

**Paul's Disinterest
in the Fulfilling of the Law**

**- A New Reading of Pauline
Theology -**

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DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis hereby submitted by me for the D. Th degree at the University of the Free State is my own independent work and has not previously been submitted by me at another university/faculty. I furthermore cede copyright of the thesis in favour of the University of the Free State.

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Ὁ γὰρ νόμος τοῦ πνεύματος τῆς ζωῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ ἠλευθέρωσέν σε ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου τῆς ἁμαρτίας καὶ τοῦ θανάτου. **(Rom. 8:2)**

ABBREVIATIONS

AB	Anchor Bible
ABc	Analecta Biblica: Investigationes Scientifcae in Res Biblicas
ABR	Australian Biblical Review
ATS	Acta Theologica Supplementum
BDAG	W. Bauer, W. F. Arndt, F. W. Gingrich, and F. W. Danker, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature.2 nd ed, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979
BDBG	F. Brown, The New Brown-Driver-Briggs-Gesenius Hebrew and English Lexicon with an Appendix containing the Biblical Aramaic. Peabody: Hendrickson, 1979
BECNT	Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament
BI	Biblical Interpretation
Bib	Biblica
BNTC	Black's New Testament Commentaries
BJRL	Bulletin of the John Rylands Library
BU	Biblische Untersuchungen
CBQ	Catholic Biblical Quarterly
CC	Clarke's Commentary
DSB	Daily Study Bible Series
EBC	The Expositor's Bible Commentary
EDNT	H. Balz and G. Schneider, Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament.
EKK	Evangelisch-Katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
ET	Expository Times
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Altens und Neuen Testaments.
GSC	A Geneva Series Commentary
Hermeneia	Hermeneia – A Critical and Historical Commentary
HTKNT	Herders Theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
HTR	Harvard Theological Review

HNT	Handbuch zum Neuen Testament
HC	Householder Commentaries
IBCTP	Interpretation, A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching
ICC	International Critical Commentary
JBL	Journal of Biblical Literature
JBLMS	Journal of Biblical Literature Monograph Series
JETS	Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society
JSNT	Journal for the Study of the New Testament
JSNTSS	Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series
JTSA	Journal of Theology for Southern Africa
KEK	Kritisch-Exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament
KNT	Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
KONT	Kommentaar op het Nieuwe Testament
KVHS	Korte Verklaring der Heilige Schrift
KD	Kerygma und Dogma
LFHCC	A Library of Fathers of the Holy Catholic Church, Anterior to the Division of the East and West
LS	Louvain Studies
MK	Meyers Kommentar
MNTC	MacArthur New Testament Commentary
MoNTC	Moffatt New Testament Commentary
NAC	The New American Commentary
NCBC	New Century Bible Commentary
Neot	Neotestamentica
NIB	The New Interpreter's Bible
NICNT	The New International Commentary on the New Testament
NIDNTT	C. Brown, The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology. 4 Vols., Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986
NIGTC	New International Greek Testament Commentary
NT	Novum Testamentum
NTD	Das Neue Testament Deutsch
NTS	New Testament Studies
NTSup	Novum Testamentum Supplements
OTL	Old Testament Library

PBTM	Paternoster Biblical and Theological Monographs
RCSNT	Reformation Commentary on Scripture, New Testament
SB	Studia Biblica
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SEÁ	Svensk Exegetisk Årsbok
SNTW	Studies in the New Testament and its World
SJT	Scottish Journal of Theology
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
SR	Studies in Religion
SP	Studia Paulina
TB	Theologische Bücherei
TDNT	G. Kittel and G. Friedrich, Theological Dictionary of the New Testament. 10 Vols., Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976
Them	Themelios
THKNT	Theologischer Handkommentar zum Neuen Testament
TLZ	Theologische Literaturzeitung
TNTC	Tyndale New Testament Commentary
TJ	Trinity Journal
TynB	Tyndale Bulletin
TU	Text und Untersuchungen
TWOT	R. L. Harris, G. L. Archer, and B. K. Waltke, Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament. 2 Vols., Chicago: Moody Press, 1980.
TZ	Theologische Zeitschrift
UNT	Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
VE	Verbum et Ecclesia
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WTJ	Westminster Theological Journal
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
ZNW	Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
ZTK	Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche
Zygon	Zygon: Journal of Religion and Science

Bible Versions

ASV	American Standard Version (1901)
BBE	The Bible in Basic English (1949/64)
BHS	Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia (4 th ed.)
CJB	The Complete Jewish Bible (1998)
CSB	Holman Standard Christian Bible (2004)
GNV	Geneva Bible (1599)
KJV	King James Version (1611/1769)
LUO	Luther Bible (1912) with Codes
LUT	Revidierte Lutherbibel (1984)
LXX	Septuaginta
L45	Luther 1545 German Bible
NAS	New American Standard Bible with Codes (1977)
NET	New English Translation
NIV	New International Version
NRS	New Revised Standard Version (1989)
RSV	Revised Standard Version (1952)

PART A

I. Introduction

I am about to jump into one of the warmest debates in New Testament Studies, that of Paul's theology of the law. This is a very complex issue. His thoughts on the law are so complicated that they give rise to many interpretations. Having followed the debates of Pauline scholars in this regard, I came to realize that their misunderstandings of each other are making the debates even more complicated. Of course, that there are differences of opinion is not wrong, but many unnecessary debates are caused by misunderstanding each other. It should be mentioned that my aim in this chapter is not merely to point out certain problems and provide the purpose of the study, as is often done in a first chapter. In this chapter I will do more: I will present a basic outline of what will be presented in the rest of the thesis. This outline might contain certain assertions of which detailed proof will only be presented later on in the thesis. This might seem troublesome at the moment. Nevertheless, I believe that a good grip on the broad outline of what I am going to argue is necessary at the outset. The benefit of such an approach is that readers can get a grip on the argument of the whole thesis by only reading the introduction. In this sense, the introduction almost functions like a conclusion.

1 Paul's objection against the law

1.1 Are we asking the right question?

As we all know very well, the Reformers rediscovered the gospel through Paul's eyes. What is more, in the very centre of Paul's gospel is his theology of the law.¹ This means that one's understanding of his view of the law is directly related to one's understanding of his gospel. Even though the Reformers' understanding of Paul's view of the law had enormous influence in Protestant circles, surprisingly, his view on the law also turned out to be the most debated issue, an issue on which scholars have not been able to reach agreement. Even though there have been many explanations of Paul's view of the law, scholars could still not reach consensus. On the contrary! More theories and debates have been triggered constantly. Paul's extremely complicated view of the law has been puzzling New Testament scholars so much that some of them even ended up believing that Paul contradicts himself on this issue.²

Due to the rise of the New Perspective on Paul, the warm debates on Paul's interpretation of the law have gained strength. In particular, the traditional view has run into strong opposition. Based on Sanders'³ new evaluation of first century Judaism, Dunn⁴ launched the New Perspective on Paul. It is no exaggeration to claim that New Testament scholars have been divided into two groups by the New Perspective. The new developments in Pauline theology increased the diversity in understanding Paul's view of the law, giving rise to different interpretations of his gospel. It is most unlikely that the continuing proliferation of interpretations of Paul's view of the law and gospel will end in the near future. For Paul, however, the gospel is so unique that diverse interpretations of it are not possible:

I am astonished that you are ... turning to a different gospel which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are ... trying to pervert the gospel

¹ T. R. Schreiner, *The Law and its Fulfilment: A Pauline Theology of the Law* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1993), p. 13.

² H. Räisänen, *Paul and the Law* (WUNT 29, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1983), pp. 62ff. and 264-65; and "Paul's Conversion and the Development of his View of the Law", *NTS* 33 (1987), pp. 404-19, may be cited as representing this view. For more debates, see J. M. G. Barclay, "Paul and the Law: Observations on Some Recent Debates", *Them* 12 (1985), pp. 5-15.

³ E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* (London: SCM, 1977).

⁴ J. D. G. Dunn, *Jesus, Paul, and the Law: Studies in Mark and Galatians* (Louisville: John Knox Press, 1990); *The Justice of God: A Fresh Look at the Old Doctrine of Justification by Faith* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994); and *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998).

of Christ. But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned! As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let him be eternally condemned. (Gal. 1:6-9.)

This statement forces us to accept that Paul did not foresee diverse interpretations of his views of the law and the gospel.

I do not believe that all the debates on Paul's view on the law – regarded as one of the most complicated issues in New Testament theology⁵ – can be settled easily. I, however, do think that it is possible to find an approach that will give us a more consistent explanation of Paul's idea of the law. The reason for this is that, despite a great diversity of interpretations of Paul's view of the law, there is one common idea shared by interpreters, which, to me, also seems to be a common mistake. Once we abandon this common notion, we will be in a better position to understand Paul's ideas. The common notion has to do with what Paul believed about fulfilling⁶ the law.

One of the most important questions concerning Paul's idea of the law is why people are cursed by the law.⁷ In Protestant circles, a very persuasive answer is usually offered, namely that the curse of the law is caused by human inability to fulfil the law perfectly and that this was the very reason why Paul was against the law. On the other hand, the New Perspective on Paul, launched by Dunn as the central figure, raised a strong objection to the traditional view and had an enormous impact. In terms of the issue addressed in this study, their views, however, do not seem to me really new. According to Dunn, Paul's criticism of the law was a matter not of legalism but of nationalism. The law was being misused as a Jewish identity marker. Although Dunn's argument had some novel aspects, it was not fundamentally new, because the misuse of the law as a Jewish identity marker was regarded as the reason

⁵ According to H. J. Schoeps, *Paul: the Theology of the Apostle in the Light of Jewish Religious History*, tr. H. Knight (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1961), p. 168, Paul's view on the law is the most complicated problem in Pauline theology.

⁶ See chapter II. By the expression "fulfilling the law", most Pauline theologians mean observing, keeping or obeying the law perfectly. I also use the phrase in this sense for the time being. We, however, are going to see that this basic idea has contributed to a misunderstanding of Paul's view of the law. The English verb "fulfil" is generally used for the Greek πληρόω and I am happy with this translation. Paul, however, uses the verb "fulfil" (πληρόω) in a sense that is different from "keeping" the law. On the other hand, understanding πληρόω in the sense of "observing" leads to a misunderstanding of the fulfilment of the law (that is, of love). Cf. chapter X.

⁷ For different answers provided by scholars as to the reason why the law cannot save, see R. B. Sloan, "Paul and the Law: Why the Law cannot Save", *NT XXXIII* (1991), pp. 35-60.

for the failure to fulfil the law in the true sense of the word. Both the traditional view and the New Perspective thus accept that Paul's objection against the law had to do with one's failure to fulfil or keep the law perfectly. With regard to the notion of a perfect fulfilling of the law, there is thus a definite consensus between the two. Accordingly, the debate between the Old and the New Perspectives is nothing but a debate on the way in which people fail to fulfil the law. According to both perspectives, the curse of the law is ultimately caused by a failure to fulfil the law truly.⁸ As we are going to see in the next chapter, these views, as well as almost all other views, have a similar point of departure.

I, however, do not believe that Paul objected to the law because he thought that it was impossible to fulfil the law in any way. Above all, we have to take note that Paul never explicitly mentioned the impossibility of fulfilling the law anywhere in his letters. Many scholars who argue that Paul thought that it was impossible to fulfil the law base this on assumptions on what certain verses would say, but not one of them can actually cite a single verse in which Paul states that it is impossible to fulfil the law.⁹ If this was indeed what Paul had in mind, it is extremely astonishing that he never explicitly mentioned it. For example, some scholars who accept that Paul believed that it was impossible to fulfil the law argue that this is implied in Gal. 3:10. Similarly, the warning in Gal. 5:3 is often understood as a warning implying that it is impossible to fulfil the law. However, this is not the case. Furthermore, Paul does not say that everyone failed in achieving perfect fulfilment of the law in Rom. 2, 3, 5, 7 and 9-10 either.¹⁰ If this is what Paul had in mind, why has this never been stated but only im-

⁸ The misuse of the law as failure to fulfil the law has been explained in various ways. For details, see the next chapter. In this regard, a unique emphasis was raised by the Bultmannian school. These scholars do not only believe that no one can achieve perfect fulfilling of the law but also claim that if perfect fulfilment was possible, it could never lead to righteousness in God's eyes because such a pursuit itself was already a sin of self-righteousness. See R. Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament*, tr. K. Grobel, Vol. 1 (London: SCM, 1952), p. 264. Schlier also reads Galatians in this way. Cf. H. Schlier, *Der Brief an die Galater* (MK 7, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1965), pp. 132-33. Such a view is not fundamentally different from the view that fulfilling the law is impossible since even a wrong kind of fulfilment of the law is not true fulfilment. Regardless of the different views on the nature of the misuse of the law, explanations based on the notion of the misuse of the law are not really different from views based on the notion of a failure to fulfil the law. For details see the next chapter.

⁹ It is generally accepted that Romans and Galatians clearly state that the law requires perfect obedience and that it is impossible for humans to reach this goal. This idea, however, is never directly stated and just based on what scholars think texts imply. For example, M. Cranford, "The Possibility of Perfect Obedience: Paul and an Implied Premise in Galatians 3:10 and 5:3" *NT XXXVI* (1994), exactly points out the problems regarding such an implied presupposition in Gal. 3:10, which is often used a proof text for the impossibility of the perfect fulfilling of the law. For details, see chapter V.

¹⁰ It must be carefully observed that Rom. 3:23 and 5:12 do not state that all broke the law but that all sinned. The "I" in Rom. 7 is not the "I: who breaks the law but the "I" who does evil. To sin and to do evil are not the same as to break the law. It is important to realize that the idea that if we keep the law

plied? Is it, as some claim, because the conclusion is obvious? If so, why does Paul then make every effort to prove what is obvious?

I, however, am not claiming that Paul argues for the possibility of perfect observance of the law. Rather, I think that Paul was not interested in this issue, i.e., neither in the possibility nor in the impossibility of fulfilling the law. To my mind, to attempt to link the reason why Paul objected to the law to a failure to truly keep the law (either by any misuse of the law or by human inability) cannot really explain Paul's view of the law. The problem that Paul had with the law was not linked to human endeavour, but was rather something essential to the law itself. It was Paul himself who said that he was blameless in terms of righteousness of the law (Phil. 3:6).¹¹ If he had realized the impossibility of fulfilling the law or had any problems with fulfilling the law truly and perfectly, would the problem with the law not have been solved easily? Would Paul have needed his extremely complicated explanation of the problem of the law? To my mind, Paul accepted that it was possible to fulfil the law perfectly and that the requirements of the law could be accomplished without any misuse of the law. Nevertheless, on the way to Damascus, having discovered himself to be sinful, Paul was thrown into turmoil. Here is our real dilemma: How could the law that was perfectly fulfilled lead Paul not to life but to death, and make Paul who was a perfect law-keeper, not righteous, but the worst of sinners? Paul did not find the answer to this dilemma in his own life, that is, he did not find it in something he did wrong in terms of the law as he had been a person who had followed the law with zeal and kept it faultlessly. In other words, Paul did not see any problems in terms of his fulfilling of the law up till that moment. The goal that he had sought, that is, the fulfilling of the law, had been accomplished and it had been done in the right way. This means that for Paul, the real problem was not anything in himself, but something in the law.

When a person's inability to keep the law perfectly or a person's misuse of the law, as the traditional view and the New Perspective respectively claim, is regarded as the problem of the law, the problem of the law is linked to the human side instead of linking it to the law itself. In one word, the problem becomes a *human* problem. The most important difficulty with such an approach is that too much emphasis is put

perfectly, we are without sin, is not an axiom in Paul's thought but just a presupposition. For details, see my exegesis of Rom. 3 and 5.

¹¹ Many interpretations have suggested but the following should be noted: The verse does not say that it is from a specific point of view that Paul was blameless in terms of righteousness of the law. For example, Paul does not say that he was blameless in regard to the righteousness of the law from a Pharisaic perspective. See section 1 "Paul's Conscience" in chapter III.

on the subjective/human side: A human being fulfils, keeps or misuses the law. The law thus becomes mere regulations or rules. The human is regarded as active and the law as passive. The problem with the law is thus not associated with the law (as object), but rather with human being (as subject). We, however, must realize that such an approach totally ignores one of the most important aspects in Paul's portrayal of the law. According to Paul, the law is something personal, something subjective.¹² The idea that human beings fulfil the law as an object is not totally absent from Paul's letters. If, however, we have not paid proper attention to the personal aspect of the law, we start our theologising on his views of the law from the wrong place, because when he provides us with his best explanation of the law, the personal nature of the law comes to the fore.

For example, in Galatians, the law appears as παιδαγωγός. I, a child, am controlled by a παιδαγωγός. Thus the law is regarded as the subject that makes me a slave. In Rom. 7, where Paul gives us the most puzzling and detailed explanation of the law, the personal nature of the law is also very conspicuous. The law is not a mere regulation anymore, that is, an object, to be kept. Rather, the law is portrayed as the stronger person who captures and leads humankind. The law is regarded as so powerful that a human being cannot refuse its requests and commands. It is extremely important to understand this since this means that the requirements of the law are similar to the commands put by a master to his slave. The slave is not in a position in which he can refuse his master's command, even before failing to obey his command. At this point, to ask about the possibility of the fulfilling of the law, is not what Paul is interested in. The more the personal nature of the law is emphasised, the further the human inability of fulfilling the law is from the centre of Paul's thought. When we recognize the personal nature of the law, we also come to perceive that it is not the human fulfilment of the law (as an object) but the portrayal of the law as a subject and its function in terms of human beings that lie in the centre of Paul's interest. In this regard, I believe that Paul's interest was to show that the law that was supposed to bring forth life, the Torah, was, in fact, the law of death. In other words, his purpose was to prove that even in cases where the law was followed (fulfilled) perfectly, it could not but bring death to humankind, because it was the law

¹² The Bultmannian School that emphasizes the 'human' misuse of the law for righteousness more than the failure of the fulfilling the law can be cited as one of the best examples of putting too much emphasis on the subjective side.

of death.¹³ The problem of the law was thus not linked to human inability to fulfil it or to its misuse, but linked to the law itself. At this point, we can see that Paul's focus was not on the human side, but had to do with the nature of the law.

That this is Paul's main concern one can see very clearly in Rom. 7. Ironically, Rom. 7, however, has been read for many centuries as an indication of the impossibility of a perfect fulfilling of the law. Paul, however, is not interested in arguing that the law cannot be fulfilled perfectly. Rather, his aim is to explain by means of an intertextual use of Genesis and Deuteronomy that the Torah can be identified as the law of death. In his attempt to prove this, Paul introduces the notion of a twofold law.¹⁴ The law is not single but plural. Take note that I argue that Paul does not simply refer to two functions or the two sides of the law, but that he thinks in terms of two laws.

In Rom. 7, Paul alludes to Gen. 3. In this allusion, Paul is identified with Eve, and the Torah with the commandment of Adam. In Genesis, Eve receives the commandment from her husband.¹⁵ That is the reason why Paul uses the analogy of a husband in Rom. 7:1-3. In essence, the Torah is thus the law of the husband. As Genesis shows, there were two commandments linked to the two trees in Eden. For Paul, the existence of two separate trees in Eden illustrates the separation and the independence of the two commandments that he has in mind. On the one hand, Paul argues in Rom. 7 that the Torah brought him knowledge of sin, that is, of evil, by producing covetousness in him (Rom. 7:7-8). Furthermore, the Torah also brought him the knowledge of good (Rom. 7:18). In terms of this way of thinking, the Torah is thus identified with the first tree, and linked to the commandment of the tree of good and evil. On the other hand, there is the commandment associated with the second tree, that is, tree of life. This is the other law, that is, the law of the mind, of life and of God. Echoing Genesis, Paul argues that the Torah, as the law of the first husband, is not the commandment of the second tree, that is, the tree of life (the law of life) but that it is associated with the first tree, that is, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (the law of death). If so, the question could be raised, what and where is the other law (the other commandment)? In order to answer this, Paul moves to Deuteronomy

¹³ This will be dealt with in chapter VIII.

¹⁴ The two laws to which I refer here, are not the laws in terms of the eschatological tension of the 'already but not yet' which are highlighted by J. D. G. Dunn, *Theology*, pp. 472-76. The death caused by the law of death was not something that began when the eschatological tension started.

¹⁵ See section 3.2.2. "Did Eve exaggerate God's Commandment?" in chapter VIII.

by alluding to it in the latter part of Rom. 7 and Rom. 8:1-2. In the latter part of Rom. 7, he accentuates the concept 'mind'. The word לֵב (mind or heart) is one of the key words in Deuteronomy, for example in expressions such as 'between the eyes' and 'on the *hand*.' He uses the captivity motif in the latter part of Rom. 7, too: As a captive, he serves the law of sin and death. The ultimate covenantal judgment in Deuteronomy is to be *captive* and to *serve* the Gentiles. It is not a coincidence that precisely key words and main ideas in Deuteronomy such as mind, serving, being captive, being released from the captivity, life and death appear in Rom. 7:23-8:2. Paul focuses in particular on Deut. 30 as is shown by the use of key words such as law, commandment, good, evil, life, death, blessing, and cursing which are found together with the notion of being liberated from captivity.

The reason why Paul concentrates on Deut. 30 is that this chapter connects Deuteronomy and Genesis. The core verse in Deut. 30 is v. 15. This verse contains the four core concepts which are associated with the two commandments of the two trees: Life, death, good, and evil. Paul interprets Deuteronomy as explaining the Torah by means of Gen. 2-3. According to Gen. 2-3, there were two trees and two commandments. Similarly, there appear two mounts in the concluding part of Deuteronomy (Deut. 27-30). By the way, surprisingly, there is no law of blessing on Mt. Ebal. The commandment of the tree of life in Adam's commandments and the law of blessing in the Mosaic laws have disappeared. For Paul, the Torah is Adam's commandment without the commandment of the tree of life (the law of life), that is, the Torah is the law of death. On the other hand, the commandment of the tree of life, or the law of Mt. Gerizim is the law of the Spirit of life, God and the mind. Citing Deut. 30 later in Rom. 10, Paul concretely reveals that the law of the mind (heart) is Christ to be believed in by the heart. The lost commandment of the tree of life, that is, the law of life and the law of the mind is the law of the new husband, Christ, that is, the law of love. In conclusion, the Torah is Adam's (old husband) commandment, the command of the tree of good and evil, the law of curse on Mt. Ebal, the law of sin, and the law of death, while Christ's (the new husband's) law is the commandment of the tree of life, the law of blessing on Mt. Gerizim, the law of God, the law of mind, and the law of the Spirit of life. The Torah is not the law giving life!

At a first glance, the notion of two laws may seem awkward and strange, but Paul shows that this is rather a natural conclusion from the context of Gen. 3 and Deut. 27 and 30, and not a skilful, fanciful explanation. The comprehension of the plurality and

personal nature of the law is the starting point for understanding the various ways in which Paul refers to the law rhetorically. For a long time, Pauline scholars have been mystified and even tormented by Paul's negative and positive views on the law. They added midrashic interpretations¹⁶ to many verses in the Pauline letters in an attempt to understand the Paul who was so strongly against the law, but who could also call upon Christians to fulfil the law of Christ. If, however, we grasp the fact that there are actually two laws, we can understand Paul without resorting to midrashic explanations.

We must also pay attention to the implications of the plurality in Paul's concept of the law, because it has an enormous and critical effect on his theology of the law. The implication of the existence of two laws (not merely of two functions of the law) is as follows: The end results of the law, namely, death and life respectively, does not depend on the fulfilling of the law, but on the identity of the particular law that is operative. In other words, the respective end results of the two laws are pre-determined. If Paul was thinking in terms of only one law with two possible outcomes, these outcomes would not be determined by the identification of law as such but by what humankind do with the law. For example, depending on the perfect fulfilling of the law or not, the two possible outcomes of death and life would be open to humankind. In such a case, a failure to perfectly fulfil the law causes death. On the other hand, by perfect fulfilling of the law, the same law causes life. When, however, two end results (life and death) correspond to two different laws, the two different end results are not based on human input, but on the identification of the specific law. In such a case, Paul's interest is not in the human input as such, that is, in human deeds or human achievements. According to the identification of the particular law under which a person is, a person will be steered to the particular result (death or life) corresponding to the particular law. There is thus no side road on either of the two laws. The law of life always takes humans to life and the law of death always takes humans to death. It is impossible for the law of life to produce death and vice versa. There is thus no room for any human input that might change the end results.

The identification of the particular law further implies the following: Even by perfect fulfilment the law of death brings forth death. Let us regard this in terms of the

¹⁶ Ideas such as that Paul distinguishes between the law as a means of salvation and as a way of living, or that he classifies the law into moral law and ritual law, are additions, and not distinctions made by him.

misuse of the law. No matter how well the law of death is used, it cannot produce life. Therefore, it is not by the misuse of the law of death that it produces death. The reason why the law of death causes death is not that humans follow it in the wrong way, but rather because the law that guides them is actually the law of death; it leads humankind only to death. Even though it may sound extremely awkward, the exact function of the law of death is to bring death to the person who follows it. Therefore, death does not come from the misuse of the law of death neither does death come from a failure to fulfil the law perfectly. Earlier on, I pointed out that when one grasps the notion that the law is presented in a personal way, one realises that any attempt to fulfil the law is a form of submission. The force of the law (as a person) is so powerful that humans cannot but obey it. As captives, people cannot but obey the law of death and finally come to death. To put it in a nutshell, through fulfilling (obeying) the law of death (without misusing it) one arrives at death.¹⁷

To sum up, according to Paul, humankind is totally incapable before the two laws, the two laws being regarded as two different persons. If we ask more specifically in which sense humankind is incapable, the answer is: The two laws are in a battle with each other, trying to capture humankind (Rom. 7). Whoever wins captures a person and makes him/her a slave. Humankind is thus thoroughly incapable in various senses: They are incapable in the sense that they cannot choose which law to serve; they are incapable in the sense that they cannot choose the way in which they can serve the law; and they are incapable in the sense that they cannot reject the fulfilment of the requirements of the law. It is thus impossible for them to choose the law, to misuse it, or to *fail* to fulfil it.

Finally, when we regard the two laws as two persons, we also realise that (the failure of) the fulfilling of the law is not the point in which Paul is interested when he discusses the problem with the law. The problem with the law lies in the identity of the particular law. For him, the law that he followed and fulfilled perfectly has turned out to be the law of death. His interest is to prove this. From this it is clear, that Pauline scholars have often been interested in something in which Paul had no interest

¹⁷ The idea that the law does not produce an end result until it is fully fulfilled, and that it produces the opposite result when it is broken, is one of the general and widely held presuppositions found in scholarly literature. This matter is going to be dealt with in chapters III and V.

By the way, the relationship between the two laws and their respective end results is very similar to the relationship between the 'flesh' and the 'Holy Spirit' and their respective end results. The works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit have been predetermined to lead to two different end results (Gal. 6:8). Not the failure in *fulfilling* the lust of the flesh but one's *success* in this regard gives rise to sinful works.

himself. I will prove this later through detailed exegesis.

There is also the issue of circumcision that lies in the centre of Paul's debate on the law. Understanding circumcision is directly related to understanding Paul's view of the law. When one takes the notion of the law in terms of two persons as point of departure, one can get a better grip on the reason why Paul was against circumcision. He was against the Galatians' acceptance of circumcision not because of their purpose in doing this or because they misused the law. He opposed circumcision because by practising circumcision they accepted the law which enslaves a person spiritually, and, accordingly, this law had already identified the person as a slave by the mere fact that the law was accepted, regardless of any misuse of the law. In this regard, it is in fact not very useful to try to identify the works of the law (ἔργα νόμου) – an issue on which a lot of time has been spent in Pauline debates on the law. It does not really matter whether one explains the works of the law in terms of the traditional view (works as good deeds) or of the New Perspective (works as Jewish identifying deeds). Paul was not opposed to circumcision because it was the beginning of a task that one would fail to fulfil. The life under the curse did not begin only when the person who accepted circumcision failed to fulfil the law perfectly. Paul did not say that someone who had perfectly accomplished circumcision was temporally free until he failed to fulfil the other laws, such as the Sabbath or food regulations. The circumcised one was already under a curse because of the circumcision that he had perfectly accomplished. His life under the curse started with the fulfilment of circumcision and continued afterwards through the continuing fulfilment, that is, continuing submission to the other regulations of the law. The life under the curse did not begin with the failure to fulfil the rest of the law. Rather, by accepting circumcision one has already accepted the curse of slavery, which stayed on one throughout one's obedience to the rest of the law, even if it were a perfect fulfilment of the whole law (Gal. 5:3). This is the simple reason why Paul opposed circumcision. The point is that one's accomplishment of obedience to the law did not change the nature of the life of spiritual slavery. The logic according to which a slave is free from the curse, as long as he fulfils his duties of slavery does not make sense. It is foolish to claim that a slave who obeys his master perfectly because of the fear of death is *free from* punishment as long as he obeys the master completely. No, the slave lives the life of slavery under death in spite of fulfilment of the master's commands. Furthermore, even if he would fulfil all his duties until the last day of his life, this would not change

the nature of his life in any way. His life is nothing but a perfect life of perfect slavery. This is the tragedy of the life under the curse, or the life of slavery. The curse of the life under the law, to which Paul refers, is not a future curse that will become effective with a failure in fulfilling the law, but is linked to the present life of slavery. Perfect fulfilment is thus not freedom but perfect obedience, and the acceptance of circumcision promises only death, regardless of one's success in fulfilment of the rest of the law.

Here, we see again that (the possibility of) the fulfilling of the law is not the issue that is problematic for Paul when he discusses circumcision. His concern is to point out the identity of the law. This reading enables us to read Gal. 3:10 and 5:3 without accepting the implied presupposition of the impossibility of perfect obedience accepted by so many scholars. Furthermore, by this reading, we, unlike the New Perspective, can explain why Paul refers to the works of the law in a general sense without identifying the particular works of the law. The problem with a life fulfilling the law is not the impossibility of doing so, but its nature of spiritual slavery. The identification of the works of the law thus does not affect the nature of such a life.

The climax of the notion of the two laws as two persons can be noticed in Rom. 10, since here Christ himself is portrayed as the law. When we follow the notion of the personal nature of the two laws, a new reading of Rom. 10 begins to emerge. In Rom. 7, Paul referred to the two laws as two persons, but he did not reveal their identities. Eventually, in Rom. 10, he then discloses the identities of the two laws by using Deuteronomy.¹⁸ Rom. 10 (including the end of Rom. 9) has often been read as dealing with two different ways in the pursuit of the fulfilment of the law. It has often been interpreted as that Israel could not succeed in fulfilling the law, because she did it in the wrong way, that is, through the works of the law. However, Paul does not state that Israel could not attain the fulfilling or the purpose¹⁹ of the law but that they could not attain the law itself (Rom. 9:31). This misreading of the text is caused by overlooking the notion of the two laws and then being blinded to the importance of this difference.

When we realize the importance of the notion of the two laws, we will also see that the works (mentioned in Rom. 9:32) does not refer to the misuse of the law. The law of death does not produce death because it is being pursued in the wrong way.

¹⁸ For details, see chapter IX.

¹⁹ CJB and RSV interpret it in this way.

In fact, it is actually impossible to misuse the law in the sense that humankind cannot determine its outcome. In this respect, the two laws are the same, but they have different outcomes. The way in which one obeys the particular law determines its identity; not one's success or failure in fulfilling it. The identification of the particular law determines its results. Paul's intention is thus to reveal the identities of the two laws. He does not rebuke Israel for failure in fulfilling the law, but because she has not attained to the law that she should have attained to. In other words, Paul argues that the law that Israel followed and obeyed was not the law through which she could get life, namely, the law of life.

In Rom. 7, it is said that the law of death is served in the flesh and the law of life by the heart. It is impossible to serve the law of life in the flesh and the law of death by the heart. It is very important to remember that the law of death can be served only in the flesh. Paul never presents the flesh as the way in which one misuses the law of death. For him, to serve the law in the flesh means to serve the law of death. The key point is that the way of pursuing the law is related not to the misuse of the law but to the identity of the law. This insight is vital for understanding Rom. 10 correctly. In Rom. 10, Paul compares the Mosaic law and Christ. The Torah is the law whose way of being served is by works, i.e., by doing. Doing is not the wrong way to serve the Torah. Paul relates the works to the flesh, while emphasizing that Christ is the law to be believed in the heart. It is revealed that, according to Deut. 30, Christ who is to be confessed by the mouth and believed in by the heart, is the law of life that is to be in the mouth and the heart. Of course, already in Rom. 7, Paul had said that the law of life is served in (by) the mind (heart).²⁰ What Paul states in Rom. 10, is thus based on Rom. 7. He relates the heart to the belief and the flesh to the works. In this way, readers would immediately come to realize the identity of the Torah.

Israel did not rely on belief but on works. This does not mean that she tried to fulfil the law in the wrong way. Her relying on the works meant her relying on the law of flesh, that is, the law of death. Surprisingly, the Torah was a law of doing. Paul's objection against works lies here. Many scholars accept that Paul's emphasis falls on Israel's failure to fulfil the law or to reach its true purpose,²¹ but this misses the point.

²⁰ The Hebrew word לֵבָב is generally translated as νοῦς (mind) or καρδία (heart) in Greek. In Rom. 7-10, Paul, in fact, uses the two words without distinction. In Rom. 7, however, he prefers νοῦς, hinting at the tree of knowledge of good and evil. For details, see section 3 on "Rom. 7:7-25" in chapter VIII and section 4 on "Rom. 10:5-10" in chapter IX.

²¹ After the Reformers, M. Henry, *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: An Exposition*

Paul discloses that since Israel did not believe in Christ, she was in fact captured by the law of works, the law of death. Accordingly, she could not reach the law of life.

1.2 Is our answer right?

From the above it is clear that Paul was never interested in the fulfilment of the law. For him the problem of the law was linked to its identity. If this is the case, what was then the solution to the problem of the law, that is, to its curse? If Paul's answer would just be to present another way of fulfilling the law, it would be an irrelevant solution. Many scholars who link the problem of the law to humankind's failure to fulfil it perfectly, interpret its fulfilment (πλήρωμα) by love (Rom. 13:10; Gal. 5:13-14, 6:2) as the solution to the problem, still arguing within the context of law-observance.²² According to this interpretation, love is the true solution to fulfilling the law perfectly (according to a saying of Christ). This, however, does not sound right to me since a Paul who believes that love is the right way to fulfil the law (Torah) is actually a Paul who says that we can fulfil the law of slavery (the law of death) that he was so strongly against, by means of the law of Christ (the law of life). On the other hand, if the problem does not lie in human inability to fulfil the law or in the wrong way of observing the law but rather in the identity of the law itself, the solution to the fulfilment of the law must also be related to the identity of the law. This would be logical. In other words, if we take into account that Paul is thinking of two laws, the matter of the identity has to do with the relationship between the law of death and the law of life. Paul does not accept an easy solution in that he discards the law entirely. If so, he

with *Practical Observations of the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans*, Vol. 6 (London: Fleming H. Revell Company), pp. 436-40, propagated this idea, it was accepted ever since. See F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans: An Introduction and Commentary* (London: The Tyndale Press, 1963), pp. 198-202. (It seems that he amended his idea in the second edition.); W. Barclay, *The Letter to the Romans* (DSB, Edinburgh: Saint Andrew Press, 1969), pp. 141-49; C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, Vol. II (ICC, Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1979), pp. 507-22; T. R. Schreiner, "Israel's Failure to Attain Righteousness in Romans 9:30-10:3", *TJ* 12 (1991), pp. 209-20; and T. D. Gordon, "Why Israel did not Obtain Torah-Righteousness: A Translation Note on Rom. 9:32", *WTJ* 54 (1992), pp. 163-66.

²² It has been claimed that love makes the true fulfilling of the law possible. See P. Stuhlmacher, *Der Brief an die Römer* (NTD 6, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998), pp. 186-88; H. Räisänen, *Paul and the Law*, pp. 62-5; I. Hong, *The Law in Galatians* (JSNTSS 81, Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), pp. 170-83; and see the scholars introduced in section 1 "Method or End Product?" in chapter X. The fulfilment of the law is still regarded as a valid requirement for Christians. The fulfilment that was impossible, however, is now possible through faith in Christ.

would not have called the law of life a *law* (νόμος). Because of Jesus, the law of death is no more the law of *death* but rather becomes the law of life. The change is something that is related not to human beings but to the law itself. In other words, the solution for the problem with the law is not linked to humankind but to its essential nature.

In Rom. 7, Paul explains the essential problem of the law; it was supposed to bring life but in fact produced death. The law was given originally for life but actually worked for death (Rom. 7:10). Paul explains this dilemma in terms of a battle between the two laws. They battle with each other to get hold of a person; the law of life gets defeated and loses control over him. The law of life is thus powerless. In Rom. 7, the focus of powerlessness lies not in the human but in the law itself. On the other hand, in Rom 8, the law (not of death) can do the right thing. The law of life, the law of the Holy Spirit through Christ, then finally liberates a person. At last the right action of the law (τὸ δικαίωμα τοῦ νόμου) has been fulfilled (Rom. 8:4). It is in this sense that Christ fulfills the law. The fulfilment of the law as a solution must be understood in this context. We should not interpret the text in the sense that humans achieve observance of the law. Rather the law that was not perfect and therefore could not but lead people to death, is fulfilled to become the perfect law, performing 'the right action (δικαίωμα)'. That is to say, fulfilling the law in the context of Rom. 7-8 is not observing the law in the sense of doing or keeping it perfectly, but making the law the perfect law.

This, however, does not mean a mere recovery of the function of the law. In Paul's thought, the law is twofold. The fulfilment of the law is not linked to the function of the law but to the relationship between the two laws. It has to do with the essence of the two laws and that is the reason why Paul could not but explain it in such a complicated and profound way, calling both of them νόμος. It is not the case that the Torah functions rightly as the Torah after the recovery of its function; it is rather the case that the Torah is transformed (fulfilled) to be the law of life and performs its right action; not as the Torah but as the new law.

Paul explains this in terms of a new creation. Ἀνακεφαλαιόω does not mean a simple summation but a newness of all things being unified in Christ (Eph. 1:10). In Gal. 6:15, he calls the new law, love, a new creature (καινή κτίσις). This is neither summation, nor abolishment, nor substitution. As a sinner is created to be a new creature (a righteous), so the law of death is created to be the law of life. The sinner is not

summed up, reduced, abolished, or substituted to be a righteous. It is the same person, but with an essential difference. Becoming righteous does not mean that a sinner recovers a former function. Likewise, the Torah and the fulfilled law are the same law but there is an essential difference between them. Christ's new commandment, love, does not sum up, reduce, or substitute the Torah. Love is the finished product that the Torah is essentially changed and transformed to be. The essence of the transformed law is love.²³

Love is the fulfilment of the law. In the light of what has been argued so far, we note that love, the law of Christ, is actually the law performing the right action, that is, it being the law of life. In other words, love is, sort of, the finished product, namely, the completed law. All interpretations that focus on human incapability to keep the law, and in how to achieve perfect observance of the law, thus miss the point. Love itself is already its fulfilment, irrespective of human achievement to keep the law perfectly. Love is not the true means or the right way in which humans can keep the law perfectly. Love itself *already* is the fulfilled law or the fulfilment of the law.

Once again, this interpretation makes it clear that by referring to the fulfilment of the law, Paul is not interested in its perfect observance at all. If this is correct, there seems to remain one further question: Why does Paul still refer to the fulfilment of the law in connection with Christians? Rom. 13 and Gal. 6 seem to say that Christians fulfil the law by means of love. Does this mean that when Paul comes to ethics, he eventually returns to the notion of observing the law? Scholars tend to pay attention to the verb 'fulfil' (πληρώω) in Gal. 5:14 and 6:2.²⁴ One of the most popular ways of explaining this is by accepting that *fulfilling* the law differs from *keeping* or *doing* the law.²⁵ Christians do not *keep* the law by doing everything any more but *fulfil* the law. If this were true, Paul is actually playing with words, and, in a sense, it still means that Christians have to keep everything in the law perfectly. This would mean that Paul attempts to escape contradicting himself simply by using different words.

But if Paul says that even though Christians do not keep everything in the law,

²³ In understanding this are the essentials for understanding Paul's view of the law.

²⁴ Gal. 5:14: 'Ο γὰρ πᾶς νόμος ἐν ἐνὶ λόγῳ πληροῦται, ἐν τῷ, Ἀγαπήσεις τὸν πλησίον σου ὡς ἑαυτόν. Gal. 6:2: Ἀλλήλων τὰ βάρη βαστάζετε καὶ οὕτως ἀναπληρώσετε τὸν νόμον τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

E. de. W. Burton, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians* (ICC, Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1980), pp. 294ff., already emphasized the importance of the verb πληρώω.

²⁵ H. D. Betz, *Galatians: A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Churches in Galatia* (Hermeneia, Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), p. 275; S. Westerholm, "On Fulfilling the Whole Law (Gal. 5:14)", *SEÁ* 51-2 (1986/7), pp. 229-37; and J. M. G. Barclay, *Obeying the Truth. A Study of Paul's Ethics in Galatians* (SNTW, Edinburgh, T. & T. Clark, SPCK, 1988), p. 140.

they in a true sense fulfil *the law* without observing everything in it, why did he attack the law itself elsewhere? In Galatians, Paul says that whoever accepts the law accepts the life of a spiritual slave. Being a slave, any fulfilling, keeping, doing or observing of the law or anything else can in no way give such a life any positive meaning. According to Romans, the law is the law of death. Would this mean that it is the task of the Christian to fulfil the law of death in a true sense and a right way? If this were true, he would be drawing a line through all his attacks on the law. This I cannot accept.

The one thing that is most clear and that we must not give up is that for Paul, the law is the law of death and slavery. The identity of the law is not based upon human misuse and inability but linked to its nature. This is the reason why he says that Galatians must not accept the law. In Galatians, Paul's warning is very severe and in Romans, the I as a slave of the law is depicted as miserable. We should not forget this. According to Paul, we can never go back to the law. Paul's call is as clear as it is simple: Christians are not to follow the law, but to love. If we do not forget this simple fact, the solution is rather easy.

First of all, when Paul states in Rom. 13:9-10 that love is the fulfilment of the law we must note that love is not suggested as a way of keeping the law. Paul does not say that because loving is equivalent to doing the whole law (without keeping all the commands), loving one's neighbour is an effective and possible way to keep the law. Take note that Paul does not say that *doing* love is the fulfilment of the law. Love itself is already the fulfilment of the law. Here, Gal. 5:14 should be considered too. The relationship between all the law (commandments) and one word is highlighted. Paul says that all commandments are unified, that is, are transformed and united, (ἀνακεφαλαιώω) in the word ἀγαπήσεις τὸν πλησίον σου ὡς σεαυτόν. The whole law is fulfilled in one word. In Romans and Galatians, Paul refers to a change in the essence of the law itself. This is what we also saw earlier in Rom. 7-10. He just says that the whole law is fulfilled to be one word, 'love your neighbour'.

Furthermore the meaning of the fulfilment in 13:8 is based on what is said in vv. 9-10.²⁶ To accept that in v. 8 love for one's neighbour is the way to observe the law cannot be justified and means that we do not take into account vv. 9-10. The core to understanding the text lies in noting that Paul says that he who *loves* his neighbour

²⁶ Note the γάρ sentence.

has (already) fulfilled the law. If loving one's neighbour is equivalent to doing the whole law, in other words, if loving someone else is the way to observe the whole law, Paul should have said that he who loves another fulfils the law²⁷ or that he who has loved his neighbour has fulfilled the law. If Paul presents love for one's fellow human being as a way or means to observe all the commands, this can never explain the perfect tense. If, however, we realize that love *itself* is already the fulfilment of the law, the perfect tense is inevitable.

In v. 8 Paul refers to debt. He contrasts two different kinds of debt, that is, love and the law. His argument is clear. Christians must not take on them the debt of the law; they should take on the debt of love. To put it in a nut shell, not the law but love! Paul's motto is not 'the love for the law' but 'not the law but love'. This is what love as the fulfilment of the law means. Since a person's loving of his neighbour means doing the already fulfilled law, for such a person the law has already been fulfilled, not observed. Therefore, the debt to the law plays no role anymore. This, however, is not because the debt of the law has been paid but because the debt of the law has no force anymore. In other words, the debt of the law has already lost its effect for those who love others. Love is not the way to pay the debt of the law but the way to be free from it. This is the reason why Paul uses the perfect tense. The one *loving* is not the one *fulfilling* the law but the one having *already* been freed from the debt of the law. To claim that love is the way to fulfil the law is to read the text exactly contrary to Paul's intention.

Our understanding of the law can be confirmed by Galatians. Gal. 6:2 is an important verse which is often assumed to refer to the observance of the law. If, however, we take into account the fact that Paul argues strongly against the law throughout the whole letter up until Gal. 6:2, we realise that explanations²⁸ that accept that Christians fulfil the law in the true sense²⁹ without actually keeping every command, go against Paul's logic. The understanding of the verse hinges on the

²⁷ According to D. S. Lim, "Fullness", in: G. F. Hawthorne and R. P. Martin (eds.), *Dictionary of Paul and his Letters* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1993), p. 319, in vv. 8-10, Paul is interested in obedience to the *whole* Torah. Love is the sum of the law's demands and Christians fulfil it wholly. According to his explanation, Christians are still fulfilling all the demands of the Torah in a certain way, though.

²⁸ For example, to say that πληρώω (fulfil) is different from ποιέω (do) so that Christians fulfil the whole law through love without keeping all its regulations is to read the text ultimately in terms of the observance of the law, in that it understands love as the right way to fulfil the law.

²⁹ The following English versions of Gal. 6:2 clearly show this. BBE: Take on yourselves one another's troubles, and so keep the law of Christ. CJB: Bear one another's burdens. In this way you will be fulfilling the *Torah's* true meaning, which the Messiah upholds.

grasp of the prefix *ἀνά*. We should take note that the verse does not say that Christians fulfil the law of Christ by carrying one another's burdens, but that they 're-(*ἀνά*)-fulfil the law of Christ. Almost no translation or commentary have paid proper attention to the prefix *ἀνά*. Scholars never explain the meaning of 'again' (*ἀνά*). There have been numerous debates on the identity of the law of Christ. Regardless of whether it is the Torah or the new law, it is very important to realise that Christians have never finished observing any of them. All readings centring on observing the law in any sense result in ignoring the meaning of *ἀνά*, that is, 'again'. It might not be impossible to take the prefix as a meaningless grammatical particle³⁰ but the best option is to always consider the possibility that it does make sense.

Our approach to the fulfilment of the law can give the proper sense to *ἀνά*. *Ἀνά* shows that what Christians fulfil through love, that is, by carrying others' burdens, has already been fulfilled. If we interpret the verse in terms of law observance, we run into trouble. However, Paul does not use 'fulfilling' in the sense of observing the law. Paul has already referred to fulfilment earlier on. According to him, the whole law has already been fulfilled in one word, that is, in love (Gal. 5:14). In Galatians, Paul says the same as in Romans. According to Galatians, the law has already been fulfilled in love and, according to Romans, the law has already been fulfilled by loving one's neighbour. Paul does not speak about the observance of the law but about the identity and nature of the law. Love itself is already the fulfilled (completed) law.

In Romans, Paul says that for the one who loves his neighbour (that is, the one who is doing the already fulfilled law) the law has no authority any more. The reason why Paul uses the perfect tense in Gal. 5:14 is because he wishes to say that the law has no value, but that love and faith are in force. One should see that Paul's logic in Gal. 5:6 is connected to 5:13b. The reason why circumcision has no value, but love and faith are important, is because the whole law has already been fulfilled in love. Paul's point, therefore, is not that Christians must do the law, but that they must do the fulfilled law, love. Christians must serve one another, not in the law, but in love. This point of Paul is verified once again by his continuing objection against the law (vv. 18 and 23) and his demand for love again in 6:2 (bear one another's burdens). That is to say, Paul repeats in 6:2 what he said in 5:14. In Gal. 5:14, exhorting the Galatians to love, Paul stressed that the law had *already* been fulfilled, and in Gal. 6,

³⁰ In this case, *ἀνά* might be understood to express a sort of light intensity that does not add anything essential to the main verb. Then *ἀναπληρόω* is a synonym for *πληρόω*.

spurring them on to love, he reminds them of the completion of the fulfilment of the law. By putting love into practice, Christians fulfil the law of Christ again. Since fulfilling the law in Gal. 5:14 does not mean that the law has been fully kept, so 're-fulfill' (ἀναπληρώω) in Gal. 6:2 does not refer to the observance of the law. Ἄνα shows that love is the fulfilled law and at this point ἄνα is not a meaningless prefix but rather a key word. All exegesis disregarding the prefix ἄνα misses the point. The true meaning of ἄνα cannot be explained at all in terms of observing of the law. Rather the text should be read the other way round. By reading it from the angle of law observance, love becomes the means and the law the purpose. Paul, however, does not say that Christians must do the law but that they should love. In other words, love is the true purpose. We, therefore, cannot find a hint of an interest on Paul's side in fulfilling (keeping or observing) the law, not even in Gal. 6:2. Consequently, it follows that the verses in Galatians and Romans which are believed to refer to Christians' perfect observance of the law, do, in fact, not say so. Paul, rather, was strongly against the law and only for love.

2 Purpose and method of the study

From the above it is clear why the answer provided to the old question posed at the beginning of this chapter needs to be considered again. Is the curse of the law really caused by humankind's failure to fulfil it perfectly? We need to rethink the answer that is commonly accepted and that has never been fundamentally challenged, thereby surviving long and fiery debates on Paul's view of the law. Paul does not refer anywhere in his letters to the impossibility of the perfect observance of the law. Neither is it ever an issue in his letters. He is not interested in fulfilling the law at all. In Galatians and Romans, where he spends the most time on the law, he consistently opposes the law. For him, the law is nothing but the law of death and of slavery. The problem of this law is never linked by him to a failure to perfectly obey the law.

For him the perfectly observed law gives birth to death and a life of perfect observance or even a life of perfect obedience is merely the perfect life of a spiritual slave. The problem of the law has to do with its' nature, identity and, therefore, finally with the law itself. It is not possible to imagine a Paul who is worried about the right and true way to fulfil this very law. To put it in a nut shell, all efforts to solve problems related to the perfect observance of the law are attempts to answer questions that Paul never asked. A Pauline theology of the law that views the problem as the impossibility of perfect observance and the answer as the possibility of perfect observance cannot but distort Paul's view of the law.

Paul focuses on the essence and nature of the law. As the law of death, the law itself has ceased and has been fulfilled to become the law of life through Christ. Thus, the fulfilment of the law is not an issue of human effort but has to do with its nature. It thus has to do with a fundamental change of the law, regardless of human observance. The law is not discarded; it is fulfilled. This is the very reason why Paul refers to two laws. After the death of Christ, Paul can still refer to the law but the law is no longer the Torah. On this point, Paul can still be against the law. The important point, however, is that Paul's objection to the law does not operate on the level of regulations. Paul does not want to establish another Torah in the form of regulations. Many scholars correctly pay attention to Paul's rejection of circumcision, but the same amount of attention must be given to his rejection of uncircumcision as well. His reason for being opposed to uncircumcision is exactly the same as for being opposed to circumcision. Just as circumcision is a regulation which needs to be practised, so uncircumcision is a regulation which needs to be practised, that is, by the abolishment of circumcision. Paul is against both of them. The life of a Christian is neither one of keeping the Torah nor one of observing another Torah which abolishes the previous Torah. According to Paul, the life of the Christian is one of following love. Why is this so important?

Love is neither the Torah (the continuation of the Torah) nor the replacement of the Torah (the abolishment of the Torah). Because love is the fulfilment of the law, it does not establish any regulations for or against the Torah. Neither circumcision (observing circumcision) nor uncircumcision (abolishing circumcision) is perfect. Love is the perfect law, namely, the fulfilled law. For the first time, through love, both circumcision and uncircumcision might be allowed or rejected. The abolishment of the law, the continuation of the law, the reduction of the law and so forth, none of the existing

explanations of Paul's view of the law, can explain why Paul who was extremely against the law let Timothy be circumcised. When, however, we understand the fulfilment of the law correctly, we are able to remove the false charge of opportunism against Paul who was against circumcision of the Galatians and for circumcision of Timothy. Paul followed neither the regulation of circumcision nor that of uncircumcision; he followed the fulfilled law, that is, love. In love, both might be accepted or denied.

In the last century Paul's theology was often regarded as being contradictory. This was not due to a lack of logic, but rather because theologians tended to focus on the notion of the perfect observance of the law, something in which Paul was not interested. This caused misunderstanding of what Paul was saying about the law. I, therefore, rather take Paul's (dis)interest in fulfilling the law as the key to understanding his view of the law, and from this perspective, will point out the problems with existing explanations, and, finally, will read the relevant texts again. In conclusion, I wish to point out:

- In Paul's thought, there are two laws (the law of death and the law of life), the final results of each law not being determined by one's failure to fulfil it (e.g., by human inability, misuse, wrong way of observing and so forth), but having already been determined by the nature of the particular law, either life or death. Accordingly, Paul's interest is not in fulfilling these laws but in identifying them.
- The life under the Mosaic law is not rejected because of the impossibility of a perfect observance of it. For Paul, keeping the Torah perfectly was possible, but life under the law had to be rejected because it was a life of spiritual slavery which could not be avoided in any way. The Mosaic law was thus identified as the law of death.
- The Torah, however, was neither simply abolished nor replaced by the law of life, but was fulfilled by Jesus (that is, transformed and completed) to become the law of life. The fulfilled law, that is, the law of life was identified with love, that is, the word of Jesus.
- Finally, love was not regarded by Paul as the way in which perfect fulfilling of the law (that is, perfect observance and spiritual slavery) became possible, but as a new way of living of people who were truly liberated from the obliga-

tions of spiritual slavery (that is, the obligations of the law of death).

Accordingly, the outline of the study is as follows: Firstly, I will investigate the history of Pauline theology of the law. I will offer an overview covering the period from the traditional perspective up to the New Perspective. I will show that scholars have focused on the fulfilment of the law (in more than one sense), and that their views are all linked to people's failure to perfectly fulfil the law.

Secondly, I will offer my own exegesis of the major texts that have been interpreted as referring to the impossibility of perfect observance as the problem with the law. My study will focus primarily on Romans and Galatians in which one can find most of what Paul has to say about the law. In particular Rom. 3, 7, 10, and Gal. 3 will be scrutinized and interpreted. I will show that Paul never refers to the failure to perfectly fulfil the law, neither to the impossibility of doing this in his letters. Furthermore, he never considers a way to achieve this, and was never interested in the issue of fulfilling the law, but rather in revealing its nature.

Lastly, the texts which are claimed to refer to the fulfilment of the whole law (or all the laws) as a solution to the failure of perfectly observing it will be scrutinized. In this regard Rom. 13 and Gal. 5-6 will be the centre of attention. I will show that in these chapters, Paul is still not interested in fulfilling the law, but that, according to him, the law was fulfilled to be love. In other words, love itself was already the fulfilled law. Finally, I will indicate that Paul tried to avoid the misunderstanding that he simply abolished the law, and that instead he offered love as the way of Christian living.

II. The Continuous Interest in the Fulfilling of the Law in the History of the Interpretation of Paul

In this chapter, I will offer an overview of the history of the interpretation of Paul's views on the law. However, it is not the purpose of this chapter to provide detailed historical information and to point out the problems of the major explanations in this regard. Rather, the goal of this chapter is to highlight the aspects deemed important by scholars in this regard in the past, in particular the aspects that continue to influence the interpretation of Paul, and to indicate why these are problematic.

The history of Protestant theology started with a new interpretation of Paul. This new interpretation of Paul offered a new understanding of his views of the law and the gospel. With regard to the law, the fundamental question was why Paul was against the law, in other words, why the law put humankind under a curse. Numerous answers have been given to this question. Even though there have been many variations in these answers, there is a fundamental agreement among all of these. Almost all the explanations in the history of Protestant interpretation gave the same fundamental answer: Humankind came under the curse of the law, since they failed to fulfil the law truly. Various explanations of the reason for the failure in fulfilling the law have been given, but the notion that humankind failed to fulfil the law remained the basic answer that was never changed, thereby becoming a sort of a legacy in Pauline scholarship. Again and again Paul has been understood by scholars as being interested in the fulfilling of the law. Let us have a look at the Reformers' view.

1 The Reformers

1.1 M. Luther

Luther is the right figure to begin with, because his understanding had a great effect on the basic thrust of Protestant theology. His understanding of the law largely depended on the Pauline letters. It is well known that he regarded the Pauline letters in which justification by faith is emphasized as more valuable than James. He believed that the essence of humankind's salvation was linked to the fulfilling of the law.³¹ He understood the "works of the law"³² as meritorious acts. According to him, the reason why humans could not be saved by means of the works of the law was that it was *impossible* to keep the law perfectly. In other words, for Luther, the impossibility of the perfect observance of the law was the fundamental problem of the law.³³ In his own life, Luther tried to achieve justification by means of observance of the law, but the harder he tried, the more he was disappointed, since he was not able to keep the law perfectly; this notion was then projected on to Paul.³⁴

For Luther, God's law showed how high God's standards were, thereby leading humans to despair and, eventually, urging them to repent and grieve for Christ.³⁵ The law declared death as the first step to life. This theological use of the law (*usus theologicus*) was called the pedagogical use (*usus pedagogicus* or *elenchiticus*).³⁶ From this perspective, the God that humans met under the law was a suppressive God.³⁷

Accordingly, for Luther's Paul, the only way to escape the curse of the law was

³¹ Luther also believed that Christians were in the process of fulfilling the law. See P. Althaus, *The Theology of Martin Luther*, tr. R. C. Schultz (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1966), p. 270.

³² Especially, since Dunn, the expression 'works of the law' has become a very important issue. According to J. D. G. Dunn, *Jesus*, pp. 203-13, 237-41, and "Yet Once More – the Works of the Law: A Response", *JSNT* 46 (1992), pp. 100-02, the works of the law differ from doing the law and focus on identity markers such as circumcision.

³³ M. Luther, *Luther's Works*, Vol. 2, J. Pelikan (Vols. 1-30) and H. T. Lehmann (Vols. 31-55) (eds.), (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1957), p. 317, emphasizes the perfection of observance of the law.

³⁴ Cf. K. Stendahl, "The Apostle Paul and the Introspective Conscience of the West", *HTR* 56 (1963), pp. 199—215. He points out the serious mistake of Western Christianity in his remarkable paper.

³⁵ R. Seeberg, *Text-Book of the History of Doctrines*, Vol. 2 (*History of Doctrines in the Middle and Modern Ages*), tr. C. E. Hay (Philadelphia: Lutheran Publication Society, 1905), pp. 246-52.

³⁶ H. Schmid, *Die Dogmatik der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche dargestellt und aus den Quellen belegt*, Ed. H. G. Pöhlmann, (Gütersloh: Mohn, 1979), p. 325.

³⁷ This cognition of God obtained through the law and reason differs from the gracious cognition of God through the gospel. The cognition of God through the law is called the general cognition (*cognition generalis*). Cf. T. Harnack. *Luthers Theologie*, Vol. 1 (Erlangen: T. Blaesing, 1862-66), pp. 91-110. This understanding of Luther became the understanding of Lutherans, through Philip Melancton (cf. *Loci communes*, p. 149, 152, 154 and 156). The Lutheran view that the law causes humans to despair is found in the Formula of Concord.

This understanding of the function of the law is shared in Reformed circles. For instance, the Second Helvetic Confession clearly reflects the idea (cf. 12.3).

perfect observance of the law, but that was impossible; he thus turned against the law, opting for the gospel: Christ satisfied God the Father through his perfect observance of the law and exchanged this fulfilled satisfaction for our sins. For Luther, the solution to the problem of the law was also related to Christ's perfect keeping of the law. In this regard, the merits of Christ were stressed in order to argue that the law could not be kept perfectly. In this way, for Luther, Paul's interest in the law was focused on (the impossibility of) the perfect observance of the law.

However, it must be pointed out that the notion that the law led humans to Christ through their despair – a notion that came from Luther – in fact failed to explain what happened to Paul himself. Paul was more zealous about the law than many other Jews. If Luther were right, Paul's zeal for the law should have brought despair to him but what Paul himself tells about his life, does not portray a despairing Paul.³⁸ On the contrary, Paul himself claims that he was faultless in terms of legalistic righteousness. Even if Luther were right and Paul had felt hopeless about his attempts to keep the law, it is nevertheless true that his pursuit of the law would not lead him to Christ but rather make him cling to the observance of the law even more, and, eventually, would hide Christ from him. For Paul, the law was definitely not a schoolmaster who led him to Christ; following the law was a wrong quest, taking one away from Christ. At this point, I wish to raise the following question: Would Paul indeed try to use a notion that was not experienced by himself in a practical sense as his core logic? In other words, how would Paul, contrary to his own experience, come to the theological conclusion that one's despair of fulfilling the law was the only way to Christ? Even if we would succeed in finding an answer to this question, we would be confronted with a question that is more difficult: Why did Paul as a missionary never put this theological conviction into practice in his missionary work? He never suggested the law as a way of recognizing one's despair with regard to fulfilling the law before he highlighted the importance of the gospel. Thus, what Luther, a Gentile Christian, identified as the most important function of the law was experienced neither by Paul the apostle of the Gentiles nor by all the Gentiles evangelized by Paul. The experi-

³⁸ For the anguish and agony of the pre-Christian Paul, see K. Stendahl, "Introspective Conscience". According to Stendahl, Paul did not suffer from agony concerning the fulfilling of the law. Paul, rather, had a robust conscience. In other words, he did not feel guilty of law-breaking.

Furthermore, I wish to point out that when we speak of Paul's agony, we unconsciously tend to think of what he writes in Rom. 7. However, the deepest sorrow and grief that he expresses in Romans concerns Israel's unbelief (Rom. 9). We easily and often miss Paul's own concern and emphasis.

ence of the pre-Christian Paul and the practice of Paul as Christian missionary thus make us question Luther's idea.

As we are going to find in the rest of this survey, Luther's emphasis on Paul's interest in the fulfilling of the law has been repeatedly followed in diverse ways by scholars after him. Until our times, scholars continue to interpret Paul in terms of the notions of the failure to fulfil the law and the possibility of achieving the perfect observance of the law.

1.2 J. Calvin

Calvin also understood the works of the law as good deeds. According to Calvin, nobody can be saved because nobody can fulfil the requirements of the law perfectly. In *Institutes* III.17.2, he writes that the promises of the law that are available on condition that the law is perfectly observed are unreachable because of human inability; thus the promises can only be attained through the gospel. The promises of the gospel replace the promises of the law so that the blessings of the old covenant which were supposed to be given to the perfect law-keeper are given to Christians.³⁹ Calvin agrees with Luther that the function of the law is that of showing that no one can reach the standards of God through the works of the law.⁴⁰ Even for Calvin, the law precedes the gospel and makes sinners long for Christ.⁴¹ In this sense, the Reformed tradition understands the law as gospel, that is, as guiding one to repentance. We can safely say that, in general, Calvin's view does not differ from that of Luther: the law cannot be kept perfectly; the law that cannot be kept perfectly leads sinners to the gospel by revealing their sins.⁴² The ultimate reason why the law brings a curse to humans is thus linked to their inability to observe it, a situation caused by

³⁹ See also J. Calvin, *Institutes* II.7.3-5. Calvin suggests the impossibility of a perfect observance of the law as the reason for the impossibility of the salvation through the law. See *Institutes* III.11.17 as well; even though he does not clearly distinguish the law from love, he says that even a perfect human cannot observe the law perfectly.

⁴⁰ J. Calvin, *Institutes* II.7.7 and 9.

⁴¹ Cf. I. J. Hesselink, "Law and Gospel or Gospel and Law? Calvin's Understanding of the Relationship" in: R. V. Schnucker (ed.), *Calviniana: Ideas and Influence of Jean Calvin* (Kirksville, Missouri: Sixteenth Century Journal Publishers, 1988), pp. 13-32.

⁴² The idea that it is impossible to fulfil the law, thus making salvation through the works of law impossible, continues amongst reformed scholars, e.g., S. Greijdanus, *De Brief van den Apostel Paulus aan de Gemeente te Rome*, Vol. II (KONT VI, Amsterdam: H. A. van Bottenburg, 1933), pp. 453ff.

their corruption.⁴³

Like Luther, Calvin interprets the problem and the solution of the law in terms of the perfect observance of the law. In terms of this view, Paul's aim is to prove that the law cannot be kept perfectly, to reject the law as a way of justification and to suggest Christ's grace.

The Reformers brought a new interpretation of the law and discovered the gospel again. That it is impossible to fulfil the law has become one of the foundational truths of the reformed view; and has been accepted by most Protestant New Testament scholars. It is very easy to find this idea even amongst modern scholars.⁴⁴ However, this does not mean that all scholars just repeated this notion. One can find different emphases amongst scholars, as the rest of this survey will show.

2 Post-Reformation

2.1 R. Bultmann

In the previous century, Bultmann's School made a strong impact on the understanding of the New Testament and of Paul. According to this school, sin involves a false pursuit of life and a self-reliant attitude, a confidence in one's own strength. This manifests in an enthusiasm to obtain self-righteousness through the observance of the law, becoming visible in the form of boasting and arrogance,⁴⁵ that is, a sinful passion aroused by the law. Bultmann also emphasizes that the law arouses sin by a false zeal to fulfil it rather than the violation of the law.⁴⁶ For Bultmann, sin is not merely the evil deeds that one commits; the intention to be righteous through the ob-

⁴³ This idea can be found in the Westminster Confession and is followed by systematic theologians such as Hodge. See A. A. Hodge, *The Confession of Faith – A Handbook of Christian Doctrine expounding the Westminster Confession* (London: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1958).

⁴⁴ U. Wilckens, "Zur Entwicklung des paulinischen Gesetzesverständnis", *NTS* 28 (1982), pp. 165-72; F. F. Bruce, *Romans*, p. 201; and F. Mussner, *Der Galaterbrief* (HTKNT 9, Freiburg: Herder, 1974), pp. 191ff.

⁴⁵ R. Bultmann, *Theology*, Vol. 1, pp. 239-46.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.* pp. 246-49.

servance of the law is in itself a sin.⁴⁷ The same emphasis can be found in Schlier and Klein.⁴⁸

In fact, Bultmann even claims that this is the purpose of the law. According to him, the purpose of the law in salvation history was 1) not simply to tell what sin was but to lead humans into sinning and to evoke transgressions by arousing the desire to violate the law (Gal. 3:19, Rom. 7:7); 2) furthermore, to lead humans to sin by making them pursue observance of the law and ultimately to show God as God by bringing them to death. His view of the law is not different from that of Luther (the law as schoolmaster leading sinners to Christ by bringing them to despair) and that of Calvin (the law as gospel leading sinners to repentance). In this sense, it is not surprising that Bultmann finally claims that it is obvious that God's request concretised in the law is only grace.

However, it must be noted that even though Bultmann highlights that even before one's failure to keep the law, one's pursuit to do so in order to obtain salvation is already a sin in itself, the pursuit of the self-righteousness of the law clearly is the pursuit of the fulfilling of the law. See below. According to his view, in terms of the law, sin is to try to fulfil the law for righteousness, a law that was not intended to be fulfilled. This constitutes a misuse of the law and this is a misuse in terms of the fulfilling of the law. In this sense, his explanation remains linked to the concept of the fulfilling of the law. Bultmann's Paul still remains in the context of the fulfilling of the law; Paul's interest never fundamentally leaves the fulfilling of the law.

What is important in Bultmann's explanation is that, according to him, it is impossible to fulfil the law.⁴⁹ In fact, the law was given to be observed so that life would be given to those who observe the law perfectly. Here, he says, "what makes his situation so desperate is the simple fact that prior to faith *there is no true fulfillment of the law*" (Bultmann's italics). Nobody can be righteous by the works of the law since no one can exhibit the works of the law in their entirety. In other words, all humans under the law are transgressors.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.* pp. 264 and 267; R. Bultmann, "Christ the End of the Law", in: tr. J. C. G. Greig, *Glauben und Verstehen: Essays Philosophical and Theological* (London: SCM, 1955), p. 46.

⁴⁸ This understanding of Bultmann is found in H. Schlier, *Galater*, pp. 132ff., too. According to Schlier, the emphasis of the citation in v. 10 lies on *πολιῆσαι*. And the curse is not there only because of the non-fulfilment of the law in its entirety in a quantitative fashion, but already because the law simply must be done. See G. Klein, "Sündenverständnis und *theologia Crucis* bei Paulus", in: C. Andresen and Günter Klein (eds.), *Theologia Crucis – Signum Crucis: Festschrift für Erich Dinkler* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1979) too.

⁴⁹ See R. Bultmann, *Theology*, pp. 259-69.

According to Bultmann's view, before faith came, no true fulfilment of the law was possible, because the pursuit of the law for salvation itself was a sin. Salvation through the fulfilment of the law was never intended to be possible in a true sense of the word. Thus, ultimately, the true fulfilment of the law was never God's intention. For Christians, in other words, after faith, the law still has validity and the fulfilment of the law is really intended for the first time. Putting all of this together: According to Bultmann, the pursuit of the law for salvation implied that the law was misused, meaning that even though the law might have been kept, it would not be true fulfilment. Even though Bultmann claims that, regardless of the fulfilling of the law or not, the pursuit of the law for salvation is already a sin, he, in fact, did not escape the notion of the (perfect and true) fulfilment of the law. He, in fact, distinguishes a failure to fulfil the law caused by the misuse of the law from a failure to fulfil the law caused by transgressions. In this sense, Bultmann only distinguishes a qualitative failure to fulfil the law from a quantitative failure to do so, emphasizing the former. For Bultmann too, ultimately, the curse of the law is caused by the failure of the true fulfilment of the law which is possible only in Christ.⁵⁰ At this point, one realises that Bultmann's understanding of the law is not fundamentally different from Luther's. Paul's interest in the law is still linked to the fulfilling of the law.

2.2 W. G. Kümmel

When we consider human inability to fulfil the law, one of the chapters that draw our attention immediately is Rom. 7. This chapter has received attention continually. Since the Reformation, the general trend has been to interpret it as a kind of Pauline autobiography. Accordingly, scholars have paid much attention to the identity of the *ego* in this chapter. Objecting to this trend, Kümmel wrote a monumental book, *Römer 7 und die Bekehrung des Paulus*.⁵¹

Deferring identifying the 'I' in Rom. 7, he emphasizes that Paul's intention in the

⁵⁰ Here, I wish to point out that this conclusion of Bultmann does not make sense, since the people that Paul warns not to follow the law are mostly Christians, that is, they are the people for whom the fulfilling of the law is really intended.

⁵¹ W. G. Kümmel, *Römer 7 und die Bekehrung des Paulus* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1929, reprinted, *Römer 7 und das Bild des Menschen im Neuen Testament* (München: Chr. Kaiser, 1974).

chapter is to protect the law. According to Kümmel, the 'I' is a rhetorical expression; Paul does not use it to describe a particular event but rather to delineate theoretically and pictorially the fact that the law and sin brought death to humans. Therefore, Kümmel argues strongly against an autobiographical reading of Rom. 7. According to him, we cannot find any proof of agony or twinges of conscience on Paul's side with regard to his own fulfilment of the law.⁵²

However, even though Kümmel proposes such a new insight with regard to Rom. 7, he does not let go of the notion that Paul was interested in the fulfilling of the law, since he also accepts that one's inability to fulfil the law mattered to Paul. For Paul, 'flesh' is often used to indicate what is against spirit, that is, God and his actions. In other words, 'flesh' is used to describe the character of the human who has turned away from God. Along these lines, Kümmel claims that the fleshly 'I' found it impossible to obey the law that was spiritual.⁵³ For Kümmel, Rom. 8:3 reflects the situation of human inability described in 7:14-25. However, when the 'I' follows the Holy Spirit instead of the flesh, the 'I' can fulfil God's requirements.⁵⁴

Finally, even though Kümmel's Paul himself does not experience agony and twinges of conscience because of his inability to fulfil the law, his Paul does not differ much from the Pauls we have met above, in that Kümmel also believes that Paul was of the opinion that humans could not fulfil the law perfectly before they were led by the Holy Spirit, thereby regarding this human inability as the problem of the law.

2.3 H. Hübner

In Hübner, we meet a different explanation of Paul's views on the fulfilling of the law. According to Hübner, in Galatians, Paul is against the law, because of the impossibility of keeping the law quantitatively. When Paul refers to Deut. 27:26 (LXX) in Gal. 3:10a, the underlying presupposition is that there is *no single person* who follows the law in *all* its prescriptions. Hübner claims that Paul actually declares the direct opposite of what the Hebrew text says. Whereas the Hebrew text accepts that it was pos-

⁵² This idea had an influence on K. Stendahl, "Introspective Conscience", later.

⁵³ W. G. Kümmel, *Römer 7*, pp. 57-68.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 68-73.

sible to keep the requirements of the Shechemite dodecalogue, and that all Israelites were supposed to do so or else they would be under the curse, Paul interprets $\pi\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$ and $\pi\acute{\alpha}\sigma\iota\nu$ (from the LXX) as meaning that no one is able to keep all the requirements of the law, and that, accordingly, everybody is guilty.⁵⁵ Furthermore, Paul accepts that the violation of one part of the law implies that the entire Torah had been disregarded and therefore, he is against the law, warning the Galatians that if they would accept the law, they would not be able to keep it quantitatively.⁵⁶

On the other hand, Hübner draws attention to Gal. 5:14, according to which one fulfils the whole law if one fulfils the commandment to love.⁵⁷ For him, there is a dilemma in this verse. According to v. 3, if one accepts circumcision, one has to keep the whole law. This implies that one does not have to obey the whole law. Gal. 5:14, however, declares that it is expected of Christians to fulfil the whole law through the commandment to love. Hübner solves the dilemma as follows: It is possible to give some consistent sense to these two utterances only if $\acute{\omicron}\ \pi\acute{\alpha}\varsigma\ \nu\acute{\omicron}\mu\omicron\varsigma$ (5:14) does not mean the same as $\acute{\omicron}\lambda\omicron\nu\ \tau\acute{\omicron}\nu\ \nu\acute{\omicron}\mu\omicron\nu$ (5:3). For him, 'the whole law' is the law in a quantitative sense, that is, all the requirements. On the other hand, 'all the law' is something different, namely the law energised by faith working through love, that is, the law in a qualitative sense.⁵⁸ Therefore, in their natural state, humans are not able to fulfil the law; true fulfilment of the law is possible only by the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

Furthermore, according to Hübner, Paul's objection against the law in Romans has a different emphasis. He claims that one cannot compare Rom. 13:8-10 with Gal. 5:14, and that the emphasis on the whole law which is so important in Galatians is no longer found in Romans. He argues that, in Romans, the critical point is that Paul does not use the phrase 'the whole law' any more, but only 'the law'.⁵⁹ In Romans Paul's objection against the law is qualitative rather than quantitative. Hübner also points out that the pursuit for righteousness through the law is a sin in itself, since fulfilling the law implies self-boasting (Rom. 3:4, 9:30-10:13). From the perspective of the Torah, there can be no person who is perfect, and even perfect righteousness based on the works would not mean righteousness before God; thus there is no

⁵⁵ H. Hübner, *Law in Paul's Thought*, tr. J. C. G. Greig (SNTW, Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1984), p. 19.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 24-5.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 37-40.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 83ff.

righteousness person.⁶⁰ In terms of this understanding, Hübner also explains Abraham. Abraham was a sinner in two senses: 1) He could not accomplish the works that could bring forth righteousness; 2) He wanted to be righteous by works. However, he was pardoned both of these sins by faith.⁶¹ Indeed, this idea of Hübner is not quite different from Bultmann's view.

Finally, for Hübner, the problem of the law is caused by its misuse, that is, one's mistaken pursuit to achieve righteousness through the law. According to him, in Rom. 3:27, νόμος ἔργων means the misuse of the law (in the light of Rom. 4), in other words, the righteousness through works.⁶² He interprets νόμος πίστεως in Rom. 3:27 as the law of Moses, in the sense of realising the misuse of the law by means of the right practice of the law. Hübner interprets Rom. 10:4-5 along the same lines. He accepts that the righteousness by the law and the righteousness by faith in Rom. 10:5ff. are meant to contrast two ways of keeping the law. According to Rom. 10:5, Moses correctly indicated that when the law was not misused for the legalistic self-righteousness, it brought forth life.⁶³ Furthermore, in Rom. 10:4, Paul says that Christ brought an end to legalism in terms of how one should keep the law. For Hübner, the law brought to an end, is only the law misused.⁶⁴ Therefore, the Torah still has to be fulfilled. The law in Rom. 13:8-10 is still the Torah. According to him, we only now got truly interested in fulfilling the Torah.⁶⁵

Hübner also argues that, since what are summed up in the commandment to love are only the so-called moral commandments, the Torah is actually reduced, and its ritual regulations are abolished. He also claims that Paul's interest is not so much dogmatic but rather existential; and that Paul does not provide enough explanation of the issue which causes some difficulties in the text. Despite these difficulties, however, the practice of love as the summary of the law is the fulfilment of the Torah.⁶⁶

To sum up, according to Hübner, in Galatians Paul concentrates on the impossibility of a perfect keeping of the law, in a quantitative sense, and also emphasizes that Christians are able to fulfil the law in a qualitative sense through the fruit of the

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 119.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 121.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 118.

⁶³ See H. Hübner, *Gottes Ich und Israel: Zum Schriftgebrauch des Paulus in Römer 9-11* (FRLANT 136, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1984), pp. 60-98. Cf. H. Hübner, *Law*, p. 113.

⁶⁴ H. Hübner, *Law*, p. 138.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 83.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 84-7.

Holy Spirit, that is, through love. In both instances Paul is interested in the true fulfilment of the law. In other words, the fundamental problem of the law is caused by the impossibility of its true fulfilment and the ultimate solution of the problem is the possibility of its true fulfilment. Furthermore, according to Hübner, in Romans, Paul emphasizes the qualitatively distorted pursuit of the law (legalism), rather than the mode of quantitative fulfilment of the law that is important in Galatians. Even though the legalistic fulfilment of the law was brought to an end by Christ, the Torah still was important when right fulfilment is considered. As the summary of the law, love is the way to fulfil the law rightly. In terms of this understanding, despite Paul's emphasis on the qualitative fulfilment of the law, the problem of the law is ultimately related to the failure to truly fulfil the law by the erroneous pursuit to obtain righteousness through the law. The solution also lies in the true fulfilment of the law. Thus, Hübner's Paul is ultimately concerned about the fulfilment of the law, despite the different emphases in Galatians and Romans. In this respect, even though there might be some unique aspects in Hübner's interpretation of Paul, it does not differ fundamentally from that of other scholars since Luther as referred to above.

3 Rhetorical approaches

3.1 H. D. Betz and R. N. Longenecker

If one wishes to understand Paul's view of the law, the Letter to the Galatians plays an important role. Unfortunately, Galatians has not always been given due consideration in this regard. Quite often it has been regarded as a baffling letter. However, due to Betz's monumental commentary on the letter, a new avenue for the interpretation of the letter has been opened. As a result of his approach, many Pauline theologians started paying attention to rhetoric.⁶⁷ Amongst other things, Betz deplored the

⁶⁷ According to B. H. Brinsmead, *Galatians: Dialogical Response to Opponents* (SBLDS 65, Chico: Scholars Press, 1982), pp. 37-55, Galatians must not be analysed in terms of the form of the ancient letter, but only in terms of its rhetorical structure. J. D. Hester, "The rhetorical structure of Galatians

sad fact that the exegesis of ancient and medieval times was disturbed by dogmatic presuppositions, and that Paul was even depicted in some instances as an antitype of Jesus, a sort of an incoherent person who could not write clearly and logically.

