fulfil its precepts."

23. Van Unnik, p. 119.

24. Van Unnik, p. 120.

25. Windisch, pp. 112-12. "Die Bezeugung dieser δόξα war wohl für ihn eine Aporie, und der Zweck des Midrasch ist es, aus dem Berichte selbst die Aporie aufzulösen und ihn geradezu zu einem Beweis für die Minderwertigkeit des alten und die Erhabenheit des neuen Bundes zu gebrauchen." (p. 113)

26. Bultmann, p. 87.

27. Bultmann, p. 82.

28. Bultmann, pp. 82, 85; Plummer, p. 89. According to Wendland, p. 156, Paul's aim is ultimately to reduce the glory of the Mosaic ministry to nothing (see also Bultmann, p. 86). The Apostle links law and death, and sees these as passing, whereas the Spirit is eternal.

29. Windisch, p. 114: "... δόξα beim Dienst des Todes eigentlich ubel angebracht ist, wahrend sie zum Dienst des Geistes die innersten Beziehungen besitzt."

30. Windisch, p. 116; Bultmann, p. 86.

31. Bultmann, p. 84; Windisch, p. 117.

32. Windisch, p. 117.

33. Bultmann, p. 86; see Windisch, pp. 116-17.

34. Bultmann, p. 86; Barrett, p. 116.

35. Windisch, p. 117; Barrett, p. 116.

36. Allo, p. 88.

37. Plummer, p. 92. See Wendland, p. 156, "Das Gesetz hatte seine Zeit. Aber diese Zeit ist abgelaufen.... Jetzt ist Christuszeit, Endzeit."

38. Windisch, p. 114; Bultmann, p. 83; Plummer, p. 90.

39. Hughes, p. 103. See Goudge's comment, "In the first place to seek for righteousness by obedience to the law is to seek for it by a method foredoomed to failure. There is no road that way. The people of God have never succeeded in obeying the law, and they never will succeed. The law has inevitably brought 'condemnation', not 'righteousness'.... Moses ... had been the minister of death, for death was the penalty for disobedience to the law, and disobedience

was inevitable." Note, however, that through the Holy Spirit the believer is now enabled to begin to fulfil the law, albeit in an imperfect and incomplete manner.

40. Hughes, p. 102.

41. Cranfield, "St Paul," 160. See also Peter Jones, "L'Apôtre Paul: Un second Moïse pour la Communauté de la nouvelle Alliance: Une Étude sur l'Autorité apostolique paulinienne," Foi et Vie 75 (1976), 36-58, especially pp. 46-52.

42. Cranfield, "St Paul," p. 160.

43. Cranfield, "St Paul," p. 160.

44. Hughes, pp. 104-5.

45. Windisch, p. 117.

46. Bultmann, p. 87, sums the verses up thus: "Dementsprechend ist die καινὴ διακονία eine solche der παρρησία, bzw. ἐλευθερία." Allo, pp. 87-88, sees πνεῦμα (as opposed to γράμμα and κάλυμμα) in this section suggesting the perfect freedom which characterizes the διακονία of the gospel.

47. C. K. Barrett, From First Adam to Last: A Study in Pauline Theology, p. 53.

48. Barrett, First Adam, p. 52 n. 1. See also his commentary, p. 119.

49. Barrett, First Adam, p. 52.

50. Windisch, p. 119.

51. Windisch, p. 119.

52. Wendland, p. 157. The implication is inescapable: see also Plummer, p. 97, Windsch, p. 119. Allo, p. 90 and Bultmann, pp. 88-89, fail to comment at all on this!

53. Windisch, pp. 119-120. For a similar position see Bultmann, pp. 88-89; Bläser, pp. 208-10.

54. Plummer, p. 97. See also Allo, p. 90: "Il ne s'agit directement que des rayons de Moise ... seulement les versets suivants montreront que l'Apôtre en a fait un symbole: cette lumière que les témoins croient durable, mais qui s'atténue et meurt sous l'abri du voile, elle représente la gloire meme de la Loi, dont cet éclat était le signe matériel, et qui sera transitoire comme son reflet." Barrett, p. 119, comments that according to Paul, Moses put the veil on so that the Israelites "... might not see the glory come to an end and thus be led to disparage Moses as being of no more than temporary importance." Could it be said, on this basis (as, on this view, the glory of the law and indeed the law itself is a temporary phenomenon) that Paul is thereby attributing some measure of deceit to Moses? Surely the Apostle's meaning is not that Moses was trying to disguise the truth!

54a. Cranfield, II, 854-855.

55. Hughes, p. 109.

56. Hughes, p. 109 n. 6.

57. Héring, p. 25. He suggests, however, that τέλος here should be understood as "goal" in light of Rom 10:4 -- but this is unlikely. How could Paul have meant Moses veiled his face to stop the Israelites from seeing Christ? Why, in any case, should the final purpose of the law be "veiled" by God? God's desire in Christ is to remove the veil. See Plummer, p. 97; Hughes, pp. 109-10 n. 6.

58. Cranfield, "St Paul," p. 161.

59. Windisch, p. 122; Bultmann, p. 89.

60. Windisch, p. 122.

61. Hughes, p. 112 n. 9; Windisch, p. 122; Plummer, p. 100; Barrett, p. 121; Allo, p. 91, sees an acc. abs. here, but admits it is without exception in the NT (though not in secular literature of the period).

62. Cranfield, "St Paul," p. 161; Windisch, p. 122.

63. Cranfield, "St Paul," p. 161; Windisch, p. 122.

64. Plummer, p. 100.

65. Bultmann, p. 90, contra E. Kühl, "Stellung und Bedeutung des altestamentlichen Gesetzes im Zusammenhang der paulinischen Lehre," Th St u Kr 67 (1894), pp. 126-27 n. 1, who must resort to the unsatisfactory suggestion that ἀνακαλυπτόμενον is written for ἀποκαλυπτόμενον.

66. Bultmann, pp. 86, 90. He admits (p. 88 n. 34) that καταργουμένου in v. 13 must refer to the δόξα, though "sachlich" it refers to the law. But this, as we have seen, involves unproven -- and unlikely -- assumptions.

67. Allo, p. 91.

68. Kühl, pp. 126-27 n. 1.

69. Windisch, p. 122.

70. Hughes, pp. 112-13 n. 9.

71. Admitting that elsewhere Paul links law and promise, Bultmann, p. 91, tries to find (with his system) some positive meaning for the law. He sees the OT as having value in that it gives an understanding of man as an historical being ("Explikation des geschichtlichen Daseinsverständnisses"). This is the only reason the church, over against Marcion and the gnostics, should retain the OT. The gospel does not need the actual OT, but it so happens that the historical situation of man in his relationship with God is nowhere better exemplified than there. We have seen from our previous studies, as well as from this one, that this view,

while perhaps offering some appeal as an ideological system, has nothing in common with Paul's evaluation of the law as holy and the positive connection he makes between gospel and law or promise and law. The gospel would not be the gospel at all, were it not for the OT! To impute any other view to Paul is unthinkable.

72. Windisch, p. 122.

73. Allo, p. 92: "Ce n'est plus que l'ancien Testament, une alliance périmée.... Cependent les Juifs ne le voient pas, parce que le même voile -- pris ici au sens moral et spirituel -- pend toujours entre leurs yeux et le vrai visage de Moïse, ou le vrai sens de la révélation, qui enseignait elle-même son caractère transitoire.... ce n'est pas la faute de Moïse ni de l'Ancien Testament, qui fut inspiré de Dieu et reflète aussi la gloire divine, si l'on ne voit pas que ce n'est plus qu'une vieillerie, une lumière ayant perdu toute raison d'être pour elle-même, qui a été réduite à rien, abolie (καταργεῖται)en se perdant dans l'éclat du Christ qu'elle prédisait et qui est venu avec une révélation et toute une économie définitives...."

74. Plummer, p. 101.

75. Hughes, p. 111.

76. Albrecht Oepke, "κάλυμμα," TDNT 3, 560.

77. Karl Barth, "Gospel and Law," in God, Grace and Gospel, trans. J. McNab, p. 16.

78. Oepke, 3, 560.

79. With reference to the relationship of Christ and the Spirit in v. 17, a good interpretation is that of Cranfield, pp. 161-62: "But the Lord (i.e. the risen and exalted Christ), of whom it may truly be said that, when Israel's heart turns to Him, the veil which prevents it understanding the law is taken away, is the Spirit to whom reference has been made in verses 6 and 8, and where the Spirit of the Lord (i.e. of Christ) is present, there is liberty. The fact that the Lord and the Spirit, while they are identified in the first half of the verse, are distinguished in the second half, is an indication that we should not take 'the Lord is the Spirit' to imply that, for Paul, the exalted Christ and the Holy Spirit are identical, but rather that to turn to Christ is to be introduced into the realm of the Spirit." See also Bultmann, pp. 99-100; Wendland, p. 158; Windisch, pp. 124-25. Wendland, p. 158, points out correctly that Paul does not intend to make dogmatic observations here. Windisch: "... der Herr wirkt wie der Geist oder wo er ist und wirkt, da ist auch der Geist...." (p. 124). Hence, conversion to Christ means entry into the realm of the Spirit. Mistaken, surely, is Allo, pp. 93ff, who does not see here a reference to the Holy Spirit at all.

80. Windisch, p. 126.

81. Windisch, p. 126.

82. Windisch, p. 127.

83. Bultmann, p. 100; Wendland, p. 159. Both, however, rightly criticize the view of Windisch, p. 126, that Paul develops his concept of freedom here along Stoic lines. Windisch believes that this is where Paul has received his understanding of the role of the Spirit in the attainment of freedom. Bultmann, however, points out correctly that for Paul the work of the Spirit is to be seen in the closest possible conjunction with the work of Christ: "Ihn leitet offenbar nicht die stoische, sondern die hellenistisch-gnostisch πνεῦμα-Vorstellung, nach der das πνεῦμα (im Zusammenhang eines dualistischen Weltbildes) supranaturale göttliche Kraft und Gabe ist. Aber hat er eben diese Vorstellung aufgegriffen und nach Analogie von ἐν πνεύματι das ἐν Χριστῷ gebildet, so muss auch umgekehrt das ἐν πνεύματι nach dem ἐν Χριστῷ interpretiert werden. Da Christus für Paulus das eschatologische Heilsfaktum ist, so bedeutet ἐν Χριστῷ wie ἐν πνεύματι die durchgängige Bestimmtheit des Lebens durch Christus, bzw. durch das πνεῦμα, nicht aber eine mysteriöse Qualität, eine höhere Natur" (p. 100). We can take the essential point out of this, without thereby endorsing Bultmann's choice of wording or the other concepts which may be in his mind here.

84. Wendland, p. 159.

85. Plummer, p. 103.

86. Van Unnik, p. 120.

87. Jones, pp. 49-50.

88. Cranfield, "St Paul," p. 162.

89. See Allo, p. 95.

90. Marie-J. Lagrange, Saint Paul, Épître aux Galates, p. 191; Michel, p. 248; Schlier, p. 237; Leenhardt, p. 201; Cranfield, Romans, I, 372-73; Barrett, p. 154; A. Feuillet, "Loi ancienne et Morale chrétienne d'après l'Épître aux Romains," Nouvelle Revue Théologique 92 (1970), p. 790; contra Stalder, p. 389; Sanday/Headlam, p. 190. Schmidt, p. 134, links the text also with 5:1ff. Understanding 8:1 as picking up the thought of 7:6 avoids the difficulty of seeing v. 1 in too close a connection with either 7:25a or 25b, or having to consider the verse as a gloss.

91. We should not, of course, assume that vv. 1ff are without any connection to 7:25; indeed, we shall see this is by no means the case. The passages are all linked with one another.

92. Leenhardt, p. 202.

93. Schlier, p. 238.

94. Barrett, p. 154; Cerfaux, p. 322.

95. See Cranfield, I, 373.

96. Lagrange, p. 191; Schlier, p. 237; Cranfield, I, 373-74; Stalder, p. 392.

96a. Cranfield, I, 374.

97. Lagrange, pp. 191-92; Althaus, p. 75; Kasemann, p. 207; Michel, p. 249; Kuss, II, 490; Dodd, p. 119; Nygren, pp. 311ff; Schlier, pp. 238-39; Gaugler, p. 251; Cranfield, I, 373-76; contra Schmidt, p. 136; Stalder, pp. 392-93. Barrett, p. 155, speaks of the Mosaic law corrupted by sin -- yet this does not fit with what we have seen of Paul's view of the law. Stanislas Lyonnet, "Le Nouveau Testament à la lumière de l'Ancien: À propos de Rom 8, 2-4," N.R.T. 87 (1965), pp. 569-70, notes that the law of sin and death encompasses the Mosaic law insofar as it is an "external demand" -- though he notes truthfully that this could be said equally (indeed moreso!) of the gospel.

98. Michel, p. 249; Gaugler, p. 251.

99. Cranfield, I, 375.

100. Cranfield, I, 375-76.

101. Cranfield, I, 375-76.

102. Kuss, II, 489-90.

103. Leenhardt, pp. 201-2.

104. Kasemann, p. 207. For a similar view see Barrett, p. 155.

105. Kasemann, p. 207.

106. See Stalder, pp. 390-96; J. A. Fitzmyer, "Saint Paul and the Law," The Jurist 27 (1967), p. 34; Cerfaux, p. 322.

107. See further on v. 4. We have elsewhere noted that any freedom vouchsafed to the believer, as any genuine obedience in his life, is by no means perfectly achieved, according to Paul, in his present existence (cf. 7:14). A real beginning, nonetheless, based on the very real freedom wrought in Christ, is made. This is why it is so important to read chs. 7 and 8 together. Cranfield comments, "While the Christian never in this life escapes entirely from the hold of egotism, that is, of sin, so that even the best things he does are always marred by its corruption, and any impression of having attained a perfect freedom is but an illusion, itself the expression of that same egotism, there is a vast difference between the ways in which the believer and the unbeliever are prisoners of the law of sin -- a difference which fully warrants, we believe, the ἠλευθέρωσεν of 8:2." (I, 377-78)

108. Althaus, p. 76; Michel, p. 250; Lagrange, p. 193; Kuss, II, 497; Lietzmann, p. 79; Cranfield, I, 378-79; Schlier, p. 242.

109. Kasemann, p. 208. This also seems to be suggested by Leenhardt, pp. 202-4.

110. See, for instance, Schlier, p. 242; Lagrange, p. 193; Michel, p. 250; Cranfield, I, 379.

111. Cranfield, I, 383.

112. Leenhardt, pp. 204-5.

113. Stalder, p. 404.

114. Kuss, II, 496-97.

115. See also the curious view of Leenhardt, pp. 204-5, who states that man accomplishes the law "... not by particular acts which are in conformity with the law, but above all by the fundamental attitude of his whole being...."

116. Käsemann, pp. 209-10.

117. Käsemann, pp. 209-10.

118. Paul Althaus, The Divine Command: A New Perspective on Law and Gospel, trans. F. Sherman, pp. 22-23.

119. Althaus, Divine Command, pp. 13-14.

120. Althaus, Divine Command, p. 43.

121. Althaus, Divine Command, pp. 34-35.

122. Cranfield, I, 384. H. W. M. van de Sandt, "Research into Rom 8,4a: The Legal Claim of the Law," Bijdragen 37 (1976), pp. 252-69, and also "An Explanation of Rom 8,4a," Bijdragen 37 (1976), pp. 361-78, examines v. 4 in some detail. He concludes that by δικαίωμα Paul could refer to the judgment claim or just requirement of the law, or he could refer to a particular commandment of the law -- which van de Sandt, on the basis of Gal 5:13ff, 6:2, Rom 13:8-10, suggest is love (see pp. 255ff). He also suggests (pp. 371ff) that the phrase is analogous to Rabbinic law-summaries speaking of doing one commandment as uivalent to doing all the others. There may be some truth in this but, a van de Sandt admits, it could just as easily be true that a general reference to the law's just requirement is in view. The parallel to the Rabbinic summaries is by no means clear. These summaries, at any rate, do not involve reduction of the law to one command. While the Apostle himself refers elsewhere to love as the summing up of the law, he sees this as involving a genuine obedience to the whole law -- not the reduction of the law to a love command. See our comments on Rom 13:8-10 and Gal 5:13ff. The context here (7:7-25, 8:5ff) indicates that whole-hearted battle against sin on every front is called for -- not just vague adherence to a generalised love command. Therefore, it may be concluded that van de Sandt's argument is, surely, to be rejected if it implies a disregard for the other commandments of the law in favour of an undefined "love command". See also our comments on law and commandment in the text, and on 1 Cor 9:19ff.

123. Lyonnet, "À propos de Rom 8, 2-4," pp. 583-584.

124. Lyonnet, p. 584. Even scholars taking a more negative view of the law admit the force of Paul's comments here. Michel, p. 251, comments, "Damit wird ein Grundton des Römerbriefes angeschlagen: Das Heilsgeschehen dient dazu, die Autorität des göttlichen Willens aufzurichten und durchzusetzen." Schlier, p. 243: "Gott hat durch seinen Sohn die Sündenmacht verdammt, damit das Gerechte, das das Gesetz fordert (δικαίωμα), durch uns getan werden kann, damit also durch uns der gerechte Wille Gottes erfüllt werde, an dem ja unser Leben hängt."

125. Cranfield, I, 384.

126. Cranfield, I, 385.

Section IV, part C

Introduction

Having established that Christ is the goal of the law, and that the Christian is free, by the power of the Spirit, to begin a genuine fulfilment of the law, we are now in a position to consider a further theme in Paul's understanding of freedom, the fulfilling of the law in love. In the two passages which we shall examine, the Apostle develops the idea of freedom for obedience with reference to specific commandments of the law, in particular the commandment to love. His supposition here is that freedom for obedience to the law means freedom to love.

We have seen in the previous subsection (IV, part B) that there is no conflict between the law and the working of the Holy Spirit, so far as the proper exercise of Christian freedom is concerned. Here we discover that, contrary to the views of many interpreters, the law and the commandment to love, far from being in any way contradictory, are seen by the Apostle to stand in the closest possible relationship. Love is the content of the law, and it is the fulfilling of the law in love for which we are freed in Christ. What this means for the proper exercise of this freedom will be further illustrated by our comments in the following subsection (IV, part D).

We turn first to Rom 13:8-10.

Rom 13:8-10

In this short section Paul sums up the ethical teaching he has been giving in the overarching commandment of love. Within the span of these few verses there is an important statement on the Christian's positive relationship to the law, which in turn gives a deeper understanding of the freedom given in Christ.

The opening command Μηδενὶ μηδὲν ὀφείλετε repeats negatively the positive command of v. 7, ἀπόδοτε πᾶσιν τὰς ὀφειλάς, forming a smooth transition from the previous paragraph (vv. 1-7).[1] The new section is also linked to the ethical exhortations of ch. 12,[2] and, as such, is not an "excursus" on the subject of the law[3] but rather an important summary statement concerning the nature of Christian service and freedom.[4] The sense of v. 8 appears to be that Christians are to leave no human debts outstanding (cf. 1-7), except the debt of love. Some commentators suggest that εἰ μή should be translated "but" (as if equivalent to ἀλλά), and the verse rendered "leave no debt outstanding ... but (you ought to) love one another."[5] This, however, involves taking the verb in a different (though possible) sense in the second clause -- and also in a different mood. It also means attributing a meaning to εἰ μή unusual in the NT (though again possible grammatically).[6] We prefer to follow the natural sense of the Greek which, on any account, provides a perfectly coherent meaning, as we shall see, in context.

Two views have been advanced as to the structure of v. 8b (ὁ γὰρ ἀγαπῶν, κ.τ.λ.). W. Marxsen argues that ἕτερον should be taken as adjectival, modifying νόμον.[7] In support of this contention, he notes that πλησίον, not ἕτερον is used normally in the NT with ἀγαπᾶν, though Paul uses ὁ ἕτερος elsewhere in the sense of "neighbour" (though governed by other verbs).[8] Paul would then be saying that, in opposition to the civil law referred to in vv. 1-7, whose requirements can and may be met (Μηδενὶ μηδὲν ὀφείλετε), the law of God (τὸν ἕτερον νόμον) always leaves us in its debt, as we can never perfectly fulfil it (εἰ μὴ τὸ ἀλλήλους ἀγαπᾶν). Paul, on this view, makes this distinction because he wishes to underline the fact that, unlike civil law, the requirements of God's law can never perfectly be fulfilled, and thus believers must be urged to further and deeper obedience.[9] In response to this, however, must be offered the observation that no mention of Roman law has been made in the previous verses.[10] In fact, the word νόμος has not occurred in the letter since 10:5.[11] Paul often uses ὁ ἕτερος in the sense of "neighbour" (e.g. Rom 2:1, 1 Cor 6:1 and 10:24, 29, Gal 6:4).[12] Michel notes that even if the phrase τὸν ἕτερον

ἀγαπᾶν is not attested in the NT, "... so lässt sich daraus allein keine Entscheidung fällen."[13] Finally, Paul nowhere else uses ἀγαπᾶν in an absolute sense.[14] Least of all would he be likely to do so here, where he is dealing explicitly with the theme of loving one's neighbour. The Apostle probably chooses a variety of words the better to express his meaning (ὁ ἕτερος, πλησίον, ὁ ἄλλος).

Marxsen's comments on the substance of the Apostle's meaning here, however, deserve consideration. Whatever Paul thinks of the relationship between civil and divine law, it is clear that he wishes here (see our comments on the transition from v. 7 to v. 8) to point out that there is a difference between the believer's ability to fulfil normal legal and social requirements and his capacity to obey the law of God. There can be no question that νόμος here refers to the Mosaic law.[15] Attempts to introduce into this text the concept of a "law of Christ" (see Gal 6:2) or a "law of the Spirit" (see Rom 8:2) founder not only on what (on our view) is the correct reference of those verses (on which see our comments) but also on the utter lack of any contextual evidence that anything other than the Mosaic law could be referred to here. This is quite clear from Paul's extensive citation of the OT in v. 9, during which he locates the command to love squarely in the middle of the Mosaic law.[16] We have also seen that in Romans νόμος almost always refers to the Mosaic law.

Given that the Apostle has in v. 8a described the command to love as the one enduring debt of all believers, it is natural to expect in v. 8b some explanation as to why the command to love should be different in this respect from normal human obligations. Lietzmann, admitting that what Paul says here positively concerning the need for the Christian to fulfil the law conflicts with what (on his view) the Apostle has said earlier in the letter, suggests that what for the Jews was the unreachable ideal of law fulfilment has now become a reality in Christ.[17] While there can be little doubt that Paul refers here to a positive fulfilment of the law he does not, as Marxsen points out, speak of the fulfilment of an "ideal", but rather only of the beginning of an attitude of obedience whose goal is never (in this life) fully reached: "Die Erledigung liegt im andauernden Tun! Das ist nun gerade keine Erfüllung bestimmter Verpflichtungen wie etwa der vorher genannten staatlichen, wo keine ὀφειλή zurückzubleiben braucht und zurückbleiben darf."[18] This yields a good explanation of the relationship between v. 8a and v. 8b. Cranfield notes that v. 8b may be understood as

"... stating a reason for loving one another, to do so is to fulfil the law."[19] The perfect πεπλήρωκεν is, in this case, understood as gnomic.[20] Even more justice is done to v. 8b when it is understood as explaining why the debt will always remain outstanding: if it were fully discharged, believers would already have reached perfection by fully obeying the law -- which, for fallen man, even in his redeemed state, is impossible.[21] This seems to fit the meaning well here -- though the first idea (loving because of a desire for obedience) is certainly in the Apostle's mind.

Thus comprehended, this verse (8) strongly supports the view we have taken that Christians are enabled by the Holy Spirit to attain a genuine measure of obedience to God's law. That this is Paul's view is admitted by most commentators -- even those who see a negative understanding of law elsewhere in Paul. Linking 13:8 to 3:31, Michel says, "... der νόμος tritt unter die Herrschaft des πνεῦμα und kommt dadurch zu seinem eigentlichen Sinn. Wer also das Gesetz als γράμμα ansieht, d.h. vom jüdischen Gesetzesverständnis her, der versteht die Autorität des Gesetzes falsch. Das jüdische Gesetzesverständnis (γράμμα) ist das des 'Verdienstes' und des 'Fleisches', während das paulinische auf χάρις und ἀγάπη gestellt ist...."[22] Surely unsatisfactory, therefore, is the view of Lyonnet that, according to this verse, love and law are to be opposed, as love is not an external norm (as is the law) but "une force, un dynamisme."[24] Love brings freedom, says Lyonnet, whereas law brings bondage.[25] Marxsen, however, quite correctly points out that it is the Mosaic law, not the love command which, according to v. 8b, is to be fulfilled.[26] Hübner rightly contends that the command to love here is not to be sundered from the law, but is rather its "Generalnenner".[27] This shows once more that the distinction between so called internal and external commands or norms is erroneous when applied to a supposed opposition between law and grace or law and the love command. The demand of the gospel is (or can be) just as much (indeed, more so) a death-bringing external command as any precept of the law (2 Cor 2:14-16); see also our comments on 2 Cor 3, Rom 2:25ff, 7:1-6. Mistaken, surely, is Nygren, when he says, "Not by fulfillment of law is the law fulfilled, but by life 'in Christ' and 'in love'. It is in this sense, and only this sense, that 'love is the fulfilling of the law.'"[28]

That such a view as that of Nygren is not to be accepted is made more clear by v. 9. In this verse, which confirms (γάρ) v. 8b, the Apostle names four of the commandments in the second table of the

Decalogue, adds the phrase καὶ εἴ τις ἑτέρα ἐντολή to indicate that these serve only as examples, and then states that all these commands are summed up (ἀνακεφαλαιοῦται) in the command to love one's neighbour as oneself. The last commandment is a citation from Lev 19:18. Most of the debate about this verse has centred on the significance of ἀνακεφαλαιοῦται (meaning "bring together under one heading" or "sum up"[29]). One group of commentators maintains that the meaning here is that, in some way, love eclipses the law. No one can keep all the law's demands, according to van Dülmen, but the love command "... fasst in sich die Summe aller Vorschriften."[30] She continues, "Dem paulinischen Verständnis des Gesetzes als einer ganzheitlichen Grösse entspricht auch eine ganzheitliche Erfüllung.... (Die) Irrelevanz der Einzelgebote für Paulus ermöglicht um so leichter ihre Zusammenfassung in dem einen Liebesgebot."[31] The Christian's goal is no longer to fulfil the law but to aim at love, for then (incidentally) the law will be fulfilled.[32] A similar position is taken by J. Cambier, who states that in the new regime, "... la loi de Dieu devient un ensemble d'indications qui aident le spirituel à connaitre la volonté du Père .... et à l'accomplir en obéissance de foi."[33] Being freed from the law, we are guided by "un esprit nouveau, l'agapé."[34] Christian freedom, continues Cambier, means that we are no longer bound to fulfil carefully all the commands of the law, but that we are rather responsible to Christ to live from a perspective of love.[35] The law needs no longer to be obeyed, says Lagrange in similar vein, but is "... largement accomplie dans ses éléments essentiels et permanents par la charité."[36]

These observers are agreed that the central feature here is that (while there is some continuity) love and the law are sharply contrasted. Now that the Christian is freed from the authority of the law, he can (instead) freely fulfil the command to love, and in this he finds true liberty. We cannot, however, accept that such a view offers an accurate interpretation of the text. Most commentators, to begin with, point out rightly that Paul stands here firmly within a Jewish exegetical tradition which sought to find in love a unifying, all-encompassing principle in the Torah.[37] Such an exegetical perspective would in no way yield the thought that the underlying or unifying principle is in any sense to be contrasted with the Torah itself (or that it superseded it). Käsemann admits that the problem (for him) presented by the text is that "... keinerlei Polemik gegen den Nomos vorliegt...."[38] Nor is it just that (as Kuss, for instance, supposes[39]) Paul is endorsing the

Decalogue as a convenient table of moral values, for by the addition of καὶ εἴ τις ἑτέρα ἐντολή he extends the scope of his statement to the whole law.[40] Michel comments rightly, "Gemeint ist hier, dass jedes einzelne Gebot des Alten Testaments, das sich auf unser Verhältnis zum Mitmenschen bezieht, im Liebesgebot mitgesetzt ist und dass umgekehrt sich das Liebesgebot in jeder Situation verschieden konkretisiert."[41] Some commentators see here a reference to the "moral law", yet acknowledge that Paul nowhere else allows for such a division within the law.[42] A more satisfactory solution is to see that Paul is saying that love is involv in every command in the law, even those involving sacrificial aspects (which, of course, Paul would see fulfilled once and for all in the death of Christ on the cross).

In v. 10 the Apostle states negatively what has been said positively in the preceding verse, then concludes with the assertion πλήρωμα οὖν νόμου ἡ ἀγάπη Feuillet suggests that here the thought of completion, not that of action, is involved. He says, "Pareillement, que la charité soit la plérôma de la Loi mosaïque, cela ne veut pas dire simplement que sa pratique équivaut à l'accomplissement intégral de la Loi mosaïque, mais bien plutôt qu'en la seule vertu de charité se trouve renfermée la totalité des préceptes de la Loi."[43] The precepts of the law are, in his view, more than "... la somme des préceptes ainsi unifiés. Si la charité synthétise tous les commandements, c'est en les dépassant."[44] That this view is doubtful, however, is already indicated by v. 8b, which shows that the debt of love is always outstanding precisely because the law can never be perfectly fulfilled. Again we have an attempt here to oppose love and law. A better understanding of the text is gained if we realise, in the light of the use of πληροῦν in v. 8,[45] that πλήρωμα here is to be understood in the sense of "fulfilling."[46]

What Paul says in this passage, therefore, is similar to what he has said in 8:1-4. In Christ, the believer is enabled to begin a genuine fulfilment of the law. This measure of fulfilment occurs as the believer allows the love of God in Christ to become ever increasingly the motivation for all his actions. Thus, while the law will never, in this life, be perfectly obeyed, the believer is enabled to achieve a genuine fulfilling of the law in day-to-day obedience expressed in love. Nygren states that the law is only a restraint on sin and presents no positive demand to the believer; he says that love only fulfils the law by excluding the unrighteousness against which the law is directed ("... where love is, the things which the law

forbids do not occur."[47]). Hence, the law is superfluous. We are now in a position to appreciate fully the untenable nature of this position. Nygren overlooks the fact that in v. 8 the command to love is itself merely a citation from the same law he declares irrelevant for the believer. A general command to love, divorced from the framework of the holy and righteous law of God, would be meaningless for the Apostle. It would also be dangerous for the Christian. Cranfield cautions justly, "For, while we most certainly need the summary to save us from missing the wood for the trees and from understanding the particular commandments in a rigid, literalistic, unimaginative, pedantic or loveless way, we are equally in need of the particular commandments, into which the law breaks down the general obligation to love, to save us from resting content with vague, and often hypocritical, sentiments, which -- in ourselves and quite often even in others --we all are prone to mistake for Christian love."[48]

This means, of course, that freedom in Christ is structured by the law -- or, put in another way, "limited" by love (see on Rom 14:1ff and the other texts examined in Section IV, part D below). We are not free to do as we wish, but only to act within the framework of obedience (see on Romans 6 in our discussion of freedom from sin below), obedience to God's righteous will (See Rom 7:12,14). Paul's discussion paves the way for what he has to say regarding the strong and the weak in 14:1ff.[49] As Käsemann puts it, love (in which true Christian freedom consists) is the basis of all other Christian activity.[50] We are freed to love -- which may well, in many cases, mean giving up freedom in the worldly sense. Paul does not fashion some vague love-ethic, but rather speaks always of specific obligations.[51] This, of course, is because the law is specific.

Total freedom would mean full participation in the life and glory of God -- and this, as we have seen, is very far from being a reality in the believer's present weak condition. His freedom, though real, is far from fulfilled. This fact is described well by H.R. Balz, who comments, "Entsprechend haben sie [believers] auch jetzt schon die volle Freiheit, aber die eschatologische Erfüllung dieser Freiheit als totale Lebenswirklichkeit steht noch aus. Totale Freiheit wäre gleichbedeutend mit der totalen Verwirklichung von Doxa und Pneuma und also mit der eigentlichen Lebenssphäre Gottes."[51a] Total freedom, therefore, implies perfection. Because even believers are in this life all too easily prone to sin and rebellion they cannot attain here and now

the fulfilment of their freedom in Christ. This is why God's law and its command to love are so important in the proper exercise of Christian freedom. Achievement of freedom as an end in itself, a freedom governed only by vague or subjective notions (such as an all-encompassing but ill-defined "love-command") can never be the proper goal of true Christian endeavour, for it implies that the believer is in this life capable of exercising freedom in the absolute sense in such a way as to express thereby an attitude of submission to God and concern for the needs of others. This, says Paul, is far from being the case.

Eschatologically, the believer's freedom will still, of course, be freedom for obedience and service to God. In his future state of perfect fellowship with God, however, the believer will not need to be reminded continually of God's command and of the need to obey. His obedience will be expressed fully and naturally in his relationship with the Father. In this sense, the believer will no longer need the commands of God's law in order to exercise hisfreedom in a way glorifying to God. In the meantime, however, because of the fact that he is all too prone to the desires of his sinful nature, the believer needs the continual reminder that the freedom he does enjoy must be exercised strictly within the limits of obedience to God's holy law, which constantly directs his attention away from himself (where it would otherwise always tend to return) and toward God and his neighbour, so that genuine love and service can be expressed, albeit imperfectly, in his life. Achievement of full freedom can be spoken of as a proper goal for the Christian, only in the sense that he should long for participation in God's eternal glory, not as an end in itself, but so that he will be able, in that condition, to serve and worship God unreservedly and in perfect obedience, freed from the limitations of hispresent existence.

Our obligation to fulfil the law, not as a means of attaining justification, but because it is the holy and righteous will of God, is clearly stated in these verses. It is worth quoting in summary the observations on these verses of John Murray:

> We are not saved <u>by</u> obedience to the law, but we are saved <u>unto</u> it. In their [modern "libertines'"] insistence upon love they have placed love in opposition to law. We have just to remind them with well-balanced emphasis that love is the fulfilling of the <u>law</u>. It is not love in opposition to law but love fulfilling law. What our modern apostles of love really mean is the very opposite of this: they mean that love fulfils its own dictates, that love not only fulfils, but that it is also the law fulfilled, that love is as it were an autonomous, self-instructing and self-directing principle, that not only impels to the doing of the right but also tells us what the right is.

> This is certainly not what Paul meant when he said, "love is the fulfilling of the law." He tells us not only that love fulfils, but also what the law is which it fulfils.... The directing principle of love is objectively revealed statutory commandments, not at all the dictates which it might itself be presumed to excogitate.[53]

Gal 5:13ff

The same theme is taken up at somewhat greater length in Gal 5:13ff. Even in Galatians, where Paul is concerned to counter the undue exaltation of the law over the promise, the strong link between freedom, love and the law is again brought into prominence. Up to this point in the letter, the Apostle has dealt with the theme of freedom only from a negative standpoint. Now, after he has refuted thoroughly the false teaching of the Judaizers and established firmly his call to freedom in Christ from the bondage of legalism and of the στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου, he turns, for the first time in the letter, to consider the positive content and proper exercise of Christian freedom as a theme in itself. In these verses, culminating in the command of 6:2, freedom in Christ is seen consistently as freedom for that love and mutual service which, for Paul, lie at the heart of the OT law. Again, therefore, as in Rom 13:8-10, Christian freedom is seen as freedom for love, and hence as freedom for obedience to the law in which the command to love is rooted and finds its basis.

At 5:13 the Apostle turns to consider the question of the proper exercise of Christian freedom; the ensuing discussion occupies the remainder of the letter (excepting the concluding greetings, 6:11ff). The theme of the section, set forth in vv. 13-15, involves the relationship of freedom in Christ to the law, love and mutual service. This is followed, in vv. 16ff, by various exhortations and instructions; several points in this further discussion will also receive our attention insofar as they relate to the initial theme.

vv. 13-15

The new section is linked closely (γάρ) not only to the preceding verse but to the whole discussion in vv. 1-12 and even earlier in the letter concerning freedom from the law's condemnation.[54] The same freedom is in view in v. 13 as in vv. 1ff.[55] Burton notes that μόνον is used "... to call attention not to an exception to a preceding statement, but to an important addition ot it...."[56] The Apostle now

turns, however, to a closer examination of the nature of this freedom granted in Christ as it applies to the daily outworking of the Christian life. It is unlikely that a separate "libertine" group existed in Galatia alongside the Judaizers.[57] Mussner comments, "Der Brief kämpft gegen eine einzige Front, aber gerade aus diesem 'Kampf' heraus könnte sich ein Missverständnis des Wesens der christlichen Freiheit ergeben, das der Apostel a limine vorbeugend abwehren will, nämlich dies: die Entlassung des Gläubigen in den ethischen Libertinismus."[58] Paul wishes to counteract any suggestion that he taught a total release from any external constraint.[59]

The Galatians' freedom is qualified both negatively and positively. Its exercise must not give an opportunity for the flesh, but must rather be worked out in a constant expression of love through service. Thus we find ourselves on similar ground to Rom 13:8-10, 14:1ff and 1 Cor 8-10 (see comments on these texts). The very possession of freedom may itself prove the occasion for sinful rebellion against God's will.[60] Hence its proper use must be carefully defined. As in other texts noted above, the believers here are commanded to lay down their rights and lives in the interests of those around them. True freedom consists in the giving up of one's own rights in service to others. Hence, paradoxically, freedom in Christ is expressed in terms of slavery -- slavery to Christ and to each other (cf. Rom 6, 1 Cor 7:17ff, 8-10). Freedom, therefore, is not a goal in itself,[61] but is freedom for love[62] and for mutual service.[63] The only way to preserve freedom, moreover, is through love; the exercise of love and the exercise of freedom should always involve the same thing.[64] Paul purposely links ἐλευθερία and δουλεία here to make this point.[65] His use of δουλεία here provides a strong contrast to his use of the word in Gal 4,[66] and shows that there is a right and a wrong form of δουλεία (as well as a right and a wrong form of ἐλευθερία).

The Apostle is not satisfied, however, with leaving the discussion at this stage. He goes on (v. 14) to place it within the framework of the OT law. By living in this genuine freedom, the believer fulfils (or at least begins to fulfil) the whole law (ὁ πᾶς νόμος); γάρ links the fulfilling of the law closely with the attitudes described in v. 13.[67] The unusual placing of the adjective (πᾶς)[68] emphasizes that the whole law is involved,[69] including ritual aspects.[70] The view that Paul here reduces the OT law to a single ethical principle (love),[71] is, therefore, unlikely. Burton notes that πεπλήρωται

(used here as a gnomic perfect[72]) yields the meaning "fully to obey",[73] though we must note, as we have seen, that this cannot imply a total obedience. The most obvious and natural meaning is that the OT law, in all its precepts, stands obeyed (in a real if incomplete sense) when it is performed under the conditions noted in v. 13 -- and in this fulfilment is found true freedom. Van Dülmen notes rightly that Paul never distinguishes between totally separate parts of the law; here, therefore, law is "... der Gesamtheit der verbindlichen Forderungen Gottes, so wie sie in der Schrift offenbart sind."[74] Πεπλήρωται stands for the "vollständige Ausführung des Gesetzes" and so it is wrong to suggest there is any reduction of the law involved here.[75] Hübner rightly points out that v. 14 either means that the whole Torah, with all its commandments, participates in the love command, or that the content of the Torah can be reduced to the one (love-) command. He states correctly that the second alternative fails to take Paul's assertion concerning the fulfilment of the whole law seriously. On his view, however, the first alternative is not possible either, for that would involve Paul in an approbation of the practice of the various commandments of the law which in Galatians he considers abolished. Hübner thus proposes that ὁ πᾶς νόμος is an ironical phrase opposing the Jewish ideal of keeping the whole law and suggests that the real law is love. Reduction means abrogation, so that the "whole law" can only be spoken of in a critical/ironical way.[76] This, surely is a counsel of despair. If Paul's clear statement in vv. 13-14, citing the OT and speaking of the genuine fulfilment of the law, is ironical, what other statement of the Apostle's can be taken at face value? If we take v. 14 in the most reasonable and obvious way, then the first alternative noted by Hübner must surely be accepted. P. Bonnard notes rightly that the verse speaks not of the law culminating in the love command, nor of love elevated to an impersonal principle, but states concretely that he who loves has fulfilled God's law.[77]

Only true freedom in Christ enables a genuine (albeit imperfect) performance of the law. Schlier notes rightly that the Apostle thinks of the law as possessing an inner unity in its various commandments, all of which express the same characteristic of love.[78] We cannot agree, therefore, with the view of Duncan that the law is no longer, according to this verse, operative, but is replaced by the new "rule of love."[79] Rather is there here a positive statement concerning the fulfilment of the law as God's holy will. Even as we are freed from

the law in that we are freed from its just condemnation of our sinful disobedience and efforts to establish a claim upon God's righteousness, so we are now freed, for the first time, for obedience to the law as the righteous will of God. Schlier comments rightly, "Das Gesetz aber, zu dem wir hingerufen sind, ist das Gesetz, so wie es dem Menschen im Glauben an Christus als der Wille Gottes eröffnet wird, zur Verwirklichung der Freiheit in der selbstlosen Liebe. Der Ruf zur Freiheit, der im Evangelium der Freiheit an uns ergangen ist, ist damit die Freilegung unserer Person für das Gesetz als Willen Gottes und die Freigabe des Gesetzes als des Willen Gottes für uns."[80] The call to freedom in the gospel is simultaneously the freeing of the believer for obedience to the law.[81] There is no hint here of an opposition between the commandments of the law and the lordship of Christ, as Beyer supposes.[82] The fact that Paul appeals to a commandment of the OT (and one taken from the Pentateuch at that) should serve as an indication that no depreciation of the law is in view here. There is no justification for Betz' view that in Galatians Paul differentiates between Torah (negative) and Scripture (positive).[83] By citing Lev 19:18 Paul gives the law full authority and validity.[84] The significance of the phrase ἐν ἑνὶ λόγῳ is not to be found in its reduction of the law to a principle. The reference is rather to the single command of Lev 19:18,[85] and points to the fact that love is the attitude in which all the law's commands should be fulfilled. Only when the believer fulfils the law's commands in love do the commands themselves find true fulfilment. What, therefore are we to make of Burton's comment[86] that because all the law really requires is "love" the believer is released from all the "statutes" of the law? Yet love is itself a "statute" of the law, according to Paul. How could the Apostle speak of a genuine fulfilment of the law if he really meant a genuine abrogation? Lietzmann admits that it is the law's fulfilment of which Paul speaks here, yet suggests that what is meant (which can be determined, he says, only from context) is its abrogation.[87] We have seen there is no ground for existence of such contextual evidence. Lietzmann himself later admits that, according to this chapter, the believer is to fulfil the "decisive demands" of the law.[88]

The Apostle, therefore, far from devaluing the law, is correcting the misimpression (which could have been given by his consistent emphasis in the letter on justification by faith) that he is rejecting the law's authority and thus opening the door to antinomianism and licence.

The context (5:13-6:10) shows that for Paul there is far more than a simple "love command" involved in the gospel! Bonnard notes forcefully, "... une vie morale renouvelée ne découle pas automatiquement de l'expérience du pardon; l'Évangile serait incomplet sans le rappel de la loi de Dieu. La justification gratuite donne la vie; la loi décrit cette vie nouvelle ... Paul, ici, ne décrit pas un processus invariable de la vie chrétienne, mais ... il exhorte après avoir appelé. Toute la vie morale des croyants comme toute leur liberté tient à cette double initiative de l'enseignement apostolique et non à une idée plus ou moins vague de la communion avec Jésus-Christ."[89] The moral life of the Christian, he continues, is based on the authority of God's law proclaimed to the believers by the Apostle himself.[90] The commandments of God are presented to those who have already been justified by faith, not to those who would misuse them as an instrument by which to establish a claim upon God.[91] Law fulfilment is, in this sense, we may add, not merely a work of man but (and to a greater degree) a gift of God.[92]

This truth is further illustrated by the close links between these verses and Rom 13:8-10. There are obvious striking similarities in both structure and content, and the two texts were probably written within a year of each other. Hence, some commentators justifiably state that Rom 13:8-10 is the authentic commentary on this text.[93] Whether or not this is the case in every respect, it is certainly true that substantially the same ideas are involved in both texts. This is also shown by the fact that the same OT text, Lev 19:18, is cited in Rom 13:9. The thought of Rom 13:8 (that love remains as a debt always outstanding because love fulfils the law and the law can never be perfectly fulfilled) can be linked with Paul's use of the present imperative in v. 13 which, as Burton notes, "... reflects the fact that what Paul enjoins is not a single act of service, nor an entrance into service, but a continuous attitude and activity."[94]

vv. 18, 23

Paul, having concluded the previous subsection with the sharp warning of v. 15 reminding the Galatians of their woeful failure properly to exercise their freedom in Christ, takes up in v. 16 a more extended practical exhortation (or list of exhortations; see further our comment on these verses in connection with the topic of freedom from sin). The theme of this subsection is walking in the Spirit (v. 16). In v. 18, the Apostle states that if the believer

walks obediently in the Spirit, he is not ὑπὸ νόμον. This requires a brief comment.

What is meant here is clearly that state of being "under law" which Paul has repeatedly referred to in the letter. It is that condition in which the Judaizers, exalting the law above the promise, have attempted to use the law to establish a claim upon God. For this reason (and the fact that no true fulfilment of the law is forthcoming) they are brought under the law's just condemnation. How are we to relate this to vv. 13-15? Oepke makes a distinction between "die tiefinnerliche, sittliche Bindung an den im Gesetz zum Ausdruck kommenden Gotteswillen" and "die harte, aüsserliche Versklavung unter das Gesetz als gottfeindliche Macht, die es zu einer wirklichen Erfüllung jenes Willens eben nicht kommen lässt."[95] We have seen that the Apostle in no way characterizes the law as a "gottfeindliche Macht". The distinction can, however, be made between the system of human legalism and abuse of the law (which the Apostle condemns) and the right use of the law in which it is obeyed by the believer as the enduring expression of the holy and righteous will of God spoken of in vv. 13-15. The view of Duncan, therefore, that if Christians know the life of the Spirit, they "neither require nor recognize the safeguards of the law,"[96] surely does not reflect the Apostle's view here. Duncan is right to oppose life in the Spirit and legalism,[97] but fails to see that legalism and the proper use of the law, far from being synonymous, are opposites. Furthermore, his view that the believer no longer needs the safeguards of the law surely implies ethical perfectionism. Betz also misses the point when he states that "... Paul suggests that it is more important to be enabled to act with ethical responsibility than to introduce a code of law which remains a mere demand."[98] This introduces into the text a thought quite alien to Paul. Betz says, "In other words, the introduction of the Torah into the Galatian churches would not lead to ethical responsibility, so long as the people were not motivated and enabled ethically. If they were motivated and enabled, however, the Torah is [sic] superfluous."[99] More to the point, however, would be to say, "If they were motivated and enabled, the Torah would be fulfilled." Van Dülmen's observation is apposite: it is untrue that the believer no longer needs the law or that the law's command has become irrelevant -- rather is it that he now has "die einzige reale Möglichkeit, das Gesetz zu erfüllen."[100] In this passage, as in Rom 8, the work of the Holy Spirit is recognized as having a decisive role in the

ability of the believer to begin genuinely to fulfil the requirements of God's law. In this passage, as in Rom 6, the life thus guided by the Holy Spirit will lead not to licence but to a freedom which is expressed, under the authority of God's law, in mutual love and service.

After providing in vv. 19-23 a lengthy list of vices to be avoided and virtues to be embraced by the believer (a list which belies the notion that, for the Apostle, the simple "love command" would in any way suffice as a guide for the believer's daily life), Paul sums up in v. 23b, κατὰ τῶν τοιούτων οὐκ ἔστιν νόμος. Some take τοιούτων as masculine, and thus as a reference to the believers who walk according to the Spirit (v. 18).[101] This, however, seems rather artificial when a more obvious reference (the immediately preceding list of virtues) is close at hand. It seems best, then, to take τοιούτων as neuter.[102] The Apostle is stating, therefore, that the freedom given in Christ should be expressed in such a way that there is brought forth by the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer these kind of character qualities, against which no law stands.

The point here is not that the law does not forbid these virtues -- this is self-evident and would scarcely need stating.[103] Is the meaning, therefore, as Mussner supposes, that the virtues have nothing to do with the killing power of the law but are rather the fruit of the Spirit, in that the Spirit, not the law, leads the believer to these virtues? In this way, suggests Mussner, the Spirit replaces the law as "das einzige 'Moralprinzip'", and the freedom of the believer "... bleibt so auch im ethischen Bereich gewahrt."[104] On this view, it can be said that the law (for Paul) no longer exists as far as the believer is concerned.[105] In what sense, however, we must ask, can (on the basis of this view) v. 23 be reconciled with the thematic statement of vv. 13-15? Burton notes rightly that v. 23 "... has the effect of an emphatic assertion that these things have fully met the requirements of the law (cf. v. 14)."[106] By the enablement of the Holy Spirit, we may say, the Christian does what the law aims at.[107] It is surely reasonable to see this verse in the light of Paul's teaching on the law elsewhere in the letter. In this way, the verse can be taken in its perfectly natural sense of expressing the truth that the Christian has been freed from the law's just condemnation of sin. Where there is a genuine (though imperfect) fulfilling of the law (enabled by the Spirit), the law's condemnation no longer stands against the character qualities of the lives of such people as are fulfilling the law. Oepke

comments rightly, "Paulus möchte auch den letzten Zweifel beseitigen, als ob die Thora gegen diejenigen, die sie zwar nicht mechanisch in allen Einzelheiten, wohl aber geistlich (V. 14) erfüllen, als Anklägerin auftreten werde. Wie sollte sie sich so mit ihrem wesentlichen Gehalt selbst in Widerspruch setzen?"[108] Oepke further points out that Paul does not simply say οὐκ ἔστιν νόμος, but specifies more clearly what he means,[109] a point Mussner might well note. Certainly this verse expresses the truth that, in one important sense, the law has to do with the judging of sin, a function which (in the truest sense) it no longer exercises over the believer, the curse of the law having been laid upon Christ (3:10).[110] This does not mean, however, that the law has no further role to play for the believer[111] -- but rather that the law itself is, in one way, freed to perform a new role in the life of the Christian.[112] This opens us up to the love of God revealed in the law, and means that freedom from the law's condemnation means also freedom for love and service in obedience to the law's requirement. Schlier comments, "Im Angerufensein durch die uns in Christus sich erweisende Liebe Gottes eröffnet sich uns die im Gesetz geforderte Liebe Gottes und eröffnen wir uns dieser Liebe.... Indem wir von der Liebe Christi im Glauben getragen sind, werden wir frei zur Liebe, die den Nächsten trägt und so das Gesetz in seinem göttlichen Willen erfüllt. Als die Geliebten sind wir frei zum Lieben."[113]

6:2

The final text for us to examine here is 6:2 where, urging the believers to live up to their calling in Christ, the Apostle declares that thus they will fulfil the law of Christ (καὶ οὕτως ἀναπληρώσετε τὸν νόμον τοῦ Χριστοῦ). Oepke links this text with Midr. Qoh. 11:8 (52a), which states that the Torah learned in this world is nothing in comparison with the Torah of the Messiah.[114] He also notes Sanh 97a/b, which refers to the six thousand years of world history (two thousand before the law, two thousand of law, and two thousand of the Messiah).[115] We have noted elsewhere, however, the unlikelihood that contemporary Rabbinic theology held any such view that the coming of the Messiah would abrogate the Torah. Further to this, E. Bammel points out that the aim of the periodisation of history in Sanh 97 is "... to fix the date of the coming of the Messiah but not to limit the validity of the Torah."[116] Bammel notes that contemporary apocalyptic, with its stress on the coming age, should have been an ideal breeding ground for thoughts of

a new law, but in fact shows no evidence of such ideas. Instead, the Torah is often antedated and knowledge of it attributed to such figures as Enoch, Noah and Abraham (see on Rom 4).[117] The single text which does refer to the "Torah of the Messiah" (Midr. Qoh. 11:8) can, in our view, scarcely bear the weight put on it, and, in light of the overwhelming tendency of Rabbinic theology, probably refers to a reinterpretation or reestablishment of the Torah by the Messiah.[118]

Schlier, while still linking v. 2 to the one Rabbinic text noted above, sees the νόμος τοῦ Χριστοῦ as "ein im Prinzip durch Christus erneuertes Gesetz,"[119] i.e. the OT law, fulfilled in the power of the Spirit, which brings forth the fruit of the Spirit, preeminently love. Formally speaking, according to Schlier, the law of Christ is identical with the law of works (Rom 3:27), although the two are opposed in terms of the results they produce.[120] Interesing is the view of van Dülmen, who makes a clear distinction between the new "law of Christ" (=life in the Spirit, the new life in Christ) and the old law of Moses (by which is meant the same as Schlier denotes by "law of works"). Van Dülmen admits, however, that formally, the two laws are the same, and that the fulfilment of one implies fulfilment of the other. Van Dülmen continues, "Auch der Inhalt ist nach wie vor der am Sinai geoffenbarte Wille Gottes, dessen Forderungen von höchster Verbindlichkeit sind. In Christus und seinem Nomos leben, heisst in den Forderungen Gottes leben und ihnen entsprechen."[121] The law of Christ "... ist Anspruch und Zuspruch zugleich. Das ἐν Χριστῷ εἶναι bedeutet Forderung und Erfüllung in einem. Es ist dem Menschen nicht nur die Möglichkeit zur Erfüllung des Gesetzes gegeben, sondern die Erfüllung ist implizit in dem Status des Geistbesitzes enthalten. Der Mensch ist durch Christus dergestalt umgewandelt, dass die Gesetzeserfüllung für ihn nicht mehr Leistung, sondern Geschenk ist."[122] Surely, however, a more natural way of getting around the problem that Paul does not seem to know of two laws and the content of both (supposedly different) laws is identical (and even that their fulfilment amounts to the same thing), is to acknowledge that for the Apostle there is in fact only one law, and his distinction is between the proper and improper use of it. As far as the "law of works" referred to by Schlier is concerned, we have seen (on Rom 3:21-31) that the expression refers to the OT law misunderstood and misused as a means for making a claim upon God (rather than simply the OT law requiring works of obedience). It makes sense, therefore, to see in Gal 6:2 a statement regarding the proper use of the law -- when it is

humbly obeyed as God's law by those who have confessed their total inadequacy to perform acts of righteousness before God and have instead accepted God's grace in Christ as the only means of justification, the law can fittingly be described as the νόμος τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

This coheres well with vv. 13-15, which speak of the link between God's law and love. When it is understood from this perspective, we can agree with the comment of Schlier, "In ihm wird 'der Nomos' nicht vernichtet, sondern aufgerichtet. Weit entfernt also davon, dass Christus in dem Sinn des Gesetzes 'Ende' ist, dass das Gesetz Gottes und also Gottes Forderung und ihre Erfüllung in Werken aufgehört hatte, ist er es vielmehr in dem Sinn, dass das Gesetz der Juden und Heiden, das Gesetz der Welt, dadurch in ihm ein Ende hat, dass er selbst nun sein Gesetz aufrichtete, in dem das Geist und Leben schaffende Gesetz Gottes schlechthin neu zu Gehör kommt."[123] Unlikely, therefore, is the view of some that the Apostle here refers simply to the "new life in Christ" or the "NT imperative" -- something, at any rate, totally opposed to the OT law.[124] The OT law, on this view, is abrogated, and the new law of Christ has nothing to do with it, even if, as Mussner admits, there are (according to v. 14 and Rom 13:8-10) similarities of content.[125] We have seen repeatedly, however, that neither according to this passage nor according to other passages in Paul, is there any ground for suggesting that the Apostle held any such view. We have seen that νόμος in Galatians refers exclusively to the OT law. We have also noted (see on these texts) that verses such as Rom 8:2, 1 Cor 9:21 can scarcely be utilised in support of the view that the Apostle believed in the existence of a new law of some kind,[126] or that he would refer to the actual commands of Christ (as opposed to the OT law) as such.[127] Indeed, the lack of reference in Paul to the sayings of Jesus (let alone to a body of collected sayings) is a notable feature of the Apostle's writings. This point is tacitly admitted in Oepke's comment, "Der Nomos Christi ist nicht auf einzelne überlieferte Herrenworte zu beschränken, sondern umfassend als die im neuen Aion geltende und das Teilhaben an ihm sichernde Lebensordnung zu verstehen."[128] What, however, is this undefined "Lebensordnung"? Oepke suggests Rom 15:2-3 as a "Zusammenfassung" of the law of Christ[129] -- but (apart from the fact that no "law" is suggested in this text) the description of the conduct of Christ there receives its support from an OT citation (Ps 69:9) -- just as in v. 14 and Rom 13:9! Van Dülmen, who also speaks of the new "Lebensordnung", admits this is the only text in Galatians where νόμος

does not refer to the OT law.[130] She admits, as we have seen, that the fulfilling of the one law implies the fulfilling of the other, and concedes elsewhere that the law of Christ "... ist nicht ein völlig neues Gesetz, sondern es ist das alte Gesetz, insofern es in seinem Wesen pneumatisch ist und deshalb nun im Aion des Pneuma in Geltung steht."[131] The distinction in the law, on her view, is the distinction between letter and spirit, old Aeon and new Aeon. Given, however, that Paul made no such distinction in the law, is what is referred to by van Dülmen not rather what the Apostle sees as the proper and improper use of the law? Van Dülmen eventually admits as much: "Es [the law of Christ] ist dies das gleiche Gesetz, denn Christus bringt nicht ein neues Gesetz, sondern er bringt die völlig neue Bewertung des Gesetzes .... Der Inhalt und grundlegende Wert der alten Heilstatsachen bleibt bestehen, aber ihre Gültigkeit, ihre Bestimmtheit liegt nun einzig im Geist...."[132] This, surely, implies no new law at all, and is a rather confusing way of grappling with Paul's more straightforward view of the law.[133] W. Schrage admits this when he says that Gal 6:2 represents neither an "imitatio Christi" nor an opposition to the OT law, but speaks rather of a fulfilment of the OT law (and hence its commands) in Christ.[134] Schrage sees the difference between the two laws as lying "... nicht in einem verschieden starken Anspruch auf Gültigkeit und Verbindlichkeit, also nicht darin, dass das Gesetz Christi nichts konkretes forderte, sondern darin, dass hier nicht gefordert wird, ohne dass gegeben wird, und das hier nicht gefordert wird, damit gegeben wird. Auch hier gibt es ein Sollen, aber nicht ohne ein Sein, auch hier gibt es konkreten Anspruch und konkreten Aufgabe, aber keinen Anspruch ohne einen Zuspruch und keine Aufgaben ohne Gottes zuvorkommende Gaben."[135] Bammel admits that using the term νόμος to refer to the precepts of Christ stretches the meaning of the word too far;[136] see also our critique of the position of C. H. Dodd on 1 Cor 9:19ff.[137]

The point of 6:2, therefore, is the same as that noted with respect to 5:14. Christian freedom means not only freedom from the just condemnation of the law, from that situation in which the law was misused to suit the purposes of men, and hence, from that condition in which we were imprisoned by the law (in the sense of 3:22), but also freedom <u>for</u> obedience to the law as the righteous command of God. This is stated succinctly by Schrage: "Die Freiheit <u>vom</u> Gesetz als Heilsweg ist zugleich eine Freiheit <u>zum</u> Gesetz als inhaltlichen Gebot."[138] There is no conflict between Christian freedom and the OT law,

properly understood. Rather in Christ is the believer for the first time freed to begin a life of obedience to the law as the holy and righteous will of God, the "law of Christ".

Conclusions

1. Christians are called to love one another, because to love is to fulfil the law. As the law can never perfectly be fulfilled, the debt to love will always remain outstanding. The law the believers are called to obey is clearly, according to Paul, the OT law.
2. It is untrue, therefore, to say that love brings freedom and the law brings bondage, or that Christian freedom means freedom from the need to fulfil the law's commands. Rather is it true that in Christ the believer is free both to love and to obey the law, each of whose commands involves love.
3. Freedom, therefore, is not for the Christian an end or goal in itself. Rather is it freedom for love and mutual service. The very possession of freedom may prove the occasion for disobedience and rebellion, and its proper use must be carefully defined. Total freedom can be reached only in the believer's full participation in the eternal glory and life of God, a participation which is clearly reserved for the future, according to the Apostle. In his present mortal condition, the believer would turn absolute freedom into a means for self-centred pursuits. Hence, the believer's freedom must be limited or structured by God's law, which continually directs his attention away from himself to the needs of others, and shows him how to live a life pleasing to God and in accordance with His commands.
4. Freedom to love (and to obey the law) is not, therefore, freedom for the Christian to do as he wishes, or to be guided by some general "love principle", which would exalt freedom as an end in itself, and so lead to disaster.
5. Freedom in Christ may, indeed, mean a giving up of freedom in the worldly sense, or a giving up of the outward exercise of the true inner freedom the believer has in Christ. Freedom to love is freedom for obedience. Believers are called to lay down their lives for those around them.
6. Only when the believer fulfils the law's commands in love do the commands themselves find a genuine fulfilment.

7. The commands of the law are not irrelevant to, but are the basis of Christian ethics. The life truly guided by the Holy Spirit will lead neither to licence nor to a purely independent, self-centred discernment of what is good. Rather will it result in a freedom which is expressed, under the authority of God's law, in mutual love and service.
8. The law's just condemnation no longer stands against the believer because, in the life of the believer, the law's command is fulfilled. Far from having no further role to play for the believer, the law itself is now freed to perform a new role in the life of the Christian.
9. The "law of Christ" (Gal 6:2) is neither some undefined collection of Jesus' sayings nor a general reference to the new life in Christ. Rather is it a definite reference to the OT law as fulfilled in the life of the believer.
10. The command to love and the command to fulfil the law are, therefore, one and the same thing, when both love and the law are properly understood. This command is reached only in the life of the believer freed through the work of Christ from the law's condemnation. Freedom from condemnation, therefore, is freedom for obedience.

Footnotes

1. Cranfield,II, 673; Käsemann, p. 348; Althaus, p. 136; Sanday/Headlam, p. 373; Lietzmann, p. 113; Leenhardt, p. 337n.

2. Schlier, p. 394; Käsemann, p. 348.

3. Käsemann, p. 348; Leenhardt, p. 337; contra Michel, p. 408.

4. Käsemann, p. 348; Schmidt, p. 222; Schlier, p. 394.

5. Schlier, p. 394, suggests εἰ μή corresponds to the Aramaic אִם לָא. He thinks that speaking of a "debt of love" makes no sense in the context -- yet (see our comments) this is by no means the case, in our opinion. For this view see also Lietzmann, p. 113; Barrett, pp. 249-50.

6. Cranfield,II, 674; Schmidt, p. 222. Michel, pp. 408-9 n. 4, is undecided, while Käsemann, p. 348, seems to allow for both possibilities! This could be true if only a word-play on the verb were involved, but since a change of mood and attribution of an unusual meaning to εἰ μή is in view also, it seems likely Paul had the idea of "debt" firmly in mind.

7. Willi Marxsen, "Der ἕτερος νόμος Röm. 13,8," ThZ 11 (1955), p. 234. This view is supported by Leenhardt, p. 337 n.

8. Marxsen, pp. 232-33.

9. Marxsen, pp. 236-37.

10. Käsemann, p. 348; Cranfield, II, 675.

11. Cranfield, II, 675.

12. See Michel, p. 409 n. 5.

13. Michel, p. 409 n. 5.

14. Käsemann, p. 348; Cranfield, II, 675-76. On the interpretation of this phrase see also Schlier, p. 395 n. 2.

15. Lietzmann, p. 113; Michel, pp. 409-10; Schlier, pp. 394-95; Leenhardt, pp. 337-38; Schmidt, p. 222; Marxsen, p. 237; Cranfield, I, 676; Hübner, p. 76. There is no basis for the view of Sanday/Headlam, p. 373, that νόμος "... is not merely the Jewish law, although it is from it that the illustrations that follow are taken, but law as a principle."

16. Käsemann, p. 348; contra van Dülmen, p. 173; Blaser, pp. 236, 239.

17. Lietzmann, p. 113. He puts the discrepancy down to Paul's "unschematische Art" -- but attribution of such confused thinking to the Apostle surely does him little justice, especially when a quite coherent and reasonable view is close to hand.

18. Marxsen, p. 236.

19. Cranfield, II, 676.

20. Blass-Debrunner, para. 344; Michel, p. 410 n. 6; Cranfield, II, 676 n. 2; Schlier, p. 395 n. 3.

21. Cranfield, II, 676.

22. Michel, p. 410.

23. Leenhardt, p. 337.

24. Stanislas Lyonnet, "Liberté chrétienne et loi d'Esprit selon saint Paul," Christus 4 (1954), p. 18. He comments further, "Sans donc avoir besoin d'une loi que le contraigne de l'extérieur, le chrétien, amené par l'Esprit, accomplit toute loi dans la pleine liberté de fils" (p. 19).

25. Lyonnet, pp. 14, 19.

26. Marxsen, p. 237.

27. Hans Hübner, "Das ganze und das eine Gesetz: Zum Problemkreis Paulus und die Stoa," K.D. 21 (1975), p. 248.

28. Nygren, p. 435.

29. Michel, p. 410; Kasemann, p. 349; Cranfield, II, 677; Schlier, p. 395; Leenhardt, p. 338n.

30. Van Dülmen, p. 227.

31. Van Dülmen, pp. 227-28.

32. Van Dülmen, p. 230.

33. Jules Cambier, "La liberté chrétienne selon saint Paul," Lumière et Vie 12 (1963), p. 14.

34. Cambier, p. 14.

35. Cambier, p. 14.

36. Lagrange, p. 316.

37. Schlier, p. 395; Käsemann, pp. 348-49; Michel, p. 410 n. 9; Leenhardt, p. 338 n.; Barrett, p. 251. For a list of Rabbinic texts, see Strack-Billerbeck 1, 357-59; 3, 506. Schlier, p. 395, comments, "Formal steht Paulus hier in spätjüdischer exegetischer Tradition, nach der das Gebot der Liebe das grosse, allumfassende Prinzip der Tora כְּלָל גָּדוֹל בַּתּוֹרָה ist."

38. Käsemann, p. 348.

39. Kuss, "Nomos," p. 224, speaks of a "Tugendkatalog" involving the "essential" element in the law, the Ten Commandments.

40. Cranfield, II, 677; Käsemann, p. 349; Schlier, p. 395.

41. Michel, pp. 410-11.

42. Schlier, p. 395; Käsemann, p. 349. Käsemann suggests that Paul is dependent here on a tradition in which the moral law is still binding -- but this, surely, without any further evidence being given, is special pleading.

43. Feuillet, p. 797.

44. Feuillet, p. 797.

45. Käsemann, p. 349; Cranfield, II, 678; Barrett, p. 251.

46. Käsemann, p. 349; Cranfield, II, 678; Schlier, p. 395; Barrett, p. 251; Lietzmann, p. 113. Schmidt, p. 223; Michel, p. 411, partially support this view.

47. Nygren, p. 435; see pp. 433-35.

48. Cranfield, II, 679. An example of the opposite view is Dodd, p. 206, who comments that our obligations as Christians cannot be "... defined or limited by any code of behaviour; they arise out of the varying situations in which one is involved with other people, and are felt as duties in so far as love for men is a dominant sentiment." "Sentiment," even in the sense of "motivation" or "attitude", is surely a totally inadequate word, so far as Paul is concerned, by which to speak of the obligation of the Christian to obey God's law and live in a way pleasing to Him. Schrage, Die konkreten Einzelgebote , p. 255, takes a similar view, but is at least honest when he states that love not only fulfils, but sometimes dispenses with the commandment. The commandments of the Torah are fulfilled, not replaced -- yet in such a way that their validity is judged by the higher criterion of the love command (Rom 13:8) or the "law of Christ" (Gal 6:2;

see pp. 255-56). Schrage seems to want to have it both ways, but this approach, in the end, falls into confusion (as can be seen by our discussion of his treatment of the same themes in Gal 6; see (88) below). For refutation of the view that the "law of Christ" is anything other than the Mosaic law, see on Gal 6:2; see also on 1 Cor 9, Section IV,D (102). For an extreme statement of the view we have rejected here, see John Knox, The Ethic of Jesus in the Teaching of the Church, p. 102, who suggests that in the Christian's life of love, the law's requirement is inevitably fulfilled and, as such, "transcended and in a real sense invalidated." How far this is removed from the thinking of Paul we have seen. For a critique of this view, see C. F. D. Moule, "Obligation in the Ethic of Paul," in Christian History and Interpretation, ed. W. R. Farmer et al., p. 391. See on Gal 5:1-12, Section III, part A, (196), (197).

49. Michel, p. 409, n. 5, "Röm 13, 8-10 bereitet in gewisser Weise auch Röm 14 als Testfall vor."

50. Käsemann, p. 348.

51. Käsemann, p. 348.

51a. H.R. Balz, Heilsvertrauen und Welterfahrung, p. 50.

52. Marxsen, p. 237.

53. John Murray, Collected Writings, vol 1: The Claims of Truth, ed. Ian Murray, p. 199.

54. Schlier, p. 241; Mussner, p. 366; Burton, p. 291; Oepke, p. 168; Bonnard, p. 108; contra Lagrange, p. 145. Betz, p. 272, weakens the sense by suggesting γάρ indicates merely "another step in the argument."

55. Oepke, p. 168; Schlier, p. 241; Duncan, p. 162. See Burton, p. 292: "The article before ἐλευθερίαν is demonstrative, referring to ἐλευθερία of the preceding clause, and through it to that of 5:1 and the implication of the whole context."

56. Burton, p. 291; Bonnard, p. 108.

57. Betz, p. 272 and 272 nn. 17, 18, points out the danger of reading the situation of 1 Corinthians into Galatians. There is no evidence of a libertine group with the Galatian church.

58. Mussner, p. 367.

59. As suggested by U. Lütgert, Gesetz und Geist, pp. 11ff. Lietzmann, p. 39, Mussner, pp. 25-26, points out that Paul's probable concern here is the same as in Rom 6, i.e. both to guard against the possibility that his teaching might be misunderstood, with antinomian consequences, and to defend himself against the Judaizers' charge that this was the case. Lietzmann notes that the warning (6:1) not to despise someone for the transgression of God's moral order is hardly an indication that the πνευματικοί were libertines. See the whole discussion in Mussner, pp. 11-29.

60. Schlier, p. 243; Betz, p. 273. Paul's point, however, as we shall see, is that a wrong conception involving the idea of total freedom (release) from the law is as harmful as the practice of the Judaizers.

61. Contra Mussner, p. 367.

62. Schlier, p. 243: "Die Freiheit, zu der die Galater gerufen sind, ist ihrem Sinn und rechten Gebrauch nach die Freiheit zur Liebe, sie ist, kann man auch sagen, die Freiheit der Liebe." Mussner, p. 369: "In der Übung der ἀγάπη wird die Freiheit erst ganz frei, weil sie vom Ich sich loslöst, befreit von allen falschen Bindungen. Der liebende Mensch ist der freie Mensch."

63. Oepke, p. 169: "Die Liebe gibt sich dem Nächsten zum Sklaven.... Gerade darin liegt wahre Freiheit." See also Mussner, p. 369.

64. Betz, p. 274.

65. Duncan, p. 163; Betz, p. 274.

66. Burton, p. 293; Mussner, p. 369; Betz, p. 274.

67. Mussner, p. 369.

68. Burton, p. 296; Oepke, p. 170.

69. Schlier, p. 244; Oepke, p. 170; Mussner, p. 370 -- though there is surely no justification for the view of Mussner that "das gesamte Gesetz" is opposed here to the individual "Anordnungen" of the law.

