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ABSTRACT

THE BODY OF CHRIST AND THE LAW: A COMPARATIVE STUDY
OF ROMANS 7:4 AND GALATIANS 2:19

By

Dominic Bornand

Adviser: P. Richard Choi, Ph.D.

ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Dissertation

Andrews University

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

Title: THE BODY OF CHRIST AND THE LAW: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF
ROMANS 7:4 AND GALATIANS 2:19

Name of researcher: Dominic Bornand

Name and degree of faculty adviser: P. Richard Choi, Ph.D.

Date completed: 2023

In Romans and Galatians, Paul refers to a spiritual death to sin (Rom 6:2) and to the law (Rom 7:4; Gal 2:19). As the means of the believer's death to the law, Paul mentions the "body of Christ" in Rom 7:4 and the "law" in Gal 2:19. These verses seem to suggest some sort of relationship between the body of Christ and the law, as well as between the law and sin. The purpose of this study is to determine the type of relationship between the body of Christ and the law, as well as between law and sin. The study consists of a survey of non-Jewish, Greco-Roman literature, and Jewish literature (Hebrew Bible and Second Temple literature) along with exegetical and theological analyses of relevant Pauline passages.

The study argues that the believer's death to sin (Rom 6:2) is spiritual in nature, consisting of a change in rulership. The believer's death to sin terminates the rule of sin

but does not do away with sin's existence in the believer's life. Furthermore, the believer's death to sin has soteriological significance; therefore it cannot be metaphorical. The believer's death to the law (Rom 7:4; Gal 2:19) is also spiritual, consisting of liberation from condemnation to death through the law of sin. The law of sin is the law of God, embodied in sinful human beings, which condemns them to death. The condemnation through the law of sin depends on rulership. The believer's death to the law of sin terminates the believer's condemnation to death, but not the existence of the law of sin in the believer's life. Regarding the means of the believer's death to the law, "the body of Christ" (Rom 7:4) refers to the crucified and resurrected body of Christ and "through the law" (Gal 2:19) refers to the law of God embodied in Christ, which enables the believer to live to God. In Rom 7:4, the believer experiences liberation from the law of sin by participation in the crucified and resurrected body of Christ. Similarly, in Gal 2:19, the believer also experiences liberation from the same law of sin by participation in the law of God embodied in Christ. Christ's fulfillment of the law of God enables the believer's righteous status and liberation from condemnation to death. Both means of redemption—the crucified and resurrected body of Christ (Rom 7:4) and the law of God embodied in Christ (Gal 2:19)—centers in Christ's death on the cross.

Andrews University
Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

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A Dissertation
Presented in Partial Fulfillment
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APPROVAL BY THE COMMITTEE:

Faculty Adviser,
P. Richard Choi
Professor of New Testament

Director of PhD/ThD Program
John W. Reeve

Ranko Stefanovic
Professor of New Testament

Dean, SDA Theological Seminary
Jiří Moskala

Roy E. Gane
Professor of Hebrew Bible and
Ancient Near Eastern Languages

Félix H. Cortez
Professor of New Testament Literature

A. Andrew Das
Buik Chair and Professor of Religious Studies
Elmhurst College, Elmhurst, IL

Date approved

To Maria
I am yours. You are mine. What a privilege!
(1 Cor 7:4)

To Elise Lilianne
May you be a living sacrifice!
(Rom 12:1)

To Irène Aurelia
May you be a temple of the Holy Spirit!
(1 Cor 6:19)

To Etienne Seneca
May the LORD's word be on your heart and soul!
(Deut 11:18)

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AB	Anchor Bible
<i>ABD</i>	<i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i> . Edited by David Noel Freedman. 6 vols. New York: Doubleday, 1992
AGJU	Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums
<i>ALUOS</i>	<i>Annual of Leeds University Oriental Society</i>
AnBib	Analecta Biblica
ANRW	<i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt: Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung</i> . Part 2, <i>Principat</i> . Edited by Hildegard Temporini and Wolfgang Haase. Berlin: de Gruyter, 1972–
<i>AUSS</i>	<i>Andrews University Seminary Studies</i>
BBB	Bonner biblische Beiträge
BDB	Brown, Francis, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs. <i>A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament</i>
BDAG	Danker, Frederick W., Walter Bauer, William F. Arndt, and F. Wilbur Gingrich. <i>Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> . 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000 (Danker-Bauer-Arndt-Gingrich)
BECNT	Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament
BETL	Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium
BEvT	Beiträge zur evangelischen Theologie
<i>Bib</i>	<i>Biblica</i>
BNTC	Black's New Testament Commentaries

BZABR	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für altorientalische und biblische Rechtsgeschichte
BZNW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
<i>CBQ</i>	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
<i>CTQ</i>	<i>Concordia Theological Quarterly</i>
CNT	Commentaire du Nouveau Testament
ConcC	Concordia Commentary
CPT	Contours of Pauline Theology
<i>CV</i>	<i>Communio Viatorum</i>
DK	Diels, Hermann, and Walther Kranz, eds. <i>Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker</i> . 6th rev. ed. 3 vols. Zurich: Weidmann, 1952
<i>EBib</i>	<i>Etudes bibliques</i>
ECL	Early Christianity and Its Literature
EKKNT	Evangelisch-katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
<i>EMC</i>	<i>Echos du monde classique/Classical Views</i>
<i>ETL</i>	<i>Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses</i>
<i>EvT</i>	<i>Evangelische Theologie</i>
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
<i>Greg</i>	<i>Gregorianum</i>
HNT	Handbuch zum Neuen Testament
HTA	Historisch-Theologische Auslegung
HThKNT	Herders Theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
<i>HTR</i>	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
IBC	Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching

ICC	International Critical Commentary
<i>JATS</i>	<i>Journal of the Adventist Theological Society</i>
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JETS</i>	<i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
<i>JSNT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
JSNTSup	Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series
<i>JTI</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Interpretation</i>
<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
KEK	Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament (Meyer-Kommentar)
KNT	Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
<i>L&N</i>	Louw, Johannes P., and Eugene A. Nida, eds. <i>Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains</i> . 2nd ed. New York: United Bible Societies, 1989
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LHBOTS	The Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies
LNTS	The Library of New Testament Studies
LPS	Library of Pauline Studies
LS	Long, A. A., and D. N. Sedley, eds. <i>The Hellenistic Philosophers</i> . 2 vols. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987
<i>LSJ</i>	Liddell, Henry George, Robert Scott, Henry Stuart Jones. <i>A Greek- English Lexicon</i> . 9th ed. with revised supplement. Oxford: Clarendon, 1996
LXX	Septuagint
<i>MNTC</i>	<i>Moffatt New Testament Commentary</i>
NAC	New American Commentary
NCB	New Century Commentary

<i>NIB</i>	<i>The New Interpreter's Bible</i> . Edited by Leander E. Keck. 12 vols. Nashville: Abingdon, 1994–2004
NIBC	New International Biblical Commentary
NICNT	New International Commentary on the New Testament
NICOT	New International Commentary on the Old Testament
NIGTC	New International Greek Testament Commentary
<i>NovT</i>	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
NovTSup	Supplements to Novum Testamentum
NSBT	New Studies in Biblical Theology
NTAbh	Neutestamentliche Abhandlungen
NTL	New Testament Library
<i>NTS</i>	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
<i>OEBL</i>	<i>The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Bible and Law</i>
PD	Principal Doctrines (Epicure)
PG	Patrologia Graeca [= <i>Patrologiae Cursus Completus: Series Graeca</i>]. Edited by Jacques-Paul Migne. 162 vols. Paris, 1857–1886
PL	Patrologia Latina [= <i>Patrologiae Cursus Completus: Series Latina</i>]. Edited by Jacques-Paul Migne. 217 vols. Paris, 1844–1864
<i>RTR</i>	<i>Reformed Theological Review</i>
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBS	Stuttgarter Bibelstudien
SFSHJ	South Florida Studies in the History of Judaism
SNT	Studien zum Neuen Testament
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series

SNTW	Studies of the New Testament and Its World
SP	Sacra Pagina
SubBi	Subsidia Biblica
<i>SVF</i>	<i>Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta</i> . Hans Friedrich August von Arnim. 4 vols. Leipzig: Teubne, 1903–1924
<i>TDNT</i>	<i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i> . Edited by Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich. Translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. 10 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964–1976
<i>TDOT</i>	Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament. Edited by G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren. Translated by John T. Willis et al. 8 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974–2006
THKNT	Theologischer Handkommentar zum Neuen Testament
<i>TLOT</i>	<i>Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> . Edited by Ernst Jenni, with assistance from Claus Westermann. Translated by Mark E. Biddle. 3 vols. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1997
TNTC	Tyndale New Testament Commentary
TPNTC	The Pillar New Testament Commentary
<i>TynBul</i>	<i>Tyndale Bulletin</i>
<i>TZ</i>	<i>Theologische Zeitschrift</i>
UTB	Uni-Taschenbücher
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament
<i>WTJ</i>	<i>Westminster Theological Journal</i>
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
YCS	Yale Classical Studies
ZECNT	Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament
<i>ZNW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche</i>

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Galatians 2:19 shows close terminological, syntactical, and thematic connections to Rom 6:1–14 and 7:4–6. Paul uses the same keywords in these passages,¹ as well as two prominent syntactical parallels. First, in all three passages, both key verbs, ἀποθνήσκω/θανατόω (“to die”) and ζάω (“to live”), have dative objects.² Second, the means through which death takes place is introduced by διά, followed by a genitive (“through”). Finally, all three passages have the same theme: the believer’s death that leads to life.

¹ In these three passages, Paul uses ἀποθνήσκω (“to die”) in Rom 6:2, 7–10; 7:6; Gal 2:19, 21; also see θανατόω (“to die”) in Rom 7:4, θάνατος (“death”) in 6:3–5, 9; 7:5 and νεκρός (“dead”) in 6:4, 9, 11, 13; 7:4, νόμος (“law”) in 6:14; 7:4–6; Gal 2:19, 21, θεός (“God”) in Rom 6:10–11, 13; 7:4; Gal 2:19–21, and Χριστός (“Christ”) in Rom 6:3–4, 8–9, 11; 7:4; Gal 2:19–21. In two of the three passages he uses ζάω (“to live”) in Rom 6:2, 10–11, 13; Gal 2:19–20; ζάω is also used in the immediate context of Rom 7:4, see verses 1–3 and συζάω (“to live with”) in 6:8, ἁμαρτία (“sin”) in 6:1–2, 6–7, 10–14; 7:5, σῶμα (“body”) in 6:6, 12; 7:4, σὰρξ (“flesh”) in 7:5; Gal 2:20, συσταυρόω (“to co-crucify”) in Rom 6:6; Gal 2:19, and καταργέω (“to destroy” or “to annihilate”) in Rom 6:6; 7:6.

² The believer’s death happens to ἁμαρτία (“sin”) in Rom 6:2, 10–11 or to νόμος (“law”) in 7:4; Gal 2:19. The believer’s life happens to θεός (“God”) in Rom 6:10–11; Gal 2:19–21 or to Χριστός (“Christ”) in Rom 6:3–4, 8–9, 11; Gal 2:19–20. A. T. Robertson and F. Blass, A. Debrunner, and R. W. Funk identify these datives as datives of advantage and disadvantage. See A. T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research* (New York: Hodder & Stoughton, 1914), 539; Blass, Friedrich, Albert Debrunner, and Robert W. Funk, *Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), §188.2. Wilhelm Thüsing and Daniel Wallace suggest identifying them as datives of reference. See Wilhelm Thüsing, *Per Christum in Deum: Studien zum Verhältnis von Christozentrik und Theozentrik in den paulinischen Hauptbriefen*, NTAbh 2/1 (Münster: Aschendorff, 1965), 79–81; Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 145–46.

Background of the Study

Pauline scholarship has recognized the terminological, syntactical, and thematic connections between Rom 6:1–14; 7:4–6 and Gal 2:19.³ However, scholars do not satisfactorily address why Paul is able to identify the means of death to the law as διὰ τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ (“through the body of Christ”) in Rom 7:4, and as διὰ νόμου

³ This footnote includes a selection of sources that link all three passages to each other. For commentaries on Romans, see: James D. G. Dunn, *Romans*, 2 vols., WBC 38A–B (Dallas: Word, 1988), 1:361–67; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *Romans: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 33 (New York: Doubleday, 1993), 458; Brendan Byrne, *Romans*, SP 6 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1996), 191; Michael Wolter, *Der Brief an die Römer*, 2 vols., EKKNT 6 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag; Ostfildern: Patmos, 2014–18), 1:415; Douglas J. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 2nd ed., NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018), 439–43; Frank Thielman, *Romans*, ZECNT 6 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2018), 336–37.

For commentaries on Galatians, see Heinrich Schlier, *Der Brief an die Galater*, 12th ed., KEK (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1962), 98–101; Franz Mussner, *Der Galaterbrief*, HThKNT 9 (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1974), 180–82; Hans Dieter Betz, *Galatians: A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Churches in Galatia*, Hermeneia—A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979), 121–23; Richard N. Longenecker, *Galatians*, WBC 41 (Nashville: Nelson, 1990), 91–92; J. Louis Martyn, *Galatians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 33A (New York: Doubleday, 1997), 256–57, 278–80; Douglas J. Moo, *Galatians*, BECNT 9 (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013), 168–71; Craig S. Keener, *Galatians: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2019), 192–95.

For theologies on the New Testament or Paul, see James D. G. Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 331n89; Thomas R. Schreiner, *New Testament Theology: Magnifying God in Christ* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 310, 648–49; Martin Meiser, “Das Verhältnis zur Tora,” in *Paulus Handbuch*, ed. Friedrich W. Horn (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), 444–49; N. T. Wright, *Paul and the Faithfulness of God*, 2 vols., Christian Origins and the Question of God 4 (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2013), 892, 1009–10; Udo Schnelle, *Paulus: Leben und Denken*, 2nd ed. (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2013), 593–94; Michael Wolter, *Paulus: Ein Grundriss seiner Theologie*, 2nd rev. ed. (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2015), 141, 249, 255–56.

For monographs, see Robert C. Tannehill, *Dying and Rising with Christ: A Study in Pauline Theology*, BZNW 32 (Berlin: Töpelmann, 1967), 24, 43–47, 55–61; Heikki Räisänen, *Paul and the Law* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986; repr., Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1983), 56–62; John M. G. Barclay, *Paul and the Gift* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015), 452–53; Susan G. Eastman, *Paul and the Person: Reframing Paul's Anthropology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2017), 86–91.

For unpublished dissertations, see Ivan Thomas Blazen, “Death to Sin according to Romans 6:1–14 and Related Texts: An Exegetical-Theological Study with a Critique of Views” (PhD diss., Princeton Theological Seminary, 1979), 74–112, 251–70, 430–33, 506–12; Gary Earl Giltvedt, “Dying ‘Through the Law to the Law’” (PhD diss., University of St. Andrews, 1989), 76–133; Robert A. J. Gagnon, “Should We Sin? The Romans Debate and Romans 6:1–7:6” (PhD diss., Princeton Theological Seminary, 1993), 353–72; Jonathan Ray Pratt, “The Relationship between Justification and Sanctification in Romans 5–8” (PhD diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 1999), 118–19, 127n40, 201; Chris Alex Vlachos, “Law and Sin: An Edenic Nexus? A Study with Reference to 1 Corinthians 15:56 and the Catalytic Operation of the Law” (PhD diss., Wheaton College, 2006), 328–31.

(“through the law”) in Gal 2:19.⁴ Paul’s parallel usage of these two propositional phrases points to a relationship between the body of Christ and the law.

Scholars have interpreted “through the body of Christ” in Rom 7:4 differently. Eduard Schweizer’s detailed discussion on the body of Christ in the undisputed Pauline epistles shows basically three distinctive approaches to how the body of Christ is used: congregationally, eucharistically, and literally.⁵ All of them have been applied to verse 4. Most scholars interpret the body of Christ in verse 4 as being a literal, physical, crucified body.⁶ Only a few argue for an ecclesiological reading of the body of Christ in verse 4.⁷ Scholarship generally rejects a eucharistic reading of the body of Christ.⁸ Michael

⁴ Most commentators refer to the terminological, syntactical, and thematic connections of Rom 7:4 and Gal 2:19 but avoid providing any explanations.

⁵ Eduard Schweizer, “σῶμα, σωματικός, σώσωμος,” *TDNT* 7:1024–96.

⁶ The following selection of scholars shows the broad acceptance of this view. Werner Georg Kümmel, *Römer 7 und das Bild des Menschen im Neuen Testament: Zwei Studien*, Theologische Bücherei: Neues Testament 53 (Munich: Kaiser, 1974), 20; Robert Jewett, *Paul’s Anthropological Terms: A Study of Their Use in Conflict Settings*, AGJU 10 (Leiden: Brill, 1971), 299–300; C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, 6th ed., 2 vols., ICC 31 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1975), 1:336; Heinrich Schlier, *Der Römerbrief*, HThKNT 6 (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1977), 217; Dunn, *Romans*, 1:362; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 458; Richard N. Longenecker, *The Epistle to the Romans: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016), 635–36; Moo, *Romans*, 443.

⁷ Tertullian interpreted the body of Christ as the church, based on Eph 1:23. See Tertullian, *De Monogamia* (PL 2:999). Recent interpreters include Meuzelaar, *Der Leib des Messias: Eine exegetische Studie über den Gedanken vom Leib Christi in den Paulusbriefen*, Van Gorcum’s theologische Bibliotheek 35 (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1961), 57–58; Byrne, *Romans*, 211. Theodore of Mopsuestia suggested an in-between position, literal to the actual crucified body of Christ, and mystical in reference to the church. See Theodore of Mopsuestia, *In Epistolam ad Romanos* (PG 66:805). Other supporters of this in-between position include Albert Schweitzer, *Die Mystik des Apostels Paulus*, reprint ed., UTB 1091 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1981), 186; John A. T. Robinson, *The Body: A Study in Pauline Theology* (Bristol, IN: Wyndham Hall, 1988), 47. Rejecting an ecclesiological view, Tannehill argues that the body of Christ in Rom 7:4 refers not only to the literal body, but also “to the body of the old aeon, the body of ‘sin’ and ‘flesh.’” See Tannehill, *Dying*, 46–47.

⁸ Githvedt, “Dying,” 122; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 458. Nevertheless, Ulrich Wilckens seemingly acknowledges a eucharistic link to the body of Christ in Rom 7:4. Ulrich Wilckens, *Der Brief an die Römer*, 3 vols., EKKNT 6 (Zurich: Bänziger; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1978–1982), 2:65.

Wolter, however, observes that the body of Christ in verse 4 links to previous Pauline references to the body of Christ in 1 Corinthians, which mention the body of Christ in the context of the eucharist.⁹ Therefore, a re-examination of the body of Christ in verse 4 is necessary.

Current scholarship identifies the law in Gal 2:19 through which the believer's death takes place as being the law of Moses.¹⁰ There are two different strands of interpretation that support the idea of the prepositional phrase "through the law" referring to the law of Moses.¹¹ The first strand argues that the phrase "through the law" refers to the believer abandoning the idea that through the works of the law one can acquire righteousness.¹² The second strand of interpretation argues that the phrase "through the

⁹ Although Wolter denies a eucharistic reading of Rom 7:4, he argues that the body of Christ is a metonym for Christ's death and its salvific effects. He further argues that the body in 1 Cor 11:29 has the same meaning. See Wolter, *Paulus*, 282–83. For a discussion on the meaning of the body of Christ in 1 Corinthians, see Jeffrey A. Gibbs, "An Exegetical Case for Close(d) Communion: 1 Corinthians 10:14–22; 11:17–34," *Concordia Journal* (1995): 148–63; A. Andrew Das, "1 Corinthians 11:17–34 Revisited," *CTQ* 62 (1998): 187–208. More recent studies have provided a critique of Gibbs's and Das's conclusions, see for example George May, "The Lord's Supper: Ritual or Relationship? Making a Meal of It in Corinth Part 2: Meals at Corinth," *RTR* 61 (2002): 1–18; Ho Hyung Cho, "A Study of *Prolambanō* and *Ekdechomai* from a Socio-Historical-Cultural Context: 1 Corinthians 11:17–34 Revisited," *Canon and Culture* 10 (2016): 227–54.

¹⁰ In-Gyu Hong, *The Law in Galatians*, JSNTSup 81 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), 189.

¹¹ The presented strands of interpretation are based on Blazen, "Death to Sin," 506–15; Hans-Joachim Eckstein, *Verheissung und Gesetz: Eine exegetische Untersuchung zu Galater 2,15–4,7*, WUNT 86 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1996), 60–66; Keener, *Galatians*, 193–94.

¹² Joseph Barber Lightfoot, *St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians* (Andover: Draper, 1891), 118; Ernest De Witt Burton, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians*, ICC 35 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1921), 133; Timothy George, *Galatians*, NAC 30 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1994), 199; Moo, *Romans*, 168–69. James D. G. Dunn supports this reading to a certain degree, arguing that it was Paul's zeal for the law prior to his conversion that caused the encounter with Christ and changed his understanding of the law. See James D. G. Dunn, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, BNTC 9 (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1993), 143. A minority of scholars suggest that the law of Moses primarily points to Christ as Redeemer and not to a person's sinfulness (see Rom 3:21). Ivan Thomas Blazen lists this as a separate view and refers to it as a "perhaps more remote exegetical possibility." See Blazen, "Death to Sin," 514. Heikki Räisänen considers this interpretation as perhaps a sufficient explanation for Gal 2:19.

law” points to the law of Moses as an instrument that caused Christ’s death, by bringing the curse of the law of Moses upon him (3:13; 4:4).¹³ Eun-Geol Lyu justifies a re-examination of 2:19 by stating that “this paradoxically sounding phrase has forever been a very controversial subject in the debate. Unto this point, there has been no compelling solution found.”¹⁴

Although the terminological, syntactical, and thematic connections between Rom 6:1–14; 7:4–6 and Gal 2:19 are widely acknowledged, no satisfactory answer has been provided as to why Paul refers, in Rom 7:4, to “the body of Christ” but in Gal 2:19 to “the law” as the means through which the transition occurs from a former status of being under the law, to a latter status of life in God. Lyu supports this observation by stating that, “Unto this point the interest lay heavier on the relationship between the law and righteousness but the relationship between the three factors, sin, law, and righteousness has not been sufficiently addressed in Pauline studies.”¹⁵

See Räisänen, *Paul*, 58. Hans Lietzmann comments very briefly on Gal 2:19, but states that the law points the believer to grace. See Hans Lietzmann, *An die Galater*, 2nd rev. ed., HNT 10 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1923), 16. Hans Dieter Betz states that “‘through the Torah’ is explained in 3:19–25 by attributing to the Torah an active role in salvation.” See Betz, *Galatians*, 122.

¹³ Friedrich Sieffert, *Der Brief an die Galater*, 8th ed., KEK (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1894), 148–49; Schlier, *Galater*, 98–101; Tannehill, *Dying*, 58–59; Rudolf Bultmann, *Exegetica: Aufsätze zur Erforschung des Neuen Testaments*, ed. Erich Dinkler (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1967), 397; Mussner, *Galaterbrief*, 180–81; Frank J. Matera, *Galatians*, SP 9 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1992), 95; Eckstein, *Gesetz*, 64–66; Martyn, *Galatians*, 257; Thomas R. Schreiner, *Galatians*, ZECNT 9 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 170–71; David A. deSilva, *The Letter to the Galatians*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018), 246–49; Jeanette Hagen Pifer, *Faith as Participation*, WUNT 2/486 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2019), 161; Keener, *Galatians*, 193–94.

¹⁴ The German original reads: “Diese paradox klingende Phrase ist seit jeher ein sehr kontroverses Thema der Debatte, bisher wurde aber noch keine zwingende Lösung gefunden” (translation mine). See Eun-Geol Lyu, *Sünde und Rechtfertigung bei Paulus: Eine exegetische Untersuchung zum paulinischen Sündenverständnis aus soteriologischer Sicht*, WUNT 2/318 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 103.

¹⁵ The German original reads: “Bisher hat das Interesse an der Beziehung des Gesetzes zur Rechtfertigung überwogen, aber die Beziehung zwischen den drei Faktoren Sünde, Gesetz und

Statement of the Problem

In Rom 6:1–14; 7:4–6 and Gal 2:19, Paul refers to a spiritual death. However, while in Rom 6:1–14, the believer dies to sin, in 7:4 and Gal 2:19 the believer dies to the law. As the means of this death, Paul mentions the σῶμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ (“body of Christ”) in Rom 7:4, and the νόμος (“law”) in Gal 2:19. Paul seems to suggest some sort of relationship between the body of Christ and the law, as well as between the law and sin.

First, this study addresses the question of the relationship between the body of Christ and the law, since both serve as the means through which the believer dies to the law, as well as the question of the relationship between the law and sin, since both are entities to which the believer dies.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study is to determine the relationship between the body of Christ and the law, as well as the relationship between the law and sin, according to Paul.

Justification of the Study

The understanding of Paul’s view on righteousness has recently undergone a tremendous shift.¹⁶ For this reason, the scholarly debate on the role of the law and Christ, in relation to righteousness, is ongoing. The following review presents the major positions of the current debate.

Rechtfertigung ist in der Paulusforschung noch kaum hinreichend untersucht worden.” (translation mine) Lyu, *Sünde*, 209.

¹⁶ For an overview on the development since Martin Luther, see Magnus Zetterholm, *Approaches to Paul: A Student’s Guide to Recent Scholarship* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2009); Friedrich W. Horn ed. *Paulus Handbuch* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), 16–41; N. T. Wright, *Paul and His Recent Interpreters: Some Contemporary Debates* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2015).

According to the standard view, also referred to as the Old Perspective, Paul's understanding of righteousness by faith in Christ sharply contrasts with the Jewish understanding of righteousness through obedience to the law. This view went virtually unchallenged from the time of the reformation until the second half of the twentieth century. Whereas Martin Luther shaped this view theologically, Ferdinand Wilhelm Weber, Wilhelm Bousset, and Hermann L. Strack and Paul Billerbeck later provided the historical foundation in their works on Judaism.¹⁷ Scholars of differing schools of interpretation, such as the *Tübinger Schule*,¹⁸ *Religionsgeschichtliche Schule*,¹⁹ or *Bultmannschule*²⁰ have remained in the interpretative framework of the Old Perspective.

In 1977, E. P. Sanders initiated a major challenge to the standard view and launched the New Perspective on Paul.²¹ He compared certain patterns of religions,

¹⁷ Ferdinand Wilhelm Weber, *System der altsynagogalen palästinischen Theologie aus Targum, Midrasch und Talmud* (Leipzig: Dörffling & Franke, 1880); Hermann L. Strack and Paul Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch*, 6 vols. (Munich: Beck, 1922–1961); Wilhelm Bousset, *Die Religion des Judentums im neutestamentlichen Zeitalter* (Berlin: Reuther & Reichardt, 1903); Wilhelm Bousset, *Die Religion des Judentums im späthellenistischen Zeitalter*, 4th ed., HNT 21 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1966).

¹⁸ F. C. Baur was a leading scholar in the *Tübinger Schule*. His perspective on Paul and Judaism is published, among other works, in F. C. Baur, *Paulus, der Apostel Jesu Christi: Sein Leben und Wirken, seine Briefe und seine Lehre: Ein Beitrag zu einer kritischen Geschichte des Urchristentums*, 2 vols. (Stuttgart: Becher & Müller, 1845).

¹⁹ Bousset's works are standard works on Judaism within the *Religionsgeschichtlichen Schule*.

²⁰ Bultmann's view on Paul and Judaism can be found in Rudolf Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament*, trans. Kendrick Grobel, 2 vols. (New York: Scribner, 1951), 1:63–65, 92–121, 191–345. Although not in agreement with Bultmann on many things, Ernst Käsemann was another influential scholar of this school. His view on Paul is published in Ernst Käsemann, *Perspectives on Paul*, trans. Margaret Kohl (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1974).

²¹ Dunn coined the term in 1982, but Sanders's publication was the initial spark. See E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977). Prior to Sanders, several scholars such as Solomon Schechter, C. G. Montefiore, and Krister Stendahl criticized the standard view on Judaism in New Testament scholarship. See Solomon Schechter, *Some Aspects of Rabbinic Theology* (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1909); C. G. Montefiore, *Judaism and St. Paul: Two*

namely, how someone “gets in” and “stays in” Judaism, and Paul’s religion.²² Sanders concluded that Judaism is not characterized by legalism, but by “covenantal nomism,”²³ whereas the pattern of Paul’s religion is “participationist eschatology.”²⁴ Thus, Paul does not criticize legalism, but the Jews, themselves, for not seeking righteousness in Christ, the only means for obtaining salvation.²⁵ Although Sanders’s study provided the basis for the view that the religion of Paul was part of Judaism, scholars of the New Perspective still identified a break between Paul and Judaism.

Recent Pauline scholarship has had diverse development. Whereas some defend the Old Perspective,²⁶ and others define the New Perspective more precisely, a third

Essays (London: Goshen, 1914); Krister Stendahl, *Paul among Jews and Gentiles, and other Essays* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976). Wolter points out that in 1897 Paul Wernle mentions the central theses of the New Perspective. See Paul Wernle, *Der Christ und die Sünde bei Paulus* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Mohr Siebeck, 1897), 83–84; Wolter, *Paulus*, 341–42. However, not until Sanders’s *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* did these views impact New Testament scholarship. For a major critique on Sanders’s work, see Jacob Neusner, *Judaic Law from Jesus to the Mishnah: A Systematic Reply to Professor E. P. Sanders*, SFSHJ 84 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993), 231–46.

²² Sanders, *Paul*, 16–17.

²³ Sanders defines covenantal nomism as “(1) God has chosen Israel and (2) given the law. The law implies both (3) God’s promise to maintain the election and (4) the requirement to obey. (5) God rewards obedience and punishes transgression. (6) The law provides for means of atonement, and atonement results in (7) maintenance or re-establishment of the covenantal relationship. (8) All those who are maintained in the covenant by obedience, atonement, and God’s mercy belong to the group which will be saved.” See Sanders, *Paul*, 422.

²⁴ Sanders defines participationist eschatology as “God has sent Christ to be the saviour of all, . . . one participates in salvation by becoming one person with Christ, dying with him to sin and sharing the promise of his resurrection; the transformation, however, will not be completed until the Lord returns; meanwhile one who is in Christ has been freed from the power of sin and the uncleanness of transgression, and his behaviour should be determined by his new situation; since Christ died to save all, all men must have been under the dominion of sin, . . . as opposed to being in the Spirit.” See Sanders, *Paul*, 549.

²⁵ Sanders, *Paul*, 550.

²⁶ In critique of covenantal nomism are Mark A. Seifrid, *Christ, Our Righteousness: Paul’s Theology of Justification*, NSBT 9 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000); D. A. Carson, Peter Thomas O’Brien, and Mark A. Seifrid eds., *The Paradoxes of Paul*, vol. 2 of *Justification and Variegated Nomism: A Fresh Appraisal of Paul and Second Temple Judaism*, eds. D. A. Carson, et al., WUNT 2/140

group, also known as the New View on Paul,²⁷ argues that Paul did not leave Judaism, but belonged to it. Key to this view is that in his legal discourse, Paul exclusively addresses Gentile Christians.²⁸ Thus, advocates of the New View on Paul see “the problem with the Torah *with regard to the non-Jews*.”²⁹ In current scholarship, the crucial question remains whether the Jews believed that keeping the law was salvific or not.

Whereas advocates on the Old Perspective see no salvific function to the law of Moses, advocates of the New View have not settled on this question.³⁰ Thus, addressing the role

(Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001); A. Andrew Das, *Paul, the Law, and the Covenant* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2001); S. J. Gathercole, *Where Is Boasting? Early Jewish Soteriology and Paul's Response in Romans 1–5* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002); Stephen Westerholm, *Perspectives Old and New on Paul: The “Lutheran” Paul and His Critics* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004); Charles Lee Irons, *The Righteousness of God: A Lexical Examination of the Covenant-Faithfulness Interpretation*, WUNT 2/386 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2015). In critique of the concept of *solution to plight* is Frank Thielman, *From Plight to Solution: A Jewish Framework for Understanding Paul's View of the Law in Galatians and Romans*, NovTSup 61 (Leiden: Brill, 1989). In critique of the New Perspective's rejection of a forensic understanding of justification, see Irons's *Righteousness of God*, where he presents a study on Paul's use of the noun ἡ δικαιοσύνη (“righteousness”) or James B. Prothro who has studied Paul's use of the verb δικαίωω (“to do justice” or “to justify”). See James B. Prothro, *Both Judge and Justifier: Biblical Legal Language and the Act of Justifying in Paul*, WUNT 2/461 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2018).

²⁷ Michael Bachmann points out that it is common to refer to this group of scholars as the New View on Paul. See Michael Bachmann, “‘The New Perspective on Paul’ und ‘The New View on Paul,’” in *Paulus Handbuch*, ed. Friedrich W. Horn (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), 30–38. This view has been labeled as “Paul-within-Judaism” by its own advocates.

²⁸ For a survey on scholars who argued for a Gentile Christian audience, see Zetterholm, *Approaches to Paul*, 127–63. While the exclusive Gentile audience is key for the New View on Paul, advocates of the Old or New Perspective may also share this premise, see for example A. Andrew Das, *Solving the Romans Debate*, (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007); A. Andrews Das, “‘Praise the Lord, All You Gentiles’: The Encoded Audience of Romans 15:7–13,” *JSNT* 34 (2011): 90–110; and A. Andrew Das, “The Gentile Encoded Audience of Romans: The Church Outside the Synagogue,” in *Reading Paul's Letter to the Romans*, ed. Jerry L. Sumney, RBS 73 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2012), 29–46.

²⁹ Zetterholm, *Approaches to Paul*, 162.

³⁰ Hayes, for example, notes that “Jews too are delivered from sin through faith in Christ Jesus and only through faith, not the Law.” See Christine Hayes, *What's Divine about Divine Law? Early Perspectives* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015), 149. Differently, Paula Fredriksen remains vague on the role of Christ for the Jews, see discussion on pages 151–52. Others agree that Paul promotes different ways to attain righteousness for Jews, as compared to Gentiles. See for example John G. Gager, *The Origins of Anti-Semitism: Attitudes toward Judaism in Pagan and Christian Antiquity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), 213–46; Lloyd Gaston, *Paul and the Torah* (Vancouver: University of British

of Christ and the law in relation to righteousness is still legitimate. A study on the body of Christ and its relation to the law in Rom 7:4 and Gal 2:19 contributes to an understanding of the role of the law in the time after Christ's death.

Methodology

This study is a comparative study of Paul's statements in Rom 7:4 and Gal 2:19. The exegetical analyses implemented in this study follow an exegetical methodology suggested by Gordon D. Fee which includes historical, grammatical and syntactical, semantical, structural, and contextual analyses.³¹ The intent of the study is to first examine the relationship between the law and the body of Christ, which both serve as the means of the believer's death to the law, and, second, the relationship between the law and sin, both of which are entities to which the believer dies. To answer these questions, the study is divided into seven chapters.

In the first chapter, I present an introduction and problem statement for my study. In the second chapter, I survey non-Jewish, Greco-Roman literature and Jewish literature (Hebrew Bible and Second Temple literature) to determine the similarities and differences in their legal concepts, along with their understanding of how the human body relates to the law. This chapter provides the historical background and, thus, the interpretative framework necessary for an accurate interpretation of Paul's statements in Rom 7:4 and Gal 2:19.

Columbia Press, 1987), 31–34, 135–50; Stanley K. Stowers, *A Rereading of Romans: Justice, Jews, and Gentiles* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 189–93, 304–5.

³¹ Gordon D. Fee, *New Testament Exegesis: A Handbook for Students and Pastors*, 3rd. ed. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002).

In the third chapter, I exegetically investigate whether dying to sin (Rom 6:1–14) delivers the believers from the rule of sin and death (1 Cor 5:6–8; 11:23–26; Gal 1:4) and atones them with God (Rom 3:25; 8:3; 2 Cor 5:21). This chapter seeks to explain the meaning of the phrase “the body of Christ” (Rom 7:4). Furthermore, the conceptual parallels between death to sin (6:1–14) and death to the law (7:4; Gal 2:19) shed light on the meaning of the believer’s death to the law.

In the fourth chapter, I outline Paul’s legal discourse in Romans and Galatians to determine whether Paul uses Greco-Roman legal concepts. This chapter mainly contributes to identifying the law to which the believer dies in Rom 7:4 and Gal 2:19.

In the fifth chapter, I investigate how the law of God relates to sin, Christ, and the believer based on an exegetical analysis of Rom 7:7–8:13; Gal 3:10, 14; and 4:4–5. I address the question of whether Paul presents the law of God as the law of sin. This chapter sheds further light on identifying the law to which the believer dies in Rom 7:4 and Gal 2:19. Additionally, this chapter addresses how Christ relates to the law. The intent is to explain how the body of Christ (Rom 7:4) and the law (Gal 2:19) function as the means through which the believer dies to the law.

In the sixth chapter, I provide an exegetical analysis of Rom 7:4 and Gal 2:19 based on inferences from the findings of previous chapters. This chapter attempts to answer how the body of Christ (Rom 7:4) and the law (Gal 2:19) serve as the means of the believer’s death to the law (Rom 7:4; Gal 2:19).

The seventh chapter provides a summary of each chapter and its contribution to this study, followed by the conclusion of this study.

CHAPTER 2

THE BODY AND THE LAW IN NON-JEWISH, GRECO- ROMAN LITERATURE AND JEWISH LITERATURE

The purpose of this chapter is to provide some background to Paul's assertion that a believer dies to the law, (Rom 7:4; Gal 2:19) either through the body of Christ (Rom 7:4), or through the law itself (Gal 2:19). Paul wrote his letters to Christians throughout the Roman Empire. Most recipients of his letters were probably Gentile Christians, accompanied by a minority of Jewish Christians.¹ Paul faced challenging cultural gaps in his work outside of Palestine since Christianity originated within the Hellenized Jewish environment of the early first-century CE, but also stood on the shoulders of Second Temple Jewish religious practices.²

In light of the multicultural origins of Paul's letters to the Romans and Galatians, I will address whether non-Jewish, Greco-Roman literature and Jewish literature (Hebrew Bible and Second Temple literature) share similar legal and anthropological concepts. This question will be answered in two steps. In the first step, I will survey the effect of a

¹ Advocates for an exclusively gentile audience include Das, as well as scholars following the Stanley Stowers school of Pauline scholarship or the New View on Paul. See page 9, footnote 28.

² Everett Ferguson notes, "The historical setting for the New Testament and early Christianity may be described as a series of concentric circles. The Roman world provided the outer circle—the governmental, legal, and economic context. The Greek world provided the cultural, educational, and philosophical context. The Jewish world was the matrix of early Christianity, providing the immediate religious context." See Everett Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 1.

particular legal concept on the body within the context of non-Jewish, Greco-Roman literature. In the second step, I will survey the same, but within the context of Jewish literature.³ A concise summary of the findings follows each section. Conclusions based on the findings of the entire chapter complete the chapter. In this chapter, I only intend to study legal and anthropological concepts within the mentioned bodies of literature, without drawing inferences to Paul's view on the respective issues.

The Body and the Law in Non-Jewish, Greco-Roman Literature

According to Greco-Roman philosophy, the body and the law interact with each other in diverse ways. To fully understand this interaction, I will first survey the Greco-Roman legal concept in general, and then discuss the relation of the law to the body.

The Legal Concept in the Non-Jewish, Greco-Roman World

In order to understand the differentiation between natural law and positive law in the Greco-Roman legal concept,⁴ it is necessary to outline the origin and opposing characteristics of each, as well as to analyze the relationship between them.

³ Although the Hebrew legal tradition predates the Greek one, this study first focuses on non-Jewish, Greco-Roman literature because of the influence of Greek culture on Judaism during the Hellenistic period.

⁴ This study uses the terms positive and natural law based on the definition provided in Merriam-Webster's *Collegiate Dictionary*, see "Positive Law," *Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* 968. Positive law includes many types of laws produced by human beings, both political and sacred, presented in written or oral form. Scholarly literature also uses the terms "human law" or "written law" for positive law, and "universal," "unwritten," or "divine law" for natural law.

Origin and Characteristics of Natural Law

The first reference to natural law is found within the fragmentary remains of the writings of pre-Socratic philosophers. Being primarily interested in cosmology, pre-Socratic philosophers observed nature. Their focus was on regularity and discerning the underlying order within natural processes. They found nature to be organized according to mathematical laws and discovered numerical ratios within different sciences, such as music intervals and astronomy.⁵ Later in history, the Stoic philosophers developed a more comprehensive concept of natural law.

In *De republica*, Cicero presents a concise characterization of the Stoic natural law theory.⁶ He points out three distinctive characteristics of natural law:

True law is right reason in agreement with nature; it is of universal application, unchanging and everlasting; it summons to duty by its commands, and averts from wrongdoing by its prohibitions. And it does not lay its commands or prohibitions upon good men in vain, though neither have any effect on the wicked. It is a sin to try to alter this law, nor is it allowable to attempt to repeal any part of it, and it is impossible to abolish it entirely. We cannot be freed from its obligations by senate or people, and we need not look outside ourselves for an expounder or interpreter of it. And there will not be different laws at Rome and at Athens, or different laws now and in the future, but one eternal and unchangeable law will be valid for all nations and all times, and there will be one master and ruler, that is, God, over us all, for he is the author of this law, its promulgator, and its enforcing judge. Whoever is disobedient is fleeing from himself and denying his human nature, and by reason of this very fact he will suffer the worst penalties, even if he escapes what is commonly considered punishment (Cicero, *Rep.* 3.33; see also *SVF.* 3.325).⁷

⁵ See Anthony Kenny, *A New History of Western Philosophy* (Oxford: Clarendon, 2012), 14; Christine Hayes, *What's Divine about Divine Law? Early Perspectives* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015), 55.

⁶ Anthony Kenny identifies Cicero's philosophy as eclectic. In further detail, Kenny argues that Cicero favored "the Stoic rather than the Epicurean tradition" in ethics. See Kenny, *Philosophy*, 85. Christine Hayes describes Cicero as "loyal to Plato's Academy but sympathetic to Stoicism and the Peripatetic tradition." See Hayes, *Divine Law*, 56.

⁷ If not further indicated, this study displays all translations of Greco-Roman primary sources from the Loeb Classical Library.

First, natural law is rational. Stoics believed that λόγος (“reason”) is a forming, qualifying, and moving agent that penetrates all of nature’s ὕλη (“matter”).⁸ There is no contradiction between nature and right reason. According to Cicero, human beings differ from animals in their ability to reason and think, which is the “first common possession of man and God.”⁹ Cicero further equates right reason with the law, concluding that “men have Law also in common with the gods” (Cicero, *Rep.* 1.23). Through right reason, which the human soul embodies, natural law found its way into human beings (see Seneca, *Ep.* 66.12).¹⁰

Second, natural law has a “universal application.” Cicero’s statement indicates that only one law exists. Rome and Athens will eventually share the same law, which “will be valid for all nations.” In another context, he states that natural law “rules the whole universe by its wisdom in command and prohibition” (Cicero, *Rep.* 2.8). Thus, the validity of natural law does not solely apply to the nations, but to the whole universe. Its validity is indefinite in scope.

Third, natural law is “unchanging and everlasting.” The validity of natural law is not only indefinite in scope, but also in time. Cicero considers any alteration of natural law to be sin and forbids any attempt to repeal even parts of the law. It is impossible to

⁸ Malte Hossenfelder, *Die Philosophie der Antike: Stoa, Epikureismus und Skepsis*, 2nd rev. ed., vol. 3.3 of *Geschichte der Philosophie*, ed. Wolfgang Röd (Munich: Beck, 1995), 81.

⁹ Similarly, Seneca states, “reason, however, is a common attribute of both gods and men; in the gods it is already perfected, in us it is capable of being perfected.” See Seneca, *Ep.* 92.27.

¹⁰ To understand natural law, according to Cicero, “we need not look outside ourselves for an expounder or interpreter of it.” See Cicero, *Rep.* 3.33. Cicero’s statement indicates that human beings have, through their reason, direct access to natural law. Heraclitus’s fragment 45 contains a similar idea, see Eric Brown, “The Emergence of Natural Law and the Cosmopolis,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Ancient Greek Political Thought*, ed. Stephen Salkever (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 331–66.

abolish natural law. Its obligations remain binding to every human being. The idea of inalterability of natural law is also found elsewhere in Cicero, where he states, that “the Law . . . can neither be repealed nor abrogated” (Cicero, *Rep.* 2.14).

Based on the three characteristics of natural law—its rationality, its infinity in scope, and its infinity in time—Cicero, in line with Stoic philosophy, deduces three implications regarding natural law.

First, natural law is divine. Stoics used the term θεῖος νόμος (“divine law”) for natural law. Cicero’s statement, “God . . . is the author of this law, its promulgator, and its enforcing judge” (Cicero, *Rep.* 3.33), does not identify an external divine source of natural law. The Stoics instead held a pantheistic perception of nature, with divine reason as a creative and ordering principle.¹¹ This view of god renders the idea of an extrinsic divine lawgiver impossible. Stoics attributed divinity to nature’s law because of its inherent characteristics. For them, rationality and infinity in time and scope were divine characteristics in and of themselves.¹² Consequently, reason as the host of natural law represents a divine aspect of human beings.

The Epicureans deviated from the Stoics regarding the divine mind behind the order of the universe. The Epicurean spokesman in Cicero’s *De Natura Deorum*, argues, “the world was made by nature, without needing an artificer to construct it, and that the act of creation, which according to you cannot be performed without divine skill, is so

¹¹ Hayes argues that “for the Stoics, God was not distinct from nature, God was nature; nature was divine. Therefore the rational order or eternal reason (*logos*) of nature is none other than the eternal reason of God.” Hayes, *Divine Law*, 55. See also Seneca, *Ep.* 92.30.

¹² Hayes, *Divine Law*, 2. See also Rémi Brague, *The Law of God: The Philosophical History of an Idea*, trans. Lydia G. Cochrane (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 18.

easy, that nature will create, is creating and has created worlds without number” (Cicero, *Nat. d.* 1.53). For the Epicureans, the order of the universe builds on the movement of the atoms in the void.¹³

Second, natural law is the truth. Stoics equated natural law with the truth. This equation builds on its common element of inalterability. Even Socrates potentially argues that the “law tends to be discovery of reality” (Plato, [*Min.*] 315a). Since reality describes what is and what is not, it corresponds with truth. Because reality never changes, natural law, defined as the discovery of reality, never changes either, thus conveying truth.¹⁴

Third, natural law is a moral law and functions as an ethical standard. Since reason orders nature efficiently,¹⁵ and natural law corresponds to truth, the Greco-Roman thinkers defined ethical behavior according to this universal standard. As Cicero’s definition indicates, natural law “does not lay its commands or prohibitions upon good men in vain” (Cicero, *Rep.* 3.33). Therefore, the good person, living a moral life, does not need new laws, since “he follows the dictates of reason automatically.”¹⁶

¹³ Lucretius argues that the “motion the bodies of first-beginnings are now, in that same motion they were in ages gone by, and hereafter they will always be carried along in the same way, and the things which have been accustomed to be born will be born under the same conditions; they will be and will grow and will be strong with their strength as much as is granted to each by the laws of nature.” See Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura*. 2.297–302. If Lucretius’s argument was strictly applied, everything would follow the same track, and nothing new would ever come to exist. However, Epicureans explained the occurrence of chance by the swerve of the atoms, which potentially could create something new. For a detailed discussion on the Epicurean’s take on chance and natural law, see A. A. Long, *From Epicurus to Epictetus: Studies in Hellenistic and Roman Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 157–77.

¹⁴ Hayes, *Divine Law*, 56.

¹⁵ Brown, “Natural Law,” 342.

¹⁶ Hayes, *Divine Law*, 59. For a more detailed discussion on Greco-Roman concepts of morality, see Julia Annas, “Ancient Ethics and Modern Morality,” *Philosophical Perspectives* 6 (1992): 119–36.

Origin and Characteristics of Positive Law

The earliest Greek literature provides evidence for the existence of positive laws. The writings of Homer and Hesiod show records of juridical activities by the ancient Greeks. Anselm C. Hagedorn observes that these legal processes were most likely on an oral basis because of the lack of references to written laws.¹⁷ Inscriptions like the Grotyn Code in Crete¹⁸ and (partially legendary) records on the activity of various νομοθέτης (“lawgivers”)¹⁹ shed light on the early stages of the textualization and codification of positive law in the Greco-Roman world. Michael Gagarin argues that most of Greece’s more significant cities had written laws as early as the sixth century BCE. However, the only available pieces of written laws, with a few exceptions, date around the mid-fourth century BCE.²⁰ Greeks usually organized these laws around a common topic or a current social conflict. Therefore, these laws do not represent a comprehensive legal system, but resemble only parts of ancient Greek positive law.²¹

Classical philosophers showed a rising interest in human society and politics.

They were convinced that an individual could experience the meaning of life exclusively

¹⁷ Anselm C. Hagedorn, “Greek Law,” *OEBL* 1:356–62.

¹⁸ According to current scholarship, evidence has been found for the first written laws on the island of Crete in Greece. Françoise Ruzé argues that ideological connections exist between the different lawgivers, which have their common source in Minos’s myth from Crete. See Françoise Ruzé, “La codification en Grèce archaïque,” in *Writing Laws in Antiquity/L’écriture du droit dans l’Antiquité*, eds. Dominique Jaillard and Christophe Nihan, BZABR 19 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2017), 34–49. See also Plato, [*Min.*] 318c–d.

¹⁹ Among others, prominent ones are Zaleucus in Epizephyrian Locri (Italy), Lycurgus in Sparta (Greece), Charondas in Catania (Sicily), and Draco and Solon in Athens (Greece).

²⁰ Michael Gagarin, *Writing Greek Law* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 52.

²¹ Ruzé, “La codification,” 37.

within the collective of the state.²² Therefore, prominent classical philosophers authored treatises on laws, states, and politicians, in which they addressed the characteristics of positive law.

In contrast to natural law, positive law is a written law, limited in time and scope. Being confronted with the question on why human beings “do not always use the same laws on the same matters,” Socrates answered that “men, who do not use always the same laws, . . . are not always able to discover what the law is intent on—reality” (Plato, *[Min.]* 315a–b). This short dialogue indicates that positive law does not necessarily correspond with reality, which renders an equation with truth impossible. This characteristic of positive law means that it lacks rationality, immutability, and universality. In other words, positive law is always subject to change, depending on the political and social circumstance. Positive law can never determine “exactly what is noblest and most just for one and all,” and “enjoin upon them that which is best” (Plato, *Pol.* 294a). It is imperfect and, therefore, forces lawgivers to constantly reform their laws.

[The Lawgiver] purposes, first, to write down the laws, so far as he can, with complete precision; next, when in the course of time he puts his decrees to the test of practice, you cannot suppose that any lawgiver will be so foolish as not to perceive that very many things must necessarily be left over, which it will be the duty of some successor to make right, in order that the constitution and the system of the State he has organised may always grow better, and never in any way worse (Plato, *Leg.* 769d–e).

Despite these shortcomings of positive law, philosophers of different schools considered its existence necessary. Although Plato preferred to be ruled by a wise man whose inherent wisdom left him without need of positive law, he concluded that, due to a

²² Reimar Müller, “Anthropologie und Ethik in der epikureischen Philosophie,” *Sitzungsberichte der Akademie der Wissenschaften der DDR Gesellschaftswissenschaften* 3 (1987): 1–23.

lack of such wise men, “ordinance and law” are the necessary “second best” alternative. Plato considered making laws and conducting life “according to laws” to be essential in order to prevent men from living like “the most savage of beasts.” (Plato, *Leg.* 875a–d).

Cicero believed that, ideally, all states would share a common constitution based upon natural law. In this case, positive laws would be unnecessary, or at least not labeled as laws, because they are not able to regulate what is just and unjust (Cicero, *Rep.* 2.13).²³ Nevertheless, Cicero saw the value of positive laws, stating that they “were invented for the safety of citizens, the preservation of states, and the tranquility and happiness of human life” (Cicero, *Rep.* 2.5).

The Epicureans felt similarly skeptical toward positive laws. Hermachus argues, “if everyone were equally able to observe and be mindful of utility, they would have no need of laws in addition” (LS 22M). Nevertheless, the Epicureans also saw the value in positive laws, because such laws guarantee security to a state’s citizens and thus provide the required environment to experience happiness.²⁴

The Relationship between Natural Law and Positive Law

The conviction that positive laws must derive from natural law is one that originated early in Greek philosophy. However, the material dealing with the relationship between natural law and positive law is limited since pre-Socratic philosophers were primarily interested in cosmology rather than human society or politics.

²³ Stoics shared Cicero’s negative sentiment toward positive law. Chrysippus, for example, states that “all existing laws and constitutions were erroneous.” See *SVF.* 3.324.

²⁴ Robin Philippon, “Die Rechtsphilosophie der Epikureer,” *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* 2/23 (1910): 289–337; Long, *Epicurus*, 183–84.

Heraclitus marks the first known example. He states that “all human laws are nourished by one law, the divine one: for it dominates as much as it wants to, and it suffices for all” (Heraclitus, *Frag.* 114).²⁵ Heraclitus perceives the rational order of nature, the universal logos, as a prescriptive norm for human behavior.

A fragment attributed to Anaximander of Milet marks another early example. He observes a relationship between competing opposites, which occur in nature, such as heat and cold.²⁶ These opposites act “according to obligation,” namely by “pay[ing] justice and retribution to each other for their injustice according to the order of time” (Anaximander, *Doctrine.* 6, see also DK 12 B1). In other words, Anaximander perceives the balance between natural opposites as justice, whereas the domination of one over the other as injustice. Kurt A. Raaflaub concludes that Anaximander’s use of legal terminology for describing natural phenomena, indicates, that “the cosmos presupposes an analogous concept of social and political order: it functions only based on justice and balance of power among equals.”²⁷

Later in classical Greece, Plato’s Athenian stranger argues “that reason which controls what exists among the stars, together with the necessary preliminary sciences,” must be applied “to the institutions and rules of ethics” (Plato, *Leg.* 967e). Thus, the idea

²⁵ The original text of Heraclitus’s fragment (τρέφονται γὰρ πάντες οἱ ἀνθρώπειοι νόμοι ὑπὸ ἐνὸς τοῦ θεοῦ) indicates that, at the time of its formation, Greek philosophers already perceived natural law to be divine. Hayes argues, “the Stoics were the first to use the phrase ‘divine law’ (*theios nomos*) to refer to natural law,” see Hayes, *Divine Law*, 55. However, this does not mean that Stoics were the first ones to develop the concept of natural law as divine law.

²⁶ See Kenny, *Philosophy*, 12.

²⁷ Kurt A. Raaflaub, “Poets, Lawgivers, and the Beginnings of Political Reflection in Archaic Greece,” in *The Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Political Thought*, eds. Christopher Rowe and Malcolm Schofield (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 23–59.

of natural law as the prime source of positive laws was already being developed by pre-Socratic philosophers, to be later adopted by Classical and Hellenistic philosophy.

The Role of a Σωτήρ (“Savior”)

Although Greco-Roman legislators attempted to create positive laws that were as congruent as possible to natural law, positive laws remain imperfect. As mentioned previously, positive laws are not indefinite in time and scope, but also lack the inherent ability to adapt to circumstantial changes. Change in circumstance could render positive laws unjust or even life-threatening to citizens. Plato comments on this challenge,

that our task of legislation has nearly come to an end. But in every case, the full end does not consist in the doing, establishing or founding something: rather our view should be that it is only when we have discovered a means of salvation, endless and complete, for our creation, that we are at length justified in believing that we have done all that ought to be done: until then, we must believe, the whole of our creation is incomplete (Plato, *Leg.* 960b–c, see also d).

Plato designates positive laws as incomplete because there are no endless and complete means of salvation for positive laws.

Plato argues that a divine σωτήρ (“savior”), a statesman, with the ability of right legislation based on his divine soul is needed to save the law and state’s citizens. In contrast to positive laws, the educated statesman provides, based on his wisdom, the necessary flexibility to adapt and apply positive laws to given circumstances (Plato, *Leg.* 964d–969c, esp. 966d and 968a). The Eleatic stranger in Plato’s *Politicus* illustrates that a wise statesman does not always follow positive law. Plato argues that “the truest criterion of right government” is when a statesman “by persuasion or by other means, in accordance with written laws or contrary to them, does what is for the good of the people” (Plato, *Pol.* 296d–e). Having these abilities, the statesman saves not only the law,

but also the citizens of his state by preventing the law from turning unjustly against them. For this reason, Hellenistic kings often adopted the title σωτήρ (“savior”).²⁸

In Hellenism, Neopythagorean philosophers referred to the ideal ruler as the one in whom resides natural law, or *logos*. Therefore, the ideal ruler has absolute power and can give positive law to the state. Whereas it is expected that this ruler acts responsibly, he is not bound by his own positive laws, but is able to legislate according to his will.²⁹ In this sense, the ideal ruler becomes a νόμος ἔμψυχος (“living law”), causing harmony among his subjects by leading as an example in virtue (see similarly, Cicero, *Rep.* 1.52).³⁰ According to Julien Smith the concept of a ruler as a living law “pertains not simply to governance, but more expansively to the principle by which the king establishes on earth the harmony that is understood to exist in the cosmos.”³¹ For this reason Erwin R. Goodenough states that the ruler as the living law is “the immediate means by which men may get into harmony with the universe.”³² Plutarch formulates the same concept, saying that “law is the work of the ruler, and the ruler is the image of God who orders all things”

²⁸ Hayes, *Divine Law*, 67, 76.

²⁹ Julien Smith, *Christ the Ideal King: Cultural Context, Rhetorical Strategy, and the Power of Divine Monarchy in Ephesians*, WUNT 2/313 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 45.

³⁰ Smith, *Ideal King*, 45.

³¹ Smith, *Ideal King*, 45.

³² Erwin R. Goodenough, *The Political Philosophy of Hellenistic Kingship*, YCS 1 (New Haven Yale University Press, 1928), 61.

(Plutarch, *Princ. iner.* 780d–f). Thus, Greco-Roman political theory regarded the ruler “as the embodiment or agent or representative of the Law or Reason or Logos of God.”³³

The Body and Greco-Roman Natural Law

In Greco-Roman philosophy, the human body is in close relationship with natural law as well as positive law. However, only the body’s relationship to natural law is relevant to this study.³⁴ Since the body hosts reason, natural law is not only embodied,

³³ Glenn F. Chesnut, “The Ruler and the Logos in Neopythagorean, Middle Platonic, and Late Stoic Political Philosophy,” *ANRW* 16.2:1310–32. See also Bruno Centrone, “Platonism and Pythagoreanism in the Early Empire,” in *The Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Political Thought*, eds. Christopher Rowe and Malcolm Schofield (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 559–84; Hayes, *Divine Law*, 67.

³⁴ The human positive laws in Greece deal with the body from early on. In non-Jewish, Greco-Roman literature, two kinds of positive laws dealt with the human body.

First, regulations protected the citizen’s body. Draco, Athens’s first lawgiver in the seventh century BCE, provided a law code with severe bodily punishment for the lowest kinds of criminality. See Plutarch, *Comp. Sol. Publ.* 87. See also Aristotle, *Rhet.* 400b; Aristotle, *Pol.* 1274b. Draco’s law code also regulated debt-slavery. Debt-slavery allowed a person to pledge one’s body as security for a credit. In case of failure to pay back the credit, the person would experience enslavement. See Morris Silver, *Economic Structures of Antiquity*, Contributions in Economics and Economic History 159 (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1995), 117. Aristotle and Plutarch reported that, due to Draco’s law, most of “the poor themselves and also their wives and children were actually in slavery to the rich; . . . and all borrowing was on the security of the debtors’ persons [σῶμα].” See Aristotle, *Ath. pol.* 2.2. See also Plutarch, *Comp. Sol. Publ.* 13.

Solon’s legal reform in the sixth-century BCE enacted a cancellation of debts and debt-slavery. He made “the people free both at the time and for the future by prohibiting loans secured on the person [σῶμα].” See Aristotle, *Ath. pol.* 6.1; Plutarch, *Comp. Sol. Publ.* 15. The prohibition of debt-slavery was the most crucial democratic feature of Solon’s law. See Aristotle, *Ath. pol.* 10.1. Aeschines, in his speech *against Timarchus* states “that in a democracy it is the laws that guard the person [σῶμα] of the citizen and the constitution of the state.” See Aeschines, *Tim.* 79. David M. Halperin argues that this new political system, which involved all the citizens in political activity, “required a series of measures designed to uphold the dignity and autonomy . . . of every (male) citizen, whatever his economic circumstances.” He further points out that “the body of the male citizen constituted that zone.” See David M. Halperin, “The Democratic Body: Prostitution and Citizenship in Classical Athens,” in *One Hundred Years of Homosexuality: And Other Essays on Greek Love*, The New Ancient World (New York: Routledge, 1990), 88–120. See also Virginia J. Hunter, “Constructing the Body of the Citizen: Corporal Punishment in Classical Athens,” *EMC* 36 (1992): 271–91. Therefore, the Athenians enacted laws against any insults toward a citizen’s body. See Demosthenes, *Andr.* 179.

Rome abolished debt-slavery in 326 BCE. Livy states that “in that year the liberty of the Roman plebs had as it were a new beginning; for men ceased to be imprisoned for debt.” See Livy, *The History of Rome.* 8.28. Varro dates the abolishment of the *nexus*, a technical term for debt-slavery, as later in the year 313 BCE. See Varro, *Ling.* 7.105. Although Rome abolished debt-slavery later than the Greeks, it

but also interacts with the body. First, this study will focus on how non-Jewish, Greco-Roman philosophers defined the ideal interaction between the body and natural law. Second, it will focus on how non-Jewish, Greco-Roman philosophers perceived the reality of the body's interaction with natural law. Finally, the study will address various proposals within the non-Jewish, Greco-Roman literature on how to move from reality to the ideal.

The Ideal of the Body's Relationship with Natural Law

In the Stoic line of thought, one could only achieve εὐδαιμονία (“happiness”), the τέλος (“ultimate goal”) of life, by living in agreement with nature, as expressed by the founder of Stoicism, Zeno of Citium (Diogenes Laertius, *Lives*. 7.87).³⁵ Wrestling with

developed laws to protect the citizen's bodies. Publius Valerius, one of the first consuls of the Roman republic, enacted a law that guaranteed bodily security to a Roman citizen. See Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Ant. rom.* 5.70. In *Pro Rabirio Perduellionis Reo*, Cicero refers to a similar law, enacted by the plebeian family *Porcia* in the second century BCE. Similar to the Valerian law, the Porcian law also “forbade the rod to be used on the person of any Roman citizen.” He also refers to another second century BCE law, carried by the tribune Gaius Gracchus, “forbidding sentence to be passed on the life of a Roman citizen” without a tribune's consent. See Cicero, *Rab. Perd.* 12.

These laws became dividers between social classes in Greco-Roman society. Whereas the bodies of citizens became sacrosanct, slaves had to pay for every offense with their bodies, see Demosthenes, *Andr.* 55. See also Demosthenes, [*Tim.*] 167,171.

Second, regulations defined how citizens had to treat their bodies in order to remain entirely accepted within society. Giving up self-determination over one's own body had significant consequences regarding a citizen's civil rights. For example, when an Athenian boy prostituted himself, he faced significant legal consequences in the future. Aeschines points out that such a person was no longer able to serve in any public office. See Aeschines, *Tim.* 21. The argument builds on the assumption that a man who sold the liberty of his body may also sell his city's liberty, see Halperin, “Democratic Body,” 97–98. Roman culture expresses similar sentiments towards female prostitutes who wanted to serve as priestesses. See Seneca the Elder, *Controversiae*. 1.2.

³⁵ Kenny sides with Diogenes Laertius's claim, see Kenny, *Philosophy*, 222. Hossenfelder argues in accordance with Stobaeus's cited fragment, see Hossenfelder, *Philosophie der Antike*, 45–46. A fragmentary text of Arius Didymus, included in Stobaeus's *Anthology* (Stobaeus. *Ecl.* 2.7.6a; see also *SVF*. 1.552), indicates that Zeno's original formulation of the doctrine was a shorter version, including only the words “the goal of life is in agreement.” According to this fragment, Cleanthes, Zeno's successor as the head of the Stoic school, added the words “with nature.” Scholarship has no consensus on whether Zeno had already penned the more extended version of the doctrine. Brad Inwood and Pierluigi Donini adopt a harmonizing view, arguing that “probably Zeno gave both the longer and shorter formulae and the

the question of how to translate τέλος in Latin, Cicero writes, “I have all along been translating the Greek term telos either by ‘final’ or ‘ultimate aim,’ or ‘chief Good,’ and for ‘final’ or ‘ultimate aim,’ we may also substitute ‘End’—inasmuch then as the final aim is to live in agreement and harmony with nature,” (Cicero, *Fin.* 3.26). Later, Seneca confirms the doctrine by stating, “I follow the guidance of Nature—a doctrine upon which all Stoics are agreed. Not to stray from Nature and to mould ourselves according to her law and pattern—this is true ‘wisdom and further ‘the happy life, therefore, is a life that is in harmony with its own nature, and it can be attained in only one way’” (Seneca, *Vit. beat.* 3.3–4, see also 8.2).

Stoics argued that to live in agreement with nature, a person must entrust the conduct of life to λόγος (“reason”). They believed that before taking action, the impulse which triggers the action must be evaluated by human reason. The goal of the Stoics was to remain in a state of ἀπαθία (“freedom from emotions”)³⁶ and to avoid the tension of dissatisfaction which leads to πάθος (“emotion”).³⁷ They considered emotions to be the result of an erroneous evaluation, therefore equating virtue with right reason (Seneca, *Ep.* 66.32).³⁸ Under virtue, they perceived “a true and never-swerving judgment” (Seneca,

followers mentioned by Stobaeus reacted against the short version.” See Brad Inwood and Pierluigi Donini, “Stoic Ethics,” in *The Cambridge History of Hellenistic Philosophy*, eds. Keimpe Algra, et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 675–738. Unfortunately, they do not provide any support for their claim.

³⁶ “ἀπάθεια,” *LSJ* 174.

³⁷ “πάθος,” *LSJ* 1285.

³⁸ Virtue situates itself in the “nobler part, that is, the rational part” of human beings, which means in the soul. See Seneca, *Ep.* 71.32.

Ep. 71.33).³⁹ Thus, for a happy, emotionless life, virtue or right reason would need to be in charge, judging every impulse correctly.

Since natural law is part of reason, which is part of the human soul, life in agreement with nature requires the soul to rule over the body. Seneca argues that “God’s place in the universe corresponds to the soul’s relation to man. World-matter corresponds to our mortal body; therefore let the lower serve the higher” (Seneca, *Ep.* 65.24). On another occasion, commenting on the happy life, he mentions that, “when the soul has transported itself to this lofty height, it regards the body also, since it is a burden which must be borne, not as a thing to love, but as a thing to oversee; nor is it subservient to that over which it is set in mastery” (Seneca, *Ep.* 92.33).

Stoics were not the first ones to argue that, ideally, the soul should be in supremacy over the body. Already Plato’s Socrates⁴⁰ points out that nature intends the soul’s governance over the body.

Whenever soul and body are in the same place nature directs the latter to serve and be governed and the former to govern and be master; and on this subject again, which one do you think resembles the divine and which the mortal? Or do you not think the divine is naturally such as to govern and control and the mortal to be governed and serve? (Plato, *Phaed.* 80a).

By using the phrase ἡ φύσις προστάττει (“the nature directs”), Plato displays nature as an authority which actively determines the hierarchy between the soul and the body, when

³⁹ He also states that a “happy man, therefore, is one who has right judgment,” and further “the happy man is he who allows reason to fix the value of every condition of existence,” see Seneca, *Vit. beat.* 6.2. See also Seneca, *Ep.* 124.4.

⁴⁰ To differentiate between the thoughts of the historical Socrates and Plato, this study follows the suggestions made by Kenny, *Philosophy*, 36–39. Thus, “Plato’s Socrates” refers to the statements of Socrates in Plato’s dialogues that most probably resemble Plato’s philosophical ideas.

united.⁴¹ Similarly, Aristotle argues that “in the first place an animal consists of soul and body, of which the former is by nature the ruling and the latter the subject factor . . . the soul rules the body with the sway of a master . . . it is natural and expedient for the body to be governed by the soul” (Aristotle, *Pol.* 1254a–b; see also Aristotle, *Top.* 128b; *Part. an.* 678b). By using the phrase *κατὰ φύσιν* (“according to nature”), Aristotle points to nature’s intentionality that the soul should rule over the body. Even the Epicureans, who significantly disagree with the Stoic on the concept of natural law, consent to the idea that nature intends the soul to be “the body’s guardian and source of its existence” (Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura.* 3.323–24).⁴² Thus, in Greco-Roman philosophy, the body ideally always submits to the soul, because the soul embodies natural law.⁴³ This hierarchy, which expresses the foundation of the Greco-Roman dualistic anthropology, was seen as the only guarantee of a happy life.

⁴¹ For a similar idea, see also Plato, *Leg.* 896c–d.

⁴² The Latin reads, *Haec igitur natura tenetur corpore ab omni, ipsaque corporis est custos et causa salutis*. The text does not mention the soul per se, but instead it mentions nature, which functions as the guardian of the body. The Loeb translation provides a footnote after *natura*, stating that in this case, *natura* refers to the soul.

⁴³ The natural law not only defines the hierarchy between body and soul, but was also in line with the dualism in Greek anthropology. This dualism was already present in the earliest Greek writings of Homer. Out of the eight references to *σῶμα* (“body”) in Homer’s *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, five refer to the bodies of human beings. All of them refer to dead bodies. See Homer, *Il.* 7.79; 22.342; Homer, *Od.* 11.52; 12.67; 24.187. The anthropological dualism becomes evident when the soul of a dead person appears in a dream of a living person, begging for an appropriate burial to enter the gates of Hades. See Homer, *Od.* 11.52; 24.167.

The Reality of the Body's Relationship with Natural Law

In contrast to the ideal where the soul rules over the body, classic philosophers observed that the body enslaves the soul, causing an unhappy life. This reality caused an attitude change toward the body and, especially, its desires.

Socrates and Plato maintained a negative view of the body. Although Socrates argues in *Lysis* that “a body, . . . is neither good nor bad” (Plato, *Symp.* 217a–b, see also 218c, 219a), he attributes to the body a passive negative influence on the soul. Being asked to elaborate on the meaning of σῶμα, he answers,

Some say it is the tomb (σῆμα) of the soul, their notion being that the soul is buried in the present life; . . . most likely . . . the Orphic poets gave this name, with the idea that the soul is undergoing punishment for something; they think it has the body as an enclosure to keep it safe, like a prison, and this is, as the name itself denotes, the safe (σῶμα) for the soul, until the penalty is paid, and not even a letter needs to be changed (Plato, *Crat.* 400c).⁴⁴

By quoting orphic poets who define the body as a jail cell or even a tomb of the soul, Socrates agrees that the body is at least a punishing and liberty-depriving instrument for the soul. At worst, the body functions as a soul's grave, which makes the eternal soul temporarily lifeless.

Plato's Socrates attributes to the body a more powerful, negative influence on the soul. In *Phaedo*, Plato's Socrates argues that if the body is the master over the soul, a μεμιασμένως (“polluted”) or ἀκάθαρτος (“unclean”) soul is the long-term effect.

⁴⁴ See also Plato, *Symp.* 493a. Socrates refers to Philolaus, a Pythagorean philosopher, who said that the body is the tomb of the soul. For a detailed discussion on Socrates's use of the body as a tomb, see Joachim Dalfen, *Gorgias*, vol. 6.3 of *Platon Werke: Übersetzung und Kommentar* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2004), 368–69. For the primary source, see Philolaus, *Frag.* 14.4, 21–22. For a discussion on the authenticity of this fragment, see Carl A. Huffman, *Philolaus of Croton: Pythagorean and Presocratic: A Commentary on the Fragments and Testimonia with Interpretive Essays* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 404–6. Huffman argues that fragment fourteen is a forgery.

When it [the soul] is released from the body it is polluted and uncleansed, in that it has been continually with the body and serving it and loving it, and so bewitched by it and the influence of its desires and pleasures as to think that nothing is real but the corporeal, which one can touch and see and drink and eat and use for sexual pleasure, and it has become used to hating, fearing, and avoiding what is obscure and invisible to the eyes, but intelligible and to be grasped by philosophy (Plato, *Phaed.* 81b–c, see also 108a–b).

Plato's Socrates also attributes to the body a negative influence on the people around and makes the body ultimately responsible for all evil.

You see the body provides us with countless distractions because it must have nourishment, and furthermore, if any illnesses attack, they hinder our pursuit of reality. It fills us with all kinds of passions, desires, fears and illusions as well as much nonsense so that the result is, as the saying goes, because of it we really and truly do not have it in us ever to think about anything. For nothing causes us wars, revolts and battles other than the body and its appetites. You see all wars are caused by the acquisition of money and we're compelled to acquire money because of the body, being slaves [δουλεύοντες] to its service (Plato, *Phaed.* 66b–d).

Socrates and Plato expand the negative perspective of the body to life in general. The only hope in their life was the belief that death affects only the body, but not the soul. Therefore, they despised their bodies and their lives, eagerly awaiting death, which would free the soul from its prison and let the person enjoy the afterlife.⁴⁵

Aristotle's view of the body deviates extensively from that of Socrates and Plato. He attributes to the body a much more positive role, with the consequence of having a more positive attitude toward life. Several times Aristotle indicates that "the body is the soul's tool" (Aristotle, *Nic. eth.* 1241b; see also Aristotle, *Part. an.* 642a, 645a). Additionally, he argues that "it is quite clear, then, that neither the soul nor certain parts of it, if it has parts, can be separated from the body" (Aristotle, *De an.* 412a–13a, see also 414a). Aristotle presents a *hylomorphic* view of human beings, proposing that "a living

⁴⁵ For this reason, Plato's Socrates did not fear death, see Plato, *Phaed.* 67d–e. He supports this conviction by stating that a person who fears death is focused only on the body and has no wisdom. See Plato, *Phaed.* 68b–c.

creature . . . is ‘composed of soul and body’” (Aristotle, *De an.* 129a, see also 131a, 137b, 151a). Whereas the soul is the “actuality,” “essence,” or “form” of the body, the body is the “matter” of the soul. In contrast to Socrates and Plato, Aristotle perceives the body not as a soul’s jail cell or grave, but as its useful and necessary counterpart.

Although concurring with Socrates and Plato, Aristotle argues that the soul should have supremacy over the body. He is aware that it is not ideal when the body receives too much attention and believes that the reason people are “bad” or in “bad condition” is due to the reversal of nature’s intended hierarchy between the body and the soul. He states that “the body often rules the soul because of its vicious and unnatural condition” (Aristotle, *Pol.* 1254b). Aristotle lists “licentious in regard to bodily pleasures,” among other vices, which eventually render the affected person not only vicious, but also unjust (Aristotle, *Rhet.* 1368b). Thus, although Aristotle has a more positive view of the body, he believes that if the body receives too much power, it will lead to unethical behavior and life conduct that is not in line with natural law.

Stoics believed that a person whose body had no supervision of the soul would ultimately end in unhappiness and impurity. Seneca argues that if the body takes over the conduct of life, the person will automatically hold virtues which are “too cheap” (Seneca, *Ep.* 14.1). Further, he states that the pleasures of the body will “rush” the person “headlong into the abyss of sorrow” (Seneca, *Ep.* 23.6). For Stoics, the rule of the body over the soul entails the adoption of vices and the inability to avoid emotions, which eventually will lead to an unhappy life. Seneca describes this condition as “fettered and weakened by many vices.” He states that those people are “not merely defiled,” but “dyed by” these vices. It is “hard for” them “to be cleansed” (Seneca, *Ep.* 59.9).

Although the Stoics were aware of the potential negative influence of the body on the fate of a person, they did not have a generally negative attitude toward the body. They not only acknowledged that the body functions as the soul's necessary "domicile" (Seneca, *Ep.* 66.1), or "garment" (Seneca, *Ep.* 92.12), but also that the body was essential in life because, without it, a person "can accomplish nothing" (Seneca, *Ep.* 23.6).