Pointing out that a criterion for the structure of the form of the letter has mostly not been considered properly, he argues that it can be analysed in terms of Greco-Roman rhetoric and epistolary literature. According to him, Galatians is an example of an apologetic epistle. Thus the letter elements of the letter can be easily detached from the body of the letter, and the letter elements may even be regarded as a sort of parenthesis.⁶⁸ What is left is a rhetorical speech, or, in other words, an apologetic address. Viewed from this perspective, the recipients are the jury, Paul the defender, and the opponents the prosecutor(s).⁶⁹ Betz's rhetorical approach revived the notion of Paul as a logical and analytical person.

No one can deny that Betz opened new avenues for interpreting Paul.⁷⁰ His new approach, however, did not bring any radical change with regard to the interpretation of Paul's views on the fulfilment of the law. He keeps to the view point that Paul regarded it as impossible to keep the law perfectly. In his commentary on Gal. 3:10, Betz classifies it as the second point of the *probatio*. The purpose of the citation, according to Betz, is to show the impossibility of fulfilling the law perfectly. In other words, nobody can keep every regulation of the law. Furthermore, Betz argues that, for Paul, the salvation in Christ and the fulfilling of the law undoubtedly go together.⁷¹ The only problem is whether 'the works of the Torah', that is, a Jewish concept, can enable the fulfilling of the Torah, a possibility that Paul rejects. For Paul, the law given at Mountain Sinai was not intended for salvation; it was something inferior and something given because of the transgressions. As explained in 3:19-22, the establishment of the law ended with the transgression of the law. The accumulation of

1:11-2:14", *JBL* 103/2 (1984), pp. 223-33, also follows Betz in this regard. For him, Galatians is an apologetic letter in the category of a forensic address. On the other hand, G. A. Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation through Rhetorical Criticism* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: The University of North Carolina Press, 1984), pp. 144-52, regards Galatians as an example of deliberative rhetoric rather than an apologetic letter. Scholarly interest in the rhetorical analysis of Galatians is still active in the 21st century as well. D. F. Tolmie, *Persuading the Galatians: A Text-Centred Rhetorical Analysis of a Pauline Letter* (WUNT 190, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), offered a new rhetorical approach to the letter.

⁶⁸ H. Betz, *Galatians*, pp. 14-5.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

⁷⁰ The new avenues opened by Betz got wider and wider even after one generation. For developments in this regard, see D. F. Tolmie, "The Rhetorical Analysis of the Letter to the Galatians: 1995-2005", in: D. F. Tolmie, *Exploring New Rhetorical Approaches to Galatians* (ATS 9, Bloemfontein: Universiteit van die Vrystaat, 2007), pp. 1-28. It was originally presented at the conference on the rhetorical Analysis of Galatians at die Universiteit van die Vrystaat on 13-14, March, 2006.

⁷¹ H. Betz, *Galatians*, pp. 74-6, 283-88 and 298-301.

transgressions made the sin so overwhelming that all were under sin (v. 22). Not to continue in all the things which were written in the book of the law, thus meant transgressing them, with those who did so coming under the curse. Thus, according to Betz's rhetorical reading, the problem of (the works of) the law was still related to the failure to fulfil the law.

Longenecker disagrees with Betz and claims that the letter elements of Galatians may not be so easily detached from the rhetorical body of the letter. He criticizes Betz, saying that in terms of Betz's approach, Galatians is in fact not a letter at all. Instead Longenecker accentuates the genre of Galatians as letter, although he still pays attention to the persuasive aspects in his own analysis. However, he does not apply Greco-Roman forensic rhetoric to the Galatians in the same strict genealogical way as Betz does. Instead of a diachronic approach he prefers to follow a synchronic one.

Longenecker's own analysis, however, does not bring a radically different reading of Paul's explanation of the law. According to him, in 3:10-12, Paul cites a verse that was used by his opponents: They cited Deut. 27 and Lev. 15, attempting to convince the Galatians to accept and to follow the Mosaic law as the only way by which they could live a full life before God. Paul, however, disagrees with them and with the common Jewish view at that time that, in principle, the law can be fulfilled. In Gal. 3:10, he thus presupposes that nobody can keep the whole law. While the opponents emphasized the phrase ποιῆσαι αὐτά, Paul accentuated the word πᾶσι.⁷² Finally, according to Longenecker, Paul connects faith to righteousness and law to curse. This is emphasized in 5:3 and again in 6:13. Thus, Paul's views on the fulfilment of the law remain unchanged, even in terms of Longenecker's approach.

⁷² R. Longenecker, *Galatians* (WBC 41, Dallas: Word Books, 1990), p. 117.

4 The New Perspective

4.1 E. P. Sanders and J. D. G. Dunn

We saw above that, regardless of the various emphases, approaches, and explanations of Paul's view on the law, the Reformer M. Luther's understanding has never fundamentally been rejected. The problem of the law has been understood in the context of the fulfilling of the law so that Paul's interest has been closely related to the observance of the law. However, E. P. Sanders⁷³ strongly challenged the traditional idea that Judaism in the first century was a legalistic religion in which the Jews tried to keep the law in order to be righteous before God. He presents Palestinian Judaism as covenantal nomism. This new evaluation of Judaism triggered the launching of the New Perspective on Paul, the leading figure of which was Dunn. The New Perspective brought the most powerful upheaval in Pauline theology since the Reformation. It is no exaggeration to claim that the circle of Pauline scholarship then divided into two. There have been many debates on Sanders' new view on Judaism but we cannot delve into this issue here. Let us concentrate on Sanders' understanding of the fulfilling of the law.⁷⁴

According to Sanders, Paul does not seem interested in fulfilling the law. It is not because of the impossibility of fulfilling the law that Paul rejected the law. Sanders' basic idea concerning Paul's rejection of the law can be seen in his explanation of Gal. 3:10 which he regards as a starting point.⁷⁵ Traditionally, most scholars⁷⁶ add an implied presupposition to Gal. 3:10 to make sense of the statement that no one can fulfil the law. Sanders, however, rejects the implied presupposition. According to him, Paul only selected a verse which contained both the words 'law' and 'curse'; he was not interested in the word $\pi\acute{\alpha}\sigma\tau\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ which was actually included by chance. In this reading, Paul was against the law not because of the potential impossibility of the fulfilling of the law but because the law was linked to the curse. Sanders' reading is definitely not traditional. In terms of this aspect of his argument, Paul's interest does not seem related to the fulfilling of the law.

⁷³ E. P. Sanders, *Judaism*, pp. 419ff.

⁷⁴ For an overview of his ideas, see J. Song, *Rethinking the New Perspective on Paul: Justification by Faith and Paul's Gospel according to Galatians* (Bloemfontein: University of the Free State, 2006).

⁷⁵ E. P. Sanders, *Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983), pp. 20ff.

⁷⁶ For scholars who take Gal. 3:10 as a proof text for the human inability of fulfilling the law, see the following: E. D. Burton, *Galatians*, p. 164; H. J. Schoeps, *Paul*, pp. 175-77; D. J. Moo, "'Law', 'the Works of the law', and Legalism in Paul", *WTJ* 47 (1983), pp. 73-100; and T. R. Schreiner, "Is Perfect Obedience to the Law Possible?: A Re-examination of Galatians 3:10", *JETS* 27 (1984), pp. 151-60.

However, Sanders cannot carry through his interpretation of Gal. 3:10 when he explains the verses in Romans that allegedly refer to the impossibility of fulfilling the law. For example, he agrees that Paul refers to the impossibility of fulfilling the law in Rom. 3, but argues that Rom. 3:23 cannot be used to construct Paul's view on the law since the verse contains pre-Pauline traditions, which were inconsistent with Paul's own views on the law.⁷⁷ Sanders⁷⁸ believes that Paul refers to the impossibility of fulfilling the law in Rom. 7:14-8:8, too. Even though the law orders good things, humans who are fleshly are not able to fulfil it, for the law of sin (or, in short, sin) obstructs them from fulfilling the law. Only those who possess the Holy Spirit are able to fulfil the law. Nevertheless, Sanders argues, this notion of human inability of fulfilling the law in Rom. 7 does not reflect Paul's real view on the law. Let us investigate why he says so.

According to Sanders, the explanation of the law and sin in Rom. 7 differs from that in Galatians and Rom. 3-5. Paul's explanation of the sin changes in Rom. 6:1-7:6 so that a dualistic structure comes into being. Therefore, the new explanation in Rom. 7:7-13 is needed. Furthermore, Sanders argues that there is a difference between the explanations of the law and sin in Rom. 7:7-13 and 14-25. Finally, according to him, Paul gives us three different explanations of God, the law and sin. Rom. 7 is not to be regarded as representative of Paul's view of the law. Rather this represents a distorted explanation because of his emotional anguish and agony, and is an attempt to solve his theological dilemma.⁷⁹ For Sanders, therefore, the human inability as portrayed in Rom. 7 is unique amongst what Paul writes about the law. To me, however, Sanders' explanation does not seem persuasive; just convenient. It is a very easy solution to sacrifice Paul's consistency in an attempt to prove his consistency. Anyway, it is clear that, in some instances, Sanders' Paul does accept the impossibility of fulfilling the law, and, in some instances, shows his interest in fulfilling the law, even though, according to Sanders, this reflects an inconsistency in Paul's

⁷⁷ E. P. Sanders, *Law*, pp. 23-4, says that Rom. 3:23ff. cannot be regarded as the source of Paul's view of the law. And see pp. 123ff. and 132. According to him, Rom. 1:18-2:29 is intended to demonstrate the universal sinfulness of all (3:9 and 20), so as to lay the ground for the righteousness by faith in Christ. The section, however, contains to an unusual degree homiletical material from Diaspora Judaism. Conclusively, what is said about the law in the section cannot be fitted into a category otherwise known from Paul's letters.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 70-81.

⁷⁹ According to Sanders, Paul exaggerates the non-Christian life. The reason for Paul's distortion is as follows: He did not think that God intended the law to bring the sin, so that he tried to separate the law from the sin.

mind.

In addition to this, we should also take note that Sanders' Paul is still interested in fulfilling the law in terms of Christian life. Having compared Paul and Palestinian Judaism in terms of religious patterns, Sanders concludes that even though there are substantial agreements between two, they are basically different.⁸⁰ However, Sanders' Paul is interested in fulfilling the law too. The law is rejected at the entrance level, yet regarded as meaningful in Christian life so that, in terms of this aspect, Christians need to fulfil the law.⁸¹ At the same time, Sanders is opposed to the idea⁸² that Paul reduced the law by curtailing the ritual regulations and by keeping only the ethical ones. For him Paul reduced the law in the sense that he discarded the regulations that functioned as social boundaries. Paul, however, does not give us any theoretical foundation in this regard and just says that the law that Christians must fulfil is the same law that they died to. The true way to fulfil the law is love (Gal. 5:14, 6:2 and Rom. 13:8-10). Finally, according to Sanders, Christian love is a means to *fulfil* the same law.

It is obvious that Sanders' understanding is quite different from the traditional view. According to his view, the law was neither to be pursued in a legalistic sense, nor rejected because of the impossibility of its fulfilment. Sanders' Paul, however, does not seem to me a fundamentally new Paul, for Sanders' inconsistent Paul sometimes claims that it is impossible to fulfil the law, sometimes accentuates the necessity of fulfilling of the law, and sometimes even suggests love as a means of fulfilling the law. To put it in a nut shell, in terms of fulfilling of the law, Sanders' Paul still resembles the traditional Paul, the one who is interested in fulfilling the law, even though this Paul is less consistent than the traditional Paul.

Dunn⁸³ launched the New Perspective, based on the new evaluation of Judaism. Was his perspective truly new? He agreed with Sanders that the works of the law did not refer to good deeds done to get righteousness through the law. Rather, Dunn claimed, the phrase 'the works of the law' was a sort of jargon for the special actions centring on Jewish identity. As an apostle to the Gentiles, Paul was against the law

⁸⁰ E. P. Sanders, *Judaism*, pp. 543ff. Paul and Palestinian Judaism are in agreement regarding the relationship between grace and works but Paul's theology cannot be understood according to the pattern of Palestinian Judaism, covenantal nomism.

⁸¹ E. P. Sanders, *Law*, pp. 93-135, chapter 3 "The Law should be fulfilled".

⁸² J. Eckert, *Die urchristliche Verkündigung im Streit zwischen Paulus und seinen Gegnern nach dem Galaterbrief* (BU 6, Regensburg: R. Pustet, 1971), p. 159.

⁸³ See footnote 4.

that functioned as a boundary between Jews and Gentiles, because he wanted to protect his Gentile mission.⁸⁴ In this context, his thoughts on the fulfilling of the law can be clearly seen in his explanation of Gal. 3:10 – a text that Dunn calls a testing text.⁸⁵

Dunn does not agree with the traditional view that Gal. 3:10ff. refers to the impossibility of fulfilling the law. He argues that the idea that, in quoting Deut. 27:26, Paul presupposes the impossibility of fulfilling the law is hardly self-evident and has to be read into the argument.⁸⁶ Then, Gal. 3:10 can be harmonized with the fact that Paul refers to the possibility of fulfilling the law in verses such as Phil. 3:6 and Gal. 5:14. Therefore, for Dunn, the problem of the law is not the impossibility of its fulfilment as a way to achieve righteousness, but rather the distorted function of the law as a boundary marker for Jewish privileges. According to Dunn, this social interpretation should be regarded as a new reason for Paul's rejection of the law. It, however, does not seem to me really new.

Why does the law pursued for Jewish identity constitute a problem? In other words, why does the law that is misused cause a curse? Dunn explains it as follows: To be of 'works of the law' is not the same as remaining in the law but is something which falls short of abiding by everything written in the law. Those of the works (namely, Israel) put a lot of emphasis on ethnical and fleshly things, instead of on the Holy Spirit, love, and faith, thus putting the emphasis in the wrong place. In terms of priority, they thus fall short of what the law requires. Therefore, to be of the works of the law is not the same as fulfilling the law; it represents less than what the law requires.⁸⁷ Eventually, for Dunn, the ultimate reason for the curse caused by the law is interpreted as the failure to fulfil the law.

Dunn⁸⁸ also refers to the failure to fulfil the law in his explanation of Israel's prob-

⁸⁴ Here, I concentrate on Paul's interest in fulfilling the law. For a detailed summary of Dunn's view and an evaluation of it, see J. Song, *The New Perspective*.

⁸⁵ J. D. G. Dunn, *Jesus*, pp. 225ff.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 226.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 226-27. See J. D. G. Dunn, *Theology*, p. 362; and *The Epistle to the Galatians* (BNTC, London: Hendrickson, 1993), pp. 170-04, too.

M. Cranford, "Perfect Obedience", p. 249, agrees with Dunn. According to him, 'works of the law' refers to much less than the perfect obedience of the law. The opponents, however, were obtuse in understanding it. Paul cites Deut. 27:26 not because no one can obey the law perfectly, but because the works of the law imply, at most, partial obedience, and, in fact, are accompanied by the actual disobedience.

Cf. J. P. Braswell, "The Blessing of Abraham versus the Curse of the Law: Another Look at Gal. 3:10-13", *WTJ* 53 (1991), too.

⁸⁸ J. D. G. Dunn, *Theology*, pp. 365 and 639ff.

lem in Rom. 9:30ff. According to him, the law was the proper goal, and there was no objection against the law. Following the law itself was not wrong, but following the law in a wrong way was the problem. The law of faith, νόμος πίστεως (Rom. 3:27), refers to the law pursued by faith. The law can be attained only through faith but Israel pursued the law in the wrong way (works) so that she could not attain the goal, that is, the law. In other words, she could not reach the standards established by the law. In this way, Dunn thus identifies Israel's problem as a failure to fulfil the law.

The logical end of Dunn's new social interpretation of the works of the law concurs with the traditional understanding, namely, that of a failure to fulfil the law perfectly. This is *not* a *new* answer. Even though Dunn's perspective might be a new one in terms of the reason that he provides for the failure to fulfil the law, the ultimate problem of the works of the law is still linked to a failure to fulfil it. The only difference is that the failure is not linked to human inability but to a wrong pursuit of the law as a Jewish identity marker. In this respect, we realise that even though Dunn posed a new question, he finally reached the same answer as Luther. In this regard, to me, his perspective is not really a new one.

It comes as no surprise to see that Dunn reached the same understanding of the fulfilment of the law as the traditional one. If the ultimate problem of the law is the failure to fulfil it, it follows logically that the solution of the law must be related to one's success in fulfilling it. One thus expects Dunn to say that the purpose of salvation is to make the fulfilling of the requirements of the law possible.⁸⁹ According to him, the law is still valid and one is expected to fulfil it.⁹⁰ The law, however, must be pursued not from the viewpoint of doing as such, but in the right way, namely by faith.⁹¹ The law of faith and the law of Spirit show how the Holy Spirit and faith make fulfilling the law possible, and, in fact, the obedience of faith is the obedience to fulfil the law.⁹² The law of Christ is Jesus' teaching and example about the love commandment, and to fulfil the law of Christ is to fulfil the law. The love commandment is not a substitute for the law;⁹³ rather love shows how one should keep God's commandments. Thus, for Dunn, the fulfilment of the law means the true keeping (fulfilling) of the law, and, according to him, Paul presents love as the way to make ful-

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 646.

⁹⁰ Cf. *ibid.*, chapter 8, especially pp. 631-34, section 23.2.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 368-69.

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 649.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 655-57.

filling the law possible.⁹⁴

To summarize, Dunn's new Paul is actually the same as the traditional Paul in that, according to his view, the ultimate problem of the law is the failure to fulfil the law.

4.2 H. Räisänen

Let us now focus on another scholar who agrees with Sanders' new evaluation of Judaism. According to Räisänen, Paul does not have a coherent view of the law.⁹⁵ He argues that Paul's ideas radically contradict each other. He points out ten major inconsistencies in this regard, the fourth of which is related to the fulfilling of the law. He begins by pointing out that, in several places, Paul accentuates that no one can keep the law in its totality. This idea is presupposed in Gal. 3:10-12 and developed in Rom. 1:18-3:20. Gal. 5:3 and 6:13 reflect the same idea.⁹⁶ Räisänen also interprets Rom. 7:7-25 as indicating that no one can fulfil the law.⁹⁷ On the other hand, Räisänen argues that Paul shows his inconsistency in proclaiming that even non-Christian Gentiles can fulfil the law. This happens in Rom. 8:14, 13:8-10 and Gal. 5:14. Räisänen also interprets Rom. 8:3-34 as implying that the law must be fulfilled by Christians. For him all of these are indicative of an inconsistency in Paul's thought. He also claims that, since Paul's views on the law are basically contradictive, one should not attempt to harmonize them, but just accept them as they are. In short, Räisänen's Paul sometimes accepts the impossibility of perfect observance of the law, sometimes accepts that it is possible to do so, and also accepts that the law must be fulfilled by Christians. Nevertheless, inconsistent as Paul is according to Räisänen, Paul is quite consistent in his interest in fulfilling the law.

⁹⁴ M. Cranford, "Perfect Obedience", p. 257, who understands the problem of the law in the same way as Dunn, also thinks that the law must be fulfilled, and that Gal. 5:14 implies that the law can be fulfilled by Christians.

⁹⁵ H. Räisänen, "Paul's Theological Difficulties with the Law", in: E. A. Livingstone (ed.), *SB 3: Papers on Paul and Other New Testament Authors* (JSNTSS 3, Sheffield: JSOT, 1980), discusses the ten points of inconsistency in section "The Basic Anomalies in Paul's Thought on the Law".

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 308.

⁹⁷ H. Räisänen, *Paul and the Law*, pp. 94-118; and "Difficulties", pp. 310-12.

4.3 N. T. Wright

The New Perspective covers a relatively broad spectrum. Nevertheless, generally speaking, scholars from the New Perspective do not link the problem of the law to the impossibility of fulfilling it. For this study, the New Perspective is important for the following reason: If the problem of the law is not linked to the impossibility of fulfilling it, it is very likely that Paul's interest as such does not focus on the fulfilling of the law. Let us move to another scholar from the New Perspective, N.T. Wright. He agrees with the New Perspective, but offers a new reading of the law. According to him,⁹⁸ the period of Israel's exile should be understood in a different way. For him, Paul does not deal with Israel and Gentiles individually but collectively. Therefore, he argues that under the system of the sacrifice of the Old Testament, some individuals such as Paul could indeed reach a level of faultlessness in terms of legalistic righteousness, but since Israel as a whole sinned before God, she was cursed by the law. At the time of Jesus, Israel was still suffering from God's judgement from the exile period. According to this interpretation, in Gal. 3:1-14, Paul speaks of the national and collective sin that cannot be covered by sin offerings

According to Wright's view, Paul is thus not against the law because no one can fulfil it perfectly. In this respect, he abandons the traditional understanding, and offers a way of interpreting Paul without sacrificing consistency. In other words, he introduces a more acceptable way to harmonize Paul's remarks in Gal. 3 (the alleged impossibility of fulfilling of the law) and in Phil. 3 (the possibility of doings so). None the less, for me, his idea is not totally new.

Why is it wrong to accept the law? According to Wright, all who accept the Torah also accept the national life style of Israel.⁹⁹ This implies that they follow Israel, and also the wrong example set by Israel. Therefore Paul warns the recipients of his letters not to follow Israel, since her failure to fulfil the law cannot be forgiven by sin offerings. Wright understands Rom. 7 along the same lines. He takes Israel as the principal referent of the *ego*: Israel (*ego*) who belongs to Adam is unable.¹⁰⁰ Hence, the final problem for those who still follow the law is the failure to fulfil the law which

⁹⁸ N. T. Wright, *The Climax of the Covenant: Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), p. 145.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 147.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 197.

is caused by following a wrong way, that of Israel.¹⁰¹ The only difference is that the failure is not individual, but national.

Israel followed the Torah in the wrong way (works) and failed in fulfilling it. Thus, she could not attain to the Torah (Rom. 9:31ff.). The solution to the problem is not to abolish the Torah but to find the new way to keep it.¹⁰² The true meaning of Lev. 18:5 in Rom. 10:5 is found in the exegesis of Deut. 30 in Rom. 10:6ff. To believe in Christ is to perform the Torah in the sense that Deuteronomy (and Jeremiah) intended. Therefore, Christians are fulfilling the Torah.¹⁰³ And according to Wright, all commandments are summed up in love. Therefore, if one puts love into practice, one fulfills the Torah. Someone obeying the law of love actually accomplishes the moral commandment of the Torah.¹⁰⁴

Wright points out, that although following the wrong way was not legalism as such, it is nevertheless true that Israel followed the law in a wrong way. Wright's Paul is still interested in fulfilling the law. Eventually, we see that even in terms of Wright's ethnical and national approach, the failure in fulfilling the law and the true way to fulfil the law are still interpreted as of primary importance to Paul.

5 Reaction

5.1 T. R. Schreiner, C. E. B. Cranfield and S. Westerholm

The impact of Sanders' new evaluation of Judaism and Dunn's New Perspective was indeed powerful. It is not an exaggeration to say that this should be regarded as the most powerful challenge since the Reformation. In spite of this, the New Perspective was not persuasive enough to terminate the debate on Paul's view of the law. Reaction soon came from New Testament circles, in particular from traditional circles. The

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 220-29.

¹⁰² N. T. Wright, *Romans* (NIB 10, Nashville: Abingdon, 2002), pp. 656-58.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, pp. 656-60.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 724-25; and N. T. Wright, *Paul for Everyone: Romans Part 1*. (London: SPCK, 2004), pp. 141-42.

pendulum of the reaction moved in the opposite way, just as strongly as the challenge posed by the New Perspective.¹⁰⁵ From these, Schreiner seems to be the most enthusiast proponent of the traditional view. To him human inability to fulfil the law is a very important aspect of Pauline theology.¹⁰⁶

Emphasizing the importance of Gal. 3:10 in Pauline theology on the law, he argues strongly against Sanders' view.¹⁰⁷ He disagrees in particular with Sanders' disregard of *πασιν* in the citation from Deut. 27:26. For Schreiner, Paul offers the reason why one cannot be saved by the works of the law by citing Deut. 27:26, with the implied premise that no one is able to keep all the things written in the book of the law. For Schreiner, the problem of the law is linked to the impossibility of obeying it.

He understands Rom. 3:20 along the same lines. According to him,¹⁰⁸ when Paul concludes in Rom. 3:20 that no flesh can be justified through the works of the law, this is based on the citations (vv. 10-18) which show that no one can be justified by keeping all the requirements of the law. Furthermore, he claims that v. 20b provides the reason why it is impossible to become righteous through the works of the law, because Paul states, "for by the law is the knowledge of sin". The law thus reveals sin and nobody can be innocent before it. Therefore, the expression 'works of the law' refers to the whole law, and Paul accuses both Jews and Gentiles of having failed in keeping the whole law.

Since Schreiner regards the problem of the law as the impossibility of obeying it, it follows naturally that he would also link the solution to the perfect obedience of the law. According to him, the law was reduced by Christ's fulfilment of it, but Christians still have to fulfil it.¹⁰⁹ In the new covenant, it is possible to obey the law by the power

¹⁰⁵ For an objection to Sanders, see F. Thielman, *From Plight to Solution: A Jewish Framework for Understanding Paul's View of the Law in Galatians and Romans* (Leiden: Brill, 1989). Sanders, *Law*, pp. 125 and 150, and *Palestinian Judaism*, pp. 442-47, argues that the direction of Paul's view on the law is 'from solution to plight'. Thielman, however, insists that Paul's view on the law is in line with Jewish framework, that is, 'from plight to solution'. The plight, the disobedience of the law, is solved by the Spirit. In the present evil age, the law is on the side of flesh and cannot be kept. This disobedience causes a curse. But, in the eschatological age of the Holy Spirit, Christians keep the law by walking in the Holy Spirit so that the just requirements of the law can be fulfilled (Gal. 5:14 and Rom. 8:3). Cf. F. Thielman, *ibid.*, pp. 50ff. and 102.

T. S. Holland, *Contours of Pauline Theology* (Rossshire: Christian Focus Publications, 2004), also argues against the New Perspective and attempts to support the Reformed perspective. See especially chapter 9.

¹⁰⁶ T. R. Schreiner, "Paul and Perfect Obedience to the Law: An Evaluation of the View of E. P. Sanders", *WTJ* 47(1985), pp. 245-78.

¹⁰⁷ T. R. Schreiner, *Law*, pp. 44-7.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 55-7 and 65-6.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 152-56, 171 and 177-78.

of the Holy Spirit.¹¹⁰

Cranfield also reacted strongly against Dunn's view,¹¹¹ and argued in favour of the traditional view. According to Cranfield, works of the law should be understood as merits in the traditional sense. He acknowledges that it is possible to interpret the concept in Galatians in the way that Dunn does, but claims that this does not make sense in Romans. In Rom. 3:20, this expression occurs in Romans for the first time, and Cranfield argues that it should be interpreted in the traditional sense, as that justification before God on the basis of one's obedience to the law is not a possibility for fallen human beings.¹¹² He also opposes Räisänen's view that, in Rom. 2:14-15 and 26-7, Paul accepts that Gentiles fulfil the law. For Cranfield, the notion of Christians' obedience as a sign of faith can be harmonized with Rom. 1:18-3:20 according to which all are under sin.¹¹³

Westerholm¹¹⁴ updated his previous book, *Israel's Law and the Church's Faith*. This is a faithful apology of the traditional view. Westerholm¹¹⁵ still supports the traditional interpretation of Gal. 3:10, saying that the presupposed premise as accepted traditionally, is still valid. Like Luther, he also finds an antithesis between the law and Christ. The law was regarded as a way to life by the Jews. Humans, however, could not obtain life because of their inability to fulfil the law. Hence, the law was completely abolished by Christ. According to Westerholm, Paul objected to this in order to emphasize that the law had been abolished by Christ. Therefore, Christians are not expected to keep all the commandments. Rather, they are supposed to live by the teaching of the Holy Spirit.¹¹⁶

In Schreiner, Cranfield, and Westerholm's explanations, we see a strong return to Luther's views.¹¹⁷ Since the Reformation, there have been surprisingly many debates on Paul's view on the law, and especially since the New Perspective the intensity of

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 188-89.

¹¹¹ For another detailed objection to Dunn's view, see S. Kim, *Paul and the New Perspective* (WUNT 140, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002), pp. 57-66 and 128-36.

¹¹² C. E. B. Cranfield, "The Works of the Law' in the Epistle of the Romans", *JSNT* 43 (1991), p. 95.

¹¹³ C. E. B. Cranfield, "Giving a Dog a Bad Name: A Note on H. Räisänen's Paul and the Law", *JSNT* 38 (1990), pp. 77-85.

¹¹⁴ S. Westerholm, *Perspectives Old and New on Paul* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004).

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 314-19 and 374-76.

¹¹⁶ S. Westerholm, "Law, Grace and the 'Soteriology' of Judaism", in: P. Richardson and S. Westerholm (eds.), *Law in Religious Communities in the Roman Period* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1991), pp. 69ff; *Israel's Law and the Church's Faith: Paul and His Recent Interpreters* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), pp. 108 and 142; and "On Fulfilling".

¹¹⁷ Schreiner basically follows Luther, but Schreiner does not agree with Luther's view that Paul's opponents were self-righteousness seekers. Nevertheless, Schreiner accentuates human inability to fulfil the law as the major reason for Paul's objection against the law more than Luther does.

the debate increased. Nevertheless, it seems to me that there has been remarkably little critical introspection. Paul's interest was regarded solely as focusing on human inability to fulfil the law and in showing that one can only realize one's sinful nature through the law. It was accepted that, even after the coming of Christ, Paul's interest still focused on the fulfilling of the law.

6 Evaluation

We have scrutinized many views since the Reformers, each having its own emphasis. Nevertheless, we noted that, regardless of difference in emphasis, all of them are related to the fulfilling of the law. No matter how the concept 'works of the law' was interpreted, it was always linked to a failure to fulfil the law. Furthermore, regardless of whether fulfilling the law was regarded as being possible or not, the curse of the law was ultimately regarded as being caused by a failure to truly fulfil the law. Even the view that accentuated the sinful nature of the pursuit to fulfil the law could not totally leave the notion of fulfilling the law behind.

Eventually, neither the traditional view, nor the rhetorical approach, nor the New Perspective could explain Paul's view on the law without resorting to the notion of the fulfilling of the law. Although there have been many debates amongst Pauline scholars on the Pauline view of the law, the history of interpretation shows that there has never been a fundamental reflection on this particular matter, and actually nothing has ever changed in this regard. In one way or another, the problem of the law is always linked to its fulfilling and the solution to the problem is linked to its fulfilment as well. To my mind, exactly this is the cause of the many misunderstandings of Paul's view of the law. Unless we regard Paul's view of the law from a different point of view, we will not stop the endless debates in this regard.

Basic to all views there is the notion that if the law is not perfectly and truly fulfilled for whatever reason (misuse, human inability, and so forth), it brings a curse on humankind. In other words, the idea that there would be no curse if it were possible to

keep the law perfectly, in qualitative and quantitative terms, is widely shared. One may even speak of a universal agreement in this regard since the history of interpretation of Paul's view on the law shows that this idea has never been challenged fundamentally. Since this idea is taken as point of departure by all scholars, it is impossible for them to identify the problem of the law without linking it to humankind's failure to fulfil the law. All that happens is that different explanations for the reason why the law cannot be/is not fulfilled are generated. In all of these, the problem of the law is fundamentally linked to the human aspect: the human subject that misuses the law in order to achieve self-righteousness, the problem of Jewish identity, the inability of humans to fulfil the law perfectly, the fact that humans are misled to misuse the law, etc. On the other hand, if Paul is not interested in the fulfilling of the law as such, all attempts to identify the reason for Paul's objection against the law in human terms, must be reconsidered. In this sense, an approach that does not focus on the fulfilling of the law would be a quest to find a fundamentally new answer to this problem. In order to achieve this, I will raise some radical questions concerning our presuppositions and prejudices.

III. Presuppositions, Questions and a New Direction

There is no other subject in Pauline theology that is more complicated and more difficult than Paul's view of the law. Uncountable attempts to understand Paul's view of the law have already been published. Many ideas regarding Paul's view of the law have been considered and reconsidered from various perspectives. Nevertheless, there still are certain ideas about the law that have never been fundamentally questioned and which have always been taken for granted. For instance, some scholars seem to accept intuitively that Paul's statement that salvation does not depend on the law implies that salvation does not depend on the human fulfilling of the law.¹¹⁸ This means that, from the outset, the problem of the law is interpreted in terms of the notion of the fulfilling of the law. Such logic may seem natural and acceptable; however, it cannot merely be accepted, but must be proven.

In general, it is impossible to reason without having certain presuppositions and by being completely free of any premises. When, however, such presuppositions and premises are not correct, the result is already predetermined in that one is already on the wrong track. Accordingly, one could say that it is even more important to check one's presuppositions than to do exegesis. Therefore, in this chapter, I wish to rethink several presuppositions shared by many Pauline scholars. This will be done by focusing on two important aspects of the law, that is, on the two aspects to which I refer to as the personal and the plural nature of the law. By doing so, I will indicate whether Pauline theologians are on the right track when they accept intuitively that the problem of the law is linked to the ultimate failure to truly fulfil the law, as we had seen in chapter II.

¹¹⁸ H. Ridderbos, *Paul: An Outline of His Theology*, tr. J. R. de Witt (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975), p.150, argues that the statement that salvation does not depend on the law means that the salvation does not depend on human fulfilment but on God's (one-sided) promise. However, he does not really explain why salvation should be understood in the context of human fulfilling of the law.

1 Paul's conscience¹¹⁹

It is quite well known that, before M. Luther rediscovered the truth of the gospel, the more he depended on his works, the more he was disappointed with himself, because he could not reach the level that the law required. Luther's God thus allowed the pangs of conscience beforehand so that sinners would finally find the peace of the gospel. It seems to me that most modern Christians experience the same as Luther and that they regard the pangs of conscience associated with an impossibility to fulfil the law as a sort of a Christian common sense. If this is the case, however, one comes to hear Paul's voice through the voice of one's personal experiences. Because there are not many premises as strong as human experience, it means that once one experiences the agony caused by one's conscience regarding the law, it feels logical that it must be impossible to fulfil the law.

Luther, however, read Paul through his own experiences. He projected his own guilty conscience on Paul, and so the guilty conscience of Luther's Paul could only finally find peace after Paul had met Christ on the road to Damascus. We should not forget that it is a historical fact that Luther himself felt such pangs of conscience in the face of the law, but this does not prove that the pre-Christian Paul experienced the same agony in the face of the law. On the contrary, if one compares Luther's experience to that of Paul, it is clear that Paul's own description of himself before the Damascus encounter is the direct opposite of what Luther experienced! For example, in Phil. 3, the pre-Christian Paul does not say that he failed to fulfil the law. His conscience seems to have been quite clear in this regard. Before we proceed to scrutinize Paul's evaluation of himself in detail, let us briefly check how other Jews in Paul's time felt about the fulfilling of the law.

The Synoptics introduce us to a person whose portrait is quite different from that of the modern Christian with an agonizing conscience, a picture that has become almost typical since the time of Luther.¹²⁰ This is the young rich ruler (Matt. 19, Mark.

¹¹⁹ Cf. J. Song, *The New Perspective*, pp. 74-9.

¹²⁰ In the case of Christians following Luther's views, it is a *sine qua non* that the law requires 'flawless and perfect' moral standards, and that it is impossible for one to reach the 'perfect' level the law re-

10 and Luke. 18). What draws our attention in this case, is his self-evaluation and Jesus' reaction to it. He asks Jesus what he should do to inherit eternal life. Jesus orders him to keep the commandments, mentioning several ones from Ten Commandments. It is obvious that Jesus does not say that only these commandments should be kept. The fact that Jesus also orders him to love his neighbours as himself (ἀγαπήσεις τὸν πλησίον σου ὡς σεαυτόν; Matt. 19:19) indicates that Jesus is actually referring to all the commandments. The ruler responds that he has kept all the commandments since he was a boy (ταῦτα πάντα ἐφύλαξα ἐκ νεότητος; Luke 18:21). The text does not indicate any hint of hesitation on his side. His attitude, rather, looks boastful. One wants to raise the question, how he can he say that he has observed all commandments 'from his youth' – even though he is still young. If one keeps in mind that Jesus says in Matt. 19, "Love your neighbour 'as yourself'", the ruler's answer is so confident that most post-Luther Christians probably get a little bit frustrated about it! Can 'loving one's neighbours' be kept perfectly or at least relatively well enough to give someone this kind of confidence? Are we reading too much into the text by making assumptions about his conscience? Even if this is the case, we must still say that he does not even try to rethink his way of observing the commandments from a different perspective, namely from that of the good teacher, Jesus. To put it in a nutshell, he does not realize yet what he is lacking (τί ἔτι ὑστερῶ; Matt. 19:20). Is he not aware of his faults? Is he some kind of spiritual narcissist?

On the other hand, what surprises us is how Jesus reacts to the ruler's answer. Probably, modern descendants of Luther would have expected Jesus to say, "How could you be so proud of yourself that you dare say that you have kept these since your childhood?" However, surprisingly, Jesus does not question the ruler's confidence with regard to his keeping of the commandments.¹²¹ In other words, Jesus does not find the ruler's claim as to his observance of the law problematic at all. Jesus accepts that he succeeded in keeping the commandments in the sense that he did not break any of the commandments, not even once. Of course, Jesus is not satisfied with the ruler's observance of the law. It is not sufficient. The point, however, is that Jesus does not object to the ruler's claim in a Lutheran sense. Jesus does not

quires. Thus far I have not met a single Korean or South African pastor who does not accept that no one can have a robust conscience in terms of the requirements of the law.

¹²¹ According to R. T. France, *The Gospel of Mark* (NIGTC, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 2002), p. 403, ἠγάπησεν αὐτόν shows that the ruler's profession is not insincere and that Jesus has not been engaged in unmasking hypocrisy.

attempt to remind the ruler of even a minor failure in fulfilling the law. Furthermore, Jesus does not attempt to make the ruler aware of his spiritual ignorance, in that he points out the impossibility of the perfect observance of the law, by saying, for example, that it is absolutely impossible to truly keep all commandments for such a long time. What Jesus wants from the ruler is something more, namely helping the poor. Here we have to pay attention to the extent of the relief Jesus wants for the poor. Jesus orders the ruler to sell all that he has (πάντα ὅσα ἔχεις; Luke. 18:22). No commandment in the law requires this. In brief, what Jesus requires of the ruler does not in any way point out any fault in himself or in his keeping of the commandments of the law.¹²² Jesus' request goes beyond the law.¹²³ What the ruler lacks is not something in terms of the law. In this regard, there is a tacit consent between the two of them that it is possible to do everything that the law requires.

Thus, in the text, Jesus is not portrayed as someone making the ruler despair of his righteousness. On the contrary, the atmosphere of the text indicates that the keeping of all the commandments is indeed possible. This is actually taken for granted, so that both Jesus and the ruler are portrayed as not being concerned about a possible failure to keep all the commandments.¹²⁴ Furthermore, the text does not give us any hint that what the ruler claimed is regarded as something special. The text does also not suggest anywhere that only a small number of very pious persons are able to achieve this. It is even possible that Jesus' additional command can be performed in a very practical and possible way. Even if we accept that the ruler's observance is not perfect, the possibility of a perfect observance is still open for him. He can make his observance perfect by performing the charity that Jesus commands. This is the key point: The possibility of a perfect observance of the law is not an issue at all in this text. The concern of Jesus and the ruler is not how the ruler can observe all the commandments, but what more he needs to do. The implied readers of the narrative are also not expected to ask how the ruler has been able to keep the commandments since he was a boy; instead the fulfilment of the commandments is

¹²² Contra C. E. B. Cranfield, *The Gospel according to Saint Mark* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), pp. 328-30, who claims that Jesus asked the ruler to sell all his possession in order to show that the ruler did not keep all the commandments perfectly.

¹²³ R. Banks, *Jesus and the Law in the Synoptic Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), p. 163. Cf. E. Lohmeyer, *Das Evangelium des Markus* (KEK 12, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1967), pp. 211-12.

¹²⁴ Here, it is useful to remember the ruler's question: What must I do to inherit eternal life? (τί ποιήσας ζωὴν αἰώνιον κληρονομήσω; Luke. 18:18). His question does not focus on what he must do to compensate for his failure to keep the law, but what needs to be added.

presupposed as something natural for the ruler, Jesus and for the implied readers. If this were not the case, the ruler's question and Jesus' answer would become meaningless.

The fact that Jesus is portrayed as not being interested in pointing out the ruler's imperfection in terms of the law in this narrative from the Synoptics does not fit with the way in which Paul's views of the law are depicted by so many Pauline theologians. As we have seen in the previous chapter, most Pauline theologians after Luther have claimed that Paul was against the law because of the impossibility of fulfilling it. Does, then, Paul have a view different from the one reflected in the Synoptics? It does not seem to be the case. We can turn to Paul's self-evaluation in Phil. 3 in this regard. It is very interesting that Paul's own evaluation of his righteousness in terms of the law does not differ from that of the ruler. Paul declares that he was faultless as to righteousness in terms of the law. From the traditional point of view, such a claim is excessive and full of conceit. Due to their embarrassment with Paul's attitude most theologians accept that Paul is talking from a Pharisaic perspective in this chapter.¹²⁵ Such an understanding, however, is based upon the presupposition that Paul could not have meant that he had actually observed the law fully, because of what he said with regard to universal sin in Rom. 2-3 and 5. However, what is more important is that scholars do not realize that this way of thinking in itself is based upon another presupposition that committing sins (or being sinful) means violating the law.¹²⁶ It is indeed the case that, in Rom. 2-3 and 5, Paul argues that all had sinned. It, however, must be noted that Paul does not say that all have violated the law. See especially 3:23 and 5:12 in this regard. These two verses do not say that all have infringed the law but that all have sinned. The idea that committing sins always and inevitably means violating the law is not proven and is nothing but a presupposition. Only when keeping the law always and necessarily means righteousness can such an idea be

¹²⁵ P. T. O'Brien, *The Epistle to the Philippians* (NIGTC, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), p. 380; and R. P. Martin, *The Epistle of Paul to the Philippians* (TNTC, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), p. 147.

¹²⁶ According to J. M. G. Barclay, *Obeying*, p.157, one who can obey (the law) perfectly does not sin. A. Hoekema, *Saved by Grace* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), p. 112, argues that only the violation of the law can be sin. In terms of this way of thinking, that all sinned means that all violated the law.

E. P. Sanders, *Law*, pp. 23-4, thinks that Phil. 3:6 contradicts Rom. 5:12. According to him, Paul thinks that the perfect fulfilling of the law is very difficult, but that it is not impossible so that he can claim that he is blameless in terms of the law, and, in general, that all sin at some time or other. On the other hand, T. R. Schreiner, "Paul and Perfect Obedience", p. 249, is opposed to Sanders' idea. He finds the solution in the occasional and situational character of Paul's letters. Interestingly, however, they agree with each other in their interpretation that the notion that all have sinned means that all have violated the law.

accepted.¹²⁷

Because Rom. 2:13 claims that the doers of the law are justified, and because Rom. 3:10 says that there is no righteous person, at a first glance, the equation that the doers of the law are the same as the righteous seems logical. This logical leap, however, occurs when one does not keep in mind the progress of Paul's logic in Rom. 3. Paul does refer to law-breakers in Rom. 1 and 2, but then moves to the next level in Rom. 3 by referring to law-keepers. In 3:1, Paul starts to talk about the advantages of Jews and the profit of circumcision. 3:1 rests on 2:25-6, which means that the value of circumcision exists only when the circumcised person keeps the law.¹²⁸

It also must be noted that the 'I' in Rom. 7, the chapter in which Paul refers to the fundamental problem of the law in detail, is not the *ego* who breaks the law but the *ego* who does evil (7:19). And once again, in the following chapter, Rom. 8, in which he mentions the solution to the problem, all things are said to work together not for the fulfilment of the law but for the good (8:28). The problem and the solution of the 'I' in terms of the law are not related to the fulfilling of the law. In other words, the good and the evil do not correspond to the fulfilling and to the breaking of the law. For Paul, committing a sin and doing evil are not synonymous with breaking the law. An idea such as that if one keeps the law perfectly without any misuse, one is sinless, is nothing but a presupposition. The Paul in Phil. 3:6, who is blameless in terms of legal righteousness, is the same Paul who is portrayed as the foremost of sinners in 1 Tim. 1:15!

If, as many scholars point out, Paul continually proclaimed the impossibility of fulfilling the law, from the time of writing Galatians up to the time of writing Romans, even though his self-evaluation in Phil. 3 is from Pharisaic point of view, the remark in Phil. 3 is then a very careless one. It would be extremely surprising that he would introduce a notion that clearly contradicts the most critical point of his argument regarding the law, without explaining it further in any way. Was he not aware of the danger of a possible misunderstanding of his self-evaluation?

It is important to keep in mind that Paul is enumerating the reasons for his confidence in the flesh, his fleshly boasts, so to say. This considered, reading Phil. 3:6 as

¹²⁷ For Paul, following (keeping) the law without misuse can spell evil. See the discussion in the following sections, "The Personal Nature of the Law" and "The Plural Nature of the Law".

¹²⁸ For the exegesis in detail, see chapter VII.

the evaluation of the pre-Christian Pharisaic Paul does not fit the context. The items listed in Paul's curriculum vitae in v. 5, that is, being circumcised on the eighth day, an Israelite, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews, and being a Pharisee, are not merely the personal attitude of Paul the Pharisee, but rather objective facts that not only Paul the Pharisee but also Paul the apostle could still offer as his fleshly boasts. The fact that Paul was a circumcised Hebrew of the tribe of Benjamin could still be presented for Paul the apostle's confidence *in terms of the flesh*. The Pharisees were regarded as one of the *most enthusiastic and strict* legalistic sects so that having been a Pharisee could still be regarded as a fleshly boast *in terms of the law* (κατὰ νόμον) by the Christian Paul. Paul's persecution of the church could also be regarded as a fleshly boast *in terms of zeal* (κατὰ ζήλος), because it showed his zeal for religious matters. Even though he later realised that the zeal was directed in a wrong way, nevertheless it did show his zeal, something which he could later still refer to as an indication of his zeal. Paul does not say that his zeal was right but just focuses on the authenticity and the extent of his zeal. The Christian Paul could still accept him being circumcised on the eighth day, being an Israelite, of the tribe of Benjamin, and a Hebrew of Hebrews. Likewise, Paul the apostle could accept the authenticity of his zeal shown in persecuting the church. It is in the same context that Paul's legalistic righteousness is mentioned. Even though his righteousness was not something that could bring salvation to him, it is obvious that the Christian Paul could totally agree with the idea that he was blameless *in terms of the righteousness of the law* (κατὰ δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐν νόμῳ).¹²⁹ If this were not the case, then the reversal in vv. 7-8 would not make any sense.

The key point is the following: As Paul does not say in 3:6a that his zeal was right but that it was real, so Paul does not claim that his legalistic righteousness was right but that he was truly righteous in a *legalistic* sense. He is strongly against circumcision in flesh, because, for him, the true circumcision is of the heart (Rom. 2:28-9). That, however, does not suggest at all that Paul's circumcision as such was imperfect from a legalistic point of view. Likewise, the fact that, in comparison with the righteousness of faith, legalistic righteousness was not the true righteousness bringing salvation,¹³⁰ does not imply that his legalistic righteousness was imperfect.¹³¹

¹²⁹ J. H. Michael, *The Epistle of Paul to the Philippians* (MoNTC, New York and London: Harper & Brothers, 1927), p. 143.

¹³⁰ According to Paul's explanation in Rom. 10, the reason why his legalistic righteousness could not

From his current perspective, Paul views his legalistic righteousness as flawless, but the real problem is that such perfect righteousness in terms of the law could not make him truly righteous before God. It was, in fact, a loss, and rubbish. To put it in a nutshell, when regarded from the perspectives of both Paul the Pharisee and Paul the Christian, there is no difference as to whether his legal righteousness was flawless or not; the difference lies in the meaning of such flawless legalistic righteousness. When we grasp that righteousness is not equal to legalistic righteousness, we are in a position to understand the meaning of ἄμεμπτος.¹³²

Since Paul was blameless in a legalistic sense, he could not suffer agony as a result of the law. In this sense Stendahl, who claims that Paul's conscience was robust, is right.¹³³ He pointed out that after Luther, the Western world wrongly interpreted Paul as a prototype of an agonizing conscience as a result of the law. According to Stendahl, Paul was not troubled by the pangs of a guilty conscience.¹³⁴ Sanders also agrees with such a view. His idea can be summarized by the phrase, 'from solution to plight'. According to him, Paul could not find any problem with the law before his encounter with Christ on the way to Damascus, so that he did not actually move from the plight of the law to the solution to it in Christ. Rather, only after he had met Christ, did he begin to see the problem of the law. His thoughts thus moved from solution to plight.¹³⁵ Luther's pangs of conscience were not Paul's!

In this regard, Paul, in fact, was not unique. Without scrutinizing other Jewish literature in too much detail, we can easily find similar examples in the Old Testament.

bring life was not that it, in fact, was imperfect but that it was not God's righteousness. See chapter IX for detail.

¹³¹ Cf. G. F. Hawthorne, *Philippians* (WBC, Chicago: Moody Press, 1983), p. 135. The word, 'righteousness' indicates that Paul followed the external rules regarded as God's requirements. In terms of obeying the law, Paul thus did not omit anything from what was required of him.

¹³² In this regard, Paul's righteousness in terms of the law was not different from that of the Pharisees and the scribes who were blamed by Jesus. When Jesus told believers that their righteousness must be better than that of the Pharisees and the scribes (Matt. 5:20), this should not be understood as that they were hypocrites; from a legalistic perspective, their obedience was perfect. Like Paul, they kept the law faultlessly and their legalistic righteousness must have been evident to their contemporaries. Otherwise, Jesus' emphasis does not make sense.

¹³³ K. Stendahl, "Introspective Conscience".

¹³⁴ In this regard, G. Bornkamm, *Paul: His Life and Thought*, tr. D. M. G. Stalker, (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), pp. 14-5 and 125; and J. A. Fitzmyer, "Paul", in: R. E. Brown, J. A. Fitzmyer and R. E. Murphy (eds.), *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1991), p. 1333, no 22, agree.

¹³⁵ A similar idea, namely that the fact that Christ is the only way to salvation, wipes out the law as a way to salvation, is also found in *NIDNTT*. Cf. H. H. Esser, "νόμος", *NIDNTT*, Vol. 2, p.444. On the other hand, F. Thielman, *From Plight to Solution*, insists that Jewish writings at the time of the Second Temple Period (that is, before Paul) already contained the notion that humans cannot keep the law and, therefore, Paul's thoughts moved from plight to solution.

According to the Old Testament, many kings followed the law wholeheartedly. The common sense interpretation of this is that it means that they followed the Torah faultlessly. In which sense does this evaluation of the kings in the Old Testament differ from the way in which modern Christians evaluate themselves? The fundamental difference lies in the way in which the law is interpreted. Modern Christians tend to think that following the law means doing good in the most sublime sense of the word. Following the law, however, does not mean doing goodness in an abstract sense, but keeping the concrete regulations of the Torah. These regulations require observance in a very concrete way, which means that it is quite possible to follow them. The regulations in the Torah do not prescribe goodness in an abstract sense, but are concrete prescriptions that take the hardness of hearts (πρὸς τὴν σκληροκαρδίαν; Matt. 19:8) into consideration. For instance, the law permits a bill of divorce (Deut. 24:1). Jesus says that this was not the case from the beginning but that it was allowed because of the hardness of human hearts (Matt. 19:8). The regulations in the Torah thus do not declare some perfect level of goodness without any consideration to the sinful nature of human beings and the possibility of the fulfilment of the regulations.¹³⁶ Even when such regulations (with consideration of the hardness of human hearts being taken into mind) are violated, the regulations themselves provide a way for recovery. For instance, the effect of a sin offering makes the performer *legalistically* blameless.¹³⁷ And above all, it is the Torah itself that states that the regulations taking human wickedness into account and specifying ways to recovery, can be fulfilled (Lev. 4-6; Deut. 21:10-7 and 24:1-4).

Rabbinic Judaism also seems quite optimistic with regard to the fulfilling of the law. The idea that the law requires perfect obedience was not as common in Rabbinic Judaism as in modern Christianity.¹³⁸ The doctrine of God's weighing good and evil that is generally regarded as the teaching of Tannaim Judaism is a total misunderstanding.¹³⁹ The opposite of 'deny' in rabbinic terminology is not 'obey perfectly'

¹³⁶ Cf. the explanation of the flaw of the law in section 3 "The Plural Nature of the Law".

¹³⁷ For different views on the effect of the sin offering, see U. Wilckens, "Was heißt bei Paulus: 'Aus Werken des Gesetzes wird kein Mensch gerecht'?" in: *Rechtfertigung als Freiheit: Paulusstudien* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1974), pp. 79-94. According to him, one mistake results in eternal condemnation. On the other hand, T. R. Schreiner, "Galatians 3:10", p. 159, says that the effect of the sin offering changed after Christ.

¹³⁸ R. Longenecker, *Galatians*, p. 118.

¹³⁹ E. P. Sander, "On the Question of Fulfilling the Law in Paul and Rabbinic Judaism", in: D. David, E. Bammel, and C. K. Barrett (eds.), *Donum Gentilicium: New Testament Studies in Honour of David Daube* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), p. 122. Cf. also T. Latto, *Paul and Judaism: An Anthropological Approach* (Atlanta: Scholars, 1995), for the optimistic Jewish anthropology with regard to

but 'confess'. Neither perfect nor 51% of obedience was the prerequisite for salvation. The amount of the law that was fulfilled was not essential in deciding whether or not one would have a portion in the coming world. Along these lines, Sanders correctly says that in this regard, rabbis would agree with Paul that one could not be justified by the works of the law.

Paul's *curriculum vitae* and the atmosphere of the Old Testament, the New Testament, and Rabbinic Judaism thus make it difficult to accept that Paul suffered any pangs of a guilty conscience about his fulfilling of the law. This means that reading texts such as Gal. 3:10-12 and Rom. 7 as implying the impossibility of fulfilling the law means reading them as implying something that goes against Paul's own practical experience.

There is another option. We have seen in chapter II that Dunn pointed out that fulfilment of the law was not impossible but that the works of the law which were misused as Jewish identity markers fell short of true fulfilment of the law. Phil. 3:6, however, does not support such a view. The Paul with the blameless observance of the law portrayed in Phil. 3: 6 was not the Paul who understood the law in terms of faith, but rather the Pharisee Paul who had zeal for the law as a boundary marker of Jewish people. Finally, no matter what the concept 'works of the law' mean, that is, merits or identity markers, the idea that by works of the law one cannot reach true fulfilment of the law brings one to a portrait of Paul differing quite a bit from Paul's self-portrait.

What I want to emphasize here, however, is not that, for Paul, blameless law observance was 'possible'. Rather, it is that, if the Old Testament, the New Testament, Rabbinic Judaism, and Paul himself take the possibility of the fulfilment of the law for granted, such a possibility cannot be the centre of concern in Paul's thought. All readings based on the notion of a failure to truly fulfil the law as the ultimate problem with the law are thus focusing on something which Paul was not really interested in.

2 The personal nature of the law

It seems to me that scholars of Pauline theology have been so busy with providing reasons for humankind's failure to fulfil the law that they have never stopped to check if they were on the right track. Their emphasis of the importance of the notion of the fulfilment of the law actually runs counter to Paul's unique and extremely important emphasis when he refers to the law. In general, nowadays laws are regarded as the sum of regulations and prescriptions that have to be kept. However, for Paul, the law was not just an object to be fulfilled. Paul introduces the law not as depersonalized and materialized regulations which are to be fulfilled, but as a very active and actually as a living being. In one word, he regards the law as a person (Gal. 3:24-5 and Rom. 7:23-5).¹⁴⁰ Surprisingly, even though Paul's notion of the personal nature of the law is very characteristic and quite distinctive, proper attention has not been paid to it by scholars. According to Paul, the law is a person. More accurately, the law is two persons (Rom. 7:23-25 and 8:2). Actually, this is a widely known fact. If we just check the implication of the personal nature and plurality of the law, we will realize that the existing interpretations centring on the notion of the failure to fulfil the law actually goes against Paul's thought.

Firstly, let us consider the personal nature of the law. Although it is well recognized that Paul presents the law as a person (παιδαγωγός), the implication of it has never been seriously considered. For first century Jews, the law was not a group of regulations, as is the case for modern citizens when they think of criminal and civil law.¹⁴¹ This was due to the fact that the origin of the law was not human. The law-giver was God. Therefore, the law was God's words. In this sense, the law was regarded as a guide. And as a guide, the law was regarded as a light (Prov. 6:23). This is the reason why Jews thought that the law kept them from sins. In this regard, Paul was thus not unique when he referred to the personal nature of the law. However, it

¹⁴⁰ The idea that humans 'do' the law can be found in Paul's writings. This idea, however, does not exclude the notion that humans 'do' the law as slaves 'do' what was required of them by the law as a person.

¹⁴¹ G. F. Moor, *Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era, The Age of the Tannaim*, Vol. I (New York: Schocken Books, 1971), p. 263, rightly points out that the root of the problem is the fact that the Torah has usually been translated as *nomos* – from the time it was first translated into Greek. However, the Torah must not be understood as legislation. It is the whole of the revelation of God's will. For Jews, the important aspect in this regard was that the law represents wisdom. However, Moor's very important insight seems to have been ignored. The personal nature of the law implies that it is not merely a sum of to-do-lists.

was Paul who developed the personal nature of the law pictorially and delved into it dramatically. For Paul, the personal nature of the law was something more than mere simple personification or rhetorical expression. The personal nature of the law can easily be noticed in the image of the παιδαγωγός in Gal. 3. The law guides one. The law is not depicted here as regulations to be kept but as a person ruling one. Furthermore, the personal nature of the law is depicted in a dramatic fashion in Rom. 7. Again, the law is not a list of actions but rather a powerful person who controls human beings. In this instance, the personal nature of the law is emphasized even more than this, because the law(s) in Rom. 7 is/are of such a personal nature that it/they even fight(s) to capture one as a slave.

What is also important is that, as a person, in Galatians and Romans the law is not portrayed as being equal to a human being. It is not just another person; it is a superior person. The law is not only a guide. It is so powerful that it totally controls one. In comparison to the law, the human being thus becomes totally passive, just like a powerless child or an unable slave. It is even materialized to become the booty¹⁴² of the war between the laws. The common aspect in the images of a child, a slave and booty is that the human being is depicted as being totally powerless. In other words, the subject in charge is the law, and not the human being. In fact, this is the very reason for the personification of the law. By means of this feature, Paul does not only want to show the power of the law, but also wishes to reveal the incompetency of the human being in terms of the more powerful one, that is, the law. Therefore, to take note of the personal nature of the law actually means to grasp the inability¹⁴³ of the human being.

The guidance of the law does not come as advice but as a command. One cannot even refuse the commands of the law. The command of the law obliges one to submit to it. It does not ask for one's own intentions and own preferences; it is not even interested in whether its command can be carried out or not. If one understands this, one comes to understand the human inability that Paul is referring to. For Paul, human inability does not mean that even though humans want to fulfil the law, they simply cannot. But it rather means that human beings, as slaves, are powerless and

¹⁴² Even though one is captured (αἰχμαλωτίζονται με; v. 23), one is not a typical prisoner of war, because one is not one of the fighting parties. The fighting parties are the two laws. In this sense, one is not a prisoner of war, but (personified) booty.

¹⁴³ It is important to keep in mind that this inability is not related to the fulfilling of the law as such. It is thus not about the law as object to be fulfilled, but about the law as a person controlling them.

incapable so that they cannot refuse the command of the law. In this sense, the law is the subject, and the human being is the object. If one pays attention to the personal nature of the law, one comes to see clearly that the idea that a human (as the subject) keeps the law (as an object) runs against Paul's views. From the perspective of modern citizens, humans are the subjects and such laws as criminal and civil laws are objects to be kept. This way of thinking is structured in terms of the pattern 'humans to law'. In terms of this pattern, any concerns about the law should be related directly to humans. For instance, in this case, the intention, choice, and ability of humans are of importance. However, in terms of Paul's view on the law, according to which the law is the subject and a human cannot but obey it without having a choice, the pattern is the opposite: 'law to humans'. According to this pattern, one is not in the position in which one can choose to keep or to violate the law, but rather in the position in which the law forces one to obey it. In terms of this pattern, violation of the law is not possible. It is unnecessary to point out that it is then also impossible for someone to misuse the law. In terms of this pattern, one's choice, intention, misuse, or ability etc., are not the matter of concern. If one takes note of this pattern, one comes to realize that focusing one's attention on the human ability to keep the law or to look for reasons for the failure to obey the law goes against Paul's thought.

The law thus is the commanding subject rather than the object to be fulfilled. The law is a more powerful person than the human being, so that the human being cannot refuse what is ordered by the law. What are the implications of this? If we agree with this view of the law, we also have to agree with the following: Fulfilling the law is unavoidable because fulfilling the law is nothing but obeying the order of the law. The human beings are incapable not in terms of 'fulfilling the law' but rather in terms of 'not fulfilling the law'. This is the same result as the one that we came to in the previous section (on Paul's conscience): For Paul, fulfilling the law is not a possibility but a matter of course.

I do not claim that the above amounts to everything that Paul has to say about the law.¹⁴⁴ However, this aspect is the most unique and important notion in Paul's view of the law. All explanations that run against this dominant structure cannot but destroy the overall picture of Paul's view of the law. Unfortunately, this aspect has been thor-

¹⁴⁴ Paul does not only use law-centred expressions such as "I serve the law" (Rom. 7:25), but also general expressions, that is, human-centred ones, such as "I do (keep) the law" (Gal. 5:3; Rom. 2:13 and 25). However, we must not forget the fact that when he reveals his deepest understandings of the law, he leaves the typical and general expressions and presents the law as a powerful person.

oughly disregarded so far in studies of Paul's view of the law. The inability of human beings (as subjects) and the reasons for it have been the centre of the attention exclusively so far. As a result of this scholars have not been able to explain Paul's view of the law adequately. Instead it had the effect that they wrongly accepted that Paul's view of the law was extremely complicated and even inconsistent.

3 The plural nature of the law

Thus far we have argued that, because of the personal nature of the law, the law is depicted as a person, implying that fulfilling the law was viewed as obeying the law, which implies that powerless human beings could not refuse to fulfil the law. In this regard, humans are incapable, in the sense that they cannot but fulfil (obey) the law thoroughly. As far as the law is depicted as a person, what is impossible is not the fulfilment of the law but rather the failure to fulfil the law. What does this imply? One of the implications is that the thoroughly obeyed, that is, perfectly fulfilled law, carries a curse. The historical survey in chapter II has showed that most Pauline theologians accept the axiom that if the law is fulfilled it cannot bring forth death. According to them, the problem was that human beings failed to fulfil the law. However, that even the fully kept law brought death is shown by Paul's own life. Paul himself was faultless as far as legalistic righteousness was concerned. His fulfilment of the law was perfect. However, his righteousness in fulfilling the law led him to death. The question then is how is it possible that the perfectly fulfilled law can bring death? Understanding this is the core of Paul's view of the law and the key to the answer lies in the plural nature of the law.

Before we delve further into this topic, we have to scrutinize the defect or the flaw of the law. According to Lutheran thought, the law shows the way to moral perfection and also requires it.¹⁴⁵ The law is thus regarded as a kind of a perfect diamond with-

¹⁴⁵ According to M. Luther, there is only one law that was written in human hearts after creation. This

out any scratches. Therefore, the reason why humans cannot earn life is to be found in their own faults, that is, the problem is their inability to obey the perfect law perfectly. The fault thus is a pure human one. According to this line of thinking, the idea that the law is perfect and faultless functions as a sort of an axiomatic presupposition. However, when we start doubting this, we can see beyond this limited horizon. In other words, when we focus on the law itself as a subject, having left the human-centric view point of the misuse of the faultless law or the failure to fulfil the law behind, we can begin to understand the law from a new point of view.

Take note that the Book of Hebrews also points out the shortcomings of the law. The law has weakness and is useless (Heb. 7:18). The law is not perfect. This fault of the law is not the result of human abuse or of a failure to fulfil it, but is part of its nature. Without going into the issue of the authorship of Hebrews, we may deduce from the fact that the book was accepted as Scripture by early Christians, that, at least, by some Christians, the law was not regarded as a perfect golden rule. I do not claim that this view of the law should be related directly to that of Paul. All that I wish to point out is that, whereas many scholars unconsciously accept that the law is perfect, we have evidence from the New Testament itself of the opposite idea: that the law is defective. That this is what Hebrews claims is so obvious that exegesis is not even needed. However, this statement in Hebrews has been treated as trivial. Although New Testament theologians are all aware of this statement in Hebrews regarding the shortcomings of the law, they generally disregard it. Yet, if we give this statement its proper attention, and take note of the basic faults of the law, it becomes clear that it is not correct to accept that the reason why humans cannot get life through the law is their inability to fulfil the law.

Romans and Galatians also do not relate the problem of the law to its misuse by human beings. In Galatians the law is portrayed as a suppressive παιδαγωγός. The important aspect to be noted is that it was not human beings that turned the law into a παιδαγωγός by their misuse of it. It was the law itself that led them to slavery and not to freedom. According to Rom. 7, the law is a powerful person turning human beings

one law was the same as the moral admonition in the Gospels and in the Mosaic law which was the summary of the natural law. Cf. P. Althaus, *Luther*, pp. 251-73.

The idea of regarding the law essentially as a flawless moral law is shared by some dogmatic theologians. For example, A. A. Hodge, *The Confession*, pp. 120-3 and 248-58, claims that Adam also received the law as a moral law and that the law which is summarized in the moral law, the ten commandments, requires the perfection of moral conscience so that it is impossible to keep it perfectly.

into the spoils of war. Once again it was not as a result of human beings abusing the law. The context of Rom. 7 also shows that humans are not in a position to misuse the law. Rather, it is the opposite situation: The law misuses human beings and finally brings them to death. The curse of slavery and death is not a human problem; it relates to the nature of the law itself.

The point thus is: In terms of the notion 'unable humans before the perfect law', the human being is the problem, but in terms of the notion 'obeying (fulfilling) humans under the imperfect law', the law itself is the problem. Should we delve into the deepest levels of human beings or should we rather scrutinize the nature of the law? Realising the essential defect of the law – regardless of human misuse or inability – is an important first step for changing one's views of the law. To take this step is inevitable if we want to stay on the right track.

This insight, however, poses a dilemma. Is it not true that the law came from God with the purpose of giving life? Such a view almost instinctively came to the Jews. In fact, Paul also says that the law has not been abolished and that the Galatians should fulfil the law (of Christ). How is it possible that he can point out the shortcomings of the law, and, at the same time, be in favour of the law? Various solutions have been proposed by scholars: a reduction of the law, a division of the law into a ritual one and an ethical one, and a distinction between the law pursued properly and the law misused. Some claim that the law that was abolished and the valid law are totally different. I do not agree with any of these views, as the plural nature of the law is not taken into account.

Paul clearly refers to two laws. By 'two laws' I do not mean two functions or two sides of the same law; nor the temporary division of the law in terms of the time of the church.¹⁴⁶ According to Rom. 7, Paul has in mind two different laws. In this chapter, Paul presents the law as a person, and, in the very same chapter, he refers to the law of life and the law of death. In Rom. 7 he thus does not mention two sides of one person (the law), but two different persons. According to him, there are two laws just as there are two persons. One is the law of life and the other is the law of death. The fact that he refers to two different laws is so obvious that it seems almost unnecessary to point this out. However, this simple fact has always been interpreted as a mere rhetorical strategy, and as referring to two sides or two functions of the law –

¹⁴⁶ J. D. G. Dunn, *Theology*, pp. 157 and pp. 472-76.

a dramatic exaggeration of Paul's psychological agony. Accordingly, it has not been taken seriously in terms of Pauline theology on the law. However, if one takes the notion that there are actually two different laws seriously, it opens new avenues for understanding Paul's view of the law. It allows us understand why Paul can point out the shortcomings of the law, and, at the same time, also not give up the holiness and goodness of the law. This enables us to grasp both Paul's positive and negative remarks regarding the law without sacrificing consistency in his thoughts. It also helps us to get to a better point of view than merely opting for the abolition or the continuation of the law.

What does it imply that there are not one but two laws? If one accepts that there is only one law with two functions or end results, it means that humans have two possibilities depending on their success or failure to fulfil the law. If there are two different laws, the function or end result of each law is pre-determined, regardless of human success or failure. The law of life leads one to life only and the law of death to death only. The law of death can never bring life and the law of life can never produce death. The respective end results of the two laws are determined not by the type of human input but by the identities of the two laws. Again, what does this mean if one also takes the personal nature of the law into account? With regard to the personal nature of the law, we have pointed out that humans are not in a position where they can misuse the law and the obedience to the law (the fulfilment of the law) was unavoidable. Thus, once a human being comes under the control of one of the two laws, s/he thoroughly obeys the particular law; s/he fulfils the law, so to say. Neither of the two laws can be misused or failed to be obeyed, and the respective end results are the exact opposite of each other. The law of death produces death and the law of life, life.

Finally, we see that 'the perfect fulfilment' of the two laws produces death and life respectively. What is important to take note of here, is that in the same way that the perfect fulfilment of the law of life produces life, the perfect fulfilment of the law of death produces death. This is the point: Death is not produced by the misuse of the law of death. It is also impossible that one can get life by pursuing the law of death in the right way. The only possibility there is, is that a human being comes to death by perfectly obeying the law of death, in other words, by perfectly fulfilling it. Here, we must pay careful attention to the way in which Paul formulates it. He never says that

a human comes to death by misusing the law of life or by failing to fulfil it.¹⁴⁷ No, the fulfilment of the law of death leads to death. The fulfilment itself is natural in regard to both of these laws, and, therefore, Paul is not interested in the fulfilment of each as them as such. Finally, it becomes clear that the law of death turns out to be the law having the essential defect. In terms of this logical structure, Paul's interest is primarily in revealing the identity of the law which he obeyed and fulfilled thoroughly but from which he could not get life. Since this law was the law of death, it could not give life, no matter how perfectly it was obeyed. Even though one might obey and fulfil the law of death, there is no possibility of getting life from it.

4 A new direction

To summarize what has been argued thus far:

- 1) All solutions to the problem of the law which are linked to the notion of a failure to fulfil the law are solutions based on the presupposition that if the law is fulfilled, it cannot curse the fulfiller.
- 2) This presupposes that, if the law is not misused, it indicates the perfect standard for righteousness.
- 3) Therefore, Paul's exclamation that all are sinners should be interpreted that no one fulfilled the law perfectly.

¹⁴⁷ Rom. 7 has often been understood as explaining the reasons for humans not being able to fulfil the law perfectly. It is often claimed that this chapter depicts the experience of someone who cannot keep the law of life perfectly, because of the hindrance of the law of death. Furthermore, the inability of humans to keep the law (of life) is often brought up. We, however, have to pay attention to Paul's way of thinking here. The human depicted in Rom. 7 is not someone who wants and *does the good to a certain extent*, but, in the end, cannot fulfil the law of life *perfectly* because of being hindered by the law of death. The *ego* in Rom. 7 is not the insufficient human who cannot reach the 100% mark in the fulfilling of the law but the one who cannot serve (keep) the law of life *at all* and cannot but serve (keep) *only* the law of death *perfectly*. The *ego* is the one who does only evil. This depiction of the *ego* perfectly matches that of humans practising only evil as described in Rom. 2.

Paul does not pay attention to the failure to fulfil the law of life. For him, the fulfilling of the law of life, or of death, is something natural. He is thus interested only in identifying the law that the *ego* serves. See chapter VIII, especially section 1.1.1. "Q. 1: Extremity of Paul's Expression" for details.

4) Accordingly, the impossibility to fulfil the law becomes an axiom.¹⁴⁸

5) Modern Christians experiencing pangs of conscience similar to that of M. Luther confirm the axiomatic nature of the notion of the impossibility to fulfil the law by means of their experiences.

The above line of thought affects the exegesis of the texts. For example, in the exegesis of Gal. 3:10, the notion of the impossibility to fulfil the law is deemed so obvious that it becomes an implied presupposition.

In terms of this logic, the problem of the law is a human one. It is then natural that the solution must also be human, and thus the solution is usually connected to humans' true fulfilment of the law. Once this track of thought has been set upon, the task for scholars of Pauline theology of the law is only to find the reason why the works of the law cannot bring forth true fulfilment of the law. Even though they offer various reasons, such as human inability to fulfil the law, human misuse of the law for merit, or human misuse of the law as an ethnical boundary, the basic presuppositions and axioms are mostly shared.¹⁴⁹

We, however, pointed out that such commonly accepted presuppositions and axioms do not fit Paul's way of thinking regarding the law. Instead, focusing the personal and the plural nature of the law, we emphasised

1') that Paul can thus say that the truly fulfilled law curses the fulfiller;

2') that he can also say that the law in essence brings a curse, even though it is not being misused:

3') that although he pronounces all to be sinners, he never says that all have trespassed the law;

4') that he never explicitly mentions the impossibility of fulfilling the law;

5') and that he describes himself with a robust conscience as someone being faultless in a legal sense. The various aspects outlined here support and explain one another. It also shows clearly that one can interpret the problem of the law without linking it primarily to its fulfilment.

Since the Reformation, scholars of Paul's theology of the law have always been interested in the fulfilment of the law in one way or another. The direction of this logic

¹⁴⁸ As we had seen in the historical survey in the previous chapter, there is a wide variety amongst scholars who claim that the failure to truly fulfil the law is the ultimate problem of the law. Although not all of them agree with all the presuppositions outlined above, what they assert are generally based on the presuppositions above.

¹⁴⁹ Even though many scholars do not express the ideas above explicitly as axioms, they do base their arguments on them. Strangely, such ideas are never proven; merely presupposed.

may be summarised as: humans → law. The personal and plural nature of the law, however, implies an opposite logic, that is: law → humans. In this regard, it can be said that scholars of Pauline theology of the law have been battling against Paul's view of the law. Ironically, they have based their ideas of Paul's view of the law on the impossibility to fulfil the law – an idea that Paul himself never expresses in his letters. Against this trend, I thus propose that Paul's view of the law should rather be based on a notion that is not interested in the notion of the fulfilling of the law, that is, it should be based upon the logic: law → human. Of course, such a new interpretation must be based on the exegesis of Pauline texts. This is what will be done next.

PART B

(Paul's Lack of Interest in the Fulfilling of the Law in Galatians)

IV. What is the Debate in Galatians about?

1 The problem of the concept of justification

It is very important to understand the background of the Galatian debate before proceeding to the exegesis of the main texts in the letter. But this is an issue on which agreement has not yet been reached, which means that discussing it in detail might need another full-length dissertation. Accordingly, I will not go into this debate in detail here, e.g., aspects such as the identity of Paul's opponents. I will only focus on aspects that are really important for the exegesis of Gal. 3:10-12.

Traditionally, the Galatian debate has been viewed as a debate on legalism. The works of the law are then interpreted as meritorious deeds for individual salvation. From this perspective, the debate on the law is viewed in terms of an individual and general level and understood as a timeless theological one. Of course, there have been voices raised against such an approach.¹⁵⁰ The New Perspective in particular was one of the most powerful voices against such a view. From the view point of salvation history, E. P. Sanders and J. D. G. Dunn interpreted the Galatian debate as a

¹⁵⁰ F. Watson, *Paul, Judaism and the Gentiles: A Sociological Approach* (SNTSMS 56, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), is not satisfied with M. Luther's views in that the traditional view isolated theology from history. Watson focuses on the historical and social background of Paul's view of the law. According to him, pp. 19-20 and 31, Paul's view of the law is a theological thought which developed as a result of historical problems. See also G. Howard, *Paul: Crisis in Galatia, A Study in Early Christian Theology* (SNTSMS 35, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979); and W. D. Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism: Some Elements in Pauline Theology* (London: SPCK, 1948).

so-called 'getting-in' debate that was closely connected to the issue of the Gentiles' entering the church. However, it must also be noted that, in spite of their disagreement, both the traditional perspective and the New Perspective agreed that the main background of Paul's objection against the law was not related to the lives of 'Christians'.¹⁵¹ In other words, according to both the traditional perspective¹⁵² and the New Perspective, the Pauline debate on the law remained a debate on salvation.¹⁵³ Such an approach is still popular.¹⁵⁴ The debate is thus essentially a pre-Christian debate. Of course, it is natural that Gal. 3 was read within the context of soteriology.

However, reading the Galatian debate on the law in terms of the context of salvation gives rise to a basic problem, namely how to harmonise it with the concept of justification. It is unquestionable that the Galatian debate on the law is also a debate on justification (2:15-21, 3:6-11 and 21-24). In Jewish theology, righteousness is a typical term referring to the fact that God's people are in the proper covenantal relationship with him.¹⁵⁵ The concept righteousness is to be distinguished from the concept salvation which refers to becoming part of God's people. Justification is distinguished from the change from 'slave to freeman', or from 'death to life'. Reading the Galatian debate on the law as a debate on salvation means that Paul has left the traditional Jewish idea behind, and that he regarded the concept justification as a concept of salvation.¹⁵⁶ This issue is connected to the question how Paul treats the original meaning of Hab. 2:4 when he cites it in Gal. 3:11. Does Paul change the original

¹⁵¹ A. H. Wakefield, *Where to Live: The Hermeneutical Significance of Paul's Citations from Scripture in Galatians 3:1-14* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003), pp. 22-44, identifies this problem clearly. He points out that most scholars including the traditional ones and the New Perspective ones do not realise that Paul's objection against the law goes beyond the field of soteriology.

¹⁵² There are many scholars in the traditional circle who think that the law is unimportant even for Christian living. Cf. Burton, *Galatians*, pp. 294-97; Betz, *Galatians*, p. 275; and Longenecker, *Galatians*, pp. 241-43. They, however, also think that Paul's debate focuses primarily on salvation.

¹⁵³ For Paul, salvation is given to God's people freely, and, at the same time, must be accomplished by his people. In this regard, soteriology goes beyond being children of God and comprises Christian living. E. P. Sanders' distinction between getting-in and staying-in also broadly belongs to the field of salvation. This has been especially emphasized by covenant theology. Usually, however, a narrow sense of salvation is viewed as something separate from Christian living.

¹⁵⁴ Relatively recently, U. Schnelle published a voluminous work, *Apostle Paul: His Life and Theology*, tr. M. Eugene (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005). He still interprets the Galatian debate as a salvational one (pp. 276 and 293). He disagrees with Bultmann, claiming that nobody can keep the whole law (Gal. 3:10) so that the works of the law cause sinful failure (p. 281). According to this view, just one violation of the law causes a problem of salvation (p. 293).