70. Schlier, p. 244; Oepke, p. 170.

71. For such a view, see Burton, p. 458; Lagrange, p. 146; Betz, p. 275. Betz supports his view by the notion that Paul opposes doing and fulfilling the law (ποιεῖν and πληροῦν). The first involves justification by works, the second living in love. What justification, however, is there for limiting πληροῦν to love? Surely it is used (as in Rom 8:4) to convey the idea that God's purposes are fully carried out in the law; used thus, it underlines the authority of the law. Betz' comment on 6:2 is more satisfactory: "... the Christian's relationship to the law is this: he is not required to earn his salvation by doing the 'works of the law,' but by being a part of the divine salvation, 'through faith,' he also fulfills the law." (p. 300)

72. Burton, p. 295; Schlier, p. 244.

73. Burton, p. 295.

74. Van Dülmen, p. 60. See also p. 224, where she states that any distinction between parts of the law is "vollkommen unmöglich." Hence, by implication, any attempt to single out some portion of the law (even only one principle) as still valid (while other parts are not) is out of the question. Rather what the Apostle indicates is that Christ Himself has fulfilled for us certain aspects of the law. This does not mean these commands are irrelevant or wrong, but simply that we fulfil them not directly but only by faith in Him, i.e. there would be no point in our (attempting to) repeat what Christ has done in taking the curse upon Himself. Our experience with the law shows that, in our woeful failure, we are unable to do this anyway. Other aspects of the law, while no more important in God's sight, still remain for us directly to fulfil. In this sense can a distinction be made between ceremonial and moral aspects

of the law. Paul's parenesis (e.g. Gal 5:13ff) is only a reflection of the broad spectrum of the moral teaching of the OT law; see Lietzmann, p. 40; Beyer/Althaus, p. 48. Even elements which he may have borrowed from current Greek thinking would never have been entertained had he thought a contradiction with the holy and righteous will of God (Rom 7:12) had been involved.

75. Van Dülmen, p. 60, n. 130.

76. Hübner, pp. 37-38; also Hans Hübner, "Das ganze und das eine Gesetz: Zum Problemkreis Paulus und die Stoa," K.D. 21 (1975), pp. 239-47. Hübner comments, "Paulus will also sagen: Ihr Galater, ihr wollt dem Gesetz gehorchen; nun, so gehorcht dem Liebesgebot, das ist euer 'Gesetz'" (p. 246). Hübner suggests that, taken at face value, v. 14 is opposed to v. 3, where Paul opposes the idea of keeping the whole law. Surely, however, the Apostle's aim in v. 3 is to deny the claims of the Galatians who dare to suggest they have satisfied the law's demands merely by the act of being circumcised. See our comments on 5:1-12. Hübner explains what he sees as Paul's concept of reduction by postulating Stoic influence; see "Das ganze...Gesetz," 251- This seems, however, a rather novel idea, and the evidence is unconvincing, when a perfectly natural explanation of the phrase is at hand. Hübner elsewhere admits, in fact, that love and Torah are connected rather more closely here: "Immerhin ist ja das 'ganze', den Christen fordernde Gesetz eine Forderung der Torah" (Das Gesetz bei Paulus, p. 42).

77. Bonnard, p. 109.

78. Schlier, p. 245: "Nach unserem Satz ist die innere Einheit der in allen Einzelforderungen laut werdende Anspruch der an der Liebe zu sich selbst ihr Mass empfangende Liebe zum andern. Das, wovor jedes Wort des Gesetzes den Menschen stellt, ist die Forderung der Liebe."

79. Duncan, p. 164. What justification can there be for the view of D. Stanley, "Freedom and Slavery in Pauline Usage," The Way 15 (1975), p. 97, that Paul's command here must not "... be considered as another external norm replacing the outmoded demands of the mosaic law." This suggests a total break between Paul's command and the law, whereas Paul's purpose here seems clearly to link the two. The opposition between external and internal norms or commands is, in this context, ill-considered; see also our comments on 2 Cor 3.

80. Schlier, p. 245.

81. Schlier, p. 245.

82. Beyer/Althaus, p. 46, who, admitting that this text says that God now accomplishes His purposes through the law, view this in terms of one thousand restrictive commandments giving way to the lordship of Christ ... surely not what Paul is thinking of here!

83. Betz, p. 275. What are we to make of Betz's dismissal of the Lev quotation with the suggestion that "Paul then quotes Lev 19:18 according to the LXX, which does not mean that he quotes directly from the LXX [!]; it is more likely that he takes the quotation from primitive Christian tradition, where it is widely attested" (p. 276). Only three examples outside the NT are given of this

"wide" attestation -- and it stretches credulity to believe that the citations in the gospels are not explicit and careful references to the OT. The only other NT reff. given are Rom 13:9 (on which see our comments) and James 2:8. This is another case in which primitive tradition, so far as it exists, follows the NT, rather than vice-versa.

84. Van Dülmen, p. 60, who comments further: "Heilsbedeutung hat das Gesetz selbstverständlich jetzt ebensowenig wie früher. Aber es offenbart dem Willen Gottes, der erfüllt werden muss."

85. Schlier, p. 245.

86. Burton, p. 294.

87. Lietzmann, p. 39.

88. Lietzmann, p. 40. See also Kühl, p. 140, who suggests that the law must be abolished if it is to be truly fulfilled. Preaching even the ten commandments, says Kühl (p. 141), leads to legalism and death -- love is sufficient. Yet what implications does this have for the preaching of the gospel? If the OT demands have such fearful consequences, what of the demand made by the gospel? In vv. 19ff, anyway, Paul goes far beyond a simple love command in his paranesis. Kühl suggests (pp. 142ff) that the sense underlying the OT commands is fulfilled in Christ, but can offer no elaboration of what he means. He also says that the "Vorschriften" of Christ are the true commands, yet neither identifies these nor accounts for the contradiction between the preaching of such specific command. This analysis seems to us to be confused and self-contradictory; for critique of a somewhat similar position, see our comments on Kuss' theory of a "Kerngesetz" in Romans. Schrage, p. 230 states that the OT ethos is binding for the Christian -- but not its commands. What, however, are we to understand by "ethos"? Elsewhere, indeed (p. 136), he suggests that the OT ethos is recognized only "in Auswahl" and is binding only from the perspective of Christ. With respect to Gal 5:14, however, he admits (p. 232) that the law "... als Norm sittlichen Lebens geltend gemacht und darauf zurückgegriffen." He then compounds the confusion by stating that the Christian doesn't do things because they are in the law but he fulfils what is in the law. The Christian is freed from the law, but this does not mean its commands are no longer valid; Paul distinguishes between the law as God's will and as abrogated (p. 232). When one is freed from the law's condemnation, he can take seriously its content; on the other hand, the law is only one source among others for moral teaching (p. 237). It is indeed difficult to find some coherence in all this. Schrage is caught, it seems to us, between the evidence of the text and the attraction of an understanding of freedom and the law far removed from that of Paul. The inevitable result is self-contradiction.

89. Bonnard, p. 108.

90. Bonnard, p. 108 n.

91. Bonnard, p. 109: "Si Paul réintroduit maintenant la loi de Dieu, il ne s'agit pas d'une réglementation religieuse utilisée par l'homme comme moyen de salut, mais de la loi de Dieu donnée à ceux qui, dans l'Église, ont déjà beneficié de la justification gratuite."

92. Van Dülmen, p. 59.

93. Mussner, p. 370; Oepke, pp. 169-70. Oepke, however, sees a distinction between ἀνακεφαλαιοῦται (13:9) and πεπλήρωκεν (13:8) -- but Mussner rightly points out that the two verbs should not be considered as contrasting but as complementary; see on Rom 13:8-10. Other linking v. 14 with Rom 13:8-10 include Bonnard, p. 109; Schlier, p. 245; Schrage, p. 232.

94. Burton, p. 293.

95. Oepke, p. 176.

96. Duncan, p. 169.

97. Duncan, p. 169.

98. Betz, p. 289.

99. Betz, p. 289.

100. Van Dülmen, p. 63, who also comments however, that the power of the law is in Christ broken and the believer freed from its "authority". A clearer definition than this is required, however! Only in one sense, as we have seen, can we say that either of these statements is true. Also mistaken, surely, is Mussner, p. 378, who takes the view that as the Christian is no longer ruled by the law, the Holy Spirit Himself becomes the "law" for the believer. This observation finds no support in the text, however (or in Rom 8:1ff, on which see our comments), and seriously misinterprets Paul's understanding of the relationship between the Holy Spirit and the law.

101. Van Dülmen, p. 63; Oepke, p. 183; Schlier, pp. 262-63, allow that this meaning is possible.

102. Bonnard, p. 115; Burton, pp. 318-19; Lagrange, p. 153; Mussner, p. 389. Note the parallel with τὰ τοιαῦτα (v. 21).

103. Oepke, p. 183; Mussner, p. 389.

104. Mussner, p. 389.

105. Mussner, pp. 389-90.

106. Burton, p. 318. See Bonnard, p. 115, who says that the statement κατὰ τῶν τοιούτων, κ.τ.λ. is true "... parce que le fruit moral de l'Esprit se résume, comme la loi elle-même, dans l'amour; surtout, parce que la loi est accomplie dans une telle existence humaine, bien au-delà de ce que les observances ... [sc. des judaïsants] peuvent produire en leurs adeptes."

107. Beyer/Althaus, p. 48.

108. Oepke, p. 183.

109. Oepke, p. 183.

110. Thus Lagrange, p. 153; Duncan, p. 179; Lightfoot, p. 213.

111. Contra Lagrange, p. 153: "La loi pose des bornes pour arrêter le mal, énonce des peines contre les transgresseurs. Mais elle n'a rien à dire quand l'impulsion est droite, l'action feconde, quand le terme poursuivi est le bien et le bonheur." See also Lightfoot, p. 213: "Law exists for the purpose of restraint, but in the works of the Spirit there is nothing to restrain." This is, as we have seen, mistaking one function of the law for its whole purpose; see our comments on Rom 5:13ff, 20.

112. See Schlier, p. 245, on v. 14 ((80) above). In this sense can we agree with his comment on v. 23: "Der Sinn der ganzen Bemerkung ist, die These noch einmal zu unterstreichen, dass das Pneuma bzw. die dem Geist gehorsame Lebensführung kraft ihrer Gesetzeserfüllung vom Gesetz befreit ist." (p. 263)

113. Schlier, p. 246.

114. Oepke, p. 188; see also Strack-Billerbeck 3, 577.

115. Oepke, p. 188.

116. Ernst Bammel, "Νόμος Χριστοῦ" in Studia Evangelica III, Texte und Untersuchungen 88 (1964), p. 122.

117. Bammel, p. 122; see also our comments on Rom 4.

118. See Bammel, p. 123; Mussner, p. 285.

119. Schlier, p. 272.

120. Schlier, p. 272.

121. Van Dülmen, pp. 66-67.

122. Van Dülmen, p. 68.

123. Schlier, pp. 272-73.

124. For this view see Mussner, pp. 284-87, 399. Betz, pp. 300-301, tries to avoid the problem by suggesting that Paul borrowed the term from his opponents, but gave it a totally new meaning, i.e. fulfilling, not doing the law (which is reduced to the love command). Apart from the fact that the latter point is very doubtful (see above (71)), there is no evidence that Paul borrowed the phrase from anyone. Betz suggests it played a role in other early Christian traditions -- but gives no references. The explanation we have put forward, on the other hand, gives a perfectly natural meaning to the term in the light of Pauline thought in general.

125. Mussner, p. 287.

126. Contra Lagrange, p. 156.

127. Contra Burton, pp. 329-30, who admits this would then be one of the few passages in Paul in which the teaching of Jesus is referred to.

128. Oepke, pp. 188-89.

129. Oepke, p. 189.

130. Van Dülmen, pp. 66-67.

131. Van Dülmen, p. 223.

132. Van Dülmen, p. 223.

133. The same kind of problem is evident in Bläser's discussion (pp. 234-43). Bläser speaks of the law of Christ as an inward force (as opposed to the external compulsion of the Mosaic law), yet admits the content of the two laws is "... auf der gleichen Linie. Nur die Form ist verschieden. Das Gesetz des Mose enthält die Gerechtfertigung in der Form des nur fordernden und darum tötenden Buchstabens, das Gesetz Christi aber in der Form des lebendigmachenden Geistes." (p. 242) He also admits that the two "laws" are fulfilled simultaneously (p. 242). Surely, however (see also on 2 Cor 3, Rom 2:25ff, 7:1-6, etc.), Paul's commands are just as much "outward" as any command of the law, and indeed are backed up by the authority of the gospel! Blaser's attempt to discover a new "law" in Paul which represents only an "inward force" fails totally for lack of evidence; see further on Rom 8:1-4.

134. Schrage, p. 99.

135. Schrage, p. 102.

136. Bammel, pp. 124-25.

137. Faced with the fact that no reference to a new law is in view here, but not wishing to admit that any reference to the OT could be involved, Bammel resorts to the opinion that the term νόμος τοῦ Χριστοῦ is coined by the Apostle "in an almost playful manner" (p. 128). This, surely, cannot be taken seriously -- and involves Bammel in denying any link with either 5:13-15 or Rom 13:8-10 (see pp. 126-28)!

138. Schrage, p. 238.

Section IV, part D

Introduction

We have seen, in the preceding subsections of Section IV, that the positive exercise of Christian freedom is to be conducted within the framework of obedience to God's law. Freedom from sin is freedom for obedience. In the immediately preceding subsection, we noted that such obedience means that freedom will, above all, be exercised with a view to loving one's neighbour and so fulfilling the law's command, even if to do so means laying down one's rights and privileges, or even one's life. Because the believer is still imperfect and prone to sin, freedom can never be absolute; he must always be reminded of the need for obedience. That the believers are exhorted by the Apostle to lay down their own interests implies their need to hear this command and take account of the needs of others ahead of their own.

That such a command is needed is illustrated in a number of passages, involving situations where the imperfection of believers and their continuing existence in a fallen world requires special vigilance and instruction if their freedom in Christ is to be exercised properly and in obedience to the law of God. We shall see that what, from one perspective, seems a limitation on freedom, from another demonstrates the truth that what believers have is not an end in itself but must be exercised in love and mutual service if it is to be preserved. Genuine freedom, for the Apostle, is slavery to Christ -- yet is so real that, in Christ, even the slave becomes truly free. Thus understood, these passages provide an excellent commentary on Paul's understanding of freedom in relation both to imperfect men and to the righteous and holy law of God.

In this subsection, we shall examine first those passages in which Paul deals with the relationship between "strong" and "weak" believers (Rom 14:1ff, 1 Cor 8-10), then turn to his comments on freedom and slavery in 1 Cor 7:17ff. Finally we shall study the themes of the Christian's freedom in various civil, social and family relationships (Rom 13:1ff, Col 3:18ff).

In this section Paul deals with the relationship between two parties in the Roman church, groups he refers to as the "strong" and the "weak". Much of what he says here is related to the question of the limits within which Christian freedom may properly be exercised. The principles which emerge from this discussion are also reflected, as we shall see, in other passages in Paul. To understand the Apostle's comments here, we must first ascertain the identity of the "weak" believers. Then, after noting the relevance of some earlier verses, we shall focus our attention in particular on 14:13-23.

Identification of the "weak" believers

Various possibilities have been suggested as to the identity of the weak believers. These may be listed and commented upon.

(1) Paul is not in fact addressing a particular situation within the church at Rome, but is imparting principles based on his previous experiences. He knows that the Roman church consists of both Jews and Gentiles, and so anticipates the occurrence of certain problems, with which he deals here.[1] This view is not, however, to be entertained seriously. Paul's allusions, as most commentators agree, are far too specific and vivid for an entirely hypothetical situation to be in view.[2]

(2) The situation is similar to that in 1 Cor 8-10, where the conscience of some believers is threatened by the eating of food offered to idols.[3] There are certainly similarities between the two sections; Cranfield notes no fewer than eleven points of contact.[4] The major difficulty with this view, however, is that the word εἰδωλόθυτα never once (in contrast to 1 Cor) occurs in the text. It is hard to believe Paul would discuss the subject in such detail without once referring to it by name.[5] No inherent danger is seen here in the activities of the strong, whereas in 1 Cor 10:1ff there is a clear warning to the strong believers on the consequences for themselves of certain actions.[6] Finally, there is no indication that the observance of special days (14:5) had any role at Corinth.[7]

(3) The situation is parallel to that of Colossians, where ascetic practices include both food and calendrical regulations. This view gains little support, however. The Colossian heresy was largely a Gentile matter (see on Col 2:6-23) -- and the weak in Romans are Jewish converts.[8] In Romans there is no mention of angel worship or veneration of the στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου which constituted the heart of the threat to the Colossian church.[9] The Apostle, indeed, does not seem in Romans

to be overly concerned with the particular practices of the weak in themselves, but only insofar as they affect the relationship between the various parties in the church. This is in great contrast to his attitude toward the Colossian heresy.

(4) The situation is similar to that in Galatians.[10] This view acknowledges that it is primarily Jewish Christians (the weak) who are involved here, and also accounts for the references to calendrical observances. There is no mention, however, of circumcision,[11] and it is scarcely likely Paul would have adopted the tolerant view evident in the section had any influence like that of the Galatian Judaizers been involved.[12]

(5) The abstinence of the weak is rooted in the ascetically-inspired vegetarianism common in the ancient world. This view finds many adherents. It is generally agreed, among advocates of this position, that the weak are to be identified with a minority group of Jewish believers in the church.[13] This is taken to account for the reference to calendrical observances.[14] This minority group, probably having its background in the syncretistic Judaism common in the Diaspora, was exposed to both Jewish and Greek ascetic influences.[15] These influences, however, appear to have involved neither the threat of rigorous Jewish legalism (as in Galatians) nor that of pagan astrological practices (as in Colossians; cf. also Gal 4:1-11), and so are treated by the Apostle as relatively benign in character.[16] The feeling that the consumption of meat or wine would lead to spiritual or moral degeneration explains the use of the κοινός/καθαρός opposition (vv. 14, 20), which contrast would be too strong were only a general approbation (by the weak) of vegetarianism (such as in today's "health food" movement) involved. Commentators point to Qumran, Jewish apocalyptic, Pythagoreanism, gnosticism and even the OT as possible sources of influence.[17] The attractiveness of this view is that it accounts for the Jewish character of the minority group and the references to food and calendrical regulations, as well as providing a reasonable explanation for ther relative mildness of the Apostle's attitude here. It must, therefore, be given serious consideration.

(6) The attitude of the weak is accounted for by a desire on their part to fulfil certain ceremonial aspects of the law. This desire to fulfil some of the law's requirements is not of the order of the Galatian legalism, which assumed that by such observances man could establish a claim upon God, but rather involved a simple inability to

give up various food and calendrical regulations and at the same time retain a clear conscience.[18] This view, like the previous one, accounts for all the points of difficulty noted above, with the advantage that it gives additional force to the use of κοινός and καθαρός in vv. 14, 20.[19] What of the objection, however, that the OT commands neither vegetarianism (except in Dan 1) nor total abstinence from wine (except in the special case of the Nazirites, Num 6:28)? With respect to the former point, Cranfield responds that vegetarianism was the only possible way of avoiding defilement because of the non-availability of proper kosher food in Rome. Though there were many Jews in Rome, they may not have been well-disposed toward supplying converts to Christianity with meat, and the problem may, of course, have arisen because of the insistence of the Gentile majority that the Jewish believers also partake of non-kosher food.[20] As to the abstinence from wine, Cranfield notes that this reference may be hypothetical rather than actual,

> as the only reference to it (in contrast to the other references to eating meat and calendrical observances) is in 14:21, and is there used in connection with the highly indefinite phrase μηδὲ ἐν ᾧ ὁ ἀδελφός σου προσκόπτει.[21]

In our view, either (5) or (6) may represent the correct understanding of the text. The first interpretation (5) does not suffer from the need to explain away the references to total abstinence from meat and wine. The second, however (6), in our view, provides a more likely description of the belief of the Jewish Christian minority at Rome. It is far more credible that these believers would have a concern for keeping the law (this coheres well with Paul's positive references to the advantages of the Jew in 3:1-2, 9:4-5) than that they would have been caught up in a vegetarianism probably inspired by pagan sources. The answer could be found in a combination of the two, i.e. (6) is fundamentally correct, but the Jewish believers have added a rigorous asceticism to their concern for keeping of the law, possibly under the influence of syncretistic Judaism or even of some unorthodox Jewish sect (which might also account for the preoccupation with calendrical observances). It is very unlikely that the Jewish believers would have had more interest in a pagan-inspired asceticism than a scrupulous keeping of the law, and it is this point which (6) deals with most adequately.

14:13-23

The characteristic feature of this subsection is the ringing address to the strong to restrict the exercise of their freedom so as to protect the spiritual position of the weak. The thrust of the passage is this exhortation to the strong,[22] i.e. to those who are enjoying their freedom in Christ, and so the question of the proper exercise of Christian freedom, and indeed, the nature of this freedom, stands at the centre of the Apostle's thinking here.

The guiding principle has already been laid down in the previous subsection (vv. 1-12) where Paul exhorts both parties, and defends the position of the strong as well as that of the weak.[23] Vv. 7-9 give the theological basis for the Apostle's train of thought throughout. V. 7 sets forth the basic thesis guarding against any misunderstanding of the nature of the Christian life, and vv. 8-9 provide elaboration of this statement.[24] The limits of our freedom are clearly defined by our obedience to Christ as our Lord.[25]

When in v. 13 Paul turns to address only the strong, he does so on the premise that their allegiance to Christ must determine the exercise of their freedom. If the effect of one's conduct is harmful to the weaker brother, then, even if that conduct represents an expression of the freedom wrought in Christ, it must be avoided.[26] The principle laid down in 13:8-10, that obedience to God's law means steadfastly seeking to fulfil the obligation to love one's neighbour, comes clearly into view here. That there is nothing wrong with this freedom itself, however, is made clear in v. 14. Paul places his entire authority behind the statement that nothing is unclean in itself,[27] and therefore, in terms of personal conviction, comes down entirely on the side of the strong.[28] There is quite possibly here an allusion to ceremonial requirements of the law and questions of ritual purity.[29] Paul declares that the Christian is freed from these requirements, which are in fact truly obeyed by believing in the One to whom they bear witness.[30] However, as the next clause (εἰ μὴ τῷ λογιζομένῳ,κ.τ.λ.) makes clear, while the believer is truly freed from the obligation to fulfil literally these requirements of the ceremonial aspect of the law (as the foods it declares unclean are no longer unclean), the fact that some believers have not properly understood this point has a bearing on the exercise of the freedom granted to (and received by) the strong. Käsemann comments, "Von ihr her konnte er das grundsätzliche Recht der Starken

anerkennen und sich doch paradoxerweise gegen unverantwortliche praktische Konsequenzen wehren."[31] Further, for the weak, without this consciousness of the freedom granted to them, to neglect obedience to these obligations would be wrong.[32]

In v. 15, which follows on closely from vv. 13b-14,[33] this freedom is defined in relation to love. Indiscriminate exercise of freedom on the part of the strong will lead the weaker brother into committing acts which he does not have the inner liberty in his faith to do. The negative character and dire results of such actions cannot be underestimated: on the clause μὴ τῷ βρώματι,κ.τ.λ. Cranfield comments, "To bring about the spiritual ruin of one's brother by insisting on exercising outwardly one's own inner freedom with regard to the ritual law was to trample on the sacrifice of Jesus Christ."[34] According to Schmidt, Paul means to say here that love is greater than the freedom of faith; he draws a parallel to 1 Cor 13.[35] This, however, is an inadequate view of the Apostle's comments here, which include no grading of virtues. Rather is a more careful definition of freedom involved. Käsemann's comment is nearer the truth: "Es geht darum, dass gerade im Verzicht auf die eigene Freiheit sich christliche Freiheit bekunden kann...."[36]

This is brought out again in v. 16 where, however, we must first ascertain the meaning of τὸ ἀγαθόν. If the verse is addressed to the whole church, this clearly could not refer to the freedom enjoyed by the strong, and would most probably be a more general reference to justification by faith in Christ. On this understanding, the reviling (βλασφημεἰσθω) would be done by those outside the church. As, in our view, however, the verse is addressed to the strong only, the reviling is probably done by the weak, and likely refers to the freedom which has been the subject in context.[37] It is still possible, however, that non-Christians (who would more naturally be referred to by βλασφημεἰσθω) are the revilers. The meaning would then be that wrangling between brethren (or ill-treatment of one group of believers by another) would bring the gospel itself (τὸ ἀγαθόν) into disrepute with the unbelieving world.[38] Either way, the freedom spoken of in the context is certainly to be included as a prominent component of τὸ ἀγαθόν. The verse thus indicates that misused freedom is a perversion of true freedom itself (rather than that love, etc., is greater than freedom). Althaus comments rightly, "... wenn die Starken ihre Freiheit rücksichtslos gebrauchen und auf die Schwachen keine Rücksicht nehmen, dann wird die Folge sein: die Schwachen, die durch die so betätigte Freiheit der Starken in

Gewissensnot gebracht sind, werden das hohe Gut dieser Freiheit, der unbefangenen Stellung zu dem Natürlichen, gründlich verkennen und sie als etwas Böses, Anstössiges, den Christenstand Bedrohendes schmähen."[39]

After reinforcing the points he has made previously (vv. 17-19), the Apostle takes up in v. 20 (as he has done in v. 15) the forceful second person singular imperative,[40] and makes a further declaration. Paul takes (as in v. 14) what appears to be a slogan of the strong, and then qualifies it.[41] In making the assertion πάντα μὲν καθαρά Paul states his agreement with the fundamental premise of the strong. In the phrase ἀλλὰ κακὸν τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ, however, the Apostle makes it clear that the freedom of the strong does not necessarily involve taking up the rights which the earlier statement in principle gives. V. 20b is probably (though not certainly) directed to the strong,[42] and therefore indicates that the improper exercise of Christian freedom can lead to disastrous results so far as the weak are concerned. Thus understood, v. 20b leads naturally into v. 21, which is a straightforward address to the strong. What is wrong (κακόν, v. 20b) is the outward expression of the genuine freedom attained in Christ where such expression causes injury to the weaker brother who has not yet fully comprehended or accepted that freedom for himself. Love determines (and limits) the proper exercise of freedom. Michel comments: "Die 'Liebe' verzichtet auf die Ausübung der 'Freiheit' um des Bruders willen."[43] Love, however, does not lead back into the bondage of legalism; it simply recognizes the condition of the one who does not yet realise he has been entirely freed from that bondage (which, of course, he does not see as such). Love's goal is to bring such a person out of bondage and into freedom.[44]

The freedom wrought in Christ is not, therefore, to be denied to the faithful believer. Cranfield points out that the strong Christian (who has the faith to eat all foods) has more freedom of action than the weak believer (who eats only vegetables) because he "... has the inner freedom not only to eat flesh but also equally to refrain from eating it."[45] Christian freedom, because it is based on the love of Christ, gives freedom not to act as well as freedom to act, and hence is a more real freedom than any other. In other words, the abuse of freedom warned against by the Apostle here is at odds with the basic nature of that freedom itself. We should not see here an opposition between freedom and love. It is never Christian freedom as such, but only the outward expression of the abiding inner freedom, which is given up. It is not so much that love is greater than freedom as that

genuine freedom in Christ is conditioned through and through by the love of God which sent Christ to the cross, and thus provided the only basis on which we could be free. This once again points up the fact that, as we have seen in Rom 13:8-10 and Gal 5:13ff, the obligation to love, which is based on the work of Christ (cf. Gal 6:2), means that one's freedom is expressed in a willingness to give up one's rights in the interest of the other, even on the model of Christ Himself. That the believer needs a continual exhortation in this regard shows forth his inadequacy in following that example. That the exhortation is given, however, shows also that the believer is now capable, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to begin to manifest that obedience, and so to express properly the freedom with which he has been entrusted in Christ.

This becomes clear in v. 22, in which Paul stresses that there is no danger of the strong losing his freedom or becoming dependent on human rules and regulations. Michel comments, "Der 'Starke' soll seinen Glauben nicht in Gefahr sehen, wenn er auf das Fleisch und den Wein verzichtet, wohl aber soll er vor Gott gewiss werden und gewiss bleiben. Er bedarf nicht der Bestätigung seiner Freiheit durch Menschen, sondern lediglich durch Gott."[46] The strong in such a situation will not use his freedom, but must be content with the inner exercise of it.[47] The phrase ὁ μὴ κρίνων, κ.τ.λ. is best understood as descriptive of the strong Christian who has that true inner freedom, unfettered by legalistic bondage, which permits him to exercise that freedom outwardly in a manner which takes account of the effect on the one who does not possess the same measure of freedom.[48] The strong, however, does not "lose" his freedom by restricting its exercise; paradoxically, he finds in this loving restraint a deeper freedom.[49] Hence, Käsemann is correct when he sees in this verse a defence of the strong;[50] v. 22b is to be taken not as a warning to the strong, but as a support for their position (always bearing in mind the constraints of love on the exercise of freedom).[51]

In v. 23 the Apostle links freedom with faith. What is meant is that the weak Christian is judged because he does that which his faith (in Christ), so far as he has grasped it, does not allow him to do. He is thus placed in a position where he is in conflict with what (on his own understanding) is his basic commitment to Christ.[52] That he has not grasped the full meaning of this commitment is central, of course, to what the Apostle is saying throughout the passage. In summary, therefore, we may say that the strong believer who has grasped

the full implications of his freedom in Christ is in no danger of losing his freedom (or having his freedom judged), but is admonished to realize the full extent of that freedom by being ready to forego its outward expression, in the hope that the weaker believer, far from being led into sin by doing that which is against his understanding of his commitment to Christ, will, in the fulness of time, himself be led into the liberty enjoyed by the strong.

Freedom in Christ, therefore, is always freedom for obedienee to the commands of God, and hence, is always freedom to love. In this freedom to love the believer shows his obedience to that law of God which is the source of this command, according to 13:8-10 (which in a very real sense serves as a basis for this passage). There we noted that enjoyment of absolute freedom in a righteous way is possible only for the life totally subject to and in fellowship with God, a condition true for the future life but not for the present; hence, the believer must be reminded of his need to obey and to exercise his freedom in obedience to God's law. Our passage applies this truth, demonstrating that freedom should not be seen merely as release from something which held us in bondage, but as freedom to begin a life of love and service in submission to God's commands.

1 Cor 8-10

The same themes are explored in this passage. The theme is set forth in 8:1. In response to the slogan of one of the Corinthian factions, πάντες γνῶσιν ἔχομεν,[53] Paul offers his commentary: ἡ γνῶσις φυσιοῖ, ἡ δε ἀγάπη οἰκοδομεῖ. The Apostle recognizes the truth in the Corinthians' phrase -- οἴδαμεν includes both himself and those to whom he is speaking.[54] He realizes, however, that it involves a misconception which must be corrected. Although in one sense πάντες includes all believers (as the Apostle admits), in another it does not, for in v. 7 he declares, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐν πᾶσιν ἡ γνῶσις.[55] The freedom of conduct (with respect to food sacrificed to idols) claimed by the strong party at Corinth must be considered in relation to the demands of love. Knowledge, of itself, has a destructive effect (v. 1b), as does the untrammeled exercise of freedom without regard to the welfare of the weaker brother. Again, therefore, as in Rom 14:1ff, we have the principle laid down that Christian freedom must be exercised with a view to its effect on other believers, particularly on those who have not yet reached a stage of full understanding of the liberty wrought in Christ. Improper exercise of freedom by the strong leads the weak not into greater liberty but into enslavement, and thus serves neither the cause of Christian freedom nor that of love. The goal of the upbuilding of the body in love

(v. 1b) should always govern the exercise of freedom in Christ. Thus we see that we are once again on the same ground not only as in Rom 14:1ff but also as in Rom 13:8-10 and Gal 5:13ff. The obligation to love must always govern the exercise of Christian freedom, if that freedom is not to be abused or become an excuse (on account of the believer's continuing proneness to sin) for self-seeking and licence. When the believer seeks to set his own standard of conduct (through his private or individual γνῶσις), he threatens the existence in his life and in the church of both ἀγάπη and ἐλευθερία. The only satisfactory solution for Paul, as we have seen, is the believer's subjection to the law of God, not to his private standard of judgment or some vaguely-defined "love-principle". We now turn to examine various sections of this passage in light of the basis Paul has laid at the beginning of his discussion.

8: 7-13

Here Paul applies this principle to the first area of difficulty at Corinth. Most meat eaten or purchased at Corinth would likely at some stage have been involved in pagan rituals,[56] and it would have been virtually impossible for Christians to avoid such meat without applying the strict kosher regulations of the Jewish community. This, as the text makes clear (ch. 10) would have forbidden most social intercourse.

The Apostle in no way dissents from the content of the γνῶσις (that idols have no spiritual reality in themselves, vv. 4-6), but disagrees with the use made of this knowledge in the life of the church.[57] Paul, in other words, is interested in the conduct of those who eat food sacrificed to idols, not in the nature of the food itself, or whether it would be right, in other circumstances, to eat it.[58] The situation of the weak (v. 7) is that, though they have become Christians, they still retain the supernatural belief in the demonic power of idols, and hence cannot divorce themselves from the view that food sacrificed to idols is spiritually defiled.[59] Hence they must abstain from partaking; otherwise, they would commit what for them would be an idolatrous act.[60] It is not the food which pollutes, but the act of eating that which the conscience of the weak does not allow.[61] This defiling Paul recognizes as an objective reality (no matter how it has come about) and as something to be avoided, for it brings disaster to the eaters. The thought expressed here by συνείδησις is very similar to that denoted in Rom 14:22ff by πίστις.[62]

Again in v. 8 Paul states his fundamental agreement with the premise of the strong (that belief in one God gives freedom from superstitious fear concerning food sacrificed to idols) but draws different conclusions as to the practical application.[63] The indiscriminate exercise of freedom based on the neutral spiritual status of the food is censured by the Apostle. This act grants no merit in the sight of God.[64] The strong believe that knowledge alone guides the exercise of freedom, but for Paul freedom in Christ is based in love and leads to mutual service.[65] Such eating is not, against the view of the strong, a sign of true freedom in Christ.[66] Neither is abstention from eating, of course, a sign of true holiness.

In v. 9 Paul gives a further explanation regarding the proper exercise of Christian freedom.[67] The word ἐξουσία here denotes the exercise of freedom and is to be linked with πάντα ἔξεστιν (10:23) and ἐλευθερία (10:29).[68] Conzelmann notes correctly that in keeping with his overall understanding Paul does not offer a definition of freedom, but describes it in relation to the practical conduct of the Christian life.[69] The ἐξουσία of the strong is recognized as valid and God-given;[70] it is the proper outward exercise of this inner freedom which is in view. Freedom isolated from love is not the mark of the truly spiritual man.[71]

In v. 10 Paul illustrates his point by a practical example. Comparison with ch. 10 shows that what is meant here is far removed from participation in an actual act of idol worship.[72] Conzelmann points out that many functions of a social and commercial nature would have occurred within temple precincts, and that the Apostle does not forbid these as such.[73] It is not the inner freedom to act which is the problem but rather the effect of that action on the weaker brother, as he misunderstands the conduct of the strong.[74] The strong may have felt that by thus acting they could show the pagan world that idols were a matter of indifference to them, but the kind of "edification" this brings to the weak is disastrous, for he is thereby emboldened to do that which offends his own conscience and understanding of the gospel.[75] Improper exercise of the freedom of the strong destroys even the freedom previously enjoyed by the church.[76]

In v. 11 Paul comes to the theological heart of the matter. The freedom exercised by the strong is exercised without regard for the meaning of what God has done in Christ. As Conzelmann correctly notes, the individual freed in Christ must exercise his freedom in encounter with the God from whom his liberty comes.[77] Thus we see that the improper

exercise of Christian freedom distorts the meaning of this freedom, so that in this improper action it is not genuine Christian freedom (based on the sacrifice and love of Christ) which is involved, but rather a libertine and self-seeking perversion of it. Thus we have a similar situation to that noted in Rom 14-15. Freedom comes from God and must be exercised according to His standard for us. Indiscriminate exercise of freedom denies the true nature of this freedom, which should always be exercised with a view to loving one's neighbour and so fulfilling God's command. The solution to this problem ultimately comes from our relationship with Christ and with the members of His body.[78] Paul, therefore, concludes in v. 13 that if food causes the weak to stumble he will never eat it again. If, of course, there is no such danger, he will eat with perfect liberty -- but he is willing, to any extent necessary -- to give up the exercise of his inner freedom in the interests of the weak.[79] This again does not deny the reality of his freedom in Christ. Indeed, it proves it: his freedom gives him the basis to act in any way called for by the circumstances without doing injury to his own conscience or relationship with God. What we have already noted in connection with Rom 14-15 is pointed out by Conzelmann here: "Die Neutralität der Speise, der Abbau der Sakralität, macht es möglich, Entscheidungen zu fallen, in denen die Freiheit verwirklicht wird. Auch der Verzicht des Starken ist ein Akt der Freiheit, da sie den Bruder als den von Christus Befreiten anerkennt."[80] True freedom does not need to prove itself by outward demonstration.[81] With equal vigour, Paul defends the freedom and knowledge of the strong and condemns its exercise when not governed by love.[82]

Ch. 9.

Some commentators see a division between 8:13 and 9:1. On this view, ch. 9 deals with a separate theme or even comes originally from a separate letter.[83] This, however, overlooks the fact that Paul, who often points to his own experience, wishes to show here that the forbearance he requires of the strong party at Corinth is only a shadow of that which he himself exercises as an Apostle. No one has greater liberty, yet no one exercises greater restraint in its use. Conzelmann admits that the same theme of freedom is in view, but suggests that it is a different kind of freedom (that of the Apostle, rather than that of the Christian in general).[84] Yet it is precisely by the example of his personal conduct that Paul seeks here to illumine the demands of

God upon the other believers. If Paul himself has renounced so much that is due to him, then how much more should the strong Christians at Corinth make the (relatively) insignificant concessions suggested in ch. 8.[85] Again Paul stands, in principle, on the side of the strong: he himself is ἐλεύθερος. Indeed he, as an Apostle, has even more rights than other believers (vv. 3-14). Yet he voluntarily gives up exercise of all these rights (ἐξουσίαι),[86] in order to make his ministry more effective.[87]

The theological basis for this is given in vv. 19-23. In v. 19 Paul returns explicitly to the theme of freedom mentioned in v. 1.[88] The basis of the actions recorded in vv. 3-14 is now explained by the principle that freedom in Christ is made real through service.[89] By this means is the progress of the gospel aided. The man who is truly free in Christ is ready, in the cause of the gospel, to become a slave to all.[90] In this way he demonstrates his freedom not only to exercise the rights that freedom gives him, but also to renounce them when the need arises. Though he agrees with their possession of inner freedom, the Apostle could in no way have made clearer his disagreement with the view of the strong that they were free to exercise this freedom without regard to the call of God to lay down their lives in love and service.[91] For Paul, as Weiss observes, "... die wahre Grösse [der Freiheit] im δουλεύειν besteht."[92] Paul regards such renunciation of freedom as, indeed, characteristic of his own life. This is illustrated in the following verses.

We have seen often that a proper view of Paul's understanding of the law is of critical importance in determining his understanding of Christian freedom. Now Paul returns, in this context, to the same subject. He seeks to illustrate the proper use of his freedom in Christ in all his relationships (all men are covered under the heading "Jew" and "Gentile"[93]) by basing it on his attitude toward the law. Paul's conduct is based on his understanding of law and freedom.[94] First he speaks of his attitude toward the Jew. It is clear here (also from 8:7ff, 10:23ff) that he has given up scrupulous observation of the ceremonial aspects of the law insofar as such observances would be regarded as necessary to establish a claim upon God. Paul guards himself against the accusation that he would allow a return to legalism by inserting ὡς before ὑπὸ νόμον and by adding the phrase μὴ ὢν αὐτὸς ὑπὸ νόμον (v. 20).[95] Conzelmann observes rightly, "Er kann als Jude die jüdische Sitte üben, ohne das Gesetz als Heilsweg zu lehren. Und

er muss die Juden nicht aus der Übung des Gesetzes herausreissen, sondern aus ihrem 'Vertrauen' auf das Gesetz als Heilsweg...."[96] While it is possible that a very real accommodation to Jewish customs was made by Paul, this was never done on the basis that such actions represented a return to legalism or were considered a means for winning God's favour. Weiss rightly notes, "Es kann sich hier nicht um regelmässige und dauernde Gesetzesbeobachtung handeln, sondern um einzelne Vorgänge, in denen P. um der Sache Willen Konzessionen gemacht hat."[97] Paul was no longer ὑπὸ νόμον in this sense. To be rejected, surely, however, is the view of Barrett that a repudiation of the law as such is involved here: "'The law' here means the law of Moses; but if this is repudiated, by an 'a fortiori' argument all less important and directly divine laws are repudiated. Paul is now related to God through Jesus Christ ... and no room is left for law."[98] That this view is not correct is clear not only from Paul's teaching on the law in general but also from his comments in v. 21.

In v. 21 the Apostle quickly corrects any impression that he might have discarded the law altogether in his quest for freedom. Rather does he show here, as Conzelmann rightly notes, that "... Freiheit vom Gesetz keine 'Gesetzlosigkeit' ist."[99] Paul pointedly uses the word ἄνομοι (rather than ἔθνη) to underline what he is saying.[100] In no way is he free from a legally binding obligation to obey God.[101] Rather is he ἔννομος Χριστοῦ. The genitives in this phrase and in the phrase ἄνομος θεοῦ probably denote relationship -- so far as God (or Christ) is concerned, Paul is not ἄνομος but ἔννομος.[102] In v. 20, the thought is clearly of the law of Moses,[103] and it is the presence or absence of this law which separates Jew and Gentile. Hence in v. 21 it is only reasonable to assume that ἀνόμους refers to those who are without the same law referred to in v. 21. Paul wishes to make the point that, while he no longer regards performance of the law as the proper means to attain justification (v. 20), he nonetheless retains a real and profound commitment to the same law, considered in relationship to Christ, i.e. he is still committed, in his relationship with Christ, to the authority of the law. This seems to be the most reasonable explanation of the phrase ἔννομος Χριστοῦ, and it coheres very satisfactorily with what we have seen of Paul's teaching on the law elsewhere. He repeats the phrase ὑπὸ νόμον four times in v. 20 with reference to the legalistic misuse of the law of Moses before proceeding in v. 21 to describe the opposite error (i.e. to that of such

legalism) as represented by the ἄνομοι (surely those who are without any relationship to the same holy law of God). He himself, however, wishes in Christ to attain to a measure of genuine obedience to that law, and hence describes himself not as without relationship to that law (ἄνομος) but as ἔννομος Χριστοῦ, i.e. under the obligation to obey the law within the context of his justification by faith in Christ rather than by human legalism. This is the manner in which, according to the Apostle, Christian freedom is genuinely expressed.

This is surely a better alternative than to gloss over Paul's carefully-chosen terminology throughout the section and to suggest (with Weiss and others) that ἔννομος Χριστοῦ "... betont weit eher die Gebundenheit an die Person als an sein Gesetz...."[104] Barrett speaks of obedience not to a code but to a Person, yet then, admitting that ἔννομος carries a further connotation, refers to the "principle of universal love", and the occasional necessity of reference to a written code.[105] Dodd points out correctly that the idea of law here is inescapable, but suggests that this refers to the "law of Christ" (cf. Gal 6:2, Rom 8:2), which is separate from the law of Moses.[106] Our understanding of Paul's use of νόμος, as well as our comments on those texts referred to by Dodd, however, make it clear that no such "law" is in view.[107] If we understand his phrase "göttliche Wille" to refer to God's law, then we can agree with Wendland's summary of vv. 20-21: "Darum ist Paulus dem göttlichen Willen gehorsam, doch frei von der Knechtschaft unter dem Gesetze, und als der vom Gesetz Freie doch nicht ein Gesetzloser wie der Heide, der den Götzen dient. Nach der einen Seite bleibt Paulus von der heidenischen Unkenntnis des göttlichen Willens, nach der anderen von dem falschen Gesetzesglauben geschieden, wenn er mit den Gesetzlosen als Gesetzloser und mit den Juden als Jude lebt."[108]

Paul concludes the paragraph by emphasizing the unlimited nature of his servanthood. Observers have noted the careful structure of the subsection,[109] and Paul brings his comments to a conclusion by noting that the ultimate end or meaning of true freedom (Ελεύθερος γὰρ ὢν ἐκ πάντων, v. 19) is true servanthood (τοῖς πᾶσιν, κ.τ.λ., v. 22, elaborates on πᾶσιν ἐμαυτὸν ἐδούλωσα, v. 19). Into this discussion Paul brings his comments on the law, and shows how genuine obedience to the law, while leaving behind human legalism, can involve adherence to ceremonial precepts in some circumstances and rejection of them in others. Paul can refrain from practising his new-found freedom from such obligations if by such conduct he can win Jews to Christ. When with Gentiles, however,

while exercising a greater measure of freedom, the Apostle disdains any libertinism which would involve disobedience to God's law, to which he recognizes a binding obligation. Thus in all things he shows himself a servant of Christ. Since that same law commands love and self-renunciation (see on Rom 13:8-10, Gal 5:13ff), the fact that Paul chooses to govern the exercise of his freedom by the effect it has on those around him demonstrates not only the greater freedom he has within (the reality and security of which is not challenged by the denial of external expression), but also his obedience to the law of God. Thus we see that, from another perspective, Paul states the truth in these verses that he is freed from legalism (and hence from the just condemnation brought on this by the law), but freed for obedience to God's holy law. Freedom for obedience to that law means freedom to lay down all human rights and privileges (even, indeed especially, those of the Apostle) that others might be won to Christ.

10:1-22

Some observers see 10:1-22 as (along with ch. 9) not originally a part of the letter. Weiss, noting the vigorous attack here on the practice of the strong, sees a totally different situation in view from ch. 8, where Paul was merely exhorting the strong (with whom he was in basic agreement) to bear with the inadequacies of the weak. Here, on the other hand (continues Weiss), the Apostle is concerned with urging a total break with the heathen past, and with warning the strong that they have not yet undertaken this step in sufficient measure -- to the point that their very spiritual well-being is in danger.[110] Conzelmann suggests that the two cases of εἰδωλολατρεία (10:1ff) and εἰδωλόθυτα (ch. 8; 10:23ff) are too dissimilar both to be considered part of the same letter.[111] This view, while having a certain attraction is, in our opinion, unlikely. A number of reasons may be given:

(a) Γάρ (10:1) links the new section with ch. 9.[112] In some measure, 10:1ff picks up the thought of 9:24-27 regarding failure through lack of self-discipline.[113] Also, 10:18 picks up the thought of 9:13[114] regarding sharing in the altar sacrifices. We have already seen that ch. 9 follows on naturally from ch. 8, and we can now see a connection between ch. 9 and ch. 10.

(b) The Apostle, as Allo points out, often presents a more general argument before proceeding to particular cases.[115]

(c) Paul wants to establish the basic principle that there is no spiritual or divine reality in the Corinthian idols before noting the secondary truth that involvement in the worship of idols would lead to subservience to very real demonic powers.[116]

(d) The same abuse of freedom is in view in the participation in idol-worship referred to in ch. 10 as was at stake in the inconsiderate treatment of the weak in ch. 8.[117] In ch. 8, the strong are warned to take regard for the weak; in 10:22, Paul ironically questions the same 'strong' believers μὴ ἰσχυρότερου αὐτοῦ ἐσμεν;[118]

(e) Several different situations are envisaged in chs. 8-10. Even within the sections considered by Conzelmann to originate from the same source three different scenarios are in view; a straightforward opposition of εἰδωλολατρεία and εἰδωλόθυτα oversimplifies the situation. For instance, εἰδωλόθυτα is used in 10:1ff as well as εἰδωλολατρεία. Barrett notes rightly that the same themes of sacrificial food and Christian freedom are in view throughout.[119] It is far more reasonable to suppose that the subject of 10:1ff was suggested by the topic of the section as a whole than to think (without any textual evidence whatever) of the existence of two (or more) original documents.

(f) The strong connection between 8:4 and 10:19 suggests that the same overall theme is in view. In both texts Paul attacks the belief in the existence of false gods and denies that there is anything inherently dangerous either in the idols themselves or the food sacrificed to them. Hence, no contrast should be seen between the two texts.[120]

We may conclude, therefore, that in 10:1ff the Apostle goes on to address the special case of those who do not merely eat in idol temples but actually participate in idolatrous rites. He points out that, though an idol is in itself nothing, participation in such rituals is abhorrent to God and involves the presence of demons. In such a special situation, the eating of food sacrificed to idols is forbidden, not because of anything in the food itself, or even because the idol has life or spiritual reality, but because the worship of Christ and the worship of idols is incompatible and the latter leads only to spiritual disaster. The conclusion we can draw, therefore, is that the abuse of freedom had, in some Corinthian circles, gone so far as to invite spiritual calamity not only for the weak but also for the strong. In ch. 8 the latter assume (rightly, in one sense) that they are stronger

than the weak. In ch. 10, however, their actions suggest they think themselves stronger than the Lord. This shows clearly the strong Corinthians were in danger of so exalting their own freedom as an end in itself that they would totally disown the One from whom that freedom came. Lack of willingness to sacrifice the exercise of one's freedom because of regard for the weak would inevitably lead to the same attitude toward the Lord Himself.

10:23-11:1

Here Paul returns more specifically to the subjects raised in ch. 8, though (as we have seen) the intervening material has its place in the development of the argument. Again, the Apostle takes up a slogan of the strong (πάντα ἔξεστιν; cf. πάντες γνῶσιν ἔχομεν, 8:1, and also 6:12), agreeing with it while at the same time correcting it.[121] As in ch. 8, it is the edification of the Body which is the Apostle's primary concern (v. 23; cf. 8:1). The exercise of freedom must be conditioned by an appreciation of the effects of this exercise on others. The self-seeking perversion of freedom warned against here does not build up the church.[122] The goal is to seek the good of the other (v. 24). Only in this way is the believer truly subjected to Christ and thus in a position to exercise his freedom in the way he is commanded to do. Freedom in Christ is freedom for obedience and hence freedom for love of one's neighbour, the obedience which God in His law (Rom 13:8-10, Gal 5:13ff) requires.

In vv. 25-26 Paul once more states his fundamental agreement with the case of the strong. Most meat at Corinth was at some stage offered to idols,[123] and to attempt to trace the past history of all the meat a believer bought in the marketplace would be impractical, if not impossible. Paul rejects a legalistic or over-anxious concern on this subject, the only answer to which would be full abstinence.[124] Paul states the case for freedom in such matters strongly, as Weiss notes: "Damit gibt Paulus eine grossartige Freiheit: gerade jenes vorsichtige Nachfragen ist vom Übel, weil es eine Ängstlichkeit und einen Mangel an Freiheit zeigt, der überwunden werden soll."[125] Yet the Christian's liberty must be exercised with a view to the upbuilding of the Body in love.[126] As he has done in ch. 8, so now Paul turns (vv. 27-30) to a specific situation in which the renunciation of the external exercise of freedom may be required.

Here is noted the case of a Christian who, absolutely free in his own conscience (vv. 25-26), is invited to a private dinner at the home of a pagan,[127] at which meat which has been sacrificed to idols is served. Again it is clear that the believer is free both to accept the invitation and to partake of the food. If, however, someone points out the nature of the food, the believer must forgo the outward exercise of his inner freedom δι' ἐκεῖνον τὸν μηνύσαντα καὶ τὴν συνείδησιν. The phrase probably refers to the same person who has raised the question.[128] The informant in question (τὸν μηνύσαντα) could scarcely be the pagan host, whose conscience would not be affected by the consumption of the meat.[129] Nor could it be a Jew, who would never have accepted the invitation to begin with.[130] The most likely answer, therefore, is that a weak Christian is involved who (perhaps for evangelistic reasons or unaware beforehand of the possible background of the meat) has accepted the invitation but declined to eat the meat portion of the dinner.[131] Paul then makes it clear (v. 29a) that the inner liberty of the strong believer is in no way to be put in doubt: the restraint of the strong is exercised only in the interests of the weak, in order to avoid causing him offence or leading him into sin. Vv. 29b-30 thus confirm the Apostle's statement in v. 29a, and indicate his concern to protect the freedom into which the strong believer has entered.[132]

The last verses of the paragraph (10:31-11:1) strengthen the Apostle's main point. Freedom in Christ means freedom to serve Christ. Everything the believer has received from God is to be put into His service -- even if this means renouncing or temporarily setting aside some of the privileges He has given. Even this renunciation, however, is an expression of the believer's freedom, for he does it voluntarily, and thus shows he is bound by nothing except that which is the true source and meaning of freedom, the love of God in Jesus Christ. Freedom, as Wendland rightly points out, is not an end in itself for the Christian, but must be expressed only in relation to the lordship of Christ, which is the basis of true freedom: "Der Raum der Freiheit ... muss begrenzt werden, weil der Christ immer angesichts des Andern lebt ... und diese Freiheit nur gelebt werden kann, wo Christus ist und seine Herrschaft, die das Fundament der christlichen Freiheit bedeutet."[133] We see, therefore, that in 1 Cor 8-10 Paul, though dealing with different situations from those dealt with in, for instance, Romans or Galatians, expresses the same truths so far as the possession and proper use of Christian freedom is concerned. Freedom in Christ means freedom for

obedience, and hence for service to Christ and to one's neighbour. Thus is God's command in His law fulfilled (Rom 13:8-10, Gal 5:13ff), and Christ acknowledged as Lord in the believer's life. Let us now see how Paul applies this (1 Cor 7:17ff) to two further practical situations.

1 Cor 7:17-24

In 7:1-16 the Apostle has set forth his views concerning the believer's attitude toward marriage. He now states the general principle underlying what he has said, and applies this to the cases of circumcision and slavery.[134] Thus the question of the Christian's freedom both from the law and from human institutions (in particular, slavery) which would limit that freedom is at the centre of the discussion. In the course of this the Apostle also offers an important comment on the goal or positive content of the believer's freedom in Christ.

The basic principle is laid down in v. 17: each must live as God has called him. Paul's preaching of Christian freedom might have led, as Wendland points out, to the assumption that believers are freed from all earthly or social responsibilities and can henceforth live in this respect as they wish.[135] Against this Paul insists that each must live in the condition in which he was when God called him, i.e. at conversion.[136] Thus the Apostle underlines the point that our freedom, wrought by the sovereign act of God in Christ, goes far deeper than the external circumstances of our lives, and can in no way be manufactured by ourselves. Only God's grace makes freedom possible.[137] No change in our outward circumstances will in any way affect our justification or possession of freedom.[138]

This principle is now appled (vv. 18-20) to the question of circumcision. Neither the Jew nor the Gentile can further the cause of his justification or increase his freedom by seeking a change in his condition. The natural distinction between the two may continue, but from God's viewpoint, any differentiation is ended in Christ, so far as our justification is concerned (though note, of course, God's special concern for the Jews, according to Rom 9-11). This means that the external sign, so far as our possession of freedom is concerned, is unimportant. If a believer seeks to remove the evidence of his circumcision[139] or gives in to pressure to be circumcised,[140] he makes possession of freedom dependent on external circumstances and denies the fact that this freedom has been wrought solely on the basis of God's work in Christ.[141] Circumcision, as an external sign, must be

accompanied by a genuine desire to fulfil God's law if it is to have any significance. According to Paul, the law itself teaches this (see on Rom 2:25ff, Rom 4).

This does not mean that Paul devalues circumcision; indeed, he counsels the Jew not to seek release from it. Rather does he put it within its proper perspective. For the Jew circumcision, when accompanied by faith, places him in the position of Abraham (Rom 4). For the Gentile, however, adoption of circumcision as a further step necessary for justification indicates a denial of the freedom God has given him in Christ (see on Gal 5:1-12), who has satisfied the demands of the whole law, including the sacrificial aspect, without thereby declaring it irrelevant or invalid. This includes the institution of circumcision which, for the Gentile, has been fulfilled in Christ.

That this in no way indicates that freedom is thereby freedom from the obligation to obey God's law is indicated in v. 19. What the Christian is freed for is the keeping of God's commands (τήρησις ἐντολῶν θεοῦ). Some commentators[142] pass over this all-important phrase, Allo, recognizing that ἐντολῶν must be given due force, surmises that by it Paul refers to the Decalogue or the precepts of the gospel.[143] Barrett suggests that the Apostle has in mind the "law of Christ" and connects the text with Gal 6:2, Rom 13:8-10 and Rom 2:25-29.[144] To him, the verse as a whole suggests a devaluation of the OT law: "'That we keep God's commandments' means an obedience to the will of God far more radical than the observance of any code, whether ceremonial or moral, could be."[145] Against these arguments, however, must be adduced the point that the various possible parallel texts all speak of a genuine allegiance to the OT law on the part of the believer (see on Gal 5:13ff, 6:2, Rom 13:8-10, Rom 8:4, Rom 2:25ff; also on 1 Cor 9:19ff). We have found no evidence anywhere in Paul to suggest that he thought in terms of a core or kernel of truth to which the OT could be reduced -- whether this "core" be construed as the Decalogue, the love command, the precepts of the gospel or any other such summary; see particularly 9:19-24, examination of which, in our opinion, yields similar conclusions. It should also be noted that ἐντολή in Paul refers almost exclusively to the specific commandments of the law (Rom 7 [six times], 13:9; Eph 2:15; the only exception is Col 4:10, where the meaning ["instructions"] is entirely different from anything in view here). Use of the word in Rom 13:9 (καὶ εἴ τις ἑτέρα ἐντολή), where the context is the fulfilling of the whole law, would seem to offer a very instructive parallel. It

seems highly likely, therefore, that the phrase here (τήρησις ἐντολῶν θεοῦ), refers to the same thing as would τήρησις νόμου θεοῦ, i.e. a real obedience to the law of God revealed in the OT.

So far as the Corinthians are concerned, Paul counsels that futile preoccupation with adoption of external signs must be replaced not by a rejection of the commands of God's law, but with a genuine obedience to them. Freedom in Christ is not release from the obligation to observe God's law, but is release for obedience to it, by the power of the Spirit. It is not circumcision as such (any more than uncircumcision) which is condemned -- rather is there rejected the view that mere possession of one or the other is itself a guarantee of justification or means of attaining true freedom in Christ. That this is the correct understanding of our text is reinforced by comparison with Rom 2:25-29 which, commentators agree,[146] deals with the same theme. There, as we have seen, Paul is concerned to establish the beginning of a genuine obedience to God's law, not a merely superficial (and insincere) conformity to certain aspects of it. The true goal of the Christian life (and of Christian freedom) is an (albeit imperfect) fulfilling of the law of God, by which God Himself is glorified in the believer's life and conduct. Reference may also be made to Gal 5:6, 6:15, also noted as parallel texts.[147] In this context, as we have seen (on Gal 5:1, 12, 13f, 18, 23 and 6:2), the Apostle is speaking not of an outright release from the authority of God's law, but rather of the possibility the believer has, for the first time, to begin to fulfil the law's requirements genuinely. The law must not supplant the promise, or be seen as a means by which men may establish a claim upon God, but it still stands as God's holy and righteous standard of life and conduct for the believer.

In vv. 21-24 the Apostle applies the principle of v. 17 to the issue of slavery. The new subsection is also closely linked to the preceding by the repetition of the theme of "calling" in vv. 20-21. At stake here again is the meaning of Christian freedom. In v. 21 the Apostle addresses the Christian who is a slave. For such a person, already made free in Christ, the human condition of slavery is of little consequence, as external circumstances do not determine whether a man is truly free or not. In v. 21b, though the meaning is not entirely clear, the Apostle may be saying that, even if the opportunity of becoming free (in the human sense) presents itself, the slave should not avail himself of it (ἀλλ' εἰ καί, κ.τ.λ.).[148] Even if this is not the meaning, however, the most the Apostle is saying is that the human

condition of freedom is a matter of indifference to the Christian. If he is offered it, he may take it -- if not, he is none the worse. The reason for the latter truth is given in v. 22.

The slave who becomes a Christian (ἐν Κυρίῳ κληθείς) is ἀπελεύθερος Κυρίου. This does not mean he is free in relation to the Lord (that would be the wrong kind of freedom referred to in Rom 6:20), but that, because of the action of his Κύριος, he has been freed from sin and death and from the law's just condemnation of his sin.[149] This freedom wrought in Christ is true freedom, freedom which overrides (though, unlike the concept of freedom held by the Stoics, does not overlook or make nothing of) the hardships which occur through the conditions of this present life. This point is brought home in v. 22b, where the Apostle states that the one who in the world's sight is free becomes, as a Christian, the δοῦλος Χριστοῦ. In relating freedom and service of Christ, the two statements are closely linked, as Conzelmann notes: "Der Freie ist wirklich frei als Sklave Christi. In dieser Dienstbarkeit besteht das Gemeinsame, die Freiheit des Sklaven und des bürgerlich Freien."[150] The character of Christian freedom is thus unfolded from a dual perspective. On the one hand, it transcends external limitations (entirely through the work of Christ and not human effort; cf. τιμῆς ἠγοράσθητε, v. 23). On the other, it results in a slavery to Christ which is in one sense far deeper (because it involves the deepest possible relationship) than that which the human institution imposes.

This paradoxical statement -- true freedom means slavery to Christ (and, through Him, to others) -- is, as we have repeatedly seen (see especially on Rom 14:1ff, 1 Cor 8-10, Rom 6) thoroughly Pauline. It distinguishes the Apostle from Greek philosophy and religion, to which the thought that true freedom could be combined with slavery to God is utterly foreign; those set free, for instance, in the Delphic rites remained in slavery to no lord.[151] Even the Stoics, with their declaration that the slave could be the truly free man, would have insisted that this freedom occurred in spite of any condition of slavery; Conzelmann rightly notes that to the Stoics "... die Dialektik von Freiheit in der Dienstbarkeit fremd ist."[152] A good summary of the Apostle's meaning here is given by Barrett: "The slave who becomes a Christian, though he retains his social status, has been freed from bondage to sin and death ... though the thought that the emancipated slave now owes loyalty and service to his patron is not far below the surface.... The man who begins, and continues, on the social level of

the free man has been bought by Christ, and thus becomes Christ's slave, owing him loyalty and service. Both slave and free man stand in the same twofold relation, of freedom and service, to Christ, and their differing social ranks become irrelevant."[153]

Paul is interested, of course, in more than the levelling of social distinctions, or even the possession of inner (in the sense of psychological or emotional) freedom. The declaration of Christian freedom is at the same time proclamation of the believer's bondage to Christ. We have argued that this bondage to Christ is expressed by the Apostle in terms of obedience to God's law, which thus becomes the framework within which Christian freedom is enabled, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to become day by day ever more a reality in the believer's life. This theme links the text closely to Rom 14:1ff and 1 Cor 8-10, for the Apostle's meaning throughout these passages is that freedom from sin, death and the law's just condemnation does not mean the right to live an independent or isolated life, free from external constraint or obligation (either to God or man), but leads to the offering of one's life in love and willing service to God and to others.

Rom 13:1-7

Paul explores this theme of the proper exercise of freedom in social relationships in at least two other ways. One of these occurs in Rom 13:1-7, where he speaks of the believer's relationship to the civil authorities. This passage, properly understood, enlarges on the idea of the obligation to love expressed in 13:8-10, and applies this, as in 14:1ff to a specific situation where the believer may be called to put his principles into practice.

It is no accident, indeed, that these verses occur in close conjunction with both 13:8-10 and 14:1ff. Even in the believer's relationship with the state, he is commanded to limit the exercise of his freedom with a view to the good of the other. Leenhardt notes that the citizen "...encounters authority primarily in the restrictions which it imposes on the free manifestation of the individual's spontaneous inclinations Submission to rules which limit freedom must be understood as a positive necessity, not as an ill to be endured but as a real good."[154] This underlines the fact that the believer's obligation to love (and so fulfil the law, vv. 8-10) extends to all men, not merely to other believers. The idea of obligation (ὀφειλάς,v.6; ὀφείλετε,v.8) shows the link between vv. 1-7 and 8-10.[155] Why, however, is this restriction of the believer's freedom so important for Paul? According to these verses, it is because the state is that authority ordained by God to provide an order in society

for the benefit of all citizens, and to organize individual efforts and abilities toward the end of attaining this goal.[156] This means that, through subjection to the governing authorities, the believer finds another means whereby he may contribute to the welfareof those around him.

This again points up the fact that freedom, far from being an end in itself, must always, according to Paul, be exercised within the framework of love and submission to God's law (vv. 8-10). Mistaken, therefore, is Michel, when he states, "Es ist bezeichnend, dass wir es in Röm 12,9ff. und 13,8ff. mit der Einschärfung der Liebe zu tun haben und dass in der Einlage Röm 13,1-7 gerade dieser Klang fehlt."[157] Paul proclaims here, however, not a vague "love-principle" but rather specific obligations.[158] Perfect men could be entrusted with absolute freedom, for they would always act, without reminder or further direction, with a view to the good of others. Even believers, however, are far from perfect, and the (genuine) freedom they do have in Christ must never become an end in itself, but must always be exercised with the good of the other in mind. Of this fact they stand in need of continual reminder. God has established the state, says Paul, in order to protect man from the consequences of his unbridled sin.[159] Even the believer must be included among those who would use unrestricted liberty as an excuse for self-seeking at the expense of others. Nygren rightly declares that if the Christian, trusting in his freedom, thinks he is absolved from the need for subjection to authorities, he is mistaken; the believer "...must not pretend that he already lives in the glorified state of the new aeon. If God has placed him in this existence with its orders,it is not theintention that he shall set himself above them and arbitrarily claim a state of glory in advance."[160] Paul rejects the idea of absolute liberty from the state for the same reason that he rejects absolute liberty in any other area of the believer's life -- because of the weakness and imperfection of men, even believers. The authority of the state, by God's overruling (and even though the state authorities may not be acting consciously or willingly as God's ministers), is directed toward the common good, and hence is needful for believers, even as is the authority of God's law. God's law itself, indeed, provides the believer with an ideal model for establishment of a proper and compassionate system of government. Because the state is ordained by God's authority, it can be said that it "...ist grundsätzlich eine Gestalt, in der Gottes Gesetz dem Menschen begegnet" (Althaus).[161]

The Apostle is careful, however, not to identify the state as the ultimate expression of God's will. The Christian's attitude toward it

should be one of respect and honour (v. 7), not of love.[162] If the state departs from its proper goal, the Christian, seeing it as in subjection to God, should urge it back along the right path. The governing authorities are always subjected to the One who ordained them, and so the believer's subjection to the state is not on the same level as his (unqualified and unrestricted) duty to obey God and His law. The attitude suggested by ὑποτάσσεσθαι is not one of slavish awe but of sincere respect.[163] Even this respect, however, is due not because of some inherent quality of the state, but because the state has received its authority entirely from God.[164]

This implies (the state being, after all, governed by men) that the governing authorities are by no means perfect.[165] The authority of the state is not absolute, and extends only so far as God allows it. Käsemann comments rightly, "Pls vergisst nicht, dass die Welt gefallene Schöpfung ist, und der Text handelt allein von Gottes souveränem Tun, das Anordnungen trifft, sich Werkzeuge schafft und statt irdischer Gleichheit die Verhältnisse von Über- und Unterordnung sanktioniert."[166] Ultimately, the believer's subjection to the state is governed by his love for God. A comparison may be drawn to Col 3: 18ff, where the motivation for subjection is the believer's desire to please the Lord. Included in this love for God is the desire to love his neighbour, and so fulfil the law. Leenhardt comments, "... submission is a dovetailing of the parts of an organic whole, with the aim of preventing disorder and furthering peace and unity.... Such submission then implies a positive obedience to common need, incumbent on an individual in view of the position he occupies in a collective whole whose good he is obliged to promote."[167]

It is significant that Paul uses ὑποτάσσεσθαι here, instead of any of the ordinary NT words for "obedience" (πειθαρχεῖν, πείθεσθαι or ὑπακούειν). Cranfield points out that in the NT ὑποτάσσεσθαί τινι does not indicate simple obedience, but rather the recognition that the other person has a greater claim on one than one has on oneself.[168] The Christian recognizes the state's authority because it is constituted by God as an instrument whereby the good of the other may be served. Käsemann rightly points out that for Paul freedom is not freedom from obligation (as, for instance, the Corinthians supposed), but is rather freedom to serve. The believer who attempts to live in isolation from the world takes away from the world "... its character as God's creation and is thereby disqualified from serious service. For Christian service must

take place on earth and in earth's everyday life; otherwise it becomes fantasy."[169] Service to the state, in the same way as submission to husbands or parents (see on Col 3:18ff), becomes for the believer an expression of ἀγάπη.[170] In this sense, the state aids the believer in living righteously, and thus θεοῦ ... διάκονός ἐστιν σοὶ εἰς τὸν ἀγαθόν (v. 4).[171]

It should be noted that Paul's stress here is not on the degree to which government may or may not be righteous, but on the believer's obligation to restrict the outward exercise of his freedom in his civic responsibilities, so as the better to seek the well-being of others. The citizen earns the praise of the authorities (and of God) not because of obedience to them as such, but because by this obedience he is acting in the best interests not only of himself but also of his neighbour. Only the believer has the freedom to be able to lay down his rights joyously and voluntarily in such a way, and so Christians should be the models of good citizenship in any society. The Apostle's interest here, however, is in exhorting the believers concerning the proper exercise of their freedom -- not in expounding any understanding of the state.[172]

The believers' subjection to the authorities must be real, not superficial -- διὰ τὴν συνείδησιν (v. 5).[173] This is because, through it, he expresses not just subjection to human authorities, but (more fundamentally) a genuine love for his neighbour and sincere obedience to God. Paul proclaims no revolutionary programme of freedom from all constraints. Rather does he here, as elsewhere, exhort the believer to express the freedom he has already won, not through human means but through God's act in Christ, in love and mutual service -- even if this means restricting the outward exercise of his inner freedom in the interests of his neighbour. In this way, according to vv. 8-10, he fulfils God's law.[174]

Col 3:18ff.

The same pattern is evident in Col 3:18ff, where the believers are commanded voluntarily and joyfully to renounce the outward exercise of their freedom in Christ in order that the goal of love might be served and Christ honoured as Lord. The tone for the passage is set by v. 14, ἐπὶ πᾶσιν δὲ τούτοις τὴν ἀγάπην, ὅ ἐστιν σύνδεσμος τῆς τελειότητος.[175] Two situations are dealt with here, family relationships and slavery.

So far as the first is concerned, a comparison may be drawn with Rom 13:1-7. In these relationships, according to the Apostle, an order has been established by God (ὡς ἀνῆκεν ἐν Κυρίῳ, v. 18; τοῦτο γὰρ εὐάρεστόν ἐστιν ἐν Κυρίῳ, v. 20). This order is constituted for the benefit of everyone involved. For each person, however, this involves a restriction on the outward exercise of their freedom. If one group is called to be subject, the other is called to take special concern for those under its authority and to let every-thing done be guided by the love (ἀγάπη) which seeks not one's own interest but that of the other.[176] The rule of love, for instance, clearly restricts the father's power to raise his children as he wishes,[177] just as much as it restricts the children's ability to live free from parental authority.