The reality for the Stoics was sobering. Their understanding of the wise man or sage, whose reason is in complete control of any mental, bodily, or external impulses, remained a theoretical ideal. They faced the charge that this was unrealistic, "since up till now the Sage has proved undiscoverable" (Empiricus Sextus, *log.* 432). Seneca comes to a similar conclusion about the rarity of a first-class good man, stating that "for one of the first class perhaps springs into existence, like the phoenix, only once in five hundred years" (Seneca, *Ep.* 42.1).⁴⁶ Similarly, Cicero remarks, that "it oftener happens that a mule brings forth a colt than that nature produces a sage" (Cicero, *Div.* 2.61). The rarity or inexistence of sages, according to the Stoics' ideal indicates that reason—and thus the soul—is not superior to the body.⁴⁷

From Reality Toward the Ideal

Greco-Roman philosophers wrestled with the discrepancy between the ideal—a life in agreement with nature's law, achieved by the soul ruling over the body—and reality, namely the reversal of nature's intended hierarchy. Since reality involved the

⁴⁶ Seneca attempts to identify Marcus Porcius Cato as a sage, see Seneca, *Vit. beat.* 7.1.

⁴⁷ For a thorough discussion on the potential existence of a sage according to Stoic standards, see René Brouwer, "Sagehood and the Stoics," *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 23 (2002): 181–224.

body's supremacy over the soul, the proposals on how to achieve the ideal condition addressed how to deal with the body.

Socrates and Plato held the most radical proposal, requiring a complete dissociation of the soul from the body and its desires. The reason for such a radical proposal lay in their after-death expectations regarding the soul. They believed that the soul is divine, with intrinsic motion, and, therefore, eternally existing. At a person's death, the soul departs from the mortal body. In a case where the soul is pure, it will leave "to another place of that kind, noble, pure and invisible" (Plato, *Phaed.* 80d). However, if the soul is "polluted and uncleansed" (Plato, *Phaed.* 81b), access to the invisible realm will be refused, and the soul will be forced to stay within the visible realm. These souls will circle "aimlessly among the tombstones and graves, . . . paying the price for their former way of life that was evil" (Plato, *Phaed.* 81d). Eventually, they will return and be "bound again to the body" (Plato, *Phaed.* 81e, see also 83d).⁴⁸ According to Socrates and Plato, only a philosopher is genuinely concerned with the destiny of the soul, striving to "have no dealings and share nothing with the body, except where absolutely necessary" (Plato, *Phaed.* 67a). Socrates and Plato's solution to achieving the desired immortal destiny of the soul is to keep the soul pure by its complete dissociation from the body while it is embodied. In a case where the soul becomes polluted, they asserted that it does not need cleansing or purifying rituals, but instead, simple adoption of the philosopher's lifestyle would prove sufficient to cleanse the soul from the body's defiling influence.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Plato's Socrates believed punishment to consist of the return of a polluted soul to a body, after being previously separated from it. For him, it would be unjust if the soul were mortal because there would be no punishment for the evil person. See Plato, *Phaed.* 107c.

⁴⁹ T. M. Robinson, *Plato's Psychology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970), 24.

Socrates and Plato understood the cleansing process of the soul to be a non-physical death. Theodor Ebert compares Plato's words describing the soul's dissociation from the body with words describing physical death.⁵⁰ His survey shows that Plato's Socrates uses the verb εἶμι ("to be") followed by the preposition χωρίς ("separated from"), the verb χωρίζω ("to separate," or "to divide"), or the passive participle of ἐκλύω ("to be set free"), (see Plato, *Phaed.* 67c–d), to describe a pure soul that dissociates from the body (Plato, *Phaed.* 67a). In the immediate context, Plato's Socrates uses the same words to describe physical death when asking his interlocutors, "so it is this that's given the name death: the freeing [λύσις] and separation [χωρισμὸς] of the soul from the body?" (Plato, *Phaed.* 67d). Ebert's lexical analysis shows that, for Socrates and Plato, the dissociation of the soul from the body in a philosopher's self-cleansing process corresponds with their perspective of physical death. However, while alive, the ideal philosopher still has an embodied soul. The ongoing presence of the body requires the philosopher to cognitively dissociate the soul from the body. This dissociation resembles a death-like condition for the body since it no longer affects the soul. For this reason, the philosophical cleansing process resembles a non-physical death.

Plato later adopted a less radical approach to deal with the body, building on a law that requires one to give honor first to the gods, second to the soul, third to the body, and

⁵⁰ Theodor Ebert, *Phaidon*, vol. 1.4 of *Platon Werke: Übersetzung und Kommentar* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2004), 142.

finally to property and money.⁵¹ He states that a life in compliance with this hierarchy guarantees a stable and temperate state of the body.

The honourable body is not the fair body nor the strong nor the swift nor the large, nor yet the body that is sound in health,—although this is what many believe; neither is it a body of the opposite kind to any of these; rather those bodies which hold the mean position between all these opposite extremes are by far the most temperate and stable; for while the one extreme makes the souls puffed up and proud, the other makes them lowly and spiritless (Plato, *Leg.* 728e).⁵²

Since the suggested hierarchy matches nature's intended hierarchy with respect to the soul and body, Plato most likely refers to natural law.

Seneca followed the proposals of Socrates and Plato, arguing that a philosophical lifestyle, requiring a separation between soul and body, will eventually lead to happiness. In contrast to Socrates and Plato, however, Seneca argues that those who have adopted vices need salvation. Seneca identifies two reasons why human beings fail with respect to salvation. First, they “do not struggle towards salvation with all . . . might.” Second, human beings “do not put sufficient trust in the discoveries of the wise” (Seneca, *Ep.* 59.9). In other words, Seneca sees salvation, or the way to happiness, as a person's fight against vices, and as trust in the teachings of the sage, see (Seneca, *Ep.* 51.13). Seneca's strategy on how to fight vices is similar to that of Socrates and Plato. He argues that “a high-minded and sensible man divorces soul from body, and dwells much with the better or divine part, and only as far as he must with this complaining and frail portion”

⁵¹ This hierarchy appears several times in Plato's writings. The order of the soul, followed by the body, is consistent. However, some hierarchies have the gods in the first category, the soul in the second, and the body in the third. See Plato, *Leg.* 726–729. Others leave the gods out and list the following hierarchy: soul, body, property, and money. See Plato, *Leg.* 697b–c, 870 a–c; Plato, *Tim.* 335b.

⁵² Plato argues that the best state for human beings is when the soul and the body are in symmetry, see Plato, *Tim.* 87c–88c.

(Seneca, *Ep.* 78.10). Seneca's view of the body is also similar to that of Socrates and Plato. Seneca states that the body has "to be regarded as necessary rather than as important" (Seneca, *Ep.* 23.6). Bodily desires do not contribute to achieving happiness.

Aristotle, on the other hand, attributed a more active role to the body in the pursuit of happiness, as contrasted with Socrates, Plato, and the later Stoics. Like these philosophers, Aristotle argues for temperance and the importance of controlling the body and its pleasures. However, in contrast to these philosophers, Aristotle perceives the body's role on the soul as being less negative. His classification of the different bodily pleasures,⁵³ and his elaboration on where temperance is effectual,⁵⁴ leads him to the conclusion that a "temperate person is self-controlled" (Aristotle, [*Mag. mor.*] 1203b).⁵⁵ Self-control is a virtue that makes bodily pleasures enjoyable within the boundaries of the law (Aristotle, *Rhet.* 1366b). Aristotle, along with the later Peripatetic philosophers, perceives temperate and self-controlled bodily pleasures to be a contributing factor to happiness. Cicero contrasts the perception of the body in relation to happiness, pointing

⁵³ Regarding bodily pleasures, Aristotle differentiates between natural and particular bodily pleasures. See Annas, "Ancient Ethics," 126. The natural bodily pleasures were "common to all men," whereas the particular ones were "peculiar to special peoples." In the case of natural bodily pleasures, people could only err by "excess in quantity," whereas "in regard to the pleasures peculiar to particular people, many men err, and err in many ways." See Aristotle, *Nic. eth.* 1118b.

⁵⁴ Aristotle argues that temperance "has to do with the pleasures of the body," but only with "the pleasures of touch and taste," though "taste appears to play but a small part, if any, in Temperance." However, when dealing with the tactual sense, temperance is related to "the most universal of the senses." Since animals share this sense, Aristotle considered enjoying some particular tactual pleasures as bestial. However, other kinds of tactual senses could be "most refined," and thus acceptable. See Aristotle, *Nic. eth.* 1118a. Thus, temperance was only needed to control certain tactual senses.

⁵⁵ This is Aristotle's potential answer to whether it is possible to be both temperate and self-controlled at the same time. This question is raised because temperate people should not have any desires, whereas people who are self-controlled are only so if they experience desire that needs to be controlled. See Aristotle, [*Mag. mor.*] 1201a. Note, however, that scholars consider the *Magna Moralia* to be inauthentic.

out that “the Peripatetics hold that the sum of happiness includes bodily advantages” (Cicero, *Fin.* 3.43). Based on his examination on ethics in Aristotle, Kenny concludes that “the happy man will value contemplation above all, but part of his happy life will be the exercise of political virtues and the enjoyment in moderation of natural human pleasures of body as well as of soul.”⁵⁶

The Cyrenaics, as well as the Epicureans, agreed with the Aristotelian notion that bodily pleasures contribute to achieving happiness. Whereas the Cyrenaics sought to satisfy bodily desires exclusively, the Epicureans argued that happiness was achieved by *ataraxia*, or peace of mind, and *aponia*, the freedom of bodily pain.⁵⁷ In other words, Epicureans were striving for a strict avoidance of pain and a constant seeking for pleasure (Diogenes Laertius, *Lives.* 10.142).⁵⁸ The third Principal Doctrine (PD) states that “the magnitude of pleasure reaches its limit in the removal of all pain. When pleasure is present, so long as it is uninterrupted, there is no pain either of body or of mind or of both together” (Diogenes Laertius, *Lives.* 10.139).⁵⁹

⁵⁶ Kenny, *Philosophy*, 219.

⁵⁷ Michael Erler and Malcolm Schofield, “Epicurean Ethics,” in *The Cambridge History of Hellenistic Philosophy*, eds. Keimpe Algra, et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999; repr., 2002), 642–74.

⁵⁸ Pleasure is counted as inherently good. The eighth principal doctrine begins with the words “No pleasure is in itself evil.” See Diogenes Laertius, *Lives.* 10.142.

⁵⁹ However, Epicureanism does not propagate a purely bodily-focused hedonism. According to a letter to Menoecus, happiness includes “sober reasoning, searching out the grounds of every choice and avoidance, and banishing those beliefs through which the greatest tumults take possession of the soul. Of all this, the beginning and the greatest good is prudence. Wherefore prudence is a more precious thing even than philosophy; from it spring all the other virtues, for it teaches that we cannot lead a life of pleasure which is not also a life of prudence, honour, and justice; nor lead a life of prudence, honour, and justice, which is not also a life of pleasure. For the virtues have grown into one with a pleasant life, and a pleasant life is inseparable from them.” See Laertius, *Lives.* 10.132.

Summary

This survey revealed that the non-Jewish, Greco-Roman legal concept differentiates between natural law and positive law. Natural law is indefinite in time and scope, corresponding with human reason as part of the human soul. These characteristics of natural law caused Greeks and Romans to perceive it as the divine, true, and ultimate ethical standard. In contrast, positive law that regulates the daily life of society shares none of these characteristics. Because of the positive law's imperfections, ideally, a statesman who has a divine soul should rule over society. Since wise rulers per definition embody natural law, they are perceived as νόμος ἔμψυχος ("living law"). Besides being a living law, Hellenistic rulers often adopted the title σωτήρ ("savior"). This title was indicative of their efforts to save positive laws from becoming unjust by adapting them to new circumstances, as well as their efforts to save their subjected people by protecting them from positive laws that had become unjust or even life-threatening.

Regarding the relationship between the body and non-Jewish, Greco-Roman law, the main focus has been on natural law. The examination revealed that Greco-Roman philosophers pursued happiness by living a life according to natural law. Since they considered natural law to be embodied in the human soul, the soul must control the body. Greco-Roman philosophers agreed that, in reality, the body and its desires often prevailed over the soul, enslaving and polluting it. The Greco-Roman philosophers crafted diverse proposals on how the soul and the body should interact. Socrates and Plato, followed by the Stoics, were more radical, requiring a divorce of the soul from the body, which corresponds with a non-physical death. In their understanding, the body contributes nothing to happiness. Aristotle and the Peripatetics, followed by the Epicureans, argued

that bodily desires (when controlled by, and limited to, the boundaries of natural law) contributed to the individual's happiness. Thus, the Greco-Roman philosophers disagreed on the question of whether bodily desires contributed to achieving happiness. However, they agreed that to achieve happiness, the soul, which embodies natural law, must control the body and its desires.

The Body and the Law in Jewish Literature

This section examines the Hebrew Bible and Second Temple literature, analyzing its description of the legal concept and how it relates the law to the body. This survey is essential for the present discussion because of the Jewish roots of Christianity, and because Paul's work frequently includes interactions with diaspora Jews and Jewish Christians. I begin with the concept of the law, and then move to a discussion on the relationship between the body and the law in Jewish literature.

The Concept of Torah in the Hebrew Bible and Second Temple Literature

The Hebrew Bible and Second Temple literature contain a unique legal concept, which I examine in two steps. In the first step, I survey the law's origin, characteristics, and purpose, as presented in the Hebrew Bible. In the second step, I survey Jewish legal concepts in Second Temple literature with a view to explaining the factors that caused an increased interest in law within Second Temple Judaism.

The intent of this analysis is to provide the necessary historical background of the Jewish legal concept to help explain Paul's understanding of the law. It is also to shed light on the challenges the Jews faced during the Greco-Roman period as they attempted

to effectively communicate their understanding of the law within the cultural context of the dominant Greco-Roman world.

The Concept of Torah in the Hebrew Bible

The LXX typically associates the Hebrew term תּוֹרָה (“law”) with the Greek term νόμος (“law”).⁶⁰ תּוֹרָה has a broad semantic range, which spans from “instruction” to “law,” and from “custom” to “manner.”⁶¹ For this reason, תּוֹרָה (from now on referred to as “Torah”) serves within Jewish literature as an umbrella term for the entire Jewish legal concept. This study uses the word “Torah” in this generic sense.

Origin and Form of the Torah

The Hebrew Bible bears witness to the existence of the Torah before the creation of the cosmos. The Torah has commonly been identified with wisdom (Deut 4:6;

⁶⁰ See Hindy Nayman, “Torah and Tradition,” *Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism* 1316–17; T. Muraoka, *A Greek-Hebrew/Aramaic Two-Way Index to the Septuagint* (Leuven: Peeters, 2010), 82. In the LXX, νόμος (“law”) appears 425 times. In the Hebrew Bible, תּוֹרָה (“law”) appears 220 times. Besides תּוֹרָה, νόμος (“law”) also translates to other Hebrew terms. First, the term מִשְׁפָּט (“ordinances”), which the LXX typically translates to either κρίμα (“ordinances”) or δικαίωμα (“ordinances”), appears in the Hebrew Bible 422 times. However, not every instance of מִשְׁפָּט refers to “ordinances” due to the broad semantic range of מִשְׁפָּט, see “מִשְׁפָּט,” *BDB* 1048–49. The Greek term κρίμα appears in the LXX 249 times, whereas δικαίωμα appears 140 times. Second, the term מִצְוָה (“commandment”), which the LXX typically translates as ἐντολή (“commandment”), appears in the Hebrew Bible 181 times. In the LXX, ἐντολή appears 230 times. Third, and often in combination with one of the two aforementioned terms, the term חֹק (“statute”) or חֻקֵּי (“statute”), is predominantly rendered as δικαίωμα. In the Hebrew Bible, the term חֹק appears 130 times and the term חֻקֵּי 104 times. Finally, the very general terms for “word,” either דְּבָר or אִמְרָה, are typically associated with λόγος, λόγιον, or ῥῆμα in the LXX. Another frequently used term in the context of law, but never translated as νόμος, is the term עֵדוּת (“testimony”). The LXX typically translates עֵדוּת to μαρτύριον (“testimony”). This term specifically refers to the two stone tablets with the Ten Commandments. The Hebrew term עֵדוּת appears a total of 83 times. עֵדוּת also refers to the tablet’s location, which is either the ark (of the testimony), or the tabernacle (of the testimony).

In Greek, νόμος (“law”) translates the Aramaic term תּוֹרָה (“law”) which appears 21 times in the Hebrew Bible, and דִּגְרָה (“degree”), which appears only in Est 1:20. See Muraoka, *Two-Way Index*, 82.

⁶¹ See “תּוֹרָה,” *BDB* 435–36; Richard Elliott Friedman, “Torah (Pentateuch),” *ABD* 6:605–22; Nayman, *Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism* 1316–17.

Ezra 7:25).⁶² The author of Prov 8:22–36 explicitly argues that wisdom is the Lord’s first creational act. Similarly, Targum Neofiti reads that “two thousand years before he [the Lord] created the world, he created the Torah” (Tg. Neof. Gen 3:24). Sirach 24:9 reads “before the age, from the beginning, he created me [wisdom].”

The Pentateuch apparently presents Torah as existing in unwritten form before the law-giving act at Mount Sinai. In the Hebrew Bible, the term Torah appears for the first time in reference to Abraham (Gen 26:5, see also Sir 44:19–21). The Lord himself referred to Abraham as keeper of תּוֹרָתִי וְחֻמֹּתַי מִצְוֹתַי וְחֻמֹּתַי (“my injunction, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws”). At the time of Abraham, there was no evidence of an existing written form of the Torah. Exodus 16:4 records another occurrence of the term Torah before a written form of it was given at Mount Sinai. The narrative reports the Lord’s intention with the manna, reading אֶנְסֶנּוּ הַיְלֵךְ בְּתוֹרָתִי אִם-לֹא (“I will test whether it [Israel] walks in my law or not”). Israel’s failure to follow the Torah led the Lord to the question in verse 28, עַד-אֵנָה מֵאַנְתֶּם לִשְׁמֹר מִצְוֹתַי וְתוֹרָתִי (“how long do you [Israel] refuse to keep my commandments and my law?”). These passages imply that the unwritten Torah was already known to a certain extent.⁶³ The Exodus narrative recounts shortly afterward how the Lord presented the written law to Israel (Exod 19–24).⁶⁴

⁶² Eckhard J. Schnabel, *Law and Wisdom from Ben Sira to Paul: A Tradition Historical Enquiry into the Relation of Law, Wisdom, and Ethics*, WUNT 2/16 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1985), 5.

⁶³ For a brief overview of textual references to particular laws before their revelation in written form, see Roy E. Gane, *Old Testament Law for Christians: Original Context and Enduring Application* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2017), 41.

⁶⁴ John H. Walton argues that a written form of the Torah was necessary for “providing a foundation for those norms (the covenant) and establishing YHWH as the source of those norms.” See John H. Walton, *Ancient Israelite Literature in its Cultural Context: A Survey of Parallels between Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern Literature*, Library of Biblical Interpretation (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1989), 90.

It was at Mount Sinai that the Lord gave the law to Israel through Moses, written partially by the Lord himself, and partly by Moses. Exodus 24:12 reads, וַאֲתַנְּנָה לְךָ אֶת־לְחֹת, וְאֶת־תּוֹרַת הַלְוִי וְהַמִּצְוֹת אֲשֶׁר כָּתַבְתִּי לְהוֹרֹתָם (‘‘and I may give to you the stone tablets, the law, and the commandments, which I have written for their instruction’’). The subject of the sentence, and thus the writer and the lawgiver, is the Lord. However, the Lord’s writing activity is limited to the Ten Commandments (Exod 31:18; 34:28; Deut 4:13; 5:22; 9:10; 10:2, 4).⁶⁵ Besides these tablets, Moses also received ‘‘the law, and the commandments.’’ Moses actively participated in the writing process of these additional laws and commandments (Exod 24:4; 23:27; Deut 31:9, 24). Despite the involvement of Moses in providing the Torah in its written form, the Lord remained the ultimate Lawgiver. Moses, whom the Lord assigned to instruct the Israelites with the wisdom of the Torah, was given the role of a mediator.⁶⁶ For this reason, though Moses instructed, the Torah is primarily referred to as תּוֹרַת יְהוָה (‘‘the law of the Lord’’).⁶⁷

⁶⁵ Douglas K. Stuart notes that ‘‘perhaps the best way to translate this verse would be: ‘Come up to me on the mountain and wait there; and I will give you the tablets of stone—as well as the law and the commandment—which I have written for their instruction.’ In other words, the verse intends to convey that it was the ‘tablets of stone’ that the Lord himself wrote, not all the laws of the covenant. Consistently in Exodus, it was only the tablets of the Ten Words/Commandments that the Lord wrote (see comments on 32:15–16; 34:1). All other commandments were written by Moses according to the Lord’s dictation (e.g., Exod 17:14; 24:4; 34:27; cf. Deut 27:3, 8; 31:9). Indeed, Deuteronomy is even more specific to the limitation of the Lord’s writing to the Ten Words/Commandments (Deut 4:13; 5:22; 10:2–4).’’ See Douglas K. Stuart, *Exodus*, NAC 2 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2006), 558.

⁶⁶ Deut 1:6; 4:44; 33:10, see Gal 3:19.

⁶⁷ Exod 13:9; 2 Kgs 10:31; Isa 5:24; 30:9; Jer 8:8; Amos 2:4; Pss 1:2; 19:8; 119:1; Ezra 7:10; Neh 9:3; 1 Chr 16:40; 22:12; 2 Chr 12:1; 17:9; 31:3–4; 34:14; 35:26. Often, the law has no direct reference to the Lord, but qualifies only through a pronominal suffix as the law of the Lord. For the first-person singular suffix, see Gen 26:5; Exod 16:4, 28; Isa 51:7; Jer 6:19; 9:12; 16:11; 26:4; 31:33; 44:10; Ezek 22:26; 44:24; Hos 8:1, 12; Pss 78:1; 89:31. For second person singular suffix, see Deut 33:10; Jer 32:23; Pss 94:12; 119:18, 29, 34, 44, 51, 53, 55, 61, 70, 77, 85, 92, 97, 109, 113, 126, 136, 142, 150, 153, 163, 165, 174; Dan 9:11, 26; Neh 9:26, 29, 34. For the third person singular suffix, see Isa 42:4; Jer 44:23; Ezek 43:11; Pss 1:2; 105:45; Dan 9:10; 2 Chr 6:16. In some cases, the law is identified as תּוֹרַת אֱלֹהִים (‘‘the law of God’’), see

The Hebrew Bible unanimously accepts the divine origin of the Torah, whether in written or unwritten form. There is, however, a significant difference between the divine characteristics of the Torah and the divine characteristics within Greco-Roman natural law. As Hayes points out, the divine element in the Jewish legal concept refers to a “personal, divine being’s *will*” (emphasis original).⁶⁸ In contrast, the previous discussion has revealed that the divine characteristics in Greco-Roman natural law are “divine *by virtue of certain qualities inherent in it*” (emphasis original).⁶⁹ Thus, although both the Greco-Roman and the Jewish legal concepts attribute to the law a divine characteristic, their understanding of “divine” differs significantly.

Characteristics of the Torah

A closer look at the Torah’s characteristics reveals that the Jewish concept of Torah differs significantly from that of the Greco-Roman concept. Whereas the Greco-Roman concept of law intrinsically requires a stark contrast between positive and natural law, the Torah requires no such contrast, and readily includes attributes of both Greco-Roman natural and positive laws.

The Torah and Greco-Roman Natural Law. The Torah shares the following four characteristics with Greco-Roman natural law. First, it corresponds with the order of the universe. Markus Bockmuehl points out that “the biblical text seems to make

Josh 24:26; Hos 4:6; Ps 37:31; Neh 8:8, 18; 10:29–30. For the pronominal suffix in relation to אֱלֹהִים, see Exod 18:16, Pss 40:9; 78:10, 18; 25:4; 30:16. In some cases, the law is identified as the תּוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה (“the law of Moses”), see Josh 8:31–32; 1 Kgs 2:3; 2 Kgs 14:6; 23:25; Mal 3:22; Dan 9:11, 13; Ezra 3:2; 7:6; Neh 8:1; 2 Chr 23:18; 25:4; 30:16.

⁶⁸ Hayes, *Divine Law*, 2.

⁶⁹ Hayes, *Divine Law*, 2.

allowance for moral principles that correspond to ‘the way things are,’ rather than being derived from a specific positive command of God.”⁷⁰ Bockmuehl’s observation finds evidence in the fact that the Torah’s ethical standard is presupposed in the pre-Sinaitic narratives found in Genesis. They condemn the same behavior that would be condemned by the written law of God, which was not yet given at this point. As examples, Bockmuehl refers to the justification of the flood based on the wickedness, corruption, and violence of humanity (Gen 6:5, 11–13),⁷¹ and the reaction of Jacob’s sons to Shechem’s raping of Dinah, where the text notes that “nothing like this should be done” (34:7).⁷² Hayes adds the example of Sodom and Gomorrah, arguing that “no positive law has been revealed, and yet the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah are culpable because they have violated an implicit moral law.”⁷³ The Torah’s correspondence with universal order implies its universality in time and scope.

Second, the Torah is unchangeable. Deuteronomy 4:2 (see also 13:1) reads, לֹא תִסְפוּ עַל־הַדְּבָר אֲשֶׁר אֲנֹכִי מְצַוֶּה אֶתְכֶם וְלֹא תִגְרְעוּ מִמֶּנּוּ לְשֹׁמֵר אֶת־מִצְוֹת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר אֲנֹכִי מְצַוֶּה אֶתְכֶם (“you shall not add to the word which I command to you! You shall not reduce from it so that you keep the commandments of the Lord your God, which I commanded you”).

Hayes argues that these prohibitions refer to changes made to the law by humans and not

⁷⁰ Markus Bockmuehl, *Jewish Law in Gentile Churches: Halakhah and the Beginning of Christian Public Ethics* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000), 90.

⁷¹ BDB indicates that all terms, which are used in Gen 6 to express the human condition, have an ethical connotation. For רָע (“wickedness,” v. 5), see “רָע,” *BDB* 947–48. For שָׁחָ (“corruptness,” vv. 11–13, 16), see “שָׁחָ,” *BDB* 1007–8. For הָמָס (“violence,” vv. 11, 13), see “הָמָס,” *BDB* 329.

⁷² Another case related to sexual ethics is Abimelech (Gen 20:3–4, 9; see also Deut 22:22–27), see Bockmuehl, *Jewish Law*, 91.

⁷³ Hayes, *Divine Law*, 26.

particularly to those made by God. Despite this reasonable nuance, she acknowledges that these statements contribute to the perception that the Torah is unchanging.⁷⁴

Third, the Torah is non-legislative. Michael LeFebvre argues that in the Greek legal tradition, the written law is the actual source of legal practices (legislative). However, in the Mesopotamian legal tradition, the written law is not considered a source for legal practices (non-legislative). This non-legislative characteristic becomes evident in the incompleteness of Mesopotamian written law and in the fact that legal proceedings in the actual court differed from those suggested in the written law. Judges in Mesopotamian cultures backed their ruling, not by written law, but by appealing to an abstract or religious sense of righteousness.⁷⁵ The Torah shows similar characteristics to Mesopotamian legal tradition. It is not a complete legal collection. In addition, Deut 16:18–20 indicates that the ideal judges pursued only internal justice. They were not advised to consult the written law. Several narratives of court proceedings lack any indication that the judge consulted the written law (Num 27:1–11; 2 Sam 14:5–17; 1 Kgs 21:8–13; 2 Kgs 8:1–6; Jer 26:8–24). A judge was supposed to intrinsically discern good and evil (2 Sam 15:5–17).⁷⁶ This ability came by embodying the Torah, which involved

⁷⁴ Hayes, *Divine Law*, 31. Hayes further observes that specific texts characterize God as unchanging (Num 23:19; Isa 46:10–11; Mal 3:6), whereas other texts indicate a change in God's mind (Gen 6:6; Exod 32:14; Jonah 3:10). See Hayes, *Divine Law*, 31.

⁷⁵ Michael LeFebvre, *Collections, Codes, and Torah: The Re-Characterization of Israel's Written Law*, LHBOTS 451 (New York: T&T Clark, 2006), 8–30.

⁷⁶ Hayes, *Divine Law*, 34.

reading it daily (Deut 17:18–20).⁷⁷ For these reasons, the Torah is closer to the non-legislative tradition of Mesopotamia and Greek natural law, than to Greek positive law.⁷⁸

Fourth, the Torah addresses moral agents. Hayes points out that many of the laws indicate the rational character of the law and its recipients. In Exod 22:20, the Lord instructs Israel not to harm or oppress the sojourner. The conjunction ׀ (“for”) introduces a rationale for this commandment. The Lord reminds Israel of their past as sojourners in Egypt. This rationale, or explanatory addition to the particular commandment, indicates the rational capacity of the Torah’s recipients (see also Deut 15:12–15; 24:20–24).⁷⁹ Hayes further points out that “the ideal human type, several biblical heroes, are represented as intelligent moral agents who challenge and argue with Yahweh.”⁸⁰ As examples, she refers to Abraham (Gen 15:5; 17:18; 18), Jacob (28:20), and Moses (Exod 32; Num 14; also 11:10–17).⁸¹

Torah and Greco-Roman Positive Law. Torah also shares the following four characteristics with Greco-Roman positive law. First, it represents the will of a lawgiver. The Torah expresses the Lord’s will, comparable with the lawgivers’ will in Greco-Roman positive laws. However, since the Lord is divine, the Torah actually becomes a divine law.

⁷⁷ LeFebvre, *Torah*, 88–89.

⁷⁸ LeFebvre, *Torah*, 31. LeFebvre explicitly states that “Hebrew law does differ in marked ways from Mesopotamian law, nonetheless . . . there are similarities.” LeFebvre further argues that the perception of the Hebrew written law changed under the influence of Hellenism.

⁷⁹ Hayes, *Divine Law*, 36.

⁸⁰ Hayes, *Divine Law*, 38.

⁸¹ Hayes, *Divine Law*, 38.

Second, the Torah is a written law, limited in time and scope. The Lord chooses to reveal it to certain people at a certain time (Exod 19–24). The Torah’s geographical limitation finds evidence in its intention to set Israel apart from other nations.

Deuteronomy 4:8 states: וְאֵי גוֹי גָדוֹל אֲשֶׁר-לוֹ חֻקִּים וּמִשְׁפָּטִים צְדִיקִים כְּכֹל הַתּוֹרָה הַזֹּאת אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי נֹתֵן לְפָנֶיכֶם הַיּוֹם (“And what great nation is there, which has statues and rules as righteous as this entire law, which I set before you today?”). Hayes observes that some regulations of the Torah are given without justification. She points out that “this is especially true of the dietary laws and purity laws, whose only explicit justification is that they set Israel apart, or ‘sanctify’ (*leqaddesh*) Israel, as separate and particular.”⁸²

The Torah’s limitation in time finds evidence in its adaptability. The Pentateuch presents several situations in which the Israelites were unsure how to proceed. For this reason, they inquired of the Lord’s will and acted accordingly once the Lord provided further instructions (Lev 24:10–16; Num 9:6–14; 15:32–35; 27:1–11). In all of these cases, the Lord formulated general rules on how to handle similar situations in the future. Hayes argues that “new rules and ordinances can be issued as long as there is continued access to Yahweh’s will through various oracular procedures.”⁸³ Hayes further contends that some narrative texts also suggest the Lord’s change of mind (Gen 6:6; Exod 32:14;

⁸² Hayes, *Divine Law*, 17.

⁸³ Hayes, *Divine Law*, 17–18.

2 Sam 24:16; Jer 26:19).⁸⁴ The prophetic literature indicates similar adaptability within the Torah.⁸⁵

Third, the Torah is coercive. Its coercive characteristics are evident in the casuistic formulations (if-then clauses), and the second-person apodictic (“you shall not”) formulations of particular regulations. This form of rhetoric gives the impression that the commands are unconditional and non-negotiable.⁸⁶ The coercive characteristics of the Torah also find support in the abundant blessings and severe curses, which are, as already indicated, consequences for obedience or disobedience to the Torah (Deut 11:27–28; 27:11–28:68).

Fourth, it requires a response of obedience and faithfulness. When Moses finished reading the Torah to Israel, the people pledged their obedience to the entire law (Exod 24:7, see also Josh 24:24). Deuteronomy frequently demands that Israel obeys the law of the Lord (Deut 4:40; 6:3; 7:11; 8:11; 10:13).⁸⁷

This survey of the Torah’s characteristics in the Hebrew Bible reveals that the Torah shares common characteristics with both Greco-Roman natural law and Greco-Roman positive law. In other words, it is impossible to identify the Torah as corresponding solely to either Greco-Roman natural law or Greco-Roman positive law.

⁸⁴ Hayes, *Divine Law*, 20.

⁸⁵ See Kenneth Bergland, *Reading as a Disclosure of the Thoughts of the Heart: Proto-Halakhic Reuse and Appropriation Between Torah and the Prophets*, BZABR 23 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2019).

⁸⁶ Hayes, *Divine Law*, 21–22.

⁸⁷ Hayes, *Divine Law*, 23.

The Purpose of the Torah

The purpose of the Torah reveals similarities to the purpose of Greco-Roman law.⁸⁸ Both legal systems were intended to enable the ideal life. Whereas Greco-Roman culture pursued happiness as the *telos* of a perfect life, Jewish culture strived to obtain covenantal blessings, while avoiding covenantal curses (Deut 11:27–28).⁸⁹ In the Jewish understanding, covenantal blessings were consequences of being obedient to the Torah (v. 27), whereas covenantal curses were consequences of disobedience (v. 28).⁹⁰ In the Pentateuch, several passages focus on blessings. While some passages list specific blessings (e.g., Lev 26:3–13; Deut 28:1–14), other passages refer more generally to positive consequences of Torah observance. The conjunction לְמַעַן (“so that”), typically introduces positive effects. In the Pentateuch, positive consequences are listed as life itself,⁹¹ numerous offspring,⁹² ownership of the promised land,⁹³ and providential help for essential needs.⁹⁴ Finally, in more general terms, obedience to the Torah provides טוב

⁸⁸ Similarity in the purpose of the Torah and the Greco-Roman law does not necessarily require similarity in the entire legal concept of either one. For this reason, my previous claim that the concept of the Torah significantly differs from the Greco-Roman legal concept still stands despite the similarity in purpose. The Torah contains characteristics of both Greco-Roman natural and positive law. In other words, the legal concept of the Torah does not incorporate the distinction between natural and positive law.

⁸⁹ For a more detailed discussion on the purpose of the law, see Gane, *Old Testament Law*, 39–57.

⁹⁰ On the one hand, the correlation between the Torah’s obedience and blessings, and the Torah’s disobedience and curses, finds expression in the conditional clauses which identify obedience to the Torah as the cause for obtaining the blessings (Deut 28:1–2, 9, 13–14), and disobedience to the Torah as the condition for falling under a curse (vv. 15, 45).

⁹¹ Deut 4:1; 5:33; 6:24; 8:1; 30:20; 32:47; see also 4:4; 8:3; 30:6 and Lev 18:4–5.

⁹² Deut 6:3; 8:1; 11:21.

⁹³ Deut 4:1, 40; 5:33; 6:18; 8:1; 11:8, 21; 30:6; 32:47; see also 5:16, 31; 16:20; 23:21; 25:15 and Lev 25:18; 1 Chr 28:8; 2 Chr 33:8.

⁹⁴ Deut 11:14–15. This is also the main focus on the specific blessings described in 28:1–14.

(“well-being”).⁹⁵ The Lord’s covenant with Abraham already delineated some of these positive consequences (Gen 12:1–8). As part of the covenant with Abraham, these positive consequences imply that the concept of blessings and curses is not exclusively related to the written form of the Torah, but more generally associated with the Torah.

The purpose of the Torah extends beyond the purpose of the Greco-Roman law. Based on the impersonal concept of divinity in Greco-Roman understanding, the ideal life involves no relational dimension between the human and the divine. A person’s highest achievement is a life conducted in agreement with nature. In contrast, the personal concept of divinity in Jewish tradition adds a divine-human relational dimension to the Torah’s purpose.⁹⁶ This divine-human dimension finds expression in the unique framework of the divine-human covenant, for which the Torah provides covenantal stipulations between the Lord and Israel. Because the Torah is the Lord’s instructional voice, obedience becomes an act of respect, while disobedience becomes an act of disrespect. Each disobedient act has an alienating effect on the human-divine relationship.⁹⁷ Figuratively describing this effect, Deut 11:28 uses the imagery of וְסָרְתָם מִן־הַדֶּרֶךְ (“turn[ing] aside from the way”). This alienating effect on the divine-human relationship insinuates that a disobedient act can quickly lead to an idolatrous act (v. 28).

⁹⁵ Deut 4:40; 5:29, 33; 6:3, 18, 24; 12:25, 28; see also 5:16; 22:7; 29:8 and 1 Kgs 3:14. Only Deut 28:1–14 mentions the blessing of security from enemies (v. 7, see also Lev 25:18).

⁹⁶ Gane identifies the Torah as an expression of God’s character. He then argues that “YHWH is the God of the Israelites, so they are to live in harmony with his holy character, imitating him.” Gane, *Old Testament Law*, 40.

⁹⁷ Disobedient acts can also have punitive consequences. However, these punitive consequences can also serve as reminders to bring the alienated human beings back to God (see e.g., Deut 30:1–3).

Therefore, the ultimate purpose of the Torah is to generate a close relationship between the Lord and humanity in order to prevent humanity's alienation from God.

The Concept of Torah in Second Temple Literature

This section investigates the Jewish legal concept in Second Temple literature. First, I examine the role of the Torah in Second Temple Judaism. Second, I look at how the understanding of Torah in Second Temple Judaism relates to Greco-Roman legal concepts.

The Role of the Torah in Second Temple Judaism

The Torah is among the most critical topics addressed by Second Temple literature. This analysis reveals two internal and one external factor that triggered the interest of Second Temple Judaism in the Torah. The first internal factor is the traumatic experience of the exile, due to the Jewish failure to observe the Torah (Dan 9:10–12; Zech 1:2–6; 7:12–14; Neh 1:5–10; 9:6–31). Tobit 3:4 states, *παρήκουσαν γὰρ τῶν ἐντολῶν σου. ἔδωκας ἡμᾶς εἰς διαρπαγὴν καὶ αἰχμαλωσίαν καὶ θάνατον* (“for they have refused to listen to your commandments, you handed us over into plunder, captivity, and death”). Similarly, Dan 3:29 in the LXX, contains similar confessions: *ἡμάρτομεν ἐν πᾶσι* (“we have sinned in all”) and in verse 30 *οὐδὲ συνετηρήσαμεν οὐδὲ ἐποιήσαμεν καθὼς ἐνετείλω ἡμῖν* (“neither have we preserved nor heeded the way you have commanded to us”). As a consequence, they acknowledge in verse 32 that *παρέδωκας ἡμᾶς εἰς χεῖρας ἐχθρῶν ἡμῶν* (“you have handed us over into the hands of our

enemies”).⁹⁸ Since failure of Torah observance was considered the reason for the exile, those returning from the exile naturally emphasized the importance of practicing the Torah. Ezra and Nehemiah bear witness to the effort taken to study the Torah as the entire nation of Jews (Neh 8:1–8).⁹⁹ Ezra’s dramatic reaction to any Jews who had foreign wives and children (Ezra 9:1–5, see also 10:2–3, 11; 13:23–29), a practice the Torah forbids, (Deut 7:3; see also Mal 2:12) bears witness to public education. Public education in Torah observance intended to prevent similar traumatic experiences in the future.¹⁰⁰ Ezra’s earnest confession of the sins of these Jews (9:6–15) expresses the hope that the Lord will show mercy and not entirely wipe them out (v. 14).

Second, some authors of Second Temple Jewish literature question the Jews’ Torah observance after the return from the exile based on the perceived lack of covenant blessings. Leviticus 26:40–45 and Deut 30:1–3 teach that when God’s people wholeheartedly return to God and repent for their unfaithfulness while being in exile, God will turn their destiny around and bless them. Upon the return from the exile, two

⁹⁸ See also Jub 1:8–14.

⁹⁹ LeFebvre, *Torah*, 132. Ezra’s determination to teach the law to the entire nation is visible in Ezra 7:10, which reads that he הכין לְבָבוֹ לְדַרְוֹשׁ אֶת־תּוֹרַת יְהוָה וְלַעֲשׂוֹת וּלְלַמֵּד בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל חֶק וּמִשְׁפָּט (“set his heart out to study the law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach the statutes and rules in Israel”). Ezra’s authority in teaching the Torah to the Jews is not only based on his expertise of the law, (v. 6) but also backed by the Persian King, Artaxerxes, who permitted Ezra to return to Jerusalem and reactivate their worship services to the Lord. In his letter, Artaxerxes emphasized the importance of following the law of the Lord, in particular (vv. 14, 21, 23, 25–26 see also vv. 17–18).

¹⁰⁰ The education of the Torah’s observance also included children. In Josephus’s *Against Apion*, Josephus argues that thoroughly educating the children to observe the law is the most important business for a Jew. See Josephus, *Ag. Ap.* 1.60; see also 42, 2.171–75; *Ant.* 4.209–211; 11.154–156; Philo, *Hyporth* 7.14; *Laws* 3.29; 4.161 and Deut 4:9. Everyone was expected to be knowledgeable in the law. See Josephus, *Ag. Ap.* 2.178, 202.

streams of thought developed within Second Temple Judaism.¹⁰¹ The theocratic stream propagated the idea that the end of the exile occurred after 70 years (see for example Ezra 1:1; 2 Chr 36:16–21).¹⁰² The eschatological stream espoused that the exile was ongoing based on the absence of the blessings, the absence of the ten northern tribes, and the ongoing subjugation to foreign rulers.¹⁰³ The awareness of this less-than-ideal reality, along with the absence of expected blessings, made some question the Jews' Torah obedience.¹⁰⁴ For this reason, some Second Temple literature exhibits a quest for Torah observance to bring forth covenantal blessings.¹⁰⁵

Regarding the external factor, interest in the Torah's role within Judaism increased during Hellenistic times due to the Greek definition of civilization. LeFebvre

¹⁰¹ For a detailed discussion, see Odil Hannes Steck, *Israel und das gewaltsame Geschick der Propheten: Untersuchungen zur Überlieferung des deuteronomistischen Geschichtsbildes im Alten Testament, Spätjudentum und Urchristentum*, WMANT 23 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1967); Odil Hannes Steck, "Das Problem theologischer Strömungen in nachexilischer Zeit," *EvT* 28 (1968): 445–58.

¹⁰² James M. Scott identifies the theocratic stream as a display of E. P. Sanders's covenantal nomism. See James M. Scott, "Restoration of Israel," *Dictionary of Paul* 795–804.

¹⁰³ Scott notes that the eschatological stream "pervades Second Temple literature." See Scott, *Dictionary of Paul* 796–97. Similarly, N. T. Wright, *The Climax of the Covenant: Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 141. Mark A. Seifrid offered a critique on Wright's oversimplified view of the ongoing exile in Second Temple literature. See Mark A. Seifrid, "Blind Alleys in the Controversy over the Paul of History," *TynBul* 45 (1994): 73–95. At this point of my study, I am simply interested in the role of the Torah in Second Temple Judaism. The acknowledgment of the existence of the eschatological stream in Second Temple literature and its implications on the role of the Torah are important to my study.

¹⁰⁴ In Bar 4:1–4, Jacob is exhorted to turn to the law. See also 1 Macc 2:64–68; 4Q375 I, 1–3; 11Q19–21, LIX, 9–21. In 1 Macc 1:11–14, for example, the author reports that certain Jews tried to improve their living situation by enacting covenants with surrounding nations. Josephus later states that under Herod, the Jews experienced worse conditions than during the exile, (*J.W.* 2.86) and that the Jews were behaving worse than the Gentiles regarding the Torah (6.101–2).

¹⁰⁵ Regarding this concept, the study is indebted to P. Richard Choi's class lectures on "Intertestamental Literature: Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha," as taught in 2014, at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary in Berrien Springs, Michigan. See also P. Richard Choi, "The Intra-Jewish Dialogue in 4 Ezra 3:1–9:25," *AUSS* 41 (2003): 237–54.

shows that Alexander the Great and the related Hellenization promoted new standards for those who were considered civilized and for those who were considered barbarian. The Greeks defined civilization by the presence and rule of written law. By contrast, barbarians were characterized by the rule of lawless despots.¹⁰⁶ This shift generated three general responses from subjected people. First, they could accept being deemed barbarians; second, they could argue against the Greek stereotype that lawless civilizations are by default oppressive; or third, they could claim that their native legal institutions matched the Hellenistic ideal of civilized culture.¹⁰⁷ Second Temple literature bears witness to the Jew's predilection for the third.

Torah and Greco-Roman Law in Second Temple Judaism

Second Temple Jews attempted to correspond the Torah to the Greek concept of law. Hayes's examination of Second Temple literature shows that the majority of Jewish Second Temple authors used two strategies to solve the incongruency between the characteristics of the Torah and Greco-Roman law. The Letter of Aristeas and Philo's literary work both emphasize the Torah's rationality, arguing for its similarity to Greco-Roman natural law. Sirach and 1 Enoch emphasize wisdom as a common element between the Torah and Creation, arguing that the Torah has particular attributes that make it similar to the natural order.¹⁰⁸ The following examples illustrate a pattern of

¹⁰⁶ LeFebvre, *Torah*, 183–89.

¹⁰⁷ LeFebvre, *Torah*, 189.

¹⁰⁸ Hayes, *Divine Law*, 95.

Second Temple literature defining the Torah within the terms of Greco-Roman legal understanding.

The Letter of Aristeas. Written presumably around the second century BCE by a Jewish author living in Ptolemaic Alexandria, this pseudo-letter contains apologetics for the Torah.¹⁰⁹ Erich S. Gruen argues that “the *Letter* offers a showcase for the familiarity of Jewish intellectuals with diverse features and forms of Greek literature” (emphasis original).¹¹⁰ Due to the historical setting in which the Letter of Aristeas came into existence, it is not surprising that it attempts to align the Torah with Greek natural law. Toward the beginning, the Let. Aris. 31 characterizes the Torah as φιλοσοφωτέραν εἶναι καὶ ἀκέραιον τὴν νομοθεσίαν ταύτην, ὡς ἂν οὕσαν θεϊαν (“being philosophical and pure lawgiving, as such being divine”). The author addresses the rationality of the most particular regulations within the Torah, such as the Jewish dietary and impurity laws (Let. Aris. 128–31).¹¹¹

Eleazar, one of the main characters in the Letter of Aristeas,¹¹² argues for the rationality of these particular regulations, especially the dietary laws. In his understanding, interactions with the environment affect the human character. The Torah is considered God’s “legal fence” around the Jews, which helps regulate what to eat,

¹⁰⁹ Erich S. Gruen, “The Letter of Aristeas,” in *Outside the Bible: Ancient Jewish Writings Related to Scripture*, eds. Louis H. Feldman, et al. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2013), 2711–68.

¹¹⁰ Gruen, “Aristeas,” 2712.

¹¹¹ Gruen, “Aristeas,” 2713; Hayes, *Divine Law*, 105–6.

¹¹² Eleazar is the Jewish High Priest who communicates with the Ptolemaic ruler, Ptolemy II Philadelphus, who requested assistance in producing a Greek translation of the Jewish law for the Alexandrian library, see Let. Aris. 1, 33, 35, 41.

drink, touch, hear, and see (Let. Aris. 139–43). Eleazar further argues in Let. Aris. 143 that, πάντα πρὸς τὸν φυσικὸν λόγον ὅμοια καθέστηκεν (“regarding natural reason, all things experience the same”). In other words, there is no difference in the rationality of creatures. He did concede that clean birds show virtuous behavior, whereas unclean birds behave viciously (Let. Aris. 145–46). By the principle of association, the bird’s character would influence the human’s character in the case of a person eating or even touching it (Let. Aris. 147–49).¹¹³ Eleazar concludes in Let. Aris. 161 that οὐ γὰρ εἰκῆ καὶ κατὰ τὸ ἔμπεσόν εἰς ψυχὴν νενομοθέτηται, πρὸς δ’ ἀλήθειαν καὶ σημείωσιν ὀρθοῦ λόγου (“the legislation was not laid down at random or by some caprice of the mind, but with a view to truth and as a token of right reason”).¹¹⁴

Through allegorical interpretation, the author of the Letter of Aristeas attempts to align the most particular and non-rational regulations of the Torah—the dietary prescriptions and laws of impurity—with Greco-Roman legal concepts. George W. E. Nickelsburg observes, “while the Law is binding on Jews, Eleazar emphasizes that the Law’s intent is compatible with and implies the finest in Gentile ethics and wisdom.”¹¹⁵

Philo. Living in approximately 20 BCE–50 CE in Ptolemaic Alexandria, Philo was part of a wealthy and influential Jewish family. Being “honored by everyone” and

¹¹³ See Hayes, *Divine Law*, 107.

¹¹⁴ Translation provided by Hayes, *Divine Law*, 108.

¹¹⁵ George W. E. Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature between the Bible and the Mishnah: A Historical and Literary Introduction*, 2nd ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005), 198.

“not unskilled in philosophy” (Josephus, *Ant.* 18.259), he became “the most important representative of Hellenistic Judaism.”¹¹⁶

When it came to the incongruency between the Torah and Greco-Roman natural law, Philo mostly ignored it. In other words, he identified the law of Moses as natural law. To support his viewpoint, he attempted to identify the characteristics of Greco-Roman natural law in the Torah. For him, “in every respect, the Holy Writings are true” (*QG* 1.12).¹¹⁷ Philo identified the law of Moses with the truth. Further, he points to the eternal and unchangeable nature of the law of Moses.

Moses is alone in this, that his laws, firm, unshaken, immovable, stamped, as it were, with the seals of nature herself, remain secure from the day when they were first enacted to now, and we may hope that they will remain for all future ages as though immortal, so long as the sun and moon and the whole heaven and universe exist. Thus, though the nation has undergone so many changes, both to increased prosperity and the reverse, nothing—not even the smallest part of the ordinances—has been disturbed; because all have clearly paid high honour to their venerable and godlike character. . . . the laws should have been guarded securely through all time (*Moses* 2.14–15, 17).

Knowing that the Greco-Roman legal concept considered written law to be in the category of positive law by default, the greatest challenge for Philo was to prove that the law of Moses consisted of natural law, though it was written. In *Abraham* 1.3, Philo argues that the laws of Moses are only a copy of unwritten legal archetypes: “let us postpone consideration of particular laws, which are, so to speak, copies, and examine first those which are more general and may be called the originals of those copies.” The

¹¹⁶ David T. Runia, “The Writings of Philo,” in *Outside the Bible: Ancient Jewish Writings Related to Scripture*, eds. Louis H. Feldman, et al. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2013), 11–17.

¹¹⁷ The translation derives from the Armenian text, for which Maren R. Niehoff provides a Greek and English translation. See Maren R. Niehoff, *Jewish Exegesis and Homeric Scholarship in Alexandria* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 159.

context clarifies that the unwritten legal archetypes were people like Abraham, who embodied the Torah. In *Abraham* 1.5, Philo argues that “in these men we have laws endowed with life and reason.” Philo’s understanding of the patriarchs led him to the conclusion that Abraham not only observed the Torah, but became a law, himself. He argues that Abraham was “one who obeyed the law, some will say, but rather, as our discourse has shown, himself a law and an unwritten statute” (*Abraham* 46.276).

Sirach. Between 195 BCE and 180 BCE, Joshua Ben Sira, a scribe who lived in Jerusalem, wrote the book entitled *The Wisdom of Ben Sira* or *Sirach*.¹¹⁸

Sirach identifies both the order of creation (Sir 16:24–17:14; 39:14–35; 42:15–43:33)¹¹⁹ and the Torah with wisdom (15:1; 17:11; 19:20; 21:11; 24:23; 34:8; 45:5).¹²⁰

Eckhard J. Schnabel conducted an extensive study on the legal terminology in *Sirach*. He argues that the legal terminology in *Sirach* refers to the law of Moses.¹²¹ Regarding the identification of both the law and the order of creation (natural law) with wisdom, Schnabel concludes that since *Sirach* relatively rarely describes the order of creation in legal terms, “it is unwarranted to hold the view that Ben Sira understood the law essentially as a comprehensive cosmic law. The realm of creation is not identical with the

¹¹⁸ Benjamin G. Wright III, “Wisdom of Ben Sira,” in *Outside the Bible: Ancient Jewish Writings Related to Scripture*, eds. Louis H. Feldman, et al. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2013), 2208–351.

¹¹⁹ For a detailed discussion, see Schnabel, *Law and Wisdom*, 16–20.

¹²⁰ Besides a detailed discussion on these seven instances, Schnabel examines the implicit instances (1:26; 2:15–16; 6:36; 15:15; 19:24; 24:22, 32–33; 33:2–3; 38:34c.d; 39:8; 44:4c; 51:15c.d, 30a.b) and the secondary passages (1:5; 19:19; and from the prologue lines 1–3, 12–14, 29, and 35–36). See Schnabel, *Law and Wisdom*, 69–79.

¹²¹ Schnabel, *Law and Wisdom*, 31–42.

realm of the law.”¹²² Schnabel points out that Sirach’s identification of both nature and the Torah with wisdom has consequences for the wisdom concept. “The universalistic tendency of wisdom is limited and the possibility of profane wisdom is excluded.”¹²³ On the one hand,

essentially sapiential instructions are now occasionally substantiated by references to law and revelation. On the other hand, the Torah takes on sapiential perspectives . . . helping Israel (and the nations!) to cope with life and with history. As the Torah is placed into the horizon of the order of creation, i.e. of wisdom, it assumes a universalistic dimension. The Torah is now itself regarded as some kind of order of creation.¹²⁴

Based on Schnabel’s elaborations, Hayes argues that wisdom serves as a bridge, transferring properties between the Torah and natural law.¹²⁵

First Enoch. The origin of this book collection dates back to the third and second century BCE.¹²⁶ The legal concept in 1 Enoch deals primarily with the universal order of creation.¹²⁷ In contrast to the Stoics, who believed that universal reason orders nature, 1 Enoch argues that God’s will is the sole foundation of the universal order. Heavenly bodies follow God’s order. First Enoch 41:5 reads:

¹²² Schnabel, *Law and Wisdom*, 62.

¹²³ Schnabel, *Law and Wisdom*, 87.

¹²⁴ Schnabel, *Law and Wisdom*, 88.

¹²⁵ Hayes, *Divine Law*, 97.

¹²⁶ First Enoch consists of The Book of the Watchers (1 En. 1–36), The Parables of Enoch (chs. 37–71), The Astronomical Book (chs. 72–82), The Book of Dream Visions (chs. 83–90), and The Epistle of Enoch (chs. 91–107). See Miryam T. Brand, “1 Enoch,” in *Outside the Bible: Ancient Jewish Writings Related to Scripture*, eds. Louis H. Feldman, et al. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2013), 1359–446.

¹²⁷ Schnabel, *Law and Wisdom*, 106.

And I saw the storerooms of the sun and the moon, from what place they come out and to which place they return, and their glorious return—how in their travel one festival is celebrated more than the other. They do not depart from their orbit, neither increase nor decrease it; but they keep faith one with another: in accordance with an oath they set and they rise.¹²⁸

The elaborations in 1 Enoch imply that the universal order of creation has characteristics of positive law rather than natural law. In accordance with Sirach, 1 Enoch identifies (God's) wisdom with the universal order, but in contrast to Sirach, 1 Enoch does not identify the law of Moses with wisdom as explicitly.¹²⁹ However, 1 Enoch still asserts that wisdom influences the ethical behavior of humanity. This influence is due to humanity's dependence on the faithfulness of the heavenly bodies to the natural order, bodies considered to be angelic beings (e.g., 1 En. 88:1–3; 90:24). In the case that these heavenly bodies might disobey the natural order, they would cause transgression on the human side, since, according to 1 Enoch, human beings would no longer be able to observe the Lord's commands, many of them dependent upon the calendar.¹³⁰

The Hellenistic concept of civilization, defined by the rule of written law, placed the Jews under a charge of barbarianism. This survey of Second Temple literature revealed the challenges that the Jews faced in the attempt to align their understanding of the Torah to Greco-Roman legal understanding. Though the Jewish authors differ in their perspectives and strategies, Second Temple literature shows a uniformly similar concept of the Torah as a natural law.

¹²⁸ Translation provided by E. Isaac, "1 (Ethiopic Apocalypse of) Enoch: A New Translation and Introduction," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, ed. James H. Charlesworth, 2 vols. (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1983), 1:5–89.

¹²⁹ Hayes, *Divine Law*, 98.

¹³⁰ Hayes, *Divine Law*, 99–100.

The Relationship of the Body to the Torah

In this subsection, I discuss the relationship between the human body and the Torah in the Hebrew Bible and Second Temple literature. This undertaking faces two challenges. First, the Greek term νόμος (“law”) translates to various Hebrew terms within the LXX.¹³¹ Although I continue to use the generic term “Torah” in reference to the Jewish legal concept, different juridical terms are also included.¹³² Second, there is no consistent Hebrew equivalent for the Greek term σῶμα (“body”).¹³³ This analysis of the relationship between the body and the Torah includes a broad set of anthropological terminology.¹³⁴ I first address the relationship between the two in the Hebrew Bible and then, in Second Temple literature.

The Body and the Torah in the Hebrew Bible

The need to prevent future exile and the lack of covenantal blessings are distinguishable factors in some examples of Second Temple literature which encouraged Jews to reconsider the question of how to observe the Torah. The Hebrew Bible defines the Torah’s observance in five aspects, using the explanatory syntactical construction ל

¹³¹ See footnote 59, page 41.

¹³² In Hebrew texts, the following terms were considered in this study: תּוֹרָה (“law”), מִצְוָה (“commandment”), מִשְׁפָּט (“ordinances”), חֹק (“statute”), עֵדוּת (“testimony”), דְּבָר (“word”), אִמְרָה (“word”). In Greek texts, the study considered the following terms: νόμος (“law”), ἐντολή (“commandment”), κρίμα (“ordinances”), δικαίωμα (“regulation”), πρόσταγμα (“order”), μαρτύριον (“witness”), λόγος (“word”), λόγιον (“word”), ῥῆμα (“word”).

¹³³ Schweizer, *TDNT* 7:1045. See, especially Baumgärtel’s concise overview of the linguistic data on pages 1044–45.

¹³⁴ In Hebrew texts, the study considered the following terms: בָּשָׂר (“flesh”), גִּוְהָ (“body”), לֵב/בְּבֹר (“heart”), נֶפֶשׁ (“soul”), יָד (“hand”). In Greek texts, the study considered the following terms: σῶμα (“body”), σάρξ (“flesh”), καρδία (“heart”), ψυχή (“soul”), νοῦς (“mind”), χεῖρ (“hand”).

followed by an infinitive construct.¹³⁵ Torah observance is לִלְכֹת בְּדַרְךְוּ (“walking in [the Lord’s] way”),¹³⁶ לִירָאָה (“fearing [the Lord]”),¹³⁷ לְדַבְקָה (“clinging to [the Lord]”),¹³⁸ לְאַהֲבָה (“loving [the Lord]”),¹³⁹ and לַעֲבֹד (“serving [the Lord]”).¹⁴⁰ In some cases, the prepositional phrase וּבְכָל־נַפְשְׁךָ וּבְכָל־לִבְּךָ (“with all your heart and all your soul”) modifies these expressions.

Claus Westermann points out that the prepositional phrase “with all your heart and all your soul” gradually becomes formulaic in the Hebrew Bible. He argues that the phrase becomes “somewhat more formulaic” when attached to verbs like “to walk” or “to return,” and fully formulaic when it is used “in association with the observance of the commandments,”¹⁴¹ (which is the case in Deut 11:18 and 2 Kgs 23:3; 2 Chr 34:31).¹⁴² However, he notes that it is not formulaic when the prepositional phrase appears with verbs like “to love” and “to serve,” since “it directly expresses a personal relationship between God and an individual,” at which point it becomes “fully meaningful.”¹⁴³

¹³⁵ Bruce K. Waltke and Michael O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns), 608.

¹³⁶ Lev 18:4; Deut 8:6; 11:22; 19:9; Josh 22:5. See also Deut 11:28; 28:14; 1 Kgs 2:3–4; 6:12; Ps 78:10.

¹³⁷ Deut 6:24; 8:6; see also 4:11; 28:58.

¹³⁸ Deut 11:22; Josh 22:5. This is a typical covenantal term.

¹³⁹ Deut 11:13, 22; 19:9; Josh 22:5.

¹⁴⁰ Deut 11:13; Josh 22:5; see also Deut 28:14; Jer 11:10; 13:10.

¹⁴¹ Claus Westermann, “נַפֶּשׁ,” *TLOT* 2:743–59.

¹⁴² Jeremiah 32:41 also uses the prepositional phrase as a formula. However, it has God as the subject.

¹⁴³ Westermann, *TLOT* 2:751.

The Torah and the Heart

The phrase, “with all your heart and all your soul,” implies the embodiment of the Torah. The term לֵב/לִב (‘‘heart’’) has a broad semantic range.¹⁴⁴ Beside its anatomical meaning of the human heart, it can refer to the person’s identity, vital center, affective center, noetic center, voluntative center, or the religious and ethical realm. Heinz-Joseph Fabry, who understands the heart as conscience, observes that ‘‘the Israelites were commanded constantly to follow the Torah and shape their *lēb* [heart] in obedience to God’s word (Dt. 30:14, 17; Jer. 31:33; Ezk. 36:26f.). The *lēb* as the organ of knowledge notes deviations from God’s will.’’¹⁴⁵ He further argues that the Torah, when written on the heart (31:33), is ‘‘directly present in the human center of decision (cf. Dt. 30:14; Ps. 37:31; Isa. 51:7).’’¹⁴⁶ Thus, the heart is the locus where the personal relationship takes place between the human being and the Lord. In other words, it is where the Lord exerts influence on the person’s ethical decisions. Oliver Glanz attributes similar characteristics of the לֵב (‘‘heart’’) to the נֶפֶשׁ (‘‘soul’’).¹⁴⁷ Thus, the soul in combination with the heart

¹⁴⁴ Heinz-Joseph Fabry, ‘‘לֵב, לִב,’’ *TDOT* 7:399–437.

¹⁴⁵ Fabry, *TDOT* 7:426.

¹⁴⁶ Fabry, *TDOT* 7:431.

¹⁴⁷ The Hebrew Bible attributes two major types of activities to the נֶפֶשׁ (‘‘soul’’). First, the soul performs activities that characterize it as a bodily organ, such as breathing (Jer 15:9, see also Josh 11:11), eating (Lev 17:12; Deut 12:20), and drinking (Isa 29:8). The soul’s intake of oxygen and food allows for the conclusion that the soul is ultimately identified with the throat. Besides, these activities determine, according to Glanz, that ‘‘the OT understanding of the human body considers the throat [soul] and the heart as the most vital organs.’’ See Oliver Glanz, ‘‘The Meaning of Nephesh in the Old Testament’’ (Unpublished Paper, 2019), 1–32 (The quote is on page 14). Second, the soul participates in activities that characterize it as the seat of emotional-cognitive functions, such as thinking, feeling, or worshipping. Glanz points out that some of the soul’s activities attribute to it the function of an organ; activities such as ‘‘to thirst’’ or ‘‘to be sated’’ can also appear without reference to actual food (see for example Pss 42:2; 63:1; 88:3; Eccl 6:3; Jer 31:13–14). Therefore, the emotional-cognitive function of the soul is not solely metaphorical. Instead, ‘‘the *nephesh* gets satisfied by food *and* by love, it breathes air *and* hope’’ (emphasis

“elevates the intensity of involvement of the entire being.”¹⁴⁸ In other words, “with all your heart and all your soul” refers to the entire person, and, in particular, to the whole of the person’s cognitive functions.

Evil has been present in the human heart since the time Adam transgressed God’s commandments. For this reason, Jeremiah identifies the human heart “as the seat of all human vices” (Jer 17:1).¹⁴⁹ Numbers 15:39 implies that following the heart is not to be confused with following the Torah’s commands, reading *וְלֹא־תִתְּרוּ אַחֲרַי לְבַבְכֶם וְאַחֲרַי עֵינֵיכֶם* (“you shall not follow after your heart and after your eyes, which you are to where after”). Deuteronomy 8:2 describes the Lord as the one who tests the Israelites to see what is in their hearts and to know whether they keep his commandments or not. Thus, the implication is that after the fall of humanity, the heart cannot, by nature, implement the Torah’s principles.¹⁵⁰

original). See Glanz, “The Meaning of Nephesh,” 18. Furthermore, “it must be stressed, that the biblical text does not seek to describe an ontological gap between *nephesh* as an organ and *nephesh* as an abstract immaterial reality (as Plato’s *ψυχή* or Seneca’s *anima*). Instead of working on an ontological differentiation, the texts invest in differentiating the function and actions of the very same *nephesh* as an ontological unity.” See Glanz, “The Meaning of Nephesh,” 18. Glanz further shows that due to the soul’s importance for the person’s vitality, the soul becomes equated with the person, itself. If the soul is alive, the person is alive. If the soul is dead the person is dead. See Glanz, “The Meaning of Nephesh,” 22–23.

¹⁴⁸ H. Seebass, “נָפֶשׁ,” *TDOT* 9:497–519.

¹⁴⁹ Fabry, *TDOT* 7:426.

¹⁵⁰ Das argues in detail for human inability to avoid sin based on Deut 27–30. See Das, *Paul*, 147–55; A. Andrew Das, “Galatians 3:10: A ‘Newer Perspective’ on the Omitted Premise,” in *Unity and Diversity in the Gospels and Paul: Essays in Honor of Frank J. Matera*, eds. Christopher W. Skinner and Kelly R. Iverson, *ECL* 7 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2012), 203–23. Das builds his conclusion on the observation that in Deut 27–30 the curses are consequences for personally committed sins. He argues against Wright who rejects an individualistic reading of chs. 27–30, seeing the curses as “what happens when *the nation as a whole fails to keep the Torah as a whole*” (emphasis original). See Wright, *Climax*, 146.

The wicked heart destroys a person's relationship with the Lord, as well as with their neighbor.¹⁵¹ Isaiah 32:6 describes the heart of the fool as a heart that is יַעֲשֶׂה-אֲנִי ("busy with iniquity, to do ungodly things and to speak errors about the Lord, to cause emptiness of the soul of the hungry and to deprive the thirsty of drink"). Regarding the relationship between the Lord and humanity, the Hebrew Bible frequently indicates that the human heart naturally leans towards apostasy and idolatry.¹⁵² Similarly, regarding the relationship between human beings, the human heart naturally leans towards social injustice. For this reason, Deut 6:6 admonishes the people of Israel to inscribe the Torah וְהָיָה ("shall be") upon their hearts.¹⁵³

The Hebrew Bible never explicitly describes how the Torah is inscribed upon a person's heart. However, some texts allow for implications about this process. When the Lord commissioned Joshua to assume the role of Moses, the Lord advised Joshua in Josh 1:7 לְשֹׂמֵר לַעֲשׂוֹת כְּכָל-הַתּוֹרָה . . . לְמַעַן תִּשְׁכַּל בְּכָל אֲשֶׁר תֵּלֵךְ ("to be careful to do according to the entire law . . . so that you have success wherever you go"). In verse 8, the Lord's advice continues, reading לֹא-יָמוּשׁ סֵפֶר הַתּוֹרָה הַזֶּה מִפִּיךָ וְהִגִּיתָ בוֹ יוֹמָם וּלְיָלָה ("this book of the law shall not depart from your mouth but you shall meditate on it day and night").¹⁵⁴

A. Negoita points out that the verb הִגָּה ("to meditate") "means the zealous study of the

¹⁵¹ Fabry, *TDOT* 7:426–27. Note also the parallelism in Lam 1:20, where the מֶעֶה ("belly") parallels the heart as a place of emotions, reacting with fear to divine judgment against human rebellion.

¹⁵² Deut 11:16; 29:17–18[18–19]; 30:17; 1 Kgs 15:3; Jer 7:24; 17:5; Hos 10:2; 2 Chr 20:33; 25:2.

¹⁵³ The Hebrew syntax in Deut 6:4 indicates that the predicate, וְהָיָה ("shall be") follows the imperative שָׁמַע ("hear") and should read as an imperative. See P. Joüon and T. Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, 3rd repr. of 2nd ed., SubBi 27 (Rome: Gregorian & Biblical Press, 2011), 370–71.

¹⁵⁴ See Ps 2:1; see also Deut 17:18–20; Ezra 7:10; Neh 8:12–14, 18).

law, which results in being filled with the will of Yahweh and the doing of his commandments.”¹⁵⁵ Active engagement with the Torah becomes evident in the highly-relational verbs that Jewish literature uses concerning its observance.¹⁵⁶ Thus, the writing of the Torah on the heart is what naturally follows one’s choice to commit oneself to the Lord.

The Torah, the Hand, and the Forehead

In addition to writing the Torah on one’s heart, the Hebrew Bible also associates the Torah with the hand and the forehead in four different places within the Pentateuch. (Exod 13:9, 16; Deut 6:8; 11:18). The phrases in 6:8 הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה (“these words”) and in 11:18 דְּבָרַי אֵלֶּה (“these words”) refer to the Lord’s legal instructions to Israel. In Exodus, the antecedent of the implied subject is less clear. In 13:9, the most logical antecedent of וְהָיָה (“and it shall be”) is the instruction regarding the Festival of Unleavened Bread (vv. 3–8), but in verse 16, the most logical antecedent of וְהָיָה (“and it shall be”) is the dedication of the firstborn (vv. 11–15).¹⁵⁷

These four references are very similar except for three minor variations. The text in 13:9 reads, וְהָיָה לָּךְ לְאוֹת עַל־יָדְךָ וּלְזִכָּרוֹן בֵּין עֵינֶיךָ (“and it [implied subject, see discussion above] should be to you a sign on your hand and a reminder between your eyes”). The first variant concerns the word זִכָּרוֹן (“reminder”) in 13:9, which verse 16 and Deut 6:8;

¹⁵⁵ A. Negoita, “הַגִּיּוֹן, הַגִּיּוֹת, הַגִּיּוֹה, הַגִּיּוֹה,” *TDOT* 3:322–23.

¹⁵⁶ These verbs are “to walk in [the Lord’s] way,” “to fear [the Lord],” “to cling on [the Lord],” “to love [the Lord],” and “to serve [the Lord].”

¹⁵⁷ Similarly, Carl Friedrich Keil and Franz Delitzsch, *Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament*, trans. James Martin (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1857–1878; repr., 10 vols., Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1996), §974; John I. Durham, *Exodus*, WBC 3 (Waco, TX: Word, 1987), 178.

11:18 exchange for טוֹטְפוֹת (“frontlet-band”). The second variant is in verse 18, where the pronominal suffixes attached to “heart” and “eyes” are in the second person plural, in contrast to the second-person singular form in Exod 13:9, 16, and Deut 6:8. The final variant is between the references in Exodus and Deuteronomy. In Exodus 13:9, 16, it reads וְהָיָה (“and it shall be”) in relation to the sign and reminder (or frontlet-band), whereas in Deut 6:8, it reads וְקָשַׁרְתֶּם (“and you should bind”) or similarly in 11:18 וְהָיוּ (“and they should be”). Despite the variants, all four texts refer to the regulation to wear the Torah on one’s hand or forehead.

A literal interpretation of Exod 13:9, 16; Deut 6:8; 11:18 resulted in the Jewish custom of wearing *phylacteries* on the hand and the forehead. This custom developed relatively early within Judaism (see Matt 23:5; Šebu. 3.8, 11). *Phylacteries* are small black leather boxes where Jews store selected texts of the Torah (Exod 13:1–10, 11–16; Deut 6:4–9; 11:13–21). Each male Jew, thirteen years of age or older, is required to wear them every day.¹⁵⁸ Although these literal manifestations of the verse have become customary, a symbolic interpretation of Exod 13:9, 16; Deut 6:8; 11:18 is preferable.

All four texts encourage wearing the Torah as a sign on the יָד (“hand”), or wearing it as a reminder (or frontlet-band) in the space בֵּין עֵינַיִךָ (“between your eyes”), meaning the forehead.¹⁵⁹ John H. Walton, Victor H. Matthews, and Mark W. Chavalas observe that “symbols worn on the forehead or arm were used as indicators of loyalty to a

¹⁵⁸ Baruch M. Bokser, “Phylacteries,” *ABD* 5:368–70.

¹⁵⁹ “עֵינַיִךְ,” *BDB* 744–45. Beside the four instances, this prepositional phrase only appears in Dan 8:5, 21 for the location of the horn of the goat, and in Deut 14:1, where the command reads, בָּנִים אַתֶּם לַיהוָה, לֹא תִגְדְּדוּ וְלֹא תִשְׂיִמוּ קַרְחָה בֵּין עֵינֵיכֶם לְמַת אֶלֶהֵיכֶם לֹא תִתְגַּדְּדוּ וְלֹא תִשְׂיִמוּ קַרְחָה בֵּין עֵינֵיכֶם לְמַת (“you are the sons of the Lord your God. You shall neither cut yourselves nor make any baldness between your eyes for the ones being dead”).

particular deity.”¹⁶⁰ Therefore, symbolically wearing the Torah as a sign on one’s hand or a reminder on one’s forehead refers to a person’s loyalty to the Torah and, thus, to the Lord.

In summary, the Hebrew Bible associates the Torah with the heart, the hand, and the forehead. Ideally, a person’s heart embodies the religious and ethical principles of the Torah. Additionally, the person wears it as a sign on their hand, and a reminder on their forehead, which indicates loyalty to the Torah and, analogically, to the Lord. In general the Hebrew Bible acknowledges that Adam’s disobedience led to a situation in which the human heart hosts evil. For this reason, a person must choose to actively engage with the Torah on a regular basis in order to reach the ideal life according to its religious and ethical standards. Since the Torah is the law of the Lord, this active, regular engagement with it also involves a God-human relational aspect.

The Body and the Torah in Second Temple Literature

The previous discussion about the legal concept of Second Temple Judaism revealed that, Jewish authors faced the challenge of communicating Jewish perspectives within a Greco-Roman legal context. The same Greco-Roman influence applied to anthropological issues. The question at hand is whether Second Temple literature tends to agree with the Hebrew Bible or Greco-Roman concepts regarding the relationship between the body and the law. To answer this question, I will evaluate both Palestinian

¹⁶⁰ John H. Walton, Victor H. Matthews, and Mark W. Chavalas, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 177.

Second Temple literature, and Philo's literature, as a sample of Second Temple literature produced outside of Palestine.

The Body and the Torah in Palestinian Second Temple Literature

Second Temple literature endorses the ideal of the Hebrew Bible embodying the Torah within one's heart. The author of 1 En. 94:5 argues that the Jew shall not let the word of God be erased from the heart (see also 4Q417 Fr. 1 I, 9). A heart that embodies the Torah's wisdom is considered solid (Sir 6:37) or undivided (1:28). Along with the heart, the soul also aligns to the ethical standards of the Torah. Sirach 32:23 reads, ἐν παντὶ ἔργῳ πίστευε τῇ ψυχῇ σου· καὶ γὰρ τοῦτό ἐστιν τήρησις ἐντολῶν ("In every work trust your soul, for this is keeping the commandments").¹⁶¹

In some cases, Second Temple literature promotes the idea that the person whose heart embodies the Torah of the Lord also receives a holy spirit, which functions to keep a person away from further evil (4Q435 Frag 1. I, 1–II, 1, see also 4Q444 Frag 1. I, 1–9; 4Q542 I, 8–11).¹⁶² Jubilees reads,

I know their contrariness and their thoughts and their stubbornness. And they will not obey until they acknowledge their sin and the sins of their fathers. But after this they will return to me in all uprightness and with all of (their) heart and soul. And I shall cut off the foreskin of their heart and the foreskin of the heart of their descendants. And I shall create for them a holy spirit, and I shall purify them so that

¹⁶¹ See also Ps. Sol 9:4; Sir 21:11.