¹⁵⁵ E. P. Sanders, "Rabbinic Judaism", p. 107.

¹⁵⁶ E. P. Sanders, *ibid.*, p. 108, claims that Gal. 3:21 shows that Paul's concept of justification is different from that of Judaism. Cf. his, *Palestinian Judaism*, p. 544, too. According to him, it is a transfer term. However, that does not seem to be the case. In Gal. 3:21, Paul distinguishes between 'the law's giving life' and 'the law's giving righteousness'. And this is confirmed in 5:25 where he distinguishes between 'to live' and 'to walk'.

meaning of the cited text arbitrarily or at least treat it carelessly? Of course, there is the possibility that Paul reinterprets the Old Testament texts. However, if we can show that Paul is faithful both to the traditional concept of justification and to the original meaning of the Old Testament text, it would be better. The following exegesis will show that this is possible.

2 The problem of the unity of the structure of Galatians

Viewing the Galatian debate as a soteriological issue causes another problem, namely the unity of the structure of the letter. Paul's argument in Galatians is usually divided into a theological one and an ethical one. It is usually from the so called theological part that the Galatians crisis is reconstructed: The acceptance of the law by accepting circumcision is usually interpreted as a denial of the sufficiency of Christ's work and the believers' faith in him. This is then usually taken as the background for Paul's objection against the law. Furthermore, it means that the so called ethical part of Paul's argument is regarded as not directly related to the Galatian debate and therefore, the ethical section in Galatians is not directly related to the Galatians crisis. This raises the question of how the theological section (Gal. 1-4) and the ethical one (Gal. 5-6), which is also called the paraenetic section, may be unified, because it seems a contradiction that having attacked works in the first half of Galatians, Paul then orders the ethical deeds in the second half (chapter 5-6).¹⁵⁷ If Gal. 5 and 6 are not a direct response, why does Paul contradict himself? The most popular solution is that having been against the law, Paul gives ethical exhortations from Gal. 5:16 onwards in order to avoid any misunderstanding.¹⁵⁸ In this case, however, Gal. 5-6

¹⁵⁷ W. Marxsen, *Einleitung in das Neue Testament: Eine Einführung in ihre Probleme*, 4. völlig neu bearbeitete Auflage, (Gütersloh: Niebuhr, 1978), p. 64, thinks that having been against legalism, Paul himself goes back to legalism in his ethical warnings. See also R. Jewett, "The Agitators and the Galatian Congregation", in: M. D. Nanos (ed.), *The Galatians Debate: Contemporary Issues in Rhetorical and Historical Interpretation* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2002), pp. 334-47.

¹⁵⁸ H. Schlier, *Galater*, pp. 247ff. (cf. also 264ff.) and H. J. Eckstein, *Verheißung und Gesetz: Eine exegetische Untersuchung zu Galater 2:15-4:7* (WUNT 86, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1996), pp.

cannot be merged into the Galatian debate and at best remains an appendix.

Another fascinating solution is that of Schmithals.¹⁵⁹ According to him, the agitators in the Galatian church were not faithful in observing the law and suggested circumcision merely as a Gnostic ceremony. In this case, Paul's ethical emphasis on the Holy Spirit can be combined with his theological objection against circumcision. However, it remains impossible to prove that circumcision was a Gnostic rite.¹⁶⁰

On the other hand, Barclay¹⁶¹ tried to connect the two sections by saying that the Galatian debate was not only concerned with membership of God's people (practicing circumcision) but also with the way in which the members behaved (observing the whole law), and that it was thus impossible to separate the two aspects of the debate. Identity and behaviour are thus inextricably bound so that the ethnical exhortation in Gal. 5-6 is closely linked to the defence of the notion of justification by faith in the previous chapters. Barclay also thinks that Gal. 2-4 mostly concerns the issue of membership. Even though identity implies behaviour, the main concern is identity. He relates Gal. 3 (except for 3:1-5) also to the issue of identity. Therefore, in fact, Gal. 3 is not understood in terms of the context of behaviour. Thus, Paul is dealing with two problems, namely identity and behaviour. A. H. Wakefield¹⁶² notices this problem. He points out that Barclay does not carry through his ideas. Barclay's explanation correctly emphasizes the strong link between identity and behaviour. Nevertheless, his explanation cannot be the solution to the problem. Finally, as far as we link the Galatian debate to the identity debate, the problem of the unity of identity and behaviour remains unsolved.

However, the two most important problems, namely that of the meaning of justification and that of the unity of the structure, are not insurmountable, because, if we do not connect the Galatian debate on the law with the getting-in issue, that is, soteriology, both problems disappear. When we regard the Galatian crisis as an issue of Christian living after entering God's community, the two problems disappear.¹⁶³ If the

248-49, think that Paul warns the Galatians against moral confusion. Cf. also E. de W. Burton, *Galatians*, pp. 290-91.

¹⁵⁹ W. Schmithals, "Die Häretiker in Galatien", *ZNW* 47 (1956), pp. 25-67.

¹⁶⁰ H. D. Betz, *Galatians*, pp. 260-61, believes that there is no evidence of the existence of Gnostic Jewish Christians who did not accept the law but just performed circumcision. R. Jewett, "The Agitators", p. 347, also disagrees with the Gnosticism theory because he cannot find the notion of dualism and the rejection of creation which are typical of Gnostic thought, rejected in Galatians.

¹⁶¹ J. M. G. Barclay, *Obeying*.

¹⁶² A. H. Wakefield, *Where to live*, p. 48.

¹⁶³ According to H. D. Betz, *Galatians*, pp. 8-9 and 295-96; and "Spirit, Freedom and Law: Paul's Mes-

issue in Gal. 1-4 is understood in terms of the context of Christian living, Paul's emphasis on Christian ethics in the following chapters is not just a mere appendix, neither just closely connected to Gal. 1-4, but essentially forms part of his argument. However, since both traditional scholars and New Perspective scholars agreed that the Galatian crisis was about the issue of salvation or about membership, both groups failed to solve the problem of the unity of Paul's argument.

sage to the Galatian Churches", *SEÁ* 39 (1974), pp. 145-60, there were serious moral problems in the lives of the Galatians. Y. Kwon, *Eschatology in Galatian: Rethinking Paul's Response to the Crisis in Galatia* (WUNT 183, Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2004), pp. 184-98, tries to reconstruct the Galatian situation not from 1-4, but from 5-6. He pays attention to the fact that Paul's alternative in the Galatian debate was faith working through love. On the basis of this, he argues that the debate on circumcision was not a theological one but a moral one. According to him, there were visible moral problems in the Galatian churches. The misdirected zeal for circumcision caused moral problems and a moral vacuum. Cf. D. E. H. Whiteley, "Galatians: Then and Now", in: E. A. Livingstone (ed.), *Studia Evangelica* VI (TU 112, Berlin, 1973), p. 626; W. Schmithals, "Die Häretiker in Galatien", pp. 32-43 and 52; and R. Jewett, "The Agitators", pp. 432-33. In particular, Schmithals and Jewett argue that there was a sort of spiritual liberalism in the Galatian church, and that the Galatians were not serious about keeping the law. Even though each scholar has a particular emphasis, all of them agree that the Galatian congregation actually experienced moral problems.

However, could the Galatians who were morally lax or had serious moral problems (Betz, Kwon), or were not serious about keeping the law (Schmithals, Jewett), be so serious that they wanted to take the risk of getting circumcised? In Paul's time, circumcision itself was quite a dangerous medical operation, involving a lot of pain, in particular for adults. And in comparison with the Corinthian church, it does not seem easy to identify the kind of serious moral problems that occurred in the Galatian church. If the Galatians had had visible ethical problems, the debate, for Paul, could have been far easier. If so, why did he sacrifice persuasiveness by interpreting the Galatians' moral problems as a theological problem?

Paul's reprimand of Peter in Gal. 2:11-14 is not moral. Paul's rejection of the law (circumcision) is very direct. The problem of circumcision was not the potential side-effects or expected results such as immorality, but something more basic. The problem of the nature of circumcision is similar to that of uncircumcision too (see section 5 "Uncircumcision" below). The problem of the acceptance of circumcision is not something occurring when moral laxity develops. Acceptance of circumcision is acceptance of a life of slavery (5:1). The nature of this life does not depend on the result nor is it changed by it.

I welcome the attempts to connect the Galatian debate on the law to ethical issues, but this is not the only way to find unity in the structure of Galatians. Without taking the absence of ethical behaviour as the point of departure, we can read the debate in Galatians theologically as an ethical debate. When we realize that, regardless of the notions of the violation of the law, or the impossibility of fulfilling the law, the law is not the righteous, that is, the moral and ethical way of 'life' for Christians, we can understand why Paul deals with the debate on the law theologically, and why he devotes a large portion of the letter to this, and we can find unity in the two parts of the argument in Galatians.

3 Childhood of Abraham and childhood of God in the Galatian debate

It is obvious that the issue of the Gentiles' childhood of Abraham is behind the Galatian debate (2:5-16, 3:14 and 28-29). In spite of the unique emphasis of the New Perspective scholars in this regard, the New Perspective generally agreed with traditional scholars that the Galatian crisis was related to the issue of salvation. The reason why the New Perspective and the traditional perspective came to agree on this issue (unintentionally) was that both groups interpreted becoming children of Abraham from the perspective of salvation. In other words, they interpreted childhood of Abraham in the context of the Galatian debate as synonymous to childhood of God. At a first glance, this statement seems nonsensical. Of course, in general in Christianity, becoming children of Abraham is synonymous to becoming children of God. In the particular context of the Galatian debate, childhood of Abraham seems to be a special expression emphasizing *a certain aspect of the childhood of God*. In this debate, Paul does not directly and finally show his interest in proving that the Galatians, who are Gentiles, are saved. Take note that in Gal. 3:2 Paul accepts that the Galatians have already received the Holy Spirit. That the Galatians possessed the Holy Spirit means that they have already become children of God (4:6). The fact that the Galatians have already received the Holy Spirit is so evident for Paul and the Galatians that he does not even need to prove this.¹⁶⁴ There is no hint that the Galatians themselves even doubted it. Paul merely accepts the fact that the Galatians are still sure of this. It is thus very unlikely that they would be worried about being children of God while they were confident of having received the Holy Spirit.¹⁶⁵

Paul's concern is not how they should begin, but how they should finish (3:3). If the Galatian crisis had been one of getting-in, or of the Galatians' childhood of God, Paul could easily have solved it by means of the fact that they have already received the

¹⁶⁴ Take note that how the Galatians received the Holy Spirit is not an issue. They already have the answer. Paul uses this aspect rhetorically. That they have received the Spirit is an accepted fact. Cf. D. F. Tolmie, *Galatians*, pp. 100ff. According to him, Gal. 3:1-5 is an argument based on experience. Paul uses a very effective series of accusatory rhetorical questions in order to remind the Galatians of events they experienced.

¹⁶⁵ If the Galatians became self-indulgent, abusing their freedom, their confidence of being God's people must have been excessive. Perhaps, the Judaisers' appeal might have partially developed as an objection against such excessive confidence caused by Paul's teaching of salvation only through faith. Anyway, at least, the Galatians seem to have been confident of their freedom. This makes it difficult to accept that they doubted their childhood of God.

Holy Spirit. For Paul, however, the Galatians' childhood of God did not need to be proven. His concern went beyond this. On the basis of their possession of the Holy Spirit, he argues that they are children of Abraham.

In this regard, take note of Gal. 3:26-29, too. Paul does not stop by saying that the Galatians are children of God (26), but, in fact, goes on to claim that they are also children of Abraham (v. 29). If childhood of God did not have a different emphasis as childhood of Abraham, and if both meant the same in terms of salvation, Paul would have stopped his argument at v. 26 (or at v. 27). Furthermore, it would be quite strange if he would try to prove the Galatians' childhood of Abraham in v. 29 by proving their childhood of God in v. 26 (in this case, for Paul both meant the same). Take note that Paul did not prove that the Galatians were God's children when he cites the human example in vv. 15ff. After having just indicated that the Galatians were children of God in Christ, he argues that they are children of Abraham by just replacing the concept children of God by the concept children of Abraham. Is that logical?

This is indeed Paul's logic. In 3:16, Paul emphasizes that the promises were made to Abraham and not to his seeds but to his seed. Therefore, the seed cannot be many. Paul deduces from this that the seed is Christ. And in the seed, Christ, all (πάντες) Galatian Christians became children of God (vv. 26-7). That this is the case is not necessary to prove. The Galatians know it well enough by their experience (cf. 3:1-5).¹⁶⁶ From this follows, then, that all became one in Christ (ὁμοῖς εἰς ἔστε ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ; v. 28). Therefore, it is obvious that all became Abraham's one offspring (v. 29).¹⁶⁷ Paul's concern is thus beyond reconfirming the obvious fact that the Galatians are God's children. His concern is to prove that they are Abraham's children, too.¹⁶⁸ In other words, Paul's goal is to show how God's children can be identi-

¹⁶⁶ Cf. D. F. Tolmie, *ibid.*, pp. 142-45. According to him, in 3:26-9, Paul argues on the basis of experience as in 3:1-5. People do not doubt their own experience; so it is effective. In 3:27-8, Paul echoes Christian baptismal tradition/liturgy.

¹⁶⁷ The use of σπέρμα (singular) instead of υἱοί shows that v. 29 is the conclusion of the explanation in vv. 16ff. Paul's concern is not for childhood of God (v. 26) but for childhood of Abraham (vv. 16 and 29).

¹⁶⁸ The structure of Paul's argument in Gal. 4 is the same as in Gal. 3. The Galatians' experience that they received the Holy Spirit clearly proves that they are God's children (4:6 = 3:2-5). The Spirit of the Son is the witness to the Galatians' being God's children. By the Spirit, they are already calling God Father (ὅτι δέ ἐστε υἱοί, ἐξαπέστειλεν ὁ θεὸς τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ εἰς τὰς καρδίας ἡμῶν κρᾶζον, Ἀββὰ ὁ πατήρ; 4:6). Paul moves beyond this. He contrasts sonship and slavery in 4:8ff. He continues explaining the contrast by the allegory of Sarah and Hagar in 4:22ff., and presents his conclusion in 4:31. The conclusion is that the Galatians are not children of the slave woman (παιδίσκη, that is, Hagar) but children of the free woman (ἐλευθέρᾳ, that is, Sarah). They are not slaves but the

fied as Abraham's children, in other words, to show how God's children can have a righteous relationship with God like Abraham. It is a matter of how those who have already become God's sons live. It is not a matter of so-called 'getting in' but of 'staying in'. In the one seed, Christ, God's children and Abraham's children converge. As the way to become God's children is not circumcision but faith, so the way for them to be righteous (to have a right relationship with God) is not circumcision but faith.

4 Circumcision

The issue of circumcision is in the centre of the Galatian debate on the law. On the surface, Paul's attitude towards circumcision seems obvious, but, in fact, it is not simple at all, because sometimes he seems not to be against circumcision (2:6-10) and not to stick to uncircumcision (5:6).

Let us investigate 2:6-10 first. Paul identifies the Galatian crisis: accepting circumcision means accepting another gospel (1:6-9). On the other hand, comparing his gospel with that of Peter in the following chapter, 2:7-9, Paul uses the word περιτομή for Jews instead of the word Ἰουδαῖος intentionally.¹⁶⁹ But is περιτομή not a term that Paul should avoid? In 2:12-3 he does not use the word Ἰουδαῖος, and calls the Jews from James who created the problems 'those from circumcision' (τοὺς ἐκ περιτομῆς). The term 'circumcision' is thus in the centre of debate. Then, why does Paul advertently use this problematic term 'circumcision' instead of the ethnic term, Ἰουδαῖος, when he compares his 'gospel' with Peter's?¹⁷⁰

children of Abraham. Paul's goal is not to prove that the Galatians are God's children but that they are Abraham's children (4:31 = 3:29).

¹⁶⁹ See vv. 13ff. Paul continually uses Ἰουδαῖος (Ἰουδαῖοι) only.

¹⁷⁰ Paul's gospel concerns not only Gentiles. In Gal. 5:1-2, Christ's salvational work is identified as the termination of the life of slavery of keeping the law. It is obvious that this benefit of salvation must be applied to the Jews as well. The acceptance of a life of slavery of keeping the whole law by accepting circumcision is a warning not only to Gentiles but also to Jews. It is confirmed in v. 3 in which Paul warns not only Gentiles but 'all' accepting circumcision (παντὶ ἀνθρώπῳ περιτεμνομένῳ). Nevertheless, Paul calls Jews the circumcised.

In 2:6-10 Paul focuses on the equality of his apostleship and gospel to that of the other apostles. His gospel and Peter's are the same. In this context, what Paul wants to say by using the very sensitive term is that the apostolic gospel is not concerned with circumcision; in other words, that the apostles did not set any regulations for circumcision. This is confirmed by the fact that Paul finally closes the paragraph by saying that the apostles agreed only on one issue, namely on the remembering of the poor (v. 10). Thus, agreeing that their gospels were the same, the apostles did not establish any regulations for circumcision; they only agreed on remembering the poor. The circumcised did not have to give up their circumcision.¹⁷¹ The uncircumcised did not have to give up their uncircumcision. The apostles thus did not decide on abolishing the circumcision or on keeping to circumcision. Paul does not regard this as negligence. In fact, by recalling the agreement on the irrelevance of the circumcision, he argues that his gospel was not against circumcision.

Then, what is the reason for Paul being against circumcision in the Galatian crisis? We can get a clue from the following incident, the Antioch incident (Gal. 2:12-14).¹⁷² Peter did not act according to the apostolic agreement, that is, according to the evangelic agreement. It was not a violation of the abolishment of Kashrut (Jewish dietary regulations). It must be noticed that even though the regulations of Kosher did not necessarily need to be kept, they had not yet been abolished. Paul, himself, made it clear that the apostolic gospel did not imply the abolishment of such regulations. Thus Peter's fault was not a violation of the decision to abolish such regulations. Then, what was the problem? The Antioch incident was about the notion of righteousness (vv. 16-17). As I pointed out above, righteousness means living in the right relationship with God in the covenant. Peter's action implied that Gentiles had to 'live' (ζᾶω) as Jews, that is, according to Jewish way of living in righteousness (2:14). Peter acted as if the Christian life still had been prescribed by the law. The term that points out this exactly is 'hypocrisy' (ὑπόκρισις; v. 13). In this regard, Peter held the same position as the agitators in the Galatian church.

Paul's gospel was not against circumcision as such. Within the context of righteous living, however, the law of circumcision had to be opposed. This will be con-

¹⁷¹ Debaptising is sometimes performed by people in the Western world, who do not like the fact of their infant baptism. Paul's gospel, however, does not require Jewish Christians to perform de-circumcision.

¹⁷² In his account of the Antioch incident, Paul declares that no one can be justified by the works of the law (v. 16); this is repeated in v. 21. And he delves into the problem of the Galatians directly in Gal. 3:1. In essence, the Galatian crisis did not differ from the Antioch incident.

firmed by the discussion of the notion of uncircumcision.

5 Uncircumcision

In regard to circumcision, one of the key notions is that in Christ circumcision is essentially equal to uncircumcision (5:6). This is very important. In essence the reason why Paul was against circumcision was not different from the reason why he was against uncircumcision. If the issue of Abraham's childhood was soteriological, in other words, if the Galatian debate was about whether Galatians, a kind of semi-people of God, had to accept circumcision, or had to keep the law, to become true people of God, what would this imply for his views on uncircumcision? If Paul had claimed that the Galatians did not need to follow the law (circumcision) in order to be full members of God's people and that only their faith in Christ was already enough for full membership, how should we understand the fact that Paul expresses himself in exactly the same verse also against not keeping the law (uncircumcision)?

If we understand circumcision and uncircumcision within the context of the Christian way of living, Paul's rejection of uncircumcision makes sense. The Christian way of living is neither 'following the law', nor 'not following the law.' In order to understand this correctly, we have to grasp that his objection to a regulation in the law is not just the abolishment of it but another regulation.¹⁷³ In this sense, uncircumcision is not just the abolishment of circumcision, but another regulation.

If uncircumcision means abolition of circumcision, why does Paul upset his own position in 5:6 (6:15), that is, his rejection of circumcision? Because uncircumcision does not just end with the abolition of the responsibility of circumcision, uncircumcision means that circumcision must not be done. In this respect, uncircumcision is thus a new regulation. The English word, uncircumcision, and the Korean word, 'mu-hallie' (non-circumcision) both contain within themselves the term 'circumcision', and

¹⁷³ This is the very reason why having been against circumcision, Paul also noted his rejection of uncircumcision. His objection to circumcision did not imply the establishment of another regulation.

thus do not really bring out this clearly. Uncircumcision means practising ἀκροβυστία. Thus the matter of circumcision and uncircumcision is not a matter of whether one must practise circumcision or *not practise it*. It is a matter of which one of the two, περιτομή or ἀκροβυστία, one *must practise*. The acceptance of circumcision ultimately means the acceptance of the Mosaic law. In this sense, the matter of circumcision and uncircumcision is a decision between whether one must 'follow' the Mosaic law or be against the Mosaic law. The acceptance of ἀκροβυστία is the acceptance of a way of living in which one 'observes' not keeping the Mosaic law, centring on the laws of circumcision, food and the Sabbath. In this case, circumcision should not be kept at all. It is in this sense that Paul was against both circumcision and uncircumcision.

Even though Paul is against circumcision, he never explains the life of keeping ἀκροβυστία. In other words, he never formulates a regulation that one must not accept circumcision. If one understands this, one realizes why Paul, when he wanted Timothy to be circumcised, could not be charged with hypocrisy. If Paul had prescribed the abolition of circumcision by being against circumcision, him having Timothy circumcised would have been a contradiction. However, by objecting to circumcision, Paul was neither in favour of the abolition of circumcision, neither trying to prescribe ἀκροβυστία. What does this mean? What Paul wanted to say is that basically the Christian life was not one of 'keeping' either ἀκροβυστία or περιτομή. The new life of Christians surpassed both ἀκροβυστία and περιτομή. The life in Christ was not the kind of life that would be prescribed in terms of either ἀκροβυστία or περιτομή.

The essence is this: Paul's objection to both ἀκροβυστία and περιτομή is based on the fact that in both instances the Christian life is prescribed in terms of regulations of keeping either ἀκροβυστία or περιτομή. As we saw above, this is the reason why he reprimanded Peter in Antioch. Within the context of righteousness, that is, within Christian life, Paul's objection to ἀκροβυστία thus does make sense.

6 Circumcision: A debate about being *in Christ*

We have seen that both circumcision and uncircumcision should not be understood in terms of the context of ‘getting-in’ but within the context of the Christian way of living. This notion can further be substantiated by the theological position of circumcision. The debate on circumcision (uncircumcision), namely, the law, is basically a debate about being ‘in’ Christ (ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ; Gal. 5:6). Paul claims that ‘in’ Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is of any avail (5:6).¹⁷⁴ Take note that Paul does not say ‘into’ Christ, but ‘in’ Christ. The debate of circumcision is thus not one of whether circumcision is necessary for someone who is not in Christ to get into Christ, but of whether circumcision, that is, the law is still the valid way for one in Christ to be identified as a child of Abraham. At a first glance, the debate on circumcision might seem to be a debate about whether the Galatians, that is, Gentiles, are true children of God; in other words, whether it is a debate about the salvation of the Gentiles, but as I have pointed out above, the fact that the Galatians were truly children of God was not something that needed to be proven. We have to keep in mind that Paul does not find it necessary to prove the salvation of the Gentiles; he just proclaims it. According to Gal. 2:7-9, by the fact that the two groups of apostles have acknowledged each other’s gospel, they have already proclaimed that the salvation of the Gentiles is on the same ground as that of the Jews. There was no difference between Paul’s gospel and Peter’s gospel, which means that there was no difference between Gentile Christians and Jewish Christians. That only faith in Christ was enough for salvation was the common creed in Christianity; Paul thus did not need to explain or prove it.

¹⁷⁴ See Gal. 2:17, too. The theological issue regarding table fellowship in the Antioch incident is also linked to being in Christ. See Gal. 3:28 as well. Paul focuses the debate continuously on being in Christ.

7 Conclusion

Our conclusion is that our survey so far has showed that the Galatian debate about childhood of Abraham was not a debate about the issue of salvation but about the Christian way of living after having been saved. In this sense, the theological and ethical parts of Galatians can be unified. On the other hand, this conclusion was already anticipated because of the fact that the debate on childhood of Abraham was essentially a debate on righteousness. Strangely, scholars have overlooked the fact that the debate on righteousness was a debate focused about being in the covenant. Even E. P. Sanders who distinguished between 'getting-in' and 'staying-in', regarded the Galatian debate on righteousness as a debate on 'getting-in'. The concept of righteousness, however, is a concept focusing on the relationship between God and his people, in terms of covenantal life. The crisis about Galatians' righteousness must be regarded firstly not as an issue whether they are God's people or not, but how they as God's people must live within the covenant righteously. If we keep this in mind, we will realize that the question how the Galatians can be true children of Abraham is a question about how Gentiles must live in order to live the righteous life that Abraham lived. In other words, the question is not whether Gentiles must keep the law (must live as Jews) to become God's true people, but whether Gentiles who have already become part of God's people must keep the law to live as righteously as Abraham did.

The Galatians were confident that they had received the Holy Spirit (Gal. 3:1-5). They were thus confident of the grace that they had experienced in becoming children of God through faith in Christ. This, in fact, had already been decided at the apostolic meeting (Gal. 2). It seems that during the time that Paul was with the Galatians, they were not self-indulgent, but were rather living well under the guidance of the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:7). However, after Paul had left them, not having given them any Halakha, the agitators arrived and stirred up the congregation, claiming that as God's people they had to live a righteous life and that such a life was based on circumcision as was the case with Abraham. The Galatians who were zealous about their spiritual lives, then seemed to be willing to accept circumcision – something that was dangerous and painful, and they were also eager to keep the rest of the law.

Paul, however, was against prescribing the righteous life in terms of the regulations of the law. For him, the life 'in Christ' was not a life that could be prescribed in

terms of either περιτομή or ἀκροβυστία. In other words, the righteous life in Christ was not a life according to Jewish ways, neither one according to Gentile ways.

Now, we are in the position to move to the exegesis of the verses referring to the fulfilling of the law. The exegesis will confirm that the Galatian debate was on the way of living. If we interpret the Galatian debate as a debate on the way of living, we will see how sections of which the interpretation is controversial, become clear.

V. The Interpretation of Gal. 3:10-12

1 Debates on Gal. 3:10 and suggested solutions

1.1 An implied presupposition?

Gal. 3:10 is regarded as one of the most difficult and important verses for understanding Paul's theology of the law.¹⁷⁵ The idea that Paul was against the law because of the impossibility of fulfilling the law has its foundation in this verse.¹⁷⁶ Thus, taking this verse as a sort of a test verse, scholars from the New Perspective, such as Sanders and Dunn, base their explanations of Paul's view of the law on this verse.¹⁷⁷ Therefore, it is no exaggeration to say that the understanding of Paul's theology of the law hinges on the understanding of this verse. Ironically, however, it seems as if scholars have not yet reached an agreement on the meaning of this important verse.

The key to the interpretation of this verse is the effect of the citation that Paul uses here. It is not easy to understand how Deut. 27:26 can support what Paul wants to say, because there seems to be a clear contradiction between the two. The problem was identified as early as M. Luther.¹⁷⁸ He points out that the citation says exactly the opposite of what Paul wants to say: Whereas Moses says that whosoever shall not do the works of the law, is accursed, Paul claims that whosoever shall do the works of the law, is accursed.¹⁷⁹ Luther solves the problem in the following way: Paul does not speak of the law and the works of the law in terms of their essence, but from the perspective of hypocrites who mistakenly do the works of the law in order to be righteous. Therefore, for Luther, this verse refers to the fact that such people do not fulfil the works of the law in the true sense of the word. They deny justification by

¹⁷⁵ T. R. Schreiner, *Law*, p. 45. According to B. W. Longenecker, *The Triumph of Abraham's God: The Transformation of Identity in Galatians* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1998), p. 134, Gal. 3:10-14 is one of the most difficult passages in the Pauline corpus.

¹⁷⁶ E. P. Sanders, *Law*, p. 20.

¹⁷⁷ J. D. G. Dunn, *Jesus*, p. 60, takes the verse as a test verse for his perspective.

¹⁷⁸ M. Luther, *A Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians* (Cambridge: James Clarke & Co. Ltd., 1953), pp. 244-47. See pp. 249 and 252, too.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 224.

faith and by 'doing the works of the law', sin against the first, second, third and, in fact, against all the commandments. Furthermore, by not actually doing the law they blaspheme against God, because they are misusing the law and thus come under the curse of the law.

According to Luther, eventually, those of the works of the law (ὅσοι ἐξ ἔργων νόμου) are those who do the law, but who are actually violating the law, and, accordingly, who fail to fulfil the law perfectly. On the other hand, for Luther, to do the law in a true sense is to believe. The law is done by faith, that is, by receiving Christ and the Holy Spirit, by loving God and neighbours, and by doing good deeds in faith. According to Luther, this is the true way to keep the law. Moses thus requires real doers of the law (those who are of faith), whereas, in Galatians, Paul is opposing those who are false doers (i.e., those who are not of faith). Thus there is no conflict between the two. Moses puts it negatively, whereas Paul puts it in the affirmative.

Luther's explanation is based on the notion of the true fulfilling of the law. Of course, his emphasis lies on faith in Christ, but the reason why he emphasizes faith in 3:10 is that, according to him, the law can only be fulfilled by faith. For Luther, the law must be done perfectly, and there are two kinds of doers of the law: 1) those of the works of the law, and 2) those of faith.¹⁸⁰ The true doers of the law are the latter.¹⁸¹ For Luther, the ultimate problem of the law is that it is impossible to fulfil the law perfectly without faith.

Another Reformer, Calvin's interpretation does not differ much from that of Luther. According to him, those of the works of the law are those who base their salvation on the works of the law. However, there has been no one who was able to keep the law perfectly; nor will there ever be. It is because humans are depraved by nature that they are unable to keep the law.¹⁸² The law requires perfect fulfilment, but no one can achieve it. For Calvin, this is the ultimate problem of the law. This Reformed understanding has been accepted for a long time.

We hear the same from Schreiner.¹⁸³ According to him, Gal. 3:10 clearly provides the reason why humans cannot become righteous through the works of the law.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 235.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 247 and 252. Luther's interest in the perfect fulfilment of the law does not waver when he moves to the aspect of Christian living. According to him, Christians also do not do the law perfectly, but because of Christ, this imperfection is not imputed to them and they are forgiven.

¹⁸² J. Calvin, *Galatians, Ephesians*, G. L. Bray (ed.), (RCSNT10, Downer's Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2011), pp. 99-100.

¹⁸³ T. R. Schreiner, "Galatians 3:10", p. 156; and "Paul and Perfect Obedience", p. 257.

Paul's logic can be explained by a syllogism.¹⁸⁴ A: Cursed be everyone who does not continue to do all the things written in the book of the law (3:10b). B: No one can keep all things written in the book of the law (implied presupposition). C: Therefore, those who rely on the works of the law for salvation are under the curse (3:10a). The citation connected by γάρ provides the reason why the works of the law lead to the curse. In most Masoretic texts the word Πᾶσι is not found in Deut. 27:26¹⁸⁵ and it thus comes from the LXX. According to Schreiner, the reason why Paul has the word Πᾶσι is to show that perfect fulfilling of the law is needed to avoid the curse of the law.¹⁸⁶ This idea that Paul refers to the impossibility of the perfect fulfilling of the law as the problem of the law, is accepted by most scholars.¹⁸⁷

Many scholars who accept the notion of the impossibility of fulfilling the law, believe that if the law could be kept perfectly, righteousness (salvation) could be earned by the works of the law. Some, however, do not agree with this, and point out that this was not the original intention of the law.¹⁸⁸ Nevertheless, in both cases, the

¹⁸⁴ T. R. Schreiner, *Law*, pp. 44ff. In this regard, S. Kim, *Paul*, pp. 141-43, is in agreement with Schreiner. This syllogism is also found in Luther. *Galatians*, p. 249.

¹⁸⁵ Πᾶσι is found in some MT. Cf. Dunn, *Theology*, p. 361, footnote 108.

¹⁸⁶ T. R. Schreiner, *Law*, p. 45.

¹⁸⁷ J. W. Drane, *Paul, Libertine or Legalist?: A Study of the Theology of the Major Pauline Epistles* (London: SPCK, 1975), p. 28; D. J. Moo, "The Works of the Law", pp. 97-98; D. H. Lietzmann, *An die Galater*, 4. Auflage, (HNT 10, Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1971), p. 19; R. H. Gundry, "Grace, Works and Staying Saved in Paul", *Bib* 66 (1985), pp. 24-5; D. Guthrie, *Galatians* (NCBC, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1973), pp. 97-8; R. Longenecker, *Galatians*, p. 117; J. MacArthur, *Galatians* (MNTC, Chicago: Moody, 1987), pp. 76-7; S. Greijdanus, *De Brief van de Apostel Paulus aan de Galaten* (KVHS, Kampen: Kok, 1953), p. 88; F. Mussner, *Der Galaterbrief*, p. 226; L. Thurén, *Derhetorizing Paul. A Dynamic Perspective on Pauline Theology and the Law* (WUNT 124, Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2000), p. 92; U. Wilckens, "Was heißt bei Paulus", p. 92; H. Hübner, *The Law*, p. 19; "Gal. 3,10 und die Herkunft des Paulus", *KD* 19 (1973), pp. 215-31; F. Thielman, *Paul and the Law: A Contextual Approach* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1994), pp. 124-30; H. J. Schoeps, *Paul*, pp. 175-77; B. W. Longenecker, *Triumph*, pp. 139-42; E. de W. Burton, *Galatians*, p. 164; A. Oepke, *Der Brief des Paulus an die Galater*, J. Rohde (ed.), (THKNT 9, Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1964), p. 72; T. Thatcher, "The Plot of Gal 3:1-18", *JETS* 40/3 (1997), p. 409; G. Walter Hansen, *Galatians* (Downer's Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1994), pp. 92-3; H. Räisänen, *Paul and the Law*, p. 94; "Difficulties", p. 308; J. Becker, *Der Brief an die Galater* (NTD 8, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck, 1990), p. 36; and F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Galatians: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (NIGTC, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), pp. 158-59.

Bruce notes the irrelevance of the perfect obedience of the law to the justification after Christ's cross (pp. 160 and 163). But it does not factor into his conclusions. Sacrificial rituals are not effectual any more since only Christ is the effectual sin offering (p. 161). According to his explanations, without Christ, it is impossible to get rid of the flaws for perfect observance, which is not different from saying that, without faith, the perfect observance of the law is impossible.

¹⁸⁸ According to D. Guthrie, *New Testament Theology* (Leicester: InterVarsity Press, 1981), p. 691, salvation can be earned by the perfect fulfilment of the law. Cf. B. Byrne, 'Sons of God'-Seed of Abraham: A Study of the Idea of the Sonship of God of All Christians in Paul against the Jewish Background (ABc 83, Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1979), p. 152; U. Wilckens, "Gesetzesverständnis", pp. 165-72; T. R. Schreiner, *Law*, p. 44; D. J. Moo, "The Works of the Law", pp. 96-9; and B. Lindars, *New Testament Apologetic: The Doctrinal Significance of the Old Testament Quotations* (London: SCM Press, 1961), p. 229.

curse of the law is believed to be caused by a failure to fulfil the law, which is viewed as the result of a human inability in this regard, and it is accepted that this is what Paul tries to prove.

However, adding this as an implied presupposition causes several difficulties. Firstly, it leads to a reading disregarding the theology of Deuteronomy. Deut. 30:11-14 clearly states that it is possible for Israelites as one party of Shechemite covenant to keep the commandments ordered in Deuteronomy.¹⁸⁹ If it would be true that Paul chose Deut. 27:26 in order to support the notion of the impossibility of fulfilling the law perfectly, he would have been proven wrong easily by the opponents. The theology of Deuteronomy thus clearly states the exact opposite to the implied presupposition.

Secondly, it is a reading which goes against Judaism in the first century.¹⁹⁰ It is beyond the range of this study to scrutinize first century Judaism in this regard. But without even having to delve deeply into first century Judaism, one can easily show that the implied presupposition is in direct opposition to Paul's own statement in Phil 3:7, and Paul himself was a first-century Pharisee.¹⁹¹

Furthermore, if one takes the rhetorical situation of the letter into account, such an implied presupposition does not make sense. In order to be persuasive, the pre-

On the other hand, H. Betz, *Galatians*, pp. 173-74, says that the Sinaitic Torah was not intended for eternal life; I. Hong, *Galatians*, pp. 133-45; A. van Dülmen, *Die Theologie des Gesetzes bei Paulus* (Stuttgart: Verlag Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1968), pp. 31-5; and T. Thatcher, "Plot", believe that in 3:10-12 Paul formulates two ideas, namely that no one can fulfil the law perfectly and that, in principle, even perfect fulfilment of the law cannot give salvation. According to C. H. Cosgrove, *The Cross and Spirit: A Study in the Argument and Theology of Galatians* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1989), pp. 59-61, in Gal. 3:11-2, Hab. 2:4 and Lev. 18:5 refer to the way of faith and of the law respectively, and the way of the law is not the way of obtaining identity but of keeping it.

¹⁸⁹ H. Hübner, *Law*, p. 19, notes this. According to him, by using the LXX, Paul expresses an idea totally different from what the Hebrew text intended. Whereas, according to the Hebrew text, the requirements of Shechemite dodecalogue can be fulfilled, when Paul cites the LXX with $\pi\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$ and $\pi\acute{\alpha}\sigma\tau\epsilon\varsigma$, he tacitly presupposes that there is *no single person* who follows the law in *all* its prescriptions.

¹⁹⁰ According to W. Gutbrod, "νόμος" *TDNT*, IV, p. 1058, generally it is asserted in principle that the law can be fulfilled; and P. Bläser, *Das Gesetz bei Paulus* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1941), pp. 115ff., points out that no pious Jews thought that the law could not be fulfilled fundamentally.

On the other hand, B. Longenecker, *Triumph*, p. 140, tries to solve the problem of the contradiction between the idea of the impossibility to fulfil the law and fundamental convictions in Judaism by saying that it is clear that Paul's Christian convictions caused him to re-evaluate his previous convictions and world views. However, we must remember that Paul does not re-interpret but cite Deut. 27:26. It is Deuteronomy that says that the law *can* be kept.

¹⁹¹ The Pharisaic Paul and the Christian Paul concur in terms of his legalistic righteousness. See section 1 "Paul's Conscience" in chapter III. On the other hand, the implied presupposition, that is, the impossibility of fulfilling the law, is asserted by the traditional view. Interestingly, according to the traditional view, Paul is only speaking from a Pharisaic point of view in Phil. 3:7. According to the traditional view, first-century Phariseism regarded fulfilling the law as possible. In this regard, the traditional view totally ignores one of the most important Jewish notions in the first century.

supposition should be acceptable to the readers. Indeed, the opposite to the implied presupposition, that is, the possibility of the fulfilling the law seems to have been accepted by the Galatians. It is probable that the Judaisers cited Deuteronomy,¹⁹² thereby attempting to persuade the Galatians that they had to fulfil the law. This attempt must have been so successful that the Galatians abandoned Paul's teaching. It must have been the case that they considered fulfilling the law a definite possibility. In other words, on this point there thus would have been no agreement between Paul and the Galatians.¹⁹³ If so, how could Paul expect that what he presupposed would in any way be accepted by the Galatians?

Furthermore, the implied presupposition raises some questions regarding the development of Paul's logic. According to the traditional view, which accepts this presupposition, the fundamental difference between Paul and the agitators¹⁹⁴ focused on the impossibility of fulfilling the law perfectly, and this was the 'core' of Paul's objection against the law. But surprisingly, Paul just implies this, and never states it explicitly; neither in Galatians, nor in any other letter.¹⁹⁵ Why does he never use this as a main argument? In this instance, the cited verse could have been used not only by Paul but also by his opponents. In fact, it would support the argument of his opponents better than it would support Paul's argument itself. To my mind, it would have been very sloppy argumentation if Paul knew that he was citing such a problematic verse, and yet failed to explicitly mention the impossibility of fulfilling the law.

Besides, the implied presupposition implies a very odd development of logic. Is Paul saying that it is impossible to keep the law perfectly to get salvation? But the Galatians do not believe so. How can it be that he is using the point that he has to prove as presupposition? No, Gal. 3:10b does not prove such a presupposition. In the following verse 11, the reason why humans cannot be righteous through the law is not the impossibility of fulfilling the law. Actually, nowhere in Galatians does Paul claim this. It does not make sense to use the point of argument that one wishes to prove as presupposition. On the other hand, if Paul implies the impossibility of ful-

¹⁹² According to J. L. Martyn, *Galatians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 33A, New York: Doubleday, 1998), p. 309, Deut. 27:26 was a text cited by the false teachers.

¹⁹³ Keep in mind that scholars who insist on accepting the implied presupposition claim that Paul thinks that perfect fulfilment of the law is impossible.

¹⁹⁴ The Judaisers also might have noticed the impossibility of fulfilling the law. In this case, however, they seemed not to reveal this, urging the Galatians to keep the law. Anyway, the fundamental difference between the Judaisers' teaching and that of Paul is the possibility of the fulfilling of the law.

¹⁹⁵ See section 1, "Paul's Conscience", in chapter III.

filling the law as a sort of *axiom*,¹⁹⁶ it does not make sense that he would explain it to the Galatians as the reason for his objection to the law, since axioms do not need to be proven.

To summarize, advocates of the theory of the impossibility of fulfilling the law fully, as Schreiner, claim that it is obvious that this is the implied presupposition required, but this explanation runs against the logic of the text. To my mind, it seems logical to accept that the possibility of fulfilling the law is a sort of shared axiom by Paul and the Galatians, and that Paul is explaining how the possible works of the law or the accomplished works of the law bring the Galatians under the curse of the law so that the implied presupposition is not needed.

1.1.1 Reading the text without such an implied presupposition:

A reading disregarding Deut. 27:26

According to Schreiner,¹⁹⁷ the presupposition discussed above is needed for understanding Paul's use of the citation within the context of 3:10a and b, and this is the simplest reading of the text. However, to my mind, if 3:10 can be explained without this implied presupposition, it would be the simplest reading. Of course, this has been tried before.

H. Schlier¹⁹⁸ argues against the acceptance of the presupposition. According to him, Deut. 27:26 assumes that the law can be fulfilled and that it is actually fulfilled. He believes that the emphasis of the citation lies on *πολιῆσαι*. According to him, the curse mentioned in v. 10 falls not so much on those who fail to do the law, but precisely on those who do the law (rather than believing in Christ). The citation is used not to explain the reason why those who depend on the law are under the curse, but to confirm that they, in fact, are under the curse. According to him, v. 12 concludes that there is a curse upon humanity not merely because they fail to fulfil the law in its entirety (in a quantitative way), but simply because the law must be 'done'. The prob-

¹⁹⁶ According to the traditional view, Paul did not mention the presupposition because it was so obvious that it did not need to be said. The impossibility of fulfilling the law was a sort of common sense or axiom.

¹⁹⁷ T. R. Schreiner, *Law*, p. 45, and "Galatians 3:10", p. 156.

¹⁹⁸ H. Schlier, *Galater*, pp. 132ff.

lem with Schlier's explanation, however, is that it implies that Paul does not care about the fact that the text actually states the opposite of what he wants to prove.

We find a similar interpretation by D. Fuller.¹⁹⁹ He also rejects the idea of accepting the implied presupposition and asserts that the expression 'the works of the law' refers to the legalistic misunderstanding that one can obtain God's favour by one's good deeds. He understands the citation along the same lines. According to him, in the context of Deut. 27, v. 26 refers to legalism. However, the text does not refer to legalism but just to the works of the law. The expression 'the works of the law' cannot be substituted by the word legalism.²⁰⁰ And Deut. 27:26 does not condemn legalistic sin.²⁰¹ The curse is not upon those who try to keep the law legalistically, but on those who do not keep the law.

Even though Fuller's emphasis of legalism differs from the traditional view in that it goes against the implied presupposition, it does not really leave the scope of the traditional one. However, a totally new view which rejects the traditional one totally, is the one suggested by Sanders. According to his interpretation,²⁰² Judaism at Paul's time was not a form of legalism but a form of covenantal nomism, and he interprets Gal. 3:10 in this way. According to him, the theme of Galatians is not legalism but the conditions on which Gentiles become part of God's people.²⁰³ Paul is not for faith itself, nor is he against works themselves. He opposes the position that Gentiles must keep the law to become children of Abraham. According to Sanders, if one is too sensitive to the theological issue of 'grace and merit', one cannot see the real theme of the letter.²⁰⁴ This misunderstanding was caused by a misunderstanding of Judaism. Taking this as point of departure, he starts his exegesis of Gal. 3:10-12, which has traditionally been accepted as a proof text for the claim that Paul opposes the law because of the impossibility of fulfilling it.

¹⁹⁹ D. P. Fuller, "Paul and 'the Works of the Law'", *WTJ* 38(1975), pp. 32-33.

²⁰⁰ The phrase 'the works of the law' is too neutral to represent the important and specific concept of legalism. 'The works of the law' is not Paul's way of referring to legalism. Cf. C. E. B. Cranfield, "St. Paul and the Law", *SJT* 17 (1964), pp. 43-68, who asserts that Paul used 'the works of the law' as there was no Greek term for legalism. Rather, it seems more natural to say that Paul just paraphrases τοῦ νόμου τοῦ ποιῆσαι αὐτά in the citation. For more on 'the works of the law', see my exegesis of Gal. 3:10.

²⁰¹ It is very difficult to find commentaries of Deuteronomy explaining Deut. 27:26 from a legalistic perspective.

²⁰² E. P. Sanders, *Judaism*.

²⁰³ E. P. Sanders, *Law*, p. 18.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 19-20.

Interpreting Gal. 3:10, Sanders²⁰⁵ mentions three reasons why he is against the view that the law is rejected because of the impossibility of fulfilling it. Firstly, he says that Paul's citations in Gal. 3 are focused on particular terms. Paul connects the concepts 'Gentiles' and 'justification by faith' by means of the reference to Abraham. Gen. 15:6 proves that Abraham was justified by faith and Gen. 18:8 that Gentiles are blessed in Abraham. The reason why Sanders thinks that this last citation does not come from Gen. 12:3, but from 18:18, is that the term 'Gentiles' is used in Gen. 18:18. Using Abraham, Paul thus explains how Gentiles can become righteous by citing a verse in which the terms 'Gentiles', 'faith' and 'justification' appear. On the other hand, in v. 10, Paul connects the law to the curse by citing a verse in which these two concepts appear. Deut. 27:26 is the only verse in which the terms 'law' and 'curse' are connected and this is the reason for it being cited. Therefore, the point of the citation is not the use of πάντων, but the words τοῦ νόμου and ἐπικατάρατος.

Secondly, Sanders opposes the idea that the interpretation of the cited verses should be the point of departure, but rather believes that Paul's argument should be studied so that one may find the key to what Paul wants to say by means of the citation. That is to say, Deut. 27:26 is not cited by him to convey the notion of the impossibility of fulfilling the law but to prove that all who accept the law are cursed.

Thirdly, Sanders pays attention to the position of vv. 10-12 within 3:8-14 as a whole. The main thesis is that God justifies Gentiles by faith (v. 8), with v. 10 providing the negative proof for the positive statement in v. 8. In vv. 11-2, Paul argues that faith excludes the law and in 14 he repeats and chiasmatically summarizes the two positive statements in v. 8 and vv. 1-5. This shows where the emphasis of vv. 1-13 lies. Vv. 10-13 is thus secondary to v. 8. Finally, according to Sanders, v. 10 is subordinate to v. 8; and Paul asserts that all who accept the law are cursed by citing the proof text which has the necessary core words. Eventually, according to Sanders, the view that Paul opposes the law because of the impossibility of fulfilling it must be rejected.²⁰⁶

Sanders' view is problematic on several points. First of all, according to him, the law is rejected because salvation comes only through Christ (v. 13). But Paul never provides a reason why the law must be excluded as a possible way of salvation.²⁰⁷ Secondly, according to Sanders, Paul is not interested in what Deut. 27:26 really

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 21-2.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

²⁰⁷ T. R. Schreiner, *Law*, p. 46.

says. Paul just uses the text to say what he wants it to say. This arbitrary portrait of Paul which Sanders presents has been shown to be wrong.²⁰⁸

Another reading without the presupposition pointed out above, was suggested by Martyn²⁰⁹ who opposes any interpretation needing for such a presupposition. He points out that Paul not only fails to articulate this particular presupposition but also does not use it in v. 3:11 where it would have been helpful for his argument. Martyn asserts that Deut. 27:26 must have been a text used by Paul's opponents and that Paul accepts the text as it stands. Paul, however, removes the difference between observers and non-observers by using 'observers' in his exegesis. In a word, for Paul, the curse of the law falls on both observers and non-observers. But in this case, there is a problem in that Martyn's Paul also sacrifices the original meaning of Deut. 27:26 to a certain extent, as he also uses it to say what he wants it to say.

We have investigated various attempts to explain the reason for the citation without using the presupposition discussed above – attempts that do not focus on the impossibility of fulfilling the law. There seems to be a common point in the various explanations discussed in this regard, namely that all of them opt for a Paul who does not focus on the original meaning of Deut. 27:26. Eventually, even these interpretations of Paul thus reach the same results as the traditional one in the sense that the context of Deuteronomy (27:26, or 30:11-14) is sacrificed, albeit it in a different way. However, if this were the case, Paul would have given his opponents a chance to counter his argument by merely pointing out that he interpreted the proof text in a wrong way. Furthermore, not one of the interpretations discussed above gives $\pi\alpha\sigma\iota\nu$ its rightful place. It is rather difficult to have to accept that it was accidental that Paul's citation contains $\pi\alpha\sigma\iota\nu$, that is, that he followed the LXX here instead of the Hebrew.²¹⁰ In particular, if the verse were used by Paul's opponents, it would almost be impossible to accept that Paul did not realize the importance of the implication of the word $\pi\alpha\sigma\iota\nu$.

²⁰⁸ J. M. Scott, "For as Many as are of Works of the Law are under a Curse (Galatians 3. 10)", in: C. A. Evans and J. A. Sanders (eds.), *Paul and the Scriptures of Israel* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), p. 191.

²⁰⁹ J. L. Martyn, *Galatians*, pp. 307-11.

²¹⁰ J. Tyson, "'Works of law' in Galatians", *JBL* 92 (1973), p. 428, thinks that the reason for Paul's citing LXX is $\pi\alpha\sigma\iota\nu$. B. Byrne, 'Sons of God', p. 151, agrees.

1.1.2 A new reading without the particular presupposition: Returning to the traditional reading of Deut. 27:26 by a different route

The scholars of the New Perspective presented an interpretation which paid attention to $\pi\acute{\alpha}\sigma\lambda\upsilon$, kept to the original meaning of Deut. 27:26, and did not need the presupposition.²¹¹ Dunn agrees with Sanders' new evaluation of the Judaism of Paul's time. He also agrees with Sanders that Paul's objection to the law was not based on the impossibility of fulfilling the law,²¹² but he criticizes Sanders for failing to discern the law from the works of the law.²¹³ According to Dunn,²¹⁴ 'works of the law' is not a synonym for doing the law, but a sort of badge for the identity of the Jews. Even though 'the works of the law' means all that were required of faithful Jews, it functioned as an ethnical boundary marker for the Jews so that it focused on such rituals as circumcision and the Sabbath. The problem with the works of the law as boundary marker was that it fell short of what the law required.²¹⁵ Therefore, according to Dunn, Paul was against the law not because it was impossible to keep the law perfectly but because the works of the law were not the right way of keeping the law. This understanding is accepted by Cranford.²¹⁶

Paul, however, did not pay a lot of attention to discerning the law from the works of the law and, above all, his objection to the law was more profound than just a problem of social boundaries. For example, his objection in the following verse, v. 11, and further on is more fundamental. Furthermore, Dunn's social interpretation, as Wakefield²¹⁷ points out, makes a harmony with Paul's own exclusivism almost impossible. Nevertheless, Dunn's interpretation is definitely new. According to his interpretation, the presupposition discussed above is not necessary and the original

²¹¹ Scholars from the New Perspective generally agree that Judaism was a religion not of legalism but of covenantal nomism. They also interpret justification by faith from this perspective. See J. Song, *The New Perspective*, for details. Furthermore, the New Perspective has a relatively broad spectrum but it generally tends to be against the most common reason provided for Paul's objection to the law, that is, the impossibility of fulfilling the law. There is an exception: Although H. Räisänen, "Difficulties", p. 308, supports the New Perspective, he believes that the notion that it is impossible to keep the law in its totality can be found in Gal. 3:10-12.

²¹² J. D. G. Dunn, *Jesus*, p. 226.

²¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 201-02.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 194 and 223.

²¹⁵ See section 4.2 in chapter II.

²¹⁶ M. Cranford, "Perfect Obedience", p. 249.

²¹⁷ As A. H. Wakefield, *Where to Live*, pp. 41-2, rightly points out, it is a problem that Paul himself refers to the situation of Gentile Christians in terms of becoming Jews. Paul refers to the Christian church as the real Israel, and urges the Galatians to cast out the sons of the slave woman. Paul himself is thus exclusive.

meaning of Deut. 27:26 as well as the importance of $\pi\acute{\alpha}\sigma\iota\nu$ are respected. But what is important is that, ironically, the New Perspective is not different from the traditional one in the sense that 'the works of the law' is interpreted as a failure to fulfil the law truly and in that it is accepted that the curse of the law is caused by this failure. In this sense, Dunn's understanding of the curse is not fundamentally new, but rather agrees with the traditional approach.

Another suggestion which does not need the presupposition discussed above and which does not violate the original meaning of Deut. 27:26 is proposed by another scholar from the New Perspective: N. T. Wright²¹⁸ argues in favour of a theory of a continuing exile. According to him, in v. 10, Paul does not refer to an individual's inability to fulfil the law. It is possible to keep the law individually but Israel as a nation violated the law and thus came under the curse of the law. Israel was still suffering the exile as a result of this curse. Anyone who accepted the law thus followed Israel's example, and this is what Paul objected to. If this interpretation is correct, it implies that Paul does not refer to the curse of the law but at best to a possibility of joining the curse Israel was still experiencing.²¹⁹ Furthermore, the presupposition of this theory, namely that the notion that Israel still lived in exile, prevailed widely and was well established in Judaism at the time of the 2nd temple has been doubted.²²⁰ Nevertheless, what I wish to pay attention to here, is that even in terms of this interpretation, the reason for the curse of the law is still linked primarily to a national *failure* to keep the law. According to this interpretation, Paul is thus still interested in fulfilling the law.

What is different from the views discussed in the previous section is the way in which Paul's opponents or the Galatians would have reacted to Paul's view in this case: Paul's opponents would have urged the Galatians to fulfil the law *truly*; or because it is not impossible to keep the law in principle, the Galatians would have tried to keep the law *truly* without misusing it as a nationalistic badge or following Israel's example. Paul's objections to the law, however, were of a more radical nature.

The challenge posed by the New Perspective is regarded as one of the biggest ones

²¹⁸ N. T. Wright, *Climax*, pp. 137-56. Cf. J. M. Scott, "Galatians 3:10", pp. 187-221, basically has the same idea. In fact, the idea of a continuing exile goes back to M. North, *Gesammelte Studien zum Alten Testament* (TB 6, München: Kaiser, 1957), pp. 155-71.

²¹⁹ D. F. Tolmie, *Galatians*, p. 115.

²²⁰ M. A. Seifrid, "Blind Alleys in the Controversy over the Paul of History", *TynB* 45 (1994), pp. 86-9. Furthermore, Paul's sayings in Rom. 2:17-20, 10:2-3 and Phil. 3:6 do not seem to support that contemporary Judaism regarded Israel as still being under a curse. Cf. J. D. G. Dunn, *Galatians*, p. 172.

since the Reformation, yet the new interpretations offered by this approach could not help scholars to do away with the notion of the impossibility of fulfilling the law when they interpret v. 10.

1.1.3 Summary: The failure to fulfil the law

Since the Reformers, most scholars have agreed that Paul referred to the impossibility of fulfilling the law in Gal. 3:10, and thus have presupposed that no one can fulfil the law perfectly. However, this reading caused several problems so that various alternatives without such a presupposition have been offered. We have divided such interpretations into two categories and have offered a survey of them. The interpretations in the first category (the notion of legalism, which was a sort of developed Reformed view; the interpretation of Sanders, which opposed the Reformed view, and a third suggestion) have a common denominator in that they all accept that Paul did not really care about the original meaning of the citation from Deuteronomy.

In the case of the second category, we scrutinized interpretations by scholars from the New Perspective. These readings were definitely new in the sense that they respected the original meaning of the citation and did not need the presupposition that it was impossible to fulfil the law. Nevertheless, we also noted that, in the end, they returned to the notion of the failure of fulfilling the law. In other words, in the case of their interpretation of v. 10, they, in essence, returned to the traditional view in that they claimed that the works of the law lead to the curse because of a failure of keeping the law. And reacting to such new readings, scholars following the traditional approach, kept on emphasising the impossibility of a perfect observance of the law.

To summarize, in order to explain the contradiction in Gal. 3:10, scholars had to choose between a Paul who was not interested in the original context of Deuteronomy (in some sense) and a Paul who was interested in the failure of a perfect observance of the law (in some sense). A Paul who did not care about the original meaning of Deut. 27:26 is not impossible but will only be the last option we can resort to, because such a choice implies that Paul was arbitrary or that he could not

build a persuasive argument. Thus, it might seem to some that the best option to solve the apparent contradiction should be related to a failure to perfectly keep the law in a certain way. However, such a notion does not fit in any way with the way in which Paul speaks of the law in Galatians. Accordingly, the following section will be devoted to the notion of the personal nature of the law.

2 The character of the law in Galatians: The personal nature of the law

What does it imply when we accept the failure to keep the law as Paul's reason for the curse of the law? The view that the curse of the law was caused by the failure to perfectly obey the law implies that if the opposite happens and the law is kept perfectly, there would be no problem at all. In general such a view can be summarised as follows: 1) The law is the sum of the regulations or commandments that humans must keep and fulfil, 2) The law is passive in terms of human success or failure to fulfil it, and regardless of whether the success and the failure are really possible or not, humans in principle have two possibilities, 3) Success in fulfilling the law brings positive results, 4) Therefore, humans want to fulfil the law, 5) On the contrary, negative results occur only after the law is fulfilled imperfectly, either in a qualitative or quantitative sense.

It might be the case that particular interpretations of Paul's view of the law in Galatians do not formulate everything as explicitly as outlined above, but, in general, this is how the logic works. However, such a logic does not match the way in which the law is presented in Galatians. The most important aspect that should be taken in this regard is that, in this letter, the law is portrayed as a person. This important aspect implies that the concept of keeping the law itself must not be emphasized. Rather the notion of a failure of keeping the law itself is impossible. Let us investigate this in more detail.

Circumcision is in the very centre of the Galatian debate on the law.²²¹ Circumcision is mentioned in Gal. 2:3 for the first time. In v. 4 Paul says that his reason for objecting to Titus' circumcision was that the matter of circumcision was a matter of spiritual slavery, which shows us that the Galatian debate on the law was one of freedom and slavery. In fact, the motif of slavery runs throughout Galatians.²²² The image of slavery is emphasized especially in Gal. 5:3 which is closely related to 3:10 with which we are concerned. In terms of structure, Gal. 3:10 belongs to the part in which Paul sets out his arguments, and 5:3 to the section in which he focuses on exhortation, or request.²²³ Paul's exhortation is based on his previous arguments. In this context, in fact, 5:2 and 4 repeat the last verse of chapter 2 (v. 21), and 5:3 repeats 3:10. Therefore, scholars²²⁴ have read 3:10 and 5:3 as both referring to the impossibility of fulfilling the law.

However, Gal. 5:3 is not a mere repetition of 3:10. 3:10 focuses on the curse of the law, while 5:3 accentuates responsibility. In 5:3, Paul warns the Galatians that accepting circumcision implies accepting the responsibility of doing the whole law. Just before this, in 5:2, he points out that if the Galatians accept circumcision, Christ will be of no value to them at all. According to v. 1, the value of Christ lies in the freedom from the yoke of slavery that he brings. Therefore, in terms of v. 1 and v. 3, the acceptance of circumcision implies the responsibility of keeping the whole law and that means taking up the yoke of slavery. Thus Paul's essential objection to the law is the acceptance of slavery, that is, the departure from freedom. Therefore we can say that the key to understanding Gal 5:3, 3:10 and Paul's view of the law in Galatians in general, is to take due cognisance of the motif of slavery. If we realise this, we will understand that it is not accidental that the motif of slavery appears so often between 3:10 and 5:3. Furthermore, what is important to take note of is that when the motif of slavery is explained, the law is portrayed as a person. The law is introduced as

²²¹ J. M. G. Barclay, *Obedying*, pp. 45-6, thinks that circumcision is the basis for understanding the Galatian crisis.

²²² As a central notion, slavery runs through the whole letter. Paul's position concerning circumcision has already been shown in the case of Titus. Paul regards the matter of Titus' circumcision as a matter of *enslaving* (Gal. 2:3-4). As we will see below, the notion of slavery continues in Gal. 3:10, and is the underlying notion of the metaphors of a παιδαγωγός, ἐπιτρόποι, οἰκονόμοι and στοιχέια in 3:22-4:9. The notion is also central in the allegory of Hagar in 4:21ff., and is also found in chapter 5 (vv. 3 and 13).

²²³ According to R. Longenecker, *Galatians*, pp. cix and 184, the request section (Deliberative Rhetoric Prominent) starts at 4:12, whereas, in terms of Betz's analysis, *Galatians*, pp. 22 and 253-55, it starts at 5:1.

²²⁴ For example, G. Klein, "Sündenverständnis", p. 270, interprets 3:10 in parallel with 5:3. See R. Longenecker, *Galatians*, p. 117, too.

παιδαγωγός, ἐπίτροπος, and οἰκονόμος.

First, let us consider the law as παιδαγωγός. There has been a variety of interpretations of this statement but they can be classified into two categories: interpretations giving a positive meaning to παιδαγωγός,²²⁵ and those giving a negative meaning to it.²²⁶ The functions a παιδαγωγός fulfilled in antiquity allow for both interpretations of the concept. The context, however, favours a negative interpretation. By using ἐφρουρούμεθα in v. 23, meaning ‘to hold in custody or confine’, Paul metaphorically depicts the situation under the law as a situation of being in prison or custody.²²⁷ The fact that συγκλείω and φρουρέω were used to refer to the concept of confinement, prison, or custodian also suggests that Paul had the same kind of nuance in mind when he used παιδαγωγός. Therefore, we should accept that παιδαγωγός was used to show the negative or captive nature of the law.

However, there is something that we should pay more attention to than the fact that παιδαγωγός is used in a negative sense, namely that by using it, Paul places humans and the law in a personal relationship. He portrays the law as a powerful person imprisoning and locking up humankind under it until faith came (v. 23). Furthermore, humankind is depicted as the weaker party; they are bound and shut up ‘under a παιδαγωγός’ (vv. 23 and 25). In fact, the position of humans as powerless persons does not essentially change, regardless of whether παιδαγωγός functions positively or negatively. And, regardless of whether v. 24a (ὁ νόμος παιδαγωγὸς ἡμῶν γέγονεν εἰς Χριστόν) means that the παιδαγωγός is put in charge of leading humans to Christ, or until Christ, the nature of the inability of human does not change essentially. No matter for what purpose (negative or not) the law is used, under it humans are fundamentally powerless and oppressed. It should be noted that they are not under the law because they cannot fulfil its requirements. Instead, as children, they cannot but obey all the requirements of the law, in the way a slave does. The effect and empha-

²²⁵ T. D. Gordon, “A Note on ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ in Galatians 3.24-25”, *NTS* 35:1 (1989), pp. 153-54, interprets παιδαγωγός in a very positive sense. According to him, the main function of a παιδαγωγός was protection. Ἐφρουρούμεθα συγκλειόμενοι (3:23) should thus be read in the context of protection. Even though his interpretation is not as positive as this, Gordon, L Belleville, “‘Under Law’: Structural Analysis and the Pauline Concept of Law in Galatians 3.21-4.11”, *JSNT* 26 (1986), p. 60, also emphasizes the protective function of the law. See also T. Zahn, *Der Brief des Paulus an die Galater* (KNT 9, Leipzig: Deichert, 1905), p. 186.

²²⁶ D. J. Lull, “The Law was our Pedagogue’: A Study in Galatians 3:19-25”, *JBL* 105 (1986), pp. 481-98, notices that under the παιδαγωγός, humans are as captive as slaves. Cf. N. H. Young, “*Paidagogos*: The Social Setting of a Pauline Metaphor”, *NT XXIX* (1987), pp. 160-76.

²²⁷ D. F. Tolmie, *Galatians*, p. 139 and p. 141. Cf. also “‘Ο ΝΟΜΟΣ ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ’ ΗΜΩΝ ΓΕΓΟΝΕΝ ΕΙΣ ΕΠΙΣΤΟΝ: The Persuasive Force of a Pauline Metaphor (Gal 3:23-26)”, *Neot* 26:2 (1992).

sis that Paul wishes to achieve by means of the analogy of a παιδαγωγός are simple: Under the law humans are like slaves. And that is all. Nowhere in the portrayal of the law as a παιδαγωγός is the incapability of humans to carry out their duties emphasized. It is neither implied that humans cannot fulfil the requirements of the law, nor is it presented as a problem. The counterpart of the motif of slavery is not capability, but freedom since what a slave lacks is not capability but freedom. In 5:1, Paul focuses on this again. Since a slave has no freedom, he must obey his master thoroughly, or perfectly, even though he does not want to.²²⁸

The images of ἐπιτρόποι (guardians) and οἰκονόμοι (administrators)²²⁹ in Gal. 4:2 are not fundamentally different from that of the παιδαγωγός. Paul wants the Galatians to connect ἐπιτρόποι, οἰκονόμοι, στοιχεῖα, and νόμος in a negative way by the structural correspondence of ὑπὸ ἐπιτρόπους καὶ οἰκονόμους (v. 2), ὑπὸ τὰ στοιχεῖα (v. 3), and ὑπὸ νόμον (vv. 4-5).²³⁰ And, in vv. 9-10, he identifies the Galatians' keeping of the law with their pagan religion before their conversion.²³¹ That is to say, for Paul, to turn back to the law is to go back to the στοιχεῖα,²³² and, essentially, to give up the right of heritage and return to the slavery under the ἐπιτρόποι and the οἰκονόμοι. In this analogy, the most important issue is not the concrete legal situation²³³ with regard to the

²²⁸ The idea that humans *want to fulfil* the law but are frustrated because they cannot achieve the task perfectly is also very popular, but it is because we are almost unconsciously affected by Rom. 7 ('misunderstood'). For details, see chapter VIII.

²²⁹ We should note that the young heir is under guardians and administrators at the same time. Cf. L. Belleville, "Under Law", p. 62.

²³⁰ Cf. D. F. Tolmie, *Galatians*, p. 147.

²³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 154.

²³² Many suggestions for the meaning of στοιχεῖα have been made: Elements of the universe: W. Wink, "The Elements of the Universe in Biblical and Scientific Perspective", *Zygon* 13 (1978), pp. 225-48, and G. Howard, *Paul*, pp. 66-7; angels: Bo Reicke, "The Law and This World according to Paul: Some Thoughts concerning Gal 4:1-11", *JBL* 70 (1951), pp. 261ff.; evil spirits: C. E. Arnold, "Returning to the Powers: *Stoicheia* as Evil Spirits in Galatians 4:3, 9", *NT XXXVIII:1* (1996), pp. 55-76. For details, cf. G. Dellling, "στοιχέω, συστοιχέω, στοιχεῖον" *TDNT*, VII, pp. 670-87.

Since στοιχεῖα has a variety of meanings, it seems very difficult to choose one. However, no matter which meaning Paul intended, it is clear that he used it in a figurative sense. He chooses a broad concept covering the forms of both Jewish and other pagan religions. Στοιχεῖα is best understood as referring to all elementary and restrictive religious practices. See D. F. Tolmie, *Galatians*, p. 147.

Here, we do not need to stick to only the personal character of στοιχεῖα to emphasize the nature of the life under the law as a life of slavery. The essential situation of the life under the law has already fully been shown in the discussion of the analogy of ἐπιτρόποι and οἰκονόμοι.

²³³ Much attention is paid to the legal background of ἐπιτρόποι and οἰκονόμοι. For details, cf. J. D. Hester, *Paul's Concept of Inheritance: A Contribution to the Understanding of Heilsgeschichte* (Edinburgh and London, Oliver & Boyd, 1968), pp. 18-9; F. Layall, "Roman Law in the Writings of Paul – Adoption", *JBL* 88 (1969), p. 465; and W. M. Ramsay, *A Historical Commentary on St Paul's Epistle to the Galatians* (Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1990), pp. 391-93.

ἐπιτρόποι and οἰκονόμοι at Paul's time, but the concept of slavery.²³⁴ Regardless of the legal background of the concept, the point of the analogy is clear. The acceptance of the law is an acceptance of slavery under ἐπιτρόποι and οἰκονόμοι.

In this analogy, the character of the slavery is not related to the incapability of the heir as a slave, but to the loss of rights and freedom. The essence of the problem of the young heir was thus not different from that of slaves who were under persons possessing legal rights and status over them (ἐπιτρόποι and οἰκονόμοι), as a result of which the young heir could not escape obedience. There is no intention to focus the attention of the Galatians on the inability of the young heir to obey the ἐπιτρόποι and οἰκονόμοι. The emphasis rather falls on the fact that the heir cannot but obey them completely.

This is the true misery of humanity: being suppressed under the law. The idea that even though humans try to fulfil the law but do not succeed in achieving it is the reason why Paul is against the law, does not grasp the real tragedy of the slavery that Paul warns the Galatians against. Such an idea is wrong, because 1) it accepts that Paul believes that humans want to fulfil the law, whereas Paul actually says that a slave does not want to do so; 2) it accepts the notion of human inability or failure to fulfil the law in one way or another, whereas Paul focuses on the impossibility of a slave avoiding obedience of the law; 3) it accepts that the problem with the law only arises when it becomes clear that the law cannot be fulfilled completely, whereas Paul regards the problem as that of *being* a slave, that is, being someone who cannot but perform the law completely. Accordingly, such a reading goes the opposite way of what Paul intended: humanity (subject) → law (object) whereas Paul's logic works the other way round: law (subject) → humanity (object).

In particular, the third aspect identified in the previous paragraph is very important for our interpretation of Gal. 3:10. It shows that we cannot accept the notion of a failure to fulfil the law as the problem of the law, in particular not the idea that no problem arises until the law is violated. The true problem of the law does not hinge on a failure to fulfil it. The true problem of the law emerges *while the law is being fulfilled, and arises even if the law is fulfilled*. For Paul, the problem of the law (that is, slavery) is simple. The life under the law is cursed because it is the life of slavery. The problem of such a life is that it is the life without any freedom. The life of slavery is

²³⁴ D. F. Tolmie, *Galatians*, p. 146.

not a neutral one, having two possibilities, that of blessing and curse; it is a life without freedom, that is, a life of curse.

Paul's portrayal of the law as a person does not leave room for the slave's (that is, humanity's) refusing or misusing the commands of the law (that is, the master). The slave obeys his master thoroughly, that is, truly. The fulfilment of perfect obedience, however, does not bring the slave any blessings. And even though he could avoid his master's punishment by perfect obedience, his life cannot be regarded as being free from the punishment. On the contrary, he is always under punishment. Why is this so? Because he is a slave who has to obey his master, fearing punishment. If, after having obeyed his master, the slave would say to himself that he is free from his master's punishment because he actually escaped the punishment, it would be a terrible delusion. The slave's perfect obedience of his master, that is, his perfect fulfilment of his master's commands cannot make him blessed or even free. Rather, his perfect obedience only shows his perfect slavery. In this context, a life of fulfilment is not synonymous to a life of blessing. A life escaping the curse can never be a life of blessing. A life of 'fulfilled' slavery is nothing but a life of slavery!

The idea that the way to avoid the curse of the law is the perfect fulfilling of the law has almost always been regarded as an axiom.²³⁵ However, Paul's emphasis on the personal nature of the law makes such a view impossible. To live the life of perfect slavery in order to avoid punishment is not the solution to the problem of the slavery (the problem of the law) but actually shows the very nature of such a life of slavery (the problem of the law). The true way to avoid the curse of the law is not to fulfil it but to be freed from it.

Surprisingly, however, the history of the interpretation of the Pauline view of the law shows that the above misinterpretation of the nature of the slavery has been repeated over and over again in the arguments of scholars.²³⁶ It is because they looked for the problem in the wrong place, that is, in the failure to fulfil the law. In other words,

²³⁵ T. A. Wilson, *The Curse of the Law and the Crisis in Galatia: Reassessing the Purpose of Galatians* (WUNT, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), pp. 98-116, closely connects the curse of the law to the Galatian crisis. According to him, Paul's opponents urged the Galatians to perform circumcision in the light of the curse of the law. The fulfilling of the law was not aimed at just a potential misunderstanding in regard to the law or simply at the confirmation of the ethical implications of the justification by faith, but at the threat of the curse of the law. For Paul the only way to avoid the curse was the fulfilling of the law. Love was the way to avoid the curse of the law.

At a glance, the idea that fulfilling the law is the only way to escape its curse seems obvious. That idea, however, must be seriously examined in terms of Pauline thought. A life fulfilling the law is precisely a life lived under the curse of the law.

²³⁶ See chapter II.

they did not see any problem if someone would achieve the complete keeping of the law. A slave, however, lives under the threat of punishment, escaping the punishment by obedience. This is the misery of his life. Paul's warning is aimed at this and not at the punishment that the slave shall face because of a future failure in keeping the law.²³⁷ The curse of the law which Paul refers to does not come upon humans only when they fail to obey the law. Rather, the keeping of the law itself is the very problem of the law.

To my mind, the logic in this section is not very complicated, but actually very simple. It is not difficult to accept that when the Galatians heard Paul's other explanations of the law, the slavery motif and its logic were still echoing in their minds. However, the slavery motif is not the master key to open everything that Paul says about the law, and, of course, the personal nature of the law is not the only thing that Paul says about the law. And the metaphors of a παιδαγωγός, ἐπιτρόποι, and οἰκονόμοι do not exhaust this aspect of the law. Therefore, we should not try to fit Paul's other explanations of the law into the notions conveyed by these metaphors. Nevertheless, from them we do get a very important hint for the interpretation of Paul's view of the law. When we focus on Paul's idea of the law, that is, the personal nature of the law, we come to realise the marvellous paradox: that a life of keeping and obeying the law, in fact, is a life cursed by the law. This truth indicates a clear direction for us for interpreting Gal. 3:10.

The notion that the law as object of human fulfilment and the notion of the law as subject enslaving humankind exclude one another and both cannot be accepted at the same time. If one accepts that, in 3:10, Paul refers to the curse of the law as something caused by a failure to fulfil the law, and then accept that, after having explained the law in terms of slavery in the later part of Gal. 3 and in Gal. 4, he in Gal. 5:1-3 returns to the notion of 3:10, one actually destroys Paul's consistency. Instead, it is reasonable to make use of the insights outlined above in order to interpret Gal. 3:10. Furthermore, it should be noticed that 3:10 is the verse where the ὑπό phrases (ὑπὸ κατάραν, ὑπὸ παιδαγωγόν, ὑπὸ ἐπιτρόπους καὶ οἰκονόμους, ὑπὸ τὰ στοιχεῖα, and ὑπὸ νόμον) begin. It would have been rather difficult for the Galatians not to connect ὑπὸ

²³⁷ In this regard, Paul already rejects circumcision as a point of departure. As soon as the Galatians accept circumcision, they throw away their freedom and begin a life of slavery. In other words, the *fulfilled* circumcision itself does not await a failure in fulfilling the other regulations in the law. Regardless of the future failure to fulfil the law, the already-accomplished circumcision immediately causes the slavery of the Galatians. For details, see the next chapter (Gal. 5:3).

παιδαγωγόν and ὑπὸ ἐπιτρόπους καὶ οἰκονόμους to ὑπὸ κατάραν in 3:10.

In conclusion, Paul's view of the personal nature of the law provides us with three guidelines for the interpretation of 3:10:

- 1) Humans are not in a position to fail to fulfil (obeying) the law.
- 2) Humans are not in a position to misuse the law in any way.
- 3) The notion of humans fulfilling (obeying) the law does not have any positive connotations; only negative ones.

Now we are in a position to do exegesis of 3:10. Our aim is to find a new interpretation that does not need the implied presupposition discussed above, that does not disregard the original meaning of Deut. 27:26, that can make sense of πάντων, and that is in harmony with the guidelines above.

3 Gal. 3:10: Cursed is everyone who does *not abide in all things written in the book of the law*. If so, what about the one who *does abide in it*?

Since the debates of the New Perspective started, scholars have been paying a lot of attention in trying to identify 'the works of the law' when interpreting 3:10.²³⁸ I do not intend to repeat the complicated debates here, because Paul does not actually seem interested in identifying 'the works of the law'. Nowhere in the Letter to the Ga-

²³⁸ Traditionally, 'the works of the law' is understood to mean works obeying the requirements of the law. For example, R. Y. K. Fung, *The Epistle to the Galatians* (NICNT, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), p. 113; and H. Räisänen, *Paul and the Law*, p. 177. On the other hand, D. Fuller, "The Works of the Law", p. 33; F. F. Bruce, *Galatians*, pp. 157ff.; and C. H. Cosgrove, "The Mosaic Law preaches Faith: A Study in Galatians 3", *WTJ* 41 (1978-9), pp. 146ff., focus on the legalistic aspect of 'the works of the law', done in order to obtain God's favour.

A new approach is suggested by L. Gaston, "Works of Law as a Subjective Genitive", *SR* 13 (1984), pp. 39-46. He reads 'the works of the law' as subjective genitive, that is, the works done by the law. Dunn, "The New Perspective on Paul", *BJRL* 65 (1983), pp. 95-122, suggests another perspective on 'the works of the law'. 'The works of the law' are the law functioning as Jewish identity markers, especially the laws on circumcision, the Sabbath, and food laws. M. Cranford, "Perfect Obedience", follows Dunn's interpretation. For details, see J. Song, *The New Perspective*, section 3.2.1 in part 3, pp. 89-112.

Galatians does Paul identify ‘the works of the law’ clearly; nor does he indicate clearly anywhere how ‘the works of the law’ contravene the law. When we try to determine what ‘the works of the law’ mean we should not forget this. Is it simply because of carelessness that Paul does not explain ‘the works of the law’ in detail? Or is it because the meaning of the terms was already clear to the Galatians? Of course, the latter might be possible. But what should be considered first of all is that in actual fact Paul did not define ‘the works of the law’ specifically. This might mean that no matter what ‘the works of the law’ are or no matter how they contravene the law, it does not really matter to him. Such an interpretation is indeed possible and must be considered as the first option, because this is apparently what Paul had in mind. Furthermore, such an interpretation is possible, because even though Paul’s criticism of the law focuses on circumcision, his concern is about basic issues. Thus, if he did not find it necessary to identify ‘the works of the law’ explicitly, we must follow his intention in our interpretation. I will thus suggest an interpretation that does not identify ‘the works of the law’ and a misuse of the law. Of course, this attempt will be in harmony with the insights that we obtained from the notion of the personal nature of the law.