Unlike Rom 13:1-7, Paul speaks here of obedience (v. 20), as well as subjection (v. 18). Yet this obedience is rooted not in the nature of the relationships as such, but in the believer's (even the child's) willing acknowledgement of Christ as Lord. Such obedience to Christ yields the understanding that, through acceptance of certain relationships, love can be exhibited and the common good served. Lohse comments rightly, "Man's relationships with his fellow men are the field upon which the Christian proves his obedience to the Lord insofar as he conducts his life in 'love' (ἀγάπη)."[178]

The Lord, however, not the social order, is the One to whom true and unquestioning obedience is always due.[179] Obedience to a person is only the reflection of one's primary obedience to the Lord.[180] Yet this does not mean that Paul is interested only in the principle (of "love") rather than in the details of social order as such, or that the latter are ultimately a matter of indifference to him. This may reflect a modern judgment of the relationships noted here, but it is clear from the text that here, as in Rom 13, obedience to Christ as Lord should, because of the order specifically ordained by God, always be manifested in willing acceptance of the restrictions on the exercise of freedom noted here. Only thus, in Paul's view, can the common good truly be subserved. It is untrue, therefore, to say, as do some, that the "love-principle" is all important for Paul, and the structure of relationships noted here is a matter of indifference by comparison -- to the degree that the structure could change totally with the times, so long as the "love-principle" to whether situations believers might find themselves in. The relationship structure here, says Conzelmann, is of non-Christian origin, and Christians recognize it only because it is a better alternative than anarchy.[182]

This view, however, while it may express a judgment, valid or otherwise, on the relationships noted in the text, does not do justice, surely, to the Apostle's comments. While it is certainly true that obedience to the Lord should underlie everything the believer is commanded to do, it is equally true that, so far as this text or Rom 13 is concerned, God Himself has ordered social relationships in such a way as to express His purposes of love for the world. We have seen many times the error of the view that the "love-principle" only is of importance to the Apostle. Paul's interest is in the eternal law of God, and he knows nothing of any "love-principle". Why this is the case is again made clear in this passage. Perfect man could be entrusted with perfect freedom. Believers, however, being far from perfect and living in an utterly fallen world (of which they also are still in a real sense a part), need the guidance of God's law in every area of their lives. Otherwise, the freedom with which they have been entrusted in Christ would most certainly be turned speedily into self-seeking and licence. This is why, for Paul, God has ordained certain relationships in society, specifically those of the family and the state. That this is the Apostle's view -- what modern observers may think of it is another matter -- cannot be doubted.[183] It should be added, however, that because specific relationships are God-ordained, the Christian, is not commanded, in the interests of love and obedience, to accept simply whatever happens to be the prevailing order,[184] which itself may have no divine sanction, or even be demonic in nature.

The situation is somewhat different, however, when we turn to the second theme of the passage, that of slavery (vv. 22ff). Here the Apostle gives no divine approval to the relationship as such. Indeed, he goes out of his way to underline the contrast between the kind of obedience owed to one's master and that owed to the Lord. The earthly κύριοι, notes Lohse correctly, are clearly distinguished from the true Κύριος.[185] Believing slaves, because they are freed in Christ, no longer need to be flatterers of men or seek their favour in a worldly sense (v. 22).[186] For the Christian slave, slavery is no longer servility.[187] The slave can serve out of a generous attitude precisely because his earthly master does not take the place of Christ, who is now the true Lord both of himself and his master; the institution of slavery is thus relativized through God's act of bringing freedom in Christ to the believing slave.[188] Dibelius comments, "... der Glaube an den himmlischen Herrn soll den Sklaven zu freiwilliger Dienstbarkeit,

den Herrn zu freiwilliger Gerechtigkeit veranlassen."[189] That the system of slavery may lead to injustice is suggested by the Apostle's consoling word to the slaves, εἰδότες ὅτι ἀπὸ Κυρίου ἀπολήμψεσθε τὴν ἀνταπόδοσιν τῆς κληρονομίας (v. 24).

In this regard, therefore, it can truly be said that Paul is interested neither in upholding nor in destroying this aspect of social relationships. His interest is rather in how the Christian believer can properly express his freedom in such a situation.[190] That this is the case, however, reinforces a point we have made elsewhere. The Apostle, as can be seen from his exhortations here to the slaves to render due obedience, is not interested in presenting a programme for social revolution.[191] In other words, he is not interested in the possession of freedom as a goal in itself. The parallel text to this passage, therefore, is 1 Cor 7:21ff, where the external condition of the slave becomes a matter of indifference in light of the true freedom he has found in Christ. There also, however, the institution as such is not sanctioned. The slave should take the opportunity of freedom if he is given it (see our comments on these verses).

The threat Paul's understanding of freedom poses to the institution of slavery does not come from a condemnation of slavery as such (though neither does he approve it), nor from an interest in the attainment of freedom as an end in itself (which would ultimately prove self-seeking and a doorway to abuse of the rights of others). Rather does the threat come from his command for both masters and slaves to allow their conduct to be subjected to the lordship of Christ and their relationships to be cemented by the bond of love (v. 14). This amounts to a restriction on the exercise of freedom by both groups, and so hits at the very underpinnings of the institution of slavery, which is based on the right by the one group of the unrestricted exercise of liberty at the expense of the other. The eventual results of Paul's teaching are foreshadowed in Philemon.[192] Lohse notes that for the Christian, the Greek themes of justice and fairness take on a new meaning, when it is realized that all -- masters and slaves alike (4:1) -- are accountable for their conduct to Christ: "If both realize that they owe obedience to the one Lord, so both have in hand the true standard for their conduct toward one another."[193]

It is clear, therefore, in conclusion, that the "bond of love" (v. 14), far from expressing a vague "love-principle" or an unbounded declaration of human liberty, rather directs the believer toward an attitude of obedience and submission to Christ as Lord of his life. In this

attitude of humble obedience, he will recognize that God's law (in His ordering of social relationships) directs him to the restriction of the outward exercise of the freedom he has been given in Christ, to the end that the good of all men may be promoted. Even in the case of slavery, the believer is urged not to put freedom ahead of love; rather should he put the interests and welfare of his master ahead of his personal desire for liberty. By such an expression of love he demonstrates his true freedom (cf. ὁ γὰρ ἐν Κυρίῳ κληθεὶς δοῦλος ἀπελεύθερος Κυρίου ἐστίν, 1 Cor 7:22), and can only aid the cause of his master being won to Christ. Those who have earthly authority, on the other hand, are likewise commanded to restrict the outward exercise of the earthly freedom which, in their case, they would otherwise have in much greater measure.

For all groups involved, this attitude is possible only because of the genuine freedom granted in Christ. This freedom frees men from the need to regard freedom as an end in itself, and does so through the self-giving example of Christ. His act, by showing to men the character of true freedom, gives them the opportunity to exercise this freedom in Christian love and mutual service. Even the unbeliever (see on Rom 13:1-7, 8-10) should be the recipient of this love. This passage, therefore, properly understood, yields many of the conclusions we have seen elsewhere regarding Paul's understanding of freedom, and constitutes a brief but significant addition to his thinking on the subject.

Conclusions

1. The weak believers in Romans are probably to be identified as Jewish Christians with an over-scrupulous concern for keeping certain ceremonial aspects of the law which, according to Paul, are fulfilled in Christ. These practices, however, are not of the order of the Galatian legalism, in that no attempt is being made through performing them to make a claim upon God. Some syncretistic or ascetic influences may be involved, but these are not seen by the Apostle as dangerous in themselves to the gospel.
2. The inner freedom of the strong to reject these practices is not questioned by the Apostle. Outward exercise of this freedom, however, is to be conducted within the framework of obedience to Christ as Lord. Freedom is defined in relation to love, so that the outward exercise of true inner freedom is to be avoided when it would hurt the weak.

3. Freedom itself, however, is never to be given up. The strong believer who has grasped the full implications of his freedom in Christ is in no danger of losing his freedom (or having his freedom judged), but is admonished to realize the full extent of that freedom by being ready to forego its outward expression.
4. The weak believers in 1 Cor 8-10 are those who, although they have become Christians, still retain the belief in the supernatural demonic power of idols, and hence cannot escape the view that food sacrificed to idols is spiritually defiled. The strong are those whose knowledge of what Christ has done has given them the freedom to eat all foods without fear of damaging their relationship with God in the process.
5. In 1 Corinthians, as in Romans, the inner freedom of the strong is endorsed, but the outward exercise of it must be guided by an attitude of love and mutual service. This does not deny the reality of this freedom, but proves it: the freedom of the strong gives him the basis to act in any way called for by the circumstances without thereby doing injury to his own conscience or relationship with God.
6. Paul illustrates this through his own example (1 Cor 9:19ff). The man who is truly free in Christ is ready, in the cause of the gospel, to become a slave to all. Exercise of freedom is conducted on the basis of obedience to God's law, that law which itself commands love. True freedom means true servanthood.
7. If freedom is exalted as an end in itself, not only the spiritual position of the weak, but also that of the strong, will eventually be threatened. Freedom should not be an end in itself (which would imply ability to use such absolute freedom totally for God's glory and in service to others), but must be expressed in relation to the law of God and the lordship of Christ, from whom true freedom comes. Renunciation of the outward exercise of freedom in love demonstrates the true inner possession of that freedom.
8. This latter truth -- that external factors do not affect the genuine possession of inner freedom -- is emphasized in 1 Cor 7:17ff. This is considered with reference to the question of circumcision and the institution of slavery. The believer will not add to his freedom by relying upon the presence or absence of external signs or factors. Even if he is deprived of freedom in a worldly sense, this makes no difference to the fact of his true inner freedom in Christ. By this is meant what we have seen to be the believer's obligation

to allow his freedom to be guided by love and expressed in obedience to God's law. That this is indeed the case is emphasized by the statement that freedom in Christ must, if genuine, result in a genuine keeping of God's commands, not a release from the obligation to obey them. Freedom from the law's condemnation thus means freedom to offer one's life, in love and willing service, to God and to others, in obedience to God's law.

9. This is further illustrated in Rom 13:1-7 and Col 3:18ff, where Paul deals with the subject of the proper exercise of freedom in various social and family relationships. Once again, the stress is on the fact that true freedom in Christ gives the believer the freedom voluntarily to lay down his rights and privileges in the interests of the other. As a citizen, the believer should respect the state as a means of improving the well-being of others, even though this involves sacrifice of certain rights on his part. Similar conclusions are drawn with respect to the family and slavery in Col 3:18ff. Here again, as in 1 Cor 7:17ff, slavery as an institution receives no endorsement from the Apostle. While believing slaves are commanded to be subject, those in positions of human authority over them are also commanded to lay down their rights. All believers, whether slave or free, are commanded to be subject to Christ as their common Lord. This, rather than any critique of slavery as such, lays the foundation for the end of slavery, as far as the Christian is concerned. Paul's interest, however, in these texts, is not in presenting an understanding or theory of the state, family or any other institution. While some of these have a certain divine sanction, none are regarded by the Apostle as ends in themselves but only as instruments through which the believer may seek to love his neighbour and so fulfil God's law.

Footnotes

1. For this view see Sanday/Headlam, pp. 399-403, esp. p. 401; also Leenhardt, pp. 345-46, who suggests that Paul includes this section because he is writing from Corinth, where similar problems have recently occurred (cf. 1 Cor 8-10).

2. See Lietzmann, p. 114, "Von diesen ganz allgemein gehaltenen Ermahnungen wendet sich der Apostel nun fast unvermittelt zu einer höchst speziellen Frage, die in der römischen Gemeinde gestiftet hat." Schmidt, p. 226, makes the same point. See also Käsemann, pp. 353-54; Michel, pp. 420-21, 422 n. 6; Schlier, pp. 403-6; Barrett, p. 256; Nygren, pp. 441-44. Schlier and Käsemann note that Paul may have spoken with a measure of reserve owing to the fact he had not had personal contact with the Roman church.

3. This view is upheld by Schmidt, p. 226; Nygren, p. 442.

4. Cranfield, II, 691-92.

5. See Michel, pp. 420-21; Cranfield, II, 692; Schlier, p. 406; Althaus, p. 138.

6. Cranfield, II, 692. See also Käsemann, pp. 354-55.

7. Cranfield, II, 692.

8. This is shown by 15:7ff, on which Käsemann, p. 371, comments, "Das legt mindestens die Annahme nahe, dass der früher geschilderte Konflikt etwas mit der verschiedenen Zusammensetzung der römischen Gemeinde zu tun hat, präziser gesagt, wesentlich das Verhältnis einer judenchristlichen Minorität zur heidenchristlichen Majorität mitbestimmte...." See also Schlier, p. 423; Michel, p. 420, p. 422 n. 6; Althaus, p. 138; Cranfield, II, 694-97.

9. Schlier, p. 406; Käsemann, p. 356.

10. This appears to be the view of Barrett, pp. 256-57, who sees the weakness of the minority in the failure to grasp the principle of justification by faith.

11. Käsemann, p. 356.

12. Cranfield, II, 690-91; Käsemann, p. 356.

13. See references in (8) above.

14. See Althaus, p. 138, "Aber die Verbindung der Askese mit dem heilighalten bestimmter Tage weist doch wohl auf das Judentum, hier also auf Judenchristen."

15. Käsemann, pp. 355-56; Michel, p. 420.

16. Schlier, pp. 405-6; Käsemann, p. 356.

17. Schlier, pp. 403-5; Althaus, p. 138; Lietzmann, pp. 114-15; Käsemann, pp. 355-56; Michel, pp. 419-20.

18. Cranfield, II, 694-96.

19. Cranfield, II, 713, 723, notes that these words are used as the equivalent of the Hebrew ṭāmē' and ṭāhôr and mean, respectively, ritually unclean and ritually clean; cf. 1 Macc 1:47, 62. Compare MT and LXX in Gen 7:3,8; Lev 11:47, 14:4.

20. Cranfield, II, 695.

21. Cranfield, II, 696, 724-25.

22. See Käsemann, p. 361; Nygren, p. 446; Schlier, p. 412; Althaus, p. 142; Schmidt, p. 230. We reach this conclusion on the following grounds. Vv. 14-15 are unquestionably directed to the strong; see Käsemann, pp. 361-63; Cranfield, II, 712ff; Michel, pp. 431-33; Barrett, pp. 262-64; Schlier, pp. 413-15; Althaus, p. 142; Nygren, pp. 446ff. V. 13b (ἀλλὰ τοῦτο, κ.τ.λ.) is inextricably linked with vv. 14-15; see Cranfield, II, 711-12 n. 6; Schmidt, p. 232; Michel,

p. 431; Käsemann, pp. 361-63 (Barrett, pp. 262-63, sees v. 13b as the theological principle then applied in vv. 14ff.). Γὰρ in v. 15 links the verse directly with v. 13b; see Cranfield, II,714; Käsemann, p. 363; Schmidt, p. 232. V. 16 is, in context, most naturally interpreted as directed to the strong; see Cranfield, II,715-17; Michel, p. 433; Althaus, p. 143; Barrett, p. 264; see our comments on the verse. V. 17 is linked by γάρ to vv. 15-16; see Cranfield, II, 717; Michel, p. 434; Schlier, p. 415. V. 18 underlines the truth noted in v. 17; see Käsemann, p. 365; Schlier, p. 416; Cranfield, II, 719 (Michel, p. 435, sees vv. 18-19 as drawing the practical consequences of v. 17). Vv. 19-20a draw the consequences of v. 18 (Käsemann, p. 365; Schlier, pp. 416-17) -- or, if διώκωμεν is the correct reading, depict the natural response of Christians to the truth of vv. 17-18; see Cranfield, II,720. V. 20b, as v. 14a, takes an assertion or slogan of the strong believers and provides Paul's comment on it; see Käsemann, p. 365; Cranfield, II, 723; Schlier, p. 417; Michel, p. 437; Barrett, p. 265). V. 21 introduces a new and important address to the strong (Michel, p. 437; Cranfield, II, 724; Käsemann, p. 365; Barrett, p. 266), and vv. 22-23 follow on from v. 21 (Michel, p. 438; Schlier, pp. 417-18).

23. See Michel, p. 434; Schlier, pp. 402ff.

24. See Michel, p. 427; Käsemann, p. 359; Schlier, p. 409.

25. See Käsemann, p. 358.

26. Cranfield, II, 712; Michel, p. 431.

27. Michel, p. 431.

28. Käsemann, p. 361; Cranfield, II, 713; Althaus, p. 142; Schmidt, p. 231.

29. As noted above, this is supported by the Jewish connotation of κοινός; see Cranfield, II, 713; Lietzmann, p. 117. Michel, pp. 431-32, also places v. 14 within a Jewish context. Käsemann, pp. 361-62; Schmidt, p. 231, link the verse with Mark 7:15, in the context of ritual purity.

30. Cranfield, II, 713.

31. Käsemann, p. 362. Michel, p. 432, comments, "Der Mensch kann mit seiner Lieblosigkeit die Kraft der Wahrheit Gottes entmächtigen, obwohl sie Wahrheit bleibt."

32. Cranfield, II, 714.

33. See (22) above for our analysis of the structure of the passage.

34. Cranfield, II, 715. Käsemann, p. 363, comments, "Missbrauchte Freiheit wendet sich nicht nur gegen Gottes Geschöpf, sondern pervertiert den Sinn der Heilstat."

35. Schmidt, p. 232.

36. Käsemann, p. 363. Michel, p. 434, makes the same point another way: "Der 'Starke' soll an der Existenz der 'Schwachen' lernen,

dass die Liebe in einem Grenzfall auf ein theologisch begründetes Recht verzichten kann. Auch in diesem Grenzfall ist die Liebe nicht die Preisgabe der theologischen Wahrheit, sondern ihre Bestätigung."

37. Althaus, p. 143; Barrett, p. 264; Michel, p. 433; Käsemann, p. 364; Sanday/Headlam, p. 391.

38. Cranfield, II, 717, prefers this interpretation.

39. Althaus, p. 143.

40. See Cranfield, II, 723; Michel, p. 437.

41. Käsemann, p. 365; Schlier, p. 417; Cranfield, II, 723.

42. The context best suits the interpretation that Paul is addressing the strong believer who, by untoward exercise of his freedom, leads the weak Christian into sin by his eating. See Cranfield, II,724; Sanday/Headlam, p. 393; Leenhardt, p. 356 n. Barrett, p. 266, allows also for the possibility that the weak are addressed. This would yield the translation "take offence" rather than "cause offence".

43. Michel, pp. 437-38.

44. Schmidt, p. 434: "... eine Rückkehr zu dem im Christusglauben überwundenen kultischen Ritualismus kommt nicht in Frage!"

45. Cranfield, II, 725; Althaus, p. 143; Nygren, p. 449; Michel, p. 438; Schlier, pp. 417-18.

46. Michel, p. 438; Schlier, pp. 417-18.

47. Cranfield, II, 726.

48. See Cranfield, II, 727.

49. See the comment of Althaus, p. 143: "Was schadet es, wenn der Starke seine Glaubensstärke nicht überall öffentlich betätigt? Er vergibt seinem Glauben durch den Verzicht nichts. Es ist genug, dass Gott ihn sieht, dass der Starke vor Gottes Angesicht, da wo er mit Gott allein ist, um seine Freiheit weiss und sich ihrer freut."

50. Käsemann, p. 366; he comments, "Der eigene Glaubensstand und die damit gewährte Freiheit brauchen deshalb nicht verleugnet zu werden." See also Schmidt, p. 235; contra Michel, p. 438.

51. Käsemann, p. 366; Sanday/Headlam, p. 393. Cranfield, II, 727, adds the necessary proviso that the scope of the statement is limited to the issues involved here, and is not to be taken as a straightforward approval of anything the strong believer might feel like doing. That, as Cranfield notes, "... would be merely an assertion of the blessedness of those Christians who have insensitive conscience."

52. See Cranfield, II, 727-28; Schlier, p. 418; Käsemann, p. 366. Schmidt, p. 236, rightly notes that faith and obedience to the

gospel are to be closely linked and that "Glaube ist hier das in Christus erwirkte Befreitsein zu einer Freiheit, die den 'Schwachen' nach ihrem Mass des Glaubens noch fehlt " Thus obedience, faith and freedom are to stand in the closest possible relationship with each other.

53. For the thought that the phrase is probably a Corinthian slogan see Robertson/Plummer, p. 163; Allo, p. 197; Barrett, p. 189; Wendland, p. 59; Goudge, pp. 69-70; Weiss, p. 214.
54. Hans Conzelmann, Der erste Brief an die Korinther, p. 165; C.K. Barrett A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians, p. 189; A. Roberts and A. Plummer, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the First Epistl of St Paul to the Corinthians, p. 163.
55. Barrett, p. 189.
56. Johannes Weiss, Der erste Korintherbrief, 9th ed., pp. 210-211.
57. Conzelmann, p. 173; Barrett, pp. 194-95.
58. Conzelmann, p. 174.
59. Barrett, p. 194.
60. Allo, p. 204; Robertson/Plummer, p. 169; Barrett, p. 194.
61. Robertson/Plummer, p. 169; H.L. Goudge, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, p. 71.
62. J. Héring, La Première Épître de Saint Paul aux Corinthiens, p. 68.
63. Conzelmann, p. 175; Wendland, pp. 61-62.
64. E-B. Allo, Saint Paul, Première Épître aux Corinthiens, 2d ed., p. 204; Weiss, p. 229.
65. Wendland, p. 59.
66. Wendland, p. 62.
67. Conzelmann, p. 175.
68. Weiss, p. 229.
69. Conzelmann, p. 175.
70. Conzelmann, pp. 175-76; Robertson/Plummer, p. 171.
71. Wendland, p. 62.
72. Barrett, p. 196.
73. Conzelmann, p. 176. Allo, pp. 204-5, however, thinks that actual participation in pagan rites is in view: Paul contents himself here with a denunciation of the effect of this action on the weak, but in ch. 10 brings the full force of his condemnation to bear. This is unlikely, however, because Paul gives no indication here that the act of partaking of the meat is in itself wrong. A closer analogy is the situation portrayed in 10:23ff. A number of different situations involving meat sacrificed to idols are in view in chs. 8-10. and they must be carefully distinguished; see further on ch. 10.

74. Conzelmann, p. 176.

75. Barrett, p. 196.

76. Conzelmann, pp. 176-77.

77. Conzelmann, p. 177.

78. Robertson/Plummer, pp. 173-74.

79. Barrett, p. 197.

80. Conzelmann, p. 178.

81. Conzelmann, p. 178 n. 43.

82. Wendland, pp. 62-63.

83. See Conzelmann, p. 179 and p. 179 n. 5; Weiss, pp. 231-32. Weiss sees vv. 19-23 only as linked to ch. 8.

84. Conzelmann, p. 179.

85. Allo, pp. 208-9; Robertson/Plummer, pp. 176-77; Wendland, p. 63; Barrett, pp. 199-200; Goudge, pp. 72-73. Barrett, p. 202, points out that, though the Apostle moves on to the question of financial maintenance, it is the thought of eating featured in ch. 8 which gives rise to his comment in v. 4, μὴ οὐκ ἔχομεν ἐξουσίαν φαγεῖν καὶ πεῖν.

86. Ἐξουσία in ch. 9 refers specifically to Paul's right to be maintained financially by the churches which he founded; see Wendland, p. 65. This is more specialised use than in 8:9 (which verse we have linked with 10:23, 29), but exemplifies the same principle, i.e. foregoing rights (or liberties) to which we are entitled. The question of financial maintenance is in view also in v. 5 (not just the right of the Apostle to marry); see Barrett, p. 203; Weiss, p. 234; Wendland, p. 64; Robertson/Plummer, p. 180.

87. Allo, p. 222; "Pour étendre le progrès de l'évangélisation, il refuse tout dédommagement de ses peines, et renonce aux 'libertés' les plus légitimes...." See also Hering, p. 73.

88. Wendland, p. 67; Conzelmann, p. 188; Robertson/Plummer, p. 190.

89. Conzelmann, p. 188, comments, "Die Freiheit, die er für sich behauptet, konkretisiert sich als Dienst."

90. Wendland, p. 67.

91. Weiss, p. 243.

92. Weiss, p. 243.

93. Conzelmann, p. 189.

94. Conzelmann, p. 190: "Sein Verhalten ist gerade von seiner Lehre von Gesetz, Glauben und Freiheit aus konsequent: Jeder wird von Gott als der angeredet, der er ist, in seiner κλῆσις."

95. Conzelmann, p. 189.

96. Conzelmann, pp. 189-190; see also Allo, p. 225.

97. Weiss, p. 244.

98. Barrett, p. 212.

99. Conzelmann, p. 190. He links this (p. 190 n. 26) to Paul's attack on antinomianism in, especially, Rom 7:7ff.

100. Conzelmann, p. 190.

101. Weiss, p. 245.

102. Weiss, p. 245; Robertson/Plummer, p. 192.

103. Robertson/Plummer, p. 191; Barrett, p. 212; Conzelmann, pp. 189-90; Weiss, pp. 243-44; Wendland, p. 67; Allo, pp. 225-26.

104. Weiss, p. 245; Conzelmann, p. 190. Héring, p. 75, admits that the first ἄνομος in v. 21 must refer to the law, yet then declares (without any supporting evidence) that the immediately succeeding words μὴ ὢν, κ.τ.λ. must refer not to that law (or to any law) but to Christ Himself. Such an argument demonstrates the weakness of this view.

105. Barrett, pp. 213-14.

106. Dodd admits ("ΕΝΝΟΜΟΣ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ" in Studia Paulina, ed. J. N. Sevenster and W. C. van Unnik, p. 97, that in v. 20 νόμος refers exclusively to the Mosaic law. Then, on his view, Paul states (v. 21) that he is ἀνόμος, i.e. outside the Mosaic law. To guard against the impression he is totally lawless, however, he says that he is μὴ ... ἄνομος θεοῦ. As Paul is outside the Mosaic law, he must be referring to the existence of a different law here, Dodd concludes (p. 98). In this, however, Dodd is mistaken, for, apart from the unlikelihood that Paul would conceive of a νόμος θεοῦ which was outside the revealed law, what the Apostle does mean (as is clear from his teaching elsewhere) is precisely that he is not free (in the sense of sundered from any relationship with) the law but that, in Christ, he is now free to fulfil the law. The addition of θεοῦ is motivated, surely, by Paul's desire to underline his reverent attitude toward the law and so to dispel any doubt that he is ἄνομος. Dodd draws (pp. 98-99) on Rom 7 to support his idea of a wider reference for the phrase νόμος θεοῦ here. As we have seen, however, νόμος is used in a positive sense, throughout Rom 7:7ff to refer to the OT law. Where it is used negatively, i.e. referring to something other than the OT law, e.g. the ἕτερος νόμος of v. 23, this is an ironical use of the word, speaking of an evil parody of the true law. Only in 8:2 is there a positive reference to law in which νόμος probably does not refer to the OT law. Here, however, the reference is likely to the authority or working of the Holy Spirit (through which the OT law is fulfilled, 8:4) -- not to some (undefined) body of further revelation or teaching. See further our comments on these texts. Dodd certainly confuses the believer's freedom from the law's just condemnation with an (unknown to Paul) total freedom from any obligation to fulfil the law of God.

Dodd then uses this (as we have seen, erroneous) concept of a νόμος θεοῦ independent of the OT as a basis for his supposition that the phrase ἔννομος Χριστοῦ implies existence of a "law of Christ", which he links with Gal 6:2 (pp. 99-100). What, however, we may ask, is the content of this "law of Christ"? Dodd admits (pp. 100-103) that the law of Christ (Gal 6:2) is linked with the love command (Gal 5:14) which is in fact a quotation from the Torah, and that Rom 8:2 refers to the activity of the Holy Spirit in bringing about the conditions in which the Christian life should be lived (and should not, therefore, be linked with Gal 6:2). He is thus reduced (pp. 103-8) to the suggestion that the existence of a "law of Christ" is indicated by such passages as 1 Cor 7:25 (ἐπιταγὴν Κυρίου οὐκ ἔχω) and 9:14 (ὁ Κύριος διέταξεν) and the link between Rom 14:14 (οὐδὲν κοινὸν δι' ἑαυτοῦ) and Jesus' teaching on clean and unclean foods in the gospels. Jesus' commands, surely, are to be understood within the framework of His reverence for the law -- and are, indeed, His interpretation of the law. Scholars tend to agree there is little evidence from the Pauline epistles that any code of Jesus' teaching (in isolation from the OT law) was used by the Apostle. The paucity of references to the sayings of Jesus is one of the more frequently noted features of Paul's letters. Paul's teaching in Rom 14 in no way invalidates the law or points to existence of a new law (see our comments on this text).

Finally, Dodd's assertion (pp. 108-10) that bearing one another's burdens (Gal 6:2) refers to a rule of church order based on Jesus' teaching in Matt 23:3 (the Pharisees who do not carry the burden of others) and Matt 18:15ff (on the existence of church discipline) is highly unlikely. The Matthaean texts have little if any substantive relationship to Gal 6:2. See further our comments on Gal 5:13ff.

In conclusion, therefore, we can find no ground in this text for the existence of a "law of Christ" of the sort Dodd has in mind, or that any such thing is in the Apostle's mind in these verses. On the contrary, his comments can be satisfactorily explained, and in harmony with his teaching elsewhere, within the framework we have suggested.

107. Rightly Conzelmann, p. 190.

108. Wendland, p. 67.

109. Weiss, p. 243; Conzelmann, p. 190, suggest a chiastic structure.

110. Weiss, pp. 212-13, 249. Conzelmann, pp. 162-63, 194, 201, 207, takes the same position.

111. Conzelmann, p. 162.

112. Robertson/Plummer, p. 199.

113. Robertson/Plummer, p. 199; Hering, p. 73.

114. Wendland, p. 73; Barrett, p. 275.

115. Allo, p. 202.

116. Allo, pp. 202-3.

117. Wendland, pp. 70-71.

118. Wendland, p. 74.

119. Barrett, p. 220.

120. Allo, p. 243; Barrett, pp. 235-37.

121. Robertson/Plummer, p. 219.

122. Wendland, p. 74.

123. Héring, pp. 87-88; Weiss, p. 263. See, however, Conzelmann, pp. 207-8 and 208 n. 12, for an indication that other meat was, at least in some measure, available. This might account for the fact that the weak brother of 10:27ff had accepted the dinner invitation (he thought other meat might have been available to his host, but discovered upon arrival that such was not the case).

124. Wendland, p. 75.

125. Weiss, p. 264; Conzelmann, p. 208.

126. Goudge, p. 91; Allo, p. 246.

127. That the setting here is that of a private dinner is indicated by the fact that there would be no need to say τοῦτο ἱερόθυτόν ἐστιν (v. 28) at a dinner in a temple. Also, it is hard to imagine how a weak believer (the μήνυσας) would be present at all in such a setting. See Robertson/Plummer, p. 221; Barrett, p. 242; Weiss, p. 264; Allo, p. 247; Wendland, p. 75.

128. Barrett, p. 242, notes the close connection in the Greek (both words being governed by διά). Hence, only one objector is involved, contra Wendland, p. 75, who sees the pagan host as the informant and the "conscience" mentioned as that of a weak Christian.

129. Barrett, p. 242; Robertson/Plummer, p. 221; Wendland, p. 75; contra Conzelmann, p. 210. Weiss, pp. 264-65, points out that τις (v. 28) cannot be identical with τις (v. 27). The Christian would only forego consumption on account of the host if he wished to show the pagan he was serious about his faith and so would not eat any such food. Yet the whole point of Paul's argument is that the strong believer is able to demonstrate his liberty in such matters because he no longer believes in the reality of idols; see Weiss, p. 265.

130. Allo, p. 248.

131. Weiss, p. 265; Wendland, p. 75; Robertson/Plummer, pp. 221-22; Barrett, p. 242. Weiss, p. 265, notes rightly that the informant here is to be linked most naturally with the weak brother of ch. 8, with his doubts concerning the meat sacrificed to idols.

132. Against the conjecture that we have here an "interjection" by a strong Christian stands the point that the sentence is introduced by γάρ, not ἀλλά (or some equivalent); see Barrett, p. 243; Conzelmann, p. 210 n. 29; Weiss, p. 265. Hence the thought must follow on from that expressed in v. 29a. Paul's thought (which must be supplied, but which is fairly evident from context) is that if it were on account of my <u>own</u> conscience I would be allowing my freedom itself to be judged; because that is not the case, however

(v. 29a), I am not allowing my inner freedom to be put in question in any way (v. 29b). Thus understood, the text makes excellent sense. There is no need, therefore, to assume (as does Weiss, pp. 265-66) that the words are a gloss. See Barrett, pp. 242-44. Hering, p. 88 n. 3, remarks correctly, "Le passage de 29a à 29b est tout à fait facile, et on ne s'explique pas bien les flots d'encre qu'ont fait couler les prétendues difficultés de rattacher 29b à ce qui precede."

133. Wendland, p. 76.

134. On the connection between vv. 1-16 and vv. 17-24, see Conzelmann, p. 150; Weiss, p. 183; Barrett, p. 167; Robertson/Plummer, p. 144; Wendland, p. 53.

135. Wendland, p. 53.

136. In Paul καλεῖν refers to the believer's being called by God into His kingdom; see 1:9, 26; Rom 8:30, etc. Paul's reference here, however, is not to the calling as such, but to the condition in which the believer found himself on the occasion of his calling, and in which the calling must be lived out (περιπατεῖν). See Barrett, p. 168; Weiss, p. 184; Wendland, p. 53.

137. Conzelmann, p. 151.

138. Conzelmann, p. 151; Weiss, pp. 184-85.

139. A not uncommon procedure by Jews wanting acceptance by the Gentile community; see Weiss, p. 186; Allo, p. 171.

140. This probably indicates the presence of Judaizers in Corinth, though the problem cannot in any way have been as serious as in Galatia, or Paul would have dealt with it more directly and at much greater length; see Weiss, p. 185; Barrett, pp. 168-69.

141. Conzelmann, p. 151. In distinction to the Stoics, who also proclaimed that freedom was not dependent on external circumstances, Paul insists that this freedom is based not on one's own efforts, but solely on the finished work of Christ. See Conzelmann, pp. 151-52 n. 14; contra Weiss, p. 187 and p. 187 n. 1, who sees a stronger link (see p. 185), but admits that Paul places the accent on the Christian's relationship to Christ (p. 185).

142. E.g., Weiss, Conzelmann, Héring.

143. Allo, p. 172.

144. Barrett, p. 169.

146. Weiss, p. 186; Allo, p. 172; see Wendland, p. 54; Barrett, p. 169.

147. Weiss, p. 186; Allo, p. 172; Wendland, p. 54; Barrett, p. 169. Wendland, p. 54, admits that τήρησις ἐντολῶν θεοῦ is a "'gesetzlich' klingende jüdische Formel" surprising in Paul. Insisting nonetheless that for Paul Christ ends the law, he explains the phrase away by the comment that Paul "... dem Antinomismus damit keinen Freibrief geschrieben hat...." This, however, is surely a weak argument in light of the evidence.

148. Χρῆσαι may be completed either by τῇ δουλείᾳ or τῇ ἐλευθερίᾳ. Most commentators opt for the former, on the basis that it would be inconsistent for the Apostle to urge acceptance of freedom by slaves when the whole point of the passage is that such freedom is unimportant, true freedom being found in Christ. These commentators note that the usual meaning of εἰ καί is "even if" (concessive) and that μᾶλλον ("rather") is thus given here the most natural rendering. See Weiss, pp. 187-88; Allo, pp. 173-74; Héring, pp. 55-56; Conzelmann, pp. 152-53; Barrett, p. 170. This is also the interpretation most favoured by the Greek Fathers. Others, however, point out that εἰ καί may be taken to mean "if you actually..." and to indicate a strengthening of the command ("by all means", "certainly"). The plausibility of this interpretation is reinforced by ἀλλά (v. 21b), which could be taken to indicate a contrast between the situations of v. 21a and v. 21b. This interpretation also enables χρῆσαι to take the object (τῇ ἐλευθερίᾳ) most directly to hand in context. Finally, the aorist may (but not necessarily need) imply a new condition. This view has a lot to be said for it; Paul's attitude toward slavery (see Philemon, also our comments on Col 3:18ff) is certainly not that it is a social institution ordained of God in the sense that, for instance, the family is. See Robertson/Plummer, pp. 147-48; Goudge, p. 59; Moule, Idiom Book, pp. 21, 167. It may also be pointed out that it does not seem likely, especially in view of v. 24, that the Apostle would counsel a slave to turn down the opportunity of freedom if given it (though the primary reference of this may be figurative, i.e. to those who would persuade the Corinthians that their freedom was dependent on external circumstances and thus lead them into bondage; see Weiss, p. 191; Héring, p. 56; Robertson/Plummer, p. 149; Goudge, p. 60). Robertson/Plummer, p. 148, suggest a parallel "exception" in v. 11 (ἐάν δὲ καί,κ.τ.λ.). In this case, v. 21b must be taken as parenthetical; the Apostle returns to the main point in v. 22. Paul's primary concern here is not to challenge the institution of slavery.

149. Conzelmann, p. 153; Robertson/Plummer, p. 148; Barrett, p. 171.

150. Conzelmann, p. 153.

151. Weiss, p. 188. In addition, Conzelmann, p. 154, points out that, beyond some similarities in vocabulary (i.e. redemption terms, cf. v. 23), there is no true parallel between the Delphic inscriptions and the thought of Paul here.

152. Conzelmann, p. 154; contra Weiss, p. 189 and p. 189 nn. 1-3. Weiss does admit a difference (which he concedes is "bemerkenswert") between the two concepts of freedom. He sees the fundamental point of both conceptions as being true inner freedom from external conditions. Christian freedom, however, has a "religious" character, i.e. freedom from sin and demonic powers (rather than merely freedom from adverse human or social conditions). The real point of distinction, however, in our view, is in the character of Christian freedom as slavery to God -- a note entirely lacking in (and foreign to) the Stoic assessment. This means that the Christian would, under many circumstances, willingly embrace adversity and situations which would result (on the human level) in bondage of various sorts. This would not be the outlook of the Stoic. Allo, p. 174, comments that Paul far surpasses the

position of the Stoics in his understanding that "...le chrétien est affranchi non pour lui-même, mais pour devenir un membre du Christ, par lequel le Sauveur opère au profit de toute l'humanité." Hence, far from there being a basic similarity of structure with only secondary differences, the basic significance of thet concepts of freedom is, in our view, quite dissimilar, and it is the similarities which are of secondary importance. See also Barrett, p. 172: "... there is nothing Stoic in the foundation of the argument ('You were bought at a price'), and the paradoxical theme that it is in service that perfect freedom is found is for Paul focussed not upon an impersonal and pantheistic logos, but upon the personal and historical Redeemer, Jesus Christ."

153. Barrett, p. 171.

154. Leenhardt, p. 330.

155. Schlier, p. 386; Cranfield, II, 652, 673; contra Käsemann, pp. 337, 339-340 and Michel, p. 394.

156. Leenhardt, p. 331; Althaus, pp. 131-32.

157. Michel, p. 395.

158. Observers are agreed that Paul holds here that the institution of the state is divinely-ordered, and is not simply an (expendable) means to an end, or a temporary phenomenon. See Käsemann, "Principles of the Interpretation of Romans 13," in New Testament Questions of Today, trans. W. J. Montague, p. 209, (196-216), for the nature of Paul's social views. See also our comments on Col 3:18ff.

159. Barrett, p. 245; Schmidt, p. 218.

160. Nygren, p. 428.

161. Althaus, p. 132. See Schlier, p. 391: "Die Unterordnung unter die politischen Gewalthaber, die Paulus inmitten seiner Paraklese der Liebe gebietet, ist nicht nur Resignation gegenüber der Übermacht, sondern eine Zustimmung des Gewissens, das darin etwas vom νόμος τοῦ θεοῦ erkennt."

162. Leenhardt, p. 324.

163. Leenhardt, p. 326; Käsemann, NT Questions, p. 213.

164. Cranfield, II, 668. Käsemann, NT Questions, p. 213: "The Christian obeys them [the authorities] as one who knows himself to be confronted in their claim with the divine summons and who in his obedience is rendering service to God."

165. Nygren, p. 428; Althaus, p. 133.

166. Kasemann, p. 344.

167. Leenhardt, p. 327.

168. See Cranfield, II, 660; also Käsemann, NT Questions, pp. 207-8; Käsemann, p. 339. Unlikely, therefore, is the view of Schlier,

p. 387 and Michel, p. 398 n. 10, that ὑποτάσσεσθαι represents a stronger form of ὑπακούειν.

169. Käsemann, NT Questions, p. 212.

170. Leenhardt, p. 326.

171. Cranfield, II, 665-66, interprets the phrase as meaning that the "good" represents the eternal salvation God has in store for the believer. Another possible interpretation is that of Schlier, p. 390, who links the phrase with v. 3, τὸ ἀγαθὸν ποίει, καὶ ἕξεις ἔπαινον ἐξ αὐτῆς. The reference would thus be to the praise or honour the believer will receive from the authorities. Leenhardt, pp. 331-32, suggests that this would give a selfish connotation to the phrase, and that the wider social good is involved -- yet this does not seem to account adequately for σοί.

172. Schlier, p. 393: "Alle anderen Fragen, die wir in bezug auf den Staat haben ... werden von Paulus nicht erörtert. Es kommt ihm im Zusammenhang nur darauf an, die römischen Christen an den den politischen Machthabern schuldigen Gehorsam, der letztlich Gehorsam gegen die von Gott gegründete und verordnete Macht ist, zu erinnern."

173. Schlier, p. 393; Käsemann, p. 346; Leenhardt, p. 336. See our comments on Rom 2:15. Both there and in 13:5 the believer acknowledges the law of God as it applies in the various areas of his life. It is not some vague "natural law" or general knowledge of God which is involved in either text.

174. Cf. Gal 6:2, Ἀλλήλων τὰ βάρη βαστάζετε, καὶ οὕτως ἀναπληρώσετε τὸν νόμον τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

175. See Eduard Lohse, Colossians and Philemon, pp. 162-63; Joachim Gnilka, Der Kolosserbrief, p. 218.

176. See Lohse, p. 157.

177. Gnilka, pp. 220-21.

178. Lohse, pp. 156-57.

179. Gnilka, p. 217.

180. Ralph Martin, Colossians and Philemon, p. 119.

181. Eduard Schweizer, Der Brief an die Kolosser, p. 165; Hans Conzelmann, Der Brief an die Kolosser, p. 200; Lohse, pp. 157-158.

182. Conzelmann, p. 199.

183. See Käsemann, NT Questions, pp. 209-10, who argues forcefully both that this is the Apostle's view here (and in Rom 13) and that such a view is no longer defensible by the church.

184. Gnilka, p. 218.

185. Lohse, p. 160.

186. See Schweizer, p. 168.

187. Gnilka, pp. 220-21.

188. Schweizer, p. 170; Gnilka, pp. 220-21.

189. Martin Dibelius, An die Kolosser, Epheser, An Philemon, p. 36.

190. Gnilka, p. 225.

191. Conzelmann, pp. 199-200; Dibelius, p. 35; Martin, p. 121.

192. T.K. Abbott, The Epistles to the Ephesians and to the Colossians, p. 294, and Charles Masson, L'Épître de Saint Paul aux Colossiens, p. 149, suggest that the length of Paul's discussion of slavery here (over against that of family relationships) is because of the concern his treatment of Onesimus (a Colossian) might have given rise to in the Colossian church.

193. Lohse, p. 162; see also C.F.D. Moule, The Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Colossians and to Philemon, p. 128.

Freedom in relation to sin

Introduction

Having dealt with Paul's understanding of freedom and the law, we must now consider his views regarding freedom in relation to sin. As with freedom and the law, Paul's apprehension of freedom and sin centres on his view of the relationship between an utterly holy God and sinful and disobedient men. Into this picture comes Christ and His work, along with all the implications this has for those who respond to Him in obedience. Because of their rebellion against God, men are in slavery to sin, the ravages of which affect every area of their lives and ultimately bring upon them the sentence of death. God's act in Christ brings freedom from this absolute domination of sin. Yet this freedom comes to still weak and easily tempted men. Paul carefully balances the freedom from sin's hold won in Christ with the limitations this freedom has because of the believer's mortal nature. The believer must be reminded that freedom is real when seen as slavery -- slavery not to sin, however, but to God and His righteousness.

Only such an understanding of freedom from sin will, in our view, do justice to the complex interrelationship of "indicative" and "imperative" in Paul, or to his understanding of the consequences of justification and baptism or the gift of the Holy Spirit, all of which themes will receive our attention. We shall examine four passages which, taken together, give a consistent and comprehensive account of Paul's understanding of both the nature and purpose of this freedom. To set the stage, however, it is of vital importance that we take a further look at Rom 7:7-25, a text examined earlier in our study of freedom and the law. We must determine how this passage, the vividness and depth of which is possibly unequalled in the NT as a description of man's struggle with sin, is to be interpreted and what light it sheds, when correctly understood, on Paul's understanding of freedom and sin.

Rom 7:7-25

Any serious discussion of Paul's understanding of freedom from sin must take account of Rom 7:7-25. The history of exegesis has seen various opinions put forward -- so many, in fact, that, after an exhaustive survey of the subject, O. Kuss concludes, "... der Streit um die Auffassung wird, jedenfalls soweit die Möglichkeiten der Exegese und Historie in Frage kommen, kein Ende haben."[1] The central issue at stake for our purposes is whether the Apostle is speaking here of pre-conversion life or that of the believer. We must also consider whether the passage is primarily autobiographical, biographical, or with some kind of general reference.

Commentators are generally agreed that Paul is seeking here to defend the holiness of the law against any misunderstanding of his teaching which would imply that the law is to be identified with sin.[2] This may be the position his opponents had accused him of adopting (cf 6:1,15). The accusation could have received force from a misreading of such statements as the Apostle makes in 3:19-20, 5:13-14,20, 6:14, 7:1-6, etc.[3] The view commentators take of the precise function the law does have in our text is determined by their understanding of the passage as a whole. It is important to note at the outset, however, that what the Apostle says here concerning freedom from sin (and freedom in relation to the law) is in some sense part of his exposition of the Christian life in Rom 6-8,[4] a point we shall seek to illustrate further in the course of our examination. We should bear in mind also the comments made previously with respect to the theme of freedom and the law in these verses.

The paragraph divisions occur at v. 13 and v. 24. Vv. 7ff depict the coming of the divine command, and man's fall into sin and rebellion. The blame for man's predicament is placed in v. 13 entirely on the shoulders of his sin, and in vv. 14ff this theme is elaborated upon, vv. 24-25 providing a conclusion to the chapter. The fact that, at v. 14, Paul changes into the present tense, however, leads most commentators to consider vv. 7-13 and vv. 14-25 together (the conclusion being regarded as part of the latter subsection). This is a useful outline, and, as other commentators generally follow it, is the one we shall employ.

We shall commence our examination by setting forth an outline of the understanding of the passage adopted by many commentators. On this view, the whole passage refers to the condition of man under the law and without Christ. We shall then offer a critique of this position from a number of perspectives, and suggest an alternative and, to us,

preferable understanding of the text, along with noting the consequences this has for Paul's view of freedom from sin.

The "Pre-conversion" Interpretation

vv. 7-13

Scholars taking this position reject, to begin with, the view that these verses refer to the Apostle's own pre-conversion life. Various reasons are given:

(a) How could Paul have said that he "lived" (ἔζων, v.9), i.e. as free from the slavery of sin, before his conversion?[5] Attempts to explain this by referring to a Jewish view that a child was without sin until the age of ten (Tanchuma Bereshith 7) avoid the more general recognition of Rabbinic theology that the evil "yetzer" or impulse is present from birth.[6] Paul is scarcely likely to have made a statement of this nature about his own past life, and is certainly unlikely to have claimed a sinless childhood.[7]

(b) The phrase χωρὶς νόμου (v. 9) could only with difficulty be used to describe a Jewish child raised in the law from earliest childhood.[8] Even before he became a "bar-mitzwah" (in the initiation ceremony unattested, at any rate, except for one Talmudic reference, before the fourteenth century[9]), the Jewish child was bound to a great many commandments.[10] Against the objection that the reference is to a lack of knowledge of the law, it is noted that the text speaks clearly of the absence, then presence of the command. The phrase must refer to the Mosaic law (rather than natural law), for this is the universal use of νόμος in Paul.[11] How, on any account, could a child be said to have lived "without law"?[12] Surely the force of the argument is lost, if it depends on the religious situation or apprehension of children.

(c) A Jew such as Paul it is argued, could not have conceived of the law as a death-bringing force (ἀπέθανον, v. 10). Leenhardt notes that this does not correspond with what we know of Paul's pre-conversion views (cf. Phil 3:4ff).[13]

(d) If Paul's own situation is ruled out, so also is any view which sees him speaking here as representative or typical of the Jews. Nowhere in Rabbinic literature is the eternal authority of the law questioned.[14] Keeping the law leads to life, and forgiveness is meant to result in better allegiance to its commands.[15]

(e) It is also unlikely that the reference is to "man fallen in Adam". This view, widespread among the Fathers,[16] draws on what

are seen as parallels between vv. 7-13 and Gen 2 and 3. Seven objections to this view are given:

i: ἐντολή is used interchangeably with νόμος, and, while both could be used with reference to the Sinai covenant, νόμος would be out of place in any reference to the Paradise story.[17]

ii: The phrase οὐκ ἐπιθυμήσεις seems to be a clear reference to Exod 20:17 and Deut 5:21.

iii: Paul quotes Exod 20:17 (Deut 5:21) in Rom 13:9, in which context he uses the word ἐντολή to refer explicitly to the law.[18]

iv: The command in Genesis is οὐ φάγεσθε (3:4, LXX) not οὐκ ἐπιθυμήσεις.[19]

v: The verb used in Gen 3:13 (LXX) is ἀπατάω, not ἐξαπατάω (Rom 7:11). Both verbs are used generally, anyway, and so the latter verb need not be an echo of the Genesis account.[20]

vi: The theme of the section as a whole is the argument that the Mosaic law is not sinful; to this the example of Adam can add nothing.[21]

vii: Paul is speaking of a world into which sin has already entered, not of the Paradise situation.[22]

(f) The opinion that the "coming of the commandment" refers to conversion, and that the verses speak of the Christian life can hardly, in Kümmel's view, be sustained.[23]

(g) The only remaining possibility would seem to be some kind of general or rhetorical reference to past time, with special focus on the situation of man under the law, and this is the understanding generally adopted. Kümmel, describing this as a "Stilform",[24] comments, "... Paulus einen allgemeinen Gedanken durch die 1 Person lebendig ausdrücke."[25] The Apostle speaks here of man's bondage under the law and lostness without Christ. Commentators refer to the history of man in the "old aeon", under the power of the law and sin,[26] though they do not exclude all personal reference.

vv. 14-25:

Those holding to a "pre-conversion" understanding of vv. 7-13 take the view that these verses are closely linked with vv. 14-25. While (on this view) vv. 7-13 provide an outline for a defence of the law, vv. 14-25 explain how the events of vv. 7-13 actually occurred.[27] The nature of the subject in the earlier subsection is used as proof for the possibility of sin, and so the same subject must be in view here.[28] Kertelge takes the position that, in vv. 7-13, Paul uses the past tense simply to distance himself from the events recorded; v. 14, therefore, does not

signify a change of time or place, but rather incorporates a thematic description of vv. 7-13, i.e. the Apostle is drawing out a picture of the actual situation of the sinner as a result of the history of vv. 7-13.[29] The same topics (law, sin and death, the powers of the "old aeon") are in view in both subsections.[30] There is, admittedly, a change in the theme -- the ἐγώ comes more clearly into the foreground -- but the issue at stake is still the law: no longer an apology for the law (as in vv. 7-13), but rather the situation of the ἐγώ under the law. The ἐγώ no longer looks back to its past, but is now in the midst of battle.[31]

P. Althaus notes the difficulty of finding any dramatic break between the "aeons" at v. 14, if the break is indicated simply through γάρ.[32] Mitton points out that the change is made "almost imperceptibly."[33] In vv. 14-25 Paul supplies the reason for his assertion in v. 12 that the law is good. The change in the train of thought, according to Althaus, is only from the law as "Mittel der Sünde" to the law as powerless against sin.[34] A clear identity, therefore, is to be seen between the ἐγώ of vv. 7-13 and the ἐγώ of vv. 14-25. If the ἐγώ is the first subsection is regarded as a reference to man in bondage of the law, then so must the ἐγώ in the second subsection.[35]

A number of reasons are given as to why vv. 14-25 could not possibly refer to the life of the believer. These can be grouped under four headings:

(a) Paul's understanding of freedom and sin.

How, given what the Apostle has said concerning the believer's freedom from sin in chapters 6 and 8, could he have described himself as πεπραμένος ὑπὸ τὴν ἁμαρτίαν?[36] Surely, v. 14 must belong to the "then" of 6:21 rather than the "now" of 6:22.[37] The statement, ἐγὼ δὲ σάρκινός εἰμι (v. 14), must be taken as an explanation of v. 5, ὅτε γὰρ ἦμεν ἐν τῇ σαρκί.[38] The man portrayed in these verses is in an absolutely hopeless situation. He can do nothing whatever of the good he intends, because he is without the enabling power of the Holy Spirit.[39] His situation is as hopeless as Adam's.[40] The man pictured here is but a puppet of sin.[41] How could this be a description of the believer, who has been freed in Christ from the hold of sin?

(b) Paul's understanding of freedom and the law.

In vv. 1-6, the Apostle has firmly established the believer's

freedom from the law. In vv. 7-13, the function of the law is only to bring out the full force of man's rebellion against God, a fact which leads to death.[42] Similarly, in v. 14, the fact that the law is πνευματικός means only that the true situation of man is exposed through its working. Man's bondage to sin is sealed through the law.[43] How, therefore, asks Kümmel, can Paul be referring to the believer in vv. 14-25, where the ἐγώ so clearly continues to stand under the law's demand?[44] Although the full clarity of the situation became evident to Paul only after his conversion, he must have shared in the sentiment of the pious Jew recorded in 4 Ezra 9:36ff and other Rabbinic texts which indicate an acknowledgment of the law but a recognition of one's inability to fulfil its demands.[45]

(c) The relationship of vv. 14-25 with 8:1ff.

In Rom 8:1ff, the Christian is described as one who lives κατὰ Πνεῦμα.[46] The Apostle notes the existence of a tension in the Christian life, but never of a constant failure to do the good; the believer has the Spirit, and therefore does not fulfil the desires of the flesh.[47] Paul does not regard believers as sinless, to be sure, yet he believes that they are largely freed from the constraints of fleshly behaviour.[48] The question of how the Christian life provided (for Paul) the occasion for ethical exhortation at all is, for Kümmel, a difficult one.[49] One thing, however, is clear: while there is no solution for the man whose plight is noted in vv. 14-25, the solution for the Christian has already occurred at v. 25a and 8:1. If vv. 14-25 are a description of the believer, then he is indeed the helpless slave of sin -- and this cannot be the Apostle's view, given what he says in 8:1ff (and elsewhere).[50] Against the objection that vv. 14-25 must depict some present reality in the writer's life if he is not to be pictured as frivolous or irrational, Kümmel suggests that worse is to be attributed to the Apostle if we are to infer from v. 24 that he knew nothing of redemption in Christ.[51]

(d) The interpretation of 7:24-8:2.

That these verses provide difficulties for adherents of this school of interpretation is not denied. What is one to make of the cry of deliverance (v. 25a), which is then followed by what appears to be a summary of the preceding verses, said to be a portrayal of the non-believer? Some commentators suggest that a primitive textual rearrangement has occurred, the order in the original text being 23, 25b, 24, 25a, 8:2, 8:1.[52] It is also suggested that both v. 25b and 8:1 are glosses, added

by a later hand than Paul's.[53] By far the most widespread interpretation, however, is that, in lieu of any textual evidence for either of the above opinions, v. 25a is best regarded as an anticipatory exclamation of victory, foreshadowing 8:1ff.[54] The phrase αὐτὸς ἐγώ must therefore indicate "ich allein, ohne Christus."[55] On this understanding, v. 25a is a transitional phrase leading in to ch. 8, and v. 25b is to be seen as a summation of vv. 14-24 (or 7-24 as a whole).[56] A slightly different but related reconstruction is offered by J. Kürzinger, who sees v. 25a as the beginning of the new section, v. 25b and 8:1 contrasting the old and the new, and 8:2 picking up the thought of v. 25a.[57] Althaus explains the "doppelte Dienstbarkeit" of the ἐγώ in v. 25b on the basis that Paul wants to make it clear that blame for sin is not (as might have been inferred from vv. 17-18) to be shifted on to an alien power (sin), but that man is fully responsible for his own sin and rebellion.[58] G. Bornkamm notes that the cry of despair (v. 24), indicating the longing for redemption, should be contrasted with the longing expressed in 8:18 by the believer for the fulfilment of that redemption.[59]

The conclusion drawn by these commentators, therefore, is that the ἐγώ in vv. 14-25 represents man under the bondage of law, sin and death. Kümmel points out that the "Stilform" device is used by Paul elsewhere (e.g. Rom 3:5ff, 1 Cor 13, Gal 2:18), and that the same device can be seen in Greek and Latin literature (including Philo), and also in Rabbinic material.[60] He draws the conclusion, therefore, that ἐγώ is equivalent here to τις.[61] In vv. 14-25 as in vv. 7-13, Paul describes the condition of man under the law as such, not an account of the situation of any particular person or group of people.[62] The "Stilform" is historical, in that it refers to an actual reality,[63] but has no specific historical or personal reference.[64]

Response to the "Pre-conversion" Interpretation

We shall offer our response to the "pre-conversion" interpretation of Rom 7:7-25 under three headings, dealing with the identity of the ἐγώ in vv. 7-13, the identity of the ἐγώ in vv. 14-25, and the relationship between the two subsections.

Identity of the ἐγώ in vv. 7-13:

The interpretation of vv. 7-13 offered by the commentators noted above, according to which Paul speaks there of the situation of man under the law (the giving of the law being the background for the text),

while avoiding any more specific historical reference, is, in our view, unsatisfactory. A better explanation of the text can be given, in our opinion, by seeing the underlying reference to be not to the giving of the law, but to the Paradise account. The theme of the law is only a secondary reference, much as in Rom 5:12ff (cf. 4:15). The Apostle's primary aim is not to show that freedom is achieved apart from the law by demonstrating that the law is linked with man's condition of bondage. Rather is his purpose here, as we noted earlier, to defend the law against any suggestion that it is to be identified or linked with sin. Much as in Rom 5:12ff, the Apostle shows here that sin entered at the beginning, long before the law appeared. The law shows sin in its true colours, but is not responsible for its existence. On this understanding, the use of the first person here can be easily explained by the Hebraic concept of corporate personality, according to which all men (including Paul) are united with Adam. This is not unrelated to Kümmel's concept of the "Stilform", but it makes the latter proposal somewhat redundant. Six major reasons may be offered for adopting the point of view we have taken:

(a) The role of the law in vv. 7-13

We have noted many times that the primary reference of νόμος in Paul is, in almost all cases, to the Mosaic law. Paul's purpose, indeed, in these verses, is to defend the holiness of the law. He begins, therefore, by making the straightforward assertion that the law (of Moses) is not to be identified with sin (v. 7). He then goes on (ἀλλὰ τὴν ἁμαρτίαν οὐκ ἔγνων εἰ μὴ διὰ νόμου) to make the observation that, in the absence of the law, men do not recognize sin for what it really is.[65] He introduces the tenth commandment, οὐκ ἐπιθυμήσεις, as an example. Paul cannot mean, however, that without the law man had no practical knowledge or experience of sin (οὐκ ἔγνων/οὐκ ᾔδειν), for in ch. 5 he clearly teaches that sin existed before the coming of the law (See on freedom and the law, Section I, Part B). What he refers to, therefore, is the unmasking of sin its true colours, so that now men understand what it truly is. If we bear in mind that Paul's task here is to dissociate the law from any actual inherent connection with sin, it becomes clear that he is pointing the finger back, beyond the law, to the real culprit, in the same way he has done in ch 5 (cf 3:19-20, 4:15, 7:5). In this case, what Paul is saying here is that all the law has done is to come in and reveal sin for what it is -- and he does this

without giving any indication (see our comments on freedom and the law) that this is the sole role of the law. If this is true, we should expect the context to indicate that the primary reference is to the Genesis account. We shall now show how the giving of the law and the Paradise story are interrelated in this subsection.

(b) Assimilation of Paradise and Sinai accounts.

Jewish and early Christian literature show an assimilation of these two accounts. The command of Deut 30:15 ("I have set before you today both good and evil") is linked to the command given to Adam in both Ecclus 15:14-17 and Justin Martyr, Apology, I, 44, 1.[66] We noted, in our study of Rom 4, the tendency in Rabbinic literature to attribute to pre-Mosaic figures the practice of the law (and thus to claim for them justification by works). Neofiti, the earliest Palestinian targum on the Pentateuch, states that Adam was placed in the garden not to cultivate it, but to observe the law and keep its commandments.[67] Lyonnet notes that Neofiti on Gen 2 and 3 links the law with the tree of life.[68] This theme is repeated in other Jewish texts.[69] Käsemann notes rightly that Paul in some way utilizes this tradition in order to link the law with the Genesis account here.[70] His primary purpose, in our view, is clearly to point out the origin of sin and death in the human race, and thus to absolve the law of any blame.[71] A number of specific similarities between the two texts (Rom 7 and Gen 3) may now be pointed out.

(c) Similarities between Gen 3 and Rom 7:7-13.

The parallel between the role of the serpent in Gen 3 and that of sin in Rom 7 (the personification of which gives further stress to the comparison) points to a link between the two passages, even as does the use of ἐξαπατᾶν in 7:11, which is used by Paul with specific reference to the Genesis story in 2 Cor 11:3; cf. also 1 Tim 2:14), thus giving a strong indication, pace the views noted earlier, that this verb is an echo of ἀπατᾶν in Gen 3:13. Also, the ἐντολή in Genesis was given for life (2:17), as is the law (Rom 7:10).[72] Paul's shift from νόμος to ἐντολή cannot, in the light of the Genesis parallel, be without significance, especially as ἐντολή occurs in the singular.[73] A further similarity is commented upon below.

(d) The meaning of οὐκ ἐπιθυμήσεις.

This phrase, though a quotation from Exodus, is given by Paul a meaning which suggests that he is thinking here of the Paradise story.

Several points may be listed in support of this contention:

i: Paul abbreviates the Mosaic formula, and gives the prohibition a general meaning.[74] He means to express by it, in Barrett's words, "... the exaltation of the ego which we have seen to be of the essence of sin."[75]

ii: Neofiti on Exod 20:17 lists desire as the preeminent sin, and dissociates it from any specific object.[76]

iii: 1 Cor 10:6 suggests that Paul uses ἐπιθυμεῖν absolutely as one way in which to speak of the essence of sin or rebellion against God. The same thought can be traced in the OT (Deut 8:3, 9:22, Num 11:4-6, 34),[77] and can be linked with the desire of man in Gen 3 to attain equality with God. The entry of sin and death through man's breaking of this prohibition links the thought in vv. 7-13 very closely with that of Gen 3.

iv: The Rabbis, as is indicated by Shabbat 145b-146a, felt that desire was engendered in Paradise. In their view, however, Israel (though not the Gentiles) was delivered from it at Sinai.[78]

(e) The meaning of ἔζων χωρὶς νόμου.

This phrase cannot refer simply to the coming of the law, but must refer also to Adam.[79] The assumption on which most interpreters build is that the reference here is to some kind of relative degree of spiritual life in the intervening period between the definite command given to Adam and the giving of the law at Sinai. Paul has shown, however, in 1:18ff, as we have seen, that all men have fallen utterly short of God's requirement and must therefore account for their sin. He could scarcely be suggesting here (any more than in Rom 5:12ff, on which see our comments) that men between Adam and Moses were not in fact susceptible to death, the penalty for their sin.[80] It is more likely, as we have noted, that at 5:14 the Apostle uses the fact of death's reality between Adam and Moses to forestall any objection that this was a period in which men were not responsible for their actions (or did not receive the penalty for them).[81] The use of ἔζων here, therefore, suggests strongly that it is Adam who is involved, who did enjoy life (in the sense Paul meant it) before he fell into rebellion (and death) by disobeying the command. Jewish tradition held that Adam lived in Paradise for seven years, and while there is no evidence that this specific tradition is in the Apostle's mind, it does underline the probability that he thought in terms of a period during which real, not relative or imaginary life was enjoyed by Adam.[82] Hence, Adam can

be said to have "lived", in a way not true, for instance, of Israel or the individual Jew before they received the law.[83] The "command" given to Adam, while not identical in the Apostle's mind with the law, is at least viewed in a similar light, as in 5:12ff. The "command" foreshadows the coming of the law. Hence, Paul can say ἔζων χωρὶς νόμου with reference to Adam -- though, no doubt, the thought of the law is also in his mind.[84]

(f) The meaning of ἀνέζησεν.

The difficulty that ἀνέζησεν indicates a prior existence of sin which is not referred to in the Genesis account is resolved when one recognizes that ἀνα -verbs do not signify primarily the notion of recurrence but that of inception[85] -- although the Genesis passage certainly presupposes at least the presence of sin lurking in the background.[86] This interpretation, as well as rendering the past tenses of the narrative meaningful, allows the full sense of the verb ἀναζῆν to be brought out.[87]

On the view we have adopted, 5:12ff and 7:7-13 harmonize well. In its favour, we are also able to adduce some of the points noted by the commentators cited earlier. Most of these, as we have seen, are in agreement that we cannot understand this subsection as a purely personal, autobiographical statement on Paul's part. A good Pharisee would never have spoken of living χωρὶς νόμου. The explanation that the reference is to an (in some sense) sinless childhood simply points to the difficulty of holding this kind of position if only, before any other considerations are introduced, because "...descriptio adeo dramatica versari vix potest circa pueris experientiam" (Lyonnet).[88] Equally precluded, on these grounds, is the view that Paul is speaking as a typical Jew, or that he is portraying the Jewish situation in general. Paul's whole arguement, however, is bereft of force unless some element of actual historical reference is introduced. Even Kümmel's "Stilform" of "man under the law" can scarcely, pace Kümmel himself, be considered a hypothetical figure removed from historical content. God's act in Christ is, according to Paul, a definite historical event which has clear implications for the situation of actual men under the law. It seems to us that the problem is best resolved by considering that the Apostle, while certainly thinking in a general way of the situation of all men who are in bondage to sin, has in mind particularly the situation of Adam, the first man confronted with the divine command. Because

of the concept of corporate personality, so clearly evident in Rom 5:12ff, Paul can speak of what is (certainly for him) a specific historical occurrence (and one which fits the narrative of vv. 7-13), while at the same time having in his mind the situation of all men coram Deo, and especially the situation of men as confronted by God in His law. If, however, it is not the situation of non-believers (or Jews) in bondage to the law (where the law is seen as a negative factor) which is in view in vv. 7-13, but is rather the situation of all men as they are confronted by the righteous and holy will of God, then it is by no means obvious that in vv. 14-25 we have a picture of men in such bondage to the law. These verses, as we have already seen, if they are to be linked with the preceding, must speak of the continuing confrontation of men with God's self-revelation. This self-revelation is clearly understood, in the latter verses, in terms of the law. The exact nature of the relationship of the subject in vv. 14-25 to that law is not yet determined, however. We must now subject the views regarding these verses noted above to critical examination.

Identity of the ἐγώ in vv. 14-25:

A number of considerations, in our view, lead to the conclusion that the subject of these verses is the believer in Christ. We shall group these points under five headings, before offering some remarks at the close concerning the relationship between vv. 7-13 and vv. 14-25.

(a) Paul's understanding of freedom from sin.

Romans, as Dunn rightly points out, is a carefully planned letter.[89] It is therefore unlikely, ceteris paribus, that here, in the midst of a sustained and coherent exposition of the Christian life, the Apostle would offer a portrait of the unbeliever which, on the admission of those holding this view, is practically unequalled in depth and vividness by any of Paul's other writings. Perhaps the most serious error we could commit in understanding these verses is to isolate them from their natural context. On our view, the Apostle makes clear in chs. 6-8 how the Christian life struggles toward maturity. In each of these chapters he makes a fundamental theological statement (6:1-14, 7:1-6, 8:1-11), which is then followed up by practical exhortation or elucidation of one sort or another. These are not three separate battles, but rather one battle described from three perspectives. We shall note (immediately following in our study) how Rom 6 and 8, properly

understood, throw a great deal of light on Paul's view of freedom from sin. What the Apostle shows in these texts is that the triumphalistic view of the Christian life, assumed by many commentators, by no means adequately expresses his thinking on the subject. If, as these scholars assume, Paul teaches a radical freedom from sin in Rom 6 and 8 (and elsewhere), then the situation portrayed in Rom 7:14ff cannot be that of the believer. On our view, however, the Apostle's teaching on freedom and sin in these other chapters in no way suggests that the believer has reached perfection -- indeed, they demonstrate, though from a different standpoint, the seriousness of the conflict the believer faces in his desire to overcome the weakness of the flesh. We shall examine these passages (as well as Gal 5:13ff and Col 3:1ff) below in detail. For our present task, however, the following points may be noted:

i: Paul's use of the phrase διὰ τὴν ἀσθένειαν τῆς σαρκὸς ὑμῶν (6:19), which undoubtedly refers to the present situation of the believer, must shed light on the reference of σάρξ in 7:14-25. A connection may also be made with 8:26, where the Apostle speaks of the Spirit aiding the ἀσθένεια of the believer. Similarly, in Rom 6:11ff and 8:12ff, it is the believer who is exhorted to put to death the deeds of the body or the flesh. This admonition comes not in spite of, but as a consequence of, the teaching on justification offered by the Apostle in 6:1ff and 8:1ff. Paul's parenesis seems to have little sense unless he is presupposing a genuine and serious weakness of the flesh in believers. This corresponds to everything we have seen concerning the Apostle's understanding of freedom in relation to the law, where the continuing role of the law is necessary precisely because of the believer's continuing proneness to sin.

ii: The idea of slavery to righteousness in 6:17ff, once again referring to believers, appears parallel to the idea of slavery to the law of God noted in 7:25b, a phrase which, according to many commentators, is a summation of vv. 14-25 as a whole. Again, it is because of the believer's weakness that he must see his relationship with God in terms of slavery.

iii: In 7:24-25a, Paul seems to suggest in nuce what he expands upon in 8:17ff. The latter passage (on which see our comments in relation to freedom and death below) refers to a future deliverance from δουλεία τῆς φθορᾶς (and from ἀσθένεια). That this deliverance is reserved for the future proves that these forces are still very much

active in our present condition. The thought of "deliverance from the body" expressed in 7:24, therefore, is the same hope as is expressed in 8:23.[90] This is not the cry of the unbeliever longing for redemption, but is rather the cry of the believer longing for the final (eschatological) deliverance from sin and the flesh, and from that battle situation in which he now struggles. Rom 8:10, as we shall see, also speaks of a continuing weakness of the believer in relation to the flesh. The Apostle teaches clearly, throughout this part of the Epistle, that the believer is still locked in an extremely serious, though ultimately victorious struggle against the forces of sin within his own life and character. Deliverance from this battle is reserved for the future. The picture of the man portrayed in 7:14ff, therefore, while not presenting the whole truth concerning the Christian life, is nonetheless in harmony with these themes noted in the context.

(b) Use of the 1st Person.

Kümmel's "Stilform" theory, while at first sight attractive, presents, as we have noted, certain difficulties. It does avoid many objections, but only in the sense that its vagueness precludes its affording any truly satisfactory answer. How, asks Dunn, can the text denote "everyman" -- except for Paul?[91] Even in 1 Cor 13, use of the 1st person, while certainly rhetorical, clearly has both temporal and personal reference (the present Christian life of Paul and the Corinthian believers). Rom 7:14ff has, on any view, a greater degree of personal vividness and specificity than does 1 Cor 13. Dunn notes that in all the Pauline "ego" passages cited by Kümmel, the Apostle is himself included in the subject reference, except for one or two cases involving imaginary objectors.[92] Without some personal and temporal aspect, verbs such as ἔζων or ἀπέθανον, not to mention the dramatic cry of v. 24, become meaningless and unreal. J. I. Packer notes rightly that if Paul (even though expressing a general truth) excludes himself, the whole tenor of the passage becomes theatrical and artificial; the anguish of vv. 15ff and v. 24 is too real to exclude personal involvement.[93] Paul may, indeed, have put the matter from a personal perspective because of the delicacy of the subject -- much as might any preacher sensitive to the feelings of his listeners. This implies the realization, however, that the preacher fully shares the weaknesses of the people. The evidence, therefore, points strongly toward the possibility that the Apostle here is depicting a situation which, in some

very real way, is his own. Kümmel's argument that Paul cannot be speaking purely personally, or purely as a Jew, must be given due weight. This does not count so heavily, however, against the possibility that the Apostle is speaking here as representative man (vv. 7-13) and as representative believer (vv. 14-25), both of which categories seem to fit the evidence of the text and of the context well.