¹⁶² On the holy spirit, F. F. Bruce notes that "we shall not expect to find the holy spirit treated as a person in the Qumran texts, and so it is best not to capitalize the initials and write 'Holy Spirit' as is normally done when the New Testament presentation is under discussion." See F. F. Bruce, "Holy Spirit in Qumran Texts," *ALUOS* 6 (1966/1968): 49–55. (The quote is on page 50). Bruce's study shows that there are conceptual parallels between the characteristics of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament and the holy spirit in the Qumran texts.

they will not turn away from following me from that day and forever (Jub 1:22–23, see also 4Q504 II, 13–14).¹⁶³

Whether “the holy spirit” refers to the sanctified characteristic of the affected person or the Holy Spirit of the Trinity is unclear. James C. VanderKam points out that the wording of Jub 1:23 reflects Ps 51:12, which reads “a clean heart, create for me, God, and a firm Spirit, renew in me.”¹⁶⁴ Regarding the language of verse 12, Marvin E. Tate concedes the possibility that the “spirit” is the worshiper’s spirit. Still, he favors the meaning of “spirit” as divine Spirit, stating that “it is quite probable that the spirit in v 12 is God’s steadfast and firmly reliable spirit, which is given to those who serve him.”¹⁶⁵ Indeed, in Pauline literature, the Spirit, which is present in the circumcised heart of the believer, is the divine Holy Spirit (Rom 2:25–29).

Second Temple literature seems to also acknowledge that the Torah is not, by nature, embodied within the heart. For this reason, the author of the Testament of Judah feels the need to warn the reader to “keep my words so as to perform all the lord’s just decrees and to obey the command of God. Do not pursue evil impelled by your lusts, by the arrogance of your heart, and do not boast the exploits and strength of your youth because this too is evil in the Lord’s sight”¹⁶⁶ (T. Jud. 13:1–2; see also 1 En. 104.9; Jub 1:8–14; 12:5, 20; CD A III, 11–12; VIII, 8; B XX, 8–11). The Testament of Reuben

¹⁶³ Translation provided by O. S. Wintermute, “Jubilees: A New Translation and Introduction,” in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, ed. James H. Charlesworth, 2 vols. (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1983), 2:35–142.

¹⁶⁴ James C. VanderKam, *Jubilees 1: A Commentary on the Book of Jubilees Chapters 1–21*, Hermeneia—A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2018), 159.

¹⁶⁵ Marvin E. Tate, *Psalms 51–100*, WBC 20 (Dallas: Word, 1990), 22.

¹⁶⁶ Translation provided by H. C. Kee, “Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs: A New Translation and Introduction,” in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, ed. James H. Charlesworth, 2 vols. (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1983), 1:775–828.

refers to the natural condition of human beings as having a darkened mind, reading “And thus, every young man is destroyed, darkening his mind from the truth, neither gaining understanding in the Law of God nor heeding the advice of his fathers”¹⁶⁷ (T. Reub. 3.8).¹⁶⁸

Second Temple literature also promotes the necessity of engaging with the Torah in order to actively embody it. The outcome is different for each person, depending on their honesty in seeking. Sirach 32:15 reads, ὁ ζητῶν νόμον ἐμπλησθήσεται αὐτοῦ, καὶ ὁ ὑποκρινόμενος σκανδαλισθήσεται ἐν αὐτῷ (“the one seeking the law will be filled by it, the one who pretends, will be stumbling on it”). The Qumran literature refers to the one who pretends to seek Torah as one seeking with a false heart (4Q432 XII, 13).

The Body and the Torah in Philo

Philo’s writings represent a collection of Second Temple literature, produced in the diaspora. Philo is one example of a Jew who adopts Greco-Roman anthropological and legal concepts.¹⁶⁹ Whereas Jewish anthropology did not have the Greco-Roman dualism of the body and the soul, Philo’s anthropology shows striking parallels to Greco-Roman anthropology. Regarding the relationship between the body and the law, Philo’s anthropological and legal adaption leads to the soul having a more prominent place than the heart in his writings. *Creation*, 69 reads,

¹⁶⁷ Translation provided by Kee, “Twelve Patriarchs,” 783.

¹⁶⁸ 1QS VI, 2–6 labels the opposite condition as the enlightenment of the mind.

¹⁶⁹ For the discussion on Philo’s adaption to the Greco-Roman legal concept, see the discussion on pages 56–58.

Moses tells us that man was created after the image of God and after His likeness (Gen. i. 26). Right well does he say this, for nothing earth-born is more like God than man. Let no one represent the likeness as one to a bodily form; for neither is God in human form, nor is the human body God-like. No, it is in respect of the Mind, the sovereign element of the soul, that the word “image” is used; for after the pattern of a single Mind, even the Mind of the Universe as an archetype, the mind in each of those who successively came into being was moulded. It is in a fashion a god to him who carries and enshrines it as an object of reverence; for the human mind evidently occupies a position in men precisely answering to that which the great Ruler occupies in all the world.

Philo completely embraced the Stoic understanding of natural law; therefore it is not surprising that he would identify the location of the Torah in the divine soul, and not in the profane body. Commenting on the role of the mouth, Philo argues that “through this, as Plato says, mortal things have their entrance, immortal their exit; for foods and drinks enter it, perishable nourishment of a perishable body, but words issue from it, undying laws of an undying soul, by means of which the life of reason is guided” (*Creation*, 119). Thus, for Philo, the immortal soul is the appropriate host to the immortal Torah, whereas the mortal body is not. The body is not only unable to embody the Torah, but it also functions as a hindrance. Philo states “a single thing only, namely our understanding, is requisite: but the body not only fails to co-operate to this end, but is an actual hindrance” (*Alleg. Interp.* 1.103). Thus, similarly to Greco-Roman philosophy, Philo’s writings testify to a negative perspective on the body, one which is foreign to the Hebrew Bible.

Summary

In this section, I evaluate the concept of the Torah in both the Hebrew Bible and Second Temple literature because of the significant shifts between them regarding the

concept of Torah. Finally, I assess both the Hebrew Bible and Second Temple literature to illustrate the relationship of the Torah to the body.

The evaluation of the concept of Torah in the Hebrew Bible focuses on its origins, characteristics, and purpose. Regarding its origins, the writers of the Hebrew Bible understood the Torah to be the Lord's first creative act. The Torah existed before the creation of the cosmos and, therefore, before its revelation to Israel in written form. The discussion also reveals the incongruence of the Torah in relation to Greco-Roman legal understanding, since the Torah did not differentiate between natural law and positive law, as the Greco-Romans did, but instead had characteristics of each. Both the Torah and Greco-Roman natural law share the characteristics of being in correspondence with the order of nature. The first characteristic of the Torah entails the universality of its ethical principals in time and scope, meaning it is unchanging. Another common characteristic between the Torah and natural law is that they both assume the rationality of the law and its recipients.

With respect to Greco-Roman positive law, the Torah shares the characteristics of representing the will of a lawgiver, as well as being limited in time and scope. The Lord revealed the Torah in written form to Israel through Moses. The Torah's limitation in time finds expression in its adaptability to changing circumstances. Furthermore, it is coercive, which implies that the Torah requires a response of obedience and faithfulness.

Regarding the Torah's purpose, this discussion reveals that the Lord intended it to enable a good life, which manifests itself in the experience of covenantal blessings and the absence of covenantal curses. In addition, the Torah intends to enable a close relationship to God, a personal divine being.

The evaluation of Torah in Second Temple literature discloses that two internal factors and one external factor caused an increase of interest in the observance of the Torah within Second Temple Judaism. The two internal factors were the association of the Torah's disobedience with the exile, and the perceived lack of covenantal blessings observed by some Jewish authors upon return from the exile. Since both factors are related to disobedience to the Torah, some authors of the Second Temple period stressed its observance to precipitate the return of covenantal blessings. The one external factor relates to the Hellenistic definition of civilization, which defined civilization as the rule of written law, in contrast to the rule of lawless despots. This definition induced authors of the Second Temple period to explain the Torah's function and significance within the context of the Greco-Roman legal understanding. Whereas the Letter of Aristeas and Philo emphasized the Torah's characteristics that were congruent with Greco-Roman natural law, Sirach and 1 Enoch sought to line up the particularity of universal order with the corresponding particularities of the Torah. Thus, it was common for authors of the Second Temple period to discuss Jewish perspectives in terms of their parallels to Greco-Roman concepts.

Regarding the relation of the Torah to the body, the Hebrew Bible and Second Temple literature that originated in Palestine discloses that Torah observance requires the embodiment of the Torah within the heart, as well as the wearing of it as a sign on the hand, and a reminder on the forehead. Jewish anthropology understood the heart as the location of religious and ethical decision-making. The discussion brings to light that, by default, the human heart is evil. Thus, a person can have either a lawless, a divided, or a Torah-embodied heart. The Torah-embodied heart and the wearing of it on the hand and

forehead require the person's commitment to loyalty to the Torah and, thus, to the Lord. While the Hebrew Bible and Second Temple literature that originated in Palestine maintains a positive view of the body, Philo's writings (as an example of Second Temple literature that originated in the diaspora) promote a negative view of the body, due to Philo's assimilation to Hellenistic anthropology. This is represented in Philo's argument that only the immortal soul can host the immortal Torah, whereas the mortal body is unable to embody it.

Conclusion

This chapter addressed the question of whether Non-Jewish, Greco-Roman literature and Jewish literature (Hebrew Bible and Second Temple literature) share similar legal and anthropological concepts. The study revealed that the Greco-Roman legal concept distinguishes between natural law, which was unwritten and embodied true, eternal, and universal characteristics; and positive law that was written, and limited in time and scope. In contrast, the Jewish legal concept of the divine-given Torah did not differentiate between the two types as did the Greeks, but included both eternal, universal, and true laws, as well as positive laws that were limited in time and scope.

The examination of how the body relates to the law in each of the legal systems reveals that Greco-Roman anthropological and legal concepts both overlap and differ from Jewish anthropological and legal concepts. Greco-Roman anthropology has a dualistic view of the human being, with an inferior mortal body and superior eternal soul. By contrast, Jewish anthropology has a monistic view in which the existence of the body and the soul depend upon each other. Whereas both legal concepts involve the

embodiment of the law, substantial differences exist in the role of the body based on diverse anthropological perspectives.

Furthermore, Greco-Roman and Jewish legal concepts share the necessity of a wise statesman or king. In both categories, a particular person was needed to safeguard life under the law. In the Greco-Roman system, a wise statesman functioned as a “savior.” His role was to save the positive law by adapting it to changing circumstances, or to save the people from any written laws that proved unjust. The main requirement of the savior was to embody natural law, so that he would have the ability to shape positive laws to be more in-line with natural law. In the Jewish system, the Torah required that the king of Israel studied it daily in order to become wise (Deut 17:18–20). This engagement with the Torah was essential to knowing how to regulate the daily lives of the people through its application. In other words, the written Torah was not considered to be the final law, as it was in Greco-Roman legal culture. Instead, the written Torah was a description of what the law could be. This feature of the Torah is typical of the Mesopotamian concept of law.

The Hellenistic environment challenged the authors of the Second Temple period to express their anthropological and legal understandings in terms parallel to these Greco-Roman concepts. Second Temple literature which originated in Palestine promoted a much more positive perspective on the body. By contrast, Second Temple literature (e.g., Philo) which originated in the diaspora adopted an anthropological and legal concept that were more in-line with Greco-Roman perspectives on the body and the law.

This chapter contributes to the study by providing a necessary background to Paul’s anthropological and legal understanding. It also sheds light on the likelihood that

Paul implemented Greco-Roman legal concepts in order to efficiently communicate his Jewish understanding to his multicultural audience. Chapters 4 to 5 reveal the apostle's challenge in communicating Jewish perspectives effectively within the Greco-Roman legal context. It will become evident that Paul makes use of shared elements, such as the necessity to embody the law and the role of the wise statesman or king, who acts as a "savior" by saving people from the fatal consequence of the law. Regarding anthropology, Paul shows tendencies to perceive the body (or bodily members) as more susceptible to evil, whereas the inner human being is considered less susceptible to evil.

CHAPTER 3

A COMPARISON BETWEEN CHRIST'S DEATH AND THE BELIEVER'S DEATH TO SIN

Paul's concept of "death to sin" (Rom 6:2, 10) shows significant terminological, syntactical, and thematic parallels to his concept of "death to the law" (7:4 and Gal 2:19). Both deaths seem to be crucially related to Christ's death. In this chapter, I compare Christ's death and the believer's death to sin in Paul. This analysis will then assist in an enhanced understanding of what Paul means when he refers to the believer's death to the law (Rom 7:4; Gal 2:19). The pivotal question is whether or not Paul considers the believer's death to sin to be a change of rulership, namely from being under the rule of sin and death, to being under the rule of God. I attempt to answer this question in three parts. In the first section, I conduct an exegetical analysis of selected remarks in Gen 2–3, Rom 1:18–3:31, and 5:12–21 to determine whether Adam and Eve's transgression subjugated humanity to the rule of sin and death. In the second section, I examine Paul's understanding of the role of Christ's death and its potential liberating and atoning properties. Then, in the third section, I analyze the meaning of the phrase "death to sin" in 6:1–14 and any differences between Christ's death to sin compared to that of the believer. A concise summary of the findings follows each section. Conclusions based on the findings of the entire chapter complete the chapter.

Humanity's Spiritual Death and Subjugation under the Rule of Sin and Death

In this first section, I examine the effect of sin on humanity based on selected remarks in Gen 2–3, Rom 1:18–3:31, and 5:12–21.¹ The focus is on Adam and Eve's transgression and whether it subjugated humanity under the rule of sin and death.² This question is answered in three subsections. In the first subsection, I provide a definition of spiritual death based on Gen 2–3. In the second subsection, I evaluate Paul's remarks on the rule of sin and death in Rom 5:14, 17, 21, and 6:12. In the third subsection, I examine whether Paul considers the rule of sin and death to be universal based on his remarks in 1:18–3:31 and 5:12. This examination is foundational for the understanding of the role of Christ's death in Pauline writings and the meaning of "death to sin" in 6:2, 10.

A Definition of Spiritual Death

Spiritual death differs from physical death. The narrative of the fall of humanity (Gen 2:4–3:24) provides the background for the definition of spiritual death.³ The disobedience of Adam and Eve had a drastic effect on humanity and the human-divine relationship.⁴ Genesis 2 reports that "on the day, you [the human being] eat from it [the tree of the knowledge of good and evil], you will surely die" (v. 17). Since the physical

¹ Without further qualification, I understand the term "death," to mean the universal power that accompanies sin. As a pair, sin and death compete with God regarding the rulership over humanity.

² For an example of how Pauline scholarship discusses the issue of sin as a force or power, instead of simply as an individual human actions. See A. Andrew Das, "Models for Relating Sin as a Power to Human Activity in Romans 5,12–21," in *Sin and Its Remedy in Paul*, ed. Nijay K. Gupta and John K. Goodrich, CPT (Eugene OR: Cascade, 2020), 49–62.

³ Based on a chiasmic structure, Gordon J. Wenham argues for the literary unity of Gen 2:4–3:24. See Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, WBC 1 (Waco, TX: Word, 1987), 50–55.

⁴ Wenham notices that "a more complete transformation could not be imagined." See Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 76.

death of Adam and Eve did not take place on the day they transgressed God's commandment, it is fair to infer that the text suggests a spiritual death to God. I define physical death not merely as mortality but as the permanent cessation of any vital function in a human being. By spiritual death, I mean a transition from one ruling power to another.⁵ Therefore, spiritual death to God describes humanity's transition from being under the rule of God to being under the rule of sin⁶ and death.⁷ This change in rule becomes evident in humanity's spiritual and physical separation from God and condemnation to death which occurred on the very day that Adam and Eve transgressed God's commandment.⁸

This spiritual separation finds expression in Adam and Eve's shame and fear of God. Given the transgression of God's commandment, Adam and Eve realize their nakedness (3:7). Their attempt to cover themselves reveals their experience of shame (see also 2:25). When God approaches them, they hide among the trees of the garden (3:8).

⁵ Sin and death, however, are not explicitly mentioned as ruling powers in Gen 2:4–3:24. The narrative of the Fall describes a tremendous change in the human divine relationship and humanity's subjugation to death. I am looking at this narrative through the lens of Romans, in order to surmise how Paul might have read it. For a similar attempt with different conclusions on Paul's concept of death, see František Ábel, "Death as the Last Enemy" — Interpretation of Death in the Context of Paul's Theology," *CV* 58 (2016): 19–54.

⁶ In this study, I understand the expression "rule of sin" as humanity's subjugation under the law of sin and the resulting condemnation to death due to sinful humanity's inability to fulfil the requirements of the law. For the exact definition of "rule of sin," see pages 200–1.

⁷ In this study, I understand the expression "rule of death" as humanity's mortality due to humanity's separation from the source of life. This source is namely from the tree of life (see Gen 3:22, 24), but more importantly separation from God, the ultimate source of life.

⁸ In this study, I understand the expression "condemnation to death" as a reference to legal proceedings between God and sinful human beings. The condemnation to death refers to eternal death as the wage for sinful human beings under the rule of sin. This is as opposed to eternal life as a free gift to sinful human beings under the rule of God (see Rom 6:23). For the exact definition of "condemnation to death," see page 201.

Finally, when personally confronted by God, Adam admits that he fears God due to his nakedness (v. 10).⁹

The physical separation from God and the condemnation to death both find expression in Adam and Eve's banishment from the garden of Eden (Gen 3:23–24). The garden of Eden is cast in the cultic language of divine presence. Verse 8 associates the garden of Eden with God's presence. The *hithpael* מְהַלֵּךְ (“he walked around”), which describes God's movement in the garden also describes God's movement and presence in the tabernacle (Lev 26:12; Deut 23:15 [14]; 2 Sam 7:6–7). Similarly, the phrase מִפְנֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים (“before the Lord God”) in Gen 3:8 is generally used to describe God's presence in the temple.¹⁰ Thus, the physical removal of Adam and Eve from the garden of Eden is, at the same time, a physical separation from God. Further, God also denies human beings access to the Tree of Life which imparts some sort of immortality (vv. 22–24). Thus, the physical separation from God introduces the gradual reality of a physical death.¹¹

⁹ Several texts imply that, before their disobedience, the interaction between God, Adam, and Eve took place regularly and in a friendly, non-fearful way. In other words, Adam and Eve had not yet experienced a spiritual separation from God. The text refers to God blessing Adam and Eve as the very first divine act after their creation (Gen 1:28). Furthermore, he provides for their sustenance by planting a garden for them, including the tree of life, which sustained them (2:8–15). On several occasions, God gave them instruction regarding procreation and family life (1:28; 2:18, 24), their primacy over creation (1:28, see also 2:19–20), and their nutrition (1:29; 2:16–17).

¹⁰ Donald W. Parry, “Garden of Eden: Prototype Sanctuary,” in *Temples of the Ancient World: Ritual and Symbolism*, ed. Donald W. Parry (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book; Provo, UT: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 1994), 126–51; Richard M. Davidson, “Earth's First Sanctuary: Genesis 1–3 and Parallel Creation Accounts,” *AUSS* 53 (2015): 65–89. See also Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 76; Gordon J. Wenham, “Sanctuary Symbolism in the Garden of Eden Story,” in *I Studied Inscription from before the Flood: Ancient Near Eastern, Literary, and Linguistic Approaches to Genesis 1–11*, eds. Richard S. Hess and David Toshio Tsumura, *Studies for Biblical and Theological Studies* 4 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1994), 399–404.

¹¹ Spiritual death to God constitutes the change of rule from being under the rule of God, to being under the rule of sin and death. However, the ultimate consequence of spiritual death to God is a physical death, which constitutes the ultimate separation between humanity and its Creator.

Through Adam's disobedience, humanity becomes spiritually dead to God by nature, which means that humanity is no longer intrinsically under the rule of God, but instead subjugated under the rule of sin and death. Spiritual death to God does not eliminate the existence of God among humans. However, while God is still present in the lives of sinful human beings, he is no longer in the position of ruler. As will be discussed in the second section of this chapter, God still attempts to enable the liberation of sinful human beings from the rule of sin and death, and to effect atonement between God and humanity.

Humanity's Subjugation under the Rule of Sin and Death

Paul argues that once sin and death entered the world, they replaced God in his position of rulership over humanity. Sin is described as a ruler in Rom 5:21; 6:12 and death is similarly described as a ruler in 5:14, 17.¹²

Regarding the rule of sin, Paul states in verse 21 that sin ruled ἐν τῷ θανάτῳ ("by death" or "in death"). C. K. Barrett argues that the prepositional phrase should be understood as being instrumental, meaning that sin rules "through" or "by" death.¹³

C. E. B. Cranfield opposes the instrumental reading of the preposition ἐν stating:

for Paul, with Gen 2.17 not far from his mind, death is the result of sin, willed not by sin but by God. So it is hardly likely that the ἐν is instrumental. . . . death is not sin's

¹² There are scholars who warn against reading too much into the personification of Sin and Death in Rom 5:12–21. See Westerholm for example, who argues that Paul personifies "patterns of life, not supernatural forces" in Rom 5. See Stephen Westerholm, "Paul's Anthropological 'Pessimism' in its Jewish Context," in *Divine and Human Agency in Paul and His Cultural Environment*, ed. John M. G. Barclay and S. J. Gathercole, LNTS 335 (London: T&T Clark, 2006), 71–98. For a critique on Westerholm's view, see Das, "Sin as a Power," 55–57.

¹³ C. K. Barrett, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 2nd ed., BNTC 6 (London: Hendrickson, 1991), 111; see also Eckhard J. Schnabel, *Der Brief des Paulus an die Römer*, 2 vols., HTA (Witten: Brockhaus, 2015–2016), 1:579.

soldier or servant or instrument: death is the sign of God's authority, appointed by God as the inseparable, inescapable accompaniment of sin. In v. 14 it was death, not sin, that was said to have ruled.¹⁴

Cranfield's observation is important because it shows that although sin causes death, death is not sin's instrument. Death rules on its own, based on God's appointment.

Paul argues that Adam's transgression marks the beginning of death's rulership. In Rom 5:14, the apostle remarks that "death ruled from Adam to Moses." The ingressive aorist ἐβασίλευσεν ("he [death] began to rule")¹⁵ and the instrumental dative τῷ τοῦ ἐνὸς παραπτώματι ("by the transgression of one")¹⁶ in verse 17 indicate that death ruled from the very moment Adam transgressed God's commandment. Thus, before the manifestation of the first physical death, death already acquired its ruling position. Some scholars have argued that Paul understood death in verses 12–20 to be exclusively limited to the physical dimension.¹⁷ However, Joseph A. Fitzmyer criticizes this limited conception of death, arguing that "'death' is not merely a physical, bodily death (separation of body and soul), as has often been interpreted by theologians in the past, but

¹⁴ Cranfield, *Romans*, 1:294.

¹⁵ Schnabel, *Römer*, 1:568.

¹⁶ C. F. D. Moule, *An Idiom Book of New Testament Greek* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1953), 44.

¹⁷ For example, W. Sanday and Arthur C. Headlam argue that "it is far simpler and better to take it of 'physical death.'" See W. Sanday and Arthur C. Headlam, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, 2nd ed., ICC (New York: Scribner, 1915), 132. John Murray also states that the physical death, or "the dissolution which consists in the separation of body and spirit and the return to dust of the former had far more significance as the epitome of the wages of sin than we are disposed to attach to it." See John Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans: The English Text with Introduction, Exposition and Notes*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1968), 182. Especially in Murray's line of argument, Paul's concept of death would be very close to that of Platonism or Stoicism. For a detailed discussion on the platonic and stoic concept of death, see pages 29–32.

includes a spiritual separation of human beings from God, the ultimate source of life.”¹⁸

Thus, the rule of death would indicate humanity’s spiritual death to God.

Paul’s understanding of death as a ruling power over those who still live is unique. Robert Jewett observes that “the lack of parallels in Greek and biblical literature to the idea of death’s exercising kingly powers illustrates the distinctiveness of Paul’s view.”¹⁹ The objective of this conception is to contrast two ruling powers, namely sin and death, with the Creator God, who enables life.²⁰ This juxtaposition is fundamental to Paul’s theological expositions in Rom 6–8.

The Universality of Sin and Death

Paul argues for the universality of sin in Rom 1:18–3:31 and the universality of both sin and death in 5:12. The universality of sin is a basic premise in the book of Romans. From the onset of the epistle, Paul stresses the sinfulness of all human beings, regardless of their ethnicity (1:18–3:31).²¹ He presents three groups of people whom he

¹⁸ Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 412.

¹⁹ Robert Jewett, *Romans: A Commentary*, Hermeneia—A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007), 377. Taking a closer look at Jewish and Greek conceptions of death, it is evident that both cultures were familiar with death as a ruling entity. Nevertheless, Jewett’s observation stands because both worlds of thought perceived death’s rulership to be limited exclusively to those who had already experienced physical death. Regarding Judaism, Fitzmyer sees a possible Old Testament background to death’s rule in Hos 13:14 and Wis 1:14, see Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 417. In Hos 13:14, the term *Sheol* refers to the underworld, the location of those who have already experienced physical death. In Wis 1:14, the term *Hades* is for the underworld, the location of physically dead persons. In Greek mythology, *Hades*, is the “lord of the dead below.” See Homer, *Il.* 15.187. Greeks also perceived the netherworld as a kingdom, however it was also only in charge of those who died physically, see Apollodorus, *Greek Library*. 1.2.1.

²⁰ Jason Maston correctly notes that in Romans 5:12–21, grace is the ruling power in contrast to sin and death. See Jason Maston, “Christ or Adam: The Ground for Understanding Humanity,” *JTI* 11 (2017): 277–93, esp. 285.

²¹ For the ethnographic profile of the Roman congregation at Paul’s time, see footnote 49 on page 153.

identifies as sinners (see 3:23). Paul refers to the first group of people with the third-person plural “they.” He characterizes them by describing their idolatrous actions, sexual immoralities, and sundry vices (vv. 19–32). Commentators identify this group of people as Gentiles.²² In 2:1–17, Paul introduces a second group by shifting from the third-person plural “they” to the second-person singular “you.” The second-person singular “you” naturally refers to the Roman congregation, who is considered to be Paul’s “hidden interlocutor.”²³ This interlocutor condemns the aforementioned vicious behavior (v. 1) and stands in contrast to the Gentiles who approve it (v. 32). Dunn argues that “Paul’s attack is aimed most directly at what he sees to be a typically Jewish attitude.”²⁴ However, the first-person plural οἶδαμεν (“we know”) in verse 2 indicates that this condemning attitude applies to both Jewish and Gentile Christian believers.²⁵ Paul’s discussion on humanity’s sinfulness becomes more detailed by specifically exposing the ungodliness and injustice of the third group, whom he explicitly identifies as Jews (2:17–3:20). Having pointed out the sinfulness of the Gentiles, and both the Gentile and Jewish believers in Rome, Paul now ends with the Jews, concluding that “all have sinned” (3:23; see also v. 10)!

²² See for example, Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 270–76; Schreiner, *Romans*, 81–82; Moo, *Romans*, 107–10. Note however that a minority of scholars argue that the listed behavior can also describe Jewish failure. See for example Paul J. Achtemeier, “St. Paul, Accommodation or Confrontation: A Tradition- and Context-Analysis of Romans 1.18–32 and 2.14–15, Attempting to Determine Whether or Not Paul Is Seeking to Accommodate the Thought of These Verses to the Hellenistic Mentality” (ThD diss., Union Theological Seminary, 1957), 126–33. Das interprets these verses primarily in terms of non-Jews, but not to the exclusion of the Jews. See Das, *Paul*, 171–77.

²³ Dunn, *Romans*, 1:89. Dunn argues that Paul’s “readers would imagine someone listening to the polemic of 1:18–32 and heartily joining in its condemnation.” See Dunn, *Romans*, 1:90.

²⁴ Dunn, *Romans*, 1:90.

²⁵ Wolter, *Römer*, 1:168.

Paul argues that sin and death are foreign entities that enter the human realm through Adam’s disobedience. Paul recapitulates the narrative of the fall, stating in 5:12 that “διὰ τοῦτο ὡσπερ δι’ ἑνὸς ἀνθρώπου ἡ ἁμαρτία εἰς τὸν κόσμον εἰσῆλθεν καὶ διὰ τῆς ἁμαρτίας ὁ θάνατος (“sin entered the world through one human being and through sin, death”). The preposition διὰ (“through”) followed by the genitives ἑνὸς ἀνθρώπου (“one human being”) and ἁμαρτίας (“sin”), respectively, introduces the means through which sin (through one human being) and death (through sin) entered the world. Thus, Adam’s disobedience functioned as the gateway for sin and death.²⁶ This implies that the potential for sin and death at least existed before Adam’s disobedience, but that they were not part of God’s original creation (see vv. 18–19).²⁷ The conjunction καί (“and”) which connects sin’s entrance to death’s entrance, introduces the “result that comes from what precedes.”²⁸ In other words, death entered the world as a result of sin (see also Wis 2:24).

²⁶ Similarly, Karl Heim, *Weltschöpfung und Weltende*, *Der evangelische Glaube und das Denken der Gegenwart* 6 (Hamburg: Furche, 1952), 142. See also Otto Michel, *Der Brief an die Römer*, KEK 4/10 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1955), 122; Otto Kuss, *Der Römerbrief*, 3 vols. (Regensburg: Pustet, 1957–1978), 1:227–28; Wilckens, *Römer*, 1:315. Recent scholarship argues that sin found its origin in the world through Adam’s action, characterized as transgression (v. 14), disobedience (v. 19), sin (v. 16), and trespass (vv. 15, 17–18). See Egon Brandenburger, *Adam und Christus: Exegetisch-religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung zu Röm. 5,12–21 (1. Kor. 15)*, WMANT 7 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1962), 159n7; Wolter, *Römer*, 1:343. Whereas the preposition διὰ followed by a genitive (“through”) would allow for such a reading, the lexical meaning of εἰσερχομαι (“to enter”) renders it unlikely, because it requires that the entering object exists before the actual entrance. Therefore, Heim’s reading is to be preferred.

²⁷ Similarly, C. Clifton II Black, “Pauline Perspectives on Death in Romans 5–8,” *JBL* 103 (1984): 413–33.

²⁸ “καί,” *BDAG* 494–96. Due to the syntactical challenge of locating the required apodosis to the protasis introduced by ὡσπερ (“just as”), Klaus Haacker argues that the καὶ (διὰ τῆς ἁμαρτίας) (“and [through sin]”) already introduces the apodosis, similar to οὕτως καὶ (“so also”) in other occasions. Thus, it reads, “just as sin entered through one human being, so also death through sin entered the world, namely through one human being.” As an example of this function of καί, he refers to John 6:57, see Klaus Haacker, *Der Brief des Paulus an die Römer*, THKNT 6 (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1999), 119. Against this view, Wolter observes that Rom 5:14, and certainly verses 18–19, hint at Paul’s interest in

Thus, Paul, in harmony with the Genesis narrative, sees the sinful act as the precedent to death.

Regarding the universality of sin and death, Paul argues that once sin and death enter the human realm, they inevitably become an ontological part of every human being. Sin and death's universality is evident by Paul's use of the terms πᾶς ("all") and διέρχομαι ("to come to") in Rom 5:12. Paul uses the adjective "all" twice, as he parallels Adam's sinful actions (A) that provide an entrance for death (B), with death arriving to "all human beings" (B') because²⁹ "all" have sinned (A').³⁰ The contrast between Adam as a single human being (A, B) and the reference to all human beings in (A', B') shows that Adam's disobedience, and the related subjugation to the rule of sin and death, is shared by Adam's entire offspring without exception. Furthermore, the verb διέρχομαι ("to come to") followed by the preposition εἰς ("into") expresses a "movement toward a destination."³¹ In other words, the prepositional phrase εἰς πάντας ἀνθρώπους ("into all human beings") identifies the entirety of humanity as death's destination. Thus, once sin and death entered the world, they immediately became universal entities. The ruling power of sin and death are not a result of humanity's present sinful actions, but a result of Adam's act.

exclusively comparing Adam with Jesus Christ, see Wolter, *Römer*, 1:342n3. Thus, the syntactical function of καὶ (διὰ τῆς ἁμαρτίας) is more likely a connective, coordinating the entrance of sin and death into the world.

²⁹ For more thorough discussions on the suggested meanings of ἐφ' ᾧ and why the causal reading is to be preferred, see Cranfield, *Romans*, 1:274–79; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 413–17; Longenecker, *Romans*, 587–90.

³⁰ Benedict Englezakis, "Romans 5:12–15 and the Pauline Teaching of the Lord's Death," *Bib* 58 (1977): 231–36; Dunn, *Romans*, 1:273; Wolter, *Römer*, 1:343; Schnabel, *Römer*, 1:557.

³¹ "διέρχομαι," *BDAG* 244. For instances where the preposition εἰς ("into") follows the verb, διέρχομαι ("to enter"), see 2 Cor 1:16. See also Mark 4:35; Luke 8:22; Acts 18:27; Josephus, *Ant.* 14.414.

Summary

The previous analysis shows that Adam's transgression resulted in humanity's spiritual death to God, the consequence of which was humanity's subjugation under the rule of sin and death. Sin and death were not part of God's original creation but entered the human realm and became universal ruling powers through Adam's disobedience. This unfortunate fate subsequently required the deliverance of humanity from the rule of sin and death, and atonement between God and humanity.

The Role of Christ's Death

This second section examines Paul's understanding of the role of Christ's death, along with its liberating and atoning properties.³² I tackle this subject in two steps. First, I analyze the liberating effect of Christ's death based on Gal 1:4; 1 Cor 5:6–8; and 11:23–26. Next, I analyze the atoning effect of Christ's death based on Rom 3:25; 8:3; 1 Cor 15:3; and 2 Cor 5:21. As a whole, this section contributes to a deeper understanding of the meaning of the phrase “body of Christ” in Rom 7:4, and shows how this “body” becomes the means through which the believer's death to the law becomes actualized.

³² Douglas A. Campbell also links Christ's death and resurrection with atonement and liberation. He states “Atonement is effected for Christians, in his [Paul's] view, as they participate in Christ's death *and* resurrection; this effects a much deeper liberation from the very power of Sin, not merely cleansing from sins. Christians are not merely enabled to live, purified, in the present world, but their very being is transformed and they enter a new world” (emphasis original). See Douglas A. Campbell, *The Deliverance of God: An Apocalyptic Rereading of Justification in Paul* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013), 709.

Christ's Death as the Means of Deliverance from the Universal Rule of Sin and Death

This subsection evaluates Paul's assertions of Christ's death as the means of deliverance from the universal rule of sin and death. In the following analysis, I highlight three passages (Gal 1:4; 1 Cor 5:6–8; 11:23–26) that propose Christ's death as the means of deliverance from the universal rule of sin and death.³³

Christ's Death as the Means of Deliverance (Gal 1:4)

In Gal 1:4, Paul refers to the liberating purpose of Christ's death, stating that Christ gave himself up ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν, ὅπως ἐξέληται ἡμᾶς ἐκ τοῦ αἰῶνος τοῦ ἐνεστώτος πονηροῦ (“for our sins, so that he may deliver us from the present evil age”).³⁴ The subordinated conjunction ὅπως (“so that”) indicates the purpose of Christ's action, namely that ἐξέληται ἡμᾶς (“he may deliver us”).³⁵ Paul's statement implies that a

³³ I exclude 1 Cor 15:3 and Rom 4:25 from my discussion because Paul's statements in these verses are general in nature. In 1 Cor 15:3, Paul states that Christ died ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν (“for our sins”). This prepositional phrase is the same one that appears in Gal 1:4. However, in Galatians, Paul adds a purpose clause for further clarification, stating, ὅπως ἐξέληται ἡμᾶς ἐκ τοῦ αἰῶνος τοῦ ἐνεστώτος πονηροῦ (“so that he delivers us from the evil age, which is present.”). This clarification is not present in 1 Cor 15:3, which allows a more general interpretation of Paul's statement. This general nature finds further support from the immediate context, where Paul provides a summary of the essentials of his gospel. The statement that Christ died for our sins constitutes the first part, complemented by a reference to his resurrection after three days (v. 4). Likewise, Paul's statement in Rom 4:25, reading [ὃς παρεδόθη διὰ τὰ παραπτώματα ἡμῶν καὶ ἠγέρθη διὰ τὴν δικαιοσύνην ἡμῶν (“[Christ], who was handed over because of our transgressions and raised because of our righteousness,”), remains general.

³⁴ The textual apparatus bears witness to the interchangeability of the prepositions περί (“for”) and ὑπὲρ (“for”) in this particular context. For Gal 1:4 important manuscripts, such as \mathfrak{P}^{46} \aleph^* A D F G K L P Ψ 104. 1739. 1881 read the prepositional phrase with περί instead of ὑπὲρ, appearing in \mathfrak{B}^{51} \aleph^1 B H 0278. 6. 33. 81. 326. 365. 630. 1175. 1241. 1505. 2464. In regard to the general meaning of the verse, there is no difference with either of the prepositions. Murray J. Harris notes that “generally, ὑπὲρ is more common with persons and περί with things.” See Murray J. Harris, *Prepositions and Theology in the Greek New Testament: An Essential Reference Guide for Exegesis* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 211. This characteristic of the prepositions may be one of the reasons for the exchange.

³⁵ In other instances, the verb ἐξαίρέω (“to deliver”) refers to liberating actions (Acts 7:10, 34; 12:11; 23:27). See “ἐξαίρέω,” *BDAG* 344.

specific power is in charge. The attributive adjective πονηρός (“evil”) that negatively qualifies the age implies that sin is this ruling power.³⁶ Thus, Gal 1:4 states that the purpose of Christ’s death is to provide deliverance to humanity from the rule of sin.

Christ’s Death as the Means of Deliverance (1 Cor 5:6–8)

In 1 Cor 5:6–8, Paul uses the imagery of leaven when addressing a case of severe sexual immorality within the Corinthian church. The phrase in verse 6, reading οὐκ οἶδατε (“do you not know”) indicates that Paul recalls common knowledge when he refers to the power of a little leaven leavening an entire lump of dough (see Plutarch, *Quaest. rom.* 289e–f).³⁷ In 1 Cor 5:6, the imagery of leaven refers to the toleration of sexual immorality, which has the power to negatively affect the entire Corinthian church. Therefore, Paul gives the Corinthian believers the advice to ἐκκαθάρατε (“remove”) the old leaven, which means to no longer tolerate sexual immorality in their midst.

Paul’s advice to remove the leaven is an allusion to the festivals of Passover and Unleavened Bread. During the Passover celebration, which constitutes the first day of the week-long festival of Unleavened Bread, God instructed Moses to have the Israelites cleanse their houses from any leaven (Exod 12:15; Deut 16:4). For seven consecutive

³⁶ For a similar apocalyptic reading of Gal 1:4, see J. Christiaan Beker, *Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980), 256–57. See also Martyn, *Galatians*, 88–91.

³⁷ Hans Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians: A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians*, trans. James W. Leitch, *Hermeneia—A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975), 98; Wolfgang Schrage, *Der Erste Brief an die Korinther*, 4 vols., EKKNT 7 (Zurich: Bänziger; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1991–2001), 1:379. Leaven refers to the part of the dough which the baker left to ferment. Adding a small amount of this old, fermented leaven to the unleavened dough causes the leavening of the whole dough in a short amount of time. See Paul D. Gardner, *1 Corinthians*, ZECNT 7 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2018), 232.

days they were not allowed to eat any leavened bread (Exod 12:15, 18–20).³⁸ These festivals had their origins in Israel’s hasty departure from Egypt. Having cleansed their houses of all leaven, the Israelites left Egypt the next day with only unleavened dough in their kneading bowls (vv. 34, 39; 13:3). The festivals served as a yearly reminder of Israel’s deliverance from its slavery in Egypt (12:17; 23:15; 34:18, see also Josephus, *J.W.* 4.402). The celebration of the festivals of Passover and Unleavened Bread was a privilege and obligation, exclusively restricted to the Israelites. Foreigners who did not share in this experience of deliverance were not allowed to participate in the festivals (Exod 12:43–49; Num 9:14; see 2 Chr 30:18–20).³⁹

The application of the festival terminology to the Corinthian believers shows that Paul considers them eligible to celebrate these festivals (see 1 Cor 5:8). Thus, Paul implies that the Corinthian believers have experienced a deliverance similar to that of Israel. Whereas the Israelites experienced a deliverance from their slavery in Egypt, the Corinthian believers experienced a deliverance from their slavery to sin.⁴⁰ The Corinthians’ deliverance from their slavery to sin finds further support in Paul’s qualification of the ζύμη παλαιᾶ (“old leaven”) with κακία (“malice”) and πονηρία (“evil”) and the νέον φύραμα (“new dough”) with εὐλικρίνεια (“sincerity”) and ἀλήθεια (“truth”) in 1 Cor 5:8. While the old leaven represents behavior from the period of

³⁸ For other references to this custom, see Exod 13:6–7; 23:15; 34:18; Lev 23:6–8; Num 28:17; Deut 16:3, 8; Ezek 45:21; Ezra 6:22; 2 Chr 30:13, 21; 35:17; 1 Esdr. 1:17; 7:15.

³⁹ The only exceptions were resident aliens (so-called “sojourners”). They could participate in Passover if they were circumcised (Exod 12:43–49).

⁴⁰ Similarly, Eckhard J. Schnabel, *Der erste Brief des Paulus an die Korinther*, HTA (Witten: Brockhaus; Giessen: Brunnen, 2010), 289; Schrage, *Korinther*, 1:380–83.

slavery to sin, the new dough represents behavior after the Christian is liberated from slavery to sin. In verse 7, Paul identifies the whole Corinthian church as unleavened by stating plainly, ἐστε ἄζυμοι (“you are unleavened”). The continuous aspect of the present tense of the predicate implies that Paul considered them to have already acquired this state. Thus, Paul’s imagery of leaven and unleavened bread critiques the Corinthian believers because they do not act as people who have been freed, but people who remain under the rule of sin.⁴¹ Paul’s reference to the festivals of Passover and Unleavened Bread indicates that the Corinthian’s tolerance of sinful actions is similar to Israel’s return to Egyptian slavery.

Regarding Paul’s allusion to the festival of Passover in particular, Paul states in 1 Cor 5:7 that τὸ πάσχα ἡμῶν ἐτύθη Χριστός (“our Passover, Christ, has been sacrificed”). Due to the proximity of the Passover festival to the festival of Unleavened Bread, Paul’s shift to the festival of Passover is unproblematic.⁴² Paul identifies Christ as τὸ πάσχα ἡμῶν (“our Passover”). Dean O. Wenthe points to four options for the translation of the term τὸ πάσχα.⁴³ First, it can refer to the combination of the festivals of

⁴¹ Archibald Robertson and Alfred Plummer summarize Paul’s command in these words, “Rid yourselves of these infected and infectious remains of your unconverted past.” Archibald Robertson and Alfred Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary of the First Epistle of St Paul to the Corinthians*, 2nd ed., ICC 32 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1914), 101. See also Schrage, *Korinther*, 1:381; Schnabel, *Korinther*, 289. The concept of not acting as one who is liberated, but continuing the lifestyle of a slave is already present in Num 15:32–36, where the man gathering sticks acts like a slave in Egypt. See Mathilde Frey, “The Sabbath in the Pentateuch: An Exegetical and Theological Study” (PhD diss., Andrews University, 2011), 130–31.

⁴² Wolfgang Fenske argues that Paul’s use of the different metaphors shows a lack of concentration. See Wolfgang Fenske, *Die Argumentation des Paulus in ethischen Herausforderungen* (Göttingen: V&R Unipress, 2004), 76. For recognition of Paul’s careful and intentional handling of the metaphors in 1 Cor 5:6–8, see Schnabel, *Korinther*, 289.

⁴³ Dean O. Wenthe, “Exegetical Study of 1 Corinthians 5:7b,” *Springfielder* 38.2 (1974): 134–40.

Passover and Unleavened Bread. Second, it can indicate only the one day known as the Passover (15 Nisan). Third, it can describe the sacrificed Passover lamb on this particular day. Fourth, it can refer to the Christian's Easter feast. The combination of "Passover" with the verb "has been sacrificed" not only favors the translation of "Passover lamb," but also places the focus on the shared death experience of both the lamb and Christ.⁴⁴

The Passover lamb significantly contributed to Israel's deliverance by sparing Israel's firstborn children from being killed during the tenth plague (Exod 11:1–8). God instructed the Israelites to sacrifice between the evenings a blameless, one-year-old, male goat or sheep (12:5–6; Deut 16:2). Its blood was to be collected and wiped on the door frame of each house (Exod 12:7, 22). Following this, they were to roast the animal over a fire, and every Israelite was to take part in eating the entire animal (vv. 8–11, 47, 50; Num 9:13; Deut 16:4). Those who followed these instructions were spared from the tenth plague, the death of the firstborn of every household (Exod 12:12–13, 23, 27).

The allusion to the festival of Passover in 1 Cor 5:7 is limited only to the liberating role of Christ's death. Numerous scholars have succumbed to the temptation of filling this brief allusion with the entire soteriological function of Christ's death.⁴⁵ Their main argument builds on the account in Ezek 45:22, where the Passover celebration is accompanied by a sin offering for the prince and the people (see also Num 28:22). Based on this information, they conclude that the Passover provided atonement for sins,

⁴⁴ Wenthe, "1 Corinthians 5:7b," 134–35.

⁴⁵ For example, Dunn, *Theology*, 216–17; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* AB 32 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 242.

therefore in 1 Cor 5:7, Christ's identification with the Passover lamb must resemble these atoning characteristics.

However, there are two reasons why I argue that the atoning role of Christ's death is not present in this verse. First, both Num 28:22 and Ezek 45:22 do not prove that the sin offering of the young bull was the actual Passover sacrifice. Instead, it was part of the sacrifices that accompanied the ceremonies of the festival of Unleavened Bread. Das even argues that, until the first century CE, no evidence exists in any Jewish literature showing that Jews understood the Passover lamb to be connected with the atonement.⁴⁶ Similarly, George Buchanan Gray points out that "the Paschal victim was not a sin-offering or regarded as a means of expiating or removing sin."⁴⁷ Jane Lancaster Patterson also states that "atonement is not one of the *principal* entailments of the Passover."⁴⁸ Second, the immediate context of 1 Cor 5:7 points to the Israelites' deliverance from sin's rule (vv. 6 and 8), while references to the concept of atonement are lacking. Paul's presentation of Christ as the symbolic Passover lamb of the believer, points to the believer's deliverance from both the rule, and deadly consequences, caused by sin.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ Das, *Paul*, 124–25.

⁴⁷ George Buchanan Gary, *Sacrifice in the Old Testament: Its Theory and Practice* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1925), 397. Christian A. Eberhart also argues that "rituals lacking the burning rite on the main altar do not count as sacrifices. Therefore, the Passover (Exod 12:1–28), which is an apotropaic ritual, . . . is absent from the list of sacrifices in Lev 1–7. See Christian A. Eberhart, "To Atone or Not to Atone: Remarks on the Day of Atonement Rituals According to Leviticus 16 and the Meaning of Atonement," in *Sacrifice, Cult, and Atonement in Early Judaism and Christianity: Constituents and Critique*, eds. Henrietta L. Wiley and Christian A. Eberhart, RBS 85 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2017), 197–231.

⁴⁸ Jane Lancaster Patterson, *Keeping the Feast: Metaphors of Sacrifice in 1 Corinthians and Philippians*, ECL 16 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2015), 134.

⁴⁹ Sharyn Dowd and Elizabeth Struthers Malbon have argued that Mark also presents the role of Christ's death in reference to deliverance from the rule of sin. See Sharyn Dowd and Elizabeth Struthers

Christ's Death as the Means of Deliverance (1 Cor 11:23–26)

The reference to the Lord's Supper in 1 Cor 11:23–26 has a twofold function in Paul's rebuke. The first function of the Lord's Supper in verses 23–26 is more prominent and points to the sharp contrast between Christ's attitude and the selfishness of the Corinthian believers. In verses 17–34, Paul addresses the social wrongs which often took place during fellowship meals at the Corinthian church.⁵⁰ Some scholars have argued that when the believers gathered for the Lord's Supper, they also shared a fellowship meal, bringing food from home. Those who were better off financially would often shame the poorer members for the quality and quantity of their food.⁵¹ As part of his rebuke to this practice, Paul recites the Words of Institution of the Lord's Supper (vv. 23–26). Paul does not elaborate on the meaning of the Lord's Supper, but instead uses it to argue that when believers gather for a fellowship meal during the Lord's Supper, they should ἐκδέχομαι (“receive” or “entertain”) one another, meaning a communal sharing of their food

Malbon, “The Significance of Jesus’ Death in Mark: Narrative Context and Authorial Audience,” *JBL* 125 (2006): 271–97.

⁵⁰ Wolfgang Schrage notices that the Lord's Supper, as such, is not the primary concern of the passage, but instead a focus on its ecclesiological and ethical consequences for congregations. See Schrage, *Korinther*, 3:9. For a concise overview and discussion on the three suggested historical reconstructions and their variants, see Schnabel, *Korinther*, 626–29. See also A. Andrew Das, “1 Corinthians 11:17–34,” 188–97.

⁵¹ See Bruce W. Winter, “The Lord's Supper at Corinth: An Alternative Reconstruction,” *RTR* 37 (1978): 73–82; David E. Garland, *1 Corinthians*, BECNT 7 (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 539–42; Schnabel, *Korinther*, 637–41; Das, “1 Corinthians 11:17–34,” 188–97. A different possibility is that the hosts who were better off and more socially connected within the congregational gathering had already finished their meal by the time the socially impoverished ones arrived at their house. See Schrage, *Korinther*, 3:23–27; Gardner, *1 Corinthians*, 500–20.

(v. 33).⁵² The unwillingness among the Corinthian believers to share their food diametrically contradicted the spirit of the Lord's Supper (see Luke 22:24–30), as well as Christ's willingness to share his body and his blood (vv. 24–25), referring to Christ's death (v. 26) for the salvation of humanity.

The second function of the Lord's Supper in verses 23–27 points to the festivals of Passover and Unleavened Bread, which entail the liberating role of Christ's death. This type of reproof toward the Corinthian believers is more subtle. By identifying the bread with his own body, Jesus applies the symbolic meaning of unleavened bread at the festivals (Exod 13:3, 6–9; Deut 16:2–3) to his own death (1 Cor 11:24), framing it as a symbolic Passover meal.⁵³ Joachim Jeremias agrees with this interpretation, citing fourteen reasons why the initial Lord's Supper was considered to be a Passover meal.⁵⁴ Hans Conzelmann disagrees with Jeremias. He argues that “the Supper in the Pauline version is not characterized as a Passover meal”⁵⁵ since Paul's presentation of Christ as the Passover lamb in 5:7 does not move toward the Lord's Supper.⁵⁶ However, a closer

⁵² For the rationale to interpret ἐκδέχομαι as “to receive” or “to entertain” one another instead of the more commonly used “wait for” one another, see Bruce W. Winter, *After Paul Left Corinth: The Influence of Secular Ethics and Social Change* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 151–52; Das, “1 Corinthians 11:17–34,” 190–93.

⁵³ Brant Pitre, *Jesus and the Last Supper* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015), 406–7; 417–21; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel according to Luke: Introduction, Translation, and Notes*, 2 vols., AB 28–28A (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1981–85), 2:1391–92.

⁵⁴ Joachim Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, trans. Norman Perrin (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1966), 41–62.

⁵⁵ Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 197.

⁵⁶ Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 197n43.

look at Paul’s terminology reveals that Paul wants his readers to hear Passover-related overtones when reading the account of the Lord’s Supper.⁵⁷

Some examples include the temporal prepositional phrase in verse 23 ἐν τῇ νυκτὶ (“during the night”), which not only records the initiation of the Lord’s Supper (Matt 26:20; Mark 14:17), but is also a particular characteristic of the festival of Passover.⁵⁸ Additionally, the words related to the noun ἀνάμνησις (“remembrance”), which appear in 1 Cor 11:24–25 are used within the Passover tradition.⁵⁹ The element of remembrance is associated with the liberating character of the festivals of Passover and Unleavened Bread.⁶⁰ Also, the verb καταγγέλλω (“proclaim”) is often used in extra-biblical religious texts to denote “the proclamation of a sacred festival.”⁶¹ Paul is the only one who uses καταγγέλλω as part of the Lord’s Supper account (v. 26). Finally, Paul’s use of new covenant language (v. 25) links the Lord’s Supper to the festival of Passover, due to the close connection between covenant and Passover. Michael Patrick Barber observes that God’s deliverance of Israel from their slavery in Egypt is often mentioned alongside his

⁵⁷ For the first four connections between the Lord’s Supper and the Passover, I am indebted to Michael Patrick Barber, “The Paschal Nature of the Lord’s Supper in 1 Corinthians and the Implications for Understanding the Antioch Incident” (paper presented at the SBL Annual Meeting, Denver, 18 November 2018), 1–6.

⁵⁸ Exod 12:10; 34:25; Deut 16:4, 6. See also Jub 49:12; 11QTemple^a 17:6–9; *m. Pesahim* 5:10; 10:1. See Pitre, *Last Supper*, 316–18; Patterson, *Keeping the Feast*, 150–51.

⁵⁹ See μνημόσυνον (“memory”) in Exod 12:14; 13:9; μνημονεύω (“to remember”) in verse 3; μμνήσκομαι (“to remember”) in Deut 16:3; ὑπόμνημα (“reminder”) in Philo, *Spec. Laws.* 2.146; μνήμη (“memory”) in Josephus, *Ant.* 2.317. See also Pitre, *Last Supper*, 419–21.

⁶⁰ Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 2:1391–92.

⁶¹ See Schniewind, “ἀγγελία, ἀγγέλλω, κτλ.,” *TDNT* 1:56–72.

covenantal fidelity.⁶² Therefore, it is common for the festival of Passover to be a part of any narratives focusing on covenant renewals.⁶³

As Barber correctly concludes, “Taken individually, none of these connections are sufficient to establish Paul’s awareness of a paschal context for the Last Supper. Taken cumulatively, however, they form a weighty case in favor of such a view.”⁶⁴ Thus, Paul presents the Lord’s Supper as the believer’s sacred festival, commemorating Christ’s death as the Passover lamb that effects the believer’s liberation from the rule of sin.⁶⁵

Christ’s Death as the Means of Atonement

Scholarship agrees that Rom 3:25; 8:3; 1 Cor 15:3; and 2 Cor 5:21 address the atoning role of Christ’s death. In this subsection, I address the question of whether Paul corresponds Christ’s death to the Levitical atonement system. The Levitical process of

⁶² Exod 2:24; 6:4–7; Lev 26:9–13, 45; Deut 7:8–9; 29:25; 2 Kgs 17:34–39; 2 Chr 5:10.

⁶³ Josh 3:7–5:12; 2 Kgs 23:21–23; 2 Chr 29; 34–35. See Barber, “Lord’s Supper,” 4.

⁶⁴ Barber, “Lord’s Supper,” 4. Note that Patterson even considers it “perverse to continue to deny connections with the Passover sacrifice.” See Patterson, *Keeping the Feast*, 150.

⁶⁵ The prepositional phrase ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν (“for you”), has led many scholars to conclude that Christ’s death in verses 24 and 26 carries a sacrificial meaning, either in an atoning or vicarious sense. See Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 198; Schrage, *Korinther*, 3:35; Schnabel, *Korinther*, 440. Some scholars have pointed out that the righteous suffering servant (e.g., Isa 53) sheds light on the meaning of the prepositional phrase. Thus, they favor a vicarious nature of Christ’s death. See Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 551; Ellen Bradshaw Aitken, “τὰ δρώμενα καὶ τὰ λεγόμενα: The Eucharistic Memory of Jesus’ Words in First Corinthians,” *HTR* 90 (1997): 359–70; Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians*, 440; Gardner, *1 Corinthians*, 510. However, Paul’s presentation of the Lord’s Supper as a Passover emphasizes the liberating aspect of Christ’s death.

For a discussion on Paul’s understanding of Sin (cosmic power) versus sins (human acting) in 1 Corinthians, see Alexandra R. Brown, “Letters from the Battlefield: Cosmic Sin and Captive Sinners in 1 Corinthians,” in *Sin and Its Remedy in Paul*, ed. Nijay K. Gupta and John K. Goodrich, CPT (Eugene OR: Cascade, 2020) 63–80. Brown acknowledges that in 1 Corinthians Paul presents Christ’s death as a liberating event for human beings being held captive by the cosmic power of sin. However, her discussion is limited to these texts that exclusively mention the term “(to) sin.”

atonement serves as a model to explain God’s effort to effect atonement with humanity and undo the separation between sinful human beings and himself.

Leviticus presents a two-phased atonement process.⁶⁶ The first phase consisted of purification offerings (typically, and in this study, referred to as sin offerings) throughout the year.⁶⁷ The purpose of these offerings was to purge the physical, ritual impurities and sins from the offerer, resulting in the offerer’s ritual purity and the Lord’s forgiveness of his or her sins.⁶⁸ Thus, a sin offering “is part of a process of ‘atonement’ or reconciliation with God.”⁶⁹

The second phase consisted of yearly sin offerings on the Day of Atonement, involving a blood rite performed on the mercy seat (*hilasterion*). These sin offerings served to purge the sanctuary from the physical, ritual impurities and sins that might have accumulated at the sanctuary throughout the year. This yearly ritual completed the atonement process, effecting moral purity for Israel (Lev 16:30).⁷⁰

⁶⁶ Regarding the purpose and phases of Israel’s sacrificial system, I base my work on Roy E. Gane. See Roy E. Gane, *Cult and Character: Purification Offerings, Day of Atonement, and Theodicy* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2005). He summarizes phase one with the following words, “An outer-altar purification offering for a person who is physically impure (טמא) purges (כפר) this ritual contamination from (privative מן) the offerer, with the result that he/she is pure (טהר). An outer-altar or outer-sanctum purification offering for sin purges (כפר) this from (privative מן) the offerer, following which YHWH forgives (סלח) the sinner.” See Gane, *Cult and Character*, 275.

⁶⁷ Jacob Milgrom has pointed out the mistranslation of הַטָּעֹת as “sin offering,” pointing out that the הַטָּעֹת sacrifice “is prescribed for persons and objects who cannot have sinned.” Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, 3 vols., AB 3 (New York: Doubleday, 1991–2001), 1:253. For this reason, he suggests translating הַטָּעֹת as “purification offering.” However, in the current literature, “sin offering” still seems to be the more common term that is used. Therefore, this study renders הַטָּעֹת as “sin offering.”

⁶⁸ Gane, *Cult and Character*, 275.

⁶⁹ Hyam Maccoby, *Ritual and Morality: The Ritual Purity System and Its Place in Judaism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 171.

⁷⁰ Gane, *Cult and Character*, 275.

Christ's Death as Sin Offering (Rom 8:3)

The object of interest is the prepositional phrase *περὶ ἁμαρτίας* (“for sin” or “as a sin offering”) in Rom 8:3. This prepositional phrase is one of two qualifications of God’s sending his Son. First, Christ was sent *ἐν ὁμοιώματι σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας* (“in the likeness of sinful flesh”) and second, *περὶ ἁμαρτίας* (“for sin” or “as a sin offering”). If *περὶ ἁμαρτίας* means “for sin,” Paul’s statement is general in the sense that Christ came to solve humanity’s problem of sin. If *περὶ ἁμαρτίας* means “as a sin offering,” Paul’s statement is more specific in the sense that Christ as a blameless sin offering came to purge humanity’s sin, and thus to atone sinful humanity with God. These three prepositional phrases—“in the likeness of sinful flesh” and “for sin” or “as a sin offering”—describe the role of Christ sent by God, so that God could condemn sin in the flesh.⁷¹ The following analysis addresses the ambiguity in the translation of *περὶ ἁμαρτίας* as “for sin” or “as a sin offering.”

The lexical analysis of the phrase *περὶ ἁμαρτίας* in the New Testament preserves two meanings: “for sin” and “as a sin offering.” Besides Rom 8:3, the phrase *περὶ ἁμαρτίας* appears seven times in the New Testament. In four instances, it refers to “sin” (John 8:46; 16:8–9; Heb 10:18) and in three instances to a “sin offering” (Heb 10:6, 8; 13:11).⁷²

⁷¹ See Wilckens, *Römer*, 2:124. The finite verb is *κατέκρινεν* (“he condemned”), with *ὁ θεός* (“God”) as its subject. Paul expresses the sending of the Son in the preceding participial clause. Syntactically, this participle indicates “the means by which God was able to condemn sin.” See Thielman, *Romans*, 380.

⁷² Heb 10:6 and 8 contain a quote from Ps 40:7 (engl. v. 6; LXX 39:7).

The lexical analysis of the phrase *περὶ ἁμαρτίας* in the LXX favors the meaning “sin offering.” In the LXX *περὶ ἁμαρτίας* appears fifty-eight times.⁷³ In thirty-one instances *περὶ ἁμαρτίας* renders the Hebrew term *לחטות* (“for sin” or “as a sin offering”).⁷⁴ In twenty instances *περὶ ἁμαρτίας* renders the Hebrew term *חטאת* (“sin”) or (“sin offering”).⁷⁵ In four instances *περὶ ἁμαρτίας* lacks correspondence in the Hebrew text.⁷⁶ In two instances (2 Kgs 12:17; Isa 53:10) *περὶ ἁμαρτίας* renders the Hebrew term *עֲוֹן* (“guilt offering”).⁷⁷ Finally, in Ps 40:7 (engl. v. 6; LXX 39:7) *περὶ ἁμαρτίας* renders the Hebrew term *לחטות* (“sin offering”).⁷⁸ Aware that *לחטות* can mean “sin” as well as “sin offering” Wright suggests a “sliding scale of usage, from the meaning ‘sin’ to the meaning ‘sin-offering.’”⁷⁹ Despite the proposed sliding scale for the meaning of *περὶ ἁμαρτίας* Wright identifies the meaning of *περὶ ἁμαρτίας* in most instances as “sin

⁷³ Wright counts fifty-four, leaving out Num 28:30; 29:25; Job 1:5; Bar 1:10. See N. T. Wright, *The Climax of the Covenant: Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 222.

⁷⁴ Lev 5:6, 7, 11; 7:37; 9:2–3; 12:6, 8; 16:3, 5; 23:19; Num 6:11; 7:16, 22, 28, 34, 40, 46, 52, 58, 64, 70, 76, 82, 87; 8:8, 15:24, 27; 28:15 Ezek 43:19; 2 Chr 29:21.

⁷⁵ Lev 5:11; 14:22, 31; 15:15, 30; 16:9; Num 8:12; 28:22, 30; 29:5, 11, 16, 19, 22, 25, 28, 31, 34, 38; Ezra 8:35.

⁷⁶ Bar 1:10; 2 Macc 12:43. The reference in Job 1:5 seems to represent a different Hebrew *Vorlage* when compared to the Masoretic Text. Finally, Ezra 6:17 is in Aramaic.

⁷⁷ In 2 Kgs 12:17, the Hebrew reads *תְּרֵיִסִּים חֲטָוֹת וְתְרֵיִסִּים עֲוֹן* (“money for a guilt offering and money for sin offerings”). The LXX translates this phrase as *ἀργύριον περὶ ἁμαρτίας καὶ ἀργύριον περὶ πλημμελείας* (“money for a sin offering and money for a guilt offering”). Therefore, either the LXX used a different *Vorlage* in which the two nouns were in reverse order, or the translation got mixed up, so that the LXX translates *לחטות* as (“sin offering”). This would be odd because *περὶ ἁμαρτίας* typically reads as *περὶ πλημμελείας*, a term normally used for *עֲוֹן* (“guilt offering”). See Lev 5:15–16, 18, 25; 6:10; 7:1–2, 5, 7, 37; 14:12–14, 17, 24–25, 28; 19:21–22; Num 6:12; 18:9.

⁷⁸ *לחטות* normally refers to serious sins (Gen 20:9; Exod 32:21, 30–31; 2 Kgs 17:21; Pss 32:1; 40:7; 109:7). However, verse 7a, reads *חֹטֵאת וְזִבְחֵי* (“sacrifice and offering”) and *לחטות וְזִבְחֵי* (“burnt offering and sin offering”), thereby constraining the translation of *לחטות* to “sin offering.”

⁷⁹ Wright, *Climax*, 221.

offering.” He proposes that only in nine instances⁸⁰ the meaning of *περὶ ἁμαρτίας* may be “nearer to the meaning ‘for sin,’ but even if this were so, the phrase would still have strong and unavoidable sacrificial associations.”⁸¹ Wright tends to be overly cautious. With the exceptions of 2 Kgs 12:17 and Isa 53:10, the contexts of all references validate the meaning of *περὶ ἁμαρτίας* as “sin offering.”⁸² Thus, whereas the LXX univocally renders *περὶ ἁμαρτίας* as “sin offering,”⁸³ the New Testament preserves “for sin” as a legitimate translation.

Since the lexical analysis cannot completely rule out the meaning “for sin” as the meaning of the phrase *περὶ ἁμαρτίας* in Rom 8:3, one must consider the context. Wright argues that the context of verse 3 favors the meaning “as a sin offering.” Leviticus 4 and Num 15 show that a sin offering was offered among others for unwittingly committed sins. Wright indicates that sins committed unwittingly or in ignorance “is precisely what we find in the context of Romans 8:3.”⁸⁴ In verses 1–4 describes the solution of the previously addressed issues, which are sinful actions committed ignorantly and unwittingly (7:7–25). The believer delights in the law of God but continues transgressing

⁸⁰ Lev 5:6; 11 (twice); 16:9; Num 15:27; 2 Esdras 6:17; 2 Chr 29:21; Ezek 43:21; 2 Macc 12:43.

⁸¹ Wright, *Climax*, 222.

⁸² A. Andrew Das argues that Wright’s “concession was unnecessary” since most biblical commentators “take most or all nine as referring to the sin-offering, since in each instance a sacrificial animal is identified in the context.” See A. Andrew Das, “Περὶ ἁμαρτίας as the Sin-Offering in Rom 8:3: A Critique,” in *Scripture Texts, and Tracings in Romans*, eds. Linda L. Belleville and A. Andrew Das (Lanham, MD: Lexington/Fortress Academic, 2021), 67–81, esp 68.

⁸³ As does Philo, see Philo, *Spec. Laws*. 190, 226, 247; Philo, *Names*. 233–34.

⁸⁴ Wright, *Climax*, 223.

it (v. 22). In the Levitical sacrificial system, the sin offering would have been the appropriate means of seeking atonement.⁸⁵

While Richard B. Hays follows Wright’s argument in stating that “περὶ ἁμαρτίας in its context in Rom. 8.3 must be a metaphorical reference to the Torah’s offering for unwilling sin,”⁸⁶ Das rejects Wright’s contextual argument. Das argues that the translation “sin offering” is only valid when the respective syntagmatic markers are present.⁸⁷ He points out that Paul “never offers any of the syntagmatic markers for a sin-offering,”⁸⁸ but presents sin in Rom 5–8 as “an oppressive, ruling power over humanity.”⁸⁹ Das argues that the context implies a general meaning of περὶ ἁμαρτίας as “for sin.”⁹⁰

Das’s contextual observations of the lack of syntagmatic markers in 8:3 and Paul’s presentation of sin as the oppressive ruling power in Rom 5–7 are correct. However, they are not sufficiently strong to render Wright’s observations invalid. Wright has shown a strong association between the experience of the “I” in 7:7–25 and the Old

⁸⁵ Wright, *Climax*, 223–24.

⁸⁶ Richard B. Hays, “On the Rebound: A Response to Critiques of *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*,” in *Paul and the Scriptures of Israel*, eds. Craig A. Evans and James A. Sanders, JSNTSup 83 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), 70–96.

⁸⁷ Das suggests syntagmatic markers such as “ὄλοκαύτωμα, θυσία, θυσιαστήριον, ἱερεύς, the verb προσφέρω (for a priest’s bringing or offering the sacrificial animal), or a sacrificial animal (μόσχος, χίμαρος, or περιστερά).” See Das, “Περὶ Ἁμαρτίας,” 70, see also 76.

⁸⁸ Das, “Περὶ Ἁμαρτίας,” 76.

⁸⁹ Das, “Περὶ Ἁμαρτίας,” 75.

⁹⁰ Similarly, Patrick McMurray argues that no compelling reason exists to see a reference to the sin offering in Rom 8:3. See Patrick McMurray, *Sacrifice, Brotherhood, and the Body: Abraham and the Nations in Romans* (Lanham, MD: Lexington/Fortress Academic, 2021), 45–56.

Testament concept of the sin offering to remedy sin that is unwittingly committed (Lev 4). The strong association between these experiences renders a clear syntagmatic marker unnecessary. Additionally, the context of Rom 5–8 not only refers to sin’s ruling power, but to the atoning effect of Christ’s death with respect to the human-divine relationship. Romans 8:1 reads that οὐδὲν ἄρα νῦν κατάκριμα τοῖς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ (“now there is no condemnation for those in Christ”). Condemnation enters the world due to Adam’s disobedience (5:16, 18), but Christ’s death, as an atoning sin offering, removes this condemnation and restores the human-divine relationship.

Furthermore, Paul’s choice to qualify the sending of Christ to earth with *περὶ ἁμαρτίας* indicates a high level of intentionality. When Paul refers to a more general aspect of the relationship between Christ’s death and sin, he uses *ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν* (“for our sins”) as in 1 Cor 15:3 and Gal 1:4,⁹¹ or *διὰ τὰ παραπτώματα ἡμῶν* (“because of our sins”) as in Rom 4:25. In Paul’s use of *περὶ ἁμαρτίας*, the particular combination of *περὶ* followed by the genitive singular of *ἁμαρτία* is unique, which leads Wolter to the conclusion that *περὶ ἁμαρτίας* in 8:3 intentionally echoes its sacrificial use in the LXX.⁹²

Although it is not possible in verse 3 to completely exclude the meaning “for sin” from the phrase *περὶ ἁμαρτίας*, I find the arguments for the meaning “as a sin offering” to be more convincing, on both lexical and contextual grounds. The role of Christ’s death in verse 3 corresponds to the purifying and atoning role of the Levitical sin offering, which

⁹¹ The preposition *ὑπὲρ* (“for”) followed by *ἁμαρτία* (“sin”) can also refer to a “sin offering” (Ezek 40:39; 43:22, 25; 44:29; 45:17, 22–23, 25; 46:20). However, it only appears in the LXX translation of Ezekiel. Across the entire LXX, far more instances tend to read *περὶ ἁμαρτίας*.

⁹² Wolter, *Römer*, 1:478–79.

implies Christ's blamelessness, similar to the unblemished physical quality of the Levitical sin offering (see e.g., Lev 22:19–25). Christ as a blameless sin offering enables God to condemn sin in the life of a sinful human being (vv. 1–3).⁹³

Christ's Death as Sin Offering (2 Cor 5:21)

The phrase of interest is the object complement ἁμαρτίαν (“sin” or “a sin offering”) in 2 Cor 5:21. Paul's statement reads, τὸν μὴ γνόντα ἁμαρτίαν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἁμαρτίαν ἐποίησεν (“he [God] made the one who did not know sin, sin/a sin offering for us”). The verb ποιέω (“to do”) takes on a double accusative in the form of an object-complement construction.⁹⁴ The participial clause τὸν μὴ γνόντα ἁμαρτίαν (“the one not knowing sin”) is the direct object and refers to Christ (v. 20). The anarthrous noun ἁμαρτίαν (“sin” or “a sin offering”) which complements the direct object is the object complement. If ἁμαρτίαν means “sin,” Paul states that Christ “came to stand in that relation with God which normally is the result of sin, estranged from God and the object of his wrath.”⁹⁵ If ἁμαρτίαν means “sin offering,” Paul states that Christ, who was as blameless as the Levitical sin offerings, purged humanity's sin so that God can bestow his righteousness to the believer.⁹⁶ The following analysis addresses the ambiguity in the translation of ἁμαρτίαν as (“sin” or “a sin offering”). I discuss three arguments against

⁹³ For a detailed discussion on the meaning of the prepositional phrase ἐν τῇ σαρκί (“in the flesh”) in Rom 8:3, see page 219.

⁹⁴ Wallace, *Grammar*, 183n24; 186. See also Reimund Bieringer and Jan Lambrecht, *Studies on 2 Corinthians*, BETL 122 (Leuven: Leuven University Press; Leuven: Peeters, 1994), 473.

⁹⁵ C. K. Barrett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, BNTC 8 (London: Black, 1973; repr., Peabody, MA: Hendrickson 2008), 180.

⁹⁶ Ralph P. Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 2nd ed., WBC 40 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014), 317–18.

the sacrificial reading and present four arguments in favor of the sacrificial reading of verse 21.

The sacrificial reading of ἁμαρτίαν in verse 21 has lost its dominant position in scholarship for three reasons.⁹⁷ First, two different meanings for two instances of the same noun within a range of four words is unlikely.⁹⁸ However, grammatically it would not be impossible to find two different meanings for two instances of the same noun, within a range of four words. Furthermore, in agreement with the Masoretic Text, the LXX text of Lev 4:3 uses the phrase περὶ τῆς ἁμαρτίας αὐτοῦ (“for his sin” or “as his sin offering”), once for the sin of the High Priest, and once for the sin offering that he was required to offer. Second, the verb ποιέω (“to do”) in relation to the performance of sacrifice is atypical.⁹⁹ However, in Leviticus the verb פָּעַל (“to do”) is used to refer to performing a sacrifice.¹⁰⁰ Besides, Paul’s focus is not on God as an offering priest, but on the atoning role of Christ’s death (2 Cor 5:21). Third, the contrast between “sin” and

⁹⁷ For a discussion of alternative interpretations that are argued for ἁμαρτίαν, see Bieringer and Lambrecht, *2 Corinthians*, 473–95. For Das’s refutation of the sacrificial reading, see Das, *Paul*, 128–32. Das’s concern with the sacrificial reading is based on the view that alternative models of understanding Christ’s death are far more accessible to the Gentile readers of these letters, as presented most recently in McMurry’s work (see, McMurry, *Sacrifice*) or earlier in the Stowers school of scholarship. However, this view assumes limited knowledge regarding Old Testament concepts in Gentile circle as well as an exclusive Gentile audience. I do not share these assumptions.

⁹⁸ Margaret E. Thrall, for example, argues that “ἁμαρτία must have roughly the same meaning.” See Margaret E. Thrall, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 2 vols., ICC (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994), 1:441. Léopold Sabourin objects to the idea that ἁμαρτία must have an identical meaning in both instances. See Léopold Sabourin, *Rédemption sacrificielle: une enquête exégétique*, Studia: recherches de philosophie et de théologie 11 (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1961), 155.

⁹⁹ Philipp Bachmann, *Der zweite Brief des Paulus an die Korinther*, 3rd ed., KNT 8 (Leipzig: Deichert, 1918), 273. Martin argues that the unusual use of ποιέω is a result of “the non-Pauline character of the verse as a whole,” see Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 317. However, the view that 2 Cor 5:18–21 is a pre-Pauline tradition has been effectively refuted by Reimund Bieringer, “2 Kor 5,19a und die Versöhnung der Welt,” *ETL* 63.4 (1987): 295–326; Thrall, *Second Corinthians*, 1:445–49.

¹⁰⁰ Lev 9:7; 14:19, 30; 15:15, 30.

“righteousness” in verse 21 requires the object complement to have the meaning “sin,”¹⁰¹ therefore, a juxtaposition of sin offering and righteousness is less likely. However, the sin offering was God’s means for sinful humanity to receive forgiveness for their sins and to effect atonement (e.g., Lev 4:20, 26, 31, 35). In other words, there is no argument that would render the sacrificial reading of 2 Cor 5:21 completely invalid. Thus, the arguments against the sacrificial reading of verse 21 are not fully compelling.

Furthermore, four reasons support the sacrificial reading of verse 21. First, the sacrificial reading has a long interpretative history.¹⁰² Second, the LXX testifies that the absolute noun ἁμαρτία can refer to the sin offering.¹⁰³ Third, Paul’s description of Christ’s death in verse 21 alludes to the sacrificial passage of Isaiah’s suffering servant

¹⁰¹ Thrall, *Second Corinthians*, 1:441; Philip Edgcumbe Hughes, *Paul’s Second Epistle to the Corinthians: The English Text with Introduction, Exposition and Notes*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1962), 215. Das even argues for a chiasmic contrast, “between a sinless Christ being ‘made sin’ and the sinful Christian becoming the ‘righteousness of God.’” See Das, *Paul*, 132.