Besides ‘the works of the law’, the notion of performance (the infinitive ποιῆσαι) has received quite a lot of attention.²³⁹ It is traditionally accepted that, in 3:10, Paul cited Deut. 27:26 to say that everyone who could not *do* all the things in the law perfectly is cursed. But if Paul wanted to prove this, a verse which stated directly that everyone who did not *perform* all the things in the law was cursed, would have been more appropriate. Deut. 27:26 says “everyone who does not *abide* (πᾶς ὃς οὐκ ἐμμένει), but, Deut. 28:58-9, for example, could have been a better option for this purpose.²⁴⁰ Extremely surprisingly is that, even though Deut. 28:58-9 is the most

²³⁹ For example, according to Luther, *Galatians*, p. 245, Paul regards the law from a perspective different from that of the false apostles, that is, he regards it from a spiritual perspective. The entire effect of the matter thus has to do with the interpretation of the infinitive ποιῆσαι. To ‘do’ the law means to do the law not outwardly but truly and perfectly.

²⁴⁰ Deut. 28:58 (in MT and the LXX) might fit the traditional idea better than Deut. 27:26. Both versions of 28:58 emphasize ‘all’ (πάντα τὰ ῥήματα τοῦ νόμου and כָּל-דְּבָרֵי הַתּוֹרָה). And Deut. 28:58 in the LXX (ἐὰν μὴ εἰσακούσητε ποιεῖν: if you do not obey to do) and in MT (אִם-לֹא תִשְׁמַר לַעֲשׂוֹת: if you do not observe to do, or, if you do not carefully do) connects the subject to the action of doing the law (the infinitive, ‘to do’) more directly and closely than Deut. 27:26 does (in the version Paul used). Note that the cursed in Paul’s citation of Deut. 27:26 (πᾶς ὃς οὐκ ἐμμένει (ἐν) πᾶσιν τοῖς γὰρ γραμμένοις...τοῦ ποιῆσαι αὐτά) is not the one who does not *remain in doing* all things, but the one who does not *remain in all things* to do them. The importance of the difference between these two will be explained below.

suitable for such a purpose, it has never been cited by Paul in any of his letters!

How is it to be explained that Paul did not cite Deut. 28:58-9 but opted for Deut. 27:26? It could not have been a case of Paul not remembering Deut. 28:58-9. Rather, it must have been that he cited Deut. 27:26 because it was more suitable to his purpose than 28:58-9. In order to grasp Paul's intention, we must pay attention to something that has been overlooked by scholars thus far. That is to say, Gal. 3:10b (Paul's citation) does not say explicitly that everyone who does *not perform* all the things in the book of the law is cursed (πᾶς ὃς οὐκ ποίει πάντα τὰ γεγραμμένα ἐν τῷ βιβλίῳ τοῦ νόμου). The citation does not fully agree with any MT or LXX text, but it is closest to the LXX.²⁴¹ The verse in the LXX is different from the verse in the MT.²⁴² The MT says "Everyone who does not *establish/fulfil* (קָוַם)²⁴³ all the words of this law to do them", while the LXX says, "Everyone who does not *abide* (ἐμμένω)²⁴⁴ *in*²⁴⁵ (or live in) all things written in the book of the law to do them". Even though both texts bring out the connection between curse and doer by means of the infinitive 'to do' (לַעֲשׂוֹת, τοῦ ποιῆσαι), there is a difference between the two versions in terms of the modification of 'cursed' (the participle אָרִוּר and the adjective ἐπικατάρατος). In the LXX, the curse does not come directly upon every non-fulfiller but on every non-abider, that is, non-dweller. From the perspective of the works of the law, the two texts thus have different emphases. The MT is interested primarily in doing (that is, works), while the LXX is interested in living (that is, place). From a traditional stand-point, the MT would have been more suitable than the LXX for Paul's purpose. Paul, however, did not

²⁴¹ On the other hand, Paul's citation is different from the LXX in several aspects. The difference, however, does not seem to be intended by Paul. Cf. D. F. Tolmie, *Galatians*, p. 114-15.

²⁴² Cf. אָרִוּר אֲשֶׁר לֹא יִקְוֶם אֶת־דְּבָרֵי הַתּוֹרָה הַזֹּאת לַעֲשׂוֹת אוֹתָם (BHS); ἐπικατάρατος πᾶς ἄνθρωπος ὃς οὐκ ἐμμένει ἐν πάσιν τοῖς λόγοις τοῦ νόμου τούτου τοῦ ποιῆσαι αὐτοῦς (LXX).

²⁴³ Luther's German Bible in 1545 translates קָוַם as 'erfüllen'. For the legal usage and sense of this, see L. J. Coppes, "קָוַם", *TWOT*, Vol. 2, pp 793-94.

²⁴⁴ Cf. G. L. Archer and G. Chirichigno, *Old Testament Quotations in the New Testament* (Chicago: The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago, 1983), quoted text no. 108. It is possible that the LXX read קָוַם instead of קָוַם in V^G Ke n⁸⁴ 4MSS.

²⁴⁵ The verb ἐμμένω in connection with place literally means 'remain or stay'. Cf. T. Friberg, B. Friberg, and N. F. Miller, *Analytical Lexicon to the Greek New Testament* (BC. in CA: Trafford, 2005), p. 146. Then, ἐμμένω ἐν should be translated as 'abide in' (live in) instead of 'abide by'. This is supported by the fact that, in the following verses (11-2), Paul refers to the place to live. For codices which have ἐν after ἐμμένω, cf. C. Tischendorf, *Novum Testamentum Graece*, O. C. Maior, Vol. II (Leipzig: Giesecke & Devrient, 1872), p. 640.

Furthermore, ἐν is not necessary if ἐμμένω is to be translated as 'to live in'. The verb ἐμμένω itself already has the prepositional prefix. The addition of ἐν strengthens the meaning of the prepositional prefix.

choose the MT. Pauline scholars have missed this. They concentrated only on ‘the works of the law’ (ἔργα νόμου) and ‘to do’ (πολιθαλι) and thus that they came to see a contradiction between 3:10a and b.

However, when we pay attention to ‘abide in’, we can identify a different emphasis. That is to say, Paul does not want to highlight the impossibility of *doing* all the things of the law but the nature of *living* (that is, the *life*) *in* doing all the things of the law. What, then, is the effect of the citation in regard to a life of doing the law? The citation says that everyone who does not abide in all the things written in the law to do them cursed is, that is, everyone who does not live doing the law.

Here, I should pose a question. What about everyone who does live in all things in the law, and who does them? When we try to answer this, we are instinctively influenced by the Reformed antithesis. That is to say, in terms of the Reformed perspective the answer would be that everyone who lives *doing all the things* in the law would be saved, that is, blessed. We, however, must not go beyond Paul’s citation. If we let go of the orientation of Reformed Systematic Theology and look at what Deut. 27:26 actually says, we realise that the obvious meaning is that everyone who does not live in all the things in the law to do them, is cursed. If the negation in the relative pronoun clause is removed, we get only this: Everyone who does live in all the things written in the law to do them, is *not cursed*. The effect of the citation stops here. Everyone who lives in all things written in the law can, at best, escape the curse and that is all. Thus the emphasis does not fall on the possibility of escaping the curse but on the nature of the life under the threat of the curse. In other words, according to Deut. 27:26, the life of the one who does live in all the things of the law to do them, is a life in fear of being cursed and a life of doing all the things of the law in order not to be cursed.

The traditional interpretation, however, did not stop at the citation but went further. That is to say, the traditional view interpreted the citation as saying that everyone who lives in *all* the things of the law is *blessed*, and this interpretation provided the implied presupposition to harmonize 3:10a and b. However Paul speaks here as if he had forgotten the rest of Deuteronomy, which refers to blessings, because what Paul wants to say is only what the citation says. What Paul wants to point out is the nature of a possible life of someone doing all the things in the law, and Deut. 27:26 does this clearly. Thus, for his argument, 27:26 is best, and not 28:58.

If, bearing this in mind, we read Paul’s statement in 3:10a, we come to under-

stand how perfectly the citation supports what he wants to say: Even though everyone who lives in all the things in the law to do them (that is, everyone who lives doing all the things) is not cursed yet, such a person is *already living* under the curse. This is exactly what Paul says in 3:10a: As many as are of the works of the law are (already) *under* the curse.

Here, we must note that Paul's interest is not in a curse waiting somewhere in the future.²⁴⁶ Strictly speaking, compared to πᾶς ὃς οὐκ ἐμμένει ἐν πᾶσιν τοῖς γεγραμμένοις ἐν τῷ βιβλίῳ τοῦ νόμου, ὅσοι ἐξ ἔργων νόμου are not accursed yet.²⁴⁷ However, here is the point: Paul is not interested in a future curse that will come upon those who fail to live in all the things written in the law, but in the curse itself. Ὅσοι ἐξ ἔργων νόμου are not just in fear or anxiety of the possibility of realizing the potential curse. Their problem is their way of existing, that is, that they must always do the whole law. Although the curse itself is impending, its rule and control²⁴⁸ over those of the works of the law are present and existential. Paul perceives the tragedy of this existence. He does not warn against the activation of a potential curse. He, rather, warns of the tragic existence of someone under the curse regardless of its activation or not. Not *the curse* to be activated by the failure of doing the law but the existence of obeying the whole law as being *under the curse* itself, that is the real tragedy that Paul is warning against.

This reading can solve the exegetical problems related to 3:10 which we indicated above: 1) without the implied presupposition, this reading can 2) make sense of the meaning of πᾶσιν, 3) and not disregard the original meaning of Deut. 27:26. This reading is supported by the fact that it is in harmony with the insights that we obtained in the discussion of the personal nature of the law. It is not because Paul

²⁴⁶ Focusing on reader-response, C. D. Stanley, "‘Under a Curse’: A Fresh Reading of Galatians 3:10-14", *NTS* 36 (1990), pp. 499-500, stresses Paul's rhetorical intention in threatening the Galatians by means of a potential curse. According to him, the curse is not an event brought about by the citation of 3:10 but rather a threat preventing a certain action. In v. 10, Paul uses ὑπὸ κατάραν instead of ἐπικᾶ τάρατος to indicate the potential curse and its threat. For persuasive purposes, Paul stresses that the perfect fulfilling of the law is almost impossible.

²⁴⁷ C. D. Stanley, *ibid.*, pp. 499-500, realises this. The presupposition ὑπό shows the difference. Being under curse is at least not yet accursed.

²⁴⁸ According to R. Longenecker, *Galatians*, pp. 116-17, in Galatians, the preposition ὑπό is connected to the law directly or indirectly, and indicates a situation of being under the authority or power of what it modifies. Cf. H. J. Eckstein, *Verheißung und Gesetz*, p. 214. The phrase ὑπὸ κατάραν refers to being controlled by the power of the curse. The ὑπό phrases that follow (ὑπὸ νόμον, ὑπὸ κατάραν, ὑπὸ παιδαγωγόν, and ὑπὸ ἐπιτρόπους καὶ οἰκονόμους) all show this tragedy of slavery under the curse rather well. Cf. T. A. Wilson, *The Curse of the Law*, pp. 31-43, who interprets 'under law' after 3:10-14 as shorthand for 'under the curse of the law'.

thought that no one could do all the things of the law that he cited Deut. 27:26. Rather, the book that Paul cited, Deuteronomy, itself clearly says in 30:11-14 that doing the things in the book of the law is possible and the citation also implies this, because, according to it, the person living under the threat of the curse is the person who stays in all the things of the law, doing them.

The misery of this way of living is not due to a failure to do the law. On the contrary, Paul reveals the true tragedy of a life *doing all the things* of the law. Therefore, all readings that regard the failure of fulfilling the law as the problem miss Paul's point. Πᾶσιν points out the degree to which a life of doing the law is subject to the curse. Πᾶσιν was not included by Paul by chance,²⁴⁹ neither was it emphasised by him because it was impossible to do all the things in the law.²⁵⁰ On the contrary, he used it to show that a life under the curse was a life of doing 'all' the things of the law because of a fear of being cursed. Finally, according to him, every person 'of the works of the law' could not but do all the things in the law and, although such a person was fulfilling the whole law, he was not free, but only someone under the curse. This is exactly what Paul also indicated by means of the metaphors of a παιδαγωγός, ἐπιτρόποι, and οἰκονόμοι. Humans under the law lived a life of slavery.

Humans had to obey the παιδαγωγός and ἐπιτρόποι in all things. They were slaves and did not have any freedom. This was the tragic reality of human life. The misery was not due to an inability to do all the things in the law, neither because they kept the law in a wrong way thus not achieving true fulfilment of it. The law required thorough obedience and it was unavoidable that the obedience would be thoroughly, that is, perfectly completed. However, a life in which humans could not but do all the things of the law thoroughly was not a life of freedom but of slavery. The more truly and completely humans did all the things of the law, the more truly and thoroughly they lived the life of slaves. And this is all that Paul wanted to say. This makes sense without the implied presupposition pointed out above, and also without having to provide any reasons for an expected failure to do all things. All the major parts of the citation (ἐμμένει, πᾶσιν, and τοῦ ποιῆσαι) exactly indicate the simple and clear nature of such a life. Paul must have realised that not only in Deuteronomy but also in the whole Old Testament, Deut. 27:26 was the best verse for this purpose, and that the

²⁴⁹ *Contra* Sanders

²⁵⁰ *Contra* the traditional view.

LXX containing ἐμμένει ἐν and πᾶσιν, provided a better option in this regard than the MT.

It is generally perceived that there seems to be a contradiction between 3:10a and 10b (citation).²⁵¹ There have been a lot of attempts to solve this. The common feature of all such attempts is that they solve the contradiction not only by focusing on the text, but by inserting an implied presupposition, or by interpreting ‘the works of the law’ as works for self-salvation or works bolstering Jewish identity, or by adding a new meaning to Deut. 27:26, thereby sacrificing the original one. However, why all of this were needed was due to the fact that the contradiction was actually read into the text. There is no contradiction. When we constitute a thesis and an antithesis in terms of either success or failure to fulfil the law, centring on the works themselves, a contradiction appears, but when we focus on the nature of the life of doers of the law, the contradiction disappears.

If we focus our attention only on the essence of the life of those doing all the things of the law, we come to understand Paul’s logic with what the text offers (3:10), without needing any other additions (presuppositions, special meanings of ‘the works of the law’, or even a new interpretation of Deut. 27:26): Regardless of 1) what the concept ‘the works of the law’ means, 2) whether the perfect fulfilment of the law is impossible (the human-natural inability), and, 3) if possible, what the reason for the failure to fulfil the law would be, the interpretation remains the same: Everyone who wants to live in all things of the law to do them is someone wanting to live the life of a slave under the curse of the law. This is what Paul wants to say.²⁵² Here, we should remember that the Galatian debate is one on the way of living.²⁵³ By means of the citation, Paul wishes to prove that a life of doing the law is not the right way. The character of the Galatian debate thus supports our interpretation of the citation, and the following verses will further substantiate this interpretation. Let us move to vv. 11-12.

²⁵¹ H. D. Betz, *Galatians*, p. 145.

²⁵² We almost instinctively attempt to identify some kind of human sin in Gal. 3:10, for example, the sin of legalism, the sin of the misuse of the law as ethnic badge, or the sin of the failure to fulfil the law, etc. However, strictly speaking, in v. 10, Paul is not interested in any human problems or even in human sins. Instead, he is just pointing out the misery of the life which someone will have to face if he lives under the law. In a word, he does not reveal a problem of humanity but a problem of the law. If we focus on humanity, it would not be much different from looking into a microscope the other way around.

²⁵³ See chapter II.

4 Verification and confirmation²⁵⁴ (vv. 11-12): Everyone who does the law lives *in it*

In vv. 11-12, Paul provides the reason for his rejection of the law as a way of justification. Therefore, these two verses are very important for understanding v. 10. They will thus be used to check and examine our interpretation of v. 10 above.

In the previous chapter, I argued that the debate on Gal. 3 had generally been focused on the notion of salvation. Of course, vv. 11-12 were understood from a soteriological perspective.²⁵⁵ Therefore, the citations in vv. 11-12 were understood within the context of salvation. Firstly, however, such a reading does not fit with the concept of righteousness. Paul provides the reason why it is impossible to be justified by the law in vv. 11-12. As I indicated in the previous chapter,²⁵⁶ righteousness was a Jewish term for the covenantal relationship of *God's people* with God. Secondly, such a reading does not fit the OT context of the texts, because the cited verses occur in a context focusing on the right covenantal way of living of God's people and not on obtaining salvation.²⁵⁷ If so, it would mean that Paul uses the concept 'righteousness' in a different sense and cites Hab. 2:4 arbitrarily. We, however, saw that, in 3:10, Paul referred to the righteous way of life. If it is the case that he is still referring to the righteous way of living in vv. 11-12, it is not necessary to assume a diversion from the original meaning of righteousness and an arbitrary use of Hab. 2:4.

There have been many debates on the logical development in vv. 11-12. Fung²⁵⁸

²⁵⁴ This section is the revision and supplement of section 3.2.2. "Gal. 3:12", in part 3 in my *Rethinking the New Perspective*.

²⁵⁵ Even in the case of interpreting v. 11 as referring to status and v. 12 as referring to keeping it, in v. 11, the way of faith of Hab. 2:4 is regarded as the way of salvation. Cf. C. H. Cosgrove, *Cross*, pp. 59-61; and W. C. Kaiser, "Leviticus 18:5 and Paul: Do This and You Shall Live (Eternally?)", *JETS* 14 (1971), pp. 19-28.

²⁵⁶ See the explanation after footnote 155.

²⁵⁷ Cf. W. C. Kaiser, "Leviticus 18:5", and G. E. Ladd, "Paul and the Law", in: J. M. Richards (ed.), *Soli Deo Gloria: New Testament Studies in Honor of W. C. Robinson* (Richmond, VA: John Knox, 1968), p. 142.

²⁵⁸ R. Y. K. Fung, *Galatians*, p. 145. Cf. C. D. Stanley, "Under a Curse", p. 502, who has the same idea.

understands Paul as citing Habakkuk and Leviticus to contrast faith and works: The law was not of faith for the law was about works. But in terms of the teaching of the Old Testament and Jewish thought, it would be strange to assume that doing the law was against faith.²⁵⁹ And it would be strange that Paul would cite Hab. 2:4 and Lev. 18:5 to show that the law was not of faith since it was based on works. Rather, the following logic looks more natural: 1) the righteous will *live* (ζήσεται) from faith (ἐκ πίστεως); 2) the person who does these things (the works of the law) shall *live* (ζήσεται); 3) therefore, ‘from faith’ is not different from ‘doing the law’. In this case, the citations, rather, might have supported Paul’s opponents in that ‘from faith truly’ means ‘doing the law thoroughly’.

On the other hand, following Dunn, Cranford argues that Paul does not contrast the citations but that he contrasts 12a (the law negatively seen as the identity marker of Jewish people) and 12b (the law positively seen as the standard of obedience).²⁶⁰ But 12a does not say that the *works* of the law are not out of faith. According to Cranford, by ‘the *works* of the law’, Paul refers to the special action of the law misused as identity marker.²⁶¹ However, in verses 11-12 Paul omits this important division very easily. And even if the law in v. 12a would refer to ‘the *works* of the law’, it should be noted that Paul does not say why ‘the works of the law’ are not of faith. According to Cranford, the law misused (v. 12a) and the law positively observed (v. 12b) are contrasted, but if v. 12a would read ‘the *works* of the law are not of faith’, it would be natural to read ‘the person who does these things’ in v. 12b as ‘the person who does the works of the law’. Explaining this extremely important contrast in one verse (v. 12), Paul omits the key word ‘the *works*’ in the first half, as well as the *law* that must be differentiated from the works of the law, in the second half. If, in 3:10-12, doing the law is decisively different from the works of the law, Paul’s usage of the key words would be unbelievably careless.

Another explanation of vv. 11-12 is that, as in v. 10, Paul refers to the impossibility of the perfect fulfilment of the law. In this case, the citation of Lev. 18:5 is understood a proof of this claim. Scholars, such as Gundry,²⁶² Hübner²⁶³ and Ridderbos²⁶⁴ who

²⁵⁹ H. J. Schoeps, *Paul*, p. 202. Cf. Nils Dahl, *Studies in Paul: Theology for the Early Christian Mission* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Pub. House, 1977), pp. 159-77.

²⁶⁰ M. Cranford, “Perfect Obedience?”, p. 254.

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 249.

²⁶² R. H. Gundry, “Grace”.

²⁶³ H. Hübner, *Law*, pp. 19ff.

²⁶⁴ H. Ridderbos, *Paul*, p. 134, says, “If one were to fulfil its requirement he would in fact live”.

accept that Paul is opposed to the law because of human inability to keep it, believe that Paul cited Lev. 18:5 in order to prove the theory that eternal life could be earned by perfect obedience (even though it was not possible in practice). In other words, they think that Paul cited Lev. 18:5 in order to say that eternal life cannot *practically* be earned by perfect obedience (v. 10), but as a purely *theoretical* possibility, it could be done.

In this case, however, in fact, a textual contradiction exists between v. 10 and v. 12.²⁶⁵ Scholars²⁶⁶ tried to solve the problem by saying that no one can achieve the perfect fulfilment of the law and that only Jesus can fulfil the theoretical possibility pointed out in Lev. 18:5. However, it is said nowhere in vv. 11-12 that perfect fulfilment was only a theoretical possibility. The text does not say 'if a human can do these things, such a person will live', but 'the person who does these things will live'. Thus, the simple reading of the text does not restrict the text to a theoretical possibility. If Paul would keep insisting on the impossibility of fulfilment in vv. 11-12, it would be quite strange that, after he had only implied such a notion in v. 10, he again just implies such a *theoretical* possibility in v. 12, citing Lev. 18:5 which actually contradicts his argument. If so, it would mean that he has forgotten about his attempts to persuade the Galatians, and that he wrongly assumes that they have already grasped his silent logic, and even fully agree with him.

Furthermore, the notion of the impossibility of the fulfilment of the law makes it much more difficult to explain the logic of the argument in vv. 10-12. If Paul cited Lev. 18:5 to indicate the theoretical possibility of the fulfilment of the law, the logic in vv. 11-12 would be as follows: He must have thought that it was evident that no one was justified before God by the law (v. 11a), because 'he who does them shall live in them' (v. 12b). This means that Paul should have connected the latter part of v. 12 directly to the former part of v. 11. Otherwise, the better option for supporting the notion that it was impossible to keep the law would have been for him to reverse the order of verses 10, 11 and 12. In other words, Paul should have argued: "He who does them shall live in them (v. 12) → (but) it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law (v. 11) → for it is written that everyone will be cursed who does not abide by all things written in the book of the law, and do them (v.10)". However, the order in

²⁶⁵ J. M. G. Barclay, *Obeying*, p. 67, points out that the notion of the impossibility of fulfilling the law contradicts the idea in v. 12.

²⁶⁶ C. E. B. Cranfield, *Romans*, Vol. II, p. 522, footnote 2.

which Paul placed his argument does not permit one to interpret it as implying the impossibility of keeping the law.

We must deal with v. 11 very carefully. The text simply and clearly states, “Now it is evident that no man is justified before God by the law, for he, who through faith is righteous, shall live”. By means of a ὅτι-clause Paul clearly provides the reason why humans cannot be justified by the law. The reason provided is a Christian axiom that the one who through faith is righteous, shall live. The axiom is indicated by means of the word δῆλον. This axiom clearly states that, regardless of its fulfilment, the law is neither the way in which humans can be justified, nor the principle by which they just can live. To put it another way, in no way is the law related to faith, the only way through which humans be justified. Tyson²⁶⁷ basically follows the same approach; and Martyn’s²⁶⁸ explanation is not essentially different. He claims that, in Gal 3:11, Paul begins to discuss not law observance as such, but the law itself. According to him, Paul disqualifies the law on the basis of its origin, in comparison to faith (3:12a). As a consequence of this argument, I must point out again that Sanders was surely right in that Paul tried to argue that the law has a function that differs from the function that faith has in salvation history.

Paul confirms this by stating in v.12: ὁ δὲ νόμος οὐκ ἔστιν ἐκ πίστεως. Moreover, it is proved again by the development the Paul’s point in 3:15-25 that his intention was to point out the basic difference in the nature of law and faith in salvation history respectively. Reinforcing his logic of the previous paragraph in verses 15-25, Paul poses the questions: “How are they different?”, and “What is the law?” He then discusses the nature of the law in detail, from the perspective of salvation history, whereas he very briefly refers in verse 10 only to the impossibility of keeping the law perfectly, that is, of course, if v. 10 indeed refers to this notion. This shows that human inability to keep the law was not at the centre of Paul’s thought.

I believe that v. 12b is meant as an explanation of v. 12a.²⁶⁹ If, as Gundry²⁷⁰ and

²⁶⁷ J. Tyson, “Works”, p. 428.

²⁶⁸ J. L. Martyn, *Galatians*, pp. 312 and 315. According to him, in Gal. 3:11-12, Paul introduces a textual contradiction by citing Hab. 2:4 and Lev. 18:5. Paul, however, does not want to dissolve the contradiction between the two texts. Instead, he accentuates the difference between the law that curses and God’s voice that blesses (pp. 330-34). Furthermore, Paul leads the readers to see the abyss between the two voices by attributing the blessing voice to God and the cursing one to the law given through angels (pp. 364-70).

²⁶⁹ L. Gaston, “Paul and the Law in Galatians 2 and 3”, in: *Paul and the Torah* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1987), p. 74, claims that ἀλλά prevents us from taking v. 12b as a proof verse for 12a. According to him, Lev. 18:5 is cited not for a contrast to Hab. 2:4, but positively. How-

Hübner²⁷¹ claim, Paul had wanted to say in verse 12b that, although it is not actually possible, salvation in principle comes from doing the law, then, the reason for verse 12a (ὁ νόμος οὐκ ἔστιν ἐκ πίστεως) would in fact disappear. This would mean that Paul reminds the readers of the fact that someone who, through faith, is righteous shall live (v. 11). And then continues by pointing out that the law is not from faith (v. 12a). However, Paul has not yet provided the reason why the law is not from faith. That no one can perfectly keep the whole law cannot be the reason why the law is not from faith. On the contrary, if, after claiming that the one who, through faith, is righteous shall live, Paul had argued that the one who can keep the whole law shall live in principle, then it would have implied that there was indeed a relationship between the law and faith. Of course, such a view goes against what is stated in the previous sentence, namely that the law is not from faith.

Let us yield one point to Gundry and Hübner. Suppose it was true that Paul merely suggested a theoretical possibility that salvation in principle could come from the observance of the law as the reason why the law was not from faith. If Paul had cited Leviticus in order to prove this, the emphasis of the citation would fall on the two verbs 'do' and '(shall) live' in Gal 3:12.²⁷² However, even if this were true, I cannot find any logical reason why the law was not from faith when I examine the clause 'He who *can do* them *shall live*'. In other words, I do not believe that what Paul wanted to say, was that the law was not from faith (12a), because the law provided the basis of *life* in terms of *the possibility of doing*. In this case, the logic, at best, would be that *doing is not faith*. To my mind, this is not a reason but an argument. Thus, I disagree with the idea that Paul cited Leviticus in verse 12 in order to show that even though full observance of the law was impossible, salvation could come in principle from the observance of the law.

I believe that the effect of the citation of verse 12b is to explain verse 12a. I do not

ever, to my mind, it seems a very strange development of logic that, after having objected to the law in the very previous verse where he states clearly that no one can be justified by the law by the citing Hab. 2:4, Paul then goes on to cite Lev. 18:5, which states that someone who does the law will live, in order to say something positive in this regard, and not as contrast to Hab. 2:4. In v. 12b, Paul actually presents the reason for v. 12a. See the explanation that follows.

²⁷⁰ R. H. Gundry, "Grace", p. 25.

²⁷¹ H. Hübner, *Law*, p. 19.

²⁷² If Paul had cited Leviticus in order to prove such a theoretical possibility, the meaning of the phrase ἐν αὐτοῖς in the cited verse would have been as follows: He who does them shall live by them. In this case, the emphasis in the citation in Gal 3:12 falls on 'do', '(shall) live', and 'by them'. However, the phrase ἐν αὐτοῖς should be translated not as 'by them', but as 'in them' (the reason why it cannot be translated as 'by them' will be explained shortly after). Therefore, the phrase ἐν αὐτοῖς should not be included among the words on which the emphasis of the citation falls.

agree that the emphasis of the citation in Gal 3:12 falls on the two verbs 'do' and 'shall live'. Rather, I would argue that the emphasis falls on the phrase ἐν αὐτοῖς. I believe that the many different explanations provided by scholars for Paul's citation of Lev. 18:5 are primarily caused by the fact the phrase ἐν αὐτοῖς is neglected. The word 'law', however, is one of the key words in Galatians, and, in particular, in Gal. 3:10-14. Although the word νόμος does not occur in the Greek clause cited in Gal. 3:12 and the original Hebrew clause does not have the word תּוֹרָה, the pronouns in מִן־בְּרִית (Lev. 18:5) and in ἐν αὐτοῖς (Gal. 3:12) refer to the law.²⁷³ Therefore, the phrase ἐν αὐτοῖς that contains the key word could not have been included by chance.

Why does Paul stress this phrase? To my mind he does so, because in Gal 3:12 he has Gal 2:20 in mind. Having explained in Gal 2:16 that humans can be justified not by the 'works of the law' but by faith in Christ, Paul moves on to his (obviously including all Christians) being²⁷⁴ in relationship with Christ's death (vv. 17-20). In doing so, Paul intensively uses the verb ζάω and the proposition ἐν. He uses the word ζάω five times (once in v. 19 and four times in v. 20), and contrasts verse 19 with verse 20 by means of the word ζάω. Verse 19: through the law Paul died to the law, that he might live to God. Verse 20: Paul lives in faith. Therefore, the two verses indicate that to live in faith is to die to the law. Furthermore, Paul uses the preposition ἐν four times (once in v. 17 and three times in v. 20). The point that he wants to bring across is that the Christian Paul, now, lives in faith in Christ who lives in him. To put it another way, because for Christians to live in faith is for Christ to live in them, someone who does not live in faith has nothing to do with Christ. In conclusion, to *live in faith* is to die to the law and to live in a new relationship with Christ.²⁷⁵

It is also necessary to point out that interpreting the phrase ἐν αὐτοῖς in 3:12 as 'by them' is to misinterpret Paul's intention. Of course, it is grammatically possible to in-

²⁷³ Note the fact that the words תּוֹרָה (statute) and מִשְׁפָּט (judgment) in Lev. 18:5 appear in Deut. 30: 9-10 and 16, referring to the contents of the book of the law.

²⁷⁴ Here Paul does not say anything about obtaining salvation. He is explaining the Christian life. Note that in v. 20, he explains the natural meaning of the life in the flesh.

²⁷⁵ According to J. D. G. Dunn, *Jesus*, pp. 227-28, Paul contrasts two 'from' phrases with two 'in' phrases. There is indeed much truth in this statement. In particular, by means of the contrast between the two 'from faith' phrases, Paul stresses the fact that the law is not from the faith that the righteous shall live from. However, it is a pity that Dunn did not connect Gal. 3:11-12 with Gal. 2: 19-20 (see also J. D. G. Dunn, *Galatians*, pp. 174-76), because any explanation that does not fully consider the expression 'in them' in v. 12b in relation with Gal 2:19-20 is too weak to effectively explain why the law is not from faith.

interpret ἐν αὐτοῖς as meaning ‘by them’.²⁷⁶ However, when we investigate the way in which Paul uses this preposition to indicate causal or instrumental usage, we realise that when Paul says ‘by’ or ‘through the law’ or ‘by’ or ‘through the works of the law’ in Romans and Galatians where he intensively deals with the matter of the law, the prepositions that he usually employs are ἐκ and διὰ.²⁷⁷ He actually uses the preposition ἐν only in Gal. 3:11-12. What is important is that just as Paul uses the preposition ἐν and the verb ζάω in Gal. 2:19-20 together on purpose, so he uses ἐν and ζάω in Gal. 3:11-12 together on purpose in connection with the law.²⁷⁸ And Gal. 3:11-12 is actually the only place where ἐν νόμῳ (ἐν αὐτοῖς) and ζάω appear at the same time.²⁷⁹ Thus, I conclude that, only when Paul talks about the law in connection with the way of living, does he use the expression ἐν νόμῳ. In the light of this, I am convinced that Paul utters 3:11-12 trusting that the Galatians fully understand and still remember Gal. 2:19-20. In Gal. 3:11-12, he uses ἐν as a key word together with another key word ζάω, used in Gal. 2:19-20, and, by doing so, he reminds the Galatians of Gal. 2:19-20.²⁸⁰ The preposition ἐν is not the usual way of indicating the instrumental usage of the law. This special usage makes it impossible to interpret the preposition ἐν in ἐν νόμῳ and ἐν αὐτοῖς as ‘by’.²⁸¹ Thus, the only correct interpretation is to read ἐν αὐτοῖς in Gal. 3:12 as ‘in them’.

Consequently, I am convinced that my assertion above that Paul stresses the phrase ἐν αὐτοῖς in Gal. 3:12, because he has Gal. 2:20 in mind is correct.²⁸² At the same

²⁷⁶ W. Bauer, W. F. Arndt, F. W. Gingrich, and F. W. Danker, “ἐν”, *BDAG*, p. 260.

²⁷⁷ Paul uses ἐκ twice and διὰ five times in Romans (2:12, 3:20, 4:13, 7:5, 7:7, and 10:5) and ἐκ five times and διὰ twice in Galatians (2:16, 2:19, 2:21, 3:2, 3:5, 3:10, and 3:21).

²⁷⁸ The phrase ‘in the law’ appears in Gal. 5:4 also. Referring to the breaking of the relationship with Christ, Paul also accentuates the same concept in Gal. 5:4 that he did in Gal. 2:19-20 and 3:11-12 where he stressed ἐν and ζάω, that is, to *live in faith* is to die to the law, and to live in the new relationship with Christ. In other words, since Paul uses ἐν νόμῳ in the same way as in Gal. 2:19-20 and 3:11-12, Gal. 5:4 does not undermine my argument about Gal. 3:11-12.

²⁷⁹ Except for Gal. 3:11-12, the words νόμος and ζάω appear only in Gal. 2:19. But Gal. 2:19 does not need the use of the preposition ἐν so that the verse cannot negatively affect my argument.

²⁸⁰ This is strengthened by the fact that Paul refers to Christ’s death in 3:13 right after he mentioned the place to live in 3:12, just as he did in 2:20-21.

²⁸¹ ‘By the law’ in Greek is indicated by a genitive alone without any preposition so that ἐν νόμῳ in 3:11 should be read not as ‘by the law’ but as ‘in the law’. Cf. E. de W. Burton, *Galatians*, p. 165.

²⁸² It seems attractive to accept that Paul intended that ζήσεται ἐν αὐτοῖς in v. 12b would remind the Galatians of ἐμμένει (ἐν) πᾶσιν τοῖς γεγραμμένοις in v. 10 b. However, if v. 12b were to be connected to v. 10b in order to provide the reason why no one could be justified by the law, the citation of Hab. 2:4 would have no use. In other words, if Paul wanted to say: one doing the law lives (only) in it (v. 12) → and one staying (living) in the law is (at best) under the curse (v. 10) → therefore, in the law, no one can be justified (v. 11), Hab. 2:4 would not be needed.

Paul deals with the curse and righteousness separately. In Gal. 3:2-5, Paul opposed ‘the works of the law’. Then, in v. 9, he continues by saying that (not those of the works of the law but) those of faith

time, this was the basis of my previous argument²⁸³ that, if Paul cited Lev. 18:5 in Gal. 3:12b because of the impossibility of full law observance, the core of the citation would fall on 'do' and 'live' and not on 'in them'.

In the light of this, I believe that Paul simply but clearly says that the person who does the law shall live (*not in faith* but *in it*; Lev. 18:5 in Gal. 3:12). Thus the law is irrelevant to a life related to Christ. In a word, believers live in faith (3:11 b and 2:20), while law-doers live in the law (3:12b) so that the law is not from faith (3:12a).

This interpretation of vv. 11-12 is in full harmony with our interpretation linking the debate on the law in v. 10 to the context of Christian life. The one of the works of the law is the one who has to live the life of slavery under the curse (v. 10). Such a life style is definitely not the way the righteous live because the righteous will live by faith (v. 11). Even though Christians live in the flesh, in fact, they live in faith in Christ (2:20); but those who do the law do not live in faith but in the law (v. 12).²⁸⁴ Therefore, those who do the law live a life which has no connection with the life of the righteous, that is, the life in faith.

5 Conclusion

Gal. 3:10 has often been regarded as a starting point for understanding the Pauline theology of the law. Scholars then usually focus on the word *πίστιν*, interpreting it as an indication of the impossibility of fulfilling the law. However, as has been pointed

are blessed. The reason is given in v. 10: Because those of the works of the law are under the curse. After saying this, Paul then moves on to the theme of righteousness. However, it should be noted that he does not do this in the following way: those of works of the law are under the curse so that they are not justified. Rather, he proves righteousness by means of Hab. 2:4 which refers to righteousness. To put it in a nutshell, Paul's contrast is not 1) blessing ⇔ curse → under curse (unrighteousness) ⇔ in faith (righteousness) but 1) blessing ⇔ curse, and 2) *in* the law (unrighteousness) ⇔ *in* faith (righteousness).

²⁸³ See footnote 272.

²⁸⁴ A. H. Wakefield, *Where to live*, pp. 174-80, reads Gal. 3:10-12 not from a soteriological point of view, but from the perspective of 'where to live'. As far as I know, he is the only one that realises that Paul's thrust in vv. 10-12 falls on the life *under* curse (v. 10) and *in* the law (v. 12). He comes to almost the same conclusion as I by means of a different exegesis.

out, this is a presupposition that is not necessarily implied by the text, but added by scholars. Furthermore, we have noted that alternatives without such a presupposition are proposed by some scholars, but that these lead to sacrificing the original meaning of Deut. 27:26, or accepting a failure to fulfil the law in some sense of the word. To summarize, the different interpretations of 3:10 boil down to two different Pauls, a Paul who denies the theology of Deuteronomy according to which it was possible to fulfil the law, yet citing a text from it, or a Paul who, according to v. 10, in some sense, accepts a failure to keep the law perfectly

It has been argued that Paul's portrayal of the law as a person depicts the life under the law (παιδαγωγός, ἐπιτρόποι, and οἰκονόμοι) as the life of a slave. The problem of such a life is not primarily a failure to fulfil the law somewhere in the future. This aspect is the critical point of difference between the view presented here and the views of most Pauline scholars. According to them, the problem with the law only arises in the future, that is, when a person fails to fulfil the law, whereas, according to Paul, *the real problem already occurs when the law is being fulfilled*. The real problem, ironically, thus lies in the fulfilment of the law. Perfect fulfilment implies perfect obedience, causing the slave (of the law) not to be blessed or even to be free but, rather, to be a perfect slave.

Gal. 3:10 thus discloses the tragedy of such a life by means of Deut. 27:26. Paying attention to ἐμμένει (ἐν), we pointed out a new emphasis: Paul reveals that living in (ἐμμένει ἐν) all (πάντων) things of the law and doing them, that is, a life of fulfilling the law, is nothing but a life under a curse. Paul is not warning against some future curse but a present one, that is, the present existence of those doing all things in the law as a life under the curse. For Paul, doing all things in the law is not an impossible possibility but an avoidable possibility, that is, something that may be avoided, thereby avoiding the curse. Such a life of the inevitable fulfilment of the law is a life under the curse. However, when we focus on the unspoken identity of the works of the law, or on a silent premise, we cannot hear Paul's voice. If we are guided by our own notion of the impossibility of fulfilling the law, we hear our own voices whispering that a life achieving the fulfilment of the law is righteous one, but when we are guided by the notion of the nature of a life fulfilling the law, we hear Paul's own voice – a voice pointing out an almost unbelievable paradox, that is, that a life *fulfilling* the law is nothing but a life under the curse!

Gal. 3:11-12 is also usually interpreted in terms of the notion of the impossibility of fulfilling the law. In such a case, the citation from Lev. 18:5 is usually understood as indicating a theoretical possibility of salvation by the perfect observance of the law. As has been argued, however, the purpose of the citation was not to indicate a theoretical possibility but to provide a reason for v. 12a, that is, that a life of doing the law is by nature different from a life in faith. Paul's emphasis lies on ἐν αὐτοῖς. Believers live in faith in Christ (2:20 and 3:11b), while law-doers live (*not in faith, but*) *in the law* (ἐν αὐτοῖς) (3:12b) so that the law becomes irrelevant for the life of the righteous, that is, a life in faith in Christ (3:11a and 12 a).

In the previous chapter, we saw that the Galatian debate was on the way of life. Furthermore, in this chapter, we saw that Paul's saying in vv. 10-12 should be interpreted in terms of the context of a way of life. Regardless of the possibility of a perfect fulfilment of the law, a person of the works of the law (v. 10: ὅσοι ἐξ ἔργων νόμου), one staying (living) in the law (v. 10: πᾶς ὃς οὐκ ἐμμένει πᾶσιν τοῖς γεγραμμένοις ἐν τῷ βιβλίῳ τοῦ νόμου), one in the law (v. 11: ἐν νόμῳ οὐδεὶς), and one doing the law (v. 12: ὁ ποιήσας αὐτὰ) all live a life under the curse (v. 10), and do not live the life of the righteous (vv. 11-12). The law is not the way for Christians at all.

In conclusion, Gal. 3:10-12 should not be read in terms of the notion of the impossibility (or failure) of fulfilling the law perfectly. Rather, it points to the unavoidability of fulfilling the law thoroughly. This is also the reason why Paul neither identifies the works of the law, nor refers to the impossibility of a perfect fulfilment of the law. In the debates on Gal. 3:10, however, the notion of the impossibility (or failure) of a perfect fulfilment of the law as the fundamental problem of the law always gets centre stage. Whereas scholars always tend to read Gal. 3:10-12 against such a background, the fact of the matter is that Paul himself is not really interested in this matter at all.

VI. The Interpretation of Gal. 5:3

Gal. 5:3 is usually regarded as the second proof verse for the notion of the impossibility of fulfilling the law. According to such an interpretation, in this verse Paul argues that an acceptance of circumcision implies an acceptance of the obligation to keep the whole law – an endeavour which will end in a failure to keep the whole law.²⁸⁵ Thus, here, once again, the problem with the law is linked to the impossibility of fulfilling the law.

The critically important thing, however, is that 5:3 merely says that a circumcised person is obliged to do the whole law. Paul mentions neither the impossibility nor the failure to fulfil the whole law. If he had regarded this as impossible, why does he not mention it in 5:3? Why does he omit this conclusion? Is it because the conclusion is self-evident and obvious? Then, why does he keep on explaining something which is so obvious?

In their interpretation of Gal. 5:3, some scholars²⁸⁶ focus on the notion of carelessness to keep the whole law, rather than on the impossibility of doing so. In this regard, the explanation of Schmithals²⁸⁷ is unique: Gnostic agitators introduced circumcision as a magical ritual to Galatians and did not actually ask them to keep the Torah. From 5:3 and 6:13 Schmithals concludes that the agitators were free-thinkers regarding the Jewish Torah. Paul then argues against such a view that circumcision

²⁸⁵ T. R. Schreiner, "Paul and Perfect Obedience", pp. 266-68; and F. F. Bruce, *Galatians*, pp. 229-31. T. George, *Galatians* (NAC, Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994), pp. 357-59, thinks that Paul argues here in the same way as in 3:10. According to him, the acceptance of circumcision implies the bearing of an intolerable burden because it carries a further all-encompassing obligation: the necessity of observing the law in every precept, and this is impossible.

In this respect, the Roman Catholic theologian, J. Blich, *Galatians, A Discussion of St Paul's Epistle* (HC 1, London: St Paul Publications, 1970), pp. 421-22, does not differ from the interpretation of the Reformers: Judaizing teachers placed a great deal of weight on circumcision, paying no more than lip service to most requirements of the law. Against such a view, Paul claims that the Judaizing Christians cannot stop with circumcision and the Jewish calendar but must fulfil the whole law. Of course, this is not possible.

²⁸⁶ It is not difficult to find scholars who read 5:3 (and 6:13) as saying that Paul's opponents are selective with regard to obedience to the law, or not serious about it. Cf. F. Mussner, *Der Galaterbrief*, pp. 347-48; P. Vielhauer, "Gesetzesdienst und Stoicheiadienst im Galaterbrief", in: J. Friedrich, W. Pöhlmann and P. Stuhlmacher (eds.), *Rechtfertigung: Festschrift für E. Käsemann* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1976), p. 545; R. Jewett, "Agitators", pp. 337-38 and 43; and B. H. Brinsmead, *Galatians*, pp. 64-5.

²⁸⁷ W. Schmithals, "Heretics", pp. 25ff. and 32ff.; and "Judaisten in Galatien?", *ZNW* 74 (1983), pp. 43-55.

implies a dedication to doing the law.

Jewett,²⁸⁸ however, criticizes Schmithals, pointing out that Paul's objection against doing the law becomes meaningless unless the Galatian agitators actually were advocates for the observance of the law, and, therefore, Schmithals' idea makes Paul's objection superfluous. Instead, Jewett proposes another theory. He pays attention to the fact that those who wanted to avoid persecution by practicing circumcision were not the Galatians but the agitators who tried to escape persecution by having the Galatians circumcised. According to him, the Galatian agitators belonged to a nomistic Christian group in Judea, which faced Zealot anti-Pauline persecution in the late 40s and early 50s and then tried to escape the danger of such persecution by converting Gentile Christians to nomism. In this missionary enterprise, the agitators thus followed a Judaising program.²⁸⁹

According to Jewett, there is no evidence that the agitators tried to introduce the whole Torah to the Galatians. Even though the agitators believed that submission to the law was essential for salvation, and that, accordingly, Gentile Christians had to be circumcised as a first step, the agitators were satisfied with the accomplishment of the first visible steps, that is, circumcision and the cultic calendar. They did not tell the Galatians that circumcision implied an obligation to keep the whole law. The promise of perfection by circumcision was misunderstood and accepted by the Galatians because of their Hellenistic aspirations. In fact, the Galatians were inclined towards pneumatic liberalism and were not serious about keeping the whole law at all. They just wanted to reach the last level of perfection by means of circumcision. The agitators did not care that circumcision was not accepted in a right way; as long as they could get a fast and observable result, they were satisfied. In this way, Jewett reads 5:3 as an indication that the agitators contented themselves with the limited goal of circumcision, believing that obedience to the entire law would follow in due course. Against this, Paul then reveals the agitators' hidden intention and points out that a selective observance of the law is meaningless.

Jewett's interpretation, however, shares the problem that Schmithals' interpretation raises. It implies that the Galatians did not actually intend to keep the law seriously, but that Paul nevertheless warns them against doing so. However, Paul's

²⁸⁸ R. Jewett, "Agitators", pp. 337-46.

²⁸⁹ Jewett's view is accepted by R. P. Martin, *New Testament Foundations: A Guide for Christian Students*, Vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), pp. 154ff.

objection against keeping the law would only make sense if the Galatians were in fact advocating keeping the law.

Barclay's²⁹⁰ explanation seems a little bit better. He also opposes the idea that the agitators were not serious to keep the law. And he points out that if no one of the Galatians was serious and interested in keeping the law, Paul's explanation in 4:21ff. (the allegory of Hagar and Sarah) becomes meaningless. According to him, in the light of the fact that Paul concludes his argument in 5:1 by urging the Galatians not to be entangled with the yoke of bondage – which obviously suggests the Jewish concept of the yoke of the law – Paul's admonishment would be meaningless if the Galatians were not interested in keeping the law.

According to Barclay, 5:3 follows the appeal in 4:21 very closely and picks up the emphasis on $\pi\acute{\alpha}\sigma\lambda\upsilon$ in 3:10. Paul intends to emphasise not what the Galatians were absolutely ignorant of, but what they were a little naïve of. They wanted to obey the law but needed to practically face the implication of keeping the whole law.²⁹¹

The explanations above all have similar emphases. What we thus need to pay attention to is that, regardless of the different explanations provided, all of them have one common point. In interpreting 5:3, all of them portray Paul as saying that only when the law is kept fully, observance of the law becomes meaningful.²⁹² Thus, Paul's interest in 5:3 lies in fulfilling the law.

These explanations, however, do not grasp Paul's point. First of all, let us consider the necessity of mentioning the implications of accepting circumcision. In terms of the traditional view, Paul's idea in 5:3 is that accepting circumcision implies receiving the whole law to keep, which is not achievable. It is also assumed that the impossibility of fulfilling the whole law is so *obvious* that it is unnecessary to mention it. Therefore, Paul omits it.

Then, I would like to ask a question: Is it really impossible to omit mentioning that the acceptance of circumcision implies the acceptance of the whole law? It was already mentioned in 3:10 that if one chooses the works of the law, one must do the

²⁹⁰ J. M. G. Barclay, *Obeying*, pp. 62-4.

²⁹¹ Barclay who follows W. G. Kümmel, *Introduction to the New Testament*, tr. H. C. Kee, from the 17th revised edition (London: SCM, 1975), p. 300, says that, in 5:3, Paul wants to remind the Galatians not of something entirely new but of something already known but not fully considered by them.

²⁹² The common idea that in Gal. 5:3, Paul says that once one accepts a part of the law, one must obey the rest of it, dates back to the Christian Church Fathers, such as J. Chrysostom, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians and Homilies on the Epistle to the Ephesians of S. John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople (with notes and Indices)* (LFHCC 5, Oxford: John Henry Parker, 1840), p. 74.

whole law.²⁹³ Then, would it cause a logical jump to just say in 5:3 that receiving circumcision implies an impossible responsibility? The traditional view focuses on the impossibility of fulfilling the law. According to this view, the Galatians' observing of the law was not selective. Rather, they seem to have tried the impossible task of keeping the law foolishly. For Paul, it was an impossible challenge as had already been proved by his life. Here, the point lies in the impossibility of fulfilling the law and it seems, rather, unnecessary to point out the implication that accepting circumcision implies accepting the whole law. In this situation, it is not likely that, omitting his major thrust (the impossibility of fulfilling the law), Paul explains the logical link (the implication of accepting circumcision) repeatedly.

On the other hand, let us consider the necessity of explaining the implications in the case of Barclay and Kümmel who accept the Galatians' sincerity in trying to keep the law. They focus on the implications of accepting the *whole* law that follows from accepting circumcision. In this case, even though the implication was not entirely new, it was neither fully considered nor practiced by the Galatians because of their naivety. Paul was therefore attempting to remind the Galatians of this issue. However, was this implication really as complicated and difficult that it could be perceived only when fully considered and seriously thought of?²⁹⁴ Otherwise, was Paul the only one having the insight to truly grasp this implication? Could the congregations in Galatia not have perceived this implication? Were they so silly and impulsive that they were willing to embrace circumcision without serious thinking of its implications, something which meant a painful and potentially dangerous surgical operation? Barclay's emphasis that the Galatians were sincere in their wishes to fulfil the law makes his assertion that they did not grasp the implications of keeping the whole law, difficult to accept. This implication was definitely not so difficult that only Paul would have picked it up. Both Barclay and Kümmel realise this, and thus cannot claim that the Galatians did not consider the implications fully nor face them practically.

If, however, Paul simply wanted to remind the Galatians of what they knew but did not consider fully, practically and seriously, was the long explanation of Gal. 3-4 then

²⁹³ Πάλιν is generally regarded as meaning that Gal. 3:10 probably is the verse that Paul has in his mind, when he writes 5:3. See F. Watson, *Gentiles*, p. 71.

²⁹⁴ Jewett's explanation is not essentially different from that of Barclay. According to Jewett, the agitators did not tell the Galatians of the implications of circumcision because of strategic reasons. In the end, Jewett's argument is that it was so difficult for the Galatians to realise that accepting circumcision implies the responsibility of doing the rest of the law that they could not do so without Paul pointing this out to them.

really necessary? Why did Paul delve into his profound insight of the nature of the law before he reminded the Galatians of the implication of accepting circumcision that they knew of but did not heed fully? And when Paul pointed out the implications of accepting circumcision, why did he not use this insight but just reminded the Galatians of these implications as shared knowledge? If the conclusion of what Paul has in mind is that acceptance of the law by receiving circumcision finally boils down to an acceptance of the whole law, Paul's long explanation of the nature of the law in Gal. 3-4 becomes useless.

In Gal. 3-4, Paul reveals a unique insight in the law that is different from the way in which the law is perceived by the agitators or the Galatians. Paul compares the law with faith and the promise, in terms of the *nature* of the law (3:1-22). In this sense, the law cannot give life. If so, what kind of life is a life under the law? The next section, Gal. 3:23-4:11, then reveals the nature of the law. By means of the analogies of ἐπίτροποι and οἰκονόμοι it is shown in a figurative way that a life under the law is a life without freedom. And the motive of slavery is emphasized dramatically by means of the allegory of Sarah and Hagar (4:21-31). The conclusion is that the Galatians were the children not of a slave woman but of a free woman; they were free. It is obvious that neither the agitators nor the Galatians realised the problem of the nature of the law.

This profound insight of Paul continues in Gal. 5:1-3. The Christian freedom and the yoke of slavery are still contrasted in v. 1. If one gets circumcised, Christ will be of no advantage to one (v. 2). The advantage mentioned here is the freedom that Christ gave, as v. 1 indicates. Therefore, if one receives circumcision, one will lose one's freedom and become a slave again. Furthermore, ὀφειλέτης in v. 3 shows that v. 3 is also to be read in the context of becoming a slave. This context is not abandoned. Rather, the motive of slavery that is taken up in 3:23 reaches a climax in 5:3. In his explanation of slavery in Gal. 3-4, Paul concludes his argument on the natural and essential problem of the law. If one assumes that in 5:3, Paul merely reminds the Galatians of the Jewish idea that observance of the law becomes meaningless if one does not keep the whole law, one ignores the argument that Paul develops in Gal. 3-4.²⁹⁵ On the other hand, if one takes note of Paul's emphasis in Gal. 3-4, which is

²⁹⁵ According to Betz, *Galatians*, p. 259, this idea was clear to Paul as an ex-Pharisee, but not to the Galatians.

J. A. Ziesler, *The Epistle to the Galatians* (London: Epworth Press, 1992), pp. 74-5, argues that

continued in 5:1-3, that is, that in terms of the personal nature of the law, it enslaves one, the weak points of the explanations above are obvious. Which of the following expresses Paul's intention?

One who wishes to take up the yoke of slavery by accepting circumcision should not do so because he cannot fulfil the yoke perfectly

Or:

One who wishes to live a life of slavery by accepting circumcision cannot live a life of partial slavery but must accept the entire life of slavery; otherwise it would not make sense.

None of them! In both a Paul is portrayed who is against the Galatians' wrong way of spiritual slavery and suggests a *right* way of life of slavery, in which slavery is fulfilled *meaningfully*. Paul's reason for his objection against a life of slavery, however, is simply because the life is a life of *slavery*. There is no *right* way to live a life of slavery. No matter how rightly and meaningfully one lives a life of slavery, one's life is in no way right or meaningful. Paul objects to slavery as such. Even if such slavery is performed and fulfilled thoroughly, it does not have any positive meaning. It is not because one fails to be a slave or performs one's duties only partially that the life of slavery is a problem. *A life of slavery which just commenced, a partial life of slavery, and even a life of perfect slavery – all of them are miserable!* The problem with slavery to the law thus does not lie in the extent of the slavery to the law, but in the slavery to the law as such. Thus, all explanations of 5:3 that accept that observance of the law is meaningful only when the whole law is observed, ignore Paul's argument as developed in Gal. 3-4.

Paul's thrust is simple and crystal-clear. For him, a life under the law is a life of slavery. Therefore, the acceptance of circumcision is acceptance of slavery. For him, regardless of whether someone who is circumcised does not do anything else, or whether he is also willing to keep the whole law, or whether he tries to obey all the law and it is possible to do so, the essential nature of the deed of circumcision never changes. In other words, circumcision always indicates the beginning of slavery. The

good and faithful Jews did not choose the items of the law to be observed, but that the Galatians did not consider what accepting circumcision entailed subsequently and regarded it as an insignificant isolated rite. On the other hand, in Gal. 5:3, Paul informs the Galatians what they were in fact about to accept. Paul's assertion in Gal. 5:3 is thus completely in accord with the normal Jewish views.

problem of the law thus lies in the unchanging nature of circumcision (the law).

It is important to emphasize this point. The problem of the law is not linked to the entirety as such of the law to keep, or to the responsibility as such of the doer: The reason why the acceptance of the law by circumcision is problematic is not because accepting circumcision is accepting the responsibility of doing the law in its entirety. The responsibility of doing the law in its entirety becomes problematic *because accepting circumcision implies accepting slavery to the law*. Most Jews in the first century, as well as the agitators, knew that the observance of the law was meaningful only when the law was kept in its entirety. However, they did not regard taking the responsibility of keeping the law in its entirety to make it meaningful as something negative. This is the point where the essential difference between Paul on the one hand and the agitators and the Galatians on the other hand is to be found. This is what the Galatians did not realise and what Paul wishes to say in 5:3.

It is not the wish to fulfil the law in a meaningful way that is the true problem, but taking up the responsibility of slavery to the law. Such a responsibility is limitless, because it requires keeping the law in its entirety. This is the very reason why Paul emphasises the concepts “entirety” and “responsibility”. The responsibility of slavery that is launched by circumcision is a limitless one of having to obey all the commandments of the master, the law. No single regulation of the law may be skipped; it is the command of the master that everything must be obeyed. This is the gist of what Paul wants to say, having explained the nature of slavery to the law in Gal. 3-4. In 5:3, he accentuates the extent of the slavery. The common point in existing explanations, that is, the *positive* sense of observing the entire law, is not what ὅλον in 5:3 points to; such an interpretation actually goes against Paul’s intention. For Paul, that the whole law to be fulfilled is nothing but slavery.

In this chapter, we have thus seen that 5:3 can be interpreted in accordance with the conclusion that we got from the exegesis of 3:10ff. It is also clear that such an interpretation provides a better understanding of the following verses because it does not produce the dilemma that the usual interpretations of v. 14 cause. The dilemma is the fulfilling of the law. This is so, because Paul who was against the law seems to have drastically changed his attitude in that he seems to regard the fulfilling of the law as something positive in the latter parts of Galatians and Romans.

Now, before we scrutinize the notion of the fulfillment of the law, we have to investigate the verses that are assumed to refer to the impossibility of fulfilling the law in Romans.

PART C

(Paul's lack of interest in the fulfilling of the law in Romans)

It is in Romans, together with Galatians, that Paul's view of the law is revealed best. It is interesting to take note that the idea that Paul's view of the law in Romans differs from that in Galatians is quite common. For example, J. A. Fitzmyer²⁹⁶ says that, in Galatians, Paul did not realize that humans cannot keep the law, whereas in Romans it is clear that he is not satisfied with his previous explanation of the matter in Galatians. Realising that it is impossible for humans to keep the law, Paul presents the problem in Romans in terms of nature, and finds a solution from the essential transformation, that is, from the perspective of being justified through the Holy Spirit in Christ.²⁹⁷ Can the insights that we found in Galatians also be found in Romans? Or are we going to find a different Paul in Romans, someone who accepts the impossibility of fulfilling the law? Let us move to Romans.

VII. Rom. 1-5

1 Rom. 1-2

It is generally accepted that Paul refers to Gentiles in Rom. 1 (vv. 18-32) and to Jews

²⁹⁶ J. A. Fitzmyer, "Pauline Theology", in: R. E. Brown, J. A. Fitzmyer and R. E. Murphy (eds.), *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1991), p. 1404, no 95.

²⁹⁷ Cf. H. Hübner, *Law. According to Hübner* (cf. section 2.3 "H. Hübner" in chapter II), whereas Paul's explanation of the law in Galatians focuses on quantity, in Romans it focuses on quality. J. W. Drane, *Paul: Libertine or Legalist?* (London: SPCK Publishing, 1975); and *Paul: An Illustrated Documentary on the Life and Writings of a Key Figure in the Beginning of Christianity* (New York: HarperCollins, 1977), also accepts a kind of development theory with regard to Paul's view of the law. According to him, we find a balanced notion of Paul's view of the law in Romans, but not in Galatians.

in Rom. 2, and that his argument climaxes in Rom. 3 (vv. 1-20) where he indicts both Gentiles and Jews.²⁹⁸ By doing this in the first 3 chapters of Romans, he attempts to prove that all humans are sinners because of their failure to fulfil the law. Firstly, let us consider Rom. 1-2. According to F. Mussner,²⁹⁹ Rom. 1-2 shows that, from experience, Paul knows that no one can keep the law perfectly. T. R. Schreiner³⁰⁰ also argues that Rom. 1:18-2:29 focuses on humankind's inability in this regard, and especially, that Rom. 2 proves that the Jews are under judgment because they failed to keep the law perfectly.

But while Paul accuses the Jews of an inability to keep the law, in Rom. 2:13-15, he seems to accept that Gentiles can fulfil the law. C. H. Dodd³⁰¹ explains the problem as follows: When referring to humankind in general, Paul's view is extreme, namely that it is impossible to fulfil the law, but when it comes to concrete cases, he accepts that some good Gentiles and Jews can do the right things. Dodd, in fact, thus allows for some level of inconsistency in Paul's views. Räisänen's³⁰² explanation is more extreme. According to him, Paul is not only inconsistent, but contradicts himself. On the other hand, the majority of scholars³⁰³ hesitate to accept such an extreme view. Instead, they argue that Paul is merely referring to a hypothetical situation.

Such an explanation, however, does not seem correct from a grammatical point of view.³⁰⁴ Furthermore, if Paul accuses all Jews in Rom. 2 of an inability to keep the

²⁹⁸ C. K. Barrett, *The Epistle to the Romans* (London: A & C Black, 1957), pp. 32-40 and 69; M. Black, *Romans*, NCBC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1973), pp. 49-64; and J. Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans: The English Text with Introduction, Exposition and Notes*, Vol. I (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1959), pp. 34-53 and 102-06. See A. Nygren, *Commentary on Romans*, tr. C. C. Rasmussen (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1944), pp. 98-113 and 141; M. P. Boylan, *St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans: Translation and Commentary* (Dublin: M. H. Gill and Son Ltd., 1947), pp. 17-33; and C. H. Dodd, *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans*, MNTC (London: Collins, 1932), pp. 46-55 and 72 also. They emphasize Paul's accusation of the Jews in Rom. 3, and accept that Paul is still referring to Gentiles in Rom. 3. In terms of overall structure they still accept that Paul accuses both Gentiles and Jews in Romans 1-3.

²⁹⁹ F. Mussner, *Galaterbrief*, pp. 191ff.

³⁰⁰ T. R. Schreiner, *Law*, pp. 66-8 and 181.

³⁰¹ C. H. Dodd, *Romans*, p. 37.

³⁰² According to Räisänen, "Difficulties", pp. 308-09, the idea in Gal. 3:10-12 that it is impossible to obey the law fully is found in Rom. 1-3, too. According to him, Paul is inconsistent since he claims in Rom. 2:14-5 and 26-7 that some Gentiles obey the law.

³⁰³ For example, F. Kuhr, "Römer 2:14ff. und die Verheissung bei Jeremia 31.31ff.", *ZNW* 55 (1964), pp. 252-61; U. Wilckens, *Der Brief an die Römer*, Vol. 1 (EKK VI, Neukirchen: Neukirchener, Vol. 1-2, 1978-80), pp. 132-33; and G. Bornkamm, "Gesetz und Natur (Röm 2. 14-16)", in: *Studien zu Antike und Urchristentum*, Vol. 2 (München: Chr. Kaiser, 1959), p. 110.

³⁰⁴ Cf. Johannes Riedl, "Die Auslegung von Rom. 2:14-16 in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart", in: *Studiorum Paulinorum Congressus Internationalis Catholicus: 1961* (AB 17-18, Rome: E Pontificio Instituto Biblico, 1963), p. 272. Almost all Roman Catholic theologians think that the conjunction γάρ

law, how is it possible that he bases his argument on a hypothesis that undermines the point of his argument? This would not make sense. Furthermore, even if we accept that vv. 13-5 refers to a hypothetical situation, we still have another problem, since, in verse 27, Paul again mentions that Gentiles keep the law.

Käsemann³⁰⁵ asserts that 2:25-27 is absolutely hypothetical. However, as K. R. Snodgrass³⁰⁶ correctly points out, the absence of a phrase such as ἀνθρώπινον λέγω makes it difficult to accept that the verses refers to a hypothetical situation. Furthermore Paul uses εἰ in vv. 25-6 three times instead of εἰ. Ἐάν clauses should firstly be read not in a subjunctive sense, but conditionally.³⁰⁷ V. 25b does not imply the breaking of the law. Breaking the law was an actual condition. In contrast, v. 25a should be understood as a condition and so also v. 26. And most importantly, if the Gentiles who keep the law were hypothetical figures, v. 27 loses its meaning, because Gentiles who keep the law and, therefore, can judge the Jews who break the law do not actually exist. In this case, logically, Paul cannot claim that such Gentiles can judge the Jews. Thus one cannot accept that Paul refers to a hypothetical situation in Rom. 2. Of course, the fact that Paul does not have a hypothetical case in mind in Rom. 2 does not automatically prove the existence of Gentiles that actually fulfil the law.

There is another suggestion. There are some scholars who believe that the law-keeping Gentiles to whom Paul is referring were Christians.³⁰⁸ Vv. 13-5, however, does not seem to refer to Gentile Christians. Vv. 12-13 refers to judgement and v. 16 also refers to the day of judgement. Therefore, it is better to accept that the Gentiles vv. 14-5 refers to, have the law as a basis for judgment. The Gentiles do the works of the law by themselves, and know what is right.

In verses 26-7 the atmosphere is totally different.³⁰⁹ Verse 27 refers to Gentiles who keep the law not occasionally but perfectly. If this situation is hypothetical, there is a great likelihood that Paul here has Christians in mind. In particular, Paul's statement in v. 29 that circumcision is of the heart, *in spirit* not in letter, supports such a

does not allow us to read ὅταν in v. 14 in a subjunctive sense, but that it refers to an actual case.

³⁰⁵ E. Käsemann, *An die Römer* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1980), pp. 68-9.

³⁰⁶ K. R. Snodgrass, "Justification by Grace – To the Doers: An Analysis of the Place of Romans 2 in the Theology of Paul", *NTS* 32 (1986), p. 74.

³⁰⁷ Cf. H. A. W. Meyer, *The Epistle to the Romans: Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, Part IV*, Vol. 1 (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1876), p. 131, argues that Paul uses the two εἰ-clauses in v. 25 not in the sense of presumption but in the sense of an actual case.

³⁰⁸ K. Barth, *A Shorter Commentary on Romans* (Richmond: John Knox, 1959), pp. 36-39; A. König, "Gentiles or Gentile Christians? On the Meaning of Romans 2:12-16", *JTSA* 15 (1976), pp. 53-60; and C. E. B. Cranfield, *Romans*, Vol. I, pp. 152-62 and 173-76.

³⁰⁹ See the contrast between φύσις in v. 14 and πνεῦμα in v. 29.

likelihood. Therefore, I think it is far-fetched to argue on the basis of these verses that some Gentiles can actually fulfil the law.

However, what is important is the following: The thrust of the context is that Jews who have the law but do not keep it are under judgment. In other words, to have the law in itself is of no value. There is no Jewish privilege and there is no fundamental difference between Jews and Gentiles.³¹⁰ If Paul only wanted to prove that no Jew can fulfil the law perfectly, his argument could have stopped at v. 23, as at that stage he has already pointed out the transgression of the Jews adequately. However, Paul uses the argument on the transgression of the Jews to prove that the distinction between Jews and Gentiles in terms of outward appearance, letter, and circumcision is not valid. What must be pointed out is that we cannot say that, in vv. 13-5 and 25-7, Paul refers to the possibility that some Gentiles may fulfil the law, but, on the other hand, we cannot accept that he intends to say that *all* Jews failed to fulfil the law, either. This is the case, because Paul did not have to prove that all Jews failed to fulfil the law in order to show the invalidity of physical circumcision in regard to the distinction between Jews and Gentiles. Regardless of whether or not the Gentiles fulfilling the law are Christians, when they keep the law, they can judge some (or most) of the Jews and, eventually, it is simply proved that outward circumcision is not important. I will prove later that Paul does not refer to *all* Jews in Rom. 2.

Furthermore, we must not forget that the sins mentioned in vv. 21-22 are not impossible to avoid. If Paul intended to prove that all Jews violated the law, he should have listed regulations that seemed more difficult to keep. The examples Paul refers to, however, are not too difficult to keep, and thus it is obvious that Paul could not claim that all Jews committed these sins. This problem has been solved in various ways. According to E. P. Sanders,³¹¹ Paul is exaggerating. On the other hand, George³¹² understands it as a rhetorical expression and Schreiner³¹³ regards it as just exemplification.

These attempts, however, do not seem to give a satisfactory explanation, because

³¹⁰ According to J. D. G. Dunn, *Theology*, pp. 114-19, the point of the debate in Rom. 2 is not that the Jews thought that they did not break the law but the fact that they accepted that there was no judgement for them. For the Jews, their Jewish identity was an amulet, or charm against judgement. G. P. Carras, "Romans 2:1-29: A Dialogue on Jewish Ideals", *Bib* 73 (1992), pp. 185 and 195, also thinks that Paul was against the notion of Jewish privileges. Cf. J. M. Bassler, *Divine Impartiality: Paul and a Theological Axiom* (Chico: Scholars Press, 1982), pp. 121-60.

³¹¹ E. P. Sanders, *Law*, pp. 124-25.

³¹² G. P. Carras, "Romans. 2:1-29", pp. 199-202.

³¹³ T. R. Schreiner, *Law*, p. 181.

then Paul would be arguing in an extremely arbitrary way. What Paul claims, was not something that would have been accepted easily by anyone. He does not give an example of someone toiling hard and agonising about never being perfect as we find in Rom. 7. Paul does not say that Jews just fall short of goodness but declares plainly that Jews commit obvious sins. In Rom. 2, he is thus not interested at all in proving that even those Jews who strive and struggle to keep the law end up failing to achieve this.³¹⁴ Rather, he is referring to Jews who do not keep the law positively and actively. They are not those who strive to do so, but just fall short of achieving this, but disbelieving Jews who are not different to disbelieving Gentiles, because of their transgressions. As we will see again later, this refers to certain Jews who are distinguished from the 'we' in 3:9. Because Paul does not want to argue that all the Jews broke the law but wants to refer only to certain Jews breaking the law, he does not choose sins which can be generally regarded as being universal, and accuses such Jews of obvious sins without delving into the notion of agonizing human psychology as popularly read in Rom. 7.³¹⁵

Furthermore, if Paul's purpose in Rom. 2 had been to show that all Jews failed to fulfil the law, he should have shown more clearly that the Gentiles he refers to in vv. 26-7 who keep the law perfectly were Christians. This would be so, because in that case the fact that no one can fulfil the law perfectly without Christ (or the Holy Spirit) could be accentuated. I do not wish to argue that the Gentiles referred to in vv. 26-27 are necessarily not Christians. What I wish to emphasize is that if Paul wanted to contrast the misery of all Jews who have failed to keep the law with Gentiles who keep the law through the Holy Spirit in Christ, he does it so vaguely that it sounds as if he meant to say that some non-Christian Gentiles succeeded in keeping the law perfectly. In other words, if the point of Paul's argument in Rom. 2 was to prove the inability of Jews to keep the law, he formulated it carelessly. Even though it must have been an important point for Paul that fulfilling the law perfectly in a true sense was possible only for Christians, he does not provide a contrast in vv. 26-7 indicating whether the Gentiles were Christians or not.

Finally, it is very important to keep in mind Paul's purpose in Rom. 2. He wants to indicate that when the Jews break the law, they have no privilege because their cir-

³¹⁴ H. Räisänen, "Difficulties", pp. 305-06, correctly points out that, instead of indicating that even the best fall short, in 2:17-24, Paul asserts that Jews are thieves, adulterers, and temple-robbers.

³¹⁵ I do not accept the popular interpretation of Rom. 7. I will interpret it in an entirely different way. See chapter VIII.

cumcision as such is nothing to boast about. Even though we cannot say that some non-Christian Gentiles can indeed fulfil the law, we have to keep in mind that Paul did not argue that all Jews fail to fulfil the law perfectly.

However, I am not going to argue negatively in the sense that Rom. 1-2 and 3 (that I am going to move to) does not indicate the impossibility of fulfilling the law. Rather, I am going to argue that even in Rom. 1-3 that is popularly regarded as indicating the impossibility of fulfilling the law, Paul thinks that the law can be fulfilled. Most of the scholars who accept the possibility of fulfilling the law in Rom. 1-3 resort to Rom. 2:13-5 and 26-7 for their argument. However, I will not follow them. I will prove that in Rom. 1-3 Paul thinks that the law can be fulfilled in a different way. This depends on the interpretation of Rom. 3.

2 Rom. 3

2.1 The problem of repetition

Rom. 3 is commonly understood as a conclusion where Paul accuses both Jews and Gentiles of an inability to fulfil the law.³¹⁶ Thus human inability to fulfil the law is brought into focus once again.³¹⁷ Paul's conclusion is found in 3:20. In this case, however, there arises a fundamental question. Has Paul charged the Jews with their sins already in the previous chapter (Rom. 2)? If so, why does he then accuse them once again at great length in Rom. 3?³¹⁸ To my mind, these issues are not trivial, and

³¹⁶ See footnote 298.

³¹⁷ C. E. B. Cranfield, "The Works of the Law", pp. 93-4; E. F. Harrison, *Romans*, F. E. Gaebelin (ed.), (EBC 10, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976), p. 40; P. Stuhlmacher, *Römer*, p. 53; T. R. Schreiner, *Law*, pp. 55-7 and 65-6; E. Käsemann, *Römer*, pp. 81-4; and R. Reymond, *Paul: Missionary Theologian* (Ross-Shire, Scotland: Christian Focus Publications Ltd., 2000), p. 316.

K. Stendahl, "Introspective Conscience", argues that the introspective conscience of the West regarding the law resulted from a wrong reading of Paul by Luther. Paul did not have pangs of remorse as a result of a failure to fulfil the law. Even Stendahl, though, accepts that the impossibility to fulfil the law is still the centre of his argument, although he thinks that Paul does not refer to individuals in Rom. 2:17-3:20 but to Israel as a whole.

³¹⁸ M. P. Boylan, *Romans*, pp.17-33; A. Nygren, *Romans*, pp. 98-113 and 141; and C. H. Dodd, *Romans*, pp. 46-55 and 72, all accept that Rom. 3 includes an accusation against Gentiles but focuses

are related to the structure of Rom. 1-3.

In fact, scholars often point this out. For example, according to D. J. S. Chae,³¹⁹ the citation in 3:10-18 confirms that both Jews and Gentiles are equally sinners by emphasizing the sins of the Jews again. But why *again*? According to him,³²⁰ in Rom. 1-3, the focus is on the sinfulness of the Jews even though these chapters highlight the equality of Jews and Gentiles. Furthermore, Paul mentions the guilt of the Jews several times in Rom. 2 and 3, and even in Rom. 1. However, according to him, there is no development in Paul's accusation against the Jews; it is mere repetition. He ignores the importance of such repetition, thus failing to explain it.

Dunn³²¹ does not realise that Paul's accusation in Rom. 3 enters a totally new phase either so that he also reads this chapter as a repetition of the same ideas. According to him, προαίτιάομαι in v. 9 is a summary of the conclusion of Rom. 1:18-3:8. In particular, he thinks that it refers to Rom. 1:18-32 that proves that all human beings are guilty. If so, my question is as follows: Why does Paul use citations in vv. 3:10-18 to repeat what he has already proven? Dunn seems to notice this problem, and therefore tries to emphasize the special function of the citations. He also criticizes Schenke³²² for regarding the citations as an additional insertion. According to Dunn, the citations presuppose the distinction between the righteous and the unrighteous, and indicate that when the presupposition of God's favour is removed, all humans are sinners.³²³ The text, however, does not refer to the abolishment of God's favour but only states that all are sinners. Dunn thus does not succeed in identifying a new accent in this citation in Rom. 3, which is in any way different from Rom. 1-2. To my mind, Dunn's position does thus not differ much from that of Schenke.

The fundamental reason why the problem of the repetition of ideas in Rom. 2 and 3 has not been solved so far is that most scholars accept that when Paul refers to Jews in Rom. 1-3, he always think of *all*³²⁴ Jews. If it is accepted that he focuses on the guilt of all Jews in both Rom. 2 and 3, the problem of repetition cannot be avoid-

on the accusation against Jews.

³¹⁹ D. J. S. Chae, *Paul as Apostle to the Galatians: His Apostolic Self-Awareness and its Influence on the Soteriological Argument in Romans* (PBTM, Cumbria: Paternoster Press, 1997), p. 134.

³²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 72-3, 94, and 133-34.

³²¹ J. D. G. Dunn, *Romans* (WBC 38, Dallas: Word Books, 1988), p. 148.

³²² H. M. Schenke, "Aporien im Römerbrief", *TLZ* 92, (1967), pp. 885-87.

³²³ J. D. G. Dunn, *Romans*, p. 145.

³²⁴ Even though Paul does not accuse all Jews, if he keeps on accusing the same group of Jews, the problem of repetition of Rom. 2 and 3 still remains. My point is that the groups of Jews in Rom. 2 and 3 are different.

ed. And if Paul has in mind all Jews in Rom. 2, the sinful situation of the Jews as described in Rom. 2 becomes, in fact, an extreme exaggeration, as Räisänen and Sanders indicate,³²⁵ because it is not true that all Jews committed such sins. This problem of exaggeration has been a constant problem for of scholars. Let us listen to Käsemann's solution.

According to Käsemann,³²⁶ in 2:17-24, Paul reports sins that were actually committed, and even though his accusation might sound strange, he takes empirical exceptions as representative of the Jewish society in terms of an apocalyptic approach. However, the tone of this passage in Romans cannot be simply explained away in that way. The sins mentioned in 2:17-24 are, in fact, not a fair representation of the behaviour of all Jews. See, in particular, 2:21-22. If Paul was actually charging *all* Jews, he would have to prove the validity of his accusation of Jews *theologically*. However, this is not what he does in Rom. 2. As I will explain later, the reason why Paul did not prove this is that he did not need to do so because he does not have all the Jews in mind.

On the other hand, Schreiner criticizes Räisänen and Sanders, arguing that they cannot show exemplification from this passage. According to him, Rom. 2 refers to all Jews. In a practical sense, however, how could Paul assert so strongly that all Jews committed these sins? Has he observed all Jews? It is self-evident that if Paul's accusation had to be based on statistics, it could never be proven. It was simply impossible to survey all Jews. And if Paul wanted to accuse all Jews, the sins that he cites as examples are too extreme. Such a way of arguing would have an opposite result, that is, that the readers would disagree with him. None of his examples is of a general nature, but, rather, very specific. Generally speaking, faithful Jews did not commit those sins. If Paul were actually accusing all Jews of stealing, adultery, and sacrilege, it would have been fairly easy to refute his accusation. If this is what Paul had in mind, he should have taken examples of a more general nature. For instance, the tenth commandment, you shall not *covet* your neighbour's house ... or *anything* that belongs to your neighbour (Exod. 20:17), would have worked.