(c) Use of the present tense.

The use of the present tense in vv. 14ff, when linked with the use of the 1st person singular and the extraordinarily vivid exclamations of the passage, point to a situation which is both real and present to the speaker. Cranfield, indeed, following Calvin, argues that this is the only natural way to understand the present tense here.[94] By οὐ γινώσκω (v. 15), it is surely more reasonable to assume that the speaker is confronted by a dilemma with which he is fully familiar but cannot somehow resolve[95], than to think that the whole matter is seen only "through the eyes of faith", as other commentators suppose, taking the lack of comprehension to refer to the situation of the unbeliever who does not realize (γινώσκειν) that he is bringing forth the opposite of what he thinks he is! That the speaker can now declare οὐ γινώσκω, thus indicating that he has become aware of this discrepancy, is only (on this view) because the words are put into his mouth by the actual writer of the chapter, who is certain of his present position of justification in Christ.[96] This tortuous interpretation surely has little with which to commend itself. The suggestion of C. L. Mitton that we have here an example of the "historical present" is undermined by his own admission that such a use is otherwise unexampled in Paul.[97] Packer points out that the use of the historical present in the Gospel narratives is not an adequate parallel here, for in vv. 7-25 the narrative portion is actually in the aorist, and the segment in the present is in some sense explanatory comment.[98] The "historical present" suggestion is certainly unnatural, especially when a more reasonable alternative is in view.

(d) Paul's understanding of freedom and the law.

One of the major reasons why commentators take vv. 14-25 to refer to pre-Christian existence is that the subject is portrayed as still standing under the law's command, whereas the believer, on their view, is freed from any further relationship with the law. We have seen,

however, that this is very far from being the case. On the contrary, the believer is now, for the first time, freed to enter into a measure of obedience, genuine though incomplete, to the law's commands. In our earlier discussion of Rom 7:7ff, we saw how the Apostle treats this theme in these verses. His aim, as we also noted above, is to defend the holiness of the law by showing that sin, not the law, is the cause of man's predicament.[99] The picture here is one of conflict precisely because it is the portrayal of the one who has begun to come to grips with the claim of God upon his life, who has acknowledged his utter inadequacy and consequent need for the grace of God, and who, therefore, is in a position, for the first time, to fight genuinely against the hold of sin on his life.[100] The fact that a battle situation is pictured here is a strong support, therefore, for the view that Paul is speaking of the believer here, rather than the unbeliever, who is in no such struggle -- indeed, who has not even yet seen the extent of his need. This is why commentators have to go to such lengths to explain away the fact that the subject in these verses appears to have a genuine grasp of his situation -- a grasp only the believer in Christ could have. Furthermore, it is by no means apparent that the situation of the ἐγώ is as hopeless as some make it out to be. That there is a battle does not mean that the battle is automatically lost. That the believer is constantly frustrated in what he does shows only that what he does never lives up to the righteous and utterly holy standards of God, as expressed in His law. This does not mean that no progress is being made; Paul's exhortations imply that the believer is able, by the power of the Spirit, to begin to fulfil God's righteous requirement (Rom 8:4). The absence of any reference to the Spirit in vv. 7ff is satisfactorily accounted for is we realize that Paul's attention is centred here on the Christian's relationship to the law. On the other hand, if we take vv. 7ff to be in some sense explanatory of vv. 1-6, there is a reference to the Spirit's working in v. 5. If vv. 7ff elucidate vv. 1-6 and provide a picture of the who who, according to vv. 1-6, has been freed for a new life of obedience in the Spirit, then the presence of the Spirit in the life of the subject of vv. 14ff may be assumed, even though it may not be mentioned because Paul's interest is taken up with other matters. There is, for that matter, no reference to the Spirit in ch. 6, yet no one takes that chapter to be descriptive of the non-believer. If we allow Paul's narrative to flow naturally, the role of the Spirit receives its due place at 8:4, where, as we saw in

our earlier study of that text, Spirit and law are brought together with reference to the life of the believer.

Those holding to a "pre-conversion" interpretation of vv. 14ff assume that in vv. 1-6 the Apostle declares the Christian free from any further relationship with the law. A connection is made between v. 5, ὅτε γὰρ ἦμεν ἐν τῇ σαρκί, and v. 14, ἐγὼ δὲ σάρκινός εἰμι, πεπραμένος ὑπὸ τὴν ἁμαρτίαν. As we saw, however, in our examination of 7:1-6, Paul is speaking there of the believer's freedom from the just condemnation of the law upon his sin, not of freedom or release from the command of the law itself. Indeed, at 8:4 and many other places, as we have also noted, the Apostle shows how it is precisely the believer who is freed for obedience to the law, and for an attitude toward the law such as is manifested by the subject of vv. 14ff. We pointed out that v. 5 (cf. 3:19-20, 5:13-14,20, Gal 3:6ff, etc) expresses only one aspect of Paul's understanding of the law's role. Further, in v. 5 the Apostle speaks very clearly in the past tense (ἦμεν), whereas in v. 14 he speaks (also in the 1st person) in the present. The contrast is clear. That the Christian is σάρκινος is nothing more than is implied in chs. 6 and 8, or in any of Paul's exhortations (cf. 1 Cor 3:1); that he is still ἐν τῇ σαρκί in the sense of v. 5 is another matter altogether.[101] The subject of vv. 14ff who wills the good (vv. 15,16, 19,20,22,25b) and desires to obey God's law, must surely be identified as a believer.[102] Packer rightly notes the contrast between this man and the man of 8:5, whose mind is set on the flesh, or that between the man of v. 25b, who is in slavery to the law, and the man of 8:7, who refuses to be subject to the same law.[103]

We must note also the statement in v. 22 that the man who delights in God's law does so κατὰ τὸν ἔσω ἄνθρωπον. The phrase ἔσω ἄνθρωπος is used by Paul always with reference to the believer (2 Cor 4:16, Eph 3:16, Rom 6:6, Col 3:10, etc).[104] This is admitted by Käsemann, who sees Paul's use of the phrase here as inadequate in the context, and explains it away as a reference to God's preliminary work in the unredeemed[105]-- surely a case of special pleading. The same considerations apply to the use of νοῦς in vv. 23 and 25; Dunn observes that this must represent the νοῦς renewed by the Spirit (cf. 12:2),[106] for the Apostle nowhere speaks of the natural mind.[107] The Apostle speaks of ἀνακαίνωσις with respect to both the νοῦς and the ἔσω ἄνθρωπος (see 2 Cor 4:16, Col 3:10).[108]

Paul makes no allowance for the unregenerate man so far as making a claim upon God or meeting God's standards is concerned (see Rom 1:18-3:20),[109] and it is almost impossible, in our view, to imagine that the positive statements of these verses could be descriptive of the unbeliever. The comparison (if one is to be made) is rather to the description of the believer in Rom 2:12ff, 25ff. The description in both passages is surely that of the believer who is freed from the law's just condemnation in order to begin a life of obedience to God's righteous standard. The contrast Paul draws elsewhere (as we have seen) between the holiness of the law and the weakness of the believer could hardly be more vividly portrayed than in Rom 7:14-25.

(e) The significance of v. 25b.

This phrase is a key to proper understanding of the whole passage.[110] If this is the case, then it poses serious problems for those holding to a "pre-conversion" interpretation of vv. 14-25. Even Leenhardt notes that, within the context of his view of the passage, v. 25b does not give a satisfactory summary of the foregoing, because "...the man who expressed his experience earlier, while approving the law of God, could not have said that he served it -- which would presuppose that he obeyed it."[111] Käsemann admits that his only reason for rejecting the verse's authenticity is that it contradicts his understanding of Paul's view of freedom and the law.[112]

Content, however, is not the only difficulty in this respect. The positioning of the phrase in the immediate context proves a further embarrassment to those holding a "pre-conversion" view of the passage. We noted earlier the weakness of attempts to rearrange the text or excise it altogether. We must now show that the "anticipatory exclamation" theory provides no satisfactory solution either. Several points must be noted:

i: We have already noted the significance of νοῦς in v. 25b makes it difficult to see the phrase in a "pre-conversion" context.

ii: The natural interpretation in context of the phrase αὐτὸς ἐγώ is to take it as a simple assertion of man's unity (and hence responsibility before God), over against any suggestion of dualism which might otherwise have been drawn from the context. Cranfield notes rightly, "The words...would seem to be best explained neither as emphasizing that Paul is speaking of himself nor that the sentence is stating what is true apart from Christ's intervention, but rather as underlining the full personal involvement of the Christian as the subject

of both statements."[113] Even Kuss, who sees αὐτὸς ἐγώ as referring to the ἐγώ apart from Christ, admits that this meaning must be deduced from the context, because it is not necessarily the meaning the text itself yields.[114] Yet the context, as we have seen, points in an entirely different direction. Kürzinger's theory that v. 25a is the beginning of the new section (v. 25b and 8:1 being summaries of the respective alternatives) fails not only because of its general awkwardness and disregard for the plain sense and order of the text, but also because 8:1 refers back to 7:6, and 8:2 is reliant on the thought expressed in 8:1.[115] V. 25b is clearly the conclusion to vv. 14ff, and, on our understanding of the passage, expresses a balanced and honest view of the Christian life (as well as being an excellent summary of the foregoing). Kürzinger, in fact, admits that his solution is awkward and that v. 25a cannot be construed grammatically as a better conclusion to the chapter than v. 25b.[116]

iii: It seems far more reasonable, in the light of the overall context in Rom 6-8, to suppose that the "double slavery" of the phrase is not, as is understood by some, a reference to the non-believer, but is instead to be taken as a reference to the Christian, in whom the battle against sin is for the first time truly joined.[117] J. Lambrecht, who sees the passage as speaking of the non-believer, admits that something different is in view here.[118]

These points, taken together, show how in v. 25b the Apostle sums up well the view he has depicted in the preceding verses of the conflict in the life of the believer who seeks to obey God's law yet always falls woefully short of the mark. That there is a battle, however, and that there is a real service of God involved, indicates that this battle is far from lost or hopeless -- indeed, the surrounding chapters show that ultimately, it will be victorious.

The relationship between vv. 7-13 and vv. 14-25:

That there is a close relationship between the two subsections is demonstrated by the following points:

i: All the factors introduced at the outset (sin, the law and death, as well as the ἐγώ) remain until the end.

ii: The syntax of the transition at vv. 13-14 allows for no drastic rupture.

iii: Several highly plausible explanations can be offered as to how the struggle of vv. 14-25, while remaining the same struggle as that of

vv. 7-13, is viewed from a different perspective.

We have also seen how the Paradise story was in Paul's mind when he wrote vv. 7-13, though the fact that he speaks there and in context of the νόμος indicates that the giving of the law, and the subsequent disobedience of man to its commands, is also being thought of, probably as a resumption of the story of disobedience in Paradise. There are grounds, therefore, for assuming that in some way the whole sorry history of the human race is involved. How this can be so may be relat to what some view as the Hebraic concept of corporate personality, evidenced also in 5:12ff, to which the present text bears some resemblance.

If the fall of every man (including Paul himself) is recorded in vv. 7ff, and the transition from vv. 7-13 to vv. 14-25 is a smooth one,[119] how are we to relate this subsection to the description of the believer in vv. 14-25? This question is not hard to answer, in the light of Paul's understanding of the believer as still prone to sin on account of the weakness of the flesh. In this sense he is still part of the sad history of rebellion and disobedience which began in Adam. Several commentators note that ἤδειν (v. 7) implies continuing experience.[120]

In this sense, therefore, we can say that vv. 7-13 represents the past of Paul himself,[121] as of every man-in-Adam. The thought of corporate personality lying behind this is well expressed by the writer of 4 Ezra, who laments, "O thou Adam, what hast thou done! For though it was thou that sinned the fall was not thine alone, but ours also who are thy descendents" (7:118)."[122] As Rom 5:12ff shows, such a blend of the personal and historical elements is not as great a problem for the Apostle as it is for some of his interpreters. Vv. 7-13 can be said to have a place in a description of the Christian life also, in that it is preeminently the believer who is confronted by his continuing failure to live up to God's eternal standards and who is thus reminded of his part in the original rebellion against God. This consciousness of sin comes only through the gospel, to the man who is now genuinely in Christ, while in another sense still "in Adam". This is why, as Bengel long ago noted, no dramatic break can be in view at v. 14. In this sense, the whole passage, vv. 7-25, is descriptive of the Christian life. Only the believer who has been freed from his sin in Christ can know the depths to which he had fallen, an the degree to which his life had been (and in measure continues to be) separated from the holiness of

and purpose of the freedom from sin the believer has received through the work of Christ.

Rom 6: 1-23

Most interpreters of Romans 6 agree that a proper understanding of the relationship between indicative and imperative here is very important for a correct understanding of the meaning of the passage. It is this factor which best illumines the enigma of the continuing

love, martydom, etc), and that this must a fortiori be true of Paul, "...ubi nullus est sermo de ulla poena quam quis subiret, neque de legitimo domino sive hero cui solvendum esset totum ei debitum pretium, ita ut nihil amplius remaneret exigendum."[143] Instead, there is only, continues, Lyonnet, the question of the old man crucified with Christ and the body of sin reduced to powerlessness through baptism. This does not, however, necessitate a magical or mystical process. Instead, we should understand the change as wrought through the receipt of the Holy Spirit, which has come about through the work of Christ.[144]

An even more satisfactory answer is found, however, when we examine carefully the meaning of δικαιόω here. Does the verse, as some suppose,[145] refer to the believer's being freed from any relationship with the law? Apart from the fact that this would make Paul's thoughts here totally at odds with his other statements on the subject, it is hard to see how the phrase can be thus understood. R. Scroggs points out correctly that such a meaning for δικαιόω (though possible in Acts 8:38) is unexampled in Paul. Further, is it not far more natural (cf 5:12ff) to take ἁμαρτία as indicating man's disobedience toward God (rather than as a reference to the law)?[146] Much more reasonable is the view that Paul is thinking primarily here (as in the preceding verses) of the death of Christ. Hence, as Scroggs points out, the verse is not some general maxim about death, "...but a statement of the specific situation of the believer in so far as he has died a specific death with Christ."[147] As far as the Rabbinic texts are concerned, reference may also be made to our comments on Rom 7:1-6, where we noted that the texts are scarcely representative of Rabbinic thinking and that the interpretation suggested earlier is by no means self-evident. The first text cited is attributed to R. Johanan (d. A. D. 279), and so is hardly likely to have influenced the Apostle two hundred years earlier! On the interpretation we have taken to be correct, however, the passage is brought into line with 5:12ff,[148] and points to the participation of the believer in the death of Christ.[149]

In this event, the primary reference of ἀποθανών is not baptismal; rather is the focus on the atoning work of Christ and how it becomes effective in us through baptism (as well as repentance and faith!). It is important for us now, indeed, to clarify the meaning and importance of justification in this passage so far as this relates to

the believer's continuing encounter with sin. To what extent, according to this chapter, is the believer freed from sin? What are the consequences of this freedom? All these are questions we must seek to answer. That the primary reference of the text is to the work of God in Christ and its effects on men (and that it is not a portrayal of baptismal sinlessness) will become yet clearer in the course of our treatment.

We noted earlier the impasse arrived at in the Bultmann-Windisch debate. Bultmann never clearly defines what he means by such terms as "Sündenmacht" and "Sündlosigkeit".[150] The believer, according to Bultmann, is never other than a sinner and is always determined by sin. Neither sin nor righteousness, in his view, are internal or moral qualities of man, for he rejects moral categories in his discussion of justification and freedom from sin. Neither, however, in his view, is sin an external power which righteousness visibly destroys; the vanquishing of sin does not involve any such final destruction. Furthermore, as we noted, possession or attribution of righteousness can only be "believed" -- it occurs only in the decision or judgment ("Urteil") of God. Such a view does not do justice to Rom 6, where both sin and righteousness appear to be real forces in the lives of believers; this much is seen by Windisch. The latter's alternative, however, is scarcely more satisfactory, for he conceives of sin as a human quality destroyed by Christ in baptism. This view would yield the happy but mistaken thought that the believer is in this life totally free from sin -- a view Windisch himself admits Paul could not sustain, with the result that the exhortations of vv. 12ff contradict the assertions of vv. 1ff. This means, however, that we are to attribute to Paul the ability to make two totally contradictory statements concerning the very heart of his understanding of the Gospel, and to do so almost within the very same breath!

A more reasonable solution, surely lies along the lines on which we have suggested the chapter should be interpreted. This means that, while Windisch has misunderstood (and overstated) the nature, origin and relative importance of baptism as it relates to the Christian life, Bultmann has just as seriously misunderstood the nature of justification. Baptism in Paul involves participation in the death of Christ, not a magical or mystical cleansing of all sins. The Apostle is far removed from the atmosphere of the mystery religions in this respect. On the other hand, if justification is reduced to existential or

mythological categories, Paul's statements concerning the significance of the redeeming death of Christ are emptied of all meaning. Käsemann notes correctly that by reducing dying with Christ to a psychological or sacramental level, or by passing over the actual historical death of Jesus on the cross at Golgotha, Paul's preaching of freedom from sin is emptied of significance and the death of Christ becomes only a mythical cipher ("Chiffre"). The thought of solidarity (as in 5:12ff), of the believer's participation in the actual historical death of Christ, must remain paramount.[151] Justification, according to our text, is based on the atoning death of Christ, which frees us from the stranglehold of sin (ἁμαρτία, v. 7), and places us in fellowship with God. Thus can the battle against sin for the first time be truly joined. Indeed, as Stalder notes, it should be the distinctive characteristic of the Christian life: "Darum ist der Kampf gegen die Sünde für die Gerechtfertigten keine 'Last' und kein 'Aber' sondern die Lebensmöglichkeit, in der sich an ihm die Wirklichkeit der Rechtfertigung bestätigt. So ist die Heiligung der Triumph der 'dikaiosyne theou'."[152] Released through God's act in Christ from the domination of sin, the believer is able for the first time to fight back with a genuine, though imperfect, measure of obedience. The exhortations of vv. 12ff thus indicate both the believer's ability to manifest a genuine degree of obedience to God, and also the believer's still weak and mortal condition, which necessitates the day to day prolonging of the battle against sin.

It is not, pace Bultmann, that the new life is realized only in the eschaton and is not manifested in history. Precisely because it has eternal validity it becomes effectual in the present, even though the consummation, pace Windisch, awaits the eschatological fulfilment.[152a] Only such a balance does justice to the Apostle's thinking here. The righteousness of God is real, but is not something magical or automatic, something which develops and bears fruit on its own without human cooperation. According to Rom 6, entry into the Body of Christ is marked not by a mechanical or magical inflow of divine power, but by a change of lordship. True freedom from sin does not entail absolute independence, or ability to live as one wishes, but is marked by submission to the authority of Christ; otherwise, freedom would become licence. Hence, Paul can go on to say (vv. 18ff, see below) that true freedom is true servanthood, slavery to righteousness -- and that we must be minded of this because of the weakness of our condition even as believers. Paul guards, notes Lohse rightly, against the enthusiastic

concept of baptism as something "... durch die eine mit unverlierbarem Heilsbesitz erfüllende Verwandlung des Menschen sich ereignet, so dass es ihm freigegeben würde, zu tun oder zu lassen, wie es ihm beliebt."[153] The Christian life involves the repeated, day by day obedience of the believer to his lord. This is because, though through God's gracious act he is freed from slavery to sin, this freedom is as yet far from complete, and it is all too easy for the believer to fall back or make no progress. Freedom from sin, as we shall see further, means above all freedom for obedience. This does not mean that God's act in Christ has no effect on our lives. The believer should be daily becoming more like Christ, being enabled to fight against sin by the power of the Spirit (though the role of the Spirit does not become apparent until Rom 8:1ff). This fits very well with what we have seen to be Paul's understanding of the Christian's relationship to the law. Precisely, in juxtaposition to the holiness of the law (cf 7:12, 14) does the believer's sinfulness become apparent. Precisely because of his mortal condition does he need an enduring standard against which to measure his progress, and by which he may be guarded against the wiles of sin. When Paul speaks of the need to become a slave to righteousness (v. 18), he is referring to obedience to God's law. If the believer were free to do as he wished (free from any external standard), he would surely revert quickly to that condition described in v. 20 as being "free with respect to righteousness." Possession of absolute freedom would indeed imply the end of any need for the law, for one would be guided entirely by one's own conscience or wishes. Such freedom, however, would only be genuine if the believer were entirely free from sin -- and this, according to Rom 6, is very far from being the case. Freedom from sin, therefore, must mean above all freedom for obedience -- and freedom for obedience means freedom to begin to obey genuinely the law of God.

II

Having set forth some of the principles at stake here, we shall now look more closely at several points of concern in the passage. The question we seek to shed light on throughout is this: what effect does God's justifying act in Christ have on the believer in terms of his freedom from the power of sin? Paul makes no secret of the existence of sin in the churches, yet never considers the condition as normal. His exhortation to the believers is, "You are free from

sin -- therefore fight against it."[154] Freedom from sin means not ethical perfection but a breaking of the hold of sin on the believer's life in such a way that he is enabled by God's power to begin a life of obedience in a genuine (albeit limited) way. The chapter is generally divided into three paragraphs (vv. 1-11, 12-14 and 15-23), which we shall consider in order.

vv. 1-11.

We have already taken note of the baptismal statements of vv. 3, 4a and 7. Vv. 8-10 (and 4b) are primarily Christological, and the texts of more interest to us are vv. 2, 4c, 5, 6 and 11.

v. 2. Here Paul declares, ἀπεθάνομεν τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ. Cranfield notes rightly that there are four different senses in which, according to Paul, Christians die and are raised up -- juridical (in God's sight), baptismal, moral (daily mortification), and eschatological.[155] The primary meaning in this verse is undoubtedly, as Cranfield suggests, juridical. It is impossible, of course, to erect a rigid barrier separating the juridical, for instance, from the 'moral,' and this must be kept in mind. What the Apostle means here is that the act of God in Christ provides the basis for any change which might occur in the life of the believer. God's act, of course, ought to involve consequences in the believer's life; where this does not happen (as in Corinth; see 1 Cor 5:1ff), Paul treats the situation as abnormal and even shocking. He is very careful to say, however, as Bornkamm rightly notes, that the believer has died to sin, not that sin has died.[156] Paul's assertion here does not mean that sin is destroyed, but does signify that, as a demonic power, its absolute authority and compelling tyranny over our lives has at last been successfully challenged -- even though its strength is by no means fully spent.[157]

v. 4c. Because the act of God in Christ ought to affect all areas of our lives, Paul can speak here of walking ἐν καινότητι ζωῆς. We may note the association of καινότης with the eschatological hope,[158] and so here (as in Rom 12:2, 2 Cor 5:17 and Gal 6:15), we have a "...foretaste of the final renewal," as Cranfield puts it.[159] Precisely because we have been given new life (a life we could not have created ourselves), which is based on the once-for-all resurrection of Christ, we are summoned as believers to demonstrate or verify

the reality of what has occurred in our justification in our daily obedience to Christ.[160] Indeed, later in the chapter (vv. 22-23), the Apostle makes demands for the present on the basis of our future hope.[161] This theme, as we shall see later in our study, emerges clearly in those passages where the Apostle speaks of the believer's freedom from death. The interconnectedness of past, present and future runs through this and the following verses. Kuss comments that Paul characteristically argues from what is past (the death and resurrection of Christ, appropriated in baptism) to what is present (the demands of the Christian life) to what is yet to come (the future consummation).[162] This fits well with our observation that for Paul the believer has been freed, through the work of Christ, to fight back against sin's attacks. We shall see, in our study of freedom from death, that the future fulfilment of our hope also becomes a motivation for obedience in the present life to God and His law. Paul's statement in v. 4c indicates both that the believer can manifest a genuine measure of obedience to God in his present life, and that the fulfilment of this new life remains outstanding. Freed from sin's domination, the believer, in grateful response to God, must live continually striving to use this freedom to reach greater conformity to Christ.

v. 5. The same pattern can be seen here. The perfect γεγόναμεν speaks of something which has occurred in the past, but has real effects in the present.[163] To this may be added the thought that σύμφυτοι presents a picture of the Christian life as a growth process. A parallel may be drawn to Rom 7:14, where the Christian, though freed from sin, remains tied to his present mortal condition. P-E. Langevin comments, "Aussi le progrès moral... est-il de rigueur. Par le mot σύμφυτοι ...Paul définit cette longue lutte contre le péché comme une union croissante à une mort semblable à celle du Christ, union qui a debuté pour chaque chrétien lors de son baptême."[164] Christians not only have died to sin, but must continue to do so. The future ἐσόμεθα is not to be taken chronologically (though neither is it strictly logical), for a reference to the Christian's moral life seems to be demanded by the context (vv. 4c and 6).[165] The believer is able to live (v. 4c) precisely because in some sense he shares in the resurrection as well as the death of Christ.[166] He becomes like Christ in His resurrection, even as in His death (and

thus the parallelism is preserved).[167] It is also important to recall that Paul's time categories are not airtight compartments, but to some extent overlap each other. An eschatological reference cannot be entirely excluded here, for our present life as believers shares in the effects of the resurrection in an anticipatory way. It is true to say that the life we will receive at the future resurrection is in some measure already present in our earthly lives.[168] Because of our continuing sinfulness, however, this resurrection power is present now, as Käsemann rightly points out, only tentatively, in the form of a new rule of obedience. He comments, "Der leibliche Gehorsam ist als Vorwegnahme leiblicher Auferweckungswirklichkeit notwendig."[169] Nonetheless, the believer, even in his present condition, is always receiving new life, the basis of which is always God's work in Christ.[170] The future resurrection remains another source of ethical motivation.[171] All the enablement the believer receives, however, is directed toward the battle against sin.

v. 6. The reference here to the παλαιὸς ἄνθρωπος is, as Cranfield correctly notes, to "...the whole of our fallen nature, the whole self in its fallenness."[172] The old self still lingers on (see our comments on Col 3:9, where the believer is exhorted to put the old man off[173]). The παλαιὸς ἄνθρωπος is to identified with the σῶμα τῆς ἁμαρτίας (v. 6b), both references being to the whole person as controlled by sin.[174] As for the ἵνα-clause, Cranfield notes that a reference to the moral life of believers would suit the context, but that, as the old man is still alive (in that the believer is not yet perfect), this seems an unlikely interpretation. The reference, therefore, is probably baptismal.[175] The second clause, however (τοῦ μηκέτι δουλεύειν ἡμᾶς τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ) points to the effect of God's act in Christ on our continuing battle against sin.[176] The meaning, therefore, is that the believer has been freed in Christ from sin's controlling grasp in a way which can make a real difference to his life. This freedom must be worked out within a framework of obedience and service (note the use of δουλεύειν; cf. vv. 18-19). This shows clearly that freedom for obedience is the purpose of freedom from sin, and indicates clearly that the believer always stands in need of such an exhortation. Because of God's act in Christ, the believer is no longer a slave to sin -- he has the possibility of not continually falling into sin. This involves no statement of the believer's perfection, however, but rather issues in a call to obedience. For

the first time, man has the power to fight back against sin.[177] Genuine freedom, as Käsemann rightly observes, is possible "... allein in der Herrschaft des Gekreuzigten...."[178] A. Schlatter comments, "Weil die Glaubenden zur Menschheit gehören, wie sie seit Adam ist, sind sie veraltete Menschen, da sie aber Christus gehören, sind sie nicht einzig dies, sondern von der Neuheit seines Lebens gestaltet und bewegt."[179]

This statement, of course, should not be taken to mean that sin's power is equal in the believer's life to that of righteousness. V. 6 does speak in a genuine sense of the destruction of sin's dominion over the believer.[180] This means that a real change has occurred in man's relation to sin. There is real force in the remark of E. Dinkler, "Hier ist offenbar an die Sünde als Macht gedacht, deren Herrschaftsbereich wir als Christen durch die Taufe entnommen sind, so dass ein δουλεύειν τῇ ἁμαρτιᾳ nicht mehr möglich ist."[181] The ἵνα-clause provides the basis for the following clause, for it is God's act in Christ, appropriated in baptism, which undergirds the Christian life at every moment, and enables the believer to begin a life of service to righteousness.

v. 11. Λογίζεσθε should be taken as imperatival, rather than as an indicative. Cranfield notes, however, that this is not a matter of pretending (an "as if" situation). Rather is it a "...deliberate and sober judgment on the basis of the gospel," which calls forth a decisive step of obedience."[182] This means that the believer's act (the λογίζεσθε) is not purely an act of the will, but is based in the judgment of God, which itself gives rise to the possibility the believers now have of making visible the fruits of that judgment in their experience. The believer has an awesome responsibility to take seriously the freedom Christ has won for him. Kuss declares, "Die Getauften sollen dinkend und lebend Ernst machen mit dem Faktum, dass sie für die Sündenmacht tot... dass sie aber lebendig sind für Gott."[183] Thus God provides the place or opportunity for obedience to be demonstrated in service to righteousness. Because God has freed the believer from the bondage of sin, he is obligated to use that freedom to render obedient service in living for Him.[184] This obedience, as we have noted, is totally dependent on God's grace in Christ (not even on baptism).[185] The obedience always has a provisional character, reflecting the all too real way in which the believer still gives way to sin. Cranfield notes that νεκρούς in v. 11

has a primarily juridical sense.[186] Barrett adds that Christians are no more visibly dead than Abraham was visibly righteous.[187] True -- though Abraham manifested the righteousness of God more than did those around him. God's act in Christ involves juridical consequences for us -- but this juridical aspect, as we have seen, entails (or should entail) ethical consequences too. Schmidt characterizes v. 11 as signifying what God's act in Christ means for the present existence of Christians.[188] The very real freedom from sin implied here involves, however, a life of continual service.[189] The practical significance of this is drawn out somewhat in the following paragraph.

vv. 12-14

This somewhat shorter paragraph presents the picture of sin as a reigning monarch with troops at his disposal, but whose power is broken in Christ.[190] The believer is exhorted to put what God has done for him in Christ into service in his life.[191] This, however, is no automatic occurrence, for the σῶμα (which, as we have seen, designates the whole fallen life of man, not just the physical elements[192]) is θνητόν (v. 12) and still susceptible to sin's attacks. The believer is exposed to the attacks of sin not just in his body, as if he were in some sense free from sin in his inner or moral being, but in his whole person. The σῶμα θνητόν is not the mortal body, from which the true self must be distinguished. In this case, as Käsemann points out, parenesis would be meaningless.[193] Rather does σῶμα here refer to the whole situation of the believer in a world of conflicting powers and claims which the believer himself is torn in his loyalty.[194] This is why, as Käsemann notes, true freedom can operate only in service or obedience to God.[195] The believer is still far too fickle and sinful to be entrusted with freedom to do as he wishes. He must always be reminded that genuine freedom is freedom for righteousness and obedience in slavery to Christ. Freedom as an end in itself, or ungoverned by God's law, would imply the believer's perfection in this life -- a thought, as we have seen, far from the Apostle's mind here. Thus we see once more how Paul's understanding of freedom from sin undergirds his statements concerning the relationship of the believer to God's law, which is the framework within which his obedience is to be expressed. The need for obedience is reinforced by the military metaphor carried through the paragraph: we serve a new King, but must be careful to place ourselves at His disposal. Ultimate victory,

however, is assured, for we are no longer subject to the law's just condemnation (v. 14).[196]

In vv. 12-13 the Apostle gives expression to the tension in which the believer's life is lived. Kuss describes this tension well, "Das Geschehene immer noch vollzogen werden muss. Dem Indikativ folgt der Imperative: die Glaubenden werden aufgefordert, der Sündenmacht das Herrschaftsgebiet streitig zu machen."[197] Our body is θνητός, and will be freed totally from sin only at Christ's return.[198] Lagrange suggests that Paul calls the body θνητός to indicate that, in spite of the believer's participation in the resurrection of Christ, his life is still open to temptation.[199] The believer is freed from the compulsion to sin,[200] but (because of his still weak and mortal condition) he must be reminded that this freedom is manifested as freedom for obedience. In the battle against sin, the believer is constantly dependent on the grace of God.[201] It is precisely because he has been freed from sin that the believer is now obligated to present his life in obedience to God.[202] We are clearly on the same ground here as in vv. 1-11. Cranfield takes the σῶμα θνητόν to refer to our fallen nature as a whole, and suggests, "... it is in the whole field of our life as the fallen human beings we are that we are called to resist sin's dominion."[203] This truth, of course, must be taken in conjunction with the promise of victory, of which clear indication is given in v. 14. The latter verse indicates the believer's new found ability to fight back against sin. Cranfield rightly comments, "Though sin will still have a hold upon them... they will henceforth, as subjects of Christ over whom He has decisively reasserted His authority, be free to fight against sin's usurped power."[204] The believer, of course, carries on this battle not as a matter of his own will, but is enabled by God's power and grace. Justification is misunderstood, therefore, if it is not presented as the true basis of all Paul's imperatives and as giving the power for all moral actions. The exhortations are misunderstood if their basis is not found in the death and resurrection of Christ.[205] The believer always fights on the basis of the victory accomplished at Calvary -- yet only in battle does this victory begin to bear visible results in his day to day life.[206]

vv. 15-23.

In the third and final paragraph of the chapter, the Apostle uses the idea of slavery as a source for describing the human condition

with and without Christ. Freedom and slavery, as Schlier points out, are the ruling concepts here.[207] While the imagery is unusual and (for some commentators) dramatic or even harsh, it fits well with the comments made in the preceding verses. The nature of the slavery analogy serves to bring out with great force the basic principles underlying Paul's conception of the Christian's freedom from sin, as well as the non-Christian's subjection to it. At the same time, something of the positive content and purpose of this freedom (as well as a comment on the believer's weak and mortal nature) is stressed through the idea of slavery to righteousness.

Paul begins by setting forth what could be termed an absolute "either-or" situation for man.[208] Man is free to choose only the master he will serve[209] -- and the only reason man even has a choice is because of God's act in Christ. The proliferation of passives, stressing that our justification has been accomplished solely by God's act in Christ, along with use of the obedience-slavery motif, making clear we are never masters of our own destiny but rather servants of Christ, serves to underline this at every step of the way. The freedom gained through what God has done in Christ must be worked out in recognition of the change of masters. Freedom from sin's compelling power means freedom (and obligation) to become slaves of righteousness.[210] The new life means a new obligation. The believer's freedom is given so that, by God's grace, he can give up his self-seeking liberty in order to become a slave to righteousness.[211] This kind of slavery is in fact true freedom -- freedom for righteousness and freedom to lay down one's life in love.[212] This may also, as we have noted elsewhere, be described as freedom for obedience to God's law, which is the one enduring standard by which God gives us His command to love (see Rom 13:8-10, Gal 5:13ff). It is because of the believer's weakness that the law is so vital for proper conduct of his life. This once again underlines the fact that freedom for Paul is not emancipation or autonomy in the human sense, i.e. the liberty to do as one wishes. Man, even as believer, is still so far from being righteous in himself that he could in no way be trusted with the freedom to follow a life of righteousness simply through his own decision, or on the basis of his own ideas or standards. Hence, freedom must always be freedom for the One who alone stands above the sinfulness and perversity of this world, and who alone is able to draw us more and more from its ways. It must thus also always be freedom

for His law, the righteous and holy expression of His will. Käsemann is right when he says, "Er ist der Freie, der gehorsam wurde, während wir unsere Freiheit in der Bindung an ihn und als Konsequenz des von Gott gnädig über uns aufgerichteten Herrenrechtes erhalten."[213]

Freedom, as we have noted elsewhere, cannot be an end in itself for the believer, for this would imply the believer's perfection in this life (see, for instance, on Rom 13:8-10). This also means, as we see here, that freedom is neither good nor bad in itself. This is indicated by Paul's phrase ἐλεύθεροι ἦτε τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ (v. 20). This kind of "freedom" is radically opposed to true freedom in Christ. It is, in fact, slavery.[214] Genuine freedom is characterized by service to God and to others. This is well expressed by Althaus, "Nun kann man seinen bestimmten Dienst wohl wechseln, aber nicht die Dienstbarkeit überhaupt abwerfen. Mit dem Dienste wechselt man auch die Freiheit. Denn dem bestimmten Dienstverhältnis entspricht je bestimmte Freiheit. Jedes Dienstverhältnis bedeutet nach der anderen Seite hin Freiheit, jede Freiheit nach der anderen Seite in Dienst."[215]

The exhortations resulting from this change of masters in no way puts in question the reality of what has already happened to the believer. Rather, as Bornkamm notes, "...they receive their power precisely from the unconditional validity of the latter."[216] In like manner, the various indicative statements of the passage in no way dilute the genuineness and seriousness of the imperatives. Michel is right to assert, "Der Herrschaftswechsel bedeutet keineswegs eine Einschränkung der Verantwortlichkeit: jetzt erst wird der ganze Sinn eines echten Imperativs möglich."[217] The new freedom in Christ, far from bringing an end to the responsibility to strive for righteousness, opens the door for the first time for the demand for genuine obedience to bear real fruit in the believer's life. The freedom won through Christ exists only in the context of service, so that what the believer <u>is</u> in Christ (by virtue of Christ's grace toward him) forms the basis for the exhortations he is given. Käsemann expresses this well, "Der sogennante Imperativ ist in den Indikativ integriert und steht keineswegs paradox neben ihm, weil der Kyrios nur für den ihm Dienenden Kyrios bleibt. Gabe und Aufgabe fallen darin zusammen, dass sie den Stand unter der Herrschaft Christi bezeichnen...."[218] God's act in Christ gives our new life its beginning, but also undergirds it at every point, and will find its ultimate goal in the eternal life spoken of in vv. 22-23.

The believer's freedom, therefore, is (or should be) characterized by obedience, which itself is a gift from God. It may be said, then, that ἐδουλώθητε (v. 18) is a prerequisite for παραστήσατε (v. 19).[219] The condition of having been freed (ἐλευθερωθέντες,, v. 18) makes the δουλεία τῆς δικαιοσύνης and the ἁγιασμός of v. 19 possible (though not inevitable!). In this sense, therefore, ἁγιασμός may be seen as the practical outworking of God's justifying act in the life of the believer. The basis of the believer's shame regarding his past life, notes Stalder rightly, is not his improved morality in the present, but the righteousness of God which has brought to light the nature and significance of his past activity (v. 21).[220] Man can never be freed through his own efforts, but only through God's act in Christ. Neither can man, in his weak and mortal condition, sustain this freedom himself. Only these facts can explain the paradox of vv. 18 and 22 that freedom from sin is slavery to God. Man is free only in Christ; he thus belongs to Christ and must serve Him. Stalder's comment is apt, "Damit ist nicht etwa gesagt, dass das neue Leben doch nicht eigentliche Freiheit sei, wohl aber, dass der Mensch nicht an sich frei ist, sondern allein durch den Vollzug der Gerechtigkeit Gottes in Christus, die sich darin erweist, dass der Mensch Gott dienen darf und kann."[221]

It is in light of this that we must reach our understanding of the phrase ἀνθρώπινον λέγω διὰ τὴν ἀσθένειαν τῆς σαρκὸς ὑμῶν (v. 19). This phrase stands at the heart of the paragraph and, though often misunderstood, throws considerable light on the meaning of the passage as a whole. Some commentators take this as an apology by Paul for using the figure of slavery in connection with the Christian life. That is, one cannot truly compare Christian obedience to the yoke of slavery. What is at issue here, on this view, is merely a formal adaptation of language.[222] Hence, ἀνθρώπινον λέγω should be compared with κατὰ ἄνθρωπον λέγω/λαλῶ (Rom 3:5, Gal 3:15, 1 Cor 9:8). Paul, this view states, is pressed to the limits of human expression. This is because of the defective understanding of his readers, for whom living for righteousness is now for the first time possible.[223]

This view, however, seems to take insufficient account of the following διά-clause, which points to a more substantial weakness in the believers themselves.[224] Barrett speaks of the "...frailty of human nature, which cannot grasp profound truth unless it is presented in analogies."[225] Lietzmann, citing 1 Cor 3:1, also points to a

weakness in knowledge.[226] Such views, however, do not grasp the seriousness of Paul's statement here. The weakness should be located in the moral and ethical lives of believers, at the very heart of their existence. Sanday/Headlam are right to take σαρκός here as indicating "...human nature in its weakness, primarily physical and moral, but secondarily intellectual."[227] The concept of δουλεία is central to this paragraph,[228] and so ἀσθένεια must be given its full weight here. What is spoken of is the believer's susceptibility to the attacks of sin.[229] It is precisely because of the believer's weak and sinful condition that he needs to be addressed in such terms. The thought of v. 19 should thus be linked with ἐδουλώθητε τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ (v. 18). Slavery to Christ, as much as freedom from sin, is the prerequisite for any of the exhortations of the passage.[230] There is no conflict, therefore, with a true confession of freedom in Christ.[231] Recognition of the believer's true condition, and the need for reminder that his obedience is to be expressed in terms of slavery, imply also his need for God's holy law as the enduring standard by which his obedience may be expressed. The interplay between the sinful believer and the holy law is portrayed, as we have seen, in the next chapter. The basis for the believer's need of the law, as well as the nature of his obedience to it (as real though imperfect), are both set forth by Paul's discussion here of freedom from sin as slavery to Christ.

Overemphasis on freedom would soon lead to a denial of Christ's authority over the believer.[232] Käsemann may well be right in his suggestion that Paul's use of ἀσθένεια constitutes a warning to the "strong" believers (see Rom 14:1ff), who wish to cast aside external restraint.[233] Once again we see, therefore, that Christian freedom, though real, will be abused, and ultimately, lost, if it is not expressed in an attitude of humble obedience which puts the interests of Christ and of the other (cf 14:1ff) first. It seems likely, then, that Paul's use of the slavery metaphor here is a deliberate attempt on his part to remind the Romans that, though freed in Christ from the power of sin, they are still exposed to its attacks. Indeed, because of the relative shallowness of their spiritual life and their proneness to sin (in which they reflect the condition of all believers), they must be . to see the Christian life in terms of slavery to righteousness. In other words, as we have noted previously, men cannot be entrusted with absolute freedom, freedom to do

as they wish or see fit. Genuine freedom, as we have seen throughout Rom 6, comes from Christ, and Him alone. The nature of our continuing existence in the flesh is such that we can only come to an appreciation of the reality of this freedom through recognition of the danger, in which we continually stand, of losing its benefits. This theme is taken up by the Apostle in Rom 8:1ff, to which we now turn.

Rom 8:1-17

One notable feature of Rom 8 is the description Paul offers there of Christian freedom in relation to the work of the Holy Spirit. We have already explored this theme in our discussion of freedom and law. It it also important, however, for our study of freedom from sin. We hope to show that a proper understanding of the Apostle's comments in this regard provides an excellent complement to what (on our view) he has said here concerning freedom and law. Our attention will be focussed on the first three paragraphs, which show a structure similar to that observed in Rom 6, the first two (vv. 1-8 and 9-11) dealing with the "indicative" aspect, and the third (vv. 12-17) with the "imperative" (insofar as these can be separated).

vv. 1-8

We shall deal, respectively, with vv. 1-4 and 5-8. The first four verses deal primarily with the work of Christ, while the latter four describe the two options open to man in light of this -- life according to the flesh and life according to the Spirit.

(1) vv. 1-4.

The description of the conflict within the believer in ch. 7 is followed in 8:1 by the emphatic declaration of acquittal. Even as Paul has been concerned to emphasize the seriousness of sin, so now he is at pains to stress that the believer no longer stands under God's verdict of condemnation -- an assurance of which the believer, confronted with the evidence of his continual failure to live up to the standard of God's law, is greatly in need. The explanation of v. 1 is found in v. 2, where the believer's vindication is seen as an accomplished reality (ἠλευθέρωσεν). We have already seen something of what this means for the Christian's relationship with the law.

In the light of what the Apostle has said in the preceding two chapters, however, how far can we take this freedom to extend, insofar as it is freedom from sin?

It is important to note at the outset that here, as in Rom 6, we are faced with juridical terminology. The vital thing which has happened is that Christ's death has resulted in sin being judged and that this verdict is now applied to the believer through the agency of the Spirit. This does not mean, of course, that the believer is freed from sin in such a way that he may henceforth live a life of flawless perfection and holiness before God (or man); such a conclusion would run counter to what we have observed in Rom 6 and 7 regarding the Christian's freedom from sin. The answer to our question surely lies along the lines of our previous conclusion. H. W. Schmidt comments, "Bedeutet die Befreiung vom Gesetz der Sünde die Moglichkeit eines ethischen und religiösen Perfektionismus? Nach unserer Auslegung beseitigt die Befreiung nicht das Sündigen überhaupt, sondern den Zwang und die unentrinnbare Notwendigkeit zur Sünde."[234] Cranfield rightly points out that the Christian's best deeds are marred by sin and any illusion of perfect freedom is egotism -- yet, he continues, the sense in which the believer and the unbeliever are prisoners of sin is quite different, for in the former "a constraint even stronger than sin is already at work,"[235] i.e. the power of the Holy Spirit. This in turn means that (v. 3) must imply more than a simple statement of condemnation; it must, indeed, constitute (again in Cranfield's words) "a final and altogether decisive dealing with its object -- so God's effective breaking of sin's power."[236] This breaking of the power of sin does not mean the believer is no longer susceptible to its allurements; in that case, the command of v. 12, for instance, would be meaningless. It does, however, relate the opening verses of Rom 8 not only to the indicative-imperative "dialectic" of Rom 6 but also to the great description of conflict in Rom 7. Cranfield notes rightly that 8:1 draws out the true significance of 7:1-6, of which vv. 7-25 are a necessary elaboration.[237]

What is made clear in 8:1ff is that the conflict of chapter 7 is a victorious one for the believer, whose service to God (7:25a) is a slavery to righteousness, the end of which is eternal life (cf. 6:22), because the Holy Spirit applies God's condemnation of sin through the sacrifice of His Son to our lives in such a way that God's law is now fulfilled in us (8:4). This means, however, that we must be careful to avoid a facile identification of the juridical and the ethical.

We have seen in our discussion of Rom 6 that the two cannot be rent apart any more than can justification and sanctification (with which these two categories are closely to be identified) -- yet the one does not imply the other simpliciter. We shall see in our discussion of Rom 8 that it is the work of the Holy Spirit to bring the two into ever closer conjunction in our lives.

O. Michel contrasts Rom 7 and 8 in these word, "Die neue Ordnung setzt an die Stelle der Zerspaltung des Menschen die Spannung zwischen Geist und Fleisch, aber der Mensch steht nun unter der Herrschaft des Geist Gottes."[238] We must disagree, however, with the first half of this statement, for the conflict in Rom 8 is the same as that in Rom 7, the difference being that in Rom 8 the stress on the work of the Holy Spirit underlines the ultimately victorious position of the Christian. The fact that the believer is under the lordship of the Spirit, though, in no way releases him from the obligation to continue the battle against sin; indeed, as we noted with reference to Rom 6, it is the divine initiative which enables the battle, for the first time, to be truly joined. Michel himself notes (on v. 4) that the claim to have the Spirit must be authenticated by the battle against the flesh. Drawing a parallel between Paul and the Qumran community, he comments, "Der Glaubende ist als Sünder 'Fleisch der Sünde', als 'Erwählter' dagegen Glied der 'ewigen Gemeinschaft.'"[239] This underscores the point that absolute freedom fron sin is no more in view here than it was in ch. 6. The act of freeing mentioned in v. 2 implies neither licentiousness nor libertinism but, rather, slavery to righteousness and (as we have noted elsewhere), obedience to the law of God (v. 4). Kuss is right, therefore, when he says that the freedom of v. 2 does not mean "... schlechthin 'ungebunden' sein, eine 'absolut', 'unabhängige' Position erreicht haben, sondern eben: der Sünden- und Todesordnung entnommen und der Lebensgeistordnung unterworfen sein, wenn jetzt auch die starke Formulierung vom 'versklavt sein' der Gerechtigkeit (6:18), bzw. Gott (6:22) nicht mehr erscheint."[240] Thus we note the very close similarity to Paul's view that the believer must be reminded of his obligation to obey God's law because, in his weak and imperfect condition, he can never adequately fulfil its requirements. Indeed, as we have seen, even the believer cannot be entrusted with absolute freedom, for he would surely turn this to his own advantage. Here we see another aspect of the same truth. Because of the believer's still sinful condition, he must be reminded that his freedom from sin is not a

total freedom from sin's hold, but as freedom for obedience in the context of a nature still prone to sin's attacks. This freedom for obedience may quite justly be portrayed as slavery to righteousness, because of the extent of the believer's obligation to God and his dependence on Him for every part of the battle.

That these themes of ch. 6 are not far from Paul's mind is clear from the statement in v. 4 that those who walk according to the Spirit fulfil the δικαίωμα τοῦ νόμου. This not only supplies a positive emphasis to the liberation from sin mentioned in v. 2, but also, by declaring that believers live under the divine demand and are called to constant obedience (walking κατὰ πνεῦμα), shows that the battle is by no means over. V. 4, therefore, implies not that believers fulfil the law perfectly, but rather (as Cranfield observes) that their lives are "... turned in the direction of obedience," an obedience which, in this life is always incomplete.[241] The admonition of v. 12 further demonstrates the truth of this observation. There is to be no question of a claim being made upon God or of a renewed legalism.[242] Believers, as we saw, can never perfectly fulfil the law of God (cf. 13:8-10), and so are never in a position to make a claim upon Him.

These first four verses of ch. 8, culminating in the telic clause of v. 4, state that, through the Spirit, the believer is placed under the new lordship referred to by Paul in ch. 6, and by this means is enabled to conduct the battle (described so vividly in ch. 7) along victorious lines. In this struggle consists the true significance of freedom from sin, as is seen in the statement of Bultmann, "unter seiner Herrschaft stehen ... heisst, echte Freiheit haben."[243] True freedom, as we saw, is freedom to live under the authority of God's law. In the same way, freedom from sin here is seen as freedom to live under the Spirit's lordship. Indeed, of course, it is the Spirit who, according to v. 4, enables the law's fulfilment. This freedom, however, is never our attainment; there is no question of human co-operation in breaking sin's power, as Gaugler notes.[244] It is through the Spirit breaking into our lives that freedom from the power of sin becomes a reality, and this action of the Spirit is itself based in the atoning death of Christ (ἐν χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, v. 2; τὸν ἑαυτοῦ Υἱόν, v. 3). This encounter with the Spirit brings not an unbridled liberty but the demand of God for obedience. Stalder observes, "Denn im Geist begegnet uns der Herrschaftsanspruch des Lebens kraft der Rechtfertigung und Heiligung in Jesus Christus, durch die wir von dem bösen, nur durch

den Fluch möglichen Herrschaft der Sünde und des Todes befreit sind."[245] It is not that Christ defeated sin through leading a sinless life which we are to emulate; our righteousness, according to Paul, is derived solely through the efficacy of His atoning death applied through the Spirit's action -- and hence is, properly speaking, always His righteousness and only in a secondary sense our own. This applies both to our justification and to our sanctification; the latter can never be seen as enabled primarily by human effort.[246] Stalder suggests correctly that those who (like Leenhardt) suggest that Christ died to destroy Sin (conceived of as a personalized power) are wrong. In Paul's view, Christ did not die to destroy such a (for Paul) mythical super-human entity; rather, he died for the sinner, and to break the power of sin, which is itself but the expression of our own rebellion against God (and for which we alone, and not some imaginary being, must remain responsible).[247]

The fact that our continuing obedience to the δικαιώμα of God's law is enabled only by the Spirit suggests that God's power and righteousness stand not only at the beginning of our Christian life but make possible its continuation in the obedient believer. Without such continual aid, our sinful nature, just as if it were entrusted with absolute freedom without the firm guidance of the law, would soon reassert its claims. Hence, Stalder's comment is just, "Unsere Untersuchung über die Rechtfertigung hat ergeben, dass sie gerade nicht nur ein In-Ordnung Bringen unserer Vergangenheit ist, sondern unsere Zukunft miteinschliesst, sogar auf sie ausgerichtet ist, so dass die Wirklichkeit der Rechtfertigung zugleich die reale Gegenwart der eschatologischen Lebens ist."[248] We must not, however, overlook the distinction between, on the one hand, the juridical act of justification and, on the other, righteousness as a continuing, growing reality in the Christian life. Even as in our discussion of Rom 6 we saw the error of views proposing a cleavage in Paul between sacramentalism and ethics, so now in Rom 8 we see the falsity of positions supposing an opposition between justification through Christ's atoning death and the present ethical working of the Spirit. The Spirit is not for Paul a new element, but the means through which the objective, historical reality of the death of Christ is applied to our present life. In this sense, one may agree with H. Schlier that the Spirit makes the act of God in Christ "offenbar und gegenwärtig";[249] there can be no sundering of the work of Christ and the life in the Spirit. The Spirit is already at work

in our justification, and the historical death of Christ continues to underlie our day to day life in the Spirit. At every stage the Spirit is present -- hence the aptness of Schlier's comment: "Entmächtigung der Sündenmacht in Christus Jesus -- Präsenz dieser Tat im Geist -- Vollzug des Lebens nach dem Geist, geschieht also das, was in V. 2 als Befreiung durch den Anspruch des Geistes bezeichnet ist."[250]

Although the Spirit enables our obedience, a response is required; it is the believer who must walk κατὰ πνεῦμα and not κατὰ σάρκα. The relationship between God's act and our response in the attainment and preservation of the measure of freedom from sin we are able to realize resembles very much the pattern already observed in Rom 6. Without doubt, the initiative is entirely on the divine side; in Rom 8 this truth is expressed through the idea of the gift of the Holy Spirit to the believer in Christ. The power to live a life pleasing to God comes only from the Spirit, and never from ourselves. Kuss rightly observes, with reference to the fulfilling of the law in v. 4, "Allein die Glaubenden, die auf Grund der durch Jesus Christus erwirkten, von Gott geschenkten göttlichen Kraft ihr Leben Führenden sind dazu imstande."[251] However, as Cranfield, with equal justice, notes, this demands a response in the believer, who must turn repeatedly against the flesh and toward the "... freedom which the Spirit of God has given to us."[252] Stalder notes that it is precisely because the believer is freed <u>from</u> the curse of sin and death that he is freed <u>for</u> "... den gnädigen Anspruch Gottes."[253] Hence, the believer's περιπατεῖν involves, according to Paul, a continual decision of obedience.[254] This requires our active enlistment in the service of righteousness, recognizing that our freedom from sin is far from an achieved reality (in any ethical sense) in this life -- indeed, insofar as it depends upon our obedience to God and response to His grace, it will always remain such that even the believer -- <u>especially</u> the believer, for he alone fully realizes the gravity of man's rebellion against God, a rebellion whose results are still painfully evident in his own life -- can exclaim truthfully, ἐγὼ δὲ σάρκινός εἰμι, πεπραμένος ὑπὸ τὴν ἁμαρτίαν (Rom 7:14).

<u>(2) vv. 5-8</u>

This becomes clearer still as we examine the next four verses. Some commentators have felt that Paul is distinguishing here between two groups of individuals, those who are of the flesh (non-believers) and those of the Spirit (Christians). Lagrange, for example, suggests

that in these verses we find two categories of men radically opposed to each other; Paul could have no thought of an internal dualism, for the opposition portrayed is too strong.[255] O. Kuss agrees that there are here two categories of individuals clearly distinguished by the salvific work of God in Christ;[256] and E. Gaugler, viewing man in the flesh as man without Christ, sees σάρξ here as depicting not simply the material aspect of man but the natural man "als gefallener, als von Adam her bestimmter,"[257] C. K. Barrett comments that vv. 5-8 do not "apply to the Christian readers of the Epistle,"[258] for the "contrariety[of the two groups] is absolute."[259] Hence, the reference to those who live κατὰ σάρκα is taken by these commentators to refer to the same hopeless existence as (on their view) is portrayed in 7:14-25. Lagrange declares that vv. 5-8 belong entirely to the past and are included only for the purpose of contrasting the former life without Christ to the present life in the Spirit.[260] H. W. Schmidt, also linking 8:5 with the (for him) hopeless predicament of the man of 7:14, suggests that 8:7 is a portrayal of Paul's past life as a legalist and is thus a parallel text to Phil 3:6.[261]

If our interpretation of Rom 6 and 7 is correct, however, we must question the judgment of these interpreters on the reference of vv. 5-8. The Christian is spiritual, not carnal or fleshly, to be sure -- or, at least, he ought to be; yet Paul declares to the Corinthians that, though they were clearly believers in Christ, he was not able to speak to them as πνευματικοῖ but as σαρκίνοις (1 Cor 3:1; cf. Rom 7:14). It seems more accurate, therefore, to view Paul's comments here within the context of his understanding of the Christian life as still affected (and not merely at a superficial level) by sin and the flesh. Though sin still dwells within the Christian, it is no longer "the deepest force in his life" (Nygren).[262] It is reasonable to assume that the account of the conflict in the believer, so vividly portrayed in chapter 7, is carried over into chapter 8. Furthermore, as Stalder notes, vv. 12-13 show that Paul is speaking in "... von zwei Möglichkeiten, denen der Christ dauernd gegenüberstehe."[263] We must be careful to mark, however, that the matter goes deeper than this, for the Christian does not merely stand before life and death, the Spirit and the flesh, and decide (albeit repeatedly) for one or the other; in actuality, these forces reside within the believer himself, and (as we have noted) not simply at a surface level. To be sure, the life κατὰ σάρκα and the life κατὰ πνεῦμα are here

radically opposed; at the deepest level, there is no continuity between them. One is a life of rebellion against the law of God (8:7), the other a life of obedience to it (8:4). Yet such an obedience (as we have noted also in our study of freedom and law) can only be characteristic of the Christian life in its eschatological fulfilment, for in our present earthly existence the two forces still clash repeatedly and at the deepest level within the life of the believer (though not of the non-believer, who is given over entirely to the flesh, cf. on 1:18ff).

A proper understanding of Paul's concept of living κατὰ σάρκα must be linked with the description of such a life in v. 7 as one which denies the law of God.[264] Sin, we may conclude, amounts to rebellion against God's law, not simply a wrong decision taken by a morally neutral being. If this is the case, the life κατὰ σάρκα is not eradicated or disposed of as easily as might be thought possible on the basis of a view which would, for instance, deny existence of absolute moral standards or would define freedom as freedom to do as one wishes, even if guided by some indefinite "love-principle".

Christians, to be sure, are not to be given over to the eschatological death referred to in v. 6 (and 6:23), yet it is precisely the continuing power of the σάρξ in the believer's life which makes him subject to the physical death noted in v. 10 (and 6:12). We thus conclude that Paul outlines two distinct possibilities in vv. 5-8. One (life according to the Spirit) is at present the determinative (though not absolutely dominating) force in the Christian existence, and the other (life according to the flesh) the determinative (and dominating) force in the non-believer's existence. Life according to the Spirit leads ultimately to complete victory for the believer, and the other alternative leads to utter defeat. The way in which the Apostle views the Christian life as a whole, however, requires us to regard the flesh (and death) as still active and never-to-be-underestimated factors in the Christian life, whose continuing presence calls for constant vigilance and concern, as is evident, for instance, from the exhortations of vv. 12-13 (and 6:11-14). The framework within which this obedience is to be expressed, as is clear from vv. 4 and 7, is the law of God, obedience to which, however imperfect, gives genuine expression to the new life enabled by the Spirit. Indeed, it is only against the backdrop of this law that man appears so much in need of the exhortation to use the freedom he has been

given from sin's domination unstintingly in the service of righteousness. Otherwise, this freedom will itself become an excuse for licence.

vv. 9-11

Paul now addresses the Roman Christians directly. It is generally agreed that the εἴπερ-clause is one of assurance, εἴπερ itself being equivalent to ἐπείπερ, or to the Latin "si quidem" (rather than "si tamen"), i.e. "if -- as indeed you are" (a fulfilled, rather than a simple conditional statement).[265] V. 9a as a whole is, as Gaugler rightly notes, an assertion rather than an exhortation, juridical rather than moralistic.[266] The Christians are ἐν πνεύματι, not ἐν σάρκι, though this must not (as we have seen) be taken to mean that the power of the flesh or of sin is now banished from their lives. The following verse (10) makes this clear. The consequence of being in the Spirit or in Christ (actually Χριστὸς ἐν ὑμῖν in v. 10a) is stated thus by Paul, τὸ μὲν σῶμα νεκρὸν διὰ ἁμαρτίαν, τὸ δὲ πνεῦμα ζωὴ διὰ δικαιοσύνην. A proper understanding of this statement is vital to a correct interpretation of what is said here regarding freedom from sin. We shall examine the two halves of the statement separately.

(1) τὸ μὲν σῶμα νεκρὸν διὰ ἁμαρτίαν (v. 10b). The word σῶμα here has a wider reference than the English equivalent "body" might indicate. R. C. Tannehill suggests that σῶμα is what ties man to the present world, and that for this reason final redemption cannot occur until the world in which man lives is itself physically transformed (cf. on 8:17ff).[267] The body, Tannehill continues, remains a point of battle between sin and God, for both claim it and demand its obedience; according to 8:10, sin makes its power felt through the body, which is vulnerable to sin's attacks.[268] This understanding, while not without truth, would still seem to place undue emphasis on the physical aspect of σῶμα, for what is in view here is not simply the physical side of man, or even man-as-body or man-as-flesh, but rather man as a whole with or without Christ. That is to say, man as man is dead on account of sin; even the believer must still submit to the judgment brought about by his own sin. Hence, as Stalder observes, σῶμα is not a part of man, but stands for the whole man.[269] Even the Christian, as Cranfield points out, "must still submit to death as the wages of sin, because he is a sinner."[270] While not disputing a wider reference of σῶμα (to man as a whole, rather than simply the physical part of man) many scholars, however, challenge the meaning

of νεκρὸν διὰ ἁμαρτίαν assumed above, i.e. as indicating the judgment of physical death which comes upon man as a result of his sin. Kuss, while admitting that his viewpoint is a minority one and noting that the meaning of the clause suggested above (where "dead" is equivalent to "mortal") is supported by the reference to θνητὰ σώματα in v. 11, insists nonetheless that the context favours the meaning that the body has been made dead to sin through the indwelling Holy Spirit (v. 9). He then refers to v. 13 as expressing "...der ethische Konsequenz der ontischen Verwandlung," i.e. of v. 10.[271] Kuss suggests that εἰ δὲ Χριστὸς ἐν ὑμῖν (v. 10a) expects a statement as to how sin was dealt with, and hence we are to understand διὰ ἁμαρτίαν ("um der Sünde willen") as meaning "um der Beseitigung der Sünde willen."[272] Schmidt, taking a similar view, links v. 10b with 6:3; in both passages, dying with Christ plays a significant role.[273] Schmidt also draws a parallel between v. 12 (the thought that we are no longer debtors to sin) and 7:1 (where the end of the law's claim means we are now dead to sin through the body of Christ);[274] and finally, he links v. 10 with 7:4 to show that the former verse means our obligation to the flesh -- and to the law of sin of 8:2 -- is now ended.[275] On this view, one must take σῶμα to refer to the existence in the "old aeon",[276] and therefore having no reference to the present life of the believer. Stalder and Gaugler also give preference to the view that the phrase refers to the judging (and hence setting aside) of sin on the cross.[277] Schlier and Käsemann link v. 10b with 7:24 and 6:6 as well as Col 2:11, and suggests that the destruction of sin's authority through baptism is in view.[278] Schlier states that the reference is not "von unserem individuellen Leib, sondern vom Leib in Sinn der Leiblichkeit oder Fleischlichkeit überhaupt, die freilich in der individuellen Leiblichkeit existiert, in der auch wir Christen waren ... und die uns als unsere Vergangenheit immer wieder anficht."[279] "Fleischlichkeit" and "Leiblichkeit" are "Daseinsmächte" by which we are ruled, or in whose realm we are sharers.[280]

Several points, however, weigh against this view (and in favour of the previous one):

(i). There is no reason why the phrase cannot be understood grammatically as concessive;

(ii). It is difficult to see how the preposition can be taken as equivalent to a dat. incomm. (which this view requires), when the meaning, on a grammatical basis, seems clearly causal. Cranfield

notes that in Rom 6 the deaths are "to sin" rather than "because of sin", and use simple datives.[281] This point would seem to exclude the parallels drawn to that chapter;[282]

(iii). The appearance of the phrase θνητὰ σώματα in the very next verse (11) supports the view that it is the mortal nature of the body which is in view here. Cranfield, Sanday/Headlam, and Michel propose that νεκρός is used instead of θνητός in this verse to add strength and vividness to the image;[283]

(iv). The parallel suggested to 7:24 is rendered inadmissible if the view we have put forward regarding Rom 7 is adopted. Indeed, as we have seen, the whole thrust of the discussion from 6:1 onwards supports strongly the notion that our present existence still stands in some sense under the divine judgment, and that our present life, particularly in light of 7:24, can easily (and fittingly) be described as νεκρός.

(v). Schlier's concept of the destruction of sin's authority and the end of the tyranny of the "Daseinsmächte" over "Fleischlichkeit" and "Leiblichkeit" not only runs counter to the grammatical and contextual observations made above but appears also to represent an unwarranted intrusion of quite alien concepts into the Pauline text, which speaks plainly of the subjection of actual men (whether as individuals or as members of a collectivity) to the penalty of actual physical death. As to his linking of 8:12 and 7:1 to produce the result that we are now freed from sin (and law), one needs only to note that the very concept of ὀφειλέτης suggests a continuing obligation to fight the works of the flesh (which must therefore still in some sense exert their authority in our lives); in addition, freeing from the need to lay a claim upon God through one's own works (7:1) means not that we are freed from the law of God but rather (as we have seen) that we are enabled (and therefore under obligation, cf. v. 12) to fulfil it (v. 4).

(2) τὸ δὲ πνεῦμα ζωὴ διὰ δικαιοσύνην (v. 10c). We take the view that πνεῦμα here, as in the preceding verses, refers to the Holy Spirit rather than the human spirit.[284] If νεκρόν, κ.τ.λ. in v. 10b is taken to refer to the judgment of God which comes on account of human sin rather than to God's juridical acquittal of man (the judging of sin upon the cross which results in our justification), then v. 10b is a concessive statement, and it becomes natural to interpret διὰ δικαιοσύνην as referring to the <u>opposite</u> reality, i.e. God's judgment

upon sin and justification of the believer in Christ. This, indeed, is why the Spirit can be described as ζωή; the close eschatological tie between the two can be seen again in the next verse (11). Schlier supposes that διά is final here ("allowing righteousness to occur"),[285] but this stretches the natural meaning of the preposition with the accusative (which is normally a construction indicating cause) and, as Cranfield points out, destroys the neat balance of διὰ ἁμαρτίαν and διὰ δικαιοσύνην.[286] Leenhardt notes that εἰς δικαιοσύνην would quite easily have represented the notion of human striving, had Paul wished to put across that idea here.[287]

Further light is shed on this in v. 11, where Paul declares that God will make alive (ζωοποιήσει) the mortal bodies of believers also (καὶ τὰ θνητὰ σώματα ὑμῶν), i.e. the bodies of the believers in addition to that of Christ,[288] through the Holy Spirit who indwells them. Thus the Apostle creates a fine distinction between the life-bringing work of the Spirit in the present and in the future. We will see this thought further developed in our comments on freedom from death. Even as he wishes to caution in v. 10b that the believer still stands under the judgment of God and must hence undergo physical death, so now he guards against the view that the ζωή mentioned in v. 10c is at present a fulfilled reality. Most commentators agree that the reference in v. 11 is eschatological.[289] Cranfield offers four reasons -- the meaning of v. 10, the use of θνητός in v. 11, the (apparently) eschatological reference of v. 13, and the way in which at v. 12 the topic of ethics is introduced into the discussion as something new.[290] H. Lietzmann sees ζωοποιήσει as a reference to the present life, and hence as ethical rather than eschatological,[291] but this is very much a minority viewpoint; his suggestion that eschatology is alien to the context overlooks not only 7:24 and v. 13b, but also the whole eschatological thrust of vv. 17ff.

There is a subtle tendency, however, on the part of many commentators to introduce ethical elements into the discussion. P. Althaus speaks of a future reality which is "already present",[292] and Schmidt declares in like manner that while the reference is eschatological, in Paul eschatology always breaks into the present.[293] Stalder also speaks of the eschatological life "breaking into" the present, and of the first-fruits of the Spirit which come to fulfilment in the eschaton.[294] Leenhardt goes further; for him at v. 11 the eschatological and the mystical merge, and the believer gains a "present participation in

those revivifying forces" which broke into history in Christ. This for Leenhardt comes about through the "vivifying energy of the Spirit, who liberates from the tyranny of sin."[295] While one would not want to deny the present working of the Holy Spirit, it does seem a confusion of thought to see v. 11 in this light. The Spirit, as we have noted, does indeed bring deliverance and power to the Christian life -- indeed, makes the Christian life a reality. Here, however, Paul is speaking clearly of the future resurrection, and it is in no sense justifiable to view this life-giving work of the Spirit as in any way present. Otherwise, a dangerous confusion of thought regarding the nature of the Christian life may arise. The eschatological does not (in these verses, at any rate!) "break into" the present; if it did, the body would no longer be νεκρός. The Apostle's references to death and life in these verses are to be understood as juridical, not ethical assertions; hence, we have here a present death and a future deliverance (see further on freedom from death). The Spirit is indeed the pledge of the future resurrection, and as such confers -- and is -- ζωή, but we must not mistakenly suppose that this means we have here an ethical reference or some sign that the future life of unmarred communion with the risen Lord has already begun.

vv. 12-17

Paul now moves to straightforward exhortation, urging the believers to make the truths he has emphasized in the preceding verses something of a visible reality in their daily conduct. The parallel to the relationship between 6:1-11 and 12-23 is almost immediately evident.

The declaration in v. 12 that we are debtors (ὀφειλέται) to live not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit reminds us once more that the believer's freedom in Christ does not involve automatic deliverance from the power of sin but instead places him under a weighty responsibility to respond to the grace of God by conforming his life to God's will and holy law. We are obligated, Stalder points out, through a legal relationship, an obligation which arises out of God's claim upon us.[296] This obligation occurs precisely because the believer is still weak and sinful, utterly unable of himself to begin to satisfy any of God's righteous ordinances. Through God's act in Christ, however, he is freed from the law's just condemnation of his disobedience and enabled, by the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit, to begin to obey God's law. Because of his continuing weakness, his

freedom must be constantly enabled by the Spirit and channelled in the direction of obedience, if that freedom is not to be turned, by his self-will and egotism (cf. 7:14), into licence and self-seeking. The law thus provides the channel or pattern for the freedom God gives in Christ, and the Spirit actually enables the obedience itself.