¹⁰² Among the Greek Fathers, Origen is the first who connects the phrase “Jesus made sin” with the lamb sacrificed for our sins. However, his explicit statements are more focused on Rom 8:3. See Origen, *Commentariorum in epistolam B. Pauli: Ad Romanos* (PG 14:1095). Even more precise, Cyril of Alexandria advocates the sacrificial reading. See Cyril of Alexandria, *Epistola XLI* (PG 77:209); Cyril of Alexandria, *Commentarius in Oseam Prophetam* (PG 71:124). Among the Latin Fathers, Ambrosiaster is the first who explicitly suggests a sacrificial reading of 2 Cor 5:21. See Ambrosiaster, *In Epistolam B. Pauli Ad Corinthios Secundam* (PL 17:315). For a complete discussion on the patristic exegesis of 2 Cor 5:21, see Sabourin, *Rédemption*, 15–79; Stanislas Lyonnet and Léopold Sabourin, *Sin, Redemption, and Sacrifice: A Biblical and Patristic Study*, AnBib 48 (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1970), 189–224. Charles H. Talbert counts these early witnesses as one of the arguments in favor of the sacrificial interpreting of 2 Cor 5:21. He states, “it is an ancient tradition, the dominant reading up to the time of the Reformation.” See Charles H. Talbert, *Reading Corinthians: Literary and Theological Commentary*, 2nd ed. (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2002), 201.

¹⁰³ ἁμαρτία can refer to sin offering in the determined form ἡ ἁμαρτία in rendering תַּחֲטִיף, see Exod 29:36; 30:10; Lev 4:21; Num 18:9; for תַּחֲטִיפָה, see Lev 4:8, 20, 25, 33, 34; 6:18; 8:14; for תַּחֲטִיפֵהָ תֹּאֲרֵךְ, see Lev 4:29; and for תַּחֲטִיפֶהָ, see Lev 6:10. In anarthrous form, it would be ἁμαρτία rendering תַּחֲטִיף, see Exod 29:14; Lev 4:24; 5:9, 12.

(Isa 52:13–53:12).¹⁰⁴ This allusion favors the meaning “sin offering” in 2 Cor 5:21.

Although the Hebrew text of Isa 53:10 is unclear regarding the person and grammatical gender of the subject who offers a guilt offering,¹⁰⁵ the LXX indicates that the translator

¹⁰⁴ For a list of parallels between 2 Cor 5 and Isa 52:13–53:12, see Otfried Hofius, “Erwägung zur Gestalt und Herkunft des paulinischen Versöhnungsgedankens,” *ZTK* 77 (1980): 186–99. Other scholars in support of this allusion include Lyonnet and Sabourin, *Sin, Redemption, and Sacrifice*, 248–56; F. F. Bruce, *1 and 2 Corinthians*, NCB (London: Oliphants, 1971), 210; Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 317. Dunn considers it “also possible.” See Dunn, *Theology*, 217. Thrall records that “Isa 53:9–11 may be in his mind here.” See Thrall, *Second Corinthians*, 1:442. Other scholars, for example Das, oppose that Isa 53 relates to the sin offering. See Das, “Περὶ Ἀμαρτίας,” 72–73; Das, *Paul and the Stories of Israel: Grand Thematic Narratives in Galatians* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2016), 225–36.

Hans Windisch argues for the Azazel rite (Lev 16:4–10, 20–22, 26) as the potential background for Paul’s statement in 2 Cor 5:21. See Hans Windisch, *Der zweite Korintherbrief*, 9th ed., KEK 6 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1970, repr. 1924), 198. Although this idea has received approval by prominent scholars such as Dunn (see Dunn, *Theology*, 217), the Azazel rite as a background for Paul’s statement in verse 21 is unlikely. Leviticus 16:5 indeed identifies the goat for Azazel as אֵזָזֵל (“sin”) or (“sin offering”). However, Milgrom attests, “the he-goat for Azazel was not a sacrifice. Here, then, the term *ḥattā’* may have been chosen for its philological sense ‘that which removes sin,’ which precisely defines the function of the scapegoat.” See Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 1018. Note also, that the Hebrew exclusively reads in verses 8, 10, and 26 לְאֵזָזֵל (“for Azazel”). Thus, the goat itself is not Azazel. By laying both hands on its head, Aaron confessed Israel’s entire iniquities, transgressions, and sins (v. 21) before the goat was sent off to the desert, bearing all their iniquities (v. 22). Gane argues that placing two hands on the goat combined with confession “transfers moral faults to the goat.” See Gane, *Cult and Character*, 245. Gane further shows that the goat for Azazel uniquely functions as a vehicle causing atonement by elimination. See Gane, *Cult and Character*, 261. This means that it is neither an atoning instrument for the Israelites themselves, nor is it part of the sanctuary’s cleansing. Commenting on the identity of this goat, Gane attests to the silence of Lev 16, but “early Jewish interpretation (1 Enoch 9:6; 10:4–5, 8, Apocalypse of Abraham, rabbinic literature) . . . identifies Azazel as a demonic source of evil, to whom the Lord has his people return their sins.” See Roy E. Gane, *Leviticus, Numbers*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004), 289. For a full discussion of Azazel, see Gane, *Cult and Character*, 261–65; Gane, *Leviticus, Numbers*, 288–91. Windisch’s suggestion to draw a parallel between Christ and the goat of Azazel, fails.

¹⁰⁵ Joseph Blenkinsopp notes that “though supported by 1QIsa^a and 4Q Isa^d, MT is problematic, especially with respect to the 2d-person sing. verb, reproduced in LXX but not in Vulg. (*si posuerit pro peccato animam suam*); the least radical emendations are either to repoint *tāsīm* as *tušam* Qal as passive, agreeing with *napšō* “if his life is laid down as a guilt offering,” adopted here, or to redivide words and read *’emet šām āšām napšō*, “truly, he has offered his life as a guilt sacrifice.” See Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 40–55: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 19A (New York: Doubleday, 2000), 348. If Isa 53:10 reads as is, אַתָּה עוֹשֶׂה reads as second singular masculine (“you will make”) and indicates a direct address to the male servant. A direct address to the servant is only made in 52:14a. If אַתָּה עוֹשֶׂה reads as third singular feminine (“she will make”), the feminine noun נַפְשׁוֹ (“his soul”) is the subject, which then allows for a translation such as “he, (his soul), makes a guilt offering.”

understood the death of the servant to be a sin offering¹⁰⁶ since it reads ἐὰν δῶτε περὶ ἁμαρτίας (“if you give a sin offering”). Thus, the LXX text of Isa 53:10 provides sufficient ground for reading ἁμαρτίαν as “a sin offering” in 2 Cor 5:21. Fourth, the atoning role of Christ’s death as described in verses 11–21 perfectly corresponds with the atoning function of the sin offering. According to the Hebrew Bible, atonement is achieved by a חטאת (“sin offering”).¹⁰⁷ The concept of atonement expressed in Hebrew by the root, כפר lacks terminological continuity between the LXX and the New Testament. With only one exception (Exod 29:36), the LXX translates כפר to ἐξιλάσκομαι (“to make atonement”), a term not used in the entire New Testament.¹⁰⁸ Paul uses the term καταλλάσσω (“to reconcile”),¹⁰⁹ which is synonymous to ἐξιλάσκομαι,¹¹⁰ but is rarely used in the LXX.¹¹¹ In the context of 2 Cor 5:21, Paul uses καταλλαγή (“reconciliation”) twice (vv. 18–19) and καταλλάσσω (“to reconcile”) three times (vv. 19–20) to describe

¹⁰⁶ חטאת (“guilt offering”) is translated as περὶ ἁμαρτίας (“sin offering”). See 2 Kgs 12:17. See also Num 18:9, where חטאת (“guilt offering”) reads as ἀπὸ πασῶν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν (“from every sin offering”).

¹⁰⁷ Exod 29:36; 30:10; Lev 4:20; 5:6, 13; 6:23; 7:7; 9:7; 12:8; 14:19, 31; 15:15, 30; 16:6, 11, 27; Num 6:11; 8:12; 15:25; 28:22; 29:5. See also Ezek 45:17; Neh 10:34; 2 Chr 29:24.

¹⁰⁸ The verb ἰλάσκομαι (“to conciliate”) appears twice in the New Testament in Luke 18:13; Heb 2:17, as do the related terms, ἰλασμός (“propitiation”) in 1 John 2:2; 4:10, and ἰλαστήριον (“votive offering,” “propitiatory,” or “mercy seat”) in Rom 3:25; Heb 9:5.

¹⁰⁹ In the New Testament, καταλλάσσω (“to reconcile”) and καταλλαγή (“reconciliation”) are only used by Paul. The verb καταλλάσσω appears six times in Rom 5:10 (2x) 1 Cor 7:11; 2 Cor 5:18–20. The noun καταλλαγή appears four times in Rom 5:11; 11:15; 2 Cor 5:18–19.

¹¹⁰ J. P. Louw and E. A. Nida list καταλλάσσω; καταλλαγή, ἦς and the related words ἰλάσκομαι, ἰλασμός, and ἰλαστήριον, which are present in the New Testament under the domain “Reconciliation, Forgiveness,” see “Reconciliation, Forgiveness,” *L&N* §40.1–13.

¹¹¹ 2 Macc 1:5; 7:33; 8:29; Jer 31:39; see καταλλαγή (“reconciliation”) in 2 Macc 5:20; Isa 9:4.

Christ's death as the atoning means.¹¹² This context of atonement favors the sacrificial reading of the object complement ἁμαρτίαν as “a sin offering.” Verse 21 presents Christ's death as the blameless sin offering which effected atonement between sinful humanity and its Creator. Thus, similarly to Rom 8:3, the role of Christ's death in 2 Cor 5:21 corresponds to the role of a Levitical sin offering.

Christ's Death as a Location of Atonement (Rom 3:25)

The object of interest is the object complement ἱλαστήριον (“votive offering,” “propitiatory,” or “mercy seat”) in Rom 3:25. Paul's statement reads ὃν προέθετο ὁ θεὸς ἱλαστήριον διὰ [τῆς] πίστεως ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦ αἵματι (“God set him forth as *hilasterion* through faith in his blood”). The predicate προέθετο (“set forth”) takes on a double accusative in the form of an object-complement construction. The relative pronoun ὃν (“him”), referring to Christ Jesus (see v. 24), is the direct object, whereas the anarthrous noun ἱλαστήριον (“votive offering,” “propitiatory,” or “mercy seat”) is the object

¹¹² From 2 Cor 5:14 onward, Paul frequently refers to the atoning role of Christ's death. After first covering the universal effect of Christ's death, stating in verse 14 that εἷς ὑπὲρ πάντων ἀπέθανεν (“one died for all”) and stating the almost identical in verse 15 ὑπὲρ πάντων ἀπέθανεν (“he died for all”), Paul elaborates on the purpose of Christ's death, indicated by ἵνα (“in order”). This purpose is the believers' transition from a life for themselves to a life, expressed in verse 15 as τῷ ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν ἀποθανόντι καὶ ἐγεργέντι (“for the one who died and has been raised”). Paul describes this transition in verses 16–17 as the transition from being κατὰ σάρκα (“according to the flesh”) to being ἐν Χριστῷ (“in Christ”). Christ's death enables the believers to enter into a close relationship with their Creator. In addition, this newly received status is labeled in verse 17 as καινὴ κτίσις (“a new creation”), which indicates that “the fundamental Creator/creature relationship . . . is being restored.” See Dunn, *Theology*, 229. Since Christ's physical death is essential to this transformation process, Paul continues to argue in verse 18 that τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ καταλλάξαντος ἡμᾶς ἑαυτῷ διὰ Χριστοῦ (“God was the one who atoned us to him through Christ”). The prepositional clause διὰ Χριστοῦ (“through Christ”) identifies Christ as the intermediate agent of atonement and God as its initiator. See Wallace, *Grammar*, 432–34. Dunn labels Christ as the “medium of the reconciliation.” See Dunn, *Theology*, 229.

complement.¹¹³ This statement is followed by two prepositional phrases διὰ [τῆς] πίστεως (“through faith”) and ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦ αἵματι (“by his blood”), which provide further information about God’s action. Syntactically, the second prepositional phrase, “by his blood,” is directly linked to the main clause, meaning “God set him forth as *hilasterion*. . . . by his blood.”¹¹⁴ The following analysis will address the three possible meanings of the object complement ἱλαστήριον as “votive offering,” “propitiatory,” or “mercy seat.”

A comprehensive survey of ἱλαστήριον in Greek literature reveals that, with few exceptions, the Jewish usage significantly differs from the profane Greek usage.¹¹⁵ The inner-biblical use of ἱλαστήριον almost univocally describes the location where the realization of atonement takes place. In the New Testament, ἱλαστήριον only appears in Rom 3:25 and Heb 9:5. In verse 5 it refers to the כַּפֹּתֵי (“mercy seat” or “cover of the ark of the covenant”). In the Old Testament, ἱλαστήριον appears twenty-eight times. In twenty-six instances, ἱλαστήριον renders either the Hebrew term כַּפֹּתֵי (“mercy seat”) which refers to the cover of the ark of the covenant,¹¹⁶ or the Hebrew term קַרְנֵי

¹¹³ Wallace, *Grammar*, 187.

¹¹⁴ See Wolter, *Römer*, 1:248, 256.

¹¹⁵ The findings presented here build on Wolfgang Kraus, *Der Tod Jesu als Heiligtumsweihe: Eine Untersuchung zum Umfeld der Sühnevorstellung in Römer 3,25–26a*, WMANT 66 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1991).

¹¹⁶ See Exod 25:17–22; 31:7; 35:12; 38:5, 7–8; Lev 16:2, 13–15; Num 7:89.

(“ledges”),¹¹⁷ which describes different ledges of the burnt offering altar at the temple.¹¹⁸ The instance in Amos 9:1 is most likely a result of an erroneous reading of כפתור (“capital”) as כפורת (“propitiatory”).¹¹⁹ Fourth Maccabees 17:22 is the only instance in the LXX where ἱλαστήριον is not used in the sense of an atoning location, but to describe the propitiatory effect of the martyrs’ death.

In extra-biblical Jewish literature, ἱλαστήριον appears eight times. Seven instances refer to the mercy seat.¹²⁰ Josephus alone uses ἱλαστήριον μνημα (“monument to ask for atonement”) as a votive offering when referring to Herod’s propitiatory monument, which Herod erected in reaction to the sudden death by fire of the two guards who attempted to enter and rob the tombs of David and Solomon (Josephus, *Ant.* 16.181–82). In pre-Pauline, non-Jewish, Greco-Roman literature, ἱλαστήριον appears four times. In all four instances, it refers to a votive offering.¹²¹

¹¹⁷ See Ezek 43:14, 17, 20. See “הַיָּצֵ” *BDB* 741.

¹¹⁸ Also note Symmachus’s usage of ἱλαστήριον in reference to Noah’s ark (Gen 6:16). Deissmann assumes that Symmachus understood Noah’s ark as a location of grace. See Adolf Deissmann, “ἱλαστήριος und ἱλαστήριον: Eine lexikalische Studie” *ZNW* 4 (1903): 193–212. For a different explanation, namely, that the same Hebrew root is used to refer to the covering of the ark of the covenant, as well as to the process of caulking Noah’s ark, see Wolter, *Römer*, 1:256.

¹¹⁹ Kraus argues for the possibility that ἱλαστήριον may be an intentional translation in reference to an altar. See Kraus, *Heiligtumsweihe*, 24–25.

¹²⁰ Philo, *Cher* 1.25; *Her* 1.166; *Fug* 1.100–101; *Moy*s 2.95, 97. Philo’s use of ἱλαστήριον is of importance since he uses it for the mercy seat in both a determined and anarthrous form. Thus, Philo’s use disproves the argument that ἱλαστήριον only refers to the mercy seat when it is determined. See Leon Morris, “The Meaning of ἱλαστήριον in Romans iii. 25,” *NTS* 2 (1955): 33–43. Likewise does ἱλαστήριον in T. Sol. 21:2.

¹²¹ For a detailed discussion, see Deissmann, “ἱλαστήριον,” 195–96; Kraus, *Heiligtumsweihe*, 27–28; Stefan Schreiber, “Das Weihegeschenk Gottes: Eine Deutung des Todes Jesu in Röm 3,25,” *ZNW* 97 (2006): 88–110.

Based on this survey, the object complement ἱλαστήριον in Rom 3:25 can be limited to three potential meanings: “votive offering,” “propitiatory death,” or “mercy seat.” First, Stefan Schreiber argues that ἱλαστήριον refers to Christ’s death as votive offering,¹²² reading verse 25 as “God set him [Christ, Jesus] forth as a votive offering through faith in his blood.” This meaning is in line with non-Jewish, Greco-Roman literature and the usage of Josephus.¹²³ Schreiber’s proposal can be challenged due to its subject-object-confusion. Since God is the subject of the verb προτίθημι (“set forth”), it would be God who offers the votive offering. This setting stands in contrast to the Greco-Roman concept, where the gods are always the objects to which offerings are devoted. Additionally, Paul refers to blood in connection with ἱλαστήριον, an element that is unusual for Greco-Roman votive offerings.¹²⁴

Second, Eduard Lohse argues that ἱλαστήριον refers to Christ’s death as a propitiatory death, similar to the martyrs’ death described in 4 Macc 17:22. Lohse takes ἱλαστήριον as a proper adjective with the meaning “atoning.” He suggests that one should mentally supplement ἱλαστήριον with the noun θύμα (“sacrifice”), reading Rom 3:25 as “God set him [Christ, Jesus] forth as an atoning [sacrifice] through faith in his blood.”

¹²² See Schreiber, “Weihegeschenk,” 105–10. Similarly, McMurry has supported the reading of ἱλαστήριον as a Greco-Roman votive offering, arguing that mere mention of “blood” does not automatically make a reference to the mercy seat. Especially in view of other uses of ἱλαστήριον in Greco-Roman literature, such as the Trojan Horse, which served as a peace offering to end the conflict between parties. Understanding ἱλαστήριον in this way, Christ’s offering becomes a peace offering to bring about peace before God who would otherwise come in wrath. See McMurry, *Sacrifice*, 45–56. See for another rejection of reading ἱλαστήριον as “mercy seat”, Stowers, *Rereading of Romans*, 209–13. Das also considers the allusion to the “mercy seat” as unlikely. See Das, *Paul*, 137–42.

¹²³ For a detailed discussion on appearances of ἱλαστήριον in non-Jewish, Greco-Roman literature, see Daniel P. Bailey, “Jesus as the Mercy Seat: The Semantics and Theology of Paul’s Use of *Hilasterion* in Romans 3:25” (PhD diss., University of Cambridge, 1999), 31–75.

¹²⁴ Schnabel, *Römer*, 403.

Due to Christ's sinlessness, Christ's death surpasses the propitiating death of the martyrs in 4 Macc 17:22, which was, in its effect, limited to a nation.¹²⁵ Lohse's reading has received substantial critique, compelling enough to disqualify it from being Paul's primary intent.¹²⁶

Third, Schnabel argues that ἰλαστήριον refers to Christ's death as the mercy seat, reading Rom 3:25 as "God set him [Christ, Jesus] forth as the mercy seat [location of the realization of atonement] through faith in his blood."¹²⁷ The spatial reading corresponds with the common usage of ἰλαστήριον in Jewish literature. Schnabel discusses three concerns which scholars have raised against this reading. First, the predominantly Gentile audience of Romans would have misunderstood Paul's reference to the mercy seat. Second, ἰλαστήριον (v. 25) lacks the article, while in the LXX, it does have the article when used as a technical term for the mercy seat. Third, if Jesus is the mercy seat, the imagery is confusing because of Christ's blood, which is applied to the mercy seat. Schnabel concludes that these concerns are insubstantial.¹²⁸ Considering the arguments

¹²⁵ Eduard Lohse, *Märtyrer und Gottesknecht: Untersuchungen zur urchristlichen Verkündigung vom Sühntod Jesu Christi*, 2nd rev. ed., FRLANT 2/46 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1963), 152. For a more recent supporter of Lohse's interpretation, see Campbell, *Deliverance*, 640–56.

¹²⁶ Daniel P. Bailey points out that there is no need to draw a parallel between Rom 3:25 and 4 Macc 17:22. He argues that the biblical use of ἰλαστήριον ("mercy seat") serves as the metaphor for Rom 3:25, while the mainstream Greek understanding of ἰλαστήριον ("votive offering") explains 4 Macc 17:22. See Daniel P. Bailey, "Jesus as the Mercy Seat: The Semantics and Theology of Paul's Use of *Hilasterion* in Romans 3:25," *TynBul* 51 (2000): 155–58. Kraus points out that the subject-object-confusion is also present in Lohse's reading. See Kraus, *Heiligtumsweihe*, 42–44. Schnabel disproves Lohse's suggested supplement of θῦμα ("sacrifice") based on grammatical reasons, as well as the lack of its lexical appearance in Greek literature. Additionally, Schnabel raises concerns about the disputed dating of 4 Maccabees, rendering its value questionable to understanding Rom 3:25. Schnabel, *Römer*, 1:402–3.

¹²⁷ Schnabel, *Römer*, 1:403.

¹²⁸ For a detailed discussion on the three concerns against reading ἰλαστήριον as the "mercy seat" and why they are not compelling, see Schnabel, *Römer*, 1:401–2.

presented in this survey, the meaning of ἱλαστήριον in verse 25 as “mercy seat” seems to be the most convincing.¹²⁹

In the LXX of the Pentateuch, ἱλαστήριον has two essential roles. First, the mercy seat is the location of God’s presence, where he directly interacts with sinful human beings (Exod 25:22; Lev 16:2; Num 7:89). Thus, it designates a space where the separation between humanity and its Creator is undone. Second, the mercy seat links with the rituals of the Day of Atonement. It was subject to the yearly cleansing rite of the sanctuary on the Day of Atonement by the blood of the goat for the Lord (Lev 16:13–15). The Day of Atonement becomes especially prominent as the background of Rom 3:25 since Paul refers to Christ’s blood in the immediate context.¹³⁰ As Gane points out, the blood application of the sin offering to the mercy seat on the Day of Atonement was part of the second phase of the Levitical process of atonement. The blood purged the sanctuary from Israel’s physical, ritual impurities as well as from their sins (Lev 16:16, 19). This yearly rite on the Day of Atonement completed the process of

¹²⁹ For a recent attempt that links the second and third reading of ἱλαστήριον, see Stephen Hultgren, “*Hilasterion* (Rom. 3:25) and the Union of Divine Justice and Mercy. Part I: The Convergence of Temple and Martyrdom Theologies,” *JTS* 70 (2019), 69–109 and Stephen Hultgren, “*Hilasterion* (Rom. 3:25) and the Union of Divine Justice and Mercy. Part II: Atonement in the Old Testament and in Romans 1–5,” *JTS* 70 (2019), 546–99.

¹³⁰ Jewett, *Romans*, 284. Note also that the reference to Christ’s blood is paralleled to his death in Rom 5:9–10. Thus, the blood in 3:25 refers to Christ’s death. This reference finds support in Choi’s discussion on the challenge of translating verse 25. He argues that most scholars agree that ἱλαστήριον refers to the “mercy seat.” The real issue that translators face is the prepositional phrase ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦ αἵματι. Choi suggests a better translation of the prepositional phrase to be “with his blood [upon it].” The second prepositional phrase διὰ [τῆς] πίστεως should read “through (his) (covenant) faithfulness.” See P. Richard Choi, “The Problem of Translating ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦ αἵματι in Romans 3:25a,” *AUSS* 38 (2000): 199–201.

atonement and rendered the sinners morally pure.¹³¹ Thus, Paul argues in Rom 3:25 that, in line with the Old Covenant's role of the mercy seat, the New Covenant points to Christ serving as the location where the realization of atonement takes place. The atoning effect of Christ's death undoes the separation caused by sin and death between humanity and its Creator. The undoing of the separation between humanity and its Creator takes place, in one aspect, by Christ's blood, which effects forgiveness for the believer's sins and, in another aspect, provides an epiphanic opportunity where the believer can experience the presence of God.¹³² Therefore, the term ἱλαστήριον in verse 25 is to be understood in line with the Jewish usage of the term "mercy seat." Thus, Christ as ἱλαστήριον describes the location of the realization of atonement.

Summary

This second section shows that Paul emphasizes the liberating and atoning role of Christ's death. First, Paul presents Christ's death as the means of humanity's deliverance from sin's rule. While this role of Christ's death is stated directly in Gal 1:4, it is more subtly indicated in 1 Cor 5:6–8 and 11:23–26 through the allusions to the festivals of Passover and Unleavened Bread. These festivals served as a reminder of Israel's deliverance from their slavery in Egypt. By applying the imagery of leaven to the

¹³¹ Gane summarizes phase two with the following words: "The corporate inner-sanctum purification offerings on behalf of the priestly and lay communities on the Day of Atonement purge (כפר) the sanctuary from (privative מן) the physical ritual impurities (טְמֵאָה) and הַטְּמָאֹת sins of the Israelites (Lev 16:16, 19), that is, the same categories of evil that have been removed from offerers of purification offerings at the sanctuary throughout the year. This purgation of the sanctuary completes the process of כפר for הַטְּמָאֹת sins, in which the corporate group of הַטְּמָאֹת (but not פְּשָׁעִים) sinners are (morally) pure (טהור; v. 30), provided that they demonstrate submission to YHWH by practicing self-denial and abstaining from work on this day (Lev 16:29, 31; Lev 23:27–32; Num 29:7)." See Gane, *Cult and Character*, 275.

¹³² Jewett, *Romans*, 285. Jewett is translated and quoted from Kraus, *Heiligtumsweihe*, 163.

Corinthian congregation, Paul considers them to have had a similar liberating experience, namely their deliverance from slavery to sin. Paul's presentation of Christ as the believer's Passover lamb (5:7) indicates that Christ's physical death is the means for the believer's deliverance from the slavery to sin. Furthermore, Paul's presentation of the Lord's Supper, in light of the festivals of Passover and Unleavened Bread (11:23–26), indicates that the Lord's Supper should be understood as the believing congregation's sacred festival; a commemoration of Christ's death as the Passover lamb, who effected the believer's liberation from their slavery to sin.

Second, Paul presents Christ's death as corresponding to the two phases of the Levitical process of atonement. Christ's death in Rom 8:3 and 2 Cor 5:21 corresponds to the role of the sin offering in the Levitical process of atonement, which purifies the offerer from physical ritual impurities and provides forgiveness for their sins. Christ's death in Rom 3:25 corresponds to the role of the mercy seat in the Levitical process of atonement. The blood applied to the mercy seat purged the sanctuary from the physical, ritual impurities and sins, and completed the atonement process by effecting moral purity for Israel. By presenting Christ's death as corresponding to both phases of the Levitical process of atonement, Paul clarifies that Christ's death is the means of overcoming the separation between humanity and its Creator caused by sin and death.

Death to Sin

This third and final section analyzes the meaning of death to sin in Rom 6:2, 10. I assess whether Christ's death to sin differs from the believer's death to sin by first analyzing the meaning of Christ's death to sin (vv. 9–10), and then the meaning of the

believer's death to sin (vv. 5–6, 12–14). Due to the similar characteristics between the believer's death to sin (v. 2) and the believer's death to the law (7:4; Gal 2:19), this section contributes to understanding the meaning of the believer's death to the law.

Christ's Death to Sin (Rom 6:9–10)

Within the analysis of Christ's death to sin, three questions are of particular interest. First, what does the termination of death's rule over Christ mean? Second, what does the qualifier τῆ ἀμαρτία (“to sin”) mean? Third, what does the qualifier ἐφάπαξ (“once for all”) mean?

Termination of the Universal Rule of Death

In Rom 6:9–10, Paul argues that Christ's death to sin terminated death's universal rule, stating in verse 9 that Christ οὐκέτι ἀποθνήσκει (“no longer dies”) and θάνατος αὐτοῦ οὐκέτι κυριεύει (“death is no longer ruling over him”).¹³³ The subordinated participial clause ἐγερθεὶς ἐκ νεκρῶν (“having been raised from the dead”) indicates that Christ's resurrection is the cause for the termination of death's rule.¹³⁴ The gnomic present, κυριεύει (“is ruling”), indicates the permanence of the termination of death's rule. The permanence of this termination finds further evidence in the apostle's double use of the temporal adverb οὐκέτι (“no longer”) when describing the relationship of death

¹³³ Wolter, *Römer*, 1:382. Cranfield sees the second clause as a reinforcement of the preceding statement. See Cranfield, *Romans*, 1:313.

¹³⁴ Daniel B. Wallace notices that, in the case of a causal participle clause, the participle typically precedes the verb it modifies. See Wallace, *Grammar*, 662n11. In Rom 6:9, the causal participle ἐγερθεὶς (“having been raised”) precedes the finite verb of the main clause ἀποθνήσκει (“he dies”). In support of a causal reading, see Wolter, *Römer*, 1:381; Schreiner, *Romans*, 320.

to the incarnated Christ.¹³⁵ The adverb marks “the extension of time up to a point but not beyond.”¹³⁶ Thus, before Christ’s physical death,¹³⁷ Paul understands him as subjugated to the rule of death. The genitive pronoun αὐτοῦ (“of him”), in reference to Christ, restricts the termination of death’s rule to Christ alone. However, the termination of death’s rule over Christ terminates the universal rule of death.

Christ’s resurrection, which ended the rule of death, was only possible because of the uniqueness of Christ’s death to sin. Paul states in verse 10 ὁ γὰρ ἀπέθανεν, τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ ἀπέθανεν ἑφάπαξ (“for what he died; he died to sin, once for all”). The explanatory conjunction γὰρ (“for”) indicates that Paul is providing further explanation of the termination of death’s rule. The aorist tense of ἀπέθανεν (“he died”) refers to Christ’s physical death on the cross as a specific historical event.¹³⁸ The predicate “he died” is repeated, but receives two qualifiers, the dative τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ (“to sin”) and the compound adverb ἑφάπαξ (“once for all”). These qualifiers shift the focus to the effect of Christ’s death on sin. A closer look at these two qualifiers provides further insight into the relationship between death and the body of Christ.

Christ’s Death as a Death “to Sin”

The qualifier of interest is the dative τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ (“to sin”) in Rom 6:10. Although the four major New Testament Greek grammar guides identify “to sin” in verse 10 as a

¹³⁵ Similarly, Murray, *Romans*, 223.

¹³⁶ “οὐκέτι,” *BDAG* 736.

¹³⁷ In verse 9, Paul indirectly refers to Christ’s death when he mentions Christ’s resurrection ἐκ νεκρῶν (“from the dead ones”) in the causal participial clause.

¹³⁸ Wolter, *Römer*, 1:382.

dative of interest (advantage or disadvantage), they differ in nuance, which causes uncertainty, since each nuance may provide a different meaning of “to sin.” For example, Robertson adds no further specification to his identification of “to sin” as a dative of interest.¹³⁹ Blass, Debrunner, and Funk agree with Robertson, but specify that the datives in Rom 6:2, 10–11; 7:4; 14:7; 2 Cor 5:15; and Gal 2:19 express “more the possessor.”¹⁴⁰ They are inclined to identify “to sin” as a dative of advantage. C. F. D. Moule also lists “to sin” as a dative of interest, but his suggested translation, “[with] reference to sin,” shows that he reads it as more of a dative of reference.¹⁴¹ Wallace argues that “when referring especially to things, [the dative] reduces the element of interest and relation to that of reference or framework.”¹⁴² Thus, without particularly mentioning Rom 6:10, Wallace seems to identify “to sin” as a dative of reference, while translating it similarly to Moule as “[with reference] to sin.”¹⁴³ As the following survey shows, these seemingly minor differences in the syntactical identification of “to sin” cause significant differences in the meaning of Christ’s death to sin.

First, in basic agreement with Robertson’s general identification, Thüsing represents the most common interpretation of “to sin.” He identifies the dative as a dative of disadvantage, arguing that, through death, Christ escaped the rulership of sin, which became a disadvantage for sin because it lost rulership over Christ. Wilhelm Thüsing

¹³⁹ Robertson, *Grammar*, 539.

¹⁴⁰ BDF §188.

¹⁴¹ Moule, *Idiom*, 46.

¹⁴² Wallace, *Grammar*, 145.

¹⁴³ Wallace, *Grammar*, 142–45.

further explains that Christ's death to sin in verse 10 is not exclusively limited to Christ, but has a broader soteriological dimension in which Christ functions as a corporate personality. All human beings who partake in Christ's death experience are delivered from sin's rulership.¹⁴⁴

Second, in agreement with Blass, Debrunner, and Funk, Ulrich Wilckens stresses the possessive characteristic of "to sin." He claims that "to sin" and "to God" indicate the respective owner (vv. 2, 10).¹⁴⁵ In accordance with his syntactical choice, Wilckens emphasizes death as something owned by sin. Sin, in the role of master over death (see vv. 6, 14), is entitled to claim the death of sinners (see vv. 22–23).¹⁴⁶ In Christ's case, "Christ did not die as a sinner, but he, in the form of his death, vicariously on our behalf gave to 'the' sin what appertains to her by the sinner."¹⁴⁷ Wilckens further explains that this happened "once for all," which means that "the bill is effectively paid to its full extent, and since then, sin has absolutely no claims left."¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁴ Thüsing, *Christum*, 72.

¹⁴⁵ Wilckens, *Römer*, 2:19. According to Schreiner, an alternative to reading τῆ ἀμαρτίᾳ as a dative of disadvantage, might be a possessive reading. See Schreiner, *Romans*, 320.

¹⁴⁶ Wilckens, *Römer*, 2:19.

¹⁴⁷ Wilckens, *Römer*, 2:19.

¹⁴⁸ Wilckens, *Römer*, 2:19. Sanday and Headlam do not indicate their syntactical identification of "to sin;" however they do point out that "the phrase seems to point back to ver. 7 above: Sin ceased to have a claim upon Him." See Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 160. Peter Von der Osten-Sacken goes even further than those stressing the possessive characteristics of the dative, arguing that "to sin" is a dative of advantage. For him, this syntactical decision is required based on the terminological and syntactical parallel, as part of a μέν-δέ ("on the one hand . . . on the other hand") construction (v. 11). Additionally, he points out that "Jesus Christ's death, according to Rom 6:10," should be understood "as death 'for the benefit of sin,' an event by which sin's claim is satisfied." See Peter von der Osten-Sacken, *Römer 8 als Beispiel paulinischer Soteriologie*, FRLANT 112 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1975), 179. Von der Osten-Sacken's argument that the μέν-δέ construction in verse 11 requires syntactically-matching datives is unconvincing. Besides, the interpretation of Christ's death and the believers' death to sin being an advantage for sin is not in line with Paul's overall argument.

Third, Cranfield syntactically aligns himself with Moule by identifying “to sin” as “a dative of the person affected,” and claims that it “may be translated ‘to sin’, i.e. in relation to sin.”¹⁴⁹ He suggests that Christ, at his death, bore the full penalty of humanity’s sin. Christ “affected sin by His dying, in that, as the altogether sinless One who identified Himself with sinful men, He bore for them the full penalty of their sins and so—in the pregnant sense in which the words are used in 8.3—‘condemned sin in the flesh.’”¹⁵⁰ To reach this conclusion, he draws “from what Paul says elsewhere about the relation of Christ’s death to sin (e.g., 3.24–26; 4.25; 5.6–8; 8.3; 1 Cor 15.3; 2 Cor 5.21; Gal 3.13).”¹⁵¹

Fourth, Leon Morris agrees with Wallace’s syntactical argument that the dative “to sin” is a dative of reference, hence Morris states that “it is best to see Paul as indicating that Jesus’ death was related to sin, but that the case does not prescribe in detail what that relationship was.”¹⁵² Paul’s remarks on Christ’s death to sin in Rom 6:10 are of a general nature. Based on the context of verse 10, Morris further argues that “Christ died for our sins; he had none of his own to which he might die. But dealing with our sins meant coming into this world of sin and then dying the death that put sin away.

¹⁴⁹ Cranfield, *Romans*, 1:314.

¹⁵⁰ Cranfield, *Romans*, 1:314.

¹⁵¹ Cranfield, *Romans*, 1:314.

¹⁵² Leon Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans*, TPNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; Leicester: Apollos, 1988), 255.

That death was a death ‘to sin,’ for it meant the end of Christ’s being in the realm of sin. It was a death to his whole relationship to sin.”¹⁵³

The major problem with all of these suggestions is that the text does not provide the means to read soteriological concepts into Christ’s death to sin.¹⁵⁴ Paul does so in other passages (see 8:3; see also 3:25; 1 Cor 15:3; 2 Cor 5:21), but in Rom 6:9–10, Paul’s use of the pronoun αὐτοῦ (“of him”) in relation to Christ indicates that Paul understands the termination of death’s rule as being limited to Christ.

In verses 9–10, Paul presents Christ’s death to sin as his ultimate separation from sin, which is what delivers him from the rule of death. In this study, I differentiate between the rule of sin and the rule of death, even though the two concepts are closely intertwined. The rule of sin implies embodiment of sin and a sinful nature while the rule of death entails the mortality of human beings. Christ’s death to sin is unique, due to the difference in his relationship to sin, as compared to humanity’s relationship to sin. Whereas humanity is subjugated to the rule of sin, resulting in humanity’s sinful nature, Paul never refers to Christ as being subjugated (see Gal 2:17). In relation to sin, Christ abstained from the embodiment of sin and thus was not under the rule of sin. In relation to death, Christ took a mortal body and thus was under the rule of death while incarnated. Despite Christ’s temporary subjugation to the rule of death by taking on a mortal body, he resisted any sinful acting, which would have placed him under the rule of sin (2 Cor 5:21; Phil 2:7–8). In other words, the incarnate Christ was exposed, but not subjugated to

¹⁵³ Morris, *Romans*, 255.

¹⁵⁴ Wolter, *Römer*, 1:382n68.

the rule of sin, meaning that Christ did not need deliverance from sin's rule.¹⁵⁵ Christ's physical death became his death to sin, in the sense that the termination of Christ's life took away from sin any further opportunity to subjugate him to its rulership.¹⁵⁶ Similarly, Barrett acknowledges that "Christ died to sin because he died sinless, because he died rather than sin (by disobeying his Father), and because he died in a context of sin."¹⁵⁷ Christ's death to sin marked Christ's ultimate separation from sin and delivered him from the rule of death.¹⁵⁸

Christ's Death as "Once and for All"

Paul's second qualifier of Christ's death to sin, the compound adverb ἐφάπαξ ("once for all") refers exclusively to Christ's experience. The adverb restricts the event of Christ's death to sin "to take place once and to the exclusion of any further occurrence."¹⁵⁹ Therefore, Christ's death to sin became a one-time occurrence.

Although the believer also experiences death to sin (Rom 6:2), it differs significantly from Christ's death to sin. Paul's exhortation encouraging the Roman believers to keep sin from returning to power (vv. 12–14) implies that the believer's death to sin only ends the rule, but not the presence, of sin. In addition, it shows the

¹⁵⁵ Teresa Kuo-Yu Tsui suggests an apocalyptic reading of Christ's death to sin. In contrast to my reading of Christ's death to sin, she argues that "Christ in his earthly life was subject to the power of sin. However, she does not provide textual evidence for her interpretation. See Teresa Kuo-Yu Tsui, "Baptized into His Death' (Rom 6,3) and 'Clothed with Christ' (Gal 3,27): The Soteriological Meaning of Baptism in Light of Pauline Apocalyptic," *ETL* 88 (2012): 395–417, esp. 401.

¹⁵⁶ In that sense, one could see τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ ("to sin") in Rom 6:10 as a dative of disadvantage.

¹⁵⁷ Barrett, *Romans*, 118.

¹⁵⁸ Similarly, Wolter, *Römer*, 1:382.

¹⁵⁹ "ἐφάπαξ," *BDAG* 417.

possibility that, for humanity, sin can return to power. Therefore, “once for all” cannot apply to the believer’s experience of death to sin because sin retains the opportunity to subjugate the believer under its power again.¹⁶⁰

The Believer’s Death to Sin

After examining the meaning of Christ’s death to sin, I address the meaning of the believer’s death to sin. Romans 6:1–14 reveals that Paul explains the believer’s death to sin through its connection to Christ’s death. Paul elaborates on the believer’s death to sin (v. 2) by referring to baptism (vv. 3–4), which serves as a means of interpretation (vv. 3–4),¹⁶¹ and by a parallel exposition of the believer’s death to sin (vv. 5–7) and Christ’s death to sin (vv. 8–10).¹⁶²

¹⁶⁰ Wolter, *Römer*, 1:382.

¹⁶¹ See Wolter, *Römer*, 1:370. Numerous discussions have addressed the significance of baptism in Rom 6:1–14. Some scholars give baptism a dominant role in their discussions regarding Paul’s intentions with verses 1–14. Rudolf Schnackenburg, for example, calls verses 1–11 the *locus classicus* when elaborating on baptism as a salvific event. Rudolf Schnackenburg, *Baptism in the Thought of St. Paul: A Study in Pauline Theology*, trans. G. R. Beasley-Murray (Oxford: Blackwell, 1964), 30. Other examples are Niklaus Gäumann, *Taufe und Ethik: Studien zu Römer 6*, BEvT 47 (Munich: Kaiser, 1967); Hubert Frankemölle, *Das Taufverständnis des Paulus; Taufe, Tod und Auferstehung nach Röm 6*, SBS 47 (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1970); Hans Halter, *Taufe und Ethos: Paulinische Kriterien für das Proprium christlicher Moral*, Freiburger theologische Studien 106 (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1977), 35–73; Søren Agersnap, *Baptism and the New Life: A Study of Romans 6:1–14*, trans. Christine and Frederick Crowley (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 1999); Samuli Siikavirta, *Baptism and Cognition in Romans 6–8: Paul’s Ethics Beyond “Indicative” and “Imperative,”* WUNT 2/407 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2015), 103–50. Others, like Schnabel, argue that Paul was not at all referring to the baptismal rite in verses 1–14. See Schnabel, *Römer*, 2:27–40. The most compelling view takes the middle ground, arguing that “baptism [serves] as an argument in support of his second negated rhetorical question in v. 2.” Despite this supportive function of baptism in the passage, “many scholars nevertheless take it that the passage reflects in significant ways some of Paul’s thoughts on the topic, and they interpret it accordingly.” See Hendrikus Boers, “The Structure and Meaning of Romans 6:1–14,” *CBQ* 63 (2001): 664–82.

¹⁶² Günther Bornkamm argued for the parallel structure. See Günther Bornkamm, “Taufe und neues Leben bei Paulus,” in *Das Ende des Gesetzes: Paulustudien*, ed. Günther Bornkamm, 2nd ed., BEvT 16 (Munich: Kaiser, 1958), 34–50. See also Dunn, *Romans*, 1:305–6. Both panels begin with a first-class conditional clause, confirming in the protasis the linkage between the believer’s death to sin and Christ’s death. The apodosis expresses the logical consequences of the linkage of Christ’s resurrection with the

Within the analysis of the believer’s death to sin, three questions are of particular interest. First, what does Paul’s statement εἰ γὰρ σύμφυτοι γεγόναμεν τῷ ὁμοιώματι τοῦ θανάτου αὐτοῦ (“for if we have been united with the likeness of his death”) in verse 5 mean? Second, what are the implications of the differences between the believer’s death to sin and Christ’s death to sin? Third, does Paul intend the phrase “death to sin” to be understood as a metaphor, or as a real death?

The Believer’s Unity with the “Likeness of Christ’s Death” to Sin

The object of interest is Paul’s statement in Rom 6:5, reading εἰ γὰρ σύμφυτοι γεγόναμεν τῷ ὁμοιώματι τοῦ θανάτου αὐτοῦ (“for if we have been united with the likeness of his death”).¹⁶³ The possessive pronoun αὐτοῦ (“his”) marks the death as being that of Christ.¹⁶⁴ The meaning of the statement σύμφυτοι γεγόναμεν τῷ ὁμοιώματι (“we have been united with the likeness”) is highly debated.¹⁶⁵ In the following, I address the

expected resurrection of the believers. After the conditional clauses, Paul adds a short exposition, as well as listed consequences within each panel, followed by an explanation and a logical result. The first panel (vv. 5–7) focuses on the believer’s experience, whereas the second panel (vv. 8–10) elaborates on Christ’s experience. Hendrikus Boers rejects Bornkamm’s proposal, arguing for a chiasm in verses 1–11. See Boers, “Structure,” 664–82. Craig S. Keener argues that Bornkamm’s “structure is more compelling than the ingenious chiasm proposed” by Boers. See Craig S. Keener, *The Mind of the Spirit: Paul’s Approach to Transformed Thinking* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2016), 45n100.

¹⁶³ The Greek term for “united with” is the compound adjective σύμφυτος. Its root φύω (“to grow”) implies the connotation of two plants that have grown together.

¹⁶⁴ Technically speaking, αὐτός (“he”) is a personal pronoun. However, in the genitive case, as it appears in Rom 6:5, it also takes on the function of a possessive pronoun. See Wallace, *Grammar*, 352.

¹⁶⁵ Ugo Vanni, Florence A. Morgan, and Sorin Sabou performed significant studies. Ugo Vanni, “ὁμοίωμα in Paolo (Rm 1,23: 5,14: 6,5: 8,3: Fil 2,7): Un’Interpretazione esegetico-teologica alla luce dell’uso del LXX, pt 1,” *Greg* 58 (1977): 321–45; Ugo Vanni, “ὁμοίωμα in Paolo (Rm 1,23: 5,14: 6,5: 8,3: Fil 2,7): Un’Interpretazione esegetico-teologica alla luce dell’uso del LXX, pt 2,” *Greg* 58 (1977): 413–30; Florence A. Morgan, “Romans 6:5a: United to a Death like Christ’s,” *ETL* 59 (1983): 267–302; Florence A. Morgan, *A Study of Romans 6:5a: United to a Death like Christ’s* (San Francisco: Mellen Research University Press, 1992); Sorin Sabou, “A Note on Romans 6:5: The Representation (ὁμοίωμα) of His Death,” *TynBul* 55 (2004): 219–29.

semantics of the noun ὁμοίωμα (“likeness”), as well as evaluating Paul’s usage of it, and complete a closer syntactical analysis of verse 5.

Two slightly different, yet significant meanings of ὁμοίωμα appear in Greek literature. The rare occurrence of the term in secular, ancient Greek literature only bears witness to the sense of “likeness” [*Abbild*].¹⁶⁶ J. Schneider argues that the meaning of “likeness” [*Abbild*] indicates “the similarity, but with no need for an inner connection between the original and the copy.”¹⁶⁷ Plato, for example, uses ὁμοίωμα to describe “the earthly copies of the heavenly prototypes”¹⁶⁸ (Plato, *Phaedr.* 250a–b). The forty instances of it in the LXX bear witness to a slight shift from the meaning of “likeness” [*Abbild*] toward the meaning of “form” [*Gestalt*]. The term refers, in this case, to a copy “which is made like something else and is congruent with it . . . This leads to a transition to the sense of ‘form,’ with no further thought of a copy.”¹⁶⁹

Morgan’s study on the history of ὁμοίωμα’s interpretation in Rom 6:5 shows that pre-twentieth-century commentators interpreted ὁμοίωμα in an *abbildlich* sense, understanding it as “likeness.” In the twentieth century, based on Schneider’s *TDNT* article, scholars began to interpret ὁμοίωμα in verse 5 as “form” in a *nicht abbildlich* sense.¹⁷⁰ Morgan lists Günther Bornkamm (among other prominent scholars), who states that ὁμοίωμα can be understood as “‘identical form,’ which means an expression of a

¹⁶⁶ J. Schneider, “ὅμοιος, κτλ.,” *TDNT* 5:186–99.

¹⁶⁷ Schneider, *TDNT* 5:191.

¹⁶⁸ Schneider, *TDNT* 5:191.

¹⁶⁹ Schneider, *TDNT* 5:191.

¹⁷⁰ Schneider, *TDNT* 5:191.

form that is not only similar to another form but identical. Thereby it is crucial that ὁμοίωμα brings to an expression the essence of the depicted one.”¹⁷¹ Robert C. Tannehill states, “this would mean that Rom. 6:5 does not refer to the union of the believers with a ‘likeness’ of Christ’s death which is distinct from that death, but rather speaks of a direct union with Christ’s death.”¹⁷²

However, Paul’s usage of ὁμοίωμα favors the meaning of “likeness” rather than “form.”¹⁷³ In 1:23, Paul refers to idols, which are in the “likeness” of the image of perishable human beings or other creatures. These images are similar in appearance, but still differ from the models regarding their state of being alive. In 5:14, Paul observes that death rules over all human beings though not everybody transgressed in “the likeness” of Adam’s transgression. Paul argues that Adam transgressed an explicit commandment (Gen 2:16–17), whereas, for the time between Adam and Moses, there was no explicit commandment in the form of a written Torah.¹⁷⁴ In Rom 8:3, Paul refers to Christ’s incarnation in the “likeness” of sinful flesh. The similarity finds its expression in Christ taking on a mortal human body. However, as previously argued, Christ differed from all human beings because he was not subjugated to the rule of sin.¹⁷⁵ Considering this

¹⁷¹ Bornkamm, “Taufe,” 41–42; See also Schnackenburg, *Baptism*, 52–53.

¹⁷² Tannehill, *Dying*, 35.

¹⁷³ In total, τό ὁμοίωμα (“the likeness”) appears five times in Pauline writings (Rom 1:23; 5:14; 6:5; 8:3; Phil 2:7), and in one place outside of them (Rev 9:7).

¹⁷⁴ Morgan sees in Gen 2:16–17, “the most proximate use of the term.” See Morgan, “Romans 6:5a,” 300.

¹⁷⁵ Similar to Rom 8:3, Phil 2:7 refers to Christ’s incarnation. The similarity finds expression in the shared form of human nature. However, according to Paul, the difference lies in Christ only sharing the σχήματι (“outward form”) of man, implying that, in regard to the inward being, Christ differed from

semantic characteristic of ὁμοίωμα, the meaning of τῷ ὁμοιώματι in 6:5 tends toward “likeness,” rather than “form.”¹⁷⁶ Paul intends the reader to understand that the believer’s death to sin has both similarities and differences to Christ’s death to sin.¹⁷⁷

A syntactical analysis of verse 5 shows how the two parts of the protasis σύμφυτοι γεγόναμεν (“we have been united with”) and τῷ ὁμοιώματι τοῦ θανάτου αὐτοῦ (“the likeness of his death”) relate to each other. Morgan summarizes three different suggestions that are present in scholarship.¹⁷⁸ First, certain scholars consider the clause grammatically incomplete and propose to interpolate “to him [Christ],” reading “we have been united to him in the likeness of his death” (see vv. 6, 8). Consequently, “in the likeness” functions instrumentally.¹⁷⁹ The main reason for the interpolation is the doubt that a person can unite with something abstract such as “likeness.”¹⁸⁰ Otto Kuss counters

humanity. On Christ’s death to sin and how he related to sin while incarnated and after his resurrection, see pages 126–27.

¹⁷⁶ Although Morgan does not point to “form” as a semantic possibility for ὁμοίωμα, she reaches a similar conclusion, stating that “this interpretation understands ὁμοίωμα in its most usual sense, (as a likeness, *Abbild*) and conforms with Paul’s use of the same word with an *abbildlich* nuance elsewhere.” See Morgan, “Romans 6:5a,” 300.

¹⁷⁷ As does Wolter who observes that ὁμοίωμα denotes similarity, while at the same time indicating difference. See Wolter, *Römer*, 1:376–77. Isaac Augustine Morales reduced the difference between Christ’s death and the believer’s death to the difference between Christ’s death on the cross and the believer’s death in form of baptism. Further he sees the similarity in both deaths being a death to sin. See Isaac Augustine Morales, “Baptism, Holiness, and Resurrection Hope in Romans 6,” *CBQ* 83 (2021): 466–81. Morales’s reading falls short because he does not take into account that Christ’s relationship to sin differs from the believer’s relationship to sin.

¹⁷⁸ For an excellent discussion, see Morgan, “Romans 6:5a,” 272–76.

¹⁷⁹ Romans 6:5 reads that “by the similarity of his death, we have become united with him.” Marie-Joseph Lagrange, *Saint Paul: épître aux Romains*, EBib (Paris: Gabalda, 1950), 146; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 435. Sanday and Headlam identify τῷ ὁμοιώματι as a dative of instrument or respect. See Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 157–58.

¹⁸⁰ Ernst Kühl, *Der Brief des Paulus an die Römer* (Leipzig: Quelle & Meyer, 1913), 204; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 435.

this doubt by taking a closer look at the broad usage of σύμφυτος (“united with”) in Greek literature, concluding that σύμφυτος can be used to express a link between anything.¹⁸¹

Second, Barrett agrees with the notion that a person cannot unite with an *abstractum*, but rejects the interpolation of αὐτῷ (“to him”). He argues that “his death” is syntactically linked to “unite with” and should be repeated, reading “for if by means of the image of his death (that is, baptism) we have been joined [united] with his death.”¹⁸² This reading not only goes against the natural reading of verse 5 in terms of its word order,¹⁸³ but also requires “unwarranted interpolations,” making the text more complicated.¹⁸⁴

Third, some scholars propose to read “in the likeness” as a dative of association syntactically linked to “have been united with,” reading, “for if we have been united with the likeness of his death.”¹⁸⁵ According to Joseph Gewiess, “the likeness of Christ’s death” can only refer to the believer’s death to sin.¹⁸⁶ The protasis in verse 5 indicates

¹⁸¹ Otto Kuss, *Auslegung und Verkündigung*, 3 vols. (Regensburg: Pustet, 1963), 1:154–56.

¹⁸² Barrett, *Romans*, 115–16.

¹⁸³ Tannehill, *Dying*, 31.

¹⁸⁴ Blazen, “Death to Sin,” 323.

¹⁸⁵ Similar to its verbal counterpart συμφύω (“to grow together”), the compound, verbal adjective σύμφυτος asks for the dative of association. See Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 157–58; Kuss, *Auslegung und Verkündigung*, 1:153; Käsemann, *Römer*, 158; Cranfield, *Romans*, 1:370; Wilckens, *Römer*, 2:13; Schreiner, *Romans*, 314–15; Jewett, *Romans*, 400; Wolter, *Römer*, 1:376n45.

¹⁸⁶ Joseph Gewiess, “Das Abbild des Todes Christi (Röm 6,5),” *Historisches Jahrbuch* 77 (1958): 339–46.

that the believer's death to sin is a likeness [*Abbild*] of Christ's death to sin. In other words, both deaths to sin share similarities, but there are also differences.

Differences between the Believer's and Christ's Death to Sin

In contrast to Christ, the believer's death to sin (Rom 6:2) precedes the physical death, which indicates that the believer's death to sin is spiritual. Romans 6:1–14 provides numerous indications for the believer's ongoing physical existence after experiencing death to sin. The most reliable indicator is the aorist tense of ἀπεθάνομεν (“we have died”) to sin (v. 2). The aorist tense situates the death experience of the believer in the past. The logical consequence is that the believer's death to sin is a spiritual death to sin.¹⁸⁷

Wolter argues that death to someone or something does not need to be a physical death.¹⁸⁸ As an example, Wolter points to a letter from Myrrhina to Nicippē. Myrrhina, a courtesan, is jealous because Diphilus her suitor no longer visits her, but Thettalē instead. In this letter, she reveals her plans to win him back, concluding the letter with the words, “little care I; he must either live to me or die to Thettalē” (Alciphron, *Ep.* 4.10.5). The letter clarifies that Myrrhina wishes that Diphilus would visit her again and stop visiting Thettalē. The expression that Diphilus must die to Thettalē shows the possibility of death as a spiritual, non-physical phenomenon, in which Diphilus separates himself from Thettalē to such a degree that he is, for all intents and purposes, dead to Thettalē.

¹⁸⁷ Similarly, Toan Do, “Christ Crucified and Raised from the Dead: Paul's Baptismal Theology and Metaphorical Appropriations in Romans 6:3–4,” *Conversations with the Biblical World* 34 (2014): 204–25, esp. 221.

¹⁸⁸ Wolter, *Römer*, 1:382. For more related examples, see Keener, *Mind*, 34.

However, Diphilius and Thettalē would both remain alive, even if Diphilius died to Thettalē. Obviously, death is being used as a metaphor of a severed relationship in this trite example. My intent is not to argue that death to sin in Rom 6 is a metaphor but to illustrate that “death to . . .” can express a spiritual, non-physical change of allegiance between entities.

In Rom 6:6, Paul presents the purpose of the believer’s death to sin, indicated by the conjunction ἵνα (“in order to”), stating ἵνα καταργηθῇ τὸ σῶμα τῆς ἁμαρτίας (“in order that the body of sin may be done away with”). Hubert Frankemölle argues that in the context of an execution, καταργέω should read as “to annihilate,” “to wipeout,” or “to destroy.”¹⁸⁹ Despite the spiritual nature of the believer’s death to sin, Paul refers to τὸ σῶμα τῆς ἁμαρτίας (“the body of sin”) that is destroyed at the moment of the believer’s death to sin. Thomas R. Schreiner lists various interpretations that scholars have suggested for “the body of sin” (v. 6).¹⁹⁰ First, Calvin defines “the body of sin” as the “mass made up of sin,” which one has committed.¹⁹¹ Second, Charles Hodge argues that “the body of sin” is “sin considered as a body, as something which can be crucified.”¹⁹² Third, Anders Nygren argues that “the body of sin” is a congregational body of people under the rule of sin, stating “it is this body to which man formerly belonged, when he

¹⁸⁹ See Frankemölle, *Taufverständnis*, 76. See also Schreiner, *Romans*, 316. Note also that Paul uses the same verb καταργέω in Rom 7:6 in reference to the believer who has been released from the law.

¹⁹⁰ Schreiner, *Romans*, 316.

¹⁹¹ John Calvin, *Commentaries on the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Romans*, trans. John Owen, *Calvin’s Commentary* (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1849), 226.

¹⁹² Charles Hodge, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1955), 198.

was under the dominion of sin and death.”¹⁹³ Nygren sees the congregational body of sin as being in competition with the congregational body of Christ. Fourth, Jewett argues that “the body of sin” is the person’s physical body dominated by sin.¹⁹⁴ Fifth, Rudolf Bultmann argues that “the body of sin” is the whole person, including the physical body under the rule of sin.¹⁹⁵ For Bultmann, adjectives and other qualifiers related to σῶμα express “its captivation by an outside power.”¹⁹⁶ Similarly, Dunn observes that σῶμα is a relational concept. “It denotes the person embodied in a particular environment.”¹⁹⁷ In particular, the “body of sin” denotes human being as belonging to the age ruled by sin.¹⁹⁸

The following adverbial infinitive clause in verse 6, τοῦ μηκέτι δουλεύειν ἡμᾶς τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ (“we no longer serve sin”), which describes the result of the destruction of the body of sin, indicates that the phrase “the body of sin” denotes a person’s condition of being under the rule of sin.¹⁹⁹ The verb δουλεύειν (“to serve”) indicates a submission to a

¹⁹³ Anders Nygren, *Commentary on Romans*, trans. Carl C. Rasmussen (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg, 1949), 234.

¹⁹⁴ Jewett, *Anthropological Terms*, 291. See also Robert Horton Gundry, *Sōma in Biblical Theology: With Emphasis on Pauline Anthropology*, SNTSMS 29 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 58; Susan G. Eastman, “Oneself in Another: Participation and the Spirit in Romans 8,” in *“In Christ” in Paul: Explorations in Paul’s Theology of Union and Participation*, eds. Michael J Thate, et al. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018; repr., Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), 103–25.

¹⁹⁵ Bultmann, *Theology*, 1:196–200.

¹⁹⁶ Bultmann, *Theology*, 1:197.

¹⁹⁷ Dunn, *Theology*, 56.

¹⁹⁸ Dunn, *Romans*, 1:320.

¹⁹⁹ The genitive article τοῦ when followed by an infinitive can indicate a result. See Wallace, *Grammar*, 610.

master, in this case the sin.²⁰⁰ The reading of “the body of sin” as a condition of slavery to sin finds further support in the verb καταργέω, if reading it as “invalidate,” or “make powerless.”²⁰¹ καταργέω refers to a loss of power or effectiveness. If “body” refers to the whole person, and the expression “body of sin” indicates the specific condition of slavery to sin, it would mean that the whole person, including the physical body, experiences deliverance from slavery to sin (see v. 14).

Thus, the loss of power that “the body of sin” experiences at the believer’s death to sin, is the believer’s deliverance from the rule of sin. Although the deliverance from the rule of sin affects the whole person, including the physical body, its effect on the physical body of the believer does not show immediately. The believer experiences a temporal gap between spiritual death to sin and physical death, which leads to a “post-mortem” experience that differs significantly from Christ’s death. While in Christ’s case “death no longer rules over him” (v. 9); in the believer’s case, Paul advises the believer in verse 12 to μὴ οὖν βασιλευέτω ἡ ἁμαρτία ἐν τῷ θνητῷ ὑμῶν σώματι (“not let sin rule over your mortal body”). The difference between Christ’s physical death to sin and the believer’s spiritual death to sin is relevant from several viewpoints. First, the noun σῶμα (“body”), with the attributive adjective θνητόν (“mortal”) as its qualifier, indicates the believer’s ongoing mortality, and thus the believer’s subjugation under the rule of death

²⁰⁰ Two possible interpretations exist regarding the syntactical function of the genitive noun τῆς ἁμαρτίας (“of sin”) within the phrase τὸ σῶμα τῆς ἁμαρτίας (“the body of sin”). First, “of sin” could be a possessive genitive, meaning that sin owns “the body.” Second, “of sin” could be an attributive genitive, qualifying the “body” as sinful, meaning that the sin is in charge of the body, and reading “sinful body.” See Schnabel, *Römer*, 2:46.

²⁰¹ “καταργέω,” *BDAG* 525–26. Some commentators argue that the verb instead indicates the process of rendering something powerless or putting something out of action. See, for example, Dunn, *Romans*, 1:319.

despite their liberation from rule of sin (e.g., 2 Cor 4:11). In this sense, Douglas J. Moo observes that “the Christian is no longer ‘body of sin’ (6:6) . . . , but he or she is still ‘mortal body.’”²⁰² The spiritual nature of death to sin does not effect an immediate physical renewal, which means that the believer still lives in the “mortal body” and faces the inevitability of physical death. The physical renewal for those who have previously died to sin will take place at Christ’s parousia (1 Cor 15:35–53).²⁰³

Second, the believer’s death to sin terminates the believer’s enslavement to sin, but not the existence of sin itself.²⁰⁴ Despite having spiritually died to sin and being delivered from the rule of sin, the believer may still act sinfully (e.g., 8:12). In contrast to a person who has not spiritually died to sin, the believer is aware of sinful actions and seeks atonement with God through Christ. This condition of the believer—being delivered from the rule of sin while experiencing the ongoing presence of sin in one’s own life—is the utmost ideal a believer can reach before their physical death. Once a person who has died spiritually dies physically, sin remains without any claim of ownership over the believer (e.g., Rom 6:5; 8:11). In this case, similar to Christ, the believer’s resurrection will follow as a consequence at Christ’s parousia (vv. 5, 8; see also 8:11; Phil 3:10–11, 21).

²⁰² Moo, *Romans*, 407. Fitzmyer seems to miss the differentiation between the body of sin and the mortal body when he argues that “Christians may still be in ‘the sinful body’ (6:6) and may be seduced or swayed by ‘its cravings.’ The ‘body of sin’ denotes the state in which even baptized Christians may find themselves; with such a body that they too can still be subject to the dominion of sin.” Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 446.

²⁰³ Similarly, Kuo-Yu Tsui, “Baptized,” 404–5.

²⁰⁴ Similarly, Wolter, *Römer*, 1:387.

Third, Paul's imperatival statement in Rom 6:12 $\mu\eta\ \sigma\upsilon\nu\ \beta\alpha\sigma\iota\lambda\epsilon\nu\acute{\epsilon}\tau\omega$ ("do not let sin rule") indicates, not only sin's ongoing existence in the believer's life, but also the potential danger that sin may again enslave the believer. The active voice and the singular number of the imperative both indicate that re-enslavement to sin depends on the believer's decision. The enslavement to sin does not result from the believer's sinful actions per se, but occurs through a cognitive abandonment of Christ as master, by no longer seeking atonement with him.²⁰⁵ In this case, at the believer's physical death, sin could claim ownership over the person, with the consequence being that the person would not experience resurrection at Christ's parousia.

While I have discussed the differences between the two scenarios, the aforementioned examples show that Christ and the believer's death to sin do share the element of separation from sin. However, whereas in Christ's case separation from sin takes place "once for all," with no further opportunity for sin to tempt Christ, the believer's case differs, with the separation taking place only from the rule of sin. The believer's death to sin does not functionally eliminate the presence of sin from their life. Sin still has the opportunity to tempt and re-enslave the believer. Nevertheless, Christ and the believer's death to sin have the same ultimate consequence of being resurrected and receiving eternal life. However, since the believer's death to sin is a spiritual death, and not a physical death to sin (as it is in Christ's case), the believer is unfortunately still subjugated under the rule of death until parousia.²⁰⁶

²⁰⁵ For a detailed discussion of this topic, see pages 241–45.

²⁰⁶ Although I understand the believer's death to sin as a spiritual death, it also has real physical consequences.

The Believer's Death to Sin as a Metaphor

Some scholars have argued that Paul uses the phrase “death to sin” metaphorically.²⁰⁷ Aristotle defines a metaphor as “the application of a word that belongs to another thing: either from genus to species, species to genus, species to species, or by analogy” (Aristotle, *Poet.* 1457b). According to Aristotle, “to use metaphor well is to discern similarities” (Aristotle, *Poet.* 1459a). Thus, a metaphor is a form of describing one item through a different, but similar item. The use of death as a metaphor finds support in the Greco-Roman literature. Keener argues that “people in antiquity sometimes spoke of death figuratively or by way of comparison with an abject state.”²⁰⁸ Scholars who advocate that “death to sin” in Rom 6:1–14 is a metaphor, argue that Paul depicts the termination of the rule of sin over the believer through its similarity to physical death. Schnabel states that “as the physical death terminates life, so did sin stop to exist for the believer in Christ.”²⁰⁹ Romans 6:2, however, states that the believer dies to sin. Thus, it would be more accurate to conclude that the believer stopped existing to sin. Furthermore, the discussion above has shown that death to sin does not terminate the existence of sin, but only its rule over the one who has died to it.

The metaphorical reading of “death to sin” is rendered unlikely because Adam’s spiritual death to God resembles the believer’s spiritual death to sin. At the moment of Adam’s transgression, Adam experienced a spiritual death to God. Adam’s spiritual death

²⁰⁷ Wolter, *Römer*, 1:367; 369–70; Schnabel, *Römer*, 2:25–26.

²⁰⁸ Keener, *Mind*, 34.

²⁰⁹ Schnabel, *Römer*, 2:26.

describes the transition from being under the rule of God, to being under the rule of sin. In Adam's case, the spiritual death to God precedes his physical death. Adam's spiritual death also had physical consequences. On the day he ate the fruit, he began to decay. Although human beings have been spiritually dead to God by default since the time of Adam's transgression, God remains existent and makes efforts to liberate human beings from the rule of sin and death. Adam's spiritual death to God has similar characteristics to the believer's spiritual death to sin. The believer who dies to sin experiences liberation from the rule of sin and returns to a life under God's rule. However, sin remains existent in the believer's life and consistently tries to regain its rule over the believer. Just as Adam's spiritual death to God was real, and had real consequences, so the believer's spiritual death to sin is real, with its own set of real consequences. The believer's death to sin has physical consequences—namely the physical resurrection at the parousia.²¹⁰ A solely metaphorical reading of the believer's death to sin would miss the soteriological importance of the believer's spiritual death to sin.

The soteriological implications of the believer's death to sin question the validity of a metaphorical reading of "death to sin." Romans 6:4 indicates that, after death to sin, the believer walks ἐν καινότητι ζωῆς ("in newness of life"). Christ's physical death to sin left sin without any further claim over Christ. The necessary consequence was Christ's resurrection to eternal life. Similarly, the believer's spiritual death to sin leaves sin without any further claim over the believer once the believer dies physically. The believer

²¹⁰ Another consequence of the believer's death to sin is his or her walk in the "newness of life" (Rom 6:4), which describes the topic of sanctification. The discussion on sanctification goes beyond the scope of my study.

enjoys the guarantee of a future physical resurrection at Christ's parousia (v. 5). A metaphorical meaning of "death to sin" cannot explain this soteriological implication of death to sin.

Summary

This third and final section showed that Christ's death to sin differed from the believer's death to sin. Christ's death to sin was a physical death. Before his physical death Christ was exposed to sin, which had the opportunity to subject him to its rule. However, because Christ never subjected himself to the rule of sin, sin had no claim over Christ after his physical death. Christ's resurrection from the dead was a necessary consequence of this phenomenon. Christ's death to sin and his resurrection marks the end of universal rule of sin and death.

By contrast, the believer's death to sin is a spiritual death. It liberates the believer from the rule of sin but does not terminate the existence of sin in their lives. Sin remains present in the believer's life. For this reason, the possibility remains for believer to act sinfully. The ongoing sinful action of the believer leaves sin with the potential to regain rulership over the believer. Sin re-enslaves the believer when the believer ceases to seek atonement with God. In such a case, sin can reclaim ownership over the person, and no resurrection in Christ will follow. However, if the believer remains under the rule of God, then similarly to Christ, sin has no claim over the believer, and resurrection at Christ's parousia will follow as a necessary consequence. This soteriological consequence of the believer's death to sin renders a metaphorical reading of death to sin unlikely.

The non-metaphorical reading of death to sin finds further support in the resemblance between Adam's spiritual death to God and the believer's spiritual death to sin. In both cases, spiritual death separates the person from the entity to which the person died and terminates the entity's rule over the person. The entity to which the person died remains existent in the person's life and tries to regain rulership over the person until their physical death.

Conclusion

Based on the findings in this chapter, it is possible to formulate a preliminary, working hypothesis regarding the meaning of "body of Christ" in Rom 7:4 and the meaning of the believer's death to the law in verse 4 and Gal 2:19.

The insights within Paul's presentation of Christ's death have two implications for the meaning of the "body of Christ" in Rom 7:4. First, Paul's connection between Christ's death and the Passover lamb implies that the body of Christ has a liberating effect on the believer. Second, Paul's connection between Christ's death and the Levitical process of atonement implies that the body of Christ must be understood as God's means of providing atonement between sinful humanity and the Creator. Therefore, the phrase "body of Christ" (v. 4) is primarily referring to its liberating and atoning effect.

The characteristics of the believer's death to sin (6:2) are applicable to the believer's death to the law (7:4; Gal 2:19) due to the significant parallels between the two concepts. Similar to the death to sin, the death to the law (Rom 7:4; Gal 2:19) is spiritual and is in some way related to the process of atonement and deliverance from sin's rulership. Furthermore, just as sin continues to exist in the believer's life after death to

sin, the law also continues to exist in the believer's life, even after the believer dies to the law. As is the case with sin losing its rulership after spiritual death to sin, a change is also inherent in the role of the law within the lives of believers who have died to the law.

CHAPTER 4

AN OUTLINE OF PAUL'S LEGAL UNDERSTANDING

In this chapter, I attempt to outline Paul's legal discourse in Romans and Galatians.¹ Paul's legal discourse has long been a central focus of interest throughout Pauline scholarship. The question is whether Paul uses Greco-Roman legal concepts in his legal discourse. I undertake three steps to answer this question. In the first step, I address whether Paul's legal discourse is consistent between, and within, Romans and Galatians. This section clarifies whether death to the law in Rom 7:4 and Gal 2:19 refers to the same event in the believer's life, and whether these texts explain each other. In the second step, I address whether Paul attributes characteristics of the Greco-Roman positive and natural law to the law of Moses. This will help clarify to which law is the believer's death, referenced in Rom 7:7 and Gal 2:19. In the third step, I synthesize Paul's legal understanding, focusing particularly on the discontinuity, yet ongoing relevance, of the law of Moses in the time after Christ's death. A concise summary of the findings follows each section, and the chapter ends with conclusions based on the findings throughout.

¹ In the thirteen letters that claim Pauline authorship νόμος (law) appears 121 times. It appears in Romans seventy-four times, in 1 Corinthians nine times, in Galatians thirty-two times, in Ephesians once, in Philippians three times, and in 2 Timothy twice.

Perceived Inconsistencies of Paul's Legal Discourse

Pauline scholarship has scrutinized Paul's legal discourse down to the minutest detail. Interpreters have raised doubts about the inner consistency of Paul's legal discourse to the point where Paul not only changes his viewpoint on the law between Galatians and Romans, but apparently contradicts himself within each letter. In this study, two relevant issues are different, yet related. First, the question of whether Paul's legal discourse is consistent in Romans as compared to Galatians. Second, the question of whether Paul's legal discourse is internally consistent in Romans, as well as in Galatians.

Perceived Inconsistencies of Paul's Legal Discourse in Romans as compared to Galatians

In the mid-nineteenth century, German scholarship began to argue that there were inconsistencies between Paul's legal discourse in Romans compared to that of Galatians. Albrecht Ritschl explained the inconsistency using the classic threefold division of the law of Moses into moral, civil, and ceremonial categories. He concluded that in Galatians, Paul argues primarily for the end of the ceremonial part of the law, whereas in Romans, Paul focuses on the moral aspect of the law.² Hans Hübner points out that Ritschl perceived the inconsistencies to result from Paul's personal experience with the law. Ritschl, according to Hübner, never argued for the theory of development in Paul's legal understanding.³ Current scholarship questions the value of the threefold division of

² Albrecht Ritschl, *Die Entstehung der altkatholischen Kirche: Eine kirchen- und dogmengeschichtliche Monographie*, 2nd ed. (Bonn: Marcus, 1857), 76–77.

³ Paul experienced the ceremonial side of the law as a Pharisee. Romans 7 records the experience of the moral side of the law which Ritschl interprets as autobiographically. See Hans Hübner, *Law in Paul's Thought: A Contribution to the Development of Pauline Theology*, trans. James C. G. Greig, SNTW (London: T&T Clark, 1984), 1–2.

the law in Paul's writings for two reasons. First, it was foreign to Paul's legal understanding.⁴ Second, assigning each law to one of the three categories creates difficulties.⁵

Friedrich Sieffert introduced the concept of theological development in Paul's legal understanding. The notion of development expanded a variety of suggestions on how the development took place. Each proposal dealt with the same three factors: first, the severity of the inconsistencies; second, the dates of composition of Romans and Galatians, along with the question of the sequence of the two letters; and third, the historical situation of the addressees and Paul's relation to the respective congregations.

The provided explanations vary from insurmountable differences to substantial contradictions. Based on the assumption of the proximity of the composition of Romans and Galatians, Ulrich Luz argues that the distinctive situation to which each letter was composed caused the observed insurmountable differences in Paul's legal discourse.⁶

Sieffert argues that due to the assumption of a long-time gap between Galatians and

⁴ Current scholarship considers Tertullian to be one of the first to differentiate between parts of the law. In particular, he distinguished the ceremonial parts from the moral parts, arguing for the abolishment of the former and the ongoing validity of the latter. See Tertullian, *De Monogamia* (PL 2:978–88); Tertullian, *De Pudicitia* (PL 2:1041–43); Tertullian, *De Oratione* (PL 1:1251–55). See also Richard N. Longenecker, "Three Ways of Understanding Relations between the Testaments: Historically and Today," in *Tradition and Interpretation in the New Testament: Essays in Honor of E. Earle Ellis for his 60th Birthday*, eds. Gerald F. Hawthorne and Otto Betz (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1987), 22–32.

⁵ Schreiner observes that "it is quite difficult to distinguish between what is 'moral' and 'ceremonial' in the law." Thomas R. Schreiner, *40 Questions about Christians and Biblical Law*, 40 Questions Series (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2010), 90. See also Räisänen, *Paul*, 23–28.

⁶ Ulrich Luz, *Das Geschichtsverständnis des Paulus*, BEvT 49 (Munich: Kaiser, 1968), 285. Räisänen also states that "in face of different challenges this impulsive and flexible thinker often shifted his ground." See Räisänen, *Paul*, 9. For a discussion on the distinctive situations between the churches in Galatia and Rome, see footnotes 48–49 on page 153.

Romans, Paul underwent theological development in his understanding of the law.

Sieffert states:

Once the sharp, dialectical, rigid formulation of his teaching on freedom from the Law, as we find it in Galatians, had been brought into being by the struggle the apostle found himself having to engage in against Judaism-within-Christianity, there then followed in Romans at a later date, a more comprehensive and profound, but at the same time more moderate development of that teaching.⁷

Hübner argues that Paul underwent significant theological development in his perception of the law so that “Paul in Romans no longer wanted to say what he once said in Galatians.”⁸ According to Hübner, Paul describes the law in Galatians as unfavorable and argues for its abolishment⁹ due to its demonic origin (Gal 3:19).¹⁰ By contrast, Paul presents the law in Romans as “a determinative factor” for Christians (Rom 13:8–10). The argument for “Christ alone” ended the perverted Jewish understanding of the law.¹¹ Hübner also negates the parallel between verses 8–10 and Gal 5:14, as well as negating that the love command in verse 14 refers to the law of Moses.¹² These proposals demonstrate that scholarship has not reached common ground in explaining the perceived inconsistencies in Paul’s legal discourse.