³²⁵ H. Räisänen, "Difficulties", p. 310; and *The Law*, pp. 98-101, argues that Paul's main idea in 1:18-32, 2:17-24, and 7:14-25, is an extreme exaggeration. E. P. Sanders, *Law*, pp. 124-25, basically has the same idea as Räisänen.

³²⁶ E. Käsemann, *Römer*, pp. 64 and 66.

2.2 The foundation of the question in Rom. 3:1

Paul begins Rom. 3 with a question: What is the benefit of being a Jew and being circumcised? It is strange that the presupposition on which this question is based, and which forms the core of Paul's logic in Rom. 2-3, has been ignored by scholars. 3:1 is based on 2:25. Even though Dunn³²⁷ tries to understand 3:1 in terms of 2:25, he ignores the first *ἐάν* clause (v. 25a) completely and just thinks that Paul has in mind the perspective of someone presupposing this benefit. According to Dunn, Paul is thus speaking only from the perspective of someone who supposes that even when Jews break the law, Jewish advantage still belongs to them. In this case, 3:1 is not a practical question but just a question developing logical from Rom. 2. It does not deal with any real situation.

The text, however, does not suggest such a presupposition. The accusation of Jews violating the law by referring to Gentiles keeping the law in vv. 26-7 is not based on such a presupposition; neither does the statement in v. 25 that if the law is done, circumcision is of value. If Rom. 3:1 is based on 2:25 and not on this presupposition, the question in 3:11, 'What is the value of circumcision?', basically means the same as 'What is the value of keeping the law?'. The question is in no ways hypothetical. Only when the law has been kept, is there any value in circumcision. Thus, in Rom. 3 a new argument is introduced for the situation in which law is kept perfectly.

In Rom. 2, Paul focused on Jews who had the law but did not keep it. According to him, they commit theft, adultery, and sacrilege. In this way Paul proved that being Jewish, circumcised and having the law did not have any value for them. Then, is it not natural to ask the following question: There might be many faithful Jews who do not commit such sins, what about them? In other words, what about the Jews keeping the law? In comparison to Gentiles, what privilege can they expect? It is exactly this question that appears at the beginning of Rom. 3. Paul expects this response by his readers. To him, such a question is not unrealistic. For a Jew such as Paul, fulfilling the law was something attainable and something which should be pursued. It is thus not a hypothetical question. What value can Jews – like Paul – who are blame-

³²⁷ J. D. G. Dunn, *Romans*, p. 130.

less in terms of legalistic righteousness (Phil. 3:6), have? In Rom. 3, Paul responds to this question. Both the Gentiles who commit sins without the law (Rom. 1)³²⁸ and the Jews who commit sins with the law (Rom. 2) are under the same judgment. Here, there is no discrimination. Now in Rom. 3, Paul is moving towards his conclusion. Even though the Jewish identity and circumcision are of no value for those who break the law, what about Jews who keep the law? This case (the third one) is truly an important one. Even though faithful Jews could have agreed with Paul about the first two cases, they must have expected that there should be some privileges for Jews keeping the law (the third case). Paul gives an answer to this in Rom. 3. That this is the case is confirmed by the following:

The fact that Paul refers to “some” (τινες) in 3:3 clearly shows that he has other Jews in mind than those mentioned in 3:1.³²⁹ In contrast to the “some” in 3:3 who do not believe, those who can expect the value of circumcision are those who believe (πιστεύω). They are Jews faithful to the law in the Jewish³³⁰ sense of the word. In Rom. 3, Paul thus does not repeat Rom. 2 by charging all Jews. He now focuses on those Jews who could expect privileges from God who remained faithful notwithstanding the unbelief of some (other) Jews; in other words, Jews who, like Paul, were faultless in terms of legalistic righteousness and, therefore, could expect value from circumcision.

In 3:9, too, Paul makes it clear that he has Jews in mind, who, like himself, are expected to be better than the “some” (τινες) mentioned in 3:3. According to Käsemann,³³¹ Paul refers to Jews including himself in 3:9. Käsemann, however, neglects the contrast between v. 9 (προεχόμεθα) and v. 3. On the other hand, G. N. Davies³³² realizes that Paul does not refer to all Jews in Rom. 3. He even notes that Paul refers to righteous Jews. However, surprisingly, he reads the chapter the other way

³²⁸ M. Hooker, “Adam in Romans 1”, *NTS* 6 (59-60), pp. 297-306, and N. Hyldahl, “A Reminiscence of the Old Testament at Romans 1:23”, *NTS* 2 (55-56), pp. 285-88, think that Paul’s accusation in Rom. 1 refers to Jews. Rom. 1:20, however, seems to go well with Gentiles. Jews came to know God not by means of things that were created but by God’s direct words. Anyway, Gentiles were not excluded in Rom. 1 and it still is the case that both Gentiles and Jews were accused by Paul.

³²⁹ According to C. H. Dodd, *Romans*, pp. 70-1, Rom. 3:1-8 is a digression. Paul, however, reveals the presupposition for the arguments in vv. 9ff. beforehand. In spite of the unbelief of some Jews, God’s faithfulness towards the Jews cannot be nullified. Then, what is the value of this?

³³⁰ Here, the words ‘Jewish sense’ do not have any negative sense. It means the correct Jewish sense or the correct legalistic sense. We must keep in mind that Paul refers to Jews who can rightly expect legalistic righteousness and, therefore, Jewish privileges, too.

³³¹ E. Käsemann, *Römer*, p. 81.

³³² G. N. Davies, *Faith and Obedience in Romans: A Study of Romans 1-4* (JSNTSS 39, Sheffield: JSOT, 1990), pp. 93-5.

around. According to him, Paul distinguishes the righteous from the unrighteous in 2:12-20 and does not charge all the Jews in Rom. 3. According to Davies, the Jews that Paul is against in Rom. 3 are those who rely on the law and brag of their relationship with God. Accordingly, Paul uses the Old Testament to show that there is no righteousness for the evil regardless of whether they are Jews or Gentiles.³³³ Eventually Davies comes to the conclusion that we cannot use Rom. 3:9-20 to argue that all people are sinners without exception.³³⁴ If so, as Chae³³⁵ points out correctly, Paul, at most, proves something which is just common sense, by means of the lengthy citations from the Old Testament.

Furthermore, a mirror reading of the point of the citations in 3:10-18 confirms my interpretation. In the citations, οὐκ ἔστιν is repeated four times and οὐκ ἔστιν is emphasized by οὐδὲ εἷς and ἕως ἑνός in v. 10 and 12 respectively. The purpose of the citations is not to point out the sins of sinners but to prove that there is no righteous one on earth. Reading this oppositely, we come to see that the 'we' in 3:9, who are expected to be better, are those who are expected not to be evil but righteous. When Paul accused Jews of violating the law in Rom. 2, he did not argue that all Jews committed these sins. There was the possibility that there were some Jews who did not transgress the law. Now, Paul refers to Jews who keep the law and who could expect the value of circumcision; in other words, those who could be expected to be righteous.³³⁶ Are they really righteous? According to Paul, they were not. Paul claims that the accusation of the law that there is no one who is righteous includes the Jews

³³³ Cf. H. Lichtenberger, "Paulus und das Gesetz", in: M. Hengel and U. Heckel (eds.), *Paulus: Missionar und Theologe und das antike Judentum* (WUNT 58, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1991), p. 371, has the basically same idea.

³³⁴ The idea that Paul does not argue in Rom. 3 that all human beings are sinners, is more popular than one would expect. For example, N. Elliott, *The Rhetoric of Romans: Argumentative Constraint and the Strategy of Paul's Dialogue with Judaism* (Sheffield: JSOT, 1990), pp. 105-46, comes to the same conclusion. According to him, Paul does not prove that all are sinners but just that all are under God's judgement.

³³⁵ D. J. S. Chae, *Paul*, pp. 137-38.

³³⁶ The psalm cited can be read as referring to Jews. Rom. 3:10-12 cites Psa. 14:1-3. Many scholars think that the verses refer to Gentiles but scholars such as A. Weiser, *The Psalms*, tr. H. Hartwell (OTL, London: S.C.M. Press, Ltd., 1962), pp. 164-66, read the verses as referring to Jews. On the other hand, it is not critically important whether the verses refer to Gentiles or to Jews. Rather, it seems that Paul expected this debate because he mentions in v. 19 that whatever the law says, it says to those under the law. What is important is the purpose that Paul wishes to achieve with the citation.

Furthermore, the point of Rom. 2 is that there is no critical distinction between Jews and Gentiles. Therefore, it is not a logical jump to apply the Palms which originally might have referred to Jews, to Gentiles.

under the law, too.³³⁷ Accordingly, not one of the Jews keeping the law, who could claim the value of circumcision, could be regarded as righteous.

Beker³³⁸ perceives a difference between Rom. 2 and 3, but, eventually, does not realize what the essential difference between the two chapters is. According to him, in Rom. 2, Jews are charged with a discrepancy between their moral behaviour and their confession, but, in Rom. 3, with their blindness of sins. In other words, Paul argues that the Jews' intention and attempts to be moral became a form of self-righteousness. The focus of Rom. 3 is then the blindness of the Jews, which appeared in the form of boasting over their enthusiasm in keeping the Torah. In the case of Beker, the difference between the Jews in Rom. 2 and 3 is, in essence, a difference of blindness, or of perception. The difference focused on by Paul, however, is whether there is any value in circumcision. This value could only become available to those keeping the law so that the essential difference was one between Jews keeping the law and Jew violating it. If we have to formulate this in terms of boasting, Paul does not focus on a boasting based on a blindness of violating the law, but on a faultless keeping of the law. I am not arguing that there was nothing wrong with the boasting of the Jews. We, however, should note that Paul does not focus on this boastful blindness but on the accusation that he finds in the law. The point is that the law accuses everyone under the law, regardless of anything, that is, their blindness. Even though it was the case that Jews were not blinded by their Jewish privileges, the law had already declared that no one was righteous, not even one under the law.

2.3 Does the citation (3:10-18) refer to the impossibility of a perfect observance of the law?

I, here, have to point out something simple but very important. Scholars such as Schreiner³³⁹ accept that, in Rom. 3:20, Paul says that it is impossible to keep the law

³³⁷ T. S. Holland, *Romans: The Divine Marriage. A Biblical Theological Commentary* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2011), pp. 79-82, offers a new reading of Romans by means of an exodus paradigm. He believes that the citation refers to the exile of Israel. The exile of Israel became a picture or a type of humanity under sin. Holland, however, fails to note Paul's emphasis.

³³⁸ J. C. Beker, *Paul the Apostle, the Triumph of God in Life and Thought* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), pp. 78-83.

³³⁹ T. R. Schreiner, *Law*, pp. 55ff.

and that he cites Psalms and Isaiah to support this statement. Surprisingly, however, Paul does not say anywhere in Romans that all have violated *the law*. When he speaks about the Jews violating the law in Rom. 2, he clearly refers to the notion of violation of *the law* (διὰ τῆς παραβάσεως τοῦ νόμου; in 2: 23, and ἐὰν παραβάτης νόμου ᾦς; in 2:25). In Rom. 3, however, he says that all (both Jews and Greeks) are *under sin* (γὰρ Ἰουδαίους τε καὶ Ἑλληνας πάντας ὑφ' ἁμαρτίαν εἶναι; in 3:9). Furthermore, we have to pay attention to the fact that Paul does not say that there is no one who keeps *the law* but that there is no righteous one, not even one (οὐκ ἔστιν δίκαιος οὐδὲ εἷς; in 3:10) and that there is no one who does good, not even one (οὐκ ἔστιν ὁ ποιῶν χρηστότητα ἕως ἐνός; in 3:12). This looks simple and trivial but it is extremely important. In 3:23 again, Paul does not say that all have violated *the law*, but that all have sinned.³⁴⁰ As we will see in the next section, when Paul explains Adam and Jesus as representatives in Rom. 5, Paul does not declare that all have broken *the law* but that all have sinned (5:12).³⁴¹ If Paul intended to prove the absence of perfect law-keepers in Rom. 1-3, it is very surprising that, as happens in Galatians, the critical statement that *all have violated the law* does not appear anywhere in Romans either. It seems that Paul is not interested in proving the impossibility of keeping the law. We see rather that his interest moves quickly beyond this aspect to the conclusion that the law denounces all under it. There is no one that is righteous. The Book of the Psalms and the law have already proclaimed this. According to Dunn,³⁴² Paul reminds the readers of his previous saying, that is, Rom. 1:18-3:8. But προητιασάμεθα does not mean 'earlier in Romans' but 'far earlier than Romans, that is, in the earlier declaration of Psalms'. Therefore, προητιασάμεθα does not mean 'before Rom. 3:9' but, on the contrary, 'after Rom. 3:9'. Thus, the decisive declaration of Psalms and the accusatory declaration of the law clearly show that not one of the perfect law-keepers can be righteous.³⁴³

³⁴⁰ According to E. P. Sanders, *Law*, pp. 23-4 and 123ff., even though Rom. 3:23ff., seems to be a proof of the idea that righteousness comes through faith since no one can keep the law, we cannot use the verse to construct Paul's view of the law because it contains a tradition before Paul. Sanders, however, overlooks the fact that Paul does not say that all have violated the law.

³⁴¹ That all have sinned does not mean that all have violated the law. See section 3 "Rom. 5:12-21" in chapter VII for details.

³⁴² J. D. G. Dunn, *Romans*, p. 148. We find a similar approach in V. Grimm, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Being Grimm's Wilke's Clavis Novi Testamenti*, tr. J. H. Thayer (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1977), p. 537, Strong cord no 4256 'προαιτιόμααι'. The prefix προ in Rom. 3:9 refers to Rom. 1:18-31, 2:1-5, and 17-29.

³⁴³ Cf. Paul's way of arguing in Gal. 3:21-22. There he uses the same logic. He does not deny the positive meaning of the law. Nevertheless, according to him, no one could be justified by the law. Paul

Beker³⁴⁴ points out that the citations do not refer directly to the law and makes use of this insight for explaining v. 21. Since the citations not related to the law refer to the Jews, so God's righteousness without the law is witnessed to by the law. Paul, however, makes it clear that he cites the law (v. 19a). We, rather, must note that the sins listed in the citations are not related directly to a violation of the regulations of the law.³⁴⁵ The sins listed in the citations are in clear contrast to the sins mentioned in Rom. 2:20-22, which are related directly to the violation of the regulations of the law. In particular, in 2:23, Paul clearly charges Jews with *the violation of the law*. On the other hand, explaining the value of circumcision, or, of being Jewish, in Rom. 3, Paul does not say that all have violated the law. It is not a coincidence or Paul's negligence that he does not mention anywhere in Rom. 3 that all have violated the law. He intentionally says that all (both Jews and Gentiles) are under sin (3:9). Furthermore, their sins are not in terms of a violation of the regulations of the law.³⁴⁶ Nevertheless, all keeping the law should hear this declaration that there is no one righteous, not even one; and that this comes from the law that they keep and obey.

Here, we should note Paul's intention in choosing the citations. He uses them to accuse very severely. He does not say that all have fallen short of perfect goodness but that all sin actively and almost totally. His aim is not to prove that even the best law keepers do not succeed in the perfect keeping of the law but to show the sins they are doing.³⁴⁷ As far as the citations go, such law-keepers are not portrayed as

does not prove it by directly showing the impossibility of fulfilling the law. He rather uses an axiomatic proclamation of the Scripture: All are under sin. This statement logically leads to the notion of the impossibility of justification by the law.

³⁴⁴ J. C. Beker, *Paul*, pp. 80-1.

³⁴⁵ The cited verses refer to the members of flesh. This is done in order to use *σάρξ* in 3:20 and furthermore to contrast the citation with Rom. 10:13-5. For details, see footnote 354.

³⁴⁶ The boast of the Jews must be read in this context. Many New Perspective scholars link the boast to the blindness of the Jews but Paul's aim is not false boasting but, in a certain sense, true boasting that is based on their keeping of the law.

³⁴⁷ As we will see later, this is the case not only in Rom. 2 but also in Rom. 7. It is important to note that Paul's explanations in Rom. 2 and 7 are quite extreme. See Rom. 7:16-9. The ego does not fall short of the best goodness but does only evil. In Rom. 2 and 7, Paul does not refer to the impossibility of the perfect keeping of the law but discloses that humans are beings doing only evil. He claims that even someone who keeps the law perfectly is not a righteous person in any way. Note that the agony of the ego in Rom. 7 is not that of the ego who cannot keep the law perfectly but that of the ego who cannot but keep, or obey, the law thoroughly, or perfectly, since the ego is captured by the law (of death). The ego that kept the law perfectly does not fall short of the best goodness but, surprisingly, does not do good but evil and evil only. Cf. section 1.1.1 "Q. 1: Extremity of Paul's Expression" in chapter VIII.

It seems that not only contemporary lay Christians but also many theologians have difficulties to accept the notion that even someone who keeps the law perfectly is still a sinner in a total sense of the word. In particular, it is difficult for them to grasp that Paul does not charge those keeping the law with self-righteousness but indicts them as utter sinners. This also caused a problem for the recipients

agonizing but as entirely sinful. If Rom. 3:20 is read in this context, we come to see that it is not because no one can keep the law perfectly that no flesh can be justified before God by the works of the law. Those blamed by Paul in the citation are doing evil rather than trying to keep the law perfectly. What Paul wants to show here is not that there is a hint of a hidden sinful nature even in the best law-keepers but the total sinfulness of all under the law – something that the law proclaims. This already shows that there is no flesh that can become righteous through the works of the law, even through perfect works.

According to Schreiner,³⁴⁸ the γάρ-clause in 3:20b shows that 3:20b is the reason for 3:20a, and that it confirms that the citations indicate that no one can keep the law. In that case, however, it would have been much better and more accurate for Paul to have said, "..., because all have violated the law". However, as I have already pointed out several times in the exegesis of Galatians, Paul always avoids saying that all have violated the law in cases whenever and wherever he could have said it. Schreiner reads ἐπίγνωσις ἁμαρτίας as the revelation of sin. In this case, because sin is revealed through the law, Paul uses the citations to show that no one can keep the law perfectly. Even in this case, however, the revelation of sin though the law does not necessarily imply the violation of the law (the impossibility of keeping the law). Are the law and the violation of it necessary for sin to be revealed? According to Rom. 4:15, where there is no law there is *no transgression*. Take note that the verse does not say that there is *no sin*. Sin existed before the law (5:13) and humans can (could) sin without the law (2:12). Death without the violation of the law, that is, without having the law, very clearly shows the sins of all humankind (5:12).³⁴⁹ The law and the violation of it are thus not necessary for the revelation of sin. Schreiner's thus makes an error by mistaking ἐπίγνωσις ἁμαρτίας for ἐπίγνωσις παράπτωματος.³⁵⁰

of the letter. Paul does not solve this problem until Rom. 7 where he provides a full explanation. I will deal with this later. Here my point is that both Rom. 3 and 7 refer to perfect law-keepers and prove that they are not righteous at all.

³⁴⁸ T. R. Schreiner, *Romans* (BECNT 6, Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006), pp. 169-72.

³⁴⁹ See the next section "Rom. 5:12-21".

³⁵⁰ For M. Luther, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, tr. J. T. Mueller (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1978), p. 76, ἐπίγνωσις ἁμαρτίας means that I come to know my sinful nature through the law and my sins, in other words, by being a sinner. One's knowledge of sin thus confirms that one is a sinner. However, is the law needed for the knowledge? Paul often says that God closes the mouths of sinners. Those who are judged themselves should know without any excuse that they are sinners (Rom. 1:18 and 32). Paul also says that, for Gentiles, φύσις and συνείδησις function like the law (2:14-5). There is thus no essential difference between the law and nature in terms of the function the law has in God's judgement. With the witness of conscience, the accusing and excusing of thoughts (2:15) do not exclude the owners' cognition of being sinners. The knowledge of being sinners

Ἐπίγνωσις should be understood in a similar way as in 7:7 which is Paul's own saying. Take note that Paul keeps emphasizing flesh before and after 7:7 (v. 5 and vv. 14ff.). The fact that Paul accentuates (fleshly) body parts (throats, tongues, lips, mouths, feet, and eyes) by means of the citations in Rom. 3 and stresses flesh in 3:20 again, confirms that we should understand 3:20 along the same lines as 7:7. In Rom. 7, the carnal *ego* is captured and brought under the law of sin and does only evil: I come to commit sin through the law.³⁵¹ When the verse is considered in the light of Paul's saying in Rom. 7:7,³⁵² the knowledge of sin (ἐπίγνωσις ἁμαρτίας) should be understood in terms of experience and existence, that is, in terms of 'doing sin and, by it, knowing sin'.³⁵³ When humans do the law they come to sin, in other words, they become sinners. In this way, humans come to know sin. What is important here is Paul's way of saying this. Paul does not say that humans come to the knowledge of their sins *by the violation of the law*. Rather, they come to know sin *by the law*. 'By the law' should be read as meaning 'by the law pursued, kept and obeyed rightly'.³⁵⁴ Humans come to know sin not by the violation of the law but by doing the works of the law. Surprisingly and ironically, the 'I' that has kept and obeyed the law rightly, or perfectly, is identified as a sinner!

This understanding of v. 20b goes well with v. 20a. We thus need the full background of Rom. 7 and 10 to interpret v. 20a. I will deal with Rom. 7 and 10 in full later. Here, it can be summarized as follows: The key terms regarding the law in v. 20a are works and flesh. In association with the law they reveal the identity of the law, according to Rom. 7 and 10.³⁵⁵ Works, flesh, and the law of sin constitute a set in con-

is possible by means of both nature and conscience. In this sense, Luther also does not take into account that Paul does not say ἐπίγνωσις παράπτωματος in 3:20 but ἐπίγνωσις ἁμαρτίας.

³⁵¹ Cf. section 3.2 "Rom. 7:7-13" in chapter VIII.

³⁵² We get the same idea earlier than Rom. 7:7, that is, in 5:20. The law makes sin abundant.

³⁵³ Cf. G. Bornkamm, "Sin, Law and Death: An Exegetical Study of Romans 7", in: tr. P. L. Hammer, *Early Christian Experience* (New York: Harper & Row, 1969), p. 102; and J. D. G. Dunn, *Romans*, p. 378. Contra S. Greijdanus, *de Gemeente te Rome*, Vol. I, pp. 326-27; and A. Clarke, *Epistle to the Romans* (CC 6, New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press), p. 83, who says that the law is the *straight edge* which determines the quantum of *obliquity* in the *crooked line* to which it is applied.

³⁵⁴ When we say that by conversation, we come to know each other, the meaning of 'by conversation' is 'by conversation rightly used and, therefore, rightly functioning'. This does not need to be proved, even though it seems that many people have some problems in following this logic.

³⁵⁵ Paul cites verses related to the body parts. This is in order to use σάρξ in v. 20. Repeating 3:20b in Rom. 7:7, he connects the law, sin, and flesh. Furthermore, by citing verses connected to the flesh in Rom. 3, he prepares for Rom. 10. See Rom. 10:13-15. A chain of ideas is developed from calling on the Lord to preaching the gospel, in other words, from mouth to feet. Mouth and feet as blessed body parts for righteousness and salvation are brought into focus. In the citations in Rom. 3 in contrast, throats, tongues, lips, mouths, and feet as body parts used for sinning, that is, as tools for sin, are brought into focus. Cf. the exegesis of Rom. 10 in chapter IX.

trast to the other set that consists of faith, mind (heart), and the law of God. Respective elements of the set show the identity of the corresponding law. In Rom. 7, the *ego* is fleshly and serves only the law of sin, or death (7:14 and 25, cf. 8:2). The principle of the law is works or doing (9:31-2 and 10:5). In this context, that the flesh does the law in 3:20b means that one serves the law of sin with the flesh.³⁵⁶ In this case, justification is totally impossible, because the law is the law of sin. Regardless of the keeping of the law, the law of sin or death cannot bring forth righteousness and life. The law of sin only makes humans sin. This is exactly what 3:20b says. No flesh can be justified by the law of doing, or the law of sin, because it only knows sin.

Therefore, finally, Paul's logic in using the citations can be summarized as follows: When the law is violated, circumcision becomes uncircumcision (2:25). Then the question is what the value of circumcision is if circumcision is circumcision (3:1)? In other words, what is the value of a perfect obedience of the law? The citations clearly show that there is no one who is righteous. This is declared by the law. Therefore, the law proclaims that all under it are sinners, without any exception. This means that a perfect law-keeper is – ironically – a sinner!³⁵⁷ What the citation says is exactly what the *γάρ*-clause in 3:20 says. Nobody can be righteous through works of the law, because (*γάρ*) the law makes humans experience and know sin.³⁵⁸ Therefore, the *γάρ*-clause does not confirm that the citation proves the impossibility of a perfect obedience of the law. By means of this interpretation, we come to understand why Paul did not refer to the impossibility of perfect obedience of the law in Rom. 3. Paul did not omit it; he did not mention it, because it was irrelevant, and it was an idea that he did not share.

³⁵⁶ J. Gnilka, *Paulus von Tarsus, Apostel und Zeuge* (Freiburg: Herder, 1996), p. 225, tries to determine the meaning of *σάρξ*. According to Gnilka, Paul stresses that the law as a way of salvation is abolished and that this is the case for both Jews and Gentiles. In this context, *σάρξ* is used in 3:20 to refer to all humans. Gnilka, however, does not realise that by using *σάρξ* and *ἐργα*, Paul prepares for Rom. 7 and 10. *Σάρξ* is not used merely as a reference to the whole human race, but also a key term associated with the law, which, together with *ἐργα*, indicate the identity of the law.

³⁵⁷ In other words, the value of perfect circumcision is, ironically, becoming a sinner. This is also what we found in the Galatians. The acceptance of perfect circumcision without any form of misuse meant the immediate acceptance of slavery. The problem of the law is thus not something human but something essential.

³⁵⁸ According to Luther and Schreiner, sin is revealed by a failure to keep the law or by the human sinful nature which hates the good law, whereas Paul actually says that when we follow the law, we, rather, come to commit sins. As we will see in the exegesis of Rom. 7, the difference between these two views of the law is that Luther and Schreiner interpret 3:20 from the perspective of the law of God, whereas Paul uses it in terms of the perspective of the law of sin. For Paul, there are two laws. Whereas faith and heart connected to the corresponding law identify the law as the law of Christ, or the law of God, flesh and works connected to the corresponding law identify the law as the law of sin, or the law of death. For details, see the exegesis of Rom. 7 and 10 in chapter VIII and IX.

2.4 Conclusion

Now, let us go back to the question we posed earlier in section 2.1., that is, the problem of repetition. If Paul wanted to use the citations in Rom. 3 to argue that *all* Jews have failed to keep the law, his accusation against the Jews in Rom. 2 would not have been necessary.³⁵⁹ Rom. 2, however, is not redundant, and Rom. 3 is not a repetition of Rom. 2, or a summary of Rom. 1-2. The point is that Paul is *developing* his logic very precisely. He attacks law-breaking Jews in Rom. 2 and law-keeping Jews in Rom. 3 respectively.³⁶⁰

If one does not look at Paul's logic carefully, he is misunderstood and one concludes that he is illogical. For example, Dunn³⁶¹ thinks that 3:1ff., and 3:9 contradict each other and that Paul inserts οὐ πάντως in order to soften the contradiction. In order to argue in this way Dunn reads οὐ πάντως in an unusual way. According to him, οὐ πάντως does not mean 'not at all', but 'not altogether'. He goes so far as to agree with Dahl³⁶² who views the phrase as a postscript. Rather, one should realize that this phrase forms one of the major building blocks of Paul's argument. The Jewish identity of law-breaking Jews is meaningless, while that of law-keeping Jews, or circumcision, has value. Nevertheless, this value cannot make the true circumcised righteous at all. The meaning of 'not at all' (οὐ πάντως) is closely connected to 'not even one' (οὐδὲ εἷς in v. 10 and ἕως ἑνός in v. 12) in the following citation. The supposed discrepancy between 3:1 and 9 does not stem from Paul's inconsistency but

³⁵⁹ Even if Paul uses the citation to claim that all Gentiles, or all Greeks, have sinned, Rom. 3 is a repetition of Rom. 1-2.

³⁶⁰ By the way, here, the situation of Gentiles keeping the law is not considered. Such a scenario, in fact, is not necessary. This is because circumcision and uncircumcision themselves are meaningless (2:25-8), and, therefore, if the observance of the law cannot bring justification to the Jews, this is the case for the Gentiles, too. I welcome the growing tendency among scholars to emphasise more and more that, in Rom. 1-3, Paul emphasizes the impartiality of Jews and Gentiles, rather than the universal sinfulness of human beings. It, however, should be noticed that, in order to do so, Paul brings the law into focus. If the privileges of Jews who have the law are denied in terms of justification, the distinction between Jews and Gentiles collapses. Therefore, Paul's interest lies in the law of the Jews and ends with Jews who keep the law. If there is no righteous among the Jews who keep the law, it is obvious that there is no righteous among the Gentiles (who keep the law) either.

³⁶¹ J. D. G. Dunn, *Romans*, pp. 146-47.

³⁶² N. A. Dahl, "Romans 3:9: Text and Meaning", in: M. D. Hooker and S. G. Wilson (eds.), *Paul and Paulinism: Essays in honour of C. K. Barrett* (London: SPCK, 1982), pp. 184-204.

from the dilemma of the law itself. More precisely, Paul reveals this dilemma of the law intentionally. The dilemma leads to the conclusion that the law makes circumcision meaningful, and adds value for the true circumcised, but cannot make the true circumcised righteous at all, and, therefore, the righteousness cannot come from the law. If we miss this, we might think that the phrase οὐ πάντως is unnecessary.

To conclude, we see clearly that, in Rom. 1-3, Paul did not argue for human inability to keep the law. On the contrary, he develops his logic on the presumption that it is possible to obey the law perfectly, but we should be aware that Paul does not intend to accentuate the possibility of the fulfilling of the law. His point is that faultless obedience of the law does not make the law-keeper righteous but a sinner. Paul's interest is not in the fulfilling of the law.

3 Rom. 5:12-21

We have seen that, in Rom. 1-3, Paul unfolded his logic on the grounds that the perfect observance of the law was possible. According to the law, even perfect law-observers could not be regarded as righteous. Thus far Paul has not provided enough theological explanation of this idea. In Rom. 5, we find his full theological development of this notion. Nevertheless Rom. 5 should not be seen as the foundation for Rom. 3. Rather, Rom. 3 prepares the way for Rom. 5. In this chapter I will explain Rom. 5 briefly, because, Rom. 5, in turn, is the groundwork for Rom. 7 and the exegesis of Rom. 7 will unfold the understanding of Rom. 5 offered here further.

Scholars have been perplexed about the position of Rom. 5:12-21. U. Luz³⁶³ thinks that the paragraph does not connect to what comes before and what follows. O'Neill³⁶⁴ even sees it as a sort of theological appendix that was added at a later stage. Since it is difficult to connect διὰ τοῦτο to the previous verses, scholars' em-

³⁶³ U. Luz, *Das Geschichtsverständnis des Paulus* (München: Kaiser Verlag, 1968), p.193.

³⁶⁴ J. C. O'Neill, *Paul's Letter to the Romans* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1975), p. 96.

barrassment in this regard is understandable. The break in the flow of ideas is so clear that $\delta\iota\acute{\alpha}$ τοῦτο cannot be regarded as a conjunction,³⁶⁵ indicating a loose connection and a simple movement in thought. Therefore, Käsemann³⁶⁶ regards vv. 12-21 as a new paragraph, confirming the contents of the previous verses. The break in the flow of ideas, however, is so great that the paragraph cannot be interpreted as providing the conclusion to the previous verses.

It seems rather better to accept that vv. 12ff. provides the theological foundation for what goes before. It is clearly stated in Rom. 1-3 that every human being is a sinner. In particular, we have seen how Paul argued in Rom. 3 that perfect observance of the law could not make the observer righteous. Even a perfect law-keeper was still a sinner. Therefore, in terms of justification, the law was irrelevant. In the first part of Rom. 4 Paul illustrates the irrelevance of observing the law for justification by means of the example of Abraham, and in the next part, he links justification to the principle of faith. He thus completes the first stage of his argument. Now, in Rom. 5, he focuses on peace with God (v. 1) and joy in God (vv. 2 and 11).³⁶⁷ However, there, still remains one question. Even though it is clear that although the law declares that all are sinners, the perfect keeping of the law cannot change the declaration, the question that follows logically is why that is the case. In other words, what, then, is the function of the law? Paul has not yet explained this. Now it is quite proper for him to move to further aspects such as this and to explain them.³⁶⁸ He does this by focusing in terms of issues of principle and nature.

What does it mean that all have sinned (v. 12)? Many interpret this as a statement that all have violated the law. Schreiner objected to Sanders who believe that Rom. 5:12 and Phil. 3:6 contradict each other that Paul's letters are occasional and situational.³⁶⁹ This debate, however, seems to me beside the point. Paul does not say that all have violated the law but that all have sinned. We must pay attention to the

³⁶⁵ R. Scroggs, *The Last Adam: A Study in Pauline Anthropology* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1966), p. 77.

³⁶⁶ E. Käsemann, *Römer*, p. 138. C. E. B. Cranfield, *Romans*, Vol. I, p. 271; and "On Some of the Problems in the Interpretation of Romans 5:12", *SJT* 22 (1969), p. 325, also thinks that the paragraph provides the conclusion to the previous verses (vv. 1-11).

³⁶⁷ According to J. D. G. Dunn, *Romans*, pp. 271-72, $\delta\iota\acute{\alpha}$ τοῦτο in v. 12 indicates the result of the argument not of the section right before it, but of 1:18-5:11. This is so because v. 11 has already effectively closed the flow of the previous argument. To my mind, it is right to accept that, in vv. 12ff., Paul refers back to the argument in Rom. 1-5. However, vv. 12ff. does not summarise what was said in Rom. 1-5. It is not a conclusion, but a new basis for the argument.

³⁶⁸ E. F. Harrison, *Romans*, p. 61, regards vv. 12-21 as the core of the evolvment of Paul's thoughts. He correctly points out that Paul delves into the question how all humans except Jesus in fact has become sinners.

³⁶⁹ T. R. Schreiner, "Paul and Perfect Obedience", p. 249. Cf. also E. P. Sanders, *Law*, p. 24.

fact that he here repeats the idea that all have sinned, after having mentioned it already in 3:23. The debate between Schreiner and Sanders presupposes that someone who keeps the law perfectly is not a sinner. However, this is wrong. That even somebody keeping the law perfectly is still a sinner can clearly be seen in Rom. 7. Here, in Rom. 5:12-21, Paul already starts to raise this issue by discussing the identity of the law. The notion that the law is on the side of sin is thus introduced here.

Paul's thinking in Rom. 5:12-21 is based on the principle of the corporate personality.³⁷⁰ He concentrates on the period of the absence of the law, explaining this principle: No law, no violation. Therefore, there were no violations of the law in the period from Adam until Moses. Besides, he also refers to those who, unlike Adam, did not commit the sin of the violation of God's commandment.³⁷¹ All humans, however, have sinned. This is what the fact that all have died and shall die clearly proves. This tells us that, without the violation of the law or the commandments, all have sinned in Adam. This aspect serves as further support for my explanation of Rom. 3, namely that those who have not violated the law are also sinners. One does not need to be a violator of the law in order to be regarded as a sinner. However, I will not use Rom. 5 to confirm my interpretation of Rom. 3, because what Paul wants to say actually goes beyond this.

In v. 12, Paul says that sin entered into the world by one human and death by sin and that all humans died. Therefore, in that³⁷² death came upon all humans, all have

³⁷⁰ All humans are in Adam or in Christ (see also 1 Cor. 15:22 *ἐν τῷ Ἀδὰμ ... καὶ ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ*). This corporate unity also underlies the discussion of baptism in Rom. 6 and the analogy of marriage in Rom. 7:1-16. To be married means to be one body. In this sense, this mystic union is corporal. See my exegesis of Rom. 7 for more detail.

³⁷¹ If Paul wanted to emphasize that all have violated the law, referring to those who have not violated the commandment from Adam to Moses is not helpful. And not until Moses but also after him, Gentiles who are without the law are not related to transgressions. In particular, when we accept the point of departure that the law makes sin judicially imputable, we have to accept that such gentiles are not guilty in judicial terms.

Besides, it is not easy to determine whether or not those before Moses, who did not sin in the same way as Adam transgressed, were pious, and ethically right and moral. They might have been pious like Abel. This, however, is not important in the judicial sense. Anyway, Paul says that they did not violate commandments. And there is no reason why it should be likely that such right people did not exist among gentiles after Moses. The point is this: If there existed those without transgressions in a judicial sense before and after Moses, Paul does not need to claim that all committed transgressions in order to say that the Jews after Moses were sinners.

³⁷² Since Augustine, the Western church has understood this in terms of original sin imputed to Adam, interpreting *ἐφ' ᾧ* as 'in whom'. See *De Civitate Dei*, 13.14., for Augustine's view. In this case, however, *ἐν ᾧ* is more correct. Therefore, many scholars prefer to interpret *ἐφ' ᾧ* as 'because' so that most English versions of the Bible follow this understanding: Death passed onto all because all have sinned.

However, the reason for death being passed onto all is found in v. 12a. *Οὕτως* shows this clearly. Therefore, *ἐφ' ᾧ*, rather, refers to the previous verse as foundation and links the following verse to it. Cf. M. Black, "The Pauline Doctrine of the Second Adam", *SJT* 7 (1954), pp. 170-79. Since death

sinned.³⁷³ Here we have to pay attention to the flow of Paul's logic. It does not move not from the notion of universal sin to universal death but the other way round; that is, from the universality of death to sin.³⁷⁴ The axiomatic fact that all die shows and proves that all have sinned.³⁷⁵ Furthermore, what does v. 13 say? V. 13 is generally understood as saying that the law makes sins judicially meaningful. If there is no law, sin cannot be identified; in other words, then sin cannot be reckoned in a judicial sense. This understanding, however, is problematic.

1) The reading must explain why sin should be interpreted in v. 13 as sinful acts and not as it is interpreted in v. 12. In v. 12, sin is depicted as a person coming into the world. This is the case in vv. 13ff, too. See also v. 21 in this regard: Sin exercised dominion over the world in death. The rule of sin is contrasted to the rule of grace through righteousness. As grace does not refer to human good nature, so sin here does not refer to human sinful nature. Therefore, sin is not a sinful act of a human being, but a personal power. Paul's explanation in Rom. 6 (based on the foundation laid in Rom. 5) thus still describes sin as a personal power. See also Rom. 6:17-8. Sin is thus contrasted with righteousness. As righteousness is not the righteousness of the human being, so sin is not the sin of the human being. Take note that Paul does not say that sin entered humankind, but the world. This does not refer to the sinful act of human beings, but to sin as some kind of personal power that entered the world and ruled it.

passed onto all, all have sinned!

Cf. C. C. Black, "Pauline Perspective on Death in Romans 5-8", *JBL* 103 (1984), p. 421, who thinks that 5:12ab is a sort of sin-oriented or death-ward determinism and 12c (individual responsibility) is a counterbalance so that there is a tension between the two. This reading, however, misses Paul's direction of logic in v. 12. The last clause in v. 12 (ἐφ' ᾧ πάντες ἥμαρτον) is a conclusive exclamation.

³⁷³ According to R. Bultmann, "Adam and Christ in Romans 5" in: tr. K. R. Grim, *The Old and New Man in the Letter of Paul* (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1967), p. 62, Paul has the *personal* sins of all humans after Adam in mind, claiming that all sinned. Cf. J. A. Fitzmyer, *Romans* (AB: New York: Doubleday, 1993), p. 417; E. Jüngel, "Das Gesetz zwischen Adam und Christus", *ZTK*, 1965, pp. 42-74; and C. E. B. Cranfield, *Romans*, Vol. I, p. 279. They also basically have the same idea. In the context of the Adam-Christ typology, however, sin is contrasted to the righteousness that humans have in Christ. As righteousness is not a personal action, so sin is not a personal one. Cf. W. Barclay, *The Mind of St. Paul* (London: Collins Clear-Type Press, 1958), pp. 138-46.

³⁷⁴ This is noticed by J. A. Ziesler, *Paul's Letter to the Romans* (London: SCM Press, 1989), p. 146, too; however, he does not delve deeper into its importance. See also P. J. Achtemeier, *Romans* (IBC-CTP, Louisville: John Knox Press, 1985), p. 97.

³⁷⁵ See Rom. 1:18ff., especially, v. 32. Death is God's judgment (δικαίωμα) on the unrighteous (ἀδικία). It is declared that the wages of sin is death. Someone's death clearly proves such a person being sinner.

2) The text (v. 13) does not say that humankind sinned but that sin 'was' (ἦν). Compare this to v. 14. V. 14 clearly refers to those who had not sinned (ἐπὶ τοὺς μὴ ἁμαρτήσαντας). V. 13, however, simply refers to the existence of sin (in the singular). Keep the following in mind: Sin entered into (εἰς) the world through Adam. Paul uses the word 'world' once again in v. 13 (ἁμαρτία ἦν ἐν κόσμῳ). The emphasis falls on sin that entered the world, and that it still 'was', that is, still existed in the world.

3) The interpretation³⁷⁶ according to which sin is not imputed or taken into account conflicts with Rom 2:12. Sins committed apart from the law are also punished.³⁷⁷ Furthermore, if sin is not imputed if there is no law, the sin of the Gentiles could still not be imputed, even after Moses. It must be noticed that Paul here does not refer to the law written in people's hearts (Rom. 2:15).

4) Lastly, if sin is not taken into account, the reason why Paul mentions in v. 14 those who lived in the period between Adam and Moses and whose sins were not like the transgression of Adam, disappears. We should also take note that Paul does not say that sin is not imputed as the transgression of the law. Sin is not taken into account as sin.³⁷⁸ In this case, not only the transgressions that were like that of Adam but all sins committed afterwards by all in the period from Adam to Moses do not matter. In this instance, the phrase ἐπὶ τοὺς μὴ ἁμαρτήσαντας ἐπὶ τῷ ὁμοιώματι τῆς παραβάσεως Ἀδάμ, is meaningless. There is no difference between sins committed like that of Adam and other sins.

Then, what does ἁμαρτία δὲ οὐκ ἐλλογέεται mean? The word ἐλλογέω is a commercial term which originally meant 'to enter account in a book'. Dunn³⁷⁹ thinks that Paul was influenced by the Jewish idea of a heavenly book in which sins are recorded

³⁷⁶ According to J. Ziesler, *Romans*, p. 148, without the law human actions cannot be measured so that they cannot be identified. Most English versions follow this interpretation (KJV, ASV, and NIV). Most popular Korean versions follow a more radical interpretation. They translate v. 13b (ἁμαρτία δὲ οὐκ ἐλλογέεται) as meaning that sin is not regarded as sin.

³⁷⁷ Those who sin without the law shall perish (ἀπολοῦνται). The voice of the verb is not a passive, but that does not mean that sinners perish on their own without punishment of God. That they perish is a result of God's judgment (Rom. 2:6).

³⁷⁸ The main reason for referring to transgression is for distinguishing between sin and transgression. This, however, does not mean distinguishing between sin as an action done by humans without the law and transgression as a violation of the Adamic commandment or the law, but means distinguishing between sin depicted as a personal force with power controlling humans and sin as actions done by humans obeying sin.

³⁷⁹ J. D. G. Dunn, *Romans*, p. 274.

(Jub. 30.17-23; 1 Enoch. 104.2; and 2 Apoc. Bar. 24.1). However, it is difficult to prove such a supposition because Paul does not mention it here. We have rather to scrutinize Paul's utterances on sin in terms of the law. The sting of death is sin and the strength of sin is the law (1 Cor. 15:56). Without the law, sin loses its power. If there is no law, sin is dead (Rom. 7:8). On the contrary, the law shows sin as sin, so that it may become sinful beyond measure (Rom. 7:12-3). These verses tell us that without the law, sin cannot act as sin and has no power. In other words, without the law, even though sin is alive, it is as good as dead. Sin without the law is brain-dead and in a vegetative state, that is, in a coma.³⁸⁰ This understanding can be verified by checking the change with regard to the state of sin before and after the law. V. 20 does not say that after the law sin can be imputed but that after the law it abounds. Sin that could not act powerfully as sin, increased in power after the coming of the law.

What Paul says in vv. 13-4 is that sin without the law is so totally powerless that it cannot be regarded as sin. Paul then explains how it had happened that sin (and death) which was without any power had come to rule over all humans, including those whose sins were not like that of Adam before the law was given. As by several special soldiers who triumph over a king, his entire kingdom gets reigned, so by the powerless sin that captured the one man, Adam, who was the type (τύπος) of Christ, all human beings were being controlled. Which part was played by the law in this terrible history? The answer to this is as follows: Although powerless, sin could rule over humankind through Adam and the law could not change this miserable situation. The law, rather, made it even worse. The law was kind of the main group of troops, arriving after the first commando. The rule of sin became even stronger. When the law arrived, it did not destroy sin but in fact strengthened it. Even though this explanation might seem strange to contemporary Christians, this is what Paul wanted to say.

Let us consider v. 20 more closely. The ἵνα clause does not denote result. The word παρελσέρχομαι does not mean 'came in' (RSV), 'was added' (NIV), or 'entered'

³⁸⁰ When Jesus fed 5000 people with 5 loaves and 2 fishes, only men were taken into account (Matt.14:21). Women and children were not counted. It was not because there was no law according to which they could be counted but because they had no power to perform their full rights. In this sense, they were not regarded as humans. They were meaningless. This is a good illustration to help us to understand the state of sin without the law. Sin without the law cannot be imputed, not because there is no law according to which sin can be imputed but because sin is not sin in that it is powerless and dead. Imputing sin is meaningless.

(KJV). It means 'came in secretly'.³⁸¹ This shows that the law was not given for a positive or even a neutral purpose. In Gal. 2:4, Paul used the same verb to describe how the false brothers came in. In this case the prefix παρά might be linked to the coming in of sin in v. 12 (εἰσέρχομαι). In this case, the prefix implies that the law came in secretly on the side of sin.³⁸² V. 20 thus says that the problem of the law was not linked to human failure in terms of the law but that the law had actually come into the world for a negative purpose from the very beginning. Therefore, Paul's emphasis falls on the unbelievable fact that the law entered to help sin that was powerless so that it became powerful and strong.

Here, we have to pay careful attention to what Paul is saying. According to him, the law entered so that transgression and sin could abound.³⁸³ Paul's explanation is not human-centred. Paul's concern is not human inability but the relationship between transgression, sin and the law, regardless of human ability. The law entered not *for humans* to sin but *for sin* to abound. This is explained clearly in Rom. 7. This idea is already found earlier on, in Rom. 6, too. Sin is depicted as a powerful person who exercises dominion and controls all humans by the law. The law is a tool, or more precisely a helper, that makes the rule of sin more powerful.

Let us summarise once again. The fact that if there is no law, there is no transgression and sin is not imputed, does not simply mean that there is no judicial ground on which sin constitutes a transgression; neither does it show us the anatomical chart of the sinful nature of humans, namely that their sinful nature commits a transgression when the law is given. Paul's explanation, rather, excludes humans, or, to put it in another way, it renders them passive. Sin, as a personal power, came into the world. Although weak, it came to take over all humans. The whole human race came under its control and then the law made this control much stronger.³⁸⁴ The law

³⁸¹ Cf. 2 Pet. 2:1.

³⁸² In Rom. 7, Paul alludes to Gen. 3. In this allusion, sin's coming into the world reminds one of the serpent's coming into the garden. If so, it is suggested that the law came into the world secretly, by the side of sin. See the exegesis of Rom. 7 in chapter VIII for detail.

³⁸³ Transgression is not sin. Here, Paul does not use the words 'transgression' and 'sin' alternatively, without any distinction between them. He refers to the result of the situation of transgression. Transgressions come to abound so that sin becomes strong and powerful.

³⁸⁴ Even though the following will be clear fully only after the exegesis of Rom. 7, let me briefly point out here that Paul's idea of the law reminds one here of Genesis. Satan or sin personified by serpent was in Eden but could not act powerfully without the commandment. It was only with the commandment that sin began to act powerfully. Take note that it is not said that sin then began to be reckoned as sin but that it acted powerfully. In the redemptive history, the Adamic commandment functioned like the law. Paul, in fact, does not distinguish between the commandment and the law in Rom. 7. For more detail, see the exegesis of Rom. 7 in chapter VIII further on.

entered the world by the side of sin and supported sin so that sin could abound.³⁸⁵ Thus, the reason why Paul mentions the law here is not its judicial nature³⁸⁶ but its power. Two chapters later Paul then identifies the law as 'the law of sin' (7:23, 25, 8:2).

In this context, it is obvious that humankind's failure to keep the law was not Paul's concern. His explanation of the law in Rom. 5 is not linked to (the failure of) the perfect observing of the law. That all sinned does not mean that all violated the law. What is more important is that the failure to observe the law is not the issue in which Paul is interested. What has been set out in this chapter, is expressed more clearly and in a sense more dramatically in Rom. 7.

³⁸⁵ Rom. 6:15 seems to refer to Christian ethics. However, it must not be understood in the context of the nature of the law that Paul is referring to. Committing sin is not linked to human choice. This is so, because if there is no law, committing sin is impossible, and if there is the law, not committing sin is impossible. It is also the case because if humans are not under the law, they are not under the control of the law (6:14). Humans sin through the action that they do under the rule of sin.

³⁸⁶ See Rom. 7:8. Paul's emphasis falls on the law helping sin. The commandment, 'do not covet', does not reckon humans' coveting a judicial nature but makes them covet. The commandment produces coveting. No law, no coveting.

VIII. Rom. 7:1-8:4

Two Trees, Two Mounts and Two Laws

1 Introduction

1.1 Proposed questions

1.1.1 Q. 1: Extremity of Paul's expression

Rom. 7:1-8:4 has been understood as the best proof for the notion that humans are unable to observe the law.³⁸⁷ The logic is normally as follows: The 'I' (*ego*) wants and tries to observe the law, but is in agony because of its inability to keep the law perfectly. The 'I' knows that the law is good, and therefore sincerely wants to obey the law. One's mind (heart) and flesh then struggle about this. Unfortunately, however, the 'I' is defeated by the flesh so that it cannot keep the law. Through this inner psy-

³⁸⁷ It does not matter whether the text is read from the traditional perspective, a rhetorical one, or the New Perspective; in each instance, the text might be understood as referring to the agonizing *ego*, failing to observe the law.

According to W. G. Kümmel, *Römer 7*, pp. 57-68, the fleshly *ego* eventually discovers that it cannot obey the spiritual law perfectly. Kümmel interprets Rom. 8:3-4 as a solution to the problem. See pp. 68-73, too. Cf. D. J. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans* (NICNT, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1996), pp. 442ff and 450-51 (cf. pp. 481-85), thinks that, in Rom. 7, Paul describes unregenerate Jews including himself from a Christian perspective autobiographically (*contra* Kümmel) but he also thinks that the *ego* is not able to obey the law. The law cannot give us the ability to fulfil our duties. Finally, the *ego* is frustrated at the failure in fulfilling the law; cf. also R. B. Sloan, "Paul and the Law", pp. 35-60.

Most scholars in the circle of the New Perspective also basically accept the same idea. Sanders, *Law*, pp. 74ff., understands Rom. 7:14-23 as meaning that even though the law requires good things, the flesh or sin cannot accomplish it. Dunn, *Theology*, pp. 646-49, does not suggest a new idea in terms of observing the law. For him Rom. 8:4 indicates that the purpose of God's plan of salvation is to make the observance of the law possible. The prepositional phrase 'of Spirit' in 'the law of Spirit' shows how obedience of the law is possible. According to Wright, *Climax*, p. 197, the *ego* belongs to Adam so that it is fleshy. And because of the flesh, it cannot obey the law.

The idea that the law's problem is linked to the fact that it cannot provide power to follow it even though it provides the knowledge as information, is shared by many scholars. See M. J. Borg and J. D. Crossan, *The First Paul: Reclaiming the Radical Visionary behind the Church's Conservative Icon* (New York: HarperOne, 2010), pp. 169-72. Cf. D. Fee, *God's Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), pp. 515-91, too.

chological battle, the 'I' comes to discover its weak self that cannot fulfil the good ethical requirements of the law, and grieves for it deeply. Whether or not the 'I' (*ego*) is Christian, the 'I' is condemned due to its failure to keep the law because only perfect observance can bring life.

This understanding is supported by humankind's personal experiences and thus it is easily accepted. According to this interpretation, in this text, Paul delves into human psychology, describing it dramatically.³⁸⁸ But is the picture of humans portrayed by this understanding really in harmony with the picture of the *ego* in Rom. 7? To my mind, it is not. We must notice that the portrait of the *ego* that Rom. 7 depicts is far more miserable. The *ego* in Rom. 7 is absolutely and thoroughly tragic. It is not a case that even though the 'I' (*ego*) tries, in the end it does not succeed in achieving perfect obedience of the law. The 'I' does not do what is good at all (v. 18). It only wants to do what is good. Doing what is good is not just short but does not happen at all. The 'I', rather, does what is evil (v. 19). Paul does not offer a portrait of humankind as we normally experience it in any way, that is, that we want what is good and do it up to a certain level, failing to reach a perfect level of doing it because we do what is evil, too. It must be remembered that the 'I' does in no way do what is good. When Paul says that what the 'I' does is not what is good but what is evil in v. 19, he does not say that its doing good is not perfect. He simply describes its action as evil. In Rom. 7, the 'I' is not presented as someone wanting and doing good in general without being perfect because of its inability but as a monster doing only what it does not want at all, therefore being condemned. Paul does not exaggerate the estrangement between its action and its intention but specifically declares that it does only evil. In a nutshell, the thrust of his presentation of the 'I' is: All it does are only evil!

At this point in the argument the 'I' is not depicted as struggling inwardly. Its heart and flesh do not fight each other. The battle between the mind wanting to do good and the flesh obstructing the mind is not introduced at this stage. It is only in v. 23 when the battle commonly misunderstood as Paul's inner conflict is introduced. However, it must be noticed that even the battle in v. 23 is driven not by Paul but by

³⁸⁸ Even though it has been a long time since K. Stendahl published his brilliant article, "The Apostle Paul and the Introspective Conscience of the West", *HTR* 56, No 3 (1963), pp. 199-215, read at the Annual Meeting of the American Psychological Association in 1961, Rom. 7 still is read to say that Paul deplores his lack of will power. L. Bègue, *Psychologie du Bien et du Mal* (Paris: Odile Jacob, 2011), p. 275, starts his last chapter, introducing Paul as a typical human lacking the strength of will. Paul, however, does not explain what can generally be experienced and understood by means of such a long and complicated explanation in order to boast of his literary art. He is explaining what is totally hidden, that is, the entity of the law.

the laws over it. The 'I' that Paul refers to is not the *agonizing ego* that fights against its flesh but *the strange ego* that does what it does not want to do. The difference between the two *egos* is not trivial; it affects the direction of one's interpretation of the *ego*. It should be understood that Paul's intention is not to reveal something regarding his psychology; he wants to declare something extreme: There is no good in my *ego*! We must find the reason for him doing this. It will be shown later that the good not existing in him refers to one of the two laws.

1.1.2 Q. 2: The ambiguity of Paul's expression

Scholars have been struggling to identify the *ego* in Rom. 7. The chapter has generally been regarded as Paul's autobiography. On the other hand, there have also been efforts to understand Rom. 7 as a rhetorical expression depicting not Paul's personal psychology but the universal situation of all human beings. Kümmel³⁸⁹ played a pioneering role in this regard. And K. Stendahl³⁹⁰ has credibly showed that even though, since Augustine, Western Christianity had read Rom 7 as if it described the agony of the human conscience, Paul's conscience had actually been quite robust. In spite of their powerful arguments, the debates of the agony and its subject are not yet finished. If Paul refers to a universal human situation, to which specific situation does he refer? Is it the spiritual battle experienced by Christians³⁹¹, or the misery of non-Christians who are unable to get salvation by themselves?³⁹² Tradi-

³⁸⁹ W. G. Kümmel, *Römer 7*.

³⁹⁰ K. Stendahl, "Introspective Conscience".

³⁹¹ J. Murray, *Romans 1-8*, pp. 256-73; D. Wenham, "The Christian Life: A Life of Tension? A Consideration of the Nature of Christian Experience in Paul", in: D. A. Hagner and M. J. Harris (eds.), *Pauline Studies* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), pp. 80-94; C.E.B. Cranfield, *Romans*, Vol. I, pp. 340-70; M. A. Seifrid, "The Subject of Romans 7:14-25," *NT XXXIV* (1992), pp. 313-33; T. Latto, *Paul and Judaism*, pp. 104-45; J. D. G. Dunn, "Rom 7:14-25 in the Theology of Paul," *TZ* 31 (1975), pp. 257-73; A. Nygren, *Romans*, pp. 284-303; R. W. Grosheide, *De Openbaring Gods in het Nieuwe Testament* (Kampen: Kok, 1953), p. 173; J. I. Packer, "The 'Wretched Man' Revisited: Another Look at Romans 7:14-25", in: S. Soderlund and N. T. Wright (eds.), *Romans & the People of God: Essays in Honor of Gordon D. Fee on the Occasion of his 65th Birthday* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), pp. 70-81; and D. B. Garlington, "Romans 7:14-25 and the Creation Theology of Paul," *TJ* 11 (1990), pp. 197-235.

³⁹² W. G. Kümmel, *Römer 7*; R. Bultmann, "Romans 7 and the Anthropology of Paul," in: Tr. S. M. Ogden, *Existence and Faith: The Shorter Writing of Rudolf Bultmann* (New York: Meridian, 1960), pp. 147-57; H. Ridderbos, *Paul*, pp. 126-30; J. C. Beker, *Paul the Apostle*, pp. 215-18; U. Wilckens, *Römer*, Vol. 2, pp. 72-117; G. Bornkamm, "Sin, Law and Death", pp. 87-104; P. Stuhlmacher, *Römer*, pp. 98-107; and J. Lambrecht, *The Wretched 'I' and its Liberation: Paul in Romans 7 and 8* (Grand

tionally, the Reformers understood Rom. 7 as referring to the process of the glorification of Christians. This was due to the fact that the *ego* is depicted as having inner delight in the law of God (v. 22), serving it with its mind, even though it agonises about its contradictory behaviour.

However, when we take only Rom. 7:1-8:4 into account, the identification of the *ego* seems rather obvious. It is said in Rom. 8:2 that the law of the Holy Spirit freed the *ego* from the law of sin and death. According to Rom. 7:1, the one freed from the law of sin and death is obviously the one in Christ. On the contrary, the agonizing *ego* in Rom. 7 is the one seized under the law of sin (7:23). The obvious contrast between Rom. 7:23 and 8:2 seems to show that the 'I' in Rom. 7 is not in Christ.³⁹³ If so, then I want to raise the following question: If Paul refers to the situation of a non-Christian, why does he use more ambiguous language in Rom. 7 than in Rom. 1-3? The portrayal in Rom. 7 is too positive to interpret it as describing the situation of a non-Christian. If Paul wanted to depict the non-Christian situation, his descriptions are extremely ambiguous and rather vague.³⁹⁴ Accordingly one should consider the possibility that he has something else in mind. Fortunately, this problem has already been noticed by some scholars. Kümmel³⁹⁵ tries to understand Rom. 7 without identifying the *ego*. He tries to show that Paul's thrust was not so much the explanation of the situation of the *ego*; he wanted to protect the law. I agree with him that one should not focus on the identification of the *ego*, but even then another problem still remains in that Paul's explanations of the law are ambiguous. Does Paul really try to protect the law?³⁹⁶

When we read Rom. 7 without prejudice, it becomes clear that it is very difficult to decide whether Paul is defending or attacking the law. If he is defending the law, his advocacy seems very poor. Even though he attributes the ultimate problem to sin, his evaluation of the law is too negative to vindicate the law. The law still is the law of sin (vv. 23 and 25). On the other hand, it is the law of God (vv. 22 and 25). Does Paul

Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992).

³⁹³ I will deal with this subject again later. See section 3.3.7 "Rom. 7:25 (8:2)" in chapter VIII for the problem of the position of gratitude in Rom. 7:25a that is generally regarded as a strong evidence for the case of the Christian situation.

³⁹⁴ The attempts to understand the complicated, ambiguous, and unique explanations in Rom. 7:14-25 were made in various ways. J. C. O'Neill, *Romans*, pp. 131-32, suggests one of the most radical options. He focuses on the dualism between flesh and spirit and thinks that the word 'law' is used here in general sense. He concludes that 7:14-25 was not Paul's, but was added by a Hellenistic Jew.

³⁹⁵ W. G. Kümmel, *Römer 7*.

³⁹⁶ Rom. 7 was regarded as a sort of addition for *defending the law* by German scholars. For instance, G. Bornkamm, "Sin", pp. 88ff.; and R. Bultmann, "Romans 7", pp. 153-54.

speak of another law? He, in fact, mixes positive and negative explanations. Just by reading this, one should say that Paul is against and for the law at the same time. At a first glance, this conclusion seems to be useless. Nevertheless, it is important to see this clearly. Paul both denies and protects the law. This should make us wary of choosing only one of the two options. In fact, Paul's ambiguity on this issue should not be understood as carelessness but as his very intention. The fact that he both denies and defends the law without emphasizing only one of the two perspectives suggests another possibility, namely that he actually has two entities of the law in mind. To put it bluntly, he refers to two laws.

In this section I will not introduce all the complicated debates on Rom. 7. In fact, I will minimise the discussion of these debates, because I do not agree with the scholarly opinions in this regard. I am not going to amend or complement existing explanations as they do not succeed in explaining Paul's ambiguity. Instead I will attempt to suggest a totally new interpretation of Rom. 7.

I, however, have to deal with two well-known subjects again for the foundation of a proper exegesis of Rom. 7. These are the meaning of the concept 'flesh' and the identification of the *ego*. Having dealt with these, I will then do exegesis of Rom. 7 in a new way. Finally, I will show that the impossibility or the failure to keep the law perfectly is not what Paul is interested in.

1.2 Flesh (σάρξ)

I have already pointed out that Paul continually refers to the concept of corporate union in Rom. 5-7. Against this background we should understand the meaning of 'flesh'. Many studies have been published in this regard. I though, want to show that the word 'flesh' is Paul's jargon that explains the state of being united with Adam.

The meaning of 'flesh' (σάρξ) is relatively wide. In a neutral sense, it refers to the human body. Our concern in Rom. 7, however, is its negative meaning. Here 'flesh' is understood as a universal power.³⁹⁷ Many scholars were interested in how much

³⁹⁷ This understanding dates back to F. C. Baur. He tried to understand the antithetic relation between the Holy Spirit and flesh by means of Hegel's philosophy. Cf. R. Jewett, *Paul's Anthropological Terms: A Study of Their Use in Conflict Settings* (Leiden: Brill, 1971), p. 51.

Paul was influenced by Hellenism in this regard.³⁹⁸ Bultmann's³⁹⁹ explanation is not irrelevant to this concern. He understands the negative meaning of 'flesh' in terms of the contrast between 'in the flesh' and 'in the Holy Spirit'/'in Christ'. Why does Paul refer to the opposite state of being of 'in the Holy Spirit' as 'in the flesh'? Bultmann explains this by means of the phrase 'according to flesh' (κατὰ σάρκα) (Rom. 8:5). 'Flesh' means the sphere of nature. 'Flesh' though, has a negative meaning in that being in the 'flesh' means setting the mind on the things of the flesh. What is the foundation on which being in the 'flesh' in Rom. 8:5 is understood as pursuing the merely human, the earthly-transitory? Furthermore, why is the pursuing of earthly things wrong? Bultmann's explanation is nothing more but reading his own understanding that 'flesh' is the whole sphere of that which is earthly or natural into the text. Finally, the problem of 'in the flesh' is understood only in contrast with 'in Christ' but its essential and radical problem is not grasped.⁴⁰⁰

Dunn⁴⁰¹ is not satisfied with Bultmann's explanation. In his discussion of Rom. 7-8, Dunn accentuates that the flesh is depicted as being vulnerable to the temptation of sin. Flesh itself is not sinful. The human and carnal needs that want to quench desires expose humankind to the evil of sin. Being 'after the flesh' (κατὰ σάρκα) indicates the animal-like and materialistic life seeking for human desires. Therefore, for Dunn, flesh is not a universal power but more like a sphere in which sin works. Flesh is not something non-spiritual understood in the context of dualism but the vulnerability of humans. Finally, Dunn connects the problem of flesh to the Jews' ethnical boasting. Being in the flesh thus means being in the situation of the Jews, trusting in their ethnicity.

Dunn's interpretation is new. However, basically, both Bultmann and Dunn tend to understand 'flesh' in Rom. 7 (and 8) by means of the general meaning of 'flesh' rather than by means of Paul's theology in Rom. 7. Their understanding of 'flesh' is still restricted to the general meaning of 'flesh', that is, in the vulnerability and materiality

³⁹⁸ This approach had been followed for long time. Cf. H. Lüdemann, *Die Anthropologie des Apostels Paulus und ihre Stellung innerhalb seiner Heilslehre* (Kiel, 1872); and W. D. Stacey, *The Pauline View of Man in Relation to its Judaic and Hellenistic Background* (London: Macmillan, 1956).

³⁹⁹ R. Bultmann, *Theology*, pp. 232-38. On the other hand, he thinks that Paul's anthropology was influenced by Gnosticism. Cf. E. Käsemann, *Leib und Leib Christi: Eine Untersuchung zur paulinischen Begrifflichkeit* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1933), p. 105, for another attempt to understand Paul's idea in a Gnostic context,

⁴⁰⁰ H. Ridderbos is right in saying that Bultmann's explanation is based on a dualistic analysis and is not theological but anthropological. Cf. Ridderbos, *Paul*, pp. 100-07.

⁴⁰¹ J. D. G. Dunn, *Theology*, pp. 62-70.

of flesh that is natural, time-limited, and mortal. They thus just project this neutral meaning of 'flesh' found in other Pauline letters into the meaning of 'flesh' in Rom. 7. Accordingly, Dunn fails to understand Rom. 7. He himself says that the constant contrast between *κατὰ σάρκα* referring to sinful social life in ethnic terms and *ἐν σαρκὶ* referring to the unavoidable human condition is exceptionally confusing in terms of style and rhetoric in Rom. 7-8.

W. Barclay⁴⁰² explains the meaning of 'flesh' in terms of experience by connecting flesh and sin. 'Flesh' is a bridgehead for sin. Sin approaches humankind, taking a chance by means of the sensual and basic human instinct. Therefore, when Paul refers to 'flesh', he thinks of it in terms of general human experience.

In spite of the many debates on the meaning of 'flesh', the carnal, natural, and materialistic sense of 'flesh' has been affecting the interpretation of 'flesh' ever since. However, if Paul connects 'flesh' to sin in terms of one's natural and general experience of 'flesh', is such a complicated explanation of 'flesh' needed? The negative meaning of 'flesh' must be derived not from our common sense or experience but from Rom. 7 itself, where 'flesh' is connected to sin in a most characteristic way.

When Paul refers to 'flesh', he does not describe humankind as such. 'Flesh', rather, designates a relation.⁴⁰³ Paul introduces a chain of ideas referring to union in Rom. 5:12-7:4. According to Rom. 5:12-19, all humankind belongs to one of the two unions, that is, a union with Adam and one with Christ. And then the meaning of the union with Christ is explained in detail in Rom. 6 by means of baptism. Uniting with Christ brings forth a drastic change of the previous state. Those in union with him experience death together with Christ. What is important here is that the change is explained in terms of the body.⁴⁰⁴ Through baptism, the old being of the Christian is crucified together with Christ. This is to not serve sin. Serving sin (or righteousness) as its servant is the main theme of the latter part of Rom. 6 (vv. 12-2, and 16-22). Being relieved from serving sin becomes a possibility if one destroys the body of sin (6:6). In a word, being united with Christ equals destroying the body of sin.

By the way, the 'body of sin' referred to here is nothing but the body related to Adam, because Paul's explanation in Rom. 6 has not yet completely moved beyond

⁴⁰² W. Barclay, *Mind*, pp. 151ff.

⁴⁰³ J. A. Fitzmyer, "Pauline Theology", p. 1406, no 101, notices this. It is a brilliant insight.

⁴⁰⁴ The meanings of 'body' and 'flesh' overlap to quite an extent. When it comes to Adam's body, the difference comes into view. I will use the word 'body' for the sake of referring to this until the full explanation later on.

the contrast of Adam and Christ (Rom. 5:12ff). Take note of the following: 1) In 5:12ff. Paul refers to the union of one man, Adam or Christ. At first all humans belong to one man, Adam. It is obvious that, when Paul refers in 6:6 to the old *man* crucified, that man is the first one, Adam. Paul does not introduce a new human *nature* by man. 2) We should pay attention to the fact that Paul keeps using terms related to Adam up to the end of Rom. 6. The bodies of sin of Christians have been destroyed on the cross by becoming one body of Christ and by then beginning their new lives (v. 11). The old life and the new one are in contrast in terms of the serving of sin and of righteousness in vv. 12-23 (especially, vv. 18 and 20). And here the contrast is explained by terms suggesting the story of Adam.⁴⁰⁵ In 6:21-22, Paul contrasts the fruit of life with the fruit of death. His intention is that the readers should be reminded of the story of Adam in Genesis. To sum up, being united with Christ means terminating the union with the old man, namely Adam. What is important here is that Paul refers to that termination as that of the body of sin. The union that all humans have with Adam was the union with the body of sin.

Paul continues to explain the union by means of the marriage in Rom. 7.⁴⁰⁶ A woman is joined to her husband. The union of marriage lasts till one of the couple dies. If one dies, a new union of marriage becomes a possibility. Having said that, Paul then claims that Christians are bound to their new husband. It is obvious that the new husband is Christ (v. 4). On the other hand, the ex-husband is Adam, because the explanation of the union by marriage in Rom. 7 is based on the previous explanation of the union of baptism. In Rom. 6, Paul said that in the case of Christians, the sinful body has been destroyed by baptism. The old man is dead in Christ. On the death of this old man, the marriage becomes void (7:2-3). Therefore, Christians are not bound to their old 'husband', Adam, any more⁴⁰⁷. Now it is possible for them to be married to a new 'husband' (Christ). This continuation of thoughts and logic implies that Paul does not leave the contrast of Adam and Christ in Rom. 7:1-4.

⁴⁰⁵ Paul's allusion to Adam's story in Eden developed fully in Rom. 7. For the intertextuality of Gen. 3 and Rom. 7, see the discussion after section 3.1 "Intertextuality" in chapter VIII.

⁴⁰⁶ It is natural to link union through baptism to union through marriage. Take note that this union is being explained in terms of marriage. One of the central ideas associated with marriage is that of becoming one body. Elsewhere Paul also says that the secret of becoming one body shows the relation between Christ and Christians (Eph. 5:32). See also Paul's reference to becoming one body with a harlot in 1Cor. 6 too.

⁴⁰⁷ In fact, the point of 7:2a is not being bound to the husband by the law but the other way round, being bound to the law by the husband. The full exegesis of 7:2 will be done later. See section 2 "Rom. 7:1-6: Marriage Analogy" in chapter VIII.

Take note that Paul who started hinting at the event of Adam by referring to fruit in 6:21-2 still uses the fruit metaphor (7:4-5). What should also be taken note of is that the relation to the old 'husband', Adam, is again expressed in terms of the body.⁴⁰⁸ Since Christians suffered from death through Christ's body, they can belong to him (7:4).

The common point in Paul's explanation of baptism and marriage is that the new union with Christ begins with the death of the body. In other words, before humans are united (baptism) and bound (marriage) to Christ, they were in the body of sin. It is after explaining this that Paul begins to use the expression, "when we were in flesh" in Rom. 7:5. It is thus clear that this reference to the time when we were in flesh in v. 5 means the time before we were bound to Christ. Those who are dead through Christ's body have died to the law and bear fruit for God (7:4). On the contrary, those in the flesh in 7:5 bear fruit for death because of the law. The time when we were in flesh means the time when we were bound to our 'ex-husband' before we were bound to Christ.⁴⁰⁹ Therefore, the time when we were in flesh refers to what Paul had said previously, that is, to the time when we were bound to Adam, before our bodies died. This is not an unexpected thought. After 5:12, Paul never emphasizes any natural, observable, worldly, animal-like, sensual, and materialistic sense of body (flesh). What does continue in his explanation is the contrast between Adam and Christ and the two extreme unions. In this context, 'in flesh' simply but meaningfully replaces 'in Adam', that is, 'in the body of sin'.⁴¹⁰

This understanding can be confirmed by the relation between 7:2 and 7:25-8:2. As long as the marriage is valid, a wife is bound to her husband and bound to her husband's law.⁴¹¹ It should be noticed that the husband is not the law and the law of husband is not the law related to marriage. The law of the husband is the law⁴¹² met

⁴⁰⁸ The body is very important in marriage. It is the medium of union in marriage. Humankind as whole is united with Adam by becoming one body.

⁴⁰⁹ When we were in flesh, we were *held* by the law (7:5-6). On the other hand, a wife was *bound* to her husband while he was alive (7:2). Notice the similarity of the two states. The time when we were in the flesh is the time when we were bound to the law of the husband by becoming one body.

⁴¹⁰ To understand this is not difficult. All humans are born to be Adam's descendants by the ordinary way of birth. 'Flesh' is the radical medium by which all humans are connected to Adam. Such an idea goes well with the narrative of Nicodemus in John. 3. What is born at the time of the first birth, that is, the natural birth is 'flesh'. 'Flesh' is the word by which the New Testament explains the first and natural state of all humans in contrast to the state after the second birth.

⁴¹¹ Cf. my full exegesis of 7:2 later. The idea that a wife is bound to her husband's law goes back to the Old Testament. For instance, a wife's legal right of vow is restricted by her husband (Num. 30).

⁴¹² For Paul, Adam's commandment is in essence not different from the law (7:7-13). For detail, cf. my exegesis of Rom. 7-13.

in the 'ex-husband', Adam. Humans become free from the law that they were bound to in the 'ex-husband', Adam, by their new 'marriage' to Christ. This is exactly what is said in Rom. 7-8: The 'I' is delivered from the law of sin and death. In contrast, it is revealed that the law of sin and death is the law that the 'I' was bound to in its 'ex-husband', that is, the law of Adam. The law is the law that the 'I' served with the flesh in 7:25. It is thus confirmed that 'flesh' refers to the relation to Adam.

Another question arises: Why is 'body' replaced by 'flesh'? Before 7:5 Paul uses the word 'body' (6:6, 12, and 7:4). On the other hand, the word 'flesh' is used intensively after 7:5 (7:5, 14, 18, and 25). Paul distinguishes 'flesh' from 'body'. Dunn⁴¹³ also notices this. According to him, the theological meaning of the obvious division is that Paul combined Hebrew anthropology and Hellenistic ones. He tried to avoid the bipolarization of exaggerating or minimizing fleshy things. He does not confine his distinguishing flesh from body within Rom. 7. However, can his insight of 'flesh' explain Rom. 7-8 that he regards as Paul's full discussion of 'flesh' and 'sin' satisfactorily? It appears that it cannot.

The reason why Paul distinguishes 'flesh' from 'body' in Rom. 7 is to distinguish human's union with Adam from that with Christ. From 5:12 up to 7:4, Paul has been explaining the two unions, contrasting Adam with Christ. Paul explains the union with Christ by means of baptism and marriage. We saw that 'body' was central to this explanation. It was said that the body of sin of a Christian, which was the medium of the old union, died by the union with Christ by baptism. Here, the reason why it was possible was the union with Christ's *body*. On the other hand, the 'marriage' to Christ is possible because the 'I' died through the union with Christ's body. In other words, the 'I' needed to be united with Christ for its old body to die. Because the 'I' has been united with a new body and died on the cross, its old body that was united with Adam, namely, the body of sin, dies. It is here that a problem arises. The old union with Adam and the new one with Christ is a union through the body. The old union was under sin and for death, but the new one is for righteousness and eternal life. Paul must distinguish these two. Here is where the division between the two originated. When 'body' has a negative meaning, in other words, when it is used in connection to Adam, it is modified (for example, Rom. 6:6: 'body of sin' and Rom. 6:12: 'mortal body').⁴¹⁴ But when it is used on its own, it has a positive meaning. It is used even in

⁴¹³ J. D. G. Dunn, *Theology*, pp. 70-3.

⁴¹⁴ The old body of Christians has already died. Now Christians have already become one body with

connection with Christ (Rom. 7:4: the body of Christ). On the other hand, when 'flesh' is substituted for 'body' it indicates the negative meaning, that is, the connection with Adam, without any modifiers.

Christians never stop being *human* by participating in Christ's death and resurrection. They still live as humans through the union with one Man, Christ. They move from the union with one *man*, Adam, to that with the other *Man*, Christ. The two unions with the two *men* must be distinguished. Paul distinguishes the state of the old union by calling it *old man* (6:6). Likewise, a division in regard to body is needed. Christians become one body with Christ and, through this their bodies of sin (mortal body) are destroyed. If Paul simply said, 'in body', it would be extremely confusing. He thus distinguishes the two by referring to the body of sin as 'flesh'.

To sum up, 'flesh' is Paul's jargon for the Adamic body. 'In flesh' means 'in the body of sin', or 'in the old man, Adam'. Of course, there might be a different nuance in the meaning of 'flesh' in other Pauline letters. My point, however, is that at least in Rom. 7 which depicts a negative meaning of 'flesh' in so much detail, 'flesh' does not accentuate its vulnerable, animal-like, and materialistic characters in terms of human experiences. The approach from the perspective of human experiences concentrates on something human itself, that is, a certain human propensity, even though the approach shows that flesh refers to the whole human. The approach centres on the propensity of the human being who is totally isolated (from Adam or Christ). But humans do not exist independently. For Paul, every human exists only in terms of one of the two unions, that with Adam or with Christ. Paul views humans in terms of the relationship with these two. 'Flesh' does not refer to isolated and independent human beings but to the connection with Adam. In a word, 'flesh' is the character of Adam. Most scholars have focused on finding the meaning of 'flesh' in terms of something in the human being itself. However, this is not correct. 'Flesh' refers to one's relation to Adam, which is something outside of oneself. 'In Christ' does not mean one's character or nature. Likewise, 'in flesh' does not refer to anything natural such as one's muscles and vessels, or the desire of one's stomach and tongue. To put it simply, 'in flesh' in Rom. 7 means 'in Adam'.

Christ. Nevertheless, they shall participate in the resurrection (Rom. 6:5). On the contrary, even though their body of sin has been destroyed, it might be said that they still live in the mortal body (Rom. 6:12). What is obvious is that the body that shall die is the body that is still connected to Adam in one way or another.