Our obligation to fulfil the δικάιωμα τοῦ νόμου (v. 4) becomes clear in these verses. Tannehill notes the connection between the term ὀφειλέται and the slavery analogy of 6:15-23, and also points out the parallel between the life-death contrast which occurs at v. 13 and at 6:21-23.[297] This obligation, however, does not involve a new legalism, for although the work of God in the believer's life requires an active response, God Himself offers to empower and enable this response through His Spirit. As Michel notes, "In der Forderung Gottes liegt beides, die Gabe der Freiheit und die Aufforderung zur Bewährung."[298] Therefore while, as Leenhardt points out, Christians are called not to asceticism but to new life,[299] we should not take this to mean that freedom from sin involves freedom (in any sense) to do what we want, outside of complete submission to the will of God. Hence, we may agree with Gaugler, who (commenting on ὀφειλέται) says, "Frei ist nicht, wer tut, was 'er will'.... Frei ist, wer sich entscheiden kann und tut, was Gottes Geist mit ihm will.... Keine tiefere Bindung ist überhaupt zu denken, als diese Freiheit vom sündigen Fleisch, diese Schuldnerschaft gegenüber dem Geist."[300] Freedom from sin, therefore, is freedom to be bound to the authority of the Holy Spirit. Only thus can He direct the believer to live in a way pleasing to the One from whom his freedom comes. True freedom, therefore, here as in ch. 6, is freedom to be a slave of God (or of righteousness). Obedience to God's law is the way in which this slavery (which is true freedom!) is expressed.

This exhortation is followed by another warning in which Paul clearly sets before his readers the two alternatives open to them. The first option is eschatological death (rather than the physical death of v. 10b to which even believers are subject). The periphrastic construction μέλλετε ἀποθνήσκειν (v. 13a) emphasizes certain consequence, as it is the final judgment of God which is in view (Cranfield).[301] This note of stress, added to the fact that Paul would scarcely have suggested only the non-believers would suffer physical death (note the strict opposition of ἀποθνήσκειν and ζήσεσθε, v. 13b),[302] gives solid assurance that eschatological realities are in question here,

and enables us to make a careful distinction between the sense in which all (even Christians) must die and the eschatological judgment from which Christians will be saved, but in which nonbelievers will surely perish.

The important role played by the Spirit is once again evident (εἰ δὲ πνεύματι ... ζήσεσθε, v. 13b), though the Spirit is not, as Cranfield cautions, to be regarded as a "tool in the hands of Christians" (against which misunderstanding v. 14 guards).[303] Man's decision is vital but can have no effect without the Spirit's empowering.[304] The ethical and hortatory stress characteristic of this paragraph is evident here in v. 13b, as Paul exhorts the believers to put to death the deeds of the body. These are aptly defined by Stalder as the whole willing and doing of man in rebellion against God[305] -- remembering that the Christian, too, remains, in a very real sense, in rebellion against God. The verb θανατοῦτε, denoting a continuous (rather than once-for-all) action,[306] indicates that the power of sin is anything but dormant; hence, it is necessary to stress the continuous nature of the battle against the flesh[307] which must accompany possession of the Spirit, and which is itself a sign that the freedom vouchsafed to the believer in Christ is beginning to bear fruit in his life, even though it must fall woefully short of that glorious consummation which awaits the eschaton.

Tannehill notes that in v. 13 the body is seen as standing entirely on the side of the flesh, for the believer is "still part of an untransformed world, and through the body is still subject to the attacks of the old powers."[308] The imperative is needed because man (as σῶμα) cannot be abstracted from his world.[309] Hence, Tannehill continues, the believer's existence continues to be characterized by dying with Christ, and a "... continual manifestation and affirmation of his past death with Christ" must occur in his life; if we do not see this link between soteriology and ethics Paul will be viewed either as reinstating works-righteousness or as attaching no significance to the Christian's actions.[310] This analysis is correct at many points, though it must be noted that it is not simply the physical body which is subject to the power of sin, nor is it the body as expressing the whole complex of physical, emotional and psychological desires and volitions of the olf man (as opposed to the renewed nature of the new man), for the Christian himself, as long as he is in the world, remains subject in every respect, in the fallenness which still mars his "being-renewed" nature, to the attacks of sin. This is simply to say that no man,

for Paul, can be subdivided into "old" and "new" parts. The Christian remains one, whole, undivided person, still with a fallen nature which affects all his actions and attitudes, yet now with the indwelling power of the Spirit available to counteract and gradually to gain ground against the forces of sin. The believer is not part-sinner and part-justified; he remains thoroughly affected by the power of sin, yet in every part of his being he is touched by God's grace in Christ.[311]

The denial of the flesh called for in v. 13b is a sign not only of the Spirit's presence, but also of the gift of sonship mediated through Him, which is the subject of the last four verses of the subsection (including v. 17, which is a transitional point between this and the next paragraph[312]). Any misconception stemming from v. 13b that human effort is the primary source of Christian obedience (and that the Holy Spirit is merely an instrument in the believer's hands) is swept away in v. 14 by the declaration that believers are led by the Spirit in the accomplishment of their sanctification. The importance of the believer's obedience cannot be underestimated, to be sure, but the strength enabling us to fulfil it comes from the Spirit. The freedom the believer gains from sin's sway, to whatever degree he may attain it is enabled entirely by the Holy Spirit. Michel comments, "Wenn man die 'Handlungen des Leibes' tötet, dann gehört auch dies Geschehen zum Getriebenwerden durch den Geist Gottes."[313]

The γάρ with which v. 14 is introduced appears to anchor the truth of v. 13b in v. 14a; our obedience in putting to death the deeds of the body is made possible only because the Spirit leads us and gives us strength so to do. While it might be said with equal justice that the leading of the Spirit means little unless it is accompanied by our obedience -- indeed, that the Spirit is unable to lead without our obedience -- it is undoubtedly the work of the Spirit upon which Paul lays the greater stress here. Cranfield notes that though the "active participation" of the believer is involved, the mortifying of the flesh is "fundamentally the work of the Spirit."[314] If this emphasis is lost, it might be felt that because the Christian stands in the new age, his "decision" becomes equal in stature to the work of the Spirit, both of which are indispensable to the working of God. This provides the basis for a sadly deficient understanding of Paul's view of the Christian's freedom from sin. The stress must always be placed on the divine enabling because that alone provides the strength for the human obedience, all too often tragically lacking in the

redeemed believer, to perform but the smallest and most insignificant task in the kingdom of God, or to do anything without taking equal (or more than equal) credit for itself.

This truth is reinforced by Paul's description of the divine gift of sonship in vv. 15-17; v. 15, as Cranfield notes, "harks back with its confident positive assertion, ἐλάβετε πνεῦμα υἱοθεσίας, to the fundamental indicatives of vv. 1-11 which are the context and presupposition of vv. 12ff...."[315] This is further stressed through the cry of v. 16, Ἀββᾶ ὁ Πατήρ, in which Cranfield sees the summation of Christian ethics -- a humble submission to God's lordship by the Spirit's enabling power.[316] Only in sonship does freedom to fight against the desires of the flesh become possible, because only in this sonship do the power and leading of the Spirit become a reality; otherwise, left to our own efforts, the believer is condemned to utter failure and true slavery.[317] Genuine freedom -- freedom from the power of sin, not freedom for our own devices -- comes only from this relation of sonship, in which we submit ourselves to the will and purpose of God for our lives, to the leading of His Spirit and the authority of His law. In Michel's words, true sonship i.e. over against unlimited self-freedom "... ist Ausdruck für die Freiheit des Getauften, der keine andere Bindung anzuerkennen braucht, als den Willen Gottes, für das Verständnis Gottes, der sich dem Menschen aufschliesst, und für das Vertrauen, das aus dieser Vaterschaft erwächst."[318]

In this section, therefore, Paul presents his understanding of freedom from sin in much the same way as in Rom 6, i.e. as freedom for service to God and freedom to fight back against that sin and rebellion which oppose God and His law. Here, however, these themes are specifically related to the working of the Holy Spirit, who is shown to enable the believer's battle against sin and direct him toward obedience to God's law. By this reference to the work of the Spirit, Paul is able to bring out more clearly than in 7:14-25 the ultimately-victorious nature of the Christian life. Freedom from sin, according to these verses, is freedom for submission to the lordship of the Holy Spirit. The thought of sonship or that of being led by the Spirit (which are closely related to each other here) stress once more the fact that Christian freedom is not freedom to do as one wishes, but is freedom for obedience to the Father's will. Possession of the Spirit is no licence for libertinism, for the Spirit is to be lord in the believer's

life, and will direct him to obey God's law. The only way to preserve freedom is through continual submission to the Holy Spirit, who makes the freedom wrought in Christ real in the believer's life. That the presence of the Spirit must, for Paul, imply the lordship of the Spirit points up the Apostle's concern for the weak and mortal nature of the believer's condition, as a result of which his freedom must always be exercised under the Spirit's authority.

In this submission, however (as in the slavery to righteousness of Rom 6), is found true freedom. Only the Spirit can make the work of Christ in freeing the believer from the authority of sin real in the believer's day-to-day life, a life in which (if it is lived in conformity with the Spirit's leading) will issue in the δικαίωμα τοῦ νόμου being genuinely, if not perfectly fulfilled. The Apostle, finally, makes a careful distinction between this peresent working of the Spirit and that aspect of His work which is reserved for the future. In his present mortal existence the believer receives, through the Spirit, a genuine, but incomplete freedom from sin and mortality (the latter theme being examined in 8:17ff, on which see our comments below). As still part of the fallen world, he is still subject to sin to the extent that he receives the sentence of physical death, as much as any other part of the fallen creation. Through the working of the Spirit, however, he will ultimately (eschatologically) be freed even from this bondage, into an existence of true life and perfect fellowship with the holy and righteous God.

We now turn our attention to Gal 5:13ff, the other passage in which Paul discusses the believer's freedom from sin in relation to the working of the Holy Spirit. There we shall find a confirmation of the points we have noted here.

Gal 5:13-25

In Gal 5:13-25, the Apostle warns the Galatians not to use the freedom they have found in Christ as a pretext to live as they please. We have examined this passage earlier in our study, with respect to its implications for Christian freedom and the law. Further light is shed from this text on our understanding of Christian freedom, however, when it is examined with a view to its implications for freedom from sin. In the course of Paul's exhortation here, he stresses the continuing vulnerability of the believer to the onslaught of sin, and calls for repeated obedience as the only adequate response on the believer's part. The theme of obedience brings us into close

proximity also to the theme of freedom and the Spirit, and this passage shows clearly how closely the Apostle's understanding of freedom from sin is related to his understanding of freedom and the work of the Holy Spirit.

The initial warning and exhortation takes up vv. 13-15. This is followed by a further exhortation, which relates the conflict in which the Christian finds himself to the battle between flesh and Spirit (vv. 16-18), to which are appended lists of the works of the flesh (vv. 19-21) and the Spirit (vv. 22-23). A final statement concerning the Christian's relationship to flesh and Spirit (vv. 24-25) concludes the passage. We shall look at these three subsections (vv. 13-15, 16-23 and 24-25) in order.

vv. 13-15

Paul must here warn (as he does in Rom 6:1ff, 15ff; 8:12ff) that his gospel does not lead to moral anarchy. This warning is necessitated because of the tendency, ever present even in the life of the committed believer, to fall prey to the never-ceasing attacks of sin. The flesh is an opponent ready to seize any opportunity (ἀφορμή, cf. Rom 7:8, 11). The only remedy is mutual service in love (Gal 5:13b). The comment of D. Guthrie that mention of δουλεία qualifies the idea of Christian freedom here[319] is untrue if it is thereby implied that such δουλεία somehow opposes the basic meaning of the freedom. True freedom for the Christian is found precisely in love and mutual service or slavery.[320]

There is a close link, indeed, between love and slavery here. True love is not a denial of one's individuality, but involves the conscious decision to put the interests of the other ahead of one's own.[321] In doing so the believer shows his true freedom, and so it can be said that freedom in Christ and slavery to Christ are one and the same thing. The "freedom" of the non-Christian, who places his own interests first and is "free" to do as he pleases (the "freedom with respect to righteousness" of Rom 6:20) is true slavery.[322] Slavery in Christ, however, breaks the mould of the worldly pattern of slavery, in that it is mutual, and not one-sided (see our comments on 1 Cor 7:17ff, Col 3:18ff). In this mutual slavery love and Christian freedom come to their fulfilment.[323] This mutual subjection is needful for the believer because, freed from such constraints, he would surely abuse his freedom in Christ, his own sinful desires leading him to take advantage of his neighbour. Freedom from sin, therefore, must always

be seen as freedom for mutual slavery, even as it must be seen as freedom for obedience to the law of God -- which commands such a relationship. That the same linking of δουλεία and ἐλευθερία is found in Rom 6:15ff shows that the two passages are closed related.[324]

It may, in the same vein, be observed that μόνον (v. 13a) is not restrictive in the sense that it questions the reality of the freedom granted to the believer in 5:1.[325] Rather does it make plain that the call to true freedom is one which encompasses the whole life of the believer, taking account of his weaknesses, to be sure, but not condoning any surrender to them. Burton states that μόνον is used here "... to call attention not to an exception to a preceding statement, but to an important addition to it." He continues, "... it introduces a most significant element of the apostle's teaching concerning freedom, which has not been previously mentioned, and which occasions his thought throughout the remainder of this chapter. On this word, as on a hinge, the thought of the epistle turns from freedom to a sharply contrasted aspect of the matter, the danger of abusing freedom."[326] It is this latter expression of Paul's views here regarding the relationship of the believer to sin within the context of his already-attained status of freedom.

According to G. Duncan, we might have expected the Apostle here to take up the theme that Christ replaces the law, whereas in fact he turns to prescribing norms of Christian conduct -- and does so in the straightforward language of δουλεία.[327] If, however, we understand that Christ, far from replacing the law, is the law's fulfilment (as we have seen), then the introduction of the slavery-obedience theme (and its being related to the law of God, vv. 13-14) is exactly what we would have foreseen. P. Bonnard notes correctly that, for Paul, "... une vie moral renouvelée ne découle pas automatiquement de l'expérience du pardon."[328] Because the believer is still all too susceptible to sin's attacks, he needs to be reminded that the freedom he has been granted in Christ is always to be expressed in service, even slavery, to God. If the believer had attained perfection, the Apostle would not have needed to use such reminders, for the believer would express his slavery to righteousness naturally. The freedom the believer has received is genuine (v. 13), but is not to be considered an end in itself (which would imply, as we have seen earlier in our study, the believer's ability to use absolute freedom in a righteous fashion). Freedom is not freedom to do as one wishes.[329] Indiscriminate exercise of freedom will lead only to loss of that freedom and a return to slavery.[330]

Rather is freedom in Christ freedom for obedience, freedom which is to be expressed, according to Paul, in love and service toward God and one's neighbour. Freedom must prove itself in love.[331] This in turn has some bearing on Duncan's comment above. It should come as no surprise that the Apostle, far from speaking of Christ replacing the law, in fact appeals to its authority (v. 14). The law, far from being supplanted by Christ, finds its fulfilment in Him. The law is of vital importance in the life of the believer because he is the one who has found in Christ the ability to fight back against sin, and is thus in the position where he can begin to see a real, even though incomplete, fulfilment of the law in his life. The believer, according to the Apostle, needs a holy and righteous standard totally out of his own control and ability to manipulate, and high above his own level of conduct and character. For Paul this is the law. The law, as we have seen, is the instrument through which the believer expresses his obedience in love. Without such a standard he would surely revert to his own desires and sinful ways.

The Apostle underlines his point by using the present imperative (δουλεύετε) in v. 13a, indicating that a lifetime of service is in mind, a continued and repeated action, not just an isolated act or once-for-all occurrence.[332] The particular need for such an exhortation is made clear in v. 15, where the form of the sentence appears to suggest that the situation envisioned there is real and not merely hypothetical.[333] Paul's exposition here of the nature of Christian freedom as it relates to the continuing problem of sin takes on added urgency and pointedness, and this in turn provides the occasion for the account which follows (vv. 16-25) of the battle between flesh and Spirit and its bearing on the relationship between sin and freedom in the life of the Christian.

vv. 16-23

Having delivered the severe warning of v. 15, Paul commences this new subsection with an exhortation, to which a promise is appended (v. 16). This opening statement sums up what he is going to say in the remainder of the chapter and is of particular importance.[334] The command Πνεύματι περιπατεῖτε, cast in the present tense, emphasizes that the life led by the Spirit (with almost all commentators, we take the references made in these verses to be to the Holy Spirit rather than the human spirit[335]) is one of continual service and

obedience, the verb itself denoting conduct of one's whole life.[336] The very use of the imperative emphasizes the continuing subjection of the believer to the lures of sin, and stresses that no magical transformation has been wrought through the receiving of the Spirit (cf. our comments on Rom 8:10).[337]

If the believer's life is characterized by obedience to God's command, he will receive the promise of v. 16b, ἐπιθυμίαν σαρκὸς οὐ μὴ τελέσητε. This is not another command, but rather an emphatic declaration, the construction representing "... the most definite form of negation regarding the future" (BDF, par. 365).[338] Receipt of the promise, however, is contingent on obedience to the command, and Paul goes on to explain (γάρ, v. 17) why this is so. Flesh and Spirit are in complete opposition to each other, and so if the Christian walks by the Spirit, he can be sure he is protected against the flesh.[339] In this way v. 17 acts as a proof of the command and promise of v. 16.[340] Burton suggests that v. 17a is a statement of a general truth, while v. 17b applies this to the situation of the individual believer (with v. 17c referring to the result in the believer's life). Otherwise, he says, v. 17b would be tautologous.[341] This may be true, although it is by no means impossible that v. 17b is intended simply as a reinforcement of v. 17a, and certainly the latter has equal relevance for the believer's life.

What implications, however, does this verse have for our understanding of the Christian's freedom fom sin? To being with, it underlines the seriousness of the challenge still posed by the flesh, which is, in the words of Lietzmann, "noch eine gefährliche Macht."[342] This accords with the view we have thus far taken to be Paul's thinking on the subject. Schlier (who draws a parallel to Rom 8) comments rightly, "Sie stellt, obwohl und gerade weil sie unsere, jeweilige σάρξ ist, eine über uns hinausgreifende und uns doch angehende, konkrete Daseinsmacht dar."[343] He goes on to suggest that flesh and Spirit here fight as equal adversaries, able to frustrate the believer's desire (θέλητε) now to follow the one, now the other. On this view, the ἵνα-clause expresses the purpose of their (mutually-conflicting) aims. This, says Schlier, portrays the predicament of the "... von Fleisch und Geist bedrängte, verlockte und bedrohte Mensch, bzw. Christ."[344] So long as the believer holds to the power of the Spirit, however, he will indeed

mortify the desires of the flesh, for in Christ, says Schlier, he is freed from the power of sin. This view is also held by Lagrange[345] and by Lietzmann, who draws parallels to Rom 7 (the flesh subduing the will seeking the good) and Rom 8 (the Spirit enabling man to put to death the desires of the flesh).[346]

Although this viewpoint ably expresses the seriousness of sin's continuing threat to the believer, it does not correspond to the structure of thought in the context. This may be set forth as follows. Paul starts out by establishing the reality of God's promise in the believer's life, though warning him not to abuse his God-given freedom but rather to fulfil God's law in love (vv. 13-14). This is followed (v. 15) by a contrastive statement (εἰ δέ) portraying the alternative (which, according to our observations above, is a far from unreal threat). Paul then returns (v. 16) to the positive side, which is introduced by a further adversative construction (λέγω δέ) setting forth God's promise. Following this, however, his "contrapuntal" approach veers back to the negative, as he seeks to expound (γάρ) the tragic alternative to living in the Spirit and to draw out some of the consequences of this kind of life (the ἵνα-clause). Finally (v. 18), he reverts to the theme of promise, introduced once more by an adversative construction (εἰ δέ).

In v. 17, therefore, it is the desire of the believer (θέλητε) to do the good which is referred to. It is this θέλειν which is frustrated by the desires of the flesh. It is not true, therefore, that by θέλητε both the desire to do good and the desire to do evil are referred to (which, on the latter view, would then be opposed, respectively, by the power of the flesh and that of the Spirit).[347] The believer is not helplessly caught between two equally strong, opposing forces. Rather, because he has received the Spirit, he has the power to fight back against sin.[348] This does not mean that he has been magically transformed or that he has attained perfection, but rather indicates that he has been given the ability, for the first time, to decide for the good and against the evil[349] -- hence, the situation of conflict into which he is brought, according to this verse. The freedom from sin into which the believer is released becomes a field of battle against the desires of the flesh. In this battle he is aided by the Spirit,[350] and has the hope of gaining a measure of victory over sin through his day-to-day obedience to God and His law.

A description in v. 17 of the Christian life as an absolute stalemate clearly does not line up with statements in the neighbouring verses concerning the believer's freedom from sin.[351] Neither is it likely that Paul wished to portray the believer merely as a battleground between warring powers, the believer himself having little say (and hence little responsibility) in the outcome. While it is true that the extent of the believer's freedom is severely qualified in this life, it seems highly improbable that Paul would assert that the power of the flesh is equal to the power of the Spirit, and that a measure of victory is not possible, even if the believer obediently seeks the Spirit's enabling. It is also unthinkable, as Oepke notes, that Paul would see the Spirit as "... eine fremde, den Willen knechtende Macht ...."[352] Rather should we see the verse as indicating the utter gravity of the battle in which the believer is engaged, and as pointing out both his continuing vulnerability to the power of the flesh and his failure to put to death by the Spirit the deeds of the body (cf. Rom 8:13). The verse also indicates the consequences this failure entails, i.e. the rendering powerless of the desire the believer has been given, through his freedom in Christ, to do the good.

The interpretation we have rejected is left with the problem of understanding the θέλειν of the believer as referring now to the good intention frustrated by the flesh, now to the evil desire restrained by the Spirit. This interpretation seems highly unlikely. As we have noted, it makes the Spirit appear as an alien power forcing its way on man. Further, besides needing recourse to the unnatural expedient of making the one phrase mean two entirely different things, it neglects the parallel thought in Rom 7:14ff, where the Apostle, as we have seen, testifies that for the Christian, the θέλειν to do the good is present, though the κατεργάζεσθαι may not be so, owing to the continuing weakness of the flesh.[353] There, in a fashion similar to our text, though at much greater length, Paul expounds the problem and then gives the answer (8:1ff) -- an answer which, while not making the problem disappear, promises that at least some measure of progress is possible through continuing and steadfast adherence to the Spirit's leading. In view of this parallel, it is difficult to see why some interpreters persist in assigning such "double meaning" to the phrase in our verse -- and more difficult yet to comprehend why others actually take the position that the θέλειν is an entirely negative phenomenon, something restrained by the Spirit. Guthrie and Duncan both assert that, because

Paul so confidently declares in context that the Spirit is triumphant, he must in v. 17 be referring to the θέλειν as a weak human desire which (in the believer) is easily overcome by the Spirit.[354] This interpretation again makes nonsense of Paul's central contention, which is that the Spirit cannot triumph without the assent of the human will. That such assent is never fully offered draws the believer into the situation of conflict portrayed in the verse. Nonetheless, because he has been freed in Christ from sin's hold, he has the ability to let his conduct be ruled by the Spirit. He is not, however, merely a tool in the hands of God. Guthrie and Duncan do not understand the seriousness of the battle into which the believer is thrown precisely because he has been freed in Christ from the domination of sin. Duncan's assertion that the hopelessness of the situation portrayed in Rom 7 is far removed from the victorious atmosphere of Gal 5[355] misunderstands Rom 7 (which, in context, does not speak of an utterly hopeless situation) and gravely overstates the "triumphal" nature of Gal 5 -- as well as avoiding the straightforward linguistic parallels between the two texts.[356]

Burton suggests, however, that the ἵνα-clause is purely telic (no other usage, save that of conceived result, which is not in view here, being evidenced in contemporary Greek), and that this forbids us from seeing the victory of either side in the struggle.[357] It is difficult to see, however, why the distinction between telic and ecbatic use should of itself dictate such a conclusion. It does seem reasonable to see at least a fiercely-pitched battle (though not a stalemate) here, but this would appear to hold regardless of whether the ἵνα-clause is one of purpose or of result. Moreover, the battle does not, as we have seen, involve the Spirit and the flesh alternatively hindering the fickle or weak human will.[358] In addition, a significant difficulty is involved in this view, in that purpose is attributed neither to the Spirit alone, nor to the flesh alone, but seemingly (for want of any other explanation) either to some combination of the two, or now to the one, now to the other, thus involving a tortuous ellipsis similar to that noted (and rejected) earlier with respect to θέλητε. Such an understanding is grammatically forced and unnatural.[359] The argument loses its remaining support when it is discovered that Burton's assertion regarding the usage of ἵνα in contemporary Greek is open to question, and that there is reasonable evidence that the construction could be used in clauses of actual result.[360]

We are led, therefore, to the observation that these verses manifest the same patterns of thought noted in Rom 6, 7 and 8. One may draw particular attention to the similarities between Gal 5:13ff on the one hand, and Rom 6:11-14 and 8:12-14 on the other. In all of these texts, the Apostle exhorts and warns on the basis of (previously-explicated) doctrinal truths, setting forth a description of the two alternatives open (Gal 5:13-15; Rom 6:12-13, 8:13; cf. 8:5-8). He declares the possibility of victory over sin (ἐπιθυμίαν σαρκὸς οὐ μὴ τελέσητε, Gal 5:16; ἁμαρτία γὰρ ὑμῶν οὐ κυριεύσει, Rom 6:14; cf. ζήσεσθε, Rom 8:13). Finally, he concludes either with a statement assuring believers that they are not ὑπὸ νόμον but ὑπὸ χάριν (Rom 6:14), or with a declaration that they are led by the Spirit and are no longer slaves (Rom 8:14; cf. 8:15-17) -- or with a mixture of the two (εἰ δὲ Πνεύματι ἄγεσθε, οὐκ ἐστὲ ὑπὸ νόμον, Gal 5:18).

Paul concludes this subsection by listing, respectively, the works of the flesh, to which he appends a warning (vv. 19-21), and the fruit of the Spirit, to which he adds a promise (vv. 22-23). It will be readily apparent from our comments that, according to Paul, though it is only the Christian who has access to the empowering of the Spirit (and is hence able to manifest the Spirit's fruit), it is by no means true that the unbeliever has a monopoly on the works of the flesh. If the picture we have presented of the Apostle's thinking on the matter is at all accurate, he is to be seen as calling for a daily renunciation of these works by the Spirit's power, as the believer gives himself over in humble obedience to the Lord (the fruit remains, of course, the fruit of the Spirit, not the fruit of the believer's obedience to the Lord as such). There is, however, a division between those whose lives are characterized more readily by the works of the flesh, and those who, on the other hand, are giving themselves in obedience to the leading of the Spirit. This is made clear by the statements with which the Apostle brings the section to a close (vv. 24-25).

vv. 24-25

Here again, we find strong affinities with Rom 6 and 8, as is clear from the following citations:

(i) Rom 6:6: ὁ παλαιὸς ἡμῶν ἄνθρωπος συνεσταυρώθη, ἵνα καταργηθῇ τὸ σῶμα τῆς ἁμαρτίας, τοῦ μηκέτι δουλεύειν ἡμᾶς τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ.

Rom 6:12: Μὴ οὖν βασιλευέτω ἡ ἁμαρτία ἐν τῷ θνητῷ ὑμῶν σώματι εἰς τὸ ὑπακούειν ταῖς ἐπιθυμίαις αὐτοῦ ...

Gal 5:24: οἱ δὲ τοῦ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ τὴν σάρκα ἐσταύρωσαν σὺν τοῖς παθήμασιν καὶ ταῖς ἐπιθυμίαις.

(ii) Rom 8:14: ὅσοι γὰρ Πνεύματι Θεοῦ ἄγονται, οὗτοι υἱοὶ εἰσιν Θεοῦ.

Gal 5:25: Εἰ ζῶμεν Πνεύματι, Πνεύματι καὶ στοιχῶμεν.

The parallels are not exact. Rom 6, for instance, speaks of σῶμα rather than σάρξ, and there may not be a precise equivalence between ἄγονται (passive) and στοιχῶμεν (active), or between the ideas of "sonship" in Rom 8 and "life" in Gal 5 (though note ζήσεσθε, Rom 8:13, and the idea of inheritance expressed, albeit negatively, in Gal 5:21). There is clearly enough similarity, however (especially when we recall the links we have already noted between these chapters) to demonstrate that in Gal 5:24-25 Paul is thinking along the same lines as in Romans. Many of the observations we have made with respect to the Romans texts will have a bearing on the understanding of our present verses.

In v. 24 Paul states that the believers have crucified (ἐσταύρωσαν) the flesh. Many commentators see the past tense here as indicating a baptismal reference,[361] though others prefer an allusion to conversion.[362] Burton notes that the act is assigned to no specific point of time, and hence is best translated by the English perfect tense.[363] In similar vein, Lightfoot argues that the aspect may be punctiliar rather than temporal, stressing the complete and decisive nature of the change rather than any particular historical event.[364] Though there may be some truth in Lightfoot's comment, it does not seem that a temporal reference can be entirely excluded -- when, for instance, does the decisive change occur or begin to occur? It seems fruitless to debate whether conversion or baptism is in view, particularly when the early church saw a close connection between the two. We should be wary, however, of any overly-sacramental interpretation of this (and other) texts in Galatians,[365] and must stress that for Paul (here as in Rom 6) water baptism does not of itself constitute a magical changing of character or inflow of divine power which wipes sin out. Neither baptism nor the act of repentance represents an automatic end to the power of sin in the believer's life.[366] This point needs to be stressed, in the light of injudicious comments by some interpreters. Schlier, for instance, states that ἐσταύρωσαν "... ein einmaliges

vergangenes Ereignis meint, in dem alle Christen ihrer σάρξ ein Ende bereitet haben."[367] Lagrange comments, "... par leur union, non seulement morale, mais réelle quoique mystique, au Sauveur crucifié, ils ont placé leur chair dans un état de mort...."[368] He goes on to admit that the flesh is not "... tout à fait morte; ce qui est mort, c'est le péché qui la mettait en mouvement."[369] For Paul, however, neither sin nor the flesh is dead, and it is not to be implied that sin, as an external power, is to be blamed for starting off the desires of the flesh. It is true that, for Paul, the believer has died to sin in a juridical sense, and that the objective guilt of the believer (and, in this sense, the power of sin) is set aside on the cross. Neither Schlier nor Lagrange, however, succeed in making a clear distinction between this use of the word and the ethical sense.[370] The Apostle, as is clear from his many exhortations (Rom 6:12, 8:13, Gal 5:25, etc.) regards the putting to death of the flesh as an ethical task which stands before us for the duration of our present life. This is seen by P. Bonnard, who notes, "Ici comme plus tard dans Rom 6, Paul fonde la nouvelle vie sur l'anéantissement de la vie ancienne. Cet anéantissement n'a rien de magique; il s'agit de croire que la vie ancienne a été anéantie (condamnée) par Dieu au Calvaire. Cette foi, sans cesse affermie par l'apôtre, est le vrai fondement de la vie nouvelle."[371] Freedom from sin is a reality, not merely a promise,[372] yet this freedom must be made real in day-to-day obedience.[373]

That the believer's freedom is a gift from God sovereignly bestowed on the penitent heart is the point emphasized by the Apostle in v. 25. The phrase εἰ δέ, as in v. 15, portrays an actual situation,[374] and the double occurrence of Πνεύματι constitutes, as in v. 16, a dative of agent (though also of norm),[375] the Spirit being viewed here as the source of the believer's life, and hence as the source of his ability to work that life out in his daily conduct. Possession of the Spirit must not, however, become an excuse for complacency in the daily struggle against sin.[376] Guthrie notes correctly that the implication of this verse is that life in the Spirit carries weighty responsibilities, as the practical application of the gift of new life received by the believer is far from automatic.[377] H. Ridderbos rightly speaks of a "... constantly renewed mandate and a continuous exertion."[378] The similarity of thought between this passage and Rom 6:2-14 well justifies Lightfoot's linking of the two.[379] The stress on the need to make visible and tangible in the believer's daily life the "death" to sin

which has already occurred juridically (in the sight of God on the basis of the work of Christ) is reinforced by the use of the verb στοιχεῖν, with its strong accent on external conduct.[380] It is important to note that the στοιχεῖν, as much as the ζῆν, finds both its original power and continuing enablement from the presence of the Holy Spirit in the believer's life. The freedom from sin in view here is the sovereign gift of God to the believer, to enable him to fight back against sin and, for the first time, to achieve a genuine measure of success. We cannot, therefore, agree with Burton's comment that v. 23 combines "... the conception of morality as the product of a divine force working in men with the thought of the human will as a necessary force in producing it."[381] Paul certainly stresses the importance of the believer's obedience in enabling God to work in him to produce the fruit of the Spirit. He nowhere, however, speaks of any action of the believer which could be understood to have a part in "producing" this "divine force." The fact that the believers, not the Spirit, are the subject of the verb points out not only their responsibility daily to seek the Spirit's power, but also highlights their deep inability to produce even the least fruit of righteousness through their own efforts. The believer is called constantly to seek the power of God to enable him to exercise properly and effectively the freedom from sin he has been granted in Christ. This freedom is never the result of his own efforts, and, if it is used to suit his own purposes, will be abused and lost. Freedom from sin is freedom for obedience, and finds fulfilment in that slavery to Christ which alone enables the believer to bring forth the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

Col 3:1-17

Many of the themes we have noted in the passages discussed above recur in Col 3:1-17. It is of particular interest for the way in which, even more than in the previous texts, the indicatives and imperatives are so thoroughly intertwined that it is impossible to isolate an "indicative" portion of the text providing the basis for a further (self-contained) "imperative" portion. Examination of this text will provide ample confirmation, but from a quite different perspective, of the observations we have made regarding Paul's understanding of freedom and sin in the Christian life. Unlike Romans and Galatians, Colossians does not deal so thoroughly with the question of the law; the Colossian heresy (see our comments on 2:6-23) is a different problem from those affecting either the Roman or

Galatian churches. Yet here, in an atmosphere far removed from that of the previous letters, we find almost exactly the same understanding of this important aspect of Christian freedom. The Apostle's statements here regarding the nature and purpose of freedom from sin provide a strong support, therefore, for the view that the position he has taken in Romans and Galatians is fundamental to his understanding of Christian freedom.

Our passage begins at v. 1 with (as in our other texts) a statement concerning the accomplished fact of the believers' justification (εἰ οὖν συνηγέρθητε τῷ Χριστῷ). Immediately following this comes the first of the exhortation (τὰ ἄνω ζητεῖτε). The passage is to be seen in conjunction with what the Apostle[382] has said in the preceding verses. On three occasions already in the letter, 2:6 (ὡς οὖν παρελάβετε, κ.τ.λ.), 2:11ff (ἐν ᾧ καὶ περιετμήθητε ... συνταφέντες ... καὶ συνηγέρθητε ... συνεζωοποιήσεν ὑμᾶς), and 2:20 (εἰ ἀπεθάνετε, κ.τ.λ.), he has begun to discuss themes familiar to us from our study of Romans and Galatians, though each time he chooses for the moment to digress upon various aspects of the Colossian heresy and issue related rebukes or warnings to the believers (2:8, βλέπετε μή, κ.τ.λ.; 2:16, μὴ οὖν τις ὑμᾶς κρινέτω; 2:20, τί ὡς ζῶντες ἐν κόσμῳ δογματίζεσθε, κ.τ.λ.), rather than taking up the theme of obedience to Christ in putting to death the deeds of the flesh (or body), as he does in the previous epistles. That this latter project, however, is not far from Paul's mind is seen by the fact that he uses such words as συνταφέντες (2:12) and ἀπεθάνετε (2:20; cf. συνετάφημεν, Rom 6:4, and ἀπεθάνομεν, Rom 6:2).

He eventually takes up our theme in earnest at 3:1, the introductory phrase of which (εἰ οὖν συνηγέρθητε τῷ Χριστῷ) echoes the words of 2:12 (ἐν ᾧ καὶ συνηγέρθητε), but moves on into a sustained positive exposition of the nature of the Christian life, with particular reference to the question of the Christian's freedom from sin. The first four verses of the chapter set forth by means of general principles the outlines of the believer's new life and the obligations that go with it, while vv. 5-17 consist chiefly of more specific instructions regarding Christian conduct. We shall examine the two subsections in order.

vv. 1-4

In examining this subsection, we note two things immediately. First, the pattern "already-accomplished justification by faith and

receipt of new life -- present obligations of that life", noted in our previous texts, is present here -- and in concentrated form, for, instead of dwelling on the one before proceeding to the other, Paul mixes the two and moves almost immediately (τὰ ἄνω ζητεῖτε) into ethical exhortation. However -- our second observation -- the already accomplished justification by faith and new life is spoken of not merely as a death (ἀπεθάνετε, v. 3), which would run parallel to the Apostle's thought in Rom 6:2-4, but as a resurrection (συνηγέρθητε, v. 1), a concept Paul appears carefully to avoid in those verses. Only after Paul has made his point there does he -- guardedly, as we saw -- make use of such language to refer to the Christian's moral life (Rom 6:5). The Romans and Colossians passages are not at all inconsistent, however, in our opinion. We must now justify this observation.

A belief in the sinlessness of Christian believers -- the consequence of an "over-realized" eschatology -- is no more in prospect in Col 3 than in Rom 6, as is evidenced by the double command τὰ ἄνω ζητεῖτε ... τὰ ἄνω φρονεῖτε in vv. 1-2. If the believer's being raised with Christ resulted in a perfect ἐν καινότητι ζωῆς περιπατεῖν (the subject of Paul's statement in Rom 6:4), these imperatives would be meaningless and hopelessly out of place. Lohse notes that the fact that God's justifying act in Christ has already taken place does not amount to a bestowal of immortality on the redeemed, but rather constitutes a "summons to obedient appropriation."[383] This statement suggests the need for the Christian to conduct a daily battle against sin, that force which seeks constantly to counter the effectiveness of God's act in Christ so far as the believer's daily life is concerned. The fact that the believer has been freed from sin's domination and has genuinely received new life does not do away with his responsibility to put that freedom into service in the battle against sin's ever-continuing hold on him. The presence of the imperative here puts an end to any thought that the believer has already reached his goal.[384] Here, we are clearly on the same ground as in our other texts. This point becomes clearer when we realize that seeking τὰ ἄνω does not represent seizing of some unseen higher mystical life (over against the lowly material existence) -- which may have been the viewpoint of Paul's opponents. Rather does the command here indicate that Christians are to mould their everyday life in obedience to the Lord[385] -- a thought very similar to that expressed in Rom 6:15ff.

This point is reinforced in vv. 3-4 where, reverting to the verb used in Rom 6 (ἀπεθάνετε, v. 3),[386] the Apostle swiftly follows up his suggestion that the believer has been raised with Christ with the qualification tht his new ζωή is hidden with Christ, and will not be revealed until Christ's future appearance. This thought is very close to that of Rom 6:4, where Paul places the stress on Christ's resurrection but on the believer's new life, which involves a continual battle against sin and a realization of our human weakness, even as believers. Only after this does he speak of the believer's resurrection (6:5), i.e. where it may now be understood in a "moral" rather than a "mystical" sense. The believer's life in Christ is real, but is hidden and unfulfilled.[387] For E. Schweizer, v. 3 comes as a surprise[388] -- but it ought not to, for the Apostle is only clarifying his meaning to make sure that he is not mistaken as advocating a view he has clearly rejected. The believer has died and received new life in Christ -- but this life is not his own; it is hidden in Christ. Hence, as Lohmeyer notes rightly, he must live in hope of the coming of the Lord, existing in a "Zwitterhaftigkeit" between heaven and earth.[389] Paul, indeed, is controverting his enthusiastically-inspired opponents by taking up their own resurrection-orientated terminology and giving it an entirely different meaning (though a meaning quite consonant with the thoughts expressed in Rom 6). Far from having attained perfection, the believers need t summons to continual obedience, for the consummation awaits the future (v. 4). The believer's life will not attain its goal -- the likeness of Christ -- until Christ Himself appears, for his true life (his ζωή) is, at least in its fullest sense (full communion with Christ and freedom from sin), a future phenomenon. This is the same point as is made in Rom 6:4 and 8:13.

It is also important to note that in both Romans and Galatians the Apostle stresses the break with the past in a manner not dissimilar to that described in Col 3. According to Romans, the believer has died to sin (6:2), been buried in baptism (6:3), received a new life (6:4), had the old man crucified (6:5), died with Christ (6:8), died to legalism to live for Christ (7:4), and received the Holy Spirit (8:4, 9-11). Similarly, in Galatians the Christian has died to legalism and received a new life in Christ (2:19-21), has "put on" Christ (3:27), and has crucified the flesh and recieved life through the Holy Spirit (5:24-25). This does not, to be sure, mean that the Christian has been totally delivered from sin. The freedom he has been given in

Christ is freedom to fight back, for the first time, and to expect a genuine measure of success in so doing. This same understanding of freedom from sin is also evident in Col 3:1-4 (and also in vv. 5;17, as we shall see below). It is also worth noting that of the texts earlier in Colossians to which we have referred, two (2:12a, 2:20) emphasize the thought of death and burial (as in Rom 6), a third (2:6) speaks of receiving Christ Jesus as Lord (to which we may compare Rom 6:15-23), and a fourth (2:12b), in which a resurrection-word does occur, is immediately placed in the context of justification by faith through the phrase διὰ τῆς πίστεως. It is interesting to note the parallels here to 2 Cor 4, where Paul speaks so eloquently of the limitations of the present life in Christ, yet also refers to a present ζωή being revealed in our mortal flesh. The use of φανερωθῇ in both 2 Cor 4:11 and Col 3:4 indicates a link between the present and future existence, even though there is no identification of the two; see further our comments on 2 Cor 4:7ff later in our study.

This parallel also throws light on our fifth text, Col 2:13 (συνεζωοποίησεν ὑμᾶς σὺν αὐτῷ). Here the receipt of ζωή is to be viewed in the same light as in 2 Cor 4;11; this is a ζωή still hemmed in by sin and the flesh. In 3:3f the Apostle qualifies the statement of 2:13, stating that the believer's ζωή is still hidden. Christ is his ζωή, and when He is revealed, τότε καὶ ὑμεῖς σὺν αὐτῷ φανερωθήσεσθε ἐν δόξῃ. In Christ alone will our new life come to its true completion. This careful statement of the Apostle's ought to warn against drawing over-hasty conclusions from the earlier verse. Two meanings (or aspects) of ζωή, related but not identical, are involved. We shall see this theme worked out in more detail in our treatment of freedom and death below.

The question as to why Paul uses resurrection language in Col 3:1 (and 2:12), while so carefully limiting it in Romans to the moral life, may find its answer in the differing situations of the two churches. In Romans, Paul is fighting against a spurious understanding of his message, in which he is portrayed by legalists as a libertine. This misunderstanding might well have involved the suggestion that the believer is free to live as he wishes, without reference to God's law. The Apostle counters this by pointing out that, while the believer has received new life in Christ and been freed from the power of sin and death, this new life and freedom are still subject to serious restrictions and, in many ways, remain as goals to be sought rather than prizes already won. Hence, he stresses the way in which the believer's

ζωή or ἀνάστασις remains reserved for the future. In Colossians, however, as we have seen (in our comments earlier in our study on Col 2:6-23), Paul must counteract a heresy which seeks to show that believers have not attained fulness through faith in Christ, and so must make up what is lacking through their own exertions or practices.[390] The Colossians need assurance that their justification is complete, and this is what Paul attempts to convey through his use of resurrection terminology. Lähnemann's comment is surely correct, "Es wurde hier auch keineswegs die 'gnostische Parole' ausgegeben, die Auferweckung sei schon geschehen ... sondern umgekehrt bezweifelt, dass die Gnade Christi den Menschen ganz erlösen könne, der doch den Schicksalkräften des Kosmos unterworfen war."[391] Viewed in this light, Paul's words in Col 3:1-4 appear quite consistent with his previous statements regarding the believer's freedom from sin in Romans and Galatians. This coherence becomes even clearer as we look at the second subsection of our passage.

vv. 5-17

These verses contain a series of commands dealing with the putting away of the old life (vv. 5-9a) and the entrance into the new life (vv. 12-17), between which is found a transitional passage (vv. 9b-11).

(a) vv. 5-9a

Paul now recasts the general truths of vv. 1-4 in a more specific form, and here the parallels to Romans and Galatians come clearly to light. The first command, νεκρώσατε οὖν τὰ μέλη τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, immediately calls to mind Rom 8:13, τὰς πράξεις τοῦ σώματος θανατοῦτε, as well as the command in Rom 6:11 for the believers to reckon themselves νεκροὺς μὲν τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ. In both Romans texts, the context indicates that the believers have already died to sin, yet their bodies are still mortal (θνητόν, 6:12 and 8:11; νεκρόν, 8:10), and the responsibility remains to put to death fleshly desires. The use of μέλη in Col 3:5 provides a further link, for in Rom 6 the believers are urged no longer to present their μέλη as instruments of sin but rather as weapons of righteousness (v. 13) or as slaves to righteousness (v. 19). What, therefore, are the implications of this first exhortation?

It is important first to note that the whole chain of aorist imperatives (νεκρώσατε, ἀπόθεσθε and ἐνδύσασθε) is complexive in nature.

It expresses, in the words of P. Joüon, "... une multiplicité réelle présentée sous l'aspect de l'unité."[392] This fits well with what we have seen of Paul's view of the Christian's freedom from sin, for by no means (on our understanding of the matter) could he have in mind here a once-for-all putting to death of the deeds of the flesh. Rather is a continued action in prospect (note also the present imperative μὴ ψεύδεσθε, v. 9). Joüon notes that in the parallel text, Rom 13:12-14, where the same verbs occur as complexive aorists (ἀποθώμεθα, ἐνδυσώμεθα and ἐνδύσασθε), "... la multiplicité réelle des actes impliquée par ces verbes est tellement présente à l'esprit de l'écrivain qu'elle se fait jour finalement dans le présent de la fin μὴ ποιεῖσθε."[393] Indeed, Paul, for the most part, casts his positive exhortations in the present. The string of present tenses after ἐνδύσασθε (ἀνεχόμενοι, χαριζόμενοι, βραπευέτω, γίνεσθε, ἐνοικείτω, διδάσκοντες, νουθετοῦντες, ποιῆτε, εὐχαριστοῦντες) itself implies a continuing struggle to persevere in obedience.

What, therefore, are we to make of the position of E. F. Scott, who takes the view that for Paul Christ, by His death, destroyed the "principle of sin" so that it ought, in theory at least, to be impossible for the Christian to sin? Paul, according to Scott, overcomes the problem that the "sinful principle is still active"[394] by suggesting (as, for instance, in Col 3:5) that, although the Christian is ideally a new man, he must yet "... become in actual fact what he is ideally."[395] In this way, says Scott, the Apostle, while making some sense of the human dilemma, is caught up in inconsistency. Lohse suggests similarly that for Paul "... what was once is now definitively erased and removed by the death which was experienced with Christ in baptism. Therefore the past is replaced by the present which from now on has sole validity."[396] Lohse also, however, must now try to make sense of the commands found in the text. His solution is to suggest that Paul urges the "old man", already dead in baptism, to be dead.[397] Surely, however, there are at least two senses of "dead" involved here, and a proper distinction between the two would greatly facilitate a correct understanding of the passage and view of what the Apostle says here concerning the believer's freedom from sin. Lohse also comments, "Since what was once had to yield in baptism to the now of Christian existence, this prior decision should and must be made reality in obedience."[398] How, on Lohse's view, this obedience is necessary following the definitive erasing of sin in baptism, however, is not made clear.

If, on the other hand, we speak of justification, appropriated in baptism, as giving (through the power of the Spirit) the ability to begin for the first time to fight back against the power of sin and to win a measure of freedom from its grip, then the passage makes excellent sense (as does the latter citation from Lohse). This also throws some light on Scott's idea of the Christian becoming in actuality what he already is ideally, a thought plagued by the non-Pauline concepts of "actual' and "ideal". It is encouraging to note that Paul is able to illumine our understanding of some commentators![399] Conzelmann comments that, while the old life has been destroyed in Christ, we possess the new life only insofar as we destroy the old.[400] This statement begins to point the way to an adequate response, if only by bringing out the exegetical confusion surrounding the different senses in which the believer dies to the old life and receives the new.

To understand Paul correctly, therefore, it is necessary to draw upon the distinction made in our comments on Romans and Galatians between the different senses in which, according to Paul, the believer has died to sin. If we see in Col 3:1-4 a parallel to passages such as Rom 6:1ff (and we have noted above in some detail the similarities between the two texts), we then have in these verses a statement regarding the believer's juridical death to sin through the atoning work of Christ. In this sense, the believer is truly dead to sin and alive to God (see Rom 6:11), and has received a genuine freedom from sin's power. This death, however, has not occurred in the same way in an ethical sense. While the believer has been justified in God's sight, and while he has received new life (words such as συνηγέρθητε and ἀπεθάνετε cannot be without some significance for the believer's daily life), yet, within the confines of his continuing fleshly existence -- an existence which is itself νεκρός and stands under the judgment of the righteous and holy God -- the Christian finds that sin is an ever-present reality against which he must continually battle. Hence, it comes as no surprise that Paul, so soon after declaring that the believer has died and been raised with Christ, urges the same believer to put to death his earthly motivations and desires. In this way, as Bruce points out, the believer is living "on two planes."[401] On the other hand, this putting to death (ἀπόθεσθαι) is not simply an act of the believer's will. That would be no different from the strenuous efforts of the Colossian heretics (see 2:20-23). Rather, as Moule points out, is it "... a change worked by the Spirit

of God, not by our unaided struggles."[402] This again, as in Rom 8 and Gal 5, places the Holy Spirit in the centre of the battle against sin. That this battle exists is no cause for despair: it is only the Christian who is in a position to fight back against sin's hold.[403]

Further light on Paul's understanding of freedom from sin here is shed by his use of the expression τὰ μέλη τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς (v. 5).[404] Lohse suggests that the phrase comes from an Iranian tradition in which "members" refer to "deeds".[405] Dibelius, however, points out that, while there may be a Persian parallel, what is primarily involved here is a listing of character qualities.[406] A better alternative yet is tht offerred by J. Horst who, while seeing a secondary reference to the Persian mysteries, views μέλη here as "... the members which constitute active and concrete corporeality under sin."[407] The meaning, therefore, is very close to that of Rom 6:13 or 8:13.[408] Moule comments rightly, "One can only guess that the vivid, concrete word is used because it is through the limbs or organs of the physical body that the vices are implemented."[409]

It seems reasonable, in the light of the similarities we have seen between all thesertexts, to take μέλη in its natural sense as a reference to the members of our bodies, understood not, however, as the source of sin, but rather, as Bruce expresses it, as "... comprehending the various kinds of sins which were committed by their means."[410] This is not a false ascetic approach involving a separation of body and spirit, however, for the bodily resurrection encompasses the whole man, and Paul (if our parallel to Rom 6 holds) views the μέλη as potential instruments of righteousness as well as of sin (see also 1 Cor 6:15).[411] What seems to be meant, therefore, is the putting to death of the whole man with all his attitudes and actions, insofar as he is in disobedience to Christ. The Apostle's use of μέλη here thus appears very similar to his use of σῶμα in Rom 8.[412] Lightfoot and Abbott, indeed, identify the μέλη with the παλαιὸς ἄνθρωπος (cf. Rom 6:6).[413] One would have to note, however, that for the believer, the μέλη must henceforth be enlisted in the service of the righteousness of God. In Rom 6:13-14, the μέλη are similarly enlisted as weapons of righteousness; the parallel text ἑαυτούς ...μέλη seems to suggest that the μέλη are now to be (progressively) identified with the new life as a whole (cf. the νέος ἄνθρωπος of Col 3:10).[414]

The thought here, therefore, is wholly in line with what Paul has said in Romans and Galatians. The believer has been freed from

sin through God's act in Christ. This freedom, however, is meaningless unless put to use in the service of righteousness, for the believer, far from having reached a state of perfection in which he could exercise his freedom as he wished, is continually faced with the need to seek God's renewing power by which his freedom from sin may be expressed in real, albeit imperfect, obedience to righteousness.

(b) vv. 9b-11

This brief portion of our text provides a transition from the exhortation regarding the putting to death of the old life to those dealing with the putting on of the new life. This transition is accomplished through the use of two participial phrases introduced, respectively, by ἀπεκδυσάμενοι and ἐνδυσάμενοι. The first provides the basis for the last of the first series of commands (μὴ ψεύδεσθε). The second leads on to the first of the new exhortations (ἐνδύσασθε οὖν, which relies directly on the idea expressed in the participle). Two questions are at stake here: the meaning of the participles and the significance of the two phrases following them.

Some commentators follow the suggestion of D. Daube that the Hebraic use of the participle as imperative underlies many NT commands, especially those in "catechetical lists" such as those found in 1 Pet 2:13ff, Eph 5:22ff and Col 3:18ff. Daube takes the view that these texts express a "... code enumerating rules of conduct within the new community."[415] Commentators favouring this position propose that the participles in Col 3:9-10 should be taken as imperatival.[416] That the participle may be used as an imperative appears quite possible from the evidence given by Daube and also that of Robertson in his Grammar, pp. 945-46.[417] The two participles in our text are probably not examples of such a use, however.[418] The following reasons may be given:

(i). They are not part of any list of social or civic responsibilities such as are the texts listed by Daube as incorporating "rules of conduct" for the community. Rather do they appear to be references to the believer's justification. It is general Pauline practice, as we have seen, to base the imperatives in indicatives (even though the division is more clear cut in some texts than in others),[419] and vv. 9b-11 fit better into the context as a description of the situation from which the imperatives of the surrounding verses take their meaning (note particularly the purely descriptive nature of v. 11[420]).[421]

(ii). The imagery is baptismal, and almost certainly expresses the same thought as 2:12 (... ἐν τῇ ἀπεκδύσει τοῦ σώματος τῆς σαρκός ... συνταφέντες αὐτῷ ἐν τῷ βαπτίσματι, ἐν ᾧ καὶ συνηγέρθητε).

(iii). The introduction of the imperative ἐνδύσασθε in v. 12 by οὖν seems to indicate a shift in thought (to the imperative from the indicative).[422]

(iv). According to Gal 3:27, the believers (in a definite reference to a past baptismal act[423]) are described as having put on Christ (Χριστὸν ἐνεδύσασθε). There is no reason why this idea should be out of place in Paul.

We may conclude, therefore, that the Apostle is referring to a real past occurrence (the believer's justification by faith, appropriated in baptism), yet not, however, in the sense of the mystery cults, whose language he may have borrowed, all the better to express his point (though the baptismal ceremony itself would have suggested the terms). In the Isis cult, the initiate, having put on special garments, was considered filled with the powers of the cosmos and physically transformed.[424] Such a picture, however, as we have seen, is far removed from the Apostle's thinking. Lohse notes that when Paul uses this image, he "... describes neither an ontological transfer of man nor the release of a divine kernel so as to allow it to develop fully and to let man possess salvation. Rather, the image illustrates the change of rule that has taken place in baptism."[425]

This corresponds with the "obedience" theme noted in our previous texts, and is brought out further in the second phrase, ἐνδυσάμενοι τὸν νέον, κ.τ.λ. Paul states that the νέος ἄνθρωπος has already been put on. This statement, however, is qualified by the following phrase. τὸν ἀνακαινούμενον, κ.τ.λ. The participle implies a continual renewal, and this removes the thought of a once-for-all achieved state of perfection in favour of a freedom from sin which always needs the exhortation to be exercised in obedience to Christ.[426] The "new man" is both a present reality and a future goal; each "new man" requires continual renewal.[427] This renewal is something which occurs to the whole person (over against the dualism of the Colossian errorists),[428] and thus places the whole person under the lordship of Christ. This again brings into prominence the fact that freedom for Paul can only be understood in the context of Christ's lordship over the believer. Freedom is not an end in itself for man, something with which he can be entrusted in an absolute measure, but is always freedom for obedience, freedom

to live under Christ's authority, and hence, as we have seen, freedom to begin to fulfil the law's just requirement. The νέος ἄνθρωπος is none other than the believer justified by faith in Christ, called to translate his profession of faith in baptism into actual practice.[429] Moule is right to point out that this does not mean that "... the 'old Adam' is gradually transformed into something better, but rather that the new humanity, already existing in Christ, is progressively actualized in the Christian church."[430] We must note, however, that this "actualization" is not a question of the "real" erasing the "unreal", but rather represents two equally real forces vying for the still-wavering allegiance of the believer who, though in one sense already part of the "new humanity", in another is all too tragically hemmed in by the desires of the old nature.

This latter thought receives further stress through the phrase εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν κατ' εἰκόνα τοῦ κτίσαντος αὐτόν, where κατ' εἰκόνα is probably a reference to Christ (cf. Col 1:15, ὅς ἐστιν εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ἀοράτου).[431] Knowledge of Christ,[432] rather than gnostic intuition, is the τέλος of the Christian life. This in itself is a telling comment on Christian existence. Lohmeyer notes that the new life in Christ "... führt nicht zu der Neuheit verklärten Daseins, sondern sittlicher 'Erkenntnis.'"[433] Knowledge of Christ cannot be fully attained in this life, but stands as a goal toward which the believer must press on. The believer is freed from sin's power and in some way takes on the image of Christ, yet full deliverance from sin and full knowledge of Christ remain outstanding. Freedom from sin must, therefore, become freedom for obedience. The putting off of the old man and putting on of the new involves a day to day attitude of obedience and subjection to Christ. Only in such obedience and humble submission is true freedom found. Thus we find that in this passage we are dealing with the same understanding of freedom from sin as in our previous texts. Schweizer sums up the import of the transitional statement well with his comment, "... diese Neuschaffung nicht etwa ein für allemal mit der Taufe erledigt ist, sondern ... der neue Mensch täglich erneuert werden muss."[434]

(c) vv. 12-17

This theme receives further reinforcement from the series of positive commands concerning the Christian life with which our passage

is concluded. The first of these, ἐνδύσασθε (v. 12), introduces a lengthy list of character qualities which, according to Paul, ought to be evidenced in the lives of believers. The basis for these is found in the example of Christ. Paul then issues instructions regarding the life of the church as a whole and characteristics of proper Christian worship. For our purposes, it is necessary to focus attention only on the first exhortation, letting it stand for the rest. Indeed, this command is well suited to our task, for it stands in close proximity to the immediately preceding participial form (ἐνδυσάμενοι) of the same word (with which our attention has just been occupied), and yet also stands in sharp distinction from it.

That Paul exhorts the believers to "put on" good qualities, when he has just declared that they have already "put on" the new man, surely implies a concern on his part to underline the incomplete nature of Christian obedience in the present life, and to forestall any misconception that, having put on the new man, the believers are in need of no further renewal and are no longer under obligation to work out their lives in continual obedience. That this obedience, as is made clear in vv. 1-4 (as well as in Romans and Galatians), is possible only and entirely through the grace of God is emphasized again here through the phrase ὡς ἐκλεκτοὶ τοῦ θεοῦ.[435] The command refers not to a once-for-all putting on; if so, it would seem strange that this (and the other commands in context) are given to <u>believers</u>. Our comments above have shown that this, and the other commands in the passage, should be seen as acts which must be repeated again and again.[436] There is some sense to Conzelmann's remark that the new man exists "... indem er sich dieser Richtschnur entsprechend verhält und dadurch verwirklicht, wozu er in der Taufe gemacht ist."[437] The placing of the command between the two words descriptive of past occurrences (ἐνδυσάμενοι and ἐκλεκτοί) highlights the believer's responsibility to confirm his own calling. R. Martin points out that this calling demands adherence to the highest ethical standards, so that the believers "... become in practice what they already were by divine calling and design."[438] Every believer is answerable to God for the way in which he undertakes the task of putting on those characteristics which the "new man" should manifest.[439]

Freedom for obedience, therefore, is once again placed in the closest conjunction with Paul's understanding of freedom from sin. This thought receives one more particular note of stress in v. 17,

where the believers are commanded to do everything ἐν ὀνόματι Κυρίου Ἰησοῦ. This resumes the thought of 2:6, ὡς οὖν παρελάβετε τὸν Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν τὸν Κύριον, ἐν αὐτῷ περιπατεῖτε. H. Bietenhard notes that "in the name of the Lord Jesus" is neither a mystical nor a magical formula, but rather signifies that the believers' lives have been placed under His authority.[440] Lohse comments, "... with this phrase ... the Christian's entire life is placed under obedience to the Lord."[441]

Our freedom is brought about entirely through God's act in Christ. This means, for Paul, that it is freedom to confess Christ's lordship over our lives. This provides the basis for the Apostle to describe true freedom in terms of slavery (cf. Rom 6:15ff). That the believer must stand under the lordship of Christ in the exercise of his freedom is true because of his weak and mortal condition. Of his own accord, he could not express genuine obedience to God unless he were able continually to receive God's grace to enable him to do so. Receiving of new life, however, does enable him to break free of the bondage of sin, the compelling rule of which has been broken in Christ. This is why the believer also needs God's law, as a steadfast and righteous expression, beyond human tampering and imperfection, of the will of God for his life. Freedom from sin is not something the believer has won for himself, so this freedom can never become a possession of the believer or an end in itself, i.e. something merely for the believer to enjoy or take pleasure in. The confession that he has been freed from sin in Christ must throw the believer continually back on the fact that he has been justified by faith and on his need to express that freedom under Christ's authority and in humble and grateful obedience to His will. In this way the idea of bondage to Christ can, in the fullest way, express the meaning of true freedom.

That Jesus is Κύριος means that we are his δοῦλοι. Yet in this slavery to Christ is found true freedom -- freedom which makes the earthly distinctions between δοῦλος and ἐλεύθερος (v. 11) immaterial by comparison (see our comments on 1 Cor 7:17ff). It is the Κύριος, however, who has forgiven us and provided the model for our forebearance (v. 13), even as it is the Κύριος who Himself, according to Phil 2:7, becomes δοῦλος, and whose lordship is defined precisely in terms of service and servanthood. This offers the pattern for our humble service and constant obedience which alone can begin to bring into adequate focus the fact that we have indeed been raised with Christ, and in Him received true freedom from the bondage of sin.

Conclusions

1. Rom 7:7-13 records the believer's consciousness of sin in the light of the original rebellion against God in which he participated. The background is the Paradise story, assimilated to some extent to the account of the giving of the law. That Paul can be thinking here of the Genesis account (and also of Sinai), as well as of the present situation of the believer, is explained by the Hebraic concept of corporate personality, evident also in Rom 5:12ff. That it is the believer who is speaking (which is indicated by the relationship between 7:7-13 and 7:14-25) shows how it is only through the gospel that the consciousness of sin and of its true nature comes to its height. Nowhere is man's sinfulness in the presence of God clearer than in his confrontation with the gospel.
2. Rom 7:14-25, with which vv. 7-13 are to be closely linked, sets forth the situation of the believer who, freed in Christ from sin's power, is beginning to express this freedom in fighting back, for the first time, against the attacks of sin. These verses speak (in a way very similar to the portrait of the believer in Rom 2:12ff, 25ff) of the one who loves God's law, and use phrases such as ἔσω ἄνθρωπος and νοῦς, which are elsewhere employed by Paul with specific reference to the Christian. The battle portrayed here is fierce but by no means hopeless. Its description, however, should be regarded as part of the overall outline of the Christian life Paul offers in Rom 6-8. It is no more an exclusive picture of the believer's situation than are texts such as Rom 5:13-14 an exclusive portrayal of the role of the law. A correct understanding of Rom 7:7-25, however, with its honest and vivid picture of the believer who has received freedom from sin's domination yet is only beginning to exercise that freedom in his struggle to overcome the weakness of the flesh, is crucial if the other texts in which Paul speaks of the believer's freedom from and victory over sin are not to be misunderstood as yielding an "over-optimistic" view of the Christian life.
3. In Rom 6, the question of freedom from sin is examined with relation to justification and baptism. The Apostle does not speak here of a mystical or magical sacramental sinlessness, but of a justification and baptism in which the believer is freed from the absolute domination of sin in order to fight back against its authority. The

thought of the believer's participation in the historical death of Christ (cf. the concept of corporate personality), not of a mystical initiation ritual, is in view here.

4. In Rom 6, as in Rom 7, Paul exhibits a profound awareness of the believer's continuing weakness in his present mortal condition, even when he speaks of the new life received in Christ. Only such an understanding of his thinking can do justice to the way in which he relates "indicative" and "imperative" texts. The presence of the latter indicates that a response of the believer, i.e. his active cooperation, is required with respect to God's act in Christ if the effects of Christ's work are to be made real in his life.
5. Freedom from sin, therefore, means not ethical perfection but a breaking of the hold of sin in such a way that the believer is enabled by God to begin a life of obedience to His commands. He has died to sin and received new life, but this life is not yet present in its fulfilled form. Because of this, the believer is not freed to do as he wishes, but needs the reminder that his freedom takes the form of slavery to God. Only in this slavery will the juridical act of God in Christ begin to have ethical consequences in the believer's life. Freedom, therefore, is not an end in itself, but is freedom for obedience. Its basis is always found in God's justification of sinners. Freedom as an end in itself will prove disastrous, but in slavery to God and to righteousness it receives its true meaning. That this freedom (and, with it, a genuine measure of victory over sin) is real, receives a stress here lacking in Rom 7:7ff, because Paul is focussing here on the positive effects of God's act in Christ rather than on the believer's consciousness of sin when confronted with God's righteous command.
6. The same themes -- justification of the sinner through God's act in Christ, freedom from sin's domination, receipt of the new life, the believer's continuing weakness, the interrelationship of "indicative" and "imperative" -- are all found in Rom 8:1ff. Here, however, Paul's focus, in discussing the believer's freedom from sin, is not on justification and baptism but on justification and the working of the Holy Spirit. The same patterns, however, are evident. As with baptism, the gift of the Spirit leads not to unbridled freedom, licence to do as one pleases, but rather places the believer under the lordship of Christ. This is because, even as baptism does not result in ethical perfection, neither does the

gift of the Spirit. The same distinction between the incomplete nature of the new life in this mortal existence and its eschatological fulfilment is evident here as in Rom 6 -- except that here it is related to the future life-bringing work of the Holy Spirit. Also, even as baptism requires the active response of the believer in making real the break with sin effected only through the work of Christ, so also does the gift of the Spirit, based firmly in the death and resurrection of Christ, require the believer's co-operation, without which he cannot be said to be walking κατὰ Πνεῦμα, and is in danger of walking κατὰ σάρκα instead. The life κατὰ σάρκα is not characteristic of the believer; neither, however, is it totally removed from one who is still commanded to put to death the deeds of the body. Indeed, the continuing power of the flesh in the believer's life means that he is still subject to the effects of sin in his mortal existence, i.e. physical death. The freedom the believer receives is freedom for obedience, and can only be preserved through continual submission to the lordship of the Spirit. Again, however, as in Rom 6, the reality of that freedom and victory over sin which the believer has received is given a place not accorded to it in Rom 7:7ff, because here again, Paul is focussing on the positive effects of God's act in Christ (this time with relation to the work of the Holy Spirit), rather than the confrontation between sinful men and God's holy command.

7. Gal 5:13ff unites the themes of Rom 6 and 8, in that it speaks of the partnership of ἐλευθερία and δουλεία and the consequences of justification and baptism within the context of the working of the Spirit. As in the previous texts, because of the believer's weak and mortal condition, Paul must insist that the freedom given through God's act in Christ can only be preserved through slavery to God and obedience to His law (expressed in love for God and for others), and in submission to the leading of the Spirit. In such slavery and submission, Paul states here as in Romans, is found true freedom, freedom for obedience and not freedom to do as one wishes. Freedom from sin (as in Romans) comes through God's act in Christ, not through the believer himself. Yet for this freedom to be real, the believer must continually yield himself to the leading of the Spirit. Life comes always from the Spirit, but can only be made real through the believer's active desire to express his freedom in slavery to righteousness. Finally, Paul's emphasis here that the believer

has received a genuine freedom from sin corresponds to this stress noted also in Rom 6 and 8.

8. The appearance of the same patterns of thought in Col 3:1-17, in an atmosphere clearly removed from that of the Roman or Galatian churches, indicates the consistency and strength of Paul's views on our topic. Even here, where he is addressing different questions (with respect, for instance, to the Colossian heresy), and consequently expressing his views in a somewhat different way (using resurrection language, for instance, with reference to the believer's justification), he conveys the same thoughts. As in the previous passages, the believer, though he has received a genuine new life, is still subject to the attacks of sin, and must be exhorted to express his freedom in terms of obedience. Even here, where the Apostle wishes to encourage the believers regarding the reality and power of Christ's work, he makes clear that the fulfilment of their new life is reserved for the future. The believer has died and been raised in justification and baptism, yet must still put to death the desires of the flesh. This thought receives particular stress here with respect to the concept of the μέλη and that of the νέος ἄνθρωπος who, having been put on in baptism, is still, however, in the process of renewal and needs the exhortation to express his freedom in obedience to Christ and submission to His lordship. Once again, though, the assurance of real victory over sin is made, this time through the stress (lacking in Romans) on the way in which the believer has already been raised with Christ to a new life.

Footnotes

1. Otto Kuss, Der Römerbrief, 3 vols., II, 481.

2. See Franz-J. Leenhardt, The Epistle to the Romans, p. 185; C. K. Barrett, A Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, pp. 140-41; Paul Althaus, Der Brief an die Römer, p. 74; Hans W. Schmidt, Der Brief des Paulus an die Römer, pp. 220-21; Otto Michel, Der Römerbrief, p. 226; Kuss, II, pp. 439-42; C.E.B. Cranfield, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, 2 vols, I, 340-41. Mistaken is Anders Nygren, Romans, pp. 278-84, who asserts that Paul wishes to portray the law here as taking its place among the powers that destroy and as impotent to call forth the good.

3. See Barrett, p. 140; Schmidt, p. 123; Heinrich Schlier, Der Römerbrief, p. 220.

4. See James Dunn, "Rom. 7:14-25 in the Theology of St Paul," TZ 31 (1975), p. 260.

5. Werner G. Kümmel, Röm. 7 und das Bild des Menschen im Neuen Testament, p. 78.

6. Ulrich Luz, Das Geschichtsverständnis bei Paulus, p. 165, notes the Rabbinic view that the evil impulse comes at birth, the good only through the Torah. Solomon Schechter, Aspects of Rabbinic Theology, p. 252, points out that the Rabbis were divided as to whether the evil "yetzer" came at conception (Aboth R Nathan 32b) or at birth (Sanh. 91b, Gen R 34:6, Jer Ber 6b). See also Hans J. Schoeps, Paul: The Theology of the Apostle in the Light of Jewish Religious History, pp. 185-86.

7. Kümmel, p. 82.

8. Kümmel, p. 81; Schlier, p. 223; Ernst Käsemann, An die Romer, p. 185.

9. Kümmel, p. 83.

10. Kümmel, p. 82; Schlier, p. 223; Käsemann, p. 185.

11. Kümmel, p. 83.

12. Luz, p. 165.

13. Leenhardt, p. 181.

14. Kümmel, p. 113.

15. See Schechter, p. 324 on the cooperation of human acts and divine aid.

16. See the list in Stanislas Lyonnet, "L'histoire de salut selon le chapitre VII de l'Épître aux Romains," Bib 43 (1962), p. 132.

17. Kümmel, p. 86.

18. Kümmel, p. 87.

19. Kümmel, p. 87.

20. Kümmel, p. 54.

21. Kümmel, pp. 85-87.

22. Althaus, p. 75. See also Andrew J. Bandstra, The Law and the Elements of the World: An Exegetical Study in Aspects of Paul's Teaching, p. 137.

23. Kümmel, p. 77.

24. See Kümmel, pp. 87-88.

25. Kümmel, p. 124. Althaus, p. 74, states that Paul relates this as his own history, but does so theologically, not biographically,

speaking not so much of his personal situation as of "pre-Christian history".

26. Karl Kertelge, "Exegetische Überlegungen zum Verständnis der paulinischen Anthropologie nach Römer 7," ZNW 62 (1971), p. 108; Schmidt, p. 125.