⁷ Friedrich Sieffert, “Die Entwicklungslinie der paulinischen Gesetzeslehre nach den vier Hauptschriften des Apostels,” in *Theologische Studien: Herrn Wirkl. Oberkonsistorialrath Professor D. Bernhard Weiss zu seinem 70. Geburtstage dargebracht*, eds. C. R. Gregory, et al. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1897), 332–357. Translation provided by Hübner, *Law in Paul’s Thought*, 4.

⁸ Hübner, *Law in Paul’s Thought*, 5.

⁹ To maintain this argument, Hübner does not see Gal 5:14 as a reference to the Torah. See Hübner, *Law in Paul’s Thought*, 136.

¹⁰ Hübner, *Law in Paul’s Thought*, 25–31.

¹¹ Hübner, *Law in Paul’s Thought*, 135.

¹² Hübner, *Law in Paul’s Thought*, 36–37.

A close reading of Paul’s legal discourse in Romans and Galatians renders unlikely the assumption that his legal understanding underwent theological development. The core points of the legal discourse in Romans and Galatians are alike.¹³ Paul presents a lengthy discussion on the law as a universal standard for God’s righteous, eschatological judgment, along with the failure of all humanity to live up to the law—Jews and Gentiles included (Rom 1:18–3:20). Paul concludes that “no flesh will be justified by the works of the law” (3:20). The same phrase ends the opening statement of Paul’s legal discourse in Galatians (Gal 2:16, see also 3:11).¹⁴ Paul continues the legal discourse in both letters by pointing out that justification is independent of the law (Rom 3:21, 28;¹⁵ Gal 2:21¹⁶).¹⁷ Following this initial proposition, Paul refers to Abraham

¹³ See also Wolter, *Römer*, 1:47.

¹⁴ Galatians 2:16 is part of the letter’s *propositio* (vv. 15–21). See Betz, *Galatians*, 113–14. In 3:11, Paul quotes from Hab 2:4 stating that “the righteous one will live by faith.” Paul also uses this quote in Rom 1:17, which is part of the *propositio* of Romans. See Jewett, *Romans*, 135–36. Therefore, even though Paul expands the legal discourse in Romans with material that is not present in Galatians, the initial position in the legal discourse is the same in both letters. Paul argues for justification that does not come from works of the law, but by faith.

¹⁵ In Rom 3:28, Paul uses terminology similar to that of Gal 2:1 to express the independence of righteousness from the law. Although the two verses do not contain the same content, they are related. See Udo Borse, *Der Standort des Galaterbriefes*, BBB 41 (Bonn: Hanstein, 1972), 122.

¹⁶ In Gal 2:21, Paul uses a conditional clause, stating “for if righteousness [comes] through the law, then Christ has died in vain.” The conditional clause is a first-class conditional clause. This class of conditional clauses indicates an assumption about the truth of the statement for the sake of argument. Thus, verse 21 reads, “suppose for a moment that righteousness is through the law, then consider the implications of such, if it were true; for then Christ’s death was wasted; he didn’t need to die.” See James L. Boyer, “First Class Conditions: What Do They Mean?,” *Grace Theological Journal* 2 (1981): 75–114. The protasis reveals that Paul understands that righteousness is independent of the law. In Rom 3:21 Paul uses the preposition χωρίς (“apart from”) to express the independence of righteousness from the law.

¹⁷ Borse points to four other terms used in Gal 2:15–18, which Paul typically uses in Romans when discussing similar content: First, the prepositional phrase ἐκ πίστεως (“by faith”) in verse 16; 3:7–9, 11–12, 22, 24; 5:5; Rom 1:17; 3:26, 30; 4:16; 5:1; 9:30, 32; 10:6; 14:23; Second, the expression ἔργα νόμου (“works of the law”) in Gal 2:16; 3:2, 5, 10; Rom 3:20, 28, see also v. 27; Third, the adjective ἁματωλός (“sinner”) in Gal 2:15, 17; Rom 3:7; 5:8, 19; 7:13; Finally, the noun παραβάτης (“transgressor”) in Gal 2:18; Rom 2:25, 27. See Borse, *Standort*, 123.

to prove first, that faith in the Lord's promises led to Abraham's righteousness, and second, that faith (rather than the law) is the identifying characteristic of Abraham's offspring. Therefore, through faith the Gentiles also become Abraham's offspring (Rom 4;¹⁸ Gal 3:6–19; 4:21–31).¹⁹ Paul further points out in both letters that those who keep seeking justification exclusively through the law by emphasizing the need for circumcision are obligated to keep the entire law (Rom 2:25; Gal 5:3;²⁰ see also Rom 10:5; Gal 3:12).²¹ Addressing the question of the law's relevance, Paul argues that

¹⁸ Romans 4:12 gives the impression that Paul would consider those who are circumcised to be just as much a part of Abraham's offspring as those who share in Abraham's faith. However, the immediate context indicates that Paul promotes a much more exclusive offspring of Abraham; namely those who solely share in his faith. This is because, ultimately, his faith was considered the reason for his righteousness before his circumcision (vv. 9–11, 13–14). Note the close terminological parallel in the protasis of verse 14 *εἰ γὰρ ἐκ νόμου ἡ κληρονομία* ("for if the inheritance is from the law") and Gal 3:18, *εἰ γὰρ οἱ ἐκ νόμου κληρονόμοι* ("for if the heirs are from the law"). The apodosis of each verse also indicates parallels stating that in this case "faith is nullified and the promise void" (Rom 4:14) or the inheritance in this case is "not out of the promises" (Gal 3:18).

¹⁹ Udo Borse points out that Paul only quotes from Gen 15:6 in Gal 3:6 and Rom 4:3 and partially in verse 23. Paul further refers to Gen 15:6 in Rom 4:9 and 22. Borse further observes that the name "Abraham" appears in Pauline writings apart from 2 Cor 11:22, exclusively in Romans (4:1–3, 9, 12–13, 16; 9:7; 11:1) and in Galatians (Gal 3:6–9, 14, 16, 18, 29; 4:22). Besides, he points out that the expression *κληρονόμος* ("heir") appears in Gal 3:29; 4:1, 7 and Rom 4:13–14; 8:17. See Borse, *Standort*, 124, 127. For further parallels between Gal 4:21–31 and Rom 9:6–13 regarding Abraham's offspring, see Borse, *Standort*, 128–29.

²⁰ In Rom 2:25, Paul expresses his idea using a third-class conditional clause, which indicates a logical connection. Thus, Paul considers circumcision to be only beneficial in the case of an individual keeping the law. In Gal 5:3, Paul argues along a similar line when he writes that every circumcised human is obligated to keep the entire law.

²¹ In Rom 10:5, Paul does not refer to circumcision, but argues for the necessity of keeping the entire law if someone pursues righteousness through the law. In support of his argument, he quotes from Lev 18:5 which reads "the human being who does these things will live by them." In Rom 10:5, these things relate to the law which Paul mentions in the clause before the quote. In Lev 18:5, the context indicates that these things relate to the Lord's statutes and rules, which is the same quote Paul uses in Gal 3:12 to argue that "the law is not out of faith." This statement is an abbreviated form of saying that righteousness through works of the law is not by faith, but by performance.

the Lord added the law because of Israel's transgressions (Rom 5:20; Gal 3:19).²² The relationship between the law and Israel's transgression expresses itself in the law's condemnation of those who transgress it. According to Paul, Christ terminates this condemning function of the law (Rom 8:2–3; 10:4; Gal 3:13, 22–25; 4:4–5).²³ In both letters, Paul argues that the believer who seeks to escape from the deadly condemnation of the law must die to it (Rom 7:4, 6; Gal 2:19).²⁴ Ironically, in Romans, as well as in Galatians, Paul concludes the legal discourse by pointing out that after death to the law, the believer keeps the law by showing love toward one's neighbor (Rom 13:8–10; Gal 5:14; 6:2).²⁵

Based on the textual similarities between Galatians and Romans,²⁶ which extend beyond the outlined similarities of Paul's legal discourse, Udo Borse argues that the dates

²² In Rom 5:20, Paul states that the law *παρεισῆλθεν* (“has slipped in”) as a side issue. By using *παρεισέρχομαι* in the given context (vv. 12–21), Paul expresses that the law had no dominant function in God's salvific plans. The law's purpose, as indicated by the conjunction *ἵνα* (“in order to”), was to increase trespasses. This role of the law not only creates accountability for sin (v. 13), but also generates knowledge of sin, by triggering desires which, when put into action, have deadly consequences (3:20; 7:5, 7–11). In Gal 3:19, Paul argues that the law has been added *χάριν* (“because of”) the transgressions.

²³ In Rom 8:2–3, Paul explicitly mentions Christ's incarnation into sinful flesh as the necessary action to free the believer from the law of sin and death (see also 7:6). In Galatians, Paul points out that Christ as the incarnated one bought the believers free from the curse of the law (Gal 3:13) or the law in general (4:4–5). These liberating actions take place under the condition that faith in Christ is present.

²⁴ Romans 7:4 describes death in a passive form *ἐθανατώθητε* (“you have been put to death”). See also verse 6. The death took place *τῷ νόμῳ* (“to the law”). Galatians 2:19 describes death in an active form *ἀπέθανον* (“I have died”). Similar to Rom 7:4, death took place *νόμῳ* (“to the law”). The immediate context of both verses indicates that the consequence is *ζωὴ θεῷ* (“life to God”), see Gal 2:19; Rom 6:10–11, 13. See also Borse, *Standort*, 123–24.

²⁵ In Rom 13:8–10, Paul instructs the church members not to owe anything to each other except love. He reasons that the one who loves the other fulfills the law (v. 8, see also Gal 6:2). Paul then quotes from the second part of the Decalogue, explaining that all of these laws are summed up in one law; namely that “you shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Rom 13:9). This statement is a quote from Lev 19:18, which Paul also uses in Gal 5:14 where he similarly argues that the entire law is fulfilled in this particular principle.

²⁶ Borse, *Standort*, 120.

of composition of both Romans and Galatians are quite close.²⁷ He suggests that the composition of Galatians followed a couple of months after Romans while Paul was in Macedonia.²⁸ Other scholars suggest the reverse order, but retain the notion of compositional dates for Galatians and Romans within six months.²⁹ Even Dunn, who argues for a more extended period between the composition of Galatians and Romans,³⁰ rejects any development in Paul's theology between the letters based on textual similarities.³¹

Perceived Inconsistencies of Paul's Legal Discourse within Romans and Galatians

Besides the perceived inconsistencies between Romans and Galatians, scholars have also argued for inconsistencies in Paul's legal discourse within each letter. Among the most prominent studies on this type of inconsistency is Räisänen's *Paul and the Law*. Following five chapters of presenting textual observations on Paul's legal discourse, Räisänen concludes:

No other writer, however, is led to such radical and negative conclusions with respect to the law as Paul: the law incites man to sin and increases transgressions; the law

²⁷ Borse, *Standort*, 120–43.

²⁸ This dating of Paul's letters is in support of the northern Galatians thesis. For a comprehensive collection of the arguments in favor of an early date of Galatians, see Longenecker, *Galatians*, lxxii–lxxxviii.

²⁹ Pierre Bonnard, *L'épître de Saint Paul aux Galates*, rev. and enl. ed., CNT 9 (Paris: Delachaux & Niestlé, 1972), 14; Alfred Suhl, *Paulus und seine Briefe: Ein Beitrag zur paulinischen Chronologie*, SNT 11 (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1975), 343.

³⁰ Dunn refers to the consensus that Paul wrote Romans between 55 and 58 CE. For Galatians, he estimates the date between late 50 and mid-51 CE. See Dunn, *Theology*, 131n14.

³¹ Dunn, *Theology*, 31. Räisänen argues that development in Paul's thought regarding the law is likely. However, he believes that it took place up to the Antiochian incident (ca. 48 CE). After this event, Paul's understanding of the law remained unchanged. See Räisänen, *Paul*, 9–10.

ought to be fulfilled 100 percent; Jews do not fulfil the law whereas the Christians do; the law was given through angels, not by God. All these negative statements are made problematic because other *Pauline* statements contradict them. *Paul's most radical conclusions about the law are thus strangely ambiguous.*³²

Räisänen refuses to harmonize any of the contradictions he has identified. He introduces a previously unseen approach to Pauline studies.³³

Current Pauline scholarship adopts a less critical approach to perceived inconsistencies in Paul's legal discourse. Paula Fredriksen observes that "at least since the second century, gentile forms of Christianity have achieved theological consistency by minimizing Paul's positive statements about the Law and emphasizing his negative ones."³⁴ Scholars of the New Perspective on Paul no longer ignore Paul's positive statements on the law. This New Perspective has led to a variety of harmonizing attempts of Paul's legal discourse.

Sanders's attempt to harmonize the perceived inconsistencies is theological. He argues that Paul's legal discourse contains, not only inconsistencies or variations, but real self-contradictions.³⁵ He resolves the self-contradictions by pointing out that Paul addressed different questions, giving different answers.

"When he was asked 'how can one enter the body of those who will be saved?', he answered invariably 'not by doing the law,' and he backed that up by attributing to God a completely different purpose in giving it. When he was asked, 'what is correct

³² Räisänen, *Paul*, 201, (emphasis original).

³³ The layers of inconsistency in Räisänen's study are multifaceted. This study will only address a few key aspects of the discussion on inconsistencies in Paul's legal discourse within each letter.

³⁴ Paula Fredriksen, *Paul: The Pagans' Apostle* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017), 108.

³⁵ Sanders, *Law*, 124, 147.

behavior?,' he answered (among other things), 'observance of the obvious and self-evident commandments.'"³⁶

Dunn explains the perceived inconsistencies by stressing the social dimension of the law at Paul's time. He argues that Paul's negative statements on the law are primarily against the misuse of the law as a means of distinguishing between Jews and Gentiles.³⁷ The law, correctly understood in terms of faith and not works, continues to serve as a positive entity.³⁸ The social framework which Dunn applies to Paul's legal discourse resolves, to a large degree, the inconsistencies emphasized by Räisänen.³⁹

Fredriksen, on the other hand, identifies Paul's use of ethnological concepts as the reason for the perceived inconsistencies. According to Fredriksen, Paul retains the ethnical distinction between Jews and Gentiles.⁴⁰ Paul's understanding of the law makes it a blessing for Israel and a curse for the Gentiles. In other words, the curse of the law was not considered to be universal, but exclusively for "gentiles, who *without Christ*, cannot live according to its demands."⁴¹ Whereas the law of Moses would continue to be relevant for ethnic Jews, the Gentiles could meet the demands of the law solely through

³⁶ E. P. Sanders, "When is a Law a Law? The Case of Jesus and Paul," in *Religion and Law: Biblical-Judaic and Islamic Perspectives*, eds. Edwin R. Firmage, et al. (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 139–158. See also Sanders, *Law*, 84.

³⁷ James D. G. Dunn, *Jesus, Paul, and the Law: Studies in Mark and Galatians* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1990), 224.

³⁸ Dunn, *Law*, 224.

³⁹ Dunn, *Law*, 224–25.

⁴⁰ Fredriksen argues that "in short: Jews and Greeks, men and women, the enslaved and the free might all be 'one in Christ Jesus' (Gal 3.28), that is, *kata pneuma*, 'in spirit' . . . but *kata sarka* they all remained distinct, both socially and ethnically." See Fredriksen, *Paul*, 114.

⁴¹ Fredriksen, *Paul*, 130, (emphasis original), see also 86, 120, 125.

their faith in Jesus Christ.⁴² Consequently, Paul's arguments against the observance of the law are against "gentile Judaizing, not against Jewish Torah observance."⁴³ Although Fredriksen acknowledges "that Jews as well as gentiles are 'under sin' (Rom 3.9–20) and that the blessing of Abraham as the model of *pistis* is pronounced on 'the circumcised' as well as 'on the uncircumcised' (4.1–9),"⁴⁴ she remains vague on Christ's role for Jews.⁴⁵

Hayes chooses a rhetorical approach to resolve the perceived inconsistencies in Paul's legal discourse. She reads Paul's legal discourse through the lens of the Greco-Roman legal understanding. Her study reveals that Paul associates the law of Moses with Greco-Roman positive law since it

is counter to nature; it is lifeless, bringing slavery, sin, and death; it doesn't guarantee virtue, and it is the second-best option restraining those subject to the passions and desires of the flesh until such time as they find deliverance from the flesh through a savior. The conclusion toward which his rhetoric points is that the Mosaic Law is the written law of a particular, genealogically defined people.⁴⁶

Hayes argues that Paul presented the law of Moses as a Greco-Roman positive law to prevent the Gentile Christians from keeping the law of Moses.

⁴² According to Fredriksen, Paul argues that Christ's function is to be the gateway for the Gentiles to become heirs through adoption. See Fredriksen, *Paul*, 37.

⁴³ Fredriksen, *Paul*, 130.

⁴⁴ Fredriksen, *Paul*, 234.

⁴⁵ While Fredriksen explicitly states that the Gentiles depend on Christ in order to keep the law, she does not state that Jews depend on Christ for their justification. Hayes, on the other hand, does. She argues that, according to Paul, justification through faith in Christ involves observance of the law without struggle or effort (see Jer 31 and Ezek 36). She further notes that "Jews too are delivered from sin through faith in Christ Jesus and only through faith, not the Law." She concludes that "Jews are not freed from the Law by the advent of Jesus; they are freed from the state of sin that prevents them from fulfilling the Law as intended." See Hayes, *Divine Law*, 149.

⁴⁶ Hayes, *Divine Law*, 163.

Hayes's argument builds on the assumption that Paul accepted the Ezran ethnological concept. The ethnological concept divides humanity according to their holiness into four estates. First, the priests; second, the Levites; third, the lay Israelites; and fourth, the Gentiles. The rights and privileges of the law of Moses are exclusively granted to the first three estates.⁴⁷ Therefore, Paul may have argued against the observance of the law of Moses by Gentile Christians, based on this ethnological concept. Hayes assumes that in Galatians, Paul addresses Gentile Christians who sought to become proselytes by promoting the observance of the law of Moses.⁴⁸ In Romans, Paul addresses Gentile Christians, who claimed that they had replaced the Jews.⁴⁹ In both cases, Gentile Christians claimed an inaccessible position in Paul's economy, which left him with the need to clarify the relation of Gentile Christians to the law of Moses. By

⁴⁷ Hayes argues that "it was not the Torah's *inferiority* that motivates Paul's rejection of the Torah for Gentiles, but precisely its *superiority*." Hayes, *Divine Law*, 151, (emphasis original).

⁴⁸ In Galatians, the predominantly Gentile audience and a Jewish minority are also well accepted among scholars. See Betz, *Galatians*, 4; Martyn, *Galatians*, 13–15; Dunn, *Galatians*, 5–11; Moo, *Galatians*, 2. David A. DeSilva acknowledges that "the presence of Jewish Christians among the Galatian congregation cannot be positively proven, any more than their presence can be ruled out." Based on Paul's missiological pattern of initiating new churches in the local synagogue, and his emphasis on giving up ethnical boundaries, deSilva concludes that the Galatian churches most likely consisted of Jews, as well as Gentiles. See deSilva, *Galatians*, 26–28.

⁴⁹ Hayes, *Divine Law*, 151–52. This historical assumption is taken from page eight on Mark D. Nanos, "The Myth of the 'Law-Free' Paul Standing between Christians and Jews," *Studies in Christian-Jewish Relations* 4 (2009): 1–22.

Regarding the ethnological characteristics of the Roman audience in general, see Johannes Munck, *Paul and the Salvation of Mankind*, trans. Frank Clarke (Richmon, VA: John Knox, 1959), 196–209; Stowers, *Rereading of Romans*, 29–30. Recent commentators generally agree that Paul primarily addresses a Gentile majority dominating a Jewish minority. See Jewett, *Romans*, 70; Schnabel, *Römer*, 1:28–36; Thielman, *Romans*, 27–34; Moo, *Romans*, 8–12. This situation explains why a very Jewish topic, such as the law for example, might be so prominent in Romans. Wolter, on the other hand, argues that the Jews and Jewish Christians were always present in Rome. Thus, Romans addressed Gentile and Jewish Christians. Unfortunately, Wolter fails to provide evidence for his historical assumption. See Wolter, *Römer*, 1:40–41.

presenting the law of Moses in terms of Greco-Roman positive law, Paul hoped that his Gentile audience would lose interest in the observance of the law of Moses.⁵⁰

Hayes further points out that Gentile Christians misunderstood Paul's devaluation of the law,⁵¹ which subsequently led to a complete abolishment of the law of Moses. Christianity assumes "a stark dichotomy according to which the Mosaic Law is not only not identified with the universal law but is entirely distinct from it, if not antithetical to it."⁵² She observes that Christianity considers "the Mosaic Law abrogated and superseded." Instead, Christianity fully embraced the "natural law as the ontologically primary mode by which God communicates his will for universal humankind."⁵³

This survey has shown that various explanations have been proposed to resolve the perceived inconsistencies in Paul's legal discourse without ascribing self-contradiction to Paul. Given the dissatisfaction with Räisänen's approach, Dunn ranks the simple acceptance of perceived inconsistencies in Paul's legal discourse as a last resort.⁵⁴ Instead, however, he calls for an exegesis that respects the text's integrity and the apostle's "intellectual caliber and theological competence."⁵⁵ In the following attempt to

⁵⁰ Hayes, *Divine Law*, 152–53. She further states that "distancing the Mosaic law from classical conceptions of divine natural law rendered it less appealing to Gentiles without entirely discrediting it." See Hayes, *Divine Law*, 15.

⁵¹ Hayes notes that "Paul succeeded a little too well. . . . Paul's rhetoric of denigration of the Law when speaking to Gentiles—a rhetoric intended to squelch any desire on the part of Gentiles to observe what was the exclusive prerogative of the literal seed of Israel through Isaac—would be distilled as Paul's definitive view of the Law *in all contexts*." Hayes, *Divine Law*, 163, (emphasis original).

⁵² Hayes, *Divine Law*, 164n43.

⁵³ Hayes, *Divine Law*, 164.

⁵⁴ Dunn, *Law*, 215.

⁵⁵ Dunn, *Law*, 215.

outline Paul's legal understanding, I stand on the shoulders of those Pauline scholars who have looked for alternatives to the lack of consistency in Paul's writings.

Summary

The above discussion addressed doubts about the consistency within Paul's legal discourse. Based on the parallel structure and content between the legal discourse in Romans and Galatians, I accept the view that Paul did not undergo any significant theological development in his legal understanding between the writing of Galatians and the writing of Romans. The survey has also shown that current Pauline scholarship rejects Räisänen's conclusion that Paul's legal discourse is inconsistent within Romans or Galatians.

Paul's Use of Greco-Roman Legal Concepts in His Legal Discourse

In this section, I investigate the question of whether Paul uses Greco-Roman legal concepts in his legal discourse. In the first subsection, I provide a short definition on νόμος in Paul. In the second subsection, I examine the question of whether Paul treats in his legal discourse the law of Moses with attributed characteristics of Greco-Roman positive law. In the third subsection, I address the question of whether Paul treats the law of Moses also with attributed characteristics of Greco-Roman natural law. These questions contribute to this study by identifying the law to which the believer dies in Rom 7:4 and Gal 2:19.

A Definition on νόμος in Paul

Paul applies four different meanings to the noun νόμος. First, Paul uses νόμος in reference to Torah in the sense of its legal claims. This meaning is the most prominent one. Second, Paul uses νόμος in reference to Torah in the sense of the Pentateuch (Rom 3:21b). Third, Paul uses νόμος in reference to law as in the sense of a generic name (Rom 4:15b; 7:1; Gal 5:23). Fourth, Paul uses νόμος in reference to law in a metaphorical sense meaning a general principle (Rom 3:27; 7:21a, 25b; 8:2).⁵⁶

Recently, Pauline scholarship reached the conclusion that νόμος in Paul generally refers to Torah in the sense of its legal claims.⁵⁷ Dunn, for example, states that “when Paul spoke of *nomos* and *ho nomos* he was thinking of the Torah.”⁵⁸ The view that the definite article determines the meaning of νόμος was prominent in the nineteenth century and could be traced back to Origen.⁵⁹ However, this view has been discarded.⁶⁰ Räisänen points out that “Paul never defines the content of the term νόμος. He presupposes that the readers will know what he is talking about.”⁶¹ Räisänen further shows that Paul never alludes to any distinguishing nuances of the term νόμος, which renders the proposed distinguishing nuances on Paul’s use of νόμος (e.g. ritual and moral law) by various

⁵⁶ See Michael Wolter, “Gesetz/Werke des Gesetzes” in *Paulus Handbuch*, ed. Friedrich W. Horn (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013) 358–62.

⁵⁷ Similarly, for example Räisänen, *Paul*, 16–18; Schnelle, *Paulus*, 289–90n48. For Galatians, this view is supported by the work of Hong, *Law*, 189. For Romans, this view is supported by James D. G. Dunn, *The New Perspective on Paul*, Rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 133.

⁵⁸ Dunn, *Theology*, 133.

⁵⁹ Edwin Hamilton Gifford, *The Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans* (London: Murray, 1886), 41–48; Lightfoot, *Galatians*, 118.

⁶⁰ Dunn, *Theology*, 132–33.

⁶¹ Räisänen, *Paul*, 16.

scholars simply speculative.⁶² Nevertheless, Räisänen acknowledges, that some of Paul's "statements about the *nomos* . . . are difficult to apply to the Mosaic law."⁶³

Paul's legal understanding is shaped by the Torah. Therefore, the self-testimony of the Torah must be considered. As previously argued, the Pentateuch understands the law of God to be, not just the written form as provided to Israel at Mount Sinai, but a witness to Torah in the sense of its legal claims that pre-existed its written form.⁶⁴ One can assume that Paul knew of this characteristic of the Torah. With the awareness that Paul never defines the content of νόμος, my intention is not to argue whether the content of Torah is different or congruent in its written or unwritten form. Instead, my goal is to emphasize that the feature of Torah existing in written and unwritten form enables Paul to treat νόμος as positive law, while also attributing characteristics of natural law to νόμος, as discussed in further detail below.⁶⁵ Through the written law of Moses, Paul was able to gain a legal understanding in which he "wanted to make universal claims at various points, even when speaking of the Torah, the law of Moses as such."⁶⁶

νόμος as Positive Law in Paul

The discussion in chapter 2 on "Origin and Characteristics of Positive Law" defined positive law as a written law, limited in time and scope. Wise lawgivers tried to

⁶² Räisänen, *Paul*, 18.

⁶³ Räisänen, *Paul*, 18.

⁶⁴ See pages 40–43.

⁶⁵ See the following discussion.

⁶⁶ Dunn, *Theology*, 133.

write positive laws for certain limited territories⁶⁷ that would be as congruent as possible to natural law. Changes in circumstances could render positive laws unjust, or even life-threatening to citizens. In this instance, a divine σωτήρ (“savior”), a statesman with the ability of right legislation based on his divine soul, was needed to save the law, along with the state’s citizens, from the unjust or life-threatening positive law by adapting it to a changed circumstance. The question is whether Paul attributes characteristics of Greco-Roman positive law to the law of Moses.

The Law of Moses as the Law of God

As previously discussed, the law of Moses had its origin at Mount Sinai, partially written by Moses and partially written by the Lord himself.⁶⁸ Whereas the Lord was the ultimate Lawgiver, Moses’s involvement in providing the written version of the law of God attributed the role of mediator to Moses. In line with this understanding, Paul sees the law of Moses as the law of God in written form. Despite pointing to the roles of angels and Moses as mediators of the law of God, Gal 3:19–21 indicates that the law of Moses is essentially divine. The divine origin of the law of Moses finds further support by Paul’s use of the divine passive προσετέθη (“has been added”) in reference to the origin of the law of Moses (v. 19).⁶⁹ However, in his legal discourse, Paul also attributes unambiguous characteristics of Greco-Roman positive law to the law of Moses.

⁶⁷ Prominent territories with positive laws were Epizephyrian Locri (Italy), Sparta (Greece), Catania (Sicily), and Athens (Greece).

⁶⁸ See pages 40–43.

⁶⁹ Daniel B. Wallace, “Galatians 3:19–20: A *Crux Interpretum* for Paul’s View of the Law,” *WTJ* 52 (1990): 225–45; A. Andrew Das, *Galatians*, ConcC (St. Louis: Concordia, 2014), 356–58; Dunn,

The Law of Moses as Written Law

Paul attributes the law of Moses as being a written law, which in Greco-Roman legal discourse is a characteristic attributed to positive law. In relation to the origin of the law of Moses, Paul refers to the involvement of angels (v. 19), thereby following a well-known Jewish tradition.⁷⁰ The unnamed human mediator is a reference to Moses (see v. 17). Moses took part in the writing of the law. Although the Pentateuch witnesses the Lord as the lawgiver, his writing activity is limited to the Decalogue (Exod 31:18; 34:28; Deut 4:13; 5:22; 9:10; 10:2, 4). Aside from the Decalogue, Moses wrote the other commandments upon the Lord's dictation (Exod 17:14; 24:4; 34:27; see also Deut 27:3, 8; 31:9). Thus, Moses's role of mediator in the law-giving process entailed the actual process of writing down divinely-inspired laws. Moses's involvement in the law-giving process is, to a certain degree, analogous to the role of Greco-Roman lawgivers who wrote positive laws for their people by trying to apply natural law to the given situation as accurately as they could.⁷¹

Galatians, 191; Schreiner, *Galatians*, 239; Moo, *Galatians*, 233. John W. Drane denies the divine origin of the law. See John W. Drane, *Paul, Libertine or Legalist: A Study in the Theology of the Major Pauline Epistles* (London: SPCK, 1975), 34, 113. Similarly, on the attribution of the origin of the Torah to angels, see Hübner, *Law in Paul's Thought*, 26–27; 82–83; Martyn, *Galatians*, 254–57; 365–68. Syntactically speaking, however, the preposition *διά*, followed by the genitive plural form of “angel,” which is later attached to the passive participle *διαταγείς* (“being ordained”) indicates intermediate agency, according to Wallace. See Wallace, *Grammar*, 432, 434. In other words, the angels are not the originators of the law, but simply used as agents to transmit the law of God to the Jews.

⁷⁰ Hübner identifies the angels as evil. See Hübner, *Law in Paul's Thought*, 24–36. Barnabas 9:3 is acquainted with the idea of an evil angel giving mischievous instructions. However, Hübner's proposal falls short, since Jewish interpretation considers angels as being present at the law-giving ceremony at Mount Sinai (Deut 33:2; Ps 68:18 [LXX 67:18]; Apg 7:53; Heb 2:2; Jub 1:29–2:1; Josephus, *Ant* 15.136). See Terrance Callan, “Pauline Midrash: The Exegetical Background of Gal 3:19b,” *JBL* 99 (1980): 549–67.

⁷¹ See pages 40–43.

The Law of Moses as Limited in Time

Paul presents the law of Moses as similar to Greco-Roman positive law by qualifying it as time-limited. Paul refers to two events in history that set temporal boundaries on the law of Moses. In Gal 3:17, he points out that the law of Moses came into existence 430 years after the Lord ratified the covenant with Abraham.⁷² Although this date is relative, it unambiguously refers to the specific point in time when the Lord revealed the law of Moses to the nation of Israel at Mount Sinai (Exod 19–24). Two verses later, Paul refers to a time limit to the law of Moses. He states in Gal 3:19 that the law of Moses was added, ἄχρις οὗ ἔλθῃ τὸ σπέρμα (“until the seed shall come”). The preposition ἄχρις (“until”) is a “marker of continuous extent of time up to a point.”⁷³ The expected coming of the seed, which the immediate context identified as Jesus Christ (esp. v. 16), functions as a time limit to the law of Moses. By attributing temporal limits to the law of Moses, a characteristic shared with the Greco-Roman positive law, Paul clarifies that the law of Moses is not universal in time.⁷⁴

The Law of Moses as Limited in Scope

According to Paul, the law of Moses is limited in scope, a characteristic that was also attributed to positive law in the Greco-Roman legal discourse. Paul understands the

⁷² While Gen 15:13 foresees the duration of Israel’s slavery in Egypt lasting for 400 years, Exod 12:40 reports that the duration of Israel’s slavery in Egypt lasted 430 years. Longenecker refers to the substantial discussion in Rabbinic literature concerning the difference in years between the two accounts. Rabbis have typically concurred that the 430 years should be taken as the period between the covenant’s ratification with Abraham and the law-giving act at Mount Sinai. The 400 years refer to the actual time Israel spent in slavery. See Longenecker, *Galatians*, 133. Similarly, see also Josephus, *Ant* 2.205, 318.

⁷³ “ἄχρι,” *BDAG* 160–61.

⁷⁴ Das solves the temporal ambiguity of the law in Paul by arguing that Paul views the law from two different perspectives: as legal code which enslaves, and as a narrative of promises that points forward to the new era. See Das, *Galatians*, 356–58.

law of Moses to be exclusively given into the possession of a specific ethnical group. In Rom 2, Paul distinguishes between two groups. In one group, the Gentiles “who do not have the law” (v. 14), and in the other group the Jews who “rely on the law” (v. 17), being “instructed in the law” (v. 18), and “having available the embodiment of knowledge and truth in the form of the law” (v. 20).⁷⁵ The juxtaposition of Gentiles and Jews implies that the law in verses 17–24 refers to the law of Moses.⁷⁶ Thus, similar to the Greco-Roman positive law, Paul perceived the law of Moses as limited in its geographical availability.

A Final Note on the Law of Moses as Greco-Roman Positive Law

The above discussion reveals that Paul, in line with the Pentateuch, understood the law of Moses to be the law of God. The Lord served as the ultimate Lawgiver, while Moses took on the role of mediator in the writing process of the law. In his legal discourse, however, Paul treats the law of Moses as positive law by attributing certain characteristics of Greco-Roman positive law to the law of Moses.

νόμος as Natural Law in Paul

The discussion in chapter 2 on “Origin and Characteristics of Natural Law” defines natural law as indefinite in scope, able to be embodied in the reason of a wise

⁷⁵ For a more detailed discussion on Rom 2:11–14, see pages 162–67.

⁷⁶ Dunn states that “the interlocutor is proud of the name ‘Jew,’ self-confident in the privileges of being a Jew, conscious of his responsibilities to those who are less highly-favored than himself. His confidence is based on the fact that he has been given the law; he rests his hope on the law; his sense of security as a Jew is focused on the law.” See Dunn, *Romans*, 1:116.

person, and indefinite in time. The question is whether these characteristics of Greco-Roman natural law appear to be part of Paul's understanding of the law.

Paul's Perception of the Law as Indefinite in Scope

Paul perceives the law as indefinite in scope. This characteristic of the law hinges on the question of the identity of ἔθνη ("Gentile") in Rom 2:14.⁷⁷ In verse 14, Paul states, ὅταν γὰρ ἔθνη τὰ μὴ νόμον ἔχοντα φύσει τὰ τοῦ νόμου ποιῶσιν, οὗτοι νόμον μὴ ἔχοντες ἑαυτοῖς εἰσὶν νόμος ("when Gentiles, who do not have the law [by nature], do [by nature] the law's demands, they, who do not have the law, become a law to themselves"). The question on the identity of ἔθνη depends on the placement of the dative object "by nature" (see the two options in the translation).⁷⁸ Those who position "by nature" in the first clause, reading "when Gentiles, who do not have the law by nature," identify ἔθνη as "Gentile Christians."⁷⁹ This view implies that Gentiles, in general, have no access to the law. In this case, the law is taken as the law of Moses being finite in scope. Those who

⁷⁷ Note that Fitzmyer observes that "there is no definite article before *ethnē*; so it means 'some Gentiles,' not necessarily all Gentiles." See Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 309. However, ἔθνος ("Gentile") is a generic noun and does not need a definite article to be determined. Fitzmyer's argument that the anarthrous ἔθνη refers to "some Gentiles," in contrast to "all Gentiles," is not convincing since in this case ἔθνη is the subject of a conditional clause arguing for a general aspect of Gentiles. If ἔθνη referred only to "a part of the Gentiles," Paul's argument would lose validity.

⁷⁸ Longenecker presents a brief overview of a broad variety of proposals explaining Rom 2:12–16. See Longenecker, *Romans*, 260–64.

⁷⁹ Augustine is among the earliest proponents of this view. See Augustine, *C. Jul.* (PL 44:751). More recently, Cranfield argued similarly. See Cranfield, *Romans*, 1:155–57; See also N. T. Wright, "The Law in Romans 2," in *Paul and the Mosaic Law*, ed. James D. G. Dunn (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001; repr., Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1996), 131–50; S. J. Gathercole, "A Law unto Themselves: The Gentiles in Romans 2.14–15 Revisited," *JSNT* 85 (2002): 27–49; Jewett, *Romans*, 213–14; Thielman, *Romans*, 136.

Achtemeier as well as Das argue for Gentiles as a reference to Gentiles in general despite preferring to position "by nature" in the first clause. See Paul J. Achtemeier, *Romans*, IBC (Atlanta: John Knox, 1985), 44–45; Das, *Paul*, 180n28.

position “by nature” in the second clause, reading “Gentiles . . . do by nature the law’s demands” understand ἔθνη to refer to “Gentiles” in general.⁸⁰ This reading instead implies an indefinite scope, allowing for universal access to the law of God.⁸¹

Wright identifies ἔθνη as Gentile Christians, providing three arguments why “by nature” should be linked with the first clause.⁸² First, Rom 14:1 indicates that a substantive participle follows, rather than precedes, its modifying dative. Thus, the dative “by nature” should be connected to “Gentiles, who do not have the law.”⁸³ Second, the term “by nature” in verse 27 is equivalent to the meaning “by birth.” Therefore, the same meaning should be applied to verse 14 reading, “Gentiles, who do not have the law by birth.”⁸⁴ Third, if “by nature” is connected with the clause “Gentiles . . . do by nature the law’s demands,” the contribution of verses 14–15 to Paul’s argument in verses 12–16 (and the entire passage) would become far weaker. This would mean that Gentiles, in general, occasionally keep some of the prescriptions of the law of Moses by nature.⁸⁵ Further, Wright argues that the statement “the doers of the law will be justified” (v. 13) does not interrelate with the statement “when Gentiles . . . do the law’s demands” (v. 14).

⁸⁰ Dunn, *Romans*, 1:98–99; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 309–11; Wolter, *Römer*, 1:184–85; Moo, *Romans*, 159–61.

⁸¹ Campbell states that “it matters little whether pagans possess a law ‘by nature,’ going on to do it, at least to some degree, or whether they ‘do’ those good deeds ‘by nature’ . . . Paul’s point is simply that such ‘doing’ ‘demonstrates’ prior pagan possession of an ethical code.” See Campbell, *Deliverance*, 556.

⁸² P. Richard Choi has previously identified these arguments. See P. Richard Choi, “Paul and Revelation 14,” *JATS* 20 (2009): 223–243.

⁸³ Wright, “Law,” 145. Gathercole provides further examples of dative objects located outside the clause. See Gathercole, “Law,” 35–37.

⁸⁴ Wright, “Law,” 145.

⁸⁵ Wright, “Law,” 145.

Otherwise, Gentiles would be justified based on their doing of the law. Wright also rejects the idea that the statement, “the work of the law written on their heart” (v. 15), applies to Gentiles in general since it alludes to the new covenant concept of Jer 31:33. He considers the idea “that Paul could have written this phrase, with its overtone of Jeremiah’s new covenant promise, simply to refer to pagans who happen by accident to share some of Israel’s moral teaching,” as “next to impossible.”⁸⁶ However, if ἔθνη refers to Gentile Christians, then their inclusion in the new covenant is a given.

The following five arguments reveal that the reading of ἔθνη as Gentile in general is preferable. First, Dunn and Fitzmyer argue that “syntax and balance of the sentence require that ‘by nature’ be taken with what follows.”⁸⁷ Moo favors Dunn and Fitzmyer’s reading, but acknowledges that the placement of “by nature” does not clearly indicate “which of the two phrases it should be taken with.”⁸⁸ Richard N. Longenecker points out that if “by nature” accompanies what precedes it, additional redundancy is added to Paul’s statement, which already has redundancy by the twofold appearance of the phrase “not having the law.”⁸⁹

Second, Bornkamm observes a chain of four consecutive instances of γάρ (“for”) in 2:11–14. He argues that each γάρ introduces an explanatory statement. Bornkamm

⁸⁶ Wright, “Law,” 147.

⁸⁷ Dunn, *Romans*, 1:98; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 310. See also Longenecker, *Romans*, 276.

⁸⁸ Moo, *Romans*, 159n309.

⁸⁹ Longenecker, *Romans*, 274.

concludes that Paul's statements in verses 14–15 link to verse 11 and not to verse 13.⁹⁰ Since verse 11 deals with God's impartiality regarding Jews and Greeks, it is more likely that ἔθνη refers to Gentiles in general.⁹¹ If ἔθνη refers to Gentiles in general, Bornkamm's structural insight renders ineffective Wright's argument that verses 14–15 do not significantly contribute to the immediate context.

Third, the context supports the reading of ἔθνη as Gentiles in general. Verse 12 identifies ἔθνη as “those who sinned without the law.” At first sight, Paul's statement in verse 12, ὅσοι γὰρ ἀνόμως ἥμαρτον, ἀνόμως καὶ ἀπολοῦνται, καὶ ὅσοι ἐν νόμῳ ἥμαρτον, διὰ νόμου κριθήσονται (“as many who sinned without the law, will also perish without the law, and as many who sinned under the law will be judged through the law”), seems to imply that some people are without access to the law,⁹² which would favor the reading of ἔθνη as Gentile Christians. Wolter, however, points out that verse 12 is a reaction by Paul to an unexpressed, anticipated objection from those in his audience with a Jewish background. Jews understood the law of Moses as God's gift to the Jews to save them from a negative destiny in the eschatological judgment (see Deut 4:8; Bar 3:37–4:4).⁹³

⁹⁰ See Günther Bornkamm, “Gesetz und Natur,” in *Studien zu Antike und Urchristentum: Gesammelte Aufsätze, Band 2*, BEvT 28 (Munich: Kaiser, 1959), 93–118.

⁹¹ See Jouette M. Bassler, “Divine Impartiality in Paul's Letter to the Romans,” *NovT* 26 (1984): 43–58.

⁹² The law in Rom 2:12 refers exclusively to the law of Moses. See similarly, Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 305, 307–8.

⁹³ Wolter, *Römer*, 1:180. Thus Wolter's reading indicates that the content of Rom 2:12–16 does reflect Paul's opinion on the discussed issue. In contrast, Fitzmyer argues that regarding verse 13, “Paul adopts a Jewish perspective and implicitly echoes Lev 18:5. . . . Paul repeats the emphatic teaching of the OT about observing the law. . . . If one were to take the Pauline statement in this part of the verse out of its context, it might seem like a contradiction of what Paul says in 3:20. . . . In this verse Paul argues *dato, non concessio*, for the sake of his argument.” See Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 308. However, Fitzmyer's comment

Paul argues that possession of the law of Moses does not lead to a better position for the Jews in the eschatological judgment. The twofold use of “they sinned” indicates that the law of Moses has no preventive effect on the continuous sinful behavior of the Jews.⁹⁴ Transgressors of the law will face condemnation, whether they are Jew or Greek (Rom 2:9–10, 13).⁹⁵

Fourth, Wolter argues that the notion of the Jews having the law of Moses by nature, (in the sense of being an essential part of their ethnicity) is untenable. Jews received the law from the Lord at a certain moment in time through revelation at Mount Sinai. In addition, each generation was to learn anew the law of Moses. They were to hear it repeatedly (v. 13a).⁹⁶ Thus, the law of Moses was not part of their ethnic nature.

Fifth, Paul attributes to the law of God a role in the eschatological judgment (v. 13; 2 Cor 5:10). This judgment is “according to the truth” (Rom 2:2) and has God as the judge without partiality (v. 11). The characteristics of the eschatological judgment require that the law of God must be in some sort universally accessible.⁹⁷

Reading ἔθνη as Gentiles, in general, raises the question of how the Gentiles access the law. In verses 14–15, Paul clarifies that Gentiles become a law unto

implies that the law of Moses and the law that Paul promotes seem to propose opposing understandings of acquiring righteousness related to the law’s role in the process. Wolter’s proposal has the advantage of allowing Paul a more positive view of the law of Moses.

⁹⁴ The aorist is best understood as a dramatic indication that the sinful actions occurred recently. See Burton, *Galatians*, 153n2.

⁹⁵ Ernst Käsemann expresses this notion by stating that “Gifts granted to the Jew in salvation history do not protect him against universal judgment.” See Ernst Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, ed. and trans. G. W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 61. See also Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 308.

⁹⁶ Wolter, *Römer*, 1:184n70.

⁹⁷ Similarly, Bornkamm, “Gesetz,” 100.

themselves the moment they fulfill the law’s demand by nature. The subordinated temporal conjunction ὅταν (“when” or “whenever”) in verse 14 not only introduces a conditional clause, but also determines the temporal relationship between the protasis “when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do the law’s demand” and the apodosis “they, who do not have the law, become a law to themselves.” The predicate of the protasis “they do” is present subjunctive. The conjunction ὅταν, combined with present subjunctive, expresses that the action of the protasis is contemporaneous with the action of the apodosis.⁹⁸ Thus, according to Paul, the same moment that Gentiles perform the law’s demand by nature, they gain access to the law. By pointing out the Gentiles’ ability to comply with the law’s demands, Paul attributes to the law the characteristic of indefinite scope to the law, which is in line with natural law. This does not mean that Gentiles have explicit knowledge of the law of Moses. Instead, the law of Moses contains glimpses of natural law, e.g. love your neighbor as yourself (Lev 19:18), which is available to all human beings.⁹⁹ The law of God is available to humanity in written form as the law of Moses to the Jews in particular, and in unwritten form to humanity in general, which reflects its infinity in scope.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ “ὅταν,” *BDAG* 730–31.

⁹⁹ Regarding Rom 13:8–9, Dunn comments that Paul “was not so much in the business of abandoning the firm guidelines of the Torah,” but rather transforms the Torah by freeing the firm guidelines “from its specifically ethnic context,” which supports the idea that the law of Moses contains glimpses of the natural law which are universally applicable. See Dunn, *Romans*, 2:782.

¹⁰⁰ Bornkamm observes that the term νόμος remains unchanged, regarding its content. “νόμος refers in this instance to the one and same law of God, which has been given to the Jews and Gentiles in different forms.” See Bornkamm, “Gesetz,” 101. This reading of Rom 2:12–16 builds on Paul’s previous statement in 1:32 that οἵτινες τὸ δικαίωμα τοῦ θεοῦ ἐπιγινόντες ὅτι οἱ τὰ τοιαῦτα πράσσοντες ἄξιοι θανάτου εἰσὶν (“they know the God’s ordinance, that those who do these things are worthy of death”). Since this statement follows Paul’s description of the sinful behavior of the ungodly ones (vv. 18–31), οἵτινες (“they”)

Paul's Perception of the Ability to Embody the Law

Paul argues that the Gentiles' ability of natural observance of the law is possible due to their ability to embody it. He states in Rom 2:15, οἵτινες ἐνδείκνυνται τὸ ἔργον τοῦ νόμου γραπτὸν ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις αὐτῶν ("they demonstrate that the work of the law is written on their hearts"). The subject οἵτινες ("they") limits the argument to the Gentiles. The "work of the law" parallels the statement in verse 13, reading οἱ ποιηταὶ νόμου δικαιοθήσονται ("the doers of the law will be justified").¹⁰¹ The "works of the law" refer to the observance of the law. The prepositional phrase "on their hearts" is influenced by the Jewish legal understanding. The notion of writing the law on one's heart is already present in Prov 7:3 (see also the Masoretic Text of 3:3) and Jer 31:33 (LXX 38:33).¹⁰² As previously discussed, the heart functions as the place of the conscience and of decision-making; the place where a person notices any deviations from the law of God.¹⁰³ In other words, the embodiment of the law of God is associated with the heart. This ability of the heart is, according to Paul, independent of the ethnological identity of a person. Since

in verse 32 most naturally refers to the Gentiles. Implied by the apostle's remark that those who turn away from God are "without excuse" (v. 20), Paul attributes their knowledge of God and his ordinances to creation, which testifies of God's "eternal power and nature" (v. 20). Thus, Paul considers cosmology a valuable source for knowledge of God and his ethical and moral standard. This consideration is especially clear in 1 Cor 6:12–20 and 11:2–16, also chs. 8–10. See Dominic Bornand, "Cosmology and Creation in First and Second Corinthians," in *The Genesis Creation Account and Its Reverberations in the New Testament*, ed. Thomas R. Shepherd (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2022), 297–322.

¹⁰¹ In this context, it does not share the typical negative connotation. See Jewett, *Romans*, 214.

¹⁰² The proponents of the pagan Christian reading of Rom 2:12–16 often use the terminological connection to Jer 31:33 to argue that the Gentiles are part of the new covenant. See Cranfield, *Romans*, 1:158–59. Wolter rejects this argument based on the fact that Paul does neither explicitly refer to the new covenant, nor to the eschatological transformation of Israel, which are part of Jeremiah's message. See Wolter, *Römer*, 1:186n73.

¹⁰³ Fabry, *TDOT* 7:426–31.

Jews and Gentiles share the ability to embody the law, they would also share the ability to conduct their life in equally ethical and moral ways.

Paul further elaborates on the nature of the Gentiles' embodiment of the law by adding a concept of the witness-bearing "conscience" (Rom 2:15). Paul's choice of the term συνείδησις ("conscience") is significant since it has no equivalent in the Hebrew Bible.¹⁰⁴ It denotes the "inward faculty to distinguish right from wrong."¹⁰⁵ Hans-Joachim Eckstein argues that Paul perceives the conscience as objectified and personified, independent from the thinking and acting "I."¹⁰⁶ The role of the conscience is to evaluate the consistency or inconsistency between accepted norms and values and the individual's thoughts and actions.¹⁰⁷ According to Paul, the proper function of the conscience depends on the presence of the law of God, which Paul locates in 12:2 in the renewed νοῦς ("mind") or καρδία ("heart").¹⁰⁸ Paul's reference to a properly functioning conscience among the Gentiles becomes evidence for the presence of the law of God in the mind and heart of the Gentiles.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁴ Eckstein's research reveals there is no equivalent term for συνείδησις in the Hebrew Bible. See Hans-Joachim Eckstein, *Der Begriff Syneidesis bei Paulus*, WUNT 2/10 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1983), 105.

¹⁰⁵ "συνείδησις," *BDAG* 967–68.

¹⁰⁶ Eckstein, *Syneidesis*, 176–77.

¹⁰⁷ Jewett, *Anthropological Terms*, 425; Eckstein, *Syneidesis*, 177–78.

¹⁰⁸ According to Paul, Gentiles also have the necessary knowledge about God's norms and values in their minds and hearts. See Rom 1:19–21, 28, 32.

¹⁰⁹ Eckstein, *Syneidesis*, 178–79.

Paul's Perception of the Law as Indefinite in Time

Paul perceives the law as indefinite in time. The law's infinity in time becomes evident in Paul's argument that the law is the sole basis for God's eschatological judgment. Paul states in Rom 2:13 that οὐ . . . οἱ ἀκροαταὶ νόμου δίκαιοι παρὰ [τῷ] θεῷ, ἀλλ' οἱ ποιηταὶ νόμου δικαιοθήσονται ("not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law will be justified"). The future tense of the finite verb δικαιοθήσονται ("they will be justified") is one of many indicators that Paul is speaking about the eschatological judgment.¹¹⁰ The passive voice of the finite verb points to God as the one who will declare humans righteous.¹¹¹ Thus, the law is God's eternal and ethical standard for human behavior.

A Final Note on νόμος as Natural Law

The discussion above reveals that Paul's understanding of the law allows him to attribute characteristics of Greco-Roman natural law to the law. He presents the law as indefinite in time and scope, as well as capable to be embodied. Scholars debate whether Paul intended to argue that the law available to the Gentiles corresponds with the Stoic concept of natural law. Nygren fully denies that Paul had a Greco-Roman legal concept

¹¹⁰ Other indicators are Paul's description of the judgment as corresponding with the truth (Rom 2:2), being just (v. 5), and being a "day of wrath and revelation" (v. 5). The rewards given in the judgment are namely "eternal life" (v. 7) or "wrath and fury" (v. 8) which are additional indicators of the eschatological character of the judgment. Wright correctly points out that "the justification and the judgment spoken of in this paragraph are inalienably *future*. This is not *present* justification." See Wright, "Law," 143, (emphasis original).

¹¹¹ In similar clarity, see Schnabel, *Römer*, 1:294. See also Christian Macholz, "Das 'Passivum divinum', seine Anfänge im Alten Testament und der 'Hofstil'," *ZNW* 81 (1990): 247–53.

in mind.¹¹² Bornkamm, however, argues that Paul presents a positive perception of the pagan concept of natural law. However, by applying it to the law of God and the eschatological judgment, the pagan concept takes on a new and utterly non-Greek interpretation.¹¹³ While Bornkamm's discussion reveals Paul's use of typical Greco-Roman, legal-discourse terminology, his conclusion that Paul viewed the pagan concept of natural law in a positive light may be exaggerated. Paul likely used familiar Greco-Roman legal concepts to more effectively communicate his legal understanding among his audience. As previously discussed, the approach of expressing particular Jewish legal concepts using typical terminology of the Greco-Roman legal discourse was common for Jewish authors in a Hellenistic environment.¹¹⁴

Summary

The discussion in this section addressed whether Paul uses Greco-Roman legal concepts in his legal discourse. The analysis revealed that Paul does not particularly distinguish between the law of Moses and the law of God. Although some of Paul's statements obviously refer to the law of Moses, less obvious references make it nearly impossible to distinguish between the two. For Paul, the law of Moses is law of God.

However, Paul is also aware that the law of God is not limited to its written form.

¹¹² Nygren, *Romans*, 122–25. Jewett, who praises the pagan Christian reading of Rom 2:12–16, comments that “this exegetical decision renders irrelevant the immense debate over natural law with regard to this verse.” See Jewett, *Romans*, 214n207.

¹¹³ Bornkamm, “Gesetz,” 117. Bornkamm points out that Paul's use of natural law no longer supported the proposed greater glory for humanity as was the case in the Greek concept. See Bornkamm, “Gesetz,” 117.

¹¹⁴ See pages 54–60.

The discussion of the second subsection revealed, however, that in some of the obvious references to the law of Moses in Rom 2:12–24 and Gal 3:15–20, Paul treats the law of Moses as a positive law by attributing to it characteristics to it that are similar to the characteristics of Greco-Roman positive law. First, Paul presents the law of Moses as a written law. Second, the law of Moses is exclusively given to the nation of Israel. Third, Paul attributes a temporal limitation to the law of Moses. The law of Moses was given at Mount Sinai to Israel until the promised seed, pointing to Christ's arrival as marking a temporal limit to the law of Moses.

The discussion of the third subsection revealed that Paul also understands the law as having similar characteristics to Greco-Roman natural law. The discussion on Rom 2:12–16 showed that Paul considers the law to be indefinite in scope. The law of God must be available to all human beings in order to preserve the characteristics of justice and truth in the eschatological judgment. A second characteristic is the ability of the law of God to be embodied. Paul argues that the Gentiles become a law unto themselves the same moment they perform the law's demands (vv. 14–15). Their proper functioning conscience becomes proof of access to the universal law of God written on their hearts. A third characteristic of the law of God is that Paul considers it indefinite in time. Paul argues that the law of God is God's universal ethical standard that will serve as a legal foundation in the eschatological judgment (v. 13).

A Synthesis of Paul's Understanding of Law

In this section, I further clarify Paul's understanding of the law of Moses. To answer this question, I first focus on Paul's statements regarding the purpose of the law

of Moses in Gal 3:19–25 and Rom 3:20–22. Second, I address the temporal aspects of the law of Moses in Paul’s statements in Gal 3:23–25 and Rom 10:4 to determine whether Paul considers the law of Moses discontinued in the time after Christ’s death. Third, I examine the relationship between the law of God and the law of Moses to determine the ongoing relevancy of the law of Moses for the believer in the time after Christ’s death.

The Purpose of the Law of Moses

In this subsection, I investigate the purpose of the law of Moses in Paul’s statements in Gal 3:19–25 and Rom 3:20–22.

The Purpose of the Law of Moses (Gal 3:19–25)

The purpose of the law of Moses becomes evident in two statements. The first statement in Gal 3:19 reads that the law of Moses τῶν παραβάσεων χάριν προσετέθη (“was added because of transgressions”). The improper preposition χάριν (“because”) functions either as causative or cognitive.¹¹⁵ If the preposition expresses cause, Paul effectively states that the law was added to cause transgressions.¹¹⁶ If the preposition intends cognition, then Paul argues that the purpose of the law of Moses was to provide knowledge about transgressions.¹¹⁷ Longenecker considers this a more likely option, but

¹¹⁵ For a detailed discussion on different readings of χάριν, see Das, *Galatians*, 358–60.

¹¹⁶ See Betz, *Galatians*, 164–65; F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Galatians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981), 175; Hübner, *Law in Paul’s Thought*, 26; Räisänen, *Paul*, 144–45; Hong, *Law*, 150–51; Martyn, *Galatians*, 354–55; Schreiner, *Galatians*, 239–40.

¹¹⁷ Burton, *Galatians*, 188; Mussner, *Galaterbrief*, 245–46; Jeffrey A. D. Weima, “The Function of the Law in Relation to Sin: An Evaluation of the View of H. Räisänen,” *NovT* 32 (1990): 219–35. Das favors the view that “the notion of goal or purpose may convey that the Law ‘converts’ sin into transgressions.” See Das, *Galatians*, 360.

acknowledges that Paul's main concern was probably to argue that the law came to deal with transgressions.¹¹⁸

The second statement is in verses 22–23 where Paul describes the law of Moses as Israel's protective entity for a limited time, similar to the role of the Greco-Roman pedagogue. In verse 22, Paul states ἀλλὰ συνέκλεισεν ἡ γραφή τὰ πάντα ὑπὸ ἁμαρτίαν (“but Scripture confined everything under sin”). Regarding the meaning of “Scripture” scholars suggest a variety of possibilities.¹¹⁹ Dunn's proposal seems to be the most reasonable. He argues that “the singular ‘scripture’ . . . stands for the collectivity of scriptures. . . . In which case, the scriptures Paul had in mind probably at least include those cited in Rom. iii.10–18.”¹²⁰ Thus, Scripture refers to particular parts of the Hebrew Bible which define every human being as being under the rulership of sin. The phrase indicates that Paul sees “Scripture” as the confining entity of “everything.” The preposition ὑπό (“under”), followed by an accusative case, indicates subordination.¹²¹ Thus, sin is not the confining agent, but the ruling entity under which Scripture confined

¹¹⁸ Longenecker, *Galatians*, 138–39. Dunn suggests that the law was added “‘in order to provide some sort of remedy for transgressions.’ . . . What was in view, in other words, would be that whole dimension of the law so largely lost to sight in modern Christian treatments of Paul.” See Dunn, *Galatians*, 190.

¹¹⁹ Some scholars argue for identification with νόμος (“law”). See Albrecht Oepke, *Der Brief an die Galater*, 4th ed., THKNT 9 (Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1979), 119; Bruce, *Galatians*, 180. Others have suggested that the singular of the subject and its article both indicate that Paul must have one particular verse in mind. See Longenecker, *Galatians*, 144; Das, *Galatians*, 368. Others see a metonymy for God, for example, Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield, *The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible*, ed. Samuel G. Craig (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 1948), 299–348; Linda L. Belleville, “‘Under Law’: Structural Analysis and the Pauline Concept of Law in Galatians 3:21–4:11,” *JSNT* 26 (1986): 53–78. Betz argues for similarity to the Greek conception of fate. See Betz, *Galatians*, 175. Thus, Scripture refers to particular parts of the Hebrew Bible which define every human being as being under the rulership of sin.

¹²⁰ See Dunn, *Galatians*, 194.

¹²¹ Wallace, *Grammar*, 389, 432.

everything (see also 5:12, 14, 21). Longenecker observes that “the neuter τὰ πάντα (lit.: ‘all things’) used of people has the effect of obliterating every distinction and referring to all humanity as an entity (so ‘all people’ or perhaps better ‘everyone without distinction’).”¹²²

In Gal 3:23, the focus shifts from “everything”—humanity in general—confined under sin (v. 22) to a more exclusive group expressed by the first-person plural “we” (v. 23). Paul states ὑπὸ νόμον ἐφρουρούμεθα (“under the law, we were guarded”). Scholarship disagrees regarding the identification of the “we.”¹²³ Naturally, the “we” may refer to Paul and the Galatians with the indication that their experience applies to all believers or even every human being (esp. vv. 27–28).¹²⁴ However, the immediate context which refers to the law of Moses (see vv. 17, 19) and the given contrast to τὰ πάντα (“everything”) in verse 22 make it more likely that the “we” exclusively refers to

¹²² Longenecker, *Galatians*, 144.

¹²³ Throughout the letter, Paul uses first-person plural pronouns and verbs to refer to different groups with whom he identifies. See Gal 1:3–4, 8–9, 23; 2:4–5, 9–10, 15–17; 3:13–14, 23–25; 4:3, 5–6, 26, 31; 5:1, 5, 25–26; 6:9–10, 14, 18. A debate in Pauline scholarship addresses the identification of “we” in Galatians. Terence L. Donaldson’s has argued that Paul understands the Jews as God’s eschatological people whom the Gentiles join. He argues therefore that the “we” in Galatians primarily refers to the Jews. See Terence L. Donaldson, “The ‘Curse of the Law’ and the Inclusion of the Gentiles: Galatians 3.13–14,” *NTS* 32 (1986): 94–112. For a critique on Donaldson’s view, see Das, *Stories of Israel*, 33–63.

¹²⁴ Mussner, *Galaterbrief*, 256; Betz, *Galatians*, 182; Hübner, *Law in Paul’s Thought*, 33; Joachim Rohde, *Der Brief des Paulus an die Galater*, THKNT 9 (Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1989), 161; Martyn, *Galatians*, 362; Das, *Galatians*, 371; Martinus C. de Boer, *Galatians: A Commentary*, NTL (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2011), 238.

the Jews (see 2:15).¹²⁵ Thus, Paul elaborates in 3:23–25 on the role of the law of Moses for historical Israel before faith in Christ became available.¹²⁶

The finite verb ἐφρουρούμεθα in verse 23 has a broad semantic range. It can refer to a negative situation “we were in custody”¹²⁷ or a positive one “we were guarded,” “we were watched over,” or “we were protected by.”¹²⁸ If Paul intended the negative meaning of ἐφρουρούμεθα, then verses 22–23 read as follows: “but Scripture confined everything under sin . . . but before faith came, we were in custody under the law being confined until the coming faith would be revealed.” In this case, the present participle συγκλειόμενοι (“being confined”) in verse 23 repeats the notion that both Scripture and the law act synonymously as an entity under which everything is confined.¹²⁹

If Paul, however, intended the positive meaning of ἐφρουρούμεθα, then verses 22–23 read as follows: “but Scripture confined everything under sin . . . but before faith came, we were guarded by the law being confined to the coming faith which would be revealed.” The argument would be that the Jews were guarded or protected by the law of Moses. This protection manifests itself in the form of confinement to the coming faith. Thus, Paul plays with the verb συγκλείω. Whereas in verse 22, Scripture confines

¹²⁵ Dunn, *Galatians*, 197–98; Schreiner, *Galatians*, 246; Moo, *Galatians*, 241.

¹²⁶ The temporal clauses πρὸ τοῦ δὲ ἐλθεῖν τὴν πίστιν (“before faith came”) in verse 23 and ἐλθούσης δὲ τῆς πίστεως (“after faith came”) in verse 25 create a literary unit within these verses. See Mussner, *Galaterbrief*, 254.

¹²⁷ “φρουρέω,” *LSJ* 1957–58. II.b; “φρουρέω,” *BDAG* 1066–67.

¹²⁸ *LSJ* 1957–58; *BDAG* 1066–67.

¹²⁹ Most commentators support this view. See, for example, Burton, *Galatians*, 199; Mussner, *Galaterbrief*, 255; Matera, *Galatians*, 136; Dunn, *Galatians*, 199; Longenecker, *Galatians*, 145; Moo, *Galatians*, 242; Schreiner, *Galatians*, 246.

everyone under sin,¹³⁰ in verse 23, the law of Moses is like a guardian for the Jews, protecting them by keeping them confined to faith in Christ. The positive reading finds support in the fact that Paul uses the verb φρουρέω positively in both other instances (2 Cor 11:8; Phil 4:7; see also 1 Pet 1:5).¹³¹ Thus, the purpose of the law of Moses was to reveal that the issue of sin will be resolved by faith in Christ.

Paul further clarifies the role of the law of Moses by adding another illustration. In Gal 3:24, he states ὥστε ὁ νόμος παιδαγωγὸς ἡμῶν γέγονεν εἰς Χριστόν (“so the law was our pedagogue until Christ”). In Greco-Roman society, the pedagogue was a slave who was placed in charge of the upbringing of a child once the child reached independence from the mother and nurse (Plato, *Laws*, 808e). It was the pedagogue’s responsibility to protect the child physically when away from home and to prepare the child for a life as a mature member of society.¹³² In so doing, the pedagogue instructed, and when necessary, disciplined the child to restrain vices and develop virtues.¹³³

¹³⁰ Martyn argues that both ὑπὸ constructions in Gal 3:22–23 indicate that sin as well as the law are apocalyptic powers. See Martyn, *Galatians*, 370–73. Das disagrees with Martyn’s apocalyptic approach to verses 22–23. See Das, *Galatians*, 373–74.

¹³¹ Similarly, see Dunn, *Galatians*, 197; see also Bonnard, *Galates*, 75–76; Mussner, *Galaterbrief*, 255–56; Oepke, *Galater*, 120; Matera, *Galatians*, 136. Moo acknowledges that “we certainly need to avoid an overly negative view of the law’s ministry in the life of Israel.” However, he then proceeds to argue that the parallel between “under the law” (v. 23) and “under sin” (v. 22) indicates that “Paul views being *not* ‘under the law’ as a good thing.” Therefore, Moo prefers to read the passage somewhat negatively. See Moo, *Galatians*, 242. See also Hong, *Law*, 157; Schreiner, *Galatians*, 246.

¹³² See Plato, *Symp.* 208; Plato, *Leg.* 7.808d–e; Plato, *Symp.* 183c–d; Xenophon, *Lac.* 2.1. Stanley Frederick Bonner notes that the Roman concept of the pedagogue followed the Greek example which legitimizes looking at Greek sources to understand the role of the pedagogue. See Stanley Frederick Bonner, *Education in Ancient Rome: From the Elder Cato to the Younger Pliny* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), 37, 40–46. For the moral responsibility of the pedagogue, see David J. Lull, “‘The Law Was Our Pedagogue’: A Study in Galatians 3:19–25,” *JBL* 105 (1986): 481–98.

¹³³ Regarding discipline, however, Longenecker points out that the negative portrayal of the pedagogue, often used by commentators to explain Gal 3:24–25, originates from a caricatural image of the

David J. Lull points out that Greeks and Romans considered the pedagogue necessary because “children tend to satisfy ‘bodily desires’ . . . and of these especially ‘sensual pleasures’ . . . over which they lack self-control.”¹³⁴ Thus when Paul compares the role of the law of Moses to the role of the pedagogue, he presents the law of Moses not only as Israel’s ethical lifestyle supervisor, but also as their instructor in dealing with their sinfulness.¹³⁵

The Purpose of the Law of Moses (Rom 3:20–22)

In Rom 3:20–22, Paul presents the purpose of the law of Moses in line with Gal 3:19–25. Paul points out that the law provides consciousness of sin and imparts knowledge on how sinful human beings can deal with their sinfulness.

In the preceding context (Rom 3:9–19), Paul argues for the universal sinfulness of humanity. He concludes that “no flesh will be justified before him [God] by the works of the law” (v. 20). Instead, Paul identifies the purpose of the law of Moses as the source of a knowledge of sin as he states in verse 20 διὰ γὰρ νόμου ἐπίγνωσις ἁμαρτίας (“for through the law [comes] knowledge of sin”).

In verse 21, Paul further comments on how to attain righteousness and on the role of the law of Moses in this process. Paul states, *οὐ γὰρ ἐστὶν δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ ἡ ἐκ νόμου*

pedagogue often displayed in ancient plays. It should therefore not serve as a foundation for the interpretation of Paul’s illustration. See Longenecker, *Galatians*, 148.

¹³⁴ Lull, “Pedagogue,” 493. See also Aristotle, *Rhet.* 1389a; 1390b. These characteristics lead to the conclusion that children were considered socially and anthropologically indifferent to slaves. See Lull, “Pedagogue,” 494. See also Plato, *Leg.* 7.808d–e; Aristotle, *Rhet.* 1390b. This concept perfectly fits with Paul’s further elaborations in Galatians.

¹³⁵ Some commentators do prefer the negative reading of the pedagogue. See for example Das, *Galatians*, 374–76.

πεφανέρωται (“but now apart from the law, God’s righteousness has been revealed”).

Dunn observes that the temporal adverb νυνί (“now”) and the perfect tense of πεφανέρωται (“has been revealed”) indicate “a new state of affairs, which was introduced by a decisive act in the past, the effect of which remains in force.”¹³⁶ The context identifies the decisive act as Christ’s death (vv. 24–25). The preposition χωρίς (“apart from”) expresses the absolute independence of God’s righteousness from the law of Moses.¹³⁷

In verse 21, Paul further clarifies that the purpose of the law of Moses is to bear witness to how righteousness can be achieved. Paul states that the law of Moses and the prophets bear witness to how God’s righteousness has been revealed apart from the law. In verse 22, Paul renders the testimony of the law of Moses as follows, δικαιοσύνη δὲ θεοῦ διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ εἰς πάντας τοὺς πιστεύοντας (“but the righteousness of God [comes] through the faith of Jesus Christ for all who believe”).

The testimony contains many debated phrases. Longenecker suggests that the first phrase δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ (“the righteousness of God”) has

both an *attributive sense* with regard to God’s nature and character (‘his righteousness,’ ‘justice,’ ‘just actions’) and a *communicative sense* with respect to what God gives as a gift to those who respond positively to him by faith (i.e., ‘righteousness bestowed or given,’ which, by the working of God’s Spirit, is the basis for and enables ‘justice’ and ‘just actions’).¹³⁸

¹³⁶ Dunn, *Romans*, 1:176.

¹³⁷ “χωρίς,” *BDAG* 1095. For a short discussion on why the law in verse 21 refers to the law of Moses, see Longenecker, *Romans*, 400.

¹³⁸ Longenecker, *Romans*, 407–8, (emphasis original).

Concerning the second phrase διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (“through the faith of Jesus Christ”) most scholars have favored the objective reading “faith in Jesus Christ.”¹³⁹ More recently, the subjective reading “the faithfulness of Jesus Christ” has gained more ground.¹⁴⁰ No matter how one reads the phrase “faith of Jesus Christ” Paul’s argument regarding the means of receiving the righteousness of God remains unchanged. The objective aspect of the added phrase εἰς πάντα τοὺς πιστεύοντας (“for all who believe”) accentuates that God enables righteousness for believers through Christ. God’s righteousness by no means comes through works of the law of Moses. Instead, the purpose of the law of Moses is to provide consciousness of sin. The law of Moses also instructs sinful human beings as to how they can effectively deal with their sinfulness by standing alongside the prophets as witnesses to the reception of God’s righteousness by faith in Christ.

The Discontinuing Effect of Christ’s Death on the Law of Moses

In this subsection, I analyze whether Paul argues that Christ’s death discontinues the law of Moses. To answer this question, I first conduct an exegetical analysis on Gal 3:23–25, followed by an exegetical analysis on Rom 10:4.

¹³⁹ Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 83–84; Nygren, *Romans*, 150–61; Cranfield, *Romans*, 1:203; Schlier, *Römerbrief*, 105, 115; Käsemann, *Romans*, 94, 101; Dunn, *Romans*, 1:166–67; Barrett, *Romans*, 74; Jewett, *Romans*, 277–78.

¹⁴⁰ See Richard B. Hays, *The Faith of Jesus Christ: An Investigation of the Narrative Substructure of Galatians 3:1–4:11*, SBLDS 56 (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1983), 157–67; Morna D. Hooker, “Πίστις Χριστοῦ,” *NTS* 35 (1989): 321–42; Wallace, *Grammar*, 114–16; N. T. Wright, “The Letter to the Romans,” in *Acts, Introduction to Epistolary Literature, Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians*, ed. Leander E. Keck, NIB 9 (Nashville: Abingdon, 2002), 393–770; Longenecker, *Romans*, 412.

**The Discontinuing Effect of Christ's
Death on the Law of Moses
(Gal 3:23–25)**

As discussed in the previous subsection, Paul uses two illustrations in Gal 3:23–25 to describe the purpose of the law of Moses. In both illustrations, Paul's statements include temporal elements which point to Christ's salvific act as having a discontinuing effect on the law of Moses. In the first illustration of the law of Moses as Israel's guard in verse 23, Paul states that *πρὸ τοῦ δὲ ἐλθεῖν τὴν πίστιν ὑπὸ νόμον ἐφρουρούμεθα* ("but before faith came, we were guarded by the law"). The temporal infinitive construction *πρὸ τοῦ δὲ ἐλθεῖν τὴν πίστιν* ("but before faith came") implies that the arrival of faith (which according to the immediate context refers to Christ [vv. 22–29]), ends the guardian role of the law of Moses.¹⁴¹ This temporal limit finds further support by the imperfect indicative of *ἐφρουρούμεθα* ("we were guarded"), which indicates that the guarding role of the law of Moses was an ongoing condition in the past. The preposition *εἰς* (v. 23) can have both a temporal meaning ("until") or a teleological meaning ("toward").¹⁴² Thus, the preposition can express the concept that faith brings the guarding role of the law to an end, or that faith was the ultimate goal of the guardian role. Since there are many temporal elements in the immediate context, the preposition's temporal dimension is more prominent.¹⁴³ However, deSilva observes that "the potential for ambiguity is much clearer in the Greek than in most English representations; Paul has,

¹⁴¹ Similarly, Burton, *Galatians*, 198; Mussner, *Galaterbrief*, 254–55; Betz, *Galatians*, 175–76; Oepke, *Galater*, 120; Martyn, *Galatians*, 361–64. The context clarifies that the coming faith corresponds with Christ (vv. 19, 22, 24–25).

¹⁴² deSilva, *Galatians*, 331; Moo, *Galatians*, 242–43.

¹⁴³ Schlier, *Galater*, 176; Mussner, *Galaterbrief*, 256; Matera, *Galatians*, 136; Martyn, *Galatians*, 362.

moreover, *not* chosen a word that would unambiguously or, at least, more typically communicate temporal limitation (e.g., ἕως or μέχρι[ς]).”¹⁴⁴ Thus, Christ discontinued the guarding role of the law of Moses by realizing righteousness by faith for all the believers.

In the second illustration, where Paul identifies the law of Moses as a Greco-Roman pedagogue (vv. 24–25), Paul compares Christ’s death to the moment a patrician releases his son from his pedagogue. Commenting on the extent of the law of Moses and its role as pedagogue, Paul again uses the preposition εἰς (“until” or “toward”), followed by Χριστόν (“Christ”). In other words, Christ marks the end, or the completed goal of the law of Moses as pedagogue. Again, the temporal dimension is prominent,¹⁴⁵ which finds further evidence in verse (v. 25), starting with a temporal genitive absolute construction, reading ἐλθούσης δὲ τῆς πίστεως (“but after faith has come”).¹⁴⁶ Switching subjects in the main clause, Paul focuses on the consequences for the “we,” stating that οὐκέτι ὑπὸ παιδαγωγόν ἐσμεν (“we are no longer under the pedagogue”). Thus, Paul understood that Christ discontinued the role of the law of Moses as Israel’s pedagogue. In addition to the temporal meaning (“until”), the preposition εἰς can also refer to the purpose of the law of Moses (“toward”).¹⁴⁷ As deSilva argues, the role of the pedagogue also included the

¹⁴⁴ deSilva, *Galatians*, 331n275, (emphasis original).