1.3 The ἐγώ: biographical, rhetorical, or what?

Rom. 7 has been read as a sort of autobiography.⁴¹⁵ Käsemann,⁴¹⁶ however, points out that reading it as an autobiography is not in harmony with Phil. 3:6. According to him, pious Jews did not think that it would be impossible to keep the law. Kümmel⁴¹⁷ also realises this so that he denies an autobiographic reading of this chapter. His alternative is a rhetorical reading.⁴¹⁸ Paul uses *ego* rhetorically in order to say that all humans are under the law. In order to substantiate this, Kümmel refers to many examples from Pauline letters. The example that he takes from Romans is only one of these (3:7-8). However, I do not agree with him. The *ego* in 7:7ff. is not to be understood rhetorically or autobiographically but theologically. The key to understanding Paul's expression in Rom. 7 is to be found in the way in which his logic is developed in Rom. 5-6.

In Rom. 5:12-19, Paul uses the Adam-Christ typology to argue that all humans become one with either Adam or Christ. They become either sinners or righteous persons by only one, (Adam or Christ). This corporate notion is then concretely explained by means of baptism in Rom. 6. In Rom. 6:1-11, Paul says that Christians *become one* with Christ through baptism. Being together is accentuated (vv. 5-8). This principle of union is then continued by means of the principle of marriage in Rom. 7. Introducing marriage after baptism should not be understood as an unexpected move by Paul. One of the most important aspects of marriage is precisely 'becoming one'. A man shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh (Eph. 5:31). On the other hand, adultery causes a sinful union (1 Cor. 6:16). A marriage is a union of being one. Only death can nullify the union and make another one legally possible.⁴¹⁹ Christians die and live again by becoming one by baptism (6:3-8).

⁴¹⁵ R. H. Gundry, "The Moral Frustration of Paul before His Conversion: Sexual Lust in Romans 7:7-25", in: *Pauline Studies* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), pp. 228-45; and F. F. Bruce, *Romans*, p. 148. Cf. J. C. Beker, *Apostle*, pp. 236-43, who argues that Rom. 7 is an autobiography partially, and shows Paul's dissatisfaction in regard to the law; and J. D. G. Dunn, "Rom. 7, 14-25 in the Theology of Paul", *TZ* 31 (1975), pp. 258ff.

⁴¹⁶ E. Käsemann, *Römer*, pp. 184ff. .

⁴¹⁷ W. G. Kümmel, *Römer 7*, pp. 74ff.

⁴¹⁸ Cf. W. G. Kümmel, *ibid.*, pp. 85ff.; and *Man in the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1963), pp. 51ff.

⁴¹⁹ The concept 'becoming one body' (flesh) shows the relation of Christ and Christians in the best way. Take also note of what is said about members of Christ and a harlot (1 Cor. 6:15). Christians be-

Now, they are free from the 'ex-husband' and 'marry' the new one (7:4). In contrast, Christians were married to their 'ex-husband' (Adam) before they marry Christ. Subsequently, in 7:7ff., Paul explains the law by means of the commandment of Adam. Doing this, Paul thus presupposes the story of Adam. Paul puts the law, that is, the commandment of Adam, into the context of Adam and Eve in Gen. 3. Readers thus have to realize that the law is the law of Adam which brought death to Eve through Adam. (I will do the full exegesis of this issue later.)

What I want to point out here before the full exegesis of the text is the following: If Paul uses *ego* in 7:7ff. when referring to humankind's union with Adam before they 'married' Christ, the *ego* does not designate only one person, Paul. It is quite proper for Paul to introduce Eve here. Eve was historically the wife of Adam. All humans are the 'wives' of Adam unless they 'remarry' Christ. Of course, Paul himself is not an exception and Christians do not differ from him. At this very point, it is perfectly right for Paul to refer to the story of Eve from the perspective of the first person, *ego*. Paul does not try to provide us with an autobiography; neither does he present himself as a kind of a representative of all humans in a rhetorical way. He, rather, binds Eve, himself and all humans together in his theological framework. The 'I' in Rom. 7:7ff. is not an autobiographical 'I', or a rhetorical 'I', but a theological 'I' that is precisely placed within his Adam-Christ theology developed in Rom. 5:12ff.⁴²⁰

Therefore, the *ego* in Rom. 7:7ff. is Paul, Eve, the readers, and all humans at the same time. The story in Rom. 7:7ff. is Paul's autobiography, the story of Eve, and the destiny of all humans at the same time. What makes such an explanation of Paul possible is not a literary framework or his literary technique but his profound theology. The attempt to understand the *ego* as referring only to Paul's autobiography or to all humans only by a literary framework and not to the autobiography of all human beings, misconstrues Paul's theology. This does not help one to understand Rom. 7.

come one body with Christ. See also Eph. 5:31-2 which depicts the relation between Christ and his church in terms of marriage.

⁴²⁰ Even though the *ego* refers to all humans, the *ego* in regard to the law has its focus on the Jews. It, however, must be always noticed that even this focus forms part of the big circle of humanity.

1.4 A proposed interpretation

In Rom. 5:12ff., Paul refers to two persons, Adam and Christ. Christians become one body with Christ through baptism (Rom. 6). On the other hand, non-Christians are united to Adam. Paul explains the contrast by means of marriage (Rom. 7:1-6). All humans become one body with Adam through 'marriage'. When they believe in Christ, they die and become alive through baptism. They leave their 'ex-husband' and become one with Christ. In this theological structure, the situation of all humans, including that of Paul, is explained in terms of union. How should his remarks about the law be understood in terms of this view?

His explanation of the law seems extremely complicated and sometimes it even looks arbitrary and ambiguous. To my mind, the key to the solution lies in realising that he is thinking of the law in a twofold sense. All the difficulties and complications in understanding the law in Rom. 7 are caused by a failure to recognise that he actually has two laws in mind. He refers to two different entities, but calls both of them 'law'. We could say the key to understanding what is going on, is hidden in Eden. There we find two entities (two trees) in the centre of Eden. Even though they can be distinguished, they are not essentially different. Both of them are trees related to the commandments. By means of intertextuality, Paul views in Rom. 7, Gen. 3 (Eden), and Deut. 27 (Shechem, that is, Ebal and Gerizim) in terms of redemptive history. The exegesis of Rom. 7 constitutes the core of Paul's law theology and is extremely complicated. So, here, I will first briefly summarize what I am going to argue. I will distinguish between two laws, the Mosaic one and the Christian one. When needed, I will use the word 'Torah' that Paul does not use,⁴²¹ for the sake of explanation.

Paul explains the unfamiliar concept of two laws by means of redemptive history. For this, he introduces the analogy of marriage in Rom. 7:1-7, that is, that of a wife bound to the law of her husband. Then he hints at Gen. 3 in Rom. 7:7ff. Covetousness is one of the Ten Commandments but more exactly it is the commandment of Eve's husband; in other words, God's commandment given to Eve by her husband, Adam. The focus is not on Adam, but on Eve who is bound to his commandment. In the theological framework in Rom. 5:12ff., Eve represents all humans who are united to Adam. In this theological structure, Paul associates all humans and himself, with

⁴²¹ Paul does not use the word 'Torah' (did not coin a word for only 'Torah') to avoid confusion of the Mosaic law and Christian law. He uses the word 'law' *on purpose*. By doing this, he succeeds in identifying the law in terms of redemptive history.

Eve. In essence, Israel's Torah is identified as the commandment of Adam.⁴²² Furthermore, the commandments of Adam are related to the two trees in Eden. In that sense, there are two commandments of Adam. The commandments exist as two respective entities. Adamic commandments thus consist of the commandment of life (you shall eat the fruit of the tree of life)⁴²³ and the commandment of death (you shall not eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil).⁴²⁴ Paul, however, explains the Torah only in connection with the tree of knowledge of good and evil. The commandment (the Torah) produces covetousness. The 'I' comes to know sin (*evil*) (7:7) and dies. The Torah is thus the law in connection with the tree of knowledge of good and *evil*, that is, the law in connection with death.

On the other hand, the Torah is connected to good, too. It makes the 'I' know good. But the knowledge is of a pessimistic nature. The 'I' comes to know that there is no good in it (7:18). The good in Rom. 7:7ff. is not of a human nature, such as the nature, temper, or mentality of humans. The good is the Torah, too; *more exactly, the law that should be contained in the Torah*. The good law that is not in the 'I'; in other words, the law that the 'I' lost, is the commandment (the law⁴²⁵) of the tree of life that Eve had lost. In doing so, Paul thus says that there is only the law of death (the law of the tree of knowledge of good and evil) and that there is no law of life (the law of the tree of life). In that sense, in a word, the Torah is only the law of death. What is important, here, is that while Paul refers to the absence of the good, that is, the law of life, he starts hinting at Deuteronomy, leaving Genesis. This is confirmed by the change of the tense of verbs and the disappearance of the word 'commandment'. Now, Paul reads Deuteronomy in the echo of Genesis. Doing this, he puts Deuteronomy in the same theological structure. He tries to prove that Deuteronomy also says

⁴²² The connection between Torah and covetousness is changed into that between the commandment (of Adam) and covetousness in 7:7-8. As Eve and Paul can be divided but they are one in essence, so Torah and the commandment can be divided, but Paul does not distinguish them for in essence they are the same.

⁴²³ Eating the fruit of tree of life is included in God's commandment (וַיִּצְוֵנוּ אֱכֹל מִכָּל עֵץ-הַגֶּן אֲכַל תֹּאכְלוּ: (וַיִּצְוֵנוּ)). (Gen. 2:16). Remember that the tree of life is at the centre of the edible trees. And take note that the verb אֲכַל (eat) in regard to the fruits of the two trees is the same (qal imperfect 2nd person masculine singular).

⁴²⁴ It must be noticed that God did not connect life and death to only one tree. So to speak, it is not the case that there is only one tree in the middle of the garden and that Adam must not eat the fruit of the tree and if he keeps the commandment, he can have life but if not, he shall die. In the Adamic commandments, life and death are connected to two different trees. The commandments of life and death exist as two respective commandments.

⁴²⁵ We should always keep in mind that for Paul, the commandments of Adam are in essence the same as the law.

that the law of life, or the law of blessing, is missing in the Torah. The two trees of the law of Adam are projected onto the two mountains of the law of Moses so that the two commandments of the two trees become one with the two laws of blessing and cursing of the two mountains, Gerizim and Ebal. However, in contrast to the stone tables and the declaration of the twelve blessings (Dodecalogue) on Mt. Ebal, there are no stone tables and blessings on Mt. Gerizim. The loss (absence) of the tree of life in Eden is echoed by the absence of blessings in Gerizim. In comparison to the law of cursing written on stone tables on Mt. Ebal, the law of blessings is the law of the heart (mind) in Deut. 30:13-4.

The commandments of Adam consisted of the commandment of life and that of death, but finally, the former had gone. Likewise, it is revealed that the Torah speaks and announces life and death, but the law of blessings (life) is missing and therefore, the Torah, in fact, is nothing but the law of cursing, or, the law of death. That Paul has been alluding to Genesis and Deuteronomy is proven in Rom 7:23 once again. The ultimate curse in Deut. 28-29, that is, the end of the law of death, is that Israel is being captive (being exiled from the blessed land, like Eve). Paul sees the 'I' as being taken captive by the Torah, or by the law of death (7:23). On the other hand, the deliverance from being captive in Deut. 30:1-14 is ultimately done by the word in the heart (mind). The word is the law of life (Deut. 30:15). The law is the law of life and the law of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:2). This very law delivers the 'I'.

Paul could have used only Genesis to show that the law of life is not to be found in the Torah. Why does he then put Deuteronomy in the same framework as Genesis? The ultimate purpose is to reveal the nature of the law of blessings. He identifies the word in the heart (mind), in other words, the law of life, or the law of the heart (mind), in Deut. 30, with the word of Christ in Rom. 10. In fact, the movement toward this framework could be expected. By connecting Genesis to Deuteronomy, he completes the structure of contrast between Adam and Christ that has played a role since Rom. 5:12. Adam-Christ, flesh-heart (mind), and death-life are all contrasted. Eve, all humans, Israel, or Paul becomes the captive of the law of death by being in Adam or in the flesh. There is no law of life served with the heart (mind), namely, the law of the heart (mind) or the law of Christ, in the flesh, that is, in Adam. The deliverance by the law of life is possible only in Christ. Finally, the Adam-Christ theology (death in Adam-life in Christ) in Rom. 5:12ff. is explained in terms of law.

2 Rom. 7:1-6: The marriage analogy

At a glance, the analogy in Rom. 7:2-4 seems asymmetric or inaccurate. The One who dies by Christ' body in v. 4 is a Christian but the one who dies in vv. 2-3 is the husband.⁴²⁶ A more serious imbalance arises from the popular reading⁴²⁷ that the wife is bound to her husband by the law, because the wife becomes free not from husband but from the law. There have been many debates on this. Ziesler⁴²⁸ even suggests that we should accept that the analogy is not accurate. I, however, cannot agree with him at all.

Firstly, let us check the imbalance in terms of the death of the husband. The point of the analogy is that death makes it possible to be freed from the law. Cranfield⁴²⁹ is aware of this. He tries to explain the ostensible imbalance of the analogy by seeing vv. 2-3 as only an explanation for v. 1. Vv. 2-3, however, is not only to be linked to v. 1, but is very important for the conclusion in v. 4. The imbalance in the analogy is only there for composing the analogy. When either a husband or his wife dies, the marriage becomes void and the partner can get married to another person. It does not matter who dies in terms of nullifying a marriage. Of course, the focus falls on the wife. But if Paul had said that when a wife dies, even though she is married to another man, she is not an adulteress, the analogy cannot be constituted. It would not make the analogy clear, but, rather, obscure it. We must not think of Christians' resurrection in terms of the wife in vv. 2-3. In this analogy, the wife is not supposed to be resurrected to marry another man.⁴³⁰ In the analogy, it is the death of the husband

⁴²⁶ Many scholars such as J. Ziesler, *Romans*, p. 172; and R. H. Mounce, *Romans* (NAC 27, Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995), p. 161, think that the husband is the law. Reading the husband as the law has been popular in various ways in the history (Origen and Pelagius). Cf. G. Bray (ed.), *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture, Romans*, Vol. VI, (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1998), p. 176. Whether the husband is the law or not, the imbalance still remains.

⁴²⁷ Most commentators follow this reading.

⁴²⁸ J. A. Ziesler, *Romans*, pp. 172-74.

⁴²⁹ C. E. B. Cranfield, *Romans*, Vol. I, pp. 334-35.

⁴³⁰ N. T. Wright, *Climax*, p. 196, says that the wife has herself been enabled to die and rise. Resurrection is the concept of the new covenant. Here, what Paul wants to say is the inauguration of the new

that caused the nullification of the marriage and the law of the husband cannot be over the wife. It does not matter who dies in terms of the nullification of the marriage. Checking if the analogy is asymmetric must not be done mechanically. The asymmetry of the analogy must be in terms of its meaning. This mistake is made by many scholars, including Spitaler,⁴³¹ who point out the asymmetry of the analogy.

Let us move to a more important point of asymmetry which is related to the liberation of the wife. Spitaler insists that Paul formulates a symmetric argument by the analogy in Rom. 7:2-4. He reads in v. 2a. (ἡ γὰρ ὑπανδρος γυνὴ τῷ ζῶντι ἀνδρὶ δέδεται νόμῳ) that the wife is bound to the law by way of the man who is alive. And he understands the law of the husband as the law that ruled the husband. What Paul says by the analogy is that Christians are freed from the law *that ruled Christ*, by the death of Christ.

This, however, has a problem. Christians are not under the law (6:14-5). It is by death by the union with Christ by baptism that they are liberated from the law (6:1-13). The union is continually explained in terms of marriage in Rom. 7. Christians are liberated from the law by the 'marriage' to Christ. However, it is by the marriage to Christ that Christians are liberated from the law. If Christians are not 'married' to Christ, they do not become bound to the law, the Torah, that ruled their husband, Christ. Spitaler's explanation thus cannot avoid the logical consequence that Christians get bound to the law by marriage in order to get free from the law.

Furthermore, his explanation cannot explain the reason why Paul introduces the marriage analogy. What new information does Paul want to convey by means of the analogy? Christians participate in Christ's death by baptism and they, finally, die to the law that ruled them. This is what Paul has already said in Rom. 6:1-14. In short, being free from the law can be explained only by baptism, not by referring to marriage. Ultimately, Spitaler cannot see the progress of Paul's logic by means of the analogy of marriage. In 7:7ff., after the analogy of marriage, Paul unmasks the law by introducing Eve. I will explain this later. For the time being, let us delve deeper into the analogy.

covenant. In order to explain this, Wright says that the previous husband is the old man and he acts as the husband and the wife. However, his explanation is too much strained.

⁴³¹ P. Spitaler, "Analogical Reasoning in Romans 7:2-4: A Woman and the Believers in Rome", *JBL*, 125, No. 4 (2006).

The law of the husband is not the law that rules him. Spitaler⁴³² says that the law is the law that rules the husband, insisting that Paul introduces the cultural paradigm of Israel. But in terms of the cultural paradigm that Spitaler refers to, the law does not rule the husband but the wife. The law of the ex-husband must be identified in terms of the context of Rom. 7:1-6. The identification of the law becomes clear in terms of the contrast with the law of the new husband, because the contrast does not stop with the new husband but continues up to the law of the new husband. It is not the case that, having been freed from the law, the woman serves no law.⁴³³ The woman still serves the new law (7:6). Paul contrasts the newness of the Holy Spirit to the oldness of letter. In contrast, the newness of the Holy Spirit is expected to be a new law. The principle that marriage makes the woman bound to the law of her husband does not change. Notice that we still *serve* in the new (law) of the Holy Spirit (7:6). That which is changed is having a new husband and a new law. *What Paul wants to say is that after a woman is liberated from the law of her ex-husband, she is bound to the law of her new husband.* The husband is not the law. The law does not die. The oldness of letter is not the husband but the law of the ex-husband, namely, the law. The newness of the Holy Spirit is not the new husband but his new law. Take note of the contrast between *καινότης* and *παλαιότης*. The essential difference between the two makes sense only in terms of its essential connection. Therefore, the newness must have a legal essence and character.

This understanding is strengthened by an explanation of what follows. In fact, the analogy in vv. 2-3 is a foundation for what follows, 7:7-25. Paul contrasts the law of sin and death and the law of God and the Spirit of life. Here, take note of the fact that Paul always uses the word, law. He contrasts two laws. And, here again, take note of Paul's expressions and images related to the two laws. The *ego* is captive under the law of sin, serves it in the flesh, gets liberated by the law of the Holy Spirit, and still serves the law of God. This picture matches the ideas found in the paragraph of the analogy of marriage (7:1-6) exactly. When in the flesh (7:5), we were bound to the law of the ex-husband and served it (7:1, 6). Having got free from the law, we still serve in the newness of the holy law (7:7). It is vital to understand the newness of the Holy Spirit as meaning the law of the Holy Spirit⁴³⁴ in this context. What Paul in 7:1-6

⁴³² *Ibid.*, p. 726.

⁴³³ Cf. 1 Cor. 9:21. Paul says that he is not without law, but still under the law of Christ.

⁴³⁴ I do not mean the Torah that is used by the Holy Spirit or functions newly in the Holy Spirit by the

wants to say is the following: We who were bound to the Torah (which is in essence not different from Adam's commandments) by our 'ex-husband' Adam and who served it, was liberated from our first marriage by our death through baptism, and were then 'married' to Christ. Now, we have come to serve (with) the new law of the Holy Spirit through our new husband. Here, the law of the Holy Spirit and God is not the law that rules the Holy Spirit and God.

It seems quite asymmetric to me that Spitaler who tries to read the analogy symmetrically does not read the law of the (ex-)husband symmetrically, that is, in terms of the legal system of the new husband. He notices that the woman moves from one legal system to another. He understands the law of the husband as a sort of legal sphere.⁴³⁵ However, he moves away from the symmetric fact that the law of the new husband is not the law that rules the new husband. When we understand the law of the husband as the law that rules the husband, a new imbalance in regard to the new law of the new husband who has risen from the dead, arises.

The key to the meaning of the law of husband lies in 7:2a. V. 7:2a has two datives *ἀνδρὶ δέδεταί νόμῳ*. Almost all English versions⁴³⁶ translate it as meaning 'is bound to husband by law'. In that case, however, an asymmetry arises between 7:2a and b. 7:2b says that when the husband is dead, the wife is loosened from *the law* of husband. 7:2a must be interpreted as 'she is bound to the law by her husband' in order to be symmetric with 7:2b. The law of the husband is the law that has effect and force over the wife and rules her by the husband.⁴³⁷ In other words, the law of husband is the law given through the husband.

Here, the following must be kept in mind. In Rom. 7 (union by marriage), Paul has still not left the ideas of Rom. 6 (union by baptism) completely behind. And Paul's idea of union goes back to Rom. 5:12ff. The analogy must be read in terms of the

law of the Holy Spirit. This will be explained clearly in the exegesis of the Eve narrative (7:7-11).

⁴³⁵ See P. Spitaler, "Analogical Reasoning", p. 726.

⁴³⁶ ASV, CJB, CSB, GNV, KJV, NAS, NET, NIV, and RSV. It is interesting to see the change in the German versions of the Luther Bible in that 'ein Weib ist sie gebunden an das Gesetz' (L45) is changed into 'ein Weib ist an ihn gebunden durch das Gesetz' (LUO) and 'eine Frau ist an ihren Mann gebunden durch das Gesetz' (LUT). Even though Luther himself, *Romans*, p. 109, could not explain the meaning of being bound to the law by the husband, the ignorance of this fact became popular among German scholars. The change in German Bibles shows how popular it had become.

⁴³⁷ The adjective ὑπαυδρος which means 'under (authority or power of) a man' or 'subordinated to a man' (cf. *EDNT*, Vol. 3, p. 395), confirms that the cause of the being bound of the wife (γυνή) does not lie in the law but in the husband. Take note that the wife is already under her man (husband). Because the wife is under (the power of) her husband, she is bound to the law of her husband by him. The text does not say that the wife is bound to her husband by the law so that she gets subordinated to her husband. In that case, the adjective ὑπαυδρος is a redundancy.

framework of the Adam-Christ typological union; the ex-husband must be Adam in contrast to the new husband who is obviously the resurrected Christ (7:4). Therefore, the law of the husband in 7:2 is the law of Adam. Then, the law of Adam means the law that has force over and rules the wife (Eve or the 'I') by Adam, or by being given through Adam.⁴³⁸

In this analogy, what changed for the woman, is the husbands. And by that, the laws of her husbands were changed. However, as the meaning and nature of marriage never changes, so the fact that the wife is bound to the law of husband and has to serve it, never changes. The core of the problem of the analogy is thus the identification of the two laws.⁴³⁹ The identification becomes clear by means of the identification of the two husbands, Adam and Christ. Paul, however, has not revealed the identities of the two laws yet. What are the law of Adam and the law of Christ? Are they the same?⁴⁴⁰ Now, Paul moves to this subject in 7:7ff.

⁴³⁸ N. T. Wright, *Climax*, 169; and *Romans*, pp. 558-59, also thinks that Rom. 5-6 should be considered to understand the analogy. But he does not carry out his idea thoroughly. He, in fact, isolates the analogy from Rom. 5-6 by saying that the old man acts as the husband and the wife. Finally, Wright, *Romans*, p. 259, comes to say that Paul does not concretely discuss the abstractly understood analogy. See also his, *Paul*, p. 118. He says that Paul's illustration does not work well.

However, the analogy constitutes the decisive framework of Paul's explanation so that a failure to build this framework results in a failure to connect Rom. 7 to Gen. 3 clearly. Even though Wright recognizes that Paul has Gen. 3 in his mind, he fails in understanding the ultimate reason. According to him, *Romans*, pp. 562ff., Israel merely followed Adam and the disobedience in Eden was repeated by Israel's disobedience of the Torah at Mt Sinai. However, Paul delves deeper into Gen. 3, focusing on Eve. See my exegesis of Rom. 7 that follows.

⁴³⁹ The law in the analogy might seem to be the law in general. But when we come to 7:4-6, and read it in terms of the contrast between Adam and Christ in 5:12ff., the law should not be understood as the law in general. It must always be kept in mind that, since 5:12ff., Paul, in fact, identifies the commandments of Adam as the law of Moses. As will be revealed, the law of the new husband is the law of blessings that is supposed to be in the law of Moses. In that sense, the two laws of the two husbands can be understood as the Mosaic law, more accurately, the Mosaic laws. Here, I mean the two laws of two Moseses. As explained later, Paul regards Jesus as the new Moses prophesied in Deuteronomy. The two laws of the two Moseses are two entities. In fact, in the analogy, Paul does not think of laws in general such as the Roman law but only of the Mosaic laws. Wives are not bound to the general law by their husbands. Paul does not aim at a general meaning of the analogy but at a biblical and redemptive historical one (*contra* M. Wolter, *Paulus. Ein Grundriss seiner Theologie* [Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 2011], p. 353). For Paul, the law consists of two laws.

⁴⁴⁰ Does Paul have, say, the misuse of the law in his mind? Or does he think about the proper functions of the law by Christ?

3 Rom. 7:7-25

3.1 Intertextuality

Intertextuality refers to the fact that a text and its meaning are not fixed and isolated but found in relationship with other texts. This approach was first developed in the interpretation of secular literature.⁴⁴¹ Intertextuality opens new possibilities for understanding a text, and consists of many aspects.⁴⁴² In general, there is more emphasis on the role of the reader when one focuses on intertextuality.⁴⁴³ Intertextuality also invites readers to matrixing (webbing)⁴⁴⁴ and to deciding on meaning. Readers of a text identify the meaning of a text by connecting the text to other texts. The explanation and persuasion start from the author but are accomplished by the readers. This causes a highly effective rhetorical effect. If the text is from the New Testament, and the newly connected text is a well-known one from the Old Testament, the effect is very dramatic. But in the case of Pauline letters, this is not Rabbinic Midrash.⁴⁴⁵ The matrixed text from the Old Testament (subtext) is never cited. This is not a typology either. Paul does not say that it is a concrete accomplishment. And this might be distinguished from an allegory also. See Paul's use of the allegory of the two covenants in Gal 4:24. Furthermore, the theological basis of Rom. 7 is Rom. 5:12ff in which Paul uses the word 'type'. The division between allegory and typology is not always clear.⁴⁴⁶

⁴⁴¹ See J. Kristeva, "Word, Dialogue and Novel" in: T. Moi (ed.), *The Kristeva Reader* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), pp. 34-61.

⁴⁴² J. W. Voelz "Multiple Signs and Double Texts: Elements of Intertextuality", in: S. Draisma (ed.), *Intertextuality in Biblical Writings, Essays in Honour of Bas van Iersel* (Kampen: Kok, 1989), p. 34.

⁴⁴³ At this point, intertextuality overlaps with Postmodernism. For example, accentuating the absoluteness of the influence of readers' experiences and religious systems on the interpretation of a text, W. Vorster, "Intertextuality and *Redaktionsgeschichte*", in: S. Draisma (ed.), *ibid.*; and J. W. Voelz, "Multiple Signs", regard readers as a second text. According to Voelz, *ibid.*, pp. 32-3, 1) explicit explanation 2) the interpreter's own life-experience, and 3) his own system of beliefs constitute the final court of appeal of the interpretation. On the other hand, S. Moyise, "Intertextuality and Biblical Studies: A Review", *VE* 23 (2002), pp. 418-31, classifies intertextuality into five types. According to him, Postmodern Intertextuality pays attention to the fact that a text has more interpretations than one. However, when I refer to intertextuality, I never pay attention to this aspect.

⁴⁴⁴ Matrix in intertextuality means the web in which a text is connected to another.

⁴⁴⁵ Cf. D. Boyarin, *Intertextuality and the Reading of Midrash* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990); and L. A. Jervis, "'But I want You to know...': Paul's Midrashic Intertextual Response to the Corinthian Worshipers (1 Cor. 11:2-16)", *JBL* 112 (1993), pp. 231-46, want to see Biblical intertextuality as a sort of Midrash.

⁴⁴⁶ For the classical study of allegory, parable and type, see part I in B. Keach, *Tropologia, Preaching from the Types and Metaphors of the Bible*, Part I (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1972).

Hays⁴⁴⁷ emphasises allusions in the Pauline letters. The most important aspects of intertextual interactions are not obvious but allusive.⁴⁴⁸ He, however, says that if the allusion sounds in an echo chamber, the echo, that is, the dim traces of the text, might be strong enough. Paul never cites the Old Testament in Rom. 7. But he whispers by allusions and echoes, in this way making his readers themselves see the possibility of interpretation. As Moyise has already pointed out, this is not totally free from speculation,⁴⁴⁹ but in Rom. 7 one cannot dismiss the possibility that Paul is using allusions and echoes.

We have seen that, in Rom. 5:12-7:6, Paul argues in terms of the contrast between Adam and Christ. He uses baptism and marriage as indicative of a union with them within the context of contrast. Especially, in 7:1-6, Paul explains the law in the context of Adam and his wife. He has thus already led us into the cave of Adam and his wife, Eve. In the cave, the echo of Gen. 2-3 resounds clearly in Rom. 7:7ff.⁴⁵⁰ Let us identify the echoes of Gen. 2-3 in Rom. 7:7ff.⁴⁵¹

7:7ff. hints at the narrative of the first couple in Gen. 2-3, centring on the commandment of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Οὐκ ἐπιθυμήσεις and ἡ ἀμαρτία κατειργάσατο πᾶσαν ἐπιθυμίαν in 7:7-8 allude to עֵץ הַיָּדָע (the tree was to be desired)⁴⁵² in Gen. 3:6. And covetousness is connected to 'do not touch it' in Gen. 3:3, too. I will deal with it below. Furthermore, Rom. 7:11 (ἡ γὰρ ἀμαρτία ἀφορμὴν λαβοῦσα διὰ τῆς ἐντολῆς ἐξηπάτησέν με καὶ δι' αὐτῆς ἀπέκτεινεν) describes exactly the scene in

⁴⁴⁷ R. B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Heaven and London: Yale University Press, 1989).

⁴⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 155.

⁴⁴⁹ The potential danger of intertextuality should be taken account of, but intertextuality still is a good possibility, better than many other approaches. For example, to seek allusions to the Old Testament in Rom. 7 is better than delving into the inside of a human being by means of psychological analysis. It is because even though allusions may be vague in general, the Old Testament that a text alludes to has a more obvious and clear voice than many other exegetical tools.

⁴⁵⁰ J. W. Voelz, "Multiple Sings", suggests three factors in regard to matrixing. These are proximity, contrast, and vocables. In the case of proximity, the proximity of allusion by a near text should be considered. The very previous paragraph, 7:1-6 referring to marriage, turns up the volume of the echo of Adam and Eve in the following text, 7:7ff.

⁴⁵¹ In fact, Rom. 7 hints at the whole narrative of Gen. 2-3. At this point, we can identify it as narrative intertextuality in terms of S. Moyise's classification. By the way, his example for narrative intertextuality, S. C. Keesmaat, "Exodus and the Intertextual Transformation of Tradition in Romans 8:14-30", *JSNT* 54 (1994), finds an Exodus narrative in Rom. 8. However, it seems very difficult to me to find any signs of the Exodus narrative in Rom. 7. On the other hand, hints about Gen. 2-3 are more obvious in Rom. 7. Rom. 7 points at concrete verses precisely against the backdrop of Gen. 2-3. Many vocables as signs appear clearly.

⁴⁵² The verb עָבַד used in the form of infinitive in Gen. 3:6 is the same verb used in the tenth commandment, do not covet (לֹא תַאֲבָדֶנָּה), in Exod. 20:17.

Gen. 3:4-5: that the serpent deceived Eve by the commandment.⁴⁵³ The one who was deceived by the serpent was not Adam but Eve. And through this, death came.

Subsequently, good and evil are continually mentioned in connection with the commandment, that is, the law. The law is good (7:12). The 'I' agrees that the law is good (7:16). On the other hand, the 'I' comes to know sin and covetousness by the law (7:7). Good does not dwell in the 'I' and it does not do good (7:18). The 'I' does not do good but evil (7:19). The 'I' wants to do good but evil is present with it (7:21). These are the allusions to the commandment related to good and evil in Gen. 3, that one must not eat the fruit of the tree of good and evil. Not only good and evil but 'to know sin' is stressed in the allusions. If not by the law, the 'I' would not have *known sin* (τὴν ἁμαρτίαν οὐκ ἔγνων εἰ μὴ διὰ νόμου) (7:7). The verb 'know', γινώσκω, in 7:7 reminds readers of the tree of knowledge of good and evil (τὸ ξύλον τοῦ εἰδέναι γινώσκον καλοῦ καὶ πονηροῦ) (Gen. 2:9 in the LXX). And in contrast to good and evil, the allusions to the law of the tree of *life* immediately follow the allusions to the law of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Notice the law of the Holy Spirit of life (γὰρ νόμος τοῦ πνεύματος τῆς ζωῆς) (8:2).⁴⁵⁴ Now, let us see how the newly matrixed text (subtext), Gen. 2-3 can give the original text, Rom. 7, new meaning, in order to conform that those signs hint at Gen. 2-3.

I have said that 7:1-6 must be read in terms of the contrast between Adam and Christ in 5:12ff. The law of the old husband is the law of Adam. The focus falls on his wife, Eve. That is to say, the point of the analogy is how Eve is bound to the law of her husband and serves the new law. Following on this, Paul starts to explain the law in 7:7ff. Now, it is very natural to understand the person in the explanation of the law as Eve. Once we read Rom. 7:7ff. from the perspective of Eve, the meaning of the text starts to be clear.

⁴⁵³ Already in 5:12, Paul uses the expression in which sin hints at the serpent. Sin comes into the world.

⁴⁵⁴ In fact, alluding to the two trees in Gen. 2 has already started in 6:21-2, right before Rom. 7. Take note that fruit is paired with death and (eternal) life respectively in Rom. 6:21-2.

3.2 Rom. 7:7-13

3.2.1 The scholarly debate

Who is the *ego* in 7:7ff.? The history of interpretation shows how the pendulum has swung between Paul and Adam. Reading Rom. 7:7ff. as an autobiography has been popular.⁴⁵⁵ However viewing the *ego* as Paul creates some problems. For example, Paul never experienced a time without the law,⁴⁵⁶ or when he “died” to the law

The other option is to interpret the *ego* as referring to Adam.⁴⁵⁷ This is mainly because 7:7ff. hints at the Adam narrative. The fact that 6:21-7:11 follows the structure of Gen. 2-3 supports this option: Rom. 6:21-2 (two types of fruit of death and life) → 7:1-6 (marriage metaphor) → 7:7-11 (temptation and violation). This structure reflects that of the Adam narrative: Gen. 2:15-17 (two trees) → 2:18-25 (the first marriage) → 3:16 (the serpent’s temptation and Adam’s violation). Rom. 6:21-7:11 thus reflects the structure of the Eden event rather closely. However, in this case, the decisive problem is that οὐκ ἐπιθυμήσεις in v. 7 does not seem to refer to the commandment to Adam. It rather seems to refer to the tenth commandment.⁴⁵⁸ That makes one hesitate to connect 7:7ff. to the Adam narrative.⁴⁵⁹

I, however, believe that both interpretations outlined above miss the core of Paul’s thrust completely. When we interpret the *ego* as a third person, we are given a new horizon of interpretation. The *ego* refers to all humans including Paul, but Paul concentrates on a particular person in human history. This person is the first wife of the

⁴⁵⁵ D. J. Moo’s explanation, *Romans*, p. 427, is a sort of reaction against Kümmel. Moo claims that it is impossible to get rid of autobiographical aspects from the *ego* in Rom. 7:7-25. The *ego* is neither everybody nor Adam for νόμος means the Torah. The *ego* is Israel in the sense of corporate identity. Thus the *ego* is Paul himself in solidarity with Israel. Moo’s view is a combination of the autobiographical view with the view that identifies the *ego* with Israel (see p. 431).

⁴⁵⁶ Scholars, who identify the *ego* as Paul, no matter whether it is done autobiographically or rhetorically, have a problem with 7:9. When was the time when Paul did not have the law? One smart solution is to say that Paul was thinking of the period before he accepted the Torah publicly to become a bar-mitzvah. Then, apart from the problem of anachronism (cf. Moo, *Ibid.*, p. 430), two problems arise. Paul does not call it ‘law’ but ‘commandment’. Let us remember that the commandment (of Adam) and the law are not essentially different but that they can be distinguished clearly. Furthermore, Paul connects the commandment to covetousness in Gen. 3.

⁴⁵⁷ E. Käsemann, *Römer*, p. 188; and P. Stuhlmacher, *Römer*, pp. 98-9.

⁴⁵⁸ For example, D. J. Moo, *Romans*, pp. 434-35, thinks that Paul refers to the tenth commandment.

⁴⁵⁹ E. Käsemann, *Römer*, p. 188; and J. D. G. Dunn, *Romans*, pp. 379-80, resort to Jewish tradition and theology to connect Adam to the law. However, I think that once we start to read 7:7ff. in the light of Genesis, we had better resort to Genesis, that is, to the Adam-Eve narrative rather than something lying outside of Genesis.

first man in the very first marriage.⁴⁶⁰ Let us check if Paul refers to the tenth commandment or the commandment to Adam.

3.2.2 Did Eve exaggerate God's commandment?

Earlier I argued that the law of the husband was the law of Adam. The core of 7:1-6 is that a wife is bound to the law by her husband. Intertextuality connects 7:7ff. to the subtext, Gen. 3. Now, let us go back to Gen. 3 and scrutinize how Eve was bound to the law by Adam. Unfortunately, there is no general understanding of what I am going to try to argue now. Therefore, I cannot help but dealing with the Old Testament briefly. Eve's version of God's commandment in Gen. 3:3 ("You shall not eat of it, *neither shall you touch it*") has been regarded by almost all exegetes as a sort of exaggeration or alteration in an arbitrary and sinful way.⁴⁶¹ In this case, Eve wrongly describes God as arbitrary and stubborn. In terms of this approach, Eve is thus already classified as a sinner before she even eats the forbidden fruit with Adam. Once Eve is regarded as a sinner, the wrong answer that she gives cannot render any trustworthy except for revealing her mistakes or sinful nature.⁴⁶² However, it must be noted that Gen. 3 itself never suggests any fault on Eve's part in this regard. Eve has not technically been depraved yet. If we reconstruct the events in Gen. 2-3, we come to realise that God's commandment as formulated by Eve in Gen. 3:3 was originally given to her by Adam. Gen. 2:16-8 says that the commandment ("You shall not eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil") had been given to Adam directly from God before Eve was created. By the way, in Gen. 3:3, Eve knows the com-

⁴⁶⁰ A. Busch, "The Figure of Eve in Romans 7:5-25", *BI* 12 (2004), pp. 1-36, recognizes that the central figure in Rom. 7 is not Adam but Eve. He focuses on the paradoxical relationship of the passivity (passive surrender to God) and the activity (active transgression) of Eve in Rom. 7:7-13. She is a picture of the *ego* paradoxically torn between the law and transgression because of sin. This illustrates the *ego* split under sin in vv. 14-25. Cf. also S. Krauter, "Eva in Röm 7", *ZNW* 99 (2008), pp. 1-17.

However, Busch misses Paul's purpose in terms of the background of Gen. 3 in Rom. 7. Paul's focus does not remain on the *ego*, Eve, but delves into the law of her husband. Through Eve, Paul argues in terms of the plural nature of the law of Adam. He depicts the Torah against the backdrop of Eden. Cf. the exegesis of Rom. 7 that follows.

⁴⁶¹ For instance, G. J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15* (WBC 1, Waco: Word Books, 1987), p 73; and G. von Rad, *Genesis* (OTL, London: SCM Press, 1963), pp. 85-6.

⁴⁶² In some Korean Bibles, the prejudice against Eve is even worse. For example, the most popular Korean Bible says that Eve weakened the certainty of death as punishment: "You two *may* die..."

mandment. It is not impossible that God also announced this to Eve, but in terms of the story it is difficult to find proof for such an interpretation.

Furthermore we need to pay attention to God's judgment after the fall. In Gen. 3:11 and 17 God twice mentions that he himself gave the commandment *to Adam*. In contrast, in 3:13 and 16, God did not mention that he gave the command *to Eve*, too, but just asks the reason for her violation. It should also be noted that the punishment of Eve is not directly related to death as announced in the commandment of the tree of knowledge of good and evil (3:16).⁴⁶³ All of these implicitly show that God did not give the commandment of the tree of knowledge of good and evil directly to Eve. The commandment was given to Eve by Adam. This is exactly what Paul says in the analogy in Rom. 7:1-6. The law of Adam was given to his wife, Eve, through marriage. Take note that their marriage took place before Gen. 3:3.

The point is this: Eve's answer ("You shall not eat of it, neither shall you touch it") cannot be regarded as wrong but must be regarded as the law given by Adam. Once Eve's answer turns out to be the law given by Adam, it can be identified as the law of the husband mentioned in the analogy.⁴⁶⁴ Paul thus must have had Eve's answer in mind when he wrote this.

3.2.3 Guess or truth?

Can we be sure that Paul paid attention to Gen. 3:3? To my mind, we can. We can even find the text that tells us what Paul had in mind. Let us move to Gal. 3. In 3:19, Paul emphasizes that the law was given by means of angels (δι' ἀγγέλων ἐν χειρὶ μεσίτου). In general, scholars agree that the law was given not directly from God but through mediators, but they have diverse interpretations of the phrase δι' ἀγγέλων ἐν

⁴⁶³ Technically speaking, Eve comes under death by the law of husband, Adam. It will be explained further on.

⁴⁶⁴ For Paul, in 7:7-13, ὁ νόμος and ἡ ἐντολή are essentially alike as I have already said. Here, it is interesting to take note of a similarity between the law of Adam and the law of Moses. The Torah contains Moses' explanations and comments of God's commandments. Likewise, the small change in the wording of the law of Adam in Gen. 3: 3 ("Neither shall you touch it") might be seen as a sort of explanation of it by Adam.

χειρὶ μεσίτου. Hübner⁴⁶⁵ understands it as meaning that the law was given by evil angels. On the other hand, Dunn⁴⁶⁶ interprets this as referring to God's glory as shown by angels, citing Deut. 33:2 in the LXX. Interpreting ἄγγελοι as angels, however, no matter whether they are good or evil, is faced with the problem that no Old Testament verses say that the law was given by angels. Even in Deut. 33:2 in the LXX where the appearance of angels is mentioned, they do not appear as mediators. We will do better if we read ἄγγελοι as referring to human messengers.⁴⁶⁷ In this case, what Paul wants to say is that the law was given by human messengers with the function of mediation. The Torah, in fact, was not given to Israel directly by God. See Deut. 6 and Exod. 20. The Torah was given through the mediation of Moses. If Paul had noticed that the Torah had been given through mediators,⁴⁶⁸ he would not have overlooked it. He must have paid attention to the fact that the Torah was given by the hand of human messengers on behalf of God.⁴⁶⁹

Here, let us remember Rom. 5:12ff. Paul treats the law (the commandment) of Adam and the law of Moses on the same level. He sees an essential continuity between the two. It is quite surprising to see a further point of continuity between the two in 'being-given-by-messengers' again: The commandment of Adam and the law of Moses were both given by human messengers. Now we can safely say that Paul pays attention to the fact that Eve's commandment was given by Adam. In this sense, the commandment in Gen. 3 is the law of Adam; in other words, it is the law given by Adam, and Eve is bound to the law by Adam.

⁴⁶⁵ H. Hübner, *Law*, pp. 26-31. Cf. J. L. Martyn, *Galatians*, pp. 356-57, who basically has the same idea: Angels played an active part in establishing the law in God's absence.

⁴⁶⁶ J. D. G. Dunn, *Theology*, p. 140.

⁴⁶⁷ Cf. σκόλοψ τῆ σαρκί, ἄγγελος σατανᾶ (2 Cor. 12:7), and also the angels in the seven churches in Revelation who are pastors and thus God's messengers.

⁴⁶⁸ The reason why Paul uses ἀγγέλων (plural) can be understood in ways: 1) For Paul, the commandment(s) of Adam and the law of Moses do not differ, so that the law is given by messengers (Adam and Moses); or 2) The Torah was given to Israel again officially when she entered the Promised Land, and the official mediator was Joshua at that time (Josh. 1); the official acceptance of the Torah represented by Shechemite Decalogue was actually done by Joshua (Josh. 8).

⁴⁶⁹ It is very interesting to compare the logic of Paul's arguments in Rom. 7 and Gal. 3. In Galatians, having said that the law was given by human messengers, Paul then continues to the notion that the law was given for transgressions. In Romans, the development of his thoughts does not differ. The law is the law given by husband, and the law produces covetousness.

3.2.4 “You shall not touch it” = “You shall not covet”

Eve was given the commandment and bound to it by Adam. By the way, in Rom. 7:7ff., Paul refers to Eve by means of the *ego*. If so, then, where can we find the commandment οὐκ ἐπιθυμήσεις (Rom. 7:7) in Gen. 2-3? And if we can, why did Paul take it as an example?

As we have seen above, Eve’s version of the commandment of the tree of knowledge of good and evil is different from that of God in Gen. 2. Eve’s one has an addition: “You shall not touch it” (וְלֹא תִגְעֶנּוּ בּוֹ). It should be noted that touching is connected to coveting. Firstly, Genesis itself connects the two. Eve says this addition,⁴⁷⁰ and then the serpent deceives her by it. Eve then succumbs to covetousness, and *takes* (וַתִּקַּח מִפְרִיָּו) and eats the fruit (Gen. 3:6). Taking is an actual violation of the commandment not to touch it. Secondly, the desire of eating is also linked to touching elsewhere in the Old Testament, for example, in Job 6:6-7. Take note that the verb “touch” (נָגַעַ) in 6:7 (“My soul refuses to touch”) is the same as the verb “touch” in Gen. 3:3. Thirdly, the tenth commandment in the Ten Commandments is also connected to touching. Adultery and coveting the neighbour’s wife is described in terms of touching. For instance, see Prov. 6:29. The verse also has the same verb (נָגַעַ).

Decisively and lastly, in Col. 2:20-1,⁴⁷¹ Paul describes the law in terms of Gen. 3. Col. 2:21 (μὴ ἄψηται μηδὲ γεύσῃ μηδὲ θίγῃς) paraphrases Gen. 3:3 (וְלֹא תִגְעֶנּוּ בּוֹ) מִמֶּנּוּ וְלֹא תִאֲכַלְוּ: “You shall not eat of it, neither shall you touch it”) and 6 (וַתִּקַּח מִפְרִיָּו וַתֹּאכַל) “She took of the fruit and ate”) exactly. Especially, it must be carefully noted that Paul uses the two verbs (ἄπτω and θιγγάνω) with similar meanings. What he emphasizes by a sort of redundancy is closely related to the addition (“Neither shall you

⁴⁷⁰ It should be noted that this addition was not from Eve but from Adam. Gen. 3 does not suggest that she added it. On the other hand, it should also be noted that the addition by Adam was not a change of the original commandment of God. It was the husband’s, Adam’s, correct explanation. Remember that for Eve, God’s commandment of the tree of knowledge of good and evil was the law of her husband.

⁴⁷¹ Στοιχεῖον is essentially not different from the law. See Gal. 4:3-9.

touch it”) in Gen. 3:3. Therefore, we can accept that in 7:7ff., Paul does not refer to the tenth commandment in the Torah but to the commandment of Adam.⁴⁷²

Why did Paul refer to the law of Adam? He wanted to explain the nature of the Torah *in terms of Eve’s narrative* by identifying the law of Adam as the law of Moses.

3.2.5 Ὁ νόμος καὶ ἡ ἐντολή

The theological ‘I’, or Eve for that matter, is not different from any human being, including Paul. Paul groups himself with Eve who has become one body with Adam, by saying that he is in the flesh. Paul and Eve, however, can be distinguished clearly. Likewise, the commandments of Adam and of the Torah are not essentially different but they can be distinguished. Already in Rom. 5 Paul has stated that the commandments of Adam and of the Torah are the same. Adam’s violation does not differ from the transgressions of the people after Moses. The transgression of the commandment of Adam is not different from that of the law of Moses. In Rom. 7, Paul again connects the commandment of Adam and the law of Moses by hinting at the Eve narrative.

Covetousness is used as a point of contact between the commandment of Adam and the law of Moses. The commandment of Adam is violated by covetousness; and the covetousness can be connected to the tenth commandment of the law. Paul reveals how sin acts through the law by showing how the serpent brought forth death by the commandment of Adam. The real culprit is sin (7:11) with 7:11 thus functioning as the answer to 7:7. The law is not sin; this Paul shows by referring to Adam and Eve’s case. However, at the same time, Paul has to face the terrible truth that, for him, the law means not life, but death. 7:7ff. is generally regarded as a defence of the law. But if Paul simply wanted to defend the law, should he not have developed this idea to avoid the dilemma? This does not happen. It seems rather as if he leads his readers deliberately to the dilemma. The dilemma is the undeniable historical conclusion revealed by the Eve event. Having shown the dilemma, he then offers a

⁴⁷² *Contra* J. A. Ziesler, “The Role of the Tenth Commandment in Romans 7”, *JSNT* 33 (1988), pp. 41-56. According to him, Paul concludes that people are absolutely not able to do the law by citing the tenth commandment containing a prohibition not of action but of attitude.

counter-argument. The law is holy (7:12). If so, does this mean that what is good has become death for him? By no means (7:13). This is an obvious dilemma. However, it is not a case of him attempting to solve the dilemma belatedly. He, rather, tries to disclose the dilemmatic nature of the law by an historic dilemma. This is the very purpose of Rom. 7.

Paul is for and against the law. For him, the law is good. We all know this (7:14a). Nevertheless, the law brings forth death. This is an undeniable truth in human history. But what is good can in no ways be death. All of these statements so far are true. This historical dilemma of the law can never be explained by an investigation of the psychological agony of humankind, neither can it be solved by an analysis of the human inability to observe the law. The solution to the dilemma must be related to the nature and the essence of the law. Now Paul tries to solve it. Having outlined the dilemma caused by the commandment of Adam by the Eve event in the past, Paul then starts to concentrate only on the Torah by hinting at Deuteronomy. The word commandment (ἐντολή) disappears and only the word law (νόμος) remains, used with present verbs in 7:14ff. Before we move to 7:14-25, let us have a preliminary conclusion.

3.2.6 Explanation and conclusion

In 7:7ff., Paul identifies the law in the context of Genesis, hinting at the Adam and Eve event. The law is then identified with the commandment given to Eve by Adam.⁴⁷³ What kind of law is the commandment (her law) for Eve (her ego)? Eve (that is, the ego) could not have known covetousness without the law. That does not mean that the law made her find her already-existing covetousness within herself. Take note that, in 7:7, Paul links covetousness to sin. Without the law Eve could not have known sin and covetousness. Here, it is important that sin does not refer to her sinful nature. Sin is depicted as the serpent. Sin is a satanic power coming out of

⁴⁷³ As far as I know, K. Barth, *Der Römerbrief* (Zürich: Theologischer Verlag, 1967), pp. 228-31, was unique in the last century in that he linked Eve to Rom. 7:8. He, however, understood it as saying that Eve worshiped God wrongly by religion, that is, by the word of the serpent. His interpretation completely misses the thrust of Paul's argument which is based on the analogy of marriage.

Eve and ruling her. Sin thus becomes powerful by the law; the law makes her experience sin (commit sin) and know it. Likewise, covetousness was not something Eve had in herself. She came to experience it⁴⁷⁴ by the law. This is confirmed in 7:8. The law does not help her to find covetousness existing in her, but produces (καὶ τεργάζομαι) it in her.⁴⁷⁵ The *ego* is not the subject of the performance but the place where sin creates covetousness by the law (7:8). The subject is sin, using the law. The law makes sin alive (powerful), and sin produces covetousness by the law, and finally kills Eve by the law. The death of Eve thus comes through deceit (Gen. 3:4-5). This is exactly what Rom. 7:11 points out. If the verse refers to Paul's experience or the experience of Christians in general, in other words, if the verse explains not an once-and-for-all event but one that is repeated over and over, in what way does it make sense that sin deceives humankind by the commandment?

It is said that sin works covetousness by the commandment, which does not mean that Eve's weakness or inability was revealed by the commandment. Sin produced covetousness not by her inability but by the commandment. Sin took the opportunity by the commandment (7:8). In other words, sin cannot act without the commandment. This is what we have seen in Rom. 5:13.⁴⁷⁶ Sin is as good as dead without the commandment. This is also supported by Rom. 7:9: Sin was dead before the commandment came; it could not take the opportunity. This exactly describes the situation: Without the commandment the serpent could not attack Eve in Eden. On arrival of the commandment, sin began to act together with it at last. Sin was in fact revived. The commandment helped sin to be sinful and to act sin-like (cf. 7:13). What if the commandment was there while sin was not? We must remember that *Eve never discovered her fault, the hibernating covetousness in her, before the serpent deceived her*. The point is that without the commandment, sin was as good as dead and covetousness could not be produced in Eve. To conclude, what Paul wants to deduce from the Eve event is this: By the law, Eve came to *know* covetousness and sin. The law that gave her the knowledge of sin turned out to be the commandment of the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

⁴⁷⁴ Cf. D. J. Moo, *Romans*, p. 434, footnote 32, for the experiential aspect of the knowledge in Rom. 7:7. He refers to several German scholars.

⁴⁷⁵ Gen. 3:6 indicates the scope of the covetousness produced in Eve.

⁴⁷⁶ Cf. section "Rom. 5:12-21" in chapter VII for the exegesis of Rom. 5:13.

3.3 Rom. 7:14-25

3.3.1 Introduction

For the sake of understanding the whole structure, I have to discuss the tree of knowledge of good and evil. This is so, because even though, for Paul, the Torah is identified with the commandment of the tree, contemporary New Testament scholars do not understand the tree as in the way that I understand it. The tree of knowledge of good and evil is not the tree of good and evil. The tree itself is not evil. It only makes humankind know evil. On the other hand, the tree is not good either. It only brings the knowledge of what is good. The evil is sin, and the good is life.⁴⁷⁷ The commandment of the tree of knowledge of good and evil thus brings knowledge of covetousness and sin but it is not evil or sin itself. On the other hand, it gives the knowledge of good (as explained later, the knowledge of the absence of the good in this context) but it is not good itself.

Understanding this is very important for understanding Rom. 7, as its understanding hinges on the proper interpretation of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. This is so, because *Paul develops his logic in Rom. 7:7-21 according to the structure above*. The law (commandment) makes Eve know evil (sin) (7:7-13) and good (14-21).

Having said that, Paul then states that the law which brought the knowledge of evil and good is the law which was used by sin, that is, the law of sin, which also brought death, that is, the law of death (7:23, 25, and 8:2). As the commandment of the tree of knowledge of good and evil is not evil itself but is the commandment of death, so the law is not evil itself but the law of death.

⁴⁷⁷ To put it in a more personalized way: Sin, the evil, is the serpent representing Satan, who produced covetousness, while the good is Christ, that is, life. Since Calvin, Reformed circles have been reading the tree of life as Christ in a sacramental sense.

3.3.2 Good and evil

In section 1.1, I have paid attention to the fact that the *ego* in 7:14ff. does only evil. Paul's explanation is thus too extreme to fit the portrait of human psychology. He tries to depict something else. What is the good in 7:18? When it comes to the good in humankind, we normally tend to think of the good nature of humankind in terms of ethics. This idea easily slips into one's understanding of Rom. 7. We easily forget something that Paul repeats several times in 7:12ff. (7:12, 13, and 16): What Paul calls good is actually the law. And it is said earlier in 7:12 that the law is good. Therefore, we have to read "good" in 7:18 as the law. Reading 'good' as the law goes well with its verb οἰκέω. The good thing in v. 18 is not something good in abstract terms, for example, in the sense of 'good and evil'. The good is something *personal*. Take note that Paul describes the two laws in 7:23ff. as two persons. The laws are battling and one of them captures the *ego*. On the other hand, the *ego* also obeys the law. This is confirmed by the fact that the good in v. 18 is the law. In 7:19-21, Paul uses the same structure as in 7:15-8.⁴⁷⁸ What Paul in 7:19-21 comes to know (find) is *the law*; this is expressed by the same logical structure as in 7:15-8, by which Paul said that he knew no dwelling of *the law* in him. In v. 18 he thus does not refer to his good nature but to the law.

On the other hand, what is 'evil' in v. 21? This does not refer to evil human nature. In v. 20, Paul has already identified the culprit who did what Paul did not want to do. It was sin. Therefore, 'evil' is not used to designate human nature committing sin in Paul. It should be noticed that 'evil' should be compared to 'good'. From the fact that he does not do what is good, Paul deduces that good does not dwell in him (v. 18). On the other hand, from the fact that he does the evil that he does not want to, he deduces that evil is present with him (19-21). Evil must be something which is in contrast to good, that is, the law. The point is this: Evil is opposed to good but they essentially share a certain nature. If the good is the good law (the law of the good),

⁴⁷⁸ 1) Rom. 7:15 ὁ γὰρ κατεργάζομαι οὐ γινώσκω· οὐ γὰρ ὁ θέλω τοῦτο πράσσω, ἀλλ' ὁ μισῶ τοῦτο ποιῶ. → Rom. 7:19 οὐ γὰρ ὁ θέλω ποιῶ ἀγαθόν, ἀλλὰ ὁ οὐ θέλω κακὸν τοῦτο πράσσω.
2) Rom. 7:16-7 εἰ δὲ ὁ οὐ θέλω τοῦτο ποιῶ, σύμφημι τῷ νόμῳ ὅτι καλός· ἡ δὲ οὐκέτι ἐγὼ κατεργάζομαι αὐτὸ ἀλλὰ ἡ οἰκοῦσα ἐν ἐμοὶ ἁμαρτία. → Rom. 7:20 εἰ δὲ ὁ οὐ θέλω [ἐγὼ] τοῦτο ποιῶ, οὐκέτι ἐγὼ κατεργάζομαι αὐτὸ ἀλλὰ ἡ οἰκοῦσα ἐν ἐμοὶ ἁμαρτία.
3) Rom. 7:18 Οἶδα γὰρ ὅτι οὐκ οἰκεῖ ἐν ἐμοί, τοῦτ' ἔστιν ἐν τῇ σαρκί μου, ἀγαθόν· τὸ γὰρ θέλειν παράκειται μοι, τὸ δὲ κατεργάζεσθαι τὸ καλὸν οὐ· → Rom. 7:21 εὕρισκω ἄρα τὸν νόμον, τῷ θέλοντι ἐμοὶ ποιεῖν τὸ καλόν, ὅτι ἐμοὶ τὸ κακὸν παράκειται.

then evil must be the evil law (the law of the evil). Is this expression not strange? Does Paul contrast the good law to the evil law? We find the same contrast in v. 25: The law of God and the law of sin. We do not have any problems in understanding that Paul says that the law is good and then calls it the law of God. In contrast to this, we should grasp that if Paul speaks of the evil law, “the law of sin” must be one of the most exact paraphrases of what he has in mind.

In v. 21, it is reconfirmed that Paul does not refer to human nature but to the laws of good and evil. Having finished his explanation of good and evil in vv. 18-20, Paul ‘finds’ something in v. 21. What he finds is the law. In this instance ‘law’ does not mean principle.⁴⁷⁹ First of all, if νόμος in v. 21 means principle, it will be a sort of redundancy. It is not absolutely necessary. If so, would Paul who had been using the word to refer to law really try to use the same word to mean principle, if it adds something unnecessary? Νόμος is one of the most important words in the entire Romans and has been used to indicate the law throughout until now. And in the next verses (vv. 22ff.) Paul continues his unique thoughts on the law. There is no reason for him to suddenly use the word in any other sense in v. 21. In short, what Paul finds in v. 21 is νόμος, the law. In v. 21, Paul declares that he has finally found, seen, and understood the law! Take note that in the wake of finding νόμος, the law, Paul begins to use a wide variety of descriptions to refer to the law: law of God, law of the mind, law of sin, law of the Spirit of life, and law of death. It is unthinkable that he would use this key word in a different sense in the climax of his explanation of the law.

Finally, let us suppose that good and evil in vv. 18 and 21 do not mean law but just good and evil. What is critically important is that in vv. 22ff., Paul, in fact, refers to the good law (the law of God, the law of the mind, and the law of the Spirit) and to the evil law (the law of sin and the law of death). In 15-21, Paul realizes that *even though he wants the good, the good is not in him, that is, in his flesh* (v. 16), *but rather evil is in him* (v. 21). This is repeated exactly in 7:22-4. Paul delights in the law of God after the inner man (v. 22). He is brought into captivity to the law of sin and is captured in the body of death, that is, in the flesh (v. 22-3). Good turns into the law of God and evil into the law of sin. 7:18 and 21 are repeated exactly in v. 25. That he wants good (the law), but that evil (the law) is in his flesh, is changed into the notion

⁴⁷⁹ *Contra* D. J. Moo, *Romans*, p. 460, who says that it makes more sense to interpret νόμος here as principle (see footnote 62).

that he serves the law of God with the mind and the law of sin with the flesh. Thus the difference in the expressions is not essential and critical. It is obvious that Paul means the good law and the evil law, namely, the law of God and the law of sin when referring to good (v. 18) and evil (v. 21). Here, Paul in fact refers to two laws. The law is depicted as a person who dwells in him and captures him. Furthermore the law is twofold. Take note that Paul refers to the law of God and to another law in vv. 22-3. This does not refer to two functions of one and the same law. The other law of v. 23 is a different law.⁴⁸⁰ Paul thus has two laws in mind. When we realise that this is not merely a form of literary art, but a theological frame from ἕτερος νόμος, a new horizon for the understanding of the law opens to us.

3.3.3 Οὐκ οἰκεῖ ἐν ἐμοί, τοῦτ' ἔστιν ἐν τῇ σαρκί μου, ἀγαθόν

The identification of the commandment, that is, of the law, in terms of evil appeared in 7:10-11. The commandment for life led the *ego* to death. Now Paul begins to explain the commandment in terms of the good. A question appears at the beginning of the shift in vv. 12-3.

V. 7:12 is not the conclusion of vv. 7-11. Already in v. 10, Paul said that the commandment was supposed to lead him to life. However, he did not substantiate this statement. Obviously, this was revealed by the tree of life in the commandment of Adam. Therefore, it was not necessary to prove that the commandment was holy, righteous, and good. Thus 7:12 is not a conclusion. It should rather be read as the foundation of the question in v. 13. In this case, it is a kind of insertion clause. Μέν in v. 12 in fact indicates a concessive meaning. The logic develops as follows: The commandment (the law) led the *ego* to death by sin (vv. 7-11). Therefore, even though the commandment was obviously good, does it become death (vv. 12-3a)? What is the answer to this question? The good can never be death. This was the case in order that sin might be shown to be sin (v. 13b). The reason why Paul asks

⁴⁸⁰ The ἕτερος νόμος is not a third law apart from the law of God and the law of sin. The adjective ἕτερος shows that the law is different from the law of God (v. 22) that is mentioned right before it. Take note that soon after this, the law of God is called the law of the mind and ἕτερος νόμος is called the law of sin.

this question (v. 13a) is that after he has finished explaining the commandment only in terms of evil and after having connected it to the tree of knowledge of good and evil, he wants to explain it in terms of the good. In terms of the evil, the commandment gives one the knowledge of sin by experiencing it. Then, in terms of the good, what knowledge does the commandment give to the *ego*? The answer is found in vv. 14-21.

We should notice that Paul uses the word *θέλω* intensively in order to answer this question. He uses the verb seven times in vv. 15-21. By doing so, he intensively contrasts what the *ego* does with what the *ego* wants to do (vv. 15-6 and 18-21). The aim of this contrast is to contrast the mind and the flesh. What the *ego* wants is finally connected to the mind in v. 25 through the inner man in v. 22. Mind and flesh are thus contrasted conclusively in v. 25. Paul deduces this contrast from the contrast of the *ego*'s wanting good and doing evil.

Since Paul's explanations are based on the notion of the tree of *knowledge* of good and evil, we have to pay attention to what Paul came to 'know' (*οἶδα*) and "find" (*εὕρισκω*) (v. 18 and v. 21). What Paul realizes in v. 18 is – surprisingly – related to the good, namely that the good does not dwell in the *ego*. And what is important is that it is the law that the *ego* comes to find by this. According to this circle of logic, by finding the law, *the ego* knows that although it wants good, evil is in it instead. Once again, the law has been identified as the law that gives the knowledge of good and evil. Even if the *ego* wants to do the good law, the good law is not in it⁴⁸¹ but instead the evil law is in it in the flesh, that is, in Adam.

Finally, this means that the law does not differ from the commandment of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. The law brings the knowledge of good and evil. By the law, the *ego* comes to know sin and evil. In this sense, the law is the law of sin. On the other hand, the law brings the knowledge of good, too. But this knowledge is tragic. The knowledge tells the *ego* that the law of the good is absent in it. Finally, it is revealed that the law is identified as the law of sin but not as the law of the good. The law gives the *ego* the knowledge that the law of the good is not in it. The *ego* comes to realise this misery. The *ego* thus comes to know *the law!*

If so, then what and where is the law of the good? Besides this question, we also have to pay attention to one more thing. The law is essentially the same as the

⁴⁸¹ The reason why the *ego* cannot do good is that the good law is not in it. The *ego* is ruled by the law that dwells in it and, at the same time, captures it.

commandment. By the way, the commandment is related to the two trees. Paul, however, has been explaining the law only in terms of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. What meaning does the law have in terms of the tree of life? Paul is about to discuss this now. The way to the tree of life was closed to Eve. In that sense, there was no commandment of life. Paul suggested this by referring to the absence of the good law.⁴⁸² In Adam, there is no commandment of life (the good law). Is that then the end of the story? We all know that the redemptive history did not end in Gen. 3. Now, Paul begins to hint at Deuteronomy in order to explain the law in terms of the commandment of the tree of life, or the good law.⁴⁸³

3.3.4 Change of tense: from ἐντολή to νόμος

The commandment of Adam and the law are essentially alike but can be distinguished. Paul explained the nature of the law by means of Genesis. The law is the commandment of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Paul suddenly makes quite a change, putting the law within the framework of the tree of knowledge of good and evil in vv. 7-21. What should be noted is the shift in tenses. He begins to use the present tense in v. 14.⁴⁸⁴ For which reason?⁴⁸⁵ The critical hint to get to the answer lies in the word ἐντολή disappearing in vv. 14ff. Leaving Genesis, Paul leaves the commandment, and concentrates only on the law of Moses now. When Paul referred

⁴⁸² Paul might have paid attention to the end of Gen. 3. Adam came to know good and evil in Gen. 3:22a. Here, take note that the knowledge is directly connected to his awareness of the necessity of the tree of life, in other words, to its absence.

⁴⁸³ The good law appears as the law of God, the law of the Spirit of *life* later on. The latter designation hints effectively at the commandment of the tree of knowledge of *life*.

⁴⁸⁴ N. T. Wright, "Romans and the Theology of Paul", in: *Pauline Perspectives: Essays on Paul, 1978-2013* (London: SPCK, 2013), pp. 109-13, identifies seven points of Rom. 7:1-8:11. In the second point, he says that 7:7-12 deals with the *arrival* of the Torah (the aorist tenses) but 7:13-20 deals with the *continuing state* of Israel (the present tenses). C. E. B. Cranfield, *Romans*, Vol. I, p. 354, also thinks that a new paragraph starts with v. 13. Cf. D. J. Mood, *Romans*, pp. 451-52, too.

However, the sentence after ἀλλά in v. 13 is incomplete so that we should add ἐγένετο (ἐμοὶ θάνατος) (cf. C. E. B. Cranfield, *Romans*, Vol. I, p. 354). The past tense of v. 13 shows that the verse should be included in the previous paragraph (vv. 7-12).

⁴⁸⁵ The change to the present tense is so important that we cannot say that it is just a vivid explanation (cf. C. L. Mitten, "Romans vii. Reconsidered", *ET* 65 [1954], p. 100). Following Calvin, C. E. B. Cranfield, *Romans*, Vol. I, p. 356, says that the natural interpretation of the present tense with the *ego* is that it depicts the situation of Christians. However, we will see that the present tense describes the present situation not of believers but of the Torah.

to the *ego* in terms of Eve, he used the past tense. So it is not just proper but in fact necessary that he has to switch to the present tense when he refers to Israel, including the *ego*. For this, Paul turns to Deuteronomy.

3.3.5 An echo of Deut. 30

In the beginning of his explanation of Rom. 7, Käsemann⁴⁸⁶ notes that the antithesis between flesh and spirit must have been influenced by a dualism, and investigates the origin of dualism from the perspective of the history of religions. According to him, however, this investigation is not fruitful. To my mind, we should follow a different route. Before we try to investigate the dualism between flesh and spirit, we must attempt to understand Paul's view of the law in Rom. 7, in particular in the light of Paul's contrast between flesh and spirit in 7:5-6 and 8:4ff., and the contrast between σάρξ (flesh) and νοῦς (*mind*) in the middle part, that is, in 7:23-5, where the huge variety in terms of expressions referring to the law appears.

In the case of vv. 14-21, I have argued that by good and evil Paul meant the law of God and the law of sin. That is to say, what he says in 7:22-8:2 is linked to what he says in 7:14-21. The critical statement is found in 7:25 and its final expression in the opposite sense appears in 8:2. The *ego* serves the law of God with the mind, and the law of sin with the flesh. That the evil law is in it, that is, in the flesh, is then changed to the statement that the *ego* serves the law of sin with the flesh; and that it wants the good law is changed into the notion that the *ego* serves the law of God with the mind. Paul substitutes the mind for the inner man who delights and serves the law of God for the sake of contrast with the flesh. Importantly, he couples the law of God with the mind, and the law of sin with the flesh, respectively, and then divides the two. Finally, the law of God is called the law of the Spirit of life, and the law of sin is called the law of sin and death in 8:2.⁴⁸⁷ Why did Paul work out this antithesis in

⁴⁸⁶ E. Käsemann, *Römer*, pp. 178-83.

⁴⁸⁷ Νόμος in a positive sense in 7:22-8:2 is popularly read as principle. For instance, see D. Moo. *Romans*, pp. 462-75; and H. Räisänen, "The Law of Faith and the Spirit", in: *Jesus, Paul, and Torah: Collected Essays* (JSNTSup 43, Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992), p. 66. Also see H. Räisänen, "Paul's Word-Play on νόμος: A Linguistic Study", in: *ibid.*, pp. 69-94. According to him, Paul is performing a sort of word-play. However, these approaches are all based on the presupposition that Paul only had

terms of the form of a pair (the law of God – the mind ⇔ the law of sin – the flesh) in v. 25?

Many have tried to explain this by referring to the Hellenistic understanding of the mind (νοῦς).⁴⁸⁸ However, not one of the Hellenistic semantic approaches to the mind does really grasp the important reason why Paul uses this word instead of spirit. If listeners know the Old Testament very well, the mere mentioning of one word, for example, gate post, is enough to remind them of all the images linked to it. And “hand and forehead” (between the eyes) makes listeners recall the famous verse in Deuteronomy immediately. Likewise, לֵב⁴⁸⁹ is one of the key words in Deuteronomy. Deut. 6:5 (and 30:9)⁴⁹⁰ is one of the key verses in the book. So it is not a logical jump to recall the verse or the book, by one word, לֵב. In Rom. 2:29, Paul has already hinted clearly at Deuteronomy (10:16 or 30:6), focusing on לֵב.⁴⁹¹ He emphasized the circumcision of the *heart*. To me it seems logical that the fact that he accentuated *mind* again in Rom. 7 should remind one of Deuteronomy. So let us consider Paul’s explanation in terms of a connection to Deuteronomy.

In order to understand the declarations in 7:25 (a negative version) and 8:2 (a positive one), we have to follow Paul’s logic in 7:15-21 properly. Paul knows that the good (the law) is not in the *ego’s* flesh by the fact that to do the good is not present with it. The opposite happens; it does what it does not want to do. By this, it knows

one law in mind.

In 7:22-8:2, where a variety of expressions of νόμος appears, Paul uses the word in a negative and a positive sense without any clear distinction. We should ponder how the positive use of νόμος is possible together with the negative use of it, keeping on reading νόμος as law consistently rather than reading it as a different word, thereby not realising the possibility of the positive use of νόμος by focusing only on Paul’s emphasis of the negative aspects of νόμος. Paul has already declared that νόμος is holy (7:12) and spiritual (7:14). Here, in vv. 12 and 14, νόμος cannot mean principle. Paul’s positive evaluation of νόμος in 7:22-8:2 does not appear suddenly out of the blue. The νόμος of the Spirit in 8:2 is rather in harmony with 7:14 so that it cannot be the principle of the Spirit.

⁴⁸⁸ For instance, according to Käsemann, *Römer*, pp.198-99, the mind is the same as the inner man, and is not different from the human reason in the Hellenistic tradition.

⁴⁸⁹ The Hebrew word לֵב can be generally translated as νοῦς (mind) or καρδία (heart). Cf. 3824 לֵב, *BDBG*, p. 523. Paul, in fact, does not distinguish between the two in regard to לֵב. As we will see, Paul hints at Deut. 30:14 in 7:25. This time he uses νοῦς for לֵב. And νοῦς is connected to the law of God in 7:25. The law of God is rephrased as the law of the Spirit of life in 8:2 so that νοῦς is connected to the law of *the Spirit* of life. Then, later in 8:27, καρδία is introduced as the place of *the Spirit*. Paul uses the two words in regard to the Spirit without any clear distinction. He might have thought that νοῦς was a better choice than καρδία in Rom. 7 where he said, οἴδαμεν ὅτι ὁ νόμος πνευματικός ἐστίν (7:14), and ὑμῶν τῷ νόμῳ ὅτι καλός (7: 16). When he cites Deut. 30:14 in Rom. 10:8, he uses καρδία for לֵב. Between the two, καρδία definitely seems to be a better choice in connection to belief.

⁴⁹⁰ וּבְכָל־מֵאֲדָרְךָ: וְיִהְיֶה אֵת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל־לְבָבְךָ וּבְכָל־מֵאֲדָרְךָ:

⁴⁹¹ It is translated as heart (καρδία) in Rom. 2:29.

that evil (the law) is present with it. He connects “what does it do?” to “what law is with it?”.⁴⁹² In other words, for Paul, the presence of a particular law directly relates to what the *ego* does in terms of it. What the *ego* will do, depends on which law is (dwells) in it. In other words, if the *ego* cannot do something, it is because the law relating to what has to be done is not in it. If the law of God is in the *ego*, it cannot but do it; on the other hand if the *ego* does not do something, it implies the absence of the law. This idea might seem very strange to modern Christians, but in fact it is an idea already found in the Old Testament.

Deut. 30 proclaims the law, and commands the Israelites to do it, warning them by means of curse and blessing. They did not only receive promise and hope but also fear. Deut. 30, however, declares that the commandments of God are not difficult. The key to the blessed life is found in Deut. 30:14. If the word⁴⁹³ is in one’s mind (לִבָּ), one can do it. In other words, the being of the word in one’s mind implies one’s doing of it. In that sense, if the Israelites cannot do the word, it is because they do not have the word in their minds.⁴⁹⁴ But this does not focus on one’s ability to do things. The point is the location of the word. See Deut. 30:12-3, and keep in mind that humankind is in a position to serve and obey the law in itself. The focus is not on the ability of the Israelites as such but on the presence of the law.

Paul does not cite Deuteronomy in Rom. 7. However, it is most likely that, when explaining the dilemma of the law, Paul must have paid close attention to Deuteronomy because it deals with the law in so much detail. And this probability becomes even stronger if we take note of the fact that Paul develops his expressions in Rom. 7:22-5 in harmony with Deut. 30:14-5. The inner man delights in the law of God (Rom. 7:22) → The law of God is changed into the law of the *mind* (Rom. 7:23) → And finally, it is declared that the *ego* serves the law of God with the *mind* (Rom. 7:25). If Paul has Deut. 30:11-4 in mind in Rom. 7:15-21, and we take note of the fact that Deut. 30:14-5 says that *the law to bring life and good must be in mind*, we

⁴⁹² According to M. Hengel, *The Pre-Christian Paul*, tr. J. Bowden (London: SCM, 1991), p. 48, we can see the traces of the Rabbinic teaching that good desires or impulses defeat the bad ones by the help of the law, although Paul now attacks the teaching in a Rabbinic way. But the idea that the law helps us not to follow our bad desires is repeatedly found in the Old Testament, for example, in Deuteronomy (30) and Psalms (1 and 119). Moreover, Paul is not against the idea. He just says that the good law, the helper, is not present in the *ego*.

⁴⁹³ The word turns out to be the law later.

⁴⁹⁴ The idea that the presence of Christ’s word determines the life of Christians is found in John 15:7, too.

can expect the expression in Rom. 7:22-5 that the *ego* serves⁴⁹⁵ *the law of God* (the good law in 7:16-8) *with the mind*.⁴⁹⁶

Now, let us pay attention to the wide variety of expressions that Paul uses in regard to the law in 7:10-8:2. The law of God is depicted as the law of the Spirit of life, and the law of sin as the law of sin and death. To summarise: we have the following: A) the law to life – the law of God – the law of the mind - the law of the Spirit of life – the mind; and B) the law to death – the law of sin – the law of death – the flesh are contrasted. The one string is mind – life – good – law and the other one is flesh – death – evil – law. Having noted this, we are struck by the fact that the text in the Old Testament in which one finds the same contrastive strings in the most explicit way, is found in Deut. 30, and, particularly by the fact that the text is found in the verses (vv. 11-5) in Deut. 30 that refer to the same ideas as the one in Rom. 7:14ff., that is, “to do good depends on the presence of the law”. The key words ‘mind’, ‘word’ (‘commandment’ or ‘law’), ‘life’, ‘good’, ‘death’, and ‘evil’ all appear in Deut. 30:14-5!

Besides, it is confirmed by Rom. 10 that in 7:14ff., Paul has Deut. 30 in mind. Paul’s explanation of the law in Rom. 7-8 is developed further in Rom. 9 with regard to Israel, and then connected to what is found in Rom. 10. In other words, his view of the law in Rom. 7-8 prepares one for what is said in Rom. 10.⁴⁹⁷ In Rom. 10, Paul contrasts Christ’s word with the law (the Torah) and says that Christ’s word is the word to be believed with the heart, that is, the word that should be in one’s heart, and then he says that Christ’s word fulfil the Torah.⁴⁹⁸ For this purpose Paul cites Deut. 30:12-4 in Rom. 10:6-8. He uses Deut. 30 to contrast Christ’s word with the Torah in terms of *the word that should be in one’s heart*. That is to say, the kernel of Paul’s theology in regard to the law and one’s heart lies in Deut. 30. It is thus most likely that when Paul referred to the *mind in connection with the law of God* in Rom. 7:25, he thought of Deut. 30 to which he explicitly referred later in Rom. 10.

Let us now have a closer look at Deut. 30. When it comes to the Torah, one of the most important books in the Old Testament is Deuteronomy. Deut. 30 is part of the

⁴⁹⁵ The saying *δουλεύω νόμῳ* in Rom. 7:25 also hints at Deut. 30. Take note that Deut. 30:16-7 warns the Israelites not to *worship and serve* (the commandments of) gods instead of the commandments of God.

⁴⁹⁶ Paul has been accentuating mind and heart in regard to the law from the early part of Rom (1:28, 2:5, and 15).

⁴⁹⁷ The prerequisite for the restoration of Israel in Deut. 30 is her repentance. It is very interesting in terms of structure to see that Paul repents on behalf of Israel in Rom 9 just like Moses did.