27. See Käsemann, pp. 186-87; Kuss, II, 451; Kümmel, pp. 89-90, 126.

28. Kümmel, p. 90.

29. Kertelge, p. 108.

30. Kertelge, p. 108.

31. Kertelge, p. 109.

32. Paul Althaus, "Zur Auslegung von Röm 7:14ff: Antwort an Anders Nygren," ThLZ 77 (1952), col. 477. He cites Bengel: "... hoc versu 14 nec particula 'enim' ullum omnino, nedum res ipsa tam grandem patitur saltum fieri ab uno statu in alterum."

33. C. L. Mitton, "Romans vii -- Reconsidered (part 1)," ExpT 65 (1953-54), p. 79.

34. Althaus, "Zur Auslegung," col. 477.

35. Kümmel, p. 97.

36. Althaus, "Zur Auslegung," col. 477.

37. Mitton, p. 79.

38. Althaus, "Zur Auslegung," col. 479; Michel, p. 233; Käsemann, p. 191; Schlier, p. 229.

39. See Käsemann, pp. 194-96.

40. Käsemann, p. 196.

41. Kuss, II, 454.

42. Michel, p. 227, who links the thought to that expressed in Rom 4:15.

43. Michel, p. 230; Käsemann, p. 190; Schlier, p. 229; Kümmel, p. 57.

44. Kümmel, p. 97; Käsemann, p. 202.

45. See Althaus, "Zur Auslegung," col. 479-80; Richard N. Longenecker, Paul: Apostle of Liberty, p. 112.

46. Kümmel, p. 98. See also Gal 5:13ff where, though a seemingly analogous conflict is in view, the presence of the Spirit (vv. 16-17) is a key to the believer's victory. The Galatians parallel is used by commentators holding to the "pre-conversion" interpretation. We shall see below, however, that the conclusions drawn from it are by no means assured, if it is taken to indicate a contrast to our text.

47. Althaus, "Zur Auslegung," col. 478.

48. See our discussion (in our study of freedom from sin in Rom 6) below on the debate between Windisch and Bultmann on the problem of indicative and imperative in Paul.

49. Kümmel, p. 101.

50. Kümmel, p. 107.

51. Kümmel, p. 108.

52. See F. Muller, "Zwei Marginalien im Brief des Paulus an die Römer," ZNW 40 (1941), pp. 249-54.

53. See Rudolf Bultmann, "Glossen im Römerbrief," ThLZ 72 (1947), cols. 192-202. See also Schlier, p. 235; Käsemann, pp. 203-4.

54. Kümmel, p. 110; Althaus, An die Römer, p. 78, who says that what we have here is simply an "... erkennbaren stilistischen Eigenart des Paulus, dass er sich unterbricht und etwas nachträgt."

55. Kümmel, p. 110. See also C. L. Mitton, "Romans vii -- Reconsidered (part 3)," ExpT 65 (1953-54), p. 133, who translates the phrase "man entirely on his own"; J. Kürzinger, "Der Schlüssel zum Verständnis von Röm. 7," BZ 7 (1963), p. 274, translates, "ich für mich selbst, ich auf mich (allein) gestellt."

56. See Mitton, "Romans vii ... (part 3)," p. 134.

57. Kürzinger, p. 271; Longenecker, p. 113, views v. 25b as an "interjected parenthesis".

58. Althaus, An die Römer, pp. 77-78; see also Günther Bornkamm, "Sin, Law and Death: An Exegetical Study of Romans 7," in Early Christian Experience, pp. 98-99.

59. Bornkamm, p. 101.

60. See Kümmel, pp. 121-31, for a listing of texts.

61. Kümmel, p. 132.

62. Kümmel, p. 124.

63. Kümmel, p. 126.

64. Kümmel, p. 132.

65. See Cranfield, I, 348.

66. On these texts see Stanislas Lyonnet, "Quaestiones ad Rom 7:7-13," VD 40 (1962), p. 166.

67. See Lyonnet, "L'histoire de salut," p. 137; Käsemann, p. 188.

68. Lyonnet, "L'histoire de salut," p. 138.

69. See 4 Ezra 8:52, Theophilus of Antioch, Ad Autolycum II, 24 (PG 6, 1092).

70. Käsemann, p. 188.

71. Michel, pp. 228-29, "Wieder wird Röm 7,7-25 zur grossen Anklage der Sünde, nicht des Gesetzes Gottes."

72. Lyonnet, "Quaestiones," p. 171. See also Michel, p. 228; Luz, p. 166.

73. Lyonnet, "L'histoire de salut," p. 133.

74. See Michel, p. 226; Cranfield, I, 349.

75. Barrett, p. 141.

76. Stanislas Lyonnet, "'Tu ne convoiteras pas' (Rom 7:7)," in Neotestamentica et Patristica (Novum Testamentum Supplement 6), pp. 159-60.

77. Lyonnet, "'Tu ne convoiteras pas'," p. 160.

78. Lyonnet, "'Tu ne convoiteras pas'," p. 162.

79. Käsemann, p. 188; Schlier, p. 224.

80. See Lyonnet, "L'histoire de salut," pp. 126-28.

81. See Cranfield, I, 283.

82. Lyonnet, "Quaestiones," p. 180.

83. Kümmel, p. 80.

84. Lyonnet, "Quaestiones," p. 180. His suggestion, however, that νόμος here simply denotes the idea of an external command is unhelpful. Rather does Paul, starting with νόμος (because his subject in the subsection is the defence of the law), look back to the Genesis story and view it as the first occasion on which a direct command came from God to man, a command which received its fuller expression many years later in the law (and which, in one sense, has received its fullest expression in the gospel).

85. See the examples listed in Lyonnet, "Quaestiones," p. 182; see also Kümmel, p. 52 n. 1; Michel, pp. 227-28 n. 22.

86. Longenecker, p. 95.

87. Longenecker, p. 94; Michel, pp. 227-28 n. 22.

88. Lyonnet, "Quaestiones," p. 169.

89. Dunn, p. 260.

90. J. I. Packer, "The 'wretched man' in Romans 7," Studia Evangelica II (Texte und Untersuchungen 87 (1964)), p. 626. See Cranfield, I, 365-66, who also notes that ταλαίπωρος (v. 24) "... can indicate

distress, affliction, suffering, without in any way implying hopelessness..." (p. 366). See also Dunn, p. 263.

91. Dunn, p. 260.

92. Dunn, p. 261. Longenecker, p. 88, points out that Kümmel's Rabbinic examples are late (second century), and have a similarly imaginary or even conjured character.

93. Packer, p. 623.

94. Cranfield, I, 356.

95. See Cranfield, I, 358-59, who translates, "I do not acknowledge" or "I do not approve".

96. For this interpretation see Schmidt, p. 130 ("Das Rätsel entsteht also erst für den Christen"); Schlier, p. 230; Bornkamm, pp. 96-97; Kasemann, p. 195, who suggests that this is a Christian perspective on the past. Rudolf Bultmann, "Romans 7 and the Anthropology of Paul," in Existence and Faith, pp. 154-55, who interprets the discrepancy as being between genuine obedience to the actual commands of God, and the establishment of human boasting thereby.

97. See C. L. Mitton, "Romans vii -- Reconsidered (part 2)," ExpT 65 (1953-54), p. 100.

98. Packer, p. 624.

99. What, therefore, are we to make of the assertion of Victor P. Furnish, Theology and Ethics in Paul, pp. 141-43, that the law tempts man into sin by making him try to fulfil its commands and so enter into pride? Thus, for Furnish, the law becomes the agent of sin! This seems to miss the whole point of the passage -- apart from being a grave misunderstanding of Paul's view of freedom and the law.

100. Surely mistaken, therefore, is the view of Schoeps, pp. 184-85, that Paul sees the seriousness of sin and how it uses the law, comes to the realization that the law can do nothing to help, and therefore declares it abolished. On the contrary, it is only because the believer is now able to begin to fulfil the law that he fully appreciates the depth of his own sin and rebellion, against which he is now fighting back. These verses do not indicate a hopeless situation, as Schoeps thinks.

101. Michel, p. 233 and Käsemann, p. 191, are correct in seeing σάρξ as indicating man as in opposition to God, but wrong in supposing that this necessarily shows that the unbeliever is in view. The believer also, as one still living in the flesh, remains far from obedient to the commands of God.

102. Cranfield, I, 346.

103. Packer, p. 625.

104. Dunn, p. 262; Cranfield, I, 363. We must therefore reject Leenhardt's description of the ἔσω ἄνθρωπος as "... the natural man considered

from the point of view of his faculties of moral judgment" (p. 193). Also mistaken is the view of Kümmel, p. 136, that the ἔσω ἄνθρωπος represents man as the "willing subject", while σάρξ represents man as the "acting subject". For a critique of this view, see Cranfield, I, 363 n. 2.

For the same reasons we must also doubt the views of those who seek to pursue a middle course of actions here. Three examples may be noted of this kind of position:

i: O. Modalsli, "Gal 2:19-21, 5:16-18 und Röm 7:7-25," ThZ 21 (1965), p. 35, argues that, while vv. 14-25 undoubtedly portray the Christian, it is the Christian who seeks to live as a "renewed man" rather than by the Spirit; the contrast between vv. 14-25 and 8:1ff is that between the believer who seeks to live ἐν Χριστῳ (or ἐν Πνεύματι) and the Christian who seeks to live out of his own resources ("aus sich zu leben"), presumably in some kind of legalism. The very expression "renewed man", however, militates against this argument, in that it always refers in Paul to man as under the influence of the Spirit, i.e. is always a positive reference. On the significance of the lack of mention of the Spirit in Rom 7:7ff, see our comments in the text. Also to be rejected, surely is the view of George E. Ladd, A Theology of the New Testament, pp. 476-77, who sees the phrase as referring to the "... higher, essential self, either redeemed or redeemable, made for God and opposed to sin" (p. 477). Apart from the glaring ambiguity of the phrase "redeemed or redeemable" (what for Paul would "redeemable" have meant?), how could Paul have spoken of something in the unregenerate man (cf. Rom 1:18ff) which was "made for God and opposed to sin"? Ladd's statement (p. 509) that the man of vv. 14-25 delights in the law but does not fulfil it suffers from the same difficulty.

ii: We may also doubt the view of Andrew Bandstra who, while admitting that ἔσω ἄνθρωπος refers in Paul to "man under the influence of the Spirit" (p. 146), and that the use of νοῦς here should be linked with its use in 12:2, maintains that "delight in the law" does not represent normative Christian experience, and that the ἐγώ here is not yet presented as fulfilling the δικαίωμα τοῦ νόμου of 8:4. (Reference may be made here also to the view of William Sanday and Arthur C. Headlam, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, p. 185, that three stages are depicted: ignorance, "inter regenerandum" and "truly and fully regenerate" (v. 25a and ch. 8). On this view, one cannot say where the point of conversion comes. Not until v. 25a is there a single characteristically Christian expression, the use of which marks the end of the conflict in the subject (p. 186). As for this latter view, however, what evidence is there in Paul for such a threefold process? And, as for their point regarding the language of the passage, we have seen that various expressions occur in these verses which are distinctively Christian.

To his prior comments, Bandstra adds the thought that v. 24 refers to Paul's Damascus Road encounter (p. 147). On the basis of this and the other points noted above, he supposes that the "double conclusion" of v. 25b-8:1 ("I on my own without Christ -- those in Christ Jesus") indicates a contrast between the newly-converted believer of vv. 14;25 and the mature Christian of 8:1ff. He states, "Thus Rom 7:14-25 gives the deepened awareness that comes from being confronted with Jesus Christ, when God's grace had hit its mark in the life of Paul and his

fellow Jewish Christians. In this experience Paul came to see that he was a sinner, under the power of sin, and that the law was helpless and inadequate to save him" (p. 203). We must discard this view, however, for the following reasons:

a) ἔσω ἄνθρωπος and νοῦς elsewhere refer to the Christian life developing properly and normally under the power of the Spirit -- and bear no necessary reference to the new believer.
b) The assumption that v. 24 has a Damascus Road background is totally unfounded. Paul's other references to his conversion do not provide any support for the possibility of such a reference here.
c) For a critique of the view that αὐτὸς ἐγώ denotes the self without Christ, see our comments in the text.
d) The attempt to drive a wedge between Rom 7 and Rom 8 ignores the unity of Rom 6-8 (as noted in our comments).
e) Finally (and perhaps most decisively), vv. 14-25 to all appearances represents a prolonged struggle, not an instantaneous realization at the moment of conversion.

iii: We must also reject, surely, the view of E. Ellwein, who argues that vv. 14-25 depict the believer growing in sanctification until he reaches the point of the "mors mystica" at v. 24, which in turn issues in the triumph of v. 25a and ch. 8 ("Das Rätsel von Röm 7," KD 1 (1955), p. 267). This view overlooks the reality of the struggle against sin portrayed in chs. 6 and 8, and depends for its strength on the dubious conclusion that the expressions of v. 19 and v. 22 are far more intense than those of vv. 15 and 16, for which no lexical evidence is adduced (all other commentators take these verses as more or less parallel). V. 24 does not represent any more heightened sense of conflict than does v. 14 (often taken by commentators as one of the chief indications that a non-believer is the subject. Ellwein asserts that in the subsection there occurs a personification of sin representing a progressive isolation of its power is equally doubtful. The personification, surely, is present as early as v. 8 (or indeed 5:21!) -- and does not the Apostle go to some lengths at v. 25b to underline man's responsibility for his sin? Surely Ellwein misunderstands the nature of the conflict in these verses, even though he grasps something of the truth.

105. See Käsemann, p. 198; Schlier, p. 233.

106. See Cranfield, I, 363.

107. Dunn, p. 263. This solution not only appears justified from the evidence, but also avoids the necessity of having to postulate a confusion in Paul's understanding of man's position before God which is quite uncalled for.

108. Cranfield, I, 363.

109. Mistaken, surely, is Kümmel, pp. 137-38, who asserts that Paul makes more allowance for the non-believer here than elsewhere. See our comments on 1:18-3:20. Some commentators are misled here by the thought that Paul speaks of enlightened non-believers in Rom 2:12ff, 15ff -- but see our critique of this view.

110. See Mitton, "Romans vii -- (part 3)," p. 133.

111. Leenhardt, p. 195.

112. Käsemann, pp. 203-4.

113. Cranfield, I, 369 n. 4.

114. Kuss, II, 460. Packer, p. 625, notes that no parallel NT reference can be given to support Kümmel's notion of the self thrown back on its own resources, i.e. without Christ.

115. See Cranfield, I, 373-74.

116. Kürzinger, p. 271.

117. See Dunn, p. 262. Note also the comment of H. Braun, "Römer 7: 7-25 und das Selbstverständnis des Qumran-Frommen," ZThK 56 (1959), p. 8, that for the Qumran sectarians it was at conversion that the individual realized his creaturely nothingness before God, and hence gained a consciousness of his own inadequacy. Before conversion, this conflict did not exist, for he lived unaware of his sins. The assurance of acceptance by God is combined with a sense of one's own sinfulness (p. 11). The parallels to our text are interesting, if not conclusive. It is also instructive to note that the "I" form is found in many of the Qumran hymns. K. G. Kuhn, "New light on temptation, sin and flesh in the NT," in The Scrolls and the New Testament, ed. K. Stendahl, p. 102, suggests that this is to be taken as descriptive of human experience, and notes also that the believer in these texts is described both as "flesh of sin" and "elect of God". It may not be legitimate to draw hard and fast conclusions from these comparisons, but Luz, pp. 160ff, is surely too bold when he states that the deeper concept of sin in Paul makes the whole comparison illegitimate (Paul could not have conceived of the believer as open to sin in the way Qumran could). If anything, Paul's deeper concept of sin made him more aware of the believer's weaknesses, and less likely to pass them off or view them as things of the past. On Paul and Qumran see also Wolfgang Nauck, Die Tradition und der Charakter des ersten Johannesbriefes, pp. 106-11.

118. J. Lambrecht, "Man before and without Christ: Rom 7 and Pauline Anthropology," Louvain Studies 5 (1974), p. 26. On the theme of the Lutheran "simul iustus et peccator" applied to v. 25b, see M. Byskov, "'Simul iustus et peccator': Röm 7:25b," StTh 30 (1976), pp. 75-87.

119. Kurt Stalder, Das Werk des Geistes in der Rechtfertigung bei Paulus, p. 290; Dunn, p. 262.

120. Dunn, p. 261; Cranfield, I, 348; Barrett, p. 142.

121. That is, in a way that does not suggest that the passage is purely autobiographical. In this sense, we can surely agree with Barrett, p. 143, who says that Paul tells his own story in the light of Genesis.

122. See also Strack-Billerbeck 3, pp. 227-29.

123. See H. Windisch, "Das Problem des paulinischen Imperativs," ZNW 23 (1924), pp. 265-80.

124. See Windisch, pp. 267-72.

125. See Windisch, pp. 272, 277, 280.

126. See Rudolf Bultmann, "Das Problem der Ethik bei Paulus, " ZNW 23 (1924), pp. 123-40.

127. Bultmann, p. 126.

128. Bultmann, p. 136.

129. Bultmann, p. 140.

130. Windisch, p. 273.

131. See Windisch, p. 273.

132. P-B.Langevin, "Le Baptême dans la Mort-Résurrection: Exégèse de Rm 6, 1-5," Sciences Ecclésiastiques 17 (1965), p. 65, comments that these verses contain "... l'expression la plus profonde et la plus vigoureuse que contienne le NT sur le sens théologique et la portée spirituelle du baptême chrétienne."

133. See Langevin, p. 65.

134. See G. Wagner, Pauline Baptism and the Pagan Mysteries, trans. J. P. Smith, pp. 43-57.

135. See Wagner, pp. 283-84. See also G. Delling, Die Zueignung des Heils in der Taufe, pp. 68-83; P. Bonnard, "Mourir et Vivre avec Jésus-Christ selon Saint Paul," Revue d'Histoire et de Philosophie Religieuses36 (1956), pp. 101-12. We may also make note of the conflict regarding the correct interpretation of v. 5, εἰ γὰρ σύμφυτοι γεγόναμεν τῷ ὁμοιώματι τοῦ θανάτου αὐτοῦ. Kuss, II, 361-62, even though holding that there is a baptismal reference here, notes that the thought is primarily of the death of Christ. If there is a baptismal reference, the dative (ὁμοιώματι) is, in our view, local rather than instrumental. G. Bornkamm,"Baptism and New Life in Paul," in Early Christian Experience, trans. P. L. Hammer, p. 78, notes a dat. instr. would require αὐτῷ after γεγόναμεν. The omission of the pronoun is all the more striking when in v. 4 Paul has just written συνετάφημεν οὖν αὐτῷ διὰ τοῦ βαπτίσματος εἰς τὸν θάνατον. It is also difficult to supply τῷ ὁμοιώματι (as a baptismal reference) before τῆς ἀναστάσεως in v. 5b (see Bornkamm, p. 85 n. 19), where, on such an interpretation, it is required to balance the verse and fill in the ellipsis. Lagrange, p. 146, admits such a view stretches the syntax (though he prefers it). Given the parallels in vv. 4, 6 and 8, however, a baptismal reference cannot be entirely ruled out -- yet Paul seems to move away from the idea of baptism in v. 5b (see Cranfield, I, 307).

136. See Käsemann, p. 157.

137. See Käsemann, p. 157.

138. See Käsemann, p. 157. See also K-A. Bauer, Leiblichkeit: Das Ende aller Werke Gottes, p. 150.

138a. On this see F. Neugebauer, "Das paulinische 'in Christo'," NTS 4 (1957-58), pp. 124-38.

139. Wagner, pp. 290-92.

140. See K. G. Kuhn, "Rm 6.7: ὁ γὰρ ἀποθανὼν δεδικαίωται ἀπὸ τῆς ἁμαρτίας," ZNW 30 (1931), pp. 305-11. For the view that Paul's reliance here on Rabbinic texts means that, for him, the Christian has nothing further to do with the law, see W. Diezinger, "Unter Toten Freigeworden: Eine Untersuchung zu Röm. III-VIII, NovTest 5 (1962), pp. 268-98; J. Klausner, From Jesus to Paul, pp. 496-97; Schoeps, pp. 171-72. G. Schrenk, "δικαιόω," TDNT II, p. 218, suggests that the verse is an "erratic block" in Paul, and that "... the Rabbinic saying that the soul of the dead achieves expiation by death, and the Pauline statement that he who dies is thereby pronounced free from sin, are fully identical in substance." Another variant of this view is found in E. Klaar, "'Ὁ γὰρ ἀποθανὼν δεδικαίωται ἀπὸ τῆς ἁμαρτίας'," ZNW 59 (1968), pp. 131-34. For a related but somewhat different interpretation see Lagrange, p. 147. For Diezinger's discussion of Paul's baptismal statements see our comments on Rom 7:1-6.

141. Kuhn, p. 305.

142. Kuhn, p. 310.

143. Stanislas Lyonnet, "Qui enim mortuus est, iustificatus est a peccato (Rom 6.7)," VD 42 (1964), p. 20.

144. Lyonnet, p. 21: "Ergo liberari a peccato est liberari a corpore carnali et iustitiae possessorem fieri seu vitae pneumaticae; eodem modo atque Christus factus est possessor vitae pneumaticae ... mediante morte sua et resurrectione."

145. For references see (140) above.

146. R. Scroggs, "Romans 6.7, 'ὁ γὰρ ἀποθανὼν δεδικαίωται ἀπὸ τῆς ἁμαρτίας,'" NTS 10 (1963-64), pp. 104-8.

147. Scroggs, p. 106.

148. On which see Käsemann, p. 157.

149. Klaar, p. 132, objects to the meaning this gives to ἁμαρτία, which (he feels) from context must be a reference to a force which is present. This, however, betrays an inadequate understanding of Paul's concept of the dynamic nature of sin. It is because we are free from the objective guilt of the past that we can overcome the present attacks of the same evil power.

150. Stalder, pp. 228-31 n. 81.

151. See Käsemann, p. 157; Stalder, p. 227.

152. Stalder, p. 231 n. 81.

152a. See W. Joest, "Paulus und das Luthersche Simul Iustus et Peccator," KD 1 (1955), pp. 280-81.

153. E. Lohse, "Taufe und Rechtfertigung bei Paulus," KD 11 (1965), p. 319. A. Oepke, "βαπτίζω," TDNT I, p. 542, notes, "... it must be emphasized that an immediate and almost magical transformation of human nature, in which sin is eradicated, is no more a part of Paul's logic than an immediate destruction of sin and death." Nygren, p. 263, notes rightly the gist of Paul's argument, "He who is not free from sin cannot fight against it, for he is the slave of sin.... Only he who, through Christ, has been freed from sin can enter the battle against it; and he, because of his status as a slave of righteousness, is obligated to join in that battle."

154. See Joest, p. 293.

155. Cranfield, I, 299-300.

156. Bornkamm, p. 80.

157. See Stalder, p. 215 n. 75.

158. Cranfield, I, 305; Schlier, p. 194; Käsemann, p. 158.

159. Cranfield, I, 305.

160. Schlier, p. 194.

161. Schlier, p. 194; Käsemann, p. 159.

162. Kuss, I, 298.

163. See Kuss, I, 300.

164. Langevin, p. 60.

165. Cranfield, I, 308.

166. Althaus, p. 62; Schlier, p. 196.

167. Langevin, p. 62; Cranfield, I, 308.

168. Schlier, p. 196.

169. Kasemann, p. 169.

170. See Joest, pp. 277-78.

171. H. Lietzmann, An die Römer, pp. 65-66. See also (189) below.

172. Cranfield, I, 308-9.

173. Cranfield's rendering (I, 309), contra, e.g. NIV, NASB, RSV. V. 8, however, suffices to make the point, even if v. 9 is seen as a reference to a past act.

174. See Cranfield, I, 309.

175. Cranfield, I, 310, draws on the fact that crucifixion and the resulting death were not one event (as crucifixion was often a long and drawn-out procedure). See also Schlier, pp. 197-98.

176. See Cranfield, I, 310.

177. See Schlier, p. 198.

178. Käsemann, p. 161.

179. A. Schlatter, Gottes Gerechtigkeit: Ein Kommentar zum Römerbrief, 4th ed., p. 208.

180. Bauer, p. 151.

181. E. Dinkler, Zum Problem der Ethik bei Paulus, p. 231. Nygren, p. 243, comments, "In the death of Christ sin suffered the definitive loss of its right to rule." See also Kuss, I, 304; Schmidt, p. 111.

182. Cranfield, I, 315. Michel comments, "... es bezeichnet den Akt des Glaubens, der das Heilsgeschehen annimmt, versteht und auf sich anwendet" (p. 208).

183. Kuss, I, 306.

184. See O. Merk, Handeln aus Glauben: Die Motivierungen der paulinischen Ethik, p. 27.

185. See Stalder, p. 215.

186. Cranfield, I, 315.

187. Barrett, p. 127.

188. Schmidt, p. 112.

189. See Cranfield on v. 12 (I, 316-17). See also Schmidt, p. 113, who comments that the separation from sin has occurred in such a way that "... die Vollzug und die Verwirklichung der grundsätzlich schon gesetzten Bestimmung des Christen immer schon im Gange ist." Lietzmann, pp. 65-66, views Paul as fighting against the proponents of a premature resurrection; hence, he sees ἐσόμεθα in v. 5 as entirely futuristic. He still takes v. 11, however, to indicate that the future resurrection has already become the occasion for ethical decision. In this way, the present reality of the new life is made a basis for ethics (in distinction to the mystery religions). The new ability the believer acquires from God, however, requires obedience if it is to become and remain effective.

190. See Leenhardt, p. 165.

191. See Schlier, pp. 202-3.

192. Stalder, p. 216: "unsere ganze gegenwärtige Existenz." E. Schweizer and F. Baumgärtel, "σῶμα," TDNT VII, p. 1064: "man as a whole". J. Horst, "μέλος," TDNT IV, p. 561, notes that μέλη (v. 13), "... embraces man in his actuality."

193. Käsemann, p. 169.

194. Käsemann, p. 168.

195. Käsemann, p. 168.

196. For the significance of ὑπὸ νόμον see on Rom 3:19-20, 7:6, 7:7ff, Gal 3:23, etc. The end of the law's just condemnation of our sin, not the end of the law itself, is in view here.

197. Kuss, II, 383.

198. Stalder, p. 216, comments, "Unsere Existenzweise ist immer noch eine vorläufige.... Erst in der Parusie werden wir überhaupt keine Bekanntschaft mehr haven mit der Sünde." To be doubted is the view of Bauer, p. 154, that the θνητὸν σῶμα is a kind of intermediate stage between the σῶμα τῆς ἁμαρτίαςand the σῶμα πνευμάτικον. See also Merk, p. 37. There seems little evidence for such a supposition, however. These are all different ways of describing the Christian's battle as a whole person against sin; cf. on Rom 8:10.

199. M-J. Lagrange, Saint Paul, Épître aux Romains, p. 153.

200. See Delling's comment in (201) below.

201. Merk, p. 37, comments, "Diese Befreiung ermöglicht den erfolgreichen Kampf gegen die Sünde, weil der in Gottes Handeln Einbezogene wirklich frei ist von der Macht der Sünde. Das immer neue Rückbezug auf Gottes Tat ist darum die entscheidende Waffe gegen die Sünde." See also G. Delling, "Zum neueren Paulusverständnis," NovTest 4 (1960-61), p. 119: Solange der Christ noch im 'sterblichen Leibe' befindet, ist er -- da die Sünde durch das an die irdische Leiblichkeit gebundene Begehren neue Macht über den Christen gewinnen will und kann ... -- der Möglichkeit der Sündigens ausgesetzt; der Möglichkeit, aber nicht dem Zwang zum Sündigen."

202. Schlier, p. 204.

203. Cranfield, I, 317.

204. Cranfield, I, 319.

205. See Althaus, p. 68.

206. See Althaus, p. 68. Stalder notes (p. 226), "Die Sünde ist jedoch keine Theorie. Sie ist als Macht noch anwesend in unserem sterblichem Leibe.... Darum ist der Glaube und der Gehorsam immer auch ein Kampf, Opfer, Überwindung, unbeschadet dessen, dass das Gehorchendürfen und -können die Wirklichkeit der Rechtfertigung ist, nein, gerade in Bestätigung dieser Wirklichkeit."

207. Schlier, p. 206.

208. See Michel, p. 210.

209. Nygren, p. 255.

210. Käsemann, p. 172; Schlier, pp. 206-8.

211. Schlier, p. 208.

212. Schlier, p. 210.

213. Käsemann, p. 171.

214. Schlier, p. 212.

215. Althaus, p. 69.

216. Bornkamm, p. 79.

217. Michel, p. 214.

218. Käsemann, p. 167.

219. See Merk, p. 31; Cranfield, I, 327.

220. Stalder, p. 230.

221. Stalder, p. 231.

222. See Leenhardt, p. 172; Lagrange, p. 156.

223. See Michel, pp. 213-14.

224. For a summary of the possible interpretations, see Kuss, II, 391.

225. Barrett, p. 132.

226. Lietzmann, p. 71.

227. Sanday/Headlam, p. 169. See Cranfield, I, 326 n. 1, "What is meant is the incomprehension, insensitiveness, insincerity and proneness to self-deception, which characterize the fallen nature even of Christians."

228. See Käsemann, p. 174.

229. See Käsemann, p. 174.

230. See Michel, p. 214.

231. See Michel, p. 214.

232. Käsemann, p. 174.

233. Käsemann, p. 174.

234. Schmidt, p. 136.

235. Cranfield, I, 378.

236. Cranfield, I, 382-83.

237. Cranfield, I, 373.

238. Michel, p. 249.

239. Michel, p. 251.

240. Kuss, II, 490.

241. See Cranfield, I, 384.

242. See Cranfield, I, 384.

243. E. Gaugler, Der Brief an die Römer, 2 vols., I, 264.

244. See Gaugler, I, 264.

245. Stalder, p. 397.

246. Otherwise, justification and sanctification are split asunder, the latter especially being seen as a product of human effort rather than depending always upon divine grace.

247. See Stalder, pp. 399-401; Leenhardt, p. 165, and also p. 227 for his tendency to "exteriorize " sin.

248. Stalder, p. 402.

249. Schlier, p. 243.

250. Schlier, p. 244.

251. Kuss, II, 497.

252. Cranfield, I, 385.

253. Stalder, p. 404.

254. Kuss, II, 497.

255. See Lagrange, p. 196.

256. See Kuss, II, 498; though note his later comment (on vv. 12-13) that there the other alternative surprisingly reappears, and may yet represent the correct solution (see II, 504).

257. Gaugler, I, 271.

258. Barrett, p. 158.

259. Barrett, p. 157; see also Schlier, p. 244.

260. See Lagrange, p. 195.

261. See Schmidt, p. 138.

262. Nygren, p. 321.

263. Stalder, p. 418.

264. See Stalder, p. 421.

265. See Cranfield, I, 388; Gaugler, I, 273; Kuss, II, 501; Lagrange, p. 197; Michel, p. 253; Käsemann, p. 215.

266. See Gaugler, I, 271.

267. See R. C. Tannehill, Dying and Rising with Christ: A Study in Pauline Theology, pp. 77-78.

268. See Tannehill, pp. 78-79.

269. See Stalder, p. 438.

270. Cranfield, I, 389.

271. Kuss, II, 503.

272. Kuss, II, 504; see also Käsemann, p. 216.

273. Schmidt, p. 139.

274. See Schmidt, p. 139.

275. See Schmidt, p. 140.

276. Schmidt, p. 140.

277. See Stalder, p. 439; Gaugler, I, 276. Gaugler in particular emphasizes the juridical rather than the baptismal element.

278. Schlier, p. 248; Käsemann, p. 216.

279. Schlier, p. 248.

280. Schlier, p. 248.

281. See Cranfield, I, 389.

282. See Sanday/Headlam, p. 197, who note that the parallel is to 5:12ff, not 6:2ff. Note the future tense in 5:17.

283. See Cranfield, I, 389; Sanday/Headlam, p. 198; Michel, p. 254 n. 12.

284. See Cranfield, I, 390; Michel, p. 254; Barrett, p. 159; Schmidt, p. 140; contra Gaugler, I, 276.

285. See Schlier, p. 248.

286. See Cranfield, I, 390 n. 4.

287. See Leenhardt, p. 208.

288. See Cranfield, I, 391.

289. See Althaus, p. 87; Gaugler, I, 280; Kuss, II, 505; Michel, p. 255; Schlier, pp. 248-49; and Schmidt, p. 140. Schlier asserts that in v. 11 Paul speaks no longer of "Leiblichkeit" in general but rather of our individual body -- though this is no longer

the body of sin (Rom 6:6) or death (7:24) but is instead "der der Sünde und dem Tod verfallene 'Leib', sondern der diesen (durch die Taufe) kraft des innewohnenden Geistes entnommene, aber als solche noch 'sterbliche Leib', d.h., der dem Tod verfallen kann, unsere dem Tod nicht mehr ausgelieferte, aber immer noch von ihm bedrohte Leiblichkeit" (p. 248). There seems to be no evidence, however, that Paul so abruptly changes his point of reference (especially given the occurrence of σῶμα in both vv. 10 and 11). It seems more reasonable to assume that Paul is thinking of only one body, but (at different places) of that body as under sin's domination (6:6, but not 7:24, on our view of that verse), and as under the penalty of physical death (8:10) even though future deliverance is promised (8:11). The idea that there is a θνητὸν σῶμα as distinct from a σῶμα ἁμαρτίας shares in such a confusion; see further our comments on 6:12-13.

290. See Cranfield, I, 391.

291. See Lietzmann, p. 80.

292. See Althaus, p. 87.

293. See Schmidt, p. 140.

294. See Stalder, pp. 440-41.

295. Leenhardt, p. 210.

296. See Stalder, p. 442.

297. See Tannehill, p. 79.

298. Michel, p. 258; Stalder comments, "Die göttliche Gehorsamsforderung kein 'Aber' ist, das nachträgliche Einschränkung siener Gnade gegenüberträte, sondern selber ein Gnadenruf, der uns die Wirklichkeit des Lebens im Sieg seiner Gerechtigkeit konkret aufzeigt und erleben lässt" (p. 444).

299. See Leenhardt, p. 211.

300. Gaugler, I, 282-83.

301. See Cranfield, I, 394; Schlier translates "you must" (see p. 250).

302. Michel comments, "μέλλετε ἀποθνήσκειν drückt die notwendige Konsequenz, das zukünftige Gericht Gottes aus; ganz entsprechend ist ζήσεσθε eine betonte Beschreibung der göttlichen Verheissung" (p. 259).

303. Cranfield, I, 394.

304. Schlier notes that while v. 13 involves a decision of man, "es ist eine solche, die auf den Zuspruch und Anspruch des Geistes hin geschieht, der den Menschen von sich selbst ablöst, so dass er selbst-los das Nein zu den 'Taten des Leibes' sagen kann" (p. 251). Hence, the new life is something "Gewährtes und Ergriffenes zugleich" (p. 251).

305. See Stalder, p. 450.

306. See Cranfield, I, 395.

307. See Kuss, II, 598.

308. Tannehill, p. 80.

309. See Tannehill, p. 78.

310. See Tannehill, p. 81. Tannehill notes that dying with Christ is not simply a past event, because the Christian is "still exposed to the powers of the old aeon" (p. 127), and hence, "the new existence which is based on the past death with Christ takes on the form of a continuing dying with Christ" (p. 127). This dying, Tannehill continues, is also a sign of God's hidden victory, because through it God manifests the life of Jesus, and hence the new life is "protected from becoming a pseudo-life which does not involve the surrender of one's heart before God, and assures that it remains God's to grant, not man's possession" (p. 129). We would add the cautionary note that Tannehill's earlier suggestion (p. 81) that our present experience constitutes a manifestation or affirmation of our past death with Christ is perhaps more satisfactory than the idea that dying is a continuing process, which seems to confuse our once-for-all incorporation into the Body of Christ with our repeated putting to death (by the power of the Spirit) of the deeds of the flesh, i.e. there is again a confusion of the juridical and the ethical. Occasionally categories appropriate to modern philosophy, especially existentialism in its various forms, seem to intrude into and thus cloud examination of Paul's own ways of thinking; this is a particular problem when relating the historical act of God in Christ with its present ethical consequences in our lives, and it must be guarded against.

311. The formulation of Peter von den Osten-Sacken is therefore somewhat more satisfactory; he comments (on 8:1-13 as a whole), "Weil sie das Heil in der Zeit betrifft, darum bleibt die vergangene Wirklichkeit ihrer vorchristlichen Existenz als Möglichkeit ständige Gegenwart; darum existiert das Heil nur in Form des Vollzugs des Lebens κατὰ πνεῦμα. Die Begierden, von denen das θνητὸν σῶμα beherrscht war, gehören zur Vergangenheit des Glaubenden nur, sofern sie in der Gegenwart überwunden werden. Und entsprechend gilt die heilvolle Gewissheit, dass das Soma ... tot ist nur, sofern der Geist die Glaubenden beherrscht" (Römer 8 als Beispiel paulinischer Soteriologie, pp. 242-43). We would note, however, (i) that salvation, in an eschatological sense, is an objective fact, outside of the present life κατὰ πνεῦμα, i.e. it ought not to be thought of simply as an "existential" phenomenon; and (ii) the last sentence quoted betrays the confusion of thought regarding the phrase τὸ μὲν σῶμα νεκρὸν διὰ ἁμαρτίαν we have noted and discussed above.

312. See Cranfield, I, 404, who places v. 17 with vv. 18-30.

313. Michel, p. 259.

314. Cranfield, I, 395.

315. Cranfield, I, 401.

316. See Cranfield, I, 401-2.

317. See Michel, p. 260.

318. Michel, p. 260.

319. Donald Guthrie, Galatians, p. 142.

320. Heinrich Schlier, Der Brief an die Galater, p. 243. Hans Dieter Betz, Galatians, p. 274, comments, "The freedom to which the Galatians were called ... and to which Christ liberated them ... is the same as that which Christ himself had practiced: it is the freedom to love.... Hence Paul equates the exercise of love and the exercise of freedom. Paradoxically, the exercise of freedom and love means becoming one another's δοῦλος...."

321. Albrecht Oepke, Der Brief des Paulus an die Galater, p. 169.

322. Oepke, p. 172.

323. Franz Mussner, Der Galaterbrief, p. 369.

324. Schlier, p. 243.

325. Pierre Bonnard, L'Épître de Saint Paul aux Galates, p. 108.

326. Ernest deWitt Burton, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians, p. 291.

327. George S. Duncan, The Epistle of Paul to the Galatians, p. 163.

328. Bonnard, p. 108.

329. Mussner, p. 367.

330. Betz, pp. 272-73.

331. Mussner, p. 366.

332. See Burton, p. 293.

333. See Burton, p. 297, who notes, "The form of the conditional and the tense of the verbs imply that the apostle has in mind a condition which he knows to be, or thinks may be, even now existing ...." See also Bonnard, p. 109, and Paul Althaus, Der Brief an die Galater, in Die kleineren Briefe des Apostels Paulus, ed. H. W. Beyer et al., p. 47.

334. Burton, p. 297, notes that the phrase λέγω δέ "... not strictly necessary to the expression of the thought, throws emphasis upon the statement thus introduced."

335. Althaus, p. 47; Bonnard, p. 112; Duncan, p. 165; Guthrie, p. 143; Hans Lietzmann, An die Galater, p. 39; Herman Ridderbos, The Epistle of Paul to the churches of Galatia, p. 203; Schlier, p. 248; Joseph Lightfoot, St Paul's Epistle to the Galatians,

p. 210; contra Marie-Joseph Lagrange, Saint Paul, Épître aux Galates, p. 147, who understands the meaning of the word here in the light of Rom 8:1ff, where "... l'esprit est incontestablement acquis à l'homme comme un élément propre permanent ... l'homme est devenu spirituel, πνευμάτικος.... Il y a donc entre les facultés humaines et l'Esprit de Dieu ce moyen terme qui est l'esprit participé, et que la théologie catholique nomme la grâce." In Rom 8, however, the Πνεῦμα appears as a force transcending man, and is identified rather with God. This is the almost unanimous view of scholars, as noted in our comments on Rom 8. Lagrange also claims that the majority viewpoint would make flesh and Spirit equal rivals in 5:17; this, however, misses the Apostle's point in that text, which is not that the desires of the flesh are of the same magnitude or strength as those of the Spirit, but rather that one may as easily choose one as the other. Burton, p. 490, suggests that the reference in both Rom 8 and Gal 5 is to the operation of the Holy Spirit in the human spirit for the production of ethical results. This raises two problems, however: an apparent sundering of justification and "ethical results", and a division of man into various parts, one only of which is the recipient of divine grace. For a critique of Burton's understanding of the role of man in producing "ethical results", see our comments on vv. 24-25. See further our comments on Rom 6:5-11 and 8:9-11.

336. Burton, p. 298, and Schlier, p. 248, note that this use of the verb holds for Paul and John (the literal sense being used elsewhere). Burton points out that the stress is on ethics and moral conduct, but the figure (in our view) can probably stand for the whole of the Christian life expressed as an offering of obedient service to the Lord (over against Burton's suggestion that the "outward life" is to be contrasted with the "surrender of will to the divine guidance" and "participation in moral life through mystical union", p. 298). Paul's references here appear to be to the whole of the Christian life, and it is highly unlikely, in view of what we have seen of the Apostle's all-embracing understanding of Christian obedience as something central to the believer's life, that he would contrast "inner" and "outer", or "mystical" and "ethical" obedience.

337. Commentators are divided as to whether the Spirit is viewed here as norm (see Lightfoot, pp. 209, 214) or as agent (see Bonnard, p. 112; C. F. D. Moule, An Idiom Book of New Testament Greek, p. 44; Schlier, p. 248). V. 25 brings clearly into view that both aspects are involved. The life of the Spirit is that which we ought to follow but which we are enabled to follow by the Spirit's power, if we submit ourselves in obedience. Burton, p. 300, explains the anarthrous state here as a qualitative reference (in contrast to the definitive reference in v. 17).

338. See also Duncan, p. 166; Guthrie, p. 143; Lightfoot, p. 209; Lagrange, p. 147. Lagrange notes that the construction in both Hellenistic and NT Greek refers to "... une chose qui ne se fera pas, et non une chose qu'il ne faut pas faire."

339. See Althaus, p. 47.

340. See Burton, p. 300.

341. Burton, p. 301, takes v. 17b as proving the statement of v. 16; both vv. 17b and 17c refer to the Christian life, but the latter is a more specific application. This division, however, seems to us rather artificial.

342. Lietzmann, p. 39.

343. Schlier, p. 249.

344. Schlier, p. 249.

345. See Lagrange, pp. 147-48.

346. See Lietzmann, pp. 39-40.

347. Betz, p. 280, sees three wills in v. 17 (the "ego", the Spirit and the flesh). The "ego" is caught between the opposing forces. He admits that v. 18 brings a clarification, in that the "ego" is seen to cooperate with the Spirit. Rather than taking this in the most natural way, linking vv. 17 and 18 (as we have suggested), he assumes that v. 17 is a pre-Pauline fragment which Paul has left untouched by his soteriological views (v. 18). Surely, however, the Apostle is able to coordinate his thinking better than this, especially on such an important subject, rather than incorporating a conflicting view into his argument! If we view Paul's portrayal of the Christian life in the way we have suggested (as a life of battle, not of perfection or easy victory), then both vv. 17 and 18 have their place in his argument, even as do both Rom 7 and Rom 8.

348. Mussner, pp. 377-78.

349. Mussner, p. 378.

350. Mussner, p. 378.

351. See Betz, p. 281.

352. Oepke, p. 175.

353. Oepke, p. 175, notes that the parallel to Rom 7 is a powerful support for the interpretation we have (above) suggested for our text. The only problem, in Oepke's view, is that Rom 7 describes the non-believer. This, however, as we have seen, is not the case. At any rate, in the final analysis, Oepke believes that the evidence for our interpretation is so strong that it should be adopted. Rom 7, he says, does describe the same conflict, but with the power of the Spirit as an external, rather than internal factor. His exertions, are unnecessary on our understanding of Rom 7!

354. See Guthrie, p. 144; Duncan, pp. 167-68. Duncan's statement that we have here "... a bold and confident declaration that, although the flesh asserts its desires in opposition to the Spirit (this is admitted, but only as the statement of a preliminary and subsidiary truth), nevertheless (and here follows the main contention) the Spirit asserts its desires in opposition to the flesh ... with the result that 'you are not free to do as

you please,' i.e. follow the desires of the flesh, has no support in the text. The solution lies not in v. 17 (which is a statement of the sad reality), but rather in vv. 16 and 18 (which express the promise of a measure of victory through continual perseverance).

355. See Duncan, pp. 166-68.

356. One might, on a "pre-conversion" interpretation of Rom 7, suggest that the θέλειν there has less power than in the Galatians text. Even on that understanding, however, one could scarcely suggest that the term has an opposing signification in the two clearly analogous passages. This is forcefully pointed out by Althaus who, though seeing Rom 7 as a portrayal of pre-Christian existence, nonetheless (like Oepke) finds there a clear parallel to Gal 5:17 ("'... Dass ihr nicht tut, was ihr wollt' (Zur Auslegung von Gal 5,17)," ThLZ 76 (1951), col. 17). He notes that the "ego" in Rom 7 is at one with the law of God, and that flesh and Spirit stand in quite different relationships to the "ego", which is frustrated by the flesh, but not by the Spirit. He comments, "Paulus spricht nicht von einem neutralen Ich, über das die fremden Mächte, bald das Fleisch, bald der Geist kommen. Sondern das Ich ist immer das in Röm 7,17ff gemeinte, und für dieses ist der Geist keine fremde Macht, die es hindern könnte, das zu tun, was es 'will' -- denn dieses Ich will ja in der Richtung des Geistes" (col. 17). Is this not again, a powerful support for our interpretation of Rom 7 (as well as of this passage)?

357. See Burton, pp. 301-2.

358. Burton, pp. 301-2, feels that the absolute stalemate results from the fact that the man of v. 17 is ὑπὸ νόμον (cf. v. 18). He draws further parallels to Rom 6:14 and 7:14ff, where man's inability to achieve victory over sin occurs because (on Burton's view) he is seeking righteousness through the law. In our view, however, the Rom 7 passage does not refer to the unbeliever, and it is even less likely that this could be the case in Gal 5:17 (or Rom 6). Rather is the disobedient believer in view, whose θέλειν inclines toward the will but whose κατεργάζεσθαι is frustrated through lack of submission to God. This, according to Paul, is, to some extent, the situation of every believer.

359. See Ridderbos, p. 203 n. 9; Oepke, p. 175.

360. Burton resolutely maintains that there is no "sufficient warrant in the usage of the period for taking ἵνα in a purely ecbatic sense," (p. 301), i.e. for taking this clause as a clause of actual result. He does allow that ἵνα may be used in the NT in a clause of conceived result (something denied to be actual, 1 Thess 5:4; asked about, John 9:2; or affirmed to be necessary, Heb 10:36), but suggests that in Gal 5:17 we are dealing with a "direct and positive affirmation" (p. 301), where such a use would be out of the question. This viewpoint is upheld in BDF, par. 388, which notes that in the NT ἵνα with subjunctive often expresses intended or probable result, while ἵνα with indicative is used to denote actual facts, especially those belonging to past time (both words being used increasingly as substitutes for the infinitive). It is further noted there (par. 391) that ἵνα should not be substituted for the infinitive if actual result

is to be denoted, and 1 John 1:9 (with parallel to Heb 6:10) and Rev 13:13 (with parallel to Matt 24:24) are given as examples of ἵνα used in a consecutive sense to denote intended or probable result. This interpretation, however, is challenged by A. T. Robertson, A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research, who, after noting the frequent use of ἵνα in sub-final clauses (with verbs of striving, beseeching, commanding and fearing), i.e. clauses of intended, probable or conceived result (pp. 991-94), insists that examination of the various contexts involved points clearly to the existence of a purely ecbatic use (pp. 997-99). He argues that the use of ἵνα in clauses of conceived result (such as Heb 10:36 and John 6:7) provides the basis for its use in clauses where actual result is in view. It is stretching matters, in his view, to see John 9:2 as conceived rather than actual result, and the parallel of 1 John 1:9 with Heb 6:10 suggests strongly that the former text is purely ecbatic, as such a sense can scarcely be disputed for the latter verse (contra BDF). The same, says Robertson, is true for Rev 13:13 (with parallel to Matt 24:24), though the latter may be telic, if interpreted according to Mark 13:22 (as is also noted by Maximilian Zerwick, Biblical Greek, par. 352). Robertson also adduces Rev 9:20 (with parallel to Rev 16:9) and 1 John 3:1, where the consecutive sense is highlighted by the clause καὶ ἐσμέν; other examples given are John 9:36 and Mark 11:28. Zerwick terms the John 9:2 text "obviously consecutive" (par. 352), and lists various other examples (including Gal 5:17). See also Nigel Turner, Syntax, vol. 3 of J. H. Moulton et al., A Grammar of New Testament Greek, p. 102. Zerwick concludes, "It is finally only from the context that the distinction between final and consecutive sense can be gathered in the usage" (par. 352). Similar conclusions are reached by Moule, Idiom Book, pp. 142-43, who also adduces Gen 22:14 (LXX), ἐκάλεσεν Ἀβραὰμ τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ τόπου ἐκείνου κύριος εἶδεν ἵνα εἴπωσιν σήμερον. Robertson, p. 999, notes the occurrence of consecutive ἵνα in sources outside Biblical Greek, e.g. Epict., III, 2, 16, οὕτω μωρὸς ἦν, ἵνα μὴ ἴδῃ and IV, 3, 9, ἐλεύθερος γὰρ εἰμι καὶ φίλος τοῦ θεοῦ ἵν' ἐκὼν πείθωμαι αὐτῷ. BDF, par. 391, and Zerwick, par. 353, record the comment of Chrysostom on Rom 5:20, τὸ δὲ ἵνα ἐνταῦθα οὐκ αἰτιολογίας πάλιν ἀλλ' ἐκβάσεώς ἐστιν. Finally, Robertson, p. 997, points out that in later Greek (perhaps under the influence of the Latin "ut") ἵνα was used in a purely ecbatic sense, while in modern Greek νά (=ἵνα) is used widely to indicate actual result. Conclusive evidence may not be available for some of these texts, but it seems unlikely, on the basis of what we have seen thus far, that a clear line can be drawn limiting the use of ἵνα to clauses of conceived rather than actual result. Indeed, there seems no reason to suppose, if the context allows -- even encourages -- it, that the word cannot be used in texts such as Gal 5:17, where contextual factors appear to indicate that a clause of actual result is in view.

361. See Althaus, p. 49; Duncan, p. 176; Lagrange, p. 153; Schlier, p. 263.

362. See Guthrie, p. 150; Mussner, p. 390; Bonnard, p. 115. Bonnard comments, "Disons qu'il est remarquable que Paul emploie cette expression sans mentionner le baptême."

363. See Burton, pp. 319-20.

364. See Lightfoot, p. 213.

365. For a critique of the artificiality of an overly-sacramental interpretation of this and other texts in Galatians, see Betz, p. 289 n. 172.

366. See Oepke, p. 183.

367. Schlier, p. 263.

368. Lagrange, p. 153.

369. Lagrange, p. 153.

370. A further example of this kind of confusion of thought is found in Duncan who, after observing that the flesh is "dead" on account of the crucifixion of the old self (5:24), and allowing that it is never "robbed altogether of the power to assert its claims," then adds, "... but however it may seek to do so, the Christian refuses to allow it any determining voice whatsoever in the instigation or control of his conduct" (p. 177). Note further our comments on Rom 6:5. Elsewhere, however, Duncan does allow that the act of crucifixion is "... to be distinguished from the death to which is is the prelude" (p. 176). See further our comments on Rom 6:6. Schlier attempts to avoid the problem to which his statement concerning the end of sin gives rise by suggesting that this refers to the Christian's sacramental being, a phenomenon which must still be worked out ethically. The believer, says Schlier, has already experienced a "geschehene Befreiung von der Sünde" and enjoys a "gegenwärtige Freiheit" as a result, yet the imperative "... fordert den Christen auf, das, was indikativisch über ihn ausgesagt ist, zu erfüllen, d.h. aber das, was er durch die Taufe verborgen aber real ist, auch offenbar und wirksam in seiner Lebenserführung zu erweisen, sein sakramentales Sein ethisch-praktisch zu dokumentieren und zu festigen" (p. 267). This introduction of terms such as "sakramentales Sein", however, serves only to confuse the issue, while still leaving the impression that a substantive change has been wrought in man, a change which requires simply to be brought out into the open or revealed. It would be truer to Paul to stress that ἐσταύρωσαν highlights man's judgment before God, in whose presence he stands always and only as a sinner, justified by grace, which grace is now at work to conform him to the image of Christ. This conformation occurs only as the believer, standing beneath the cross and accepting his lowly position before God, receives the divine mercy. This mercy, far from being something the believer himself develops (or which arises out of his "sacramental being"), always comes as a gift from God, sovereignly bestowed on the penitent heart.

371. Bonnard, p. 116.

372. Oepke, p. 184.

373. See Oepke, p. 185, "Eine magische Verwandlung der menschlichen Natur ist in der Taufe sowenig vor sich gegangen wie in der Auferstehung Jesu eine magische Verwandlung der Welt."

374. See Bonnard, p. 116; Burton, pp. 321-22; Guthrie, p. 150; Schlier, p. 268.

375. Bonnard, p. 116, and Lagrange, p. 154, see both in view. Burton, p. 322, and Schlier, p. 268, favour the instrumental, which probably ought to have priority, in the light of Paul's understanding of the Spirit as an active power in the life of the believer, not only the standard by which he lives. Lightfoot, p. 214, however, takes ζῶμεν Πνεύματι as dat. comm. (cf. Rom 6:2, 10-11) and Πνεύματι καὶ στοιχῶμεν as indicating a line or direction after στοιχεῖν, περιπατεῖν, etc. This is a less likely interpretation, and is not taken up by other commentators.

376. Betz, p. 293.

377. Guthrie, p. 150.

378. Ridderbos, p. 211.

379. See Lightfoot, p. 214.

380. Against Duncan, p. 178, and Bonnard, p. 116, who suggest that community (not individual) life is involved (in the latter case, ζῆν, not στοιχεῖν would be used). Schlier, p. 268, notes, however, that the reference is to the day-to-day conduct of the believer's life. Burton, pp. 322-23, feels that the contrast is between the inner life of the believer and his external conduct, i.e. ζῆν as opposed to στοιχεῖν. This does harmonize with the context, in which the Apostle declares that the (juridical) death to sin must issue in a daily mortification of the flesh (cf. Rom 8:13). In the light of the evident parallels to Rom 6 and 8, however (note occurrences of ζῆν and cognates in 6:4, 8, 10-11, 13, 22-23, and 8:2, 6, 10-11, 13; note also our comments on the nature of the Christian's death to and freedom from sin as described in both chapters), it seems better to speak here not of "inner life" as opposed to "outer conduct", but rather of the death of the whole man accomplished juridically at Calvary and the life thus received through faith in Christ, and of this life as it is beginning to be manifested ethically in the present life. The latter reality will only receive fulfilment, of course, when the believer is united with the Lord. See also (336) above.

381. Burton, p. 322.

382. On the authority of Colossians, see our comments on Col 2:6-23 in Section III, part B of our study of freedom and the law above, footnote (1).

383. Eduard Lohse, Colossians and Philemon, trans. W. R. Poehlmann and R. J. Karris, p. 132.

384. Joachim Gnilka, Der Kolosserbrief, p. 172.

385. Lohse, p. 133.

386. Lohse, p. 134, suggests that ἀπεθάνετε makes it clear that the consummation lies in the future, and is deliberately used here in place of συνηγέρθητε.

387. See Gnilka, p. 174.

388. Eduard Schweizer, Der Brief an die Kolosser, p. 133.

389. E. Lohmeyer, Die Briefe an die Philipper, an die Kolosser and an Philemon, p. 134.

390. Johannes Lähnemann, Der Kolosserbrief: Komposition, Situation und Argumentation, p. 159, comments, "... die Christen werden auf einen Mangel der Erlösung angesprochen."

391. Lähnemann, p. 160.

392. Paul Joüon, "Note sur Colossiens III, 5-11," RScR 26 (1936), p. 187 n. 3.

393. Joüon, p. 188.

394. Edward F. Scott, The Epistles of Paul to the Colossians, to Philemon and to the Ephesians, p. 65.

395. Scott, p. 66.

396. Lohse, p. 140.

397. Lohse, p. 137.

398. Lohse, p. 140.

399. Hans Conzelmann, Der Brief an die Kolosser, in Die Briefe an die Galater, Epheser, Philipper, Kolosser, Thessalonicher und Philemon, p. 196, comments, "... wir sind wirklich Heilige; aber erscheinen (auch vor unserem eigenen Blick) werden wir als solche erst am Tage der Erscheinung Christi." This elliptical observation is scarcely helpful.

400. Conzelmann, p. 197.

401. F. F. Bruce, Commentary on the Epistle to the Colossians, in Commentary on the Epistles to the Ephesians and to the Colossians, by F. F. Bruce and E. K. Simpson, p. 268.

402. C. F. D. Moule, The Epistles to Colossians and to Philemon, p. 115.

403. Gnilka, p. 179.

404. Charles Masson, L'Épître de St Paul aux Colossiens, in Les Épîtres de St Paul aux Colossiens et aux Philippiens, by Pierre Bonnard and Charles Masson, p. 142, makes the suggestion that τὰ μέλη should be taken as vocative (and thus linked with the theme of the church as the Body of Christ), with τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς alone standing as the object. He asserts that identifying τὰ μέλη with the members of the physical body would fall into the very asceticism Paul is trying to counter. This interpretation, however, appears unlikely, for as Martin Dibelius, An die Kolosser, Epheser, An Philemon, p. 41, points out, there is no hint of head-body imagery in the context. The normal use of the word renders such an explanation doubtful unless there are good contextual

grounds for its adoption. Moule, p. 116, notes that Masson's meaning would require addition of words such as ὑμεῖς or τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

405. Lohse, p. 137. Conzelmann, p. 197, also takes the view that a Persian influence is involved.

406. Dibelius, p. 41. Ralph P. Martin, Colossians and Philemon, p. 103, declares that any Iranian parallels are remote. Schweizer, p. 138, points out that references likening an abstract quality to a limb found in Manichaean writings come four centuries later than Colossians.

407. J. Horst, "μελος," TDNT IV, 565.

408. See Horst, p. 565; C. F. D. Moule, "The 'New Life' in Colossians 3:1-17," RevExp 70 (1973), p. 486.

409. Moule, "'New Life'," p. 486. A similar parallel is noted by Ralph P. Martin, Colossians: The Church's Lord and the Christian's Liberty, p. 108.

410. Bruce, p. 268.

411. In our text, as Schweizer, pp. 140-41, notes, Paul nowhere lists the μέλη or identifies any one of them with any particular sin; instead, he lists the sins. His use of μέλος reflects the Jewish localizing of sin in the members (without identifying the two). Joseph Lightfoot, Saint Paul's Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon, p. 211, suggests (probably correctly; see Moule, Colossians, p. 116) that a stop should be placed after γῆς, making the following prospective accusatives dependent on some such word as ἀπόθεσθε, thus preventing even more forcefully a clear identification of the μέλη with certain sins, the μέλη being the occasion for sin but not linked inextricably with it. Note also the suggestion of Schweizer, p. 145, that πὰ πάντα (v. 8) links the νυνὶ δέ clause with the preceding list, pointing to an allusion to it here. Christian Maurer, "πρᾶξις," TDNT 6, p. 644, who also links Col 3:9 and Rom 8:13, sees the πράξεις τοῦ σώματος of the latter text as referring not to deeds done by the body so much as "... the indwelling evil nature of the man who lives κατὰ σάρκα." Hence, in both texts, according to Maurer, the body is to become the place of service to the Lord, not the occasion for asceticism. This seems to express Paul's thought well.

412. See Cranfield, I, 395; also I, 309-10.

413. Lightfoot, p. 211; T. K. Abbott, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians, p. 280.

414. We must therefore reject the suggestion of Lohmeyer, p. 137, that Paul's metaphysic tends toward a low view of the flesh. Rather does the Apostle see in the flesh the concrete expression of man's disobedience to God. He always fights (particularly here!) against any body-spirit dualism, usually by stressing that the whole man equally is redeemed in Christ, even though the ethical outworking of this death to sin has only begun. This is also why man, though redeemed, is still subject to physical death

(see below on freedom and death). The second group of commands, νυνὶ δὲ ἀπόθεσθε, κ.τ.λ., ending with ἐκ τοῦ στόματος ὑμῶν, which, according to Moule, Colossians, pp. 118-19, governs the whole list, thus making all the sins mentioned a matter of words rather than deeds, followed by μὴ ψεύδεσθε (v. 9), recalls vividly the words of Jesus (Mark 7:21-23), where the evil deeds come from the heart as the centre of moral decision-making. Note also the parallel text, Matt 15:18, where the phrase becomes τὰ δὲ ἐκπορευόμενα ἐκ τοῦ στόματος ἐκ τῆς καρδίας ἐξέρχεται, κἀκεῖνα κοινοῖ τὸν ἄνθρωπον. Note the comment of Johannes Behm, "καρδία," TDNT 3, p. 612, "... the heart is supremely the one centre in man to which God turns, in which the religious life is rooted, which determines moral conduct."

415. David Daube, "Participle and Imperative in I Peter," in The First Epistle of Peter, by Edward G. Selwyn, p. 481.

416. Lightfoot, pp. 214-15 (long before Daube!), takes the same position, noting that the parallel passage in Eph 4:24 is imperatival. See also Rom 13:12, 14 and Eph 6:11 for imperatival forms of ἐνδύεσθαι, and also Eph 6:14 and 1 Thess 5:8, where the participle seems clearly to be part of the command.

417. BDF, para. 468.2, however, takes the position that the participle is coordinated with the noun. A further variant of this view is put forward by Joüon, p. 189, who suggests that the phrase μὴ ψεύδεσθε εἰς ἀλλήλους can be treated syntactically as parenthetical rather than as the beginning of a new sentence, i.e. Paul could as easily have said ἀπόθεσθε ... ψεύδος, but wished to underline that the problem affected the corporate life of the body and not just the individual. Hence, in his view, ἀπεκδυσάμενοι is dependent directly on ἀπόθεσθε which, along with νεκρώσατε and ἐνδύσασθε, is to be taken as a complexive aorist (see our comments on 3:5), and the participles (ἀπεκδυσάμενοι and ἐνδυσάμενοι), subordinate to the verbs, ought to be viewed in the same light (rather than as references simply to a past event). The complexive nature of ἐνδυσάμενοι is emphasized by the immediately folowing participle ἀνακαινούμενον and in the parallel passage, Rom 13:12, ἀποθώμεθα and ἐνδυσώμεθα appear in tandem to express the continuing claim of God upon the believer as he conducts his life and seeks continually to persevere in obedience. Joüon also points to the parallel passage, Eph 4:22-24, where the believers are reminded that they were taught the truth as it is in Jesus, to put off the old man and put on the new (ἀποθέσθαι ... καὶ ἐνδύσασθαι). Joüon draws the conclusion from all this that to put off the old man is no simple, once-for-all act, but is "... un travail de toute la vie" (p. 189). In this latter thought he is undeniably correct, as also in his stress on the continuous nature of the obedience required of the believer. But see also (421) below.

418. See, for instance, Abbott, Bruce, Masson, Maurer, Martin, Church's Lord, against Lohse and Albrecht Oepke, "ἀπεκδύω," TDNT 2, pp. 318-19.

419. See Masson, p. 144.

420. See Abbott, p. 283.

421. Joüon's point concerning the need for the believer to persevere and continually to put off the old man and put on the new is to be taken very seriously. In our view, however, these thoughts are already adequately expressed by the various imperatives in the text, and indeed by the whole structure of the passage. The aorist participle normally (though not necessarily) refers to an event preceding the time of the main verb. Robertson, p. 860, notes that while simultaneous action is common, antecedent action is the "usual idiom with the circumstantial participle." Many examples (cited in Robertson) of the former usage are accounted for in Turner, Syntax, vol. 3, pp. 153-57, as cases where Semitic influence has been paramount; see, for instance, the whole category of pleonastic participles (ἄγων, ἀρξάμενος, ἔχων, φέρων and λαβών, often having the meaning "with"), as well as participles of speaking, e.g. λέγων, εἰπών, ἀποκριθείς. None of these instances, however, approximates the Colossians text. See also J. H. Moulton, Prolegomena, vol. 1 of A Grammar of NT Greek, ed. J. H. Moulton, pp. 14-17. F. Blass and A. Debrunner, A Greek Grammar of the NT and other Early Christian Literature, trans. and rev. R. W. Funk, par. 339, also notes that aorist participles usually express antecedent action, though this may not be the case if they are used with aorist finite verbs (examples given are Acts 1:24, 10:33, 18:23 and Matt 27:4 -- but on Act 10:33 as an idiom see Moulton, vol. 1, p. 228). The use of the imperative in Col 3:8 (accepting Joüon's hypothesis) is not a good parallel to the aorist indicatives of the passages noted in BDF. Maximilian Zerwick, Biblical Greek, par. 262-63, states that the interpretation is entirely dependent on the context, but adduces only once certain example of coincident action (Heb 2:10), in cases where the context will allow for either. In fact, Moule, Idiom Book, pp. 99-101, declares that when the context "... positively demands a decision as to the sequence of actions ... referred to..." (p. 99), the rule of treating the aorist participle as expressive of antecedent action is, apart from one or two exceptions (he lists Acts 25:13 and possibly 16:6). "... even safer for NT Greek than for the Classical writers" (p. 100).

422. Contra Lohse, p. 141, who sees the surrounding imperatives as evidence that the participles themselves are imperatival. This argument, however, lacks force as an argument from context, particularly as it ignores the fact that Paul is quite capable of changing from indicative to imperative and back again to make his point.

423. This is admitted by Joüon, p. 189.

424. Lohse, p. 141.

425. Lohse, p. 141.

426. See Masson, p. 143 and p. 143 n. 8; see also Scott, p. 69. Lightfoot, p. 222, draws attention to the parallel thought expressed in 2 Cor 4:16, ἀλλ' εἰ καὶ ὁ ἔξω ἡμῶν ἄνθρωπος διαφθείρεται, ἀλλ' ὁ ἔσω ἡμῶν ἀνακαινοῦται ἡμέρᾳ καὶ ἡμέρᾳ.

427. Gnilka, p. 187.

428. Conzelmann, p. 198.

429. Schweizer, pp. 147-48.

430. Moule, Colossians, p. 120.

431. See Schweizer, pp. 147-48; Moule, Colossians, p. 120.

432. Knowledge of Christ is "... that response of the whole person to God or Christ which is distinctive of Christian experience..." (Moule, Colossians, p. 121), not just "... the ability to recognize God's will and command..." (Lohse, p. 143 -- though it certainly includes this).

433. Lohmeyer, p. 142. See also Dibelius, p. 42, who notes that the "... Kennzeichnen des neuen Menschen ist nicht etwa δόξα, sondern ἐπίγνωσις."

434. Schweizer, p. 151.

435. Schweizer, p. 154, contra Lohmeyer, p. 145, who takes ὡς as a term of comparison and sees the ἐκλεκτοί as referring to angels, who are linked with the pious in Jewish apocalyptic. The use of the ἐκλέγω word-group in Paul, however, suggests that there is no need to adopt such an idea, when a far more reasonable solution lies close to hand (see Rom 9:11-13, 11:5, 11:28, and 8:33).

436. Schweizer, p. 154.

437. Conzelmann, p. 198.

438. Martin, Church's Lord, p. 121.

439. Gnilka, p. 193.

440. Hans Bietenhard, "ὄνομα," TDNT 5, p. 274.

441. See Lohse, p. 152.

Freedom in relation to death

Introduction

The final area in which Paul deals with the theme of freedom is that of the believer's freedom in relation to death. We have seen, in our previous comments, the way in which disobedience to the law means the entry of sin and God's curse coming upon man. The result of this curse is death (Rom 6:23, Gal 3:10). We have also seen how, in Christ, the believer is freed from the law's just condemnation, and hence from the tyranny of sin. If the Apostle's thinking is as consistent here as we have observed it to be elsewhere, we should expect that this freedom in Christ will have consequences so far as death -- the result of man's disobedience and sin -- is concerned.

We have also seen, however, the limited nature of the believer's freedom from sin, and the way in which he is still prone to sin's attacks and thus continually falls short of God's righteous standard in the law. This means that the freedom he has in Christ must be carefully exercised in love and mutual service, in submission to God's law, so that it does not become an excuse for licence or an opportunity for the flesh. We should also expect, therefore, that the fact of the believer's continuing weakness and the need for a positive and unyielding standard by which the exercise of his freedom can be guided will be of consequence for Paul's understanding of the believer's freedom from death

These two themes -- the reality of the believer's freedom from death but the limited nature of this freedom in the present life -- do in fact provide the outline for what Paul says concerning this subject. We shall begin by examining 2 Cor 4:7ff, a passage in which all the aspects of Paul's understanding of freedom from death are displayed. We shall also show how the Apostle relates his understanding of freedom from death to his understanding of freedom from sin and freedom from the law's condemnation, and what consequences his understanding of freedom from death has for what we have seen thus far to be his view of the positive exercise of Christian freedom.

2 Cor 4:7-5:10

In this passage, the Apostle speaks extensively concerning the Christian's attitude toward life and death. Within this discussion, though neither ἐλευθερία nor any of its cognates appear, the theme of the Christian's freedom from death (and what this frees him for) receives a thorough treatment. Many similarities will be noted here with what we have observed to be Paul's understanding of freedom in relation to sin and the law. For our purposes, the passage can be divided into five subsections.

4: 7-12

Here the Apostle deals with the paradox that life is manifested in death in the existence of the believer. Far from being freed by the power of God from the ever-advancing hold of death on his body, the Apostle manifests God's life within a mortal and vulnerable framework. Because of his desire to serve and obey Christ, he becomes subject to a variety of afflictions and persecutions (v. 8) which harass and gradually wear down the resources not just of his mortal body but of his whole personality.[1] It is not merely our physical bodies, indeed, which are weak; the phrase ἐν ὀστρακίνοις σκεύεσιν (v. 7) refers to our whole being which, viewed from one aspect, is entirely mortal and weak.[2] Contrary to the Greeks, Paul maintains that it is precisely our ἀσθένεια which shows forth God's δύναμις.[3] In accepting the authority of Christ over his life, the Apostle gives up any freedom and security he might have had from the troubles of the world and willingly exposes himself to any and all threats to his personal well-being. This slavery to Christ allows His power to shine through the believer's weakness, even though in his mortal condition he may suffer as a result. The believer, therefore (for the Apostle, while referring here to his own situation, in no way suggests that it should be anything other than the pattern for that of all believers[4]), not only gives up any delusion he might have had concerning freedom from death in this life, but also places himself in a position where he is more exposed to death's power than he otherwise would have been. This is because of his desire not to seek his own freedom as an end in itself, but to allow the exercise of that freedom to be guided by concern for love and mutual service.

Total freedom, as we noted in our study of freedom and the law, would mean full participation in the heavenly glory and life of God.[5] This, as we have seen, is very far from being a reality in the believer's present mortal condition. Total freedom from death would imply

achievement of life which will only belong to the believer in the future life. This freedom, as far as Paul is concerned in 2 Cor. 4:7ff, is clearly outstanding. The believer, therefore, cannot now be entrusted with absolute freedom, for he would turn it immediately to his own advantage. Not freedom as an end in itself, but the freedom to serve God and neighbour under the command of God's law, should be the hallmark of Christian existence. The fact that the believer will receive freedom from death should, as we shall see, act as a further motivation for rendering obedience to God in this present limited and mortal condition.