¹⁴⁵ Longenecker argues that the temporal sense is the only possible one. See Longenecker, *Galatians*, 148–49. See also Mussner, *Galaterbrief*, 257; Schlier, *Römerbrief*, 169–70; Betz, *Galatians*, 178; Bruce, *Galatians*, 183; Matera, *Galatians*, 136; Dunn, *Galatians*, 199; Martyn, *Galatians*, 362. Moo again questions the purely temporal use of the preposition εἰς in verse 24. See Moo, *Galatians*, 243–44. Burton even denies it. See Burton, *Galatians*, 200.

¹⁴⁶ The aorist participle indicates a completed antecedent action to the main verb. This temporal construction creates an apparent reference to Christ’s incarnation.

¹⁴⁷ deSilva, *Galatians*, 331; Moo, *Galatians*, 242–43.

exercise of “authority over his charges to bring them ‘unto’ a particular goal.”¹⁴⁸ This reading corresponds with the more historically accurate perception of the pedagogue as holding a positive role. The goal of the law of Moses is expressed in the subordinated purpose clause in verse 24, reading ἵνα ἐκ πίστεως δικαιοθῶμεν (“so that we may be righteous by faith”). Again, Christ discontinued the role of the law of Moses as a pedagogue by realizing righteousness by faith for the believers.

The Discontinuing Effect of Christ’s Death on the Law of Moses (Rom 10:4)

Paul’s statement in Rom 10:4 reading τέλος γὰρ νόμου Χριστὸς (“Christ is the end of the law”) has experienced a colorful history of interpretation. Robert Badenas has shown that the antinomian temporal reading, which argues for the abrogation of the law through Christ, became prevalent only during the aftermath of the Reformation. Before it, and more recently again, interpreters have understood τέλος (“end”) in a more completive, teleological sense, arguing that Christ is the fulfillment of the law’s prophecies or the goal to which the law leads.¹⁴⁹ For a better understanding of Paul’s statement on Christ being “the end of the law,” it is important to address two questions. First, what does Paul mean when he uses the term τέλος (“end”)? Second, what does Paul mean when he uses the term νόμος (“law”)?¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁸ deSilva, *Galatians*, 332.

¹⁴⁹ Robert Badenas, *Christ the End of the Law: Romans 10.4 in Pauline Perspective*, JSNTSup 10 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1985), 7–37. For a second, detailed history of interpretation that comes to a similar conclusion, see James Arne Nestingen, “Christ the End of the Law: Romans 10:4 as an Historical Exegetical-Theological Problem” (PhD diss., University of St. Michael’s College, 1984).

¹⁵⁰ Badenas correctly acknowledges that “determination of its [νόμος] meaning is decisive for the interpretation of the text.” See Badenas, *Christ*, 113.

After an extensive survey on the use and meaning of τέλος (“end”), Badenas concludes that “semantics, grammar, and literature strongly favor a teleological interpretation of this phrase.”¹⁵¹ His contextual analysis reveals that the law “is presented as teleologically oriented toward Christ, and Christ is presented as the fulfillment and realization of God’s design.”¹⁵² Badenas argues that “end” does not have a temporal or abrogating meaning. Dunn acknowledges the “idea of ‘goal’ and ‘object’” in verse 4 and that “Paul sees a continuing role for the law.” He does, however, raise a valid critique of Badenas’s work by pointing out that “it is not realistic to exclude the sense of termination.”¹⁵³ He further argues that if the race imagery in 9:31 is present, then presenting Christ as the finish line of the law implies that Israel’s race to reach the law leading to righteousness came to an end.¹⁵⁴ Thus, one cannot wholly ignore the temporal dimension of Paul’s statement.¹⁵⁵

The temporal dimension of “end” often confuses scholars. Badenas’s main concern was to clarify that 10:4 does not validate the idea that Christ abrogated the law by introducing a different, more efficient form of attaining righteousness.¹⁵⁶ Badenas argues for a certain continuity between the era of the law and the era of Christ by

¹⁵¹ Badenas, *Christ*, 80.

¹⁵² Badenas, *Christ*, 144.

¹⁵³ Dunn remarks that Badenas “treats the LXX data in particular somewhat tendentiously.” See Dunn, *Romans*, 2:589.

¹⁵⁴ Dunn, *Romans*, 2:589; Moo, *Romans*, 659.

¹⁵⁵ Similarly, Das, *Paul*, 249–53.

¹⁵⁶ Badenas, *Christ*, 143.

pointing out that the purpose of the law was to point forward to Christ as the means to attain righteousness, which is analogous to the idea expressed in 3:20–22.

Regarding the meaning of νόμος (“law”) in 10:4, scholarship has proposed four interpretations. They have identified the law as legalism,¹⁵⁷ as law in a general sense,¹⁵⁸ as the Old Testament revelation,¹⁵⁹ or as the law of Moses.¹⁶⁰ Moo observes that “law” as a reference to legalism “is unattested in Paul.”¹⁶¹ He further observes that the context provides no support for the second and third options, concluding that Christ is the end of the law of Moses.¹⁶²

The immediate context indicates that the purpose of the law of Moses is to point to righteousness by faith in Christ. For Paul, the purpose of the law of Moses was not to provide righteousness by works of the law. In 9:30, Paul points to the Gentiles who

¹⁵⁷ C. F. D. Moule, “Obligation in the Ethic of Paul,” in *Christian History and Interpretation: Studies Presented to John Knox*, eds. W. R. Farmer, et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 389–406. See also Rudolf Bultmann, “Christ the End of the Law,” in *Essays: Philosophical and Theological*, trans. James C. G. Greig (New York: Macmillan, 1955), 36–66.

¹⁵⁸ Gifford, *Romans*, 183; Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 284.

¹⁵⁹ Andrew John Bandstra, *The Law and the Elements of the World: An Exegetical Study in Aspects of Paul’s Teaching* (Kampen: Kok, 1964), 106; Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:516; W. S. Campbell, “Christ the End of the Law: Romans 10:4,” in *Papers on Paul and Other New Testament Authors*, vol. 3 of *Studia Biblica 1978*, ed. E. A. Livingstone, JSNTSup 3 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1978), 73–81; Badenas, *Christ*, 113–14.

¹⁶⁰ Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 585; Schnabel, *Römer*, 2:375; Thielman, *Romans*, 490; Moo, *Romans*, 654–55.

¹⁶¹ Moo, *Romans*, 655.

¹⁶² Moo, *Romans*, 654. In an alleged attempt to understand the law “in the sense of Torah (not as mere legal code, but as the revelation of God’s will),” Badenas considers the immediate context. See Badenas, *Christ*, 113. The problem is that in his discussion, he primarily focuses on the question of whether the presence or absence of the definite article influences the meaning of “law.” This turns his contextual argument into an assumption rather than an exegetically-informed decision. The preceding context with the comparison between Gentiles and Jews (Rom 9:30–31), and the following context with the reference to Moses—both support Moo’s conclusion that the law refers to the law of Moses.

attained righteousness by faith.¹⁶³ He continues the argument by focusing on Israel in verse 31, who pursued a law that supposedly produces righteousness.¹⁶⁴ They missed their goal because they pursued the law by works and not by faith (v. 32). Whereas Paul feels compassion for the Jews and bears witness to their zeal for God (10:1–2), he also notes their ignorance regarding how to attain God’s righteousness. By pursuing righteousness by works of the law, they sought to establish their way of achieving righteousness (v. 3).

According to Paul, the Israelites mistook the purpose of the law of Moses, namely, to point to Christ as means of righteousness. Consequently, they failed to attain righteousness by faith in Christ, which resulted in their condemnation to death by the law of Moses. The Israelites’ misunderstanding of the purpose of the law of Moses turned the law of Moses against them. Christ’s death introduced new circumstances which affect the law of Moses. As chapter 5 will show, Christ functions similarly to a Greco-Roman σωτήρ (“savior”) regarding the law and sinful humanity.¹⁶⁵ Paul’s statement that “Christ is the end of the law” implies that the law of Moses is no longer the governing law of the believing congregation. The statement “Christ is the end of the law” is, on the one hand,

¹⁶³ Previous discussion on the identification of ἔθνη in Rom 2:14 showed that in the context of Rom 2, Paul uses this term in general reference to Gentiles. Regarding Paul’s use of ἔθνη in 9:30, the context clarifies that the term only refers to the Gentiles who κατέλαβεν (“attained”) righteousness through faith. The aorist tense of κατέλαβεν refers to a behavior that does not apply to Gentiles in general but specifically to Gentile Christians.

¹⁶⁴ In the suggested reading identifies the genitive noun in νόμον δικαιοσύνης as a genitive of product. Wallace shows that the genitive noun in a genitive of product construction “is the *product* of the noun to which it stands related.” See Wallace, *Grammar*, 106, (emphasis original). Reading νόμον δικαιοσύνης in Rom 9:31 as a genitive of product means that Paul presents Israel as the ones who understood righteousness as the product from the law. Similarly, see Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 279.

¹⁶⁵ See pages 213–14.

teleological since the law of Moses points forward to Christ as the one through whom humanity will attain righteousness. On the other hand, the law of Moses also has a temporal aspect to it. Christ's death discontinues a vast amount of particular regulations of the law of Moses, which functioned as an illustration of how God, through Christ, would one day deal with humanity's sinfulness and enable righteousness for sinful humanity.¹⁶⁶ This study does not intend to determine what parts of the law of Moses are discontinued or fulfilled in Christ. Rather, I argue that Paul's presentation of the law of Moses as a positive law given for a limited time to deal with sin allows him to compromise on certain legal stipulations of the law of Moses, e.g. such as the circumcision.

The Ongoing Relevance of the Law of Moses for Believers in the Time after Christ's Death

In this subsection, I discuss the ongoing relevance of the law of Moses for believers in the time after Christ's death. As discussed in section two of this chapter, Paul presents the law of Moses as a positive law limited in time. The law of Moses regulated the daily life of the Israelites until the coming of Christ.¹⁶⁷ In a way, the law of Moses

¹⁶⁶ Das presents a different explanation for the temporal aspect of Christ as the end of the law of Moses, stating "certainly striving after the law in the attempt to do what it requires has been a major factor in Israel's failure to 'attain' the law and the establishment, instead, of 'their own' righteousness (v. 3). On the other hand, Paul seems to be demolishing a 'straw man' when he claims that the Jews are pursuing the law on the basis of its works." See Das, *Paul*, 251. Further, Das states "Christ would be the end of the law-as-a-way-to-righteousness, that is, the mistaken pursuit of national righteousness." See Das, *Paul*, 252. See also Harry Alan Hahne, "Righteousness by Faith, Not by the Law: Paul's Argument from Scripture in Romans 10:1–8," in *Scripture, Texts, and Tracings in Romans*, eds. Linda L. Belleville and A. Andrew Das (Lenham: Lexington/Fortress Academic, 2021), 135–55.

¹⁶⁷ The LXX renders the Hebrew יְהוָה יְהוָה ("assembly of the Lord") with ἐκκλησία κυρίου. The Old Testament typically uses this terminology to refer to historical Israel as a corporate congregation serving the Lord. The law of Moses defined who was eligible to join the assembly of the Lord (Deut 23:1–

exemplified how the universal principles of the law of God, (e.g. love your neighbor as yourself) were adapted to the particular context of Israel. At the same time, I argue that Paul attributes infinity in time to the law also.

Paul's understanding of neighborly love as a universal principle is expressed in Rom 13:8–10. Paul argues that love for one another is the fulfillment of the law.¹⁶⁸ In verse 8, Paul commands¹⁶⁹ μηδενι μηδεν οφειλετε ει μη το αλληλους αγαπων (“you should owe to no one anything except to love each other”).¹⁷⁰ The present tense indicates Paul's expectation that the believer's loving behavior is supposed to be ongoing.¹⁷¹ Paul provides further explanations indicated by the explanatory conjunction γαρ (“for”). In verses 8–9, he adds two explanations. The first reads in verse 8 ο γαρ αγαπων τον ετερον νομον πεπληρωκεν (“for the one who loves the other has fulfilled the law”). The present tense of the substantival participle ο αγαπων (“the one who loves”) confirms the constancy of love. The participle “the one who loves” and the object τον ετερον (“the other”) are general in its reference. In other words, Paul does not strictly refer strictly to

9). In 1 Chr 28:8, King David clarifies that the assembly of the Lord “shall keep and seek all commandments of the Lord your God.” Thus, the law of Moses was inseparable from historical Israel as the assembly of the Lord.

¹⁶⁸ For a discussion on the chiasmic structure of Rom 13:8–10, see Wolter, *Römer*, 2:330.

¹⁶⁹ For the imperatival meaning of οφειλετε (“owe!”), see Wolter, *Römer*, 2:331. Haacker argues that the lexical meaning of οφειλω emphasizes the prevention of becoming indebted to someone. See Haacker, *Römer*, 270–71.

¹⁷⁰ The English term “brotherly love” has a Christian connotation. Wolter argues that μηδενι (“no one”) does not correspond with πανσιν (“to all”) in verse 7 but with αλληλους (“one another”) which only refers to the fellow believers. This finds support in Paul's use of αλληλους in Rom 12:10, 16, Gal 5:13; 1 Thess 3:12, 4:9; 5:15. See Wolter, *Römer*, 2:331. In contrast to Wolter Thielman reads αλληλους already in connection with the general τον ετερον (“the other”) reading Paul's statement about everyone not just the believers. See Thielmann, *Romans*, 612; similarly, Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:674–75. Dunn argues that “perhaps it would be best to say that Paul has fellow believers particularly in view but not in any exclusive way. See Dunn, *Romans*, 2:776.

¹⁷¹ Similarly see, Thielmann, *Romans*, 612.

the love among the believers but implies that everybody can love one's neighbor, thus fulfilling the demand of the law of God.¹⁷² The perfect tense of the finite verb *πεπλήρωκεν* ("he has fulfilled") is a proleptic perfect. Wallace defines the use of the proleptic perfect as referring "to a state resulting from an antecedent action that is future from the time of speaking."¹⁷³ Thus the love toward the other is the antecedent action, which leads to the fulfillment of the law.

For the second explanation in verse 9, Paul quoted four commandments of the second part of the Decalogue (Exod 20:13–17; Deut 5:17–21)¹⁷⁴ arguing that these commandments *ἀνακεφαλαιοῦται* ("are summed up") in the commandment *ἀγαπήσεις τὸν πλησίον σου ὡς σεαυτόν* ("you shall love your neighbor as yourself"), which is a quote in Rom 13:9 from Lev 19:18.¹⁷⁵ The verb *ἀνακεφαλαιῶ* indicates that Paul understood verse 18 as an overarching category that summarizes all commandments.¹⁷⁶ If a person fulfills the commandment of love toward the other, he or she also fulfills all

¹⁷² Wolter, *Römer*, 2:332–33.

¹⁷³ Wallace, *Grammar*, 581. Similarly A. T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research* (New York: Hodder & Stoughton, 1914), 898; Wolter, *Römer*, 2:333n17.

¹⁷⁴ Paul's selection of the quoted commandments is motivated by his emphasis on brotherly love. See Wolter, *Römer*, 2:333. Paul quotes the seventh, the sixth, the eighth, and a short version of the tenth commandment in this particular order. In various LXX manuscripts the order of the commandments six to eight varies. Paul's order corresponds with the order of Deut 5:17–19 in B V etc. Paul's order of the sixth to the eighth commandment appears also in Luke 18:20 (see also Jas 2:11). Besides Paul's order finds support in Philo, *Decal.* 36, 51, 168–71; *Her.* 173. See Wolter, *Römer*, 2:333. For further discussion see F. C. Burkitt, "The Hebrew Papyrus of the Ten Commandments," *JQR* 15 (1903): 392–408.

¹⁷⁵ All quotes of Rom 13:9 are in agreement with the text in the LXX. For a discussion on the Jewish reception of Lev 19:18, see Wolter, *Römer*, 2:334. He concludes that besides Paul, no one explicitly refers to Lev 19:18 but their dependency on it is evident (see T. Gad 4:2; T. Iss. 5,3; T. Benj. 3–5; Sib. Or. 8:480–82; Jub. 7:20; 20:2; Sir 13:15). The New Testament contains the first known explicit references to Lev 19:18 in Matt 19:18–19; 22:36–40; Mark 12:29–33; Jas 2:8.

¹⁷⁶ "ἀνακεφαλαιῶ," *BDAG* 65.

commandments.¹⁷⁷ The common intention of the commandments is not limited to the avoidance to do wrong to the other person but is also a commitment to do good to the other. Therefore Paul concludes in verse 10, stating that πλήρωμα οὖν νόμου ἡ ἀγάπη (“love [is] the fulfillment of the law”).

Paul similarly argues in Gal 5:14 for neighborly love as a universal principle. In verse 13, Paul commands διὰ τῆς ἀγάπης δουλεύετε ἀλλήλοις (“serve one another through love”). His explanation in verse 14 reads ὁ γὰρ πᾶς νόμος ἐν ἐνὶ λόγῳ πεπλήρωται (“for the whole law is fulfilled in one word”). In support of his explanation, Paul quotes from Lev 19:18 stating “you shall love your neighbor as yourself.” In this case, Paul argues that ὁ . . . πᾶς νόμος (“the whole law”) is fulfilled by the practice of love to one another.¹⁷⁸ Thus, in Romans and Galatians, Paul argues that the believer can fulfill the demands of the law, whether in written or unwritten form by love to others. In

¹⁷⁷ The syntax of Paul’s concluding statement “love [is] the fulfillment of the law” implies that love is only a part of the law’s fulfillment. The subject of Paul’s statement is ἡ ἀγάπη (“love”) whereas πλήρωμα (“fulfillment”) is the predicate nominative. Wolter’s identification of love as the predicate nominative is due to the determination of both nouns as not preferable. See Wolter, *Römer*, 2:336. According to Wallace’s rule, the determination of the nouns πλήρωμα (“fulfillment”) and ἡ ἀγάπη (“love”) indicates a subset proposition construction, which means that the subject “love” is part of the predicate nominative “the fulfillment” of the law but not the exact equivalent. In other words, the fulfillment of the law involves more than just love. See Wallace, *Grammar*, 40–46. Wolter observes that in contrast to the Gospel tradition, Paul does not refer to the love toward God in this particular context. His emphasis is on the horizontal side of the law of God. Wolter argues that Paul covers the vertical side of the law, the love toward God in his concept of πίστις (“faith”). The one who has faith in Christ shows love toward God. See Wolter, *Römer*, 2:335–36. What the Gospel tradition expresses as love toward God and neighbor, Paul expresses by faith and love. See 1 Cor 13:13; 2 Cor 8:7; Gal 5:6; 1 Thess 1:3; 3:6; 5:8; Phlm 5.

¹⁷⁸ Schreiner correctly notes that “it is somewhat surprising that Paul does not follow Jesus in seeing the fulfillment of the whole law in terms of love to God and neighbor.” See Schreiner, *Galatians*, 335. He further points out that “perhaps the focus is on loving neighbors because social relationships dominate this section of Galatians.” See Schreiner, *Galatians*, 335. The social dimension finds further support in the social nature of Paul’s statement in Gal 6:2 reading ἀλλήλων τὰ βάρη βαστάζετε καὶ οὕτως ἀναπληρώσετε τὸν νόμον τοῦ Χριστοῦ (“bear the burdens of one another and in this way, you will fulfill Christ’s law”) However in Galatians Paul also covers the vertical side of law observance. In Gal 3–4, he sufficiently emphasizes the importance of faith in Christ as part of the law’s intention. This has been discussed on pages 181–83.

other words, for Paul the law to love your neighbor as yourself is part of the law of Moses and constitutes a universal principle applicable to all human beings.

In a recent study, Kenneth Bergland made an argument along the lines of Søren Kirkegaard's argument to apply a hermeneutic of love, an expansionistic reading of the law of Moses,¹⁷⁹ which does not seek the minimum which a law requires, but "a desire to go all the way with YHWH . . . a commitment to go as far as possible while rooted in a close reading of Torah and simultaneously following indications and trajectories that take us beyond literalistic boundaries."¹⁸⁰ Bergland demonstrates that the prophets regularly conducted an expansionistic reading of legal material. They did so by introducing certain legal *novums*,¹⁸¹ seeking for the most radical application of a regulation to a given situation,¹⁸² and revealing the moral obligation toward the neighbor linked to cultic regulations.¹⁸³

¹⁷⁹ Bergland, *Proto-Halakhic Reuse*, 287–88.

¹⁸⁰ Bergland, *Proto-Halakhic Reuse*, 304.

¹⁸¹ According to Bergland, a legal *novum* is present in Jer 17:19–27 where the author adds instructions to initial Sabbath regulations by expanding rules for carrying and moving on the Sabbath day. He further points out that the Lord, himself, speaks and thus, the additions are legitimate. These additions are by no means contradictory to the original instruction, but instead expand and adapt the original instruction to new circumstances in a new setting. See Bergland, *Proto-Halakhic Reuse*, 146, 150. He also sees a *novum* in Jer 34:8–22, where Zedekiah's covenant issues the immediate release of all Hebrew slaves. See Bergland, *Proto-Halakhic Reuse*, 213.

¹⁸² Bergland argues that this is the case in Jer 34, where Lev 25 and Deut 15 are used dialectically to argue for the abolition of all Hebrew slavery. See Bergland, *Proto-Halakhic Reuse*, 213–15.

¹⁸³ Moral obligation linked to cultic regulations appears in Isa 58:1–13, where God is the one who can interpret the true meaning of the Day of Atonement. Isaiah 58 critiques the people for not being able to read the legal instruction of the law of Moses in an expansionistic way. This expansionistic reading indicates that the problem is not Israel's disregard of the fasting and resting regulations, but that their religious actions are not beneficial to their neighbors. Thus, the prophets closely linked cultic instructions with moral instructions. In other words, lacking morals, while correctly performing cultic ceremonies still ignores the Lord's instructions. See Bergland, *Proto-Halakhic Reuse*, 248–50.

The law of Moses remains valuable for two reasons. First, despite elements similar to Greco-Roman positive law, the law of Moses is essentially the law of God. It contains universal principles, such as to love your neighbor as yourself. Second, the law of Moses bears witness to divine wisdom in the sense that it shows how to apply the law of God to specific situations. By studying the law of Moses, the Christian believer gains a deeper understanding of how to conduct daily life according to the law of God.¹⁸⁴

Summary

In this section, I provide a synthesis of Paul's understanding of the law of Moses. In the first subsection, the exegetical analysis of Gal 3:19–25 and Rom 3:20–22 revealed a twofold purpose of the law of Moses. First, that the law of Moses provides consciousness about sin. Second, that the law of Moses provides knowledge about how to deal with sinfulness, namely, by pointing to faith in Christ, which enables righteousness for the believer.

In the second subsection, the exegetical analysis of Gal 3:23–25 and Rom 10:4 revealed that Paul's statements concerning the law of Moses contain several temporal elements that point to the discontinuing effect of Christ's coming on the law of Moses. The two illustrations in Gal 3:23–25 clarify that the law of Moses functioned as a guardian and a pedagogue for Israel until Christ realized righteousness by faith. The analysis of Rom 10:4 showed that the meaning of Paul's statement, "Christ is the end of the law," depends on the definition of νόμος ("law") and τέλος ("end"). Regarding the noun νόμος, the immediate context clarified that Paul speaks about the law of Moses in

¹⁸⁴ For a detailed discussion on how to apply Old Testament laws to modern times, see Gane, *Old Testament Law*, 137–218.

particular. The immediate context also points to Israel's misunderstanding of the purpose of the law of Moses, pursuing righteousness by works of the law of Moses. As a consequence of their misunderstanding regarding righteousness by faith to which the law of Moses pointed forward, they faced condemnation to death through the law of Moses. Regarding the noun τέλος, the analysis revealed that it has both teleological and temporal meanings. Paul's statement, "Christ is the end of the law," has a teleological meaning in that the law of Moses points ahead to Christ as the one through whom humanity would attain righteousness. Additionally, the statement has a temporal meaning in that Christ's coming discontinued certain regulations of the law of Moses.

In the third subsection, the study focused on the ongoing relevance of the law of Moses for believers following Christ's death. The exegetical study revealed that the command to love your neighbor as yourself, which Paul quotes from Lev 19:18 constitutes an ongoing principle for Paul regarding the law of Moses. The law of Moses remains important for the congregation of Christ because it is a source of divine wisdom, demonstrating how to apply the law of God to specific circumstances.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I outlined Paul's legal discourse in Romans and Galatians. The study revealed that Paul attributes characteristics of Greco-Roman positive and natural law to νόμος.

In the first section, I argued that Paul's legal discourse is consistent between and within Romans and Galatians. An overview of Paul's discourse in each letter showed that Paul addresses similar issues. Thus, the believer's death to the law (through the body of

Christ) in Rom 7:4, and the believer's death to the law (through the law) in Gal 2:19, both can refer to the same event in the believer's life. In other words, these texts can contribute to each other's interpretation.

In the second and third section, I showed that Paul treats the law of Moses as a Greco-Roman positive law that was given for a limited time to deal with sin. Christ's death discontinued specific regulations of the law of Moses. While Paul treats the law of Moses as a positive law, he also attributes characteristics of Greco-Roman natural law to the law of Moses. The law of Moses maintains relevance for believers after Christ's death, since it has aspects similar to Greco-Roman natural law. The ongoing principle of the law of God as expressed in the command to love your neighbor as yourself, demonstrates aspects of the law of Moses that are more in line with Greco-Roman natural law.

Paul's implementation of Greco-Roman legal concepts in his legal discourse has shown that the identification of the law to which the believer died in Rom 7:4 and Gal 2:19 as the law of Moses per se does not suffice. As the following chapter will show the law to which the believer dies refers specifically to the condemning aspect of the law of Moses.

CHAPTER 5

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE LAW OF GOD AND SIN, CHRIST, AND THE BELIEVER

In his legal discourse, Paul introduces the law of the Spirit of life in contrast to the law of sin (Rom 8:2, see also 7:21–25). Whereas the law of the Spirit of life is associated with life-ensuring effects, the law of sin is associated with death. In this chapter, I explore the characteristics of the law of God and how it relates to sin, Christ, and the believer. This chapter more fully explores the identity of the law to which the believer died (v. 4; Gal 2:19). The question is whether Paul presents the law of God as the law of sin. I address this question in three steps. In step one, I examine the effect of sin on the law of God based on an exegetical analysis of Rom 7:7–12 and Gal 3:10 to evaluate whether sin turns the law of God into the law of sin. This step identifies which law the believer dies to in Rom 7:4 and Gal 2:19. In the second step, I examine the effect of Christ's death on the law of sin. The questions under investigation are whether Christ saved the law of God from turning against humanity, and whether Christ saves humans from the condemnation to death through the law of God. This section sheds light on the means of the believer's death to the law, namely the body of Christ in Rom 7:4 and the law in Gal 2:19. In the third step, I examine the effects of God's rule on the believer's relationship to the law of sin. I also evaluate whether the law of sin subjugates the believer to the rule of sin, since it remains within the believer to some degree. This section highlights the believer's

relationship to the law after dying to the law in Rom 7:4 and Gal 2:19. A concise summary of the findings follows each section, with conclusions based on the findings at the end of the chapter.

Sin and the Law of God

The discussion in chapter 4 revealed that Paul attributes characteristics of Greco-Roman positive law and Greco-Roman positive natural law to the law of Moses. This section moves from the discussion of Greco-Roman legal discourse and introduces a different categorization of law within Paul's legal understanding. In Rom 8:2, Paul distinguishes between each law based on its eventual consequence, emphasizing that *ὁ νόμος τοῦ πνεύματος τῆς ζωῆς* (“the law of Spirit of life”) is associated with life, and *ὁ νόμος τῆς ἁμαρτίας καὶ τοῦ θανάτου* (“the law of sin and death”) is associated with death. In the following section, I address whether sin has an effect on the law of God. First, I define the law of sin. Second, I examine sin's effect on the law of God based on an exegetical analysis of 7:7–12. Third, I examine sin's effect on the law of Moses based on an exegetical analysis of Gal 3:10. This section contributes to identification of the law to which the believer dies in Rom 7:4 and Gal 2:19.

The separate treatment of the law of God and the law of Moses is due to my assumption that Rom 7:7–12 echos the narrative of the Fall. In the discussion of said narrative, I use the term “law of God,” since the law of Moses is historically associated with the written law of God, given to Israel at Mount Sinai. When using the term “law of God” in this study, I do not intend to create a discrepancy between the law of Moses and the law of God, or to argue that the content of Torah in its written and unwritten forms is

different or congruent. By using the term “law of God,” my intention is to emphasize the universal aspect which Paul attributes to the law.

Definition of the Law of Sin

In Rom 8:2, Paul distinguishes between two laws: “the law of the Spirit of life” and “the law of sin and death,”¹ laws that are diametrically opposed to each other. Paul associates the law of the Spirit with life and the law of sin with death.

The narrative of humanity’s fall (Gen 2:4–3:24)² serves as the interpretative framework for Paul’s legal understanding. Genesis 2:16 refers to God’s first commandment reading וַיִּצַו יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים עַל־הָאָדָם (“and the Lord God commanded man”). The LXX renders this phrase as equivalent to καὶ ἐνετείλατο κύριος ὁ θεὸς τῷ Ἀδὰμ (“and the Lord God commanded Adam”). In the Hebrew Bible, as well as in the LXX, this verse is the first instance of the verbs צוה and ἐντέλλομαι respectively (“to command”), which means that what follows is the first commandment God gave to humanity. The commandment allowed human beings to eat from every tree in the garden of Eden, except for the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

The legal stipulation of the first commandment introduces the concept of death. Genesis 2:17 (see also 3:3) clarifies that on the day Adam and Eve transgress the commandment of God, they will surely die. This stipulation explicitly links the transgression of God’s commandment to death, thus indicating that the commandment

¹ “The law of sin” also appears in Rom 7:23, 25.

² Based on the chiasmic structure, Wenham argues for the literary unity of Gen 2:4–3:24. See Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 50–55.

causing death is the law of God when it is transgressed.³ This would show that sin is what causes the negative consequence of God’s commandment to take effect.

Adam and Eve experienced two opposing consequences within God’s commandment, namely, life before the fall, and death after the fall. These two opposing consequences of God’s commandment imply humanity’s subjugation to the law of God, which means that human beings are obliged to fulfill the requirements of the law of God.

Identifying which of the two opposing consequences of God’s law one will experience depends on the rulership over humanity. When Adam and Eve were under the rule of God they lived in perfect obedience to the embodied law of God,⁴ which consequently gave them righteousness and led to life. The life-giving consequence of the law of God is evidenced in their access to the tree of life (2:9; see also 3:22, 24).⁵

However, when they transgressed God’s commandment, all of humanity became

³ Even if Genesis does not explicitly use the term תּוֹרָה/νόμος (“Torah” or “law”), the verb צוּה and ἐντέλλομαι (“to command”) are sufficient to express the legislation and rule of God. Dunn argues that in Jewish Theology “the law had been present in some sense to Adam . . . Thus the commandment Adam received (‘You shall not eat of it,’ Gen 2:17) could be seen not as an isolated rule but as an expression of the Torah, and in breaking it Adam could be said to have broken the statutes (plural) of God.” See Dunn, *Romans*, 1:379.

⁴ The law of God is internalized in every human being to the degree that it becomes part of human ontology (see also pp. 168–69).

⁵ Jewish interpretation identifies the tree of life as being equivalent to the law of God. See Wilckens, *Römer*, 2:79. Even as early as Prov 3:18, there is a link between wisdom, which refers to the law of God, and the tree of life. It reads, “a tree of life is she [wisdom] to all who hold on to her [wisdom].” Targum Neofiti on Gen 3:24 reads, “since the tree of life is the Torah, all who study it and keep its commands will live and exist like the tree of life in the world to come. The Torah is good, for all who study it in this world are like the fruit of the tree of life.” On the dating of Targum Neofiti, Evans points out that “some scholars think that it may have originated in the second century C.E. or even earlier.” See Craig A. Evans, *Ancient Texts for New Testament Studies: A Guide to the Background Literature* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2005), 190. For a detailed discussion see Alejandro Díez Macho, *Neophyti 1: Targum Palestinense ms. de la Biblioteca Vaticana: Edición príncipe, introducción y versión castellana*, 6 vols., *Textos y estudios del Seminario Filológico Cardenal Cisneros 7–11*, 20 (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1968), 1:*57–*95.

subjugated to the rule of sin,⁶ which condemned them to death due to their inability to fulfill the requirements of the law of God. This inability to fulfill the law results from humanity's embodiment of sin, which is there by virtue of Adam and Eve's transgression. Through the transgression, humanity internalized sin to the degree that it became part of human ontology, manifesting itself in sinful human nature (see Ps 51:5) and mortality (Gen 3:19, see also vv. 22, 24).⁷ The law of God becomes the means by which sin condemns sinful humanity to death. Thus, the embodiment of sin turned the law of God into the law of sin. This would mean that the law of sin and the law of God are essentially the same law, causing different consequences due to a changed circumstance, namely humanity's subjugation to the rule of sin. Sin and God are two opposing ruling powers.⁸ Both powers use the law of God. Whereas sin uses the law of God to condemn to death,⁹ God uses it in Christ to enable life.¹⁰

⁶ Paul argues that once sin and death entered the world, they replaced God in his position of rulership over humanity (see pp. 82–84). For the definition of “the rule of sin,” see pages 200–1.

⁷ On the day that Adam and Eve transgressed God's commandment they immediately felt its condemnation (see Gen 3:7, 10). The negative consequences for Adam in verse 19 show that mortality is an essential part of fallen humanity, reading *כִּי־עֵפָר אַתָּה וְאֶל־עֵפָר תָּשׁוּב* (“because dust are you and to dust you will return”). Furthermore, verses 22 and 24 show that God denied humans access to the tree of life, which enabled eternal life in those who ate from it. The transgression of God's commandment required humanity's exchange of the privilege of life for the destiny of death.

⁸ This juxtaposition of God, who enables life, and sin which condemns to death, is fundamental to Paul's theological expositions in Rom 6–8.

⁹ I discuss sin's “use” of the law of God in the following subsection, “Sin's Effect on the Law of God (Romans 7:7–12)” on pages 201–8.

¹⁰ I discuss how the law of God in Christ enables life in a sinful human being on pages 291–98.

In this study, I define the term “law of sin” in reference to the law of God embodied in sinful human beings.¹¹ Thus, the law of sin is essentially the law of God, exercised in an altered context. The embodiment of sin renders sinful human beings unable to attain righteousness through the keeping of the law of God. This inability turns the law of God into a means by which sin doles out death to sinners. Although the law of sin is linked to sin and death, the condemnation to death through the law of sin depends on rulership. In other words, the law remains the same but the ruling powers are different and cause the law as “law of God” and “law of sin” to seem very different.¹²

In this study, I define the term “rule of sin” in reference to humanity’s subjugation to the law of sin. Humanity is required to fulfill the requirements of the law of God, while finding itself unable to do so, due to the embodiment of sin. The inability of sinful human beings to fulfill the law results in humanity’s condemnation to death through the law of sin.

This unfortunate condition is the natural condition of humanity after the fall. By contrast, when a sinful human being is under the rulership of God, the law of sin does not condemn to death because the believer is not subjugated to the law, but under the

¹¹ Eastman defines the law of sin and death as “the law in the grip of sin and death, used by sin to work death.” See Eastman, “Oneself in Another,” 108.

¹² I owe this formulation to A. Andrew Das.

auspices of grace.¹³ Genesis 3:14–15 (see also 21) reveals that God provides liberation from the rule of sin and condemnation to death by a promised Seed [Christ].¹⁴

In this study, I define the term “condemnation” in reference to legal proceedings between God and sinful human beings. The condemnation to death refers to eternal death as the wages for sinful human beings under the rulership of sin, as opposed to eternal life as the free gift to sinful human beings under the rulership of God (see Rom 6:23). The question of the subjectively perceived condemnation or feelings of guilt that the believer feels when confronted with the law of God (see 7:24) is beyond the scope of this study.

Sin’s Effect on the Law of God (Rom 7:7–12)

The narrative of humanity’s fall (Gen 2:4–3:24) serves as the interpretative framework for Paul’s so-called apology of the law (Rom 7:7–12). Paul’s quotation from the Decalogue “you shall not desire” (v. 7) and the lack of reference to the law in the narrative of the fall leads scholars to conclude that Paul when writing verses 7–12 specifically had the Torah in the sense of its legal claims in mind without any reference to the narrative of the Fall.¹⁵ However, Dunn argues that when Paul raises the question of whether the law is sin (v. 7), he refers “once again to Adam and the story of Gen 2–3.”¹⁶

Furthermore, terminological parallels between Rom 7:7–12 and Gen 2–3 such as

¹³ I discuss the believer’s relationship to the law of sin on pages 235–37.

¹⁴ For a discussion on how the believer experiences liberation from the rule of sin through Christ, see pages 131–36. For a discussion on how Christ provides liberation from condemnation to death, see pages 216–30.

¹⁵ For example, Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 467; Wolter, *Römer*, 1:431–32.

¹⁶ Dunn, *Romans*, 1:399.

ἐντέλλομαι/ἐντολή (“to command/commandment”),¹⁷ ζάω/ζωή (“to live/life”),¹⁸ ἀποθνήσκω/θάνατος (“to die/death”),¹⁹ γινώσκω (“to know”),²⁰ or ἀπατάω/ἐξαπατάω (“to deceive”)²¹ support the idea that Rom 7:7–12 echoes Gen 2–3.²² Therefore, the shortened citation of the tenth commandment, “you shall not desire” (Rom 7:7), echoes the desire of Adam and Eve regarding the tree of knowledge of good and evil. This connection is valid considering that first century CE authors have linked desire to the origin of sin (see also Jas 1:15 and *LAE* 19:3, which explicitly read, “for desire is the origin of every sin,” see also Gen 3:6). In support, Dunn argues:

The creation of man and the giving of the law were probably already associated in Jewish thinking, not least the idea that in disobeying “the commandment” of God (Gen 3:1–6) Adam was breaking “the law” of God. . . . So Paul’s readers would probably have had no difficulty in associating the commandment against the basic sin of lust (desire, covetousness) with the primeval sin of Eve and Adam.²³

In other words, the term ἐντολή (“commandment”) in Rom 7:7–12 closely echoes God’s command in Gen 2:16–17 (see ἐνετείλατο [“he commanded”] in v. 16), which prohibits eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

¹⁷ The noun ἐντολή (“commandment”), which appears in Rom 7:8–12, does not appear in the narrative of humanity’s fall. The closest term that appears is the verb ἐντέλλομαι (“to command”) in Gen 2:16; 3:11, 17. The use of the verb ἐντέλλομαι implies that what God stated in Gen 2:16–17 is the first commandment that God gave.

¹⁸ Gen 2:7, 9, 19; 3:14, 17, 20, 22, 24; Rom 7:9–10.

¹⁹ Gen 2:17; 3:3–4; Rom 7:10.

²⁰ Gen 2:17; 3:5, 7, 22; Rom 7:7.

²¹ Gen 3:13; Rom 7:11.

²² Similarly, Campbell, *Deliverance*, 141.

²³ Dunn, *Romans*, 1:400.

By pointing out two consecutive conditions of sin and the autobiographical “I [Paul],” Paul illustrates sin’s effect on the law of God.²⁴ Whereas the original purpose of the law of God was to enable life, the law of God under the rule of sin is a contributing cause of death. Depending on the absence of the law or the presence of the commandment,²⁵ sin and the “I” exchange their conditions of being either dead or alive. Paul clarifies in Rom 7:8 that χωρὶς . . . νόμου ἁμαρτία νεκρά (“apart from the law sin is dead”). In contrast, verse 9 reads that ἐγὼ . . . ἔζων χωρὶς νόμου ποτέ (“I once used to live apart from the law”). The absence of the law characterizes the first condition in which the “I” is alive, and sin is dead. The arrival of the commandment brings about the second condition in which sin becomes alive, and the “I” dies. The genitive absolute construction in verse 9 ἐλθούσης δὲ τῆς ἐντολῆς ἡ ἁμαρτία ἀνέζησεν (“but when the commandment came sin became alive”) indicates that the appearance of the commandment precedes the activation of ἁμαρτία (“sin”) and the subsequent death of the “I” (v. 10).²⁶ In addition, Paul’s language indicates that the first condition precedes the second.²⁷

²⁴ The following paragraph expands how this study defines the meaning of the pronoun “I” in the verses 7–12.

²⁵ Dunn points to Paul’s synonymous use of νόμος (“law”) and ἐντολή (“commandment”) in Rom 7:7–12. See Dunn, *Romans*, 1:380.

²⁶ See Wallace, *Grammar*, 654–55.

²⁷ The progressive imperfect ἔζων (“I used to live”) and the temporal particle ποτέ (“once”) imply that the first condition precedes the second condition.

The most natural reading of the “I” in verses 7–12 is autobiographical.²⁸

However, the narrative of humanity’s fall serves as the interpretative framework for Paul’s own experience. In other words, Paul presents his own experience of being confronted with the condemnation of the law as analogous to Adam’s experience facing the condemnation of the law. The prepositional phrase χωρὶς νόμου (“apart from the law”) in verses 8–9 characterizes two states of affairs: first, ἀμαρτία νεκρά (“sin [being] dead”) in verse 8 and second ἐγὼ δὲ ἔζων . . . ποτέ (“but I once was alive”) in verse 9. Both imply a righteous state, which entails the absence of condemnation to death.²⁹

Applied to Adam, the phrase “apart from the law” describes Adam’s righteousness, the

²⁸ Romans 7:9 is the first time in this chapter where Paul uses the keyword ἐγὼ (“I”) which appears in verses 9–10, 14, 17, 20, 24–25. The discussion among scholars on the identity of the “I” in Rom 7 has been endless. An extensive discussion on the subject goes beyond the scope of this study. Among the many attempts to provide a survey on the various suggestions, Wolter’s brief and straightforward survey is one of the most helpful. Acknowledging the impossibility of creating a comprehensive system, with detailed categories paying tribute to the nuances of each proposal, he decided to categorize the proposals according to a sort of flowchart. First, he categorizes the scholar’s suggestion by whether they consider the “I” to be autobiographical or not. For example, Werner Georg Kümmel’s denial of the autobiographical reading of Romans 7 shaped the majority view of twentieth-century Pauline scholarship. See Kümmel, *Römer* 7, 78–138. More recently, scholars have revived the autobiographical reading. See J.A. Ziesler, “The Role of the Tenth Commandment in Romans 7,” *JSNT* 33 (1988): 41–56; Jan Lambrecht, *The Wretched “I” in Its Liberation: Paul in Romans 7 and 8*, Louvain Theological and Pastoral Monographs 14 (Leuven: Peeters; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992); Troels Engberg-Pedersen, *Paul and the Stoics* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2000), 243–44; Michael Paul Middendorf, *The “I” in The Storm: A Study of Romans 7* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1997); Jewett, *Romans*, 443; Will N. Timmins, *Romans 7 and Christian Identity: A Study of the “I” in its Literary Context*, SNTSMS 170 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017). Second, Wolter categorizes the remaining cases, where the “I” is not considered to be autobiographical, by three significant categories, representing alternate proposals suggested by scholarship. The proposals are that (A) the “I” refers to the non-Christian, Adamic humanity, see for example, Kümmel, *Römer* 7, 132–38; Wilckens, *Römer*, 2:79; Richard N. Longenecker, *Paul, Apostle of Liberty* 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015), 99–105. (B) The “I” refers to the Jews who were under the law. See for example Moo, *Romans*, 471. (C) The “I” refers to Christians, like in these texts, for example Nygren, *Romans*, 265–303; Cranfield, *Romans*, 1:346; Barrett, *Romans*, 142–44; Dunn, *Romans*, 1:377. Finally, there are some positions that go further beyond one of these three categories, such as the identification of the “I” as the so-called godfearers, argued by Stowers, *Rereading of Romans*, 258–84 and Das, *Romans Debate*, 204–35. For further discussion of these proposals, see Wolter, *Römer*, 1:426–27.

²⁹ The only other place where the prepositional phrase χωρὶς νόμου (“apart from the law”) appears is in 3:21, where it also relates to righteousness. Whereas in 7:8–9, righteousness is associated with the absence of sin, in 3:21 righteousness is associated with faith.

state he enjoyed when he still had access to the tree of life. The pre-fall experience of Adam is the only time in human history when sin was dead, which means that sin was unable to condemn human beings. Dunn points out that sin, being dead, functions as a personification of the serpent “lurking in the garden before man’s fall but had found no opportunity to attack man.”³⁰ Therefore, the phrase “apart from the law” is best understood as apart from the condemnation of the law of sin. Applied to the “I [Paul],” the phrase “apart from the law” means that at one time in life, Paul thought of himself as righteous (Phil 3:5–6) and thus not condemned by the law. However, Paul was in essence never righteous before the law, but only perceived himself as such. In contrast to Adam’s pre-fallen state, Paul’s perceived righteousness was a misjudgment.

The phrase ἐλθούσης δὲ τῆς ἐντολῆς (“but when the commandment came”) in Rom 7:9 also characterizes two states of affairs: first, ἡ ἀμαρτία ἀνέζησεν (“sin became alive”) in verse 9 and second, ἐγὼ δὲ ἀπέθανον (“but I died”) in verse 10. Both imply the absence of righteous status, which entails a condemnation to death. Again, applied to Adam, the phrase “but when the commandment came,” means that at the moment that Adam transgressed the commandment he gained experiential knowledge of sin that became alive.³¹ At this moment, sin used the law of God to cause death, thereby turning the law of God into the law of sin. Applied to Paul, the phrase “but when the

³⁰ Dunn, *Romans*, 1:400.

³¹ In Rom 7:7, Paul states, “I would not have known sin, except through the law,” a thought that is similar to what he previously expresses in 3:20. The use of εἰ μὴ (“except”) expresses exclusivity. In other words, the prepositional phrase διὰ νόμου (“through the law”) is, according to Paul, the only way to achieve a definite knowledge of sin. See similarly, Wolter, *Römer*, 1:429.

commandment came” means that Paul encountered the condemnation of the law, referring to the moment when he realized his unrighteousness (Phil 3:9).

The autobiographical “I” in Rom 7:7–12 is Paul’s application of Adam’s experience to his own life. Adam in the pre-fall state was righteous and, thus, alive. However, once Adam transgressed the commandment he embodied sin, which came to life in him. Adam was no longer righteous, but condemned to death. Paul’s application shows that at a certain moment in life he perceived himself as righteous and deserving of eternal life. However, once he encountered Christ, the one who embodied the law of the Spirit of life (8:2), he realized that his actual state was condemnation to death by the law of God, and he was in need of liberation from this condemnation.³²

Paul’s apologetical intention for the law (7:7–12) is to argue that sin, not the law, is the effective cause of death. Although the law of God provides the knowledge of sinful desires (v. 7),³³ it does not produce them nor is it responsible for deceiving or killing the “I.” The commandment only functions as sin’s instrument in causing death. In parallel

³² Similarly, Dunn who states “In Phil. 3,6 Paul describes his pre-Christian experience from his then Jewish standpoint in language that would most impress the Jewish mind. But in Rom. 7,7–13 he describes his pre-Christian experience from his now Christian standpoint.” See James D. G. Dunn, “Rom. 7,14–25 in the Theology of Paul,” *TZ* 31 (1975): 257–73, esp. 261. For a more detailed discussion on the autobiographical reading of the “I” in Rom 7:7–12, see Middendorf, “I” in *The Storm*, 135–70.

³³ The pluperfect of ἤδειν (“I would not have known”) may result from lexical intrusion. See Wallace, *Grammar*, 586. The parallelism, however, implies that the pluperfect also stresses the beginning of a new state with ongoing consequences. Dunn argues that the pluperfect functions similarly to the imperfect, implying that the experience of covetousness once acquired by the individual remains with the individual. See Dunn, *Romans*, 1:379. Additionally, Paul replaces the direct object “sin” (v. 6) with “desire” (v. 7). Thus, the law provides knowledge about sin, as well as about desire. In contrast to sin, desire is not against the law by default. For example, Paul expresses the desire to visit the Thessalonians in person (1 Thess 2:17). Another time, he expresses the desire to die because the prospect of being with Christ seems brighter to him than his current situation (Phil 1:23). However, the added quote in Rom 7:7 which reads “you shall not desire”—a shortened version of the tenth commandment (Exod 20:17; Deut 5:21, see also Rom 13:9 and Philo, *Spec. Leg.* 4.78)—indicates that the law only prohibits some desires, thus qualifying them as sinful.

statements (vv. 8, 11) Paul presents sin as the subject which, ἀφορμὴν λαβοῦσα (“having grasped the opportunity”)³⁴ performs three actions. In verse 8, sin κατειργάσατο (“produced”) all types of desires in the “I.” In verse 11, sin ἐξηπάτησέν (“deceived”) and ἀπέκτεινεν (“killed”) the “I.”

Paul qualifies sin’s actions in verses 8 and 11 with the prepositional phrase διὰ τῆς ἐντολῆς (“through the commandment”) and in verse 11 with a shortened form δι’ αὐτῆς (“through it”).³⁵ The prepositional phrase “through the commandment” is ambiguous. It can be linked either to the participial clause “having grasped the opportunity,”³⁶ reading “sin grasped the opportunity through the commandment” (vv. 8, 11), or to the respective finite verbs “produced” (v. 8) and “deceived” (v. 11),³⁷ reading in verse 8 that “sin produced through the commandment all kind of desire,” and in verse 11, “sin deceived through the commandment.” Whereas both readings are legitimate, the prepositional phrase “through it” in verse 11 favors the reading that links the prepositional clauses “through the commandment” to the finite verbs “produced,” “deceived,” and “killed.”³⁸ Paul’s point is that sin, by means of the commandment,

³⁴ Paul uses the participle λαβοῦσα (“having grasped”) to describe this action. Syntactically, the adverbial participle expresses an attendant circumstance, which means Paul coordinates the action of the participle to the action of the finite verb. See Wallace, *Grammar*, 640.

³⁵ The personal pronoun in the prepositional phrase δι’ αὐτῆς (“through it”) matches in gender, number, and case with ἐντολῆς (“commandment”), which shows that “through it” is a shortened form of “through the commandment.”

³⁶ So Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 466–68; also Hans Lietzmann, *An die Römer*, 2nd ed., HNT 8 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1919), 70–71; Kümmel, *Römer* 7, 44; Wilckens, *Römer*, 2:81n319; Jewett, *Romans*, 450; Schnabel, *Römer*, 2:132, 139–40.

³⁷ Cranfield, *Romans*, 1:350; Schlier, *Römerbrief*, 222–23; Dunn, *Romans*, 1:380; Wolter, *Römer*, 1:432–33; Thielman, *Romans*, 350–51.

³⁸ The prepositional phrase “through it” (v. 11), also refers to the commandment and links to the finite verb “killed.”

produced all kinds of sinful desires (v. 8), as well as deceiving and killing the “I” (v. 11). Paul exonerated the law of God from being responsible for being the effective cause of death. For this reason, Paul can conclude in verse 12, that ὥστε ὁ μὲν νόμος ἅγιος καὶ ἡ ἐντολὴ ἅγια καὶ δίκαια καὶ ἀγαθὴ (“thus the law is indeed holy, and the commandment is holy and just and good”). Despite this conclusion that the responsibility lies with sin, the law of God still serves as sin’s means, which unfortunately turns the law of God into the law of sin. This would establish that the law of sin and the law of God are one and the same law, simply showing different consequences due to a changed circumstance, namely, humanity’s subjugation to the rulership of sin. This concept of the law of sin also being the law of God within a changed circumstance finds evidence in Paul’s apparent need for an apology for the law. If they were different laws, there would be no need for an apology for the law of God.

Sin’s Effect on the Law of Moses (Gal 3:10)

Galatians 3:10 indicates that sin also turns the law of Moses into the law of sin, which becomes evident in the concept of the curse. The law of Moses puts a curse on every human being who seeks righteousness by doing the works of the law. Paul states in verse 10, ὅσοι γὰρ ἐξ ἔργων νόμου εἰσὶν, ὑπὸ κατάραν εἰσὶν (“for all who are by the works of the law are under the curse”). In support of this general statement Paul adds a quotation from Deut 27:26 (LXX), which reads ἐπικατάρατος πᾶς ὃς οὐκ ἐμμένει πᾶσιν τοῖς γεγραμμένοις ἐν τῷ βιβλίῳ τοῦ νόμου τοῦ ποιῆσαι αὐτά (“cursed is everyone who

does not remain in all things written in the book of the law to do them”).³⁹ Scholarship has provided different interpretations regarding the function of the quotation in Gal 3:10. Two readings are prominent among scholars of the New Perspective on Paul. Wright suggests that the phrase “all who are by the works of the law” refers to Gentile Christians who advocate a Jewish lifestyle. Jews faced the curse of exile as a nation because they failed to observe the law. Wright argues that those who adopt a Jewish lifestyle place themselves under the curse of the exile.⁴⁰ For Dunn, however, those “who are by the works of the law” are the ones who are putting “too much weight on the distinctiveness of Jews from Gentiles and on the special laws which formed the boundary markers between them.”⁴¹ Moo, however, rejects the New Perspective as being guilty of reading an assumption into the text, namely the believers’ identification with Israel.⁴²

³⁹ The quotation is closer in its content to the LXX than the Masoretic Text. However, Longenecker is correct when he attests that none of Paul’s alterations significantly change the sense of the original reading in the LXX. See Longenecker, *Galatians*, 117; see also Moo, *Galatians*, 201; deSilva, *Galatians*, 286. Regarding the first alteration, the LXX reads Ἐπικατάρατος πᾶς ἄνθρωπος (“cursed is every human being”), while Paul’s version reads ἐπικατάρατος πᾶς (“cursed is everyone”), leaving out ἄνθρωπος (“human being”). The Masoretic Text lacks any corresponding counterpart to either πᾶς (“everyone”) or πᾶς ἄνθρωπος (“everyone”). The reading in the LXX may show some influence from the Hebrew text of Deut 27:14, which has the phrase אֶל-כָּל-אִישׁ (“to every man”). Also, it should be noted that Targum Neofiti and Targum Pseudo-Jonathan on Deut 27:26 both have the word גברא (“the man”). The second alteration in Paul’s version, in comparison to the LXX, is the omission of the preposition ἐν (“in”) after the finite verb ἐμμένει (“it remains”). The Masoretic Text lacks any corresponding counterpart to the prepositional phrase. Corresponding to Paul’s version, however, the Samaritan Pentateuch inserts the word כל (“all”) between אַת and דברֵי (“the words”). The final alteration in Gal 3:10 finds no corresponding counterpart in the Old Versions. They all share the phrase “in the words of this law” (Deut 27:26). Paul changes the phrase to “in what has been written in the book of the law.” This alteration is most likely the result of Paul’s exegetical interpretation of the original text. While the text in Deuteronomy refers to the words Moses delivered—see especially the Latin rendering *in sermonibus legis hujus* (“in this spoken law”)—Paul considers Moses’s instructional speech as part of the written law of Moses and therefore refers to it as the written book of the law.

⁴⁰ Wright, *Climax*, 145–48.

⁴¹ Dunn, *Galatians*, 172.

⁴² Moo, *Galatians*, 204.

The Old Perspective on Paul assumes that Paul believed in the impossibility of doing “all things written in the book of the law.” Paul, therefore, argues that everyone who favors the possibility of receiving righteousness “by the works of the law” falls under its curse.⁴³ Proponents of the New Perspective have pointed out that in Phil 3:6, Paul indicated that obedience to the entire law is possible.⁴⁴ However, this verse contains Paul’s self-reflection of his youth. In the very same verse he points to his zeal as a persecutor of the congregation (v. 6). Thus, what Paul says in this verse does not reflect his current perspective, but his past perspective. For this reason, it is questionable whether verse 6 contributes to Paul’s understanding of the works of the law in Gal 3:10.

The key to interpreting verse 10 lies in the parallelism between Paul’s statement “for all who are by the works of the law are under a curse” and the quotation from Deut 27:26, “cursed is everyone who does not remain in all things written in the book of the law to do them.” The explanatory conjunction γάρ (“for”) between Paul’s statement and the quotation indicates Paul’s intention to clarify his statement with the quotation. Paul’s statement is composed of two parts. The pronoun ὅσοι (“all who”) correlates the two parts of his statement.⁴⁵ In the first part, “all who” defines a group that Paul identifies as “all who are by the works of the law.” In the second part, “all who” indicates that this

⁴³ The Old Perspective still finds a significant number of supporters in recent literature. See Burton, *Galatians*, 164–65; Mussner, *Galaterbrief*, 224–26; Oepke, *Galater*, 72; Das, *Paul*, 145–70; A. Andrew Das, “Galatians 3:10,” 203–23; Longenecker, *Galatians*, 118; Schreiner, *Galatians*, 204–5; Moo, *Galatians*, 202–5.

⁴⁴ Dunn, *Galatians*, 171.

⁴⁵ For the lexical meaning, see “ὅσος,” *BDAG* 729. For the syntactical function of ὅσος as introducing a relative clause, see Wallace, *Grammar*, 659.

particular group is under a curse. In his statement, Paul argues that those who abide by the works of the law are under a curse, without exception.

The adjectival predicate nominative $\pi\tilde{\alpha}\zeta$ (“everyone”) and the substantivized subject $\acute{\epsilon}\pi\kappa\alpha\tau\acute{\alpha}\rho\alpha\tau\omicron\varsigma$ (“cursed is”) within the quotation parallel the pronoun “all” and the prepositional clause “are under a curse” within Paul’s statement. This parallel implies that the other part of Paul’s statement, “all who are by the works of the law” and the quotation, “who does not remain in all things written in the book of the law to do them” are also functional equivalents. Paul’s equation of “works of the law” with the failure to “remain in all things written in the book of the law to do them” is apparently incoherent.⁴⁶ However, the immediate context clarifies that Paul argues that “by the works of the law no flesh will be justified” (Gal 2:16; 3:2, 5; see also Rom 3:20, 28). Paul typically uses the term $\sigma\acute{\alpha}\rho\zeta$ (“flesh”) to refer to the sinful nature of human beings (e.g., 6:19; 8:3, 7–8).⁴⁷ In other words, no human being can keep the law of Moses due to their sinful nature. Therefore, (more in line with Moo’s view that no one can keep the law of Moses) the law of Moses places everyone who seeks righteousness by the works of the law of Moses under the curse of the law.

⁴⁶ Martyn discusses how scholars have approached this incoherency. See Martyn, *Galatians*, 309–11.

⁴⁷ Das interpretes the term $\sigma\acute{\alpha}\rho\zeta$ as oppressing powers when in contrast with spirit and not sinful nature. See Das, *Galatians*, 591–94. Dunn points out that $\sigma\acute{\alpha}\rho\zeta$ denotes “what we might describe as human mortality,” which includes human imperfection and corruption. See Dunn, *Theology*, 66.

The law of Moses functions as a law of sin when sinful humans seek justification by the works of the law. It is notable that the purpose of the law of Moses was to point to righteousness through faith in Christ, and not to righteousness by the works of the law.⁴⁸

Summary

This discussion revealed that sin has an effect on the law of God. In the first subsection, I provided a definition of the law of sin. The law of sin is essentially the law of God embodied in a sinful human being. The narrative of humanity's fall (Gen 2:4–3:24), with its reference to God's first commandment in connection with death (2:16–17), serves as the interpretative framework for Paul's legal understanding. Adam and Eve's experience of the two opposing consequences of God's commandment, namely, life before the fall and death after the fall, implicates humanity's subjugation under the law of God. Further, the consequences of the law of God depend on the rulership over human beings. When Adam and Eve were under the rulership of God they had the guarantee of eternal life through access to the tree of life (see v. 9; 3:22, 24). However, when they transgressed God's commandment, humanity embodied sin, which placed humanity under the rule of sin. Sin became an ontological part of humanity, which turned the law of God into the law of sin. The law of sin condemns sinful human beings to death when they are under the rulership of sin.

In the second subsection, I discussed sin's effect on the law of God in Rom 7:7–12. The exegetical analysis revealed several terminological connections between Paul's apologetic treatment of the law (vv. 7–12) and the narrative of humanity's fall (Gen 2:4–

⁴⁸ As previously discussed, the primary purpose of the law of Moses was not to provide righteousness, but to point to righteousness through faith in Christ (see pp. 173–80).

3:24), indicating that the latter narrative serves as the interpretative framework for Paul's autobiographical experience with the law in Romans 7. In verses 8–10, Paul discusses sin's effect on the law of God by pointing out two consecutive conditions of sin and the "I." The first condition "apart from the law" implies a righteous state of the "I." Applied to Adam, this condition describes his pre-fall state, while, when applied to Paul, describes his misjudgment of being righteous before the law (Phil 3:6). The second condition, "when the commandment came," implies a state of being condemned by the law. Applied to Adam, this condition describes his post-fall state, which, when applied to Paul, describes his encounter with Christ who embodies the law of the Spirit of life (Rom 8:2). The grammatical and syntactical analysis of 7:8 and 11 revealed that sin, not the law, was responsible for producing sinful desires, as well as deceiving and killing the "I." God's commandment, however, serves as the means through which sin effects these negative consequences. Therefore, the law of God that condemns human beings to death under the rule of sin becomes the law of sin and death.

The discussion in the third subsection focused on sin's effect on the law of Moses. The exegetical analysis of Gal 3:10 revealed that the law of Moses puts a curse on every human being who seeks righteousness by the works of the law, indicating that the law of Moses can function as a law of sin.

Christ and the Law of Sin

Through Adam's transgression and thereby humanity's embodiment of sin, the law of God turned into a law of sin through which sin universally doled out death to sinful humanity. In other words, the changed circumstance, namely humanity's

subjugation to the rule of sin, caused the law of God to turn against humanity, similar to Greco-Roman positive law that could turn against the people it governed. The universal condemnation of fallen humanity through the law of God and the human inability to attain a righteous status through the law raises the question of whether the law of God became unrighteous. This circumstance made both, the law of God and sinful humanity, to become in need of a savior, similar to a Greco-Roman wise statesman who adapted the positive law to a changed circumstance to save the people governed by it. Therefore, I first maintain that to save the law of God from the potential accusation of being unjust because it turns against sinful humanity the savior would have to prove the righteousness of the law by keeping the law himself. Second, in order to save sinful human beings from the condemnation of the law of God, a savior would have to provide a circumstance under which the law of God no longer condemns. Subsequently, in the first section I examine whether Christ saves the law of God by proving it righteous through keeping it. In the second section, I examine whether Christ's death creates the circumstance needed for the law of God to no longer condemn humanity.

Christ as Keeper of the Law

Four passages in Paul's writings testify to Christ's obedience to the law. First, Phil 2:8 reads that Christ ἐταπείνωσεν ἑαυτὸν γενόμενος ὑπήκοος μέχρι θανάτου, θανάτου δὲ σταυροῦ ("humbled himself by becoming obedient unto death, even unto death on the cross"). Paul's statement bears witness to Christ's obedience to the will of God, implying his obedience to the law of God. Second, in Rom 8:2, Paul states that God sent Christ as a *περὶ ἁμαρτίας* ("sin offering"). This expression implies Christ's

blamelessness.⁴⁹ Third, in Rom 5:12–20, Paul contrasts Adam’s disobedience with Christ’s obedience. Paul says that Adam failed to obey God’s commandment, and consequently, the law of God turned into the law of sin, whereby death entered the world. In contrast, Christ remained obedient to the law of God,⁵⁰ and consequently, the law of God never became a law of sin in his life. Fourth, in 2 Cor 5:21, Paul refers to Christ as τὸν μὴ γνόντα ἁμαρτίαν (“the one not knowing sin”), which clarifies that he never gained experiential knowledge of sin.⁵¹ Thus, Christ was never subjugated to the rule of sin, and therefore, the embodied law of God never turned into the law of sin in his life. These four passages show that Christ kept the law of God and therefore saved the law from the potential accusation of being unjust because it condemns sinful humanity to death. By faithfully keeping the law of God, he proved it righteous.

Christ and Redemption from the Law of Sin

In this subsection, I address whether Christ brings about the circumstance necessary for the law to no longer condemn a sinful human being to death. To answer this question, I analyze Rom 8:1–4, where Paul clarifies that there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ; Gal 3:13 where Paul clarifies that Christ provides redemption to the believer from the curse of the law; and 4:4–5 where Paul clarifies that the believer in

⁴⁹ For a detailed discussion on Christ as a *περὶ ἁμαρτίας* in Rom 8:3, see pages 100–5.

⁵⁰ Galatians 4:4 states that Christ *γενόμενον ὑπὸ νόμον* (“was born under the law”), which indicates that Christ as a Jew was also bound to keep the law of Moses.

⁵¹ Although Christ “not knowing sin” can refer to Christ’s pre-incarnated state, it primarily refers to his incarnated state and points to his blamelessness as a sin offering. See George H. Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, BECNT 8 (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2015), 313; Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 318.

Christ receives adoption by entering the line of Christ, without condemnation through the law of God.

Liberation from the Law of Sin (Rom 8:1–4)

In Rom 8:1–4, Paul elaborates on the effect that Christ’s death has on the law of sin. In verse 1, Paul begins with the thesis that οὐδὲν ἄρα νῦν κατάκριμα τοῖς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ (“there is now, therefore, no condemnation of those in Christ Jesus”). Paul’s thesis implies that those in Christ Jesus are righteous before the law.

In verse 2, Paul further elaborates on the righteous status of the believer by contrasting the law of the Spirit of life in Christ with the law of sin and death. As previously discussed, the law of God is essentially the law of sin and death when embodied in a sinful human being.⁵² By contrast, Paul associates the law of the Spirit of life in Christ with life-ensuring effects. If the life-ensuring effect of the law is only guaranteed in the absence of condemnation to death, then this state can only apply either to Adam’s pre-fallen state, to Christ who remained obedient to the law, or to the believer who has spiritually died to sin.

The prepositional phrase ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ (“in Christ Jesus”) further modifies the law of the Spirit of life. Cranfield lists four options to which part of Paul’s statement, the prepositional phrase “in Christ Jesus,” connects: first, to τῆς ζωῆς (“of life”); second, to ἠλευθέρωσέν (“set free”); third, to τοῦ πνεύματος τῆς ζωῆς (“the Spirit of life”); and fourth, to ὁ νόμος (“the law”).⁵³ Cranfield rejects the third and fourth options as “being

⁵² See pages 206–8.

⁵³ Cranfield, *Romans*, 1:374.

unnatural” and only discusses the first and second options in detail, which are the preferred options among scholarship.⁵⁴ Kuss argues that it is impossible to discern where the prepositional clause should be linked.⁵⁵ Jewett raises a valid point, arguing that “despite the problems it may cause, the entire subject of this sentence, ‘the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus,’ needs to be kept together on syntactical grounds.”⁵⁶ Constantine R. Campbell argues that the prepositional phrase is “locative”⁵⁷ and thus “most likely refers to the realm or domain of Christ.”⁵⁸ Thus, the prepositional phrase indicates that Christ embodies the law of the Spirit of life, which is the law of God, leading to life.

Regarding the relationship between the two laws, Paul argues that the law of the Spirit of life in Christ liberates the believer from the law of sin and death. This relationship finds evidence in the statement’s syntax, where the law of the Spirit of life in Christ serves as the subject of the verb ἠλευθέρωσέν (“liberates”).⁵⁹ Paul’s statement in

⁵⁴ Cranfield, *Romans*, 1:374–75. Schnabel lists Rom 6:23 as evidence for linking “in Christ Jesus” to “of life.” The following scholars prefer this reading. See Lagrange, *Romains*, 191; C. H. Dodd, *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans*, MNTC (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1954), 118. In support of linking “in Christ Jesus” to the verb “set free,” Schnabel lists 5:21. See Schnabel, 2:195n21. The adverbial reading of “in Christ” is preferred by Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 191; Cranfield, *Romans*, 1:374–75; Dunn, *Romans*, 1:418; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 482; Thielman, *Romans*, 378–79.

⁵⁵ Kuss, *Römerbrief*, 2:490.

⁵⁶ Jewett, *Romans*, 481. See also Kühl, *Römer*, 251; Lagrange, *Romains*, 101; Schlier, *Römerbrief*, 238–39; Kuss, *Römerbrief*, 2:490; Barrett, *Romans*, 146.

⁵⁷ Campbell also lists Rom 6:11; 1 Cor 15:18; 2 Cor 5:17; Gal 3:28; Eph 3:6; 1 Thess 4:16 as locative instances of ἐν Χριστῷ. See Constantine R. Campbell, *Paul and Union with Christ: An Exegetical and Theological Study* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 132.

⁵⁸ Campbell, *Union with Christ*, 141.

⁵⁹ See Osten-Sacken, *Römer 8*, 226–27; Wilckens, *Römer*, 2:122; Hübner, *Law in Paul’s Thought*, 144–49; Dunn, *Romans*, 1:416–17; Barrett, *Romans*, 146; Jewett, *Romans*, 480–81; Schnabel, *Römer*,

verse 2 describes a solution for human beings under the rule of sin who are condemned through the law of God. In other words, there is a way for human beings who are under the law of sin and death to experience liberation from the rule of sin.

In verse 3, Paul compares the inability of the law of sin with the ability of God. He states τὸ γὰρ ἀδύνατον τοῦ νόμου ἐν ᾧ ἡσθένηει διὰ τῆς σαρκός, ὁ θεὸς τὸν ἑαυτοῦ υἱὸν πέμψας ἐν ὁμοιώματι σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας καὶ περὶ ἁμαρτίας κατέκρινεν τὴν ἁμαρτίαν ἐν τῇ σαρκί, (“for on law’s inability because it was weakened by the flesh God condemned sin in the flesh by sending his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as a sin offering”). Scholars have discovered issues regarding the syntax of verse 3. Most commentators perceive the first two clauses (“for on law’s inability because it was weakened by the flesh . . .”) to be an anacoluthon and tend to supply the elliptical statement with the necessary words in order to smooth its reading, for example: “What the law weakened by the flesh was powerless to do God has done: . . .”⁶⁰ The additions are, however, entirely speculative, which leads other commentators to treat the first two clauses as either a pre-positioned nominative or accusative apposition, reading “for [this is] the very thing the law found impossible because it was weakened by the flesh, . . .”⁶¹

2:192–93. Others have pointed out that it is impossible to understand νόμος in Rom 8:2 as law. They read νόμος in this instance in the sense of “principle” or “rule,” similar to 7:21. See Cranfield, *Romans*, 1:375–76; Schlier, *Römerbrief*, 238; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 482–83; Wolter, *Römer*, 1:473–74; Thielman, *Romans*, 379; Moo, *Romans*, 496–97. The high density of legal terminology in the immediate context favors reading νόμος in 8:2 in its natural meaning as “law.”

⁶⁰ See Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 484. See also Michel, *Römer*, 160; Wilckens, *Römer*, 2:214; Barrett, *Romans*, 146; Moo, *Romans*, 500n908.

⁶¹ This translation is suggested by Thielman, *Romans*, 380.

In this study, I assume that the accusative τὸ ἀδύνατον (“the inability”) is an accusative of respect,⁶² summarizing Paul’s argument from 7:7 onwards, reading “for on the inability of the law, provided that it was weakened by the flesh,”⁶³ Thus, the inability of the law is not intrinsic, but is caused by the weakening effect of the flesh.⁶⁴ Sinful human nature weakens the effectiveness of the law (see 5:6, 8).⁶⁵ Since it is impossible for sinful human beings to attain a righteous status through the law, the law of sin condemns them to death.

In contrast to the law of sin that is weakened by the flesh, God can condemn sin within sinful human beings. The main clause of Paul’s statement in 8:3 clarifies that God κατέκρινεν τὴν ἁμαρτίαν ἐν τῇ σαρκί (“condemned sin in the flesh”). The syntax identifies “the sin” as the direct object of God’s condemnation, which means that God condemns sin. The prepositional phrase “in the flesh” defines the location where God’s condemnation of sin takes place. In this particular context, “in the flesh” refers to sinful human beings,⁶⁶ which means that God condemned sin within the sinful human being. In other words, God reserves condemnation for sin, itself, and not the sinful human being in which the sin resides. Moo correctly calls attention to the importance of the forensic

⁶² Wolter, *Römer*, 1:474–75.

⁶³ Similarly, Wolter, *Römer*, 1:469.

⁶⁴ Paul’s use of ἐν ᾧ (“because”) indicates causality, see “ἐν,” *BDAG* 326–30. Similarly, see BDF §219.2; Lagrange, *Romains*, 193; Cranfield, *Romans*, 1:379; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 484; Schreiner, *Romans*, 401n8; Jewett, *Romans*, 483. Others have suggested that it is read modally as “in which, wherein.” See Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*; Käsemann, *Romans*, 216.

⁶⁵ Haacker, *Römer*, 152; Wolter, *Römer*, 1:474–75; Schnabel, *Römer*, 2:196.

⁶⁶ Similarly, Schlier, *Römerbrief*, 240; Wilckens, *Römer*, 2:127n521.

connotation of the verb κατακρίνω (“to condemn”).⁶⁷ He argues that “the condemnation of sin” refers to God “executing his judgment on sin in the atoning death of his Son.”⁶⁸ Schnabel argues that “sin . . . was ‘legally’ disposed.”⁶⁹ The condemnation of sin within a sinful human being means that sin has no more power to condemn to death, thus liberating the human being. The question then becomes how it is possible for God to condemn sin within the sinful human without condemning the human.

The added participial clause in verse 3 which reads τὸν ἑαυτοῦ υἱὸν πέμψας ἐν ὁμοιώματι σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας καὶ περὶ ἁμαρτίας (“by having sent his Son [Christ] in the likeness of sinful flesh and as a sin offering”) describes the means through which God condemns sin. As discussed in chapter 3, the word ὁμοίωμα (“likeness”) indicates similarity, but not identicalness.⁷⁰ Christ differed from the rest of humanity in terms of his relationship to the rule of sin. Christ never sinned and therefore was never subjugated to the rule of sin.⁷¹ While having a mortal body, Christ, unlike the rest of humanity, embodied the law of God that leads to life. Verse 2 clarifies that Christ embodied the law of the Spirit of life. Therefore, sin could not weaken the law of God in Christ, as it does with sinful human beings.

Further, a closer look at Christ sent by God as a περὶ ἁμαρτίας (“sin offering”) in verse 3 reveals two aspects. First, the prepositional phrase περὶ ἁμαρτίας points to

⁶⁷ Moo, *Romans*, 503. See also Schreiner, *Romans*, 402.

⁶⁸ Moo, *Romans*, 503.

⁶⁹ Schnabel, *Römer*, 2:201.

⁷⁰ See pages 126–31.

⁷¹ See pages 119–24.

Christ's purifying and atoning role as a blameless sin offering, which corresponds to the role of the Levitical sin offering.⁷² This means that Christ vicariously died for sinful human beings. Second, it points to Christ's blamelessness, which means that Christ kept the entire law of God. Christ's role as a sin offering solves the problem that human beings had with the law of God. The human relationship to the law of God is summarized in two requirements. First, human beings must keep the entire law (see Gal 3:10; 5:2–3). Second, the law's transgressor must die (Rom 5:12; 6:23, see also Gen 2:16). Christ as a blameless sin offering fulfilled both requirements of the law. Thus, Christ's role as a blameless sin offering is crucial for the condemnation of sin within humans.

Further, the conjunction γάρ (“for”) links God's condemnation of sin within sinful human beings (Rom 8:3) to the law of the Spirit of life in Christ (v. 2). This means that the condemnation of sin in the flesh is based on the law as defined through Christ. In verse 1, Paul states that “there is now no condemnation for those in Christ.” Inasmuch as a sinful human being is in Christ, Christ's fulfillment of both requirements of the law of God can apply to the believer. Through the participation in the law of God, embodied in Christ, the sinful believer may fulfill both requirements of the law, thereby becoming liberated from the law of sin and death. Thus, Christ, as a blameless sin offering saves sinful human beings from condemnation to the law of death by bringing about a circumstance in which the law of God no longer condemns sinful human beings to death.

⁷² For a detailed discussion on Christ as a *περὶ ἁμαρτίας*, see pages 100–5.