⁴⁹⁸ For the meaning of fulfilling the law, see chapter X.

final section of this book (Deut. 27ff.).⁴⁹⁹ In Deut. 27, the beginning of the final section, two mountains are mentioned and their two respective laws of blessing and curse are proclaimed and official acceptance is requested. What is important here is that the law of blessing is in fact missing.⁵⁰⁰ The next chapter, Deut. 28 contains the Mosaic curses of the law. The ultimate curse is counter-Exodus. Here, captivity, that is, Israel's being captured by Gentiles, is accentuated (Deut. 28:36-7, 48, and 68). Israel's captivity is caused by the law. Now take a look at Rom. 7:23. It is the law that captures Paul. Αἰχμαλωσία in Deut. 28:41c (ἀπελεύσονται γὰρ ἐν αἰχμαλωσίᾳ) in the LXX is used in Rom. 7:23 (αἰχμαλωτίζοντά με) in the form of a participle.

The restoration is mentioned after Deut. 27-30, the section on the curse and the blessing of Shechemite covenant. The restoration depicted in Deut. 30:1-4 implies being free from captivity. In contrast to Rom. 7:24-5, Rom. 8:12 refers to the liberation of one not in the flesh but in Christ. It is thus clear that in Rom. 7:14-8:2, Paul follows the structure of Deut. 27-30. The reason for this is revealed in the next section and turns out to be very precise.

First of all, let us pay attention to the special place of Deut. 30. Deut. 30 is the only chapter in which the restoration, in particular, the liberation from captivity is mentioned in Deuteronomy. Besides, the key phrase of Deuteronomy, 'circumcision of the heart' that Paul accentuated in Rom. 2:29 appears again in Deut. 30, after Deut. 10:16. This is also striking, because it is in Deut. 30 that all the key words, 'mind', 'word' (commandment or law), 'life', 'good', 'death', and 'evil' appear. And it is very striking that Deut. 30 contains the verse that connects Deuteronomy and Genesis best. In Deut. 30:15, one finds the key words of Gen. 3, 'life', 'death', 'good', and 'evil' in the form of contrasted couples (life and good ⇔ death and evil).⁵⁰¹ Paul thus

⁴⁹⁹ The structure of Deuteronomy can be briefly summarized as follows: Deut. 1-11: Introductory address; 12-26: Deuteronomic laws; 27-8: Curse (and blessing); 29-30: Moses' last address.

⁵⁰⁰ As we will see later the notion of the law of blessing is kept back.

⁵⁰¹ In that sense, some English versions such as NIV and NET do not show the direct connection. KJV, RSV, and ASV recognize the important difference between Deut. 30:15 and 19 but CSB, NAS, NET, and NIV do not. The former ones translate הַטּוֹב and הָרָע (v. 15) as 'good' and 'evil' but the latter ones as 'prosperity' and 'adversity', 'disaster', or 'destruction'. However, הַטּוֹב and הָרָע (v. 15) must be clearly distinguished from הַבְּרָכָה and הַקְּלָלָה (v. 19). When it comes to Korean versions, the situation is even worse. Ironically, most Korean versions (except for the Modern People's Bible that prefers a free translation) do not translate הַטּוֹב and הָרָע literally so that it is more difficult for Korean readers to pick up the hint and echo.

reads Gen. 2-3 through Deut. 30. Deut. 30 gives meaning to Gen. 2-3 and Gen. 2-3 reinterprets Deut. 30.⁵⁰²

Deut. 30:15 is connected to Gen. 2-3 by means of the echo of the two trees in Eden. At this point, Deut. 30 (which is the subtext of Rom. 7) takes Gen. 2-3 as subtext. In Rom. 7:7-8, Paul hinted at Eve's covetousness in Gen. 3 and connected it to the tenth commandment in Deuteronomy. Now, in Rom. 7:14ff., he hints at Deut. 30 and connects it to Gen. 3 by means of Deut. 30:15. In this way he actually creates a circle of matrixing (connecting text and subtext in a web): Gen. → Deut. → Gen. Once one realises this connection, it becomes so clear that one cannot deny that Paul has Deut. 30 in mind in this chapter.

3.3.6 The law of the husband (Adam) and the tree of knowledge of good and evil → the law of Moses and Mt. Ebal

Now, let us further scrutinize the important link between the Torah and the commandment of Adam. I must deal with Deuteronomy briefly because even though the understanding of the theology of Deuteronomy is critical for interpreting Rom. 7:14ff., Pauline scholars seem not to be aware of it. I accentuate two points that have usually been disregarded by contemporary theologians studying Paul's views of the law. These are what I call the indirectness and the plural nature of the Torah. In particular the second notion is very important.

Let us first scrutinize the indirect nature of the Torah in terms of the way Israel received it. The Torah is God's word. Of course, this is a very positive aspect of the Torah. This aspect, however, has such an effect on scholars that many hesitate to regard and interpret the Torah from a negative point of view, even when they inter-

⁵⁰² According to N. T. Wright, "New Exodus, New Inheritance: The Narrative Structure of Romans 3-8", in: S. K. Soderlund and N. T. Wright (eds.), *Romans and the People: Essays in Honor of Gordon D. Fee on the Occasion of his 65th Birthday* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), pp. 28-9, Paul has the crossing of the Red Sea at the Exodus in mind in Rom. 6. And the topic of the following chapter, Rom. 7:1-8:11, is Israel's receiving the Torah at Mt. Sinai. Sin is correspondent to Egypt (Pharaoh). Paradoxically, the law is the part of enslavement in the second Exodus. Cf. T. S. Holland, *Romans*, for another reading of Romans in the new Exodus paradigm.

However, Wright does not recognize that Paul's idea in Rom. 7 focuses on Eden fundamentally and intensively. Paul's purpose is to reveal the existence of two laws and their identities by Gen. 2-3 reinterpreted by Deut. 30.

pret it in the Old Testament. Such an idea then functions as a sort of a presupposition that as the Torah is God's Word, nothing negative may be said about it. However, to my mind, first of all, we have to take note that the Torah was not given directly to Israel by God. Exodus shows this clearly: The Israelites were afraid of receiving the Torah directly from God so that it was given to them through Moses.⁵⁰³

My interest in the way in which the Torah was given is important, because in Rom. 7:1-6 (the analogy of the law of the husband) and in Rom. 7:7-13 (the law of Eve's husband), Paul draws our attention to the point that for Eve, the commandment in Eden was the law of her husband, that is, the law that became valid through her husband, Adam. Eve's commandment was thus given by Adam.⁵⁰⁴ Even though Eve's commandment and the Torah can be distinguished, they are essentially the same. Although the Torah came from God, it was not given to Israel directly by him. All the laws and the commandments in the Torah were delivered by Moses. For Israel, the Torah was the law given by Moses, namely, the law of Moses. Israel was bound to the law of Moses by him.

Now, let us move to the twofold nature of the Torah. Paul identified the Torah as the commandment of Adam. The two trees were linked to this commandment. It should be noted that we do not have one tree with two aspects but that it is explicitly said that there were two trees in Eden. God's commandment given to Eve by Adam consisted not only of the stipulation of death in respect of the tree of knowledge of good and evil but also of that of life in respect of the tree of life. *Both* stipulations were God's *commandment* (cf. Gen. 2:16-7).⁵⁰⁵ However, when it comes to commandment, it looks as if many scholars tend to think only of the commandment of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. But that Adam and Eve should eat all the fruits in the garden was also a commandment. The point is this: The commandment of Adam was not a single commandment, but a twofold commandment. The two orders (stipulations) were not two parts or aspects of the one commandment of Adam but two separate commandments. The fact that there were two separate trees in the centre of the garden confirms this. The violation of the commandment of the tree of

⁵⁰³ Exodus 19: 3, 19:20-20:1, and 20:18-21. See Deut. 5:5, 27, and 31, too. Cf. Deut. 33:2-4.

⁵⁰⁴ Cf. section 3.2.2 "Did Eve exaggerate God's Commandment?" in chapter VIII.

⁵⁰⁵ Most English versions indicate a nuance of permission in Gen. 2:16b ("You *may* eat..."). But, considering the relation of the verb אָכַל in the main clause, Gen. 2:16 should be understood as meaning that God commanded Adam *to eat* of all the fruits in the garden (including the tree of life) freely (or that God commanded that they should eat all the fruits freely) so that the verse shows the nature of commandment in a positive sense, in contrast to that of the other tree.

knowledge of good and evil brings forth death but the observance of the commandment cannot produce life. Life and death do not result from one tree, but independently from two trees. The commandment of the tree of knowledge of good and evil and the one of the tree of life should be linked to the two laws in Romans 7, that is, on the one hand, the law of sin and death, and, on the other hand, the law of God and the Spirit of life. In terms of the intertextuality between Gen. 2-3 and Rom. 7, Paul thus suggests that the Torah is the law of sin that brings forth the knowledge of sin by people committing sin, or, in other words, the law of death that produces death – the law in which (the commandment of) life is absent. Now let us investigate how what Paul hinted at in this way, resonates in Deuteronomy.

As is well known, the Torah contains blessings and curses. However, surprisingly, Deuteronomy postpones the law of the blessings to be found through the Torah. Deuteronomy consists of Moses' theological sermons, with Deut. 27-30 (or -34) as its concluding core. This serves as the last exhortation and is usually regarded as the conclusion of Deuteronomy as well as of the Pentateuch. Furthermore, Deut. 27 contains the concrete directions of Israel's official acceptance of Torah after the crossing of the River Jordan. In this chapter, the Israelites are ordered to assemble on Mt. Ebal and Gerizim in two groups and to listen to the proclamation of the words of the law, which should then be accepted by them by means of Amen. The words had to be written on stones and had to be placed on the mountain. But it is very surprising that the words that the Israelites had to accept consisted *only* of curses.⁵⁰⁶ And that these words should stand *only* on Mt. Ebal (obviously the words of the curses⁵⁰⁷).

⁵⁰⁶ Why this so? What happened to the blessing? Why is only the curse emphasized? Although Deut. 27:11-3 mentions both blessing and curse, 27:14-26 in fact only contains curses. There is discontinuity between 27:12-3 and 27:14-26. The relation between the two is one of the biggest difficulties in the theology of Deuteronomy. In extreme cases, 7:12-3 and 7:14-26 are regarded as referring to different events. Cf. G. von Rad, *Deuteronomy* (OTL, London: SCM Press, 1966), p. 166; S. R. Driver, *Deuteronomy*, ICC (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1978), p. 300; and S. Mowinckel, *Psalmstudien V. Segen und Fluch in Israels Kult und Psalmdichtung* (Kristiana, 1924), pp. 77 and 104. C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *The Fifth Book of Moses, Commentary on the Old Testament in Ten Volumes*, Vol. I Pentateuch (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1975), pp. 432 and 435, find the reason why only curses are proclaimed in 27:14ff. in 27:4-7, according to which the stones and the altar should stand only on Ebal. They say that it is easy to single out the corresponding blessings. But this explanation does not satisfy.

On the other hand, M. G. Kline, *Treaty of the Great King. The Covenant Structure of Deuteronomy: Studies and Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1968), p. 123, tries to solve the problem by viewing 27:14-26 not as curse but as oath. However, his solution causes another problem: Why is the oath expressed only by means of curses?

In fact, the difficulty of the balance between the law's blessing and curse in Deut. 27 is quite old. The Vulgate reads Ebal in the verse as Gerizim. BHS also prefers reading Ebal in 27:4 as Gerizim, giving weight to the Samaritan Pentateuch. The fact that the stones were supposed to stand only on Mt. Ebal and only stipulations of curse were proclaimed in Deut. 27 is surely one of the biggest difficulties in Deuteronomy. The asymmetric structure of blessing and curse gave rise to the translations

The law has often been related to mountains in the history of Israel. The law was given on Mt. Horeb in Deut. 5. It was officially proclaimed to the second generation of Exodus by Joshua on the mountains in Shechem later. It is very important that two mountains (Ebal and Gerizim) were linked to the law of Shechemite covenant. The two mountains were related to the blessing and the curse, that is, to life and death, respectively. The blessing and curse were thus divided in terms of the two mountains. And at a first glance, the law of blessing seems to be absent. This absence is important for the two trees related to the commandments in the Eve account suggested in Rom. 7:7ff.; as well as for understanding the absence of the good (the good law) in Rom. 7:14ff. The commandments of Adam and Eve were given in the garden⁵⁰⁸ of Eden (Gen. 2:15-7) and there were two trees. Just as the two commandments of life and death in Adam's law were connected to two trees, so the law of blessing and the law of curse in the Torah were connected to two mountains. The end of Adam's law was the absence of the law of life. Likewise, the law of blessing was kept back, that is, omitted in the Torah.⁵⁰⁹

Where should one then look for the commandment of the tree of life, the law of blessing? Interestingly enough, Deuteronomy does have an answer to this question. Deut. 18:15ff. foretells, sort of, another Moses. He would act like Moses, thereby showing the nature of the words that he would deliver. He would deliver another law; as is confirmed by Deut. 18:16. The words of God that he would bring would be the same as the words of God on Mount Horeb. These words would be another law. The law would be delivered by a mediator, namely, by another Moses, as was the case with the law of Adam and the law of Moses.⁵¹⁰ The law would be the law of the new

mentioned above.

⁵⁰⁷ There has been a lot of debate about the identity of "all the words of this Law" in Deut. 27:8 that were supposed to be written on stones, but it is natural to read the words as the stipulations in vv. 15-26 (words of curses). It should be noticed that no stones were placed on Mount Gerizim. This clearly shows the nature of the words of the law on the stones.

⁵⁰⁸ It is worthy to take note that the garden (גֶּן) is a high place. The first river in history was parted at the garden and became four heads, which means that the four rivers flowed from the garden. We all know that water flows from higher places. Cf. J. Jordan, *Through New Eyes, Developing a Biblical View of the World* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1999), p. 150. Also cf. pp. 155-160 for the relation between Eden as a high place and mountains.

⁵⁰⁹ Paul's citation in Gal. 3 supports the idea that he regards the law as only the law of curse proclaimed on Mt. Ebal. In Gal. 3:10, Paul explains the nature of the law of Moses by citing Deut. 27:26, the conclusion of Shechemite Dodecalogue, that is, the 12 stipulations of *curse* on Ebal. For detail, cf. my exegesis of Gal. 3:10ff.

⁵¹⁰ E. P. Sanders, *Judaism*, pp. 511-15, argues that Paul's pattern of religion cannot be understood as a new covenantal nomism presented by W. D. Davis, *Rabbinic Judaism*. According to Sanders, Paul does not compare Christ with Moses. Christ is called the second Adam, but not the new Moses. What Christ has done is not contrasted with what Moses did. Thus Paul's pattern of religion is not a new

husband. This prophet was later interpreted as Christ.⁵¹¹ Deuteronomy shows that clearly.

It looks very complicated to trace Paul's thoughts back by investigating Deuteronomistic theology. But, in fact, when we read Rom. 7 through the small lens of the law of Adam (Eve) in Genesis and the bigger one of the law of Moses in Deuteronomy, the far and dim picture of Paul's thoughts on the law appears nearer and much clearer. It seems to me that the difficulties in understanding his views on the law were not so much caused by the complexity of his thoughts as by the large gap between his views and our views in the 21st century.

3.3.7 Rom. 7:25 (8:2)

By contrasting Adam with Christ, Paul has been arguing (since the Adam-Christ typology in Rom. 5) that humans had been united with Adam before they were united with Christ. They were in the flesh. And, in Rom. 7:7ff., Paul refers to the nature of the law by means of the Eve event. The commandment (the law) that was supposed to lead Eve (that is, Paul and all humans) to life (7:10) rather brought forth death. Is, however, the law not good and holy (7:13-4)? The answer to this dilemma is found in 7:14b.⁵¹² In what way can that ἐγὼ δὲ σάρκινός εἰμι be the answer to this dilemma? Paul explains this by Deut. 30.

He guides the readers to Deut. 30 by an echo of the chapter (Deut. 30) in Rom. 7:25 (and 8:2). This hint at Deut. 30 gives an excellent background for the proclama-

covenantal nomism.

Sanders, however, overlooks that Paul focuses on Moses, explaining Jesus' works in terms of the law. Paul connects Adam, Moses, and Christ. This connection already starts in Rom. 5 (especially see v. 14) and is developed in Rom. 7. Here, it is very interesting to recall that whenever God gives his law (commandment) to his people, he always gives his law *by twos*. Remember the two stone tablets of Moses, as well as the two trees and the two mountains. Adam typifies the sinner (all sinners) and the righteous (Christ) at the same time. Likewise, Moses typifies the giver of the law of death (the first Moses) and the giver of the law of life (the second Moses, Christ) at the same time. The law of the two tablets develops to be the law of the two mountains later. As even though Adam (husband) delivers the two laws (husband's commandments), the law of life results in being absent, so even though Moses delivers the two laws, the law of life of Mt. Gerizim ends in being absent. The giving of the law of life is the work of the second Moses. The full study in this regard might need a separate article at least.

⁵¹¹ It is natural to recall the scene where Christ gave his words in regard to the law in Matt. 5. And it is interesting to take note that the place where Jesus' words were delivered was once again a mountain (Matt. 5:1), and his words were of blessing. The mountain of the blessing, then, turns out to be Mt. Gerizim.

⁵¹² J. D. G. Dunn, *Romans*, p. 406, sees 7:14b as the answer, too.

tion in Rom. 7:25 that at first might simply seem to be a precise literary rhetorical expression. The law of life meant to bring life (8:2), that is, the law of God (7:25) is the law of the mind that, as Deut. 30:11-4 says, should be served with the mind (לִבָּי). In comparison, the law of death (8:2) that produced death, that is, the law of sin (7:25) is the law that is served with the flesh. So to speak, it is the law of the flesh. The word 'flesh' does not appear in Deut. 30. However, Deuteronomistic theology continually contrasts 'mind' (heart) with 'flesh' implicitly. Deut. 10:16 and 30:6, for example, contrast the circumcision of the mind with that of the flesh (implied). Therefore we can accept that the word 'flesh' is implied in Deut. 30. Finally, the reason why Paul refers in Rom. 7:25 to words used in Deut. 30 is revealed. The 'I' (*ego*) is fleshly.⁵¹³ The fleshly 'I' (*ego*) is the 'I' sold under sin. This is repeated in 7:23-4. The 'I' belongs to the body of sin so that it is brought into captivity to the law of sin. With the flesh it cannot but serve the law of sin. The law that it serves with the flesh is the law of death that cannot but bring about death. The suggestion in Deut. 30 shows how the Mosaic law as the law of death brought death to the 'I' united with Adam. Deut. 30 is thus the best example in the Book of Deuteronomy to show the relationship of the flesh (the counterpart of the mind) and the law in terms of death. Flesh and mind (heart) are not mere manners of serving the law. Flesh does not refer to human character or nature⁵¹⁴ but to human existence. 'Flesh' is Paul's way of referring to one's being united with Adam. Deut. 30 clearly shows why the law (the law of Adam and the law of Moses) brought death to the 'I' (not only to Jews but to all humankind), when it is in Adam, that is, in the flesh, serving the law.⁵¹⁵

The question in Rom. 7:13, however, has not been fully answered yet. Did the good then become death? This is impossible, as Paul clearly says. The law must be good. However, is it true that, because of Adam, the law as the law of death brought death? If so, how can the law then still be good? The answer lies in the twofold na-

⁵¹³ The participle πεπραμένος in 7:14 (ἐγὼ δὲ σάρκινός εἰμι πεπραμένος ὑπὸ τὴν ἁμαρτίαν) is understood as a situational usage of the adverbial participle. If so, 7:14b means not "Since I am sold under the sin, I am fleshly", but "Since I am fleshly, I am sold under the sin". This reading is in harmony with what Paul said in 7:7, hinting at the Adam narrative and, earlier, in 7:5. Moreover, this interpretation of 7:14 is exactly the same as what Paul has said in 5:12ff. "Since I am united with Adam, I have become a sinner; so since I am fleshly, I am sold under the sin". Finally, the reading is supported by 7:23-4: "I am brought into captivity to the law of sin. I cry out, because I am in the body of death, that is, in the flesh."

⁵¹⁴ Cf. J. A. T. Robinson, *Wrestling with Romans* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1979), p. 90.

⁵¹⁵ The 'I' (*ego*) in Adam refers to all humankind but we can say that the 'I' under death as a covenantal curse in Deut. 30 firstly designates the Jews. It, however, does not fully come into focus before Paul delves into the problem of the Jews in Rom. 10, citing Deut. 30.

ture of the law. Paul does not refer to the law as something single, but as two entities, just like the tree (of the commandment of Adam) was not one but two. The law of death and the law of life do not refer to two functions of the law. See Rom. 7:23. The laws are just too separated, divided, and different to be regarded as two functions of one law. They are rather depicted as two opposite entities. To regard them as two functions is to lose the first vital insight necessary for understanding Paul's view of the law.⁵¹⁶ The law of life is as different from the law of death as the Holy Spirit differs from sin. The law of life and the law of death are not short-hand descriptions of the two functions of the law that produces life and death respectively. If the law of life and the law of death were two functions of one and the same law, we would not be able to avoid the conclusion that the good (law) becomes death in terms of function. However, Paul's solution is the existence of two different laws, namely, the law of life that brings only life, and the law of death that brings only death. While 'in the flesh' means 'in Adam', the mind is connected to Jesus. "(I serve) the law of God with the mind" (τῷ νοῦ δουλεύω νόμῳ θεοῦ) in 7:25 is alternatively expressed as "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ" (ὁ νόμος τοῦ πνεύματος τῆς ζωῆς ἐν Χριστῷ) in 8:2. The relation between the mind and Christ is going to be clearly revealed later on in the exegesis of Rom. 10. What we have to take note of carefully here in Rom. 7 is that Paul does not say that one law functions in two different ways in Adam and in Christ respectively, but that he says that there are two laws that he meets respectively in Adam and in Christ according to Deuteronomy. Paul meets the other law, that is, the law of life, at last, in Christ. *In the same way that the tree of life is not the correct function of the tree of knowledge of good and evil and Christ is not Adam acting rightly, so the law of life is not just the correct function of the law of death, in other words, the law of death functioning rightly.* Ironically, the only right and unique function of the law of death is to bring forth death. The law of life is a different law in the mind that brings forth life and that Paul meets only by the union with Christ.⁵¹⁷

⁵¹⁶ J. D. G. Dunn, *Theology*, pp. 472-76, refers to the split of the law, too. According to him, as human-kind is eschatologically divided between the time of Jesus' first coming and the time of his second coming, so the law is eschatologically divided. His explanation gives us the impression that the *one* law has been divided. And this division of the law, in fact, centres on the function and action of the law. The law, however, did not come to be divided into two only after Jesus' first coming. *From the very beginning, there were two laws.* As we will see in Rom. 10, Paul argues that the two laws are two essentially independent entities and they have independent and opposite functions respectively. In that sense, Rom. 7-8, is in fact a sort of preparatory movement.

⁵¹⁷ It seems that N. T. Wright refers to the plural nature of the law. Wright, *Romans*, pp. 570-72, refers to the double identities of the Torah in relation to the 'I'. He even says that the Torah might be a *Dop-*

Paul does not say that because he served the law in the wrong way, that is, with the flesh, death came to him. With the flesh, he could not but serve the law of death. To put it precisely, he does not perform or do the law. It should be noticed that he *serves* the law. The laws fight over him and then capture him. He can neither choose a law nor the way of serving. The law to serve with the flesh is fixed beforehand and so is the way to serve the law. 'Life and blessing' and 'death and curse' respectively correspond to the law in the mind and the law not in the mind (the law in the flesh); or, in other words, the law of Gerizim and the law of Ebal. The law of life that should be in the mind cannot be served with the flesh because the law of life is not found in the flesh. The good law, or the law of Gerizim, is not found on Mt. Ebal. The way to get life is not by serving the law of death thoroughly and rightly but rather to escape from its rule. Not being in the flesh is the only way to achieve this. Those in Christ are not in Adam. In other words, they are not in the flesh anymore. Once we understand this, we will also understand Paul's thanksgiving in Rom. 7:25.

It seems that Rom. 7:25a should be connected to Rom. 8:1. 7:25b, however, lies between the two. That Paul's gratitude precedes the statement in 7:25b seems to imply that 7:25b refers to Paul as a Christian.⁵¹⁸ Scholars accepting the traditional interpretation have paid attention to this aspect. However, in 7:4-6 and 8:2, Paul clearly says that Christians have died to the law of death and have been liberated from it. Therefore, the one who is seized by sin and serves the law of sin cannot be a Christian. For a long time, scholars have been divided on this point. In order to solve

pelgänger. However, his explanation, in fact, is not of two laws. According to him, when the Torah is misused by sin, it becomes the law of sin. According to Wright, *Paul*, pp. 130-31, the law has split into two but the law that seduces and accuses Israel, that is, the law that fights on the side of sin is also the law of God. This is the negative identity of the law of God. See his, "Theology of Paul", pp. 110 and 112-13, too. He says, "the Torah bifurcates so that the Torah, the thing after which 'I' strive when wanting to do what is right, also brings evil close at hand". And explaining the underlining purpose of the Torah in terms of its negative consequences, he, in fact, refers to the two functions of the Torah. Take note of his expressions (the good side of the bad side of the law, the most positive role, and the negative purpose of the Torah).

The fundamental principle of Wright's explanation is not different from Dunn's, *Theology*, pp. 157-58 and 473-74, who refers to the eschatological bifurcation of the Torah in terms of the 'I'. Wright's bifurcated Torah (Dunn's too) does not mean two laws in the full sense of the word. One Torah in fact acts and functions as if it were two laws paradoxically. He, *Paul*, p. 131, explains this paradox of the Torah in terms of the paradox of light being waves and corpuscles at the same time. According to his explanation, even though light has two paradoxical aspects, it still is one. However, Paul's light (the law) is not one but two. Paul does not refer to a bifurcated law but to two essentially different and originally independent laws. The two trees in Eden do not mean the two branches!

⁵¹⁸ Of course, the Bible refers to a Christian's spiritual battle. This battle is popularly understood to go well with Rom. 7:25. However, the existence itself of a Christian's spiritual battle is not important. Rather, the identity of the battle is what matters. The battle in Rom 7 is one that can only be lost. Although it continues, it is essentially just a continuing defeat. On the contrary, a Christian's spiritual battle is a winning one. It is a continuous victory.

the problem of the identity of the one depicted as fighting here, Käsemann expected a manuscript showing Rom. 7:25b to be a gloss to be found,⁵¹⁹ but it is not necessary to do so, because Rom. 7:25b actually functions as the foundation of 8:1-2.

7:25b does not depict either a Christian or a non-Christian. *It rather describes both of them* – as the conclusion of Paul’s profound explanations in 7:7ff, 7:25b reveals it in a proclamatory way. But it is more than a simple proclamation, because by this, Paul actually discloses the two real situations of humankind in Adam or Christ. לֵב (mind or heart)⁵²⁰ is the right way to believe in Christ and to be united with him, as it will be clearly shown in Rom. 10. On the other hand, the flesh is the way to be united with Adam. All humans serve either the law of life in Jesus or the law of death in Adam. As the proclamation of the two fates of all humans in terms of the law in redemptive history, Rom. 7:25b is the foundation of the conclusion in 8:1-2, because Paul has already clearly showed that Christians have died to the body of sin, namely the flesh, and are not in flesh any more (Rom. 6:6 and 7:4-6).⁵²¹

Let me rephrase 7:25b ff.: The ‘I’ serves the law of sin with the flesh (7:25b). With Christ the ‘I’ died to the flesh (← omitted for it was fully explained). Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ (8:1). Paul does not repeat what he outlines so clearly; it was not necessary. Ironically, many exegetes fail to recall such an obvious idea that Paul rather did not repeat. They thus run into trouble when they interpret v. 7:25a. However, it seems to me that 7:25a does not cause a problem but rather provides a good explanation.

3.3.8 Explanation and conclusion

For Paul, the law is twofold. This is the key point. All human beings are bound to one of the two laws by being either in Adam or in Christ. The one is the law of death, and the other the law of life, each with its own result (death or life). The links of ‘Adam –

⁵¹⁹ E. Käsemann, *Römer*, pp.203-04.

⁵²⁰ לֵב is translated as νοῦς in Rom. 7:23-5 and as καρδία in Rom. 10:6-8. Even if Deut. 30 containing the key word לֵב is hinted at in the former, whereas it is cited in the latter, we have seen that Paul thought of Deut. 30 in the two chapters in Rom. Cf. footnote 489 also.

⁵²¹ Therefore, 7:25a is not eschatological but rather present. Contra R. Banks, “Romans 7:25a: An Eschatological Thanksgiving”, *ABR* 26 (1978), pp. 34-42.

the law of death – death’ and ‘Christ – the law of life – life’ cannot be broken. People in Adam cannot serve the law of life and therefore in essence, life is not available to them. According to Deuteronomy, the result (curse or blessing) depends on which law is present in the *ego*. Only the law in the mind (לֵב) ⁵²² brings life. This is exactly what Paul said in Rom. 3:20: By the works ⁵²³ of the law shall no *flesh* be justified (ἐξ ἔργων νόμου οὐ δικαιωθήσεται πᾶσα σὰρξ). The law that is related to the *flesh* is not the law of life so that regardless of the quality of the works, in other words, regardless of whether or not the law is properly and perfectly kept by performing the works, the law cannot produce life. The law of life can only be in Christ (the mind). Christians become free of the law of Adam by dying together with Christ, and then they serve the law of the new husband. However, Paul does not completely reveal the identities of the law of life and the law of death in Rom. 7-8 yet. It is only in Rom. 10 where he discloses their identities in a concrete way. They turn out to be the law of Moses and the law of Christ. But even though the identity of the law of life is not revealed in full in Rom. 7, the dilemma of the law (commandment) that the ‘I’ experienced through the Eve event is solved. The law brings life. And the law brings death, too. These two statements are both true at the same time.

Although the full details of this insight might be possible only after scrutinizing Rom. 10, we can already realise at this stage that Paul did not come to meet the dilemma of the law by chance. He introduces the dilemma to us on purpose. He guides us toward discovering that the two contradictory truths regarding the law are no longer a dilemma, exactly because there are two laws. As soon as we realise that the law he speaks of is not one single law, but actually two laws, we find a way of explaining the difficulties regarding the law that have been bothering scholars for such a long time. Paul’s pros and cons regarding the law are caused by his redemptive historical view of the law, that is, by the notion of two laws.

If this is what Paul is doing, why does he confuse the readers by referring to both as νόμος? The reason for this is that he tries to explain the law by means of Genesis

⁵²² For the sake of explanation, it is better for me to mention the following: The law in the mind (the law of the mind) does not mean that the law moved into one’s mind. In other words, even if the law of sin moves into one’s mind, the law cannot become the law of the mind. The law of sin, or the law of death, cannot be in one’s mind while the law of the mind cannot be in the flesh. The two laws are two totally different entities. For detail, see my exegesis of Rom. 10.

⁵²³ Work (ἔργον) is the principle of the law of death, that is, the law of Moses. The place where a law is, indicates the nature of the law (the law of the mind = the law in the mind); thus the principle of a law also reveals the identity of the law. That will be explained in detail. See the exegesis of Rom. 10.

and Deuteronomy. To put it another way, Genesis and Deuteronomy explain the law in that way. Paul thus finds the two commandments in Genesis and the laws in Deuteronomy.

There were two trees linked to Adam's commandment. In a sense the trees were symbolic, and the fact that there were two trees is meaningful. God could have linked only one tree to the commandment of Adam. He could have planted the tree of knowledge of good and evil in such a way that it would bear two kinds of fruits, that is, the good (life) fruit and evil fruit, and he could have commanded Adam and Eve to eat only the good (life) fruit. Then, the tree of life is not needed. However, God planted two trees and linked two separate commandments to the two trees. On this notion Paul based the idea of the two commandments (the two laws).

For Paul, the law within Adam makes the *ego* know good and evil. The law gave it the knowledge of evil by producing it (7:7-13), while the law gave it the knowledge of the good, that is, the knowledge of the absence of the good (the good law or the law of life; 7:14-20). The law that the *ego* serves in Adam turns out to be the commandment of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. It is not the commandment of life. It cannot bring life. Where is the commandment (the law) that brings life then to be found? Paul finds the answer to this question in Deuteronomy, hearing an echo of the garden of Eden. Curse and blessing are not announced on only one mountain in Deuteronomy, but are linked to two mountains (Deut. 27). However, the blessing of Mount Gerizim is absent. Paul accepts that the commandment and the law are the same, and the echo of Genesis then resounds in Deuteronomy. The two trees appear as the two mountains (Deut. 27) and 'life and death' and 'good and evil' are still there (Deut. 30:15), but a progress can be detected: The lost commandment of the tree of life appears again; it is in the mind (Deut. 30:14). Just like circumcision should be in the mind, the commandment (law) of life is not in the flesh but in the mind. By means of this resonance of Genesis and Deuteronomy, Paul then proclaims that the *ego* serves the law of death in the flesh, or in Adam and the law of life in Christ (Rom. 7:15-25, and cf. 8:2).

It is not in Rom. 7-8 but in Rom. 10 that Paul refers to the identity of the law of life in Christ, that is, the law to serve with לֵבָב (mind or heart) fully. The reason why Paul emphasizes the law of the mind by suggesting Deut. 30 is only disclosed in Rom. 10. As expected, the commandment (law) is the word of Christ to be believed

in and with לֵב (mind or heart; Rom. 10:8-10 and 17). To make this clear, Paul has already suggested Gen. 2-3 in Rom 7 and has also hinted at Deut. 30 in that chapter. Finally, we then see that Deut. 27-30, in particular Chapter 30, must be read in the context of Gen. 2 and Gen. 2 must be reinterpreted by means of Deut. 30. *In this, sort of intertextual circle, the structure of the Adam-Christ antithesis that started in Rom. 5:12ff. is worked out by means of a threefold kind of intertextuality between Genesis, Deuteronomy, and Romans.* Adam's law in Gen. 2 is contrasted with Christ's word.⁵²⁴ The 'I' who was bound to the law of the husband, Adam, by becoming one body with him, now serves the new law, that is, the law of the new husband, Christ, by the death of its body that has become one with Christ (Rom. 7:4-6 and 8:2). Paul thus discloses the real situation of all humankind in Adam and Christ by the redemptive history, focusing on Genesis and Deuteronomy. The 'I', Eve, in fact, all humans serve the law of sin and death with (in) the flesh, that is, in Adam, and the law of the mind, God, and the Spirit of life with (in) the mind, that is, in Christ (Rom. 7:25 and 8:2).

Lastly, I want to ask a question. Why did Paul present what we have seen in Rom. 7 by means of a threefold kind of intertextuality? My answer is this: To explain the above took me very long and resulted in a very complex argument – much more complex than that of Paul in the chapter. But this is due to the fact that Paul assumed that his readers would intuitively understand the background of his argument – something that is not true of most modern readers for whom this complicated background has to be explained in detail. The silence of a hint can be much more effective than a complicated explanation.

⁵²⁴ The full explanation of the law of the mind, the word of Christ, and the law of Christ will be provided in the exegesis of Rom. 10, 13 and Gal. 6 in the next two chapters.

4 The two laws and the focus of Paul's interest

4.1 What is it that is missing in the ego, the ability to do what is good or the law?

My exegesis of Rom. 7 has yielded two important insights with regard to the perfect observance of the law: According to Paul, 1) there are two laws, and 2) the particular law that is present determines the outcome. Both of these insights point in the same direction, namely that the perfect observance of the law is not the issue. In other words, life and death are not two functions or two sides of one law but two opposing results of two different laws. Paul does not think in terms of one single law, but of two laws. He defends the one and attacks the other. Therefore, Rom. 7 is not a mere defence of the law. Paul has both positive and negative feelings about the law, which causes an ambiguity in his explanation of the law in Rom. 7. This insight tells us something very important. If the law were one, life and death would be regarded as the two possible results caused by the success or failure to observe the law perfectly. However, because Paul thinks in terms of two different laws, he does not say that death is the result of a failure to perfectly fulfil the law. No matter how perfectly the law of death is kept, it cannot produce life. Life is connected only to the law of life; and death only to the law of death. This means that it is incorrect to accept that either life or death is caused by one's success or failure to observe the law perfectly.

Therefore, life and death are concepts presupposing the observance of a particular law. Both life and death are decided not by whether the law is observed but by which law is obeyed. This idea may be strange to most modern people. Our modern concept of laws, for example of as traffic laws, is that someone decides on a course of action, thereby keeping or breaking a specific law. For most modern people, laws are not subjects but objects; they are not active but passive. However, in this case, we should keep in mind that Paul explicitly stated that it is the law existing in the 'I' that causes particular actions (Rom. 7:17-21). If the good law (the law of life) is in it, it does what is good; if the evil law (the law of death) is in it, it does what is evil. It must be noticed that Paul does not say that the 'I' performs evil because it fails to keep the good law. The reason why the 'I' performs evil is that the law of death and sin is in it. We do not pick up any notion of the law only being obeyed partially in Rom. 7 so that we have no reason to think that the law is not observed rightly. Rather,

the problem is that the law that the 'I' serves is not the good law. The real problem is that it thoroughly serves the evil law, the law of sin and death only. Thus the notion of the impossibility of the perfect obedience of the law is irrelevant. This claim will be tested in the following section on the personal nature of the laws.

These insights are expressed in Rom. 7:22-8:2 in a most dramatic way. The 'I' serves the law of God (the law of life) with the mind and the law of sin (the law of death) with the flesh. It cannot serve the law of death with the mind; neither can it serve the law of life with the flesh. This is so because the law of life is in the mind and the law of death is in the flesh. The real problem is that the law of God that the 'I' should serve in order to get life, is absent. The 'I' in the flesh only serves the law of the flesh, that is, the law of sin because the 'I' is captured under the law of sin; in other words, simply because the law of life is absent. In essence, the 'I' in the flesh does not have any possibility of life regardless of the observance of the law. Therefore it exclaims that the law that it serves perfectly is not the law of life but the law of death.

This confirms that Paul is not interested in trying to prove that it is impossible to observe the law perfectly, neither in what the reasons for this situation might be. He is concerned about the identity of the law, that is, the Torah. So far, however, interpreters have paid only attention to the notion that the 'I' is unable to observe the law perfectly. Thus the question that is to be asked: What is it that is missing in the 'I', the ability to do what is good or the law?

4.2 The law as a person: *Who* is unable?

Now we have to pay attention to the more important aspect with regard to the identity of the law in Rom. 7:14-8:2, in particular to the fact that the two laws appear to be two persons. This is not merely a case of personification. We have already seen that the law appears in Galatians as a person. The same happens in Romans where Paul also introduces the two laws as persons. In this case the personal nature of the two laws is emphasized to such an extent that the 'I' is almost objectified. The two laws fight against each other, while the 'I' can do nothing. The law of sin captures it and

the 'I' becomes booty of the war (7:23). It has no rights, and only serves the law(s) as master.⁵²⁵ The laws are thus not portrayed as objects to be kept, done, and performed, but rather as two powerful subjects controlling and ruling the 'I'. Like a slave and prisoner of war, the 'I' serves a person more powerful than it, that is, the law. In other words, perfect observance (perfect obedience) is actually unavoidable. The verb δουλεύω (indicative present) in 7:25 shows this clearly. The 'I' does not try to serve nor to make efforts to serve but just serves. The verb does not show any nuance indicating any difficulty of serving. Besides, 7:25 does not hint at any insufficiency or imperfection in regard to serving. Which law is in the 'I' determines which law the 'I' serves. This agrees with what we have already argued earlier.

Paul's interest thus focuses on the relationship between the particular law and the 'I'. The law that the 'I' serves determines either life or death. And which law the 'I' serves depends on which law wins the battle (7:23). The law of sin (ἕτερος νόμος)⁵²⁶ fights against the law of the mind within it (7:23). What is important in this regard is that the 'I' is not the one battling but the booty. In this sense, it cannot choose its master (the victor). That is very important. Once the 'I' is captured by a law, it has to serve the law without reserve so that it gets the result corresponding to the particular law. In short, whether the 'I' gets life or death depends on which law wins the battle. In terms of ability, it is not so much the ability of the *ego* that is important, but that of the law in winning the battle. The reason why the 'I' cannot serve the law of life is not because it cannot keep it perfectly but because the law of God, mind and life cannot capture it. In other words, the law of life is unable to do so. It is unable to defeat the law of death.

If this is correct, it should be confirmed by Rom 8. Let us now move to this chapter.

⁵²⁵ For Paul, humans always live as slaves. Their lives are decided not by other humans, but by their master. See Rom. 6:12ff., especially v. 16. Humans are either the slaves of sin or the slaves of righteousness. Absolute freedom in a neutral sense is not something considered by Paul. This is also clear from Rom. 7: The law *rules* (ὁ νόμος κυριεύει) humans.

⁵²⁶ Take note that the law of God (v. 22) is changed to the law of the mind, and ἕτερος νόμος to the law of sin.

5 Rom. 8: Rom. 7 checked

5.1 Rom. 8:3-4: τὸ δικαίωμα τοῦ νόμου

If we interpret the problem of the law in Rom. 7 as related to human inability to observe the law perfectly, we must understand Rom. 8:1-4 as indicating the solution to the problem along the same lines, namely that Rom. 8:1-4 means that the 'I' could not keep the legal demands of the law because of the flesh, but that it can now do so, because it walks according to the Spirit.⁵²⁷ But this causes several problems:

Firstly, an important issue is disregarded. According to the text, the one that is weak is not the 'I', but the law. Secondly, the general usage of the word "fulfil" is also disregarded. It is generally said that the law is kept, done, or performed by human beings. However, it is not said that human beings fulfil the law. Ziesler⁵²⁸ noticed this problem, and he pointed out that it was Jesus who fulfilled (πληρώω)⁵²⁹ the law *actively*. However, he does not apply this insight to his interpretation of τὸ δικαίωμα τοῦ νόμου. Thirdly, the approach ignores the atmosphere of Rom. 7, namely the fact that it said that it is the good law that is absent from the 'I'. The 'I' only has the evil law and this is the only law that is portrayed as being active in it. This law produces covetousness and asks the 'I' to do only evil. In this atmosphere, does the requirement of that only law the 'I' has, need to be fulfilled? Lastly, is it correct to regard the Spirit as a means of fulfilling the requirements of the law? In Rom 7:6, the law and the Spirit are opposed. It can thus not be that in the very next chapter Paul would argue that the requirement of the law can be fulfilled by the help of the Spirit. We also have to pay attention to the fact that much more weight is placed upon the law than on the 'I' in Rom.7.

⁵²⁷ Although the following scholars do not agree on what τὸ δικαίωμα τοῦ νόμου means, they all pay attention to the change of *our* ability to fulfil it in one sense or another: G. Delling, "πληρώω", *TDNT*, VI, p. 292; R. W. Tompson, "How is the Law fulfilled in Us? An Interpretation of Rom. 8:4", *LS* 11 (1986), pp. 32-3; J. A. Ziesler, "The Just Requirement of the Law (Romans 8:4)", *ABR* 35, 1987, pp. 77-82; H. Hübner, *Law*, pp. 146ff; and H. M. W. van de Sandt, "Research into Rom. 8:4a: The Legal Claim of the Law", *Bijdragen* 37 (1976), pp. 252-69. Cf. H. H. Esser, "νόμος", p. 446, who also pays attention to the human weakness of obedience.

⁵²⁸ J. A. Ziesler, *Romans*, pp. 207-08.

⁵²⁹ For the detailed explanation of πληρώω, see chapter X. Πλήρωμα νόμου ἢ ἀγάπη.

In Rom. 7, the 'I' was not independent. It had to serve one of the two laws. But the 'I' could not choose which law to serve. The essential problem was that the law of mind was too weak to win the battle against the law of sin (7:23). Because the law of the mind lost the battle, the 'I' became a slave of the law of sin. This tragedy, however, is reversed by Christ. However, even in this reversal, the ability of the law of the mind remains the focus. Rom. 8:1-4 shows the exact opposite picture of Rom. 7:22-25: Those in Christ are no longer under judgment. Here, we have to take note that the reversal, or the solution, is not due to the fact that the 'I' now became able to do something in Christ, but rather because the law of the Spirit of life has freed it from the law of sin (8:2). The focus is on how the law of the Spirit of life can win the battle and release the 'I'. In v. 3, the γάρ clause offers the answer to this. Here again, the subject of the weakness is the law. Τὸ ἀδύνατον τοῦ νόμου⁵³⁰ shows the inability of the law (of the mind) in comparison with God. It was the law that was kept weak (ἡσθένει) by the flesh.

On the other hand, God condemned the flesh which caused the weakness of the law. God's intervention thus brought about a change. If the result mentioned in 8:4 is related to the ability of the 'I', the notion would be totally out of the blue. The context thus forces us to connect the result of the change to the ability of the law.⁵³¹ In this context, one possible reading is as follows: Interpreting δικαίωμα as requirement or as demand, we can understand ἵνα τὸ δικαίωμα τοῦ νόμου πληρωθῆ as referring to the point that the fact that the law was unable to demand of us to serve has been solved so that its requirements might be fulfilled. But in this case, the focus still falls on our inability to do what the law requires.

However, we can find a better interpretation of δικαίωμα that is in harmony with the argument offered above, namely that it refers to righteous action.⁵³² Thus Paul accentuates once again the fact that the good law (the law of the mind) supposed to

⁵³⁰ This is an adverbial accusative of reference or respect. This shows what God does in regard to what the law cannot do.

⁵³¹ If we fail to take note of the fact that Paul has already focused on the inability of the law in Rom. 7, it would come as quite a surprise to us that Paul refers to the inability of the law in 8:3. In that sense, it is understandable that Ziesler, *Romans*, p. 203, would say that Paul does not clearly indicate what the law was unable to do in 8:3.

⁵³² Especially, take note that δικαίωμα is in the singular. Paying attention to this, Ziesler, "Just Requirement", reads the requirement of the law as the requirement of the commandment of covetousness that Paul referred to in 7:7ff. On the other hand, according to Dunn, *Theology*, p. 646, footnote 102, the singular does not focus on the individual requirements of the law but refers to requirements of the law as a whole and as the essential perspective of the law. It, however, rather seems that the plural form would have been used then. The singular form shows that Paul focuses on the one righteous action of the law, that is, delivering the 'I' from flesh and the law of sin and death.

lead the 'I' to life was unable to perform its right action because of the flesh. The law was unable to free it from the flesh (σάρξ, that is, τὸ σῶμα τοῦ θανάτου in v. 24). But now, the law of the mind releases it from the law of sin and death (7:23 and 8:2) by God's condemning of the flesh by sending Christ in the likeness of the flesh. Thus, the righteous action of the law of the mind which leads to life is now available, that is, fulfilled.

This understanding is supported by the fact that δικαίωμα is fulfilled 'in us'. 8:4 does not say that because we are walking in the Spirit, we fulfil it.⁵³³ The laws always act or are supposed to work in us (7:18, 22, and 23).⁵³⁴ The law of sin and death works and acts *in the flesh*, whereas the law of the mind and of God *in the mind*. Rom. 8:4a (ἵνα τὸ δικαίωμα τοῦ νόμου πληρωθῆ ἔν ἡμῖν) is related to the essential change of *the law itself* in us. It does not mean that the requirements of the law are fulfilled outwardly but that the essential righteous action of the law is fulfilled inwardly in us.

Paul has already used the word δικαίωμα in Rom. 5. In that case, Christ's righteous action (δικαίωμα) was contrasted with Adam's transgression, that is, his unrighteous action (5:17). Now, the whole picture comes into view. The law of sin acts in the flesh and the law of the mind (the law of life) acts in the mind. Here lies the terrible tragedy. The 'I' is united with Adam so that it is in the flesh. Therefore, the law of the mind is not in it; it cannot lead the 'I' to life. But now in Christ, the law of the mind (the law of the Spirit of life) comes to do its' righteous action.

*By Adam's unrighteous action, the law of the mind was unable in relation to the 'I', but now, by Christ's righteous action, the law of the mind (the law of the Spirit of life) can perform its' righteous action.*⁵³⁵

⁵³³ Even when we understand ἔν ἡμῖν as dative of advantage and as meaning 'for us' or 'to us', we still get the same result. The δικαίωμα is not fulfilled by us. The phrase ἔν ἡμῖν shows that the subject of the fulfilling δικαίωμα is not us in any sense.

⁵³⁴ We should keep in mind that the 'I' (ego) in Rom. 7 in fact means Eve, Paul, and all humans. Paul views himself and all humans through the perspective of Eve. Although Paul focuses on Deut. 30 in 7:14ff., this theological framework is not completely discarded.

⁵³⁵ As we will see in the next chapter, the fulfilment of the righteous action of the law is not the recovery of the function of the law. The law of Adam differs essentially from the law of Christ. They turn out to be the law of Moses and the word of Christ respectively.

5.2 Rom. 8:7

At this stage we need to check v. 7 briefly. Does the verse refer to our inability to keep⁵³⁶ the law perfectly? Schreiner⁵³⁷ cites this verse, arguing that humans cannot keep the law because of Adam's fall. This is not correct. Take note that Paul does not say that the thought (mind-set) of the flesh cannot submit to the law of God *perfectly*. Paul repeats 7:25 exactly in this verse. In 7:25, he declared that the 'I' serves the law of sin with the flesh. He does not refer to the law of God. Therefore it is not a case of (the thought of) the flesh choosing the law of God without being able to obey it *perfectly*. It is rather a case of (the thought of) the flesh not obeying and serving the law of God *instead of the law of sin*. Paul says this again in terms of the thought (mind-set) of the flesh and the Spirit. We can thus reformulate v. 7 as follows: The thoughts of the Spirit do not submit to the law of sin, nor can they do so; they submit to the law of God, whereas the thoughts of flesh do not submit to the law of God, nor can they do so; they submit to the law of sin. In 8:7, Paul thus repeats 7:25 exactly, just omitting unnecessary words. After saying this, he adds in 8:9 that if the Spirit of God dwells in them, Christians are *not in the flesh* but in the Spirit. If they are not in flesh, they come to serve not the other law but the law of God. Paul's logic here is similar to that in 7:14-25. In 7:25, he mentioned that not serving the law of God *perfectly* with the flesh but *just serving* the law of God with the flesh is impossible. In 8:5-9, he still adheres to the principle that the mind-set of the flesh cannot submit to the law of God and says that since Christians are not in the flesh, they serve the law of God and please God. By those in the flesh the law of God cannot be served – not because the thoughts of the flesh cannot submit to the law of God *perfectly*, but simply because their submitting to the law of God is not possible *in principle*. Only by those who live according to the Spirit, that is, in the Spirit, can the law of God be served and obeyed. The righteous action of the law of God, which brings forth life can be fulfilled and becomes possible only in those who are in the Spirit. This is in harmony with our interpretation of 8:4. To conclude, Rom. 8 is not against our reading of Rom. 7 at all but rather supports it.

⁵³⁶ In our daily speaking, fulfilling the law is generally understood as meaning keeping the law perfectly. As we have seen above, however, fulfilling the righteous action of the law is not a human but a divine work. And as we will see in the next chapter, the fulfilment of the law means the essential change of the law. Therefore, it is not theologically right that the expressions of *fulfilling* the law are used for human actions.

⁵³⁷ T. R. Schreiner, *Law*, p. 70, footnote. 81.

6 Conclusion

I have pointed out earlier that in Rom. 3, Paul said that even those who kept the law perfectly were not righteous; instead he argued that perfect law-keepers were sinners. It was not because their behaviour could not bring about what was perfectly good, but because their works were totally sinful (3:10-18). This is exactly what Rom. 7 says. Although the 'I' wants to do what is good, it does only evil. Then, in 3:20, Paul said that no flesh can be justified by the works of the law.⁵³⁸ This is, again, the same as what he says in Rom. 7. The 'I' does only evil because it is in Adam, or in the flesh, so that it serves only the law of sin (7:25). *In the flesh*, the works of the law can never be righteousness. At this very point, *no flesh* can be justified by the works of the law. The law served by flesh, the identification of which was delayed in Rom. 3, clearly turns out to be the law of death and sin in Rom. 7. No one in Adam, that is, no flesh can be justified by the works of the law of death and sin!

By the way, Paul's view on the law in Rom. 7 did not appear in this chapter for the first time. He has already used the same idea in Gal. 5. According to Gal. 5:22-23, there is no law against the fruit of the Holy Spirit. Why does Paul say *κατὰ τῶν τοῦ οὐτῶν οὐκ ἔστιν νόμος*? The reason why in Rom. 7, the 'I' could not do the good that it wanted, was that the good law, that is, the law of God, *was not present* in it; only the evil law, that is, the law of sin. It was this law that fought *against* the law of God and captured the 'I' (7:23 and 8:2). Paul expresses this just in terms of the fruit of the Holy Spirit in Gal. 5.

We have seen in our historical survey of the interpretation of the law in Pauline letters in chapter II that scholars accept that the ultimate problem of the law is linked to the failure of observing it perfectly. If one uses the idea of only one law as framework, the two results, life and death, depend on the success or the failure of the per-

⁵³⁸ The meaning of the expression 'the works of the law' will be explained in the next chapter.

fect observance of the law. In that sense, the problem of the law is human nature. Our study of Rom. 7 and 8, however, told a different story. Paul starts in Genesis and then moves to Deuteronomy, focusing on the Torah and revealing the identity of the Torah in the redemptive history.⁵³⁹

The key insight was that there are two laws, two persons, ruling the 'I' with the results of the laws (death or life) being determined by the identity of the law that the 'I' serves. Each law is connected to the corresponding place, principle, and result respectively, forming two series which are juxtaposed: the law of God – in Christ – with the mind – life ⇔ the law of sin – in Adam – with the flesh – death. Tragically, the 'I' is in Adam, or in the flesh. It does not find the law of God in itself. So, the result, death, has already been decided and destined for it.

Here the important aspect is that each element in the two lists, law – place – principle – result, must stay in its place. An element cannot be moved to the other list. For example, we cannot serve the law of God with the flesh; neither can we serve the law of sin in Christ. Therefore, mentioning only one element is enough to designate all the other elements. For instance, mentioning the one who serves a law *with the flesh* means that the one is not *in Christ*, that the law that he/she serves is *the law of sin and death*, and that the result cannot be *life*. Saying, "The 'I' serves *the law of God*" means that the 'I' serves the law *with the mind* so that it is *in Christ*. Which law the 'I' serves, tells who it is, how and where it serves it, and what result it shall have, and vice versa.

Here, we must point out a very important fact in regard to the way, or principle of serving the law. The manner of serving the law cannot be caused or changed by one's misuse. In other words, the 'I' cannot choose the way to serve so that it cannot serve the law that it is serving *in the wrong way*. The law of death is not the law misused by the 'I'. We have to keep to Paul's distinctions. The law of death captured the 'I' and forced it to serve it in flesh. The way to serve is not open to its choice and misuse. So to speak, the right way to serve that law of death is 'with the flesh'. I cannot but stress continually that misusing the law is impossible and death comes not

⁵³⁹ Scholars who think that Paul has all human laws in mind do not grasp his redemptive historical perspective. For instance, see M. J. Borg and J. D. Crossan, *The First Paul*, pp. 169-72, and J. Taubes, *The Political Theology of Paul*, tr. D. Hollander (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), pp. 23ff. According to Taubes, the law in Paul's thought refers to worldly laws and even nature laws. However, his approach ignores Paul's redemptive historical focus on the law completely. In fact, Paul regards the law of Moses as the commandment of Adam. At this point, the Mosaic law can be seen as the law of all humankind in Adam. Nevertheless, this cannot include all the general laws of human beings or natural laws.

from misuse but from the identity of the law itself. At this point, both the New Perspective and the traditional one miss Paul's point. The failure of the perfect observance of the law by legalism, ethnical boundary, or any other misuses is not what Paul has in mind here.

Our understanding above provides an excellent foundation for the interpretation of Rom. 10. In Rom. 7-8, Paul offers the most profound explanation of the law. The Mosaic law is the law of the ex-husband; the Torah is the same as the commandment of Adam. The Torah is the law giving the knowledge of good and evil. It makes one experience evil and knows that the good, that is, the good law, is absent in it. Where and what is the law of Life in concrete terms? Now, we have to move to Rom. 10. If some things are still a little bit unclear with regard to Paul's interpretation of this issue in Rom 7-8, they shall become clear in the discussion of Rom. 10.

IX. Rom. 9:30-10:10

Now, we have arrived at another major text that is often regarded as referring to Israel's failure to observe the Mosaic law perfectly.⁵⁴⁰ However, we will see that this notion is not found in the text. And, more importantly, the text will give us very important insights regarding the fulfilment of the law. This text is very complicated; it contains a sort of word play on the law, a circular way of reasoning, and several ideas that are merely suggested. I believe that unless all my explanations up to now are kept in mind, the discussion that follows now will not be easily understood, so that it is necessary to briefly review the main ideas worked out in the previous chapters. I have argued that to perform the law means to serve it. With regard to what this obedience actually entails, to do the law is not impossible but rather to avoid doing the law perfectly is unavoidable. It is not the 'I' that decides the ways of serving the laws of 'sin and death' and of the 'mind and God'. The 'I' must follow the way or manner of serving of the very law that it serves. Paul's concern is not whether one follows a particular way completely or misuses it. Rather, in terms of his views, the way or principle of pursuing reveals the identity of the law that one is serving. We will find the same ideas in Rom. 9-10. Paul does not link the problem of the Torah to the wrong way that one pursues (serves) it, nor to a failure to keep it perfectly. He presents both the Torah and Christ as law. The two laws entail different ways of pursuing (serving), namely works and faith.

In the previous chapter, I made an effort to focus only on what is found in Rom. 7-8. I have done so, because Paul did not explain everything in those two chapters. Now I move on to a question that still has to be answered. The Mosaic law was the law of the old husband, Adam. By this, Paul meant that the Mosaic law was the commandment of the knowledge of good and evil. The Mosaic law was the law of sin that

⁵⁴⁰ In fact, the reason why Paul explains the law in Rom 7-8 in this way is to be found in the dilemma of Israel in terms of the redemptive history. He contrasts the Torah of Israel with Christ's word. This preparatory movement is precisely worked out. Paul's (preaching Christ's word) life-risking meditative ministry for Israel in Rom. 9:1-3 strongly suggests the ministry of Moses who delivered the Torah. The contrast is more concretely revealed in 2 Cor. 3: The ministry of condemnation and that of righteousness (v. 9). Thus the contrast connects the Torah to the law of condemnation, and the word of Christ to the law of righteousness.

brought the knowledge of evil by producing covetousness. However, did the law of Adam only bring a warning of death and not also the promise of life? Was the law of Adam also the commandment (of the tree) of life? In this chapter, we will discover the answer to this question. The law of the old husband that had become the law of death now becomes the law of life by means of the new husband, or, to put it in other words, Christ fulfils the Mosaic law.

1 A brief history of the interpretation of the passage and questions that need to be answered

A popular way to understand Rom. 9:30-10:13 is to link it to Israel's legalism.⁵⁴¹ Although legalism can be interpreted in various ways, when viewed from a legalistic perspective, Israel's ultimate problem in terms of the Mosaic law is then understood as a failure to observe it perfectly because of her wrong ways. Israel did not do the works of the law and thus could not obtain righteousness.

Wright⁵⁴² does not focus on Israel's legalism, and pays attention to the relationship between the old covenant and the new one. According to him, Israel's problem was the misuse of the Torah as a badge of membership (another wrong way of pursuing the Torah). This leads to the same result: a failure to observe the Torah truly. Wright⁵⁴³ says that the true meaning of Lev. 18:5 in Rom. 10:5 is found in Paul's exegesis of Deut. 30 in 10:6ff. To believe in Christ is to perform the Torah in the sense that Deuteronomy (and Jeremiah) intended. According to his explanation, faith comes to be the true way to pursue (observe) the Torah. Therefore, Christians are fulfilling the Torah.

⁵⁴¹ C. K. Barrett, *Essays on Paul* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1982), p. 143; T. R. Schreiner, *Law*, pp. 104-05 (although he does not say that the law is another way to salvation, he claims that the law pursued by faith could have led Israel to see Christ); C. Hodge, *A Commentary on Romans* (GSC, Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1972), pp. 329-43; and C. E. B. Cranfield, *Romans*, Vol. II, pp. 503-08.

⁵⁴² N. T. Wright, *Climax*, pp. 239-46.

⁵⁴³ N. T. Wright, *Romans*, pp. 656-60.

Dunn⁵⁴⁴ does not link Israel's fault to legalism either. Centring on the idea that Israel misused the Torah as an ethical identity marker, he interprets Israel's not attaining of the law as meaning not attaining the goal of the law. According to him, this goal can be reached by faith only. In this case, the reference to the law (9:31) is a kind of shorthand for referring to the goal of the law. Therefore, for him, the word of faith (Rom. 10:8) is the law properly understood. He, too, comes to the same conclusion: Israel's mistake was that the law was pursued in a wrong way.

It is not difficult to find scholars who link Israel's failure to the true, namely, perfect observance of the Torah in Rom. 9:30-10:13.⁵⁴⁵ Most scholars reach the conclusion that Israel failed in attaining righteousness by her failure to observe the Torah perfectly.⁵⁴⁶

I, however, cannot but be surprised by this line of interpretation, according to which Israel's problem boils down to a failure to keep the law perfectly. This interpretation raises several questions. It is based on the following two ideas: A) *There is essentially nothing wrong with the Mosaic law*: In spite of the inability of the law to generate the power for keeping it perfectly, it is usually assumed that there is nothing essentially wrong with the law itself. B) *Therefore, there is nothing wrong with the righteousness linked to the Mosaic law*: The righteousness linked to the Mosaic law is thus not understood in a negative sense. If the law is kept in the right way, it leads to righteousness which leads to salvation.

These two ideas then lead to the following two notions: C) *The fundamental problem of the Mosaic law is not linked to the law itself, but in the way it is pursued*: The reason for Israel's failure is that it pursued the law in the wrong way, that is, by works. D) Finally, Paul contrasts righteousness by works to righteousness by faith.

Based on these ideas, Rom. 9:30-10:13 is then interpreted as follows: A') Israel failed to observe the law perfectly. B') Thus, Israel could not reach (obtain) the righteousness of the law. Therefore, in 10:5ff., Paul argues as follows: C') The problem is

⁵⁴⁴ J. D. G. Dunn, *Theology*, pp. 640-41.

⁵⁴⁵ According to T. D. Gordon, "Note on Romans 9:32", the problem does not lie in the way the law was pursued; yet he also regards the failure to observe the law as its ultimate problem.

⁵⁴⁶ The following scholars think that Rom. 10:5 means that someone who observes the law perfectly can earn life: R. Bultmann, *Theology*, Vol.1, p. 262; C. E. B. Cranfield, *Romans*, Vol. II, p. 509; and S. Westerholm, *Israel's Law*, p. 147.

The following versions of the Bible understand Rom. 9:30 as meaning that Israel's failed to observe the law. NLT: "... but the people of Israel, who tried so hard to get right with God by keeping the law, never succeeded"; NRS: "... but Israel, who did strive for the righteousness that is based on the law, did not succeed in fulfilling that law."

the pursuit of the Mosaic law by means of works (v. 5). D') Both righteousness by faith and righteousness by works are related to the Mosaic law, that is, to the way in which the law is pursued (vv. 5ff.).

I, however, disagree with all four the ideas highlighted above. I will examine them one by one. Before doing so, I have to point out the surprising fact that Rom. 9:30-10:13 does not mention any one of these notions (A' to D') explicitly. They are not found in the text, but are added by scholars in order to make sense of the text. Let us then briefly examine each of the four assumptions: A') The law was not kept perfectly: Paul never states this explicitly. What the Israelites failed to submit to was not the law but God's righteousness (Rom. 10:3). They pursued the law, moreover, with zeal. We cannot find any direct hint indicating a failure to keep the law perfectly on Israel's side. 'From the works' (ἐξ ἔργων) in 9:32 does not refer to a failure to observe the law perfectly. Works are not the wrong way of observing the law. See below. Furthermore, Israel did not attain to the law; it is not said that Israel did not attain to the observance of the law. In other words, Israel could not get to the law. This difference must be noticed carefully. B') Israel did not obtain the righteousness of the law: As I indicated above, what Israel did not attain to was not the righteousness of the law, but the law itself. When we contrast 9:30 with 9:31 carelessly, we might draw the wrong conclusion that Israel did not attain to the righteousness of the law, but this is not what the text states. It says that Israel did not attain to the law. Missing this makes one miss Paul's point. C') Works are the wrong way of pursuing the law: According to the text, Moses does not say that works are the wrong way of pursuing the law. If one reads Rom. 10:5 through the lens of 9:32, works are read into the text as the wrong way of obeying the law. D') Both righteousness by faith and righteousness by works are related to the Mosaic law, that is, to the way in which the law is pursued: Paul does not compare works and faith, centring on the Torah. In 10:5-6, he contrasts righteousness of the Torah and that of faith. In other words, he contrasts Torah and faith.

Therefore, the interpretation that Israel did not obtain righteousness of the Mosaic law because of a failure to obey the law perfectly, which was caused by a wrong way of pursuing it, is wrong. Even though all four the assumptions, A') to D'), must be rethought, I am going to concentrate on A') and B') in particular, since they contain the main ideas giving rise to the misunderstanding.

2 Rom. 9:30-33

2.1 Point of comparison: The law or Christ?

The interpretation of εἰς νόμον οὐκ ἔφθασεν (9:31) is the key to understanding Rom. 10 since this is where Israel's problem is identified. However, it is not easy to decide on its meaning. Did Israel not have the law already? Does the phrase refer to righteousness,⁵⁴⁷ the goal (purpose),⁵⁴⁸ or the fulfilment⁵⁴⁹ of the law?

Furthermore, in order to understand 9:31, one has to grasp the strange contrast between 9:30 and 31. In these verses Paul compares the Gentiles with Israel. It should also be noted that the point of comparison is not clear. In 9:30, it is said that the Gentiles obtained righteousness and it came from faith. On the other hand, in 9:31, it is said that Israel did not attain to the law. As Ziesler⁵⁵⁰ correctly points out, it is awkward to understand εἰς νόμον οὐκ ἔφθασεν as meaning that Israel did not keep the law. However, no matter whether it means Israel's failure in keeping the law or in arriving at the law, if we regard 9:31 as the reason why Israel did not get the right-

⁵⁴⁷ According to D. Moo, *Romans*, p. 620, Israel failed to attain to the righteousness that the law demanded. See also M. Luther, *Romans*, p. 144; R. H. Mounce, *Romans*, p. 205; C. T. Rhyne, "Nomos Dikaiosynēs and the Meaning of Romans 10:4", *CBQ* 47 (1985), p. 489; and J. S. Exell, *The Biblical Illustrator: Romans*, Vol. II (London: James Nisbet & CO.), p. 310. Interestingly, Exell finds Israel's fault in following the law of the righteousness instead of the righteousness. Dunn, *Roman*, p. 592, has a similar idea.

Cf. E. P. Sanders, *Law*, p. 42, who understands it as referring to righteousness by faith, too.

⁵⁴⁸ T. R. Schreiner, *Romans*, pp. 536-38. Cf. T. R. Schreiner, "Israel's Failure"; and W. H. G. Thomas, *Commentary on Romans* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1974), p. 268.

⁵⁴⁹ B. L. Martin, *Christ and the Law in Paul* (NTSup 62, Leiden: Brill, 1989), pp. 137-40; and N. T. Wright, *Climax*, p. 224. According to Wright, one confessing Christ fulfils the Torah and attains to it. A worldwide family can thus attain to the Torah, with the help of the gospel. The Torah is then fulfilled whenever anyone confesses that Jesus is the Lord. According to his interpretation, 'to attain to the law' means 'to attain to the fulfilment of it'.

In fact, the explanations of v. 31b of many commentators' (εἰς νόμον οὐκ ἔφθασεν) contain two or three of the readings above (righteousness, goal, or the fulfilment of the law). For instance, N. T. Wright, *Romans*, pp. 648-49 and 656-57, accentuates that Israel did not attain to the Torah but it finally meant that Israel failed in fulfilling the Torah and did not attain to the purpose of the Torah. In the case of Schreiner, all three readings are mixed in his explanation. However, the common point of the three readings is that they add something to the text, that is, to the phrase εἰς νόμον. It seems that many commentators think that v. 31, as it is, does not make sense. Cf. Dunn, *Romans*, p. 582, who thinks that Paul's meaning in v. 31 is not wholly clear without v. 32a.

⁵⁵⁰ A. Ziesler, *Romans*, p. 253.

eousness of God in the end (10:3), 9:31 does not seem to be a balanced comparison to 9:30. The Gentiles obtained righteousness not by keeping or arriving at the law; it comes from faith. The law is not the point of comparison. Paul has already declared that in 3:21. If Israel had been compared with the Gentiles, 9:31 would have read: Ἰσραὴλ δὲ διώκων νόμον δικαιοσύνης εἰς πίστιν οὐκ ἔφθασεν.

Does Paul state that the Gentiles and Israel have different ways of obtaining righteousness? Does he mean that the Gentiles succeeded in getting righteousness in their own way, while Israel failed in her own way? To put it in another way, does Paul say that, in principle, if Israel can keep the law, she can obtain righteousness?

According to Paul, Israel did not attain to the law. Why not? It seems obvious that Paul points out Israel's problem in 9:31-32a as her pursuit of the law not by faith but by works. Thus it is no wonder that many identify the problem not as the law itself but as the way in which it was pursued. If so, it appears as if Paul contrasts the Gentiles' faith in Christ with Israel's failure to observe the law.

It should be noted, however, that 9:32b-33 reverses this idea. Israel's pursuit of the law in the wrong way ended with her stumbling over the stumbling stone. This stone is Christ. The wrong way she pursued the law resulted in her disbelief in Christ. In short, she did not arrive at Christ. It thus seems as if Paul claimed in 9:31 that if Israel had arrived at the law by faith, that is, by the right way of keeping the law, she could have obtained the righteousness of God. However, in 9:33, he points out that she did not believe in Christ. That is Paul's point when mentioning the Gentiles in 9:30. If so, the works he mentions do not refer to the wrong way of pursuing the law but to disbelief in Christ. Then, in turn, another question arises: Why did Paul say that Israel did not arrive at, not Christ, but the law?

Paul contrasts the Gentiles and Israel by stating that the Gentiles obtained righteousness by believing in Christ (in 9:30) and that Israel did not arrive at faith in Christ (in 9:32-33). The Gentiles are contrasted to Israel not in terms of the law but in terms of Christ. Then, why does he say in 9:31 that Israel's fault was that she did not arrive at the law? If the Gentiles and Israel are contrasted in terms of Christ, Paul's statement that she did not arrive at the law creates an asymmetrical contrast. Here, we should be careful to take note that Paul does not say that Israel did not arrive at the 'goal' of the law, that is, Christ. He does not make the contrast a balanced one in this way. Thus, we may put the question: Where exactly lies Israel's fault? In not attaining the law or in not believing in Christ?

This question may be answered in two ways: 1) By assuming that Paul points out that Israel pursued the law in the wrong way (Schreiner⁵⁵¹) or 2) by assuming that he lays his finger on her disbelief in Christ (Sanders⁵⁵²). Which interpretation is correct? To my mind one should not choose between these two interpretations as both are only partially correct. Rather one should try to combine the two. According to 9:30-33, attaining to the law is the same as attaining to Christ. To put it in a nutshell, *Christ is presented as the law*. In other words, one can detect something similar going on here as in the rest of Romans and Galatians, namely Paul's emphasis on the personal nature of the law.

Israel could not arrive at the law because she pursued it (Ἰσραὴλ δὲ διώκων νόμον) not from faith (οὐκ ἐκ πίστεως) but from works (ἐξ ἔργων). On the other hand, she could not believe in Christ because she was (or pursued the law) not from faith but from works. These two statements depict Israel's fault. However, this should not be regarded as two separate problems; essentially there was only one problem. According to 9:31-2, the law is the law that can be arrived at only by (from) faith. It cannot be attained to by works. And according to 9:32-33, Christ is the rock, the object not to be done (worked) but to be believed in. Israel followed the law by works without faith and ended up with stumbling at the stumbling stone (rock) that is the object to be believed in (the object of faith), that is, Christ. Paul presents Christ (the object to be believed in) as the law that should be attained to only by faith, that is, *the law of faith*. Once we see Christ as the law, faith and works remain the two ways or two principles of arriving at the law and a balance can be detected in Paul's comparison of the Gentiles and Israel. If Christ is understood as the law, and not as the goal of the law, both Schreiner's claim that Paul compares faith and works as two ways of pursuing the law and Sanders' interpretation that Paul points out Israel's disbelief in Christ turn out to be right.

⁵⁵¹ T. R. Schreiner, *Law*, pp. 104-12.

⁵⁵² E. P. Sanders, *Law*, pp. 36-43.

2.2 The way of pursuing the law = The identity of the law: Which law did Israel pursue?

The two interpretations pointed out above are also problematic to a certain extent. The reason for this is that it is often not realised that they in fact mean the same. By this I do not mean that if one pursues the law in the right way, one will arrive at Christ as the goal of the law, and, therefore, Israel's fault of choosing the wrong way equals her fault of not believing in Christ. That Israel did not attain to the law (Ἰσραὴλ εἰς νόμον οὐκ ἔφθασεν) is not short-hand for Israel not attaining to the goal of the law. If we interpret the law here as the goal of the law, Israel's problem of not attaining to it is linked to the way in which she pursued the law. This would then imply that if the law is pursued in the proper way, the pursuer will attain the goal of the law, that is, Christ. However, Paul never makes such a claim. In Galatians, we have seen that his reference to pedagogue cannot be interpreted in this way; righteousness was not linked to the law. This also happened in Rom 3:21. We will see that he also refers to two kinds of righteousness in Rom. 10:5ff., the righteousness of the law and the righteousness not linked to the law, that is, the righteousness of faith. And here in 9:30, he states that the Gentiles did not pursue the law at all. They arrived at Christ but not through the law. Paul himself who was faultless in terms of legalistic righteousness did not arrive at Christ. Accordingly, the idea that the law should be interpreted in 9:30-31 as the goal of the law cannot be supported by other Pauline texts.

However, when we interpret εἰς νόμον in 9:31 not as 'to the goal of the law' but as 'to the law', we see a new possibility. Israel had the law. It was her boast (Rom. 2:23). And she pursued it with zeal but did not arrive 'at the law'. Paul does not say that she did not keep the law, but that she did not attain to the law itself. When we read it as simply referring to 'the law', *we come to see that he is speaking of the identity of the law that Israel had*. If she did not attain to the law, which kind of law was the Torah? And what is the law that she should have arrived at? The point is that Paul once again has two different laws in mind, as was the case in Rom 7.⁵⁵³ In other words, the Torah that Israel pursued with zeal was not the right law; there is another law and she should have pursued *that law, that is, Christ*. In terms of Paul's notion of two laws, we thus come to realise that faith and works are not introduced here as two dif-

⁵⁵³ It seems as if C. Hodge, *Romans*, p. 330, might have realised that Paul's contrast is based on the notion of two laws, but he does not delve deeper into this.

ferent ways or principles of pursuing one and the same law. Faith is not the right way of pursuing the Torah. Faith is an entirely different way of pursuing a law that is different from the Torah.

It, however, is right to say that faith is still a way of pursuing a *law*. If we keep in mind the two laws and the two corresponding ways of pursuing the two, we realize that to refer to a way of pursuing a law is to refer to the identity of the law being pursued. The law that Israel pursued was the Torah. The other law, Christ, is the law that she should have pursued by faith. Israel's ultimate problem was that she did not pursue the other law, that is, Christ. In other words, she did not believe in him. Her fault was not that she pursued the Torah by works, but that works were *the wrong way of pursuing Christ*, that is, the law.⁵⁵⁴ At this point, it is correct to accept that Israel pursued the law (not the Torah but Christ) *in the wrong way*. Finally, Schreiner's emphasis on the wrong way in which Israel pursued the law and Sander's emphasis on her disbelief in Christ, in fact, mean the same for Paul.⁵⁵⁵

The problem is why Paul explains all of this in such a confusing way. Why does he interpret Christ in terms of law? A law (= Torah) and then another law! At a glance, it might seem a strange and awkward way of thinking. Paul, however, bases this idea logically on what he had already said in Rom. 7. Let us briefly return to his argument in Rom. 7. What is the reason why the 'I' (*ego*) cannot do good? It was neither due to the weak will nor to the wrong way of pursuing of the law. It rather was that the good law was not present in the 'I'. For Paul, having the law as a person leading the 'I' is central. And in this respect, he follows the tradition of the Old Testament. For example, someone who delights in and meditates on the law is called blessed in Psalm 1:1-2 (cf. 119:47-8). That the law is a guide is more important than observing it. In this sense, Israel was boastful of her possession of the law unlike the Gentiles. When we understand this, we come to realise that it is not the failure in observing the law but the failure in arriving at the law that is important. I repeat what I have pointed out earlier: the law that is present in the 'I' determines the action, life, and outcomes of the particular law. It is within this context that Paul introduces the

⁵⁵⁴ I welcome the fact that T. D. Gordon, "Note on Romans 9:32", interprets Rom. 9:32 within the context of Gal. 3:12 and that he identifies Israel's fault as the way in which she pursued the law. However, he does not realise that her proper pursuing of the law ended with a failure in attaining to Christ, the law. For him, too, Israel's problem is the failure of observing the law.

⁵⁵⁵ If I have to choose one of these, I am more satisfied with Sander's explanation. In his, *Law*, p. 42, he realises that Paul's point is irrelevant to the manner of pursuing the law and the observance of the law. However, he cannot decisively grasp the heart of the matter. He fails to realise that Paul's framework continues after Rom. 7. See his footnote 130, too.

notion of two laws: The law of death and the law of life. And these two laws are served in two different ways, by the mind (heart) and by the flesh. According to Rom. 7, those who serve the law by the flesh cannot serve the law of life.

If we keep Paul's statements in Rom. 7-8, in mind what we find in Rom. 10 is to be expected. In Rom 7-8, one finds: 1) Two laws, 2) The notion of the two laws as persons, 3) The way of pursuing the law is linked to the identity of the law, 4) The existence of law = existence of life. These are exactly what Paul says in Rom. 9-10, too. In Rom. 9:30-10:13, one finds: 1) The Torah and another law, 2) Christ as the law, 3) Pursuit by faith and work = Pursuit of different laws, the Torah and Christ, 4) Not attaining to the law, Christ = not attaining to salvation.

To conclude, Paul continues the argument that he started in Rom. 7 in Rom. 9:30-10:13, which means the text must be understood against the backdrop of Rom. 7. In Rom. 7, he referred to the existence of the two laws and the principles behind them, but he did not disclose the identities of the two laws. Now, in Rom 9:30-10:13, they are fully revealed. Israel should have pursued the law of faith, Christ. Let us examine this in more detail.

3 Rom. 10:2-6

3.1 The two laws and the two kinds of righteousness

According to Hübner,⁵⁵⁶ the righteousness that is of the law and the righteousness that is of faith refer to the contrast in the two ways in which the law can be kept. In this case, both types of righteousness thus come from the law. However, we have to take note that Paul does not contrast works and faith in Rom. 10:5-6, centring on the law. It is obvious that in 10:5 works are related to the Mosaic law, the Torah, while the righteousness which is from faith is not related to the Torah. Furthermore Rom. 10:6 does not say anything about pursuing the Torah in the way of faith. Rom. 10:6

⁵⁵⁶ See section 2.3 on Hübner in chapter II.

does not refer to the righteousness, in relation with *the law*, by the way of faith, but to the righteousness which is of (from) faith. In other words, Paul does not compare 'the righteousness of works (in connection with the law) and the righteousness of faith (in connection with the law)' but 'the righteousness of the law and the righteousness of faith'. It is very important to realise that he distinguishes here between two kinds of righteousness. Rom. 10:5 simply refers to righteousness from the law, not to a righteousness obtained by a certain way of pursuing the law. Rom. 10:5 does not claim that works are the wrong way of pursuing the law. If this were so, the problem would be that it was Moses who taught Israel the wrong way of pursuing the law. However, in Rom. 10:5, Paul does not find any problem with Moses' principle, that is, works as a way of pursuing the law. Instead he clearly refers to the principle of a righteousness that is from the law. Doers of the law are right in terms of righteousness of the law.⁵⁵⁷

The idea that Paul contrasts work to faith, centring on the law, is the result of simply combining 9:31-2 and 10:5. If the objection raised against works in 9:32 is read into 10:5, doing the Torah becomes the problem. But this is not correct. As I have already pointed out Israel did what the law required. One should take note what Paul says himself, namely that Israel had no problem in terms of the righteousness of the law.

In this sense, Paul is a Hebrew of the Hebrews. His self-evaluation in Phil. 3:6-9 matches Israel's story in Rom. 10:2-3. Take note that Paul compares the *two kinds of righteousness* (Phil. 3:9 → Rom. 10:3), *accentuating knowledge* (Phil. 3:7 → Rom. 10:2b) *in contrast to zeal* (Phil. 3:6 → Rom. 10:2a). One could say that Paul is a sort of prototype of the Hebrews, declaring his faultlessness in terms of legalistic righteousness. The correspondence between the two texts thus supports the idea that Israel was also blameless in terms of the law. Or rather, that Israel arrived at the

⁵⁵⁷ According to D. P. Fuller, *Gospel and Law*, pp. 98-9, in Rom. 10:5, Paul cites Lev. 18:5 in a positive sense unlike Gal. 3:12. I think that Paul's argument in Romans is not different from that in Galatians, but Fuller is right in the sense that Paul's quotation in Rom. 10:5 is positive. He, however, does not see that a problem arises in comparing Rom. 10:5 with 10:6 (cf. pp. 85ff.). The problem is that even righteousness, by the right works, regarded as right by the law, is not the righteousness of faith.

R. Badenas, *Christ the End of the Law: Romans 10:4 in Pauline Perspective* (JSNTSup 10, Sheffield: JSOT Press: 1985), pp. 119ff., also reads Paul's saying the other way round. Warning that one's interpretation of Rom. 10:5-8 is easily misled by Gal. 3:10-14, he reads δέ in Rom. 10:6 not as adversative but as connective so that ἡ δικαιοσύνη ἡ ἐκ νόμου (v. 5) and ἡ ἐκ πίστεως δικαιοσύνη (v. 6) are equivalent expressions.

righteousness of the Torah because she pursued it *exactly* by (from) works, which was the right way of pursuing it.

If so, what was the problem then? Exactly what was said in the previous paragraph, namely that she followed the Torah in the right way so that she arrived at the Torah and its righteousness. However, take note that according to Paul she did not arrive at salvation (10:1). That was indeed the very problem. The righteousness of the Torah did not bring salvation. She followed the righteousness of the Torah, but this was not the righteousness of God. I realise that this distinction might sound strange to modern exegetes – as would have been the case for Israel in Paul's time.⁵⁵⁸ However, this was indeed the way in which Paul understood the situation. Although he was blameless in terms of the righteousness of the Torah he was on a road leading towards death. This is what we have also seen in Rom. 3. The righteousness of the Jewish law-keepers could not make them righteous in God's sight. Their righteousness was not God's righteousness.

Israel arrived at the righteousness of the Torah by the right way, that is, by works. This is the very reason why Paul did not say that she did not arrive at the observance or righteousness of the Torah. It was not the righteousness of the law but the law that she did not arrive at. Therefore, the law that she was supposed to arrive at but could not cannot be the Torah. This is not merely a matter of a right way of pursuing the law. The problem was her dependence on *the Torah* as such in the right way. That she did not pursue, follow, or serve the law by faith thus refers to another law, namely the law of faith.

The difficulties in understanding 9:30-10:13 are caused by the fact that Paul is involved in a kind of word-play,⁵⁵⁹ in that he calls both the Torah and Christ 'law', thus continuing his argument in Rom. 7, and by the fact that the circular argument that the way and the principle of a law determine the identity of the law and vice versa con-

⁵⁵⁸ That the perfect righteousness of the Torah cannot lead us to salvation sounds like a shocking dilemma to most modern Christians. But this dilemma also bothered Paul almost 2000 years ago. The Pre-Christian Paul did not have the right *knowledge* so that he was far from salvation although he attained perfect righteousness. As long as he was pursuing the Torah perfectly, he was moving away from Christ, that is, from the law of life. If we have difficulty in understanding Paul's idea, we must go back to Rom. 7. I mean that we must go back to Genesis. In Eden, there were two trees. According to the commandment of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, Adam and Eve were not allowed to eat the fruit of the tree. Suppose that they kept this commandment perfectly. What would have happened? Even though they would have attained perfect righteousness in terms of the commandment of the tree of knowledge this would not have given them life. Life came only from the other tree (the other commandment).

⁵⁵⁹ See the following section. By the way, is Paul trying to confuse his readers by this word-play? Not at all! This is only his way of trying to explain the dilemma of the law.

structs the text. If one forgets Rom. 7, this text might be confusing. Paul thus makes a distinction between two laws, the Torah and another law which cannot be attained to by works. According to Paul, Israel arrived at a law, but the law at which she arrived at was the wrong one.⁵⁶⁰

That we are on the right track is confirmed by the way in which Paul compares the two kinds of righteousness. We have seen that 10:5 simply refers to righteousness from the Torah, based on works. On the other hand, in 10:5-6, Paul compares the righteousness of faith and that of the Torah: The righteousness of faith is a righteousness based on a principle differing from the Torah. Furthermore, right before this, Paul compares God's righteousness to Israel's own righteousness. All of this thus demand that we should interpret the two comparisons as follows: the righteousness of faith = God's righteousness ⇔ the righteousness of the law, the Torah = Israel's own righteousness. The righteousness of the Torah is thus only Israel's own righteousness.

The interpretation of Israel's own righteousness (τὴν ἰδίαν δικαιοσύνην) has a long and complicated history, but one's interpretation should be based on the text only. In this context, 'own' (ἴδιος) does not mean 'for her merit, by herself' but 'not according to knowledge' (οὐ κατ' ἐπίγνωσιν) as is clear from 10:2. One needs to realise that the knowledge mentioned here does not refer to the right way of pursuing the law. Israel's ignorance was linked to the fact that she did not know God's righteousness (10:3). God's righteousness was the same as the righteousness of faith, and is contrasted to the righteousness of the Torah. Israel was ignorant of the existence of God's righteousness which did not come from the Torah. Thus, Israel's own righteousness does not refer to her misuse of the Torah, for example by legalism or by using it as an ethnical boundary marker. It means that she did not know that the righteousness of faith was God's righteousness, but instead regarded the righteousness of the Torah as God's righteousness. That Israel regarded the righteousness of the Torah as God's righteousness does not mean that it was 'for herself' or 'self-

⁵⁶⁰ N. T. Wright failed to see that in Rom. 7, Paul refers to two laws by the intertextuality of Genesis and Deuteronomy. He even refers to the *Doppelgänger* of the Torah but, in fact, it only means different sides, actions of functions of the Torah (see footnote 517). Furthermore, he fails to grasp Paul's point in Rom. 10. That Israel could not attain to the law does not mean that she could not attain to the *Torah* (*contra* Wright, *Romans*, pp. 648-49 and 657). He finds the solution to the problem of the law in the new way to keep the Torah. According to him, *ibid.*, pp. 657ff., the new way is faith. However, faith is not the new way to keep *the Torah* but the way of *the new law*, that is, Christ. One attains to the totally new law by faith.

efforts'.⁵⁶¹ Israel had zeal. Her zeal does not mean that she made efforts to get salvation without God. In that sense, her zeal was not towards herself but God. Note that it was the zeal of God (ζήλον θεοῦ) (10:2). It was aimed at God's righteousness, but, in fact, only at a righteousness that she regarded as God's righteousness. She did not know the true righteousness of God at all so that she did not submit to it (οὐχ ὑπετάγησαν) at all.⁵⁶² She tried to establish a righteousness that was not God's righteousness, and ended up establishing the wrong kind of righteousness, that is, only her own righteousness. It was thus not a matter of ability but of knowledge. What made her zeal wrong was not her way or ability but her ignorance.

In conclusion, that Israel had zeal for God in order to establish her own righteousness means that she had zeal in order to establish not the righteousness of faith but the righteousness of the Torah. In short, *Israel's own righteousness was not the righteousness of the Torah which went wrong but the righteousness of the Torah as such*. Israel's own righteousness that the text refers to is the righteousness of the Torah, kept with zeal not for her own efforts, merits, or ethnical boasts, but for God, performed in the right way, and finally attained perfectly. Accordingly, in terms of Paul's logic, there are two different laws corresponding to the two kinds of righteousness. *The distinction that Paul makes between two kinds of righteousness thus does not refer to two ways of doing the law, but is linked to the notion of two different laws, the Torah and Christ. He has already introduced Christ as law in 9:31.*

The righteousness (of God) does not depend on whether or not the law (the Torah) can be observed but on the question which law it is that is being pursued. One law, the Torah, leads to self-righteousness, and the other one to God's righteousness. Christ turns out to be the law of God, or the law of life (Rom. 7: 25 and 8:2). However, it is important to take note that Paul has not proved it yet. How is he going to do so? He must prove that Israel was wrong in pursuing the Torah based on a (right) principle of works. He must prove that the Torah (the law to do) was the law that brought about

⁵⁶¹ Not only the traditional reading according to which self-righteousness means self-efforts based merits, but also the new one focusing on Israel's exclusive ethnical righteousness, for example, that of G. Howard, "Christ the End of the Law: The Meaning of Romans 10:4ff.," *JBL* 88 (1969), p 336, miss Paul's thrust.

⁵⁶² God's righteousness is nothing but the righteousness of faith (Rom. 10:10). In Rom. 10:13-17, Paul points out Israel's disbelief in the gospel (Christ). It is not true that she believed in Christ in the wrong way so that she failed to believe, nor is it true that even though she wanted to believe in him, she was unable to believe. Rather, she just did not believe and simply rejected God's righteousness.

the self-righteousness and Christ (the law to believe) was the law that brought about God's righteousness.

4 Rom. 10:5-10

4.1 The law of doing and the law of faith = The law of the flesh and the law of the heart

First of all, it is useful to keep in mind what Paul has to prove. In Rom. 7-8, he explained the law. This is continued in Rom. 10. In between he discusses Israel. In this part, he tries to find an answer for his great sorrow and pain (9:1-2), that is, for Israel's dilemma (9:3-4). In order to do so, he focuses on the Torah. For this, Rom. 7-8 is a kind of preparation. He explains why the Torah pursued in the right way did not bring salvation for Israel. Israel's history shows that the righteousness of the Torah is not the righteousness of God. But how can he prove this from Scripture? Can he find a text stating this in the Old Testament? Furthermore, he also needs to find proof that Christ is the law bringing salvation. Of these two tasks the former seems to be the more difficult one to achieve. Paul finds the answer to this in Deuteronomy.

In 10: 6-8, he cites Deut. 30:12-4. The 'word on the lips and in the heart' is understood as the word of faith that is proclaimed. Paul thus finds the core text for faith in Christ in Deuteronomy. It should be noted that Deut. 30:12-4 is related to the commandments written in the book of *law* (30:10). Paul, however, reinterprets this as referring to Christ. The word of *the law* that is near in Deut. 30:12-4 is interpreted as Christ: it means confessing Christ with one's lips and believing in him in one's heart. His point is that Deut. 30 has already foretold *the law* of faith.

We should also pay attention to the way in which he uses this text from Deuteronomy in terms of its context. He understands Deut. 30:12-4 as saying that when one believes in Christ with one's heart, one will get salvation. This interpretation does not go against the original context of Deuteronomy. According to Deut. 30:14, the

word is near, on one's lips and in one's heart, so that one can do it. According to Deut. 30:14-6, life is promised on the condition that God's commandments are done. Therefore, conclusively, having God's word in one's mouth and heart promises life and blessing.⁵⁶³ By the way, according to Deut. 30:14, the direct result of having the word of the law on one's lips and in one's heart is that one can do it. If Paul wanted to prove in Rom. 9:30ff. that Israel failed to observe the law, it does not make sense that he does not refer to this verse in Rom. 10:8.⁵⁶⁴ If he intended to prove in Rom. 9:30 that Israel could not achieve observance of the law because she did not pursue the law by faith, he surely would have supported such an assertion by Deut. 30:14. However, as I have argued earlier, he is not interested in proving that Israel did not observe the law in the right way; he only wanted to show that Christ is the word that should be in one's heart, and that he is the law of salvation. What one should realise is that in identifying Christ as the law, he emphasises the relation to one's heart, but deliberately does not connect him to works. Why is that?

Paul connects only heart, belief and salvation (life) to Christ as the law. In other words, Christ is *the law of life* to be believed in *in one's heart*. That exactly is what he has also said in Rom. 7:25. The way in which he interprets and explains Deut. 30 thus strongly reminds one of Rom. 7. Although he introduced Israel's tragic situation in Rom. 9, he did not discontinue his explanation of the law. In the light of Rom. 7, it is clear why he does not want to connect Christ to works.⁵⁶⁵ In Rom. 7, he hinted at Deut. 30, and declared that he served the law of God, namely, the law of the mind or the law of (the Spirit of) life with the mind. In Rom. 10, he cites the same text and states something similar; the only difference being that he changed 'to serve with the mind' to 'to believe in the heart (mind)' and that he explicitly identified the law of the mind (the law of life) as Christ. What is very important here is that Paul also identifies

⁵⁶³ It is quite interesting to take note of this. In Deut. 30, curse and blessing are determined by the law. On the other hand, in the New Testament, they are determined by the word of Christ. The blessings on the mount in Matt. 5:1ff. and the curses (a series of οὐαὶ δὲ ὑμῖν) in Matt. 23:13ff. are proclaimed by means of the word of Jesus. According to John 3:18, one who does not believe in Jesus has already been condemned. (The word of) Christ thus functions as the law in terms of blessing and curse.

⁵⁶⁴ According to N. T. Wright, *Climax*, p. 245, Paul understands the omitted phrase in Deut. 30:14, 'so that you may do it', as referring to the true keeping of the Torah. If this is so, we have to accept that Paul believes that all of his readers can easily catch this. To my mind, if Wright is correct, then Paul always omits this crucial phrase, both here and in Galatians!

⁵⁶⁵ Take note of Paul's use of terms in Rom. 7:18-21 once again. Paul says that he does not perform or 'work' (κατεργάζομαι) the good. We have seen that the good is not human nature but the law. However, when the good is linked to the law, that is, to the law of God, the law of the mind, the law of the Spirit of life, Paul never uses the verbs 'perform', 'work' and 'do'. Only the other law, the Torah, can be connected to these terms (ποιέω in 10:5).

the opposite possibility as the law served with the flesh. If Christ is identified in Rom. 10 as the law of God and in Rom. 7 as the law of life by the connection of mind (heart) and faith in Rom. 10, it is easy to grasp that what should be connected to 'works' is 'flesh' even though 'flesh' does not appear in Rom. 10. See especially Rom. 3:20. Paul has already connected performing the law to the flesh. He contrasts the work of flesh and the faith of mind (heart). What does the contrast mean in terms of the two principles of the two laws in Rom. 7:25? It means that the law to be 'done', namely, the Torah, is the law to be served with the flesh. In a word, the Torah is the law of death. In Rom. 10, Paul says by means of the two principles of the two laws in Rom. 7 that the law of the heart (mind), the law to be believed, that is, Christ, is the law of life while the law of the flesh, the law to be 'done', that is, the Torah, is the law of death.⁵⁶⁶ In the light of this, it is clear why Paul did not want to connect 'works' to Christ.

According to Deuteronomy, especially chapter 30, the law brings both life and death. At first, Paul did not see any problem in Israel or himself observing the Torah. Yet, this actually brought about death. Death did not result from a failure to observe the Torah, nor from a wrong way of obeying it. He explains this by referring to two laws. Now, we can fully understand why Paul connected the law of life and the law of God only to the mind (heart) in Rom. 7, and why he omitted the core part, Deut. 30:14b, when he cited Deut. 30:14 in Rom. 10:8. The part that he omitted referred to the perfect observance of the law. It was not the case that he emphasised 'mind' in Rom. 7 in order to describe his mental agony so that he could get his readers' sympathy. No, he was preparing the first steps of a new theological insight, that is, mind and faith ⇔ flesh and work, which would be worked out in detail in Rom. 10.

I am surprised to see that many scholars so easily ignore Rom. 7-8 when they do exegesis of Rom. 10. For example, Ziesler⁵⁶⁷ does not pay attention to 'heart (mind)' and do not connect it to Rom. 7:25 so that he just focuses on the ease of becoming righteous by means of sermons proclaiming Christ. Of course, he does not grasp that Christ himself is presented as the law. However, Rom. 10 cannot be interpreted on its own. Paul's statement that the law to serve with one's mind is the law of life and the law served with the flesh is the law of death is not only meant for Rom. 7, but

⁵⁶⁶ In this regard, the Reformers were right in emphasising the antithesis between faith and works, but they did not realise that both faith and works were related to the law, or rather, to the two laws.

⁵⁶⁷ A. Ziesler, *Romans*, pp. 251 and 262.

prepares for Rom. 10. All of this helps him to explain Israel's dilemma. Now, we see why Paul had to draw such a complicated picture of the law in Rom. 7.

Israel followed the Torah that led to death since the Torah was the law of death. The observance was not the issue, nor was the way in which they pursued the law. According to Paul, Israel's fault was in pursuing the law not by faith, as the way of pursuing the particular law was determined by the identity of the particular law. This does not mean that she did not keep the Torah by faith; it means that she did not pursue the law of faith, heart, and life, that is, Christ.⁵⁶⁸

Now the awkward contrast in Rom. 9:31 can be understood. The verse does not mean that Israel did not attain to the Torah, its righteousness or its observance. Neither does it say that she did not arrive at the goal of the Torah. As far as the Torah is the law of death, observing it brings forth sin and death; it cannot function positively. As the law of death cannot refer to the law of life, so the Torah cannot point to Christ. The Torah cannot take Christ as *its* goal. Israel could not arrive at the *true* goal, Christ, by following the Torah. Now, we are in the position to interpret τέλος in 10:4.

5 Τέλος νόμου Χριστός

It is well known that there have been a lot of debate on the interpretation of τέλος νόμου. I am not going to claim that all the existing explanations of it are totally wrong, but I will suggest the possibility of a better interpretation. The two most important interpretations of τέλος are 'end'⁵⁶⁹ and 'goal'.⁵⁷⁰ However, it is quite difficult to choose

⁵⁶⁸ This understanding allows one to see the intertextuality between Rom. 3:27 and Rom. 9:30-10:10. Rom. 3:27 seems to refer to the two principles, faith and work. Cf. H. Räisänen, "The Law of Faith and the Spirit", and "Paul's Word-Play on νόμος". Take also note that the RSV, ASV and NIV translate νόμος as 'principle' or 'manner'. But even if νόμος means 'principle', it does not mean principle only; it also identifies the particular law. Finally, νόμος έργων and νόμος πίστεως mean the 'law of works' and the 'law of faith'; in other words, the 'law of the heart', that is, the 'law of God' and the 'law of the flesh', that is, the 'law of sin'. Now, we see why Paul kept to the word νόμος in Rom. 3:27.

⁵⁶⁹ C. K. Barrett, *Romans*, pp. 197ff. According to T. R. Schreiner, *Law*, pp. 134-36, Rom. 10:4 does not depict the general relationship between gospel and law. He focuses on v. 3. For Christians, Christ is the end of their attempts to use the law for self-righteousness.

one of these, as both interpretations do not only make sense but also create problems. In the light of so many negative explanations of the law by Paul, it might seem as if he understands τέλος νόμου as the 'end' of the law. In this case, however, the interpretation of the expression is in conflict not only with Jesus' saying in Matt. 5:17, but also with Paul's own saying in Rom. 3:31. And our study of Rom. 7-8 forces us not to interpret τέλος νόμου as the end of the law because the law of life is also called 'law' by Paul. Humans receive life in Christ, which is possible by the law of life. Above all, Paul presents Christ as the law in Rom. 9:30-10:10. If he intended to use τέλος to mean 'end', he contradicts himself by presenting Christ who is the end of the law as the law.

On the other hand, interpreting τέλος as 'goal' also causes problems. If it means that humankind comes to need grace as a result of a failure to keep the law in the sense that they come to find Christ, it cannot explain the fact that Paul does not present a failure in observing the law as the problem of the law in Rom. 7-10. On the other hand, if it means that the law eventually leads humankind to Christ by its positive function, it cannot explain why Israel that pursued the law by the right way or principle and Paul who was legally blameless in terms of the law did not arrive at Christ. Interpreting Christ as the goal of the Torah thus disregards Israel's history, and interprets Rom. 7 in a wrong way. According to Rom. 7, the 'I' was a prisoner of war caused by the law. The law led it not to life but to death. Death, rather, was the goal of the law!⁵⁷¹ The picture of the law that Paul draws is never positive. Even the *right* pursuit of the law cannot yield any positive results. To say that Christ is the goal of the Torah thus waters down the essential problem of the Torah. Thus we can conclude that both interpretations of the expression τέλος νόμου disregard the context of Rom. 7-10.

⁵⁷⁰ P. Meyer, "Romans 10:4 and the End of the Law", in: J. L. Crenshaw and S. Sandmel (eds.), *The Divine Helmsman: Studies on God's Control of Human Events* (New York: KTAV, 1980), p. 68; C. T. Rhyne, "Romans 10:4", pp. 492ff.; and *Faith Establishes the Law* (SBLDS 55, Chico: Scholars Press, 1981), pp. 103-04. R. Badenas, *The End of the Law*, p. 80, says that during the New Testament era, τέλος was especially used for designating goal and purpose. Accordingly, he, pp. 114-15, reads it not temporally but teleologically so that he finally accepts that Christ is the law's true goal.

⁵⁷¹ As I indicated in the beginning of the section the implied meaning of τέλος does not completely exclude the meaning of 'goal'. In Rom. 7, Paul identified the Torah as the commandment of knowledge of good and evil. It produces evil and makes one know evil in that way, whereas it also makes one aware of not having the good law. In this sense, it might be said that (the knowledge of) the good law is the goal of the commandment (law). Nevertheless, we must not miss Paul's thrust. It is that evil and death are the goal of the law of death, that is, the Torah.

To my mind there is a better way to interpret the phrase. As point of departure we should keep in mind that Paul's explanation of the law in Rom. 10 does not occur in a vacuum. It is true that he cites Deut. 30 in Rom. 10, but he had already begun his explanation of the law against the background of this Old Testament text in Rom. 7. We have already seen how he links the basic problem of the law to the law itself. This problem of the law outlined in Rom. 7-8 is finally solved in Rom. 10. The solution is not that the law should be abolished. No, Christ fulfils the law so that it can perform the correct action (δικαίωμα). In Christ, the law that brought death is fulfilled so that it becomes the law that brings life, that is, τέλος νόμου Χριστός. What is also important to take note of here is the unique emphasis in Rom. 10. Having indicated in Rom. 7-8 that there are two laws and that the right action is fulfilled by Christ, Paul reveals the identities of the two laws in Rom. 10. The Torah and Christ are the law of sin and the law of the mind respectively. Christ turns out to be not only the one who fulfils the law in order that it becomes the law of life; he also becomes the law of life itself. In other words, *Christ is the law that fulfils the law*. This is the final conclusion to Paul's explanations of the law in Rom. 7-10. And this is the meaning of the expression τέλος νόμου Χριστός. Christ as the law of life is the fulfilled law; he thus is the fulfilment of the law.

Paul explains Israel's dilemma in Rom. 9 by discussing the law in Rom. 10. Israel's fault was that her zeal was without knowledge. In terms of Rom. 10:2-4 the knowledge is that Christ is the fulfilment of the law (τέλος νόμου Χριστός). This ignorance resulted in their not arriving at the law, in other words, not believing in the law, that is, in Christ. This confirms that the above interpretation of τέλος was correct. Israel did not know that Christ was the fulfilment of the law, that is, the law of faith (of the mind and life) to be believed by the heart (mind). She pursued the Torah by works. Although she followed the law, she could not arrive at the law. Or rather, because she followed the law (the Torah), she could not arrive at the law (Christ). That was Paul's view of the matter.

This interpretation of τέλος νόμου Χριστός depends on the Pauline notion of two laws and depicts Christ himself as a law. Reading τέλος νόμου as the 'end' or the 'goal' of the law misses this point. When we regard Christ as the fulfilment of the law, a new horizon opens. What is more important is that the reading of Christ as the fulfilment of the law provides another important insight with regard to the fulfilment of

the law (πλήρωμα νόμου).⁵⁷² The fulfilment of the law is not an anthropological concept; it cannot be achieved by human keeping and observing of the law. It rather refers to the law itself acting as the good law, in other words, the law becoming the law of life. In this regard, it must be remembered that the fulfilment of the law becomes possible only by τέλος νόμου, that is, Χριστός. This does not mean that only Christ can keep the law perfectly. It means that only Christ who is the law and gives his word as the law can fulfil the law (the Torah) to be the law of life. This understanding is important for interpreting the verses in the next chapter, which is related to the fulfilment of the law. The fulfilment of the law (πλήρωμα νόμου) is usually understood in terms of the keeping the law. Let us investigate this matter further.

⁵⁷² I have already pointed out that Paul indicates both principle and law by νόμος at the same time (cf. footnote 568). For him, 'by the principle of faith', 'by the mind (heart)', 'by the law of the mind', and 'by the law of faith' are all equivalent, whereas 'by the principle of works', 'by flesh', 'by the law of sin', and 'by the law of works' are all equivalent. Thus, in Rom. 3:31, he says that we do not abolish the law by faith but rather establish it. The principle of faith is not the principle of faith isolated from the identity of the law. We are justified by the principle of faith, that is, by the law of faith. This is the way not to abolish but to establish the law. That is, by our righteousness, the law is established to be the law of faith and righteousness. In other words, it is fulfilled to be the law of faith.

PART D

(The meaning of the ‘fulfilling’ of the law)

X. Πλήρωμα νόμου ἢ ἀγάπη

1 Method or end product?

I have examined the verses in Galatians and Romans that are usually understood as referring to the failure or the impossibility of observing the law, either as a result of human inability or by pursuing the law in a wrong way. We have seen that Paul did not say that obeying the law was impossible, nor did he identify a failure in observing the law as the problem of the law. He was interested in the identity of the law. If so, how should we read the verses that seem to refer to the way or method of observing the law? According to Sanders,⁵⁷³ Paul denies that the law has a role to play in becoming part of the Christian community but it does have an effect on the lives of Christians. The law must be kept. Finally, it is often accepted that Paul ‘reduces’ the law in a certain sense.⁵⁷⁴ Now, let us examine the verses referring to the fulfilment of the law.

Let us begin with Gal. 5:14. Paul’s positive picture of the law in 5:14 is a problem for scholars as it stands in clear contrast to his earlier negative standpoint in 5:3. Hübner⁵⁷⁵ tries to avoid this difficulty by distinguishing between ‘the whole law’ (ὅλος

⁵⁷³ See E. P. Sanders, *Law*, pp. 93-135, chapter 3, “The Law should be fulfilled”, especially pp. 102-03.

⁵⁷⁴ The reduction of the law is one of the most popular ways of harmonising Paul’s positive and negative views of the law. For example, T. R. Schreiner, *Law*, pp. 137, 149-56, and 170-71, uses the reduction of the law to harmonize Gal. 5:14 and Rom. 13:9 with Paul’s other negative statements on the law.

⁵⁷⁵ H. Hübner, *Law*, pp. 37ff.

ὁ νόμος) in 5:3 and ‘all the law’ (ὁ πᾶς νόμος) in 5:14. The Paul he portrays seems to depend not on detailed explanations but on delicate distinctions such as these. On the other hand, Räisänen⁵⁷⁶ is so critical that he accepts that Paul contradicts himself in these verses. Another option is that of harmonising the two: if one puts love (Jesus’ one word) into practice, ‘all the law’ (the requirements of the law) is fulfilled (fully kept).⁵⁷⁷

However, it must be noted that the focus of this verse is not anthropological. That humans should do something is not found in it. The verse refers to ‘all the law’ without mentioning humankind. This agrees with our findings on Paul’s view of the law thus far. According to him, all of the Torah is fulfilled in one word of Christ, love.⁵⁷⁸ To put it in a nutshell, the entire Torah is, so to speak, transformed and changed into one word, love, so that the Torah is fulfilled.⁵⁷⁹ This does not refer to human fulfilling⁵⁸⁰ (keeping) of the Torah but to the transformation of the Torah itself.⁵⁸¹

⁵⁷⁶ H. Räisänen, *Paul and the Law*, pp. 62-4.

⁵⁷⁷ E. de W. Burton, *Galatians*, p. 294-95; H. D. Betz, *Galatians*, pp. 274-76. Betz’s distinction between doing the law and fulfilling the law is sometimes still accepted. S. Westerholm, “On Fulfilling the Whole Law”; J. M. G. Barclay, *Obeying*, pp. 139-42; and I. G. Hong, *Galatians*, pp. 170-83, have the same idea: Love fulfils the requirements of the law without performing all the commandments in the law. Love thus becomes a sort of convenient ambiguity (cf. Barclay, *Obeying*, p. 140). In this explanation, love, in fact, is regarded as a sort of effective and convenient way of fulfilling the law; J. L. Martyn, “The Crucial Event in the History of the Law (Gal 5:14)”, in: E. H. Lovering and J. L. Sumney (eds.), *Essays in Honor of Victor Paul Furnish, Theology & Ethics in Paul and his Interpreters* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1996), pp. 48-61. According to Martyn, one who loves fulfils the law and participates in Jesus’ fulfilling of the law; cf. also E. P. Sanders, *Law*, pp. 93-135, chapter 3, “The Law should be fulfilled”, especially, pp. 97-8. According to Sanders, love is the true way to fulfil the law and fulfilling the law not by circumcision but by love is the true fulfilment of the law; J. D. G. Dunn, *Galatians*, p. 290, also accepts that one fulfils the law by love; cf. also F. Thielman, *From Plight to Solution*, pp. 50ff.

⁵⁷⁸ In most cases, Jesus’ one word (ἀγαπήσεις τὸν πλησίον σου ὡς σεαυτόν) in 5:14 is regarded as a citation of Lev. 19:18, as in Rom. 13:9. This, however, does not take note of the fact that Paul refers to ‘one word’ (λόγος), not ‘one commandment’ (ἐντολή). In Rom. 10, Paul compares the Torah and Christ as the law, that is, the word of faith (10:8). And then, in 13:9, he compares all the commandments in the Torah and love, the new commandment as Christ’s word. Here, take note that he clearly distinguishes between Jesus’ commandment and all the commandments in the Torah by using ‘word’. He is not quoting one commandment in the Torah (Lev. 19:18) as a kernel law still remaining and, making a claim on the Christians (cf. H. Räisänen, *Paul and the Law*, p. 64), nor does he take Lev. 19:18 as the core of the Torah according to the Jewish views (cf. E. P. Sanders, *Law*, pp. 95ff., especially, footnote 8). Even though Gal. 5:14b is exactly the same as Lev. 19:18b in the LXX, Paul does not cite Lev. 19:18 as such but a word (λόγος) of Christ.

⁵⁷⁹ This understanding explains the reason why πληροῦν was never used in connection with the law, as well as in the sense of keeping perfectly in the Old Testament and Greek Jewish literature (cf. J. M. G. Barclay, *Obeying*, p. 138).

⁵⁸⁰ The word ‘fulfil’ is commonly used as an equivalent of keeping and observing the law. However, we have seen that in Paul’s view of the law, expressions such as ‘fulfilling’ and ‘fulfilment’ cannot be used as substitutes for ‘keeping’ and ‘observing’ the law. In this case I just use the expression for the sake of explanation.

⁵⁸¹ At this point, fulfilling the law does not even focus on Christ’s or human endeavours. In other words, that Jesus’ fulfilled the law does not refer to him keeping the law. Fulfilling the law is not related to

When we understand this, we can solve the difficulty in Rom. 13:8. Rom. 13:8-10 has popularly been understood as presenting love as the way (method) in which the Torah can be kept perfectly.⁵⁸² Such a reading focuses totally on the Torah. The Torah must be kept, which is still regarded as something positive. On the other hand, however, the verse is also interpreted as against the Torah since Paul's point is that Christians must owe each other not the debt of the Torah but the debt of love;⁵⁸³ in other words, Christians must love each other. In fact, Paul has stated this clearly in Galatians already. To owe (ὀφείλω) and to serve (δουλεύω) are not different actions. Those who accept the Torah represented by circumcision are the debtors (ὀφειλέτης) who must do the entire law (Gal. 5:3). In Gal. 5:1, to accept circumcision means to be under the yoke of slavery (ζυγῶ δουλείας). Debt and the yoke of slavery are the same, and a debtor is nothing but a slave. Christians must be the slaves of love (Gal. 5:13). The contrast is clear. Christians are not depicted as slaves in debt to the Torah but to love. This notion is also found in Rom. 13:8: Owe each other only the debt of love! Serve each other with only love! Christians are free slaves (Gal. 5:13), while the accepters of circumcision are slaves without any freedom (Gal. 5:1). The debt of love is the debt of freedom, while the debt of the Torah is the debt of slavery. Paul's point is that the Galatians must not be subjected again to the yoke of slavery. If love is the method by which Christians can keep the law, is Paul then presenting love, the debt of freedom, as the method of paying back the debt of slavery? *Love is not a new loan to pay back the old debt!* Such readings, as it were, are not different from claiming that we have to keep the law of death by the law of life, namely, by love. It depicts Jesus as a self-contradictory person who makes us free from the debt of the Torah, gives us a new debt of love and then, commands us to pay back the old debt of slavery with the new one of freedom. Such explanations cannot be accepted and dis-

obeying or keeping the law, but to the essence of the law revealed in God's redemptive history. In this regard, C. F. D. Moule's study, "Fulfillment-Words in the New Testament: Use and Abuse", *NTS* 14 (1967-8), pp. 293-320, is useful. According to him, the term 'fulfilment' is used in connection with the final consummation of God's will and plan.

If we do not take note of this and interpret Gal. 5:14 and 6:2 in terms of the true observance of the law, Paul's use of the verb πληρόω looks strange. See, for example, Barclay, *Obeying*, p. 141, who says, "In both verses (5:14 and 6:2), Paul uses a *specialized and somewhat unusual* verb, 'to fulfil', in relation to the law" (my italics).

⁵⁸² T. R. Schreiner, *Law*, pp. 145-78, chapter 6 "The Fulfillment of the Law by Christians". Especially, see pp. 145-46, 149-50, and 176-78. According to his explanation, Christians can fulfil the law by doing love, that is, the summarised law, by the help of the Holy Spirit.

⁵⁸³ Wright's interpretation of Rom. 13:8-10 is not different from Schreiner's in essence. Wright, *Romans*, pp. 724-25; and *Paul*, pp. 141-42, says that all the commandments of the Torah are summed up in love. One obeying the law of love accomplishes the moral commandments of the Torah actually.

However, this reading misses Paul's point (not Torah but love).

tort Paul's view of the law totally. In no way does Paul recommend that we should owe each other the debt of the Torah in such a way that the debt can be truly, completely and rightly paid back by love. His thrust, rather, is that we should owe each other *not the debt of the Torah but that of love*.⁵⁸⁴ That it is wrong to see love as the method of keeping the Torah, is confirmed by Paul's use of the perfect tense (πεπλήρωκεν)⁵⁸⁵ in Rom. 13:8.

If the Torah could have been observed perfectly and truly by love, it would be correct to say that by loving one fulfils, is fulfilling, or will fulfil the law, but it would not be correct to say that by loving one *has* fulfilled (πεπλήρωκεν)⁵⁸⁶ the law, since the method can never accomplish the result.⁵⁸⁷ Rom. 13:9-10 states the same as Gal. 5:14 (cf. Matt. 5:17-8, too). The entire law became, was transformed into, Christ's word, that is, into love. The only difference is that while the verbal form (πεπλήρωται) appears in Gal. 5:14, the noun form (πλήρωμα) is used in Rom. 13:10. Christ' word, love, is, so to speak, the finished product of the law. To put it another way: The Torah has already been accomplished to become love. Here is the key to understanding the perfect tense in Rom. 13:8. Someone practising love as a product completed by Jesus, is practising the law that has already been transformed, changed, and completed, or, to put it more accurately in Paul's terms, 'fulfilled'. For him, the law has already been fulfilled. Rom. 13:8b (ὁ ἀγαπῶν τὸν ἕτερον νόμον πεπλήρωκεν) is the predicative form of Rom. 13:10b (πλήρωμα νόμου ἢ ἀγάπη) from the perspective of the one practising love.

This does not mean that people who love their neighbours have already observed the law, but that the law has been fulfilled in the sense that they practise love as the completed product of the Torah. They are practising the fulfilled law. And because by loving they are paying back a new debt, the old debt of the unfulfilled law, the Torah, is irrelevant. This is what Paul wants to say. His emphasis falls upon the relationship

⁵⁸⁴ This is confirmed by Gal. 6:15. Καινή κτίσις should be read as 'a new creature'. For details, see the next section. Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is valid but only the newly fulfilled, that is, created love is valid. *Not the old ones but only the new one* is valid.

⁵⁸⁵ The perfect tense is so important that it must not be ignored but the importance of it in Paul's view of the law, unfortunately, has not attracted a good deal of scholarly attention. We can easily find many commentaries passing over it silently.

⁵⁸⁶ E. de W. Burton, *Galatians*, p. 295, understands Rom. 13:8 to mean that he who loves his neighbour stands in the position of having fulfilled the law, interpreting the perfect tense in the verse as a gnomic perfect. According to him, one who loves is a fulfiller of the law. However, we should note that it is not the one who loves but love itself that is the fulfilment of the law (13:10).

⁵⁸⁷ According to Gal. 6:2, bearing one another's burdens (ἀλλήλων τὰ βάρη βαστάζετε) leads to the re-fulfilling of the law again (ἀναπληρώσατε, or ἀναπληρώσετε, τὸν νόμον τοῦ Χριστοῦ). Although I prefer the aorist imperative (cf. footnote 600), no matter which tense is the original, neither of the tenses allow the reading that one, who loves, or bears the burdens of others, *has already fulfilled* the law.

between free human beings, Christians, who are practising the law that was fulfilled by Christ and the old debt of the old law. This is what is said in Gal. 6:2.

2 Re-fulfilling the law of Christ (ἀναπληρώσατε τὸν νόμον τοῦ Χριστοῦ)

Gal. 6:2 is one of the verses receiving much attention in Pauline studies. The verse is popularly understood in the same way as Gal. 5:14,⁵⁸⁸ that is, as indicating that the Torah is fulfilled properly by love expressed in the form of bearing each other's burdens (ἀλλήλων τὰ βάρη βαστάζετε) in 6:2a.⁵⁸⁹ Like Gal. 5:14, many⁵⁹⁰ have been paying attention to the semantic difference between (ἀνα)πληρώω and ποιέω. They argue that 'fulfilling' the law is not the same as 'doing' it, thus harmonising 6:2 with Paul's previous objections against the law. To my mind, however, we have here the same emphasis as in Rom. 13:8.

The law of Christ has been interpreted in various ways but we can broadly classify these interpretations into two groups. One group of scholars prefers to understand it as the Torah and the other does not. For example, Burton⁵⁹¹ does not distinguish between the law of Christ and the Torah. Just as the law of Moses was the law of God as put forth by Moses, so the law of Christ was the law of God as enunciated by Christ. He also calls it Jesus' teaching, but he does so in the sense that the law was

⁵⁸⁸ Since Gal. 5:14 (13) and 6:2 are so closely related (cf. J. M. G. Barclay, *Obeying*, pp. 131 and 135), many scholars deal with them at the same time.

⁵⁸⁹ E. de W. Burton, *Galatians*, pp. 329-30, understands ἀναπληρώω as meaning 'to satisfy the requirements (of the law)'; H. Betz, *Galatians*, pp. 299-301; I. G. Hong, *Galatians*, pp. 170-83; J. M. G. Barclay, *Obeying*, pp. 132-34; and J. D. G. Dunn, *Galatians*, p. 323.

⁵⁹⁰ H. Betz, *Ibid.*, pp. 299-301, keeps to his distinction between 'fulfilling' and 'doing' in 5:14. I. G. Hong, *Ibid.*, pp. 170-83, basically follows him. See also J. M. G. Barclay, *Ibid.*, pp. 140-41. On the contrary, F. Thielman, *From Plight to Solution*, p. 52, insists that Paul uses the term πληρώω to mean 'do completely' and even couple it with ὑπακοή (2 Cor. 10:6) to mean 'render complete obedience'. However, all of them miss Paul's point.

⁵⁹¹ E. de W. Burton, *Galatians*, pp. 329-30.

promulgated by Christ. For Barclay too,⁵⁹² the law of Christ was the Torah, even though it was the law in its relationship to Christ, that is, the law as redefined and fulfilled by Christ in love. And, according to Schreiner,⁵⁹³ some commandments of the Torah such as the ritual ones were no longer valid, and other ethical commandments were summed up by love. The law of Christ was still the Torah although the Torah was reduced and summed up. On the other hand, Davies⁵⁹⁴ understands the law of Christ as a rabbinic notion. It refers to the law of Messiah as the teaching of Christ. According to him, Christ's teaching (Matt. 5-7) was a Christian law. Dodd⁵⁹⁵ has basically the same idea. For him, the law of Christ means Jesus' traditional sayings – which he finds in Matthew.

To my mind, in a sense both groups are right: the law of Christ is both the transformed Torah and Christ's love at the same time. However I find the latter view a little bit more acceptable than the first one in terms of its conclusion. Yet I am not satisfied with the way in which it is explained in terms of rabbinic notions and the alluded parallels to the Gospel (especially in Matt.).⁵⁹⁶ Neither rabbinic notions nor Matthew's theology but Paul's writing and his own theology must have the central role when one tries to explain his ideas about the law. We have already seen the origin of the expression in Rom. 7:25-8:2 and that the theological framework for it is found in Rom. 7 and 10. The law of Christ does not differ from the law of God (Rom. 7:25) and the law of the Spirit of life (Rom. 8:2).⁵⁹⁷ According to Betz,⁵⁹⁸ the law of Christ is an expression of Paul's opponents and thus not a fundamental part of Paul's theology, but this is wrong. The notion of the law of Christ is one of the central elements in Paul's view of the law. The law of Christ is, as revealed concretely in Rom. 10, Christ himself as νόμος, and his word to be believed in (in the heart) is the message of the gospel preached by the apostles, that is, his new love commandment. In this regard, the

⁵⁹² J. M. G. Barclay, *Obeying*, p. 134.

⁵⁹³ T. R. Schreiner, *Law*, p. 159.

⁵⁹⁴ W. D. Davies, *Torah in the Messianic Age and/or the Age to Come* (JBLMS 7, Philadelphia: Society of Biblical Literature, 1952), p. 92.

⁵⁹⁵ C. H. Dodd, “Ἡ ἐννομία τοῦ Χριστοῦ” in: J. N. Sevenster and W. C. van Unnik (eds.), *Studia Paulina* (Bohn: Haarlem, 1953), pp. 96-110. See also R. N. Longenecker, *Paul: Apostle of Liberty* (New York: Harper & Row, 1964), pp. 183-90, who agrees with Dodd. Cf. R. B. Hays, “Christology and Ethics in Galatians: The Law of Christ”, *CBQ* (1987), pp. 268-90. For him, the law of Christ is not the Torah but Jesus' self-giving example.

⁵⁹⁶ In this regard, cf. Barclay, *Obeying*, pp. 127-30, as well as his footnotes 74 and 75.

⁵⁹⁷ In that sense, we see Paul's expression of the law in terms of the triune God. However, it seems to me that scholars tend to pay special attention to the law of Christ.

⁵⁹⁸ H. Betz, *Galatians*, pp. 300-01.

law of Christ is the word of Christ and the transformed and newly created (fulfilled) Torah⁵⁹⁹. This is the reason why Paul calls it νόμος.

Paul commands⁶⁰⁰ the Galatians to fulfil the law of Christ, namely, the law fulfilled by Christ, 'again'. He uses the word, ἀναπληρώω, in connection with the law only here in Gal. 6:2. The word can be translated without giving weight to the prefix, ἀνα. However, an interpretation that does not neglect but respect all parts of the text should be preferred. The basic meaning of ἀνα is 're-' or again.⁶⁰¹ If so, why does Paul command them to fulfil the law of Christ 'again'? We have already seen that when Christians practise the fulfilled law, that is, love, fulfilling the law was explained by means of the perfect tense in Rom. 13:8. Here in Gal. 6:2 Paul emphasises the same idea by means of the prefix ἀνα. When Christ, the fulfiller of the law, appears, it is proper that the word πληρώω has the prefix, ἀνα. Ἀναπληρώσατε in 6:2, then, means that one *fulfils* the law that has already been fulfilled by Christ, 'again'.

This means: for those practising love, the law becomes meaningful as the fulfilled law, love. Only when the law is practised as love does it become the law of Christ. By using ἀναπληρώσατε, Paul thus commands Christians to practise the Torah that has already been fulfilled as the law of life (love) 'again' as something existentially. Christ has fulfilled the Torah so that the Torah exists as love and Christians re-fulfil the fulfilled law by loving so that the fulfilled law can exist not as the Torah but as love. Those who practice love are the ones who cause the law of Christ to exist not as the Torah but as the law of God, mind, and the Spirit of life, that is, as love in their very existence. However, this does not mean a sort of supplement or complement to Christ's fulfilment of the law. Christians fulfil the *already* fulfilled law of Christ in their lives.

I welcome the fact that scholars pay attention to the difference between (ἀνα)πληρώω and ποιέω, but in most cases they fail to focus on the deeper levels of meaning, disregarding the meaning of the prefix, ἀνα. Paul could not say, "Do the law

⁵⁹⁹ See the following section.

⁶⁰⁰ The textual data allow both readings, ἀναπληρώσατε and ἀναπληρώσετε. The difference between them is not critical. In the case of the future tense, Paul makes a promise (cf. D. F. Tolmie, *Galatians*, p. 209). B. M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2002), p. 530, accepts ἀναπληρώσετε based on Ƴ⁴⁶, B, and G, while Burton, *Galatians*, p. 330, takes ἀναπληρώσατε based on Ɓ, A, C, D⁹⁷, K, P, Ψ, 614, 1739, and syr^h. If one takes into account the previous imperative βαστάζετε, the imperative seems to be the better choice.

⁶⁰¹ In compounds, ἀνα as a prefix often indicates repetition, intensity, reversal, etc. Cf. *Strong's Concordance* no 303.

of Christ”, because the law of Christ is not a law to be done, unlike the Torah. As I have pointed out several times, the identity, the principle of pursuit, and the result of the particular law are all linked. The law of Christ is not a law to be done but to be believed. Paul does not say that Christians must do the law of Christ but says that they must love each other. To put love into practice is to fulfil the law of Christ. But it must be noted that Christians’ fulfilment stands only on the fulfilment of Christ; so in this sense, they *re-fulfil* the law of Christ.

3 Fulfilling of the law = filling of the law = disappearance of the law

We notice the same idea in Gal. 5:14 and Rom. 13:9: all the commandments in the law are contrasted to Christ’s one word. The point is that the entire law is fulfilled to become one word of Christ. In Rom. 13:9, ἀνακεφαλαιοῦται is usually translated as ‘summed up’ (ASV, RSV, and NIV) or ‘briefly comprehended’ (KJV).⁶⁰² But the verse does not mean that all commandments in the law are simply summed up and included in one statement.⁶⁰³ Eph. 1:10⁶⁰⁴ uses the same verb to describe the state of all things in heaven and earth, in Christ. It seems that here the meaning of the verb is related not to summing up but to uniting. But this does not mean that all things are included and simply connected in Christ. Christ is not, so to speak, a simple adhesive. Take note that Christ’s redemptive work in the Father’s dispensation is emphasized in Eph. 1:3ff. The point is neither just inclusion nor simple being one but the new dimension of universal unification in Christ.

⁶⁰² Rom. 13:9 and Gal. 5:14 are closely related to each other. When the verb, ἀνακεφαλαιόω, in Rom. 13:9, is interpreted as ‘to sum up’, the verb, πληρόω, in Gal. 5:14 is supposed to be interpreted in the same sense. However, when the two verbs are understood as meaning ‘to sum up’, (cf. V. P. Furnish, *Theology and Ethics in Paul* [Nashville: Abingdon, 1986], p. 200), Paul’s point in the two verses cannot be grasped.

⁶⁰³ Both the old and the new version of the most popular Korean version emphasize that all commandments are included.

⁶⁰⁴ I accept that Ephesians was written by Paul. Even if the author had been part of the Pauline group, it still is more likely that he stayed faithful to Paul’s thoughts than distorting it.

The fulfilment of the law by Christ is not irrelevant to the universal unification (ἀνᾶ κεφαλαιώσασθαι) of all things in heaven and earth in Christ. This universal unification is closely related to the concept of new creation. In Gal. 6:15, Paul calls the law a new creature. Καινή κτίσις should be read not as a ‘new creation’ (RSV and NIV) but as ‘a new creature’ (KJV). In this case, καινή κτίσις means the newly created commandment in contrast to circumcision and uncircumcision. The reading gives us a better sense of the next verse, namely that the rule (κανών) by which we should walk in 6:16 is to be understood as the new commandment. And moreover, the reading goes well with Gal. 5:6 and 1 Cor. 7:19. Gal. 5:6 has the same structure as Gal. 6:15. Πίστις δι’ ἀγάπης ἐνεργουμένη appears in Gal. 5:6 instead of καινή κτίσις in Gal. 6:15, though. On the other hand, 1 Cor. 7:19 contrasts God’s commandment⁶⁰⁵ and ‘circumcision/uncircumcision’. When we read all three verses together, the three concepts (love, new creature, God’s commandment) overlap, centring on circumcision so that we come to see that love is the newly created rule or commandment. Paul thus emphasizes the validity of love as newly created rule or commandment in contrast to the invalidity of circumcision and uncircumcision.⁶⁰⁶ That Christ’s new commandment, love, is a new creature means that Jesus’ fulfilling of the law is equivalent to creating a new law. *As Christ’s people are new creatures,⁶⁰⁷ so Christ’s law is a new creature.* The newly created ‘I’ is still the ‘I’ but there is an essential newness. Conclusively, Christ’s work of fulfilling the law is a new creation so that, in that sense, the meaning of ἀνακεφαλαιοῦται in Rom. 13:9 means more than merely ‘summed up’, in the sense of an essential transformation.⁶⁰⁸

The entire law is involved in this transformation. The reason why Paul contrasts the whole law and one word is not to indicate that when one loves one’s neighbours,

⁶⁰⁵ The verse mentions God’s commandments (ἐντολῶν θεοῦ). Christ’s new commandment is love but it may be expressed as many commandments, as in Matt. 5:21ff.

⁶⁰⁶ According to M. V. Hubbard, *New Creation in Paul’s Letters and Thought* (SNTSMS 119, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 222, καινή κτίσις in Gal. 6:15 has been understood in three ways: 1) as ecclesiology focusing on the Jew-Gentile issue (cf. Gal. 3:26-29); 2) as soterio-cosmology focusing on the age to come (cf. Gal. 5:14); 3) as soterio-anthropology focusing on the new human existence (cf. 2 Cor. 5:17). The three interpretations are possible since the concept of Paul’s new creation comprises all of them. However, all three interpretations do not take the relationship with Gal. 5:6 and with 1Cor. 7:19, as well as with the following verse (v. 16) into consideration properly.

⁶⁰⁷ Take note that 2 Cor. 5:17 uses the same phrase, καινή κτίσις, as in Gal. 6:15.

⁶⁰⁸ I think that the reason why Paul did not use the verbs with prefix, μετά, such as μεταμορφώω and μετατρέπω, is that ἀνακεφαλαιόω can render Paul’s point here better that all the commandments are brought together. In this regard, ἀνακεφαλαιόω is the most suitable word for indicating the relationship between all the commandments and one word.

one comes to fulfil (keep) the whole law. Rather, his point is that not only moral laws and ethical prescriptions but the entire law is involved in Christ's fulfilling of the law (Christ's transforming of the law into love). This is in line with Jesus' saying in Matt. 5:17-8. The text is often read in terms not of the ontological essence of the law but of obedience to it.⁶⁰⁹ But the meaning of the fulfilment of the Torah is not a perfect observance of it. Jesus' emphasis is placed on jot and (or) tittle (ἰῶτα ἢ ἡ μία κεραία). Jot and tittle are not fulfilled by observing them. The point is that even jot and tittle will not pass away (παρέρχομαι) but will become (γίνομαι) something, namely the word of Jesus that follows. Against this background, it is almost obvious that Paul has the idea expressed in Matt. 5:17-8 in mind in Rom. 13:9-10.⁶¹⁰ Without missing one commandment, all the commandments, the entire law, must be included and transformed, that is fulfilled. No commandment remains unfulfilled in love. That is what Paul wants to say. No law exists any more *as the law as such* by its fulfilment. The entire law exists only as love, not as the Torah. Let us investigate this further.

How does the explanation provided above fit in with what Paul has been explaining about the law in Rom. 7 ff.? The Torah was the law of the old husband, that is, the law of Adam. After the fall, the law of Adam was the commandment of death without the commandment of life, namely, the law of death. Likewise, the Torah was the law of only curse and death without the blessing on Mt. Gerizim. And then the law of Gerizim, the law of blessing and life, is identified as the word of Christ, namely, the commandment of love. It is by Christ's word that the Torah comes to have blessing and life. In this way, the commandment of the lost tree of life in the law of Adam is recovered.

Then, is it just a return to the starting point in Eden? Do human beings stand before the two possibilities of the two commandments of the two trees of life, and knowledge of good and evil *again*? Does the Christian church say amen upon the twofold proclamation on the two mounts Ebal and Gerizim? If so, fulfilling the law would just be equal to filling the void in the law with the law of life. However, if the entire law exists not as the law but only as love, Jesus' fulfilling of the law goes beyond just recovering the law of life (just filling the void with it), namely, love, because

⁶⁰⁹ For example, see the discussion in C. S. Keener, *A Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), pp. 176-78. Jesus' fulfilling is also called confirming God's law by obedience.

⁶¹⁰ Although it is often said that Matthew's view is different from Paul's (cf. S. J. Case, *The Social Origins of Christianity* [New York: Cooper Square Publishers, 1975], p. 173), in Rom. 13:9-10, Paul in fact, repeats the ideas in Matt. 5:17-8.

it refers to the disappearance of the law of death. The Torah does not exist as Torah anymore. The Torah was the law of death. This law of death had been fulfilled to be the law to be believed, that is, the law of the mind and the heart (the law of life). In Adam, the law was *only* the law of death but in Christ, it is *only* the law of life. In Adam, *only* death was possible but in Christ *only* life is possible. This is exactly what Paul says by means of the contrast between Adam and Christ in Rom. 5:12ff.

The verb, πληρώω,⁶¹¹ shows us that the basic meaning of fulfilling the law is related to the notion of filling. This basic meaning shows us the twofold 'filling' in regard to the law, namely: 1) On the one hand, love is fulfilled and 'filled' with the entire law in that all the commandments are fulfilled (transformed) to be one word, love. 2) On the other hand, love fulfils and 'fills' the law in that love adds the lost commandment of the tree of life, that is, the law of blessing on Mt. Gerizim to the law. Here, it is important that all the commandments in the law are related to the twofold filling. All the commandments become one word, love, so that the commandment of the tree of life, that is, the entire law of blessing of Mt. Gerizim is completely filled by Jesus' one word. No commandment in the Torah remains as a commandment of the Torah, while the entire law of blessing and life is completely 'filled'. Rom. 13:9-10 states that in one word, the entire law of death disappears and the completely 'filled' law of life is created.

Together oxygen and hydrogen constitute water. All atoms of oxygen and hydrogen without exception are changed into water. After the transformation, no atom disappears. However, water is neither just the total of the atoms of oxygen and hydrogen; neither is it just the summary of them. All oxygen and all hydrogen are transformed to become a totally new entity. Neither oxygen nor hydrogen can be drunk to give the life that water can give. Water is a new creature. Water fills the places of hydrogen and oxygen, and two atoms of hydrogen and one atom of oxygen completely fill water (H₂O). Water is the fulfilment. It is once again to be noted that Paul calls Jesus' new commandment in Gal. 6:15 a new creature. *Paul who explained the law in the context of the first creation by suggesting Genesis in Rom. 7 thus had already explained love in the context of the new (second) creation by calling it a new creature (καινή κτίσις) in Gal. 6.* As he calls one in Christ (the person of death before; the person of life now) a new creature in 2 Cor. 5:17, so he now calls love (the law of

⁶¹¹ The adjective πλήρης shows us the basic meaning of the verb πληρώω. For example, when it is used with prophecy, it can be understood to mean that the prophecy has been 'filled'.

death before; the law of life now) in Gal. 6:15-6 a new creature (καινή κτίσις). Both Christians and love are essentially new creatures. The 'I' as a sinner is the 'I' and the 'I' as a righteous one is the 'I', too. Each of them may be called the 'I' and more precisely, must be called the 'I'. Neither the (old) 'I' nor part of the 'I' is abandoned. However, the old 'I' does not exist anymore. Only the newly created 'I' exists. One can thus see why Paul calls both the law of life and the law of death νόμος. He can call both of them νόμος, or rather he must do so. The law of death, however, has disappeared.⁶¹² Now in Christ, only the law of life exists. That is what Paul also said in Rom. 7:25-8:2.

4 Conclusion

Conclusively, it has been shown that all the expressions that Paul uses have been carefully formulated and thought through: ὁ πᾶς νόμος ἐν ἐνὶ λόγῳ πεπλήρωται (Gal. 5:14) → πλήρωμα νόμου ἢ ἀγάπη (Rom. 13:10) → ὁ ἀγαπῶν τὸν ἕτερον νόμον πεπλήρωκεν (Rom. 13:8) → ἀλλήλων τὰ βάρη βαστάζετε καὶ οὕτως ἀναπληρώσατε τὸν νόμον τοῦ Χριστοῦ (Gal. 6:2). Fulfilment of the law is not an anthropological concept but a divine one in that only Christ fulfils the law so that when it is used in connection with human aspects such as responsibility and life, they need to be adjusted.

If love is regarded as a method, the Torah must be obeyed and kept. That, however, is not what Paul wanted to say. Such an interpretation turns Paul's entire theology of the law upside down. To say that Christians do not 'do' (ποιέω) but 'fulfil' (ἀναπληρώω) the Torah does not make a big difference either, because it still focuses on the Torah as such. Love is not the better or right method to follow, obey and keep the law. This interpretation is based on the idea that the fundamental problem of the law is the impossibility or the failure to observe the law perfectly. According to this expla-

⁶¹² In this regard, as I have said in section 5 "τέλος νόμου Χριστός" in the previous chapter, it is possible to interpret τέλος as 'end'. In fact, the understanding of the fulfilment of the law from the redemptive historical perspective clearly shows why Paul used the comprehensive word, τέλος.

nation, it is love that at last makes the perfect observance of the law possible. But Paul does not say this because to perform one commandment, love, is more effective and easy than performing all the commandments in the law. Furthermore, both those who practise the law and those who practise love then come to be enslaved to the law, only by different ways (methods). Paul does not show an effective way of slavery (love). Paul's statement is simple and clear. In Christ, the Torah as the law of death does not exist but only love as the fulfilled law exists. Love is the fulfilment of the law! Love is the law of life so that one does owe no debt except for love! In a word, not the Torah but love!

Christ is τέλος νόμου. Christ is the law that should dwell in one's mind (Rom. 7:18), and he is the law to be believed in by one's heart (mind) (Rom. 9:31-10:10), namely, the law of the mind (Rom. 7:23). The love, that is, the one word of the incarnated Word is the fulfilled law, that is, the law of life!

XI. Final Conclusion

The study of Pauline theology of the law essentially is all about finding the answer to the question, 'Why cannot the law give us life?' The historical overview at the beginning has shown that the traditional answer to this question is linked to the notion of a failure to keep the law perfectly. Accordingly, studies often focus on the identifying 'the works of the law'. Why did the works of the law not lead to the observance of the law in a true sense? Even though various explanations have been suggested, all of them are of an anthropological nature. Whether the works of the law are actions for self-righteousness or markers of Jewish identity and privileges, the suggested explanations are all basically anthropological.

I noted that the study of the Pauline theology of the law has been built on something that Paul actually never stated explicitly. He never stated that the impossibility or the failure to keep the law was the real problem of the law, neither did he identify 'the works of the law'. That Paul would never mention this crucial insight explicitly is unacceptable to me. If he had clearly identified the works of the law, would all the debates have been unnecessary? Do we need a sort of time machine of historical critical nature to understand Paul, or does he expect 4QMMT⁶¹³ to be a necessary supplementary to his letters?

Rather it seems better to ask the probing question: Is it not perhaps the case that Pauline scholars have not been on the right track at all? Paul never identifies the works of the law and he never mentions the failure (or the impossibility) to obey the law as the real problem of the law. Rather the problem lies elsewhere: the works of the law cannot bring forth life. It is thus all about the nature of the law.

In this regard a vital insight to grasp is Paul's depiction of the law as a person. The law is the master and people are its slaves. The commandments of the master cannot be avoided. Perfect observance of the law, that is, perfect obedience of the mas-

⁶¹³ 4QMMT (*Miqsat Ma'ase ha-Torah*) was found in Cave 4 at Qumran on six fragmented manuscripts. J. D. G. Dunn, "4QMMT and Galatians", in: *The New Perspective on Paul: Collected Essays* (WUNT 185, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), pp. 333-39, reads *Miqsat Ma'ase ha-Torah* as 'some of the works of the Torah'. According to him, 4QMMT sheds light on the pre-Pauline usage and the meaning of the critical phrase, ἔργα νόμου.

ter is unavoidable. Failure to keep the law is impossible. The commandments of the master, that is, the law, are to be completely and thoroughly obeyed and kept. However, the completely kept law rather brought forth death. Here lies the dilemma of the law for Paul. He was blameless in terms of legal righteousness (Phil. 3: 6), but this could not give him life. The problem of the law thus does not lie in a failure to observe it.

Paul links the problem of the law to the existence of two laws. If the law were only one, death and life would lie in the observance of this single law. In such a scenario, the problem of the law would essentially be anthropological, but it is not. Because the law is twofold, death and life is each linked to a specific law. Both laws are kept completely, but death and life are linked to the identity of the particular law that is kept. In this scenario, the problem of the law is not anthropological but has to do with the essential nature of the law.

When Paul speaks of two laws, he does not mean two functions, sides, or roles of the law; neither does he mean a bifurcation of the law. In Paul's thought, the two laws are fundamentally different and independent of each other. He views all human beings in terms of two 'husbands', Adam and Christ; and he the twofold νόμος against the background of the garden of Eden. He argues in terms of two commandments, that of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and that of the tree of life. It was not impossible to keep the commandment of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, but doing so did not bring life. All it brings was a life *under the threat of curse*. This is the kind of life against which Paul reacts so strongly in Gal. 3:10-12.⁶¹⁴

Paul also hears a resonance of Genesis in Deuteronomy. He sees Eve in front of the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and Israel in front of good, evil, life and death (Deut. 30:15) between the two mounts in Shechem. He sees the tragic history of the 'I' united to Adam in one body, that is, Eve, Paul and Israel. Take note that the commandment of the tree of life and Mt. Gerizim are absent. The law (νόμος) in Adam is only the law of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and Mt. Ebal. Israel's Torah is not the law of the tree of life or of Mt. Gerizim. The works of the Torah, no matter what they are, even when they are fully kept, cannot bring forth life. That is the reason why Paul is silent on the identity of the works of the law, and on the failure (or the impossibility) of the perfect observance of the law.

⁶¹⁴ Ὅσοι γὰρ ἐξ ἔργων νόμου εἰσὶν, ὑπὸ κατάραν εἰσὶν... ποιήσας αὐτὰ ζήσεται ἐν αὐτοῖς.

Then, where is the law of the tree of life, the law of life, or the law of God? According to Deut. 30:12-14, the law of Mt. Gerizim is not in heaven, neither is it beyond the sea. The law is in one's heart (mind). The law of life is the law of the heart (mind), that is, *the law* to be believed in. Christ himself and his words are *the law* of life. Only this law to be believed in brings forth life. The Torah, that is, the law to be done (Rom. 10:5) is the law of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and of Mt. Ebal, so that, no matter which works of the law are performed, it produces only death, even by perfect performance. 'Justification by faith' means the following: It is not a term indicating the antithesis of law and faith, but a term indicating 'not through law but through faith'. It means 'not the law to do but the law to be believed'. Therefore, it is a matter of which of the two laws should be followed, the Torah or Christ (the law of Christ). In this sense 'justification by faith' is 'justification by the law of faith'.

The notion 'the fulfilment of the law' does not focus on the relationship between humans and the law, but on the relationship between the two laws. It is thus not anthropological. It does not refer to the perfect keeping of the law. The Torah, the law of death, becomes the new law by Christ's new creation. In this sense, the fulfilling of the law is not anthropological but divine. Only Jesus can transform (fulfil) the law to be performed into the law to be believed. The law of death in Adam is thereby fulfilled to become the law of life in Jesus. Πληροῦν is generally translated as 'fulfil'. The general meaning of 'fulfilling the law' in English is 'keeping, obeying, or observing the law perfectly'. Most commentators are influenced wrongly by this in that they understand fulfilment of the law in terms of the keeping of the law, but 'fulfilling the law' is definitely not the same as 'keeping the law'. Πληροῦν is never used in this sense in the Old Testament (LXX) and in the Pauline letters.⁶¹⁵ Fulfilling the law refers to an essential and divine changing of the law so that it is available only to Christ. This does not mean that only Christ can keep the law perfectly but that only Christ can 'fulfil' the law of death to become the law of life. The failure to keep the law was not the problem of the law, neither was the fulfilling of the law the solution to the problem. Fulfilling the law in the sense of keeping the law was not the issue that Paul was interested in.

The essential newness of the fulfilled law cannot be explained by summation or reduction. As life is new and different from death, so the fulfilled Law is new and dif-

⁶¹⁵ See footnote 579.

ferent from the Torah. All the commandments of the Torah, as the law of death and curse, are fulfilled (transformed) without exception to become the one word of Christ, that is, love. As the 'I' united to Adam dies and becomes the new 'I' by the union to Christ, so the law of the previous husband, Adam, becomes the essentially new law, the law of Christ. The new 'I' is neither a reduced 'I', nor a stronger 'I', but essentially a new creature. However, both the old 'I' and the new 'I' are essentially the 'I'. Likewise, both the Torah and love are essentially νόμος. However, both the new 'I' and love are essentially entirely new creatures. And the new life of the new 'I' is not a life fulfilling the old life of the old 'I', that is, the sinful 'I'. The new life of the resurrected 'I' is totally different from the old life. Likewise, the new and fulfilled law, that is, love is not given to fulfil the old law. Many scholars assume that the law of Christ, that is, love sums up the Torah. For them, love is the true way to fulfil (keep) the Torah perfectly and rightly. However, doing so is the same as claiming that the law of life sums up the law of death so that the law of life is the way to fulfil (observe) the law of death. This explanation turns the entire Pauline theology upside down. Paul's motto is not 'Torah by love' but 'not Torah but love'.

If the problem of the law had been anthropological, in other words, if it were due to a failure to observe it perfectly, would Paul's complicated and profound explanation of the law have been necessary? He wanted to reveal that the law could not bring forth life. The paradoxical fact that he was led to death by his blameless legalistic righteousness (Phil. 3) and that Israel could not get salvation by their righteousness of the Torah, followed in the right way (Rom. 9-10), required his profound explanation of the law. He proved that the Torah was not the law of life. Rom. 7 shows that he heard the echo of Gen. 2-3 in Deut. 27-30. He heard an amplified echo of the redemptive history, which passed through the two mounts from the two trees. He saw Israel between the two mounts in Shechem standing in the Garden of Eden. Although the echo was amplified in Shechem, it was the same sound as in Eden. The Torah was the law of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and the law of Mt. Ebal. Where is the law of the tree of life and of Mt. Gerizim? *The echo of the redemptive history starts at the Garden of Eden, is amplified, passing through Mt. Gerizim, and reaches the final garden in the final mount. Christ, the life, is hung up on the wooden cross on Mt. Golgotha. Paul finds the lost tree of life in the cross of Christ in the garden.*⁶¹⁶

⁶¹⁶ John. 19:41; ἦν δὲ ἐν τῷ τόπῳ ὅπου ἐσταυρώθη κήπος. A garden is a high place (cf. footnote 508).

The law of life is Christ himself and his word, love!

Paul's interest was in 'the identification of the two laws'. Νόμος in Adam is *only* the law of death *without* the commandment of life, while νόμος in Christ is *only* the law of life *without* the commandment of death. The problem of the Torah lies in its identity, in other words, in the fact that it is the law of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the law of Mt. Ebal, and the law of sin and death. The Torah is the law of death that brings forth death by the perfect observance of it. It is neither the problem of the works of the law (ἔργα νόμου) nor the failure of the keeping of the law that brings forth death. The reason why Paul neither refers to the impossibility or the failure of keeping the law nor identifies the works of the law is that he does not need to do that at all.

Why cannot the Torah produce life? The consensus in Pauline scholarship on the law that it is due to a failure to fulfil the law in the sense of keeping it perfectly is not the right answer. *I, see a Paul who is not interested in the fulfilling of the law. I see a Pauline scholarship that has been interested in something in which Paul was not interested in himself!*

For the usage of κῆπος for גַּן, see E. Hatch & H. A. Redpath, *A Concordance to the Septuagint and the Other Greek Versions of the Old Testament (Including the Apocryphal Books)*, Vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987), p. 763.

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ABSTRACT

The most important purpose of any investigation of Paul's theology of the law is to explain why Paul believes that the law cannot give life. An overview of such studies shows that the failure to fulfil (keep) the law has always been the answer given by Pauline scholars, even though there might be a difference of opinion amongst them as to the reason for such a failure. In this regard, even the New Perspective was not really new. If a failure to fulfil the law were the reason for Paul's problems with the law, it would mean that his interest lies in showing such a failure or the impossibility of fulfilling the law, which would basically constitute an anthropological approach as the problem of the law would then be related to humankind. However, Paul never refers to the impossibility of fulfilling the law perfectly in any of his letters.

Instead this study shows that the answer that Paul gave to this question did not focus on humankind but on the essential nature of the law. Paul was interested in revealing the identity of the law in redemptive history, an issue for which human failure to fulfil the law was not important. Accordingly, this study introduces the following two very important Pauline ideas that have not been considered adequately by scholars before, namely *the personal nature of the law and the plural nature of the law*.

- The first one implies that fulfilling the law in the sense of being obedient to the law is unavoidable, and failing to do so is impossible. Thus a failure to fulfil the law was not what Paul was interested in.
- The second one implies that life and death are not determined by human failure in fulfilling the law but by the identity of the particular law that is served. By means of an intertextual reading it is showed that, for Paul, Deut. 30 hints at Gen. 3. In Rom. 7, he presents this redemptive historical framework, hinting at the two texts (Gen. 3 and Deut. 30) in a circle of intertextuality in the following way: For Paul, the two trees of death and life in Eden and the two laws of curse and blessing on Mt. Ebal and Mt. Gerizim overlap. Furthermore the Torah and the word of Christ overlap with the two laws of blessing and curse. The Torah is thus linked to the commandment of the tree of the knowledge of

good and evil, as well as to the law on Mt Ebal, whereas the word of Christ is linked to the *lost* commandment of the tree of life and to the *lost* law on Mt. Gerizim. This means that the Torah cannot give life regardless of one's fulfilling of the law. Once again, it is clear that the fulfilling of the law as such is not what Paul is interested in.

Lastly, the study shows that the fulfilling of the law that Paul refers to (Gal. 5:14, 6:2; Rom. 13:10) should not be regarded as his response to the issue of the failure to fulfil the law, either. In this instance, the focus does not fall on humankind, but on the divine side of things. It refers to the relationship between the Torah and (the word or the law of) Christ. The Torah is fulfilled (transformed) to become the law of Christ. Once again it is clear that Paul is not interested in the fulfilling of the law.

This study focuses on texts that are generally interpreted by scholars as referring to the impossibility of fulfilling the law. In Part A, the study shows how scholars have interpreted texts in this way by means of a historical overview. The presuppositions and basic ideas in this regard are considered and a new approach is suggested. In Part B, the study focuses on Paul's disinterest in the fulfilling of the law in Galatians, and highlights Paul's views on the personal nature of the law in this letter. In Part C, the study focuses on the same issue in Romans, focusing on the plural nature of the law, as well as on its personal nature. The two opposing laws, the Torah and the law of God (mind and life) are discussed. Finally, in Part D, the study deals with the meaning of the expression 'fulfilling the law'.

The study concludes that *Paul is not interested in the fulfilling of the law and that current explanations of Paul's views of the law focus on something that Paul was not interested in himself.*

ABSTRAK

Die belangrikste doel van enige ondersoek van Paulus se siening van die wet is om te verduidelik hoekom hy gedink het dat die wet nie kan lewe gee nie. 'n Oorsig van sulke studies toon dat die antwoord wat Paulusnavorsers gee, altyd fokus op die onvermoë om die wet na te kom, selfs al is daar kleiner verskille in die manier waarop navorsers dié onvermoë verstaan. In hierdie opsig het selfs die New Perspective nie iets nuuts gebied nie. Indien onvermoë om die wet na te kom die rede sou wees vir die probleme wat Paulus met die wet gehad het, moes dit vir hom belangrik gewees het om hierdie onvermoë te verduidelik. Dit sou dan 'n antropologiese benadering tot die probleme van die wet impliseer. Dit gebeur egter nêrens in enige van die Paulusbriewe dat hy verwys na die onmoontlikheid om die wet volledig na te kom nie.

Daarteenoor word in hierdie studie geargumenteer dat die probleem wat Paulus met die wet gehad het, nie met menslike onvermoë te doen gehad het nie, maar eerder te make het met die essensiële aard van die wet. Paulus wou die aard van die wet in terme van die heilsgeskiedenis blootlê – iets waarvoor menslike onvermoë om die wet na te kom, nie belangrik is nie. Gevolglik word daar in hierdie studie op twee ander baie belangrike aspekte in Paulus se siening van die wet gekonsentreer – twee aspekte wat nog nie werklik aandag deur Paulusnavorsers gekry het nie. Die twee aspekte is onderskeidelik *die persoonlike aard van die wet en die meervoudige aard van die wet*.

- Die eerste aspek impliseer dat nakoming van die wet in die sin van onderdanigheid aan die wet onvermydelik is, en dat dit onmoontlik is om dit nie te doen nie. Gevolglik is dit duidelik dat onvermoë om die wet na te kom, nie die saak is waarop Paulus gefokus het nie.
- Die tweede aspek impliseer dat geestelike dood en lewe nie bepaal word deur menslike onvermoë om die wet na te kom nie, maar bepaal word deur die bepaalde wet wat deur die mens gedien word. Deur middel van 'n intertekstuele lees word gewys hoe Deut. 30 deur Paulus in die lig van Gen. 3 gelees is. Dit doen hy in Rom. 7, waar hy hierdie heilshistoriese raamwerk gebruik en op intertekstuele wyse sinspeel op twee tekste (Gen. 3 en Deut. 30): Vir Paulus is daar 'n ooreenkoms tussen die twee bome van dood en lewe in Eden en die

twee wette van vloek en seën op Berg Ebal en Berg Gerisim. Verder is daar vir hom ook 'n ooreenkoms tussen die Torah en die woord van Christus en die twee bome in Eden. Op dié manier word die Torah gekoppel aan die opdrag wat met die boom van kennis van goed en kwaad geassosieer is, asook met die wet wat op Berg Ebal gegee is. Aan die ander kant word die woord van Christus geassosieer met die *verlore* opdrag van die boom van die lewe en die *verlore* wet van Berg Gerisim. Vir Paulus impliseer dit dat die Torah nie lewe kan gee nie, selfs nie eens as 'n mens dit volkome nakom nie. Weereens blyk dus dat die nakoming van die wet nie die saak is waarop Paulus primêr fokus nie.

Verder toon die studie dat ook die gevalle waar Paulus wel die uitdrukking 'vervulling van die wet' gebruik (Gal. 5:14; 6:2; Rom. 13:10) nie verstaan moet word as 'n antwoord van sy kant af op die onvermoë om die wet na te kom nie. In hierdie gevalle fokus hy nie op die mens nie, maar op die goddelike kant van die saak. Dit gaan oor die verhouding tussen die Torah en (die woord of wet van) Christus. Die Torah word vervul en getransformeer om die wet van Christus te word. Weer eens is dit duidelik dat Paulus nie fokus op die nakoming van die wet as sodanig nie.

Hierdie studie skenk aandag aan Pauliniese tekste wat algemeen geïnterpreteer word as verwysings na menslike onvermoë om die wet na te kom. In Deel A word 'n historiese oorsig gebruik om aan te toon hoe navorsers hierdie teks geïnterpreteer het. Die voorveronderstellings en belangrikste idees in hierdie verband word ondersoek en 'n nuwe benadering word voorgestel. In Deel B val die klem op die feit dat Galasiërs toon dat Paulus nie aandag geskenk het aan die onvermoë om die wet na te kom nie. Verder word Paulus se beskouinge oor die persoonlike aard van die wet aangetoon. In Deel C val die klem op dieselfde sake in Romeine. Die persoonlike aard van die wet en die meervoudige aard van die wet word uitgelig. Die twee opponerende wette, die Tora en die wet van God (hart en lewe) word ook bespreek. In die laaste afdeling, Deel D, word aandag geskenk aan die uitdrukking 'nakoming van die wet'.

Die studie kom tot die gevolgtrekking dat *Paulus nie in die nakoming van die wet belanggestel het nie en dat bestaande studies van sy siening van die wet dus verkeerdelik fokus op 'n saak wat eintlik vir Paulus nie belangrik was nie.*

KEY WORDS

New Testament Studies
The fulfilment of the law
Pauline theology
The New Perspective
The Letter to the Galatians
The Letter to the Romans
The works of the law
The Law
Gal. 3:10
Rom. 7
Exegesis

TREFWOORDE

Nuwe-Testamentiese Wetenskap
Die vervulling van die wet
Pauliniese teologie
Die Nuwe Perspektief
Die Brief aan die Galasiërs
Die Brief aan die Romeine
Die werke van die wet
Die wet
Gal. 3:10
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Eksegese