This does not mean, however, that in a very real sense the believer has not been freed from death's power. The very manifestation of death in the believer points to a deeper reality -- that the believer has also received the ζωὴ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ (v. 10), even in his mortal body (ἐν τῷ σώματι ἡμῶν, v. 10). What the Apostle means here can best be understood by focussing on the seemingly contrasting phrases τὴν νέκρωσιν τοῦ Ἰησοῦ and ἡ ζωὴ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ The unusual use of νέκρωσις(as opposed to θάνατος) indicates that the thought here is of a continual process, a putting-to-death.[6] This can only be understood as a (real though limited) participation by the believer in the ministry and self-sacrifice of Jesus; cf. Phil 3:10, συμμορφιζόμενος τῷ θανάτῳ αὐτοῦ. In this giving up of the believer's life, however, is manifested the ζωὴ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ; cf. Phil 3:10, τοῦ γνῶναι αὐτὸν καὶ τὴν δύναμιν τῆς ἀναστάσεως αὐτοῦ.[7] The ζωὴ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ here is the same reality as that referred to in Rom 6:4 as the καινότης ζωῆς, the life which comes to us from God as a result of the resurrection of Jesus from the dead (cf. Rom 6:4). The once and for all resurrection of Jesus from the dead has results already in our still-mortal lives. In Rom 6, the Apostle (as we have seen) speaks of this with reference to a (beginning of) freedom from sin, while here he speaks of it with reference to (a beginning of) freedom from death. In both cases, however, this freedom, obtained through the work of Christ, is linked closely with our responsibility not to pursue freedom as an end in itself, but rather to see it as freedom for service to God. This theme becomes even clearer in ch. 5:1ff.

The believer, therefore, who has been freed in Christ and received the supernatural gift of life, has the obligation henceforth to live according to the pattern of Jesus, i.e. in laying down his life for God and for others; in this sense, these verses form a good commentary on Mark 10:34-38. Hence the Apostle can say that he carries around the death of Jesus in his own body. This is true not simply in the sense that he is exposed to risk of death through the circumstances of his ministry, but, more deeply, in that he has voluntarily laid down his

life, health and wealth so that others may also receive God's gift of life in Christ Jesus.[8] That the life the believer has is to be given up for others is shown by v. 12; Paul surrenders himself to death so that those to whom he ministers may receive life.[9] Paul's sufferings are not simply human sufferings, but are to be seen as a participation in the suffering and self-sacrifice of Christ.[10] The fact that the believer's body is still subject to the power of death only accentuates the greatness of God's gift, as His life shines through (albeit often unclearly) the frail and feeble earthen vessels of our lives. Wendland comments, "Christus-Gemeinschaft ist Leidens-Gemeinschaft. Alles Leiden ist für Paulus ein Sterben dieses schwachen, irdischen Menschen; das Leiden steht aber unter dem gewaltigen ... 'damit': damit die Auferstehung und das göttliche Leben Jesu offenbar werde im Leiden und Sterben seines Leibes, des irdischen Paulus."[11] The Christian is freed from eschatological death (and receives eschatological life) in that he is freed from God's just condemnation of his sin by the law, and from the curse which resulted in death (Rom 5:12ff, Gal 3:10). In this life, however, he is still subject, as a thoroughly imperfect mortal being, to death's sway -- and in fact he is commanded, for the sake of the gospel, to be willing to give up the life he does have in this world.

It is possible that Paul may have developed this teaching in response to false teachers at Corinth, who may have derided him (see ch. 12) for his poor physical condition, a supposed lack of miraculous attestation to his ministry.[12] The Apostle may here be opposing a view that the Christian is in this life freed from death or affliction.[13] This he would do by stressing the imperfect nature of our present life (ἐν ὀστρακίνοις σκεύεσιν, v.7), and also by noting that we are commanded to be willing to give up even that life and health we do have for the sake of the gospel (vv. 8ff). Indeed, says the Apostle, the only way for supernatural life truly to appear within us is through a dying to self and willing submission to physical death and decay. The life manifested in us through our obedience to Christ, however, is (as we shall see) a genuine foretaste of the freedom from death which, while not yet ours, is promised to us. The two ἵνα-clauses (vv. 11,12) are clearly parallel and refer to a reality in our present (and not just future) life. The ζωή, as we noted above, is to be seen in conjunction with the νέκρωσις; manifestation of one is accompanied by manifestation of the other.[14]

This means that there is a genuine manifestation of life in the believer's present existence. Against any mystical tendency, the

Apostle insists that this occurs ἐν τῷ σώματι ἡμῶν (v. 10), or ἐν τῇ θνητῇ σαρκὶ ἡμῶν (v. 11), thus showing that these phrases (even as ἐν ὀστρακίνοις σκεύεσιν, v. 7) should be taken to refer to the whole of our present mortal existence.[15] As in Rom 6, where Paul insists that the believer does enjoy a genuine (though incomplete) measure of freedom, so here he says the same with respect to freedom from death. Barrett comments on v. 11, "... the manifestation of the life of Jesus, though perfect only in the resurrection at the end, is already begun and shines through the sin and suffering of the present life -- it appears even in the context of flesh. Even our present self-centred, man-centred, existence shows signs of the transforming power of the Spirit who brings freedom...."[16]

This life does not imply a release of the soul or spirit from the body (as in gnostic thought), but rather affects the whole man.[17] Through his being freed from eschatological death, the believer is enabled not to flee the realm of the material (as in gnosticism) or to seek a position of studied indifference to it (as in Stoicism), but rather to place all his personal resources (spiritual and physical) at the disposal of Christ and the church. He gives himself over to suffering and death for Jesus' sake (διὰ Ἰησοῦν, v. 11) -- because of his desire to follow Him in His life and example.[18] Only so can Christ's resurrection life become a reality in the believer's present existence. Wendland's comment is apt: "An diesem Fleische, indem es stirbt, offenbart sich das göttliche Auferstehungsleben Jesu .... Zu diesem Leben Christi führt der Weg allein durch das Leiden, diesen schweren und harten Widerstreit zur göttlichen Herrlichkeit, hindurch. Ist aber das Leiden und Sterben des Apostels der Weg zum Leben der Auferstehung, so ist es zugleich überwunden; es kann den Apostel erschüttern und bedrängen, aber niemals seiner Herr werden, weil es sein Ziel und Ende empfangen hat: es macht das Leben Jesu ... offenbar."[19]

vv. 13-15

Our interest here lies in the reference to the resurrection in v. 14. Paul's confidence in speaking forth his message, even though suffering and death may be the result, is in the assurance that for the believer, the final outcome of the battle will be victorious. When Christ returns, he will be raised to life eternally, even as was Jesus.[20] Even though subject to death in this life, the believer is certain of the future, for God will raise him from death to eternal life.[21] This

is the proof that the ζωή of vv. 10-11 (and not the νέκρωσις) is ultimately the determinative factor for the Christian. Though, as a mortal being, he must die, God has freed him in Christ from the hold of that death, whose power is broken in the resurrection of Jesus which, eventually, will entail the resurrection of those who believe in Him. Even though this lies in the future, the absolute certainty of its occurrence frees the believer already from the fear of death or the illusion that physical death is the final outcome. Hence, even though he must still undergo that death, he faces it in the knowledge that God has a better answer. Even though it will not occur in this life, the believer will be freed from death. So certain is the the outcome, however, that already he can live freed from fear that the death he must face is the end of his existence.

Bultmann points out rightly that this means that the ζωή active in the believer is not a characteristic or possession of the believer but is rather a gift of God, dependent entirely on His work in Christ. God's gift of life exists independently of the believer, who receives it only in faith as a gift, not as his personal possession or attribute.[22] The ζωή should in fact, in light of 5:5, be linked with the gift of the Holy Spirit. Thus the believer has a genuine life which, though manifested amidst the circumstances of our all-too imperfect mortal condition, nonetheless gives the ground for a real hope of a final liberation in which death will be swallowed up by life (5:4).

vv. 16-18

The same thought is now expressed in a different way. Because (διό, v. 16) of the hope of the resurrection and final triumph over death, the believer can now face the decay and eventual destruction of his mortal being (ἔξω ἄνθρωπος). He can do this because he knows that in his relationship with God as a new man in Christ (ἔσω ἄνθρωπος), there is being worked out for him (κατεργάζεται, v. 17) an eternal weight of glory, i.e. the eventual liberation from death. The central point here is the contrast between the ἔξω ἄνθρωπος and the ἔσω ἄνθρωπος. That this terminology is borrowed from the Hellenistic world is undoubted.[23] This does not mean, however, that the meaning is the same. Paul uses terms which are both serviceable for his purposes and comprehensible even to a non-Jewish, non-Christian audience.[24] If there is a parallel here, it is more likely to be found in gnostic thought or mysticism rather than in classical philosophy, but Paul, in this case, makes

extensive alterations -- possibly to combat some kind of proto-gnostic influence in Corinth.[25]

This text is certainly to be interpreted in light of Rom 6 (also Rom 7:22 and Col 3:9), so our comments on those texts may be referred to. In this case (see also our comments on 4:7-12 above), the distinction between the ἔξω ἄνθρωπος and the ἔσω ἄνθρωπος is not between spiritual or immaterial and fleshly or material;[26] rather in both phrases is the whole man referred to, viewed either in his mortal and frail earthly condition or, as καινὴ κτίσις (5:17), in his relationship with God as a Christian.[27] In this sense is Bultmann's comment correct: "Von diesem ἔξω ἄνθρωπος kann sich der ἔσω ἄνθρωπος zwar distanzieren, aber nicht durch den Rückzug auf seinen Geist, seine Innerlichkeit, sondern nur im Glauben an den, der in Zukunft sein wird, bzw. der er in der Gemeinschaft mit Christus schon ist."[28] Ἀνακαινοῦται, therefore, refers not to a mystical inner activity but rather to the always necessary (but woefully inadequate) efforts of mortal (albeit regenerate) man daily to conform his life ever more to the law of God and thus (for the emphasis here, as opposed to Rom 6, is on life and death rather than sin and righteousness) to manifest God's supernatural life even in his mortal condition.[29] That in his present life the believer is still subject to death is indicated by διαφθείρεται, which stands in opposition to ἀνακαινοῦται. That διαφθείρεται does not represent a merely physical condition is shown by the fact that ἔξω ἄνθρωπος covers the whole range of the believer's characteristics and attributes, so far as he is still separated from God. Similarly, however, it should not be forgotten that the new life in Christ can produce results even in this present existence (cf. v. 11), enabling us the better to show forth the life of Christ in our service to Him.

The picture here, therefore, is of a continual struggle between life and death in which our whole being is involved. In terms of our present condition, it is death which will triumph; yet in our relationship with God this death, while not being avoided, will be "swallowed up" (5:4) in life. Bultmann comments, "Aber wenn sich das glaubende Verstehen jetzt immer im Kampf, in der Überwindung vollzieht, in einem ἀνακαινοῦσθαι, das einem διαφθείρεσθαι korrespondiert, so kann der Glaube auf eine Zukunft hoffen, in der ein volles Sichverstehen ohne Rätsel und ohne Angst verwirklicht ist ...."[30]

5:1-5

This subsection carries on from the preceding (γάρ, v. 1), but deals not so much with our present condition as our future hope. Central to the text is the believer's longing for the final liberation from death. In v. 1 the Apostle affirms that while the Christian, in his present condition, must still undergo death (ἐάν ... καταλυθῇ), he already has the assurance that God has a heavenly body prepared for him over which death has no hold. The present tense (ἔχομεν) is probably best taken as indicating this confident assurance (rather than speaking of an already-existing body in heaven).[31] Paul's emphasis here is on the fact of physical death (καταλυθῇ) rather than on the transformation of the body (cf. 1 Cor 15:50) at a Parousia which he expected to occur imminently.[32] Physical death seems to be the primary signification of καταλυθῇ, the idea of dissolution or decay being involved. If Paul had wished to emphasize the transformation aspect, he probably would have used a form of ἀλλάσσω (as in 1 Cor 15). He allows for the possibility of the Parousia occurring in his lifetime, but his concern here is with the end of the mortal life as such. The passage as a whole (4:7ff) speaks of the death and decay of our mortal being as opposed to the final triumph over death in the glorified body. The idea of the Parousia, in our opinion, is secondary. The Apostle is not dealing here (as he is, for instance, in 1 Thess 4) with the problem of the respective fates of the dead and the living at the Parousia. Nor is there evidence, either in 1 Thess 4 or here, to warrant the assumption that he lived in constant expectation of an imminent Parousia.[33] It is not at all improbable that he regarded his death as at least as likely to occur before the Parousia as not. In the following verses, he speaks several times of leaving the body as something which, naturally, is to be feared, but for the Christian is to be embraced. The primary reference must be to physical death as such, for no one would argue that the immediate transformation of the body at the Parousia was something to be avoided or feared. Whether, however, the leaving of the body occurs at death or the Parousia is secondary. Paul's point here is to stress the glorious hope of the future freedom from death, and that this hope liberates us from fear in the present life.

In these verses, therefore, the Apostle wishes to speak words of assurance to the believers which would bring them freedom from their fear of death. His confidence is based on the fact that a new body will be bestowed by God on the believer (cf. 1 Cor 15; Phil 3:20-21). In

one sense, therefore, the believer has already been freed from death. He groans (v. 2) not out of fear of death, but out of a longing for the true liberty which will come when death has been totally vanquished -- a future fact of which he has real assurance in the present. That he is able to long for this release, and even, in one way, to welcome it, is a clear sign of his assurance that ultimate freedom from death is his inheritance. Thus he can be freed now, if not from the necessity of undergoing physical death, at least from all fear or worry with respect to it.

The phrase οὐ θέλομεν ἐκδύσασθαι ἀλλ' ἐπενδύσασθαι (v. 4) does not express Paul's personal fear of death, but is probably a more general reference to what will happen at the Parousia to those still alive.[34] Not fear of death, but longing for a better future is involved. That the groaning is one of longing rather than fear is seen by Bultmann, who comments, "Wäre der Wunsch gemeint, nicht vor der Parusie zu sterben, so könnte das Seufzen ja keine Begründung der Gewissheit von V.1 sein; denn es wäre ja ein Seufzen der Angst!"[35] Vv. 3-4 probably express the natural human fear of death (here spoken of as "nakedness")[36], but if they do so, the emphasis is not on the fear as such, but on the fact that, though physical death must be undergone and is always to be regarded as something negative which God will (ultimately) overcome, the believer nonetheless lives in confident expectation of (and hence longing for) the better body which God will bestow. Paul does not long for death as such, as Wendland rightly points out, but rather for the putting on of the new body.[37]

This expresses once again both the limitations of our present condition and the glorious hope to which we are called. Windisch comments, "Solches Seufzen und Sichbeschwertfühlen entspricht indes dem unvollkommenen Stadium der Erlösung, in dem wir noch stehen, der Dissonanz zwischen der messianischen Erwartung und der drückenden Wirklichkeit ... freilich erwartet P. nun die Aufhebung des Druckes von der Überreichung eines neuen, dem Geistesmenschen konformen Leibes und von einer besonderen Weise seiner Darreichung."[38] Paul's expression here of a natural human fear does not, pace Bultmann,[39] undermine his assurance of final freedom from death, but merely outlines the provisional nature of our present deliverance. This understanding may have been reinforced by his recent experiences of inner turmoil (1:8ff), and certainly reflects his recognition of the feelings and doubts of those to whom he was writing. Allo's comments are apposite: "si ferme que soit l'espoir du croyant de

posséder, après la destruction du corps présent, non seulement la gloire éternelle ... mais une nouvelle demeure corporelle parfaitement adaptée à cette gloire ... cette attente ne suffit pas à calmer la révolte de son instinct humain devant la mort qui le menace et finira par le saisir un jour."[40] Paul neither welcomes nor expects necessarily to avoid natural death.[41] He longs to be free from his present mortal condition but knows that this freedom will only be fully manifested in the final victory over death.[42]

vv. 6-10

Recognizing, therefore, his mortal condition, but assured of the fact that he will ultimately be freed from death, the believer is even now freed from an obsessive preoccupation with his own well-being and freed for obedience to God. This is the focus of this subsection. Acknowledgement of the believer's ultimate freedom from death not only allows him to cope with the natural remaining fears of physical decay but, more importantly, frees him for what should be his proper concern as a Christian -- serving the Lord. Indeed, the magnitude of the coming freedom, in demonstrating (by contrast) the weakness of our present existence, points up the responsibility to exercise the freedom we have already been granted (in our weak and mortal condition) in such a way that it may not become an excuse for licence and self-seeking.

In v. 6 Paul's confidence in the face of death is reasserted. This freedom from fear has come about through the recognition that his present condition is only a temporary one. Bultmann comments, "Das θαρρεῖν ist ja die Furchtlosigkeit vor dem bevorstehenden, πάντοτε-drohenden und in den Leiden schon wirksamen Tod; und die Furchtlosigkeit folgt ja gerade aus dem Wissen, dass unsere jetzige Existenz nur eine vorläufige ist ...."[43] Plummer, noting that θαρρεῖν replaces the στενάζειν of vv. 4, 6, observes rightly, "The thought which there suggests confidence. Even the possibility of being left γυμνός for a time loses its terrors, when it is remembered that getting away from the temporary shelter furnished by the body means getting home to closer converse with the Lord."[44]

This subsection, as Wendland notes correctly, continues the theme of the believer's present and future condition in relation to freedom from death, but places the emphasis on the believer's relationship with the Lord.[45] It is God who, in Christ, has freed the believer from the condemnation of the law, and hence from death's hold. We, therefore,

who as believers have been given life, should make it our constant preoccupation to use that life in service to the One who procured it for us and freed us from death. It is not, therefore, surprising, that the central point the Apostle makes at the end of this long discussion (4:7ff) is that of living lives pleasing to the Lord (διὸ καὶ φιλοτιμούμεθα ... εὐάρεστοι αὐτῷ εἶναι, v. 9). Freed from that fear which only thoughts of death can bring, the believer is free to serve the Lord. Bultmann states the result of this freedom: "... konzentrieren wir uns nur auf das eine: εὐάρεστοι αὐτῷ εἶναι , durch keine Angst und Sorge um uns selbst abgelenkt von dem μεριμνᾶν τὰ τοῦ κυρίου, πῶς ἀρέσωμεν τῷ κυρίῳ ...."[46] In fact, whether he is "in the body" or "out of it" becomes a matter of little concern to the Christian.

We are freed from death into life, but we are answerable for that life to the Lord who gave it to us. The question as to whether we are "in the body" or "out of it" should become a matter of little import to the believer. All else should be subsumed in the goal of living in a way pleasing to the Lord.[47] This service to Christ is characterized by obligation and responsibility, but not by fear (unless fear in the sense of respect and awe). The Christian is responsible (vv. 9-10) for the life (freedom from death) he has been given.[48] Wendland is right to link these verses with Rom 8:4.[49] Even as freedom from sin means freedom for righteousness (see Rom 6), so freedom from death means obligation to live according to God's law. The believer is given the freedom for this service through the working of the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:4, cf. 2 Cor 5:5). The result (Rom 8:5ff; cf. 2 Cor 5:9-10) is the beginning of a genuine obedience to God's law. That this obedience is imperfect corresponds to the fact that our present condition is imperfect, and indeed is a condition in which, subject still to the effects of sin we must submit to physical death. Nonetheless, Paul's assurance here and throughout this section is that, because of the act of God in Christ, we who are but earthen vessels can -- and must -- manifest the resurrection life of Jesus in our mortal bodies, thus demonstrating that we have been freed from death's hold and have our eyes fixed firmly on Christ and on our future union with Him, when death will indeed be swallowed up by life.

We have noted the similarity between the thought here of freedom from death as freedom to live a life pleasing to God, and that of freedom from sin as freedom for slavery to righteousness in Rom 6 and 8. To this may be added the thought of freedom from the law's

condemnation as freedom for obedience to the law, a theme also present in Romans (cf. 7 as well as chs. 6 and 8). This link between 2 Cor 4:7ff and Rom 6-8 is reinforced by the role given in both 2 Corinthians and Romans to the Spirit in enabling the exercise of the various forms of Christian freedom. In our studies of Rom 6-8, we explored the theme of freedom in relation to sin and the law. Now that we have seen the connection between these themes and that of freedom from death, we should not be surprised to find the latter question also dealt with in Romans. Some of the texts we have already looked at contain references to the believer's freedom from death, but the topic as such is not taken up by the Apostle until 8:17ff. This passage contains many striking similarities to 2 Cor 4:7ff. After we have noted briefly several texts in Rom 6-8, we shall consider Rom 8:17ff at more length. We shall then consider three texts from other Epistles, in order to demonstrate the consistency of Paul's views on the subject. Our examination will make clear that the understanding Paul has of this aspect of Christian freedom is the same wherever and from whatever perspective he addresses the subject. We shall also note throughout the way in which his understanding of freedom from death is related closely to his view of freedom in relation to sin and the law.

Rom 6-8

In Rom 5:12ff, the Apostle, as we have seen elsewhere in our study, identifies sin -- the breaking of God's command -- as the cause of death's entrance into the world. Because of God's act in Christ, however, the hold of sin and death over the believer has been broken, yet only in such a way that the believer's reigning in life (cf. βασιλεύσουσιν, 5:17), i.e. his ultimate freedom from death, can be spoken of in strictly eschatological terms.[50] Schlier notes that this eschatological life alone will bring true freedom from the death brought by Adam's sin.[51] Käsemann states correctly that the future tense of the verb foreshadows the tension noted throughout ch. 6.[52] Only the advent of eternal life, says Schmidt, will vanquish the reign of sin and death completely, and bring participation in God's freedom and glory.[53]

This tension in the believer's life between, on the one hand, the effect of God's act in Christ and, on the other, the continuing influence of sin and death, is portrayed in the following chapters. We provide here a brief summary of the evidence relevant to this theme noted in our prior discussions of Rom 6-8, texts in which the Apostle is concerned

primarily with other matters, before turning to 8:18ff, where he takes up specifically the question of freedom from death.

We have seen in our study of Rom 6 that Paul is very careful to distinguish between the completed nature of Christ's resurrection and victory over death, and the incomplete fulfilment of the effects of this victory in the life of the believer. He stresses (vv. 3, 6, 9) that the work of God in Christ, rather than any sacramental act or ethical endeavour, is the cornerstone of the believer's life and justification. In this connection, it could be said, as we saw, that the believer has died with Christ (v. 8). The references to the resurrection and new life of the believer, however (vv. 4, 5, 8) are primarily moral rather than eschatological in nature, and the continuing need for exhortation (vv. 11ff) shows that this life is now manifest only in a hidden and incomplete way.

The Apostle's point in the chapter is to stress the need for the continuing battle against sin in the believer's life: his freedom in Christ from sin's stranglehold means not a total freedom from sin in his present life but, first and foremost, the obligation to fight back manfully against the continuing hold of sin on all aspects of his life and personality. In the course of his exposition, the Apostle is at pains to differentiate between the once and for all reality of Christ's resurrection and the incomplete nature of the new life the believer has received. As we saw, he refers to the believer's participation in resurrection life only in partial, not fulfilled terms, i.e. within the context of his responsibility to live in obedience to God in his present mortal life. The end result of this obedience is clearly participation in Christ's eschatological glory and life (vv. 22-23), but this event is placed definitely in the future.

It may be said, therefore, on the basis of Rom 6, that while the Christian's present life is (or should be ever-increasingly) based on the reality of Christ's resurrection, he only shares in that resurrection in a partial sense now, and his freedom from death (while based on the once and for all act of Christ) is reserved for the future. What God in Christ has done, therefore, should become the driving force motivating our present lives. The new life (and hope for the future) we have already received in Christ should continually motivate us to present our lives now to Him as the lives of those (in the sense we have noted) ὡσεὶ ἐκ νεκρῶν ζῶντας (v. 13). Freedom from death, therefore, though its fulfilment remains in the future, gives us freedom to live for God in the present.

The same idea (though again it is by no means the central theme) appears in 7:1-6. Here we saw that the "death" of the believer occurs on the basis of the work of Christ (v. 4). This "death", however, far from being the entry into eschatological glory, simply prepares us for a life of obedience, in the power of the Spirit, to God's law (vv. 5-6). Instead of living in rebellion against God and receiving the punishment of eternal death (v. 5, cf. 6:22-23), we are given new life in Christ, and released from the law' s just condemnation of our sin. Freedom from death means freedom for obedience, freedom to live for God.

The theme of freedom from death also appears in 8:1ff. We noted, in our examination of these verses, that the juridical act of God in Christ has declared the believer free, by the power of the Spirit (cf. 7:6),from the working of sin and death (v. 2). This juridical act, however, has yet to find its true fulfilment in our lives, for the believer (as in chs 6 and 7) has not yet received the fulness of this new life. Once more he is exhorted (vv. 12ff) on the basis of what God has done (v. 2), to begin a life of obedience to God's law (cf. v. 4). Although he is confronted continually by the desires of the flesh (vv. 5-8) which lead to death (v. 6; cf. 6;22-23, 7:5), he is able, by the indwelling Holy Spirit, to begin to obey God's law. Thus the believer is pulled between various forces. This tension, as we noted, is expressed in vv. 9ff. The believer, in his present mortal life, is subject, as a whole man, to death (v. 10a). Though the indwelling Holy Spirit brings life even to his mortal body (v. 10b; cf. 2 Cor 4:10-11), the life-bringing work of the Spirit does not negate the fact that (as the whole thrust of the discussion from 6:1 onwards indicates) our present existence still stands in some sense under the divine judgment. Our present life can therefore be described as νεκρός (v. 10; cf. the cry of the believer in 7:24, τίς με ῥύσεται ἐκ τοῦ σώματος τοῦ θανάτου τούτου;), and the vivifying miracle of v. 11 is reserved for the future. The ζωή of v. 10c is not at present a fulfilled reality. This is why (vv. 12ff) the believer must be exhorted to live according to the Spirit and not according to the flesh. These verses speak, therefore, of a present death and a future deliverance -- though even in this present mortal condition the presence of the Holy Spirit brings a measure of genuine life.

This sets the stage well for vv. 17ff, the Apostle's discussion of the hope of the believer in Christ -- the ultimate victory over death. To this we now turn.

Rom 8:17-30

Paul's topic in these verses is Christian hope,[54] insofar as it relates to the present and future implications of Christ's freeing us from death. V. 17 acts as a transitional verse, introducing the question of our future hope and its relationship to our present sufferings.[55] The fulfilment of our heirship remains in the future (συνδοξασθῶμεν), but the hardships and defects of our present life (συνπάσχομεν covers the whole gamut of our life as Christians, as we try to manifest some measure of obedience to God in the face of our own imperfections and the hostility of a sinful and rebellious world)[56] do not throw the reality of this future fulfilment into question. We recognize immediately, therefore, that we are on the same ground as in 2 Cor 4:7ff, insofar as present suffering (and subjection to death) and future glory are contrasted.[57] Our call to obedience as Christians highlights not only the depravity of the world but also our own sinfulness. We suffer not only on account of our present profession of faith in Christ but also as we put to death the deeds of the body (cf. 8:13).[58] This suffering, however, showing forth as it does the mortality both of our present condition and that of the unbelieving world, must be set against the freedom yet to be revealed which will bring this suffering to an end. This thought is well expressed by Althaus: "alles Leiden, wie es gerade der Christenstand mit sich bringt, der Schmerz um eigene und fremde Sünde, die Not in der Versuchung und im Kampfe, unter dem Widerstand der Welt, in Verfolgung und Märtyrertum, ist ein Leiden mit Christus. Das gibt ihm den Ernst, aber in aller Not zugleich die tiefe Freude und hohe Hoffnung, die alle Gemeinschaft mit Christus in sich trägt."[59]

V. 18, which sets forth the theme developed in vv. 19-30,[60] shows that it is the eschatological (future) hope which provides the answer to our present condition of suffering and death.[61] This freedom is reserved for the future (and is thus "eschatological" in the truest sense of the word). The present age, ὁ νῦν καιρός (v. 18), that in which we live our earthly lives, is "... the period of time which began with the gospel events and will be terminated by the Parousia,"[62] as Cranfield comments. The believer is still part of this world and exposed to its dangers. These include sufferings undergone specifically for the sake of the gospel, but also include our participation in the sinful course of the present world.[63] The glory of God, the triumph of eternal life manifesting itself in total freedom from the present world's deathly state, is not yet present and will be revealed only in the

return of Christ.[64] Paul strongly emphasizes here the contrast between present and future.[65] We are already sons and heirs (vv. 16-17), yet the final manifestation of this reality (and hence our final enjoyment of it) is reserved for the future.[66] Althaus comments rightly, "Die Christen sind schon Söhne Gottes, aber wie Christi Herrlichkeit selber, so ist hier Sohnestand vor der Welt noch verborgen, weil im Widerspruch zu dem, was an ihnen sichtbar ist, dem sündlichen Fleisch. Am Ende aber wird ihre Sohnschaft die Hülle durchbrechen und ans Licht treten ...."[67] We are not yet freed from death, yet have the assurance, because of what God has already done for us in Christ, that one day we shall be. Nygren states, "Death has clearly not yet lost its grip on the Christian. As long as he lives on this earth, he has definite experience that he is still in death's country. To that fact the sufferings which come to him bear unequivocal witness. To such objections Paul can answer simply by pointing to the coming glory."[68]

Into this theme of slavery to death in the present age Paul introduces a new element: the bondage of creation. In vv. 19-20 he describes how the created world, also in the thraldom of death, itself longs for the final release which will come with the ἀποκάλυψις τῶν υἱῶν τοῦ θεοῦ (v. 19). What, however, does Paul mean by κτίσις? The background to this, most observers agree, is the Genesis creation account interpreted by Rabbinic thought and Jewish apocalyptic.[69] According to this tradition, the earth was cursed on account of Adam's sin, not because of any flaw of its own. This would explain Paul's phrase οὐχ ἑκοῦσα.[70] The creation is subject to futility (ματαιότης). This probably refers to the frustration of the purpose forwhich it was made (to glorify God),[71] and to the failure by the creation (on account of man's sin) to show itself as creation and thereby point to the Creator.[72] That the reference of τὸν ὑποτάξαντα is to God is scarcely to be doubted.[73]

What is in view here, then, is the subjection by God of the whole sub-human creation[74] to the curse of futility (unfulfilment) on account of man's sin. This means that we should expect, in line with vv. 17-18, a subjection of the creation also to the bondage of death, and this is indicated in the reference to the δουλεία τῆς φθορᾶς in v. 22, where the mortality of the present world is contrasted with the future life-bringing revelation of the sons of God. The world, because of man's sin, is, like man, enslaved to death (φθορά).[75] The pall of death hangs not just over man but over the whole created world because of the entrance of death with Adam's sin (cf. 5:12ff). H.R. Balz rightly

states, "Nicht allein von Nichtigkeit oder der physischen Macht des Todes ist die Rede, sondern die Vergänglichkeit und Todverfallenheit der Welt wird als richtendes Handeln Gottes verstanden, so dass der Umschwung von der Vergänglichkeit zur Herrlichkeit auch nur von Gott her erwartet werden kann."[76] The curse of death, therefore, is not the final answer; already in v. 21 the Apostle states that God subjected the creation ἐφ' ἐλπίδι.[77] This is to be linked with the revelation of the sons of God (v. 19),[78] and shows that the judgment of God included hope of something better in the future.[79] The creation is powerless to free itself, but awaits future liberation through the eschatological act of God. Schmidt notes correctly, "Freiheit ist hier eine Lebenswirklichkeit, zu der sich das Geschöpf nicht selbst bringen kann. Die hier gemeinte Freiheit ist etwas erst Kommendes."[80]

Käsemann rightly insists that freedom is the key word here.[81] Man and creation, under the bondage of death, await the revelation of the sons of God which will bring freedom from the power of death; v. 21 states that the creation itself will "be freed" (ἐλευθερωθήσεται)[82] from slavery to death into the freedom (ἐλευθερίαν) of the children of God (who are not in bondage in such a way that shuts out God's eschatological life-bringing power). The future freeing from death into life is stressed by the use of the prepositions ἀπό and εἰς.[83] If man and creation have experienced φθορά as slavery, the coming δόξα will mean freedom.[84] The structure of the phrases used here should be regarded as parallel.[85] The δουλεία τῆς φθορᾶς is the condition of slavery which is imposed by corruption, and the ἐλευθερία τῆς δόξης is the condition of freedom granted in the revelation of the glory of the children of God. This points up the fact that while believers are already sons of God (vv. 16-17), this sonship remains to be manifested, and must be believed in spite of the circumstances of this earthly life.[86] If, as we noted above, ματαιότης signifies the failure of the creation to show itself as creation, it is also true, as Käsemann notes, that the world takes on its true identity as creation only when it is directed toward Christian freedom (i.e. the freedom of the sons of God), rather than to its own autonomy.[87] Cranfield points out rightly that this does not mean that the creation will share the same freedom as the children of God, "... but that it will have its own proper liberty as a result of the glorification of the children of God." He continues, "We may, however, assume that the liberty proper to the creation is indeed the possession of its proper glory -- that is, of the freedom fully and perfectly to fulfil its Creator's purpose for it, that freedom which

it does not have, so long as man, its lord ... is in disgrace."[88] The creation, therefore, even as it has suffered from the curse brought about by man's sin, will also benefit from the freedom to be granted to men whose sins have been forgiven on the basis of God's work in Christ.[89]

In vv. 22-23 the Apostle gradually moves his focus back to humanity itself. Not only does the creation "groan" (the language is poetic) in the present age (ἄχρι τοῦ νῦν), but even we who are believers groan in our expectation of sonship and of the ἀπολύτρωσις τοῦ σώματος ἡμῶν. Paul is likely thinking here of the ὠδῖνες (labour pains) which, according to OT and apocalyptic expectation, would accompany the advent of the Messianic era.[90] The groaning of the whole creation[91] expresses both the burden of present suffering and the hope of future deliverance. Hence, it speaks both of the present rule of death and the future release from its bondage.[92] Cranfield notes that the metaphor here "...is a very natural one to express the thought of severe distress from which a happy and worthwhile issue is to be looked for."[93]

V. 23 continues the thought, with specific application to believers, and picks up the theme of v. 19, that the sonship which the believers already possess is not yet manifest, for in one sense they can be said still to be awaiting it.[94] Our future freedom from death is defined here as receiving τὴν ἀπολύτρωσιν τοῦ σώματος ἡμῶν. Our ability to receive life and overcome death in the present age is limited by our mortal, bodily condition.[95] Some commentators rightly link this thought with 7:24 (thus supporting our view that in that verse also is expressed the longing of the <u>believer</u> for <u>final</u> liberation from the power of death).[96] Only the man who has the Spirit can appreciate either the calamity of the present situation[97] or the hope of the future. Nygren rightly points out that the contrast often drawn between Rom 7 and Rom 8 (on the basis that one refers to the defeated life of the non-believer and the other to the victorious life of the believer) here falls to the ground in Paul's careful differentiation between what has already been given and what awaits fulfilment.[98]

Schlier, however, denies that the reference here is to the "body of death" of 7:24 (or to the "body of sin" of 6:6 or the "flesh" of 8:13), for this body has been destroyed in baptism. He states, "Aber eines ist geblieben und bleibt auch für den, der den Geist hat:

dieser Leib als versuchlicher und sterblicher, der immer von seiner Vergangenheit her bedroht ist, gegen den Geist und damit gegen die Gabe des von Gott gerechtfertigten und geheiligten Lebens sich zu erheben."[99] Our examination of ch. 7 has shown, however, that it is precisely the condition of the believer which is portrayed there. Moreover if, as Schlier admits, the present bodily condition of the believer actually fights against the purposes of God in his life, is this condition not to be seen as what Paul designates as the "flesh" in Rom 8 or as our "mortal body" in Rom 6? We have already noted the link between our present condition as believers and the hold of sin. A more coherent and straightforward analysis, therefore, yields the conclusion that Paul's concern throughout is to stress that the believer, while freed in one sense from sin's dominion and also from eschatological death, in another sense must live in his present life all too painfully exposed to sin and death alike. Total freedom remains eschatological, reserved for the future. Balz quite correctly points out that in this passage ἀπολύτρωσις and ἐλευθερία are linked very closely, and that ἀπολύτρωσις, which elsewhere in Paul is used to refer to the redemption already accomplished in Christ (cf. 3:24, 1 Cor 1:30, Col 1:14, etc), here is employed in an eschatological sense to refer to the return of Christ.[100] The ἀπολύτρωσις τοῦ σώματος here, therefore, refers to the "Endverherrlichung in Freiheit"[101] of v. 21, and means the same thing as the receiving of the σῶμα πνευματικόν in 1 Cor 15:35ff, or the state of being "out of the body" (ἐκδημῆσαι ἐκ τοῦ σώματος, 2 Cor 5:8; cf. Rom 7:24).[102]

The sense here is, indeed, very close throughout to that of 2 Cor 4:7ff where, as we have seen, the limitations of the present life and the longing for the heavenly body are set against each other in stark relief. We noted at the outset that both passages highlight the opposition between δόξα and φθορά.[103] In this life we groan (v. 23), a theme also echoed in the Corinthian passage (στενάζομεν, 2 Cor 5:2; στενάζομεν βαρούμενοι, 5:4).[104] Now, however, we have the assurance of final victory over death, a confidence expressed here in vv. 16,17 and in a very similar fashion in 2 Cor 5:1ff. The parallel is further strengthened in v. 24, to which may be compared 2 Cor 4:16-18.[105] The believer looks beyond that which is seen (τὸ βλεπόμενον), i.e. the painful circumstances of the present existence, to God's future deliverance from death into life (cf. also 2 Cor 4:10-14). This characterizes the Christian life as a life of hope

(cf. also 2 Cor 5:7[106]). In the phrase τῇ γὰρ ἐλπίδι ἐσώθημεν (v. 24), ἐλπίδι is best explained as a modal dative qualifying ἐσώθημεν.[107] God's saving action has already occurred, but its final effect -- our ultimate deliverance from death -- is still outstanding.[108] Likewise in 2 Cor 4:16-18 τὰ μὴ βλεπόμενα (4:18) is linked (as in Rom 8:17,18,21,30) with the coming δόξα, whereas τὰ βλεπόμενα (4:18) is linked with the θλῖψις (4:17) and death (διαφθείρεται, 4:17, cf. φθορᾶς, Rom 8:21) of our present condition.[109] In both passages, the focus of our hope is the resurrection (2 Cor 4:14, Rom 8:23). Another striking similarity is that in both passages our life in hope is made bearable by the working in us of the Holy Spirit, a working which, in this life, is only the first installment (τὴν ἀπαρχήν, 8:23; cf. τὸν ἀρραβῶνα, 2 Cor 5:5) of His total work in us.[110] Cranfield rightly points out that what the believer has received is both foretaste and guarantee of what is to come.[111]

We may say, therefore, with respect to 8:23f what we observed in our examination of 2 Cor 4:7ff: what the Apostle has in mind is not simply deliverance from the mortal physical body but from the whole condition of our sin-scarred lives in this world. The effects of the curse of death which came upon man and creation in the Fall will only fully be lifted in the resurrection. By ἀπολύτρωσις τοῦ σώματος Paul does not mean deliverance from the mortal body as such,[112] but rather the deliverance of our whole mortal condition from death into life -- a deliverance which will transform rather than destroy our body.[113] In the present life our whole existence is marred by sin; this is what we have seen referred to as the παλαιὸς ἄνθρωπος in Rom 6 and Col 3. In our mortal condition, we are under the grip of death and need release. Käsemann's comment does justice to Paul's meaning here: "Im irdischen Leibe sind wir bleibend dem Zugriff der Knechtschaft ausgesetzt. So ist die Wendung bloss in ihrem Wortlaut missverständlich.... Erlösung geschieht endgültig natürlich, wenn der Erdenleib abgestreift wird, umgekehrt jedoch in Verleihung neuer Leiblichkeit.... Leidenschaftlich verlangt der Apostel nach Befreiung der Existenz aus Anfechtung und Vergänglichkeit zugunsten der Daseinsweise in einer allein Gott gehörenden Welt. Gerade darauf geht das Stöhnen der Christen im Warten auf die Parusie ...."[114] We must beware, therefore, of comments such as those of Althaus, who suggests that redemption has occurred only "in der Innerlichkeit" and cannot have its full effect until man has been delivered

from the body, which is subject to temptation and sin.[115] Our whole being, not just our body, is subject to death. Likewise, of course, in our whole being we live in hope and are supported by the Holy Spirit, so that even in our body we can manifest the life of Jesus (cf. 2 Cor 4:10-11).

That the weakness and mortality of our present life is not merely external or physical is already indicated by the groanings of v. 23, which are directed toward the full receiving of our sonship itself -- our whole life in Christ, which in one sense has not yet been revealed. This theme is given further expression in v. 26, where the believer's ἀσθένεια is related to his prayer life. Here we see the fallacy of Althaus' comment concerning redemption and the "inner life". This point is well illustrated by an observation of Schmidt: "Es gibt keinen einzigen Punkt im irdisch-zeitlichen Leben, wo wir über die Hoffnung hinauskommen könnten. Auch das innerlichste Leben, welches im Heiligen Geist betend vor Gott stehen darf, hat an dem Unvermögen und der Schwachheit aller Dinge in diesem Kairos teil. Der Geist kommt der betenden Seele zwar nur Hilfe, aber auch er gibt seinen Beistand nur in der Form der Hoffnung."[116] Here too the Holy Spirit must aid the believer in his lostness and weakness, as he longs for the final release from death which will deliver him into perfect communion with God. Nygren sums this up well: "It might seem natural to think that the life of the Christian could be divided into inner and outer spheres; that the weakness due to "the flesh" concerns only the latter, the Christian's external relationship with the world; and that the inner man, in its relationship with God, is so transformed that weakness gives way before the power of the Spirit. But in Paul we find quite another view of the inner life of the Christian. For right here Paul speaks of 'our weakness'. It is not only in the outer life of the Christian that weakness grips him. It is a tragic reality even in his inner life, in his life with God, in his very prayer life."[117] On the element of "not knowing" expressed in v. 26a, Cranfield comments rightly: "We take Paul's meaning to be that all praying of Christian men, in so far as it is <u>their</u> praying, remains under the sign of this not-knowing, of real ignorance, weakness and poverty, and that even in their prayers they live only by God's justification of sinners. It would indeed be strange if the continuing sinfulness of Christians (cf. 7:14-25) were altogether without effect in the matter of their

knowledge of what to pray."[118] Here Paul links our weakness in prayer directly to our present mortal condition and longing for glory and freedom from death.[119]

Two other points in the passage relevant to our theme must be noted before concluding. In v. 29 Paul says that believers are by God "foreordained to be conformed to the image of His Son." The only other NT occurrences of συμμόρφος (-ιζόμενος) are in Phil 3:10, 21, and so the most probable meaning here is that the believers are to be conformed to Christ both in His death (cf. Phil 3:10) and in His glorification (cf. Phil 3:21);[120] see further our comments on Phil 3:20-21. In Phil 3, of course, Paul is thinking of his personal desire to follow Christ, whereas here the statement is applicable to all believers. The principle, however, is the same. This rounds out the thought of 8:17, with which the passage began. Cranfield notes rightly that the Apostle is speaking here not only of the believer's final glorification, but also of his growing conformity to Christ now in suffering and obedience.[121] It is worth noting that Paul does use the aorist throughout vv. 29-30.[122] Even in the present condition of exposure to suffering and death, the Apostle insists that God is still sovereignly watching over His people.[123] Here again we may note the close parallel to 2 Cor 4:10-11.

The certainty of the fulfilment of God's purposes in our lives is thus stressed by the concluding phrase of vv. 29-30, τούτους καὶ ἐδόξασεν. So sure is our glorification that, in one sense at least, it can be said already to have been accomplished. Paul probably says this in light of our union with Christ, who has Himself been glorified.[124] This points again to the fact that this freedom from death which will accompany the revelation of the believer's sonship is based entirely on the removal, through Christ's death, of the curse which came upon man because of his sin and disobedience, the ultimate punishment of which is death. The aorist probably also signifies the fact that in some measure (cf. again 2 Cor 4:10-11) the glory of God is already manifested in our earthly lives. A parallel should be drawn to 2 Cor 3:16-18, where both Πνεῦμα and δόξα occur three times, and ἐλευθερία once; note also the parallel between συμμόρφους τῆς εἰκόνος τοῦ Υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ (8:29) and κατοπτριζόμενοι τὴν αὐτὴν εἰκόνα μεταμορφούμεθα (2 Cor 3:18).[125] Further reference may be made to our comments on 2 Cor 3.

If the comparison with 2 Cor 4:7ff holds, we should expect a strong ethical note to be present -- and this, surely, is the sense of the suffering with Christ of v. 17 and the being conformed to

Christ of v. 29. As in 2 Corinthians, the Christian is freed from eschatological death into a life of obedience. Freedom from death -- removal of the curse -- should result in lives lived to the praise and glory of the One through whose gracious action the curse was done away with. In conformity with what, as we have seen, Paul has said throughout Romans, this means freedom for obedience -- whether the Apostle is speaking of law, sin or death, the same pattern emerges. The magnitude of what God has done in the believer (vv. 29-30) should compel him to respond in willing submission to the divine command. That God will grant total freedom from death underlines the contrast between this condition and our present mortal existence. In stressing the frail nature of our present existence, Paul demonstrates how carefully the freedom we do have now must be exercised if it is not to be abused or turned to our own advantage. The believer is freed from death eschatologically, but even in this world he can begin to manifest the life of Jesus in his mortal condition through his (albeit tentative and imperfect) obedience to God's law. This, surely, is what is referred to in the verses immediately preceding our passage, in which the believer's sonship, real though awaiting final fulfilment, is expressed through his cry, "Abba, Father" (v. 16). Through this cry of obedience notes Cranfield, is God's law established.[126] Freedom from death is freedom to live -- in obedience to God.

1 Cor 15:12ff

The same theme as we have noted in 2 Cor 4:7ff and Rom 8:18ff are found in 1 Cor 15:12ff. Out of this lengthy passage several points of importance for our purposes must be noted.

(1) In vv. 17-18 Paul once again demonstrates the link between sin and death, and shows how in Christ we are freed from death's hold. If Christ was not raised from the dead, then our faith is in vain (ματαία,[127] cf. κενή v. 14). This is because it is the work of Christ, His death and resurrection, which is the basis for our justification.[128] Justification means freedom from sin's stranglehold (in the sense we have noted),[129] and freedom from sin means, ultimately, freedom from death. Allo comments rightly, "Un Christ vaincu par la mort ne peut avoir détruit le péché, dont la penalité est la mort; si la mort a été plus forte que Lui, c'est que le péché conserve sa domination; donc les croyants n'ont pas reçu le pardon."[130] Barrett aptly paraphrases the Apostle's argument thus: "It follows, since justification is by faith, that you are still related to God in terms of sins -- not merely that you still commit sin, but that the sin you commit determines God's judgement of you."[131]

If the believer is not freed from sin and the just judgment of the law (see v. 56), then he is subject not only to natural physical death but

to the unbreakable eternal power of death -- in which case, he is totally forsaken.[132] If Christ was not raised, he is still in his sins, from which he believed himself redeemed. In this case, he is still under death's power, as death occurs because of our sins, our repeated wilful transgression of God's law.[133]

(2) Paul now expands (vv. 20-28) upon the fact of Christ's resurrection and its consequences. In the resurrection the hold of death was broken. This, however, is only the ἀπαρχή (vv. 20, 23) of what is to come; Christ is the only one so far to be thus released from death's power.[134] Paul obtains a careful balance, through use of this term, between present reality and future hope.[135] The resurrection of Christ and His being freed from death is the pledge of the future resurrection (and freedom from death) of the believer.[136] There now follows a discussion of the relationship between the effect of Adam's act and that of Christ very similar to what we found in Rom 5:12ff.[137] Through Adam's sin, man came under God's judgment and, ultimately, the curse of death.[138] This curse is lifted in Christ (cf. Gal 3:10), but our release from death, notes Paul carefully, (thus distancing himself from sone gnostic or mystical views[139]) is still outstanding. This will not occur until the return of Christ,[140] when those who have died in Christ[141] will finally be freed from death. Christ has already been freed from death (note the repeated use of ἐγήγερται (six times) and ἤγειρεν (twice) in vv. 12-28). The resurrection of the believer, however, is reserved for the future (ζωοποιηθήσονται, v. 22) and our present life is still characterized by death's hold (note the present tense of ἀποθνήσκουσιν v. 22).[142] Each must occur in its own order (τάγμα -- a military term clearly denoting here this temporal distinction[143]).

The final victory over death is won at the future resurrection, as Paul makes clear in v. 26 (ἔσχατος ἐχθρὸς καταργεῖται ὁ θάνατος).[144] This also signals the end (τέλος, v. 24) of the present world.[145] Christ is risen, so the end of death's authority is now proclaimed. This proclamation, however, is carried out in the midst of a world still dominated by suffering and death. In this world the believer himself, though no longer ultimately in bondage to death, is not yet entirely free from its dominion. This freedom is promised -- indeed, guaranteed -- in the resurrection of Christ, but is not yet within the believer's grasp.

(3) So far the themes in this passage are entirely harmonious with those noted in the previous texts we have examined. A further striking similarity appears in vv. 29-34, where Paul once more links

the resurrection hope with the believer's obligation to live in this life in obedience to God's commands. After listing the fact of baptism for the dead[146] and incidents from his personal experience, he draws the conclusion in v. 32. If there is no resurrection of the death, neither is there any reason for the Christian to place his life in danger for the sake of the gospel. Indeed, continues the Apostle, there is no reason to hold him to obedience to God's law at all -- he might as well indulge in a life of self-centred pleasure. The thought here is that the Christian life involves sacrifice from a worldly point of view, and makes sense only when it is viewed from an eternal perspective. This does not merely mean, however, that the Apostle is only interested in whether or not he will receive a reward (ὄφελος, v. 32) for virtuous living.[147] Rather does he emphasize the obligation placed upon the believer when he acknowledges God's authority over his life. Living in the light of the future hope also means living with a realistic appreciation of our present condition and thus realizing the need for constant vigilance in the exercise of the freedom given in Christ, so that it will always be a freedom for obedience and service, freedom to give up self-centred pursuits in favour of seeking the well-being of others and allowing God His rightful place as Lord of our lives. If, on the one hand, the God of the Christian gospel does not exist, and there is thus no future hope of resurrection from the dead, then neither is man bound to obey Him. Rather should he take advantage of the limited (but at least real) pleasures this life has to offer (v. 32).[148] If, however, things are as Paul in his preaching declares them to be, then man is called to live a life of holiness and obedience to God <u>because</u> He is who He is. This argument appears more explicitly in Rom 14:7-12, where the believer's conduct is to be determined by the fact that he must give account for his life to the God who raises the dead and will raise him.[149] See also our discussion of 2 Cor 5:8-10.

Conzelmann comments rightly on v. 19 that the Christian hope is not a self-centred concern for the future, but is lived out on the basis of what God has already done in Christ; it is, therefore, the working out of our lives in the light of the death and resurrection of Christ.[150] The thought in v. 32 should be seen within the context of the fact that, for Paul, the forgiveness of sins in Christ is the foundation of morality (and, of course, as we have repeatedly seen, the basis on which a genuine obedience to the law occurs).[151] Schlier points out (on Rom 14:9) that Christ's death and resurrection have

occurred in order to establish his authority over the dead and the living -- because, through His resurrection, He has destroyed death's hold over us His lordship over us (whether we are dead or alive) is securely established.[152] Belonging to Christ, as Käsemann points out rightly, is the criterion which determines our daily conduct.[153] This thought is eloquently expressed, with regard to our present verses, by Goudge: "But morality for morality's sake seems a cold and distant principle, to one who has learned that God Himself is righteousness and love, and has seen that righteousness and love incarnate in the Lord.... Nor can justice be done to the Christian's thought of his future reward, unless the character of that reward be considered. It is no mere selfish enjoyment, like that which for Christ's sake has been abandoned; it is Christ, it is God Himself. It is as a resurrection in Christ, with Christ, and to Christ, that he cares for resurrection at all."[154]

(4) After an intervening subsection (vv. 35-49), in which he discusses the different characteristics of the present and future existence of believers, the Apostle closes the section (vv. 50-58) with some concluding remarks on the final victory over death. Paul's use here of ἐνδύεσθαι and θνητός (vv. 53-54), and the idea of death being swallowed up (κατεπόθη ὁ θάνατος εἰς νῖκος, v. 54), provide another strong link to 2 Cor 5 (see v. 4). The same eschatological event is in view in both passages.[155] The resurrection of the dead[156] marks the final release of the believer from the power of death. Verse 56 briefly, but in thoroughly Pauline fashion, notes the connection between law, sin and death.[157] Death, as we have seen, comes as a result of sin, and sin is transgression of the law. Through God's act in Christ, sin is forgiven and the curse lifted, thus leading eventually to deliverance from death's hold. The believer's responsibility is, as we have seen, to begin, by the power of the Spirit, to obey God's law, so that in him the δικαίωμα τοῦ νόμου will be fulfilled. Because the law's demand is satisfied in Christ, the power of sin is broken and death's sting removed, even though the believer is in this life all too prone to sinful desires and subject, in his mortal condition, to the power of death. Indeed, the reality of death's grip (in this limited sense) even on the believer, is clear in this text, as Conzelmann notes, "Erst durch diese Ausweitung wird die Feststellung über die Niederlage des Todes als aktueller Faktor des heutigen Existierens

aufgewiesen."[158] The most important thing, however, is that God, through His work in Christ, has given the believer the final victory (v. 57). The believer's hope of the future is real even in his present life, and causes him to overflow in an expression of thanksgiving.[159] The νῖκος of v. 57 must, in context, refer preeminently to the νῖκος of v. 54, i.e. the final freedom from death of the believer.

This freedom from death, already accomplished in Christ but not yet made effective or real for the believer, provides the basis for the closing exhortation of v. 58. The assurance of final victory must have practical results in the believer's life.[160] This closing comment thus once more underlines the importance of what the Apostle has stated in vv. 29-34. Even as the believer's faith in the living Christ is not in vain (κενή, v. 14), so neither (κενός, v. 58) is the response of obedience he offers to Him in light of the resurrection hope. Once again Paul states the thought that freedom from death means not only freedom to enter into eternal life, but also freedom for the believer now to live a life of obedience to the God who one day will free him totally from death's hold. The thankful cry of v. 57 (cf. Rom 7:25a) is thus but the beginning of the believer's proper response to what God in Christ has done for him in destroying the power of death.

Phil 3:10-11, 20-21

The same pattern we have observed appears again in Phil 3:10-11, 20-21. Here Paul presents the life of every Christian believer[161] as one which should be characterized by knowledge (γνῶναι, v. 10) both of Christ's resurrection and of His sufferings. This knowledge is not merely intellectual, but refers to the whole existence of the believer.[162] Two things, according to v. 10, are of importance in the life of the believer -- the reality of the resurrection and the reality of suffering. A close link may already be seen, therefore with 2 Cor 4:7ff.[163] Christ's resurrection makes possible for the believer forgiveness of sins (through confession of faith and baptism)[164] and, therefore, ultimate release from the power of death (see also on 1 Cor 15:14).[165] His resurrection already, therefore, as δύναμις (v. 10) has effects in the present, mortal life of believers -- and in their moral conduct (see also on Rom 6:4-5).[166] We have not yet, however, brought total deliverance, and so the present mortal condition is one characterized by suffering and death (v. 10). Vincent comments, "Being in Christ involves fellowship with Christ at all points, -- his obedient life, his spirit, his sufferings, his death, and his

glory."[167] We would add that in the phrase συμμορφιζόμενος τῷ θανάτῳ αὐτοῦ (v. 10) must be included (see on 2 Cor 4:10-11) the thought of our lifelong need to die to sin and be more closely conformed to Christ.[168]

This means that here, as in our previous passages, the Apostle insists that the Christian life must be lived in light of the future hope. This is expressed in v. 11 -- a clear reference to the future resurrection of believers.[169] Only at this point will the believer be freed from death's hold, and will Christ's resurrection have its true fulfilment in the believer's new life.[170] What is said in these verses is very much in line with what we have noted to be the Apostle's view elsewhere. In Philippians, he is probably directing his attack against false teachers who did not deny the resurrection altogether (as in Corinth: see on 1 Cor 15),[171] but who probably saw it as having already occurred, the result of this error being that the Christian life was seen as an inner, spiritual process free from suffering and death.[172] To this extent, an affinity can be seen with the false teachers critized in 2 Corinthians. The Philippians, therefore, are in danger of being blinded to the woeful weakness of their present condition, and the need in which they continually stand of reminder of the obligation for obedience to their Lord. As he has done in 2 Cor 4:10-11, Paul retains his insistence that the resurrection of Christ has real effects in the lives of believers, while being careful to note that the present life is one of weakness and disobedience, requiring a day by day decision to follow Christ and submit to His lordship, thus leading to suffering and death (whether on account of our own sin or that of others). This is what the Phillippian false teachers did not wish to know of.[173]

The believer's present life is, however, lived in the assurance that one day he also will participate in the full benefits of Christ's resurrection. Living in hope of the resurrection, though, should point him toward his present, very weighty responsibility of living for Christ. Paul's insistence (against the false teachers) that the resurrection is not something easily (or already) attained is further underlined by εἴ πως (v. 11). This phrase does not express doubt about the reality of the resurrection hope (this, surely, would run counter to the Apostle's purposes here[174]); rather does it indicate what should be the truly humble attitude of the believer who realizes that he has been given to participate in this hope purely by the gracious gift of God and that the resurrection life is never in any way to be taken for granted.

Indeed, the believer should realize that this life is always the gift of a loving but holy God, and his present life should be lived continually in this knowledge.[175]

This pattern is confirmed in the closing verses of Paul's discussion here (vv. 20-21),[176] where the Apostle contrasts our present and future condition. Though we are already free in Christ, the redemption of our bodies awaits Christ's return. Our πολίτευμα is (already) in heaven,[177] yet we must await from there its final consummation. This future orientation is stressed by use of ἀπεκδέχεσθαι; cf. Rom 8:19, 25.[178] Once more, the Apostle is opposing the Philippian false teachers, as R. Martin points out; "Paul is boldly announcing as a future prospect the very article of faith which the heretics at Philippi were despising, viz. a future hope which will complete God's salvation and affect our bodily existence, now weak and frail ... but then to be redeemed."[179] This future freedom is deliverance, through Christ as Σωτήρ,[180] from our present mortal condition into final victory over death.

The contrast in v. 21 between humiliation (cf. the idea of suffering in v. 10) and glory shows the Apostle is thinking in the same terms as in Rom 8:17ff and 1 Cor 15.[181] Friedrich comments rightly, "Wie die Christen nach Röm. 8, 17 mit Christus mitleiden und mitverherrlicht werden, so werden sie nach Phil. 3, 10 seinem Tode gleichgestaltet sein und nach 3, 21 dem Leibe seiner Herrlichkeit gleichgestaltet werden."[182] Martin rightly draws a further parallel to Rom 7:24,[183] the cry, as we have seen, of the Christian believer. Even as against the Corinthian errorists Paul has insisted on the reality of the future resurrection, so now he maintains against the Philippians both that our present existence is mortal and transient, and that our physical bodies will themselves be the subject of divine restoration. This will occur on the Day when the universal lordship of Christ over His enemies (cf. 1 Cor 15:25ff) will be made complete.[184] Even as the believer became like Christ in His death (v. 10), so also will he become like Him in His resurrection (v. 21).[185] In this, the believer follows the example so powerfully described in the hymn of 2:6ff. Paul does not, of course, mean to contrast the body and the soul or spirit, but refers to the transformation of the believer's whole existence.[186] The life he has already received in Christ is not able to free him in his present mortal condition from the bondage of death, yet will surely lead to final deliverance from its grasp.[187] In the process, however, as

1:20ff forcefully indicates, he should be freed here and now from the fear of death (cf. 2 Cor 5:1ff) and be ready to depart and be with Christ.

Paul's message of death and resurrection is once again the basis for his practical ethical exhortation; Phil 4:1, which leads into a series of practical injunctions, serves also as a conclusion (note ὥστε and οὕτως) for the preceding verses.[188] Thus Paul takes his stand against the errorists, who say that the Christian has already reached perfection (against whom see also 3:15!) and stands in need neither of ethical instruction nor future resurrection.[189] Friedrich's comment is apt: "Weil Christen eine andere Heimat haben, weil sie den Leib der Lichtherrlichkeit erhalten werden (3, 20f), sollen sie im Herrn feststehen...."[190] The fact that he has been freed in Christ means that the believer belongs to the Lord and must live always in the light of his future union with Him, in which this belonging will be consummated. Again Friedrich comments, "Wer 'im Herrn steht,' gehört dem Herrn und wird durch den Herrn bestimmt, so dass es nicht von ihm weicht, sondern ihm gehorsam ist."[191] The universal lordship of Christ (v. 21) sets the pattern for the life of the believer, who should always seek to live, even in his present mortal, sinful condition, in a way pleasing to God, mindful of the hope he has, which one day will reach true fulfilment.[192] That final freedom from death, of which he has a foretaste already in his heavenly citizenship, means freedom to live now according to the standards of that citizenship. Thus understood, these verses exhibit in nuce all the themes we have seen developed at further length in the passages we have already examined, and thus confirm the constancy of the Apostle's views on freedom from death and its consequences for this life.

1 Thess 4:13ff

In 1 Thess 4:13ff the Apostle deals with two themes: the respective position of living and deceased believers at the Parousia (vv. 13-18), and the need for believers to live as children of light as they await this event (5:1-11).[193] The details of Paul's eschatological views are outside the scope of our study. Two points, however, are of interest so far as our theme of freedom from death is concerned, for they demonstrate that the pattern we have observed elsewhere in Paul's thinking on this subject is evident here also.

The first point can be seen from an inspection of vv. 13-14. Here the Apostle asserts once more the Christian hope that, at the

return of Christ, God will totally free those who have believed in Christ from death's hold (v. 14).[194] That this freedom from death is not at present realized is indicated by the very fact which occasioned the Apostle's comments -- the physical death (κοιμᾶσθαι)[195] of some of the believers. Because of the work of God in Christ, however (v. 14a),[196] believers, even though they have to undergo physical death, have been given new life and are granted the assurance of participation in the final freedom from death: this is the substance of the ἐλπίς of v. 13.[197] After an interval, the dead believers will received the fulfilment of their hope, and will be with Christ (σὺν αὐτῷ, v. 14) forever.[198] The believer, through the death and resurrection of Christ, has been brought into a relationship of new life with Him, and even the reality of physical death cannot ultimately separate him from the life and relationship.[199] In this sense, Christ is the goal as well as the mediator of our justification.[200]

The freedom from death which the believer has been granted in this life is, therefore, limited, as are all aspects of this freedom in Christ, by the weak and mortal condition of every part of his life. Ultimate freedom -- glorification -- is thus not a present reality but a goal still outstanding.[201] The believer's assurance is that because of what Christ has already done, he will in due course attain this goal.[202] This is why (v. 13) the Thessalonians need not be sorrowful.[203] Thus far, therefore, this passage conforms exactly to the pattern we have seen on our other texts: a) freedom from death is granted on the basis of the death of Christ; b) this freedom is limited in the present weak and sinful life which must end in physical death; c) this freedom, however, is fulfilled, and total deliverance from death granted, at the return of Christ.[204]

The other major theme we have noted in the Apostle's treatment of freedom from death is that the coming freedom should influence the conduct of our present lives. This idea is also present here, as can be seen from 5:8-10. In v. 8, in line with the declarations of the preceding verses, the believers are described as those who belong to the day -- probably an allusion to the future glory.[205] Precisely because they are to participate in this glory, they are commanded now to clothe themselves with faith and love -- and the hope of salvation. The latter term (σωτηρία) is clearly eschatological.[206] This means, as Frame notes, that the believer's conduct is given an "eschatological sanction."[207] The believer's vision should always be fixed on the future

deliverance from death,[208] and this should influence the conduct of his present life.[209] Precisely through his hope of salvation will (or should) the believer remain alert (v. 8).[210] His assurance of future freedom should not, however, lead him into an attitude of complacency which could prove ruinous to his relationship with God.[211]

In v. 9 the Apostle finds the basis for the future deliverance in the finished work of Christ, who has liberated us from our sins and thus given us new life. Ethical exhortation, therefore, is linked with the believer's confession of faith in the Christ who has died for his sins and will return to give him final victory over death.[212] Thus the foundation and goal of Christian liberty are found in Christ. The vigilance to be exhibited by the believer is linked both to what Christ has done and to what He will yet do.[213] The believer's freedom from the law's condemnation and from sin is, as we have seen, freedom for obedience to God and His law. This freedom rests entirely on the past work of Christ. In this text, however, as in our other passages on this theme, we see the way in which the hope of future freedom also influences our present conduct and leads likewise (as does an appreciation of what Christ has done for us) to the proper exercise of the freedom we have in Christ.[214]

The putting on (ἐνδυσάμενοι) of the hope of salvation represents the fact that the believer's future freedom from death should influence the way in which he uses his present freedom to live. The aorist should be taken as expressing (chronologically) identical action with the main verb (νήφωμεν); a lifelong attitude is thus in view.[215] The fact of his future glorification should also give ample indication to the believer of the temporary and mortal nature of his present existence. The perfect and glorious nature of this future freedom should show the believer how limited his present freedom is, and how carefully he, as a still weak and fallen creature, must exercise it. Even so, he has been granted a genuine freedom in Christ to begin to live for righteousness even in this life, and it is this freedom to begin to live righteously which is urged on the believer in these verses.

Conclusions

1. The believer is freed from eschatological death (and receives eschatological life) in that he is freed from God's just condemnation of his sin by the law, and thus from the curse which resulted in death. This freedom from death, however, is reserved for the

future, for the believer, in his present weak and mortal condition, is still subject, as a thoroughly imperfect being, to the penalty of physical death. Because he is not yet totally free from sin, he cannot in this life be free from the hold of death either. The believer therefore cries out in hope of the coming of freedom, which will come to him (and, in some sense, to the physical creation) as a result of death's grip being broken in Christ's resurrection from the dead. Paul does not pin his hopes on a necessarily-imminent Parousia, but faces squarely the fact that he (and other believers) must be ready to face physical death.

2. So certain, however, is the assurance of this future freedom from death that, even now, the believer is freed from the fear of physical death. Because he knows that physical death is not the end, indeed that it is the gateway to a better existence, he is able even to welcome it.

3. This freedom from fear of death also enables the believer to offer his life willingly in service to God and others, even if that service involves risk or suffering. This service is prompted by the gratefulness the believer has (or should have) in response to the magnitude of God's gift of eternal life (freedom from eschatological death). Freedom from death, therefore, means freedom to live in a way pleasing to God and in submission to His will.

4. The nature of our future, glorified existence shows, by contrast, the weak and frail nature of our present life, in which we are all too prone to sin's attacks. It thus acts as a reminder that the freedom we have been given in Christ can all too easily be turned to our own advantage, and must therefore be exercised continually in an attitude of submission to God and with a desire to serve Him and obey His law.
5. The believer's freedom from eschatological death and realization, by contrast, of the nature of his present existence, therefore, frees him from fear of death and frees him for true life (a life lived to God's glory). His desire to serve God and others ahead of himself comes, therefore, both out of a sense of gratefulness and also out of a concern to exercise properly the freedom he has been given in Christ. This pattern, freedom from death -- freedom

for life, therefore, is closely related to the previous patterns we have seen, freedom from the law's just condemnation -- freedom for obedience to the law, and freedom from sin's domination -- freedom for slavery to righteousness. Both the glorious nature of his future existence and the frailty of every aspect of his present condition urge the believer on toward an attitude of willing submission to God and His law and toward yielding his life in that slavery to righteousness which is the hallmark of the true freedom in Christ.

Footnotes

1. Alfred Plummer, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Second Epistle of St Paul to the Corinthians, p. 127, points out that the participles in vv. 5-10 apply to body and mind, and ἐν ὀστρακίνοις σκεύεσιν refers to the weakness of our whole personality, not just the fragility of our bodies.

2. E.-B. Allo, Saint Paul, Seconde Épître aux Corinthiens, 2nd ed., p. 113: "... c'est toute la nature humaine, corps et âme, si disproportionée avec la faiblesse de ses capacités à l'oeuvre pour laquelle Dieu sien sert comme d'un instrument."

3. Rudolf Bultmann, Der zweite Brief an die Korinther, 10th ed., p. 115.

4. Contra C. K. Barrett, A Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, pp. 139-40. Bultmann, p. 118, points out that the parallel passage in Phil 3:4ff applies to all believers, as also does 2 Cor 12:5-10, where the Apostle also speaks of God's δύναμις being made manifest in our ἀσθένεια. Certainly, in our view, Paul speaks in 2 Cor 5 as an Apostle -- yet is not the Apostle to be the model (under Christ) for all believers? The principles he lays down are surely those he expects to be pursued by other believers -- as he intimates elsewhere to the Corinthians, (1 Cor 11:1).

5. See H. R. Balz, Heilsvertrauen und Welterfahrung, p. 50.

6. Barrett, pp. 139-40; Bultmann, p. 118; H. Windisch, Der zweite Korintherbrief, 9th ed., pp. 144-45; Plummer, pp. 129-30.

7. Rom 6:4-5 constitutes a further parallel to the thought of life and death here, though this text, of course, refers to the once for all act of baptism rather than the continual laying down of the believer's life (which, however, baptism signifies). See Bultmann, p. 119. This is why Paul uses νέκρωσις here in place of θάνατος, as in Rom 6.

8. See Bultmann, p. 118: "... das τὴν νέκρωσιν τοῦ Ἰησοῦ περιφέρειν ist nicht = in Lebensgefahr sein, sondern bedeutet: real im Sterben sein, nämlich wirklich διαφθείρεσθαι hinsichtlich des σῶμα ... der Todesmacht preisgegeben sein. Das eben ereignet sich in dem θλίβεσθαι, ἀπορεῖσθαι, διώκεσθαι und καταβάλλεσθαι V. 8f. Und

eben das V. 8f. beschriebene Geschehen bezeichnet Paulus in V. 10 in seinem Sinn als ein περιφέρειν der νέκρωσις τοῦ Ἰησοῦ...."

9. Heinz-D. Wendland, Die Briefe an die Korinther, 11th ed., p. 147.

10. Bultmann, p. 118: "Die Antithesen V. 8f. haben deshalb Gültigkeit, weil alle Leiden für Paulus nicht Leiden im menschlichen Sinne sind, sondern die νέκρωσις τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, weil er also in ihnen am Tode Jesu teilnimmt, weil sich in ihnen die κοινωνία παθημάτων αὐτοῦ, das συμμορφίζεσθαι τῷ θανάτῳ αὐτοῦ (Phil 3:10) vollzieht." See also Barrett, p. 140.

11. Wendland, p. 165. See Windisch, p. 142: "Mit Absicht hat sich Gott schwache hinfällige Menschen zu Gefässen seiner Gnade auserwählt, damit sein Wirken erkennbar werde."

12. See Bultmann, p. 114.

13. See Barrett, p. 139.

14. Wendland, p. 146. Allo, p. 114, comments: "En effet, cette reproduction de l'Homme-Dieu en ses souffrances redemptrices entraîne la manifestation simultanée et continue de sa puissance, puis qu'Il sauve toujours ses envoyés comme Il se sauvait lui-même jusqu'à ce que l'heure fixée fût venue."

15. Allo, p. 114, says that σῶμα here indicates "les conditions de leur vie extérieure" -- yet, surely, as noted earlier, the language of vv. 8-9 is applicable just as much to the "interior" life as to external or physical conditions.

16. Barrett, p. 141 -- who, however, sees v. 11 as primarily futuristic. The parallel nature of the two verses, however, forbids this: the future does not come into play until v. 14. Ἐν τῇ, κ.τ.λ. (v. 11), which must refer to the present life, takes further the thought of v. 10. See Allo, p. 115; Plummer, p. 130; Wendland, p. 165; Bultmann, p. 121.