Redemption from the Curse of the Law (Gal 3:13)

In Gal 3:13, Paul points to the effect of Christ's death on the curse of the law. He states: Χριστὸς ἡμᾶς ἐξαγόρασεν ἐκ τῆς κατάρας τοῦ νόμου ("Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law"). The verb ἐξαγοράζω ("to redeem") is a Hellenistic term typically used in Greco-Roman literature for buying a slave's freedom (see Diodorus Siculus, *The Library of History*, 15.7.1; 36.2.2). The curse of the law is the enslaving entity, from which the believer experiences deliverance. Galatians 3:10 relates the curse of the law to the transgression of the law.⁷³ Christ's death enables ἡμᾶς ("us") who transgress the law to escape the curse of the law. In other words, the effect of Christ's death is that the condemnation of the law is no longer applicable to ἡμᾶς ("us").

Scholarship has debated the identification of the accusative object ἡμᾶς ("us").

The prevailing view takes a general perspective, arguing that the apostle has all believers

⁷³ In Galatians, Paul wrestles with the fact that the Galatians are turning away from the Gospel of Christ to a different gospel (1:6–9). In the autobiographical sketch in 1:10–2:21, Paul refers to a meeting with leaders in Jerusalem where false brethren used the Gentile Christians' freedom in Christ to enslave them again (2:4). The apostle records that the attempt of the false brethren remained unsuccessful (vv. 5–10). He recalls another event where "those of James" visited the believers in Antioch, creating an unnecessary rift between Jewish and Gentile Christians (vv. 11–14). These autobiographical descriptions imply that the believers who promoted a more Jewish-oriented lifestyle, cherishing the observance of particular regulations of the law of Moses, (such as food conventions and circumcision), forced the issue at hand. For a collection of articles that provides a helpful overview regarding the situation within the Galatian churches, see part three in Mark D. Nanos, *The Galatians Debate: Contemporary Issues in Rhetorical and Historical Interpretation* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2002), 319–433. Among the chapters, the most relevant are A. E. Harvey, "The Opposition to Paul," in *The Galatians Debate*, 321–33; Robert Jewett, "The Agitators and the Galatians Congregation," in *The Galatians Debate*, 334–47; J. Louis Martyn, "A Law-Observant Mission to Gentiles," in *The Galatians Debate*, 348–61; John M. G. Barclay, "Mirror-Reading a Polemical Letter: Galatians as a Test Case," in *The Galatians Debate*, 367–82.

in mind.⁷⁴ Others have argued that Paul exclusively refers to Jewish Christians.⁷⁵ Moo correctly concludes that the arguments on each view “are finely balanced.”⁷⁶ He argues:

Paul’s purpose is to warn the Gentile Christians in Galatia about depending on their doing of the law for their justification (v. 10). It, therefore, makes slightly better sense to think that Paul assures them in verse 13 that they have themselves been definitively rescued . . . from the curse that stands over all human beings by virtue of their failure to meet the demands of God, expressed in its clearest form in the law of Moses.⁷⁷

Since all human beings fail to meet the demands of God (vv. 10–12), the accusative object ἡμᾶς (“us”) is best understood rhetorically, as a reference to all believers.

According to Paul, Christ provided the redemption γενόμενος ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν κατάρα (“by becoming a curse on behalf of us”). The predicate nominative κατάρα (“curse”) is best understood metonymously in the sense of “being cursed.”⁷⁸ This understanding of “curse” finds support in the added quotation from Deut 21:23 ἐπικατάρατος πᾶς ὁ κρεμάμενος ἐπὶ ξύλου (“cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree”).⁷⁹ Initially, the hanging

⁷⁴ Bruce, *Galatians*, 166–67; Rohde, *Galater*, 145; Longenecker, *Galatians*, 121; Dunn, *Galatians*, 176–77; Martyn, *Galatians*, 334–36; Norman H. Young, “Pronominal Shifts in Paul’s Argument to the Galatians,” in *Early Christianity, Late Antiquity and Beyond*, vol. 2 of *Ancient History in a Modern University*, eds. T. W. Hillard, et al. (N.S.W. Australia: Ancient History Documentary Research Centre Macquarie University; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 205–15; A. Andrew Das, *Paul and the Jews*, LPS (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), 124; Das, *Paul and the Stories*, 42–51; Schreiner, *Galatians*, 215; Moo, *Galatians*, 211–13.

⁷⁵ Lightfoot, *Galatians*, 138–39; Burton, *Galatians*, 169, 176; Betz, *Galatians*, 148–49; Terence L. Donaldson, “Inclusion of the Gentiles,” 94–112; Matera, *Galatians*, 120; Hong, *Law*, 78–79.

⁷⁶ Moo, *Galatians*, 213.

⁷⁷ Moo, *Galatians*, 213.

⁷⁸ Burton argues that Paul commonly uses metonymy, e.g., in the case of περιτομή (“circumcision”) regarding circumcised ones and ἀκροβυστία (“uncircumcision”) regarding Gentiles (Gal 2:7, 9; Rom 2:26; 3:10; see also 1 Cor 1:30). See Burton, *Galatians*, 171; Oepke, *Galater*, 107.

⁷⁹ The quotation does not strictly follow the LXX version of Deut 21:23, which reads ὅτι κεκατηραμένος ὑπὸ θεοῦ πᾶς κρεμάμενος ἐπὶ ξύλου (“for cursed by God is everyone who is hanging on a tree”). Paul’s version in Gal 3:13 reads ἐπικατάρατος πᾶς ὁ κρεμάμενος ἐπὶ ξύλου (“cursed is everyone who is hanging on a tree”). Except for the definite article ὁ (“the”) in front of the participle, Paul’s version

on a tree followed one's execution and referred to the dead body of an executed person (v. 22). A corpse was exposed by hanging it on a tree as a punishment for sin, worthy of death. A person experiencing such punishment was considered cursed by God (v. 23).⁸⁰ Fitzmyer showed, based on 4QpNah 5–8 and 11QTemple 64.6–13, that in the pre-Christian era, Jews applied the expression of “hanging on a tree” to crucifixion.⁸¹ Paul's quotation clarifies that by dying on the cross, Christ bore the punishment for a sin worthy of death. Christ bore the curse vicariously. Harris states that, regarding the meaning of the prepositional phrase ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν (“for us”), Christ acted “in our place and for our benefit.”⁸² Similar to the Levitical sin offering, Christ as a blameless sin offering bore the curse of all transgressors of the law, thereby effecting atonement between the cursed ones and God (see Rom 5:15, 17, 20–21; 8:3; 2 Cor 5:21; Phil 2:8). Redemption from the curse of the law entails a bestowal of righteous status for the redeemed ones (see Isa 53:11). Thus, Christ, through his death on the cross, saves human beings from

follows the second part of the LXX version. Regarding the beginning of the quotation, Paul renders the participial clause κεκατηραμένος ὑπὸ θεοῦ (“for cursed by God”) in a shorter version using the adjective ἐπικατάρατος (“cursed”). This rendering does not change the meaning of the statement and may originate from a similar use of ἐπικατάρατος (“cursed”) in Deut 27:26.

⁸⁰ Peter C. Craigie observes that “the body was not accursed of God because it was hanging on a tree; it was hanging on the tree because it was accursed of God.” See Peter C. Craigie, *The Book of Deuteronomy*, 2nd ed., NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), 285. He further observes that an execution “was a formal and terminal separation from the community of God's people. Hence the use of this verse in Paul's Epistle to the Galatians is very forceful. Christ took upon himself the curse of the law, the penalty of death, thereby redeeming us from the curse of the law. . . . His separation from the family of God made possible our admission to the family of God, because the curse of the broken law—which would have permanently barred admission—had been removed.” See Craigie, *Deuteronomy*, 285–86.

⁸¹ Joseph A. Fitzmyer, “Crucifixion in Ancient Palestine, Qumran Literature, and the New Testament,” *CBQ* 40 (1978): 493–513. Das questions whether Jews considered a crucified person to be cursed by God. See Das *Galatians*, 325–27.

⁸² Harris, *Prepositions*, 214.

punishment for sin, worthy of death, by bringing about a circumstance that makes it possible to escape the curse—or condemnation—of the law of sin.⁸³

Redemption for Those “under the Law” (Gal 4:4–5)

In Gal 4:4–5, Paul presents redemption from the law in terms of adoption. These verses contain a significant terminological parallel to 3:13, and significant conceptual parallels to Rom 8:2–3. Regarding the terminological parallel to Gal 3:13, Paul uses the verb ἐξαγοράζω (“to redeem”) in both verses. This is the only place throughout the entire New Testament where the verb appears in reference to the law. Regarding the conceptual parallels to Rom 8:2–3, Paul identifies God as the mission’s initiator and his Son as the mission’s agent in both passages.⁸⁴ Also in both, the central element of Christ’s mission is his death, and again in both, Paul relates the purpose of the mission to the law. In verse 3, the mission’s purpose is to achieve what the law of sin and death was unable to achieve, namely the condemnation of sin within human beings. In Gal 4:4–5, the mission’s purpose is to redeem those under the law and to extend adoption to humanity.

At the set time, God sent his Son on a specific mission into the world.

Galatians 4:4 reads ὅτε δὲ ἦλθεν τὸ πλήρωμα τοῦ χρόνου, ἐξαπέστειλεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ (“when the fullness of time came, God sent off his son”). The temporal clause “when the fullness of time came” is embedded in the immediate context of the law’s role

⁸³ Das proposes that Gal 3:13 refers to Christ’s liberating effect on “humanity from the *enslaving power* of the Law’s curse.” See Das, *Galatians*, 328–30.

⁸⁴ There is a minor terminological difference regarding the verb “to send.” Paul used ἐξαποστέλλω in Gal 4:4 and πέμπω in Rom 8:3. Louw & Nida list them as synonyms. See “πέμπω; ἀποστέλλω; ἐξαποστέλλω,” *L&N* §15.67.

as a pedagogue and is part of the Greco-Roman imagery of the father. The father releases his son at a set time from guardians and managers (v. 2, see also 3:23–24).⁸⁵ The clause “God sent off his Son” (4:4) evidently refers to Christ (see 3:24).⁸⁶ Two similar participial clauses further qualify the Son. The first participial clause describes the Son as γενόμενον ἐκ γυναικός (“being born from a woman”) and functions as an indicator of Christ’s human nature (Job 14:1; 15:14; 25:4; Matt 11:11, see also 1QS 11.21).⁸⁷ Paul expresses the same concept in Rom 8:3, where he states that “God sent his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh” and Phil 2:7, where it reads that Christ “being born in the likeness of men.” The second participial clause in Gal 4:4 which reads γενόμενον ὑπὸ νόμον (“being born under the law”) indicates Christ’s submission to the law.

Paul further elaborates on Christ’s mission by adding two purpose clauses. Both begin with the subordinated conjunction ἵνα (“so that”). The first reads ἵνα τοὺς ὑπὸ νόμον ἐξαγοράσῃ (“so that he redeemed those under the law”), and the second reads ἵνα τὴν υἰοθεσίαν ἀπολάβωμεν (“so that we have received adoption”). These purpose clauses form a chiasmic structure with the two preceding participial clauses “being born from a woman” and “being born under the law.”⁸⁸ The structure clarifies that the first participial

⁸⁵ Betz, *Galatians*, 206; Rohde, *Galater*, 171; Dunn, *Galatians*, 213; Martyn, *Galatians*, 389; Schreiner, *Galatians*, 270; Moo, *Galatians*, 265; deSilva, *Galatians*, 353.

⁸⁶ The verb ἐξαποστέλλω means “to send [someone] off” to a mission in another place. See “ἐξαποστέλλω,” *BDAG* 345–46.

⁸⁷ Schlier, *Galater*, 196; Mussner, *Galaterbrief*, 269–70; Oepke, *Galater*, 132–33; Rohde, *Galater*, 171–72; Longenecker, *Galatians*, 171; Matera, *Galatians*, 150; Dunn, *Galatians*, 215; Martyn, *Galatians*, 390; Schreiner, *Galatians*, 270.

88	A	γενόμενον ἐκ γυναικός, (“being born from a woman”)	(v. 4)
	B	γενόμενον ὑπὸ νόμον,	(v. 4)

clause “being born from a woman” links to the second purpose clause “so that we have received adoption” and the second participial clause “being born under the law” relates to the first purpose clause “so that he redeemed those under the law.”⁸⁹ The structure reveals that Paul emphasizes redemption from the law.

Paul’s emphasis on redemption from the law requires a close look at the meaning of the prepositional phrase ὑπὸ νόμον (“under the law”). The prepositional phrase appears eleven times in Paul’s letters (Rom 6:14–15; 1 Cor 9:20; Gal 3:23; 4:4–5, 21; 5:18). In all other instances, the phrase refers to the obligation to fulfill the requirements of the law.⁹⁰ Applied to Christ in 4:4, the phrase means that Christ was obligated to fulfill the requirements of the law. As discussed in the previous subsection, Rom 5:12–20; 8:3; 2 Cor 5:21; and Phil 2:7 indicated that Christ fulfilled the requirements of the law. Applied to sinful human beings, the prepositional phrase “under the law” also means that they are obliged to fulfill the requirements of the law. However, the inability of sinful

		(“being born under the law”)	
	B'	ἵνα τοὺς ὑπὸ νόμον ἐξαγοράσῃ, (“so that he redeemed those under the law”)	(v. 5)
	A'	ἵνα τὴν υἰοθεσίαν ἀπολάβωμεν. (“so that we have received adoption”).	(v. 5)

See Betz, *Galatians*, 208; Longenecker, *Galatians*, 170; Dunn, *Galatians*, 214; Moo, *Galatians*, 266–67.

⁸⁹ Matera, *Galatians*, 150. Others read the second ἵνα-clause as dependent upon the first ἵνα-clause. See Schlier, *Galater*, 197; Rohde, *Galater*, 172.

⁹⁰ Some commentators have argued that the phrase ὑπὸ νόμον (“under the law”) in Gal 4:4–5 is a reference to Jewish identity. See Mussner, *Galaterbrief*, 270; Rohde, *Galater*, 172; Matera, *Galatians*, 150; Longenecker, *Galatians*, 171; Dunn, *Galatians*, 216. However, 1 Cor 9:20 shows that an ethnic reading of the phrase is not convincing. Martyn suggests that the prepositional phrase indicates Christ’s acceptance of sinfulness. See Martyn, *Galatians*, 390. See also Burton, *Galatians*, 219–20; Schlier, *Galater*, 197; Bruce, *Galatians*, 197. The discussion reveals, however, that this reading of the phrase is not conclusive either.

human beings to attain a righteous status through the law places them under the curse of the law. For this reason, all who are under the law need redemption.

Regarding the second purpose of Christ's mission, Christ's qualification of "being born from a woman" refers to his human nature in general. One can, therefore, conclude that the "we" in the purpose clause also relates to believers in general, Jews included.⁹¹ Thus, Christ's mission was to provide adoption to believers as God's children and, therefore, also provide them the right of inheritance (see Gal 3:26, 29; 4:6–7). In the Roman empire, adoption could take place in various forms. Besides transferring the child from one father to a new father, adoption could also provide a freedman the status of a son, under a new father.⁹² The adoption of a freedman provided the adoptee with the full rights of a son within the family, but not with the full rights of a freeborn in society.⁹³ In Gal 4:4–5, Paul's interest lies in how human beings can become heirs of God. Therefore, Paul's focus is more inner-familial than social in a more general sense. Paul most likely has the adoption of freedmen in mind when he explores the concept of Christ providing adoption to believers, since, in the immediate context, Paul refers (v. 3) to enslavement to τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου ("the principles of the world"). Bo Reicke observes that "στοιχείον and κόσμος are theological concepts and are connected with the fallen world,

⁹¹ Betz, *Galatians*, 208; Matera, *Galatians*, 150; Dunn, *Galatians*, 217. Alternatively, James M. Scott has argued for reading Gal 4:1–7 against a Jewish background referring to Israel's time of slavery in Egypt. See James M. Scott, *Adoption as Sons of God: An Exegetical Investigation into the Background of ΥΙΟΘΕΣΙΑ in the Pauline Corpus*, WUNT 2/48 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1992). For a rejection of Scott's Thesis, see Das, *Galatians*, 427–38. Das concludes that "the best reading of Gal. 4.2–7 takes the first-person pronouns as referring at least primarily to the gentiles." See Das, *Paul and the Stories*, 41.

⁹² Jane F. Gardner, "The Adoption of Roman Freedmen," *Phoenix* 43 (1989): 236–57.

⁹³ Gardner, "Adoption," 238.

the flesh, and corruptibility.”⁹⁴ Reicke’s interpretation shows that although Paul does not use the term sin in Galatians to describe humanity’s master (see 3:22, Rom 6), the phrase “the principles of the world” conveys the same idea. Paul’s use of adoption language in this particular context indicates that, upon coming as a sin offering, God provided adoption to all of humanity, delivering them from their enslavement to sin.

The provided adoption also influences the legal situation of the adopted ones. As previously discussed, after Adam and Eve’s disobedience, the law of God became a law of sin.⁹⁵ Paul understands the line of Adam, which is the line of natural humanity, as enslaved to sin (vv. 15–23). In contrast, Christ, although a human being, was also the Son of God, which placed him outside of Adam’s line. In other words, Christ as a human being was never subjugated to the rule of sin. It is through God’s Son becoming a human being that God could provide adoption to humanity by entrance into the line of Christ.

The adoptee becomes a child of God and is no longer in Adam’s line, enslaved to sin, but

⁹⁴ Bo Reicke, “The Law and This World According to Paul: Some Thoughts concerning Gal 4:1–11,” *JBL* 70 (1951): 259–76. For an extensive discussion on lexical meaning of στοιχεῖον and κόσμος, see Burton, *Galatians*, 510–18. Burton lists four alternative readings for the phrase τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου (“the principles of the world”). First, the phrase τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου (“the principles of the world”) refers to “the physical elements of the universe” (see Wis 7:17). Second, the phrase τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου (“the principles of the world”) refers to “the heavenly bodies.” Third, the phrase τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου (“the principles of the world”) refers to “angels or demons in general.” Fourth, the phrase τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου (“the principles of the world”) refers to “the elements of religious knowledge, possessed by men: a description applicable both to the Gentile religion of the Galatians and to Judaism before Christ.” See Burton, *Galatians*, 515. Das observes that scholarship generally favors options three and four. See Das, *Galatians*, 439. Betz for example favors reading τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου (“the principles of the world”) as a reference to angels or demons. See Betz, *Galatians*, 213–15. Longenecker points out that literature until mid-third to fourth century CE lacks use of στοιχεῖα in reference to angels and demons. See Longenecker, *Galatians*, 165. Longenecker further suggests that the understanding of Paul’s expression of τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου (“the principles of the world”) might be altered, depending on the immediate context. For Gal 4:3 Longenecker states: “Thus when talking about the Jewish experience, it was the law in its condemnatory and supervisory functions that comprised the Jews’ ‘basic principles’ of religion. Later in v. 9 when talking about the Gentile experience, it was paganism with its veneration of nature and cultic rituals that made up the Gentiles’ ‘basic principles’ of religion.” See Longenecker, *Galatians*, 166.

⁹⁵ For further details, see pages 197–201.

in Christ's line, freed from the rule of sin. Because the adoptee is no longer under the rule of sin, the law of God no longer condemns the adoptee to death. As previously argued, the believer would only be condemned to death if he or she abandons Christ as master, meaning that the believer no longer seeks atonement from Christ.⁹⁶ In this case, the believer is re-enslaved to sin and, thus, under the rule of sin again. Therefore, Christ saves sinful human beings by redeeming them from the enslavement of sin and by providing adoption, so that the adoptee is no longer condemned to death by the law of sin.

Summary

The analysis revealed that Christ acts as savior for the law and for human beings similar to how Greco-Roman positive law and the citizens governed by it required a savior. First, Christ saved the law of God from the potential accusation of being unjust because it turns into a law of sin that condemns humanity to death. I surveyed four passages (Rom 5:12–20; 8:3; 2 Cor 5:21; Phil 2:8) where Paul implicitly and explicitly testifies that Christ kept the law of God. Christ saved the law of God by keeping the entire law, thereby proving it righteous.

Second, Christ saves sinful human beings from condemnation to death through the law of sin by bringing about a circumstance in which God can liberate humanity from condemnation. I exegetically examined three passages (Rom 8:1–4; Gal 3:13; 4:4–5) to determine how Christ's death brought about a circumstance in which the law of sin would no longer condemn sinful human beings to death.

⁹⁶ See page 135, see also pages 241–45.

The exegetical analysis of Rom 8:1–4 revealed that Paul terminologically distinguishes between the law of God when embodied in sinful human beings, which he labels as the law of sin and death, and the law of God in Christ, which he labels as the law of the Spirit of life in Christ. The discussion revealed that the law of the Spirit of life in Christ liberates the believer in Christ from the condemnation that comes from the law of sin and death. God was able to condemn the sin within human beings based on Christ's fulfillment of both requirements of the law of God, in his role as sin offering. There is now no condemnation to death through the law of God for sinful human beings who are within the realm of Christ.

The exegetical analysis of Gal 3:13 revealed that, through his death on the cross, Christ bore the curse of the law vicariously for those who are under the curse of the law. Christ, by means of his death, redeemed the believer from the curse and, thus, from the condemnation of the law.

The exegetical analysis of 4:4–5 revealed that God's redemption from the law supports the notion of adoption. The chiasmic structure revealed that Paul emphasizes redemption from those under the law. Paul describes Christ as being born under the law, which refers to the obligation to fulfill the requirements of the law. Whereas Christ fulfilled the requirements of the law because he was never subjugated under the rule of sin, sinful human beings under the law fall under the curse of the law and are therefore in need of a redeemer. Paul also describes Christ as born from a woman, which refers to his human nature. At the same time, Christ was also the Son of God, which placed him outside of Adam's line. Christ was never subjugated to the rule of sin. Through Christ becoming a human being while also God's Son, God provided the possibility of adoption

to humanity. The adoptee becomes a child of God by entering Christ's line, which frees him or her from the rulership of sin. Because the adoptee is no longer under the rulership of sin, the law of God no longer condemns the adoptee to death, unless one willingly chooses to return to Adam's line by the cognitive abandonment of Christ as master.

The Believer and the Law

The righteous status of the believer before the law of God raises the question of the believer's relationship to the law of sin. I subsequently address whether the law of sin condemns the believer to death for acting sinfully. To answer this question, I first discuss how the change of rulership from being under the rule of sin to being under the rule of God affects the believer's identity, based on an exegetical analysis of Rom 7:13–25. Second, I address the question of whether sin remains in a position of rulership within the believer's life, based on an exegetical analysis of 8:5–13. This will shed further light on the believer's death to the law (Rom 7:4; Gal 2:19).

The Effect of the Rule of God on the Believer (Rom 7:13–25)

In Rom 7:7–12, Paul clarifies the relationship between sin and the law of God, concluding that sin, and not the law, is responsible for causing death. In 7:13–25,⁹⁷ Paul shifts the focus regarding the relation of the "I [believer]" to the law of God. I address whether the change in rulership over the believer eliminates sin, and the law of sin, from the believer's life.

⁹⁷ Wolter has convincingly argued that verse 12 concludes the thought of verses 7–12. Verse 13 structurally matches verse 7 by asking a rhetorical question, followed by the emphatic negation *μὴ γένοιτο* ("never ever!"). This emphasis by Paul typically serves as the introduction of a new thought. See Wolter, *Römer*, 1:425; Cranfield, *Romans*, 1:354.

The Sinful Human Nature of the Believer (Rom 7:14)

In Rom 7:14, Paul lays the framework for how the believer relates to the law of God. He states that ὁ νόμος πνευματικός ἐστίν, ἐγὼ δὲ σάρκινός εἰμι πεπραμένος ὑπὸ τὴν ἁμαρτίαν (“the law is spiritual, but I am fleshly, having been sold under sin”).⁹⁸

Scholarship has debated extensively regarding the content of verses 13–25, with continuous disagreement about who is referred to when Paul says “I” in verses 13–25. Moo has observed that for every proposal made, a valid critique exists. Therefore, he correctly argues that “the best interpretation is the one that can fit the most pieces together in the most natural way” and further, “the best interpretation will be the one that can do the most justice to all the data of the text within the immediate and larger Pauline context.”⁹⁹

According to supporters of the non-Christian reading of the “I,” the major argument against it being a reference to the believer is in verse 14, where Paul describes the “I” as “fleshly” and as “having being sold under sin.” The participial clause πεπραμένος ὑπὸ τὴν ἁμαρτίαν (“having been sold under sin”) has the connotation of selling someone into slavery (Matt 18:25; see also Gen 31:15; Exod 22:2; Lev 25:39, 42, 47–48; Deut 15:12; 21:14; 28:68; etc.).¹⁰⁰ The preposition ὑπὸ followed by the accusative τὴν ἁμαρτίαν (“under sin”) indicates subordination and clarifies that the “I” has been sold

⁹⁸ The verb οἶδαμεν (“we know”) normally indicates that whatever follows is considered common knowledge. BDAG states “the formula οἶδαμεν ὅτι is frequently used to introduce a well-known fact that is generally accepted.” See “οἶδα,” *BDAG* 693–94.

⁹⁹ Moo, *Romans*, 469.

¹⁰⁰ “πιπράσκω,” *BDAG* 813–14.

as a slave to sin. Supporters of the non-Christian reading of the “I” consider it impossible for the “I [Christian]” to be re-enslaved to sin after being released from the rulership and law of sin (6:1–7:6).¹⁰¹

However, most interpreters do not address the importance of the perfect tense of the participle πεπραμένος (“having been sold”) in 7:14, which indicates antecedence or causality in relation to the finite verb σάρκινός εἰμι (“I am fleshly”) in verse 14.¹⁰² Being fleshly is a consequence of having been previously sold to sin. In other words, the person referred to as “I” continues to be fleshly, but that does not necessarily entail the continuous status of being enslaved to sin.¹⁰³ Some commentators argue that verses 13–25 refer to a person who had recently become a believer.¹⁰⁴ However, I previously argued that Adam’s transgression resulted in humanity’s embodiment of sin. Therefore, humanity acquired a sinful nature, which turned the embodied law of God into the law of sin.¹⁰⁵ If this assumption is accepted, it is more likely that the believer’s ongoing condition of being “fleshly” refers to the believer’s sinful nature, due to having been previously sold under sin. Therefore, I would conclude that although the “I” in verses 13–

¹⁰¹ Kümmel, *Römer* 7, 98, 104–11; Das, *Romans Debate*, 204–14; Wolter, *Römer*, 1:465; Moo, *Romans*, 469.

¹⁰² Wallace, *Grammar*, 614, 626. Wallace lists the perfect participle in Rom 7:14 as periphrastic, due to the preceding εἰμι (“I am”). See Wallace, *Grammar*, 648. This is not likely the case since the εἰμι completes the parallelism with the preceding clause.

¹⁰³ Nygren suggests understanding the fleshly nature of the “I [believer]” in the sense of ἐν σαρκί (“in flesh”) in Gal 2:20. See Nygren, *Romans*, 299. Based on ignoring the importance of the perfect tense in 7:14 and seeing sin as a ruling power throughout Romans 5–8, Das sees the “I” as a non-Christian under the ongoing power of sin and the law. See Das, *Romans Debate*, 214.

¹⁰⁴ Moo points out that this view is “better represented in popular than in scholarly literature.” See Moo, *Romans*, 471.

¹⁰⁵ See page 200.

25 is autobiographically referring to Paul as a believer in Christ, it is best understood rhetorically as a reference to all believers in Christ who have experienced spiritual death to sin (6:2) and the law (7:4), but retain the sinful human nature.¹⁰⁶

The Exoneration of the Believer for Sinful Action (Rom 7:15–20)

In Rom 7:15–20, Paul presents the believer as having conflicting desires, namely the desires of the Spirit and the desires of the flesh. The conflicting desires cause a divergence between the believer’s will and his or her action.¹⁰⁷ Paul puts the responsibility for the believer’s sinful acting on the ongoing indwelling of sin in the believer’s flesh. In verse 17, Paul clarifies that οὐκέτι ἐγὼ κατεργάζομαι αὐτὸ ἀλλὰ ἡ οἰκοῦσα ἐν ἐμοὶ ἁμαρτία (“no longer I do this but sin which indwells in me”). A string of three explanatory statements (vv. 18–19), each starting with the conjunction γάρ (“for”), verify the indwelling of sin in the believer.

In the first explanation (v. 18), Paul argues that nothing good lives ἐν ἐμοί (“in me”). He immediately qualifies the prepositional phrase ἐν ἐμοί as limited to ἐν τῇ σαρκί μου (“in my flesh”). Cranfield notices that σὰρξ does not refer to “the ‘lower self’ as a ‘part of the man’ contrasted with another part of his nature but the whole fallen human nature as such.”¹⁰⁸ Although Cranfield’s observation is correct, in verses 13–25, σὰρξ also takes on a bodily connotation due to Paul’s location of the law of sin within the

¹⁰⁶ The shift from Paul’s autobiographical statements in relation to Adam (7:7–12), to Paul’s autobiographical statements in relation to the believers in Christ (vv. 13–25), finds support in the temporal shift from the past tenses in verses 7–13, to the present tenses in verses 14–25.

¹⁰⁷ Nygren, *Romans*, 293–303.

¹⁰⁸ Cranfield, *Romans*, 1:361.

believer's bodily parts (see vv. 23–24). The second and third explanations further elaborate on the divergence of the believer's will and action. The second explanation in verse 18 reads τὸ γὰρ θέλειν παράκειται μοι, τὸ δὲ κατεργάζεσθαι τὸ καλὸν οὐ (“for the will is present in me but not the doing of the good”). The third explanation in verse 19 reads οὐ γὰρ ὃ θέλω ποιῶ ἀγαθόν, ἀλλ’ ὃ οὐ θέλω κακὸν τοῦτο πράσσω (“for I do not do the good that I want but the evil I do not want this I do”).

In verse 20, Paul concludes his argument by repeating a part of verse 16, reading εἰ δὲ ὃ οὐ θέλω τοῦτο ποιῶ (“but if I do what I do not want”), and verse 17 that οὐκέτι ἐγὼ κατεργάζομαι αὐτὸ ἀλλὰ ἡ οἰκοῦσα ἐν ἐμοὶ ἁμαρτία (“no longer I do this but sin which indwells in me”). Paul argues that the divergence between the will of the “I” and the action of the “I” proves the ongoing indwelling of sin within the believer's body. Additionally, Paul points out that sin is responsible for the sinful actions of the believer. In other words, after Paul exonerated the law of God from being responsible for death (vv. 7–12), he now exonerates the “I” from being responsible for sinful acting (vv. 17–20).¹⁰⁹ In both cases, Paul sees that the responsibility lies within sin. The exoneration of the “I” regarding sinful actions should not be understood as an excuse or a free pass for sinful acting (6:1–2, 15). Rather, Paul is simply pointing to sin's continuous indwelling in the flesh and the consequent inability of the believer to fulfill the law by his or her own efforts.¹¹⁰ Thus, the believer retains a sinful nature, along with the tendency to sin,

¹⁰⁹ The exoneration of the “I” regarding sinful actions should not be understood as an excuse, but rather an emphasis on sin's continuous presence in the flesh, and the consequent inability of the “I” to avoid sinful actions. See Cranfield, *Romans*, 1:360; Wolter, *Römer*, 1:442.

¹¹⁰ I will address the question regarding the believer's sanctification on pages 241–45.

despite being under the rule of God. The question is, what happens to the believer's relationship to the law of God when he or she sins after being justified by faith in Christ?

Even though the possibility exists for the believer to act sinfully, there is, as far as the believer's legal status is concerned, no condemnation to death through the law of sin for any sins that may have been committed. The believer is liberated from the condemnation to death through the law of sin because he or she is no longer subjugated under that law. This means that the believer is not required to fulfill the demands of the law of God by his or her own efforts. The believer is under the rulership of God and, therefore, subjugated under grace (v. 14). Being subjugated under grace means that the believer fulfills the law through the indwelling of Christ (8:1), despite sinful acting. Christ fulfilled both requirements of the law. He kept the entire law and vicariously died for our transgression of the law. As previously argued, the only way for the believer to return under condemnation to death through the law of God is by the cognitive abandonment of Christ as master, no longer seeking atonement from him.¹¹¹ It is the ongoing presence of sin and the law of sin which urge the believer to seek atonement with God through Christ. Thus, the believer who commits a sinful action remains legally righteous as long as he or she remains in Christ.

The Condemnation of the Believer's Body (Rom 7:21–25)

After identifying the responsibility of sin for both the death (7:7–12) and ongoing sinful action of the "I [believer]" (vv. 13–20), Paul then focuses on how the believer with the

¹¹¹ See page 135. See also pages 241–45.

ongoing indwelling of sin might experience the law of God (vv. 21–25). Paul divides the “I” into two parts: in the first, ὁ ἔσω ἄνθρωπος (“the inner human being”) in verse 22 and the νοῦς (“mind”) in verses 23 and 25, and secondly, μέλος (“bodily members”) in verse 23 and σάρξ (“flesh”) in verse 25.¹¹² According to Paul, the mind and bodily members represent the different aspects of relationship between the “I” and the law. He portrays the mind as having a closer relationship with the law of God and the bodily members as having a closer relationship with the law of sin.¹¹³

In verse 22, Paul clarifies that the inner human being, or the mind of the “I” delights in the law of God. In verse 23, Paul again qualifies the law of God as ὁ νόμος τοῦ νοῦς (“the law of the mind”). Later in verse 25, Paul continues to state that νοῦς δουλεύω νόμῳ θεοῦ (“I am serving the law of God with the mind”). However, in the bodily members or flesh of the “I,” Paul locates the law of sin. In verse 23, Paul points out that ὁ νόμος τῆς ἁμαρτίας (“the law of sin”) is the one that τῷ ὄντι ἐν τοῖς μέλεσίν μου (“is in my bodily members,” see also 6:12–14). In 7:25, he adds Ἄρα οὖν αὐτὸς ἐγὼ . . . δουλεύω . . . τῇ δὲ σαρκὶ νόμῳ ἁμαρτίας (“therefore now I myself serve . . . on the other hand with the flesh the law of sin”).

Paul’s elaborations in verses 21–25 suggest that the believer experiences two consequences of the law, even within his or her own body. While the inner human being, or the mind, delights in the law of God, which implies compliance with the law of God, the bodily members, or the flesh, serve the law of sin, which implies a condemnation

¹¹² Dunn speaks of a divided “I.” See Dunn, *Theology*, 472–77.

¹¹³ Dunn also speaks of the divided law, see Dunn, *Theology*, 473.

related to the bodily members or the flesh of the believer (see v. 24). Considering these things, the question then becomes, how can a believer who has spiritually died to sin and, thus, experienced liberation from the rule of sin still experiences its presence in his or her flesh? (v. 23).

As previously argued, the law of sin is a consequence of the embodiment of sin, which turns the law of God into the law of sin.¹¹⁴ Therefore, the law of sin becomes part of human ontology. The continuing association of the law of sin with the believer's bodily members and flesh is possible because the liberation that they have experienced is spiritual, not physical. As previously discussed, the spiritual nature of the death to sin ends the rulership of sin over the believer but does not deem the law of sin nonexistent.¹¹⁵ Consequently, Paul associates the believer's body with flesh and death.¹¹⁶ The believer continues to embody sin, which means that the believer's body is still condemned to death and subjugated to the rulership of the law of sin, and therefore, the rulership of death. The believer's spiritual death to sin has no liberating effect on the believer's body until the parousia. The believer will experience deliverance from the indwelling of sin and rulership of death at the parousia, in the form of a physical transformation or resurrection (see 1 Cor 15:51–57).

This condition of the “I” leads to the acknowledgment in Rom 7:24 of what *ταλαίπωρος ἐγὼ ἄνθρωπος* (“a wretched human being I [am]”), asking *τίς με ρύσεται ἐκ*

¹¹⁴ See the “Definition of Law of Sin” on page 200.

¹¹⁵ See page 135.

¹¹⁶ See Dunn, *Romans*, 1:391.

τοῦ σώματος τοῦ θανάτου τούτου (“who will deliver me from this body of death?”).¹¹⁷ Wolter argues that Paul’s expression of “the body of death” (v. 24) corresponds with the expression of “the body of sin” (6:6).¹¹⁸ As the previous discussion revealed, the expression “body of sin” relates to the rule of sin.¹¹⁹ Similarly, the expression “body of death” in this context relates to the rule of death, which manifests itself in the continuous mortality of the body of the believer (v. 12; 8:10–11). The mortality and the indwelling of sin in the believer’s body—indicators of sinful human nature—will remain until the physical renewal at the parousia. The added statement of gratitude within the reading, “thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord” indicates that the autobiographical “I” trusts Christ regarding the ultimate future deliverance of humans’ mortal bodies (see also 6:4–5; 8:10–11). Thus, as long as sin is indwelling in the believer, the believer’s flesh continues to serve the law of sin (7:25). This means that the believer’s body is subjugated under the law of sin and therefore condemned to death. However, because the Spirit of God and Christ also dwell within the believer, the believer will experience a bodily resurrection similar to that of Christ at the parousia (8:9–11).

¹¹⁷ Scholars have argued whether to translate τοῦ σώματος τοῦ θανάτου τούτου as “the body of this death.” See Kümmel, *Römer* 7, 63–64; Thielman, *Romans*, 363–64. Others suggest the translation “this body of death.” See Cranfield, *Romans*, 1:366–67; Barrett, *Romans*, 141; Jewett, *Romans*, 472; Moo, *Romans*, 489n862. Grammatically, both are possible, but the immediate context supports the reading of “this body of death.” Moo argues that “Paul has referred in the context both to ‘death’ (vv. 10, 11, 13) and to words describing the body (‘flesh’ in v. 18; ‘members’ in v. 23). Since, however, the references to the body occur in the immediate context, τούτου is probably better attached to σώματος.” See Moo, *Romans*, 489n862.

¹¹⁸ Wolter, *Römer*, 1:462.

¹¹⁹ See pages 131–36.

The Mindset as a Decisive Factor regarding Rulership
(Rom 8:5–13)

The discussion on Rom 8:5–13 further clarifies the condition of the believer regarding the rule of sin and the rule of God, by comparing the lifestyle *κατὰ σάρκα* (“according to the flesh”) with the one *κατὰ πνεῦμα* (“according to the Spirit”).¹²⁰ As the following discussion will show, a person’s mindset is the most decisive factor in determining whether he or she is ruled by sin or by God.

In verse 5, Paul defines those who are according to the flesh as the ones who *τὰ τῆς σαρκὸς φρονοῦσιν* (“set their mind on fleshly things”). In verse 6, he equates the fleshly *φρόνημα* (“mindset”) with death, which entails condemnation through the law of sin.¹²¹ In verse 7, Paul points out that *τὸ φρόνημα τῆς σαρκὸς ἔχθρα εἰς θεόν, τῷ γὰρ νόμῳ τοῦ θεοῦ οὐχ ὑποτάσσεται* (“the fleshly mindset is in enmity with God, unable to submit to the law of God”). Verse 8 clarifies that those who have a fleshly mindset *θεῷ ἀρέσαι οὐ δύναντα* (“cannot please God”). Therefore, a fleshly mindset entails subjugation to the rule of sin.

¹²⁰ Thielman refers to it as “two different patterns of daily living.” He also points out that “the preposition translated ‘according to’ (*κατά*) in 8:4–5 introduces the ‘norm which governs something.’” See Thielman, *Romans*, 382.

¹²¹ The term *φρόνημα* refers to “the faculty of fixing one’s mind on something.” See “*φρόνημα*,” *BDAG* 1066. Additionally, the instance in Rom 8 *φρόνημα* only appears in 2 Macc 7:21 and 13:9, where the term refers to the reasoning or thinking of a person. In comparison to the rarity of *φρόνημα* (“mind”) in the Greek Bible and the Pseudepigrapha, Philo uses the term *φρόνημα* (“mind”) forty-seven times and Josephus eighty-two times. The synonym *φρόνησις* (“mind”) only appears in Luke 1:17 and Eph 1:8, and about fifty-eight times in the LXX, where it is primarily used in reference to one’s wisdom or intelligence, see *BDAG* 1066. The verb *φρονέω* (“to set one’s mind on”) appears in Matt 16:23; Mark 8:33; Acts 28:22; Rom 8:5; 11:20; 12:3, 16; 14:6; 15:5; 1 Cor 13:11; 2 Cor 13:11; Gal 5:10; Phil 1:7; 2:2, 5; 3:15, 19; 4:2, 10; Col 3:2. The distribution of the term indicates that it is predominantly used by Paul in reference to the united mindset among believers (Rom 12:16; 15:5; 2 Cor 13:11; Phil 2:2, 5; 3:15; 4:2), but also to the setting of one’s mind explicitly on spiritual things versus fleshly things (Matt 16:23; Mark 8:33; Rom 8:3; Phil 2:5; 3:19; 4:2; Col 3:2).

By contrast, a spiritual mindset leads to a spiritual lifestyle. Paul argues in verse 5 that those who live according to the Spirit set their minds τὰ τοῦ πνεύματος (“on spiritual things”). In verse 6, Paul equates the spiritual mindset with life and peace, which entails a righteous status through the law of God. The spiritual lifestyle relates to the divine indwelling in the believer (vv. 8–11, see also v. 2),¹²² a crucial factor in becoming spiritual. The necessity of the divine indwelling becomes evident in Paul’s use of two conditional clauses in verse 9. The first reads, you are ἐν πνεύματι εἴπερ πνεῦμα θεοῦ οἰκεῖ ἐν ὑμῖν (“in the Spirit, if God’s Spirit dwells in you”). The second reads εἰ δέ τις πνεῦμα Χριστοῦ οὐκ ἔχει, οὗτος οὐκ ἔστιν αὐτοῦ (“but if someone has not the Spirit of Christ, he is not his”). Therefore, a spiritual mindset entails subjugation to the rule of God, which is manifested by a divine indwelling.

The divine indwelling causes no bodily renewal in the short term, but guarantees a future bodily resurrection or transformation of the believer at the parousia. In verse 10, Paul argues in the form of a μέν . . . δέ (“on the one hand . . . on the other hand”) construction that if Christ dwells in a person, τὸ μὲν σῶμα νεκρὸν διὰ ἁμαρτίαν (“on the one hand, the body is dead because of sin”) whereas τὸ δὲ πνεῦμα ζῶν διὰ δικαιοσύνην (“on the other hand, the spirit is alive because of righteousness”). This statement indicates that spiritual renewal does not lead to the immediate removal of the believer’s sinful nature, which finds expression in the ongoing mortality of the believer. However,

¹²² Jewett argues against the individualistic reading, pointing out that the prepositional phrase ἐν ὑμῖν should be translated as “among you” in reference to the congregation. This would emphasize that the Spirit dwells among the believing congregation, rather than solely in the individual believer. See Jewett, *Romans*, 489–90. Das emphasizes a similar point in Galatians on the topic of flesh versus spirit. See Das, *Galatians*, 591–94. I disagree with the suggested congregational reading because of the juxtaposition of sin and flesh with the Spirit, which renders in my view an individualistic reading more likely. See Murray, *Romans*, 1:228; Cranfield, *Romans*, 1:388; Wilckens, *Römer*, 2:131; Wolter, *Römer*, 1:486.

in verse 11, Paul clarifies that the indwelling of God's Spirit guarantees a future bodily renewal at the parousia, following the example of Christ's resurrection.¹²³

The described discrepancy in 7:25 between a spiritually renewed mindset and the unrenewed, fleshly body may lead to the conclusion that Paul adopted a Hellenistic viewpoint with a superior soul and an inferior body. Paul does not actually embrace a Greco-Roman view of dualistic anthropology.¹²⁴ However, similar to the Greco-Roman view that the soul rules over the body, Paul prioritizes the mind over the body by presenting the mind as a decisive factor regarding dominion over the entire human being. The entity which the mind chooses is what ends up ruling over the whole person. In other words, if the mind delights in the law of God, then God rules over the human being, despite the presence of sin (and the law of sin) in the person's body (8:10–11). However, if the mind delights in the law of sin, sin rules over the human being. Thus, if the believer has accepted Christ as Savior, the embodiment of sin and the law of sin in the believer's body do not necessarily entail further subjugation to the rule of sin.

A sharp contrast to the Greco-Roman dualistic anthropology becomes evident in Paul's concept of the body as a divine dwelling place. In 1 Cor 6:19, for example, Paul identifies the believer's body as the temple of the Holy Spirit. Dunn observes that in contrast to Hellenistic anthropology, where *σῶμα* and *σάρξ* were "nearly as equivalents, . . . Paul . . . made a much clearer distinction between the two words. In simple terms, the spectrum of meaning for *sōma* is for the most part morally neutral,

¹²³ This is indicated by the future tense of ζῳοποιήσει ("he will make alive"). See similarly, Cranfield, *Romans*, 1:391; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 491; Wolter, *Römer*, 1:490.

¹²⁴ Bultmann, *Theology*, 1:192–203.

whereas the spectrum of meaning for *sarx* is, for the most part morally negative.”¹²⁵ He further argues that “σῶμα [body] can cross the boundary of the ages, whereas σάρξ [flesh] belongs firmly to this present age (cf. 1 Cor 15:44–50; 2 Cor 4:7–5:5).”¹²⁶ The divine indwelling in the believer’s σῶμα (“body”), despite the sinfulness of the believer’s σάρξ (“flesh”), is possible due to σῶμα’s ability to cross the boundary of the ages.

Although Paul locates sin in the bodily members of the believer (Rom 7:23), he also emphasizes the necessity for purity in the believer’s body. In 6:12–14, Paul warns believers not to re-enslave their bodily members to sin. In 8:13, Paul states εἰ δὲ πνεύματι τὰς πράξεις τοῦ σώματος θανατοῦτε, ζήσεσθε (“but if by the Spirit you put the works of the body to death, you shall live”). Wallace identifies πνεύματι (“by the Spirit”) as a dative of means.¹²⁷ Thus, Paul clarifies that the indwelling Spirit is how the believer can successfully put the deeds of the body to death. Finally, in 12:1, Paul explicitly appeals to the believer παραστήσαι τὰ σώματα ὑμῶν θυσίαν ζῶσαν ἁγίαν εὐάρεστον τῷ θεῷ (“to present their bodies as a living, holy, and God-pleasing sacrifice to God”). Thus, according to Paul, the mind of the believer becomes spiritual after its death to sin (6:2) and the law (7:4; Gal 2:19). While this spiritual death to sin provides deliverance from sin’s rule, it does not render sin or the law of sin nonexistent. Paul locates the presence of sin and the law of sin in the believer’s body, which causes the physical death of the believer. Paul also emphasizes that the believer’s body is a place of divine indwelling, which guarantees physical resurrection at the parousia. Paul’s remarks on the body

¹²⁵ Dunn, *Theology*, 71.

¹²⁶ Dunn, *Romans*, 1:391.

¹²⁷ Wallace, *Grammar*, 166n77. See also Cranfield, *Romans*, 1:394.

indicate that the believer is constrained to act in a way that bears witness to the divine indwelling in the believer's body. For this reason, Paul's concept is more in line with the Hebrew Bible concept, which promotes the embodiment of the law of God in the heart and body.¹²⁸

Summary

This discussion revealed that the believer still embodies sin and the law of sin, despite being liberated from the rule of sin. In the first step, I examined the effect of the rule of God on the believer's relationship to the law of sin, based on an exegetical analysis of Rom 7:13–25. I concluded that, although the "I" in verses 13–25 is autobiographical to Paul, it is best understood rhetorically as a reference to all believers in Christ. A syntactical analysis of verse 14 showed that the believer retains his or her sinful nature, despite being under the rule of God. The ongoing fleshly nature of the "I" is the consequence of having been previously sold to sin. The analysis of verses 15–20 revealed that the believer still commits sinful actions due to the indwelling of sin, which results in divergence between the believer's will and actions. Since the believer is under the rule of God, and therefore under grace, Paul places the responsibility for the believer's sinful action on the indwelling sin. The analysis of verses 21–25 revealed that Paul presents the "I" as being divided into two parts, associating each part with a different consequence of the law. Whereas the inner human being, or the mind, is associated with the law of God; the bodily members, or the flesh, are associated with the law of sin. Paul argues that the law of sin remains present in the believer's body until the

¹²⁸ See pages 61–68.

physical transformation or resurrection at the parousia. Thus, the rule of God over the believer does not eliminate sin or the law of sin from the believer's body. Therefore, the believer's body remains condemned to death until the parousia, due to its embodiment of sin.

In the second step, I addressed whether sin maintains rulership in a believer's life, even after spiritual death to sin. The exegetical analysis of the two opposing lifestyles in 8:5–13 revealed that the fleshly lifestyle results from a fleshly mindset, whereas the spiritual lifestyle results from a spiritual mindset. Furthermore, the comparison showed that a fleshly mindset entails subjugation to the rule of sin, whereas a spiritual mindset entails subjugation to the rule of God. Paul's argument implies that the entity upon which the mind is set is also the entity that rules over the whole human being. Thus, the believer who has a spiritual mindset is still under the dominion of God, even if one maintains a mortal body that embodies the law of sin. The dominion of God guarantees that the believer will receive a physical transformation or resurrection at the parousia. Despite the ongoing presence of sin within the believer's body, Paul calls the believer to put the deeds of the body to death, by means of the indwelling Spirit.

Conclusion

The contribution of this chapter to my study is twofold. First, the analysis of Paul's legal understanding reveals that the law of sin is a viable option for understanding which law the believer dies to in Rom 7:4 and Gal 2:19. Second, Paul's remarks on the law of the Spirit of life in Christ that delivers from the law of sin and death and on Christ's role as sin offering (Rom 8:2–3) are significant for interpreting Paul's statement

in Gal 2:19 where he states that the believer dies to the law, through the law. In one aspect, Rom 8:2 refers to a law, defined as the law of the Spirit of life, which liberates the believer in Christ from the law of sin and death. The prepositional phrase “in Christ” further defines the law of the Spirit of life as embodied in Christ. In another aspect, Paul’s remarks in verse 3 identify Christ’s role as a sin offering as the means through which God condemns sin. Verses 2–3 connect both means, the law embodied in Christ and Christ as a sin offering by which the believer is liberated from condemnation. Both the law and Christ’s salvific action are inseparable, and both liberate humans from the law of sin and death. For this reason, one can assume that the phrase “through the body of Christ” (7:4) relates to the law embodied in Christ that enables eternal life, while the phrase “through the law” (Gal 2:19) relates to Christ’s salvific action.

CHAPTER 6

THE BODY OF CHRIST AND THE LAW

In this chapter, I examine the meaning of Rom 7:4 and Gal 2:19. In Rom 7:4, Paul states that *καὶ ὑμεῖς ἐθανατώθητε τῷ νόμῳ διὰ τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ* (“also you yourselves [believers] were put to death to the law through the body of Christ”). In Gal 2:19, Paul states *ἐγὼ γὰρ διὰ νόμου νόμῳ ἀπέθανον* (“for I died to the law through the law”). The question is whether the crucified and resurrected body of Christ, expressed by “through the body of Christ” in Rom 7:4 and the law of God embodied in Christ, expressed by “through the law” in Gal 2:19 are interrelated concepts associated with the rule of God and Christ. I attempt to answer this question in two steps. First, I discuss the meaning of Rom 7:4. Second, I discuss the meaning of Gal 2:19. A concise summary of the findings follow each part. In concluding the chapter, I compare the meaning of Rom 7:4 to Gal 2:19.

Exegetical Analysis (Rom 7:1–6)

In this part, I examine the meaning of the believer’s death to the law through the body of Christ in Rom 7:4. The question is whether “through the body of Christ” refers to Christ’s crucified and resurrected body and expresses the rule of Christ. To answer this question, I provide an exegetical analysis of verses 1–6. As part of this exegesis, I focus, first, on the meaning of the believer’s death; second, on the meaning of “to the law;” and third, on the meaning of “through the body of Christ.”

Paul presents the law in verses 1–6 as a ruling entity whose rule comes to an end when the subjugated entity dies. In verse 1, Paul asks the question ἢ ἀγνοεῖτε ὅτι ὁ νόμος κυριεύει τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐφ’ ὅσον χρόνον ζῆ (“or do you not know that the law rules over a human being as long as one is alive?”). The statement “do you not know” identifies the question as a confirmation question. Douglas Estes argues that confirmation questions point to something the hearer already knows.¹ Thus, Paul assumes that his audience knows about the ruling power of the law over those who are alive.

Despite the audience’s knowledge about the law’s ruling power over living human beings (v. 1), Paul adds an analogy of marriage for clarification in verses 2–3, which proves that the rule of law ends with death. Peter Spitaler argues for a balanced parallel A – B – A’ – B’ structure of the analogy of marriage (vv. 2–3):²

- A ἡ γὰρ ὑπανδρος γυνὴ τῷ ζῶντι ἀνδρὶ δέδετα νόμῳ.
 (“For the married woman is bound by the law to the living husband”)
- B ἐὰν δὲ ἀποθάνῃ ὁ ἀνὴρ κατήρηται ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου τοῦ ἀνδρός.
 (“but if the husband dies, she is released from the law of her husband”)
- A’ ἄρα οὖν ζῶντος τοῦ ἀνδρός μοιχαλὶς χρηματίσει ἐὰν γένηται ἀνδρὶ ἑτέρῳ.
 (“so then, while her husband is alive, she will be called an adulteress, if she becomes another man’s”)
- B’ ἐὰν δὲ ἀποθάνῃ ὁ ἀνὴρ, τοῦ μὴ εἶναι αὐτὴν μοιχαλίδα γενομένην ἀνδρὶ ἑτέρῳ.
 (“but if the husband dies, so then, she is not an adulteress if she becomes another man’s”)

Paul’s statements in A and B (v. 2) support the general knowledge about the rule of law over the living, as expressed in verse 1. In A, the law binds the married woman to

¹ Douglas Estes, *Questions and Rhetoric in the Greek New Testament: An Essential Reference Resource for Exegesis* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2017), 239–45. See also Wolter, *Römer*, 1:409.

² Peter Spitaler, “Analogical Reasoning in Romans 7:2–4: A Woman and the Believers in Rome,” *JBL* 125 (2006): 715–47.

her husband. In B, the widow is released from the law that bound her to her husband while he was alive. The perfect tense prevalent in verse 2 δέδεται (“is bound”) and κατήργηται (“is released”), indicate the ongoing condition of the woman in relation to the law, depending on whether her husband is alive or dead.³ Paul introduces A' and B' with the two conjunctions ἄρα οὖν (“so then”). These conjunctions indicate that A' and B' are an inference based on A and B.⁴ Paul now points out how the law is enacted if the woman becomes another man’s wife. In A', the law condemns the woman as an adulteress because her former husband is still alive. In B', the law does not condemn the woman because her former husband is dead. Therefore, the woman is released from the law.⁵ The analogy of marriage reveals that death affects a person’s relationship to the law. As long as death does not occur, the law remains in the ruling position, causing condemnation. However, when death occurs, the law loses its ruling power.

In verse 4, Paul uses the principle of the law ruling over the living (v. 1), along with his analogy of marriage (vv. 2–3) in the resultative conjunction ὥστε (“so”) to apply

³ Similarly, Thielman, *Romans*, 335.

⁴ Similarly, Jewett, *Romans*, 432; Thielman, *Romans*, 335.

⁵ Paul’s choice to draw an analogy between the dependence of the law on the physical life of the person and the legal situation of a married woman made the analogy relevant for his Jewish, as well as non-Jewish audience. In Judaism, the Decalogue condemns any type of adultery (Exod 20:14; Deut 5:18). Leviticus 20:10 clarifies that adultery can be committed by a married man, as well as a married woman. In Greco-Roman society, the law allowed for certain infidelities of a married man, but a married woman was forced to faithfulness by the law. Ferguson points out that “adultery was . . . possible only for a man with a married woman” and that “a man could be prosecuted by another man . . . for a liaison with an unmarried girl (unless she was a registered prostitute or a recognized concubine) or a widow and for homosexuality.” Ferguson, *Backgrounds*, 76. Rivkah Harris similarly notes that in the Mesopotamian culture “adultery was always defined in terms of extramarital relations on the part of the wife, never of the man.” See Rivkah Harris, “Women, Mesopotamia,” *ABD* 6:947–51. Thus, in both cultures, the law condemned a married woman’s unfaithfulness while her husband was alive, but allowed for remarriage of widows. In Greco-Roman society “widowed and divorced women were required to remarry within stipulated times.” See Ferguson, *Backgrounds*, 75. In Judaism the levirate marriage is one example that allowed a widow to be remarried (Deut 25:5–10; see also Gen 38; Rut 4).

them to his argument that the law rules over the believer until the believer dies to the law.⁶ He states ὥστε ἀδελφοί μου καὶ ὑμεῖς ἐθανατώθητε τῷ νόμῳ διὰ τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ (“so also you, my brothers, were put to death to the law through the body of Christ”). The exegesis of verse 4 focuses in particular on three questions. First, what is the meaning of the believer’s death? Second, what is the meaning of the dative object τῷ νόμῳ (“to the law”)? Third, what is the meaning of the prepositional phrase διὰ τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ (“through the body of Christ”)?

The Meaning of the Believer’s Death (Rom 7:4)

The ongoing physical life of the believer after death to the law clarifies that the believer’s death to the law is a spiritual death. Joyce A. Little observes that “Paul is trying in this analogy to express the reality of a unique event in the world, an event which makes it possible for a man to die and yet live. There are no parallels for this experience.”⁷ The believer’s ongoing physical life after the experience of death becomes evident in the purpose of the believer’s death to the law. In verse 4, Paul states that the believers were put to death to the law ἵνα καρποφορήσωμεν τῷ θεῷ (“in order that we [believers] bring fruit to God”). Paul’s statement in verse 6 ὥστε δουλεύειν ἡμᾶς ἐν καινότητι πνεύματος καὶ οὐ παλαιότητι γράμματος (“so, we [believers] serve in the new [one] of the Spirit and not in the old [one] of the letter”) further proves the continuing existence of believers after having been released from the law. For these reasons, the

⁶ Similarly, Cranfield, *Romans*, 1:335; Thielman, *Romans*, 336. Wolter argues that Paul only applies the analogy of marriage to the believer’s situation. See Wolter, *Römer*, 1:414–15.

⁷ Joyce A. Little, “Paul’s Use of Analogy: A Structural Analysis of Romans 7:1–6,” *CBQ* 46 (1984): 82–90.

believer's death to the law refers similarly to the believer's death to sin (6:2), to a spiritual death.

Although marriage may not be a perfect analogy, the main point is the same for both.⁸ In the analogy of marriage, the husband dies, and therefore, the wife experiences liberation from τοῦ νόμου τοῦ ἀνδρός (“the law of the husband”) and is free to be bound to another husband (7:2). In the application, the believer is put to death to the law and thereby experiences liberation from the law. Therefore, the believer is free to be bound to Christ and serve in newness of the Spirit (vv. 4–6).⁹ The marriage analogy and the application both point to death as the transition between being liberated from one entity to being bound to another entity.¹⁰

The resultative infinitive clause in verse 4 εἰς τὸ γενέσθαι ὑμᾶς ἑτέρω (“in order that you become someone else's”) indicates that the believer's death to the law causes a change in rulership. The following relative clause τῷ ἐκ νεκρῶν ἐγερθέντι (“who was raised from the dead”) defines the new ruler as Christ. In other words, the believer's

⁸ Little concludes “no matter how one distributes the roles, there is no way to get around the fact that these roles cannot be consistently applied throughout the first four verses.” See Little, “Analogy,” 86.

⁹ Similarly, Schnabel, *Römer*, 2:107. Little notes that “the fact that, unlike vv. 1 and 4, the person who physically dies in the analogy is not the person who thereby gains his freedom” is a serious problem. See Little, “Analogy,” 84. This observation leads her to express the application of the death of the husband in a more nuanced way, stating, “how one man's death can free another person from a specific part of the law, and there are also parallels for how one person's death can free another person to a new way of life.” See Little, “Analogy,” 87. See also Wolter, *Römer*, 1:414–15. A weakness of this interpretation of the application is that it ignores the fact that besides the death of Christ, the believer effectively dies a spiritual death as well. Thus, returning to the analogy, the woman would have had to die in order to experience a release from the law.

¹⁰ Similarly, Hermann Lichtenberger, *Das Ich Adams und das Ich der Menschheit: Studien zum Menschenbild in Römer 7*, WUNT 164 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 118; Schnabel, *Römer*, 2:107.

death to the law liberates the believer from the rule of law and subjugates him or her to the rule of Christ.

The Meaning of “to the Law” (Rom 7:4)

The meaning of the dative object τῷ νόμῳ (“to the law”) in verse 4 has two possible meanings. Either it refers to the law under the rule of God or to the law under the rule of sin (law of sin). As I previously discussed in chapter 5, the law remains the same but the ruling powers are different, which causes the law of God and the law of sin to bring about different consequences.

“To the Law” as the Law under the Rule of God

In the analogy of marriage, Paul labels the law that binds the woman to the first husband as ὁ νόμος τοῦ ἀνδρός (“the law of the husband”). Once the husband died, the woman was then released from “the law of the husband” so that she was legally able to become the wife of another man. The analogy of marriage implies that the law will again bind the woman to her second husband. Similarly, the infinitive clause εἰς τὸ γενέσθαι ὑμᾶς ἑτέρῳ (“in order that you become someone else’s”) expresses that the believer’s death to the law enables the believer to become bound to someone else (v. 4). The relative clause τῷ ἐκ νεκρῶν ἐγερθέντι (“who was raised from the dead”) defines the new partner (or ruler) as Christ. If the law is associated with the entity to which it binds, then it can be assumed that the believer is bound to Christ by a law associated with God and Christ. In verse 25, Paul explicitly states that the believer serves ὁ νόμος θεοῦ (“the law of God”). Paul’s statement in 8:2 ὁ γὰρ νόμος τοῦ πνεύματος τῆς ζωῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ

ἤλευθέρωσέν σε ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου τῆς ἁμαρτίας καὶ τοῦ θανάτου. (“for the law of the Spirit of life in Christ has delivered you from the law of sin and death”) supports the notion that the believer is bound to Christ by the law of God and Christ. In other words, the law of God or the law of the Spirit of life in Christ is the binding law for the believer after being put to death to the law, thus disqualifying the law of God from being the law to which the believer was put to death.¹¹ Again, if the law is associated with the entity to which it binds, then the law to which the believer was put to death is best understood as the law of sin since the believer was bound to sin before the believer’s death to the law (7:5; see also 3:9; 6:6).¹² The following discussion will further clarify why the law to which the believer was put to death is the law of sin.

“To the Law” as the Law under the Rule of Sin

In the following discussion, I will first address the issue of identifying the law to which the believer dies as the law of sin. In a second and third step, I will discuss whether the immediate context supports the identification of the law to which the believer dies as the law of sin.

¹¹ To see further reasons why the law of God cannot be the law to which the believer was put to death, see pages 161–71.

¹² See the discussion on the differences between the believer’s and Christ’s death to sin on pages 131–36.

“To the Law” as the Law of Sin

Most scholars identify the law to which the believer was put to death as being the law of Moses for the following two reasons.¹³ First, the believers’ familiarity with the law (Rom7:1) in the context of first-century Christianity is naturally associated with the law of Moses. Second, in verse 6, Paul states that the believers were released from the law ὥστε δουλεύειν ἡμᾶς ἐν καινότητι πνεύματος καὶ οὐ παλαιότητι γράμματος (“so, we [believers] serve in the newness of the Spirit and not in the old of the letter”). Readers typically associate the law of the letter with the law of Moses (2:27; see also 2 Tim 3:15).

However, the immediate literary context (Rom 7:5–6) shows that the meaning of the law to which the believer dies fits better to the concept of the law under the rule of sin.¹⁴ In verse 5, Paul refers to the believers’ past, stating that ὅτε . . . ἤμεν ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ τὰ παθήματα τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν τὰ διὰ τοῦ νόμου ἐνηργεῖτο ἐν τοῖς μέλεσιν ἡμῶν (“when we [believers] were in the flesh, sinful passions were active in our [believers’] bodily members”). The imperfect tense of the verbs εἰμί (“to be”) and ἐνεργέω (“to activate”) indicates that Paul is describing the believer’s condition previous to being put to death to the law. Paul further states that the sinful passions came to exist διὰ τοῦ νόμου (“through the law”) and that the purpose of the law is εἰς τὸ καρποφορῆσαι τῷ θανάτῳ (“to bring fruit to death”). Thus, Paul associates the law to which the believer was put to death with

¹³ Kümmel, *Römer* 7, 38n1; Schlier, *Römerbrief*, 215; Wilckens, *Römer*, 2:66; Dunn, *Romans*, 1:359; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 458; Schreiner, *Romans*, 345–55; Jewett, *Romans*, 433; Longenecker, *Romans*, 635; Moo, *Romans*, 441; Wolter, *Römer*, 1:422; Thielman, *Romans*, 329.

¹⁴ As I previously argued, the law of Moses also functions as the law of sin when a person seeks justification through the works of the law of Moses. See pages 208–12.

flesh, sinful passions, and death.¹⁵ Flesh, sinful passions, and death are better associated with the law under the rule of sin.¹⁶ Paul’s description of the believer’s past corresponds with humanity’s condition under the rule of sin and death and their subjugation to the law of sin. In other words, “to the law” can be described as the law that condemns to death.

The Law of Sin Implied (Rom 5:12–6:23)

The meaning of the believer’s death to sin (6:2) significantly contributes to the meaning of the believer’s death to the law (7:4). Terminological, syntactical, and thematic connections between 6:1–14 and 7:1–6 suggest that the believer’s death to sin and death to the law refer to the same event.¹⁷ First, Paul uses the same keywords in these passages.¹⁸ Second, the syntax shows that both key verbs, ἀποθνήσκω/θανατόω (“to die”) and ζάω (“to live”) have dative objects.¹⁹ Finally, the passages have the same theme: life and death. In both passages, the believer experiences death (6:2; 7:4). In both passages, the believer’s ongoing life indicates the spiritual nature of this death (6:4; 7:6). In both

¹⁵ Cranfield notes that “here Paul uses ἐν τῇ σαρκί, as he uses ἐν σαρκί in 8.8, 9, to denote the condition which for Christians belongs to the past.” See Cranfield, *Romans*, 1:337. Similarly, Moo, *Romans*, 444–45.

¹⁶ Thielman reads 7:4 in reference to the law of Moses which also becomes evident in the context of the following quote, he acknowledges that Paul likely thinks of “sin’s use of the law” when he refers to the release from the law in verse 6. See Thielman, *Romans*, 338–39.

¹⁷ For a general discussion on the inner consistency in Paul’s legal discourse, see pages 142–55.

¹⁸ See footnote 1 on page 1.

¹⁹ See footnote 2 on page 1.

passages, spiritual death provides liberation from the rule of sin (6:7, 18) or subjugation to the law (7:1, 3, 6, see also 6:14).²⁰

As previously discussed, the believer's spiritual death to sin in 6:2 is the believer's liberation from the rule of sin. Paul presents the universal ruling power of sin in 5:21 (see also 3:9–12; 7:14).²¹ However, once the believer spiritually dies to sin (6:2), sin's rule over the believer comes to an end. In verse 14, Paul, therefore, states ἁμαρτία . . . ὑμῶν οὐ κυριεύσει (“ . . . sin will not rule over you”). As an explanation, Paul adds in verse 14 that οὐ γὰρ ἐστε ὑπὸ νόμον ἀλλὰ ὑπὸ χάριν (“for you are not under the law but grace”). In verse 14, Paul relates the state of being under the rule of sin to subjugation to the law.²²

The law from which believers are freed in 6:14–15 is better identified through Paul's description in 5:12–14, where Paul introduces a law that condemns all human beings to death. The concept of this law is not limited to the written form of the law of Moses, given to Israel at Mount Sinai or God's first commandment.²³ In verse 12, Paul states that humanity became subjugated to sin and death through Adam's sin. Therefore, all human beings are sinners by nature. The sinful nature of humanity finds support in the

²⁰ Nygren, *Romans*, 268.

²¹ See pages 82–84.

²² Dunn notes, “for Paul being ‘under the law’ is bound up with being under the mastery of sin.” See Dunn, *Romans*, 1:351.

²³ John C. Poirier argues that in Rom 5:13–14 Paul does not postulate a distinction between the law of Moses and the law prior to Moses. Rather Paul argues against such a distinction with the intention to remove the concept of different binding laws for Jews or Gentiles. Thus, Poirier argues that the law of Moses in its written form is the same as what has been previously accessible. See John C. Poirier, “Romans 5:13–14 and the Universality of Law,” *NovT* 38 (1996): 344–58. However, it is impossible to determine, whether the law of God prior to the law of Moses is identical.

gnomic aorist ἥμαρτον in the prepositional clause ἐφ’ ᾧ πάντες ἥμαρτον (“because all have sinned”) presenting a “timeless, general fact.”²⁴ In verse 13, Paul clarifies that the law condemning human beings to death goes beyond the written form of the law of Moses, whose characteristics share much in common with Greco-Roman positive law. The law of Moses is unable to condemn to death those who lived in the time before the law of Moses existed because sin is not counted when there is no law. However, human beings have died since Adam before the law of Moses was given (v. 14). The law of Moses in its written form is unable to universally condemn humanity to death since it is limited in time and scope. In verse 14, Paul further clarifies that the law which condemns to death extends beyond God’s first commandment given to Adam because the sins which were committed in the time between Adam and Moses were not in the likeness of Adam’s transgression. Paul argues that Adam transgressed an explicit commandment (Gen 2:16–17), whereas, for the time between Adam and Moses, there was no explicit commandment in the form of a written Torah. Thus, the condemnation of human beings to death in the period between Adam and Moses proves the existence of an unwritten universal law that condemns all human beings to death.

As previously discussed, Adam and Eve were subjugated to the law of God. However, when they transgressed God’s commandment not to eat the forbidden fruit they came to embody sin and became subjugated to the law of sin.²⁵ Subjugation under the law of sin means that human beings are obliged to fulfill the requirements of the law of God

²⁴ Wallace, *Grammar*, 562.

²⁵ See pages 197–201.

in order to attain a righteous status, but are unable to fulfill the law of God due to the embodiment of sin (Rom 3:23; 5:12, 18). This inability of sinful human beings to keep the law of God turns the law of God into the law of sin, making the law of God sin's means to dole out death (see 3:19–20).²⁶ Therefore, I conclude that in Rom 5:12–14; 6:14–15; and 7:1–6, Paul elaborates on the law of sin that condemns human beings under the rule of sin to death.

The Law of Sin Explicated (Rom 7:7–8:13)

Romans 7:7–8:13 also thematizes the law of sin.²⁷ In 7:7–13, Paul illustrates sin's effect on the law of God by pointing out two consecutive conditions of sin and the "I" (vv. 9–10).²⁸ Paul argues that sin, not the law, is responsible for death (vv. 10–11). However, the law of God serves as sin's instrument to dole out death due to humanity's subjugation to the rule of sin.²⁹ In verses 14–25, Paul further clarifies that, despite the believer's liberation from the rule of sin, sin (vv. 17, 20) and the law of sin (vv. 23, 25) remain in the believer's bodily parts, causing a divergence between the will and the

²⁶ Dunn comments on the relationship between sin, death, and the law, pointing out "that sin and death find a partner in the law, where law also seems to be power, forming a fearful triumvirate with the other two." See Dunn, *Theology*, 129.

²⁷ Paul explicitly labels the law in Rom 7:23, 25 and 8:2 as "the law of sin."

²⁸ I argue that the "I" in Rom 7:7–13 is an autobiographical reference to Paul. However, Paul presents his own experience of being confronted with the condemnation of the law analogous to Adam's experience facing the condemnation of the law.

²⁹ For the discussion on the effect of sin on the law of God, see pages 200–8.

action of the “I.”³⁰ In verse 20, Paul points out that sin is responsible for the sinful actions of the believer. Thus, although the believer acts sinfully, there is, as far as the believer’s legal status is concerned, no condemnation to death through the law of sin for the committed sins.³¹ Paul argues that those in Christ are liberated from condemnation of the law of sin by the law of the Spirit of life in Christ (8:1–4).³²

Based on the exegetical and theological analysis of Rom 5:12–8:13, I conclude that “to the law” in 7:4 refers to the condemning aspect of the law of God (law of sin), which is a universal law that equally condemns all sinful human beings under the rule of sin to death.

The Meaning of “through the Body of Christ” (Rom 7:4)

The prepositional phrase διὰ τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ (“through the body of Christ”) describes the means through which the believer was put to death to the law

³⁰ I argue that although the “I” in Rom 7:14–25 is an autobiographical reference to Paul, it is best understood rhetorically as a reference to all believers in Christ. Regarding the ongoing validity of the law, Nygren argues that “to Paul there can be no thought of the law dying. It is not a case of the Christian’s decision to regard the law as repealed and nonexistent. No one is really ‘freed from the law’ in any such way; the claim of the law would continue undiminished. Nor can it be said that, with the coming of Christ, the law was outdated and abolished. The law continues, and it constantly lays its claim on man, regardless of whether he acknowledges it or not. One does not escape the sway of the law by neglecting its mandate. The law does not die. There is only one liberation. Only the fact that the Christian has died with Christ is he really and truly set beyond the realm of the law. Paul’s emphasis lies on this genuine liberation.” See Nygren, *Romans*, 272.

³¹ The believer is not condemned to death because one is no longer subjugated under the law of sin but is under grace. The only way for the believer to return under condemnation to death, is by the abandonment of Christ as master. Therefore, the believer who commits a sinful action remains righteous as long as he or she remains in Christ. Nevertheless, the exoneration of the believer regarding sinful actions should not be understood as a free pass for sinful acting (6:1–2, 15). For the discussion on the relationship between the believer and the law, see pages 235–37.

³² For the discussion on the believer’s liberation from condemnation of the law of sin, see pages 216–21.

(v. 4). Paul refers to the body of Christ in various letters (v. 4; 12:4–8; 1 Cor 10:16–17; 11:23–34; and 12:12–31).

The Body of Christ apart from Romans 7:4

Apart from Rom 7:4, Paul also refers to the “the body of Christ” in 12:4–8; 1 Cor 10:16–17; 11:23–34; and 12:12–31. The discussion on these passages will help determine the meaning of the prepositional phrase “through the body of Christ” in Rom 7:4.

The Body of Christ (Rom 12:4–8)

In Rom 12:4–8, Paul compares the members of the congregation of believers in Christ and their spiritual gifts to the bodily members of a human body and their functions. He states in verses 4–5 *καθάπερ γὰρ ἐν ἐνὶ σώματι πολλὰ μέλη ἔχομεν, τὰ δὲ μέλη πάντα οὐ τὴν αὐτὴν ἔχει πρᾶξιν οὕτως οἱ πολλοὶ ἐν σῶμά ἐσμεν ἐν Χριστῷ* (“for just as we have many members in one body, but not all members have the same function, so, we, though many, are one body in Christ”). In these verses, Paul designates the congregation of believers in Christ as the body that relates to Christ.

The Body of Christ (1 Cor 12:12–31)

In 1 Cor 12:1–11, Paul likewise elaborates on the spiritual gifts of the believers. In verses 12–31, Paul discusses how the members of the believing congregation, empowered by spiritual gifts, should work together. Just as members of the human body have their own functions and duties that contribute to the well-being of the entire human body, so each member of the believing congregation contributes with their spiritual gifts to the congregation’s well-being. After clarifying that the members of the believing

congregation function similar to the members of a human body, Paul identifies the believing congregation as the body of Christ, stating in verse 27 Ὑμεῖς δὲ ἐστε σῶμα Χριστοῦ καὶ μέλη ἐκ μέρους (“but you are the body of Christ and individually members of [it]”).

Paul’s comparison of the congregation of Christ’s believers to the composition of a human body is well-rooted in Greco-Roman society. Dionysius of Halicarnassus, for example, states, “a commonwealth [πόλις] resembles in some measure a human body. For each of them is composite and consists of many parts; and no one of their parts either has the same function or performs the same services as the others” (Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Ant. rom.* 6.86.1–2). Seneca identifies the emperor as the soul and the citizens of a state as the body. He states:

For if—and this is what thus far it is establishing—you are the soul of the state and the state your body, you see, I think, how requisite is mercy; for you are merciful to yourself when you are seemingly merciful to another. And so even reprobate citizens should have mercy as being the weak members of the body, and if there should ever be need to let blood, the hand must be held under control to keep it from cutting deeper than may be necessary (Seneca, *Clem.* 1.5.1).

In Seneca’s understanding, the citizens of a state are the body of the emperor. If the congregation of believers in Christ was to be paralleled with this Greco-Roman concept of citizens comprising the emperor’s body, then it would be appropriate to view the believing congregation as comprising the body of Christ to be under Christ’s rule.

The Body of Christ (1 Cor 10:16–17)

In 1 Cor 10:16, Paul poses two rhetorical questions. In the first question, related to the cup of the Lord’s Supper, he asks whether the cup οὐχὶ κοινωνία ἐστὶν τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ (“is not the fellowship in the blood of Christ”). In the second question,

related to the bread of the Lord's Supper, Paul asks whether the bread of the Lord's Supper οὐχὶ κοινωνία τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐστὶν ("is not the fellowship in the body of Christ"). He then continues in verse 17 with further elaborations on the bread, stating that ὅτι εἷς ἄρτος, ἐν σῶμα οἱ πολλοὶ ἐσμεν, οἱ γὰρ πάντες ἐκ τοῦ ἐνὸς ἄρτου μετέχομεν ("because [there is] one bread, we, who are many are one body, for we all partake from the one bread").³³ Scholars interpret the body of Christ in relation to the bread of the Lord's Supper in verse 16 either as a reference to the congregational body of Christ or the crucified body of Christ.

Some scholars conclude that, based on the verbal and thematic parallels to Rom 12:4–8 and 1 Cor 12:12–31, the body of Christ in 10:16–17 refers to the congregation of believers in Christ. Conzelmann argues that Paul adds a previously unknown congregational element to the Lord's Supper.³⁴ He takes εἷς ἄρτος ("one bread") as an apposition to ἐν σῶμα ("one body").³⁵ Therefore he translates the ὅτι-clause in verse 17 as an elliptical protasis reading ὅτι εἷς ἄρτος, ἐν σῶμα οἱ πολλοὶ ἐσμεν ("for we are one body, one bread, many as we are"). Further, Conzelmann argues that Paul does not link "the blood of Christ" with "the body of Christ" in verse 16. Therefore, Conzelmann concludes that "the body of Christ" does not have to mean the crucified

³³ The change in the order of the emblems in 1 Cor 10 (cup – bread) in contrast to all the other Lord's Supper traditions in which the bread is first served, followed by the cup, is most likely due to Paul's intention to further elaborate on the concept related to the bread. See Andreas Lindemann, *Der Erste Korintherbrief*, HNT 9.1 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000), 224.

³⁴ Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 172.

³⁵ Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 170.

body of Christ. Instead, when Paul refers to the body of Christ in verses 16–17, he has the congregation of the believers in Christ in mind.

Conzelmann’s congregational reading of the body of Christ in verses 16–17 is unlikely based on three exegetical reasons. First, Conzelmann’s translation of verse 17 is questionable. According to Wolfgang Schrage, reading the ὅτι-clause as an elliptical protasis has received significant criticism. A causal reading of the ὅτι-clause is to be preferred.³⁶ In addition, Schrage points to the weaknesses of the appositional reading of εἰς ἄρτος (“one bread”).³⁷ A translation “because (there is)³⁸ one bread, we who are many are one body” is more faithful to the Greek original. This translation reveals a chiasmic structure that juxtaposes the εἰς ἄρτος (“one bread”) with the many believers who form one body through the participation of one bread.³⁹

Second, the position of the predicate ἐστίν (“is”) differs in the two rhetorical questions. In the question related to the bread of the Lord’s Supper, Paul moves the predicate ἐστίν (“is”) to the end of the question, which tightens the connection between κοινωνία (“participation”) and σῶμα (“body”).⁴⁰ In other words, Paul does not state that

³⁶ Schrage, *Korinther*, 2:440–41.

³⁷ Schrage, *Korinther*, 2:441.

³⁸ The missing predicate is not a problem, see BDF §127–28.

³⁹ Fee, *First Corinthians*, 469. Fee suggests the following chiasm:

A Because (there is) one bread
 B we who are the many are one body
 B' for we all partake
A' from the one bread

Note also that the body in verse 17 is not qualified as the body of Christ. See Lindemann, *Korintherbrief*, 224.

⁴⁰ Lindemann, *Korintherbrief*, 224.

participation is the body of Christ, which would add a congregational connotation to the body of Christ. Instead, Paul states that the bread of the Lord's Supper is the participation in the body of Christ.

Third, the term *κοινωνία* ("fellowship") does not necessarily indicate a congregational reading of the body of Christ in verses 16–17. According to Anthony C. Thiselton, Paul uses the term *κοινωνία* not only to refer to a "group of like-minded people, such as the Greco-Roman *societas*," but also in the sense of "communal participation," meaning that "all participants are shareholders or are accorded a common *share*." This "common share" does not refer to Christians' simple gathering, but the participation in Christ's death.⁴¹ In other words, the term *κοινωνία* in verse 16 takes a vertical theological connotation. The consumption of the bread as part of the Lord's Supper symbolizes the believer's participation in Christ's physical death (see Rom 6:1–14). This understanding of *κοινωνία* finds further support in the verb *μετέχω* ("to partake") in 1 Cor 10:17 when Paul states *οἱ γὰρ πάντες ἐκ τοῦ ἑνὸς ἄρτου μετέχομεν* ("for all of us are partaking of the one bread"). Therefore, it is more likely that in this particular context, the noun *κοινωνία* instead points to the believer's participation in the crucified body of Christ than to the congregational "fellowship" of the believers.

Further, the wider context (chs. 8–10) reveals that 10:16–17 are part of Paul's elaboration on the consumption of meat offered to idols.⁴² Paul argues that attending pagan ritual meals poses a spiritual danger for believers (vv. 1–22). Ellen Bradshaw

⁴¹ Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 104, (emphasis original).

⁴² Similarly, Gibbs, "Close(d) Communion," 150.

Aitken has shown that Paul builds his argument against partaking in pagan rituals in verses 1–14 by contrasting two ritual meals of Israel while being in the wilderness, namely sacrifices consumed in the presence of God (Exod 24), and sacrifices consumed in the presence of idols (ch. 32).⁴³ In 1 Cor 10:14–22, Paul continues to juxtapose the two ritual meals by comparing the effect of the Christian Lord’s Supper (vv. 16–17) and the Jewish consumption of sacrifices (v. 18). Paul points out that both meals in the presence of God lead to an experience of *κοινωνία* (“participation”) with Christ and altar, respectively. Assuming that *κοινωνία* is the experience of any ritual meal, Paul argues in verse 20 that believers in Christ should avoid participation in pagan ritual meals because they are in danger of becoming *κοινωνοὺς τῶν δαιμονίων* (“participants with demons”).⁴⁴ Since Paul refers to the danger of potential participation with demons, it is possible to infer that the believer’s participation in the body of Christ refers to participation in the physical death of Christ rather than in congregational gatherings.

If “the body of Christ” in verses 16–17 does not refer to the congregation of believers in Christ, how should Paul’s statement *ἐν σῶμα οἱ πολλοὶ ἔσμεν* (“we, the many, are one body”) in verse 17 be interpreted? Most scholars perceive this statement

⁴³ Aitken, “Eucharistic Memory,” 360–66.

⁴⁴ Similarly, Gibbs, “Close(d) Communion,” 152; Das, “1 Corinthians 11:17–34,” 206. Jerome Murphy-O’Connor correctly observes that Paul “draws a parallel between Christian participation in the Eucharist (10:16–17) and the participation of Jews (10:18) and pagans (10:19–20) in their ritual meals. It is often assumed that Paul is arguing from the implications of such rituals to the meaning of the Eucharist, but the very structure of the text makes it much more probable that the reverse is true.” See Jerome Murphy-O’Connor, “Eucharist and Community in First Corinthians,” *Worship* 51 (1977): 56–69. It is interesting, however, that Murphy-O’Connor argues as if Paul is comparing the Lord’s Supper on the one hand, to the Jewish and pagan ritual meals on the other. However, the text reads more naturally when the Lord’s Supper and the Jewish meals are grouped together on one side compared to the pagan ritual meals on the other, since Paul refers to the Jewish meal in support of his argument regarding the experience of *κοινωνία* as the effect of the Lord’s Supper. Some Christian believers may have argued that participation at pagan ritual meals left them unaffected (see v. 19).

on the unity of the believers' congregation in Christ as an interruption in Paul's argument on the danger of participating in pagan ritual meals. However, J. Smit disagrees that "we, the many,⁴⁵ are one body" is an interruption. He points to the threefold use of εἷς ("one") in verse 17, arguing that εἷς emphasizes the singleness of the body of Christ in contrast to the numerous demons as potential entities with which the believer might experience participation (see also 8:4–6).⁴⁶ Thus, the unity among Christians results from their exclusive partaking in the Lord's Supper, of which the partaking of the bread symbolizes the participation in Christ's physical crucified body. In other words, the bread of the Lord's supper is a symbol for the crucified body of Christ. The consumption of the bread symbolizes participation in the crucified body of Christ and thus in the death of Christ.

The Body of Christ (1 Cor 11:13–34)

Identifying the bread of the Lord's Supper as a symbol of the crucified body of Christ also becomes evident in 1 Cor 11:24. Paul recites the Words of Institution, stating τοῦτό μου ἐστὶν τὸ σῶμα τὸ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν· τοῦτο ποιεῖτε εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν ("this is my body, which [is] for you. Do this in remembrance of me").⁴⁷ As previously discussed in chapter 3, Paul closely connects the Lord's Supper in 11:23–27 with the festivals of Passover and Unleavened Bread, which point to the liberating role of Christ's death. This connection implies that Paul understands the bread of the Lord's Supper, which Christ

⁴⁵ Note the important use of מַרְבֵּי ("many") in messianic contexts (Isa 53 and Dan 9:27).

⁴⁶ Smit also points to those who understand Paul's whole argument exclusively from a social perspective. However, he only lists one scholar, N. Walter, who argues alongside him for a purely theological reading of 1 Cor 10:1–22. See J. Smit, "'Do Not Be Idolaters': Paul's Rhetoric in First Corinthians 10:1–22" *NovT* 39 (1997): 40–53.

⁴⁷ He introduces the quote in verse 23 by stating ἐγὼ γὰρ παρέλαβον ἀπὸ τοῦ κυρίου, ὃ καὶ παρέδωκα ὑμῖν ("for I have received from the Lord, which I have handed over to you").

himself identified as his own body (v. 24) in relation to the liberating effect of Christ's death (see v. 26).⁴⁸ Consuming the bread of the Lord's Supper serves as a reminder of the believer's liberating experience through the crucified body of Christ.

The Body of Christ (Rom 7:4)

The previous discussion on the meaning of the body of Christ apart from Rom 7:4 reveals two predominant meanings: first, the congregation of the believers in Christ; second, the bread of the Lord's Supper. In addition, a reference to the crucified body of Christ is also a valid meaning of the phrase "the body of Christ." The following discussion shows how these different meanings can be applied to the understanding of the body of Christ in verse 4.

The Body of Christ as the Congregation of the Believers in Christ

If "through the body of Christ" in verse 4 refers to the congregation of believers in Christ, then the congregation of believers as such constitutes the means through which the believer is put to death to the law. In other words, it is the congregation of believers in Christ through which God provides to the believer a righteous status.

A minority of scholars have argued that "through the body of Christ" in verse 4 refers to the congregation of believers in Christ. Among the first was Tertullian, who identifies "the body of Christ" in verse 4 as the church.⁴⁹ However, Tertullian does not further explain the meaning of the body of Christ as the church in the context of verse 4.

⁴⁸ See pages 95–98.

⁴⁹ See Tertullian, *De Monogamia* (PL 2:999). Recent authors include Dodd, *Romans*, 101; Meuzelaar, *Der Leib des Messias*, 57–58; Byrne, *Romans*, 211.

A few recent interpretations of verse 4 follow Tertullian's reading. Meuzelaar sees a parallel thought to Eph 2:14 in Rom 7:4. He assumes that in Eph 2:14, Paul argues that the unity between Jews and Gentiles requires an abrogation of the law. For this reason, Meuzelaar understands "through the body of Christ" in Rom 7:4 as a multiethnic congregation consisting of Jewish and Gentile believers in Christ. For this multiethnic congregation to be unified, the law has to be abrogated, which is expressed by the believer's death to the law.⁵⁰

Meuzelaar's congregational reading of "the body of Christ" in verse 4 is unlikely for two reasons. First, the discussion of the literary context has shown that the law to which the believer dies is best understood as the law of sin that equally condemns all human beings under the rule of sin to death. In addition, Meuzelaar's reading would imply that only the Jewish believers in Christ had to die to the law, although Paul's statement reads universally.

Second, there is no evidence in Paul's writings that the congregation of believers in Christ served as a means to receive righteousness. Paul strongly opposes the concept that membership in a congregation serves as a means of attaining righteousness. His viewpoint becomes evident in Galatians when he opposes Jewish Christians who urged Gentiles to be circumcised in order to enter Abraham's line and, thus, the covenant of God. For this reason, it is rather unlikely that Paul would argue that membership to a congregation—even the congregation of believers in Christ—serves as a means to attain

⁵⁰ Meuzelaar, *Der Leib des Messias*, 57–58.

righteousness. Paul unmistakably emphasizes that righteousness comes only through faith in Christ (3:20, 28, 30; 4:5; 5:1; Gal 2:16; 3:11; Phil 3:9).

Byrne, who also reads “through the body of Christ” in Rom 7:4 to refer to the congregation of believers in Christ, introduces a different argument, that $\sigma\tilde{\omega}\mu\alpha$ “has its distinctively Pauline sense of vehicle of communication and association.”⁵¹ In support of his argument, Byrne points to the wider context, especially to 6:12–13, where bodily members are weapons that serve either sin or God. He, therefore, concludes that “believers have been ‘put to death to the law’ because of their association with the ‘career’ of Christ ‘into’ whom (cf. 6:3) they have been baptized as ‘into’ a personal, yet communal ‘sphere of salvation.’”⁵²

Byrne’s congregational reading of “the body of Christ” in 7:4 is unlikely for two reasons. First, Byrne seemingly puts “being a member of the believing congregation of Christ” on a level with “being in Christ.” This equation is questionable. Whereas being in Christ describes the vertical dimension of the believer’s relationship with Christ, the term “congregation” has the horizontal connotation of how the believers relate to each other. In other words, the believer’s membership in the congregation of Christ describes a consequence of being in Christ.

Second, Byrne’s argument stands on a causal reading of $\delta\iota\acute{\alpha}$ followed by a genitive. This causal reading allows Byrne to place the believer’s membership in the congregation as an antecedent of the believer’s death to the law. However, Byrne’s causal

⁵¹ Byrne, *Romans*, 211.

⁵² Byrne, *Romans*, 211.

reading of διὰ is syntactically questionable because a causal reading διὰ requires an accusative rather than a genitive. Furthermore, Paul clearly understands the believer's death to the law as a prerequisite to their membership in the congregational body of Christ. In verse 4, Paul states εἰς τὸ γενέσθαι ὑμᾶς ἑτέρῳ ("that you [the believers] become someone else's"). The preposition εἰς τό followed by an infinitive describes the purpose or result of the believer's death to the law.⁵³ Those who died to the law (v. 4; Gal 2:19) become bound to Christ, which results in their affiliation to the congregational body of Christ. Thus, becoming part of the congregation of believers in Christ cannot serve as a means of dying to the law. It follows, then, that it is not the congregational body of Christ that serves as the means by which the believer dies to the law; rather, it is the believer's death to the law that enables the believer's affiliation to the congregational body of Christ.

Although the congregational understanding of the body of Christ in Rom 7:4 is unlikely given the grammatical, syntactical, and contextual reasons, one should not completely dismiss a conceptual connection between the body of Christ in verse 4 and the congregational body of Christ. The congregational body of Christ requires that the believer is in fact in Christ and that the rule of God and Christ over them is a reality. As the following discussion shows, "the body of Christ" described in verse 4 is essential to the process of being in Christ and the change of rulership.

⁵³ Wallace, *Grammar*, 611.

The Body of Christ as the Bread of the Lord's Supper

The discussion in 1 Cor 10:16–17 and 11:23–27 revealed that Paul understood the bread of the Lord's Supper as the symbol of the crucified body of Christ, which raises the question whether Paul had the bread of the Lord's Supper in mind when referring to “through the body of Christ” in Rom 7:4.⁵⁴

The immediate context of verse 4 does not indicate that Paul had the Lord's Supper in mind. In 1 Cor 10–11, Paul uses words like ποτήριον (“cup”), ἄρτος (“bread”), αἷμα (“blood”), κλάω (“to break”), and εὐχαριστέω (“give thanks”) to describe the Lord's Supper. But in the immediate context of Rom 7:4, none of these technical terms of the Lord's Supper appear, which makes unlikely that he is thinking of the body of Christ as a reference to the Lord's Supper.⁵⁵ However, Wolter correctly observes that although verse 4 does not refer to the Lord's Supper, Paul metonymically uses the body of Christ to refer to Christ's death and its salvific effect in verse 4, as well as in 1 Cor 10:16–17 and 11:23–27.⁵⁶ The Lord's supper is the believer's sacred festival, commemorating Christ's death as the Passover lamb that effects the believer's liberation from the rule of sin.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ Wilckens likely comes closest to arguing for this view when he states that, by referring to the body of Christ, Paul refers to the crucified body of Christ. However, he also notes that the body of Christ is present in baptism and the Lord's Supper, which means that the believer who experiences baptism and the Lord's Supper physically partakes in the atoning effect of Christ's death. See Wilckens, *Römer*, 2:65.

⁵⁵ Similarly, Fitzmyer states “clearly, the phrase has nothing to do with the eucharistic ‘body of Christ,’” see Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 458.

⁵⁶ Wolter, *Paulus*, 282–83.

⁵⁷ Although I presume that Christ's death fulfills all sacrifices of the Levitical system of atonement, I understand in this particular Christ's sacrifice specifically as the Passover lamb because of the close connection between the Lord supper and the Festival of the Passover.

The Body of Christ as the Crucified and Resurrected Body of Christ

If “through the body of Christ” in Rom 7:4 refers to the crucified body of Christ, then it constitutes the means through which the believer is put to death to the law. In other words, it is the crucified body of Christ that denotes Christ’s death on the cross through which God provides to the believer a righteous status.

Most scholars understand “through the body of Christ” in verse 4 to refer exclusively to the crucified body of Christ.⁵⁸ Some scholars, however, rightly raise the question of why Paul emphasizes the bodily aspect of Christ when he describes the means of the believer’s death to the law in verse 4.⁵⁹ Whereas the understanding of the majority is correct, I suggest that the meaning of “body of Christ” extends beyond the crucified body of Christ and includes the resurrected body of Christ. In Romans 6, Paul argues that Christ’s death enables the believer’s spiritual death to sin (vv. 1–11), but Christ’s resurrection enables the believer’s present and resurrected sanctified life (see vv. 4–5, 8, 10–11). Similarly, 7:4–6 suggests that the believer’s “bearing fruit for God” (v. 4), which is both present and eternal sanctified life (v. 5–6; 6:22–23; see also Gal 2:19–20), is only possible through the believer’s association with the resurrected Christ. Michael F. Bird points out based on Rom 4:25 that “justification is primarily a function of Christ’s resurrection.” He explains that “the death of Christ constitutes the divine verdict against

⁵⁸ Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 173–74; Cranfield, *Romans*, 1:336; Gundry, *Sōma*, 239–40; Schlier, *Römerbrief*, 217; Dunn, *Romans*, 1:362; Barrett, *Romans*, 128; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 458; Schreiner, *Romans*, 352; Jewett, *Romans*, 433–34; Schnabel, *Römer*, 2:107; Thielman, *Romans*, 334; Moo, *Romans*, 443.

⁵⁹ So for example Nygren, *Romans*, 274; Byrne, *Romans*, 211.

sin, whereas the resurrection transforms that verdict into vindication.”⁶⁰ Romans 8:10–11 shows that the believer’s redemption is complete only when the believer experiences liberation from the rule of death by redemption of the believer’s mortal body based on the resurrection of Christ (see also 7:24; 8:23). Therefore, it is the believer’s participation with Christ’s crucified and resurrected body which enables the believer’s liberation from the condemnation to death and the believer’s life to God leading to eternal life.

Furthermore, I suggest that Paul intentionally chooses the phrase “the body of Christ” in 7:4 to juxtapose the rule of sin and death with the rule of God and Christ.⁶¹ In Romans 5–8, Paul uses *σῶμα* eight times. In four instances, Paul discusses the believer’s liberation from the rule of sin and the continuous embodiment of sin in the believer’s body (6:6, 12; 7:24; 8:13). In three instances, Paul discusses the believer’s liberation from the rule of death and the associated redemption of the believer’s mortal body (vv. 10–11, 23). In all of these instances, *σῶμα* is associated with the realm of sinful human beings and the rule of sin and death. Only in 7:4 is *σῶμα* associated with the realm of Christ and the believer’s subjugation to the resurrected Christ. The added prepositional phrase in verse 4, reading *εἰς τὸ γενέσθαι ὑμᾶς ἕτερον τῷ ἐκ νεκρῶν ἐγερθέντι* (“in order that you become someone else’s, who has been raised from the dead”) introduces the

⁶⁰ Michael F. Bird, “Incorporated Righteousness: A Response to Recent Evangelical Discussion Concerning the Imputation of Christ’s Righteousness in Justification,” *JETS* 47 (2004): 253–75.

⁶¹ Das observes that the issue of rulership over sinful humanity is Paul’s main focus in Rom 5–8. See Das, “Περὶ Ἀμαρτίας,” 75–76.

resurrected Christ as the new ruler over the believer.⁶² Hence, the “body of Christ” in verse 4 represents the rulership of Christ or God.

Dunn observes that the term “body” is a “relational concept. It denotes the person embodied in a particular environment. It is the means by which the person relates to that environment, and vice versa.”⁶³ As such, the phrase “body of Christ” describes the means by which Christ acts upon the realm of sinful human beings and through which they can enter the realm of Christ. Christ’s crucified and resurrected body expresses God’s and Christ’s righteousness. Bird states, “Christ, the representative of believers, has demonstrated his righteousness in his sacrificial death and has been vindicated as righteous in his resurrection, and it is exclusively by connection with him that believers apprehend a righteous status in God’s eyes.”⁶⁴ It is notable that righteousness does not occur in the believer, but in Christ. Only when the believer is in the realm of Christ does one participate in Christ’s crucified and resurrected body. Thus, the body of Christ can change the environment in which the law is applied. Bird points out “that union with Christ is itself a forensic event. For Paul, being ‘in Christ’ means identifying with Christ’s death and resurrection where union with him is in the sphere or realm of

⁶² Similarly, verse 6 suggests that the believer enters a new state of enslavement associated with the Spirit. Scholars have suggested different ways to interpret the genitive πνεύματος (“of the Spirit”). Some interpret the genitive πνεύματος (“of the Spirit”) as appositional, which means this new state of enslavement is dominated by the Spirit. See for example Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 176; Wolter, *Römer*, 1:421; Schnabel, *Römer*, 2:114n60. Others have pointed out that the genitive is a genitive of source which means that the newness is generated by the Spirit. See Cranfield, *Romans*, 1:339.

⁶³ Dunn, *Theology*, 56.

⁶⁴ Bird, “Incorporated Righteousness,” 269. Similarly, Prothro argues for Jesus’s resurrection in terms of vindication. See Prothro, *Judge and Justifier*, 194–95.

justification.”⁶⁵ Therefore, the body of Christ has a relational aspect. Redemption for Paul is to enter into a relationship with Christ through the body of Christ. This relationship, which is essentially the rule of God and Christ over the believer, determines the identity of the believer. Thus, Dunn’s statement is correct, reading that Paul’s “doctrine of salvation is of man and woman being restored to the image of God in the body of Christ.”⁶⁶

Based on the exegetical and theological analysis, I conclude that Paul intentionally chooses the expression “through the body of Christ” in verse 4 to link the salvific function of Christ’s death and resurrection with the issue of rulership over the believer.⁶⁷ The crucified and resurrected body of Christ enables the believer’s entry into the realm of Christ and the believer’s subjugation to the rule of God and Christ, thereby liberating the believer from the rule of sin and law of sin.

⁶⁵ Bird, “Incorporated Righteousness,” 273. Bird builds his argument on David Hill, *Greek Words and Hebrew Meanings: Studies in the Semantics of Soteriological Terms*, SNTSMS 5 (London: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 141–43. One recent study has provided philological support of the forensic understanding of justification in Paul. See Irons, *Righteousness of God*, 272–336. Iron’s study exclusively focus on the analysis of Paul’s use of the noun δικαιοσύνη. Iron’s narrow focus on the noun δικαιοσύνη leads him to the conclusion that Paul’s understanding of justification excludes a relational aspect. This conclusion is a constriction that I do not share. In contrast, Prothro’s recent study which focuses on Paul’s use of the verb δικαίωω concludes that Paul’s understanding of justification has a forensic, as well as relational aspect. See Prothro, *Judge and Justifier*, 207–16. My understanding of Paul’s use of the body of Christ and its effect on the justification does also acknowledge the forensic and relational aspect of justification.

⁶⁶ Dunn, *Theology*, 53.

⁶⁷ Similarly, Wolter observes that Paul has the salvific aspect of Christ’s death in mind when using the expression “body of Christ” in verse 4. See Wolter, *Römer*, 1:415. Wolter further observes that although Paul’s statement in verse 4 has nothing to do with the Lord’s Supper, the salvific connotation attributed to the expression “the body of Christ” in verse 4 is conceptually similar to the references to the body of Christ in 1 Cor 10:16–17 and 11:23–34. See Wolter, *Römer*, 1:415n27.

Summary

In this part, I examined the meaning of the believer's death to the law through the body of Christ in Rom 7:4. The exegetical analysis on verses 1–6 revealed that the analogy of marriage (vv. 2–3) and Paul's application (v. 4) share the main point: the release from the law through death. The infinitive clause "in order that you become someone else's" (v. 4) clarified that death to the law causes a change of rule from being under the rule of law to being under the rule of Christ.

The exegetical analysis on "to the law" revealed that it is not the law under the rule of God that leads to life, since it remains binding for the believer after his death to the law. The law to which the believer died is the law under the rule of sin and death associated with the condemnation. For this reason, the law to which the believer died is the law of sin.

The exegetical analysis of "through the body of Christ" revealed three possible readings: the congregation of the believers in Christ, the bread of the Lord's Supper, and the crucified body of Christ. First, the congregation of the believers in Christ is unlikely as the meaning of the body of Christ because Paul strongly opposes the concept that membership in a congregation serves as a means of attaining righteousness. Further, Paul understands the believer's death to the law as a prerequisite to becoming a member of the congregational body of Christ. Second, the bread of the Lord's Supper is unlikely as the meaning of the body of Christ because the immediate context of verse 4 does not indicate that Paul had the Lord's Supper in mind. Third, most scholars understand the "body of Christ" as the crucified body of Christ. However, I suggested that "the body of Christ" refers not only to the crucified body of Christ, but also to the resurrected body of Christ.

Paul attributes a salvific aspect to both Christ's death and resurrection. While Christ's death enables the believer's spiritual death to sin, his resurrection enables the believer's present and eternal life to God. Further, Paul's use of the term "body" to refer to Christ's death is intentional to link Christ's physical death and resurrection to the issue of rulership over sinful humanity. Dunn observes that the term "body" is a relational concept that denotes a person embodied in a particular environment. For this reason, the body of Christ enables the believer to enter into the realm of Christ and to participate in Christ's crucified and resurrected body, which liberates the believer from the law of sin.

Based on the analysis in this part, I suggested that Paul's statement in Rom 7:4, reading "you [believers] were put to death to the law through the body of Christ," means that the believer's death to the law is a spiritual death to the law of sin through the believer's participation in Christ's crucified and resurrected body. The spiritual death denotes a change of rule from being under the rule of the law of sin, associated with the realm of sin, to being in the realm of Christ, associated with the believer's liberation from the rule of the law of sin through Christ's death and resurrection.

Exegetical Analysis (Gal 2:11–21)

In this part, I examine the meaning of the believer's death to the law through the law in Gal 2:19. The question is whether "through the law" refers to the law embodied in Christ, which is the law of God that enables life and expresses the rule of Christ. To answer this question, I provide an exegetical analysis of verses 11–21. As part of this exegesis, I focus first on the meaning of the believer's death; second, on the meaning of "to the law;" and third, on the meaning of "through the law."

Paul’s account of the Antiochian incident in verses 11–21 addresses Cephas’s hypocritical behavior.⁶⁸ DeSilva points out that “there is no clear point of transition” between Paul’s response to Cephas and “Paul’s response to the arguments of rival teachers” in the congregations of Galatia. Rather, Paul’s response to Cephas “speaks also and fully to the situation in Galatia.”⁶⁹ Cephas disregarded the Jewish lifestyle while joining the Jewish-Gentile Christian congregation at Antioch (vv. 12, 14). However, when those of James arrived, Cephas and other Jews drew back and separated themselves from the Gentile believers (vv. 12–13). Therefore, Paul asks Cephas in verse 14 εἰ σὺ Ἰουδαῖος ὑπάρχων ἔθνικῶς καὶ οὐχὶ Ἰουδαϊκῶς ζῆς, πῶς τὰ ἔθνη ἀναγκάζεις ἰουδαΐζειν; (“if you, being a Jew live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews?”). Longenecker observes that “Ἰουδαῖος is here contrasted with τὰ ἔθνη in the apodosis of the sentence, with the context demanding that these terms be read as ‘a Jewish believer’ and ‘Gentile believers’ respectively (cf. also τῶν ἐθνῶν of v 12).”⁷⁰ The present tense of the verb ζῆς (“you are living”) indicates “Cephas’s habit of life,” which means that “Cephas had not abandoned a nonlegal lifestyle on any permanent

⁶⁸ To determine the immediate context of Gal 2:19 is challenging. In verse 10, Paul ends the narrative on his visit to Jerusalem (vv. 1–10). The conjunctions ὅτε δὲ (“but when”) in verse 11 certainly introduce the so-called Antiochian incident. However, scholarship does not agree where the account of the Antiochian incident comes to an end. Some scholars argue that the account ends in verse 14. See Betz, *Galatians*, 113–14; Longenecker, *Galatians*, 80–81. Note the change from first-person singular to first-person plural that could mark the transition from the historical narrative part to the theological exposition of the letter. Other scholars argue that it ends with verse 21 due to the direct address ὁ ἀνόητοι Γαλάται (oh, foolish Galatians!) in 3:1 which marks the beginning of a new paragraph. See for example Dunn, *Galatians*, 132–50; George, *Galatians* 188–202; Schreiner, *Galatians*, 150; Moo, *Galatians*, 153; Keener, *Galatians*, 167. For further suggestions on where the account on the Antiochian incident ends, see Schreiner, *Galatians*, 150. Das considers a decision on this matter as unnecessary. See Das, *Galatians*, 238. This view applies also for this study.

⁶⁹ deSilva, *Galatians*, 213.

⁷⁰ Longenecker, *Galatians*, 78.

basis.”⁷¹ Paul’s question implies that if a Jewish Christian can live like Gentile Christians, then the lifestyle of Gentile Christians is sufficient.⁷² Thus, Gentile Christians do not have to live like Jews. However, Cephas’s return to a Jewish lifestyle put pressure on the Gentile Christians to live like Jews.⁷³ The behavior of Cephas and the other Jews implied that a Jewish lifestyle was required to attain righteousness.⁷⁴ This implication finds further support in verse 15 when Paul expresses Jewish sentiments by pointing to the different natural conditions of Jews and Gentiles, stating that ἡμεῖς φύσει Ἰουδαῖοι καὶ οὐκ ἐξ ἔθνῶν ἁμαρτωλοὶ (“by nature, we are Jews and not Gentile sinners”).⁷⁵ Verse 15 associates Gentiles with sinners. This association raises an unexpressed question of whether it is a sin to live like Gentile Christians. If the answer is yes, it implies that Gentiles Christians must adopt a Jewish lifestyle to attain righteousness.

In verse 16, Paul counteracts the unexpressed question stating, εἰδότες [δὲ]⁷⁶ ὅτι οὐ δικαιούται ἄνθρωπος ἐξ ἔργων νόμου ἐὰν μὴ διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ ἡμεῖς εἰς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐπιστεύσαμεν (“yet, knowing that a human being is declared righteous

⁷¹ Longenecker, *Galatians*, 78. For further possibilities to interpret the present tense of the verb ζῆς (“you are living”), see Das, *Galatians*, 213–14.

⁷² Betz supports the notion of accepting a Gentile Christian lifestyle as sufficient, stating “when they [Jewish Christians] gave up the observance of the Torah, they also admitted that as a Christian one can be saved without the Torah.” See Betz, *Galatians*, 112.

⁷³ BDAG defines the verb ἰουδαῖζω as “live in Judean or Jewish fashion.” See “ἰουδαῖζω,” *BDAG* 476. What issues were actually involved in Cephas’s behavior at Antioch is not of interest for this study. For a discussion on some proposals, see Das, *Galatians*, 216–32.

⁷⁴ Similarly, Schreiner argues Cephas “was now implying that Gentiles had to live like Jews to become part of the people of God.” See Schreiner, *Galatians*, 147.

⁷⁵ Betz identifies Paul’s statement as “common ground between him and Jewish Christianity.” See Betz, *Galatians*, 115. See also Longenecker, *Galatians*, 83; Moo, *Galatians*, 156; Das, *Galatians*, 239.

⁷⁶ In my opinion, it is legitimate to include the conjunction δὲ (“yet”) as part of the text.

not by the works of the law but only through faith in Christ, we have also believed in Christ Jesus”). The participle εἰδότες (“knowing”) refers to common knowledge⁷⁷ and is best understood as a causal participle reading “because knowing.”⁷⁸ Verse 16 clarifies that the believer in Christ knows about the impossibility of righteousness by works of the law, which negates the idea that a Jewish lifestyle is crucial to attaining righteousness.⁷⁹ For this reason, the content in verse 16 opposes the type of behavior Cephas displayed, revealing that Cephas acted against his better knowledge while in Antioch.

In verse 17, Paul formulates a statement regarding the righteousness of a believer in Christ in the form of a first-class conditional clause, which indicates “the assumption of truth for the sake of the argument.”⁸⁰ In the protasis, Paul associates those who believe in Christ with sinners stating, εἰ δὲ ζητοῦντες δικαιοθῆναι ἐν Χριστῷ εὐρέθημεν καὶ αὐτοὶ ἁμαρτωλοὶ (“but if we also were found sinners although seeking righteousness in Christ”). The conjunction καὶ (“also”) refers back to verse 15, connecting Gentiles as sinners with believers in Christ as sinners (v. 17).⁸¹ The phrase, “we also were found sinners,” indicates that Paul expresses Jewish sentiments against the believers in Christ

⁷⁷ Similarly, Longenecker, *Galatians*, 83, Das, *Galatians*, 240.

⁷⁸ Similarly, Burton, *Galatians*, 119; Moisés Silva, “Galatians,” in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, eds. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic; Nottingham: Apollos, 2007), 785–812. A different view argues for reading the participle εἰδότες (“knowing”) as a concessive participle modifying verse 15. See Schreiner, *Galatians*, 154n12.

⁷⁹ For a detailed defense of the traditional reading of Gal 2:16, see Das, *Galatians*, 241–57.

⁸⁰ Wallace, *Grammar*, 690.

⁸¹ Similarly, Mussner, *Galaterbrief*, 176n41.

who do not live like Jews.⁸² In the apodosis, Paul makes an inference, asking ἄρα Χριστὸς ἀμαρτίας διάκονος (“is then Christ, a servant of sin?”). From the Jewish viewpoint, Christ is a servant of sin because he cannot provide righteousness to his believers since their faith in Christ does not result in the observance of the law of Moses.⁸³ Paul’s typical rejection μὴ γένοιτο (“never ever!”) indicates that the apodosis contains potential conclusions of the opposers that Paul does not share.

In verse 18, Paul switches from first-person plural (vv. 15–17) to the first-person singular (vv. 18–21). This switch indicates that Paul not only hints at Cephas’s hypocritical behavior (see vv. 12–13), which endorsed righteousness by works of the law, (see v. 14) but makes a general case.⁸⁴ Thus, what follows not only applies to Jewish Christians, but also to Gentile Christians.

In verses 18–21, Paul further elaborates on his statement in verse 17. In verse 18, Paul refers back to the protasis of verse 17 by elaborating the case in which the believer is actually found to be a sinner.⁸⁵ Paul states in another first-class conditional clause εἰ γὰρ ἂ κατέλυσα ταῦτα πάλιν οἰκοδομῶ, παραβάτην ἑμαυτὸν συνιστάνω (“for if I again build up the things, I have previously torn down, I demonstrate myself as a

⁸² Similarly, Betz, *Galatians*, 119; Longenecker, *Galatians*, 90. DeSilva observes that “verse 17 introduces a potential objection to Paul’s position,” namely that the law of Moses is not sufficient to attain acquittal in God’s judgment. See deSilva, *Galatians*, 213–14.

⁸³ Similarly, Betz, *Galatians*, 120.

⁸⁴ For a detailed discussion on the identification and meaning of the “I” in Gal 2:18–21, see Mussner, *Galaterbrief*, 177–78.

⁸⁵ Similarly, Mussner, *Galaterbrief*, 178–79.

transgressor”).⁸⁶ Scholars have suggested different interpretations of verse 18. The first view argues that the committed transgression relates to a period when Jewish Christians adopted a Gentile Christian lifestyle. When Jewish Christians return to the Jewish lifestyle, they must acknowledge their guilt in transgressing the law of Moses by their choice to adopt a Gentile Christian lifestyle.⁸⁷ Jan Lambrecht raises three valid reasons against this reading. He states:

First, too much remains implicit, unsaid, in such a train of thought, more particularly the transition from ‘I show (now) that (then) I was a transgressor’. Second, *συνιστάνω* [I prove] does not have elsewhere in Paul’s letters the nuance of ‘I recognize, I confess,’ . . . Third, one cannot see how the *γάρ* sentence of v. 19 explains and motivates v. 18 when this interpretation is accepted.⁸⁸

A second view is put forward by Lambrecht. Based on parallelism between verse 18 and 21, he sees an identification between the noun *παραβάτην* (“transgressor”) in verse 18 and the verb *ἀθετῶ* (“I nullify”) in verse 21. For him, the object of transgression and nullification is God’s grace and not the law.⁸⁹ Therefore, he argues that “by the restoration of the Law Paul would destroy God’s grace and become *ipso facto* a transgressor of the new command to live for God.”⁹⁰ Moo’s observation that *παραβάτης* (“transgressor”) refers to violation of the law questions Lambrecht’s view. Moo states that “in the NT this word, along with its cognate *παράβασις* . . . refers to violation of the

⁸⁶ Similarly, Longenecker identifies the conditional clause in verse 18 as a first-class conditional clause. See Longenecker, *Galatians*, 90.

⁸⁷ See for example, Marie-Joseph Lagrange, *Saint Paul épître aux Galates*, EBib (Paris: Librairie Lecoffre, 1950), 50; Mussner, *Galaterbrief*, 177–79; Rohde, *Galater*, 114.

⁸⁸ See Jan Lambrecht, “Transgressor by Nullifying God’s Grace: A Study of Gal 2,18–21,” *Bib* 72 (1991): 217–36.

⁸⁹ Lambrecht, “Transgressor,” 235–36.

⁹⁰ Lambrecht, “Transgressor,” 236.

law.”⁹¹ Lambrecht seemingly contradicts himself. In one aspect, he argues that the object of transgression is not the law, but the grace of God. In another aspect, he argues that the object of transgression is the new commandment, namely to live to God. Thus, Lambrecht admits that παραβάτην (“transgressor”) must relate to a law.

A third view held by most scholars argues that if a believer again builds up the law of Moses as the means to attain righteousness, then the believer will prove oneself to be, in subsequent actions, a transgressor of the restored law. The restoration of the law of Moses leads to its transgression due to the impossibility of keeping it.⁹² Lambrecht raises three reasons against the suggested reading. First, he questions the link between “the object of transgression in v.18b and the ταῦτα ἃ κατέλυσα [things, I have previously torn down] in v. 18a” stating that it “is not so clear since Paul is thinking of radical moral sin . . . not of breaking ceremonial prescriptions.” Second, the future sense of συνιστάνω (“I [will] demonstrate”) “is not so easy to accept.” Third, “the logical connection between v. 18 and v. 19 is equally difficult.”⁹³

Despite Lambrecht’s concerns, I favor the third view. As the following discussion shows, I maintain a different understanding of the meaning of “to the law” and “through the law” in verse 19, which has implications for interpreting verse 18. I understand the phrase πάλιν οικοδομῶ (“rebuild”) in verse 18 as not limited to Jewish Christians and their return to a Jewish lifestyle, but rather as a general reference. Thus, Paul’s statements in verses 18–21 apply to both Jewish and Gentile Christians. The believer in Christ is

⁹¹ Moo, *Galatians*, 167.

⁹² Similarly, Burton, *Galatians*, 130–31; Schlier, *Galater*, 97–98; Schreiner, *Galatians*, 169–70.

⁹³ See Lambrecht, “Transgressor,” 233.

found a sinner (v. 17) or transgressor (v. 18) when endorsing righteousness by the works of the law, returning thereby under the rule of sin and rejecting righteousness by faith (see 5:1–5).

In verse 19, Paul refers back to the apodosis of verse 17. In verse 17, I argued that from the Jewish viewpoint, Christ is a servant of sin because the believer in Christ does not fulfill the requirements of the law of Moses. The observation that a believer does not show the works of the law is to a certain degree valid, both from a Jewish perspective and from a Pauline perspective.⁹⁴ However, Betz correctly points out that believers in Christ “cannot be regarded as ‘sinners’ in the Jewish sense of the term, that is, as living outside of the realm of God’s salvation.”⁹⁵ In verse 19, Paul explains why the believer in Christ is within the realm of God’s salvation and thus not condemned by the law, although one fails to show the works of the law. Thus, after providing the case in verse 18, where the believer in Christ who is identified as a sinner is actually found to be a sinner, Paul provides a case in verse 19, where the believer in Christ who is identified as a sinner is then found righteous. Paul states in verse 19 ἐγὼ γὰρ διὰ νόμου νόμῳ ἀπέθανον, ἵνα θεῷ ζήσω (“for I myself died to the law through the law, so that I might live to God”).

Before dealing with the believer’s relationship to the law of God, it is crucial to clarify its requirements. There are two requirements of the law. First, human beings must keep the entire law in order to live (see 3:10–12). This requirement is impossible to fulfill since no sinful human being can keep the entire law (2:16, see also Rom 3:19–20).

⁹⁴ See the discussion on the continuous sinfulness of the believer on pages 232–46.

⁹⁵ Betz, *Galatians*, 120.

Second, the law's transgressor must die (5:12; 6:23, see also Gen 2:16). The fulfillment of the second requirement excludes the ongoing existence of the transgressor of the law. Thus, it is impossible for a sinful human being by one's own efforts to keep the entire law or to die to the law and yet live.

The exegesis on Gal 2:19 focuses on three questions. First, what is the meaning of the believer's death? Second, what is the meaning of the dative object νόμῳ ("to the law")? Third, what is the meaning of the prepositional phrase διὰ νόμου ("through the law")?

The Meaning of the Believer's Death (Gal 2:19)

The purpose of the believer's death to the law indicates that Paul has a spiritual death in mind since the believer continues to exist after experiencing death to the law. In Gal 2:19, the purpose is indicated by the ἵνα-clause ἵνα θεῷ ζήσω ("so that I [believer] might live to God").⁹⁶ The purpose of the believer's death to the law is the believer's life in relation to God. In other words, the believer who died to the law died a spiritual death.

Furthermore, the purpose reveals that the spiritual death not only separates the believer from the law, but also binds the believer to Christ.⁹⁷ Therefore, spiritual death denotes a transition from one ruling power to another ruling power.⁹⁸ The relation between spiritual death and the concept of rulership finds support in Paul's association of

⁹⁶ Similarly, Betz, *Galatians*, 122.

⁹⁷ This is a close conceptual parallel to Rom 7:4.

⁹⁸ Similarly, Jeanette Hagen Pifer states, "in Galatians, this power of two dominions is a dominant motif. . . . Therefore, when Paul speaks of . . . dying to the Law (Gal 2:19), there is a break from the power of the old realm and a re-identification with the new realm in Christ. The existence of the believer in Christ is now determined by this new lordship." See Hagen Pifer, *Faith*, 162–63.

the believer's death to the law with the believer's crucifixion with Christ. Verses 19–20 show that the believer's participation in Christ's death leads to the believer's participation in Christ's life. In verses 19–20, Paul states Χριστῷ συνεσταύρωμαι· ζῶ δὲ οὐκέτι ἐγώ, ζῆ δὲ ἐν ἐμοὶ Χριστός: (“I have been crucified with Christ. But I myself no longer live, but Christ lives in me”).⁹⁹ Paul expresses a similar thought regarding Christ's death in relation to the change of rule in 6:14, stating that δι' οὗ ἐμοὶ κόσμος ἐσταύρωται κατὰ κόσμῳ (“through it [the cross] the world has been crucified to me [the believer], and I [the believer] to the world”). According to this statement, the cross of Christ causes a separation between the believer and the world.¹⁰⁰ In 4:3–5, Paul presents two opposing powers. In verse 3, Paul states that τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου (“the principles of the world”) are enslaving forces. Reicke argues that this phrase is associated with “the fallen world, the flesh, and corruptibility.”¹⁰¹ In verse 5, Paul states that Christ redeems those under the law. The verb ἐξαγοράζω (“to redeem”) typically refers to buying a slave's freedom (see Diodorus Siculus, *The Library of History*, 15.7.1; 36.2.2). Thus, Paul associates “the principles of the world” with the state of being enslaved “under the law.” Christ's death enables redemption and adoption as God's children for those under the law. Paul juxtaposes the enslavement to principles of the world or the law with the adoption as children of God through Christ. Thus, Christ's death enables a change of rulership by

⁹⁹ In most English Bible translations this clause belongs to verse 20. See for example the ESV, NET, NASB, NKJV, KJV, NIV.

¹⁰⁰ Schreiner states “the world no longer rules over them [Christians].” See Schreiner, *Galatians*, 379.

¹⁰¹ Reicke, “Law,” 265. For further interpretative options of the expression τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου, see footnote 94 on page 229.

separating the believer from the rule of the world and the law and binding the believer to the rule of God and Christ (Gal 2:19–20).

The Meaning of “to the Law” (Gal 2:19)

Scholarship mostly interprets the law to which the believer dies in verse 19 to refer to the law of Moses.¹⁰² However, the following discussion shows that the meaning of “to the law” is best understood as the law of sin, which universally condemns all sinful human beings under the rule of sin to death.

In verse 19, Paul juxtaposes the law to which the believer died with God to whom the believer lives after death to the law. The purpose of the believer’s death to the law is, according to Paul, ἵνα θεῷ ζήσω (“so that I [believer] might live to God”).¹⁰³ Paul’s statement implies that the believer did not live to God before his death to the law. Thus, the believer’s death to the law denotes a transition from being unrighteous to being righteous before God (see vv. 20–21; 3:21).¹⁰⁴ This transition entails the end of condemnation to death through the law. Paul’s use of the verb ζάω (“to live”) should not be understood merely on a physical level. It is more probable that ζάω refers, in this case, to the sanctified life (see 2:20, 5:25),¹⁰⁵ which is an indicator of the qualitative distinction between a normal life and a sanctified life that becomes eternal after the final consummation (see 1 Cor 15:51–53). Based on Paul’s statements, I conclude that the law

¹⁰² Mussner, *Galaterbrief*, 179–82; Betz, *Galatians*, 122; Longenecker, *Galatians*, 91; Schreiner, *Galatians*, 170; Moo, *Galatians*, 168; deSilva, *Galatians*, 246–50.

¹⁰³ See Burton, *Galatians*, 134; Betz, *Galatians*, 122; Moo, *Galatians*, 170.

¹⁰⁴ Similarly, Schreiner argues, “those who have died with Christ are free from the power of sin and now live to God.” Schreiner, *Galatians*, 171.

¹⁰⁵ “ζάω,” *BDAG* 424–26.

to which the believer died constitutes a cosmic power associated with the rule of sin that stands in opposition to God. In other words, the believer's death to the law changes rulership from being under the dominion of the law to being under the dominion of God.

The law to which the believer died juxtaposes God to whom the believer lives. This juxtaposition points to universal dimension of the law. The law to which the believer died has a greater sphere of influence than the law of Moses in its written form, which is limited in time and scope. As previously argued, Paul treats the law of Moses as a Greco-Roman positive law because he attributes to it specific characteristics similar to Greco-Roman positive law. According to Paul, the law of Moses is limited in time and scope. Paul points out that the law of Moses came into existence 430 years after the Lord ratified the covenant with Abraham (Gal 3:17) and was exclusively given into the possession of Jews.¹⁰⁶ Thus, the law of Moses cannot condemn human beings before its existence (see Rom 5:12–14) or any Gentiles who do not have the law of Moses. In verses 12–14, Paul argues for a universal law that equally condemns all human beings to death (see also 3:23). The immediate context (Gal 2:16), supports the idea that liberation from condemnation to death through the law is a universal need of humanity. When elaborating on righteousness, Paul uses the noun ἄνθρωπος (“human being”), which indicates the universality of his statement.¹⁰⁷ As previously discussed the law of Moses does function as the law of sin for sinful human beings and condemns them to death if they seek righteousness through works of the law of Moses.¹⁰⁸ However, the phrase “to

¹⁰⁶ See pages 155–61.

¹⁰⁷ Mussner, *Galaterbrief*, 172n29.

¹⁰⁸ See pages 208–12.

the law” is better understood in a more general term as the law of God under the rule of sin and death. The focus of “to the law” is on the condemning aspect of the law of God, when under the rule of sin.

The Meaning of “through the Law” (Gal 2:19)

Current scholarship identifies both references to law in verse 19—the law to which the believer died and the law through which the believer’s death took place—as being the law of Moses.¹⁰⁹ Schlier argues that if Paul originally had two different laws in mind, he could have added a particular specification to differentiate between them.¹¹⁰ Despite accepting Schlier’s argument, Eckstein correctly observes that the difficulty of interpreting the paradoxical phrase ἐγὼ γὰρ διὰ νόμου νόμῳ ἀπέθανον (“for I died to the law through the law”) would be mitigated if διὰ νόμου (“through the law”) denotes “the law of faith” (Rom 3:27), “the law of the Spirit” (8:2), or “the law of Christ” (Gal 6:2).¹¹¹ For this reason, the following discussion examines the option of interpreting the prepositional phrase “through the law” in 2:19.

¹⁰⁹ See Hong, *Law*, 189.

¹¹⁰ See Schlier, *Galater*, 99. Examples of these specifications of the law include the law of faith (Rom 3:27); of man (7:2); of God (vv. 22, 25; 8:2); of my mind (7:23); of sin (vv. 23, 25; 8:2); of the Spirit (8:2), of righteousness (9:31); of Christ (Gal 6:2); of the commandments (Eph 2:15).

¹¹¹ Eckstein, *Gesetz*, 60. Eckstein follows Sieffert’s argument and therefore supports that both laws in 2:19 must refer to the law of Moses. However, Sieffert’s argument remains an argument out of silence.

“Through the Law” as the Law of Moses

There are two different strands of interpretation of the prepositional phrase διὰ νόμου (“through the law”) as the law of Moses.¹¹² The first strand argues that the phrase διὰ νόμου (“through the law”) means that the law of Moses causes the believer to abandon the notion that one can achieve righteousness through the works of the law. Burton observes that Paul does not state “how the necessity of abandoning law was made evident to him [Paul] by law.”¹¹³ There are two major suggestions present in current literature about how the law of Moses causes the believer to abandon the law of Moses. First, the phrase διὰ νόμου (“through the law”) indicates Paul’s own frustrating experience as a Jew who tried to live by the law of Moses. Based on his failure to attain righteousness by the works of the law, Paul concluded that one must die to the law of Moses.¹¹⁴ Second, Blazen suggests that the law of Moses primarily points to the need for Christ as Redeemer and not to a person’s sinfulness. Paul expresses a similar thought in Rom 3:21, where he states that righteousness will be provided χωρὶς νόμου (“apart from the law”).¹¹⁵

¹¹² The presented interpretation is based on Blazen, “Death to Sin,” 506–15; Eckstein, *Gesetz*, 60–66; Keener, *Galatians*, 193–94.

¹¹³ Burton, *Galatians*, 133.

¹¹⁴ Lightfoot, *Galatians*, 118; Burton, *Galatians*, 133; Donald Guthrie, *Galatians*, NCB (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981), 89; George, *Galatians* 199; Moo, *Galatians*, 168–69. Dunn supports this reading to a certain degree, arguing that it was Paul’s zeal for the law prior to his conversion that caused the encounter with Christ and changed his understanding of the law. Dunn, *Galatians*, 143. Keener argues against Dunn that “this was Paul’s misappropriation of the law, not the law itself.” See Keener, *Galatians*, 194.

¹¹⁵ Blazen lists this as a separate view and refers to it as a “perhaps more remote exegetical possibility.” See Blazen, “Death to Sin,” 514. Räisänen considers this interpretation as perhaps a sufficient explanation for Gal 2:19. See Räisänen, *Paul*, 58. Lietzmann comments very briefly on verse 19, but states that the law points the believer to grace. See Lietzmann, *An die Galater*, 16. Betz states that ““through the

A second strand argues that the phrase *διὰ νόμου* (“through the law”) should be understood in light of redemption history. This view emphasizes the parallel statement in 7:4. The phrase “through the law” indicates the law of Moses as an instrument that caused Christ’s death by bringing the curse of the law of Moses upon him (Gal 3:13; 4:4). Through participating in Christ’s death (Rom 6:1–14), the believer dies to the law of Moses, thus experiencing liberation from the curse of the law of Moses.¹¹⁶

As already discussed, the believer’s death to the law (7:4; Gal 2:19) denotes a change of rulership. The interpretation of the phrase “through the law” reflects to a certain degree the aspect of the change of rulership. Current interpretations of the phrase “through the law” do not sufficiently take into account the change of rulership.

“Through the Law” as the Law embodied in Christ

As I previously argued, in Gal 2:19 Paul provides a case where the believer in Christ who is identified as a sinner is found righteous. The phrase “through the law” shows that the law enables the believer to live to God. The following discussion examines the option of interpreting the prepositional phrase “through the law” in 2:19 as the law embodied in Christ.

Torah’ is explained in 3:19–25 by attributing to the Torah an active role in salvation (3:22, . . .” See Betz, *Galatians*, 122.

¹¹⁶ Sieffert, *Galater*, 148–49; Schlier, *Galater*, 98–101; Tannehill, *Dying*, 58–59; Bultmann, *Exegetica*, 397; Mussner, *Galaterbrief*, 180–81; Matera, *Galatians*, 95; Eckstein, *Gesetz*, 64–66; Martyn, *Galatians*, 257; Schreiner, *Galatians*, 170–71; deSilva, *Galatians*, 246–47; Hagen Pifer, *Faith*, 161; Keener, *Galatians*, 193–94.

Conceptual Parallel between Romans
7:4; 8:2 and Galatians 2:19

The conceptual parallel between Gal 2:19 and Rom 8:1–4 sheds light on the meaning of “through the law.”¹¹⁷ Both verses refer to two laws that are in opposition to each other. In both verses, one law serves as a means to liberate the believer from another law. Whereas the law that liberates in Gal 2:19 is not further specified, Paul labels the law that liberates in Rom 8:2 as the law τοῦ πνεύματος τῆς ζωῆς ἐν Χριστῷ (“of the Spirit of life in Christ”). The Spirit in relation to life refers to the divine entity that provides eternal life (vv. 5–13; Gal 6:8). The prepositional phrase ἐν Χριστῷ (“in Christ”) defines the law as embodied in Christ.

In Rom 8:1–4, Paul clarifies why the believer is not condemned to death despite sinful actions (see 7:14–25).¹¹⁸ In 8:3, Paul states that God κατέκρινεν τὴν ἁμαρτίαν ἐν τῇ σαρκί (“condemned sin in the flesh”). The syntax identifies “the sin” as the direct object of God’s condemnation. The prepositional phrase “in the flesh” refers to sinful human beings and denotes the locus where God’s condemnation of sin takes place. In other words, God condemns sin found within the sinful human being and not the sinful human being themselves. Therefore, the condemnation of sin describes the believer’s liberation from condemnation of the law of sin and death (vv. 1–2). The added participial clause in verse 3 reading τὸν ἑαυτοῦ υἱὸν πέμψας ἐν ὁμοιώματι σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας καὶ περὶ

¹¹⁷ Similarly, Lagrange, *Galates*, 51.

¹¹⁸ In Rom 7:14–25, Paul clarifies that, despite the believer’s liberation from the rule of sin, sin (vv. 17, 20) and the law of sin (vv. 23, 25) remain in the believer’s bodily parts, causing a divergence between the will and the action of the “I.” I argue that although the “I” in verses 14–25 is an autobiographical reference to Paul, it is best understood rhetorically as a reference to all believers in Christ. In verse 20, Paul points out that sin is responsible for the sinful actions of the believer. Thus, although the believer acts sinfully, there is, as far as the believer’s legal status is concerned, no condemnation to death through the law of sin for committed sins.

ἁμαρτίας (“by having sent his Son [Christ] in the likeness of sinful flesh and as a sin offering”) describes the means through which God condemns sin. Further, the conjunction γάρ (“for”) links God’s condemnation of sin within the believer (v. 3) to the law of the Spirit of life in Christ (v. 2). Thus, God could condemn sin because he sent Christ as a sin offering (v. 3)¹¹⁹ and because of the law of the Spirit of life in Christ (v. 2). Verses 2–3 reveal that the law of the Spirit of life in Christ and Christ’s role as a sin offering are inseparably bound together as the means by which the believer is liberated from the law of sin and death.

The conceptual parallel between Rom 7:4; 8:2 and Gal 2:19 suggests that “through the law” in verse 19 relates to Christ’s salvific function. The current consensus of scholarship is that “through the law” refers to the condemnatory function of the law (of Moses). My argument is that “through the law” belongs to the realm of Christ and is associated with the acquittal.

Association of “Through the Law” with Christ and the Acquittal

Humanity’s fall led to a spiritual death in relation to God and universal condemnation in relation to death through the law of sin. I attribute the law’s condemnatory function to the law of sin (law of God under the rule of sin and death), which is the law to which the believer dies in Christ. However, the meaning of “through the law” extends beyond the condemnatory function of the law. The law through which the believer dies liberates the believer from condemnation of the law and enables the

¹¹⁹ For a discussion on Christ as a *περὶ ἁμαρτίας*, see pages 100–5.

believer's present and eternal life to God (Rom 7:4; 8:2; Gal 2:19–21, see also Rom 6:4–5, 8, 10–11, 22–23). In other words, the law, through which the believer dies, restores the relationship between a sinful human being and God, and the original purpose of the law of God, namely to ensure life (see 7:10). I maintain that whereas the law of sin does condemn, this condemnation is not what justifies the believer. Rather, “through the law” refers to the law of God fulfilled in Christ that liberates and justifies the believer. Therefore, the phrase “through the law” in Gal 2:19 refers to the law associated with Christ and the acquittal. The crucified and resurrected body of Christ (Rom 7:4) and the law of God embodied in Christ (8:2) are interrelated concepts dealing with the reign of God and Christ over the believer. The discussion of the following three passages (Phil 2:8; Rom 5:12–21; 2 Cor 5:21) further demonstrate the interrelation between Christ's death and Christ's righteousness relative to the law of God.

In Phil 2:8, Paul states that Christ ἐταπείνωσεν ἑαυτὸν γενόμενος ὑπήκοος μέχρι θανάτου, θανάτου δὲ σταυροῦ (“humbled himself by becoming obedient unto death, even unto death on the cross”). Joachim Gnilka argues that μέχρι (“unto”) in verse 8 can only be interpreted in an intensifying sense.¹²⁰ Similarly, G. Walter Hansen states, that μέχρι “is not a measurement of the time of obedience, but of the degree of obedience. The point is not so much how long, but how much Christ became obedient. ‘Jesus’ obedience took him to the nth degree, to death itself.”¹²¹ Thus, Christ's death, as a climax of Christ's obedience implies that during his human life, Christ was obedient to God in

¹²⁰ Joachim Gnilka, *Der Philipperbrief*, HThKNT 10 (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1968), 123.

¹²¹ G. Walter Hansen, *The Letter to the Philippians*, TPNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; Nottingham: Apollos, 2009), 156.

everything,¹²² including the law of God (see Gal 4:4).¹²³ Ralph P. Martin points out that “Jesus’ whole life was one of submission, for this is the determining characteristic of a slave [see Phil 2:7] who owes all obedience to his master.”¹²⁴

In Rom 5:12–21, Paul presents Christ’s “act of righteousness” (v. 18) and “obedience” (v. 19) as the power “to overcome Adam’s act of disobedience.”¹²⁵ Verses 12–21 suggest a close relationship between Adam’s sin and the sinfulness of all human beings. Paul argues that humanity by nature belongs to Adam’s line and therefore participates in Adam’s sin. Moo states that Adam is “both a historical figure and a corporate figure, whose sin could be regarded at the same time as the sin of all his descendants.”¹²⁶ By contrast, Christ’s “act of righteousness” and “obedience” grant to the believer the possibility to transition into Christ’s line and therefore to participate in Christ’s and God’s righteousness (v. 19). Although the terms “act of righteousness” and “obedience” primarily refer to Christ’s death on the cross, Christ’s entire righteous life cannot be excluded. Christ is the locus of righteousness (see v. 21; 1 Cor 1:30), and it is exclusively by being in the line of Christ that the believer is considered righteous by God.

¹²² God as the object of Christ’s obedience “may be inferred from the subject of the next sentence (God exalted him) [v. 9] and from the final line of the hymn (to the glory of God the Father) [v. 11].” See Hansen, *Philippians*, 156. See also F. F. Bruce, *Philippians*, NIBC 11 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1989), 71, 79.

¹²³ Bruce J. Malina and Jerome H. Neyrey note that “obedience, moreover, belongs to the cardinal virtue of justice (*dikaïosynê*), which would likewise be readily perceived by Paul’s audience as implying other consequent values such as faithfulness and loyalty.” See Bruce J. Malina and Jerome H. Neyrey, *Portraits of Paul: An Archaeology of Ancient Personality* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1996), 195.

¹²⁴ Ralph P. Martin, *Philippians: An Introduction and Commentary*, TNTC 11 (Nottingham; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1987), 111.

¹²⁵ Moo, *Romans*, 343.

¹²⁶ Moo, *Romans*, 355.

In 2 Cor 5:21, Paul links Christ's role as a sin offering to the believer's righteous status. Paul states, τὸν μὴ γνόντα ἁμαρτίαν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἁμαρτίαν ἐποίησεν ("he [God] made the one who did not know sin, a sin offering for us"). I previously argued that Paul's second use of ἁμαρτίαν in verse 21 refers to a "sin offering" (so also Rom 8:3).¹²⁷ Christ's role as a sin offering reveals two aspects. First, Christ was morally blameless, similar to a physically unblemished Levitical sin offering (see Lev 4:1–5:13), which means that Christ kept the entire law of God. This implication is supported by Paul's explicit statement in 2 Cor 5:21 that describes Christ as τὸν μὴ γνόντα ἁμαρτίαν ("he who did not know sin"). Christ never gained experiential knowledge of sin and therefore was righteous. Second, Christ vicariously died for the transgressions of sinful human beings (see Rom 4:25).¹²⁸ The prepositional phrase ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ("for us") expresses substitution, which involves representation.¹²⁹ Furthermore, in 2 Cor 5:21, Paul shows that the purpose of Christ's role as a sin offering is to enable ἵνα ἡμεῖς γενώμεθα δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ ("that we [believer] become the righteousness of God"), which is the believer's participation in the righteousness of God.¹³⁰ The prepositional phrase ἐν αὐτῷ ("in him") in verse 21 ties the believer's becoming "the righteousness of God" to the union with Christ. Thus, it is Christ's righteousness, which includes Christ's vicarious death,¹³¹ that enables the

¹²⁷ See pages 105–10.

¹²⁸ See pages 100–10 and pages 214–15.

¹²⁹ Wallace, *Grammar*, 383.

¹³⁰ Bird notes that such a status of the believer "stems from being 'in Christ,' and the GNB is probably correct in opting for a translation of 'in union with him we might share the righteousness of God.'" See Bird, "Incorporated Righteousness," 273.

¹³¹ Christ's submission to a vicarious death is the supreme manifestation of his righteousness (see Isa 53).

believers' righteousness before God and reconciles them with him (vv. 19–21). All three passages (Rom 5:12–21; 2 Cor 5:21; Phil 2:8) demonstrate that Christ's obedience to God extends beyond the requirement to keep the entire law of God. His obedience includes his salvific function, namely his vicarious death for humanity's transgression of the law of God.

“Through the Law” as Participation in the Law of God Fulfilled in Christ

If “through the law” in Gal 2:19 refers to the law of God embodied in Christ,¹³² then the phrase denotes the believer's participation in the law of God embodied in Christ (see Rom 8:2), which is similar to the believer's participation in Christ's crucified and resurrected body (see 7:4). In Gal 2:19, Paul states ἐγὼ γὰρ διὰ νόμου νόμῳ ἀπέθανον, ἵνα θεῷ ζήσω (“For through the law I died to the law so that I might live to God”). This statement clarifies that the law has liberating power and is related to the righteous status of the believer, which enables the believer's life in God.¹³³

The discussed passages (Rom 5:12–21; 8:1–4; 2 Cor 5:21; Phil 2:8) have shown that Christ's righteousness includes the fulfillment of both requirements of the law of God. First, Christ did not know sin, which means that he kept the entire law of God and

¹³² I previously argued that Christ was never subjugated to the rule of sin, and therefore embodied the law of God leading to life, which never turned into the law of sin causing death (see pp. 214–15).

¹³³ Regarding the ongoing validity of the law, Nygren argues, “to Paul there can be no thought of the law dying. It is not a case of the Christian's decision to regard the law as repealed and nonexistent. No one is really ‘freed from the law’ in any such way; the claim of the law would continue undiminished. Nor can it be said that, with the coming of Christ, the law was outdated and abolished. The law continues, and it constantly lays its claim on man, regardless of whether he acknowledges it or not. One does not escape the sway of the law by neglecting its mandate. The law does not die. There is only one liberation. Only the fact that the Christian has died with Christ is he really and truly set beyond the realm of the law. Paul's emphasis lies on this genuine liberation.” See Nygren, *Romans*, 272.

embodied the law of God that is associated with life. Second, Christ vicariously died for the transgressions of sinful human beings. The law of sin no longer condemns those who participate in the law of God embodied in Christ because they satisfy both requirements of the law of God. The believer's participation in and satisfaction of the law of God embodied in Christ has nothing to do with the believer's works of the law, but is an act of faith in Christ (Gal 2:16; 20). Christ, who embodies the law of God, functions as a lawgiver who provides a law that enables a righteous status for sinful human beings through union with him. Therefore, the law of God embodied in Christ becomes the governing law over the believers and liberates them from the law of sin. The law embodied in Christ has liberating power because it is fulfilled and satisfies the requirements of the law of God.

The Greco-Roman concept of a divine σωτήρ (“savior”) who gives to his citizens the law through the embodiment of natural law in himself may further contribute to an understanding of how the law embodied in Christ liberates the believer from condemnation of the law of sin. The study of the Greco-Roman legal concept revealed that a change in circumstance could render positive laws unjust or even life-threatening to citizens.¹³⁴ Plato argues that in this case, a divine σωτήρ (“savior”), a statesman who embodied natural law, was required to adjust positive laws to a changed circumstance and thereby save citizens of the law (Plato, *Pol.* 296d–e). A statesman who embodied natural law was praised among Neopythagoreans as a νόμος ἔμψυχος (“living law”). Those who were subjugated to the rule of an ideal statesman and thus under the governance of a

¹³⁴ See pages 22–24.

“living law” gained harmony with fellow citizens and the cosmos by means of this statesman.

As previously discussed, Adam’s transgression introduced a changed circumstance in which the law of God turned against humanity.¹³⁵ Through the embodiment of sin, the law of God became a law of sin through which sin universally doled out death to sinful humanity. In a manner similar to the ideal Greco-Roman divine σωτήρ (“savior”), Christ embodies the universal and eternal law of God that leads to life. This life-giving law can only become a governing law of sinful human beings when they are under the rule of Christ. By entering the realm of Christ, the believer participates in the law of God embodied in Christ, which includes both Christ’s righteousness and vicarious death, thereby liberating the believer from the law of sin. As the Greco-Roman savior, being a living law, created harmony between the subjugated citizens and the cosmos, so also Christ by embodying a universal and eternal law of God leading to life creates harmony between sinful human beings and God.

Based on the exegetical and theological analysis discussed above, I conclude that the phrase “through the law” in Gal 2:19 refers to the law of God embodied in Christ, which enables the believer’s satisfaction of the law of God and liberates them from condemnation to death through the law of sin.

Summary

In this part, I examined the meaning of the believer’s death to the law through the law in Gal 2:19. Paul’s reference to the Antiochian incident (vv. 11–21) deals with the

¹³⁵ See pages 201–8.

accusation that Christ is a servant of sin since the believer in Christ who advocates righteousness by faith in Christ fails to keep the requirements of the law (v. 17). In verse 18, Paul clarifies under which condition the believer actually becomes a transgressor of the law, namely, when returning under righteousness by works of the law. In verse 19, Paul clarifies under which condition the believer who fails to show the works of the law becomes righteous and not condemned by the law.

The exegetical analysis on “to the law” revealed the law to which the believer died is a universal power in opposition to God. For this reason, the law to which the believer died is the law of sin. The exegetical analysis on “through the law” has revealed that the interpretation of the phrase must regard the aspect of a change of rule. The conceptual parallel to Rom 8:2 helps to identify this law as the law of God embodied in Christ. Through participation in the law of God embodied in Christ, the believer satisfies both requirements of the law of God and experiences freedom from condemnation of the law of sin and death. Therefore, the law of God embodied in Christ becomes a governing law of the believer and denotes the rule of God and Christ over the believer.

Based on the analysis in this part, Paul’s statement in Gal 2:19, “for I died through the law to the law,” means that the believer’s death to the law is a spiritual death. The spiritual death denotes a change of rule from being under the jurisdiction of the law of sin that condemns to death, to being under the jurisdiction of the law of God embodied in Christ that leads to life.

Conclusion

The exegetical study on Rom 7:4 and Gal 2:19 has revealed that Paul refers to the same event in these verses. In both texts, Paul refers to the believer's spiritual death, which involves change in rulership. In both texts, "to the law" refers to the law of sin that condemns sinful human beings under the rule of sin to death. In both texts, the believer experiences liberation from the condemnation of the law of sin by participation in "the body of Christ" in Rom 7:4 and the "law" in Gal 2:19, respectively.

The means of the believer's death to the law of sin, "the body of Christ," and the "law," differ terminologically, but not conceptually. Both relate to Christ's salvific function and are associated with the acquittal in the realm of Christ. The discussion of Rom 5:12–21; 8:1–4; 2 Cor 5:21; Phil 2:8 showed an interrelation between Christ's death and Christ's righteousness. All passages demonstrated that Christ's righteousness includes the fulfillment of both requirements of the law of God. First, Christ never gained experiential knowledge of sin. Second, Christ vicariously died for the transgressors of the law. Therefore, both the "the body of Christ," which refers to the crucified and resurrected body of Christ, and the "law," which refers to the law of God embodied in Christ, express Christ's righteousness. The believer experiences liberation from the law of sin by participation in the crucified and resurrected body of Christ and the law of God embodied in Christ, respectively, through which one gains a righteous status in the eyes of God.

CHAPTER 7

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This chapter consists of a summary, followed by conclusions based on the insights of this study.

Summary

Based on terminological, syntactical, and thematic parallels between Rom 6:2, 7:4, and Gal 2:19, this study dealt with the question of the relationship between the body of Christ and the law, as well as between the law and sin. The study has shown that the concept of sinfulness or righteousness is impossible to uphold without a law.

Regarding the relationship between sin (Rom 6:2) and the law (Rom 7:4; Gal 2:19), the study has revealed that sin turns the law of God into the law of sin. Through Adam's transgression of God's commandment, humanity spiritually died to God, meaning that humanity transitioned from being under the rule of God to being under the rule of sin. Since humanity's fall, human beings by nature embody sin, which turns the law of God into the law of sin, making it sin's means to condemn humanity to death. Hence, sinful human beings cannot obtain righteousness through the law by their own works.

Regarding the relationship between the body of Christ (Rom 7:4) and the law (Gal 2:19), the study has revealed that Christ provides a law that enables righteousness for sinful human beings through his death and resurrection. Christ's death and

resurrection are linked with the fulfillment of the requirements of the law of God. First, the requirement that human beings are obliged to keep the entire law to live and, second, the requirement that a transgressor of the law must die. The study has shown that Christ's obedience to God included his vicarious death. Christ died despite not being a transgressor of the law, and was resurrected due to his righteousness. Christ's death to sin and his resurrection (Rom 6:9–10) terminated the universal rule of sin and death and enabled the believer's participation in the law of God, embodied in Christ or Christ's crucified and resurrected body. Christ's fulfillment of the law of God enables the believer's righteous status, liberating the believer from the condemnation to death and leading to eternal life. Without Christ's death to sin, the believer cannot satisfy the law's requirement that the transgressor of the law must die. Without Christ's resurrection, which manifests Christ's righteousness, it is impossible for the believer to live unto God and to, similarly, experience resurrection to eternal life. Therefore, "the body of Christ" (Rom 7:4), as a reference to Christ's death and resurrection, and the law through which the believer dies (Gal 2:19), as a reference to the law of God fulfilled in Christ, are inseparably linked and constitute the means of the believer's liberation from the rule of sin and condemnation to death.

The believer's spiritual death to sin (Rom 6:2) and the law of sin (7:4; Gal 2:19) refers to the believer's transition from being subjugated to the rule of sin and the law of sin to a new subjugation to the rule of God and the law embodied in Christ.

Conclusion

This study shows overlap with existing scholarship regarding the change of rulership. The study affirms that the believer's death to sin and the law constitutes a change of rule from being under the rule of sin to being under the rule of God. The believer experiences liberation from the rule of sin by participation in Christ's salvific action. Although the believer is liberated, the full salvation of the believer is in the future when one experiences physical renewal at the parousia.

This study also shows overlap with existing scholarship regarding the meaning of the law in Rom 7:4 and Gal 2:19. Current scholars understand the law in Paul as limited to the law of Moses. The study has shown that Paul implements Greco-Roman legal concepts in his legal discourse. He attributes characteristics of Greco-Roman positive law to the law of Moses, such as being a written law with a limited scope, and being exclusively given to the nation of Israel at Mount Sinai for a set amount of time. Concurrently, he attributes to the law characteristics of Greco-Roman natural law, such as infinity in time and scope and the ability to be embodied. Furthermore, the study has shown that the law that condemns is also universal in time and scope. Therefore, the law to which the believer dies in Rom 7:4 and Gal 2:19 is better understood as the law of sin, which is the universal law of God as sin's instrument to condemn sinful human beings to death.

Second, most scholars limit the role of the law in Paul to the condemning function. However, this study has shown that the original purpose of the law of God was not the condemnation to death, but rather to safeguard life. In fact, this study has shown that the law is also part of the solution. Both the concept of sinfulness and the concept of

righteousness depend on the law. Through his death and resurrection, Christ fulfilled the requirements of the law of God and thereby enables the believer's participation in his righteousness.

This study affirms the universality and exclusivity of righteousness by faith in Christ. It is a common assumption in Pauline scholarship that Paul's concept of righteousness by faith presupposes the abrogation of the law. This study, however, has shown that righteousness by faith and the fulfillment of the law are not mutually exclusive. In fact, the fulfillment of the law is essential in the salvation of the believer, but the fulfillment of the law of God is solely with Christ. The believer satisfies the law of God not through one's own efforts, but by participation in the law of God fulfilled by Christ.

The concept of the law of sin I argue clarifies why the believer cannot fulfill the law of God by one's own effort. Sin and the law of sin remain present in the believer's body, causing the believer's sinful human nature and mortality. Therefore, it is impossible for the believer to completely overcome sin or the tendency to sin until the bodily resurrection or transformation at the parousia.

Although the believer cannot satisfy the law of God by one's own effort, the universal law of God takes an active role in the life of the believer and remains a binding moral norm. The law of Moses remains a crucial source for the believer to comprehend the universal and ethical intent of the law. It is the union with Christ that empowers the believer to live to God and be sanctified.

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