17. See Bultmann, pp. 119-20.

18. See Wendland, p. 165.

19. Wendland, p. 165.

20. That this is a reference to the Parousia, at which all believers, whether dead or alive will be united with Christ, is not disputed; see Windisch, pp. 149-50; Plummer, pp. 133-34; Allo, pp. 116-17; Philip E. Hughes, Paul's Second Epistle to the Corinthians, pp. 148-51. The thought expressed here coheres perfectly well with 1 Cor 15:22-23, and Allo, p. 115, is right to dismiss the notion that in 2 Corinthians Paul has lost the assurance he (supposedly) previously had of being alive at the Parousia. Windisch, p. 157, suggests that Paul's experiences in Asia Minor (2 Cor 1) caused him to lose heart and give up hope of an imminent Parousia. He admits, however (p. 149), that the eschatological schema here is similar to 1 Cor 15 and 1 Thess 4:13ff. In 1 Thess 4 Paul's purpose is to warn his readers against expecting an imminent return of Christ, and if in v. 15 he uses the phrase ἡμεῖς οἱ ζῶντες, κ.τ.λ. it is only to include himself among the group of

those presently living rather than those (Thessalonians) who have already died. See Hughes, pp. 149-50; Allo, pp. 155-60. To suggest, moreover, without any further evidence, that Paul's experiences -- which ultimately led him to a deeper confidence in the God who raises the dead (2 Cor 1:9) -- resulted in such a change in his eschatology is, surely, unlikely.

21. See Bultmann, p. 122.

22. Bultmann, p. 125.

23. Windisch, pp. 152-53, notes texts in Plato, the Stoics, Philo and the mysteries. In Greek philosophy the inner man is the immaterial soul, untouched by the troubles of external circumstances or the physical body (the "outer man"). In gnostic thought, the inner man becomes a spiritual light or supernatural substance, related to the higher world, which can only be experienced ecstatically; see Bultmann, p. 127.

24. Barrett, p. 146. See also Windisch, p. 153; Wendland, p. 167.

25. Bultmann, pp. 127-29. Wendland, p. 168, notes rightly that the theme of this passage ("Not schafft Herrlichkeit, Sterben schafft Leben....") would be unheard of to the Greek mind.

25a. Barrett, p. 146. Bultmann, p. 127, admits that the ἔσω ἄνθρωπος of Rom 7:22 is formally identical with this, yet the true being of the ἔσω ἄνθρωπος is in Romans somehow not "empirically realized". Surely special pleading! This only reinforces our view of Rom 7.

26. See Bultmann, p. 127.

27. Allo, p. 119, is probably still too much influenced by the thought of an opposition between spiritual and physical, as is evident by his comment here "Ils sentent bien que leur 'homme extérieur', c'est-à-dire leur corps avec tout ce qui tient à la vie de ce corps 'psychique' ... va s'affaiblissant ... mais leur 'homme intérieur', c'est-à-dire leur personnalité invisible vue par le sommet, du haut du πνεῦμα ... va se fortifiant...." Yet see also Allo's excursus (pp. 134-37) where his comment is perhaps closer to the mark: "... chez Paul ... il s'agit, non point de parties ou de fonctions diverses, mais d'une personnalité indivisible, vue du dehors ou vue de dedans, après que la régénération est intervenue" (p. 137). Wendland, p. 167, is close to the truth when he suggests that the opposition is not between body and spirit (as in Greek philosophy, a distinction sharpened in the mysteries) but is instead determined by man's relationship to Christ, which places him in the coming eschatological world instead of the old world. See also Bultmann, pp. 125-28, who speaks of "eschatological life" and of the future as an "eschatological power" influencing the present. We limit our concurrence here to Wendland's stress on relationship to Christ. Paul does not speak in terms of the "inbreaking" of the "eschatological world" or of an "eschatological life", and it is unhelpful to use such terms to try and elucidate his meaning here.

28. Bultmann, p. 127.

29. Barrett, p. 147: "... here Paul thinks of the daily renewal of Christian existence, which is not guaranteed by an act of faith,

or by baptism, in the past, but continues only in virtue of continual contact with the Lord."

30. Bultmann, p. 131.

31. Barrett, p. 151. See Bultmann, p. 134; Hughes, p. 163; Windisch, p. 160; Allo, p. 121; C. F. D. Moule, An Idiom Book of NT Greek, p. 7; contra Hans Lietzmann, An die Korinther I.II, 3rd ed., p. 117.

32. Windisch, pp. 158-59.

33. Hughes, pp. 160-61. Paul's point in writings to the Thessalonians was not to stress that he (or anyone else in particular) would still be alive at the Parousia, but rather to reassure them that those who died before the Parousia would in no way be at a disadvantage compared to those still alive. All this shows only that Paul believed someone would be alive at the Parousia! Hughes, p. 161, points out that, far from expecting an imminent Parousia, Paul had to write again to the Thessalonians precisely to stress that Christ's return could not happen before certain events had occurred (2 Thess 2:1ff). Windisch, p. 161, rightly suggests that Paul would probably have named the time of the Parousia had he believed he knew when it was going to occur; as it is, all that he expresses is the fervent wish to receive the heavenly body, indicating precisely that he did not believe he knew when the event was going to take place. Allo, p. 147, notes correctly that Paul did not share the false hopes of the Thessalonians, and there is no indication he changed his position when writing to the Corinthians who were, at any rate, far less preoccupied with eschatological matters.

34. It is possible that ἐπενδύσασθαι may be more or less equivalent to ἐκδύσαθαι (thus Bultmann, p. 136, who points out that the opposition in v. 4 is between ἐπενδύσασθαι and ἐκδύσασθαι). But see Allo, p. 141; Barrett, pp. 152-53; Plummer, pp. 145-46, for a contrary view. Paul chooses his words carefully, and it seems the prefix ἐπί should be given some force. This does not mean, however, that an imminent Parousia is in view. In one sense, Bultmann is right in asserting that Paul is not interested in an intermediate period between death and resurrection, but in the resurrection itself, in which death and the mortal body will be swallowed up in victory. Even though the body has died, however, Paul can speak of putting on the new body over the old. If, indeed, he is speaking on the basis that some believers (possibly, but not necessarily including himeself) will be alive at the Parousia, the prefix can be given its natural sense, the reference being to the putting on of the new body over the old (at the Parousia).

35. Bultmann, p. 137.

36. Though see Bultmann, pp. 137-39, who supposes that the Apostle is here countering gnostic teaching on nakedness as something to be desired. The conditional εἴ γε καί (which he translates "wenigstens wenn es gilt, dass ...") indicates that we will not be found naked. He bases this view on the understanding that for Paul the believer would only be found naked if he were without a heavenly body at the resurrection. The Apostle is not interested in an interim period.

On our view, the verse certainly expresses the assurance that the believer will not be found naked at the resurrection. However, as Windisch, p. 162, and Allo, pp. 124-29, point out, the nakedness is only said here to be vanquished at that point; see also Barrett, pp. 153-55; Plummer, pp. 147-48. J. N. Sevenster, "Some Remarks on the ΓΥΜΝΟΣ in II Cor V.3," in Studia Paulina, ed. J. N. Sevenster and W. C. van Unnik, pp. 202-8, points out that nakedness and the resurrection are clearly opposed, and the first state is regarded by the Apostle as something to be feared. Allo, p. 146, sees this also: "La vraie raison de la répugnance présupposée, c'est qu'une âme ne devient 'nue', au sens indiqué, que par le fait de la mort corporelle; c'est la mort qui fait peur à la nature humaine." The opposition between Paul and the Greeks, as Sevenster, pp. 208-14, points out, consists not in that the Apostle denies the existence of a state of nakedness but in that, while the Greeks look forward to it, he regards it as something negative. Paul does not share in the Greek desire to leave the body and enter into a non-corporeal existence after death. Rather dies he eagerly anticipate the great Day on which the faithful believer will receive a new body. See also Wendland, p. 170; Lietzmann, p. 117.

37. Wendland, p. 170. See also Sevenster, p. 208; Hughes, p. 171; Plummer, p. 147: "No one yearns for the γυμνότης of being a bodiless spirit, and God has better things in store for us."

38. Wendland, p. 161.

39. Bultmann, p. 139, argues that if Paul were thinking of an interim period here, his comments (if understood this way) would imply an attitude of fear that such a period would threaten the believer's assurance of the resurrection. This is not necessarily the case, however, as we have seen.

40. Allo, p. 128.

41. Windisch, p. 63, notes that the reference of ἵνα καταποθῇ κ.τ.λ. (v. 4) is to the resurrection, not to a necessarily-imminent Parousia, i.e. one which would avoid the necessity of having to undergo death. Death as such, not a necessarily-imminent Parousia, is envisioned here by the Apostle, for whom the Parousia might or might not occur during his lifetime.

42. Wendland, p. 170. These verses should, therefore, be connected very closely with Rom 7:24, 8:18ff, which express the longing of the believer (7:24!) for final liberation from death. See Hughes, p. 167. Wendland, p. 170, notes the link between the references to t the Holy Spirit in 2 Cor 5:5 and Rom 8:23. See also Windisch, p. 160.

43. Bultmann, p. 142. See also Windisch, p. 168, on v. 8, who notes that μᾶλλον ἐκδημῆσαι κ.τ.λ. would not make more sense were Paul living in abject fear of death.

44. Plummer, p. 152.

45. Wendland, p. 170.

46. Bultmann, p. 144.

47. See Bultmann, p. 144. Hughes, p. 178, sees the significance of the "therefore" in v. 9 thus: "To be well-pleasing to Christ is, indeed, the sum of all ambition which is truly Christian."

48. See Wendland, p. 171, notes that the consequences of the resurrection hope is the responsibility of the Christian to live a life pleasing to God.

49. Wendland, p. 172.

50. C. E. B. Cranfield, The Epistle to the Romans, 2 vols., I, 288; Hans W. Schmidt, Der Brief des Paulus an die Römer, 2nd ed., p. 101; Ernst Käsemann, An die Römer, p. 147. Heinrich Schlier, Der Römerbrief, p. 172, links βασιλεύσουσιν with σωθησόμεθα (vv. 9, 10).

51. Schlier, p. 172.

52. Käsemann, p. 147.

53. Schmidt, p. 101.

54. Cranfield, I, 404.

55. Cranfield, I, 405.

56. Our sufferings in no way replace those of Christ, however, or are in themselves redemptive. They are only a participation in the sufferings of Christ, which have already been undergone by Him; see Schlier, p. 255; Cranfield, p. 408.

57. See Schlier, pp. 257-58; Otto Michel, Der Brief an die Römer, 5th ed., p. 265; Schmidt, p. 143. Note also the comparison with 1 Cor 15:42ff where, as here, δόξα and φθορά are opposed. See Schlier, p. 266.

58. See Schlier, pp. 255-56; Michel, p. 263; Franz J. Leenhardt, Epistle to the Romans, pp. 216-17: "Suffering is the note of every life which has the tension of contradiction; it is impossible not to know suffering if one conducts one's life in this world according to the teaching of the Son...."

59. Paul Althaus, Der Brief an die Römer, 10th ed., p. 92.

60. Cranfield, I, 410; Michel, p. 264; U. Gerber, "Röm. viii 18ff. als exegetisches Problem der Dogmatik," NT 8 (1966), p. 59.

61. Michel, pp. 264-65 n. 1; Schlier, p. 257.

62. Cranfield, I, 409, who points out rightly (p. 409 n. 1) that, as συνπάσχομεν refers specifically to Christians, it is preferable to take ὁ νῦν καιρός thus than to understand it (as do, for instance, Anders Nygren, Commentary on Romans, p. 330, Schlier, p. 257 and others) in the broader sense of ὁ αἰὼν οὗτος.

63. Schlier, p. 257, notes that the sufferings include "... all das Bedrängende und Schmerzliche, alles Schreckliche und Böse, mit dem sich wissend oder unwissend dieser Äon gegen sein Ende wehrt und es sich gerade dadurch vorbereitet...."

64. See Schlier, p. 258.

65. See Michel, p. 265.

66. Cranfield, I, 409-10, warns correctly, "That Paul thought of the glory which is to be revealed εἰς ἡμᾶς as being in some senses already ours is not to be denied. But it is important not to stress this in such a way as to obscure the vastness of the difference between our present condition and that which is to be ours." See also Gerber, p. 61. Gerber, p. 59, suggests that Paul opposes here both Hellenistic "realized eschatology" (the spirit is divine, the body mortal) and Jewish "futurist eschatology" (the Spirit will come only in the future).

67. Althaus, p. 93.

68. Nygren, pp. 329-30.

69. See, for instance, Gen Rabbah, 4 Ezra 3-10, Ap Bar 15:32ff. For this view see all commentators except Schmidt. See also Gerber, p. 66, and the lengthy discussion in Balz, pp. 41-45.

70. Schlier, p. 261; Michel, p. 267; William Sanday and Arthur C. Healam, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, p. 208; Cranfield, I, 414; Leenhardt, p. 220; Hans Lietzmann, An die Römer, pp. 84-85; Althaus, p. 93; Käsemann, p. 237; Gerber, p. 69; Balz, p. 41.

71. Many suggestions have been advanced as to the precise meaning of ματαιότης; see Cranfield, I, 413. The simplest, most natural meaning seems to be creation's failure to achieve the ultimate meaning or purpose for which it was designed, i.e. to glorify God. See Leenhardt, p. 220; Cranfield, I, 413-14.

72. See Schlier, pp. 260-61. As a result of this failure, becomes subjected to φθορά. This suggestion (and that noted in (18)) are preferable to that by which ματαιότης and φθορά are taken as simple equivalents (for which view see Lietzmann, p. 85; Schmidt, pp. 146-47). Michel, p. 267 and p. 267 n. 6, links the two but notes that they are not identical. Balz, p. 40, links ματαιότης with Ecclesiastes and suggests the reference is to the meaninglessness of the created world -- this meaninglessness, however, comes from creation's failure to achieve the meaning and purpose God originally assigned to it.

73. Schlier, p. 261; Leenhardt, p. 220 and p. 221n; Michel, p. 267; Schmidt, p. 147; Lietzmann, p. 85; Barrett, p. 166; Cranfield, I, 414; Käsemann, p. 227; contra Balz, p. 41, who takes man as the subject. Lietzmann points out that, if the Gen 3:17 reference is to be taken seriously, God must be the subject. Cranfield notes that the subject of the participle must be the same as the subject of ὑπετάγη, which must be God, for neither man nor Satan could have subjected the world ἐφ' ἐλπίδι.

74. Schlier, p. 259, includes unbelieving humanity in κτίσις, on the basis that elsewhere (Gal 6:15, 2 Cor 5:17, Rom 8:39) κτίσις refers to men; Michel, p. 266, points out that in Jewish thought creation includes men and angels. See also Käsemann, p. 224 (who, however, admits that the primary reference is to the sub-human creation). Schmidt, p. 145, supposes that unbelievers must be included, for men are, above all, the object of God's saving act.

Whether or not this is the case, however, it is not the Apostle's point here; οὐχ ἑχοῦσα indicates clearly the lack of culpability of the part of the κτίσις, whereas Paul teaches that men are in Adam totally responsible for the result of their own sin (5:12ff). See Cranfield, I, 411; also Cranfield, "Some Observations on Romans 8:19-21," in Reconciliation and Hope, ed. R. Banks, p. 225. Gal 6:15 and 2 Cor 5:17 refer specifically to the καινὴ κτίσις (Christian believers), and there is no allusion to the created world at all. Cranfield, I, 411, points out it is hard to believe that the Apostle would use κτίσις, which elsewhere has a positive reference, to refer specifically to non-Christians over against Christians. See also Lietzmann, p. 84.

75. See Schlier, pp. 260-61, who identifies slavery to φθορά ("transitoriness", "corruptibility") as the result of the failure (ματαιότης) of creation to fulfil its true purpose, and as signifying the absence of God's life and power. Käsemann, p. 227, notes that "transitoriness" means slavery to the power of death. Sanday/Headlam, p. 208, refer to slavery to dissolution and decay, while Cranfield, I, 415, speaks of "... the condition of being the slaves of death and decay, of corruption and transitoriness."

76. Balz, p. 50.

77. Ἐφ' ἐλπίδι should be linked with ὑπετάγη (rather than with τὸν ὑποτάξαντα); see Schmidt, p. 147; Cranfield, I, 414.

78. See Michel, pp. 267-68.

79. See Cranfield, I, 414.

80. Schmidt, p. 147; see Schlier, pp. 261-63; Balz, p. 51. Schlier, p. 263, notes that while this freedom is clearly future, the first steps toward it are taken on the path of suffering for Christ in the proclamation of the gospel.

81. Käsemann, p. 225.

82. I.e., at the time of the revelation of the sons of God; see Cranfield, I, 415.

83. Balz, . 50.

84. See Balz, p. 50.

85. See Cranfield, I, 416; Cranfield, "Observations," pp. 228-29.

86. See Cranfield, I, 412-13 on v. 19; Käsemann, p. 226; Nygren, p. 332.

87. Käsemann, p. 228.

88. Cranfield, I, 416; Cranfield, "Observations," p. 229.

89. See Althaus, p. 93.

90. See Isa 26:17, 66:8; Jer 22:23; Micah 4:9-10. See also 1 En 62:4, 4 Ez 4: 0 and 1QH 3:7ff. See Michel, p. 269; Käsemann, p. 228; Schlier, p. 263; Leenhardt, p. 222; Cranfield, p. 416 n. 2:

"The idea of the groaning of the whole sub-human creation is not a very big step from the basic statement of Gen 3.17 that the ground is cursed for man's sake." Balz, pp. 51-53, allows more for influence of Hellenistic sources.

91. The force of the συν- of the compound verbs is not that the creation groans with the believers (for the believers are clearly distinguished from the creation according to v. 23), but rather that the whole creation groans together. See Cranfield, I, 416-17; Leenhardt, p. 222n; Lietzmann, p. 85; Käsemann, p. 228; contra Schmidt, p. 148.

92. See Schlier, pp. 263-64.

93. Cranfield, I, 416 n. 2.

94. P. Benoit, "'Nous gémissons, attendant la délivrance de notre corps': Rom. VIII, 23," in Exégèse et Théologie II, pp. 41-52, argues for the Western text of 8:23 (which omits υἱοθεσίαν), on the basis that a contradiction to v. 15 is thus avoided. Sonship, he says, cannot be augmented or lost (p. 46), and what is really awaited by the Apostle is the ἀπολύτρωσις τοῦ σώματος (pp. 48-51). He concludes that υἱοθεσίαν was place in the text by sources which felt that the ἀπολύτρωσις τοῦ σώματος was not worthy of mention as an end to be desired (p. 52). Yet Paul does not speak of υἱοθεσία as still outstanding (which could involve a contradiction); rather does he carefully balance receipt of sonship with expectation of its full manifestation (see our comments in text). See Balz, pp. 57-58. Leenhardt, pp. 228n, says rightly that "... in v. 19 creation awaits, not the presence of the sons of God, which is already a fact, but their manifestation; what they are has not yet disclosed its full effects -- the manifestation of the glory which is in them."

95. Schlier, p. 265.

96. Käsemann, p. 227 is surely mistaken when he tries to link 7:24 instead with the cry of creation of 8:22, from which he draws the conclusion that what is valid for unredeemed man is valid for the (unredeemed) creation: "Der unerlöste Mensch ist der Sprecher seiner Welt." Apart from the fact that Paul links the creation with the fate of the redeemed of v. 23 rather than that of the unbelievers (who, as we have seen, are here nowhere in view), it is far more natural to see the personal cry of 7:24 in tandem with the personal groaning of 8:23. Michel, p. 270 n. 19, comments, "Es ist erstaunlich, dass die Kommentare nicht die Nähe zu Röm 7, 24-25 erkennen." See also Nygren, p. 333.

97. See Balz, p. 57, who comments: "Nur wer den Geist hat, kann um das Verhaftetsein der menschlichen Existenz an die Sarx und an die Sünde wissen (Röm 7,7ff)...." Extraordinarily, he still goes on to identify 7:24 with the cry of the unredeemed!

98. Nygren, p. 334.

99. Schlier, p. 266.

100. Balz, p. 60.

101. Balz, p. 58.

102. Balz, p. 58.

103. See (57) above.

104. Michel, p. 269 n. 17.

105. Balz, p. 64; Leenhardt, p. 227; Michel, p. 271; Käsemann, p. 230; Schmidt, p. 149. Leenhardt, p. 228, feels that Paul in Rom 8 goes beyond 2 Cor 5 to 1 Cor 15, i.e. to the full transformation of the body -- but is this not also his theme in 2 Cor 5?

106. See Nygren, p. 334.

107. Käsemann, p. 230; Cranfield, I, 419; Sanday/Headlam, p. 209; Leenhardt, p. 228n.

108. Cranfield, I, 419-20.

109. See Balz, p. 64. This reference to φθορά also connects our text to 1 Cor 15:42ff; see Schmidt, p. 146; Michel, p. 268 n. 12; Leenhardt, p. 228. Schlier, p. 266, notes the similar opposition between δόξα and ἀφθαρσία in 1 Cor 15.

110. On the link between ἀπαρχή and ἀρραβών see Lietzmann, p. 85; Käsemann, p. 229; Cranfield, I, 418; Schlier, p. 264.

111. Cranfield, I, 418.

112. Contra Lietzmann, p. 85.

113. See Käsemann, p. 229; Michel, p. 270; Schlier, p. 266; Gerber, p. 73; Benoit, p. 50 n. 5. Balz, pp. 59-60 n. 72, takes a more sympathetic position toward Lietzmann, but suggests that a better translation would be "Erlösung aus unserer vorfindlichen Lieblichkeit."

114. Käsemann, p. 229.

115. Althaus, p. 94.

116. Schmidt, p. 149.

117. Nygren, pp. 335-36.

118. Cranfield, I, 422. See also Leenhardt, pp. 229-31.

119. See Schlier, p. 268 and pp. 268-69 n. 27.

120. Balz, p. 109.

121. Cranfield, I, 432. See also Schmidt, pp. 151-52; Michel, pp. 277-78; Schlier, pp. 272-73; Sanday/Headlam, p. 218.

122. Käsemann, p. 236.

123. See Nygren, pp. 340-41.

124. See Cranfield, I, 433.

125. See Schlier, pp. 273-74.

126. Cranfield, I, 401-2.

127. On μάταιος see Rom 8:20, where the word seems to denote "... the ineffectiveness of that which does not attain its goal...." (Cranfield, I, 413). Here the meaning is that the gospel faith would be empty, because it brings forth no result as far as justification is concerned. See Allo*, p. 402; Archibald Robertson and Alfred Plummer, First Epistle of St Paul to the Corinthians, p. 349; H. L. Goudge, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, p. 144. (* E-B. Allo, Premiere Epitre aux Corinthiens)

128. Hans Conzelmann, Der erste Brief an die Korinther, p. 315.

129. Note that Paul is not appealing so much to an "experience" of redemption or forgiveness, as to the actual significance and consequence of the believer's justification in Christ. See Conzelmann, p. 315 n. 29: "... Paulus nicht an die Erlösungserfahrung appelliert, sondern zur Besinnung über die Voraussetzungen des Vergebungsglauben aufruft...." See also the discussion of Robertson/Plummer, pp. 349-50.

130. Allo, p. 402. See also Robertson/Plummer, p. 349: "If Christ has not been raised for our justification ... His death is made a nullity, for there is no redemptive power in it. It does not save us from the guilt and penalty of sin; for how can a dead Christ save others from death, which is the penalty of sin? And how can He secure for others a life beyond the grave which He Himself does not possess?" See also Goudge, p. 144.

131. C.K. Barrett, A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians, p.3
Heinz D. Wendland, Die Briefe an die Korinther, p. 126.

132. See Conzelmann, p. 315; Robertson/Plummer, p. 350: "The ἀπώλεια is the utter loss consequent upon dying in sin.... If they are dead beyond possibility of restoration, then death separates us forever from Christ."

133. See Johannes Weiss, Der erste Korintherbrief, p. 354.

134. See Conzelmann, p. 317; Wendland, p. 128.

135. See Robertson/Plummer, pp. 351-52, on the idea of "firstfruit".

136. See Goudge, p. 145; Weiss, p. 356.

137. On the link see Allo, pp. 405-6; Goudge, p. 145; Weiss, p. 356.

138. Many commentators suggest that the Biblical idea of corporate personality or community of nature between Adam (or Christ) and mankind is in some way involved. See Goudge, p. 146; Robertson/Plummer, p. 353; Barrett, p. 352. Weiss, p. 356, notes a similar tendency in the mstery religions; but Conzelmann, p. 317, points out that this is modified by the Apostle, in that he does not speak of present life manifested but of future resurrection outstanding. See also Barrett, p. 353. Affinities with the mystery religions, however, are by no means certain. In our opinion, Paul is more likely influenced by Biblical concepts; see Allo, p. 406, for a critique of the view linking the Apostle with the mystery religions.

139. See Conzelmann, p. 317.

140. See Weiss, p. 357; Robertson/Plummer, p. 354; Allo, p. 407.

141. Πάντες (v. 22) should not be taken to mean a universal resurrection. Paul's concern throughout the passage is with the fate of believers only. See Allo, pp. 406, 443; Robertson/Plummer, pp. 353-54; Conzelmann, p. 313; Weiss, p. 357; Barrett, p. 355; Goudge, p. 146; Wendland, pp. 127-28. It is not his interest here to discuss the fate of unbelievers.

142. See Barrett, p. 355; Weiss, p. 357; Goudge, p. 146; Robertson/Plummer, pp. 352-54; Allo, p. 407.

143. Weiss, p. 357.

144. That v. 26 refers to the resurrection of Christ is generally agreed; see Conzelmann, p. 324; Goudge, p. 147; Allo, p. 408; Weiss, p. 360; Robertson/Plummer, p. 356.

145. On τέλος as "end", see Conzelmann, p. 321; Wendland, pp. 128-29. Paul does not think of a further time interval (εἶτα) between the resurrection of believers and that of unbelievers, i.e. as if τέλος were to be taken to mean "rest" or "remainder" (of the dead); for this suggestion see Lietzmann, p. 80. The latter meaning for τέλος is Biblically unattested; see Conzelmann, p. 321. Allo, pp. 407, 445, suggests εἶτα is equivalent to "alors", referring to the same moment as the resurrection. Conzelmann, p. 324, notes that Paul "... das ganze Ende in einen Augenblick zusammenzieht: V. 52."

146. This is probably a reference to some form of vicarious baptismal rite practised at Corinth; see Conzelmann, p. 127; Barrett, pp. 362-64; Weiss, p. 363; J. Héring, La Première Épître de Saint Paul aux Corinthiens, pp. 142-43. Paul seems neither to have approved nor disapproved of this rite, but simply uses it here to bolster his argument.

147. This seems to be the suggestion of Weiss, p. 366, who says that, according to Paul, if there is no hope of reward, we might as well live in whatever fashion we wish. Paul is simply stating the logical and reasonable consequences of two different understandings of life and death. It is not because Paul wants a reward that he lives as he does, but because he wishes to live in obedience to the holy and righteous Lord about whom he preaches in his message of the gospel.

148. Allo, pp. 415, 417, makes this point well.

149. See Cranfield, II, p. 707: "This is why we live and die τῷ κυρίῳ -- because we belong to Him both in life and in death" (on Rom 14:8). On the same verse, Käsemann, p. 359, states that living and dying with Christ should be the controlling factor in our day to day conduct. He correctly notes (p. 360) that, according to Paul, belonging to Christ is (or should be) the criterion which determines all our conduct.

150. Conzelmann, p. 316.

151. Conzelmann, p. 330.

152. Schlier, p. 410.

153. Käsemann, p. 360.

154. Goudge, p. 151.

155. See Conzelmann, p. 348 n. 28; Weiss, p. 379; Wendland, pp. 137-38.

156. Against the view of Barrett, p. 379, that φθαρτόν here refers to the bodies of those (already) physically dead, while θνητόν refers to the (mortal) bodies of those still alive, see Conzelmann, pp. 345-46. Conzelmann points out that the whole thrust of the argument here deals with the future resurrection; the two words here should be regarded as synonymous (p. 348).

157. Weiss, p. 380, sees the verse as a gloss. Conzelmann, however (p. 350) notes that, while the appearance of νόμος is surprising, the verse should not be excised, for sin and law are often discussed in the same context in Paul.

158. Conzelmann, p. 350.

159. See Robertson/Plummer, p. 379; Allo, p. 437; διδόντι indicates that in the battle against sin and death the believer is able to appropriate even now something of what Christ has won for him. See also Conzelmann, p. 350; Barrett, p. 384.

160. See Robertson/Plummer, p. 379; Wendland, p. 138; Lietzmann, pp. 88-89.

161. J. Gnilka, Der Philipperbrief, 2nd ed., p. 196, contra E. Lohmeyer, Der Brief an die Philipper, 11th ed., pp. 138-39, who sees the reference as being to those (like Paul) expecting martyrdom. Rather, in our view, does the Apostle express here, as in 2 Corinthians, something which is true of himself, but in which he also serves as a model for other believers (see our comments on 2 Cor 4:7ff). There is no evidence here that Paul would have restricted the truth of vv. 10-11 only to himself or a few others. On the contrary, he is concerned to safeguard the whole Philippian church from falling into the clutches of a false teaching which would deny that what Paul speaks of here is applicable to the life of every Christian. On the idea of Paul as an example for other believers see also R. P. Martin, Philippians, p. 135.

162. Gnilka, p. 196. M. R. Vincent, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles to the Philippians and to Philemon, pp. 103-4, notes that in NT Greek γινώσκειν often speaks of personal relationship, the "... influence of the object of knowledge upon the known." See also F. W. Beare, The Epistle to the Philippians, 2nd ed., p. 122; P. Bonnard, L'Épître de Saint Paul aux Philippiens, p. 66. Lohmeyer, p. 138, rightly sees the fulfilment of this knowing as eschatological, something which Paul longs for in the future. Surely, however, it is also to some degree a present reality, as the rest of v. 10 indicates. V. 11 is purely eschatological. See also M. Dibelius, An die Thessalonicher I. II, An die Philipper, 2nd ed., p. 69.

163. Gnilka, p. 196; Martin, p. 134; Beare, pp. 124-25; Vincent, p. 105.

164. Martin, p. 134, stresses that συμμορφιζόμενος τῷ θανάτῳ αὐτοῦ is a baptismal reference (cf. Rom 6:1ff). Gnilka, p. 196, notes rightly, however, that baptism is but the beginning of the Christian life, and that this phrase refers to our entire Christian existence.

165. Gnilka, p. 196.

166. Vincent, p. 104; Martin, p. 135; Beare, p. 122; Lohmeyer, p. 138; Bonnard, p. 66; Dibelius, p. 69; G. Friedrich, Der Brief an die Philipper, in Die Briefe an die Galater, Epheser, Philipper, Kolosser und Philemon, 14th ed., p. 162.

167. Vincent, p. 105.

168. Beare, p. 124: "The present participle ... suggests continual striving for unity with Christ in his death, the daily mortification of everything in him [sc. the believer] that is not Christ. The mystical union with Christ which was initiated in baptism is confirmed and deepened through the daily quest for a more and more complete identification with him in his dying to the life of this world and in his risen life over which death has no more dominion." We disagree with the view of Lohmeyer, p. 179, who s sees the phrase as indicating only the experience of physical death.

169. Vincent, pp. 106-7; Gnilka, pp. 196-97.

170. Lohmeyer, p. 138.

171. Friedrich, p. 162.

172. See Gnilka's description of the Philippian false teachers (pp. 211-18). He concludes (p. 218) that they disdain the idea of the bodily resurrection.

173. Friedrich, p. 162.

174. Martin, p. 136.

175. Gnilka, p. 197; Vincent, p. 106; Bonnard, p. 67.

176. On the parallel see Dibelius, p. 72.

177. On ὑπάρχει see Vincent, pp. 118-19.

178. See Gnilka, p. 207; Martin, p. 148; Bonnard, p. 72; Lohmeyer, p. 158.

179. Martin, p. 148.

180. Gnilka, p. 207: "Zu beachten ist, dass die Retterfunktion des Kyrios Jesus Christus ganz auf die Endzeitliche beschränkt ist. Diese mit dem Ende verbundene endgültige Rettung umschreibt der Apostel mit σωτηρία." Comparison may be made with 1 Thess 1:10.

181. See Vincent, p. 120.

182. Friedrich, p. 160.

183. Martin, p. 149.

184. See Dibelius, p. 72; Martin, p. 150; Gnilka, p. 208. Comparison should probably be made with 2:10-11.

185. On the parallel see Martin, p. 149.

186. Gnilka, pp. 207-9.

187. See Gnilka, pp. 208-9.

188. Bonnard, p. 73; Vincent, p. 129, who notes the connection is not only with vv. 20-21 but with all of ch. 3, "... since in heavenly citizenship are gathered up all the characteristics which Paul in that chapter has commended to his readers." Vincent feels 4:1 is the proper conclusion to ch. 3.

189. See Martin, pp. 149-51. Note also his comment on v. 10 (p. 135): "The point of the Pauline counter-argument is that our baptism into Christ is not a passport to mystical experience lifting us beyond the range of sufferings and trial, and transporting us to a state of blessed perfection. Rather, our 'being like him in his death' ... is our entrance upon a life in which we like Paul ... share his sufferings."

190. Friedrich, p. 167.

191. Friedrich, p. 167.

192. See Martin, p. 150.

193. See E. Best, A Commentary on the First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians, pp. 180, 203. The question here is not (as in 1 Cor) whether or not the resurrection would occur.

194. On v. 14 as a reference to the Parousia see Best, pp. 186-89; J. E. Frame, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles of St Paul to the Thessalonians, p. 170; W. Neil, The Epistle (sic) of Paul to the Thessalonians, pp. 95-96; B. Rigaux, Les Épîtres aux Thessaloniciens, p. 537; Dibelius, pp. 20-21; A. L. Moore, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, pp. 67-69; G. Friedrich, Der erste Brief an die Thessalonicher in Die Briefe an die Galater, Epheser, Philipper, Kolosser, Thessalonicher und Philemon, ed. J. Becker, pp. 242-43.

195. On κοιμᾶσθαι as a reference to physical death, see Frame, p. 166; Best, p. 185; Rigaux, pp. 529-32; E. J. Bicknell, The First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians, p. 45.

196. Best, p. 186: "... all depends on the death and resurrection of Jesus." See also Frame, p. 169; Friedrich, p. 242.

197. Rigaux, p. 535.

198. Frame, p. 167; Neil, p. 95.

199. Friedrich, p. 243.

200. Friedrich, p. 243.

201. Neil, p. 117: "... the condition of being saved is only fully realized in the eschatological sphere...." See also Friedrich, p. 246.

202. See Friedrich, p. 243; Frame, pp. 169, 189.

203. Best, p. 189.

204. The transformation of the Christian's existence at the Parousia is the same reality as is spoken of in 1 Cor 15 and Phil 3, as Best, p. 219, rightly notes.

205. Frame, pp. 184, 187.

206. Best, p. 214; Rigaux, pp. 566, 569; Friedrich, p. 246; Frame, pp. 187, 188, who rightly links the reference with Rom 8:23 and Phil 3:20-21.

207. Friedrich, p. 187. See also Best, p. 214.

208. Friedrich, p. 246.

209. Bicknell, p. 54: "A belief in the coming of Christ should lead not to restlessness, but to watchfulness and moral earnestness."

210. Best, p. 214.

211. Rigaux, p. 571.

212. Dibelius, p. 25: "Die ethische Ermahnung wird im Gottes- und Christusglauben begründet...."

213. Rigaux, p. 566: "Les versets 8 à 10 donnent le fondement, le pourquoi et la fin de la vigilance exigée impérieusement des chrétiens."

214. Rigaux, p. 570: "La vigilance et l'état d'alerte, qui doivent se traduire par une foi, une charité, une espérance très vives et très fortes, jusqu'à faire du chrétien un soldat, ont un fondement, une raison qui est dans la volonté de Dieu et l'oeuvre du Christ et ils ont un but final dans la vie avec Jésus."

215. Best, p. 215. This, of course, implies, as Best, p. 222, notes, that the Christian, while already a child of light, must continually strive to live in the light. This is, as we have seen, the pattern where Paul exhorts the believer, freed from the power of sin, to fight back constantly against sin's attacks.

Conclusion

We have seen that the idea of freedom plays an important role in Paul's understanding of the work of Christ and the Christian life. We have also seen that it is integrally related to his understanding of the law, of sin and of death, and how these things affect man, whether as a believer or as a non-believer. Paul does not, however, treat freedom at length as a theme in itself, in the way, for instance, he speaks of the law, of sin or of death. Rather does his understanding of freedom run like a thread through his treatment of these other things - and hence through his description of the work of Christ and the Christian life as a whole. We have also seen that the Apostle often speaks of the slavery of the non-believer, the freedom wrought through the work of Christ, and the limitations and proper exercise of this freedom, without using a member of the ἐλευθερία word-group. The fact of freedom (or its opposite, slavery) is nonetheless clearly in view. Had Paul lived in our day, he might have devoted extensive discussion to the theme of freedom itself. His interest is certainly conditioned by the concerns of his day and the need to speak to these situations, yet it is clear that both the slavery of man without Christ and the freedom of the Christian believer are themes at the heart of his understanding of the Christian message. Our aim in this concluding chapter is to underline this fact by drawing together the observations we have made in our study and attempting to present them as a coherent whole.

Freedom in relation to the law

We began with our study of freedom in relation to the law of God. Here we saw that the foundation on which Paul builds is the conviction that all men, Jew or Gentile, whether they have the law or not, stand under the judgment of God (Section I, part A). The Scripture itself declares the total inadequacy of fallen man's efforts to satisfy God's righteous requirement. Because of this, man stands everywhere in bondage to sin and to death. The sentence of condemnation, passed because of man's sin, is pronounced by God Himself in His law where, above all other places, His righteous requirement is set forth. The law brings man face to face with his sinfulness and inability in any way to live up to God's righteous standard

(Rom 1:18ff, 3:9ff). Man is not condemned for seeking to obey the law, we observed, but rather because he has continually and wilfully disobeyed it. Even before the law was given, indeed, man did evil and so received the just penalty for his disobedience.

Man's slavery - his failure to reach freedom - is linked by Paul in various texts specifically with the working of the law (Section I, part B). These texts, far from representing an exhaustive portrayal of Paul's understanding of the law, in fact, as we noted, refer only to one aspect of the law's role: its task, as the righteous and holy commandment of God, of defining the extent and nature of (already-existing) sin to a degree not previously possible (Rom 5:13, Gal 3:19-20). In doing so, it makes fully apparent for the first time the seriousness of sin and brings home its dire consequences. Paul makes it clear, however, that it is sin, not the law, which is responsible for man's predicament (Rom 5:20, 7:5). Slavery to sin and the sentence of death came to the human race through Adam's transgression, long before the law was given. The law, however, precisely because it gives to man an unparalleled opportunity for obedience to God, underlines man's guilt and brings him further into bondage. Because of man's sinful condition and wilful disobedience the law by itself (we noted) will never lead to justification or freedom from the curse, but the fault here is man's own. The law does indeed bring the curse (Gal 3:10) and harsh bondage (Gal 3:23-25), but this is because of man's failure to fulfil its just and righteous requirements. Paul condemns the Galatian Judaizers for professing to fulfil the law while actually making mockery of its commandments. Their legalism, constituting an improper use of the law, itself transgresses the law's requirements, and opposes its true meaning. Paul values fulfilment of the law; it is man's lack of obedience which he deplores (cf Rom 3:9ff) and which brings man into slavery. We saw that, in line with this stress, he implies that it is precisely through Christ's fulfilling of the law and bearing of the curse (Gal 3:6ff) that release from slavery and participation in the promise occur. Paul underlines the role of the law in declaring God's judgement of sin and sealing man's condition of slavery. No freedom has come about through the law - only bondage. The fact that Paul condemns the breaking of the law (or hypocritical observance of only a few of its commands) rather than its observance, and the fact that he speaks of freedom from the curse coming about

through a genuine fulfilment of the law by Christ, warn us, however, against seeing the παιδαγωγός- function of the law as exhausting the Apostle's understanding of its role.

This became clearer when we examined those texts in which he elaborates on the relationship between the law and the promise (Section II). In Galatians, Paul is attacking an improper understanding of the law's role on the part of the Judaizers who, by an undue exaltation of the law over the promise, are attempting to use the law for their own legalistic purposes. There is no conflict, however, between the law and the promise when both are understood properly (Gal 3:21-22). Indeed the promise, as both Romans and Galatians make clear, is contained in the law. Paul appeals to the law (Gal 4:21) to counteract the legalism of the Judaizers. From the evidence we examined, it is clear that the law, in isolation from the promise, leads only to death and slavery. This, however, is on account of human sin. That same sin is expressed in the Judaizers' wilful misuse of the law, which Paul opposes. A true understanding of the law, on the other hand, points in the direction of freedom in Christ (Gal 3:21-22, 4:21). Freedom can never come through the law, which highlights man's inadequacy and so results only in clear-cut disobedience (Rom 4:15). The conflict here, however, is not between law and promise, but between legalism and promise. Legalism brings slavery, while the promise brings freedom (Gal 4:21ff). This freedom should not, therefore, be construed as freedom from any further relationship with the law, but as freedom from the just condemnation the law pronounces on man's sin. What, if anything, is the positive role of the law is not yet made clear. That there is such a role, however, is suggested, as we saw, by the way in which Paul contrasts the law and its legalistic misuse, declares the absence of conflict between law and promise, and notes that the law itself points toward true freedom in Christ. This supports our previous contention that the working of wrath and bondage constitutes for Paul only one aspect of the law's role. The assertion that, for Paul, the law is somehow a demonic power, denying man freedom and opposing the promise, is therefore untrue.

Thus far our examination extended only to man's situation without Christ, and his inability to win his own freedom through the law, which in fact brought him under God's righteous condemnation. Next, however (Section III, part A), we looked at the idea that the

act of God in Christ brings freedom by ending this condemnation and condition of slavery. How, therefore, we asked, does the work of Christ affect the continuing authority of the law or the believer's relationship with the law? The law, according to Paul, when used by man as an instrument by which to achieve his own justification, results only in vain boasting (Rom 3:27). The legalist violates the law's true intent (Gal 2:15, 18) and opposes its real meaning, according to which it preaches faith (Rom 3:21-31). It does so by pointing to Christ as the only solution to man's situation. The law itself ends human boasting by showing that legalism is wrong (Gal 2:18, 21) and by setting forth the positive standards of a holy God (Rom 3:27, Gal 5:3). Because of Christ's death, therefore, the law is established as the law of faith (Rom 3:27, 31). This suggests strongly, we noted, that a continuing positive role for the law in the believer's life is envisioned by Paul. We concluded, therefore, that there is nothing in these passages which implies an opposition between faith and the law or freedom and the law. The possibility of a positive working of the law in the believer's life is still not in view. That such a relationship is possible, even probable, however, is suggested by these texts. It is clear that the condemning function of the law (the limited aspect of its working to which we have referred) is over for the believer. The very factor which enabled it to bring God's condemnation of sin, however - its holiness - likewise militates against its being excluded from God's purposes so far as the believer is concerned. There is nothing wrong with the law; it is man's sin which leads him into bondage. If in Christ it is man, not the law, who changes, there is no reason why the new-found freedom the believer has should not result in a changed attitude on his part to the unchanging and still-righteous law of God. This is especially likely if it can be said that Christ Himself, by His death, established the law, which is seen by Paul as the law of faith - the law which preaches faith. If faith is of the essence of the law, then so must freedom be. Man is freed through Christ, with the result that he stands in a different relationship to God and His law from hitherto. The exercise of Christian freedom, therefore, should involve a different (and more positive) aspect of the law's role than that we observed earlier. This is the implication we then investigated in Section IV.

Before this, however, we examined another aspect of the freedom wrought through God's act in Christ, the theme of the freedom from the στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου (Section III, part B). We noted that, in both Galatians and Colossians, the στοιχεῖα are to be seen as some form of demonic beings not connected with the law or its true observance. Freedom from the στοιχεῖα is presented as an important part of the freedom wrought in Christ. In both letters, the στοιχεῖα represent pagan demonic powers which bring the accusation against the believer that he is not yet free through the work of Christ, which is considered insufficient and needing to be supplemented by various ascetic or legalistic rites and rituals. This does not say anything, however, about a release for the believer from any further relationship with the law itself. Even in Galatians, where, on account of the circumstances, Paul must speak strongly against an undue exaltation of the law, he is careful to deny any suggestion that the law's intention is in any way counter to that of the promise (3:22). On the other hand, so far as the στοιχεῖα are concerned, these are identified as negative spiritual forces, and Paul considers that the believer is (or should be) free from any further association with them, as a result of God's act of liberation in Christ.

This theme of freedom through God's act in Christ is also in view in Eph 2:11-22 (Section III, part C). We saw here, however, that, as with the στοιχεῖα -texts, the focus is on something other than freedom from the law's condemnation. Paul is very careful not to say here that Christ has abolished the law; rather does he add qualifying phrases which indicate that only an aspect of the law's role is involved. Set aside in Christ are certain ceremonial and ritual requirements which have been used by the Jews in a legalistic way to insist upon their own privileges and deny the Gentiles participation in the blessing which the promise, itself contained in the law, holds forth. Christ's act of liberation enables even the Gentiles to enter into a life of obedience to the righteous standard of God in His law, and to become sharers in His covenant promise to Abraham. The emphasis, therefore, is on the Gentiles entering into the blessing given specifically to the Jews, not on the Jews (and their law) being excluded from it.

In Section IV, we took our argument a step further by examining Paul's understanding of the positive exercise of Christian freedom, and what relationship this has to the authority of the law. We noted

earlier that Paul's comments regarding the law and human disobedience imply that he views the law as a positive spiritual reality, and this is the contention we sought to support here. In Section IV, part A, we saw that because the righteousness of faith is the true meaning of the law, Christ is the τέλος of the law (Rom 10:4), in that He is its goal, meaning and substance. In no way, however, is He its abrogation. Israel failed to reach the freedom Christ alone can give precisely because it misused the law and attempted to use it as a means by which to establish a claim upon God (Rom 9:30ff). In Christ, the believer is freed from the law's just condemnation. This freedom, however, also has a positive purpose or aspect, and this is what the believer is freed to discover as he begins to appreciate the proper significance of the law. Christ has fulfilled the law and, through Him, the law finds the beginning of a genuine fulfilment in the life of the believer. Freed from the law's condemnation, the believer is freed for obedience to its righteous standard. That such an obedience is actually what Paul sees as desirable for the believer is what we saw illustrated in both Rom 2:12ff,25ff and Rom 7:7-25. Here we saw that, according to Paul, the work of God in Christ frees man to begin a true performance of the law, and, by it, to show up the inadequate efforts of those who by nature (birth) possess the law (Rom 2:12ff). This represents for Paul the fulfilment of the promise of Jeremiah that in the new covenant the law would be written on the hearts of believers, and opposes the notion that the law written on the heart is in some sense to be seen as in contrast with the OT law. This fulfilling of the law is related to the work of the Holy Spirit and brings to reality the OT promise of the circumcision of the heart effected by the Spirit (Rom 2:25ff). Only the tension between the utterly holy law of God and the weak but genuine efforts of the believer who is beginning to obey it can explain the situation of intense conflict in Rom 7:7-25, which is a picture not of the non-believer in bondage under the law, but of the believer freed for obedience to its commands, yet continually confronted with the incomplete nature of his obedience.

Having established these foundations, we noted (Section IV, part B) how, in the accomplishment and exercise of Christian freedom, the relationship of the law and the gift of the Holy Spirit are to be understood, especially against a background of views suggesting that the law is to be identified with slavery and the Spirit with freedom.

In our examination of 2 Cor 3, we saw again demonstrated the fact that the new covenant is the law written by the Holy Spirit on the hearts of men. Non-believers understand the law only as γράμμα (cf Rom 7:1-6) and cannot appreciate its true significance (cf Rom 9:30ff). There is no opposition here between law and gospel, slavery characterizing the one and freedom the other. Rather, what is portrayed is the change effected in the position of the man who, through Christ, is brought not only out of slavery into freedom, but is also delivered from a wrong appreciation and use of the law to a right estimation of its nature and a beginning of genuine obedience to its commands. Through Christ, therefore, man is enabled to appreciate the true significance of the law. This comes about through the working of the Holy Spirit, whose role is thus pictured as freeing man to see the true meaning of the law and enabling him to begin to fulfil it. This working of the Spirit, we saw, brings about freedom from the law's just condemnation (Rom 8:1; cf 7:1-6), the freedom which the law by itself could not achieve because of the sinfulness of man (Rom 8:3). The Spirit, however, far from replacing the law as authority in the believer's life, in fact enables its true fulfilment (8:4). Here, therefore, as in Section IV, part A, we concluded that freedom in Christ from the law's condemnation makes possible freedom for obedience to its righteous commands. The point Paul makes in these texts is that true freedom occurs in a genuine (albeit imperfect) fulfilment of the law, which is enabled by the Holy Spirit.

A closely related issue in Paul's thinking is how Christian freedom is expressed in love, and how the command to love is related to the role of the law in the believer's life. We saw, in our study of Rom 13:8-10 and Gal 5:13ff (Section IV, part C), that the idea that love brings freedom and the law brings slavery (love replacing law as the standard for obedience in the believer's life) is incorrect. Rather did we see that it is the law itself which contains and gives divine authority to the command to love, and which itself is given as an expression of God's love to men. We can say, therefore, that in Christ the believer is freed both to love and to obey the law, precisely because each of the law's commands is guided by love. The command to love, as also the gift of the Spirit, is to be seen not in opposition to but in harmony with the role of the law in the believer's life. Because of man's weak and fleshly condition, however, the very

possession of freedom may prove the occasion for disobedience and rebellion, and the possibility of abusing this God-given gift is very great. Only eschatologically will man manifest genuine obedience naturally, on the basis of a truly fulfilled relationship with the Father. In his present condition of weakness and proneness to sin, man cannot, on Paul's understanding, be entrusted with freedom in the sense of absolute autonomy or independence - freedom to do as he wishes. Nor, we noted, can he be entrusted to exercise his freedom in Christ properly merely on the basis of an undefined or vague "love-command" which he can and will interpret to his own advantage. Freedom, therefore, according to Paul, cannot be considered as a goal in itself, but must be carefully defined and its exercise properly regulated, if it is not to become merely an excuse for licence (Gal 5:13). This is why, for Paul, the exercise of freedom is subject to the commands of God's law. Love, therefore, does not replace the law, as if it expressed freedom in Christ over against the former bondage of the law. Rather does love come to its fulfilment in the life of the believer who seeks genuinely to obey God's law. Only when the believer, freed from the law's condemnation not throught the law but through the work of Christ, begins to fulfil the law in love do the commands of the law themselves find genuine (if incomplete) fulfilment. The life of the one freed in Christ will not lead to an independent performance and understanding of the good, but rather will be characterized by a freedom which is expressed, under the authority of God and His law, in love and mutual service. We noted earlier that in Christ the believer is truly freed from the law's condemnation. This thought is expressed here (Gal 5:23) and linked not to the supposed fact that the law is abolished but to the fact that in the believer the law's command finds a genuine fulfilment. Thus the believer is able to regard the law as the "law of Christ" (Gal 6:2). The command to love and the command to fulfil the law, therefore, are one and the same. Hence, we concluded (as in Section IV, parts A and B) that freedom in Christ from the law's condemnation is precisely freedom in Christ for obedience to the law's commands.

If freedom is not an end in itself, and if its proper exercise requires an attitude of love and service in submission to God and His law, Paul's understanding of it will involve the recognition that, in many circumstances, freedom for the Christian becomes freedom to sacrifice one's own rights and privileges - even to sacrifice the

outward exercise of that very freedom which the believer does possess. This is a very important consequence of the Apostle's understanding of freedom, and one which we studied in Section IV, part D. As (in one sense) the practical outworking of Paul's teaching on love and freedom, it follows on naturally from the previous subsection. We saw that in both Rom 14:1ff and 1 Cor 8-10, Paul endorses the inner freedom of the strong believers, but insists that the outward exercise of this freedom should be conducted within the framework of obedience to Christ as Lord. Because freedom in Christ is freedom for love, the outward exercise of the genuine inner freedom the believer has must be avoided when it would hurt one's neighbour and so break God's law (cf Rom 13:8-10). The strong believer who acts in such a way, far from losing his freedom, realizes the full extent of it by being ready to forego its outward expression. This gives him the liberty to act in any way called for by the circumstances without damaging his own relationship with God. This is further illustrated by Paul's own example (1 Cor 9:19ff). The Apostle, who, above all others, realizes his full freedom in Christ, is ready, above all others, to express that freedom in becoming the slave of all. Here we saw reiterated the theme that the exercise of freedom is to be conducted on the basis of obedience to God's law, which commands love.

The fact that freedom must not become an end in itself (cf Rom 13:8-10, Gal 5:13ff), and the reality of the weakness of the believer's condition and that of the world in which he lives, are also emphasized by Paul in several passages in which he speaks of the interplay between the external circumstances and limitations of the believer's life and his true inner possession of freedom. In 1 Cor 7:17ff, for instance, we saw that the believer's freedom in Christ does not depend on external signs or circumstances. Even if he is deprived of his freedom in a worldly sense, he is still free in Christ. If, however, he is free in the worldly sense, he is nonetheless a slave of Christ. True freedom, therefore, for the Christian means the freedom to live in love and obedience to God's law, as is emphasized by the Apostle's statement that freedom in Christ must, if genuine, result in a keeping of God's commands. Freedom, therefore, is not freedom to do as one wishes - to have the widest possible scope for personal activity, or to indulge one's own pleasures or desires. On the other hand, Paul does not endorse the institution of slavery, as was evident from our study of Col 3:18ff, where he points out that the

believing slave and believing master share the same freedom in Christ and hence the same obligation to love and be slaves of one another. It is easy to see how, influenced by such an attitude, the early church eventually became a prime agent in the battle against slavery (even if Paul's primary concern is not the political or social consequences of his teaching). Where Paul speaks of family relationships (Col 3:18ff) or the state (Rom 13:1-7), institutions he does see as divinely-ordained, his idea is again that, by subjecting oneself to authority, one furthers the cause of social and family order, and hence contributes to the well-being of everyone involved. At the same time, those exercising authority in such relationships are reminded of the need for the exercise of their authority to be subject to that of the Lord, from whom their authority comes. Such authority is exercised by men still prone to the weakness of the flesh, and can easily become an instrument for unfair treatment and oppression. For everyone concerned, freedom is not an end in itself, but means submission to Christ and desire to serve others in love, in obedience to God's law. Paul speaks with reference to an authoritarian state, and this makes his analysis especially important. He urges subjection, however, not out of a blind deference to authority, but in order that the well-being of others might be served. This gives a special importance to the vigorous exercise of the extensive rights granted in a modern democratic state. Paul also recognises that, even if authority is oppressive, it cannot affect possession of the true inner freedom the believer has in Christ. If freedom is freedom to love, it can never be removed or diminished by any external sources.

In summary, therefore, we have shown that the law of God occupies a central place in Paul's understanding both of man's bondage and of his freedom. A proper comprehension of its role necessitates an appreciation of the different ways in which God encounters man in the law. The effect of God's act in Christ is not to change the law or remove its authority, but to change man's position before God, and hence before His law. The result of this change in man is that the law's role in pronouncing God's just condemnation of sin is ended, and man is brought henceforth into a new and positive relationship to its authority. No longer is man in slavery under the law; rather is he now freed in Christ from the law's condemnation. The positive aspect of this new-found freedom, however, is that he should begin to live a life characterized by obedience to the law's righteous commands.

Enabled by the Holy Spirit, he should seek to fulfil the law's command to love his neighbour as himself and to find every practical way in which he can express the freedom he has received in Christ in the various social, family and civic relationships in which he finds himself.

Freedom in relation to sin

Next we dealt with Paul's understanding of the Christian's freedom in relation to sin. The Apostle's grasp of freedom in relation to sin and his grasp of freedom in relation to the law clearly overlap. We saw, for instance, that, as with his view of freedom in relation to the law, Paul's understanding of freedom from sin is based on his perception of the relationship between an utterly holy God and sinful and disobedient men. Because of his rebellion against God, man without Christ is in slavery to sin, the effects of which bring disaster to every area of his life, resulting also in the sentence of death. According to Paul, God's act in Christ brings freedom from this desperate situation. In seeking to understand how this freedom should be understood specifically in relation to the continuing reality of sin, we saw that it comes to a believer who is still very much part of the fallen world in which he lives. The result, we saw, was the careful balance between indicative and imperative, as the Apostle alternatively encourages the believers with a declaration of their victory and freedom in Christ and warns them to guard against the ever-present danger of losing that freedom through self-indulgence.

We began our study with an examination of Rom 7:7-25, not necessarily because this passage yields the most complete or balanced view of the believer's freedom from sin, but because it deals, at a foundational level, with some of the major questions involved in it. We saw that the battle portrayed here is fierce but by no means hopeless, and its description should be seen as only part of Paul's overall portrayal of the believer's freedom from sin in Rom 6-8. If our analysis of Rom 7:7-25 is correct, then Paul shows clearly here that God's act in Christ affects the believer's situation in different ways, resulting not only in a greater comprehension of his own sin, but also in a real ability to begin to respond to God - hence the fact that the believer is freed from sin to the extent that he can be said to be in slavery to God's law. This freedom, however, comes to weak

and sinful men and must thus be understood not as ethical perfection (total freedom from any taint of sin), but as freedom to fight back against sin with, for the first time, a genuine measure of success. There is a distinction, therefore, between the believer's undoubted freedom from the compelling hold and tyranny of sin, and a total freedom from any attack or influence of sin, which Paul decisively rejects. We observed, therefore, that the Apostle carefully balances the reality of the freedom the believer has been given in Christ with the fact that he must be continually reminded, owing to his still fleshly nature, that this freedom takes the form of slavery to righteousness. The resulting tension in the believer's life calls for an exercise of freedom guided not by the believer's own weak and erring nature, but by an enduring standard of righteousness, toward which the believer's attitude must be one of utter submission. Hence Paul can say that the believer, insofar as he is obedient to God, is a slave to God's law, while, insofar as he is disobedient, he is still a slave to sin (Rom 7:25).

This tension in the believer's life is also expressed by Paul in his discussions of the reality and consequences of justification and baptism (Rom 6) and justification and the working of the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:1ff). In Rom 6, Paul's focus on the work of Christ and the new life received by the believer balances the more negative stress of Rom 7:7-25, yet the presence of the imperatives here indicates that an active and continuing response of the believer is needed if the freedom from sin given in Christ is to be made real in the ethical realm. Because he is not yet free from sin (in an ethical sense), the believer cannot be entrusted to exercise sincerely the freedom he has in Christ simply on the basis of his own desires and thoughts. He must continually be reminded, therefore, that his freedom from sin must take the form of slavery to righteousness (vv. 18, 22). Only in such a slavery will the juridical act of liberation from sin in Christ begin to be expressed as freedom in the ethical sense. When he is totally free from sin (i.e. eschatologically), the believer will no longer need the various admonitions given, but will express his freedom naturally in an attitude of utter submission to God and His righteousness. Now, however, he needs the daily reminder of his responsibility to make every effort to manifest this obedience in his life. The same interrelationship of indicative and imperative is found in Rom 8:1ff, where Paul's focus, however, is

on justification and the working of the Spirit. Here we saw that, even as baptism does not result in ethical perfection, neither does the gift of the Spirit. Even though, through the Spirit, the believer has received a real freedom from sin in Christ (vv. 1-4), he must still be exhorted to submit to the Spirit's authority if he is to preserve this freedom. Only thus will he begin to receive freedom in the ethical realm. The reality of the continuing power of the flesh is emphasized by the thought that even the believer is still subject to physical death on account of his sin (v. 10). That these themes are not confined to Romans was evident from our examination of Gal 5:13ff, where Paul also speaks of the paradoxical partnership of ἐλευθερία and δουλεία and of the consequences of justification and baptism, within the context of the working of the Spirit. Even in Col 3:1-17, where Paul uses resurrection-language to refer straightforwardly to the believer's moral life, the indicative-imperative pattern and consciousness of the believer's weak and mortal condition noted in our previous texts is present, and the believer is exhorted to express the very real freedom he has received in justification and baptism through obedience to righteousness and submission to Christ's lordship.

Two points, therefore, are important in our analysis of freedom from sin according to Paul. One is the nature of the indicative-imperative relationship, and how this relationship is based on the fact that the believer, though freed in Christ, is still subject to the attacks of sin. The other, following from the first, is that this freedom, if it is to be made real, must take the form of slavery to God and His righteousness (and, through this, submission in love to one's neighbour). In the light of these two points, we may ask how the Apostle's understanding of freedom from sin relates to his view of freedom and the law. So far as the indicative-imperative relationship is concerned, we may note certain similarities immediately. Paul's indicative statements, on the one hand - his understanding of baptism and the gift of the Spirit, and his references to the reality of God's redeeming work in Christ and its effects in the believer's life - can be linked with his assertions regarding the believer's freedom from the law's condemnation. The two are brought together, indeed, in Rom 8:1-4. The Apostle's imperatives on the other hand, can be seen in relation to his call for the believer to seek to obey God's law and fulfil its commands. Some of the imperative sections

we examined occur in close conjunction with statements regarding the fulfilling of the law (Rom 8:4, Gal 5:14; cf Rom 7:25). The two lines of thought, one in relation to sin and the other to the law, are not identical but are closely related. With regard to the second point, the nature of freedom as slavery, a similar pattern can also be seen in Paul's treatment of the law. The believer's freedom from the law's just condemnation must be understood as freedom for obedience to the law's righteous standard. Whether Paul is dealing with the law or with sin, therefore, he sees the nature of the freedom involved as similar. The believer's freedom comes only from God, and should always be exercised in a way pleasing to Him.

The fact that such similarities can be seen between Paul's view of sin and of the law shows that the same ideas are being explained from two different but related perspectives. The basis on which Paul builds is, as we noted earlier, the encounter between an utterly holy God and utterly sinful men. Through this encounter God brings freedom by His act in Christ, yet the reality of this freedom does not alter the fact that men who are thus freed are still radically affected by their fallen condition, and that of the world in which they live.

Freedom in relation to death

The same situation is true with respect to the third area in regard to which Paul develops his understanding of freedom - that of freedom from death. The reality of a connection between the law, sin and death is underlined in texts such as 1 Cor 15:56, though the exact nature of this connection is not as many imagine it to be. The curse of death, we saw, comes upon man as a result of his sin and the law's righteous condemnation of it (Gal 3:10). We should expect Paul to say, therefore, that through God's act in Christ, in which the law's condemnation is ended and sin's tyranny broken, the believer has received some form of freedom in relation to death.

In our study of the various texts in which the Apostle does treat this theme, we noted his constant stress that the believer has received a genuine freedom from death, but that this freedom is eschatological in nature. In his present weak and fleshly condition, the believer is still subject to the effects of the curse, and hence to physical death. We saw the link between the continuing hold of sin on his life and the consequent subjection to physical death. Paul is confident, however, that eschatological freedom through the return of Christ will come to

the believer - whether he is alive or dead when that occurs. Because he knows that physical death is not the end, indeed, that it is the gateway to a better existence, he is able even to welcome the possibility of its occurrence (2 Cor 5:1ff; Rom 8:23; Phil 3:20-21; cf Rom 7:24).

The assurance of eschatological freedom from death should in turn, we observed, free the believer from the fear of the physical death he must be ready to undergo, and fill him with thankfulness and a desire to offer his life in service to God and to others. Freedom from death, therefore, means freedom for life, a life lived in a way pleasing to God and in submission to His will. The very nature of his future freedom also serves to remind the believer of the weakness and frailty of his present condition, both spiritually and physically, and the fact that he is answerable to God for everything done in the present life (2 Cor 5:9-10; 1 Cor 15:29-34; 1 Thess 5:4-11). Freed from fear of death, the believer is freed to be concerned with the needs of others and to express his freedom in submission to God and love for his neighbour.

Once again, therefore, we see that Paul begins with the encounter between a holy God and sinful men, and shows how God Himself brings freedom into this situation - this time, eschatological liberation from the power of death, the just condemnation pronounced by the law on man's sin. This freedom, however, is given to men who are still vulnerable to sin, and is hence incomplete in the present life. Believers, even though freed in Christ, stand in need of reminder that this freedom must not be used as an excuse to retire from the world or indulge their own pleasures, but should be put to use in the service of God and of others. Here we have the same pattern noted earlier with respect to sin and to the law. Firstly, the real though incomplete nature of the believer's freedom from death and the exhortation to use the life he has been given in a way pleasing to God corresponds to the indicative-imperative relationship in Paul's treatment of freedom from sin and to the relationship between freedom from the law's just condemnation and freedom for obedience to the law's commands. Secondly, the fact that the believer's freedom from death takes the form of freedom to live in submission to God and in the service of others shows the strong similarity to Paul's concept of freedom from sin as freedom for slavery to righteousness or freedom from the law's condemnation as freedom for obedience to the law.

Concluding remarks

Although Paul is dealing with three distinctly different subjects when he is speaking of freedom in relation to the law, to sin and to death, the parallels are such that we see various patterns of clear similarity emerging. In each case, freedom is a vitally important theme. The fundamental similarity between these three aspects of Paul's thought is expressed in two ways. In each case freedom is expressed as freedom from something and freedom for something else; in each case also this freedom is expressed in a paradoxical way as freedom for slavery or obedience.

With reference to the first point, we may now observe that these are three different ways of approaching the same basic truth. The believer, according to Paul, is freed from the law's just condemnation, the tyranny of sin and the penalty of eschatological death. These things, though not identical, are inextricably related. In the encounter between sinful men and a righteous God, man, through his disobedience, comes under the tyranny of sin, is judged by the law and receives the penalty of death. What is the effect on all this, however, of God's work in Christ? The effect, according to Paul, may be summed up in the one word - freedom. God's work in Christ not only brings freedom (in one aspect or another) from these three things - it also has a positive scope, described, respectively, as freedom for obedience to God's law, freedom for slavery to righteousness and freedom to live a life pleasing to God. These positive aspects are also, however, inseparably joined, for slavery to righteousness (and living in a way pleasing to God) mean, as we saw, none other than obedience to God's law.

The second point concerns a similarity in the paradoxical nature of Christian freedom. In each of the three areas in which Paul examines the structure of the freedom the believer has received in Christ, he sees this freedom, in a very real way, as a form of slavery. Freedom for obedience to the law means submission to its righteous commands and a recognition of the claim God makes on the believer through establishment of such a holy standard. The slavery theme is reinforced by the fact that obedience to the law involves an acknowledgment not only of God's claim upon the believer but also that of one's neighbour, whose interests the believer is commanded to place ahead of his own. This fact undergirds Paul's paradoxical assertion that the place in which the believer demonstrates most vividly his

freedom in Christ is in the voluntary renunciation of the outward exercise of this freedom on occasions where such exercise would injure someone else's relationship with God or hinder him from coming to a knowledge of God. The fact that believers are commanded to limit the exercise of their freedom across a wide range of social, family and civic relationships stems from the concern of the Apostle, noted many times above, that the believer should express, through his obedience to God and His law, an attitude of submission and service to the needs of those around him, even if - as in the case of the civic authorities - his relationship with those he is commanded to serve in love is not primarily a personal one. That the freedom the believer has is real, however, is shown by the fact that only the believer is in a position in which he is able to let his conduct be guided by love, not self-interest. Renunciation of the exercise of freedom on the part of the non-believer could only be motivated by selfish or self-centred reasons (desire to please others, fear of authority, etc.), whereas the believer is commanded to renounce the exercise of freedom even when non-believers would never do so - and solely with the purpose of serving others in love.

The same pattern is seen in the case of freedom from sin as freedom for slavery to righteousness. The absolute claim of God upon the believer's life means that it is precisely the one who is freed in Christ whose life comes under the divine command. As one who is responsible for what he has received, the believer must now yield his life in holiness and dedication to God and to His righteous service. Paul does not dispute that others may evidence a certain level of moral conduct (see Rom 2:1ff). It is only the believer, however, who can choose to allow his conduct to be guided by gratefulness to the One who gives to men the possibility of living holy lives freed from the tyranny of sin. In the voluntary renunciation of his own desires, the believer is enabled to express his freedom in a life of righteousness, even if his obedience is always incomplete. He alone is freed for righteous conduct, not motivated only out of a desire to please or influence God (or those around him) by making a claim for his own righteousness, but simply on the basis of a recognition that God has given to him the possibility of living righteously without any such motivations overpowering him.

Finally, it may be said that the freedom the believer has from death enables him to offer his life to God and to others in an attitude

of service and humility. The non-believer may serve others with a view to safeguarding his own life or advancing his own position. Only the believer, however, who has received freedom from the penalty of eschatological death, is in a position to offer up the life he has, voluntarily and without predominantly self-seeking motives, to God and to his neighbour. The freedom from fear of physical death and the assurance of ultimate freedom from death eschatologically gives him the freedom to live his life in a way which places his own interests and security last. The Apostle himself is the model for such renunciation - renunciation which simply demonstrates, however, the true freedom which only the believer possesses. Freedom is seen, therefore, by the Apostle not merely as freedom from certain constraining factors, but as freedom in relation to a positive and enduring standard, God's righteous will expressed in His law. It is thus seen not as licence or as liberty to do as one pleases, but as a form of slavery, on the model of Christ Himself, who did not please Himself but suffered for others (Rom 15:3). That these two lines of thought express the foundations of Paul's concept of Christian freedom show that it is within the crucible of the encounter between a holy God and sinful men that his understanding of freedom is refined and developed. The unyielding standard of the law is part of God's self-expression precisely because He is a holy God, and because His word always comes to sinful and imperfect men, who will always follow their own desires unless constantly reminded of God's righteous requirement and His claim on their lives. That the believer must continually be reminded that his freedom from sin is freedom for slavery to righteousness and that his freedom from death is freedom to offer the life he does have to God reflects this weak and imperfect condition of men who, if they are to express a genuine freedom in their lives, must do so always with a view to the service of God and of others, and so begin to fulfil the righteous requirement of the law.

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List of Abbreviations Used

Commentary Series

BNTC. Black's New Testament Commentaries

EKKzNT. Evangelisch-Katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament

HbzNT. Handbuch zum Neuen Testament

HThKzNT. Herders Theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament

ICC. International Critical Commentary

KEK. Kritisch-Exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament

MNTC. Moffatt's New Testament Commentaries

NICNT. New International Commentary on the New Testament

NTD. Neues Testament Deutsch

ThHkzNT. Theologischer Handkommentar zum Neuen Testament

Periodicals

Aus BR. Australian Biblical Review

Bib. Biblica

BibSac. Bibliotheca Sacra

BZ. Biblische Zeitschrift

CBQ. Catholic Biblical Quarterly

CTM. Concordia Theological Monthly

EvTh. Evangelische Theologie

ExpT. Expository Times

GL. Geist und Leben

JBL. Journal of Biblical Literature

JETS. Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society

KD. Kerygma und Dogma

MThZ. Münchener Theologische Zeitschrift

NovTest. Novum Testamentum

NRT. Nouvelle Revue Theologique

NTS. New Testament Studies

RB. Revue Biblique

RScR. Recherches de Science Religieuse

ScEccl. Sciences Ecclésiastiques

SEA. Svensk Exegetisk Årsbok

SJT. Scottish Journal of Theology

StTh. Studia Theologica

ThB. Theologische Blätter

ThLZ. Theologische Literaturzeitung

ThStuKr. Theologische Studien und Kritiken

ThZ. Theologische Zeitschrift

TU. Texte und Untersuchungen

VD. Verbum Domini

WThJ. Westminster Theological Journal

ZNW. Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft

ZThK. Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche