

# **Paul and Israel: flesh, spirit and identity**



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## **DECLARATION**

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December 2013

## ABSTRACT

The main problem that this study addresses is the way in which the apostle Paul defines the identity of God's people in his present in relation to the identity of historical Israel and those in his time who descended from historical Israel. The understanding of identity in Paul is approached amidst major shifts in this debate over the past few decades. Where the so called *New Perspective on Paul* accentuated Paul's "Jewishness" and criticised the traditional reading of Paul which viewed much of his gospel as a reaction against earning salvation by works, the *Radical New Perspective on Paul* sees an even greater discontinuity between Paul and the Christian faith (as it is known today). Other than current approaches that aim to redefine current terminology or categories for identity (e.g. to redefine *ethnos* to include fictive kin), the approach of this study is to pursue Paul's theological thought around identity mainly by way of a theological-exegetical approach. Apart from passages where the terms Ἰσραήλ (Rom 9:6,27,31; 10:19,21; 11:2,7,25,26; 1 Cor 10:18; 2 Cor 3:7,13; Gal 6:16; Php 3:5; cf. Eph 2:12) and Ἰσραηλίτης (Rom 9:4; 11:1; 2 Cor 11:22) occur which constitute the main focus, other passages are identified by way of related semantic domains which pertain to being God's people (Rom 1:16-17; 2:17-29; 4:1-25; 15:5-13; 1 Cor 1:21-24; 2 Cor 5:14-21; Gal 1:11-14,22-23; 2:11-16; 3:1-29; 4:21-5:1; 1 Th 2:13-16; 3:9-15; Phm 1:16; cf. Col 3:9-15). All these passages are divided under three modes of identity or combinations thereof and exegeted accordingly: (A) Israel according to the flesh, (B) Israel as children of the promise and as partakers of election, and (C) believers in Christ as partakers of the new creation and the Spirit. Since "Spirit/spirit" and "flesh" in Paul stand in close relationship to identity and being God's children (e.g., "Israel according to the flesh", 1 Cor 10:18; "my kindred according to the flesh", Rom 9:3; "Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God", Rom 8:16), the spirit-flesh dichotomy is studied in terms of its relation to identity (Rom 7-8; Gal 5:16-25; 1 Cor 12:12-13; cf. Col 2:11-13). In its extended meaning, "spirit" and "flesh" are found to refer to two distinct eschatological realities: "flesh" refers to an ethnic identity before or outside of Christ defined by law, works and sin, while "spirit" refers to the new eschatological aeon in Christ where identity is defined by Spirit, deliverance, faith and grace (esp. Rom 7:5-6; 8:1-16). The study climaxes in the exegesis of Romans 11:25-

27 and Galatians 6:7-16, with a specific focus on the salvation of “all Israel” (Rom 11:26) and “the Israel of God” who are blessed (Gal 6:16). In the light of the deeper theological understanding of identity in Paul and a reassessment of traditional interpretations of these passages (Rom 11:25-27; Gal 6:16), Israel is interpreted as pointing to ancient, historical Israel of inner election in both passages. As main conclusion to the whole study, the term Ἰουδαῖος is found to mainly describe people of ethnic descent in Paul’s present, while the terms Ἰσραήλ and Ἰσραηλίτης, although showing diachronic fluidity (in terms of ancient Israel and her descendants in Paul’s present), mainly denote ancient, historical Israel of the Old Testament. Regarding the identity of God’s people in Paul’s present, those who believe in Christ and are indwelt by the Spirit is found to be the only certain criteria for marking off the people of God in the new eschatological aeon in Christ. These identity markers constitute a single redemptive line (only those who believe in Christ) rather than two redemptive lines (e.g., Christ-believers who adhere to the Noahide Laws, in parallel to non-believing Judaeans who keep the whole law) in Paul’s thought.

## OPSOMMING

Die vernaamste probleem wat hierdie studie aanspreek is die manier waarop die apostel Paulus die identiteit van God se mense omskryf in verhouding met die identiteit van historiese Israel en diegene in Paulus se leeftyd wie afgestam het van historiese Israel. Die verstaan van identiteit by Paulus word aangepak te midde van groot verskuiwings in hierdie debat oor die afgelope paar dekades. Terwyl die sogenaamde *Nuwe Perspektief op Paulus* sy “Joodsheid” beklemtoon het en ’n tradisionele lees van Paulus gekritiseer het, waar baie van sy evangelie gesien is as ’n reaksie daarop om redding te verdien deur werke, sien die *Radikale Nuwe Perspektief op Paulus* selfs groter diskontinuiteit tussen Paulus en die Christelike geloof (soos dit vandag bekend is). In teenstelling met huidige benaderings wat poog om bestaande terminologie of kategorieë vir identiteit te herdefinieer (bv. om *ethnos* só te herdefinieer om denkbeeldige familieverwantskap in te sluit), is die benadering van hierdie studie om Paulus se teologiese denke rondom identiteit na te vors deur middel van ’n teologies-eksegetiese benadering. Bo en behalwe Skrifgedeeltes waar die woorde Ἰσραήλ (Rom 9:6,27,31; 10:19,21; 11:2,7,25,26; 1 Kor 10:18; 2 Kor 3:7,13; Gal 6:16; Flp 3:5; vgl. Ef 2:12) en Ἰσραηλίτης (Rom 9:4; 11:1; 2 Kor 11:22) voorkom, wat die hoofokus verteenwoordig, word ander Skrifgedeeltes uitgewys deur middel van verwante semantiese domeine wat te make het daarmee om God se mense te wees (Rom 1:16-17; 2:17-29; 4:1-25; 15:5-13; 1 Kor 1:21-24; 2 Kor 5:14-21; Gal 1:11-14,22-23; 2:11-16; 3:1-29; 4:21-5:1; 1 Tess 2:13-16; 3:9-15; Flm 1:16; vgl. Kol 3:9-15). Al hierdie Skrifgedeeltes word verdeel onder drie modusse van identiteit of kombinasies daarvan en dienooreenkomstig ge-eksegetiseer: (A) Israel na die vlees, (B) Israel as kinders van die belofte en deelgenote aan verkiesing, en (C) gelowiges in Christus as deelgenote van die nuwe skepping en die Gees. Aangesien “Gees/gees” en “vlees” by Paulus in ’n noue verhouding staan met identiteit en kindskap (bv., “Israel na die vlees”, 1 Kor 10:18; “my stamgenote na die vlees”, Rom 9:3; “Die Gees self getuig saam met ons gees dat ons kinders van God is”, Rom 8:16), word die gees-vlees digotomie nagevors in soverre dit betrekking het op identiteit (Rom 7-8; Gal 5:16-25; 1 Kor 12:12-13; vgl. Kol 2:11-13). In hul uitgebreide betekenis is gevind dat “gees” en “vlees” verwys na twee afsonderlike eskatologiese werklikhede: “vlees” verwys na ’n etniese

identiteit vóór of buite Christus, wat afgebaken word deur wet, werke en sonde, terwyl “gees” verwys na die nuwe eskatologiese era in Christus waar identiteit afgebaken word deur Gees, vrymaking, geloof en genade (veral Rom 7:5-6; 8:1-16). Die klimaks van dié studie is wanneer eksegetiese gedoen word van Romeine 11:25-27 en Galasiërs 6:7-16, met ’n spesifieke fokus op die redding van “die hele Israel” (Rom 11:26) en “die Israel van God” wat geseën word (Gal 6:16). In die lig van die dieper teologiese verstaan van identiteit by Paulus en ’n herevaluering van tradisionele interpretasies van hierdie Skrifgedeeltes (Rom 11:25-27; Gal 6:16), word Israel vertolk as duidend op antieke, historiese Israel wat innerlik uitverkies is in beide Skrifgedeeltes. As vernaamste gevolgtrekking to die hele studie is gevind dat die term Ἰουδαῖος hoofsaaklik mense van etniese herkoms in Paulus se hede beskryf, terwyl die terms Ἰσραήλ en Ἰσραηλίτης, alhoewel hulle diachroniese vloeibaarheid vertoon (m.b.t. antieke Israel en haar nakomelinge in Paulus se hede), hoofsaaklik antieke, historiese Israel van die Ou Testament aandui. Met betrekking tot die identiteit van God se mense in Paulus se hede, is gevind dat diegene wat in Christus glo en ingewoon word deur die Gees, die enigste seker kriteria is waardeur God se mense in die nuwe eskatologiese tydperk in Christus afgemerkt word. Hierdie merkers van identiteit verteenwoordig ’n enkele lyn van heil (slegs diegene wat in Christus glo) eerder as twee lyne van heil (bv. gelowiges in Christus wat die Noagitiese Wette onderhou, naasaan nie-gelowige Judeërs wat die hele wet onderhou) in Paulus se denke.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

### General

- aor. aorist.
- BCE Before Common Era.
- BDAG Danker, FW (ed.) 2000. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature*. Third Edition. (BDAG). Based on Walter Bauer's *Griechisch-Deutsches Wörterbuch zu den Schriften des Neuen Testaments und der frühchristlichen Literatur*, sixth edition, ed. Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, with Viktor Reichmann and on previous English editions by W.F. Arndt, F.W. Gingrich, and F.W. Danker. Chicago; London: The University of Chicago Press.
- BDB Brown, F; Driver, SR; Briggs, A [1906] 2010. *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon: With an appendix containing the Biblical Aramaic*. Coded with the numbering system from Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible. Peabody: Hendrickson.
- BDF Blass, F & Debrunner, A 1961. *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. Translated by Funk, RW. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- CD The Cairo Damascus Document.
- CE Common Era.
- cf. *confer* (Latin). Compare. It refers to a similar yet not identical interpretation or text, including all references thereafter (separated by “;”). Additionally, Scripture references to disputed Pauline letters are marked in this manner.
- esp. especially.
- fn. footnote.

fut.	future (tense).
ind.	indicative (mood).
lit.	literally.
LXX	Septuagint (Ancient Greek translation of the Old Testament).
MT	Masoretic Text.
n.	note.
NA27	Aland, B; Aland, K; Karavidopoulos, J; Martini, CM; Metzger, BM (eds.) 1993. <i>Novum Testamentum Graece</i> . 27th edition. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft.
NPP	New Perspective on Paul.
NT	New Testament.
OT	Old Testament.
part.	participle.
perf.	perfect (tense).
pl.	plural.
pres.	present (tense).
sing.	singular.
subj.	subjunctive.
TAP	Traditional Approach to Paul.
v.	verse.
Vol.	Volume.
vv.	verses.

### **Bible Translations**

AB	The Amplified Bible, Expanded Edition (1987).
ASV	American Standard Version (1901).
DST	Dutch States Translation (1750).

ESV	English Standard Version (2001).
GNB	Good News Bible (1992).
GW	God's Word to the Nations (1995).
ISV	International Standard Version (2001).
KJV	King James Version (also known as the Authorized Version, 1769).
LITV	Literal Translation of the Holy Bible (1976-2000) by Green, JP (Sr.).
NAT	New Afrikaans Translation (1983).
NEB	New English Bible (1970).
NIV	New International Version (1984).
NJB	New Jerusalem Bible (1985).
NLT	New Living Translation (1996).
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version (1989).
OAT	Old Afrikaans Translation (1933/1953).
REB	The Revised English Bible (1989).
RSV	Revised Standard Version, 2 <sup>nd</sup> edition (1971).
RV	Revised Version (1885).
YLT	Young's Literal Translation, by Young, JN (1898).

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

The apostle Paul's theological understanding of Israel has been a controversial and debated topic since the beginning of Christianity, starting with the Church Fathers (e.g., Justin Martyr, Marcion of Sinope, Tertullian), through the Reformation (e.g., Martin Luther, John Calvin, Augustine of Hippo), until today. In Reformed circles the legacy of Martin Luther left a lasting impression on Pauline theology. He interpreted Paul's letters such as to establish the universal human plight and his or her need for divine grace. In terms of the relationship between Israel and the church, Luther's view was characterised by what has become known as "replacement theology" or "supersessionism", where the Christian church is understood as a replacement for Israel.<sup>1</sup> This view had the corollary of a negative view of the Torah. Luther understood the "works of the law" (ἔργων νόμου) in Paul's letters as the inadequate and hopeless means of trying to earn one's salvation. Christ was the solution for this human plight (cf. Thiselton 2007:311-314).

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<sup>1</sup> Luther had put forth his position as follows: "For such ruthless wrath of God is sufficient evidence that they [the Jews] assuredly have erred and gone astray. Even a child can comprehend this. For one dare not regard God as so cruel that he would punish his own people so long, so terrible, so unmercifully... Therefore this work of wrath is proof that the Jews, surely rejected by God, are no longer his people, and neither is he any longer their God" (Luther 1971:265).

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Much of Luther's approach to Paul's letters and especially his "plight to solution" scheme became entrenched, constituting the *Traditional Approach to Paul* (TAP hereafter). One of the side-effects of the TAP is that the understanding of Paul has been perceived by many as being anti-Israel, and even antisemitic (e.g., Gager 2002:15). Ever since World War II and the Holocaust in particular, anti-Jewish sentiments, even if subtle or indirect, have been progressively contested in theology (cf. Cranfield 1979:448).

In New Testament Theology, the voices against the TAP have become gradually louder, especially from theologians such as Stendahl (1963), Sanders (1977), Dunn (1983) and Wright (1993). These writers have accentuated the "Jewishness" of Paul (cf. esp. Casey & Taylor 2011), and have especially reconsidered and reinterpreted the term "works of the law" in a more positive light. According to Sanders (1977:551-552),

It [Paul's gospel] is thus not first of all against the means of being properly religious which are appropriate to Judaism that Paul polemicizes ('by works of law'), but against the prior fundamentals of Judaism: the election, the covenant and the law; and it is because these are wrong that the means appropriate to 'righteousness according to the law' (Torah observance and repentance) are held to be wrong or are not mentioned. *In short, this is what Paul finds wrong in Judaism: it is not Christianity.*

This view of Paul has developed in what has become known as the *New Perspective on Paul* (NPP hereafter), a term that was arguably coined by Dunn (1983). By implication, the NPP holds that Paul has been fundamentally misunderstood. In the same vein as Sanders, Dunn ([1993] 1994:75) does not view Paul's reference to "works of the law" as denoting human achievement, since he views Paul's doctrine of "justification by faith" to be "a thoroughly Jewish doctrine" (:76). Rather, "works of the law" would denote "a concern to maintain Israel's covenant obligations and distinctiveness" (:79, cf. 100). This understanding of Judaism has become known by the term "covenantal nomism" (Sanders 1977:75). According to Dunn ([1993] 1994:80), "continued adherence to works of the law on the part of Christian Jews is both unnecessary and itself a threat to the sufficiency of that faith." In the NPP, "plight to solution" is turned

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around to “solution to plight”, where the Old Covenant is re-interpreted from the perspective of the gospel of Christ.

With the more radical proponents of the NPP, Paul is pictured as completely “Jewish” without any connection to some of the main tenets of Christianity (e.g., Eisenbaum 2009; Nanos 2009; 1996; Zetterholm 2003; Gager 2002; Elliott 1995; Gaston 1987; Stendahl 1976; 1963). This view is also associated with a non-supersessionist position, often described as “Two-Covenant Theology” or “Dual-Covenant Theology”. In this understanding, Israel remains in their original covenant with God by keeping the laws of the Torah, and

1. Gentiles may either believe in Christ to be saved, constituting a parallel covenant for Gentiles (e.g., Gager 2002; Gaston 1987; Stendahl 1976), or
2. they may be considered as “righteous Gentiles” (not “Christians”) and obtain a place in the world to come by observing the Noahide Laws, which is a minimum set of laws (excluding e.g. circumcision) or requirements (*halakhot*) that were expected of Gentiles (e.g., Eisenbaum 2009:252; Campbell 2008:6; Nanos 1996:50-56; cf. Tomson 1990:50).<sup>2</sup> This implies that there are not “two different systems of redemption” with Paul (Eisenbaum 2009:252), but that Christ-believers adhered to a different set of requirements in order to be counted as “righteous” and “potential Jews” (Nanos 1996:54).

Within the radical NPP and following earlier proponents of this idea, Paul’s Damascus experience is not understood as a “conversion”, but rather a “call” (Eisenbaum 2009:132-149; Stendahl 1976:3-27).

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<sup>2</sup> In this view, the admission of “righteous Gentiles” is not understood as a separate covenant, and adherents of this view do not necessarily employ the term “Two-Covenant” or “Dual-Covenant”. Even though Nanos (1996:23) admits that the terms “Noahide Laws” and “halakhot” are strictly anachronistic, since these terms were coined in later Rabbinic Judaism (see 1.2.3), he argues that this concept was present in the Qumran book of *Jubilees* 7:20-21: “And in the twenty-eight jubilee Noah began to command his grandsons with ordinances and commandments and all of the judgments which he knew. And he bore witness to his sons so that they might do justice and cover the shame of their flesh and bless the one who created them and honor father and mother, and each one love his neighbor and preserve themselves from fornication and pollution and from all injustice” (translation of O. S. Wintermute in Nanos 1996:55; see 5.1.5).

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In terms of Pauline scholarship, the NPP, and especially the radical NPP by implication tend to question the entire Pauline basis for a unique Christian identity. Yet, the implications of this position are even wider reaching. On the one hand, it challenges the way in which concepts of “Jewishness” or “Jewish identity” in Paul’s letters are understood, and on the other hand, how the identity of the Christ-believers is defined.

## 1.2 Problems and delimitations

### 1.2.1 Main Problem

Within Paul’s understanding of the identity of “Israel” in the light of faith in Christ, the main focus of this study can be defined by the following initial questions:

1. Who is “all Israel” that will be saved (Rom 11:26), and how does Paul’s understanding of “all Israel” fit into his view of Israel and believers in Christ in general?
2. Did Paul envision a “New Covenant” in Christ that supplanted the “Old Covenant”? If so, can physical Israel still be viewed as God’s people with their own intact covenant in Pauline terms? Can a “Two-Covenant Theology” be harmonised with Paul’s thought?
3. Can a purely Christian identity and the Christian church find continuity with Paul?

### 1.2.2 Passages about Israel and pre-understandings

One of the more specific problems surrounding the above mentioned questions is that there are apparent opposing passages in Paul’s letters about the Torah and Israel, which Gager (2002:5-7) divides into “anti-Israel” and “pro-Israel” passages (The “pro-Israel” set: Rom 3:1,31; 7:7,12; 9:4; 11:1,26; Gal 3:21 and the “anti-Israel” set: Gal 3:10,11; 6:15; Rom 3:20; 9:31; 11:28; 2 Cor 3:14). Gager points out four main ways of dealing with this (:7-9):

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1. The psychological technique, which would provide for a change or inconsistency in Paul's approach to these issues (e.g., Hamerton-Kelly 1992).
2. The resigned technique that would simply leave the apparent contradictions as they stand without trying to resolve them (e.g., Räisänen 1983; 1987).
3. A removal of the "offending" passages that are explained as additions and/or corruptions of the text (e.g., O'Neill 1975).
4. The dominant technique is to subordinate one set of passages to the other (according to the interpreter's view), which constitutes Gager's own approach.

Bassler (2007:71) rightly notes that the latter technique carries the assumption that Paul's views remained consistent.<sup>3</sup> She admits that even though one would ideally decide after looking at the evidence, "deep-seated convictions about inspiration often suggest the answer beforehand." If the interpreter decides that Paul is fundamentally consistent, he or she has to find a way of harmonising the apparently different assertions, "allowing one passage to control the meaning." A second decision that needs to be made is which passage(s) should count as evidence.

Deep-seated convictions are indeed an important factor in the Pauline debate. Scholars with stronger Evangelical sentiments would tend to retain a certain discontinuity of faith in Christ with physical Israel (e.g., Sanders [1983] 1989:207-210; 1977:552; esp. Wright 1993), whereas theologians with stronger positive sentiments about or affiliations with Judaism (or with strong feelings against antisemitism) would tend to seek stronger continuity between the gospel of Christ and physical Israel (e.g., Eisenbaum 2009; Nanos 1996; 2003; esp. 2008).

In this regard, as approaching this topic from an Evangelical pre-understanding, I cannot deny my own deep-seated convictions about Paul and Israel. While

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<sup>3</sup> The strongest contestant to this notion is arguably Räisänen (1983,1987) who does not view Paul's thought as consistent, especially in terms of his view of the law.

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placing my “cards on the table”, personal convictions about Paul and Israel, although inevitable (cf. Thomas 1996:249), have to be seen as an underlying problem on both sides of this debate. Preconceived notions may cause the interpreter to read a certain understanding “into” the text and hinder objectivity in the process (cf. Thomas 1996:251-252). Another factor with respect to the understanding of identity in Paul which arguably strains objectivity is the desire not to be mistaken for an “antisemite” by proposing an understanding that would impinge on the interest of national Israel. Kim (2010:329) goes so far as calling this a “theological *shibboleth* that hinders one from interpreting Paul’s theology objectively” (cf. Cranford 1993:27). The ideal will always be to strive to read Paul on his own terms, and to try and limit pre-understandings of postmodern, Western society to a minimum.

### 1.2.3 Terminology

The next problem concerning research about Paul’s position toward Israel is that pre-understandings of ancient cultures and societies (e.g., Ἰουδαῖοι) and preconceived notions expressed by concepts which have gained currency in the academy and beyond, may also hinder an authentic understanding of a specific culture or group of people. For many, designations such as “Jews” and “Judaism” in relation to New Testament scholarship have contributed to prejudice against modern Jews (e.g., Campbell 2008:2; cf. BDAG, Ἰουδαῖος). As Mason (2007) points out, current understandings of concepts like “Jews” or “Judaism” cannot uncritically be projected into the text of the New Testament and thus be equated with Paul’s use of Ἰουδαῖοι.

Neusner (1984:5) maintains that Rabbinic Judaism as we know it was born when people came to believe that by studying the Torah and by keeping the commandments, they would play a critical role in the coming of the Messiah. He dates this period at about 70 CE, somewhat before the destruction of the Temple of Jerusalem (:1). He understands Rabbinic Judaism as a gradual development mainly after 70 CE (:3-4; cf. Mason 2007:502; Langer 2003:258). Even into the first century, he writes: “the principal institutions of Israel remained priesthood and

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monarchy, Scripture and its way of life, holy Temple, land, and people” (Neusner 1984:4).

As a result of this hermeneutical distance between today’s Judaism and the Ἰουδαῖοι in Paul’s letters, Mason (2007) and others (e.g., BDAG, Ἰουδαῖος; Elliott 2007; Esler 2003) have suggested that a translation such as “Judaean” is a more appropriate translation for the Ἰουδαῖοι in Paul’s letters (or “Judaean” for Ἰουδαῖος) in order to distinguish them from today’s Jews. On the other hand, a translation such as “Judaean” could be confused for people from the geographical Judaea, or it can be argued that allowing for too great a distance between Judaean (in Paul’s time) and today’s Jews “might also assist in denying to post- New Testament Jews the heritage of Israel” (Campbell 2008:3; cf. Hodge 2007:13-14).

Mason (2007:504) however shows that “Judaean” does not have a geographical restriction any more than ethnic descriptions (e.g., “Roman”, “Egyptian”, “Greek”). He argues that such a restriction arises in our minds because of the absence of a geographic Judaea today. Josephus who can be considered as important in explaining Judaean history, laws and customs uses Ἰουδαῖοι as an *ethnos* (esp. *Against Apion* 1:6,8-9), especially when he juxtaposes Judaean with Babylonians, Egyptians, Chaldaean, Athenians, and Spartans (see Mason 2007:491-492). The notion that a translation “Judaean” could deny today’s Jews the heritage of Israel has to be weighed against the harm that has been caused by glossing Ἰουδαῖος in the New Testament with “Jew” without accounting for the hermeneutical distance between the Ἰουδαῖοι and today’s Jews, which arguably resulted in fostering anti-Judaism (in the modern sense of the word) through biblical texts (BDAG, Ἰουδαῖος).

Notwithstanding the fact that the designation “Judaean” is not beyond dispute in translating Ἰουδαῖοι in Paul, Mason’s (2007) recommendation to translate Ἰουδαῖοι with “Judaean” (or “Judaean” for Ἰουδαῖος) will be followed in this dissertation even where cited references do not. The two main reasons for utilising this terminology are (1) to account for the hermeneutical distance between today’s Judaism and the Ἰουδαῖοι in Paul, especially the fact that Ἰουδαῖος/Ἰουδαῖοι cannot be understood as a “religion” in the full sense of the word but rather as an *ethnos* (see 1.2.4 below), and (2) to keep the nature and depth of the difference between

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today's Jews and the Ἰουδαῖοι in Paul under discussion. Terms such as “Jews” and “Judaism” (in reference to the Ἰουδαῖοι in the time of Paul) are however still prevalent in most of NT scholarly material that will be consulted in this research. I will employ “Judaean(s)” in reference to them even where designations such as “Jews” or “Judaism” occur in the literature, unless where I quote directly. I will therefore leave terms such as “Jew” or “Jewish” as *is* in quotes of scholars in reference to the Ἰουδαῖοι in Paul's time, even though I would prefer translations such as “Judaean” or “a Judaean way of life”.

In the same way, since Christianity as we know it today was strictly speaking a later development after Paul, especially in terms of its institutional character as world religion, the terms “Christian” and “Christianity” can also be considered as anachronisms in terms of Paul's thought (Donfried 2011:11-12; Eisenbaum 2009; Campbell 2008:12; Mason 2007; Lieu 2002:191-209; 2004; Gager 2002). While the term “Christianity” in this Pauline study is avoided in the strict sense, Paul's continuity or discontinuity with Christianity remains under discussion. In my view, the terms “Jesus followers”, “Jesus group(s)” (e.g., Malina 2001) or “Jesus-movement” (Gager 2002:VIII) lean toward an understanding of stronger discontinuity between Paul and Christianity. While being sensitive toward the anachronism of the term “Christian” in connection with Paul on the one hand, and keeping Paul's continuity with a Christian identity under discussion on the other, I will employ the term “Christ-believers”<sup>4</sup> (or similar) in this dissertation. The term “church” in this dissertation will be employed as a translation for ἐκκλησία, a term that is abundant in the Pauline corpus, and does not necessarily imply the “Christian church”. It has to be understood as the congregation or community of believers in Christ (Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:126; cf. BDAG, ἐκκλησία §3b).

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<sup>4</sup> Campbell (2008:12), who admits to employing this term earlier in his work, decided to switch to “Christ-followers” as a result of his fear of over-emphasising the place of belief over against good works. However, viewing faith as an (or the) important constitutive element of the identity in Christ does not necessarily imply an “old perspective” view on Paul (e.g., Wright 1997; 1993).

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### 1.2.4 Paul, identity and ethnicity

As Punt (2011:153) points out, “identity is not a matter of essentialism but of construction” and part of an “ongoing negotiation”. Yet, Punt notes that “continuity over time” is always an “important constant in assertions about identity over time, or at least claims to it.” Continuity is to be understood as constructed within identity. Punt connects the claims of different people or groups to the same continuity, to history itself. This is a dynamic and reciprocal process, “the constant tugging between an experienced continuity and the sense of constant change and decay” (:153; cf. Lieu 2004:22,62). When the Pauline texts refer to Ἰσραήλ, the Ἰουδαῖοι, the Ἕλληνας and the ἐκκλησία for example, this problem of identity needs to be kept in mind, especially the fact that it is not possible to categorically pinpoint a “predefined essence” for any of these identities.

Together with this inherent problem of identity, Paul has put forth his own interpretation or re-interpretation of these identities in his epistles. The questions that arise from the problem of identity are closely related to the main problem as put forth earlier, yet more specific.

Some of the main questions in this regard are:

1. What constitutes some of the essential markers of identity “in Christ” (ἐν Χριστῷ) over against or in relation to Israel and/or the Judaeans?<sup>5</sup>
2. Can the Christian identity find shared ground with Paul’s understanding of the ἐκκλησία (Christ-believers) as it became established in the early Christian church in the first few centuries after Paul, and if so, what is the nature of such shared ground and how strong or weak is it?
3. Did Paul envision a continuation of physical Israel as God’s people apart from faith in Christ, or is there one new identity defined by faith in Christ that constitutes a new identity for all of God’s people?

Ethnicity stands in close relation to identity (see Jenkins 1997:165). Mason (2007:484) defines each *ethnos* (e.g., the Judaeans) as having its own distinctive

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<sup>5</sup> See the problem of *Judaeans and Israel* below.

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nature or character, which was expressed in a unique ancestral tradition. This tradition reflected a shared ancestry or genealogy, with its own charter stories, customs, norms, conventions, mores, laws and political arrangements or constitution. This fundamental category or *ethnos* includes important elements of what we know today as a “religion”, but the political-ethnographic category of *ethnos* cannot be equated with “religion”.<sup>6</sup>

There is difference of opinion whether *ethnos* necessarily involves genealogy or material family as a constitutive element of identity in the New Testament. Other than the more traditional view that ethnicity involves material family or genealogy and that it is therefore not a constitutive element of the identity of the Christ-believer (e.g., Wright 1997:125-133; 1993:232; Boyarin 1994:77), Buell (2005:1-5) views the usage of terms such as ἔθνος, γένος, λαός and πολιτεία by New Testament writers, and terms like *genus* and *natio* (Latin) by early Christian writers, as containing a certain fluidity. She connects these terms to “ethnic reasoning” and “race”. In the same vein, Hodge (2007:3) views “ethnicity” and “kinship” as Pauline categories for the Christ-believers, yet she broadens these categories to be not bound to material family (as would Buell), but to be understood as “myths of origins” that would constitute a “new lineage for the Gentiles” (:5). Her view has to be read in conjunction with her critique against what she calls “the universal/ethnic dichotomy” (:8; see 1.2.5 below).

Within the above mentioned debate, some of the important questions for this dissertation would be:

1. Is there room in Paul’s thought for physical descent, material family or genealogy to remain a constitutive element in the identity of God’s people in the light of Christ’s work?

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<sup>6</sup> Mason (2007:483-488) defines “religion” as a Western category with no counterpart in ancient culture. He identifies various elements that constitute “religion”: *ethnos*, cult, philosophy, rites of passage (e.g., at birth, marriage and death), voluntary association (e.g., church or synagogue) and finally, astrology and magic. The term “religious” has to be distinguished from “a religion” as such. The term “religious” thus remains a valid term in describing aspects of biblical identities (:481), as will be the case in this dissertation.

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2. While keeping the current debate about identity and ethnicity in mind, what role does physical descent, material family or genealogy play against the bigger picture of identity in Paul's letters?

### 1.2.5 Universal and/or Particular?

In very much the same way in which Hodge (2007:8) objects to the “universal/ethnic dichotomy”, Campbell (2008:96-103) voices concerns against viewing the ἐκκλησία as (a) a “Third Race” or “third entity” that replaces both Ἰουδαῖος and Ἕλλην (e.g., Sanders [1983] 1989:178-179), (b) a “New Israel” or (c) a “Redefined Israel”. His main objections to these models are that their universal nature holds the danger of superiority, dominancy and imperialism, and that these models display a lack of adequate awareness of “cultural indebtedness”, particularity, and a real concern for diversity within the church.

On the other side of the debate, from an Evangelical perspective it can be argued that an over accommodation of particularities might threaten the core of the gospel (cf. Watson 2007:354-360), and hold the danger of giving rise to another form of universalism, that is that many different roads lead to Rome (religious pluralism).

Questions that concern this study in this regard are:

1. In the light of belief in Christ, does Paul's understanding of the identity of “Israel” and/or the Christ-believers tend to lean more toward the universal side (as portrayed in the TAP) or to the particular side (as portrayed in the NPP and esp. the radical NPP)?
2. Within the above question, what is Paul's view on particularity in identity?

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### 1.2.6 Judaeans and Israel

The final problem that needs to be addressed is Paul's understanding of the designations "Ἰουδαῖοι" (Judaeans and their different sub groups) and "Ἰσραήλ" (Israel).<sup>7</sup>

1. Do these designations carry exactly the same meaning with Paul? Is there an overlap in meaning, and if so what are some of the main similarities and/or differences?
2. What does Paul understand with these designations in relation to the identity of the Christ-believer?

### 1.2.7 Summary and focus

It has to be pointed out that not all the above mentioned problems can be addressed within this dissertation on the same level of comprehensiveness, but needed to be pointed out in order to sketch the bigger valley of problem areas wherein this study will find its claim. In summary, the main focus of this dissertation is to address Paul's definition and understanding of the identity of "Israel" in the light of belief in Christ, with a special focus on who "all Israel" is that will be saved in Rom 11:26. This main question needs to be addressed amidst two main categories of problems within the debate:

1. The quagmire of interpretations of the TAP, the NPP and the radical NPP on the identity and ethnicity of God's people, and the relevant terminologies in this debate, and
2. Different views on membership in God's covenant(s) with His people.

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<sup>7</sup> See 1.4 for a preliminary discussion of the frequency of these and similar terminologies.

### 1.3 Hypotheses

One of the first underlying assumptions in the approach of this dissertation is that Paul's thought is fundamentally coherent (Beker 1980; adopted by Thiselton 1992:239 and Donfried 2002:196,198; cf. Zoccali 2008:303-304; Schreiner 1989:48) and consistent (Bassler 2007:71),<sup>8</sup> even though I leave the possibility open of Paul's thought being in the process of finalising. This implies that even though Paul's letters were written in diverse contingent situations, and even though his thought was in the process of being finalised, the core of his thoughts (i.e., his gospel) can be integrated into a coherent theological pattern.<sup>9</sup> Paul's writing of his epistles probably was instrumental in the final formation of his thought. An example of this is arguably the mystery about the salvation of "all Israel" (Rom 11:25-27). This notion about the formation of Paul's thought, I do not understand to the exclusion of the divine inspiration of the Holy Spirit in Paul's writings, but as a result thereof.

The next hypothesis that flows forth from this is that Paul's understanding of the problems put forth in this dissertation has to be unlocked primarily from the core of Paul's theological thought. In other words, my approach is that Paul's views of ethnicity, identity, Israel, the Judaeans and the Christ-believers stem from a coherent theological pattern of his gospel, and especially from what has changed in Paul's understanding of the identity of God's people as a result of his encounter with the risen Jesus Christ.

The counterpart of this approach is that many of the concerns of this study cannot adequately be resolved by merely dealing with the detail of the various passages where issues about the identity of Israel, the Judaeans or the Christ-believers are addressed directly by Paul. Rather, one has to look deeper into Paul's theological understanding as a whole in order to unlock the depth of meaning of specific

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<sup>8</sup> While working from a pre-understanding of coherency and consistency in Paul's thought, my intention is to motivate this coherency and consistency on a continual basis in dialogue with others (e.g., Räisänen 1987) who hold opposing views.

<sup>9</sup> In terms of Paul's thought, some other options would be to refer to a theological "scheme", "structure" or "system", but these might create the impression of total finality in his thought. Viewing Paul as a "systematic thinker" would take the notion of consistency too far (cf. Räisänen 1987:xi).

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passages. A deeper understanding of Pauline thought is not intended as a final synthesis, but remains a theological construct that has to be reconsidered continuously.

Another aspect of the latter hypothesis is that Paul's theological thought, which can be related to the knowledge of the gospel as it was revealed to him, has a stronger influence on his understanding of Israel, ethnicity and identity, than his particular circumstances or sociological setting (cf. Watson 2007:354-360). Yet, his particular circumstances, ethnic group and history play a large role in shaping his language, metaphors, and ways of expression. Put in another way, Paul's theology and especially the way in which he expresses it in his letters, cannot be abstracted or decontextualized (Campbell 2008:9), but the core of his thought, although influenced by particularities, is ultimately regulated by his revelatory knowledge of the Holy Spirit.

A more specific hypothesis within the above mentioned theological approach is that the priority of "Spirit/spirit" over "flesh" is fundamental to the understanding of the term "Israel" in Paul's writings (cf. Esler 1996:231; Boyarin 1994:57-85; Wright 1993:238-239; Bruce [1977] 2000:203-211). The range of this aspect of the study will be limited however, and will rely on selected texts as point of departure (see 1.4). This aspect relates to the identity in Spirit/spirit (in Christ) over against an identity according to the flesh (ethnic/physical). This will be motivated as the study progresses.

As overarching hypothesis of this dissertation, I propose that Paul's view and definition of the identity of "Israel" in the light of the new identity of the Christ-believer, and the role of ethnicity in this equation, has to be understood in terms of Paul's deeper theological understanding of his "spirit" and "flesh" dichotomy.

### **1.4 Methodology and demarcation of the fields of study**

The notion to look deeper into Paul's theology to grasp his understanding of identity-related issues, suggests that a methodology of the "dominant technique", where "one set of passages" are subordinated to "the other" (see Gager's 4th

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technique above), might be too simplistic. Rather than for example making some Ἰσραήλ passages dominant and other subordinate (in terms of “pro-Israel” and “anti-Israel”), my approach would rather be to interpret all these passages in relation to the deeper theological aspects of identity in Paul’s letters. To pursue these “deeper aspects of identity” in Paul might prompt the questions:

1. How does one determine the role and reach of identity in Paul's letters if a measure of “finalisation” in his theology is allowed for?
2. More specific, where does one start within the Pauline corpus?
3. How does one prioritise between specific thematic terms or concepts in order to determine Paul’s theology of identity?

The methodological approach of this study will primarily be exegetical with a theological aim, working toward a coherent understanding of deeper theological aspects of identity in Paul’s letters. This approach will utilise aspects of Robbins’ (1996:3-4) model of the “inner texture”<sup>10</sup> and “ideological texture”,<sup>11</sup> and to a lesser extent the “intertexture”<sup>12</sup> and the “sacred texture”<sup>13</sup> of the text. Even though the exegesis will not mainly be socio-rhetorical as Robbins’ model would suggest, his textures will serve as a reference point for the exegetical methodology of this dissertation. The exegesis itself will comprise of five main aspects, (see the Chapter outlay lower down for more detail):

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<sup>10</sup> This texture relates to structural aspects of the text, e.g., the repetition of words, beginnings and endings, present arguments, and the feel of the text (Robbins 1996:3).

<sup>11</sup> The “ideological texture” concerns “particular alliances and conflicts the language in the text and the language in an interpretation evoke and nurture”, and especially for this study, “the way the text itself and interpreters of the text position themselves in relation to other individuals and groups.” This texture involves the manner in which the text evokes different points of view (Robbins 1996:4).

<sup>12</sup> This texture concerns “a text’s configuration of phenomena that lie outside the text” (Robbins (1996:3). It mainly has to do with the use of language in other surrounding texts. Among others, it concerns “modes of understanding and belief, like the ideas people have about their importance, their opportunities, and their responsibilities in the world.”

<sup>13</sup> The “sacred texture” addresses the relation of people to the divine. This involves “communication about gods, holy persons, spirit beings, divine history, human redemption, human commitment, religious community, and ethics” (Robbins 1996:4). Since the study involves exploring aspects of “spirit” in Paul, it will mainly touch on aspects of human redemption, commitment and religious community.

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- (a) Semantic: initial passages appropriate to the study will be identified in accordance with the semantic domains of Louw & Nida (1988) in discussion with other primary and secondary literature.
- (b) Structural and co-textual: on the way to interpretation, Paul's arguments, the structure of the text itself, and the way in which he employs specific words or concepts will be taken into account.
- (c) Contextual (to a lesser extent): even though it will not be a primary aim, the way in which Paul uses terms or descriptions of identity will be compared to the employment of some of these terms or descriptions in other contexts (e.g., Greek thought, the rest of the New Testament).
- (d) Theological-exegetical: exegesis with a theological aim of the appropriate passages will be done, involving the evaluation of interpretive traditions<sup>14</sup> and other points of view. Theological-exegetical exegesis will form the main body of this study, and will utilise both primary and secondary literature.
- (e) Theological choices: my own point of view will be substantiated amidst other points of view, and harmonised with the text itself.

Aspects (a) and (b) relate to Robbins' "inner texture" and (c) to his "intertexture". Aspects (d) and (e) relate to Robbins' "ideological texture" and partly to the "sacred texture" of the text. Although (a) to (e) can be viewed as methodological steps, (b) to (e) will function in an integrated fashion within the discussion of the chosen Pauline passages and themes at hand, toward a coherent understanding of Paul's thought.

Concerning the choices of specific Pauline passages and themes, the theological insight relating to deeper aspects of identity in Paul's letters as pursued within certain passages will progressively interact with other passages (as the bigger picture becomes clearer), even though some of the issues might relate to one another indirectly. In this regard, Thiselton's (2007:318-320) reference to "multiple horizons of meaning" is helpful in terms of two kinds of hermeneutical

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<sup>14</sup> This aspect will predominantly feature in the discussion of Rom 11:25-27 and Gal 6:16.

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horizons: (i) The “juxtaposition of a variety of mutually qualifying images, symbols, analogies, or even referential terms allows an understanding to ‘come alive’” (:318). (ii) We can see complex puzzles as a *Gestalt*,<sup>15</sup> that forms a coherent picture instead of the atomistic pieces that we began with. This method therefore tends to be more deductive than inductive. Yet, the questions relating to an understanding of Paul’s theology will always be correlated to the researcher’s hermeneutical interests: his or her point of view and symbolic universe, including language and world view. Apart from this fact, it has to be taken into account that any understanding of an ancient text is incomplete.

Since the primary aim of this study is Paul’s understanding of Israel, my methodological point of departure will be to start with the obvious, namely the passages containing the terms Ἰσραήλ and Ἰσραηλίτης (Ἰσραήλ: Rom 9:6,27,31; 10:19,21; 11:2,7,25,26; 1 Cor 10:18; 2 Cor 3:7,13; Gal 6:16; Php 3:5; Ἰσραηλίτης: Rom 9:4; 11:1; 2 Cor 11:22). These passages however have to be accompanied by a broader theological understanding of Paul on identity, which implies a relation to other concepts and theological issues within semantic and theological range of the Ἰσραήλ/Ἰσραηλίτης passages.

Within the textual passages containing Ἰσραήλ and Ἰσραηλίτης, related theological concepts will be studied, and related terms will be identified for further pursuit within the Pauline corpus. As an illustration of this methodology, one strategic example is to consider Paul’s expression Ἰσραήλ κατὰ σάρκα in 1 Corinthians 10:18. This expression would suggest that σάρξ is one of the fundamental categories in which Paul expresses his understanding of Ἰσραήλ. This notion is confirmed by the similar expression τῶν συγγενῶν μου κατὰ σάρκα in Romans 9:3, which is employed in close co-textual proximity to Ἰσραηλίτης in verse 4 and Ἰσραήλ in verse 6. Very much the same scenario applies in the case of Paul’s usage of μου τὴν σάρκα in Romans 11:14. Paul’s usage of σάρξ in connection with Ἰσραήλ, τῶν συγγενῶν μου or μου τὴν σάρκα thus requires a deeper understanding of how these usages of σάρξ fit into Paul’s larger πνεῦμα-σάρξ

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<sup>15</sup> *Gestalt* as a German psychological term refers to the essence or shape of an entity’s complete form: that perception is the product of complex interactions among various stimuli (cf. Ramsey 1957:23-24).

## 1. Introduction

dichotomy (e.g., Rom 8:1-23; Gal 3:3; 5:16-17; 4:29; 6:8; Php 3:3). It is therefore expected that Paul applies the terms or expressions containing πνεῦμα in connection with identity as well. This approach will run in conjunction with a semantic approach.

The following question would follow: How does the πνεῦμα-σάρξ dichotomy pertain to physical descent and/or ethnicity as a criterion of being God's child (e.g., υἱοὶ θεοῦ in Rom 8:14-21; Gal 3:26) or God's heir (e.g., κληρονόμος in Rom 4:13-14; 8:17; Gal 3:29; 4:1,7), etc.?<sup>16</sup> These then provide methodological examples of how Paul's deeper theology of identity can be pursued by identifying related concepts in Paul's thought. This theological-exegetical approach will examine how Paul's thinking coherently developed through the trajectories suggested by mainly these (see above) and related texts.

The chapter outlay that follows is complementary to the methodological outline, and elaborates on the above mentioned exegetical aspects (a) to (e). Chapter 2 to 3 will mainly correlate with (a), and Chapters 4 to 8 will mainly correlate with (b) to (e). Aspects (b) to (e) can be viewed as repetitive steps within the various passages and terms that will be discussed in Chapters 4 to 8.

### Chapter 1. Introduction

This (current) chapter puts forth the background, problems, hypotheses, methodology and demarcation of the fields of study.

### Chapter 2. Semantic domains: initial identification of passages

On the way to a broader understanding of Ἰσραήλ or Ἰσραηλίτης in relation to belief in Christ, related semantic fields have to be considered in the Pauline corpus. Some of the terms pertaining to these semantic domains are: terms that relate to the ethnic group of Judaeans (e.g., Ἰουδαῖος, Ἰουδαίῳ, Ἰουδαϊκῶς, Ἰουδαῖσμός), terms denoting ethnicity or kin (e.g., ἔθνος, συγγενής), and terms

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<sup>16</sup> To denote the new identity of the Christ-believer, Cromhout (2009) identifies various terms in Paul's letters denoting a fictive family: the "body of Messiah" (1 Cor 10:17; 12:13-14, 20; cf. Eph 3:6), the "congregation of God" (Gal 1:13; 1 Cor 10:32, 15:9; cf. Php 3:6), the "household of faith" (Gal 6:10), and children and brothers (Gal 4:19; 1 Cor 4:14; 2 Cor 6:13; 12:14). On brotherhood as fraternal metaphor in Pauline context, see especially Punt (2012).

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denoting God's people (e.g., λαός), including Christ-believers (e.g., ἐκκλησία, οἱ ἅγιοι, πιστεύω, πίστις). As a next step, these terms will be linked to specific Pauline passages to be studied initially. The lexicon of Louw and Nida (1988) that is based on semantic domains will be instrumental in this regard, and will be used in conjunction with other lexical resources (e.g., Danker 2000 – BDAG hereafter; Balz & Schneider 1991-1993) and other relevant resources. Some specific semantic and exegetical problems will be pointed out in the process. This approach has to be seen as preliminary, and could be expanded later on as related concepts pertaining to identity in Paul are examined.

### **Chapter 3. Terminology and a theological-exegetical approach**

This chapter will position my approach toward the terms and semantic domains identified in the previous chapter more precisely, amidst recent debates about ethnicity, identity and related terms (e.g., Buell 2005; Hodge 2007). With all the initial passages on the table, they will be arranged under the anticipated aspects or modes of identity to be determined at this point. This will constitute the framework and chronology under which the theological-exegetical discussion will proceed. This chapter thus has to be seen as an elaboration on some aspects of the methodology of this dissertation.

### **Chapter 4. Israel, Israelites and Judaeans**

In this chapter, the focus will be on the passages that denote the aspects or modes of identity revolving around "Israel" in Paul. This will include a brief comparison to the way in which mainly the concepts "Israel", "Israelites" and "Judaeans" are applied in surrounding texts outside the Pauline corpus. The main body of this chapter will comprise of the exegetical study of the relevant Pauline passages under this heading.

Within the exegesis of the Ἰσραήλ/Ἰσραηλίτης and related passages, commentaries and other primary literature in conjunction with secondary literature will be employed within the discussion (chapters 4-8).

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### **Chapter 5. Faith in Christ, Abraham and law**

This theological-exegetical chapter will focus on the new identity in Christ with respect to continuity with Israel and/or being a Judaeen. The focus will especially be on identity as defined by faith, Abraham and law in dialogue with both the NPP and the radical NPP.

### **Chapter 6. Faith in Christ, Israel and the Judaeen**

This chapter will focus on the new identity and the new creation in Christ, which is anticipated to display mostly discontinuity with Israel and/or the Judaeen identity.

### **Chapter 7. Spirit, flesh and identity**

As stated above, the spirit-flesh dichotomy in Paul is anticipated as being in close relationship to the understanding of Israel, where “Israel according to the flesh” (1 Cor 10:18) is related to σάρξ in Paul’s general pattern of thought regarding his view of ethnicity or physical descent. On a next level, Paul’s use of σάρξ in this context can be compared with πνεῦμα<sup>17</sup> as a general Pauline category and the way in which he expresses the identity of the Christ-believer.

It is anticipated that some aspects of the spirit-flesh dichotomy pertaining to identity would have been discussed already at this point, and will be expounded upon in this chapter. Passages anticipated as vital in this regard are at least Romans 7 to 8 and Galatians 5:16-18 (cf. Gal 3:3; 4:29; 6:8; Php 3:3). The approach will stay mainly theological-exegetical, but will include an expansion of some semantic aspects pertaining to the πνεῦμα-σάρξ dichotomy, keeping the focus on its relation to identity in Paul.

A brief outline of the use of πνεῦμα and σάρξ in traditions outside of Paul and a broad outline of Paul’s own use of these concepts may facilitate a better understanding of these concepts where Paul employs them with respect to identity. Since the spirit-flesh dichotomy often involves aspects of anthropology,

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<sup>17</sup> Some suggest that “Israel in the spirit” is implied in 1 Cor 10:18 as counterpart of “Israel in the flesh” (e.g., Elliott 2007:141).

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with specific reference to possible Hellenistic and/or dualistic notions in Pauline theology, these issues will be attended to in this chapter.

### **Chapter 8. “All Israel” and “the Israel of God”**

This chapter is reserved for Romans 11 and Galatians 6:7-16 that is expected to gain from a deeper understanding of identity in Paul that would have become clearer at this point.

### **Chapter 9. Conclusions and implications**

In the final chapter, the results of the study will identify views from new possible angles toward a Pauline theology of identity, the understanding of universal and particular aspects therein, the implications for Pauline theology as a whole, and the implications for the discussion on (the nature of) continuity between Paul and Christianity.

## **1.5 Purpose and contribution**

One of the main aims of the study is to contribute to the understanding of two difficult Pauline passages on Israel, primarily Romans 11:25-27 and secondarily Galatians 6:16, within the context of a deeper theological understanding of Paul on ethnicity and identity, especially in relation to Paul's understanding of the spirit-flesh dichotomy. This methodology is intended as a fresh angle on the NPP versus TAP debate, that normally concentrate on the understanding of “works of the law” and the human pledge. One of my intentions is to make a contribution to bring the debate to a deeper, more integrated theological level of Paul's thought that could utilise and advance positive elements from both the TAP and the NPP.

2. *Semantic domains: initial identification of passages*

## 2. SEMANTIC DOMAINS: INITIAL IDENTIFICATION OF PASSAGES

The intention of this chapter is to identify the most relevant passages where Paul's view of identity can be pursued initially. Yet the pursuing of Paul's deeper thought on identity inevitably involves Paul's use of terminology within the Pauline corpus. These terms can however never be seen as primary with respect to a methodology that aims to gain a deeper understanding in Paul's thought, but rather as being subjected to meanings or patterns of thought. The reasoning behind this approach relates to an understanding of language as a *system* of naming (naming being something differential) rather than language being an *inventory* of naming (language as nomenclature). Words are more than labels which the one speaking or writing attaches to reality. In this understanding, language is not seen as merely a "bag of words", but rather a prism through which a non-linguistic system is viewed. Language creates someone's point of view and comprehension of reality (Botha 1989:16; Swanepoel 1986:302-304).

The lexicon of Louw and Nida (1988) utilises a similar approach to language and meaning, and arranges terminology under semantic domains rather than arranging (possible) meanings under Greek words as conventional lexicons do. This approach is however not without difficulties. One could for example ask if Louw and Nida's (1988) arrangement of semantic domains is not influenced by certain preconceived notions or a western worldview (cf. Botha 1989:17).

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Notwithstanding these inherent difficulties, their lexicon based on semantic domains is arguably the most appropriate point of departure in pursuing the Pauline passages pertaining to my enquiry. As discussed, this methodology inevitably involves certain terminology, but has to be interpreted against the understanding of language as put forth above. In other words, the terms discussed below and the passages that will be attached to these meanings have to be understood against the *semantic domains and subdomains* in which the terms occur, rather than understanding the terms as *carrying* (all) the meanings, concepts or patterns of thought that are pursued. In a strict sense, the identification of these passages thus has to be understood as both (1) a *preliminary step* in ascertaining the passages that pertain to identity, and (2) as an *incomplete exercise* in that Paul's thought on identity may occur in passages which do not contain any of these terms or that Paul's thought on identity overlaps with other concepts in his thought. Notwithstanding these limitations, the aim will be to cover the broadest possible initial scope of research pertaining to identity with the aim of extending the scope as new horizons open (see 1.4).

The aspect of the study that this chapter covers, correlates to Robbins' (1996:3) "inner texture" (see 1.4). The procedure will be to identify the initial appropriate semantic fields via Louw and Nida's Lexicon (1988), and to supplement their definitions by other lexical definitions and contemporary discussions. The reasoning behind this approach is based on the presupposition that there exists a measure of overlap between the definitions (within the semantic domains) in Louw and Nida's (1988) lexicon and the definitions of the various terms in more conventional lexicons (e.g., BDAG) and even theological dictionaries (e.g., Balz and Schneider's 1991-1993). The meanings under the various semantic domains will thus involve some preliminary discussions and delimitations.

Another aspect of my approach presupposes the priority of a synchronic approach to language over a diachronic approach to language (Kim 2006:56; Botha 1987:104-106, Silva 1983:35-38; Barr 1961) which largely builds on the work of Ferdinand de Saussure (e.g., de Saussure 1959:79-95). Both Botha (1987:104-106) and Silva (1983:35-38) rightly argue that the average speaker or writer is only conscious of the current state of a language and is thus not necessarily

## 2. Semantic domains: initial identification of passages

aware of how it developed. This would also have been the case with the Bible's first readers. Even if someone is aware of the development of language (e.g., a language professor), it does not necessarily influence the way in which such a person uses language. This approach is however not intended to disregard the development of language or concepts through time (diachronic), which will indeed form part of the study (see e.g. 4.1 and 7.1), but is based on the understanding that a synchronic approach to Paul's language is of primary importance.

As proposed in the previous chapter, the discussion about identity in the Pauline corpus will commence with the semantic domains in which the terms Ἰσραήλ and Ἰσραηλίτης occur. While the semantic domains in which Ἰσραήλ and Ἰσραηλίτης occur would serve as preliminary criterion for determining related terms, more specific criteria will be needed in order to identify some of the initial terms within the semantic domains and subdomains to address the problems at hand. While the terms Ἰσραήλ and Ἰσραηλίτης and the domains in which they occur are considered as primary criteria for determining related terms, the secondary criteria can loosely be described as having some bearing on *being part of God's people*, including being part of Israel and/or the believers in Christ. After considering related terms that occur in the same semantic domain as Ἰσραήλ and Ἰσραηλίτης, the next step will be to broaden the scope to other subdomains within the same domains, and lastly to extend the scope to terms in related domains.

The appropriate terms that will be identified via the semantic demarcation will serve as initial markers for the preliminary identification of the relevant Pauline passages for this study. While being aware of the dispute<sup>18</sup> about Pauline authorship in Ephesians, Colossians,<sup>19</sup> and 2 Thessalonians,<sup>20</sup> passages in these

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<sup>18</sup> Even though the Epistles to the Ephesians, Colossians and 2 Thessalonians are regarded by many as "deutero-Pauline" or pseudonymic, I prefer to use the term "disputed". I do not consider the debate about Pauline authorship as closed.

<sup>19</sup> While this study concerns aspects of the identity of the Christ-believer in Paul, and by implication touches on "higher" vs. "lower" Christology in Paul's letters, this study might contribute indirectly to the reassessment of some arguments about Pauline authorship in Ephesians and Colossians (cf. Wright [2005] 2009:19), even though it will not be a main focus area. An equally important reason why passages in Ephesians and Colossians are included is because many recent Pauline scholars view them as authentically Pauline despite arguments against Pauline authorship (e.g., *Ephesians*: Köstenberger, Kellum & Quarles 2009; Wright [2005] 2009:18-19; Carson & Moo 2005:486; Hoehner [2002] 2003:2-61; O'Brien 1999:5-47; Bruce 1984; Roberts

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epistles<sup>21</sup> will be incorporated within the semantic demarcation in addition to the passages occurring in the seven undisputed letters (Rom, 1 Cor, 2 Cor, Gal, Php, 1 Th, Phm). These three letters (Eph, Col, 2 Th) will thus form part of the broader field of study, for the purpose of integration into the Pauline theological discussion. In a strict sense the discussion about their authenticity will therefore be left open with the aim to reconsider some of the arguments pertaining to their authenticity or inauthenticity. The main focus and weight however will rest on the undisputed letters, and will be compared to the patterns of thought that will emerge from Ephesians, Colossians and 2 Thessalonians, without treating these three letters as being indispensable to the main theses.

In this preliminary semantic demarcation, four variables are considered: (1) semantic domains and subdomains (based on Louw & Nida 1988), (2) terms relevant to my enquiry within the Pauline corpus, (3) definitions of terms (using Louw & Nida 1988 as point of departure, and expanded by BDAG), and (4) the relevant passages within the Pauline corpus. Under each term within a specific semantic domain, basic lexical definitions will be listed (mainly Louw & Nida 1988 and BDAG), and expanded by Balz and Schneider's (1991-1993) discussions and some contemporary views where appropriate.

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1984:124; Barth 1974:41; van Roon 1974; Guthrie [1970] 1976:507-508; Hendriksen 1967; Foulkes [1963] 1974; *Colossians*: Köstenberger, Kellum & Quarles 2009; Moo 2008:41; Wright [2005] 2009:18-19; Carson & Moo 2005:521; Thompson 2005:2-5; Garland 1998; Melick 1991:165-168; Bruce 1984; Roberts 1984:124; O'Brien 1982; Guthrie [1970] 1976:554-555; Hendriksen 1968a).

<sup>20</sup> Even though the anticipated contribution of 2 Thessalonians to this study seems small, it is principally included mainly for comparative purposes. Many recent scholars defend Pauline authorship for 2 Thessalonians (e.g., Köstenberger, Kellum & Quarles 2009; Witherington III 2006; Carson & Moo 2005:542; Jones 2005; Nicholl 2004; Beale 2003; Green 2002; Malherbe 2000:364-374; Morris 1991:17-23; Wanamaker 1990:17-28; Jewett 1986:3-18; Botha 1984:166; Best 1972:37-59).

<sup>21</sup> Regarding the Pastoral Epistles (1-2 Timothy and Titus), Towner (2006) argues for Pauline authorship (:88) with leaving the possibility open that Timothy and Titus may have contributed to the letter (:87). Other scholars claiming Pauline authorship are Köstenberger, Kellum and Quarles (2009). Some scholars seem to view Pauline authorship as the most likely explanation without claiming it outright (e.g., Carson & Moo 2005:554-568; Guthrie [1970] 1976:584-622). Prior (1989:37-39) asserts Pauline authorship in the Pastoral epistles without an amanuensis, contra the undisputed letters. While I do not view the debate on authorship as closed, the Pastoral Epistles are not anticipated to contribute substantially to my enquiry, and will thus not form part of the main field of study.

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The semantic approach of this study implies an *interrelation* of lexical definitions and the actual meaning within the text. This relationship has to be seen as *fluid and dialectical*: semantic domains and subdomains, including the terms and their definitions (in discussion lexical definitions and relevant literature), serve as point of departure in order to help facilitate exegesis, yet, the exegetical conclusions ultimately prompts a possible reassessment of lexical definitions.

The Pauline (disputed and undisputed) Scripture references will be added in square brackets [...] after each meaning. First and second occurrences of terms will be indicated with “a” and “b” where terms are used with more than one meaning in any given verse (e.g., Rom 9:6b). More than one occurrence with the same meaning in a specific verse will not be indicated. All these Scripture references will be based on a preliminary reading<sup>22</sup> of these passages in the twenty seventh edition of the Nestle-Aland Greek text of the New Testament (Aland *et al* 1993, NA27 hereafter), unless otherwise indicated. Where there exists a measure of uncertainty regarding the meaning, Scripture references will be marked with a question mark (e.g., Rom 11:26?). This “measure of uncertainty” is in many instances the kind of problem questions this study intends to address, especially regarding the concept Ἰσραήλ. The question marks indicate that the measure of uncertainty or dispute for any specific meaning is greater. This approach has the added intention of guarding against employing Louw and Nida’s (1988) lexical definitions as a *shibboleth* for meaning or interpretation. This question mark will logically be repeated in the Scripture references of another meaning, unless another possible meaning falls outside the field of study. As discussed in 1.2.3, while keeping the anachronistic nature of terms such as “Christians”, “Jews” or “Judaism” in mind, Louw and Nida’s (1988) definitions will be left as is.

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<sup>22</sup> Even though a preliminary reading will inevitably involve a measure of interpretation, the intention here is to restrict interpretation to a minimum.

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## 2.1 “Names of Persons and Places” (Domain 93)

Louw and Nida (1988 Vol. 1:818-842) divide this domain into the subdomains: “A Persons” (93.1-388), and “B Places” (93.389-615). Only the first subdomain (“A Persons”) is relevant to this study.

### 2.1.1 “Persons” (Subdomain 93.1-388)

#### Ἰσραήλ (93.182)

- (1) “the patriarch Jacob (Ro 9.6)” [Rom 9:6b?; Php 3:5]
- (2) “the nation of Israel (Mt 2.6)” [Rom 9:6b?,27a,31; 10:1?,19,21;<sup>23</sup> 11:2,7,25,26?; 1 Cor 10:18; Gal 6:16?; Eph 2:12?]
- (3) “a figurative reference to Christians as the true Israel (Ga 6.16) – ‘Israel’” [Gal 6:16?; Rom 9:6a?;<sup>24</sup> 11:26?; Eph 2:12?]

(Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:825; cf. BDAG, Ἰσραήλ §1-3)

A main focus of this dissertation is to determine whether the third meaning (3) can be established exegetically, and/or to describe this category more precisely within Paul’s bigger understanding of identity. As indicated with the question marks (?), there exists some initial uncertainty as to whether the meaning “true Israel” or “Israel as Christ-believers” (meaning 3 above) is warranted in texts like Galatians 6:16 and Romans 11:26, and has to be pursued further exegetically. In Balz and Schneider’s (1991) exegetical dictionary, Kuhli (1991b:204) states:

It is indisputable that Ἰσραήλ has in Paul a specific religious meaning in comparison with Ἰουδαῖος. This fact is especially apparent in the distribution of both words in Romans, where chs. 1-8 use Ἰουδαῖος exclusively and from ch. 9 on Ἰσραήλ is consistently used.

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<sup>23</sup> Some texts contain “τοῦ Ἰσραήλ ἐστίν” (instead of αὐτῶν) in Rom 10:1: Codex K 018 (9<sup>th</sup> century), Minuscules 81, 104, 181, 326, 330, 436, 451, 614, 629, 630, 1241, 1877, 1984, 1985 and 4292 (Majority Text).

<sup>24</sup> The occurrence of Ἰσραήλ is here (Rom 9:6a) marked with “?” for even while Ἰσραήλ here cannot be national Israel (meaning 2) and it cannot be the patriarch Jacob (meaning 1), it does not necessarily have a bearing on being a Christ-believer.

## 2. Semantic domains: initial identification of passages

In a similar fashion, Campbell (1993:441) writes:

When Paul uses the term he is not using it simply as a general designation of those claiming physical descent from Abraham. Rather he uses it to designate them as the people of the covenant made with Abraham... One gets the impression that when Paul wants to stress ethnic affiliation, he uses the term Jew, but when he comes to reflect upon their spiritual heritage, Israel/Israelite alone can clearly designate this people as a religious entity.

In the rest of the New Testament (outside of the Pauline corpus), the term Ἰσραήλ seems to reflect “self-identifiers when ingroup Israelites are addressing one another”, over against Ἰουδαῖος that largely reflects outsider language (Elliott 2007:129-130; see Ἰσραηλίτης and Ἰουδαῖος below).<sup>25</sup> Tomson (1986:120) goes so far as stating that the designations “Jew” and “Israel” signal “different social identities: an ‘outside’ identity as a Jew in regard to the ancient world of nations, or alternatively, an ‘inside’ identity as one belonging to the ‘people of Israel’”.

### **Ἰσραηλίτης (93.183)**

“the ethnic name of a person belonging to the nation of Israel – ‘Israelite’ (Ac 2.22)” [Rom 9:4; 11:1; 2 Cor 11:22]

(Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:825; cf. BDAG, Ἰσραηλίτης)

Ἰσραηλίτης does not seem to carry a direct spiritual or religious meaning (as Ἰσραήλ) in the Pauline corpus (cf. Kuhli 1991c:204-205), but a possible religious connotation cannot be disregarded either. As with Ἰσραήλ, J. H. Elliott (2007:123) characterises Ἰσραηλίτης as “an insider self-designation” that he contrasts with Ἰουδαῖος, which he mostly considers as “an outsider term” in the New Testament (see Ἰουδαῖος below). This possible distinction has to be kept in mind when Paul’s understanding of Ἰσραήλ and Ἰσραηλίτης is investigated later on.

Other possible “Persons” (93.1-388 in Louw & Nida 1988:818-833) that have a bearing on being part of God’s people are the following:

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<sup>25</sup> Similarly, Von Rad (1965:359) states: “Israelites also use it [‘Israel’] of themselves in distinction from foreigners.”

## 2. Semantic domains: initial identification of passages

### Ἑβραῖος (93.105)

“the oldest ethnic name for a Jew or the Jewish people – ‘a Hebrew’” [2 Cor 11:22; Php 3:5]

(Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:822; cf. BDAG, Ἑβραῖος §1)

Wanke (1990:369) points to the fact that Ἑβραῖος was often deliberately used as an honoured name of the past. He connects Paul’s usage of the term to a claim that he was a “full-blooded Jew” (:370).

### Ἰουδαῖος (93.172)

“the ethnic name of a person who belongs to the Jewish nation – ‘a Jew’ (Mk 7.3)”

(Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:824)

[Rom 1:16; 2:9,10,17,28,29; 3:1,9,29; 9:24; 10:12; 1 Cor 1:22,23,24; 9:20; 10:32; 12:13; 2 Cor 11:24; Gal 2:13,14,15; 3:28; Col 3:11; 1 Th 2:14]

BDAG (Ἰουδαῖος §2) describes Paul’s use of Ἰουδαῖος as “one who is Judean (Jewish), with focus on adherence to Mosaic tradition, a *Judean*.”

A possible exception to Paul’s use of Ἰουδαῖος as indicated lexicographically, is Romans 2:28-29, where he describes a “true” Judaeen by way of inward circumcision of the heart in the spirit (cf. Kuhli 1991a:195).

J. H. Elliott (2007) argues that Ἰουδαῖος in the New Testament can mostly be viewed as an “outsider term” (:123)<sup>26</sup> over against Ἰσραήλ and Ἰσραηλίτης as mostly “insider terms” (:143; cf. Tomson 1986:120; see Ἰσραήλ and Ἰσραηλίτης above).<sup>27</sup> If this distinction between Ἰσραήλ/Ἰσραηλίτης and Ἰουδαῖος can be

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<sup>26</sup> Ἰουδαῖοι as an outsider designation for people associated with the land of Ἰουδαία, Jerusalem and the temple was especially prevalent in the Diaspora. Diaspora Israelites did accommodate the term Ἰουδαῖοι as a self-designation when addressing outsiders, and occasionally insiders. “Often, however, even in the Diaspora, as Paul demonstrates, preference for ‘Israel’ and ‘Israelite’ remained strong” (Elliott 2007:149). This corresponds to the Hebrew לְאִשְׂרָאֵל which “the people uses for itself”, and יְהוּדִים which is “the non-Jewish name for it” (Kuhn 1965:360, see 4.1).

<sup>27</sup> J.H. Elliott (2007:129) disconnects the term Ἰουδαῖος from Jesus and especially renders the term “king of the Ἰουδαίωv” as an outsider definition (Mt 2:2; 27:11,29,37; Mk 15:2,9,12,18,26; Lk

## 2. *Semantic domains: initial identification of passages*

maintained, Gager's (2002:5-7) juxtaposition of "pro-Israel" and "anti-Israel" texts in Paul (see 1.2.2) becomes problematic and seems to suffer from misnaming. This distinction between these concepts will serve as an initial angle in approaching these concepts in the Pauline corpus (Elliott 2007:140-146), while guarding against making this distinction too watertight, as Elliott admits:

The New Testament writings present a less uniform picture in regard to use of the terms Ἰσραήλ, Ἰσραηλίτης and Ἰουδαῖος as identifiers. On the whole, however, they manifest a continued preference for 'Israel' as chief self-designation, especially in Israelite insider-to-insider discourse (Elliott 2007:136-137).

The ultimate difference among Paul's usages of these terms has to be verified exegetically.

## **2.2 "Groups and Classes of Persons and Members of Such Groups and Classes" (Domain 11)**

Louw and Nida (1988 Vol. 1:121-136) divide this domain into the subdomains "A General" (11.1-11), "B Socio-Religious" (11.12-54), "C Socio-Political" (11.55-89), "D Ethnic-Cultural" (11.90-95) and "E Philosophical" (11.96-97). The two subdomains that seem to be the most appropriate to the theme(s) of this study are subdomains B and C.

### **2.2.1 "Socio-Religious" (Subdomain 11.12-54)**

Terms within this subdomain that are taken into consideration within the Pauline corpus that are anticipated to relate to being God's people are the following:

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23:3,37,38; Jn 18:33,39; 19:3,19,21). This is strengthened by Jesus' referral to Ἰσραήλ in Mt 10:6 and 15:24 and the absence of Jesus appropriating the term Ἰουδαῖος (:139).

## 2. Semantic domains: initial identification of passages

### **λαός (11.12)**

“a collective for people who belong to God (whether Jews or Christians) – ‘people of God’” [Rom 9:25,26; 11:1,2; 15:10; 1 Cor 10:7; 14:21; 2 Cor 6:16]

(Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:123; cf. BDAG, λαός §4)

It is noteworthy that Paul mostly uses λαός in the context of Old Testament citations (except Rom 11:1,2),<sup>28</sup> which underlines the connotations derived from the Hebrew **אֱלֹהִים**. Yet, according to Rom 9:25 the “true λαός” is called from Ἰουδαίων and ἔθνῶν (Frankemölle 1991:341).

### **υἱοὶ τοῦ φωτός, υἱοὶ τῆς ἡμέρας, τέκνα φωτός (11.14)**

These are idioms, literally “sons of the light”, “sons of the day”, and “children of light” respectively: “persons to whom the truth of God has been revealed and who are presumably living according to such truth – ‘sons of the light, children of the light, people of God’” (Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:123).

[υἱοὶ τοῦ φωτός: 1 Th 5:5]

[υἱοὶ τῆς ἡμέρας: 1 Th 5:5]

[τέκνα φωτός: Eph 5:8]

BDAG lists “υἱοὶ τοῦ φωτός” (1 Th 5:5) and “τέκνα φωτός” (Eph 5:8) under φῶς, φωτός (§1bβ): “light, that illuminates the spirit and soul of humans.” The phrase “υἱοὶ τῆς ἡμέρας” (1 Th 5:5) is listed under ἡμέρα (§1b) as a figurative usage of “day”.

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<sup>28</sup> Frankemölle (1991:341) says “In Paul it is noteworthy that λαός appears exclusively in OT citations” and seems to overlook Rom 11:1,2 which is strictly speaking not part of an Old Testament citation.

## 2. Semantic domains: initial identification of passages

### **τέλειος (11.18)**

“one who is initiated into a religious community of faith (a meaning which reflects the occurrence of τέλειος as a technical term for persons initiated into the mystery religions) – ‘initiated’” [Php 3:15?; Col 1:28?]<sup>29</sup>

(Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:124; cf. BDAG, τέλειος §3)

### **ἀδελφός (11.23)**

“a close associate of a group of persons having a well-defined membership (in the NT ἀδελφός refers specifically to fellow believers in Christ) – ‘fellow believer, (Christian) brother’” (Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:125; cf. BDAG, ἀδελφός §2a)

[Rom 1:13; 7:1,4; 8:12,29; 10:1; 11:25; 12:1; 14:10,13,15,21; 15:14,30; 16:14,17,23; 1 Cor 1:1,10,11,26; 2:1; 3:1; 4:6; 5:11; 6:5,6,8; 7:12,14,15,24,29; 8:11,12,13; 9:5; 10:1; 11:33; 12:1; 14:6,20,26,39; 15:1,6,31,50,58; 16:11,12,15,20; 2 Cor 1:1,8; 2:13; 8:1,18,22,23; 9:3,5; 11:9; 12:18; 13:11; Gal 1:2,11; 3:15; 4:12,28,31; 5:11,13; 6:1,18; Eph 6:21,23; Php 1:12,14; 2:25; 3:1,13,17; 4:1,8,21; Col 1:1,2; 4:7,9,15; 1 Th 1:4; 2:1,9,14,17; 3:2,7; 4:1,6,10,13; 5:1,4,12,14,25,26,27; 2 Th 1:3; 2:1,13,15; 3:1,6,13,15; Phm 1:1,7,16,20]

The reference to Jesus in Rom 8:29 as the “firstborn among many brethren” is probably foundational in constituting this use of ἀδελφός (Beutler 1990:30).

### **ἀδελφή (11.24)**

“a close female associate of a group with well-defined membership (in the NT referring specifically to fellow believers in Christ) – ‘fellow believer, sister in Christ, sister in the faith’” [Rom 16:1; 1 Cor 7:15; 9:5; Phm 1:2]

(Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:125; cf. BDAG, ἀδελφή §2a)

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<sup>29</sup> Louw and Nida (1988 Vol. 1:124) admits: “It is possible, however, to interpret τέλειος in Php 3.15 and Col 1.28 as mature spirituality or a state of being spiritually mature (see subdomain 88.100).”

2. *Semantic domains: initial identification of passages***ἀδελφός (11.25)**

“a person belonging to the same socio-religious entity and being of the same age group as the so-called reference person – ‘brother, fellow countryman, fellow Jew, associate’” [Rom 9:3?; Phm 1:16?]<sup>30</sup> (Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:125; cf. BDAG, ἀδελφός §2b)

**οἱ ἅγιοι (11.27)**

“persons who belong to God, and as such constitute a religious entity – ‘God’s people’” (Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:125; cf. BDAG, ἅγιος §2dβ)

[Rom 1:7; 8:27; 12:13; 15:25,26,31; 16:2,15; 1 Cor 1:2; 6:1,2; 14:33; 16:1,15; 2 Cor 1:1; 8:4; 9:1,12; 13:12; Eph 1:1,15,18; 2:19; 3:8,18; 4:12; 5:3; 6:18; Php 1:1; 4:21<sup>31</sup>,22; Col 1:2,4,12,26; 1 Th 3:13; 2 Th 1:10; Phm 1:5,7]

**ἐκκλησία (11.32)**

“a congregation of Christians, implying interacting membership – ‘congregation, church’... For the NT... it is important to understand the meaning of ἐκκλησία as ‘an assembly of God’s people’” (Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:126; cf. BDAG, ἐκκλησία §3b; Roloff 1990:412)

[Rom 16:1,4,5,16,23; 1 Cor 1:2; 4:17; 7:17; 11:16,18; 14:4,5,12,19,23,28,33,34,35; 16:1,19; 2 Cor 1:1; 8:1,18,19,23,24; 11:8,28; 12:13; Gal 1:2,22; Php 4:15; Col 4:15,16; 1 Th 1:1; 2:14; 2 Th 1:1,4; Phm 1:2]<sup>32</sup>

**ἐκκλησία (11.33)**

“the totality of congregations of Christians – ‘church’” (Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:127; cf. BDAG, ἐκκλησία §3c)

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<sup>30</sup> This domain seems to overlap with subdomain 11.57 (see above).

<sup>31</sup> In Php 4:21, ἅγιον (singular) ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ seems to fit here, even though not accounted for in Louw and Nida (1988 Vol. 1:125).

<sup>32</sup> The rule that was followed here is: if ἐκκλησία refers to a specific congregation or if it occurs in the plural, it is listed under 11.32.

## 2. *Semantic domains: initial identification of passages*

[1 Cor 6:4; 10:32; 11:22; 12:28; 15:9; Gal 1:13; Eph 1:22; 3:10,21; 5:23,24,25,27, 29,32; Php 3:6; Col 1:18,24]

### **σῶμα (11.34)**

“believers in Christ who are joined together as a group, with the implication of each having a distinctive function within the group – ‘congregation, Christian group, church’”

(Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:127; cf. BDAG, σῶμα §5; cf. Schweizer 1993:323)

[Rom 12:5; 1 Cor 10:17; 12:13,27; Eph 1:23; 2:16; 4:4,12,16; 5:23,30; Col 1:18,24; 2:19; 3:15]

### **οἱ ἐκ περιτομῆς (11.51)**

“those who insisted on circumcising Gentiles if they were to be regarded as true believers in Jesus Christ – “those of the circumcision’ or ‘those who insisted on circumcision’” (Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:129; cf. BDAG, περιτομή §2a; cf. Betz 1993:79)

[Rom 4:12?; Gal 2:12; Col 4:11]

Without venturing too deep into exegetical detail, a preliminary reading of Romans 4:12 suggests that οἱ ἐκ περιτομῆς can simply refer to Judaeans, and not to believers who “insisted on circumcision” as such.

2. Semantic domains: initial identification of passages

**2.2.2 “Socio-Political” (Subdomain 11.55-89)**

**υἱοὶ Ἰσραήλ (11.58)**

The expression “υἱοὶ Ἰσραήλ” is an idiom, literally “sons of Israel”: “the people of Israel as an ethnic entity – ‘the people of Israel, the nation of Israel’” [Rom 9:27b; 2 Cor 3:7,13]<sup>33</sup>

(Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:131)

Other possible terms that might be considered within the same semantic subdomain of “Socio-Political” (11.55-89 in Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:130-135) are the following:

**ἔθνος, λαός (11.55)**

“the largest unit into which the people of the world are divided on the basis of their constituting a socio-political community – ‘nation, people’” (Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:130)

[ἔθνος: Rom 4:17; 10:19; 15:10?,11?,12?; 16:26?; Gal 3:8b]

[λαός: Rom 10:21; 15:11]

The corresponding definitions in BDAG are “a body of persons united by kinship, culture, and common traditions, *nation, people*” (ἔθνος §1), and “a body of people with common cultural bonds and ties to a specific territory, *people-group, people*” (λαός §3) respectively.

It can be pointed out here that the term λαός in the New Testament is largely determined by its Hebrew counterpart **אֱמֻנָה** that normally denotes God’s people, and ἔθνος in turn, by its Hebrew counterpart **עַמִּי**, denoting people outside Israel. The Septuagint translates **אֱמֻנָה** primarily with λαός and **עַמִּי** with ἔθνος. Yet,

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<sup>33</sup> The expression “υἱοὶ Ἰσραήλ” is not listed under a separate meaning (paragraph) in BDAG. Rom 9:27b and 2 Cor 3:7,13 are listed under BDAG, Ἰσραήλ §1 (equivalent to Louw & Nida’s [1988] subdomain 93.182(1) – see above).

## 2. Semantic domains: initial identification of passages

especially in the Pauline corpus, as a result of his inclusive gospel of both Judaeans and Greeks, these terms (ἔθνος and λαός) are often used interchangeably (as this semantic domain suggests) and neutrally in terms of their relation to being God's people (Walter 1990:382-383). The term λαός however, is more frequently used in Paul to denote God's people than ἔθνος<sup>34</sup> (see 2.2.2).

### **πατριά (11.56)<sup>35</sup>**

“a relatively large unit of people who constitute a socio-political group, sharing a presumed biological descent... – ‘nation, people’” [Eph 3:15?] (Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:130)

BDAG places πατριά in Ephesians 3:15 under the meaning: “a division of a total people entity existing at a given moment, family” (πατριά §3).

The use of πατριά in Ephesians 3:15 is inclusive of both physical Israel and the Gentiles who are united in Christ (Hutter 1993:58).

### **συμφυλέτης, συγγενής, ἀδελφός (11.57)**

“a person who is a member of the same πατριά or φυλή ‘nation’ (11.56) – ‘fellow countryman’” (Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:130). These terms refer to a person who belongs to the same people group, or a compatriot (BDAG, συμφυλέτης, συγγενής §2, ἀδελφός §2b).

[συμφυλέτης: 1 Th 2:14]

[συγγενής: Rom 9:3,16:7,11,21]

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<sup>34</sup> ἔθνος also occurs in the semantic domain of 11.37: “those who do not belong to the Jewish or Christian faith – ‘heathen, pagans’” (Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:127). These Scripture references are therefore excluded here [Rom 1:5,13; 2:14,24; 3:29; 9:24,30; 11:11,12,13,25; 15:9,10?,11?,12?,16,18,27; 16:4,26?; 1 Cor 1:23; 5:1; 10:20; 12:2; 2 Cor 11:26; Gal 1:16; 2:2,8,9,12,14,15; 3:8(1),14; Eph 2:11; 3:1,6,8; 4:17; Col 1:27; 1 Th 2:16; 4:5]. Yet, a degree of uncertainty does exist between these two subdomains (11.55 and 11.37), admitted by Louw and Nida (1998 Vol. 1:121). They arguably overlap in Gal 2 and Rom 15 for example. In Eph 3:1,6, ἔθνος is used in the context of “believing Gentiles”.

<sup>35</sup> In Rom 11:1 and Php 3:5, φυλή (suggested by Louw & Nida 1988 to be included in this subdomain) is used with the meaning “tribe” (subdomain 10.2 in Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:112), and is thus not included in this meaning.

## 2. Semantic domains: initial identification of passages

[ἀδελφός: Rom 9:3?; Phm 1:16?]

### **πολιτεία (11.67)**

“a group of people constituting a socio-political unit – ‘state, people’” [Eph 2:12]

(Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:132; cf. BDAG, πολιτεία §2)

### **πλησίον (11.89)**

“a person who lives close beside others and who thus by implication is a part of a so-called ‘in-group’ that is, the group with which an individual identifies both ethnically and culturally – ‘neighbor, brother’” [Rom 13:9,10; 15:2; Gal 5:14; Eph 4:25]

(Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:135)

According to BDAG (πλησίον §2), “the one who is near or close by, *neighbor, fellow human being.*”

## **2.3 “Kinship Terms” (Domain 10)**

This domain is included primarily on the basis of the fact that Ἰσραήλ can refer to Israel as an “ethnic entity” (Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:131).

Louw and Nida (1988 Vol. 1:112) divide this domain into “A Groups and Members of Groups of Persons Regarded as Related by Blood but without Special Reference to Successive Generations” (10.1-13), “B Kinship Relations Involving Successive Generations (10.14-48), “C Kinship Relations of the Same Generation” (10.49-52) and “D Kinship Relations Based upon Marriage” (10.53-61). Some of the terms in the subdomains A and B will be considered.

2. *Semantic domains: initial identification of passages*

**2.3.1 “Groups and Members of Groups of Persons Regarded as Related by Blood but without Special Reference to Successive Generations” (Subdomain 10.1-13)**

**γένος, σάρξ (10.1)**

“a relatively large group of persons regarded as being biologically related – ‘race, ethnic group, nation’” (Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:112; cf. Sand 1993:231)<sup>36</sup>

[γένος: 2 Cor 11:26; Gal 1:14; Php 3:5]

[σάρξ: Rom 1:3?; 11:14]

In BDAG, this subdomain corresponds to “a relatively large people group, *nation, people*” (γένος §3), and “human/ancestral connection, *human/mortal nature, earthly descent*” (σάρξ §4) respectively.

**σάρξ (earthly descent)**

If “earthly descent” (natural birth) as opposed to “spiritual descent” (spiritual birth) is understood under σάρξ as suggested by BDAG’s definition (§4),<sup>37</sup> it seems to fall somewhat outside this particular subdomain (10.1) of Louw and Nida (1988), or any other subdomain allocated for σάρξ.<sup>38</sup>

[σάρξ: Rom 1:3?; 4:1; 9:3?,5?,8?; 1 Cor 10:18; 2 Cor 5:16?; 11:18; Gal 4:23,29; 6:12,13; Php 3:3,4; Phm 1:16?]

<sup>36</sup> This domain corresponds to one of the uses of σάρξ in the Septuagint (e.g., Gen 37:27; Lev 18:6; 25:49; cf. Moo 1996:692).

<sup>37</sup> J. H. Elliott (2007:141) makes a similar distinction when he states: “In 1 Cor. 10.18 he [Paul] designates the Israel of the Exodus generation as ‘Israel according to the flesh’ (Ἰσραὴλ κατὰ σάρκα), that is, Israel as determined by blood, kinship, and descent from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob – implying a contrast to an ‘Israel according to the Spirit’ comprising the followers of Jesus the Christ.” Whether a contrast to the followers of Jesus as “Israel according to the Spirit” is warranted, remains to be verified exegetically.

<sup>38</sup> The closest semantic subdomain to “earthly descent” in Louw and Nida (1988) is probably somewhere between subdomains 9.12 (“human nature, with emphasis upon the physical aspects – ‘physical nature, human.’” – Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:105-106) and 58.10 (“human nature, particularly in reference to the physical aspect of human life – ‘human nature, physical nature of people’” – Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:587). None of these subdomains exactly denote “earthly descent” as such.

## 2. *Semantic domains: initial identification of passages*

This understanding of σάρξ constitutes another focus area of this dissertation and is set up for further exploration later on.

### **φυλή (10.2)**

“a subgroup of a nation which is regarded as being more closely related biologically than the entire nation – “tribe” (Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:112; cf. BDAG §1).

[Rom 11:1; Php 3:5]

## **2.4 “Hold a View, Believe, Trust” (Domain 31)**

Louw and Nida (1988 Vol. 1:365) divide this domain into ten subdomains, of which the subdomain “J Be a Believer, Christian Faith” (31.102-107) is anticipated to be the most relevant to the field of study.

### **2.4.1 “Be a Believer, Christian Faith” (Subdomain 31.102-107)**

#### **πιστεύω, πίστις (31.102)**

“to believe in the good news about Jesus Christ and to become a follower – ‘to be a believer, to be a Christian, Christian faith” (Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:379; cf. BDAG, πιστεύω §2b, πίστις §2bβ; cf. Barth 1993:94)

[πιστεύω: Rom 1:16; 3:22; 4:11,24; 10:4,11; 13:11; 1 Cor 1:21; 3:5; 14:22; 15:2,11; Gal 2:16; 3:22; Eph 1:13,19; 1 Th 1:7; 2:10,13; 2 Th 1:10]

[πίστις: Rom 1:8,12,17,22,25,26,27,28,30,31; 4:5,12,14,16b;<sup>39</sup> 5:1,2; 9:30,32; 10:6,8,17; 11:20; 12:3,6; 16:26; 1 Cor 2:5; 15:14,17; 2 Cor 4:13; 13:5; Gal 1:23; 2:16,20; 3:2,5,7,8,9,11,12,14,22,23,24,25,26; 5:5,6; 6:10; Eph 1:15; 2:8; 3:12,17; 4:5,13; Php 1:25,27; 2:17; 3:9; Col 1:4,23; 2:5,7,12; 1 Th 1:3?; 2 Th 1:11; 2:13; 3:2; Phm 1:5,6]

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<sup>39</sup> Faith that is directly attributed to Abraham is left out here, even though it occurs in the same context (or is the same type of faith) as the faith of the Christ-believer.

2. *Semantic domains: initial identification of passages*

## 2.5 “Behavior and Related States” (Domain 41)

The subdomain that concerns the field of study is the subdomain “C Particular Patterns of Behavior” (Subdomain 41:29-43 in Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:504).

### 2.5.1 “Particular Patterns of Behavior” (Subdomain 41:29-43)

#### ἰουδαίζω (41.32)

“to customarily practice Jewish patterns of behaviour – ‘to live as a Jew, to practice Judaism’” [Gal 2:14] (Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:508; cf. BDAG, ἰουδαίζω; cf. Betz 1991:192)

#### Ἰουδαϊσμός (41.33)

“the system of Jewish beliefs and customs – ‘Judaism, the practice of Judaism, Jewish religion’” [Gal 1:13,14] (Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:508; cf. BDAG, Ἰουδαϊσμός)

## 2.6 Identification of Key Pauline Passages

Since it is not possible to study all the above listed passages on the same level within the scope of this dissertation, the next step is to identify some of the key passages within the Pauline corpus that can serve as points of departure in search of Paul’s view of identity. While the main focus will be on Ἰσραήλ and Ἰσραηλίτης in the Pauline corpus (including the disputed letters: Eph, Col and 2 Th), the following passages are a given, since all of them contain either Ἰσραήλ or Ἰσραηλίτης:

Ἰσραήλ: Rom 9:6,27,31; 10:1?,19,21;<sup>40</sup> 11:2,7,25,26; 1 Cor 10:18; 2 Cor 3:7,13; Gal 6:16; Eph 2:12; Php 3:5.

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<sup>40</sup> Many Byzantine texts have Ἰσραήλ in Rom 10:1 (see fn. 23).

## 2. Semantic domains: initial identification of passages

Ἰσραηλίτης: Rom 9:4; 11:1; 2 Cor 11:22.

When the co-text of the above Pauline Ἰσραήλ and Ἰσραηλίτης Scripture references are examined for related terms within the relevant semantic domains and subdomains as laid out in 2.1 to 2.5 that have some or other bearing on being God's people, and some leniency is allowed before or after the occurrence of these concepts to keep the train of thought intact where appropriate, the following seven passages emerge (terms included):<sup>41</sup>

### 1. Rom 9-11 (main focus)

Specific focus areas:

9:3-8 (Ἰσραήλ, Ἰσραηλίτης, συγγενής, ἀδελφός, σάρξ)

9:24-31 (Ἰσραήλ, υἱοὶ Ἰσραήλ, Ἰουδαῖος, λαός, πίστις)

10:1-4 (Ἰσραήλ?, ἀδελφός, πιστεύω)

10:6-8 (πίστις)

10:9-13 (Ἰουδαῖος, πιστεύω)

10:17 (πίστις)

10:19-21 (Ἰσραήλ, ἔθνος, λαός)

11:1-2 (Ἰσραήλ, Ἰσραηλίτης, λαός, φυλή)

11:7 (Ἰσραήλ)

11:14 (σάρξ)

11:20 (πίστις)

11:25-27 (Ἰσραήλ, ἀδελφός)

### 2. 1 Cor 10:18 (Ἰσραήλ, σάρξ)

### 3. 2 Cor 3:5-16 (υἱοὶ Ἰσραήλ)

### 4. 2 Cor 11:18-24 (Ἰσραηλίτης, Ἑβραῖος, Ἰουδαῖος, σάρξ)

### 5. Gal 6:7-8, 12-16 (Ἰσραήλ, σάρξ)

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<sup>41</sup> All terms listed here correspond to their distribution within the semantic fields as indicated in 2.1-2.5.

## 2. Semantic domains: initial identification of passages

6. Eph 2:8-22 (Ἰσραήλ, οἱ ἅγιοι, σῶμα, πίστις)
7. Php 3:1-9 (Ἰσραήλ, Ἑβραῖος, ἀδελφός, ἐκκλησία, γένος, σὰρξ, φυλή, πίστις)

The next step is to identify passages that display a fairly high frequency of terms within the same or related semantic fields (see 2.1-2.5), including a few selected passages anticipated to have some bearing on being part of Israel and/or being a Judaeans, even though some passages might contain a single relevant term. The following passages are identified (allowing some leniency before or after the terms to keep the train of thought intact):

8. Rom 1:16-17 (Ἰουδαῖος, πιστεύω, πίστις)
9. Rom 2:17-29 (Ἰουδαῖος)
10. Rom 4:1-25 (ἔθνος, οἱ ἐκ περιτομῆς, σὰρξ, πιστεύω, πίστις)
11. Rom 15:5-13 (ἔθνος, λαός)
12. 1 Cor 1:21-24 (Ἰουδαῖος, πιστεύω)
13. 2 Cor 5:14-21 (σὰρξ)
14. Gal 1:11-14,22-23 (γένος, ἐκκλησία, Ἰουδαϊσμός, πίστις)
15. Gal 2:11-16 (Ἰουδαῖος, οἱ ἐκ περιτομῆς, πιστεύω, Ἰουδαίζω)
16. Gal 3:1-29 (ἔθνος, ἀδελφός, πιστεύω, πίστις)
17. Gal 4:21-5:1 (σὰρξ)
18. Col 3:9-15 (Ἰουδαῖος, σῶμα)
19. 1 Th 2:13-16 (Ἰουδαῖος, συμφυλέτης, ἀδελφός, ἐκκλησία, πιστεύω)
20. Phm 1:16 (ἀδελφός, σὰρξ)

These Scripture passages (8-20) will be considered as secondary, and will not necessarily involve the same depth of study as passages 1 to 7.

3. *Terminology and a theological-exegetical approach*

### 3. TERMINOLOGY AND A THEOLOGICAL-EXEGETICAL APPROACH

This chapter has to be viewed as an elaboration on the methodology and approach of this study in the light of the semantic demarcation. In other words, the identification of the main set of initial passages appropriate to this study in 2.6, provides a more precise initial scope and context for this study, which in turn allows for (1) highlighting some specific problem areas around terms of identity, (2) elaborating on some limitations of current approaches to identity in Paul, and (3) formulating a more specific methodology and chronology in approaching these specific passages.

#### 3.1 Terms of identity and Paul's thought

The terms and semantic fields as discussed in 2.1 to 2.5 are not meant as boundary markers for the scope of this study, but serves as an instrument to determine the most appropriate Scripture passages where Paul's understanding of identity is to be studied initially. As implied in sections 1.4 and 2, Paul's thought on identity is a bigger concept than the terms that he utilises to express it. Additionally, the *overlapping nature* of identity-related terms with other theological concepts in Paul's thought that could carry other connotations apart from identity as such (e.g., his thought on σὰρξ/πνεῦμα), would suggest that his thought on identity *cannot be isolated* from the rest of his theological thinking (e.g., eschatology, soteriology, etc.). The aim of this theological-exegetical approach is

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thus to pursue Paul's conception(s) of identity along the constraints of Paul's own language and thought, even when these constraints do not correspond exactly to current etic identity-related terminology and definitions (e.g., ethnicity, race, nation, religion, Jews, Judaism, Judaeans, Christians, etc.). In other words, the aim is to lay out some of Paul's main identity-related *constraints* (cf. Mason 2007:458) of the Christ-believer in relation to being a Ἰουδαῖος and/or especially being part of Ἰσραήλ, and not to attempt to make Paul's perception of identity fit precisely into current *terms* of identity. My approach therefore tends to be more emic than etic. A truly emic approach is not possible however, since precise identity-related categories were not known yet (Mason 2007:459), or they were still in the process of development. An etic approach is not possible either, because etic categories "are not precise, observer-independent, publicly arguable, or falsifiable" and they are therefore beyond the historian's reach (:459; cf. Elliott 2007:121). It has to be pointed out though that, while my approach tends to be more emic, the aim is more toward outlining the appropriate theological constraints of identity in Paul's *thought* than to find appropriate sociological or anthropological categories or nomenclature to describe the *self-identity of the people* whom Paul addresses or represents<sup>42</sup> (see 3.2).

Apart from the understanding of language as such as put forth earlier, there are two main reasons for this approach. The *first* reason is that much of the current identity-related terminologies may verge on being anachronistic, where current categories are superimposed onto the New Testament perception(s) of identity (see 3.1.1). The *second* reason is that a measure of uncertainty and fluidity exists between the various identity-related terms in academic circles (see 3.1.2).

#### 3.1.1 Anachronism

The historical distance between terms and conceptions of identity today and that of New Testament times is a complex problem. Current terminology of identity

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<sup>42</sup> J. H. Elliott (2007:121) points out that the "process of identification and self-identification is an issue of classification and categorization. As with all classification, it is essential to be clear on *who* is doing the classifying, according to what *criteria*, and for what *purposes*."

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attempts to balance an authentic understanding of patterns of identity in the New Testament with current (mostly western) anthropological, social, and theological categories. This is at heart a hermeneutical problem.

Mason (2007:460) notes that there are no ancient Hebrew or Aramaic terms that correspond closely to today's "Judaism". 'Ιουδαϊσμός and *Iudaismus* (Latin) have a different and peculiar history of their own. It was not until 200 to 500 CE that these terms have become established with a meaning that can be related more closely to today's "Judaism" (:461). Among the terms "Jew", "Judaism" and "Judaean", there exist a complex set of connotations, ranging from ethnical and racial connotations (e.g., Buell 2007), to connotations relating to physical descent and geographical origin (e.g., Mason 2007), and to later connotations about being opposed to Jesus (e.g., Hodge 2007:12) or Christianity (e.g., Buell 2005:28). From about the third century CE, "Judaism" or "Jewishness" was associated with a "belief system and regimen of the *Ioudaioi*" (Mason 2007:471), and only viewed as a full-fledged "religion"<sup>43</sup> and isolable category during the Enlightenment (:512). Boyarin (2009) argues that the term "Jewish" was instrumental in the self-definition of Christianity over against "Judaism", especially in a category such as "Jewish Christianity", a category that he largely attributes to modernity, and aims to dissolve. All these different connotations are thus related to different insider and outsider groups defining these categories over more than two millennia.<sup>44</sup>

In the same manner, the term "Christianity" as one of the world religions stands in hermeneutical tension with the believers and followers of Christ whom Paul addressed. Categories that define a Christian today cannot be equated uncritically with Paul's conception of the identity of the believer of Christ (cf. Mason 2007:488; Elliott 2007:143,147).

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<sup>43</sup> Mason (2007:488) warns against employing a term such as "religion" (not "religious") in connection with New Testament studies (see fn. 6).

<sup>44</sup> Cf. M. Barth's (1969) definition of ethnicity as being both self-ascribed and other-ascribed. The insider-versus-outsider definitions for identity can also be viewed as an inherent problem to the categorisation of identity. Self-definitions of identity are in tension with the definitions of outsiders. Outsider definitions for identity may tend to generalise or create stereotypes (Elliott 2007:124).

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J. H. Elliott (2007:119) summarises that the “concepts ‘Jew’, ‘Jewish’ and ‘Christian’ as [they are] *understood today* are shaped more by fourth century rather than first-century CE realities and hence should be avoided as anachronistic designations for first-century persons or groups.”

Even terms such as “ethnicity” and “ethnie”<sup>45</sup> carry a large amount of anachronistic baggage, as Duling (2008:810) points out:

Should the relatively recent social-scientific terms *ethnicity* and *ethnie* be used to analyze ancient Mediterranean peoples? Yes, as long as one recognizes that they are loaded with outside observers’ (etic) meanings and, for social-scientists, some extensive theoretical perspectives. The ancient Mediterraneans had no “ethnicity theory”, but they certainly had a “selfconcept”, a “group concept”, and an “others concept”.

#### 3.1.2 Uncertainty and fluidity among terms of identity

In recent New Testament studies of identity, there has been a tendency to redefine terms of identity in order to align them more closely with an authentic New Testament understanding of identity, especially in studies with social scientific overtones. One such approach is that of Buell (2005). In order to bring terms such as “race” and “ethnicity” into the self-understanding of early followers of Christ, she redefines these terms in fluid categories that include fictive kin, and do not necessitate natural descent. In a similar way, Hodge (2007:4) argues for “a new way to read kinship and ethnic language in Paul that dismantles the contrast between a universal, ‘non-ethnic’ Christianity and an ethnic, particular Judaism.”

In both these approaches (Buell and Hodge), nomenclature such as “ethnicity”, “race”, “religion” or “kinship” seems to be indispensable for their definitions of

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<sup>45</sup> “Ethnie” is a term commonly utilised by ethnicity theorists to refer to an ethnic group or community (Duling 2008:803). Hutchinson and Smith (1996:6) define it as “a named human population with myths of common ancestry, shared historical memories, one or more elements of common culture, a link with a homeland and a sense of solidarity among at least some of its members.”

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identity,<sup>46</sup> and rather than finding new terms or abandoning these terms, these terms are redefined within open and fluid categories in order to fit their conception of identity and particularity.

With respect to the New Testament's own terms of identity, Duling (2008) recognises the overlapping and fluid nature of terms such as ἔθνος and γένος, even though he defines ἔθνος broader (including e.g., mythical ancestral categories) and γένος narrower (focusing on birth and ancestry, yet expandable to broader categories). This fluidity corresponds to the range of semantic fields of Louw and Nida (1988) as listed earlier (see 2.1-2.5).

## 3.2 Toward a constraint-driven theological approach

Any term- or category based approach to identity seems to suffer from the general hermeneutical dilemma that exists between today's perception(s) of identity and the perception(s) of identity in New Testament times. Such approaches therefore tend to be subjected to a quagmire of redefinitions or qualifications.<sup>47</sup>

The aim of this study is neither to precisely redefine these or similar terms to express Paul's understanding of identity nor to solve all the hermeneutical dilemmas involved in them. Neither is the aim to coin new terms to address conceptions of identity in Paul. Rather than aiming at finding essential categories or definitions, my approach will be constraint-driven. The aim is to identify the outer constraints<sup>48</sup> wherein a possible Pauline theology of identity can be perceived. In a sense these constraints will be employed to draw the outer picture

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<sup>46</sup> Buell (2005:2) states: "The central argument of this book is that early Christian texts used culturally available understandings of human difference, which we can analyse in terms of our modern concepts of 'ethnicity,' 'race,' and 'religion.'" Hodge (2007:3) writes: "... in Paul this new relationship is understood in terms of ethnicity and kinship." Her quest for the right terminology especially comes forth when she writes: "I have a clear idea of what we need: one term, not two, that operates in English the way *Ioudaios*... operate in Greek" (:15).

<sup>47</sup> The problematic nature of the current terms and categories for identity largely surfaces by this statement of J. H. Elliott (2007:125): "I will then show that specific terms of our current nomenclature are inaccurate, and deny advances in our understanding of ancient social relations within and beyond Israel of the first several centuries of the Common Era."

<sup>48</sup> An attempt to draw the "outer constraints" of identity does not necessarily imply that these constraints are deemed to be broad. They may also be narrow.

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of Paul's perception(s) of being God's people in the light of the work of Christ and his encounter with Christ. In attempting to identify some of these constraints within Paul's thought, Paul's own vocabulary, or close equivalents will be utilised as far as possible without trying to reduce these terms in themselves to any essential category. In other words, these constraints will be *described or explained* rather than *labelled*.

Yet, while the aim of my approach is to understand Paul's theological thought and his self-definition of identity, it is not intended as a replacement for approaches that attempt categorisation. A Pauline, theological perspective on identity, even though outlined by way of constraints, inevitably ought to influence our understanding and (etic) categorisation of the terms we use to describe identity now and in the New Testament, but this is not a primary aim of my approach.

On a theological level, the aim will be to describe Paul's thought more deductively than inductively. In other words, rather than superimposing external models (e.g., social or anthropological theories) onto the text and make Paul's thought fit onto those models, the methodology will lean more toward explaining Paul's thought by the co-text or other Pauline texts. While this will not be done to the exclusion of inductive methodologies, and a dialectic between these two approaches is acknowledged, the approach will thus be more textually immanent than transcendent, or in Robbins' (1996) words, focusing more on the "inner texture" than the "intertexture".

More specifically, as previously indicated (see 1.4), the approach in Chapters 4 to 8 will mainly be theological-exegetical. The exegesis on each passage will not attempt to be a comprehensive interpretation of all aspects or all possible problem areas within them. The approach is mainly to pursue the constraints in Paul's thought pertaining to *being God's people*, and thus to focus on the main questions asked in the layout of the problem areas for this study (see 1.2). While Romans 9 to 11 will constitute the main focus and involve the most comprehensive theological-exegetical treatment, it will not be dealt with uninterrupted. Even though its discussion will be surrounded by the discussion of other passages, Romans 9 to 11 will be dealt with chronologically and has to be seen as a

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coherent whole. The logic behind this methodology is to subject portions in Romans 9 to 11 to a larger pattern in Paul's thought on identity.

### 3.3 Approaching the Pauline passages under three anticipated modes of identity

The larger pattern that Romans 9 to 11 and all other identity-related passages pertaining to being God's people will be subjected to, can be described in terms of three anticipated *modes* of identity<sup>49</sup> that will follow shortly. These three modes of identity are not necessarily to be understood to the exclusion of one another. The aim is therefore not to classify them by essential nomenclature, but rather to describe them by way of constraints derived from Paul's own nomenclature.<sup>50</sup>

The three proposed modes of identity are as follows:

- A. Israel according to the flesh.
- B. Israel as children of the promise and as partakers of election.
- C. Believers in Christ as partakers of the new creation and the Spirit.

Israel according to the flesh (A) can be described as the broadest mode of identity relating to God's people in Paul's letters. This correlates largely to the whole nation of Israel, and can be described as the *outer Israel* (A). Mode B can be

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<sup>49</sup> On the one side of this notion would be to imply "categories" or "types" of identity (e.g., Wright 2002:448,688). Yet, the term "categories of identity" would risk an over emphasis on discontinuity or exclusion of other "modes" of identity and would hold the danger of essentialism. On the other side of this notion would be to imply "aspects of identity", but this term might risk underplaying discontinuity between these "modes" of identity and hold the danger of universalism. While aspects of continuity (and inclusivity) and discontinuity (and exclusivity) are anticipated among these different "modes", as will become clearer later on, the terminology "modes of identity" is intended to retain both aspects.

<sup>50</sup> This methodology presupposes a preliminary understanding and thus initial deductions of the passages themselves to be tested later on. Although one could expect this kind of pattern to *follow* exegesis rather than to *precede* it, stylistically, the reader should note that the intention behind the current approach is to integrate a discussion of the various modes of identity within the theological exegesis rather than adding a lengthy process of systematisation afterwards that would require the repetition of much of the theological discussion. Additionally, this approach is intended to help the reader to progressively gain insight into the various modes of identity during the course of the study rather than postponing the process and keep the reader wondering right until the end.

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understood as *inner Israel*,<sup>51</sup> a mode *within* mode A. Mode A can be described without mode B, but mode B includes mode A. The differentiation between the outer (A) and inner (B) modes is anticipated to correlate mainly to aspects of descent, filiation<sup>52</sup> and election. The aspect of descent mostly relates to *outer Israel* (mode A), and election to *inner Israel* (mode B), with filiation more or less in the middle. Still, all three of these aspects display both inner and outer dimensions, as will become clearer later on.

Since the main focus of this dissertation is on Israel, the main theses of this dissertation are laid out along passages that have some connection to identity modes A and/or B (as implied in 2.6). The third mode of identity that constitutes the identity of the Christ-believer (C) is therefore expected to show both aspects of *continuity* and *discontinuity* with A and/or B. It is expected that passages where faith in Christ is portrayed in *continuity* with Israel's patriarch Abraham would display all modes of identity (ABC), and in passages where the new creation and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in Christ is set in *discontinuity* with Israel's old identity marked off by outward identity markers, would mainly display identity modes A and C. In other words, the new identity in Christ involves a new set of identity markers which is anticipated to display both aspects of *continuity* and *discontinuity* with the identity markers of Israel.

The logic behind the proposed chronology of exegesis and the arrangement of the various passages under this pattern is to create a measure of progression, starting with texts that can be grouped under identity mode A, followed by AB, ABC and then AC. Even though my approach is to align the content of these passages along these anticipated constraints of Paul's thought on identity, a measure of fluidity in the way in which the passages relate to the three modes of identity has to be acknowledged, in some passages probably more so than others. The arrangement of the various passages under A to C therefore is not

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<sup>51</sup> Cf. Cranfield's (1979:471) distinction between the "general area of election" and the "inner circle of election" (see esp. 4.3.2).

<sup>52</sup> Filiation is to be distinguished from the etic category of "kinship". "Filiation" is intended as a theological term that holds the notion of being "children of", e.g., being "children according to the flesh" or "children of the promise" (Rom 9:8) and correlates to adoption (Rom 9:4).

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intended as a watertight classification of the passages under Paul's thought on identity, but rather as an aid to help understand the points of emphasis among the various passages. This methodology in turn has the aim of facilitating a better appreciation for the coherency in Paul's pattern(s) of thought regarding identity.

Based on a preliminary understanding of the various passages as laid out in 2.6, in conjunction with the three proposed modes of identity (A, B, and C), the passages will be dealt with in the following order:

#### **A**

Israel according to the flesh (see 4.2)

1 Cor 10:18; 2 Cor 11:18-24

#### **AB**

Israel according to the flesh and Israel as children of the promise (see 4.3)

Rom 9:1-10

Israel's calling and election (see 4.4)

Rom 9:11-23

Outward and inward Judaeans (see 4.5)

Rom 2:17-29

#### **ABC**

Faith in Christ in continuation with- and as fulfilment of the promises to Abraham (see 5.1)

Rom 1:16-17; 4:1-25; Gal 3:1-29; 4:21-5:1; Eph 2:8-22

#### **AC**

Faith in Christ in discontinuity with Israel and the Judaeans (see 6.1)

Rom 9:24-33; 10:1-21; 15:5-13; 1 Cor 1:21-24; Gal 1:11-14,22-23; 2:11-16; Php 3:1-9; 1 Th 2:13-16; Phm 1:16

The new creation in Christ versus flesh (see 6.2)

2 Cor 5:14-21; Col 3:9-15

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Spirit and the New- and Old Covenants versus flesh (see 7.3)

2 Cor 3:5-16

At this point, the spirit-flesh dichotomy in Paul will be pursued in more depth in order to better understand the role of the Spirit/spirit in identity over against flesh (see 7.4). This will involve assessing other Pauline passages where this theme surfaces (e.g., Rom 7-8; Gal 5:16-18 and Col 2:11-13; see 7.4). The aim of this aspect of the study is to formulate a more precise description of these two aspects (Spirit/spirit and flesh) in terms of their connection to identity.

Two of the key passages of this dissertation are saved for last (pun intended), namely Romans 11:1-36 (see 8.1) and Galatians 6:7-16 (see 8.2), of which Romans 11 will occupy the most space. Romans 9 to 11 can be understood as climactic<sup>53</sup> in the structure and theology of Romans, and Galatians 6:11-16 can be seen as a summary and conclusion of Paul's message(s) in Galatians (e.g., Fung 1988:300). The main problems to be addressed in Romans 11 and Galatians 6 are the meaning of the salvation of "all Israel" (Rom 11:26) and "the Israel of God" who is blessed (Gal 6:16) respectively. Both passages are at the end of long treatises of Paul's understanding of his gospel, and build upon the understanding of the preceding co-textual material. In addition, the understanding of these two passages is expected to gain from a deeper understanding of identity in Paul's thought as laid out in all the other Pauline passages. These two passages are anticipated to display all three modes of identity (ABC), especially how Paul's portrayal of the new identity in Christ (C) has to be understood in relation to both the *inner* and *outer* Israel (AB).

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<sup>53</sup> See esp. Wright (1993) who treats Rom 9-11 as the climax of Paul's thought in his work: *The Climax of the Covenant: Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology* (see 4.3.1 for others).

*4. Israel, Israelites and Judaeans***4. ISRAEL, ISRAELITES AND JUDAEANS**

Before venturing into the Pauline passages themselves, a brief introduction to the occurrence of “Israel”, “Israelites” and “Judaeans” in other texts will serve the purpose of comparing Pauline usage of these terms with the history and context in which they are employed, in order to identify similar or unique aspects in the way Paul employs them. This contextual glimpse relates to Robbins’ (1996) “intertexture” in that it concerns the use of language in surrounding texts. It concerns especially “ideas people have about their importance, their opportunities, and their responsibilities in the world” (Robbins 1996:3; see 1.4, esp. fn. 12).

**4.1 Israel, Israelites and Judaeans in other texts<sup>54</sup>**

Von Rad (1965:357) states that יִשְׂרָאֵל (“Israel”)<sup>55</sup> was originally a sacred term that denoted “the totality of the elect of Yahweh and of those united in the Yahweh cult. It thus embraces the central beliefs of the league.” This ended with David’s monarchy, and the name “Israel” became separated from the southern tribes. As

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<sup>54</sup> The term עִבְרִי/Ἑβραῖος is not discussed here, for rather than being a prevalent title for identity in Paul’s time, the term was a honoured title from the distant past. Paul therefore uses Ἑβραῖος in connection with identity only twice within a specific context (2 Cor 11:22, see 4.2.2; Php 3:5, see 6.1.7.1).

<sup>55</sup> Etymologically, יִשְׂרָאֵל consists of אֱל (“God”) and שָׂרָה (“to prevail” or “to have power”; cf. BDB, יִשְׂרָאֵל), as explained in Gen 32:28. The name has been interpreted as “He who strives with God” or even “God strives” (Mayer 1976:305).

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a result of underlying tensions in the Davidic kingdom, the northern tribes later broke away from Rehoboam and formed the kingdom of Israel. The southern tribes returned to a separate existence and formed the kingdom of Judah (a secular, political name) under the Davidic dynasty. With the fall of the northern kingdom and their deportation, in a third phase Israel was adopted by the southern kingdom (:357; cf. Moo 1996:561; Mayer 1976:305).<sup>56</sup> The title “Israel” was used as a spiritual designation which transcended the house of Judah. This name had deep roots even for the southern kingdom, and signified the people of God (Von Rad 1965:357).

After the exile, people were even more restricted to the province of Judah, and the people outside this province were non-Israelites (Kuhn 1965:359). The term יהודי (“Judaean”)<sup>57</sup> came into being after the exile. While the name had stronger territorial connotations initially, the territorial component receded and the religious component became predominant, especially with the appearance of proselytes (Tomson 1986:124). In the latter sense, יהודי was used in a more general way for a member of the people of Israel.<sup>58</sup> Both terms (ישׂראֵל and יהודי) thus denoted the religious confession of these people, where ישׂראֵל was

the fellowship of all those who worship the one true God. Thus this people describes itself as the chosen people, i.e., the people whom the one true God has chosen to worship and confess Him as distinct from the rest of the world (Kuhn 1965:359-360).

Mayer (1976:307) connects ישׂראֵל with God’s irrevocable covenant with His people, and His faithfulness, where even His judgment is a part thereof.

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<sup>56</sup> The designation ישׂראֵל was later appropriated for the southern kingdom (Isa 5:7; 8:18; Mic 2:12; 3:1,8,9; 14:14; 5:1) and the name יַעֲקֹב was transferred from the northern to the southern kingdom (Isa 2:5,6; 29:22; Mic 2:7; 3:1,8,9; 5:6; Na 2:2; Von Rad 1965:357).

<sup>57</sup> The term יהודי (“Judaean”) is etymologically derived from יהודה (“Judah”). Gen 29:35 suggests a link between יהודה and תודה (“give thanks” or “praise”) in Leah’s remark: “This time I will praise the Lord” (Mayer 1976:305). Cf. Paul’s play with words on this theme in Rom 2:29 (οὗ ὁ ἔπαινος οὐκ ἐξ ἀνθρώπων ἀλλ’ ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ).

<sup>58</sup> Although the term יהודי was not generally applied to God’s people in the Old Testament, there are exceptions (e.g., Zech 8:23; Dan 3:8,12; Von Rad 1965:358) Cf. the term’s use in Nehemia and Esther in terms of indicating any member of the Israelite nation (Moo 1996:561).

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According to Kuhn (1965:360), there was a sense in which this right standing with God was inherited and salvation was granted to the believers. Someone else could partake in salvation through faith, but they had to become a member of the people. The distinction between the two terms (לְיִשְׂרָאֵל and יִשְׂרָאֵל) was that לְיִשְׂרָאֵל signified the name that the people used for themselves, and יִשְׂרָאֵל was the non-Judaeans name for them (cf. Elliott 2007; Tomson 1986; see 2.1.1). Where לְיִשְׂרָאֵל *always* had a religious connotation pointing to the chosen people of God, יִשְׂרָאֵל was also used by non-Judaeans and did *not always* carry this connotation. It even had a disrespectful or contemptuous sound on the lips of outsiders (Kuhn 1965:360).

Gutbrod (1965:371) indicates that this notion is confirmed by the fact that pagan writers never used the term Ἰσραήλ for the Judaeans people. In contrast, the Qumran sect who was emphatically inner-Judaeans, used the name “Israel” exclusively (Tomson 1986:139). Philo’s usage of the term corresponds to the usage of the Old Testament (Gutbrod 1965:372). He used Ἰσραήλ as the “inside” name of his nation, whereas he used Ἰουδαῖος as referent to an adherent of the nation of the Judaeans as present in Alexandria (Tomson 1986:137).

It might be significant that the use of Ἰσραηλίτης and Ἰουδαῖοι was largely influenced by the Exile. Ἰσραηλίτης described the pre-exilic period and Ἰουδαῖοι was used for people of the second temple (Kuhli 1991c:205). This tendency is especially recognisable with Josephus (Tomson 1986:123-124,137-139; see esp. *Antiquities* 11:169-173). Josephus uses Ἰσραηλίτης “for members of the people of God in past days. He does not use it for present members” (Gutbrod 1965:372). Josephus speaks of Ἰσραηλίται 188 times in *Antiquities* 2 to 6 when he describes the ancient time, but predominantly employs Ἰουδαῖοι from *Antiquities* 6:6 onward and exclusively from 6:317 right up to the end (Kuhli 1991c:205). Kuhli (1991c:205) writes (cf. Jewett 2007:561-562):

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Ἰσραηλίτης was thus reserved for a part of history that was now closed. Its use by a contemporary Jew must, therefore, have been an archaism limited to specific occasions and rhetorical formulas of address (cf. 4 Macc 18:1).<sup>59</sup>

In the Synoptic Gospels, Ἰουδαῖος and Ἰουδαῖοι are rare, and are usually employed in connection with people and land (Kuhli 1991a:194; Mayer 1976:315). In the Gospel of John, οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι is the common term for those with whom Jesus has dealings, where the Synoptists normally have ὁ ὄχλος or οἱ ὄχλοι (“multitude/s”), which is less frequent in the Gospel of John. Ἰουδαῖος is never used by the Synoptists “as a proper name for the people to whom Jesus comes” (Gutbrod 1965:375; cf. Kuhli 1991a:194). Significant is that the expression βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων is never on Jesus’ lips or on the Evangelists’ lips themselves (Kuhli 1991a:194; Gutbrod 1965:375).<sup>60</sup> The term Ἰσραήλ is used for the people in the Synoptic Gospels (only used twice in Mk) by themselves, where the emphasis leans toward the religious side. It is often applied as denotation for the people of God (e.g., Mt 15:31; Lk 1:68). For the Judaeans, Jesus is βασιλεὺς Ἰσραήλ (Mt 27:42; Mk 15:32 – even though spoken in mockery), not βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων. Ἰσραήλ is similarly applied in Messianic context (e.g., Lk 2:25,32; 24:21), when Jesus finds great faith (Mt 8:10; Lk 7:9), when He indicates that He was sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Mt 10:6; 15:24), or where Jesus indicates that the disciples will judge the twelve tribes of Israel (Mt 19:28; Gutbrod 1965:384-385). For Luke, the Judaeans almost become those who refuse to believe in Jesus (Eltester 1972a:119). It is remarkable how the author of both Luke and Acts who probably was a non-Judaeans, “faithfully preserved the speech duality typical of Jewish texts” (Tomson 1986:280).

In the Gospel of John, after Jesus was asked whether He was the king of the Judaeans (18:33), He virtually denies this title by answering (v. 36) that His kingdom is not of this world. Gutbrod (1965:378) describes Ἰουδαῖος in John as “a matter of national and temporal remoteness”, which provides the possibility of a Ἰουδαῖος who believes in Jesus (8:31; 11:45; 12:11). In John, the Ἰουδαῖοι are

<sup>59</sup> 4 Macc 18:1 reads: “O Israelite children, offspring of the seed of Abraham” (NRSV).

<sup>60</sup> See e.g. Mt 2:2, where the question “Ποῦ ἐστὶν ὁ τεχθεὶς βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων,” is asked by a foreigner (Gutbrod 1965:375).

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often those who refuse to believe in Jesus and oppose Him (:378-379; cf. Kuhli 1991a:195-196; Tomson 1986:281-283,287). The term Ἰσραήλ occurs only four times in the Gospel, but is applied in a fixed sense, where Ἰσραήλ is the people of God as a whole (Mayer 1976:315; Gutbrod 1965:385). Relation to Israel implies a relationship to God. Nathanael who is called an ἀληθῶς Ἰσραηλίτης (1:47), has to be understood in the same manner. Israel as God's people need not be understood as the living members of the day, but "almost as a supratemporal entity" (Gutbrod 1965:385). There is thus a bigger contrast between the terms Ἰουδαῖος and Ἰσραήλ in John (Kuhli 1991b:203).

In Acts, Ἰουδαῖος is used in a very similar way as in the Gospel of John. They are the inhabitants of Palestine and members of this religious community. The religious connotation varies in individual passages. They are committed to the law (10:28) and circumcision (16:3; 9:22; 18:28; 22:12). The Ἰουδαῖοι can oppose the preaching of Christ as in the Gospel of John (9:23; 12:11; 13:50; 17:5,13; etc.) but this negative aspect is not inseparably linked to the term. There are Judaeans who believe (14:2; Gutbrod 1965:379-380). The term Ἰσραήλ is dominant in the first part of Acts, and Ἰουδαῖος in the second. Ἰσραήλ denotes the members of the people of God. They are called upon to recognise Jesus as the Christ (2:36; 4:10; 13:24; Gutbrod 1965:386). There is therefore continuity between Ἰσραήλ and belief in Christ, especially in 13:23, where Jesus is identified as descendant of David and Saviour in Paul's speech, and thus the fulfilment of the promise to Israel (2 Sam 7:12; 22:51; cf. Kistemaker 1990, Acts 13:13-52; cf. Gutbrod 1965:386).<sup>61</sup>

In Revelation, Ἰουδαῖος is used twice in a negative context (2:9; 3:9) of imposters that masqueraded as Judaeans, but lied and are called a συναγωγή τοῦ Σατανᾶ. Whether this implies that if they were true Judaeans they could be called a "synagogue of God" is not certain (contra Gutbrod 1965:382). Ἰσραήλ is used in

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<sup>61</sup> Gutbrod (1965:386), when he refers to Acts 13:23 (which is erroneously indicated as 12:23) argues that there "is more than agreement; there is identity" between "the people of the past" and "present Israel" – of which the latter is seemingly the Israel of that day. This interpretation however does not seem to be completely warranted by the context (cf. Kistemaker 1990, Acts 13:13-52).

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historical (2:14) and eschatological context where the twelve tribes of Israel feature (7:4; 21:12; cf. Mayer 1976:315). Despite the interpretative uncertainty of the symbolic imagery in the latter two references, Israel points to the historical nation of the Old Testament (Casarella 1997:542).

Apart from isolated passages in the writings of the Apostolic Fathers,<sup>62</sup> the term Ἰσραήλ hardly features in Christian or fringe Christian writings until the middle of the second century. They do not make much at all from literal Israel or the twelve tribes (Casarella 1997:543). On the other hand, Justin later stated (160 CE): “We are... the true spiritual Israel” (*Dialogue* 11:5; cf. 100:4; 123:9; Mayer 1976:316).

Even though the way in which “Israel(ites)” and “Judaeans(s)” occur in these texts is not uniform, the tendency to view “Israel(ites)” as insider designations and “Judaeans(s)” as outsider designations is noteworthy (Tomson 1986). Yet the way in which the terms “Israel” and “Israelites” mainly disappear in writings around and after the New Testament writings is arguably even more remarkable (esp. Josephus; Kuhli 1991c:205). This tendency even corresponds to the notion in common English today “to reserve ‘Israelite’ for the people of the Hebrew Bible, and ‘Jew’ for people of the last two millennia” (Langer 2003:257).

### 4.2 **Israel according to the flesh (A)**

This section marks the start of the main theological-exegetical body of this study which correlates mainly to Robbins’ (1996:3-4) “inner texture” and “ideological texture” of the text, which will occasionally interplay with the “intertexture” and “sacred texture” of the text.

This section simultaneously represents the passages pertaining to identity mode A: Israel according to the flesh (1 Cor 10:18; 2 Cor 11:18-24; see 3.3). These two passages are considered to display this mode of identity the clearest without

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<sup>62</sup> Clement (1 Clem 29:2-3) quotes Deut 32:8-9 from the Septuagint when he writes about how God elected historical, ethnic Israel (Casarella 1997:543). The Epistle of Barnabas urges its readers to understand the meaning of the OT text and Israel from the perspective of the church, often typologically (Casarella 1997:543; Mayer 1976:316).

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implying much of the other modes. Their position in the dissertation can be viewed as paving the way for Romans 9 to 11 which constitutes the main focus.

##### 4.2.1 **1 Corinthians 10:18**

The context of this verse (10:15-22) has to do with the practice of communion in the body of Christ, and might imply a contrast between Israel according to the flesh and believers in Christ. Yet, this verse is listed here, for Ἰσραὴλ κατὰ σάρκα seems to function here marginally (cf. Gutbrod 1965:387) as a mere title for the people in the desert Paul is referring to, without an elaboration on its meaning or an explicit contrast to belief in Christ.

A popular interpretation on Paul's use of Ἰσραὴλ κατὰ σάρκα is that it implies an Ἰσραὴλ κατὰ πνεῦμα (e.g., Elliott 2007:141; Boyarin 1994:74; Fee 1987:470). Some interpreters go even further and, apart from implying an "Israel according to the Spirit", contrasts "Israel according to the flesh" here to the church. It is argued that "our fathers" in verse 1 would point to the church as joint heirs of Israel that would correspond to an implied "Israel according to the Spirit" in verse 18 (Witherington III 1995:218). Kistemaker (1993, 1 Corinthians 10:18-22) interprets the phrase to indicate that the Israel Paul is referring to "lacked spirituality".

Even though one might want to contrast Ἰσραὴλ κατὰ σάρκα with a possible Ἰσραὴλ κατὰ πνεῦμα or understand Ἰσραὴλ κατὰ σάρκα with a negative connotation about their spirituality on the basis of Paul's dichotomy of σὰρξ and πνεῦμα, the notion to construe an "Israel according to the Spirit/spirit" too hastily apart from a deeper understanding of Ἰσραὴλ in Paul, calls for caution, especially because of the fact that Paul never connects Ἰσραὴλ to πνεῦμα as such (Schweizer 1971:127; cf. Kuhli 1991b:204; Mayer 1976:312). Ciampa and Rosner (2010:477) seem to take a safer route when they make a distinction between the

Judaism which found its identity in the Jerusalem cult and believers who considered themselves the true heirs of Israel (and whom Paul elsewhere refers to as the true circumcision [Rom. 2:28-29], or the children of the Jerusalem above rather than the present Jerusalem [Gal. 4:25-26]).

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They connect this distinction to the distinction in the Old Testament between the “faithful remnant” and the citizens of Israel “who were considered unqualified as true members of God’s covenant people” (Ciampa & Rosner 2010:477-478).

Still, even though Ἰσραὴλ κατὰ σάρκα can be rendered merely as the “earthly Israel” (BDAG, σάρξ §4; Conzelmann 1975:172), “the earthly nation... to which each belongs by natural descent” (Schweizer 1971:127; cf. Fee 1987:470), or historical Israel (Collins 1999:380; Sand 1993:231; Tomson 1986:285; Conzelmann 1975:172; Barrett [1971] 1976:235; Pop 1965:213), “some negativity may be implied in Paul’s use of this term [Ἰσραὴλ κατὰ σάρκα]” (Collins 1999:380; cf. Gutbrod 1965:387). An implicit contrast to “true Israel” (Rom 4:1; 9:3) or even “the Israel of God” (Gal 6:16) cannot be ruled out (BDAG, σάρξ §4). However, this notion does not necessitate a contrast between Ἰσραὴλ κατὰ σάρκα and belief in Christ. Fitzmyer (2008:392) is thus probably right when he states that Ἰσραὴλ κατὰ σάρκα is “ethnic or historical-empirical Israel of old, which Paul will distinguish in Rom 9:6 from those who are truly ‘Israel,’ the people of God in the OT.” Fitzmyer’s contrast of Ἰσραὴλ κατὰ σάρκα with “Christians [sic]” as such (:392) may however be reading too much into the text.<sup>63</sup>

In conclusion, Ἰσραὴλ κατὰ σάρκα in 1 Corinthians 10:18 denotes the historical Israel of the Old Testament as a national, ethnic entity, in contrast to connotations about their faith, their state of heart, or the authenticity of their relationship with God.

#### 4.2.2 2 Corinthians 11:18-24

This passage forms part of a larger section about Paul’s suffering for the gospel (11:16-33). These verses probably indicate a reaction to some people in the congregation that questioned his apostleship (cf. 11:5), and form part of his defence of authority. Paul here sarcastically (Matera 2003:257) or by “play[ing]

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<sup>63</sup> While this notion is not considered as impossible, the same caution has to be applied here as by construing a possible Ἰσραὴλ κατὰ πνεῦμα as counter-concept (Schweizer 1971:127; Kuhli 1991b:204; see above). It would be healthier to be constrained by Paul’s own thought on the concept of Ἰσραὴλ elsewhere (esp. Rom 11) than to construe too much from an argument of silence.

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the fool” (Kistemaker 1997, 2 Corinthians 11:16-21), turns to boasting (vv. 16-17) about his own heritage. This is in reaction to some within the congregation that boasted in their own external appearance (2 Cor 5:12),<sup>64</sup> which is equivalent to many that boast κατὰ σάρκα (“according to the flesh”) here in 11:18.<sup>65</sup> In the same line of thought, Schweizer (1971:130-131) interprets the expression as boasting “in which man [sic] has regard only to what may be seen and what counts with men [sic]” (cf. BDAG, σάρξ §5).

Focusing on external qualities like pedigree or descent would certainly be an aspect of this type of boasting. In this sense, the similarity to Ἰσραὴλ κατὰ σάρκα (1 Cor 10:18) is clear. In this context (2 Cor 11:18), κατὰ σάρκα thus can be rendered as “according to earthly descent” (BDAG, σάρξ §4).<sup>66</sup> The expression has been contrasted to κατὰ κύριον, parallel to the “foolishness” (ἄφροσύνη) of the boasting in verse 17 (cf. Harris 2005:782; Furnish 1984:496), without necessarily excluding the notions of “wealth, birth, or ancestry” which Chrysostom connected to κατὰ σάρκα here (Thrall 2000:715). Lenski (1963:1262) summarises the general notion when he states: “‘The flesh’ sums up all such externals and non-essentials” (cf. πρόσωπον in 2 Cor 5:12).

Paul indirectly gives an indication as to what his opponents<sup>67</sup> would typically boast about according to the flesh in verse 22, when he confirms his own pedigree in three expressions: Ἑβραῖος, Ἰσραηλίτης, and σπέρμα Ἀβραάμ.<sup>68</sup> There seems to be an ascending order in the three expressions Paul uses, “moving from racial purity, to religious identity, to Abrahamic descent” (Matera 2003:263).

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<sup>64</sup> This is the notion of those boasting ἐν προσώπῳ and not in the heart in 2 Cor 5:12 (BDAG, πρόσωπον §4).

<sup>65</sup> Cf. κατὰ σάρκα στρατευόμεθα (“walking according to the flesh”) in 2 Cor 10:3.

<sup>66</sup> BDAG lists the meaning of κατὰ σάρκα in 2 Cor 11:18 under both §4: “human/ancestral connection, *human/mortal nature, earthly descent*” and §5: “the outward side of life as determined by normal perspectives or standards”.

<sup>67</sup> Paul identifies his opponents as “super apostles” (τῶν ὑπερλίαν ἀποστόλων) in 11:5 and 12:11, and those who masquerade as apostles of Christ (μετασχηματιζόμενοι εἰς ἀποστόλους Χριστοῦ) in 11:13 (Kistemaker 1997, 2 Corinthians 11:1-4; cf. Furnish 1984:502-503).

<sup>68</sup> Cf. Php 3:5, albeit with variation in terminology (see 6.1.7).

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In the Bible, the term “Hebrew” is first mentioned in Genesis 14:13, where Abraham is called הֵעֵבְרִי (“the Hebrew”).<sup>69</sup> According to the Egyptians, Ἑβραῖος indicated an offspring from Jacob (Kistemaker 1997, 2 Corinthians 11:16-21). Later on the term was applied as an honoured title from the distant past (Kuhn 1965:367), rather than the “derogatory or even contemptuous” term Ἰουδαῖος (Kuhn 1965:368; cf. Kistemaker 1997, 2 Corinthians 11:16-21). In general, the term denotes a Judaeans who retained their national language<sup>70</sup> and customs (Harris 2005:794; Tomson 1986:128; Plummer 1915:319; Bernard 1903:105; cf. Mayer 1976:309), and signifies racial purity (Matera 2003:263; Kruse [1987] 1998:194) distinct from proselytes (Furnish 1984: 514). Yet, Ἑβραῖος can simply denote Hebrew speaking Israelites over against Greek speaking Israelites (BDAG, Ἑβραῖος §1), or Judaeans of Palestinian descent (Harris [1976] 1977:390; Gutbrod 1965:389; Ac 6:1). But in this context it seems more probable that Paul wants to confirm his ability to speak Hebrew/Aramaic together with the fact that he is a full Judaeans by birth and ancestry (Thrall 2000:730).

According to Genesis 32:28, the patriarch Jacob was renamed יִשְׂרָאֵל (“Israel”).<sup>71</sup> The association of Israel as descendants of the patriarch is prominent in the New Testament (Kuhli 1991b:203; e.g., Lk 1:16; Ac 5:21; Rom 9:27; 2 Cor 3:7). Technically, Jacob’s offspring included the Samaritans, yet only the Judaeans were called “Israelites”<sup>72</sup> (Kistemaker 1997, 2 Corinthians 11:16-21). The most likely connotation here is that Paul identifies himself as a member of God’s chosen people (Harris 2005:795; [1976] 1977:391; Matera 2003:263; Thrall 2000:727; Furnish 1984:514; Plummer 1915:320) as part of his heritage. This

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<sup>69</sup> The etymology of this word is uncertain. It denoted a people of equal standing without regard to their ethnic heritage and without a permanent home, who contractually entered the settled population. They penetrated the arable land. The word “Hebrew” was thus used by other people in old stories, even sometimes in a derogatory or self-deprecating manner (Mayer 1976:305).

<sup>70</sup> This is not beyond dispute though. An inscription: “συναγωγὴ Ἑβραίων” (“Synagogue of the Hebrews”) in Corinth indicates that Ἑβραῖος could probably be used as self-identification of Greek speaking Judaeans in the Diaspora (Thrall 2000:725; Kruse [1987] 1998:194). The difference between Palestinian and Diaspora Judaeans must thus not be exaggerated (e.g., Hengel 1989 and others: see Harris 2005:794).

<sup>71</sup> Von Rad (1965:356) views the transfer of the name of the patriarch as a secondary process after the tradition constituted by the sacral league of the twelve tribes, narrated in Jos 24.

<sup>72</sup> Cf. Mt 10:5-6, where Jesus advised his disciples not to enter a town from the Samaritans, but to go to the “the lost sheep of Israel”.

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would accord with a long tradition of viewing the term (Ἰσραηλίτης) as designating the people of God (cf. Von Rad 1965:357).

The expression σπέρμα Ἀβραάμ (“seed of Abraham”) can technically be broader than the previous two, for it can include the offspring of Isaac, Ishmael, and Keturah (Gen 25:1-6; 12-18; Kistemaker 1997, 2 Corinthians 11:16-21). But this connotation seems unlikely for the fact that (1) Paul is bringing the terms (all three) nearer to being a servant of Christ (v. 23) which constitutes progression (cf. Matera 2003:263; Plummer 1915:320), and (2) that Paul uses σπέρμα Ἀβραάμ elsewhere in connection with *inner* Israel (Rom 9:7, see 4.3.2.2) or faith in Christ (Rom 4:13,16,18; Gal 3:29). A connotation to faith in Christ or even being part of *inner* Israel is however not present here, for Paul shares these identity markers with his opponents. In this context σπέρμα Ἀβραάμ primarily denotes physical descent from Abraham and probably that Paul shares in the promises that God made to Abraham (Harris 2005:795; [1976] 1977:391; Matera 2003:263-264; Thrall 2000:727-729; Kruse [1987] 1998:195; Furnish 1984:514; Barrett [1973] 1976:293-294; Plummer 1915:320) which included the Messianic promises (Plummer 1915:320; Bernard 1903:105; cf. Matera 2003:263).

When Paul (v. 23) asks whether his opponents are servants of Christ (διάκονοι Χριστοῦ), this designation is treated in a similar fashion to the other titles that constituted Paul’s opponents’ boasting in externalities (κατὰ σάρκα in v. 18), and thus does not have a direct bearing on being a Christ-believer (see 5.1; 6.1-6.3). This designation was rather a disguise and “one of the self-designations of Paul’s rivals” (Harris 2005:796), and might have had to do with making a claim on meeting or knowing Christ in person before His ascension (cf. Furnish 1984:535).

In verse 24, Paul introduces a fourth term in close proximity to the three honoured titles that constituted his heritage (v. 22), namely Ἰουδαῖοι,<sup>73</sup> but in a negative context, which suggests that Ἰουδαῖος does not carry the same value as the other three for Paul. Here the word might imply “the opposition to Christ which these people have displayed in their actions” (Gutbrod 1965:381; cf. 6.1.8). Paul’s use

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<sup>73</sup> This is the first and only time Paul uses this term in 2 Cor (apart from a reference to the geographical Ἰουδαία in 1:16).

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of Ἰουδαῖος here seems to correspond to the distinction that J. H. Elliott (2007:140-146) makes between Ἰουδαῖος as mostly an outsider term and Ἰσραήλ as mostly an insider term of self-identification (see 2.1.1). This is probably the reason why Paul does not use the term in verse 22 when he gives an account of his own heritage.

In the context of 2 Corinthians 11, all four titles even though applied in positive and negative contexts (positive: Ἑβραῖος, Ἰσραηλίτης, and σπέρμα Ἀβραάμ; negative: Ἰουδαῖος), can be described as titles Paul uses to describe physical heritage or ethnic membership of a people, without direct connotations of faith or devoutness to God, in other words, “according to the flesh” (v. 18).

### **4.3 Israel according to the flesh and Israel as children of the promise (AB)**

The next mode of identity to be explored is identity mode B: Israel as children of the promise and as partakers of election, or to invoke the terms introduced earlier, identity mode AB.<sup>74</sup> Romans 9:1-8 corresponds mainly to the first aspect: Israel as children of the promise (this section), while Romans 9:9-21 corresponds to Israel as partakers of election (see 4.4).

#### **4.3.1 Introduction to Romans 9 to 11**

One of the first questions that have an influence on the understanding of Romans 9 to 11 is the one about the recipients of the letter to the Romans. This debate has developed for the most part into viewing the majority of the recipients as a Gentile Christ-believing majority and a Judaeon Christ-believing minority (Longenecker 2011:75-78; Moo 1996:13; Kümmel [1975] 1977:309-311). The community had taken on the complexion of a Gentile Christ-believing community which had shifted from the more Judaeon matrix of Christ-believers to a more Gentile framework. This process was accelerated by the enforced exile of

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<sup>74</sup> As previously mentioned, identity mode B implies identity mode A (see 3.3).

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Judaeans believers under Claudius<sup>75</sup> (Moo 1996:13; see also 5.2.2). On the other hand, by the time Paul wrote to the church in Rome,<sup>76</sup> some of the dust might have settled after Claudius' expulsion. So we find for example the Judaeans Aquila and Priscilla back in Rome (Rom 16:3; Ac 18:2; Carson & Moo 2005:396; cf. Wright 2002:407). Hagner (2012:522) states that "it seems clear that Jewish readers are occasionally in view." In the same vein, Wright (2002:407) argues that

Paul will have known of some Jewish Christians [sic] who had returned to Rome and who, alongside Gentile cobelievers, would now be facing the difficult question of how to live together as one family with those who cherished very different cultural traditions.

As Dunn (1988a:xliv) admits, "[w]e have little hard evidence regarding the earliest Christian [sic] groups in Rome." Much of the understanding of Paul's recipients thus has to be inferred from the text of Romans itself. Dunn argues strongly (exclusively?) for Gentile recipients, that he regards as obvious from passages such as 11:13-32 and 15:7-12 (:xliv; cf. Sanders 2011). J. H. Elliott (2007:147) on the other hand states that Paul had "Israelite fellow believers" in his audience to whom much of his rhetoric was directed (cf. Zoccali 2008:302; Esler 2003:119). Much of one's view of Paul's audience is thus subjected to how Romans 9 to 11 and other passages in the letter are interpreted, which accounts for a measure of circularity in this debate. Is Romans 9 to 11 solely an exhortation to Gentiles to have a more positive regard for Judaeans, or can it be an apology to Judaeans or Judaeans Christ-believers for Paul's pressing for an all-inclusive gospel where there is "no difference" (Rom 10:12) between Judaeans and Greek? Can Romans 9 to 11 be seen as an apology of his view of Israel who "stumbled at that stumblingstone" (Rom 9:32) and by implication have been cut off (Rom 11:22; Sanday & Headlam [1902] 1960:232-233)? This line of thinking corresponds to the view of some commentators who think that Paul's law-free gospel (see 6.1.5,

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<sup>75</sup> This took place around 49 CE, as attested by Suetonius' (*Life of Claudius* 25:4) statement that Claudius "expelled the Judaeans from Rome because they were constantly rioting at the instigation of Chrestus [Christ]" (Carson & Moo 2005:395).

<sup>76</sup> This was probably around the beginning of 57 CE (Carson & Moo 2005:394; Cranfield 1975:16).

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esp. fn. 257)<sup>77</sup> to the Gentiles earned him the reputation of being anti-Judaeans (e.g., Moo 1996:556; Barrett [1962] 1975:175-176; cf. Bruce [1985] 2000:183-184). This possible view on Paul's recipients has to be kept open, and will be revisited later on.

Käsemann (1980:261) may be right that Romans 9 to 11 is not primarily intended as a dialogue with either Judaeans or Gentiles as such: "What we have is a theological reflection, which... is broken up by fictitious objections and answers to them." Käsemann's approach implies a dialectical relationship between, in Robbins' (1996:3-4) words, the "intertexture" and the "inner texture" of the text (see 1.4). Similarly, Moo (1996:13) argues that "the purpose of Paul in 1:5-6 (and 1:13) is not so much to identify the national complexion of the community as to locate it within the scope of his commission to the Gentiles."

Moving on to the position of 9 to 11 in the letter, it needs no proof that most scholars acknowledge a break in Paul's thought after 1 to 8 and before 12 to 16, even to the point that Dodd ([1959] 1963:161-163) argued that Romans 9 to 11 was a worked out sermon by Paul that he inserted into the letter at this point. Toward the other extreme, scholars such as Stendahl (1976:4,85), Dunn (1988b:520), Fitzmyer (1993:541), Wright (1993; 2002:620) and Witherington III (2004:237,244) have argued for viewing Romans 9 to 11 as the real climax of the letter.

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<sup>77</sup> Contra Nanos (2009:4) who argues for Paul being a Torah abiding "Jew", quoting passages such as 2 Cor 11:22; Php 3:3-6; Gal 2:15; 5:3 and 1 Cor 7:17-24. In 2 Cor 11:22 and Php 3:3-6, Paul employs the terms Ἰσραηλίτης and Ἰσραήλ respectively (not Ἰουδαῖος) as designation for his physical heritage and ethnicity (see 4.2.2 and 6.1.7). Paul's status as being "blameless" concerning the righteousness in the law (Php 3:6) defines his previous identity before belief in Christ which he rejected and considers as refuse (Php 3:8; see 6.1.7). In Gal 2:15 Paul merely designates his ethnicity and then goes on to state that no one is made righteous from the works of the Torah, but through faith in Christ (v. 16; cf. Segal 1990:130). His reference to being a Judaeans (v. 15) rather refers to status by birth (Longenecker 1990:83; Bruce 1982b:137; Betz 1979:115) than denoting law observance. Gal 5:3 does not put Torah observance in a positive light, but rather that if you circumcise yourself, you are in debt to do the whole law. Paul stated earlier in Galatians that the law has put those under the law under the curse of the law (3:10,13). 1 Cor 7:19 states that circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the ἐντολῶν θεοῦ. This does not necessarily point to the Torah as such, but can be interpreted as pointing to the will of God (Fee 1987:314; Barrett [1971] 1976:169) or the commandment of love (Pop 1965:141).

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Moo (1996:551-552) is concerned that viewing Romans 9 to 11 as climactic may underplay “the importance of the individual’s relationship to God” in Romans 1 to 8. This is not an inevitable conclusion however. Paul probably wants to introduce an additional layer to his exposition in 1 to 8 from a deeper and wider perspective, not to diminish any of the individual elements in the gospel, but to understand from a salvation-historical vantage point (cf. Wright 2002:620; Moo 1996:561; Käsemann 1980:254; Ridderbos 1959:203) why and how there is now no difference between Judaeans and Greeks (Rom 10:12). In this, Paul wants to highlight the continuity as well as the discontinuity of the gospel with Israel, and answer some of the underlying concerns regarding Israel. Within his exposition, Paul also wants to underline God’s faithfulness in the way in which His promises have been fulfilled to Israel in the history of salvation (Wright 2002:622; Moo 1996:550-551,553,564; cf. Witherington III 2004:236), which probably constituted a concern within the congregation (Dunn 1988b:519).

As for the structure of Romans 9 to 11, it has to be taken as a coherent unit (Hultgren 2011:347; Dunn 1988b:518; Cranfield 1979:447-448; cf. Barrett [1962] 1975:175),<sup>78</sup> where final conclusions have to be postponed until the end of 11. My approach will be to pursue the meaning of Rom 9 to 11 within the following order of priority: (1) from within the text of Rom 9 to 11 itself, including the way in which Paul interprets and appropriates the Old Testament, (2) from the bigger context of Romans (esp. 1-8), and then (3) from other Pauline material.

Concerning the style of Romans 9 to 11, Paul might have appropriated some aspects of the diatribe style<sup>79</sup> in combination with personification and personal involvement (Witherington III 2004:236; Dunn 1988b:519). In Paul’s retelling of the story of Israel (Wright 2002:622), his “own role and vocation become topics within the story” (:624). Paul’s appropriation of the Old Testament Scripture

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<sup>78</sup> Rom 9-11 appears as a rounded unit with a clear beginning (9:1-5) and an end (11:33-36; Dunn 1988b:518). The section is preceded by the climactic conclusion of 8:31-39 (cf. Hultgren 2011:347) and is followed by a more personal note (Rom 12, etc.). The theme of Israel (marked by the terms Ἰσραήλ and Ἰσραηλίτης) is prominent in Rom 9-11 and does not occur outside of it.

<sup>79</sup> This similarity cannot be exaggerated since Rom 9-11 does depend to a large extent on 1-8, and cannot be seen as a “completely performed unit” (Dunn 1988b:520).

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references, of which the amount is remarkable,<sup>80</sup> will be approached from the perspective that the passages quoted are not mere proof texts for his argument, but are interwoven in his exposition as part of his own argumentation (cf. Hultgren 2011:348). In other words, his argument does not flow around the quoted passages, but goes right through them. In a sense, the quoted passages become his own words. This approach will become clearer as the study progresses.<sup>81</sup>

#### 4.3.2 Romans 9:1-10

Paul starts this passage with an oath (v. 1) that signifies more than solemnity (Cranfield 1979:451) or sincerity (Moo 1996:555), but utter seriousness,<sup>82</sup> to the point of the shocking statement in verse 3 where he could wish to be accursed and removed from Christ (ἀνάθεμα... ἀπὸ τοῦ Χριστοῦ) for the sake of his brothers, his kindred according to the flesh (NRSV; τῶν συγγενῶν... κατὰ σάρκα). What exactly constitutes Paul's sorrow (v. 2) for his kindred according to the flesh is not yet clear, and will unfold during the course of Romans 9 to 11.

Some commentators (e.g., Seifrid 2007:639; Wright 2002:628; Moo 1996:558-559; contra Käsemann 1980:258) see a possible connection in Paul's wish to Exodus 32:30-34, where Moses prayed to God to be blotted out of the book of life if the people that sinned by means of idolatry to the law in making a golden calf, could only be spared. This understanding implies that Paul might have assimilated the same mediating role as Moses for his people. This possible underlying connotation has to be kept in mind for the rest of Romans 9 to 11.

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<sup>80</sup> Hultgren (2011:348) counts 35 direct quotations from the Old Testament (39% of the verses) in Rom 9-11, which includes many more allusions and summaries of OT material.

<sup>81</sup> Dunn (1988b:520) calls Paul's appropriation of Scripture "midrashic" (cf. Stegner 1984). Neusner (1987:7) argues against a general, unqualified designation such as "midrashic", since there are different approaches among the "Judaisms" of late antiquity to the systematic interpretation of Scripture: Midrash (1) as paraphrase, (2) as prophecy, and (3) as allegorical reading of Scripture. Even while one has to recognise the similarity in Paul's appropriation of Scripture and Midrash as prophecy (2), Paul did not exactly treat "the historical life of ancient Israel and the contemporary times of the exegete as essentially the same, reading the former as a prefiguring of the latter" (:7), but rather adhered to the original sense of the passage, seeing Israel as the object of the passages (Battle 1981:123; cf. Moo 1996:570). Neither did Paul treat Rom 9-11 as allegory (3) which would imply a hidden or even a mystical meaning in the text of the OT (cf. Neusner 1987:8).

<sup>82</sup> Cf. Wright (2002:627) who writes that this was not a mere "rhetorical ploy to gain a little sympathy for a while. It was truly heartfelt."

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In 9:3-8, Paul will lay out specific distinctions about the identity of Israel that will prove to be key to comprehending his salvation-historical exposition in the light of belief in Christ which formally ends in 11:32.<sup>83</sup> Paul expects close attention to the distinctions he draws in the opening part of his exposition, which will be the building blocks of his eventual conclusions. In other words, everything from especially 9:3 onward has to be kept in mind and serves as reference of the scenario's that will be playing out toward the end of this whole diachronic, salvation-historical scene (Rom 9-11).

##### **4.3.2.1 *Kindred according to the flesh and their eight privileges (vv. 3-5)***

Similar to 1 Corinthians 10:18 (see 4.2.1) and 2 Corinthians 11:18 (see 4.2.2), κατὰ σάρκα in verse 3 denotes the whole nation of Israel by natural, earthly descent (BDAG, σάρξ §4) or blood relationship (Zerwick & Grosvenor 1988:479), and in this case, those of his kindred who do not believe in Christ (Hultgren 2011:356; Jewett 2007:561; Moo 1996:559; cf. Wright 2002:627). This is part of the reason for his sorrow and anguish (NRSV; v. 2) for them and Paul's desire for them to accept Christ, as will come to the forefront later on (e.g., 10:1; 11:14). Yet his anguish might in addition point to something deeper, as will come to the surface as Paul progresses in his exposition.

It is noteworthy that Paul introduces in verse 4 the designation Ἰσραηλίτης (in this case the plural Ἰσραηλίται) for the first time in his letter. The terms Ἰσραηλίτης and Ἰσραήλ only occur in chapters 9 to 11. It can be argued that Paul is drawing the circle closer, starting with more outsider terminology (mostly Ἰουδαῖοι in 1-8) to more insider terminology (Ἰσραηλίτης and Ἰσραήλ) here in 9 to 11 (cf. Jewett 2007:562). As will become more clear later on, it is of even further significance that Paul refers to his kindred according to the flesh as Ἰσραηλίται (v. 4) and not Ἰσραήλ (v. 6, see 4.3.2.2) where he provides a more precise distinction.

Even while the designation Ἰσραηλίτης can be considered an insider term for the people of God (Elliott 2007:123; Jewett 2007:562; Dunn 1988b:526) of the Old

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<sup>83</sup> Cf. Longenecker (2011:412) and Moo (1996:564-565) who see 9:5-11:28 as an "inclusio" which surrounds Paul's discussion.

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Testament, the privileges of being an Ἰσραηλίτης that Paul will soon be highlighting (vv. 4-5), can all be understood as identity markers of the identity κατὰ σάρκα (v. 3), identity mode A, the *outer Israel* (see 3.3; cf. Wright 2002:629; Moo 1996:559-560; Gutbrod 1965:386-387). From the content of these privileges and the context (esp. vv. 9-17) it can be derived that Paul primarily has historical Israelites in mind (Käsemann 1980:258; Ridderbos 1959:207; cf. Moo 1996:560; Mounce 1995:196; Dunn 1988b:535), although unbelieving Judaeans in Paul's present would stand in continuity with them (Dunn 1988b:535).

To these Ἰσραηλίται (κατὰ σάρκα) belong the following eight privileges (vv. 4-5):

(1) The adoption (ἡ υἰοθεσία).

In line with Paul's anguish (v. 2) and the fact that he appeals to his kindred κατὰ σάρκα (v. 3), the adoption (literally "sonship") here "must mean something different than the adoption of Christians [sic] in chap. 8" (Moo 1996:562). God's adoption here "conveys to that nation all the rights and privileges included within the Old Covenant" (:562). Contra Jewett (2007:563), this filiation or mode of being part of God's people is not the same as being "children of the promise" (v. 8) and does not necessarily entail salvation (Moo 1996:562).

(2) The glory (ἡ δόξα).

This refers to God's presense with the Israelites in the Old Testament (Hultgren 2011:357; Moo 1996:563; Bruce [1985] 2000:185; Cranfield 1979:462),<sup>84</sup> particularly the theophanies that were the Israelites' privilege as God's people (Ex 16:10; 24:5-17; 40:34-35; Lev 9:23; Num 14:10; etc.; Dunn 1988b:526,534).

(3) The covenants (αἱ διαθήκαι).

It is not clear to which covenants Paul is referring to. He could be referring to covenants with Abraham and the other patriarchs, the Mosaic covenant and its

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<sup>84</sup> Contra Jewett (2007:563) who connects the glory as revealed in 8:18 to the glory of Israel.

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various ratifications, or the several covenants mentioned in the Old Testament,<sup>85</sup> of which the latter is probably the best option (Moo 1996:563; Dunn 1988b:527; Bruce [1985] 2000:186; Cranfield 1979:462).<sup>86</sup>

##### (4) The giving of the law (ἡ νομοθεσία).

While this can refer to the act of giving a law or the laws that were made, the legislation, the second option is preferred (BDAG, νομοθεσία; contra Moo 1996:564). It would here thus be equivalent to the law to Moses (Hultgren 2011:357; Bruce [1985] 2000:186),<sup>87</sup> and would correspond to the preceding αἱ διαθήκαι, the covenants made (Cranfield 1979:462-463). This interpretation would additionally correspond to Paul's later referral to the law (9:31,32; 10:4,5).

##### (5) The service (ἡ λατρεία).

This service refers to the sacrificial system (or cultus) of the Israelites (Moo 1996:564; Dunn 1988b:527; Käsemann 1980:259; Sanday & Headlam [1902] 1960:231)<sup>88</sup> and not necessarily to their deeper worship such as their praying (contra Cranfield 1979:463).<sup>89</sup> It is likely that ἡ λατρεία thus refers to their ritual acts of worship in general (cf. Josh 22:27; 1 Chr 28:13) and the entire Yahwistic religious system (Hultgren 2011:358; 1 Macc 1:43; 2:19,22). Although the meaning of ἡ λατρεία as religious system does not necessarily imply a sharp contrast between “internal” and “external” worship, the ritual practice in general is not to be understood as a barometer of the condition of their heart (cf. Isa 29:13; Mt 15:7-9; Mk 7:6).

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<sup>85</sup> A fourth possibility would be that Paul could refer to all the covenants including the New Covenant (e.g., Jewett 2007:564; Ellison 1966:36-37), but that would not fit the current context which is about Israelites according to the flesh (cf. Moo 1996:562).

<sup>86</sup> This can especially be derived from the fact that the intertestamental passages that use the plural “covenants” normally refer to all the covenants that God had made with the “fathers” (Sir 44:12,18; Wis 18:22; 2 Macc 8:15; Moo 1996:563).

<sup>87</sup> Hultgren (2011:357) mentions 2 Macc 6:23 that refers to the law of Moses as “the holy God-given law” and 4 Macc 17:16 that refers to it as “the divine legislation”.

<sup>88</sup> All nine occurrences of λατρεία in the Septuagint, carries this notion (Moo 1996:546).

<sup>89</sup> My view is also contra Jewett (2007:564-565) who extends this “worship” to include the worship of the Christ-believers, a notion that does not fit the context.

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(6) The promises (αἱ ἐπαγγελίαι).

These promises refer to the promises to the fathers (cf. ἐπαγγελίας τῶν πατέρων in 15:8; Moo 1996:564; Dunn 1988b:528). Dunn (1988b:528) notes that Paul deliberately excludes the land, which would be included in the promise to Abraham (cf. 4:13, see 5.1.2.2; cf. Hultgren 2011:358), together with the blessing to the nations. This could even include God's promise through David that he would raise up a kingdom from one of his descendants to rule over an everlasting kingdom (2 Sam 2:4:17; Hultgren's 2011:358), or more specifically ὁ Χριστὸς τὸ κατὰ σάρκα (v. 5a), the Messianic promise (Käsemann 1980:259).

(7) The fathers (οἱ πατέρες).

Moo (1996:564) points out that “[d]escent from the patriarchs is valid both for them and for their descendants. The meaning and extent of these promises are the linchpin in Paul's interpretation of salvation history” (see esp. 9:6b-13; 11:15,28; cf. Hultgren 2011:358). The fathers need not be limited to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, but could be meant in a more general sense (Hultgren 2011:358; 4 Macc 13:17; cf. Cranfield 1979:464).

(8) From whom (ἐξ) the Christ [is] according to the flesh (ὁ Χριστὸς τὸ κατὰ σάρκα).

Christ, the Messiah is from ethnic Israel (Wright 2002:629; Moo 1996:565; cf. Mounce 1995:196). This is the highest of all privileges. Jesus the Christ is *their* awaited Messiah (Wright 2002:634; Dunn 1988b:528,535; Sanday & Headlam [1902] 1960:231; contra Gaston 1987:7). Yet, the Israelites' share in Christ is limited to κατὰ σάρκα, and here marks natural, ethnic descent (Hultgren 2011:358; Witherington III 2004:251) from David (Bruce [1985] 2000:186), which would logically correspond to the same meaning of κατὰ σάρκα in verse 3 (cf. Wright 2002:630-631; Dunn 1988b:5350; 1:3-4, see 5.1.1).

The translation of verse 5 is subjected to punctuation. While it is grammatically possible to translate “...according to the flesh, is the Christ. God who is over all be blessed for ever” (RSV) or similar, the translation “...from them is traced the human ancestry of Christ, who is God over all, forever praised!” (NIV) or similar

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(e.g., NRSV) is preferred. This latter translation implies a comma (not a full stop) after σάρκα, and is both grammatically and exegetically justified (Jewett 2007:567-568; Seifrid 2007:649,653; Witherington III 2004:251-252; Wright 2002:630-631; Moo 1996:565-568; Bruce [1985] 2000:186-187; Mounce 1995:197; Guthrie 1981:340; Cranfield 1979:464-470; Cullmann [1963] 1971:312-313; Sanday & Headlam 1902 [1962]:233-238; contra Dunn 1988b:529; Käsemann 1980:259).<sup>90</sup> In this preferred translation the Israelites' Messiah is considered God. That Paul would see Christ as the Israelites' own Messiah and even as their Lord (10:13, see 6.1.2) and God (v. 5), would accentuate Paul's immense pain and anguish (v. 2) for them not accepting Him, and would make the irony almost unbearable (cf. Moo 1996:568).

Paul's reference to Christ furthermore signifies the most central point of continuity between the Israelites and the gospel, later to be elaborated upon in 9:24-10:21 (see 6.1.1-6.1.2). In this context however, Paul has mentioned the way in which they relate to Christ as κατὰ σάρκα, which would keep the entire mode of identity of the Ἰσραηλῖται (v. 4) within a natural, physical identity, signifying identity mode A, the *outer Israel*. That includes all the 8 privileges mentioned above. In Paul's exposition, none of these privileges necessarily imply salvation or even faith or devoutness to God as such and can all be considered as *external* privileges that all physical descendants of the patriarch Israel would share in by default (Gutbrod 1965:387; cf. Wright 2002:629; Moo 1996:559-560). This does not mean that

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<sup>90</sup> The first translation method would place a full stop after σάρκα and takes what follows as an independent praise to God, while the preferred translation that places a comma after σάρκα means that the words after the comma would modify ὁ Χριστός. Some arguments that favour the latter, preferred translation method are the following (Moo 1996:567-568; cf. Bruce [1985] 2000:186-187; Guthrie 1981:339-340; Cranfield 1979:466-469): (1) The ὁ ὢν is most naturally taken as a relative clause that modifies the preceding co-text (Robertson 1914:1108). (2) Paul's doxologies are always tied to the preceding context (e.g., 1:25; 11:36; 2 Cor 11:31; Gal 1:5). (3) Normally, independent blessings of God take the word "blessed" in the first position (except Ps 67:19, LXX), not after "God", which suggests that the blessing must be tied to the previous co-text (Cranfield 1979:468 views this argument in itself as strong and almost conclusive). (4) An antithesis is expected after "according to the flesh". (5) The exalted language about Jesus (e.g., κύριος in 10:13 is identical to J1 2:32 in the Septuagint, a translation for יהוה – see Bruce [1985] 2000:187 and Cranfield 1979:468; "in the form of God" in Php 2:6) and the activities ascribed to Him (e.g., dispensing of grace in Rom 1:7; judging sins in 1 Cor 4:4-5 and 2 Cor 5:10; in Eph and Col, considered by many to be Pauline [see fn. 19]: creation in Col 1:16 and Eph 3:9; forgiving of sins in Col 3:13) attest to Paul's belief in Christ's deity. Yet, while this translation and interpretation is preferred, one has to acknowledge that this aspect of Paul's understanding of Christ is mostly subtle with delicate distinctions.

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second temple Judaeans generally made such a distinction between salvation and inherited privileges. The kind of distinctions between an “outer” and “inner” Israel as implied in Romans 9 to 11 seem to be very much unique to Paul (see below).

An implicit question underneath Paul’s mentioning of these external privileges would be: if being a physical Israelite does not guarantee salvation, what does? How can an Israelite then be saved? As can be derived from Paul’s reference to the patriarchs in his salvation-historical exposition that will shortly follow (vv. 8-14), these questions would be applicable to historical Israel in particular.

##### **4.3.2.2 *They are not all Israel which are from Israel (vv. 6-8)***

At the background of the Israelites’ refusal to recognise the fulfilment of its promises, their history now had taken an unexpected turn (Moo 1996:568). This notion is surely implied after 9:1-5, since Paul mentioned all the Israelites’ privileges of which even include the Messiah after the flesh. They had everything they needed. The start of verse 6 enhances this notion: “It is not as though the word of God had failed.” This all fits into God’s plan and His faithfulness to His Word. Dunn (1988b:539) writes about verse 6: “The verse is therefore thematic not only for the next paragraph or two... but for the whole section” (cf. Wright 2002:635). Furthermore, if the Israelites could inherit the gospel by physical descent (by default) and not by faith, Paul’s gospel would be in jeopardy (Moo 1996:569).

Paul now moves on to arguably the most decisive statement of the entire Romans 9 to 11 in unlocking the rest of his exposition. For the first time in the letter Paul now uses Ἰσραήλ. As previously indicated, he could have used the term Ἰσραήλ in verse 4, but deliberately used Ἰσραηλίτης in the context of his kindred according to the flesh, identity mode A. Paul reserved the term Ἰσραήλ for this very significant definition and distinction about the true identity of “Israel” (cf. Gutbrod 1965:386-387). Paul here defines the meaning of “Israel” as he will apply it in the rest of Romans 9 to 11. This thesis will be tested as the study progresses toward the end of Romans 11 (see esp. 8.1.6).

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In the phrase οὐ γὰρ πάντες οἱ ἐξ Ἰσραήλ, οὗτοι Ἰσραήλ, there are a few translation possibilities. It can be translated “For not all those of Israel are Israel”, (LITV), “For they are not all Israel which are from Israel” (KJV), or even more precisely, “For all those from Israel, these are not Israel” (Dunn 1988b:539; Piper 1983:47-48). Whichever translation one chooses, the notion stays more or less the same: Israel is not to be defined in terms of those who are ἐξ Ἰσραήλ or those who are of physical descent (Kuhli 1991b:204; cf. Zerwick & Grosvenor 1988:479) from the patriarch Israel (BDAG, Ἰσραήλ §1; Moo 1996:573; Gutbrod 1965:383; cf. Dunn 1988b:538). In other words, the Ἰσραηλίται as described in 9:4-5 would represent those ἐξ Ἰσραήλ (the physical descendants), the *outer Israel* (identity mode A, see 3.3), while Ἰσραήλ denotes the *inner Israel* (identity mode AB, see 3.3).<sup>91</sup> The important point here is that the *inner Israel* here is the real Israel or “true Israel” (Wright 1993:238), or at least what Paul will have in mind when he refers to “Israel” without qualification in the rest of Romans 9 to 11.<sup>92</sup>

Paul now (vv. 7-8) defines Ἰσραήλ (*inner Israel*): “not all of Abraham’s children are his seed”<sup>93</sup> (Wright 2002:636; Moo 1996:575; Dunn 1988b:540; cf. NRSV). Thus, to be Abraham’s physical descendant does not make you a real descendant (σπέρμα) of what Paul calls Ἰσραήλ. The real descendants are called or reckoned (καλέω) in Isaac. The τοῦτ' ἔστιν (v. 8) explains: the children of the flesh (τῆς σαρκός) are not even called “children of God”, only the children of the promise (τέκνα τῆς ἐπαγγελίας) are descendants (σπέρμα).

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<sup>91</sup> Some take Ἰσραήλ to refer to the church which would include the Gentile Christ-believers, in analogy to an interpretation where “the Israel of God” in Gal 6:16 is understood as a reference to the church (see 8.2.3). This notion is however not warranted given the current context (Moo 1996:574).

<sup>92</sup> Wright (2002:636) has a similar approach when he writes in connection with verse 6: “Paul has put down a marker that from this point on the word ‘Israel’ has two referents...” Even though this might be true in a general sense in the Pauline material, here in Rom 9:6 Paul seems to (re)define the term “Israel” as such to only point to the *inner Israel*.

<sup>93</sup> This translation takes the ὅτι with οὐδ' as the introduction to the whole sentence. Alternatively, the ὅτι can be read with εἰσὶν σπέρμα Ἀβραάμ, which would translate “Nor because they are his descendants are they all Abraham’s children” (NIV). Yet the σπέρμα is exegetically and contextually the significant term (vv. 7b,8), which makes the translation: ὅτι with οὐδ' more preferable (Moo 1996:575). Even in the alternative translation, the central point stays the same: the real descendants of Abraham are not merely national Israel (Dunn 1988b:540).

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The terms Paul uses in Romans 9:1-8 can now be arranged under the two modes of identity (A and AB) as follows:

##### **Identity mode A:**

τῶν ἀδελφῶν (my brothers, v. 3)

μου τῶν συγγενῶν μου κατὰ σάρκα (my kindred according to the flesh, v. 3)

Ἰσραηλῖται (Israelites, v. 4)

οἱ ἐξ Ἰσραήλ (those from Israel, v. 6)

Ἀβραάμ... τέκνα (Abraham's children, v. 6)

τέκνα τῆς σαρκός (children of the flesh, v. 8)

##### **Identity mode AB:**

Ἰσραήλ (Israel, v. 6)

σπέρμα (seed/descendants, vv. 7 [x2], 8)

ἐν Ἰσαὰκ (in Isaac, v. 7)

τέκνα τοῦ θεοῦ (children of God, v. 8)

τέκνα τῆς ἐπαγγελίας (children of the promise, v. 8)

##### **4.3.2.3 Theological implications**

Dunn (1988b:539) points out that there was a natural tendency, at least on the part of some, “to regard descent from the patriarchs as guarantee of salvation”<sup>94</sup> (cf. Moo 1996:573). Yet Paul does not deny that they remain “God’s people, in some sense (cf. 9:4-5; 11:1-2,28). But he denies that this corporate election of Israel means the salvation of all Israelites” (Moo 1996:573; cf. Ridderbos 1959:209). Cranfield (1979:473) certainly works in the right direction when he writes that “the point Paul is making is that not all who are included in the comprehensive Israel are included also in the selective, special Israel.” Similarly, he refers to an “Israel within Israel” (:474,475), to “God’s distinguishing within the general area of election”, and to an “inner circle of election” as opposed to those

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<sup>94</sup> See e.g. Mt 3:9; Lk 3:8; Justin, *Dialogue with Trypho* 140 (Dunn 1988b:539).

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who are outside of this circle (:471; cf. Cosgrove 1997:65-72).<sup>95</sup> Moo (1996:738) writes: “Within the corporate election of Israel, there is operating, Paul shows, an election of individuals.” The same accounts for Bruce ([1985] 2000:188) who writes that “not all the descendants of Israel are Israelites in the inward sense” or in a “spiritual sense”. While agreeing with Bruce’s general notion, “spiritual” could hardly denote the work of the Holy Spirit in the sense of regeneration which would correspond to the identity in Christ (see 5.1-7.4). In fact, Paul generally stays away from the proper designation πνεῦμα<sup>96</sup> when writing about Israel, which calls for hesitance to speak of “spiritual Israel” (cf. Käsemann 1980:262; contra Moo 1996:573,575, etc.). The context of Romans 9 constrains the identification of the “real” or “true” Israel (in Paul’s definition) within the covenant people of the Old Testament (cf. Käsemann 1980:263).

Still, the question remains: what does Paul mean by “Israel” which is not of physical descent, which are “children of the promise” or “in Isaac” (quoted from Gen 21:12)? At first glance, Paul’s notion not to make physical descent decisive of being Ἰσραήλ, seems to be contradicted by his mention of Isaac as Israel’s (the patriarch, v. 6; BDAG, Ἰσραήλ §1; Moo 1996:573; cf. Dunn 1988b:538) father, Sarah, his mother (v. 9) and Rebecca, his wife (v. 10), as if genealogy did play a role. Yet, if the distinction was merely physical and would for example point only to some physical descendants ἐξ Ἰσραήλ the patriarch (v. 6), pointing to someone higher up in the genealogical line would render such a distinction meaningless. The reference to Isaac implies a contrast to Ishmael, the other child of Abraham as is clear from the context of the quoted Gen 21:12 (v. 7). Even though the fulfilment of God’s promise involves genealogy, Paul’s ultimate contrast is between the τέκνα τῆς σαρκός and the τέκνα τῆς ἐπαγγελίας (v. 8), and thus not

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<sup>95</sup> Cosgrove (1997:65-72) also distinguishes between an “Israel A” and an “Israel B”, where “Israel B is in some sense *true* Israel” and “Israel A” would either refer to “children of the flesh” (v. 8) or “the twelve tribes stemming from Jacob” (:65-66). But on his reading of 9:6-13, Cosgrove seems to include the descendants of Esau and Ishmael under “Israel A”, which would point for him to the possibility that “all human beings belong to another Israel, Abrahamic Israel” in whom all the nations of the earth would be blessed (:72).

<sup>96</sup> A possible exception is Rom 2:29, yet there it denotes the unregenerate human spirit and does not indicate the working of the Holy Spirit as such (as e.g. in Rom 8; see 4.5.1). Furthermore, πνεῦμα has to be distinguished from πνευματικός “spiritual”, e.g., in connection with the law (Rom 7:14, see 7.4.1).

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foremost genealogical (cf. Cranfield 1979:474-475). He has something deeper in mind. Isaac was the object of God's promise rather than Ishmael. Isaac was Abraham's σπέρμα "in the selective sense" (Cranfield 1979:476). Paul's reference to Isaac as "our father" (v. 10) has to be associated with Paul's identity as Israelite, his kindred according to the flesh (:477). Verse 10 accentuates that neither Jacob nor Esau had a better claim than the other on the divine promise (Moo 1996:580; cf. v. 13).

At this point (end of verse 10) in Paul's discourse there are still some outstanding questions. It is still not entirely clear what is meant by "children of the promise" or children "in Isaac". What are the criteria for them to be reckoned as "Israel" (the *inner Israel*)? The ἐπαγγελίας (vv. 8-9) surely alludes to the promise to Abraham in Romans 4:13,14,16. But in this context the notion of faith is not explicitly mentioned as in Romans 4, neither of Abraham nor of the people of Israel. As with πνεῦμα (cf. Käsemann 1980:262; contra Dunn 1988b:541), one should be hesitant to identify Paul's notion of πίστις with identity mode AB as such (cf. Rom 4; see 5.1.2). Paul rather connects the term πίστις later in 9:30,32 to belief in Christ (cf. Dunn 1988b:539; Ridderbos 1959:210; see 6.1.1). Another question that could arise is, does being "from Isaac" and being "children of the promise" mean that *inner Israel* of the Old Testament is saved? Käsemann (1980:263) senses this tension when he writes: "Hasty statements are of no use at this point." At this point Paul probably builds up the tension on these underlying questions intentionally.

#### **4.4 Israel, calling and election: an inner and outer aspect (AB)**

Romans 9:14-23 can be understood as an excursion or detour to Paul's main argument (Moo 1996:589), where the style of diatribe is particularly evident (Hultgren 2011:366; Moo 1996:589; Dunn 1988b:555; Käsemann 1980:267; Barrett [1962] 1975:185). The aim in this section is not to explain all the detail of each verse, and neither to attempt to answer all possible questions regarding God's purpose and/or election. The focus will therefore be on Paul's bigger

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argument and only some specific questions pertaining to my enquiry will be addressed.

##### 4.4.1 Romans 9:11-23

In verses 11 to 23 Paul elaborates on what constitutes (*inner*) Israel (v. 6), the “children of the promise” (v. 8). Simultaneously, Paul interprets and appropriates salvation history (Dunn 1988b:562,564; Käsemann 1980:264; Cranfield 1979:479,492) within the context of his gospel of faith, which is first to the Judaeans, and also to the Greek (1:16, see 5.1.1; cf. Wright 2002:638). The eventual outcome of salvation history in Christ is rooted in κατ' ἐκλογὴν πρόθεσις τοῦ θεοῦ (9:11): “the purpose of God according to election” (LITV, KJV). The primary theme here is not so much election as it is God’s πρόθεσις: His *purpose* (e.g., NRSV; KJV) or *plan* (BDAG, πρόθεσις, §2). God’s purpose κατ' ἐκλογὴν describes the way in which His purpose is fulfilled (cf. Käsemann 1980:264; Sanday & Headlam [1902] 1960:244).

In these verses, Paul has in mind the bigger picture of the purpose of God that culminates in the inclusion of Gentiles (v. 24). Verses 11 to 23 are thus not foremost a treatise on the mechanics of individual election (contra Moo 1996:580-609), but rather a motivation for the outcome of salvation history in terms of the former priority of Israel and the latter inclusion of the Gentiles. In other words, God’s calling (καλέω) was to Israel first (v. 12) and then to the Gentiles (v. 24). It has more to do with the priority of nations in God’s purposes and the outplay of salvation history, than individual election as such. Against this backdrop, the content of these verses has to be interpreted (cf. Wright 2002:638; Dunn 1988b:569).

Some of the terminology that relate to God’s purpose (πρόθεσις) are the following:

(1) God’s ultimate will (implied in v. 15; θέλω: vv. 16,18) corresponds to His bigger purpose.

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(2) The hardening<sup>97</sup> (σκληρύνω: vv. 18) of people culminates in a salvation-historical outcome where God's ultimate purpose is effected.

(3) Certain actions or attributes of God all serve God's greater purpose: (a) God's wrath (ὀργή: v. 22), (b) the showing of mercy (ἐλέω: vv. 15,16,18,23) and (c) God's patience (μακροθυμία: v. 22).

(4) Paul's use of "vessel" (σκεῦος, vv. 21-23) underlines the instrumental character of God's dealings with people in the greater scheme of salvation history (cf. Cranfield 1979:487,492) that would culminate in Christ (cf. Witherington III 2004:256).

The theme of election that stands in a close relationship to God's purpose (v. 11) and stays present underneath the surface of this whole passage can be expressed in terms of two aspects (cf. Cranfield 1979:481):

(a) *Outer election*. This has to do with the whole nation of Israelites. This functions on the level of ethnicity and a specific bloodline, which culminated in Christ according to the flesh (ὁ Χριστὸς τὸ κατὰ σάρκα, v. 5). All the privileges listed in verses 4 to 5 identify them as God's children or people in some sense, but does not necessarily imply salvation (see 4.3.2). This aspect of election corresponds to identity mode A.

(b) *Inner election*. This more closely relates to God's specific purpose in salvation history. The people that share in this aspect, "stand in a positive relationship to God's purpose" (Cranfield 1979:481), which differentiates them from the outer aspect of election, or in Cranfield's (:481) words, from those who "stand outside the circle of the Israel within Israel." Even though this might imply salvation, Paul does not specifically mention salvation as such here (cf. Sanday & Headlam [1902] 1960:245), and continues to leave the underlying question about Israel's salvation unanswered (cf. 4.3.2.3). This aspect of election corresponds to identity mode AB.

In the light of Paul's bigger scheme of salvation history, His reference to Jacob and Esau (v. 13) can be understood as representatives or types (Käsemann

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<sup>97</sup> For Israel's hardening, see esp. 6.1.1.1 and 8.1.1.

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1980:264) of whole nations, where Jacob would represent historical Israel (as the patriarch carrying that name) and Esau would represent the nations outside of Israel. In other words, Paul also had the people who descended from them in mind (Witherington III 2004:253; Moo 1996:584; Bruce [1985] 2000:192; Käsemann 1980:265; Cranfield 1979:479-480; cf. Dunn 1988b:544; Sanday & Headlam [1902] 1960:246). This notion is confirmed by Paul's quotation in verse 12: Ὁ μείζων δουλεύσει τῷ ἐλάσσονι, an exact quote from Genesis 25:23 (LXX), denoting the two nations in Rebekah's womb (Cranfield 1979:479). Even the reference to Malachi 1:2-3 in verse 13 indicates that "the nations Israel and Edom, rather than their individual ancestors Jacob and Esau" are in view (Bruce [1985] 2000:192-193).

God's purpose according to election (v. 12) is based on calling (καλέω) and not on works (ἐξ ἔργων). The emphasis is on God's initiative in the calling of Israel (v. 12) and the nations (v. 24) respectively. If it was based on works, it would have been based on the initiative of human beings. The works here probably refer to the works of the law as an identity marker for being God's people rather than an attempt to earn<sup>98</sup> election (Wright 2002:637; Dunn 1988b:548-549). Paul excludes the works of the law as marker for election in answer to a Judaeans conception of Israel's election that included the works of the law (cf. Dunn 1988b:549,551), or regarded physical descent as determinative of partaking in the promise (Barrett [1962] 1975:183; Sanday & Headlam [1902] 1960:246). It is worthy of note here that Paul neither mentions anything of Israel's faith as such as possible criterion for election or salvation. Paul seems to reserve faith as criterion for salvation for believers in Christ (cf. Rom 4, see 5.1.2; Rom 10:1-21, see 6.1.2.2).

The effect of viewing God's purpose according to election here in a more generic sense as ultimately pointing to Israel and the nations (v. 24, see 6.1.1), can be understood as Paul's answer to sceptical Judaeans that questioned Paul's inclusion of the Gentiles. If seen in this way, it strengthens the possibility that Paul addressed a mixed audience, including a number of Judaeans (see 4.3.1).

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<sup>98</sup> The latter notion is however not necessarily totally excluded (cf. 4.5.1).

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### 4.5 Outward and inward Judaeans (AB?)

In Romans 2, Paul makes extensive use of the diatribe style (Moo 1996:125; Dunn 1988a:108; etc.). For Paul there is no difference in the way God treats sin, whether Judaeans or Gentile (Moo 1996:126). Romans 2:1-16 can be seen as a critique of the Judaeans' presumption about their inherited privileges (esp. vv. 1-5), where Paul relativises their possession of the law in terms of the effect it has on God's judgment (vv. 12-15), and Paul "levels the playing field" between Judaeans and Gentile (:127), especially in terms of the overall redemptive work of Christ (Hultgren 2011:131). The Judaeans cannot assume that they will escape God's wrath any more than Gentiles (Moo 1996:157).

#### 4.5.1 Romans 2:17-29

With Paul's statement οὐ Ἰουδαῖος ἐπινομάζῃ in verse 17, he confronts the Judaeans identity at its core. Paul's dialogue is not with any specific Judaeans, but with a typical Judaeans (Dunn 1988a:109) or the Judaeans as a nation (Wright 2002:445,447). In verses 17 to 22, he names 5 blessings, 4 prerogatives and 3 violations (Moo 1996:161-162):

*5 Blessings* (vv. 17-18). (1) Although the name Ἰουδαῖος (v. 17) is generally regarded as an outsider term in Paul (Elliott 2007:140-146; cf. 4.3.2.1) and he does not normally appropriate the term for his own self-designation (rather Ἰσραηλίτης: Rom 11:1; 2 Cor 11:22), it had been increasingly accepted and used as self-designation since the Maccabean period (Dunn 1988a:109). Yet, in Paul's dialogue with his Judaeans interlocutor he specifically uses the term Ἰουδαῖος when he addresses Judaeans pride and presumption (:108).<sup>99</sup> He arguably reserves the terms Ἰσραήλ and Ἰσραηλίτης for when he explains God's dealings with His people in the context of salvation history (Rom 9-11; see 4.3.2). It does not necessarily mean that Paul is anti-Judaean,<sup>100</sup> but rather that he wants to

<sup>99</sup> This still fits into the same pattern in which Paul utilised the term Ἰουδαῖοι in contrast to terms such as Ἰσραήλ, Ἰσραηλίτης or Ἑβραῖος (e.g., 2 Cor 11:22-24, see 4.2.2).

<sup>100</sup> Cf. 3:1-2, where Paul commends the Judaeans as guardians of the words of God.

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relativise any Judaeon privilege (cf. Dunn 1988a:108). (2) The possession of the law (v. 17) was certainly a blessing, but many Judaeans thought that their reliance on the law would exempt them from judgment (Moo 1996:160; Cranfield 1975:164; cf. Dunn 1988a:110) or secure their salvation (Barrett [1962] 1971:55).<sup>101</sup> (3) Even though boasting in God (v. 17) is not inherently wrong (Moo 1996:160; Dunn 1988a:110; Cranfield 1975:165) and Paul boasts in this way himself (e.g., Rom 5:11; 1 Cor 1:31; 2 Cor 10:17), he rather condemns an exclusive claim on God on the basis of ethnicity (cf. Dunn 1988a:110). (4) By knowing God's will (v. 18), Paul alludes to a "too easy assumption of a privileged knowledge by virtue of being instructed in the law" (Dunn 1988a:111). (5) To distinguish the things that really matter<sup>102</sup> (v. 18; Dunn 1988a:111) is, as the former, a privilege derived from the possession of the law (Moo 1996:161).

*4 Prerogatives* (vv. 19-20). (1) Paul addresses the Judaeon as being convinced (πέπειθαί; Zerwick & Grosvenor 1988:463) that he or she is a guide to the blind, (2) a light for those who are in darkness, (3) an instructor of the foolish, and (4) a teacher of the immature (Moo 1996:161-162). Many expositors recognise language borrowed from the Diaspora synagogue here (e.g., Moo 1996:162; Käsemann 1980:70; cf. Dunn 1988a:113), which served as Judaeon propaganda directed to the Hellenistic world (Moo 1996:162). Paul addresses typical Judaeon attitudes toward Gentiles in that he continues to confront the Judaeans' reliance on their privileged status over against the Gentiles (cf. Dunn 1988a:112).

*3 Violations* (vv. 21-22). Paul names three violations of the law as evidence of the Judaeans' failure to teach themselves (Moo 1996:163). (1) Stealing and (2) adultery are part of the Decalogue. (3) Paul lastly asks the Judaeans who detest idols (ὁ βδελυσσόμενος τὰ εἰδωλα; Zerwick & Grosvenor 1988:463), if they rob

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<sup>101</sup> This notion can be derived from Mic 3:11, where Micah says to Israel's leaders that they "lean on" (ἐπιναπαύομαι, LXX, same as Rom 2:17) the Lord, saying that calamity will not come upon them (Moo 1996:159-160).

<sup>102</sup> The phrase δοκιμάζεις τὰ διαφέροντα can also be rendered "approve those things that are best" or "distinguish the things that differ [from God's will]" (Moo 1996:160-161).

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temples (BDAG, ἱεροσυλέω §1; Zerwick & Grosvenor 1988:463; Moo 1996:163; cf. ἱερόσυλος in Ac 19:37).<sup>103</sup>

Verse 23 sums up the notion of verses 21 to 22: the Judaeans' boasting in the law as mark<sup>104</sup> of God's favour becomes a dishonour to God if their actions contradict the law (Dunn 1988a:115; cf. Wright 2002:446-447).<sup>105</sup> Yet, Paul equally criticises both their boasting in the privilege of possessing the law and their disobedience to the law (Longenecker 2011:327; Westerholm 2004:444; Gathercole 2002:200-215; Moo 1996:214).<sup>106</sup> Blasphemy against the name of God (v. 24) is thus the result of both their attitude (Dunn 1988a:116) and conduct (Moo 1996:166).

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<sup>103</sup> The verb ἱεροσυλέω, a *hapax legomenon*, could also mean "to commit sacrilege" (BDAG, ἱεροσυλέω §2; Cranfield 1975:168; Barrett [1962] 1971:57). Dunn (1988a:114-115) argues that while Paul might have Mal 1:14 in mind where funds and gifts intended for the temple were misappropriated, it is more probable that he had pagan temples in view – "the danger being that of actual plunder..., or of use of items taken from idol shrines" (cf. Wright 2002:447; Bruce [1985] 2000:99). The exact practice Paul is referring to remains unclear however (cf. Moo 1996:163).

<sup>104</sup> Wright (2002:446-447) refers to "badges that marked out" Judaeans from their pagan neighbours rather than "marks".

<sup>105</sup> For Wright (2002:447) and Dunn (1988a:115), both NPP proponents, the problem that Paul has with the Judaeans is not so much their sin and their breaking of the law, but that they dishonoured God.

<sup>106</sup> Dunn (1988a:115) is at pains to accentuate the NPP here when he argues that boasting in the possession of the law would be Paul's main target and disobedience to the law would be its result (e.g., "it needs to be said repeatedly that Paul regards the doing of the law as something desirable and necessary... His criticism of the Jewish interlocutor is that his [sic] national pride in the law has resulted in his [sic] *failing* to do what the law requires"). Gathercole (2002) convincingly argues for Paul's equal critique of both boasting in the possession of the law and the disobedience thereof (:200-215), where "God's election and Israel's obedience are consistently held together, and neither is emphasized at the expense of the other" (:203). On the basis of various Judaeans texts (e.g., Sirach, Tobit, Baruch, Enoch, 1 and 2 Maccabees, Jubilees, Psalms of Solomon, Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, Pseudo-Philo, 2 [Slavonic] Enoch, Apocalypse of Zephaniah, Testament of Job and Sibylline Oracles), Gathercole shows that final vindication based on works was prevalent in Judaeans thinking (:37-90). His final conclusion is not that far from Dunn (1988a:115) though, yet not identical: "the relationship between obedience and reliance on the Law in the texts above might be better described as reliance upon the Law *presupposing* or *including* obedience to it" (Gathercole 2002:215). In Moo's (1996:214) dialogue with the NPP, he concludes that disobedience to the law remains part of the deeper problem that Paul addresses in 2:1-29 (cf. Hong 1991:154). Moo (1996) argues for viewing the notion of merit in salvation as universal and "part of the broader realm of anthropology" (:217) that stretches wider and deeper than salvation history or even the Judaeans understanding of faith, law and covenant (cf. George 1994:241). For Westerholm (2004:444), Paul's point is that "sinners cannot be declared righteous on the basis of a law whose requirement to do what is right they have not met." Finally, Longenecker (2011:327) makes the following remark: "For the same rabbinic writings that Sanders [1977] uses for an understanding of Palestinian Judaism also contain some Jewish teachings, refer to some Jewish teachers, and report some Jewish situations that reflect an outlook that can only be called 'legalistic' and not 'nomistic' – and which, at times, some of the leading rabbis of the period denounced."

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In verse 25, Paul criticises circumcision *per se* (Moo 1996:167), the ultimate Judaeon mark of distinctiveness, the mark of the covenant. Membership of the people of the covenant without circumcision was unimaginable. It was obligatory and fundamental to their core identity (Dunn 1988a:119-120; cf. Wright 2002:448), even to the point that some would regard it as “a passport to salvation” (Barrett [1962] 1971:58; adopted by Cranfield 1975:172; cf. Mounce 1995:100). That the transgression of the law would cause their circumcision to become uncircumcision would have been controversial, but in Paul’s view such a sharp challenge “to undermine so central a pillar of Jewish self-understanding and identity” was necessary (Dunn 1988a:121).

That Paul by implication awards covenant status and judgment over against Judaeans to uncircumcised persons who fulfil the law (vv. 26-27),<sup>107</sup> relativises the importance of circumcision even more.<sup>108</sup> Paul’s direct connection of circumcision (that is in itself part of the law, Barrett [1962] 1971:58) with the obedience of the law makes circumcision and possession of the law almost synonyms, as if circumcision in itself places you under the obligation to fulfil the law, a mutuality indeed confirmed in Galatians 5:3 (Bruce [1985] 2000:99).

In summary, Paul’s rhetoric in verses 17 to 27 mainly relativises the name Ἰουδαῖος, their possession of the law and their circumcision, and places a Judaeon on an equal level with anyone else in terms of (1) obedience to the law and (2) their privileged status as covenant people of God. Paul will soon be contrasting the inability of both Judaeans and Gentiles to fulfil the law and their

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<sup>107</sup> This notion would have been beyond the bounds of what was legally permitted within the Judaeon tradition and boundary markers (Hultgren 2011:131). It may be asked if Paul is creating an altogether new mode of identity here. Against the bigger picture of Paul’s discourse in Rom 1-3 however, the possibility of either Gentiles or Judaeans who fulfil the law remain more ideal than real. The point Paul is working toward, is that he does not consider adherence to the law (even if possible) or possessing the law as warrant for salvation or as constitutive of belonging to God’s people in the New Testament, a status that is only accessed and marked by faith in Christ (Rom 3-4).

<sup>108</sup> While this is true in an absolute sense, one has to acknowledge that circumcision also has to be understood as historically and contextually positioned. In other words, circumcision was not insignificant in itself. It indeed served the timely purpose of confirming God’s covenant and appropriating His promises (Gen 17:10). Paul did however question its significance when it was understood as making circumcised persons exempt from judgment, or as ensuring their salvation.

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inherent corruptness (3:9-20) to the revelation of righteousness by faith in Christ apart from the works of the law (3:21-31).

All the privileges of the Judaeans mentioned in verses 17 to 27 (e.g., their name, possession of the law, circumcision) can be regarded as external or *outward* privileges, which constituted the externalised identity (cf. Barrett [1962] 1971:60) of the typical Judaeans (cf. Dunn 1988a:123). The Judaeans identity described in verses 17 to 27 thus can be described as identity mode A (see 3.3), very similar to Israel according to the flesh, or in Cranfield's (1975:172) words: "outside that Israel within Israel, to which Paul refers in 9.6ff" (cf. 4.2).

In verses 28 to 29, Paul now identifies a "true" Judaeans as one whose circumcision is not outward but *inward*. The real circumcision that counts is καρδίας ἐν πνεύματι οὐ γράμματι: of the heart, in the (human) spirit (KJV; LITV; Zerwick & Grosvenor 1988:464; Ervin 1984:113; Sanders [1983] 1989:127; Calvin 2012c:82,85) or spiritual (RSV; NRSV; Hultgren 2011:130-131; du Toit 2010:591; Barrett [1962] 1971:60), and not in the written Torah itself (Hultgren 2011:130; Dunn 1988a:124; Käsemann: 1980:77). Paul is not referring to the Holy Spirit here and does not allude to be "in the Spirit" as a Christ-believer (contra Wright 2002:449; Moo 1996:174-175; Dunn 1988a:127-128).<sup>109</sup> Even Paul's allusion to the meaning of their name ("praise", see 4.1) in the words: οὐ ὁ ἔπαινος οὐκ ἐξ ἀνθρώπων ἀλλ' ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ, underscores the notion that Paul is still within the domain or the Judaeans identity.<sup>110</sup>

To be circumcised in the heart in Leviticus 26:41 and Deuteronomy 10:16<sup>111</sup> allude to a yielding and humbling attitude which by implication involves the laying down of stubbornness and pride. The circumcision of the heart in Deuteronomy 30:6 is about loving the Lord, while Jeremiah 4:4 contrasts circumcision of the

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<sup>109</sup> The reference of ἐν πνεύματι together with καρδίας makes such a rendering unlikely, and would rather place both terms in an anthropological domain.

<sup>110</sup> Paul's pun on the meaning of the Judaeans name required some Judaeans insider knowledge (cf. Wright 2002:449).

<sup>111</sup> In Lev 26:41, uncircumcised hearts are explicitly contrasted to humbleness. In Deut 10:16, the contrast is to being "stiff-necked".

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heart to sinful conduct (cf. 9:24-26). Some or all of these connotations might well be part of what Paul has in mind here.

More specifically, two aspects have to be distinguished here:

- (1) A yielding, humbling spirit that loves God (Lev 26:41; Deut 10:16; 30:6; cf. Barrett [1962] 1971:61). This has more to do with attitude than conduct.
- (2) Conduct according to God's law (Jer 4:4; cf. 9:24-26).

The first aspect (1) can be considered as identity mode AB (see 3.3) that would correspond to the *inner* Israel (cf. 4.3.2.2). In as much as Paul's description of the Judaeans who is circumcised in the heart corresponds to this mode of identity, the appropriation of the term Ἰουδαῖος can arguably be viewed as a possible exception to Paul's use of the term. Paul would normally employ the term Ἰσραήλ to convey such a notion (see Elliott 2007:140-146; cf. 4.3.2.1). But Paul intentionally does not employ the terms Ἰσραήλ or Ἰσραηλίτης here, for he reserves these terms in Romans for the historical Israel in particular (Rom 9-11; as argued in 4.3.2). Yet, one cannot be too strict about the terminology here, and a measure of overlap among the terms Ἰουδαῖος, Ἰσραήλ or Ἰσραηλίτης has to be acknowledged. In view of the cryptic, unexplained nature of Paul's statements in 2:28-29, he is arguably creating some deliberate tension or possible questions among his recipients. Some of the questions that could be asked at this point are the following: (a) Does Paul envision Judaeans in his audience that are "circumcised in the heart" who do not accept Christ or believe in Him? If such a designation is possible for Paul, would such a group of people be saved? (b) Was there a historical Israel who were "circumcised in the heart"? If so, are they saved?

In answer to the first question (a), the rest of Paul's letter would answer negatively: faith in Christ is the only access to salvation (1:16-17, see 5.1.1; 3-4, see 5.1.2; 10, see 6.1.2; cf. Dunn 1988a:40). As for the second question (b), at least in terms of historical Israel, this mode of identity has to be kept open. Such people may be saved, but it would neither be on the basis of fulfilment of the law nor ethnic inheritance. The question about their salvation remains open and unanswered, only to be revisited in Romans 9 to 11 (cf. Barrett [1962] 1971:60).

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As for the physical Judaeon in Paul's time who does not accept Christ or believe in Him, the second aspect (2) probably applies (conduct), especially in this context that runs parallel to the possession of and adherence to the law. However, in terms of the ability to ultimately keep the law, all people are deemed to fail, whether Judaeon or Gentile (3:1-20).<sup>112</sup> Regarding the law itself, Paul's view is that it is inherently good (7:12) and even spiritual (7:14, see 7.4.1), but the human impossibility to adhere to the law (3:9-20) renders its ability to serve as instrument or mark of righteousness null and void. Only faith can bring about or mark out righteousness (3:21-35). With this larger picture of Paul's thought in mind, a possible allusion to circumcision in the heart as fulfilling the law would be indeed ironic and even paradoxical. Yet if Paul was alluding to a "Judaeon" who is circumcised in heart as a believer in Christ, such a notion would have been obscure and out of context, especially in the light of the way in which Paul accentuates all people's inherent corruptness in 3:1-20, and the fact that faith only enters Paul's main discourse in 3:22 (after the introductory "title" statement in 1:16-17, see 5.1.1).<sup>113</sup> To imply that the "true Judaeon" is someone who is regenerated in Christ and believes in Christ here is thus to put the cart before the horse in the build-up of Paul's argument.

It is more likely that Paul is creating a deliberate irony: he contrasts the Judaeon's inability to adhere to the law (as with the Gentile) with an *ideal* Judaeon or even a non-Judaeon (v. 27) who can.<sup>114</sup> In other words, an authentic Judaeon *would be* one who is "circumcised in heart" and therefore would have the inward moral capability in his or her spirit to fulfil the law (cf. Ervin 1984:113-115; Gutbrod

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<sup>112</sup> It could be objected here that Paul claimed law abidance himself (Php 3:6). In the polemical context of Php 3:6 however, Paul's referral to be blameless in terms of righteousness under the law most likely constitutes a perspective to the law before his conversion (Westerholm 1988:161), and especially the pharisaic interpretation of the law (v. 5; Fee 1995:309; see 6.1.7).

<sup>113</sup> Even Wright (2002:449) seems to cover the awkwardness of his interpretation (who reads the Christ-believer in here) when he states that "Paul has introduced this brief description of the new covenant people in his argument without full explanation" and then goes to great pains to make it fit into the bigger structure of Romans.

<sup>114</sup> It may be objected that Paul's reference to οὐ γράμματι (v. 29) would rule out such an interpretation. The reference to οὐ γράμματι however rather alludes to the possession of the written law (Dunn 1988a:124) than its fulfilment.

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1965:381)<sup>115</sup> and would not claim authenticity merely on the grounds of possessing the law (οὐ γράμματι, v. 29). Such Judaeans would live up to their claim, and they would honour and praise God. This *ideal* image of a Ἰουδαῖος may hint on the *inner* Israel (identity mode AB), but it does not become an *actual* designation or term to identify the *inner* Israel. The *ideal* Judaeans would then make the contrast with the total corruptness of all people and their inability to fulfil the law in Rom 3:1-20 even more stark and effective. Such an ideal picture of how Judaeans ought to be, would implicitly prompt for a solution: firstly to repent of their inability to fulfil the law, which is real humbleness (pertaining to aspect 1 again), and secondly to accept Christ as Messiah in faith. Understood in this way, Paul's image of the ideal Judaeans would be an implicit rhetorical appeal to accept Christ, for He is the only one who fits that ideal picture.

In summary then, while Paul's precise intent in 2:28-29 is hard to determine, the possibility that he might allude to both a humble, yielding Judaeans (1 above: identity mode AB) and an *ideal* Judaeans who can fulfil the law (2 above) has to be kept open.

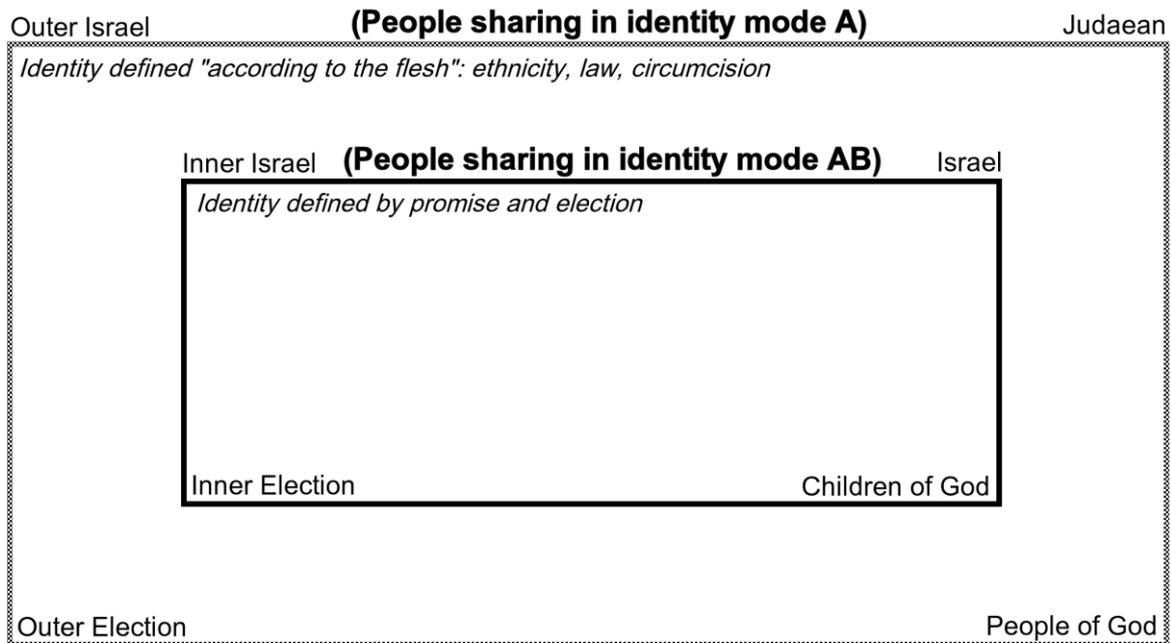
#### **4.6 People sharing in identity modes A and AB schematically**

People sharing in identity modes A and B as put forth in 4.2 to 4.5, can be represented schematically as follows:

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<sup>115</sup> Ervin (1984:113) points to the notion in Deut 10:16, where the circumcision of the heart is something the people was called upon to do for themselves.

#### 4. Israel, Israelites and Judaeans



#### 4.6.1 Explanation of schematic representation of identity modes A and B

The outer frame represents the totality of the people of God as defined in Old Testament terms. Simultaneously, this outer frame marks people sharing in identity mode A. People who defined their identity in this way are either Israel according to the flesh of the Old Testament (Ἰσραηλίτης) or unbelieving Judaeans in Paul's present (Ἰουδαῖος). Israel according to the flesh (national Israel) was the national people of God in the Old Testament and formed part of God's outer election. Their identity was marked off by physical descent, law and circumcision. Judaeans in Paul's present defined their identity as God's children on the same basis as national, historical Israel according to the flesh (identity mode A).

While the totality of Israelites in the Old Testament shared in identity mode A, not all would share in identity mode B. Identity mode AB constitutes the real or true Israel that Paul identifies with the term Ἰσραήλ (Rom 9:6). People sharing in both identity modes A and B (identity mode AB) are indicated by the solid frame which exist *within* the totality of God's people (within people sharing in identity mode A). They are the *children* of God and form part of God's inner election. In the Old

#### *4. Israel, Israelites and Judaeans*

Testament, their identity is marked off by both the identity markers of identity mode A and by being children of the promise (identity mode B: being part of God's inner election). Identity mode B could not exist on its own and necessarily implies identity mode A.

*5. Faith in Christ, Abraham and law*

## **5. FAITH IN CHRIST, ABRAHAM AND LAW**

The next mode of identity to be addressed is identity mode C. In principle, this identity mode can stand on its own, without A or B. In the texts that will be discussed in 5.1 to 6.2 however, all of them display some or other relation to A or AB. As indicated in 3.3, ABC passages can be understood as displaying mostly *continuity* with Israel (5.1), where the AC passages can be understood as mostly displaying *discontinuity* between Christ-believers and Israel (6.1-6.2).

### **5.1 Faith in Christ in continuation with- and as fulfilment of the promises to Abraham (ABC)**

With the exception of Galatians 4:21-5:1, faith in Christ is a central theme in the passages in this section (5.1), and is together with the Spirit<sup>116</sup> (Gal 3:2-5; 4:29; Eph 2:18,22) constitutive of the identity in Christ. The connection of the believer in Christ to Abraham and/or the promise to him is especially predominant in Romans 4:1-25; Galatians 3:1-29 and 4:21-5:1, and is probably implied in Romans 1:16-17 and even in Ephesians 2:12. Identity in terms of the law is a prominent theme in most of these passages (except Rom 1:16-17), especially Romans 4 and Galatians 3.

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<sup>116</sup> While faith will be a constant theme in most of sections 5.1 and 6, Paul's understanding of Spirit/spirit in terms of the identity of the Christ-believer will eventually climax in 7.1-7.5.

*5. Faith in Christ, Abraham and law***5.1.1 Romans 1:16-17**

Apart from the modes of identity that are represented here, some aspects pertaining to Christology, righteousness (δικαιοσύνη), salvation, and faith will be elaborated upon. This will help to sketch some of the outer constraints of much of Paul's understanding of the believer in Christ (identity mode C), especially in his letter to the Romans.

In Paul's introduction to his letter to the Romans, he indicates that the gospel of God (v. 1) which was promised by the prophets in the Holy Scriptures (v. 2) concerning His Son, came ἐκ σπέρματος Δαυιδ κατὰ σάρκα (v. 3). The qualification κατὰ σάρκα primarily refers to Jesus' physical, Davidic descent (Wright 2002:417; Dunn 1988a:13; Barrett [1962] 1975:18; Ridderbos 1959:25; 10.1 in Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:112; cf. 4.3.2.1), which alludes to His Messianic stature (Wright 2002:415-416; Moo 1996:46; Cranfield 1975:58; Barrett [1962] 1975:20). The phrase secondarily carries overtones of Jesus' natural human existence (58.10 in Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:587; cf. Moo 1996:47; Käsemann 1980:11; Ridderbos 1959:25). His natural earthly existence would be the counterpart of His pre-existence, signified by τοῦ γενομένου (Moo 1996:46; cf. Cranfield 1975:59; Barrett [1962] 1975:20-21; contra Dunn 1988a:12). For Käsemann (1980) Christ is the "decisive content" of the gospel (:10) and the "theme of the epistle" (:24), where the περὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ (v. 3) refers back to the εὐαγγέλιον θεοῦ (v. 1) and replaces an objective genitive, equivalent to εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ Χριστοῦ (:10). Moo (1996:50-51) extracts no less than four Christological titles in verses 1 to 4: "Son of God", "Seed of David", "Messiah" and "Lord". Christ's centrality to the gospel for Paul is also signified by the phrase εὐαγγελίῳ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ in 1:9 (cf. 15:19,29), which constitutes a high Christology (cf. Ridderbos 1959:25-26).

Most commentators regard 1:16-17 as a title statement and as thematic of the whole letter (e.g., Wright 2002:423; Moo 1996:63; Dunn 1988a:37; Cranfield 1975:87). Possible accusations against Paul's gospel that would have been anti-

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Judaeans may lie behind Paul's statement that he is not ashamed<sup>117</sup> of the gospel<sup>118</sup> (Moo 1996:66; Grayston 1964). Paul's pride for the gospel is rooted in the power of God to salvation (v. 16). The power of God and salvation itself go hand in hand, and define the gospel as an actualised message (Käsemann 1980:22) in the life of its recipients (cf. Witherington III 2004:56; Mounce 1995:70).

While the deliverance of a broad range of evils is signified by σωτηρία and its cognates<sup>119</sup> in the New Testament, as inherited from its use in the Old Testament,<sup>120</sup> "Paul uses the words only of spiritual deliverance" (Moo 1996:67; contra Jewett 2007:138-139) with an eschatological focus, especially as deliverance from eschatological "judgment that is finalized on the last day" (Moo 1996:67; cf. Dunn 1988a:39; Cranfield 1975:89; Käsemann 1980:22; Rom 5:9-10; 13:11; 1 Th 5:9). Although salvation often carries a negative meaning (deliverance from something), it can denote "restoration to wholeness" (Dunn 1988a:39), the restoration of the glory which sinful people lack (Cranfield 1975:89), or "God's provision for a person's spiritual need" (Moo 1996:67).<sup>121</sup> Apart from the eschatological dimension of salvation, anyone who believes already shares in salvation (Moo 1996:67; cf. Dunn 1988a:39; Cranfield 1975:89),<sup>122</sup> which entails "a present peace and joy as a state of openness before God" and people (Käsemann 1980:22). While Jewett (2007:138) and Wright (2002:424) both understand salvation as having a current effect apart from final judgment, they tend to put more emphasis on the social effect of salvation to the possible expense of inner, spiritual transformation.<sup>123</sup> In terms of the effect of the

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<sup>117</sup> Hultgren (2011:71) thinks that some people may have found the gospel abhorrent, since it is about a crucified "saviour" that was rejected by the Roman authorities, which in itself could have been perceived as obscene (cf. Jewett 2007:137).

<sup>118</sup> Some Greek witnesses include τοῦ Χριστοῦ after εὐαγγέλιον (D: Codex Bezae Cantabrigiensis [corrector] – 5<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> century; Ψ: Codex Athos [8<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> century]; Majority Text).

<sup>119</sup> Louw and Nida (1988 Vol. 1:241-242) additionally list σώζω, σωτήριος and σωτήριο through semantic subdomains 20.25-30.

<sup>120</sup> In the OT, salvation is normally attributed to God who delivers His people from their enemies (e.g., Ex 14:13; 15:2) or from physical peril (e.g., Judg 15:18; 1 Sam 11:9). Among other uses (e.g., historical/temporal; spiritual/eternal), it can denote God's eschatological deliverance (e.g., Isa 12:2; 25:9; 46:13; 49:6; 52:7,10) of His people (Moo 1996:66; Sanday & Headlam [1902] 1960:23).

<sup>121</sup> See esp. the notion of "saved by hope" (ἐλπίδι ἐσώθημεν) in Rom 8:24 (Moo 1996:67).

<sup>122</sup> See e.g. νῦν ἡμέρα σωτηρίας in 2 Cor 6:2 (cf. Rom 8:24, see 8.1.5.4).

<sup>123</sup> Jewett (2007:138-140,143) understands salvation as present, and sees salvation more as a transformation of the Roman imperial power structure of honour and shame. Similarly, for Wright

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power of salvation, Dunn (1988a:39) brings this power in connection with a “marked effect on people, transforming them – as evident particularly in conversion”, and to “a visible and marked alteration in a current condition that could not be attributed to human causation.” Similarly, Mounce (1995:71) connects salvation to “justification (being set right with God), sanctification (growth in holiness), and glorification (the ultimate transformation into the likeness of Christ...)” (cf. Bruce [1985] 2000:87). All of these aspects place salvation right in the centre of the human relationship with God (cf. Witherington III 2004:50; Cranfield 1975:87-91).

Salvation is for πάντι τῷ πιστεύοντι (v. 16). In terms of the nature of faith in Paul, it can be viewed as a reaction to God’s grace without merit (Moo 1996:67; Cranfield 1975:90). It signifies “trust in a person” (Moo 1996:67) and “total reliance upon God” (Dunn 1988a:46). As for the status or role of faith, it can be seen as both the initial and continuing access point to the saving power of God (Dunn 1988a:40; cf. προσαγωγή in Rom 5:2), and as mark or badge of those in the New Covenant (Wright [2005] 2009:113,121; 1997:125-129).

Just after Paul accentuated the universal nature of the gospel (for everyone), he strikes a particular note (Moo 1996:68; cf. Käsemann 1980:22): Ἰουδαίῳ τε πρῶτον καὶ Ἑλληνι (v. 16). Most commentators recognise a sense of Judaeen priority from this phrase (Moo 1996:68; Dunn 1988a:40). As for the nature of this priority, it is at least chronological and historical in that the gospel came to the Judaeans first and then to the nations (cf. Moo 1996:69; Mounce 1995:71; Hendriksen 1980, Romans 1:16-17). At a deeper level, Paul might have their priority in God’s saving purposes in mind (Dunn 1988b:40; Cranfield 1975:91; cf.

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(2002:424), “‘salvation’ had far more to do with the rescue of Israel from pagan oppression, from Egypt or Babylon or, now, Rome, than with ‘life after death.’” While the gospel would indeed affect the understanding of the imperial power structure and would prompt a transformation thereof, this would not be salvation itself, but rather a result of a new Spirit-filled life (Rom 8; Gal 5:25), a new understanding of the worth of people as equals (Gal 3:28), and love poured out in the hearts of people in Christ (Rom 5:5) that worked through to the community. In other words, I would neither argue for disconnecting the experience of spiritual and social realities in the first century person, nor to dislodge the social effect of salvation from the spiritual reality of salvation in Paul’s gospel, but rather that the social transformation follows from inner, spiritual transformation.

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Ridderbos 1959:33-34; cf. 9-11; esp. 6.1.1). Yet since Paul accentuates the responsibility to believe in verse 17 (cf. Moo 1996:67), their priority seems to include their *responsibility* (as people to whom God's words have been entrusted, 3:2) toward the gospel (1:16; 2:10). There even appears to be some form of priority with respect to judgment (2:8-9).

The righteousness (δικαιοσύνη, v. 17) can firstly denote the status of the believer given by God (Cranfield 1975:99-100; adopted by Mounce 1995:73), which is the classic Protestant interpretation. Luther viewed the righteousness as purely forensic without denoting moral transformation (in Moo 1996:71), that he described with the phrase: *simul iustus et peccator* ("simultaneously righteous and sinner"). Cranfield (1975:95) notes that the Catholic scholars traditionally included moral regeneration as part of righteousness. By taking θεοῦ as an objective genitive, righteousness can secondly denote an attribute or attitude of God such as His faithfulness<sup>124</sup> to His promises (Fitzmyer 1993:262; discussed in Moo 1996:70; Dunn 1988a:41). It can thirdly point to an activity of God, where θεοῦ is taken as a subjective genitive, and denote the saving action of God (Roberts 1981:18; Barrett [1962] 1975:29; discussed in Moo 1996:71; Dunn 1988a:41).

Other than Cranfield (1975:99-100) who views righteousness as the status of the believer (cf. Ridderbos 1966:175-176)<sup>125</sup> or Jewett (2007:142) who sees it as God's activity, Dunn (1988a:41-42) rightly argues for an approach that embraces both God's action (subjective genitive) and the gift bestowed by God (objective genitive):

Since the basic idea of *relationship* in which God acts even for the defective partner, an action whereby God sustains the weaker partner of his covenant relationship within the relationship, the answer again is really *both*... It is God's righteousness which enables and in fact achieves man's [sic] righteousness.

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<sup>124</sup> As Dunn (1988a:43) points out, this is one of the possible meanings of πίστις (cf. Rom 3:3; Gal 5:22; 2 Th 1:4).

<sup>125</sup> Ridderbos (1966:175-176) views righteousness in Paul as a human quality which is attributed/granted (Dutch: "toegekend") by God.

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Moo (1996:74) has a similar approach (cf. Barrett [1962] 1975:29; Sanday & Headlam [1902] 1960:24-25), and writes that righteousness includes both theology (God's acting) and anthropology (the human being who receives). For Paul, the righteousness of God is thus a relational concept, "the act by which God brings people into right relationship with himself" (Moo 1996:74) and with one another (Jewett 2007:141; Dunn 1988a:40-41).

The phrase ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν (v. 17) has been variously interpreted.<sup>126</sup> It can be interpreted as "faith from start to finish" (Barrett [1962] 1975:31) or "altogether by faith" (Cranfield 1975:100).<sup>127</sup> Yet Dunn (1988a:44) notes that the ἐκ is most naturally understood as denoting the source of the revelation and the εἰς as denoting "that to which the revelation is directed." Because of the apparent oddness of seeing both the ἐκ and εἰς as referring to human appropriation of God's righteousness, many commentators tend to see the ἐκ as denoting God's faithfulness, and the εἰς as denoting human faith (e.g., Witherington III 2004:48; Wright 2002:425; Manson 1991; Gaston 1987; Barth 1968:41-42; Herbert 1955). There arguably remains some ambiguity in how faith is portrayed in Paul's reference to Habakkuk 2:4 (in Rom 1:17; cf. Wright 2002:426) which embraces both God's faithfulness and human faith (Dunn 1988a:44). While all these interpretations are possible, there is probably a much simpler solution to the problem. The solution is probably that Romans 4 is largely the explanation of ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν, where the ἐκ πίστεως would denote Abraham's faith (Rom 4:3,9,13,16,17,20) and the εἰς πίστιν would denote the faith of the Christ-believers (Rom 4:24, see 5.1.2). These two aspects of faith would perfectly fit Dunn's (1988a:44) source/direction distinction (see above). The phrase ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν would then have salvation-historical significance (cf. Käsemann 1980:31).

If the expression ἐκ πίστεως denotes the faith of Abraham, the faith of the Christ-believer (εἰς πίστιν) which signifies identity mode C (see 3.3), can be understood

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<sup>126</sup> Cranfield (1975:99) lists eight possibilities, of which "from the faith of the OT to the faith of the NT" (Tertullian), "from present faith to future" (Aquinas), "from God's faithfulness to man's faith" (originally Ambrosiaster; see main text), and the idea of growth in faith (Sanday & Headlam [1902] 1960:28) are probably the most noteworthy.

<sup>127</sup> These interpretations of Barrett and Cranfield can be seen as an expression of the concept of *sola fide* (Jewett 2007:144; Cranfield 1975:100; cf. Ridderbos 1959:35).

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as in *continuity* with the original righteousness and faith of Abraham. The net result would be that all three modes of identity are being represented here: ABC (see 3.3), where A represents the Ἰουδαῖος (v. 16), B as pointing to Abraham's faith and righteousness (ἐκ πίστεως), and C as pointing to anyone's faith and righteousness in Christ (εἰς πίστιν). This continuity is enhanced by (1) the priority of the Judaeans in terms of their position in salvation history, and (2) by Paul's comparison of his current motivation of his gospel (constituted by ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν) with Habakkuk 2:4 (Ὁ δὲ δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται, v. 17). The πίστις in reference to Habakkuk 2:4 probably denotes both God's faithfulness and human faith (Dunn 1988a:44), and would fit into Paul's bigger salvation-historical scheme (Rom 9-11). Paul thus anchors the current principle(s) of faith pertaining to the gospel firmly in the Old Testament.

#### 5.1.2 Romans 4:1-25

In Romans 3, Paul explained that in the light of the work of Christ, all people have an equal status before God in terms of sin, and that covenant membership is not defined in terms of natural descent or law (3:1-20). Faith in Christ has become the equalising access point and mark of covenant membership (3:21-26). In 3:27-31, which can be seen as a summary of what will be explained in 4:1-25 (cf. Moo 1996:244-245), Paul sums up the new situation in Christ with respect to the "law of works" ([νόμου] τῶν ἔργων, v. 27) that stands opposed to the "the law of faith" (νόμου πίστεως, v. 27). Dunn (1988a) paraphrases νόμου πίστεως as "law understood in terms of faith" (:184,186) or the law as "'done' by faith" (:192), where he understands νόμος in this whole passage (esp. 3:27-31) to refer to the Old Testament, not Sinai-Torah (:191). Dunn thus interprets "law of faith" as not the law of the Judaeans alone. Wright (2002:479-480; cf. Cranfield 1975:220) seems to understand νόμος here more in the direction of Sinai-Torah throughout 3:27-31, but then as a response to grace. To see νόμος throughout 3:27-31 as Torah, whether defined in broader terms (Dunn) or narrower terms (Wright, Cranfield), appears somewhat strenuous.<sup>128</sup> In the context of 3:27-31, it makes

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<sup>128</sup> Wright (2002:480) admits that it is "controversial to take νόμος... here as 'Torah' throughout."

### 5. Faith in Christ, Abraham and law

more sense to take νόμος in verse 27 as referring to a principle (Zerwick & Grosvenor 1988:466; Newman & Nida 1973:70; NJB; NIV; RSV; NEB) or system (BDAG, νόμος §1b; Barrett [1962] 1975:82), which can then be interpreted as a principle or basis of righteousness: either by works or by faith. Even in this interpretation, it does not have to contradict the NPP or even the TAP, especially when τῶν ἔργων and πίστειως can still be understood as both *entrance to* and *mark of* the Old and New Covenants respectively.<sup>129</sup>

The “universal monotheism” (Dunn 1988a:188) that Paul sets forth in Rom 3:29 alludes to the *Shema* (Wright 2002:482), and is thus deeply rooted in the Torah (in the broader sense). The privileged position of the Judaeans in terms of covenant membership in reality undercuts this universal monotheism, which is more effectively safeguarded by justification by faith (Dunn 1988a:188). The Torah is no longer the dividing wall between Judaeans and other nations (Moo 1996:251). This important theme underlies much of Paul’s motivation for the inclusion of the Gentiles in Rom 4:1-25 and the rest of his gospel. By God’s justification of both circumcised and uncircumcised on the basis of faith in Jesus (3:24-26), the νόμος (3:31), referring to the whole of the Old Testament (Dunn 1988a:191), is confirmed (ἴσθημι, v. 31; Zerwick & Grosvenor 1988:467; Cranfield 1975:224; Newman & Nida 1973:72) or validated (BDAG, ἴσθημι §4; 76.20 in Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:682; Newman & Nida 1973:72), not in the sense that those who partake in the covenant through faith in Christ have to adhere to the stipulations and outward rituals of the Torah as such, but that the Old Testament remains the foundation on which the gospel is built (cf. D’Angelo 1979:194). Another aspect of the validation of the law is that the law is fulfilled in and through faith in Christ (Moo 1996:255; Mounce 1995:120; Cranfield 1975:240; cf. Barrett [1962] 1975:84) in that the believer is accounted as really having “done the law” on the basis of Christ’s fulfilment of the law (Moo 1996:484; cf. 8:4, see 7.4.1.4).

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<sup>129</sup> It is esp. circumcision that would serve as both *entrance to* and *mark of* the covenant in the OT (cf. Rom 2:17-29, see 4.5.1).

## 5. Faith in Christ, Abraham and law

### 5.1.2.1 From faith to faith

The phrase ἐκ πίστεως resonates frequently throughout Romans (1:17; 3:26; 3:30; 4:16 [x2]; 5:1; 9:30,32; 10:6; 14:23). While ἐκ πίστεως occurs 9 times in the direct context of faith in Christ, the only exception is in 4:16 (2<sup>nd</sup> occurrence), where it occurs in the phrase ἐκ πίστεως Ἀβραάμ, the “father of us all”. Here, faith in Christ is identified with the faith of Abraham (O’Brien 2004:387), the forerunner and father of the faith of both Judaeans and non-Judaeans. The whole of Romans 4:1-25 is an exposition of the origin of the principle of ἐκ πίστεως, and where it finds its root (cf. Mounce 1995:126), namely in the faith of Abraham that was counted to him for righteousness (vv. 3,5).

Many commentators seem to miss how verses 4 to 5 describe the nature of faith. Faith is per definition opposed to work for a reward (Dunn 1988a:203),<sup>130</sup> which ran contrary to much of the Judaeans’ perception of obtaining God’s promise (Hultgren 2011:184; O’Brien 2004:379; Gathercole 2002; Moo 1996:263; Käsemann 1980:107; Cranfield 1975:227,229; cf. 2:13)<sup>131</sup> and especially of Abraham’s reception of the promise (O’Brien 2004:384; Gathercole 2002:235-240; Bruce [1985] 2000:115; Sir 44:19-20; 1 Macc 2:52; Jub 19:8-9; 23:9-10; CD 3:2-4; cf. Barrett [1962] 175:86,91)<sup>132</sup> and David’s acceptance by God (O’Brien 2004:381,389; Gathercole 2002:246-248; CD 5:5; 4QMMT C 24-25). Paul defines faith as not accumulating debt (ὀφείλημα, v. 4) and thus as void of any inherent merit. Faith is inherently according to grace (κατὰ χάριν, v. 4). In other words,

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<sup>130</sup> The expression ἐργαζομένω ὁ μισθός probably alludes to the business world, where λογίζεται would then be “a reckoning of payment for work done” (Dunn 1988a:203; cf. Hultgren 2011:180; Wright 2002:491).

<sup>131</sup> This notion is much debated in the TAP vs. the NPP. While much has been put on the table in favour of an understanding of the faith of Judaeans of the second temple that was not based on salvation by merit, and did indeed incorporate an understanding of grace (e.g., Sanders 1977; Dunn 1983; 1988a:335-340; [1993] 1994; Wright 1993; 1997), many scholars in response identified various instances within the religious understanding of Judaeans of the second temple (or in its proximity) where final vindication based on works and merit was prevalent (e.g., Gathercole 2002; Carson *et al* 2001 and 2004, including various contributors). Moo (1996:263) sees the Judaeans’ perception of faith as synergistic (cf. fn. 106).

<sup>132</sup> The allusion to Abraham as being ungodly (ἄσεβῆ, v. 5) and being more of a Gentile (before being circumcised, v. 10) than an Israelite, would be extreme in terms of the Judaeans’ perception of Abraham (Hultgren 2011:181; Wright 2002:492).

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faith is to acknowledge that God's favour cannot be earned or worked for.<sup>133</sup> Faith is to trust (πιστεύοντι, v. 5, Hultgren 2011:185; O'Brien 2004:387; Wright 2002:499; Mounce 1995:123; cf. Zerwick & Grosvenor 1988:467) God's grace (κατὰ χάριν, v. 4) and promise (ἐπαγγελία, vv. 13,14,16,20; cf. Cranfield 1975:231), and to cease with all human self-reliance (Bruce [1985] 2000:117) and effort. Faith is for Paul "something qualitatively distinct from any human-originated endeavour" (Moo 1996:264), but can simultaneously be described as "the act and decision of the individual person" (Käsemann 1980:109). The verbs ἐπίστευσεν (v. 3) and πιστεύοντι (v. 5) are active indicative: it is Abraham that believed,<sup>134</sup> not God that imparted Abraham's faith or believed "through" Abraham in Himself. In this context it is thus unnecessary to see faith as being "imparted" irrespective of the human response. Faith ultimately relates to both God's grace in Christ and the human freedom to react to that grace. This understanding of faith underscores both the unmerited and relational aspect of righteousness (cf. 5.1.1), where faith constitutes both (1) the entrance into (Moo 1996:267; cf. Rom 5:2) and the mark of (Wright 2002:496; Käsemann 1980:109) Abraham's spiritual family, and (2) the reciprocal character of the relationship between God and His people.

Additionally, the understanding of Abraham's faith as a human reaction on God's grace, provides content to the ἐκ πίστεως of 1:17 (see esp. ἐκ πίστεως in 4:16). Abraham's belief in the promise that was fulfilled in Christ and especially God's grace in the promise to Abraham, is foundational to belief in Christ that has come (Käsemann 1980:109).<sup>135</sup> This belief in Christ corresponds to εἰς πίστιν in 1:17, which is the access (προσαγωγή, 5:2) and mark (Käsemann 1980:109) of the new identity in Christ (identity mode C). This understanding thus explains both the ἐκ πίστεως (promise to Abraham) and the εἰς πίστιν (faith in Christ) of 1:17. The identification of Abraham's faith with the faith of the believer in Christ constitutes

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<sup>133</sup> Dunn (1988a:215) notes that the function of the law was to bring people to consciousness of their transgression and to "the same unconditional dependence and reliance on God which man [sic] in general had abandoned (1:19-25) and which Abraham displayed so clearly."

<sup>134</sup> This can also be seen in πιστεύοντι δὲ (v. 5) being contrasted to μὴ ἐργαζομένων, a present middle, which indicates reflexivity and the subject's participation in the action (Wallace 1996:414-416).

<sup>135</sup> Käsemann (1980:109) understands faith here as similar to the epiphany of faith in Gal 3:23,25.

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an aspect of the profound *continuity* (Käsemann 1980:118; cf. Moo 1996:257) between the two.

#### 5.1.2.2 Abraham, faith and identity

One of the important questions pertaining to Romans 4:1-25 is which modes of identity are represented here. Romans 4:1 indicates Abraham as τὸν προπάτορα ἡμῶν κατὰ σάρκα. This primarily designates Abraham as the “father of race, in view of his place within salvation-history” (Dunn 1988a:199; cf. Hultgren 2011:179; Wright 2002:489-490; Cranfield 1975:227) as opposed to spiritual generation (Moo 1996:260). The designation κατὰ σάρκα (v. 1) can be viewed in *continuity* with ὁ Χριστὸς τὸ κατὰ σάρκα in 9:5 (see 4.3.2.1), and constitutes a dimension of physical descent to the promise to Abraham, signified by circumcision (τοῖς... ἐκ περιτομῆς, v. 12), which was fulfilled and ended in Christ κατὰ σάρκα (cf. σπέρματί σου, ὃς ἐστὶν Χριστός, Gal 3:16). Yet, to Abraham circumcision was a seal of the righteousness of faith (Rom 4:11), a deeper meaning which was also fulfilled in Christ, where the “just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us [Christ-believers]” (NRSV, Rom 8:4). Christ’s fulfilment of the promise therefore had both a natural, physical dimension in that Christ was Abraham’s physical descendant (9:5), and a spiritual dimension, where the righteousness of God has been revealed apart from the law for all who believe in Christ without differentiation (Rom 3:21-22; cf. 8:4). In Christ, the physical dimension of the promise ended (cf. Rom 10:4), and the phrase “Abraham, our father according to the flesh” (4:1) thus stands in *discontinuity* to the ultimate designation of both the concepts σπέρμα and ἐπαγγελίας.

Abraham received the circumcision as seal of righteousness of faith when he was still uncircumcised, constituting the basis on which he could become the father of all Gentiles who believe (v. 11). But Abraham’s faith as uncircumcised was also the basis on which he could become the father of those circumcised who walked in the steps of their (physical) father Abraham by believing in addition to being circumcised (v. 12; Moo 1996:270; Dunn 1988a:210-211). It is important to note here that Abraham is not portrayed (v. 12) as physical father of Israel, but as father of those of them that believe. But the question arises if faith is in Christ or

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apart from Christ. The same question applies to verse 16, and will thus be discussed below.

The promise to inherit the world was preserved for Abraham's seed on the basis of faith, and not on the basis of law (v. 13; Wright 2002:496). The promise is to be inherited on the basis of faith in order to be sure to all the seed (v. 16),

(a) οὐ τῷ ἐκ τοῦ νόμου μόνον

(b) ἀλλὰ καὶ τῷ ἐκ πίστεως Ἀβραάμ, ὃς ἐστὶν πατὴρ πάντων ἡμῶν.

Several questions can be asked here. (1) The question can be asked whether two groups (a,b) are envisioned (e.g., Judaeans believers and Gentile believers) or one group: physical Judaeans who additionally believe. (2) It can be asked whether these believers ([b], whether the second group or the only group) believe in Christ as such. (3) One can ask if physical descendants of Abraham can be counted as heirs and children of the promise apart from faith in Christ.

As for the first question (1), the first possibility to be eliminated is that group (a) would denote a group that would inherit the promise on the basis of law apart from faith. Paul has already established in verse 12 that Abraham is the father of those who are not only heirs on the basis of circumcision, but additionally believe. That a group would inherit apart from faith would be contrary to what Paul has said from 3:19 up to this point (Wright 2002:498; Käsemann 1980:121). Regarding the identity of (a) and (b) there is difference of opinion. Some view the first group as Christ-believing Judaeans and the second group as Christ-believing Gentiles (Moo 1996:279; Mounce 1995:128; Hendriksen 1980, Romans 4:1-12; Cranfield 1975:242). Others (probably correctly) see (a) and (b) as overlapping, where (a) represents Christ-believing Judaeans and (b) represents both Christ-believing Judaeans and -Gentiles (Jewett 2007:331;<sup>136</sup> Kühl 1913:147; Weiss 1899:203-205 cf. Käsemann 1980:121). Still others view (a) and (b) as constituting one group of believing Israel/Judaeans apart from Christ (Hultgren 2011:186; Dunn

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<sup>136</sup> Jewett (2007) leaves room for some ambiguity here and includes "all of Paul's fellow believers, no matter which cultural and theological tendency they represent" (:331).

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1988a:216). The implication of the latter view is that believing Israel in the past and believing Judaeans in Paul's present are/remain God's people.

In answer to the second question (2), the way in which faith is qualified in verse 24 has to be taken into account. Belief is in God ("Him") who raised Jesus from the dead. While faith is not portrayed as being in Christ as such, Paul does not separate belief in God from the work of Christ. Although faith throughout Romans 4 cannot unambiguously be connected to Christ, faith cannot unambiguously be disconnected from Christ either. The measure of uncertainty regarding faith in Romans 4 is however diminished if the immediate context (Rom) and the rest of Paul's letters (e.g., Gal 3) are considered. On both sides of Romans 4, faith is qualified in gospel terms. In 3:22-26, those believing are being justified through the redemption and faith in Christ Jesus, and in 5:1-2, justification by faith is through Christ, through whom there is access by faith into the grace wherein believers stand.

One of the stronger arguments in interpreting Romans 4 Christologically, is the possibility advanced by Jipp (2009) that Romans 3:27-4:1 previews Paul's narration of the Abraham account in 4:2-25, centring on four issues: the exclusion of works in justification (3:27-28; cf. 4:2-8), Abraham's justification as preceding his circumcision (3:29-30; cf. 4:9-12), the continuity between the law and faith (3:31; cf. 4:13-15) and the nature of Abraham's paternity (4:1; cf. 4:16-25). In this interpretation, the Abraham narrative is to be understood in terms of Paul's "prior Christological commitments" where "Abraham functions for Paul as a representative figure whose story typologically portrays features of Paul's gospel" (Jipp 2009:239).

It thus seems likely that Paul has faith in the gospel in view in 4:24, which by implication applies to faith in both verses 12 and 16 as well (Wright 2002:492,502; Moo 1996:270,277-279,287; Käsemann 1980:121; cf. Jewett 2007:331,342). This understanding is strengthened by the main thrust of Paul's argument in Romans 4, which is that "believers in Christ are legitimate children of Abraham" (Jewett 2007:320). It is thus doubtful whether Paul would want to establish faith apart from Christ in such ambiguous terms amidst the unambiguous references to faith

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in the rest of the letter. Furthermore, if the bigger picture is considered (esp. Rom 9-11 where Paul addresses profound yet potentially sensitive issues), the measure of uncertainty surrounding faith in Romans 4 might have something to do with Paul's subtle rhetoric, rather than with intended ambiguity.

As for the third question (3), it has to be noted that Paul identifies Abraham as both the father *κατὰ σάρκα* (Israel/Judaeans of physical descent, v. 1) and Abraham as the father of "us all" (v. 16), which seems to be pointing to all who believe in Christ. In view of Paul's bigger salvation-historical scheme (esp. Rom 9:1-10, see 4.3.2) it is however most unlikely that the physical children of Abraham would be reckoned as heirs to the promise (Wright 2002:490,496; Cranfield 1975:242; Hendriksen 1980, Romans 4:13-25), for they would only be Abraham's children *κατὰ σάρκα*, constituting identity mode A (*outer* Israel, cf. Rom 9:6, see 4.3.2.2). Abraham's ambivalent status as Gentile (Jewett 2007:319) who became both the father of national Israel (according to the flesh, v. 1) and the father of faith of "us all" (including Gentiles), might relate to the fact that the promise(s) (vv. 13,14,16,20) was ultimately fulfilled by Christ (cf. Sunday & Headlam [1902] 1960:107; see esp. 15:8). Abraham's ambivalent status thus does not only legitimate the acceptability of Gentiles who responded to the gospel in Christ (Jewett 2007:319), but it indicates that Abraham's true descendants were in fact not so much those who imitated his circumcision, but those who imitated his faith (Sunday & Headlam [1902] 1960:107; cf. Wright 2002:494),<sup>137</sup> an understanding that really comes into full force in Christ. Yet if Paul would allude to believing Israel apart from Christ in verses 12 and 16 (which would indicate identity mode AB, *inner* Israel), they would have to point to historical Israel, for they could hardly point to Judaeans in Paul's present whose belief is not directed

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<sup>137</sup> This notion undermines the notion that water baptism could be a replacement for circumcision and that such baptism could be understood in terms of baptismal regeneration (cf. Mounce 1995:126). In addition, this interpretation goes against the notion that Paul "restructures *genealogical lines* in order to reconfigure the boundaries that unite and divide people" (Eisenbaum 2000:142, emphasis added). For Eisenbaum, Paul does not assume that Judaeans are biological descendants (*κατὰ σάρκα*) while Gentiles become descendants by adoption (*υιοθεσία*). Rather, she contends that Paul "simply means that the Gentiles are now in the process of claiming their inheritance, whereas Jews have already received it" (:140). In Eisenbaum's approach, she does not understand genealogy being based purely on biology, but sees genealogy as interrelated with kinship relations. Notwithstanding these distinctions, her reading seems to circumnavigate the central criterion for *true descent* from Abraham, which is faith.

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to the gospel in Christ. Depending on one's interpretation of Romans 11, the latter notion would not fit the larger context and would have no parallel elsewhere in Paul's letters.

It is noteworthy that Paul neither mentions anything of the inheritance of land that was part of the promise to Abraham and formed part of Israel's expectation (e.g., Gen 12:7; 13:15-17; 15:7; Isa 57:13; 60:21; Jer 24:6; 30:3; 32:41; Ezek 36:10-12; 37:25; Ps 25:13; 37:9), nor of Israel's national reign over the nations (e.g., Isa 11:10-14; 42:1,6; 49:6; 54:3; Jer 4:2; 23:5; Zech 9:10) through the worldwide earthly dominion of the Messiah (Ps 72:8-11; Isa 9:7; Jer 23:5). Rather, believers now inherit the whole world (κόσμος, v. 13; Wright 2002:495-496; cf. Hultgren 2011:184), which points to all of humanity (BDAG, κόσμος §6a). As Paul later describes, the Messiah's reign is now of a different kind: He reigns over the dead and the living (14:9; cf. 15:12, see 6.1.3). The *fulfilment* of the promises to Abraham in terms of the one new family of Judaeans and Greek believers in Christ (Wright 2002:535; 15:8) is therefore *non-material* in terms of (1) Abraham's seed, (2) the land and (3) the reign of God's people.

In the light of Romans 4 then, identity mode B is most certainly constituted by Abraham himself as believing God's promise (4:3). Abraham's faith is portrayed as foundational to the promise which has been fulfilled in Christ, and as a type (Hultgren 2011:190) or paradigm (Dunn 1988a:223) of the faith in Christ. Abraham's faith thus constitutes the *continuity* between Abraham (identity mode AB) and the believer in Christ (identity mode C). Believers in Christ, whether Judaeans or non-Judaeans, become heirs of the promise<sup>138</sup> to Abraham, and identity modes B (Abraham) and C (Christ-believers) thus become one in Christ. Those of law (v. 14, Israel according to the flesh, identity mode A) cannot inherit the promise apart from faith (4:14) and are by implication excluded from inheritance.

The other aspect of faith in the promise to Abraham that Paul highlights is his description of God's activity as "making the dead alive, and calling the things that

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<sup>138</sup> In Rom 4, inheritance (κληρονόμος, vv. 13,14) and promise (ἐπαγγελία, vv. 13,14,16,20) are closely linked.

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are not as if they were” (4:17). The calling of the things that are not as if they were probably alludes to God’s *creatio ex nihilo*, which was part of the Judaeen tradition (Hultgren 2011:189; O’Brien 2004:385-386; Moo 1996:281; Käsemann 1980:122; Cranfield 1975:244; cf. BDAG, καλέω §4; Mounce 1995:128; Barrett [1962] 1975:97; Macc 7:28). Apart from the revival of Abraham’s “dead” body (σῶμα ἤδη νεκρωμένον, v. 19), Paul might have something more in mind with his referral to the revival of the dead (v. 17), that will probably be better understood in his repetition of the same notion in 11:15 (see 8.1.2).

In the light of Paul’s salvation-historical (Käsemann 1980:116) exposition in Romans 4, the *continuity* that believers in Christ have with Israel can now be described more precisely. The continuity of faith neither flows *through* Israel or the Judaeen nation, nor are Christ-believers an *extension* of them as a nation. Faith, whether being a believing Judaeen or Gentile, connects in a *punctiliar* way (cf. Gal 4:21-5:1, see 5.1.4, esp. Martyn 1997:444) onto Abraham through Christ *apart* from Israel according to the flesh (4:14; cf. 9:3-5, see 4.3.2.1). With belief in Christ there is therefore not continuity in terms of the works of the law, including circumcision (3:20,28), for the law in fact stands antithetical to faith in 4:13-16 (Hultgren 2011:184; Käsemann 1980:118). Rather, the law and its works have been fulfilled in Christ (Moo 1996:255; cf. Barrett [1962] 1975:84). Even while Christ Himself for Paul was a physical descendant of the patriarchs (1:3; cf. 9:5), the only connection of any Christ-believer to being God’s people, regardless of ethnicity, is via faith in Christ, and not physical (κατὰ σάρκα). Käsemann (1980:117) thus rightly identifies the actual continuity with Abraham as “the power of God”. Belief in Christ therefore renders any claim on covenant membership based on law, circumcision or any other external identity marker ineffective (cf. Bruce [1985] 2000:119). Käsemann (1971:79) correctly states that “[t]he polemic which runs through the whole chapter [4] shows that we are dealing here not with an extension or modification of the Jewish view, but with its contrast” (cf. Käsemann 1980:117).

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### 5.1.3 Galatians 3:1-29

Galatians, which some consider to be one of the oldest of Paul's letters,<sup>139</sup> has traditionally been viewed as the fountainhead for reflection about justification by faith (Hays 2000:183). Many of the NPP versus TAP debates revolve around the understanding of the "works of the law" (ἔργων νόμου) and faith (πίστις; πιστεύω) in Galatians 3. Whereas the understanding of these concepts certainly converges with the enquiry of this dissertation, my aim is not to repeat the whole of this debate here, but to focus on the modes of identity represented in this chapter.

#### 5.1.3.1 The opponents and recipients

The identity of Paul's opponents has to be inferred by a mirror reading of the letter (George 1994:55), but not without awareness of its dangers (Barclay [1988] 1991:37-41).<sup>140</sup> The traditional identification of Paul's opponents as "Judaizers", has been contested for the main reasons that (1) it would imply a conflict in Galatia between Judaeen and anti-Judaeen factions, and (2) that the verb ἰουδαίω (2:14) is more correctly translated as "to adopt Judaeen practices" (cf. Hays 2000:185; Barclay [1988] 1991:36) or to "live like a Judaeen" (see 6.1.6), rather than "to Judaize" (contra LITV; YLT). These Missionaries (Dunn 1993:11) or Teachers (Martyn 1997:117-126) were probably Judaeen Christ-believers.<sup>141</sup> These Teachers of the law<sup>142</sup> urged the other believers in Christ (a) to be

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<sup>139</sup> Some who accept the South Galatian theory date the origin of the letter as early as 48 CE (e.g., Hagner 2012:437; Carson & Moo 2005:464; Fung 1988:28) or 49-50 (e.g., George 1994:44; Guthrie [1970] 1976:463), while proponents of the North Galatian theory normally date the letter at about 50-55 CE (e.g., Betz 1979:12; cf. Lategan 1986:16).

<sup>140</sup> Barclay ([1988] 1991:37-41) shows that mirror reading inevitably involves circularity. One of the biggest problems in mirror reading Galatians is its polemical rhetoric which may result in partial accounts, or accounts that state one side of an issue (:37). The overarching danger in mirror reading Galatians is that it could become an arbitrary exercise. More specifically, mirror reading can become selective instead of focussing on the whole. It can be dangerous to focus on particular words that are taken to represent the vocabulary of the opponents, which could result in "a fragile chain of assumptions" (:39). Barclay finally warns against the danger of over-interpretation. For example, not every statement that Paul makes is necessarily a rebuttal of counter-statements of his opponents (:40).

<sup>141</sup> Since most scholars refer to them as "Jewish Christians [sic]" (e.g., Carson & Moo 2005:465; Hays 2000:185; Hong 1991:88; Fung 1988:8) this seems to be the consensus view among most scholars (Hays 2000:185; Barclay [1988] 1991:42).

<sup>142</sup> This term that I will employ is a combination of Martyn's (1997:117-126) proposal ("Teachers") and the crux of their agenda (see main text).

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circumcised (2:3; 5:2-3), (b) to observe Judaeen sabbaths and feast days (4:8-11), (c) to obey everything in the Torah (3:10), to be wanting to be under the law (4:21), to try to be justified by the law (5:4), to promise that those who keep the commandments would find life (3:12; for a-c: Carson & Moo 2005:466; Hays 2000:185,252), and lastly (d) that the Torah of Moses was divinely ordained to provide moral perfection (ἐπιτελέω, v. 3) and thereby restrain the impulses of the flesh (5:16,24; Martyn 1997:292-293).<sup>143</sup> While the Teachers of the law may have thought of themselves as believers in Christ, Paul was ready to challenge the authenticity of their belief in Christ (cf. Carson & Moo 2005:466). Dunn (1993:152) argues that their tactics might have been “underhand and seductive”.<sup>144</sup>

While most scholars agree that the original recipients of the letter are Gentile Christ-believers (e.g., Hays 2000:184; Betz 1979:4; Bruce [1977] 2000:182), Paul frequently uses the first person plural when he addresses his recipients concerning the work of Christ, the content of the gospel, or the law (1:4; 2:15,16,17; 3:13,14,23,24; 4:3,5,26,28,31; 5:1,5,25,26; 6:9,10). The first person plural includes Paul, a Judaeen Christ-believer, and all Judaeen and Gentile believers by implication (Hays 2000:262; Wright 1993:143; Dunn 1993:176,179; Fung 1988:148-149). In other words, even though (1) the addressees are Gentile Christ-believers, (2) much of Paul’s rhetoric<sup>145</sup> in the letter is aimed at the Teachers of the law, and (3) his style is thus tailored for a specific context, the propositional content underlying his rhetoric in Galatians can be applied to all the people groups with whom Paul had contact (cf. Donfried 2002:196,198; Thiselton 1992:239; Beker 1980:351).

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<sup>143</sup> Martyn (1997:292) shows this motive from CD 2:14-16 (Vermes, emphasis added): “Hear now, my sons, and I will uncover your eyes so that you may see and understand the works of God... so that you may walk *perfectly* in all his ways and not be drawn *by the thoughts of the Guilty Impulse* and by lustful eyes.” 1QS 5:5 speaks of circumcising the Impulse (:293).

<sup>144</sup> This is suggested by Paul’s direct and open approach (see esp. 3:1, where Christ is depicted as being openly exhibited before the Galatians’ eyes) that might have been contrary to the approach of the Teachers of the law (Dunn 1993:152).

<sup>145</sup> H. D. Betz (1979) has made a significant contribution in arguing that Galatians is an “apologetic letter” that is structured in accordance with the conventions of ancient judicial rhetoric, even though later reviewers have observed that Galatians does not fit the apologetic letter genre as neatly as Betz proposed (Hays 2000:188). It would be more likely that Paul’s rhetoric was not judicial but deliberative, which aim is to persuade the recipients toward a certain course of action (Kennedy 1984:144-152).

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### 5.1.3.2 Antitheses in Galatians 3

Paul's rhetoric in Galatians 3 contains several antitheses that relate to identity. The antitheses in Galatians 3 can be divided into three main groups:

1. πνεῦμα versus σὰρξ (v. 3)  
πνεῦμα versus ἐξ ἔργων νόμου (vv. 2,5)
2. ἐξ ἀκοῆς πίστεως versus ἐξ ἔργων νόμου (vv. 2,5)  
ἐκ πίστεως (vv. 7,8,9,11,12) versus ἐξ ἔργων νόμου (v. 10), ἐν νόμῳ (v. 11)  
and ὁ νόμος (v. 12)
3. ἐξ ἐπαγγελίας versus ἐκ νόμου (v. 18)

Expressions containing the terms πίστις, ἐπαγγελία, or πνεῦμα belong propositionally together, and are opposed to expressions containing νόμος or σὰρξ, which in turn belong together.

Galatians 3:2 contains Paul's first mention of the Spirit in the letter. The reception (λαμβάνω, v. 2) of the Spirit accompanies the beginning (ἐνάρχομαι, v. 3) of the new identity in Christ (Dunn 1993:152-153,156; cf. Hays 2000:251). This happens at conversion<sup>146</sup> (Dunn 1993:152-153; Longenecker 1990:102; cf. Rom 8:15; 1 Cor 2:12; 2 Cor 6:4) and corresponds to justification (George 1994:243; Fung 1988:152; Bruce 1982b:149).<sup>147</sup> In reference to verses 1 to 5, Hansen (2009:221) writes: "Paul teaches that the presence of the Spirit is the distinguishing mark of belonging to the family of God's people." The Spirit is being supplied to (ἐπιχορηγέω, v. 5; Dunn 1993:157; Zerwick & Grosvenor 1988:569) the believer, and is characterised by working works of power (ἐνεργῶν δυνάμεις, v. 5) in them. The promise to Abraham (ἐπαγγελίας, vv. 14,17,18,19,22,29) is closely linked to the Spirit (v. 14; Hays 2000:261; Martyn

<sup>146</sup> Conversion does not imply that the believers in Christ converted from one religious system to another (e.g., from "Judaism" to "Christianity"), but it does point to the acquirement of a new core identity in Christ. This does not necessarily mean that previous identities (e.g. Judaeon) were eradicated, but that they were not definitive in marking off identity as God's people any longer. The issue of conversion and more specifically, Paul's conversion, will be addressed in more depth in 6.1.5.

<sup>147</sup> Bruce (1982b:149-150) argues that the Spirit belongs for Paul to the foundation of the gospel. The Spirit's link to justification can especially be derived from the Spirit's function as guarantee for final salvation (2 Cor 1:22; 5:5).

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1997:322), which constitutes its eschatological fulfilment (Fee 1996:60),<sup>148</sup> and arguably its main content (cf. Silva 2004:237; Dunn 1993:180; Bruce 1982b:168).<sup>149</sup> Both Judaeans and non-Judaeans alike (λάβωμεν, v. 14; Fee 1996:60; Martyn 1997:322)<sup>150</sup> who believe (vv. 2,5,14)<sup>151</sup> in Christ (2:16; 3:14,22,26)<sup>152</sup> partake in the Spirit. Apart from Christ, neither Judaeans nor Gentiles had received the Abrahamic blessing, which is the Spirit (Martyn 1997:322). Those who believe in Christ are frequently referred to as ἐκ πίστεως (vv. 7,8,9,11,12,22,24), which Martyn (1997:299,302) translates as “those whose identity is derived from faith” (adopted by Hays 2000:255-256; cf. Dunn

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<sup>148</sup> Fee (1996:51-61) explains the eschatological dimension of the messianic age as commencing with the outpouring of the Spirit. For believers in Christ who partake in the Spirit, salvation is both a present (e.g., Rom 8:24; cf. Eph 2:5,8) and future (e.g., Rom 5:9,10; 1 Cor 15:2) reality which has been principally effected in Christ’s resurrection from the dead (:52-53; see 8.1.5.4 for a more elaborate discussion).

<sup>149</sup> Paul’s understanding of the promise is thus spiritual and not material, and therefore makes nothing of the inheritance of the land (Dunn 1993:183; Wright 1993:174; Bruce 1982b:172; cf. Rom 4, see 5.1.2).

<sup>150</sup> Paul’s use of the first person plural includes himself, a Judaeans Christ-believer.

<sup>151</sup> The genitival phrase ἀκοῆς πίστεως (vv. 2,5) proves difficult to translate, for both terms are lexically ambiguous. Many scholars agree that πίστις refers to the human act of believing (*fides qua creditur*), and does not have Jesus as its referent (Meyer 2009:145-146; Silva 2004:235; Longenecker 1990:103; Fung 1988:131; Bruce 1982b:149). It can be translated as “believing what you heard” (Longenecker 1990:103). Silva (2004:235) argues that even Martyn’s (1997:281,286-8) translation: “the proclamation that has the power to elicit faith”, does not eliminate the human act of believing. In verse 14, faith is to be understood as a human act (cf. Dunn 1993:179) and as the means by which the Spirit is being received (λαμβάνω), for it stands in the context of Abraham’s faith (3:6) and the righteous that will live by faith (v. 11; cf. Silva 2004:218).

<sup>152</sup> The phrase πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (2:16[X2]; 3:22) can be understood either as a subjective genitive (“[the] faith[fulness] of Jesus Christ”: Hays 2000:239-240; Longenecker 1990:145; ISV; LITV; KJV) or an objective genitive (“faith in Jesus Christ”: Fee 1995:325; George 1994:181-182,257-258; Dunn 1993:164,195; Fung 1988:165; Bruce 1982b:181; Betz 1979:117,175; ESV; NRSV; ASV). Since both translations are grammatically possible, the decision has to be determined exegetically. Silva (2004:227-234; adopted by Carson & Moo 2005:473) convincingly argues for viewing the phrase as an objective genitive, for the following main reasons: (1) The witness from the Greek fathers (e.g., Chrysostom) who understood it as “faith in Christ” shows that native Greek speakers had no difficulty in understanding the phrase as an objective genitive, and that such an understanding was not unnatural (cf. Lk 6:12; Rom 3:3; contra Hays 2002:147). (2) The human response of believing is undeniably present in the New Testament (e.g., ἔχω with πίστις; Mt 17:20; 21:21; Mk 4:40; 11:22; Lk 17:6; faith contrasted with doubt: Mk 11:23). (3) In Paul’s other letters, he uses πίστις in reference to faith in Christ rather than as an attribute of Christ (e.g., Rom 4:5,9), and never *unambiguously* refers to πίστις that belongs to Christ. Faith(fulness) that belongs to Christ is thus not characteristic of Paul. (4) In Gal 2-3, when Paul uses the verb πιστεῦω, he seems to use it mostly in connection with our faith in God or Christ (Gal 2:16; 3:6,22; cf. Dunn [1993] 1994:57-58). In Gal 2:16, the clause εἰς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐπιστεύσαμεν, exegetes the phrase πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (similarly τοῖς πιστεύουσιν in 3:22). Paul’s language about faith thus has to be understood against the contrast between the notions of law-works (as human action) over against the act of faith, which remains a prominent theme in Paul (cf. fn. 292). That Paul was capable of using a subjective genitive or that he might have used the genitive with some ambiguity in relation to Christ is however not hereby denied.

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1993:163). Longenecker (1990:116) views those ἐκ πίστεως as denoting “a specific mode of existence”. They constitute identity mode C (see 3.3).

The Spirit (corresponding to faith and promise) is being contrasted with the flesh (σάρξ, v. 3), and by implication with the works of the law (ἐξ ἔργων νόμου, vv. 2,5; Fung 1988:134). All other constructions with νόμος would by implication resort under σάρξ. In this context then, σάρξ refers to a mode of living (ζάω, v. 12), propagated by the Teachers of the law, whereby perfection (ἐπιτελέω, v. 3) is achieved in resistance to the “Impulsive Desire of the Flesh” (see fn. 143), which is closely related to circumcision as commencement of law observance (Martyn 1997:290-294; cf. George 1994:225; 1QS 5:5). All other requirements from the Teachers of the law, for example, observance of Judaeon sabbaths and feast days (4:8-11) or to obey everything in the Torah (3:10; cf. Carson & Moo 2005:466), would form part of deriving “their identity from observance of the Law” (Martyn 1997:299; cf. Hays 2000:257).<sup>153</sup> Dunn (1993:155) correctly argues that their emphasis was on “ethnic identity” which stands in contrast to the Spirit. In view of the antithesis of Spirit and flesh, their identity can be described as fundamentally being derived from flesh (σάρξ, v. 3; cf. Hays 2000:253; Dunn 1993:155-156). Everything that the Teachers of the law insisted upon was outward and external, including the observance of the law. There is thus an overlap in meaning in the way Paul employs σάρξ here with κατὰ σάρκα elsewhere.<sup>154</sup> This identity in the flesh Paul is portraying here represents identity mode A (see 3.3).

By expressing the contrast of the Spirit, faith and the promise to the law (esp. ἐξ ἔργων νόμου, 2:16; 3:2,5,10) in terms of different modes of identity, largely corresponds to a NPP-understanding of the law in this context, yet not to the exclusion of elements of merit in the Judaeon perception of their identity and the

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<sup>153</sup> Being a dedicated NPP proponent, Hays (2000:257-258) drops Martyn’s (1997:299) “observance”, and reformulates: “those whose identity is derived from works of Law”. Wright (1993:149) expresses a similar notion when he refers to “‘doing the law’ as the covenant boundary marker.”

<sup>154</sup> See esp. κατὰ σάρκα in Rom 9:3; 1 Cor 10:18; 2 Cor 5:12; 11:18 (see 4.2-4.3).

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Torah (Hagner 2012:366-374; Longenecker 1990:102-106;<sup>155</sup> cf. George 1994:229; Rom 2:17-29, see 4.5.1, esp. fn. 106). Circumcision was for the Judaeans the way they entered into the covenant people and inherited the blessing spoken to Abraham (Martyn 1997:291; cf. Longenecker 1990:109; Bruce 1982b:155). Law was thus central to God's covenant with Israel (Dunn 1993:169). Yet, for Paul, his statement that righteousness "is not found in the realm of the Law [v. 11] is true of every human being" and not merely for the Judaeans (Martyn 1997:322). Martyn further argues that Paul therefore "erase[s] the distinction" between Judaeans and Gentiles (:335; esp. v. 28). In Paul's exhortation to the Galatians, "he is now a former Jew, so they are former Gentiles... in Christ humanity is becoming a liberated unity" (:336). Paul, by rejecting the Teachers of the law's covenantal nomism, is thus not suggesting a modified form of covenantal nomism (:347; Wright 1993:156), but a "new identity [in Christ] that lies beyond ethnic, social and sexual distinctions" (Martyn 1997:374). Longenecker (1990:114) states that this new identity is inherited by "faith alone apart from righteous deeds or circumcision" (cf. George 1994:229; Dunn 1993:179; Bruce 1982b:155). "[A]ll people are accepted on the same basis of faith and together make up the one body of Christ" (Longenecker 1990:157; cf. Hays 2000:187; Wright 1993:173-174). In Latekan's (1986:62-63) words (translated): "Christ... is the only way through which Jews, the physical descendants of Abraham, can come to God again" (cf. Hong 1991:154; Sanders [1983] 1989:208).

The law as mark that distinguished Judaeans and Gentiles consequently prevented the blessing of Abraham from reaching its destination, which is all nations. The law constituted a barrier between Judaeans and Gentiles (cf. Dunn 1993:169; Eph 2:11-16, see 5.1.5). The gospel of Christ therefore marks off two "contrasting epochs"<sup>156</sup> characterised by law and faith respectively (Dunn 1993:198; cf. :196,205; Fee 1994:395; Bruce 1982b:152,181; [1977] 2000:190),

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<sup>155</sup> For Longenecker (1990:102), the phrase ἐξ ἔργων νόμου refers to "the whole legalistic complex of ideas having to do with winning God's favor by a merit-amassing observance of the Torah" (cf. :86; 2:16, see 6.1.6).

<sup>156</sup> This is especially signified by the "faith that was revealed" (πίστιν ἀποκαλυφθῆναι, v. 23) and "faith that [now] has come" (ἐλθούσης... τῆς πίστεως, v. 25).

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and lends an eschatological character to Paul's exposition in Galatians 3 (Bruce 1982b:154; cf. Hays 2000:270). Regarding verse 3, Fee (1994:385) correctly remarks that

the ultimate contrasts in Paul are eschatological: life "according to the flesh," lived according to the present age that has been condemned through the cross and is passing away; or life "according to the Spirit," lived in keeping with the values and norms of the coming aeon inaugurated by Christ through his death and resurrection and empowered by the eschatological Spirit (cf. Jewett 1971:110; 2 Cor 5:14-17, see 6.2.1).

Although Paul rejects external identity markers and envisions one new humanity in Christ (Martyn 1997:336), it does not imply that he is anti-Judaean as such: (1) Paul shifts the focus away from a covenant identity and preoccupation with law, back to its original focus: the grace of God (Dunn 1993:163; cf. Rom 4:7-12). (2) Paul does not deny Judaeans their ethnic identity as such, but he equalises the playing field between Judaeans and non-Judaean in terms of being children of Abraham (3:7), and at a deeper level, of being children of God (v. 26). In Christ, ethnic, physical or social identity (v. 28: Judaeans/Greeks, male/female, slave/free) does not cease to exist, but is relativised in terms of the new identity of all in Christ (George 1994:250; Dunn 1993:207; cf. 1 Cor 12:13, see 7.4.3; Col 3:11, see 6.2.2). Paul thus reformulates the Judaeans' claim on Abraham specifically, away from national or ethnical terms and away from claims based on the works of the law, toward spiritual terms (faith and the Spirit). Paul shows the Teachers of the law that Gentile inclusion was part of the original intention of the promise to Abraham (v. 8b; Dunn 1993:164-165), and by implication, that if they understood the promise they laid claim on, they would see its fulfilment in Christ as a blessing to all nations. Dunn (1993:165) in fact states that Paul's "*mission to the Gentiles was nothing other than the fulfilment of Israel's mission*" (contra Marcion). This understanding constitutes the heart of the profound *continuity* between Israel and the Christ-believers.

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### 5.1.3.3 Abraham's faith, law and identity: Galatians 3 and Romans 4

Paul's account of the promise to Abraham in Galatians 3 is similar to that of Romans 4 (see 5.1.2), but with important differences. Since Paul had a stronger reprimanding approach in Galatians 3, his style is more direct and his contrasts more pronounced. While the time gap between Galatians and Romans remains uncertain, depending largely on the dating of Galatians (see fn. 139), the differences between Galatians and Romans are more likely to be attributed to different contingent situations, than to a fundamental shift in Paul's thought (Witherington III [2003] 2004:260; Hong 1991:155; Beker 1990:44-59; 1980:94-108).<sup>157</sup> Yet a measure of development in Paul's thought cannot be ruled out either. But the development arguably pertains mostly to a greater measure of finalisation in his thought and a more nuanced approach in Romans.

As in Romans 4:3,9,13, Abraham's faith<sup>158</sup> was reckoned (λογίζομαι) to him as righteousness (Gal 3:6), and as in Romans 4:16,24 (see 5.1.2), the faith of believers in Christ is identified with the faith of Abraham (Gal 3:7,9; Betz 1979:143). Similarly, as the believers in Christ are reckoned as non-physical descendants (σπέρμα) of Abraham in Romans 4:13,16,18, they are considered in Galatians 3 as his descendants (σπέρμα) by belonging to Christ (Gal 3:29), or as his children by believing in Christ (v. 7). Contrary to the perception of the Judaeans and the Teachers of the law in particular that Judaeans were heirs of the promise to Abraham, apart from Christ Himself, Paul does not consider biological Israelites as heirs of the promise (Longenecker 1990:126). The promise to Abraham therefore becomes completely spiritual, and a matter of

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<sup>157</sup> Räisänen (1987) also argues against development in Paul's thought between Galatians and Romans, and recognises the similarity of Paul's position on faith and the law in the two letters (:82-83). But, contrary to my approach, he does not view Paul's thought on the law as consistent. He sees laxity in Paul's attitude toward the Torah and a tension in Paul's answer whether the law is still in force. He even rejects the view that the law was abolished as standard, while remaining in force as prediction, promise and "paraclesis" which would constitute the "letter" of the law (e.g., 2 Cor 3; D'Angelo 1979:194).

<sup>158</sup> Abraham's "subsequent faithfulness under trial" after his trust in God, was considered as part of the Judaeans' understanding of Abraham's faith and his reckoning as righteous (George 1994:230; Dunn 1993:161). Fung's (1988:135) reference to the Judaeans' perception of Abraham's faith as being "a meritorious work" however, is an overstatement (Dunn 1993:161).

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faith only (cf. Dunn 1993:179; Bruce 1982b:155). This emphasis is similar to Romans 4, except for the explicit reference to the Spirit (see below).

As for the differences, Christological (cf. Lührmann 1992:64-65) and Pneumatological aspects are more pronounced in Galatians 3. While Christ as Abraham's physical descendant is implied elsewhere in Romans (Rom 9:5), it does not form part of Paul's exposition in Romans 4. Here in Galatians 3, Christ is portrayed as the single, physical (cf. Rom 9:5) seed (σπέρμα) of the promise (ἐπαγγελίας) to Abraham (vv. 16,19), contrary to the Judaeon view of Abraham's seed.<sup>159</sup> By belief in Christ as enacted in baptism where the baptismal candidate identifies with Him in his death and resurrection (v. 27),<sup>160</sup> the believer becomes a spiritual descendant (σπέρμα) of Abraham (v. 29; Fung 1988:138,172; cf. Hays 2000:273) and partaker of a "new spiritual existence" (Fung 1988:172; cf. Ridderbos 1966:223,253). Paul therefore converges a physical and spiritual meaning of the σπέρμα of the promise to Abraham in Christ Himself.<sup>161</sup> In terms of the inheritance of the promise to Abraham, there is thus correspondence in the way Paul employs the terms σπέρμα and ἐπαγγελίας in both Galatians 3 and Romans 4, where both terms are ultimately designated for believers in Christ only (see 5.1.2). Here is a double fulfilment of the promise (cf. Fung 1988:177-178): (1) Christ Himself, the only physical descendant (σπέρμα) of Abraham, (2) fulfilled the law in all respects (cf. Rom 8:3-4, see 7.4.1; 10:4, see 6.1.2; Php 3:12, see 6.1.7; Eph 4:13). In becoming cursed by God (George 1994:249; Hong 1991:60; cf. 2 Cor 5:21, see 6.2.1) Christ removed the curse of the law (Hays 2000:260;

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<sup>159</sup> Dunn (1993:160) shows that Abraham was naturally regarded as the father of the Judaeon people, the founder of the Judaeon race (Gen 12:24; Isa 51:2; Mt 3:9; cf. George 1994:229), and that Israel naturally thought of itself as Abraham's seed (Ps 105:6; Isa 41:8; cf. Lührmann 1992:57,66; Longenecker 1990:131).

<sup>160</sup> As argued elsewhere (du Toit 2011), baptism itself is not the actual entrance into spiritual descent, but only enacted therein. The decisive point of entry into the New Covenant remains faith (esp. :47-48). The study shows that the "clothe-" metaphor in Paul has a reflexive function (mainly derived from the prominence of the medium form of ἐνδύω and cognate terms: Rom 13:12,14; 1 Cor 15:49,53,54; 2 Cor 5:2,3,4; Gal 3:27; 1 Th 5:8; cf. Col 2:11,15; Col 3:8,9,10,12; Eph 4:22,24,25; 6:11,14,15), and is employed in close connection to the stripping of the old identity and the actualisation of the new identity in Christ (Rom 13:12-14; Gal 3:27-29; cf. Eph 4:22-25; Col 3:5-12). The study verifies the notion of identity change in the baptismal practice of the early church, esp. where baptismal candidates divested themselves of old clothes before baptism, symbolising the "putting off" of the old person, and clothed themselves with new clothes afterwards, symbolising the "putting on" of the new person in Christ (cf. esp. Martyn 1997:374).

<sup>161</sup> Both dimensions are present in Rom 4, but less pronounced (see 5.1.2).

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Fung 1988:147), and brought all people back to the original, spiritual intention of the promise.

The other explicit difference between Romans 4 and Galatians 3, is the prominence of Spirit in Galatians 3:2,3,5,14, who is not mentioned in Romans 4. Yet, in Romans 5 to 8, the role of the Spirit in identity is addressed in a more comprehensive way in comparison to Galatians. In Galatians, Paul paints his pictures quicker and with broader strokes. For example, the gospel is preached to Abraham (v. 8), the promise to Abraham becomes the Spirit (v. 14, see above) and runs in close parallel to Christ Himself, the single seed of Abraham (vv. 16,19). In terms of the fulfilment of the gospel as rooted in the Torah and the promise to Abraham, the link between Abraham and the Christ-believer thus seems to run deeper and harder in Galatians 3, almost to the point of becoming anachronistic, as if Paul's gospel can be read directly in God's promise to Abraham, and Christ (physically) and the Christ-believers (spiritually) become the only heirs to the promise, without regard to ancient Israel. This is probably the reason why Martyn (1997:350) makes the following remark:

If, then, we had only Paul's letter to the Galatians, we would have no reason to credit the apostle with a belief in the divine election of the ancient people of Israel. Indeed, precisely the opposite.

In terms of the contrast between the law and faith, and by implication between identity modes A (Israel according to the flesh) and C (Christ-believers), the overall *discontinuity* is sharper in Galatians 3 (cf. Eph 2:11-22, see 5.1.5), compared to Romans 4 and the rest of Romans (Lincoln 1990:134).<sup>162</sup> The law in Galatians 3 implies a curse and verges on becoming God's enemy, and the contrast between the works of the law and faith is more pronounced, especially in view of Paul's polemical approach toward the Teachers of the Law (cf. Gal 5:12). While the theme of circumcision is not explicitly mentioned in Galatians 3 (as in Rom 4), Paul's critique against circumcision as work of the law and as identity marker is harsher in Galatians (cf. 5:1-11).

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<sup>162</sup> Lincoln (1990) compares the same matter in Galatians, Romans and Ephesians, where he views a greater stress in discontinuity in both Galatians and Ephesians.

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In spite of Paul's negative evaluation of the law and its works in defining a righteous identity (Gal 3), he does not view the law as inherently against God (contra Martyn 1997:312,326,358) or His promises (3:21), but rather that God is the Originator<sup>163</sup> of both the law and the promise (Hays 2000:267; Dunn 1993:191; Hong 1991:155; Longenecker 1990:143; Bruce 1982b:180). The difficult ὁ δὲ μεσίτης ἐνὸς οὐκ ἔστιν, ὁ δὲ θεὸς εἷς ἔστιν (v. 20) is probably best understood where the ἐνὸς οὐκ denotes "a duality of parties involved in a mediated arrangement" (Longenecker 1990:141), and does not indicate the origin of the law as if not from God (contra Martyn 1997:358). But where Longenecker (1990:141) and others (e.g., Burton 1920: 191-192; Lightfoot 1914:146-147) view the involved parties as God on the one hand and Israel on the other, I would modify their view as follows: The phrase ἐνὸς οὐκ probably refers to the mediator (Moses) as mediator of the law for many (Israel), while the θεὸς εἷς, apart from pointing to the *Shema*, might additionally point to the single seed of the promise (vv. 16,19), which is Christ (v. 16) and God (by implication).<sup>164</sup> The basic contrast would then be between the law (designated for many) and the promise (designated for One) and repeat or summarise Paul's prior comparisons between these two (vv. 16-19) in different words.<sup>165</sup>

Nevertheless, even while Paul views the law as imposing a curse<sup>166</sup> (vv. 10,13) on Judaeans and Gentile alike (George 1994:242,268-269; Dunn 1993:176-178; Fung 1988:148-149; Bruce 1982b:167,182;<sup>167</sup> cf. v. 22; contra Gager 2002:103),<sup>168</sup> as it

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<sup>163</sup> The law was added (προστίθημι, v. 19) and given (δίδωμι, v. 21).

<sup>164</sup> See fn. 90 for Christ's deity in Paul.

<sup>165</sup> Wright's (1993:157-174) view probably comes closest to my own interpretation, especially in terms of his connection of ἐνὸς in v. 20 to the single (ἐνός) seed (Christ) in v. 16, but Wright views the contrast in v. 20 as a contrast between a single family (Judaeans and Gentiles together) and two separate families (Judaeans and Gentiles separately). While the former side of Wright's proposal is conceivable, the "two families" to which he opposes the contrast, is not evident from the text of Galatians itself, and supposes a "family of Gentiles" in the Old Testament.

<sup>166</sup> In connection with the curse of the law (vv. 10-14), Wright (1993:141) understands that "in the cross of Jesus, the Messiah, the curse of exile itself reached its height, and was dealt with once and for all, so that the blessing of the covenant renewal might flow out the other side, as God always intended." This can be seen as another layer to the understanding of the law in Gal 3, that Wright labels a "messianic christology" (:146).

<sup>167</sup> Bruce (1982b:182) observes that both Judaeans and Gentiles were confined under the law, since the law was a restrainer of all people (vv. 16,22; cf. Rom 2:14).

<sup>168</sup> Gager argues that the curse of the law and circumcision which have been transcended by Christ only applies to Gentiles (see however fn. 167).

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compelled all who rely on the works of the law (Longenecker 1990:116; cf. Dunn 1993:170-171; Bruce 1982b:157) to fulfil everything in the written Torah (v. 10), the law is not intrinsically evil, but rather a curse for the reason that no one is able to fulfil the law (George 1994:240-241; Dunn 1993:171;<sup>169</sup> Lührmann 1992:61; Fung 1988:146; Lategan 1986:62; contra Hays 2000:257). The law did not provide a basis by which one could be declared righteous (Westerholm 2004:380,383,444; cf. Wright 2002:649).<sup>170</sup> If it was possible to fulfil the law (see 6.1.1.1), it could have given life (vv. 12,21; cf. Räisänen 1987:95; Rom 7:10). Cranfield (1979:522) argues that Christ did just that: by His perfect obedience, He provided redemption from the curse of the law. In terms of Paul's salvation-historical exposition in Galatians 3 (George 1994:229,276; Dunn 1993:151; Fung 1988:146,153; Bruce 1982b:154; contra Martyn 1997:343-344), the law had an important function (cf. Betz 1979:169). To converge the parallel verses 22 to 23, the law concluded (συγκλείω, v. 22,23) and guarded (φρουρέω, v. 23; NRSV) all people (πάντα, v. 22; ἐφρουρούμεθα, v. 23, 1 pl.) under the power of sin (v. 22) and under the law (v. 23), for the promise to be given (δίδωμι, v. 22) to all believers in Christ (v. 22) by the revelation of faith (v. 23). The law was the supervising guardian (Longenecker 1990:149; cf. Dunn 1993:197) or disciplinarian (NRSV), only until Christ came (v. 24; Longenecker 1990:139).<sup>171</sup> In other words, the law preserved and necessitated the promise (Christ) and the revelation of faith.

As in Romans 4, identity mode AB is constituted by Abraham himself who believed in God's promise and was counted as righteousness (Gal 3:6). Since Christ is the descendant of Abraham (physically), Christ-believers are connected

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<sup>169</sup> Dunn (1993:171) correctly states that Paul's "hidden presumption is that complete or perfect obedience to the law is beyond human capacity." Dunn however hastily qualifies this obedience of the law in terms of covenantal nomism: in assuming the Judaeans were safe under the law, they were blinded to the seriousness of their sin (:172-173). As noted elsewhere though (Rom 2:17-29, see 4.5.1, esp. fn. 106), Paul views disobedience to the requirements of the law just as important as boasting about possessing the law.

<sup>170</sup> Wright (2002:649) mentions Gal 3:21 in his discussion of Rom 9:31. He states: "Covenant membership would indeed have been defined by Torah had that been possible, just as the Torah would have given life had it been capable of doing so, instead of having to work with material that was doomed to die ([Rom] 7:10; cf. Gal 3:21)."

<sup>171</sup> Here Paul deviates widely from the Judaeian view (Longenecker 1990:139). Wis 18:4 speaks of the "imperishable light of the law", and Josephus states that the law is immortal (*Against Apion* 2:277; cf. Philo, *De vita Mosis* 2:14).

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to Abraham through faith (spiritually), just as Abraham was reckoned as righteous through faith. Christ as physical descendant of Abraham and faith in Christ, which is identified with Abraham's faith, constitute the points of *continuity* between identity modes A, B and C. Just as in Romans 4, the line of continuity between the Christ-believer (identity mode C) and Abraham (identity mode AB) in Galatians 3 does not follow *through* physical Israel apart from Christ Himself, but *directly* connects to Abraham through Christ (cf. Lategan 1986:66). In Paul's salvation historical exposition in Galatians 3, it is thus not clear what his view is on historical Israel. It is only in 6:16 where Paul uses the term Ἰσραήλ, where he possibly addresses some aspects on this topic (see 8.2.3).

#### 5.1.4 Galatians 4:21-5:1

Galatians 4:1-9 connects closely to the preceding. Paul continues to build upon and elaborate on the theme of inheritance. The sending of God's Son achieves cosmic significance (cf. Hays 2000:281) in that the epoch under the law is described as being under bondage to the "basic principles" (στοιχεῖα, vv. 3,9; ISV; Zerwick & Grosvenor 1988:571 [b]) of the world (v. 3). But when the fullness of time had come, God sent His Son, born ἐκ γυναικός and born ὑπὸ νόμον (v. 4; cf. Rom 9:5), to redeem those ὑπὸ νόμον so that all people, regardless of being Judaeen or non-Judaeen, can receive (ἀπολάβωμεν, 1 pl.; Hays 2000:284; Fung 1988:183) adoption as children (v. 5). Being under the law or deriving one's identity from law and ethnicity (cf. Dunn 1993:155), constitutes identity mode A, and corresponds to "flesh" (3:3). This mode of identity is contrasted to being an heir (κληρονόμος, v. 7) and child (υἱός, vv. 6,7). In terms of descendancy, being a υἱός (vv. 6,7) corresponds to God's own Son (υἱός, v. 4). Because of adoption (υἰοθεσία, v. 5) through Christ, God has sent the Spirit of His Son (cf. πνεῦμα υἰοθεσίας in Rom 8:15) in believers' (Gal 3:26) hearts, crying Ἀββα ὁ πατήρ (4:6). The Spirit is the final, ultimate contrast to an identity according to the flesh, and is indispensable to the identity in Christ (identity mode C; cf. Hays 2000:285; Fung 1988:185).

Verses 10 to 11 elaborate on what Paul means by living under the "basic principles" (vv. 3,9) or under the law (vv. 4,5) by some practical examples. Verses

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12 to 20 contain a personal appeal to his recipients whom Paul perceives to being led astray by the Teachers of the Law.

Verses 21 to 31 once again connect to many of the themes in verses 1 to 9: (1) The υἱός (vv. 6,7) is repeated in verses 22 (pl.) and 30 (sing.), and correlates closely to the τέκνα in verses 25,27,28 and 31. (2) An identity ὑπὸ νόμον (vv. 4,5) is repeated in verse 21. (3) Jesus was born (γίνομαι, v. 4) ὑπὸ νόμον, which is similar to the child from the slave woman who was born (γεννάω) κατὰ σάρκα (vv. 23,29). (4) Jesus, being born ἐκ γυναικός (v. 4) is paralleled by the two women in verses 22 to 31.

Additionally, many of the themes in Galatians 4:21-5:1 correspond to the same themes in Galatians 3: (1) The term ἐπαγγελίας (v. 23, 28) is used in 3:14,17,18,19,22,29. (2) The phrase ὑπὸ νόμον (v. 21) occurs in 3:23. (3) The term Ἀβραάμ (v. 22) appears in 3:6,7,8,9,14,16,18,29. (4) The expression κατὰ σάρκα (vv. 23,29) corresponds to σαρκί in 3:3. (5) One of the two διαθήκαι (v. 24) corresponds to the διαθήκη in 3:15,17. (6) The phrase κατὰ πνεῦμα (v. 29) agrees with πνεῦμα in 3:2,3,5,14. The contrast between κατὰ πνεῦμα and κατὰ σάρκα (v. 29) is especially close to the contrast of πνεῦμα and σὰρξ in 3:3.

The correspondence of themes and concepts in 4:21-5:1 with those in Galatians 3 and 4:1-9 strongly suggests that Paul addresses very much the same issues here in 4:21-5:1 as in 4:1-9 and especially 3:1-29, although from another angle. Rather than viewing this passage as a supplementary argument to the previous arguments to reinforce what he argued earlier (e.g., Bruce 1982b:214; Burton 1920:251; Chrysostom), H. D. Betz (1979:238-240; adopted in part by Longenecker 1990:198)<sup>172</sup> correctly understands 4:21-5:1 as Paul's strongest argument in 3:1-4:31.

Most scholars agree that Paul's allegory of the two women (v. 24) is "fundamentally tempered by typology" (Martyn 1997:436; cf. Hays 2000:301;

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<sup>172</sup> Longenecker however (1990:199) differs from Betz's (1979:238-240) analysis of 4:31 as the conclusion of Paul's entire argumentative *probatio*, but rather sees it as part of Paul's appeals and exhortations headed by "become like me" (4:12).

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George 1994:338-339; Longenecker 1990:209-210; Bruce 1982b:217; Betz 1979:239; Lightfoot 1914:180). Longenecker (1990:209-211) correctly notices that the manner in which Paul applies allegory is more Palestinian than Alexandrian (e.g., Philo). Paul is not emancipating the meaning of the passage from its historical content in order to transmute it into a moral sentiment or philosophical truth (Alexandrian). Paul rather refers to the original historical content and interprets it typologically. Paul's allegory is thus an aid to typology and regards history as meaningful (cf. Bruce 1982b:218).

In 4:21-5:1 Paul draws up two contrasting columns that represent two covenants (διαθηκαι, v. 24). The main contrasts can be arranged as follows:

**Two covenants**

Slave woman (v. 22) Slavery (v. 24,25) Hagar (vv. 24,25)	Free [woman] (vv. 22,23,26,30,31)
Present Jerusalem (v. 25) Mount Sinai (vv. 24,25)	Jerusalem above is free (v. 26)
Under the law (v. 21)	
Born according to the flesh (vv. 23,29)	[Born] by promise (v. 23) [Born] according to the Spirit (v. 29)
Born into slavery with her children (v. 24)	Children of the promise, like Isaac (v. 28)
Son of the slave woman (v. 30)	Son of the free [woman] (v. 30)
The yoke of slavery (5:1)	Freedom in Christ (5:1)

Hays (2000:302), Martyn (1997:446) and Dunn (1993:249) argue for viewing the two columns as one covenant in terms of two different understandings, the left column as representing the gospel of Paul's opponents (Teachers of the law) in terms of law and flesh, and the right column as the right understanding of the covenant in terms of freedom and promise. They additionally view the giving birth of children (γεννωσα, pres. part., v. 24) as pointing to present churches rather

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than to individuals, where the left column would then point to Paul's opponents (Teachers of the law) rather than to ethnic Israel. Consequently, the slave woman who has to be cast out (v. 30) is also identified with Paul's opponents (Hays 2000:306; Martyn 1997:446; Dunn 1993:258).

This line of argumentation however becomes strenuous in context of the birth of the two sons of Abraham (vv. 23,29) who each have to fall under one of two actual covenants (v. 24) that has salvation historical significance (cf. what Paul understands of them elsewhere).<sup>173</sup> It is more in line with the overall context (cf. the corresponding terms and concepts as discussed above) and the progression of Paul's argument in 3:1-4:31 (see Betz 1979:238-240; cf. Longenecker 1990:198) to understand the left column as representative the Old Covenant and the right column of the New Covenant (Meyer 2009:129,136-137; Fee 1994:413,416; George 1994:339; Longenecker 1990:211;<sup>174</sup> Fung 1988:206-207; Lategan 1986:91; Bruce 1982b:218; Betz 1979:243). The argument in 4:21-5:1 still has to be viewed in salvation-historical context (Longenecker 1990:213; cf. Bruce 1982b:217). One of the stronger arguments in viewing the two covenants as representative of two epochs (old and new) is probably the close proximity of 4:4-6, where the dividing salvation-historical moment (πλήρωμα τοῦ χρόνου, v. 4) is portrayed by the sending of God's Son (cf. Fung 1988:184; Lategan 1986:79), who was also "born of a woman, born under the law" to redeem those under the law, that all people (ἀπολάβωμεν, 1 pl., v. 5) might receive the adoption as children (v. 5) and the Spirit (v. 6) in Christ.

More fundamentally these two covenants can be broken down into two modes of identity, an identity according to the flesh that is defined by law and its consequential slavery (identity mode A), versus an identity that is birthed from the Spirit according to promise and freedom (identity mode C, see below). Yet, Paul undeniably alludes to the Teachers of the law who insisted on "perfecting"

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<sup>173</sup> Cf. how "Abraham" (Rom 4; see 5.1.2; Rom 9:7, see 4.3.2; Rom 11:1, see 8.1.1; 2 Cor 11:22, see 4.2.2; Gal 3, see 5.1.3) and "Isaac" (Rom 9:7,10, see 4.3.2) feature elsewhere in the context of the Old Covenant.

<sup>174</sup> Even though Longenecker (1990:211) views the two covenants as the Old and the New, he understands the casting out of "the slave woman and her son" (v. 30) as the casting out of the Teachers of the law (:217).

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(ἐπιτελέω, 3:3) their identity according to the law and flesh, which is all about external markers and outward performance. As Bruce (1982b:218-219; cf. Hays 2000:306) notes, Paul inverts the argument of the opponents. Where they would argue for true descent from Isaac through physical ancestry and circumcision, Paul in fact connects their line of argumentation to Ishmael, the son of Hagar, the slave woman. But Paul's refutation of his opponents is not the only aim of his argument in 4:21-5:1. He concludes his salvation-historical exposition as put forth in 3:1-5:1 by denying inheritance on the basis of law (ὑπὸ νόμον, v. 21) or ethnicity<sup>175</sup> (vv. 23,29-30) and ties inheritance only to children of the promise and the Spirit who are free from the law (vv. 28-30). The contrast between κατὰ σάρκα γεννηθεῖς (v. 29; cf. κατὰ σάρκα γεγέννηται, v. 23) and κατὰ πνεῦμα [γεννηθεῖς] (v. 29) is to be understood as a contrast between natural birth and birth from the Spirit (see 2.3.1), which apart from pointing to the promise (v. 28), probably alludes to regeneration (cf. Meyer 2009:140; Hays 2000:305; Fee 1994:414-416; 3:2-5).<sup>176</sup>

Paul hereby does not reject Judaeans indiscriminately, neither is he anti-Judaeans. Paul in fact connects inheritance directly to their ancestors Isaac and Abraham, who allegorically represents the New Covenant. The New Covenant is therefore firmly rooted in the Old (contra Bultmann 1963:31-32)<sup>177</sup> and is dependent on Christ as being born under the law (4:4). The work of Christ (see

<sup>175</sup> This notion can be derived from κατὰ σάρκα γεννηθεῖς, which signifies an ethnic identity derived from natural descent (cf. George 1994:336-337), which stands in contrast to a spiritual identity: birth ἐκ τῆς ἐλευθέρας δι' ἐπαγγελίας (v. 23) or birth κατὰ πνεῦμα (v. 29).

<sup>176</sup> It can be asked if Paul assigns an actual identity according to the Spirit to Isaac and by implication to historical Israel (v. 29). In v. 28, Paul compares "us" (believers in Christ) with Isaac. As Betz (1979:249) points out, Paul therefore does not have Isaac and Ishmael as individuals so much in mind in v. 29 but rather "the types they represent". In other words, Paul is at this point in deep allegorical language. As Fee (1994:415-416) notes, Isaac's birth κατὰ πνεῦμα might be "simply an analogy and nothing more" (:415). Yet, as is suggested in Rom 9:18-22, Paul did see Isaac's birth as supernatural (:416; Betz 1979:243; cf. Burton 1920:252-253) which probably conveys much of Paul's allusion here (Fee 1994:416; Hendriksen 1968, Galatians 4:21-31; cf. Fung 1988:214). But in terms of Paul's main rhetoric, he opposes the Old Covenant ("Ishmael") according to flesh to the New Covenant ("Isaac") according to the Spirit (Fee 1994:416; see main text), for the reception of the Spirit is associated with the beginning of belief in Christ (3:2-5; 4:6) and not with an identity under the law (4:4-5,21). Given Paul's allegorical language, an implied designation of historical Israel as "Israel according to the Spirit" is therefore unlikely.

<sup>177</sup> Bultmann (1963:31-32) states: "To the Christian faith the Old Testament is no longer revelation as it has been, and still is, for the Jews... The events which meant something for Israel, which were God's Word, mean nothing more to us... To the Christian faith the Old Testament is not in the true sense God's Word" (cf. Marcion).

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Gal 3:22-29) is the initial fulfilment of God's covenant with Abraham, awaiting the final eschatological fulfilment (cf. Dunn 1993:243). With respect to Paul's overall salvation-historical scheme, the two covenants do not co-exist in parallel, and there is in this sense indeed one covenant that has been fulfilled, that resulted in a new mode of existence (Longenecker 1990:116). Meyer (2009:136-137) is therefore correct to refer to the portrayal of the Old and New Covenants here in terms of an *eschatological contrast*, where

a new entity comes on the scene and replaces the former and because it fulfills what the former provisionally anticipated or accomplishes what the former failed to do. Therefore, the new thing replaces the former thing because the emergence of the new has rendered the existence of the former outdated and thus eschatologically old (:137).

The New Covenant stands in both *continuity* and *discontinuity* with the Old. What is cast out (v. 30) is therefore not the Judaeen people *per se*, but the Old Covenant, or more specifically, the old mode of filiation to God, which was marked off by outward identity markers, constituted mainly by natural descent from Isaac, circumcision and possession of the law (cf. Martyn 1997:441; Dunn 1993:257).<sup>178</sup> By implication, the Judaeen people who resist the gospel and Christ (cf. Bruce 1982b:219) are not counted as children of the promise, but children of the slave woman, and they are denied inheritance and their status as God's people. Burton (1920:267) puts it simple: "Allegorically interpreted the expulsion of Ishmael points to a rejection of the children of Abraham according to the flesh in favour of the sons of Abraham by faith" (cf. Fung 1988:215; Lategan 1986:93; Betz 1979:251; Hanson 1974:95). Even if one chooses the view that Paul casts out the Teachers of the law or an "Ishmael-church" (cf. Martyn 1997:446; Dunn 1993:250) it is hard to avoid the latter conclusion, since a mode of identity marked by outward identity markers (identity mode A), represented much of the claim of Paul's opponents in terms of "a perfected" identity as well. The point here is not so much that unbelieving Judaeen people as such are being disinherited, but that by

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<sup>178</sup> Even though Martyn (1997:440-441) and Dunn (1993:257) do not view the two covenants as pointing to the Old and New Covenants, they do share these notions about identity in terms of the Teachers of the law.

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implication, all who do not find their identity through faith in Christ only, are in fact not “children of the promise” (v. 28) and therefore denied inheritance (cf. 3:26,29; Bassler 2007:76; Lührmann 1992:93).

In terms of the casting out of “the slave woman and her son” (v. 30), Bruce (1982b:225) is probably correct that Paul does not envision an active casting out of some members of the congregation but rather describes “the fate of each party”. Apart from scholars who do not identify those to be cast out with unbelieving Judaeans (e.g., Hays 2000:302; Martyn 1997:446; Dunn 1993:258; Longenecker 1990:217), many scholars are hesitant on admitting outright denial of inheritance to Judaeans on the basis of ethnicity without faith in Christ, and attempt to temper the harshness of such a conclusion by comparison with Paul’s exposition in Rom 9 to 11 (e.g., Lategan 1986:93; cf. Bruce 1982b:225).<sup>179</sup> H. D. Betz (1979:251) however resists such moderation and suggests a revision of Paul’s thought in Romans 9 to 11 in comparison to Galatians 4. Longenecker (1990), despite seeing the two covenants as the Old and New Covenants (:211), rejects the view that the “the slave woman and her son” may point to a casting out of unbelieving Judaeans in general, for he argues that Romans 11:13-21 (see however 8.1.2-8.1.3) and 14:1-15:13 (see however 5.2.2) negate such a view (:217). It remains a question how much of the various interpretations on the table are regulated by the dominant technique, where one passage controls the meaning of another (see 1.2.2). Nevertheless, the measure of contrast of Paul’s view in Romans 9 to 11 with his exposition in Galatians 4:21-5:1 ultimately depends on (1) the amount of time one allows for development in Paul’s thought between Galatians and Romans (esp. the dating of Galatians), (2) if acknowledged, what the nature or extent of such development is, and ultimately (3) one’s understanding of Romans 9 to 11, especially 11 (see 8.1).

Regarding the modes of identity, the left column represents identity mode A and the right column identity mode C. As in Romans 4 (see 5.1.2) and Galatians 3

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<sup>179</sup> Bruce (1982b:225) displays overall hesitance here. He identifies the “the slave woman and her son” as “those who, being ‘under law’, are still in bondage”, and as “theologically, Ishmaels”, but he resists an interpretation of expelling some people in the congregation on the basis of his interpretation of Romans 11:13-21 (see 8.1) and 14:1-15:13 (see 5.2.2).

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(see 5.1.3), identity mode AB is once again represented by Abraham and Isaac as representatives of promise (Gal 4:23,28) and Spirit (vv. 6,29). Although faith is implied in the context of the preceding Galatians 3, it is not explicitly mentioned here in 4:21-5:1. Martyn (1997:444) is essentially correct in his view that

the Galatians... have been included in a line extending through the centuries from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. His [Paul's] exegesis is thoroughly *punctiliar*, in the sense that he sees a divine correspondence between two *points*, God's action in the birth of Isaac and God's action in the birth of the Galatian congregations.

The difference in my interpretation is that this correspondence stretches wider than the Galatian congregations, and can be applied to all the people in the New Covenant. This correspondence represents the spiritual (cf. George 1994:344) aspect of God's covenant with Abraham which is fulfilled through Christ in the believer. The physical aspect of the covenant has been fulfilled in Christ who was "born under the law" (4:4) as a physical descendant of Abraham and Isaac. This physical aspect was fulfilled and ended in Christ Himself. The *continuity* of identity mode C to that of A can therefore be described as: 1) a physical, natural continuity with Abraham and Isaac in the Person of *Christ only*, and 2) a *punctiliar* continuity with Abraham through *belief only* in Christ, the intended recipient of the promise.

#### 5.1.5 Ephesians 2:8-22

While my own position would be to defend Pauline authorship for Ephesians,<sup>180</sup> space does not allow for venturing into a discussion on the debate. The passage in Ephesians will thus be treated with awareness of the dispute about authorship. Many defenders of Pauline authorship see Ephesians as being written in Roman prison in the early 60s CE (e.g., Carson & Moo 2005:486-487; Hoehner [2002] 2003:96; O'Brien 1999:57). Those who reject Pauline authorship normally date the letter at around 90 CE (e.g. Muddiman 2001:35; Lincoln 1990:lxiii;

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<sup>180</sup> See fn. 19 for a list of scholars who defend this position.

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Schnackenburg 1991:25). Pursuing a specific setting for the letter seems to run against the literary genre of the letter (Perkins 2000:352), which looks more like a tract than an epistle (Bruce 1984:229; Fuller 1966:66). The letter is predominantly destined for Gentile Christ-believers (2:11; 3:1; O'Brien 1999:50,176; Schnackenburg 1991:125; Lincoln 1990:112; Bruce 1984:230), although not to the exclusion of Judaeans believers (1:11-14; O'Brien 1999:50). The letter was probably destined for Asia Minor (Perkins 2000:361; O'Brien 1999:48; Bruce 1984:230),<sup>181</sup> and was probably meant as a circular letter (Carson & Moo 2005:488; O'Brien 1999:47,183; Roberts 1983:12; Guthrie [1970] 1976:510).<sup>182</sup>

The thoughts of earlier Pauline letters is carried to a new stage in Ephesians (Bruce 1984:229), which probably led to the description of Ephesians as “the crown of Paulinism” (Dodd 1929:1224-1225). It is for this exact reason that many have argued against Pauline authorship which they in fact view as a departure from Pauline thought. One of the crucial areas in this equation is the way in which the new creation and the new entity of believers in Christ are understood in Ephesians. In Perkins’ (2000:404) words: “[r]eading Ephesians... [o]ne would infer... that the entire heritage of Israel had passed into the church.” This notion is normally contrasted to commentators’ interpretation of the salvation of Israel in Romans 11<sup>183</sup> and arguably contributes to the tendency to reject Pauline authorship of Ephesians (e.g., Middiman 2001:120; Perkins 2000:404; Schnackenburg 1991:110; Lincoln 1990:134). The extent of this “contrast” in turn obviously depends on one’s interpretation of both Romans 11 (see 8.1) and Ephesians 2.

Ephesians establishes powerful images of the identity of the Christ-believer (cf. Perkins 2000:352). Lincoln (1990:82-83) suggests that by mirror reading, it can be inferred from the prayers to the readers (3:14-19) and appeals in the conclusion of the parenthesis (cf. 4:1-16; 6:10-20) that the main problems for the

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<sup>181</sup> This deduction would be reasonable given the reference to the recipients’ hearing of God’s grace that was given to Paul to minister to Gentiles (3:2; 4:21; O’Brien 1999:48).

<sup>182</sup> The absence of “in Ephesus” in some of the best manuscripts (1:1), the impersonal tone of the letter and the more general content would suggest such a conclusion (O’Brien 1999:47).

<sup>183</sup> Cf. the same tendency regarding Gal 4:21-5:1 (see 5.1.4).

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readers were “powerlessness, instability and a lack of resolve, and [that] these are related to an insufficient sense of identity” (cf. Lincoln 1990:120; Perkins 2000:352). Ephesians 2 is central in defining the new identity of the believers in Christ. These Gentile believers were once dead through their trespasses and sin (v. 1). They lived in the lusts of their flesh, following its desires and senses (v. 3). In contrast, God made them alive with Christ<sup>184</sup> through His love and mercy (vv. 4-5). They are saved by grace (vv. 5,8) through faith, not of themselves (v. 8). This salvation is the gift of God (cf. Hoehner [2002] 2003:343; O’Brien 1999:175; Lincoln 1990:112).<sup>185</sup> While many who are sceptical about Pauline authorship expect justification in verse 8 (δικαιόω, e.g., Rom 3:20,24,28; Gal 2:16-17; 3:11,24; see e.g., Perkins 2000:392-393; Schnackenburg 1991:98; Luz 1976:365-383), Marshall (1996; adopted by O’Brien 1999:174) points out that salvation terminology is quite normal in the rest of the Pauline corpus (e.g., Rom 1:16; 5:10; 10:9-10; 1 Th 2:16; 1 Cor 15:2).

This salvation is οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων (v. 9), lest anyone boast (καυχῆσθαι). Ephesians indeed seems to contrast salvation to merit (O’Brien 1999:174; Lincoln 1990:111; Bruce 1984:290; cf. Muddiman 2001:111). Yet, as pointed out earlier, this notion is not foreign to Paul, and is implied in the context of boasting in addition to pride in identity and ethnicity (see Rom 2:17-19, 4.5.1, esp. fn. 106 and Rom 4:1-25, 5.1.2, esp. fn. 131). Marshall (1996:345-346) states that human effort in general “does not exclude but includes the practices required by Judaism” (cf. O’Brien 1999:176-177). As here in Ephesians 2:9, “works” (ἔργων) without the immediate qualification, “of the law” (νόμου),<sup>186</sup> is comparably contrasted in the letter to the Romans with grace (Rom 4:4; 11:6), faith (Rom 4:5) and election (Rom 9:11). This shorter form is thus thoroughly Pauline (cf. Hoehner [2002] 2003:344-345; O’Brien 1999:176).

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<sup>184</sup> The phrase “you being dead to sin, God has raised together in Christ Jesus” is authentically Pauline (Muddiman 2001:100; cf. Rom 6:11,13).

<sup>185</sup> The τοῦτο refers to the preceding clause (τῆ γὰρ χάριτί ἐστε σεσωσμένοι διὰ πίστεως) as a whole (Hoehner [2002] 2003:343; O’Brien 1999:175), where the διὰ πίστεως modifies the verb σεσωσμένοι. This means that faith itself is not necessarily portrayed as being imparted, for faith intrinsically “involves the abandonment of any attempt to justify oneself and an openness to God which is willing to accept what he has done in Christ” (Lincoln 1990:111; cf. Rom 4:4-5, see 5.1.2).

<sup>186</sup> Many who reject Pauline authorship (e.g., Muddiman 2001:111; Lincoln 1990:112; cf. Perkins 2000:392; Schnackenburg 1991:98) expect ἔργων νόμου (e.g., Gal 3) here.

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The terms ποίημα and κτίζω (v. 10) signify the new creation in Christ (O'Brien 1999:178), created in Christ unto ἔργοις ἀγαθοῖς. While this notion about good works has been described as "scarcely Pauline" in that it is perceived to contract Paul's teaching of justification into a moralistic direction (Lindemann 1975:138), O'Brien (1999:180) argues that such an understanding fails to understand this statement (v. 10) within the flow of the argument. Good works are designed for God's new creation as fruit or consequence, and are thus neither meritorious nor a prerequisite for redemption (O'Brien 1999:180; cf. Rom 13:3; Gal 5:6; 6:10; 2 Cor 5:10; 9:8; 1 Th 5:15; 2 Th 2:17; Hoehner [2002] 2003:349-350).

Verse 11 urges the Gentile Christ-believing readers to remember (μνημονεύετε). In terms of cultural memory, Punt (2011:154) writes: "Collective memory provides a centripetal force for a group, and concomitantly serves as powerful marker of social differentiation (Halbwachs 1992:38-45), and boundary-drawing and self-identification is what constitutes identity (Braxton 2000)." This memory of the readers' past helps them to have a greater appreciation and gratitude for what God has done to change their past (Lincoln 1990:135), and contrasts their new found identity in Christ to their old identity, which was labelled with the derogatory terms (Perkins 2000:397) τὰ ἔθνη ἐν σαρκί and ἀκροβυστία. Their previous identity apart from Christ which is described as being "in the flesh" (v. 11), portrays the Gentiles as being ethnically predispositioned (cf. Middiman 2001:115; Lincoln 1990:135; Bruce 1984:291).

This ethnic predisposition made these Gentiles strangers (ξένοι, v. 12) to several privileges (v. 12), which can be compared to the privileges of Israel according to the flesh in Romans 9:3-5 (see 4.3.2.1; Middiman 2001:119; Perkins 2000:397; O'Brien 1999:188; Schnakenburg 1991:109; Bruce 1984:293): (1) They were without Christ (χωρὶς Χριστοῦ), the Messiah who belonged to Israel whom they hoped for (O'Brien 1999:188-190; Bruce 1984:294; cf. Hoehner [2002] 2003:355; Roberts 1984:66-67). This correlates to the eighth privilege in Romans 9:5 (cf. Rom 9:3), Christ according to the flesh (designating ethnic descent). (2) They were alienated from (ἀπηλλοτριωμένοι; Perkins 2000:397) the citizenship or

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membership (πολιτεία; Hoehner [2002] 2003:356-357; Perkins 2000:397; Lincoln 1990:137)<sup>187</sup> of Israel, which corresponds to the adoption (first privilege) of Romans 9:3. (3) Being strangers to the covenants of the promise (τῶν διαθηκῶν τῆς ἐπαγγελίας) parallels the third (αἱ διαθήκαι) and the sixth privileges (αἱ ἐπαγγελίαι) in Romans 9:4. The primary covenant of promise in Paul is the Abrahamic covenant (Rom 4; Gal 3; 4:23,28). In comparison to Romans 9:4-7 (v. 7 mentions Abraham explicitly), τῶν διαθηκῶν τῆς ἐπαγγελίας here in Ephesians 2:12 includes at least the covenant promise to Abraham (Hoehner [2002] 2003:359; Muddiman 2001:121; Lincoln 1990:137). The genitive (τῆς ἐπαγγελίας) probably refers to the Abrahamic promise as the foundation promise (O'Brien 1999:189). (4) The Gentiles were having no hope (ἐλπίδα μὴ ἔχοντες). This logically flows from being strangers to the covenants of the promise (Hoehner [2002] 2003:360) and the fact that they were without a Messiah. (5) Finally, they were without God in the world (ἄθεοι ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ). They were predispositioned in terms of their relationship with God (cf. O'Brien 1999:190). These last two privileges that they were estranged from summarise the lowest point of their predicament. But in Christ all Judaeon privilege has been abolished (Lincoln 1990:149).

The reference to Ἰσραήλ (v. 12) refers to the Old Testament depiction of Israel as God's people (Perkins 2000:397; Gutbrod 1965:387). At the deepest level, in the Gentiles' past they were not in a covenant relationship with God. They were outside the sphere of God's election (Lincoln 1990:137). Yet, even the position of Israel is described as "the so called circumcision" (τῆς λεγομένης περιτομῆς, v. 11; BDAG λέγω, §4; Hoehner [2002] 2003:354; Schnackenburg 1991:108). Apart from the Gentiles' old identity "in the flesh" the circumcision of the Judaeon people is also described as ἐν σαρκὶ χειροποιήτου (v. 11). So, even *their* identity is

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<sup>187</sup> While πολιτεία can refer to the "commonwealth" (e.g., Bruce 1984:292; see Hoehner [2002] 2003:356-357; Perkins 2000:397; Lincoln 1990:137) of Israel, the notion of citizenship or membership is preferred in the context, for it is more inclusive. One can be a resident of a state and not be a citizen. Apart from the fact that Israel was not an independent state as such, but part of the commonwealth of Rome in the time of Paul (Hoehner [2002] 2003:357), the status of the Gentiles as strangers from Israel in this context pictures the situation in the Old Testament (cf. Perkins 2000:397). The Gentiles would not want membership of the political state of Israel so much as they would want the special privileges God bestowed on her (Hoehner [2002] 2003:357).

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depicted as being in the realm of flesh, signifying identity mode A. Circumcision was one of their primary identity markers that marked the Judaeen people off from other nations. Ephesians 2 thus does not merely establish salvation (vv. 5,8) as counterpart of merit (see above), but contrasts the identities of both Judaeen and Gentile outside Christ with the identity in Christ (identity mode C), which in turn fits much of the contentions about identity in the NPP (see esp. Lincoln 1990:141-142; cf. Schnackenburg 1991:108; O'Brien 1999:177; Bruce 1984:296). Both the identities of Israel and the Gentiles are being transcended in Christ (O'Brien 1999:209; Lincoln 1990:144,149; Bruce 1984:290,295).

This new, shared identity in Christ is portrayed by several metaphors that stand in stark contrast with an identity defined by flesh, and the division between Israel and the Gentiles before Christ (vv. 13-18). The Gentiles who were "far" have come "near" in Christ (v. 13,17; see below). This new identity in Christ of both Judaeen and Gentile is being described by several positive and negative images:

Positive images: Both Judaeen and Gentile have been made one entity (εἶς, v. 14; Hoehner [2002] 2003:363) through the blood of Christ. Christ constitutes peace (εἰρήνη, v. 14; εὐηγγελίσαστο εἰρήνην, v. 17) between God and human beings and between the nations (Lincoln 1990:148,161; Bruce 1984:295). Christ created both nations in Himself into one new person (ἓνα καινὸν ἄνθρωπον, v. 15), which signifies the new creation (Middiman 2001:133; O'Brien 1999:199-200; Schnackenburg 1991:115; Lincoln 1990:143; cf. 2 Cor 5:17) "where neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything" (O'Brien 1999:178; Gal 6:15). Both Judaeen and Gentile (ἀμφότερος, v. 16) are reconciled to God in one body of believers<sup>188</sup> (Hoehner [2002] 2003:382; Schnackenburg 2001:16; O'Brien 1999:201-202) by the cross (v. 16), and together (Hoehner [2002] 2003:388; O'Brien 1999:209) have access (προσαγωγή) to God by one Spirit to the Father (v. 18).

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<sup>188</sup> The phrase ἐνὶ σώματι (v. 16) can also refer to the body of Christ. While there might have been a certain porosity between Christological and ecclesiological connotations here (Middiman 2001:135), the latter connotation would be more likely in this context.

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Negative images: This new unity has been established in removing the middle wall of division (v. 14)<sup>189</sup> by abolishing the enmity (ἔχθρα, v. 14,16)<sup>190</sup> in Christ's flesh (ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ, v. 14), that is, by His death (O'Brien 1999:196; cf. Col 1:22). This middle wall is qualified as the law (v. 15; Hoehner [2002] 2003:371-374; Perkins 2000:399; O'Brien 1999:196; Lincoln 1990:141; Roberts 1984:64) of commandments contained in ordinances (KJV), which He rendered inoperative (καταργέω, v. 15; ISV; Hoehner [2002] 2003:374; cf. BDAG, καταργέω §2). The law functioned "as a fence to protect Israel from the impurity of the Gentiles, the law became such a sign of Jewish particularism that it also alienated Gentiles and became a cause of hostility" (Lincoln 1990:141). Perkins (2000:399-400; cf. Hoehner [2002] 2003:376; O'Brien 1999:199) points out that the law referred to here is neither just ceremonial, nor refers merely to those elements that are "in decrees" made by those who interpret the law (e.g., the elders, Mt 23:1-4,15-24; Mk 7:5-8; contra Barth 1974:287-291). That the law would be divisible into rites and customs over against Moses' legislation has little support in Judaeen texts (e.g., Josephus; CD-A 19:29; 4QMMT). The reference to the law in Ephesians 2:15 rather signifies the whole law (Perkins 2000:400). She (Perkins 2000) concludes: "Ephesians leaves no opening for the continuing observance of the law by Jewish Christians [sic]" (:402-403). The enmity or alienation caused by the law was thus twofold in that there was a rift between Judaeans and Gentiles and hostility between both of them and God (O'Brien 1999:205; cf. Roberts 1984:62).

The new identity in Christ that unites both Judaeen and Gentile as portrayed in Ephesians 2, looks very similar to the same new identity portrayed in Galatians 3, (1) where the curse of the law has been removed, and the law's function as marking off the Judaeen people from other nations has been rendered redundant

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<sup>189</sup> The expression μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ is a redundant construction which constitutes a stylistic feature (not un-Pauline; cf. e.g., Rom 1:23) that created "liturgical sonority and special emphasis, and allows extra time for the hearer to register the image and reflect upon it" (Middiman 2001:126). The term μεσότοιχον is a *hapax legomenon* and refers to a shared wall between terraced houses (Middiman 2001:127). The term φραγμός refers to a dry stone wall (:127). The combination μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ might have referred to the dividing wall between Israel and the Gentiles in the temple (:127; Lincoln 1990:141; Zerwich & Grosvenor 1988:582), which is applied metaphorically here.

<sup>190</sup> The corresponding concepts in Rom 5:10 (ἐχθρός) and 8:7 (ἔχθρα) respectively, signifies the term to be Pauline.

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(cf. Fee 1994:683), and (2) where one new identity in Christ relativises the differentiation between Judaeans and Gentiles (see 5.1.3.3). This new identity in Christ can be described as a *third entity* (Perkins 2000:400) or people-group (cf. Roberts 1984:65)<sup>191</sup> that supersedes both Judaeans and non-Judaean identities (cf. Perkins 2000:404; O'Brien 1999:209; Bruce 1984:296). This new identity in Christ provides the only access (προσγωγή, v. 18) to the Father by the Spirit, and both Judaeans and Gentiles alike have thereby become fellow-citizens of all believers (συμπολίται τῶν ἁγίων, v. 19; Perkins 2000:402; O'Brien 1999:211; Fee 1994:683) and of all people of God of all ages (Bruce 1984:302). Fellow-citizenship is thus not merely with Judaeans Christ-believers or with Judaeans in particular (O'Brien 1999:200; contra Faust 1993:184-188; Kirby 1968:168). In Perkins' (2000:402-403) words, it is "impossible to use Ephesians to support theories of an ongoing covenant with Israel that will bring it to salvation outside of Christ" (cf. Roberts 1984:69).

This sharp *discontinuity* between the new creation and Israel has led writers like Lincoln (1990:134) to construe a progressive pattern of discontinuity (Galatians), toward stronger continuity (Romans), and back again toward stronger discontinuity (Ephesians) when "Paul's position on admission of Gentiles had been established." At this point it could be asked why Ephesians 2 would fall under this section (ABC). Identity mode A can be detected in Israel as "the so called circumcision [the people] made in the flesh by hands" (v. 11) and identity mode C is recognised by the new creation in Christ. But what about identity mode AB? Amidst the discontinuity, several aspects of an equally profound *continuity* between the new identity in Christ and Israel can be detected. While "the circumcision" (the people) can be described as identity mode A, the "membership of Israel" (τῆς πολιτείας τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ, v. 12) is not so clear. This might refer to *inner* Israel or *true* Israel (identity mode AB; cf. esp. Rom 9:6, see 4.3.2.2). Even while the first four of the five privileges (v. 12, see above) do not necessarily

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<sup>191</sup> While agreeing with the intent to designate a new entity by the term "third race" (e.g., Lincoln 1990:144) or a "new race" (e.g., Hoehner [2002] 2003:379), as Clement himself referred to them (*Stromateis* 6.5.41.6; *Epistle to Diognetus* 1), I do not prefer this terminology because of its ethnic connotations (cf. 3.1.2). The designation "new creation" is more appropriate (cf. Sanders [1983] 1989:173,207).

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constitute the inner Israel (cf. Rom 9:4-5), being without God (ἄθεος) can hardly be seen as a mere external or ethnical privilege. For the Gentiles, to be without God signified “that they had no relationship with the true God, the God of Israel” (O’Brien 1999:190). Israel as portrayed in verse 12 is thus probably a conflation of identity mode A and AB. This notion is strengthened by several other indicators, all of which indicate the *continuity* between Israel and belief in Christ (1-5):

(1) That the Gentiles were previously “far” (μακράν, vv. 13,17), alludes to a previously positive (“near”, ἐγγύς, vv. 13,17) relationship of Israel with God (cf. Bruce 1984:13; Ps 148:14). Perhaps the continuity of the new identity in Christ with Israel is implicitly indicated the strongest by the fact that Israel was never “far”. They were by implication always near (cf. Middiman 2001:137). Since Christ was theirs (v. 13), their relationship with God continued uninterrupted with belief in their Messiah. Yet, Lincoln (1990:139) rightly notes that “the language of coming near undergoes a transformation. Because of Christ’s work, it can be used of Gentiles in general, not simply of proselytes to Judaism.” In Christ, the Gentiles could share in a “newly created community whose privileges transcend those of Israel” (:139; cf. O’Brien 1999:191; contra Tomson 1986:285-286).<sup>192</sup> Christ thus created “one new person which transcends the two” (Lincoln 1990:144) identities (Israel/Judaeans and Gentile), which means that Israel’s identity was transformed in Christ as well (cf. Rom 11:25-27, see esp. 8.1.5.7). The church was therefore not incorporated into historical Israel (O’Brien 1999:203; cf. Lincoln 1990:144; contra Barth 1969:95), but formed a new entity.

(2) The use of Scripture in Ephesians itself signifies the continuity between belief in Christ and Israel. In O’Brien (1999:183-184) words: “The use of the Old Testament Scriptures in this key paragraph [Eph 2:11-22], both explicitly (cf. vv. 13,17) and by way of allusion or echo (cf. vv. 19-22), underscores the note of continuity between Gentile Christians [sic] and the promises of God to Israel (cf.

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<sup>192</sup> Tomson (1986) argues that the Gentiles are “no longer ‘estranged from the citizenship of Israel’” (:285). The estrangement of the Gentiles from the citizenship of Israel however pertains to the former eschatological aeon (see main text).

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Gen 12:1-3; Isa 49:5,6).” As mentioned earlier, the promise (ἐπαγγελίας, gen., v. 12) probably alludes to the foundation promise to Abraham.

(3) The continuity of the new creation with Israel is additionally confirmed by the Gentile Christ-believers’ membership of the saints and the household of God (τῶν ἁγίων καὶ οἰκεῖοι τοῦ θεοῦ, v. 19), which signifies all people of God of all ages (Bruce 1984:302).

(4) Was it not for Israel and their Messiah (see above) who became the Messiah of the world (cf. ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ, v. 12), the Gentile people could never become part of God’s new creation. Christ Himself, Israel’s Messiah, remains the cornerstone<sup>193</sup> (ἄκρογωνιαίος, v. 20) of the new creation, which is the corporate body of believers in Christ that constitutes the temple (v. 21) and the dwelling place of God in the Spirit (v. 22; Hoehner [2002] 2003:414-415; cf. Muddiman 2001:143-144; Lincoln 1990:158). The overarching notion here is that the new creation fits into God’s history of salvation (Lincoln 1990:133,159).

(5) The Spirit (πνεῦμα, vv. 18,20) describes the nature of the new identity in Christ, and stands in contrast to an identity defined by flesh (σὰρξ, vv. 11,15) apart from Christ. This contrast can be identified as typically Pauline (see esp. 7.3-7.4). As pointed out by Suh (2007), this pneumatic dimension of Ephesians 2 shows remarkable parallels with Ezekiel 37, together with many other parallels.<sup>194</sup> Ezekiel 37 and Ephesians 2 both begin their chapters with God’s bringing back of dead people to life. The prophet Ezekiel anticipates the day when God will bring forth the New Covenant (Ezek 37:26; cf. Jer 31:31). The one new people in Christ

<sup>193</sup> The term ἄκρογωνιαίος could just as well refer to the crowning stone or capstone that held the building in place (see BDAG, ἄκρογωνιαίος; Zerwick & Grosvenor 1988:582), but Hoehner ([2002] 2003:402-405) shows that “cornerstone” would fit the current context better in conjunction with the foundation (θεμέλιος) of apostles and New Testament prophets, especially in its possible allusion to Isa 28:16 that depicts God as laying in Zion “a foundation stone, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone [ἄκρογωνιαίος, LXX], of a sure foundation” (RSV; cf. Fee 1994:687-688; Schnackenburg 1991:122-124; Lincoln 1990:153-155; Bruce 1984:304-306).

<sup>194</sup> Some of the corresponding concepts (between Ezek 37 and Eph 2) that Suh (2007:718) lists include the following: “Spirit/spirit” (Ezek 37:1,5,6,8,9,10,14; Eph 2:18,22), “covenant” (Ezek 37:26; Eph 2:12), “peace” (Ezek 37:26; Eph 2:14,15,17), “one” (Ezek 37:16,17,19,22,24; Eph 2:14,15,16,18), “two” (Ezek 37:22; Eph 2:15), “dwelling place” (Ezek 37:27,28; Eph 2:21,22), “hope” (Ezek 37:11; Eph 2:12); “law” (Ezek 37:24; Eph 2:15), “dead” (Ezek 37:9; Eph 2:1,5), “sin” (Ezek 37:27; Eph 2:1), “make alive” (Ezek 37:3,5,9,14; Eph 2:5) and “joining” (Ezek 37:7; Eph 2:21).

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(Eph 2:15-16) can be compared to the “one stick” (Ezek 37:17,19), the one new nation wherein God will unite the northern and southern kingdoms of Israel. Whatever the nature and the depth of this correspondence between Ezekiel 37 and Ephesians 2 is, it seems safe to say that the notion of God creating a new covenant (that Suh interprets as the new creation) of different people into one family, is firmly rooted within Old Testament prophecy. This further emphasises the strong *continuity* between the new creation and Israel, the people of God.

## 5.2 The radical NPP and the Noahide Laws

It is appropriate at this point to evaluate aspects of the radical NPP against the passages in the Pauline corpus where (1) the *continuity* between the Judaeen people and believers in Christ is the strongest, and (2) where these identities are to a large extent defined around the understanding of the *law* in the light of Christ (esp. Gal 3 and Rom 4). While aspects of continuity in Romans, Galatians and Ephesians are clearly evident in a qualified sense (esp. salvation-historical), my approach runs contrary to an approach where believers in Christ are considered as an *extension* of the Judaeen covenant people to *accommodate* non-Judaeen people, which is one of the basic premises of many radical NPP approaches. Proponents of the latter approach often allude to the laws or precepts of Noah (also known as “Noahide/Noachian Laws/Commandments/Precepts/Code”), a minimum set of requirements (*halakhot*) that were expected of Gentiles. According to this approach, the Noahide Laws would serve as the basis within the Judaeen way of life for non-Judaeans to have a place in the world to come (e.g., Eisenbaum 2009:252; Campbell 2008:6; Nanos 1996:50-56; Tomson 1990:50). A better understanding of the Noahide Laws is thus essential in evaluating two-covenant (or similar) approaches to Paul. In order to evaluate the claim that the Noahide Laws would have been present in Paul’s thought, a brief discussion of the origin of the Noahide Laws and the principles behind them is required (as space allows), with the aim of comparing them to Paul’s thought on identity and the law.

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### 5.2.1 The origin of the Noahide Laws

The Noahide Laws as a system of accommodating Gentiles is strictly speaking a concept that developed within Rabbinic Judaism (Langer 2003:267; Fitzmyer 1998:557; Witherington III 1998a:464; Boyarin 1994:233; Schwartz 1990:770; cf. Lundgren 2003:1732). The complete set of the seven Noahide Laws is contained in the *Mishneh Torah (Hilkhot Melakhim 8:14, 12<sup>th</sup> cent. CE)*, and includes prohibitions on (1) idolatry, (2) blasphemy, (3) murder, (4) theft, (5) sexual immorality, (6) eating living flesh, and (7) exhortations for the establishment of courts of justice. They are considered in Rabbinic Judaism as binding to *all humankind*. A Gentile that adheres to these seven laws would be considered a “righteous Gentile” (Blickenstaff 2009:280; Konvitz 1996:31) or a “Godfearer” (Tomson 1990:50). As put forth in the Rabbinic literature, it would not be expected of these “righteous Gentiles” to follow all 613 commandments, which would only be required of Jews (Lundgren 2003:1732).

The *Tosefta Avodah Zarah 8:4 (3<sup>d</sup> century CE)*, a supplement to the Mishnah, contains six of the seven commands (see Langer 2003:266):

The children of Noah were commanded concerning seven commandments: about adjudication; and about idolatry; and about blasphemy; and about sexual immorality; and about murder; and about robbery.

The seventh command: “and about eating a limb from a living animal”, is missing from the primary manuscript. It is suggested that the command can be derived from Genesis 9:4, and is missing in the text due to a scribal error (Langer 2003:266). Later Rabbinic texts derive the first six commandments (excluding the exhortations for the establishment of courts of justice law) from Genesis 2:16 (*Sanhedrin 56b*; Langer 2003:266). But such commandments are not part of Genesis 2:16, and could only be inferred by mystical and/or esoteric methods of interpretation, which can be identified with the Talmudic era (cf. the *Merkabah* mysticism, one of the divisions of Kabbalah, Poncé 1988:47-49).

Nanos (1996:55) and Tomson (1990:50) assert to find traces of the concept of the Noahide Laws in the book of *Jubilees 7:20-21* (see fn. 2). However, while the

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book of *Jubilees* can be dated at around 160-150 BCE (VanderKam 2001:17-21), the narrative about Noah, and the commands that he gave to his grandsons (including [1] doing justice, [2] covering up the shame of their flesh, [3] blessing the one who created them, [4] honouring their father and mother, [5] loving their neighbour, [6] and preserving themselves from fornication, pollution and injustice) hardly correspond to the seven Noahide Laws. A reference to the book of *Jubilees* as proof of the existence of the Noahide Laws or even an earlier form of it, is thus problematic.<sup>195</sup>

It has been argued that some form of the Noahide Laws is to be found in the so called “Apostolic Decree” in reference to Acts 15:19-32; 16:1-5 and 21:25 (e.g., Bivin 2005:141-144; Nanos 1996:52; Tomson 1990:273-274). Apart from the question about the legitimacy of using Acts as basis for Paul, the prohibitions listed in Acts 15:20,29 and 21:25 do not fit the seven Noahide Commandments very well. The four prohibitions listed are abstention from (1) the pollution of (or things offered to) idols,<sup>196</sup> (2) sexual immorality, (3) the meat of strangled animals<sup>197</sup> and (4) blood. The textual variation on the first prohibition (1) in the various locations in Acts results in a variation in meaning. The first reference (Ac 15:20) is to an “abandonment of the spiritual defilement that comes from idolatry”, where the latter references (Ac 15:29; 21:25) have to do with “participation in pagan temple feasts, not simply... the uncleanness incurred from eating meat

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<sup>195</sup> Segal (1986:171) argues that although the rabbinic name “Noahide commandments” were not attached to it, “*Jubilees* 7:20 attests to the content of the Noahide rules in Jewish thought.” But apart from the absence of the concept of “Noahide Commandments” within *Jubilees* 7:20-21, even if there are some similarities with *Jubilees* 7:20-21 and the *idea* of the Noahide Laws, the dissimilarity in the content of these laws and the lack of the universal idea in the *Jubilees* text that those who adhere to these commandments would be considered as “righteous Gentiles” or earn a place in the world to come (cf. Segal 2000a:122-124), weakens the claim that the *Jubilee* text is proof for an earlier form of the Noahide Laws itself or the concept behind it.

<sup>196</sup> There is some variation in Ac 15:20,29 and 21:25 in terms of word order and terminology. Apart from word order, the clause “to abstain from the pollution of idols” (ἀπέχεσθαι τῶν ἀλισγημάτων τῶν εἰδώλων) in Ac 15:20, reads “to abstain from [meat/food] offered to idols” (ἀπέχεσθαι εἰδωλοθύτων) in 15:29, and “to keep themselves from [things/food] offered to idols” (φυλάσσεσθαι αὐτοὺς τό τε εἰδωλόθυτον) in 21:25 respectively. Witherington III (1998a:461) notes that εἰδωλόθυτον has no proper counterpart in Judaeian literature, and thus has to be a term that originated in the early Christ-believing community.

<sup>197</sup> In Ac 15:20, some Western texts (see NA27) omit καὶ τοῦ πνικτοῦ and after αἵματος adds καὶ ὅσα μὴ θέλουσιν ἑαυτοῖς γίνεσθαι ἑτέροις μὴ ποιεῖν (“and not to do to others what they would not like done to themselves”; Bruce [1952] 1965:299), a negative form of the so called “Golden Rule”, probably to contemporise the list for a later time (Wall 2002:220). Similar alterations occur in Western texts in Ac 15:29 and 21:25 (see NA27).

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bought in the marketplace” (Peterson 2009:433; cf. Witherington III 1998a:461-464). The second prohibition (2) probably refers to sexual immorality in the broadest sense (πορνεία) rather than to spiritual adultery in the practice of idolatry (Peterson 2009:433-435). This prohibition shows the only close correspondence to one of the Noahide Laws (see no. 5 of the Noahide Laws above). The meat of strangled animals (3) refers to meat from which the blood was not drained as a result of the way it was killed (Ex 22:31; Lev 17:13-16; Peterson 2009:434; cf. Barrett 2002:233). The prohibition on blood (4) refers to the consumption of blood in any form (Gen 9:4; Lev 7:26-27; 17:10-14; Deut 12:16,23; Peterson 2009:434). The reference to Moses in Acts 15:21 most naturally refers to verse 20, and implies adherence to some Mosaic laws (Peterson 2009:435-436) rather than “Noahide Laws”.<sup>198</sup> Barrett (1998:734) concludes: “the parallel is not close, and there is nothing in the text of Acts to call Noah to mind” (adopted by Peterson 2009:434; cf. Barrett 2002:234; Fitzmyer 1998:557; Witherington III 1998a:464). The so called “Apostolic Decree” thus had more to do with a practical arrangement not to put pressure on the Judaeen Christ-believers in the light of the issue of obedience to the Mosaic law, which would not be resolved quickly (Peterson 2009:436; cf. Fitzmyer 1998:558; Bruce [1952] 1965:300). The idea that the practical arrangement would differentiate Judaeen believers from Gentile believers in some way in terms of their status before God is not present in Acts.

Lastly, it has been argued that there is some reminiscence of the Noahide Laws in the *Didache*: (1) *Didache* 3:1-6 contains references to the prohibition of murder, adultery, idolatry, theft and blasphemy, which have been interpreted as showing resemblance to the Noahide Laws (e.g., Flusser 1988:508). (2) *Didache* 6:2-3 refers to bearing the entire “yoke of the Lord” (the whole Torah), and warns

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<sup>198</sup> Another interpretation is that the rules of Leviticus 17:8-18:18 applies to Judaeans and resident aliens in the land of Israel, which would have been applied to Christ-believing Gentiles in the Diaspora. This would mean that Gentile converts were not required to become proselytes and keep the whole law, but only those parts that were required by Moses of resident aliens (e.g., Wilson [1983] 2005:85-102; cf. Wall 2002:220). This implies that Gentile Christ-believers lived with Judaeen believers in the Diaspora “in a way that was comparable to living with Jews in the Holy Land, ignoring the argument that God has taken for himself a new and distinctive people from among the nations (15:14)” (Peterson 2009:435). There is however no known Jewish parallel to the commandments from the law of Moses as those which would have been binding on Gentiles (:435). In fact, Witherington III (1998a:464-465) lists several difficulties in connecting Lev 17-18 to the “Apostolic Decree” (cf. Peterson 2009:435; Barrett 2002:234).

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against food offered to idols (e.g., van de Sandt & Flusser 2002:240). Dating the *Didache* however remains uncertain. Some think that it was composed between 50 to 70 CE (Audet 1958:187-210; cf. Robinson 1976:322-327) and others suggest an editorial date at the first half of the second century (e.g., Niederwimmer [1989] 1993:79; Barnard 1966:99). Still others argue for the second half of the second century (e.g., Kraft 1965:76-77; Johnson 1946:108). A growing consensus is however emerging (van de Sandt & Flusser 2002:48) that the text was composed by the turn of the first century CE (e.g., Rordorf & Tuilier 1998:91-99,232; Steimer 1992:20; Köhler 1987:29-30). Dating the *Didache* is largely inferred from its literary agreement with other early writings of Christ-believers. If the *Didache* used *Barnabas* and *Hermas* it must be dated later than 140 CE. Although most scholars today understand the *Didache* to have developed independent of *Barnabas* and *Hermas*, it is conceivable that the textual agreement between *Didache* 1:5 and *Hermas* represents a common tradition (van de Sandt & Flusser 2002:49). Others have compared parts of the *Didache* with the gospel of Matthew, especially the Lord's Prayer (e.g., Köhler 1987:29-30). Whether there would have been literary dependence of the *Didache* upon these mentioned writings however is not obvious and remains uncertain. It is more likely that it developed independently within a rural congregation in a Greek speaking part of Western Syria or, possibly, in the borderland between Syria and Palestine at the close of the first century (van de Sandt & Flusser 2002:52). It thus seems safe to say that the *Didache* originated after Paul's lifetime.

Apart from the difficulty in dating the *Didache*, the notion to observe the whole Torah with a specific reference to food laws (6:2-3) could have been a Jewish notion that was added at a later stage (Stuiber 1961:327-329). The reason for this possibility is that the latter section of the *Didache* seems to reflect a more anti-Jewish character (esp. 8:1-2; van de Sandt & Flusser 2002:241). As for the prohibitions listed in 3:1-6 (murder, adultery, idolatry, theft and blasphemy) and 6:3 (food offered to idols), it is a question whether this correspondence to some of the Noahide Laws is in itself enough evidence to identify some early form of the Noahide Laws in the *Didache*. There are several problems with such an interpretation: (a) There is no reference to Noah in the *Didache*. (b) The idea that

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a different set of requirements (*halakhot*) would apply for Gentiles than for Jews, has to be inferred by way of inductive reasoning. (c) The mere correspondence of some of the prohibitions within the text of the *Didache* to some of the Noahide Laws is not in itself enough evidence to identify some earlier form of the Noahide Laws and the principle(s) behind them in the *Didache*. The problem is that the prohibitions in the *Didache* that are compared to the Noahide Laws are embedded within numerous other commands and prohibitions throughout the whole writing (esp. 1-7). Given the scope of prohibitions in chapters 1 to 7, they rather represent aspects of Mosaic law.

A claim on the existence of the Noahide Laws in some form earlier than the Talmudic era partly rests on the Rabbinic doctrine of the existence of the “Oral Torah” or “Oral Law” (cf. Blickenstaff 2009:280). As part of Rabbinic teaching, the “Oral Torah” is held to be an orally transmitted legal tradition from Sages or *tanna'im* (those who transmitted Rabbinic teachings), and constitutes one leg of dual sources of Torah, the one oral and the one written (Schiffman 2009:336; Jaffee 1997:526). The period of the *tanna'im* can be dated within the second century CE (Oral Law 2002). The Rabbis believed that the “complementary Torahs... were given by God to Moses on Sinai” (Schiffman 2009:336). This teaching carries esoteric overtones, for this “Rabbinic system rooted the being of the cosmos in an ultimately linguistic conception of mind” (Jaffee 1997:527), where the “Oral Torah” is

depicted as the soul of the written torah, because its explanations bring the text to life, and without them many laws and teachings would be incomprehensible. Indeed, the explanations given in the oral tradition sometimes differ markedly from the literal meaning (*peshat*) of the biblical text (Oral Torah 1991).

This probably implies initiated, esoteric knowledge behind the concept of “Oral Torah” (Idel 1988:17-34; cf. the Kabbalah;<sup>199</sup> contra Jaffee 1997:527).<sup>200</sup>

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<sup>199</sup> Many of these oral traditions were reworked in the *Zohar* (late 13<sup>th</sup> century), which is regarded as the “Bible” for Kabbalists (Kabbalah 1991).

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Even if it could be determined that the Noahide Laws would exist in an earlier form *within* Rabbinic Judaism, in terms of Neusner's (1984:5; cf. Mason 2007:502, Langer 2003:258, see 1.2.3; 2.1.1; 3.1.1) dating of Rabbinic Judaism as commencing at about 70 CE, a conception of the seven Noahide Laws in the time of Paul would be out of reach.<sup>201</sup> Superimposing the concept of the Noahide Laws or *halakhot* into Paul's thought would be anachronistic, as even Nanos (1996:23) admits. The same accounts for tracing the Noahide Laws or an earlier form thereof in Acts 15:19-32; 16:1-5 or 21:25 (Witherington III 1998a:464; cf. Fitzmyer 1998:557).

Paul can be viewed as possibly the only link to the understanding of the earlier forms of Pharisaic Judaism (Segal [2003] 2004:162-163; Dunn 1993:60). Apart from the anachronistic nature of an approach that views the Christ-believers as "Noahides" (Nanos 1996:50) or "Noachians" (Tomson 1990:272),<sup>202</sup> to imply the concept of the Noahide Laws in Paul's thought is essentially inductive, and inevitably suffers from a measure of circular reasoning. Segal ([2003] 2004:162) warns against borrowing from the Rabbinic tradition "to fill in the many gaps in Paul's life and to characterize the religion [sic] from which he came." He states that "methodologically this move is... suspect" (:162). Rather one must start a depiction of Pharisaism in Paul with Paul's conversion experience (:163).

Bruce ([1977] 2000:195) is probably correct that "all the pre-Mosaic history accessible to Paul was contained in Genesis and the earlier part of Exodus. Before the time of Moses there was no law in the sense that no law was recorded in scripture." The Noahide Laws, which is part of Rabbinical thinking therefore "played little or no part" in Paul's thought (:195), and in terms of the evidence in

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<sup>200</sup> Although Jaffee (1997:527) doubts that "an esoteric line or oral transmission linking the medieval formulations to early Rabbinic traditions" existed (against Idel 1988:17-34), his concern does not separate the link between the concept of "Oral Torah" and ontology, even if the Rabbinic Sages did not recognise it.

<sup>201</sup> Although the exact date of Paul's death is uncertain, it is probably around 65 CE (Carson & Moo 2005:370; Bruce [1977] 2000:475).

<sup>202</sup> In Rabbinic Judaism, all descendants of Noah are considered as *benei Noah* or "Noahides" (Novak 2000:117-118).

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the Pauline corpus, he left it out of account (Barrett [1962] 1975:52,99,111 on Rom 2:14; 4:24 and 5:12 respectively).

#### 5.2.2 The Noahide Laws and Paul's thought on identity and the law

Apart from the anachronistic nature of the notion to make Paul's thought fit to the teachings about the Noahide Laws, the underlying or even subtle essentialist structure underneath the idea of the Noahide Laws stand in sharp contrast to the way in which Paul removes the distinction between Judaeans and Greeks in Christ (Rom 10:12; 1 Cor 1:24; 12:13; Gal 3:28-29; cf. Col 3:11), and the way in which Paul understands Christ's work (see esp. 5.1.3). In Christ's work on the cross, the distinction between Judaeans and Gentiles has been erased (see esp. Martyn 1997:335) and all people come to God on the same basis of faith in Christ (Hays 2000:187; Hong 1991:154; Longenecker 1990:157; Lategan 1986:62-63; Sanders [1983] 1989:203). Even if one considers the passage in *Jubilees* (7:20-21) as an earlier phase of the Noahide Laws, Segal ([2003] 2004:166) notices that according to this passage, the Gentiles will be saved by Torah. Apart from the fact that even the book of *Jubilees* (15:26-27) explicitly states that only those who are circumcised on the eighth day can be saved (Segal 2000a:122),<sup>203</sup> Paul drives a wedge between faith and law (Segal [2003] 2004:166) and

just as the exegesis [on the Torah] is based on Paul's own experience of salvation in Christ, so is his exegesis not based on specific rabbinic teaching but on his conviction and experience in preaching to Gentiles, that the redemptive death of Christ also guarantees the justification of Gentiles through their faith and not by comparing their practice to that of Jews (Segal [2003] 2004:167).

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<sup>203</sup> Segal (2000a:122) argues that it will be unwise to find a basis for "humane universalism" in the book of *Jubilees*. The book displays a dualistic worldview on both divine and human level. Israel is identified as a good kingdom. He writes: "[t]hat virtually means that conversion of the gentiles is impossible."

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Even from the NPP, it can be argued that the Judaeans' exclusivist focus on their covenant status (e.g., Dunn 1988b:587) and their righteousness as being defined by the law (e.g., Dunn 1988b:588,590; Wright 2002:649), was fundamentally criticised by Paul. Accommodation of Gentiles on a different basis than Judaeans would perpetuate Judaeans' exclusivism (even if subtly) and/or not provide Gentiles full covenant membership.

Nanos' (1996:289-336) view of Romans 13:1-7 is that the "Noahides" (believers in Christ) were under the direct authority of the synagogue and attended synagogues, and for that reason were compelled to adhere to the behaviour required of "righteous Gentiles" (e.g., Noahide Commandments and taxes) in order not to hinder the restoration of Israel.<sup>204</sup> While the synagogues could have existed autonomously and self-sufficiently in Rome in the Diaspora despite the general absence of actual synagogue buildings, there is no indication that they were a community-wide network (Levine 2005:285-286). Both Judaeans and Christ-believers had a fragmented existence in Rome (Dunn 1998a:lii), not many years after Claudius' expulsion of Judaeans from Rome in 49 CE (Carson & Moo 2005:395). Nanos (1996:372-381) argues that only a relatively small number of Judaeans were affected by the expulsion, but Riesner (1998:199-200) shows solid reasons for thinking that the expulsion was quite general (cf. Carson & Moo 2005:395-396). It is thus unlikely that Paul would have the synagogue leaders in mind in Romans 13:1. Most scholars agree that Paul had the Roman authorities in mind as the ultimate authority (e.g., Schreiner [1998] 2005:681; Moo 1996:793; Mounce 1995:243; Dunn 1988b:759-760,769; Bruce [1985] 2000:230-233; Cranfield 1979:659; Barrett [1962] 1975:244). Witherington III ([2003] 2004:259-260) views Christ as central and indispensable in the soteriology of both Galatians and Romans, but especially in Galatians. He rejects the notion of understanding Paul's view on the Gentiles in Romans (esp. 13:1-7) as having to observe halakhic behavioural requirements, contra Nanos (1996:336), on the basis that he does not see a shift in Paul's thought between the letters to the Galatians and Romans (cf. 5.1.3.3). Nanos' reading thus "does not do full justice to the data

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<sup>204</sup> Nanos' view on the restoration of Israel will be discussed in 8.1.4.

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either in Romans or elsewhere in the Pauline corpus” (Witherington III [2003] 2004:260; cf. Schreiner [1998] 2005:681).

To put it mildly, it remains a challenge to maintain an interpretative model regarding the identity of Gentiles as guests and as “Noahides” (Nanos 1996:50; cf. Tomson 1990:272) in the light of the letter to the Galatians. The only way this view can be maintained is to interpret Paul’s words in Galatians “to be other than what he actually said” (Nanos 2002:321). And that is exactly what Nanos (2002) attempted to do. He approaches the letter to the Galatians such as to view the main content of Paul’s rebuke as “ironic rebuke” (:32-61). Despite Nanos’ innovative reasoning and his valuable contribution to a possible understanding of Paul, Nanos’ model is ultimately unconvincing (cf. Carson & Moo 2005:465) for the following two main reasons: (1) In the light of Paul’s thought on the law in the whole of the Pauline corpus (see 5.1.3.3), Nanos’ model is hard to make fit everywhere. (2) Nanos’ reasoning to make passages such as Galatians 1:6-7 (“I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel...”, NRSV)<sup>205</sup> and Galatians 6:12 (“It is those who want to make a good showing in the flesh that try to compel you to be circumcised – only that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ”, NRSV)<sup>206</sup> to point to non-believing “Jewish people” (Nanos 2002:205) who wanted to proselytise the Gentile Christ-believers, is implausible. His view is contrary to what has widely being understood as pointing to Paul’s opponents as Judaeen Christ-believers (Hays 2000:185; see 5.1.3.1, esp. fn. 141).

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<sup>205</sup> Nanos (2002:56-61) interprets the θαυμάζω in Gal 1:6 as being part of an established rhetorical tradition of irony, suggesting that Paul would neither be “amazed” nor that the Teachers of the law would have a different “gospel” (1:6, εὐαγγέλιον). For Nanos, Paul would mean something different: Paul would be disappointed with the behaviour of the Galatian Gentiles and their response to the “Jewish” offer of inclusion would have been predictable. What the Galatian Gentiles would perceive as the “good news” in Christ (being circumcised and becoming “Jewish”) would in fact be a defection from the gospel’s intent. The decision to move “forward” into “Judaism” would then represent a backslide into “old age” thinking and behaviour (see Heen 2002).

<sup>206</sup> Nanos (2002:217-233) interprets Gal 6:12 in such a manner that the “influencers” on the Galatian community were “Jewish people” (:205) who wanted to complete the “proselyte conversion” (:219) of the Gentile Christ-believers. If they were not to exercise their authority, the “Jewish” community in Galatia would fall prey to the resentment and aggression of the non-“Jewish” inhabitants. If the Christ-believers could not be proselytised, the “Jewish” community would be “persecuted for the cross of Christ” (see Heen 2002).

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Even in Romans 14:1-15:13, quoted by Longenecker (1990:217) and Bruce (1982b:225) in their attempt to resist or temper Paul's "disinheritance" of unbelieving Judaeans in Galatians 4:30, a view of the Christ-believers as "Noahides" that are accommodated into "Judaism" is out of reach. Neither does Paul view adherence to the law nor, in this case, certain Judaeans food laws or feasts as central in defining the identity of a (Judaeans) Christ believer. The opposite is true in both cases. Rather than Christ-believers that are accommodated within "Judaism", Christ-believers are accommodated that still adhere to food laws or feast days, whether Judaeans or Gentile (Wright 2002:731; cf. Ridderbos 1959:302), but more probably, Judaeans believers that needed liberation from Old Testament or Judaeans ritual requirements (Schreiner [1998] 2005:712; Moo 1996:836; Mounce 1995:251; cf. Dunn 1988b:797-798; Bruce [1985] 2000:244-245; Cranfield 1979:697; Barrett [1962] 1975:256).<sup>207</sup> These believers are identified as "weak persons" (14:1,2; 15:1), but more specifically, "those who are weak in faith" (τῆ πίστει προσλαμβάνεσθε, 14:1). These weak persons are thus not unbelieving "Jews" (contra Nanos 1996:85-165).<sup>208</sup> The "strong persons" (15:1) have to bear the weak. Paul is persuaded that nothing is "unclean in itself" (14:14). The reason Paul can make these exceptions is that Paul views these laws as peripheral and in fact superfluous in defining the identity of God's people in the new aeon in Christ. Rather, "the kingdom of God is not food and drink but righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" (14:17), which is the theological center of Romans 12 to 15 (Dunn 1988b:823). Life and identity

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<sup>207</sup> This understanding argues additionally for a measurable Judaeans Christ-believing audience of Romans, even though they might be a minority (see 4.3.1).

<sup>208</sup> Nanos (1996:105) argues for viewing the faith of the weak as monotheistic "Jewish" faith. Gagnon (2000) however argues extensively against Nanos' proposal to view the weak persons in Romans as "Jews" who do not believe in Christ. Some of Gagnon's main arguments in response to Nanos are that (1) "the one for whom Christ died" (14:15; paralleled in 1 Cor 8:11) delimits a fellow believer, (2) the building up of one another (Rom 14:19; 15:2) pertains to the building up of the church (cf. 1 Cor 3:9-14; 8:1,10; 10:23; 14:3-5; etc.), (3) the exhortation "to bear the weaknesses of those without strength" (Rom 15:1) has its closest parallel in the intra-believer duty of Gal 6:2 to bear one another's burden, (4) the prayer wish in Rom 15:5-6 contains many features that make sense only if the weak are believers in Christ, (5) Paul's reciprocal formulation in 15:17 of the command in 14:1 to "welcome one another, just as Christ also welcomed you" indicates for Gagnon that the weak are Gentile believers (although I do not agree with Gagnon on this specific point – see main text), and (6) in the second prayer wish (15:13), the "you", like "one another" (14:13,19; 15:5,7), includes both the weak and strong.

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as God's people is derived from the Spirit and the work of the Spirit in and through believers (cf. Cranfield 1979:718), and not from external identity markers.

As seen from Ephesians 2 (see 5.1.5), it would be even harder to make the radical NPP fit the underlying theology of the letter. The new person in Christ consisting of both Gentile and Judaeans, constitutes a transformation not only of the Gentile identity, but of the Judaeans identity as well (see esp. Perkins 2000:402-404; cf. O'Brien 1999:209; Lincoln 1990:144,149; Bruce 1984:290,295-296). Lincoln's (1990:133) contention "that there is no room for superiority since both Jewish Christians [sic] and Gentile Christians [sic] have access to God on an equal footing" (Eph 2:14-18), runs contrary to the idea of believers in Christ as mere "Noahides". In spite of many scholars who argue against Pauline authorship for Ephesians, an understanding of Paul's gospel as accommodating Christ-believers as "Noahides" over against Ephesians that expresses a total different identity for believers in Christ, seems just too far-fetched.<sup>209</sup>

Even while dual-covenant approaches to Paul (e.g., Gager 2002; Gaston 1987; Stendahl 1976; 1963) overlaps with this debate about the Noahide Laws, it will finally be addressed in 8.1.4.

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<sup>209</sup> See esp. the close relationship between Eph and Gal (Lincoln 1990:134) in terms of discontinuity between Israel and Christ-believers (discussed in 5.1.5).

*6. Faith in Christ, Israel and the Judaeans***5.3 Summary and concluding remarks**

Faith as such can be understood as the most prominent point of continuity of Christ-believers with Abraham and by implication with historical Israel. While faith in Romans 4 is portrayed in a more general way than in Galatians 3, I have argued for an understanding of faith that involves faith in Christ in both passages. Although the possibility remains in Romans 4 that faith could be applied to Israel apart from Christ, this notion cannot be established beyond doubt. If such a notion could be established, it would most probably refer to historical (ancient) Israel. In Galatians faith is pictured explicitly as faith in Christ. Even though faith in Romans 4 is referred to in more general terms, it is doubtful whether Paul would have shifted from ultimately defining faith onto salvation away from faith in Christ in Romans 4 as opposed to Galatians 3, especially if the context of Romans is taken into account.

In the last four passages that were discussed (Rom 4:1-25; Gal 3:1-19; 4:21-5:1; Eph 2:8-22) the law (including the “works of the law”, descent and circumcision) is portrayed as being opposed to faith or the identity in Christ. The law or circumcision is thus not to be understood as constitutive of the identity in Christ. Faith in Christ is the marker of identity in Christ, which is apart from the law and opposed to the law, including works and circumcision.

The continuity in which the believer in Christ thus stands to Abraham is not defined ethnically but through faith only (spiritually), regardless of ethnic background. This continuity is punctiliar in that Christ Himself who shares in an ethnic identity (“flesh-identity”) with Israel (as Abraham’s Seed in Gal 3), is the sole connection point for believers to Abraham and historical Israel. Christ fulfilled the law by both (1) completing the era under the law in being the physical heir to the promise to Abraham, and (2) by fulfilling its demands. An identity in Christ represents the free Covenant in the Spirit as opposed to a Covenant of slavery under the bondage of the law (Gal 4:21-5:1).

The letter to the Ephesians provides evidence for both the continuity of the Christ-believing identity with historical Israel’s privileges, and believers’ discontinuity with

### *6. Faith in Christ, Israel and the Judaeans*

the law and the covenant with Israel. The identity in Christ is portrayed as a third entity that replaces the old entity (Israel), where ethnic differentiation is superseded.

An understanding of identity in Christ that both fulfils and supersedes the identity of Israel, constitutes a single redemptive line for believers in Christ in contrast to a dual-covenant approach where believers in Christ would be considered as “guests” or “Noahides” within Judaism on the basis of adherence to the seven Noahide Laws. As part of Rabbinic Judaism that started around 70 CE (outside Paul’s lifetime), the concept behind the Noahide Laws and the essentialist structure supporting them, is incompatible with Paul’s approach with respect to his removal of the distinction between Judaeans and Greeks in Christ.

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## 6. FAITH IN CHRIST, ISRAEL AND THE JUDAEAN

Where section 5.1 had the continuity between Israel/Judaeans and belief in Christ in view, these next two sections (6.1 and 6.2) accentuate the *discontinuity* between Israel and the Christ-believers. Section 6.1 focuses on the discontinuity between Israel/Judaeans and Christ-believers in general, while section 6.2 focuses specifically on the new creation.

### 6.1 Faith in Christ in discontinuity with Israel and the Judaeans (AC)

In Romans 9 and 10, Paul utilises both the terms Ἰσραήλ and Ἰουδαῖος within a salvation-historical context, which he portrays as being mostly in discontinuity with faith in Christ. These designations (Ἰσραήλ and Ἰουδαῖος) are differentiated here in accordance with how Paul's usage of them is anticipated. The differentiation is however not to be understood as a ridged scheme. The two terms are expected to show a measure of fluidity in their use. With the exception of Philippians 3:1-9 (where Paul uses Ἰσραήλ in identifying his line of descent) and Philemon 1:16, all of the passages represent discontinuity between the identity in Christ and the Judaeans identity.

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### 6.1.1 Romans 9:24-33

After Paul's exposition of God's plan (πρόθεσις, v. 11, see 4.4.1) of election in salvation-historical perspective (9:11-23, see 4.4.1) which is based on calling and not on works (v. 12), he now brings the current state of affairs into the picture. The sentence starting with "what if" in verse 22 is never completed, and Paul elaborates on the vessels of mercy whom he has called (καλέω, v. 24; Wright 2002:642). In the light of the true (inner) Israel, defined in verse 6 (see 4.3.2.2) and the reference to Jacob and Esau in verse 13, one might expect a reference to *inner* Israel here as vessels of mercy. But Paul now brings his retelling of salvation history into the sphere of the gospel. By utilising the first person plural (ἡμεῖς, v. 24), he includes himself (a Judaeans Christ-believer) and his predominantly Gentile audience as the objects of God's calling in Christ: οὐ μόνον ἐξ Ἰουδαίων ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐξ ἐθνῶν. This major turning point in the present telling of Israel's story ties what will follow to 3:21-4:25 (Wright 2002:642; see 5.1.2).

#### 6.1.1.1 The crossover in salvation history

Paul now reaches a critical point in his exposition. As noted earlier, Paul uses scripture not as mere proof texts, but appropriates them into the fabric of his exposition in a way that they become intricately interwoven within his argument (see 4.3.1). In verses 25-29, salvation history is portrayed as making a *crossover* (cf. Wright 2002:635;<sup>210</sup> Moo 1996:617)<sup>211</sup> like two parallel rails each swopping over to the other rail. Three aspects of this scenario can be identified, and will be discussed below: (1) Verses 25 to 26 describe the outcome of God's plan for the nations and (2) verses 27 to 29 describe the outcome of His plan for Israel. (3) Verses 30 to 33 describe the deeper reasoning and foundation behind this crossover which, as I will argue, constitutes the culmination of salvation history:

(1) From Paul's convergence of Hosea 2:25 and 2:1 (LXX) in verses 25 to 26, he explains that those who were previously not God's people, are now called God's

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<sup>210</sup> Wright (2002:635) refers to the mystery of Israel as being "cross-shaped, to involve being cast away that the world might be redeemed."

<sup>211</sup> Moo (1996:617) describes vv. 24-29 as a "surprising turn of salvation history."

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people, or worded differently, those who were not loved are now beloved (v. 25). Verse 26 parallels the same theme: those who are not God's people will be called "sons of the living God". These parallel scenarios refer to the Gentiles' inclusion into God's promise (vv. 8,9), effected by His calling (καλέω, v. 26), which is the gospel (Wright 2002:643). The expression "sons of God" (υἱοὶ θεοῦ) points back to the same theme in verse 8 (τέκνα τοῦ θεοῦ), constituting the children of the promise (τέκνα τῆς ἐπαγγελίας) who are reckoned as seed (σπέρμα, v. 29; Wright 2002:643; Barrett [1962] 1975:191). This means that the promise was always designated to include Gentiles. But in the current scenario, the allusion might even include the earlier "sonship" (υιοθεσία, v. 4; cf. Wright 2002:643), one of the privileges of Israel according to the flesh, which would imply a reversal of the conditions for covenant membership in the sense that it is not partly based on ethnicity any longer, but open to the nations.

(2) Paul now moves over to Israel. He conflates Isaiah 10:20-23 in verses 27 to 28. Even though the number of the children of Israel was great, only the ὑπόλοιμμα, the "remnant" will be saved. While Paul quotes from the Septuagint, the idea of a remnant comes from the Hebrew רִאשִׁית, denoting a rest or remainder (BDB, רִאשִׁית). This remnant that constitutes an element of hope and salvation (Moo 1996:615-616; cf. Bruce [1985] 2000:195), presupposes a judgment (Moo 1996:615; Bruce [1985] 2000:195; Hasel 1972; cf. Hultgren 2011:371-372; Wright 2002:643; Käsemann 1980:275-276,278; Sanday & Headlam [1902] 1960:265). This is clear from Isaiah 10:22: "destruction has been decreed" (יְהוָה בְּרָצוֹן יִשְׁלַח אֶת הַמָּוֶת, NIV). The participles συντελών and συντέμνων (v. 28, directly from Isaiah 10:20 [LXX]) are difficult to translate. According to BDAG (συντελέω §2), the verb συντελέω in this context means to bring something into being that has been promised, but it could mean to complete or finish something (BDAG, συντελέω §1; LITV). The verb συντέμνω can mean to cut short, to shorten or to limit (BDAG, συντέμνω), and either denotes a shortened time (BDAG, συντέμνω; e.g., Wright 2002:643; NRSV; NIV) or Israel that is being cut down (BDAG, συντέμνω; e.g., Wilckens 1980; Calvin 2012c:323). In the context of those who remain (remnant) after an implied judgment (Wright 2002:648), the latter meaning (being cut down) is probably part of the overall implied connotation here (cf. Wright

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2002:635,649,651; Barrett [1962] 1975:192). Paul retains some of the ambiguity in the phrase συντελῶν καὶ συντέμνων (LXX) probably to soften some of the harshness of the outcome of God's judgment (Dunn 1988b:576). The harsh implication of God's judgment with only a remnant being saved seems to be that Israel that lived before the point of judgment is in fact not saved. If Paul still honours his distinction about who "Israel" is (v. 6), the further implication might even be that the inner, elect Israel of the promise living before the point of judgement is not saved. At this point it is worthy of note that Paul applies referred authority: "Isaiah cries" (v. 27). Even though this cry of Isaiah conveys what Paul wants to bring across at this point in his exposition, it is not Paul's last word on the matter.

Verse 29, referring to Isaiah 1:9 (LXX), describes the outcome of Israel except for the seed (σπέρμα) that the Lord leaves behind. This seed is caused "to remain or to exist after a point in time" (BDAG, ἐγκαταλείπω, §1) and thus denotes the remnant (Wright 2002:643). In the Masoretic Text (Isa 1:9) it denotes a "survivor" (BDB, טִרְשָׁן §1). If it was not for the remnant, Israel would have become like Sodom and Gomorrah, which was completely destroyed. The reference to these two cities here reminds of the promised seed to Abraham and Lot and his family's escape (Gen 19:29; Wright 2002:643) amidst God's judgment. While the focus is on the remnant and God's provision, Sodom and Gomorrah in the background implies the judgment and the cutting off of Israel itself (cf. Käsemann 1980:275; Ridderbos 1959:224; Calvin 2012c:324). Paul wants to convey his message in a way that Scripture almost speaks for itself. His readers must see for themselves what Scripture says (cf. Hendriksen 1981, Romans 9:19-29; Ridderbos 1959:224) and "read between the lines." His appropriation of Scripture probably contributes to Paul's euphemistic and apologetic approach in the whole of Romans 9 to 11.

(3) The question at the beginning of verse 30 (Τί οὖν ἐροῦμεν;) is a rhetorical device to introduce the implication of Paul's exposition up to this point (Moo 1996:621). Paul now reverts back to the Gentiles. They did not pursue or strive for (BDAG, διώκω §4) righteousness by definition (Dunn 1988b:580), but attained it through faith. Righteousness here denotes a "righteous status in God's sight" (Cranfield 1979:506) or more specifically, "a right relationship between a person

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and God” (Hultgren 2011:382; cf. Barrett [1962] 1975:193). The phrase ἐκ πίστεως, points back to the same phrase earlier (1:17, see 5.1.1; 3:26,30; 4:16, see 5.1.2), denoting the original condition of the promise to Abraham in which all nations participate through faith in Christ. The righteousness to the Gentiles within the context once again points to their inclusion into God’s salvific economy, rather than denoting the righteousness of each Gentile individually (cf. Wright 2002:626; Dunn 1988b:592).<sup>212</sup>

Israel did pursue the νόμον δικαιοσύνης (v. 31). This unexpected phrase would evoke the typical Judaeans understanding of the law where the law defines righteousness (Dunn 1988b:581; cf. Wright 2002:649). Moo (1996:625) however notes that the only other verses in Romans where Paul connects righteousness language absolutely to the law stand in connection with “doing” (2:13, ποιητής; 10:5, ποιέω). As noted earlier, this is not only a matter of an incorrect definition of identity (NPP) or *merely* an incorrect *understanding* of the law (contra Dunn 1988b:577,582,583-584). While it did involve an incorrect understanding of what the law was intended for, the connection between law and righteousness also involved *actual disobedience* to the law itself (cf. Hultgren 2011:378; Rom 2:17-19, see 4.5.1, esp. fn. 106 and Rom 4:1-25, see 5.1.2, esp. fn. 131). Israel could not attain or reach (BDAG, φθάνω §3, v. 31) the law. This law of righteousness is carried over to verse 31 as the object of “attain” (Moo 1996:625; Dunn 1988b:581). The reason given for not attaining the law was that Israel “did not strive for it on the basis of faith, but as if it were based on works” (NRSV, v. 32). This means that the law was *incapable* of defining covenant membership (Wright 2002:649)<sup>213</sup> or of activating “the law’s promise of righteousness” (Moo 1996:627; cf. Witherington III 2004:259; Käsemann 1980:277). It was *impossible* to adhere to the standard the law has set (Hultgren 2011:379; 3:20; 7:6; 8:3; cf. Westerholm 2004:380,383,444; Gathercole 2004:150; Witherington III 2004:259; 1998b:67;

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<sup>212</sup> It is correct that only Gentiles who believe will obtain righteousness (Schreiner [1998] 2005:536; Cranfield 1979:506), but Paul’s point is here not to identify individual faith or individual inclusion, but that all Gentiles are principally included into God’s larger scheme of salvation.

<sup>213</sup> See fn. 170. In terms of defining covenant membership, Wright focuses stronger on the *inability* of the law to do so, where Dunn (1988b) focuses more on an *incorrect understanding* of the law (see main text).

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Räsänen 1987:95,199; Gal 3:21), but that did not remove Israel's responsibility. They stumbled over the stumbling stone. They disregarded the law and failed to adhere to it (Hultgren 2011:378-379; Gathercole 2002:207; Moo 1996:626-627; Cranfield 1979:508; Sanday & Headlam [1902] 1960:278; cf. Hong 1991:154; CD; *Psalms of Solomon*).

Verse 33 contains a quotation from a combination of Isaiah 8:14 and 28:16. Moo (1996:628) is probably right that Paul has both Israel's unbelief and an inappropriate focus on the law in mind that led her to her stumbling. The "stone of stumbling" (λίθω τοῦ προσκόμματος, v. 32; λίθον προσκόμματος, v. 33; Dunn 1988b:853; Moo 1996:620; cf. BDAG, πρόσκομμα §1) or the "rock that will make them fall" (πέτραν σκανδάλου, v. 33, NRSV; ISV; Bruce [1985] 2000:197; cf. Robinson 1852:754)<sup>214</sup> is also the object of faith (v. 33), a connotation derived from Isaiah 28:16, where it denotes "a foundation stone, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation" (NRSV). Dunn (1988b:583) and others (e.g., Hultgren 2011:381; Cranfield 1979:511) note that the Targum (Str-B 3:276) gives an explicit reference to the royal messiah in its interpretation of Isaiah 28:16 (cf. 1QH 6:26-27; 1QS 8:7), which makes it unlikely that it first emerged in Christ-believing circles (cf. Käsemann 1980:278).<sup>215</sup> The stumbling stone which is simultaneously the precious cornerstone is thus Christ Himself that God has placed in Zion (Hultgren 2011:382; Longenecker 2011:418; Seifrid 2007:651; Schnelle 2003:346; Wright 2002:650; Moo 1996:628-630; Dunn 1988b:584-585,594; Bruce [1985] 2000:198; Cranfield 1979:511-512; Käsemann 1980:278; Sanday & Headlam [1902] 1960:281-282; cf. 10:11).<sup>216</sup> While the bulk of Israel

<sup>214</sup> BDAG (σκάνδαλον) lists Rom 9:33 under §2: "an action or circumstance that leads one to act contrary to a proper course of action or set of beliefs, *temptation to sin, enticement*." Given the current context, the outcome seems to lead (figuratively) to actual fatality as from "the *bait-stick* of a trap, a *snare*" (Abbott-Smith [1923] 1929:408; cf. Wright 2002:649; Mounce 1995:206; Zerwick & Grosvenor 1988:481; Lenski 1963:66, see fn. 243), which is the literal meaning (cf. BDAG, σκάνδαλον §1). The Thayer lexicon (Thayer 1889:577) states that the term was figuratively "applied to Jesus Christ, whose person and career were so contrary to the expectations of the Jews concerning the Messiah, that they rejected him and by their obstinacy made shipwreck of salvation."

<sup>215</sup> There is reason for caution however. Hultgren (2011:381) argues that the dating of the Targum is difficult and that the interpretations in the Targum mainly represents generations of interpreters after the rise of Christianity (see Chilton 1987:xx-xxv).

<sup>216</sup> Even though Isa 8:14 as prediction of Israel's judgment was a warning that they would fall over the Lord Himself, Paul's quote differs from both the Septuagint and the MT but is identical to 1 Pt

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has stumbled over the stumbling stone, the faithful remnant is those who accepted the gospel by faith (Hultgren 2011:371; Dunn 1988b:593-594; cf. 6:17). The judgment of Israel which is connected to their hardening (v. 18) and their eventual stumbling (vv. 32-33) are thus effected through Christ (the stumbling stone), and by implication through the cross (Wright 2002:650,671; Sanday & Headlam [1902] 1960:280; Denney 1902:668).<sup>217</sup>

There is another aspect to the remnant concept (to be elaborated upon in 6.1.2 and 8.1). If the remnant indicates those who survive after judgment in Christ, it implies that those who were judged are everyone before the point of judgment. Most of Paul's exposition in 9:9-17 is indeed about historical (ancient) Israel (Gutbrod 1965:386), and they are by implication included in the judgment, just as God's hardening did not merely involve those of Israel who did not believe in *their* Messiah (Wright 2002:625) when He was revealed, but includes the hardening of the whole of historical Israel through the course of salvation history (Cranfield 1979:549; cf. Munck 1967:44-45; 11:7-10, see 8.1.1; 2 Cor 3:13-14, see 7.3.1.2, esp. fn. 360).<sup>218</sup> Isaiah's cry on behalf of Israel that only a remnant will be saved and that the rest would be judged by implication (v. 27; quoting Isa 10:22), could hardly point merely to a "future" (from the point in time of the prophecy) generation of Israelites.<sup>219</sup> Even Israel's stumbling is not meant as the stumbling of only those who did not believe in their Messiah in the gospel era. It pertains to the whole of the historical nation of Israel in terms of their position in salvation history. This *diachronic* perspective on Israel can be deduced from Paul's appropriation of Old Testament prophecy (esp. Isa 8:14; 28:16) that is such as to display an interplay between Israel's historical situation and Paul's current situation (cf. Gal

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2:8. This suggests that the understanding that Christ is the stumbling stone in Isa 8:14, formed part of an early tradition of the church (Moo 1996:629; Dunn 1988b:584; Stanley 1992:123-124; Koch 1986:59-60; Cranfield 1979:512; cf. Käsemann 1980:279). Wright (2002:650) notes that at least some Rabbis understood Isa 8:14 in a messianic sense (*b. Sanhedrin* 38a).

<sup>217</sup> This connotation is especially evident in 1 Cor 1:23, where Paul connects the cross directly to the σκάνδαλον for the Judaeans (cf. the πέτραν σκανδάλου of Rom 9:33).

<sup>218</sup> See esp. the ἄρα οὖν in v. 18, referring back to the whole historical exposition of God's mercy and hardening in vv. 9-17.

<sup>219</sup> Cf. the context of the quoted Isa 10, where v. 24 predicts the striking with the rod of the recipients of the prophecy on account of their sin (vv. 10-14).

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3:14,16,19 see 5.1.3.3; 1 Cor 10:4, see 6.1.2.1). While Paul surely implies a reference to Christ as the stumbling stone in quoting Isaiah 8:14 in Romans 9:33 (see above), its original reference to Yahweh Himself (Isa 8:13) would not be excluded in Paul's reference. Likewise, Israel's "following after a law of righteousness" (v. 31) over the course of Israel's history corresponds to their hardening, and thus includes the whole historical Israel. Their status as "My people" (v. 25) shifted together with the shift of the nations in becoming God's people (except for the remnant), crossing each other in the cross itself. This *crossover* constitutes only a part of Paul's exposition, and does not draw the whole picture. There is more explaining due regarding Israel's position from the perspective of the gospel (10:1-11:36), and the question about historical Israel's ultimate fate is still pending.

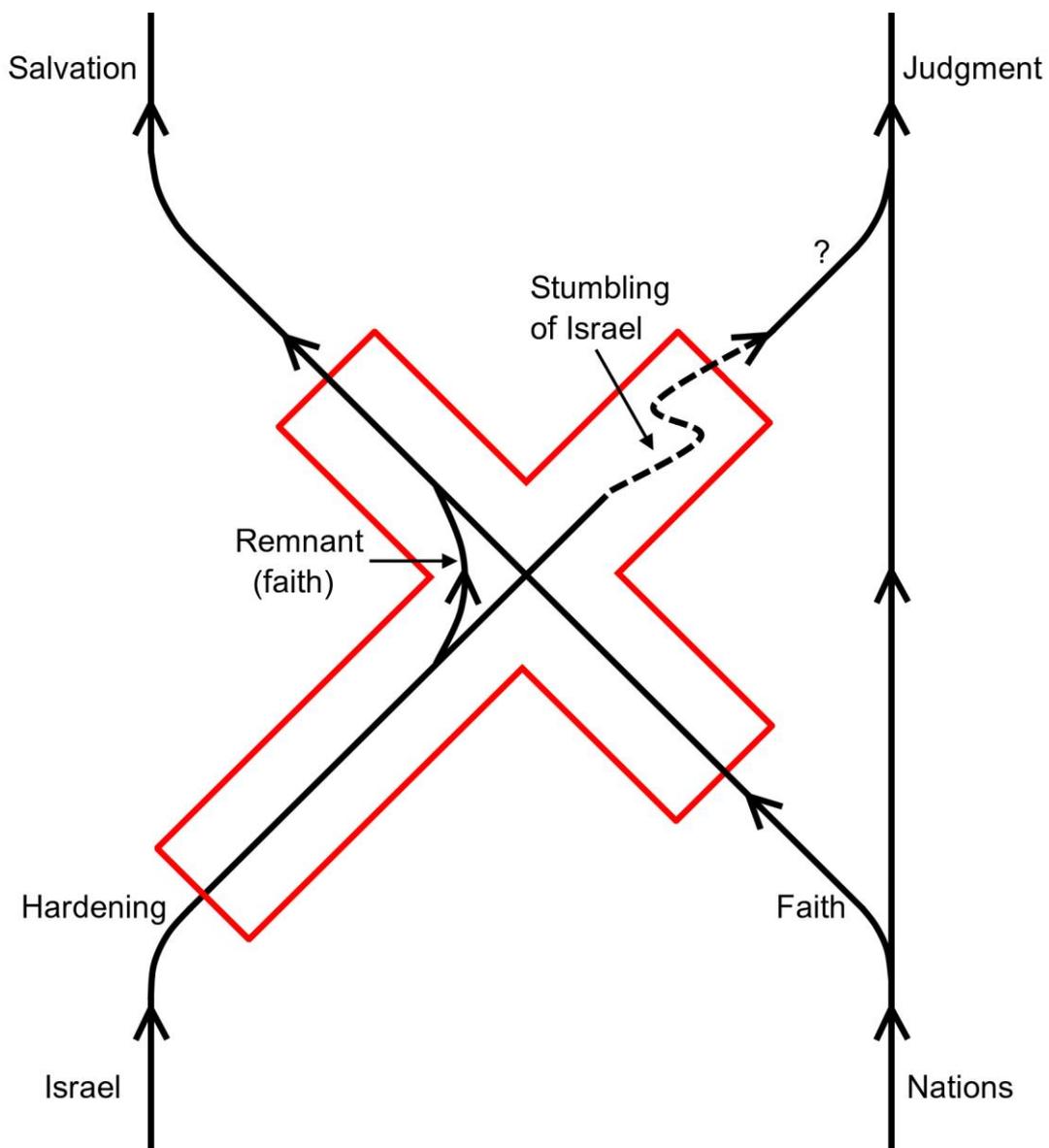
To summarise, Israel's history converged on a single point in their Messiah. Christ according to the flesh (9:5) is the "goal of the entire history laid out here" (Wright 2002:643; cf. :671) in Romans 9. Christ as culmination of the entire history of Israel, and as fulfilment of the original intention of the promise to Abraham (Rom 4), constitutes the profound *continuity* between Israel and the gospel of faith. But simultaneously, Christ represents the equally profound *crossover* in salvation history. The crossover is not necessarily to be understood as an immediate change in the election of individuals, but describes a change in the conditions (or boundary markers, Wright 2002:626) of covenant membership of His people. Through the work of Christ, these conditions have been renewed (cf. Wright 2002:671) in that they are not connected to the law and ethnicity any longer (identity mode A), but now to faith alone (identity mode C). The renewal of the conditions of covenant membership is however not a change of God's plan (πρόθεσις, v. 11) or a change of salvation history, but the completion and fulfilment thereof in Christ. It was always heading that way. Yet the rearranged covenant and the crossover in salvation history as put forth in 9:24-33, representing the New Covenant (cf. Käsemann 1980:273), stands in tension and thus in *discontinuity* with the old.

There exists a delicate balance in Israel's hardening and their disobedience (cf. Cranfield 1979:504; Barrett [1962] 1975:196) which culminated in the resistance

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of faith in Christ (10:16) on the one hand, and Israel's hardening as part of God's elective purposes (9:18; cf. Cranfield 1979:498) in the context of His salvation historical plan on the other hand. Israel's hardening is simultaneously her own responsibility and part of God's plan (Abasciano 2004:116; Mounce 1995:205; Bruce [1985] 2000:196; cf. Käsemann 1980:276; Ridderbos 1959:226). The bigger picture of salvation history around Israel's Messiah and the *crossover* in covenant membership (esp. 9:25-33) can be illustrated by the following diagram:

6.1.1.2 Salvation-historical diagram



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### 6.1.1.3 Explanation of salvation-historical diagram

The angle of the diagram illustrates the *crossover* in salvation history, where those who were not God's people are now called His people (Rom 9:25, quoting Hos 2:23). Israel's history is portrayed by the left bottom line bending off course, representing the hardening of Israel. Their history culminates in Jesus their Messiah, represented by the red cross. Christ is both a stumbling stone over whom Israel stumbles (dotted, s-shaped arrow), resulting in judgment of some kind (see below), and the object of faith for the believing remnant, portrayed as converging with believing Gentiles (nations) unto salvation. The nations (right bottom) are principally included in Christ and partake in salvation by faith. Note that the nations may carry straight on to judgment without belief in Christ,<sup>220</sup> while Israel's history has no other option but to climax in their Messiah (Wright 2002:671), which represents a crossroad in their history, either unto salvation or judgment.

Some caution concerning Israel's judgment is warranted here (marked with a question mark: "?"). While the general thrust in this passage implies a casting away of Israel (Wright 2002:635,649,651; cf. Barrett [1962] 1975:192; Sanday & Headlam [1902] 1960:263,300-301) or that they are now "outside the sphere of righteousness" (Dodd [1959] 1963:175), the implication of this aspect is not explicit at this point in Paul's exposition, and is due for further clarification and qualification later on (i.e., Rom 11).

### 6.1.2 Romans 10:1-21

Paul's "heart's desire and prayer to God" (NRSV) in verse 1 is a return to the anguish in his heart for his kindred according to the flesh (9:2-3; Hultgren 2011:382; Wright 2002:653; cf. Käsemann 1980:280), that they might be saved (εἰς σωτηρίαν, 10:1) in spite of their stumbling (9:32-33). But, surprising as it might appear, the salvation of historical (ancient) Israel might be included his

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<sup>220</sup> This is already established in Rom 1-3, where Paul described God's wrath over sin (1:18-32) and his judgment of all unrighteousness (esp. 2:2,5-6), which is all people's responsibility (3:1-26). There is righteousness (escape of judgment by implication) only by faith in Christ (3:27-31).

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anguish. This possibility is introduced heuristically at this point, and will be tested and expounded upon in the rest of the discussion.

### 6.1.2.1 Paul's hermeneutic as dialectical and diachronic

At this point in Paul's exposition, it is not entirely clear what the position of historical Israel is in terms of salvation. It does in fact appear that they as a people have been rejected in Christ (cf. Richardson 1958:266), not only in terms of covenant status, but in terms of salvation too (9:25-33; see 6.1.1.1). While Paul did identify a historical *inner* Israel as "children of the promise", a people "called" and "elected" (9:8-23, see 4.3.2.2), Paul never explicitly said that they were saved. He only referred to Isaiah who cried that only *those remaining* (and believe in Christ, by implication) are saved (9:27-33, see 4.4.1). The absence of a specific designation for whom exactly he is concerned about (αὐτῶν, 10:1)<sup>221</sup> may be deliberate if Paul has both current unbelieving Judaeans and historical Israel in mind. The basis for salvation that Paul has established up to this point in his letter, is faith in Christ (1:16; 5:9,10; 8:24)<sup>222</sup> which converges with the Christ-believing remnant of Israel after judgment in Christ (9:27). The impression left by the salvation-historical *crossover* (see 6.1.1.1) at this point in Paul's exposition, is that historical (even *inner*) Israel is in fact not saved.

As seen from the previous section, a dialectic between the current hardened, unbelieving Judaeans and historical Israel might be suggested by Paul's appropriation of Scripture in 9:25-33. The same hermeneutical principle might be applied here in 10:1-21. This principle might actually be engrained much deeper into Paul's use of Scripture than what might appear on the surface (contra Käsemann 1980:295 and Sanday & Headlam [1902] 1960:303).<sup>223</sup> As discussed, a similar kind of dialectic can be detected in Galatians 3, where Paul views the gospel as being preached to Abraham (v. 14) or where he sees Christ Himself as

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<sup>221</sup> In the light of Paul's definition of Israel in 9:6 (see 4.3.2.2), the reading "του Ἰσραὴλ ἐστίν" in many Western texts (instead of αὐτῶν) in Rom 10:1 (see fn. 23) is unlikely to be authentic.

<sup>222</sup> Although Christ is not specifically mentioned in 8:24, the first person plural (ἐσώθημεν) implies salvation of the Christ-believing community, including Paul.

<sup>223</sup> Käsemann (1980:295) argues that Paul's quotations "almost always lose their historical meaning" (cf. Sanday & Headlam [1902] 1960:303).

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the only recipient of the promise to Abraham (vv. 16,19; see 5.1.3.3). In 1 Corinthians 10:4, Paul explains the rock that Moses encountered in the desert as Christ, as if Paul is projecting Christ into the Old Testament.

In terms of Paul's engagement with Old Testament Scriptures, Cranfield (1979) comes close to identifying this hermeneutic by stating that Paul, "since he had been convinced that Jesus of Nazareth was God's Messiah, become possessed of what he saw to be key to their [OT] interpretation" (:866) and "key to its proper understanding" (:869). Similarly, Abasciano (2004:374-375) writes the following:

Paul interprets the OT through the lens of Christ and the gospel even as he interprets Christ and the gospel through the lens of the OT. Very often the gospel provides the presuppositions by which to interpret the OT, and in addition to argumentative proof or illustration, the OT provides much of the content and direction of Paul's teaching within the metanarrative of the gospel and redemptive history (cf. Carson & Moo 2005:373).

This hermeneutic is well accounted for in 2 Corinthians 3:14-16, where Paul sees a veil remaining over the hearts of those reading the Old Covenant/Testament, only to be removed in Christ (see 7.3.1). The gospel is so central in salvation history for Paul that the gospel actually seems to have a retrojective<sup>224</sup> function for Paul. On one level Christ's work in His death and resurrection appears to have an actual effect into the past, spanning over the entire human history. On another level, there exists for Paul a profound *dialectic* between the epochs before and after Christ's work, in that the gospel was already locked up (hidden) in the past, only to be revealed at the fullness of time (Gal 4:4).

In terms of the letter to the Romans, the same elements of hiddenness and revelation of the gospel in Christ are evident in 16:25-26. In 2:16, there is an intricate relationship among God's judgment, hidden things of people, the gospel and Christ. God's judgment of all people will be "according to my [Paul's] gospel" and "through Christ". While the exact implication of this verse is difficult to

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<sup>224</sup> This is more than "retrospective" which denotes "looking back on or dealing with past events or situations" (Soanes & Stevenson 2008:1230). To "retroject" is to "project backwards" (:1229).

## 6. Faith in Christ, Israel and the Judaeans

determine, Christ's position within salvation history and His (eschatological?, cf. Moo 1996:154) judgment is central for Paul, affecting all human beings (2:11-16), including historical Israel by implication. Even Christ's righteousness affects all people (δικαιώματος εἰς πάντας ἀνθρώπους, 5:18). Although these cosmic aspects<sup>225</sup> of Christ's work and His lordship (cf. Käsemann 1980:289,294,296) is difficult to pin down, there appears to be a deep-seated *diachronic* aspect to the gospel that has to be kept in mind in the way Paul appropriates Scripture in Romans 10.

### 6.1.2.2 Law, gospel and Israel

The notion behind οὐ κατ' ἐπίγνωσιν (v. 2) and ἀγνοοῦντες (v. 3) is that these people were ignorant and “without vital knowledge” (Wright 2002:654; cf. Cranfield 1979:514) in spite of their zeal. Their ignorance can be seen in their seeking to establish their “own righteousness” (ἰδίαν δικαιοσύνην, v. 3), which is contrasted to “God's righteousness” (δικαιοσύνη τοῦ θεοῦ). The righteousness of God implies both “being right” and “declaring right” (Moo 1996:633), which are God-given (Cranfield 1979:515). The verb ὑποτάσσω shows that “the righteousness of God is an active force to which one must humbly and obediently subordinate oneself” (Moo 1996:633; cf. Cranfield 1979:515; Barrett [1962] 1975:197). Their “own righteousness” is essentially opposed to faith where the source of righteousness is contrasted: either as originating from God and obtained through faith or as originating from human beings (Moo 1996:633-634; Käsemann 1980:281; cf. Hultgren 2011:383,384; Mounce 1995:206-207; Barrett [1962] 1975:196; contra Dunn 1988b:595-596 or Wright 2002:654-655).<sup>226</sup> This reading of their “own righteousness” is strongly suggested by the parallel Philippians 3:6-9, where Paul's “own righteousness of law” is contrasted to “the righteousness

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<sup>225</sup> A cosmic dimension to the gospel would correspond to Col 1:23 (Wright 2002:668); Eph 1:10,21 and 3:15-20, that would contribute to arguing for Pauline authorship in these letters.

<sup>226</sup> While my reading is not principally against the NPP, contrasting God's righteousness merely to Judaeans exclusivism and a misunderstanding of what obedience entailed (Dunn 1988b:595-596) undercuts the depth of this contrast (cf. Moo 2004:215). Whereas Wright (2002:654-655) interprets “own righteousness” similarly, he understands “God's righteousness” as God's “covenantally loyal actions”.

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from God based on faith” (NRSV; cf. Moo 1996:635; Bruce [1985] 2000:199; Käsemann 1980:281; see 6.1.7).

Christ is the culmination (Moo 1996:637) and termination (v. 4; BDAG, τέλος §1; Moo 1996:637; Bruce [1985] 2000:200; cf. Zerwick & Grosvenor 1988:482; contra Wright 2002:657-658)<sup>227</sup> of the Mosaic law (Moo 1996:636; cf. Cranfield 1979:516). This notion is underlined by the contrast between verses 3 and 4, where “Paul wants to stress the *discontinuity* between Christ and the law” (Moo 1996:640, emphasis added; cf. Hultgren 2011:384-385; 9:30-32a; contra Dunn 1988b:591 and Cranfield 1979:524).<sup>228</sup> The similarity between 10:3-4 and 3:20-23 is striking:

According to 3:20-23,

- (1) the works of the law cannot confer righteousness,
- (2) and God’s righteousness has been manifested apart from the law.
- (3) Righteousness is for all who believe.

In 10:3-4,

- (1) people have not established their own righteousness in not submitting to God’s righteousness,
- (2) and Christ is the end of the law.
- (3) Righteousness is for all who believe.

(cf. Moo 1996:640).

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<sup>227</sup> While τέλος may also denote a “goal”, (BDAG, τέλος §3; Zerwick & Grosvenor 1988:482; Cranfield 1979:519-520) it does not lose its temporal meaning (“termination”) in this context (cf. Moo 1996:641). My rendering “culmination and termination” is intended to incorporate both meanings (termination and goal/fulfilment; cf. Moo 1996:641; Barrett [1962] 1975:197; Bruce [1985] 2000:200), where “culmination” would convey an element of continuity and “termination” would account for an element of discontinuity. Dunn (1988b:590-591,596-597) argues for the end (termination) of an incorrect understanding of the law, and Wright (2002:657-658) argues for a fulfilment (τέλος) of the law and a new way of keeping it. While my translation (“culmination and termination”) leans more toward accentuating discontinuity with the law (contra Wright 2002:657-658), some ambiguity regarding Paul’s intention with τέλος arguably remains.

<sup>228</sup> Both Dunn and Cranfield do not view Christ and the law as mutually exclusive categories.

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In essence, the end of the law stands for the end of an epoch (Dunn 1988b:600,611-612; cf. Witherington III 2004:261; Moo 1996:640; Käsemann 1980:286; Barrett [1962] 1975:197; Gal 3:17-25, see 5.1.3) where one's identity of being God's people was defined by the law (identity mode A; cf. 9:4). In the new epoch in Christ, identity is being defined by faith in Christ (identity mode C) apart from the law (3:21),<sup>229</sup> and by not being "under the law" (6:14,15).

Verse 5 confirms the righteousness of the law as constituted by "doing" (ποιέω) things in order to "live" (ζῶω) by them (quoted from Lev 18:5).<sup>230</sup> Although there was nothing inherently wrong with the law and its objective to give life (cf. Gal 3:12), it could not ultimately provide life or righteousness (Moo 1996:654; cf. Hultgren 2011:384; Witherington III 2004:261; Bruce [1985] 2000:200; Barrett [1962] 1975:202) for it was impossible to adhere to the law (Hultgren 2011:384; Moo 1996:654; Mounce 1995:208; Räisänen 1987:95,199; cf. 9:31-32, see 6.1.1.1; contra Dunn 1988b:601). This "doing" according to Moses' law is being contrasted to (Hultgren 2011:386; Moo 1996:644; Dunn 1988b:602,<sup>231</sup> Barrett [1962] 1975:198; cf. Käsemann 1980:284,286)<sup>232</sup> the righteousness based on faith (vv. 6-13). Moo (1996:649) makes the following significant remark (emphasis added):

Throughout salvation history, faith and doing, 'gospel' and 'law' have run along side-by-side... But, as it is fatal to ignore one or the other, it is equally fatal to mix them or to use them for the wrong ends. The *OT Israelite* who sought to base his or her relationship with God on the law rather than on God's gracious

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<sup>229</sup> Dunn (1988a:165) understands "apart from the law" in 3:21 as outside national and religious parameters marked out by the law. This notion does not have to be excluded here. Cf. Witherington III (2004:260-261) who combines the TAP and the NPP: "righteousness is not attained nor maintained by means of the Law but by another means."

<sup>230</sup> Cranfield (1979:522) argues that "the man" (ἄνθρωπος, v. 5) is Christ, the only one who could obey perfectly and earn a righteous status for Himself and for those who believe in Him. Although this seems to be a legitimate interpretation, it would run against the general notion in Gal 3:12, unless one interprets Gal 3:12 as pointing to Christ's obedience too (as Cranfield does). This interpretation has to be considered as a possibility and might represent a second layer to Paul's exposition.

<sup>231</sup> Although defined differently, Dunn acknowledges a contrast here.

<sup>232</sup> Contra Wright (2002:658-663), who argues for righteousness based on faith as "true Torah-observance" (:663). Although the gospel can be understood as the fulfilment of the Torah (especially in referring to the OT as a whole), it signifies a new mode of existence apart from the works of the law (3:21), where the law is in no way constitutive of the new identity in Christ (7:4-6; see 7.4.1).

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election in and through the Abrahamic promise arrangement made this mistake.

Apart from Moo's perspective on the relationship between law and gospel, he provides a crucial *diachronic* perspective on Israel's relationship with God and the gospel itself that is certainly present in Romans 10.

In verses 6-8, Paul refers to Deuteronomy 30:12-14 and interprets it in the light of Christ and the gospel (Moo 1996:654). The best explanation to Paul's referral to the text of Deuteronomy is probably that it is an expression of God's grace "in establishing a relationship with his people" (Moo 1996:653; cf. Witherington III 2004:262). The ascent to heaven (v. 6) seems to allude to the incarnation of God's Son, who has been "brought down" already. Similarly, the meaning of verse 7 is probably that the fact of the resurrection can be used to deny any need to "go down to the abyss" to bring Christ up from "the realm of the dead" (Moo 1996:656; Cranfield 1979:525; Barrett [1962] 1975:199; cf. Mounce 1995:208). The "word" (ῥῆμα, v. 8) which is near, is identified with the "word of faith which we proclaim" (ῥῆμα τῆς πίστεως ὃ κηρύσσομεν), and points to the gospel (Cranfield 1979:526; Barrett [1962] 1975:200; cf. v. 16). It is as if Paul reads the gospel back into Deuteronomy 30 in such a way that he perceives the gospel to have always been there.

Yet, in verse 9 Paul identifies belief in the gospel which leads to salvation as confession in Jesus as Lord and belief that God raised Him from the dead. Most commentators recognise traces of an early confession of faith in the early church in the formula "Jesus is Lord" (e.g., Moo 1996:658; Dunn 1988b:607; Bruce [1985] 2000:202; Cranfield 1979:528; Barrett [1962] 1975:200-201; cf. 1 Cor 8:6; Php 2:11; Col 2:6) that might have been present at baptism in or into the name of Jesus (Wright 2002:664; Dunn 1988b:608; Bruce [1985] 2000:202; Cranfield 1979:527; cf. Rom 6:3; Ac 2:38; 8:16; 10:48; 19:5). Dunn (1988b:615,617-618) and Käsemann (1980:283,289,294,296) rightly argue for Christ's lordship as achieving a cosmic and universal quality (mainly vv. 9-13). Salvation is reiterated in verse 10, which is obtained by confession and which functions interchangeably with belief from the heart unto righteousness (Mounce 1995:210; Bruce [1985]

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2000:202). If righteousness, salvation and faith are linked, it might put a further question mark behind historical Israel's salvation as portrayed in 9:30-33 (see 6.1.1.1). The undeniable universal nature of the gospel (Moo 1996:658-660; Mounce 1995:209; Käsemann 1980:292; Cranfield 1979:532; Barrett [1962] 1975:202; Sanday & Headlam [1902] 1960:290) for "everyone believing on Him" (v. 11, quoting Isa 28:16), for both "Judaeans and Greek" (v. 12) without difference (διαστολή), is evident in verses 11 to 13. The same universality can be applied to Jesus' lordship. He is the Lord (v. 12, pointing back to κύριον Ἰησοῦν in v. 9 by γάρ [X2] in vv. 10-11) who is "rich toward all the ones calling on Him." And then in verse 13 Paul substantiates salvation through Christ and His lordship with an exact quote (LXX) from Joel 2:32 ("Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved", NRSV). While the quote from Isaiah 28:16 (v. 11) in its original context can be interpreted as messianic (cf. 9:33, see 6.1.1.1), Joel 2:32 (v. 13) refers to Yahweh (MT; Crenshaw 1995:169).

Together with Jesus' designation as κύριος (v. 9), which is the same title for Yahweh in the Septuagint, and Paul's identification of Jesus with Yahweh (v. 13), Jesus is identified with God (Moo 1996:660; Mounce 1995:209; Cranfield 1979:529). With Paul's identification of Jesus with Yahweh, Paul once again seems to read Christ back into the Old Testament. If this is what Paul intended, it might prompt serious questions. How could the gospel be read into the Old Testament? How can gospel principles be identified with Old Testament principles? But the questions might even stretch deeper. Does the universal principle of salvation through faith in Christ only, apply to historical Israel as well? If that is the case, how can it be so if they have not heard the gospel? And this is, I suggest, exactly where Paul might be at this point in his exposition (v. 14).

While the αὐτῶν in verse 1 almost certainly alludes to his kindred according to the flesh, his "brothers" (9:3) who stumbled over the cross (9:32-33) in unbelief (see above), Paul's exposition from 9:4 up to this point (10:14) has never treated them in isolation from historical Israelites, as if Paul continuously has historical Israel and their salvation on his heart as well. My approach thus does not have to exclude current Judaeans that resist the gospel, but it might help understand Paul's hermeneutic and the way in which he applies Scripture here. The more

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Scriptures Paul quotes, the more he seems to focus the attention back to historical Israel and even measure their unbelief to his gospel (see below).

Paul asks legitimate questions in verses 14 to 15a. It is unreasonable to expect people to call on Jesus as Lord if they have not believed in Him, to believe in Him if they have not heard of Him, or hear without a preacher being sent. Whereas these questions might be applied to all people in general (Moo 1996:664) or to Judaeans who resist the gospel in Paul's time to remove any excuse (cf. Cranfield 1979:537), these questions would make even more sense if applied to historical Israel. Then the questions would be unavoidable and hard pressed for an answer. For if Paul identifies belief in Jesus as the only universal source of salvation, how can His lordship be applied to historical Israel? Paul's quote from Isaiah 52:7 (v. 15b) legitimises the need for a preacher of the gospel. This quote might serve as legitimisation of Paul's apostolic mission (Cranfield 1979:535; cf. Barrett [1962] 1975:204), but additionally identify the gospel and its preaching within the Old Testament itself, even though in another form or with another meaning.<sup>233</sup> Historical Israel knew about "the gospel of peace" and those preaching it, even though they might not have had the same understanding of it as Paul has of his gospel.

In verse 16, Paul points out that not all have obeyed the gospel. Whereas most commentators see this as the disobedience of them that did not believe the gospel in Paul's time (Moo 1996:644-645; Dunn 1988b:622-623; Cranfield 1979:536), if Paul had current unbelieving Judaeans in mind, the aorist indicative (ὑπήκουσαν) seems somewhat inappropriate. One might rather expect the present or perfect tense here. Normally, the aorist indicative possesses a punctiliar *Aktionsart* (BDF §318) like a snapshot in the past (Wallace 1996:555), which in this context might point to historical Israel. Paul closely follows the Septuagint in his quote of Isaiah 53:1 (κύριε, τίς ἐπίστευσεν τῇ ἀκοῇ ἡμῶν). Apart

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<sup>233</sup> Whereas Isa 52:7 has been interpreted in terms of the messianic age in later Rabbinic literature (Cranfield 1979:535), the same notion as in Isaiah 52:7 occurs in Nahum 1:15 (LXX: 2:1): "Look! On the mountains the feet of one who brings good tidings, who proclaims peace! Celebrate your festivals, O Judah, fulfil your vows, for never again shall the wicked invade you; they are utterly cut off" (NRSV). This shows that the idea of "good news" (gospel) was operational within the Old Testament time itself.

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from possibly pointing forward to Israel's rejection of the gospel of Jesus, the prophet himself (Isa 53:1) probably felt that he spoke mainly to unbelieving ears (Rawlinson [1919] 2010 on Isa 53:1; cf. Isa 28:9-15; 29:10-15; 30:9-11; 42:23). In connection with the quote from Isaiah 53:1, Seifrid (2007:662) writes:

That disobedience corresponds typically to the past, when Israel disbelieved the "report" of the prophet; not only the aorist tense of the verb (*hypēkousan*) but also the repeated naming of Isaiah and Moses (with the temporal marker *prōtos*, "at the start" [10:19]) mark the event as lying in the past.

In Isaiah 53:1, the complaint of unbelief thus "also comes from the mouth of Israel" (Delitzsch 1892:286), which is historical Israel (cf. Hultgren 2011:2011:390; Childs 2001:414; Oswalt 1998:381). Hultgren (2011:390), Bruce ([1985] 2000:206) and Ridderbos (1959:241) display diachronic awareness and a sense of continuity in terms of current unbelieving Judaeans and historical Israel in their treatment of verse 16. It is thus possible that Paul used εὐαγγέλιον in very much the same way as in Galatians 3:8, where he explicitly mentions that the gospel was preached before (προεσαγγελίζομαι) to Abraham (see 5.1.3.3).

In verse 17, Paul reiterates that faith originates from hearing, and that hearing comes from the word of the Messiah (Χριστοῦ, Wright 2002:668; Sanday & Headlam [1902] 1960:299). Paul's unusual use of ῥῆμα might point back to verse 8 where he quoted from Deuteronomy 30:14 (Ἐγγύς σου τὸ ῥῆμά ἐστιν) and correspond to his next quote (τὰ ῥήματα αὐτῶν) from Psalm 18:5 (LXX) in verse 18 (Wright 2002:668). Paul's quote from Psalm 18:5 (LXX) is once again an answer to the question: "have they not heard?" (cf. v. 14). The context of Psalm 18:5 (LXX) is cosmic: the heavens are telling the glory of God and the firmament proclaims His handiwork (18:2, LXX). This is the context in which "their voice" went out into all the earth and "their words" to the ends of the world (Rom 10:18). Is Paul's allusion to the gospel that went out to the whole world simply hyperbolic (Moo 1996:667; Dunn 1988b:630; cf. Bruce [1985] 2000:206)? Wright (2002:668) correctly notes that this verse "can scarcely refer to Paul's own apostolic mission" (contra Dunn 1988b:624,630; Barrett [1962] 1975:205) because of the "universality" displayed in the Psalm (cf. Ridderbos 1959:242-243). But may Paul indeed connect cosmic significance to the gospel in Christ, as if the glory of God

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and his handiwork can be understood through the lens of the gospel? An affirmative answer has to be seen as a possibility, for even historical Israel would have a conception of the glory of God and His handiwork (Ps 18:2 [LXX]).

Paul now explicitly mentions Ἰσραήλ in verses 19 and 21. Since Romans 9 he has never disconnected the term Ἰσραήλ from historical Israel, and is most probably not doing it here, especially in view of the Scriptures that Paul quotes in verses 19 to 21. Paul asks if Israel did not know (γινώσκω, v. 19), echoing much of the same notion in verse 2 (ἐπίγνωσις). Cranfield (1979:538) shows that there is a sense in which they knew and another sense in which they did not. They have been recipients of God's special revelation, but they did not understand. Their ignorance is a blameworthy (not excusable) ignorance. In Paul's exact quote from the Septuagint (Deut 32:21), Israel's provocation of God to jealousy (Deut 32:21a, not quoted) are turned against them to provoke and anger them to jealousy (Rom 10:19). Their unfaithfulness and perversity (Deut 32:20), and by implication, their resistance of God's faithfulness are historical and had been addressed historically. Even Israel's provocation to jealousy via other nations is historical, constituted mainly by the Samaritan and Babylonian nations (Cranfield 1979:539; cf. Seifrid 2007:665).<sup>234</sup> In the reference to Isaiah 65:1 in Romans 10:20, Paul at first sight seems to have Gentiles in mind not seeking God and not enquiring after Him, and yet found God (Moo 1996:669; Dunn 1988b:626; Cranfield 1979:540; Barrett [1962] 1975:206). Paul would then contrast this to historical Israel in verse 21 (quoting Isaiah 65:2), a "contrary" (NRSV, ἀντίλεγω) and "disobedient" (ἀπειθέω) people. But many Old Testament commentators (noted by Moo 1996:699; e.g., Childs 2001:535) interpret Isaiah 65:1 in its context as God making Himself known to the people of Israel and not to Gentile nations as such (Hultgren 2011:392; Dunn 1988b:626; Bruce [1985] 2000:208; Sanday & Headlam [1902] 1960:300). In the light of my proposed hermeneutic regarding Paul and Israel in Rom 10 (see 6.1.2.1), it would be possible to interpret verse 20 as indeed pointing to historical Israel. The notion would be that God did manifest

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<sup>234</sup> Cranfield (1979:539) refers to this interpretation from Jewish literature (Ecclesiasticus 50:25-26; Jerusalem Targum I).

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Himself (ἐμφανῆς) to them and did show or prove Himself (εὐρίσκω)<sup>235</sup> to them in spite of their truancy and rebellion. The significance would then be that Paul used this to show that Israel had no excuse. If this is the case, verse 21 is not a contrast to verse 20, but a further elaboration of verse 20.<sup>236</sup> Denney (1902:675) writes that God's outstretched arms (v. 21) were "the symbol of that incessant pleading love which Israel through all its history has consistently despised" (adopted by Mounce 1995:213; cf. Bruce [1985] 2000:204; Cranfield 1979:541). Seifrid (2004:144) notes that historical Israel's recalcitrance and rebellion is a condition that extended into the present for Paul (Rom 10:19-21). This last verse at least thus has to "refer to Israel both in their original context and in Paul's application of them" (Bruce [1985] 2000:208; cf. Hultgren 2011:392). This should be an indication that Paul probably had this *diachronic* and *dialectical* perspective in mind in most (if not all) of his quotations from the Old Testament in Romans 10.

In summary, the perspective on Romans 10 that I argue for is that Paul includes historical Israel in his removal of excuse for unbelief. It has to be noted that, even though Paul has put forth Abraham's faith in Romans 4, Paul never connects faith as such to historical Israel, even though they were supposed to believe and are judged by their unbelief (Rom 9-10). The principle of faith in terms of righteousness and covenant membership seems to be reserved for believers in Christ only (see 5.1.2). Yet Paul appears to retrojectively measure historical Israel's unrighteousness and unbelief against the gospel, and removes even their excuse for not yielding to the "gospel" (even though arguably in another form). Paul might apply a hyperbolic technique in exaggerating historical Israel's unrighteousness, unbelief and lack of excuse in Romans 10 to appeal to his readers' emotions in order to enhance the effect of what he plans to say in Romans 11.

The modes of identity are not presented explicitly in Romans 10 and are implied implicitly by Paul's contrasts between law and gospel, righteousness and

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<sup>235</sup> These renderings ("show" or "prove" Himself) are well within semantic range here (BDAG, εὐρίσκω §2) in line with the Hebrew אָרָא (Isa 65:1).

<sup>236</sup> This interpretation would be made possible by δὲ in both verses 20 and 21, which can be translated as "but" or "and" (BDAG, δὲ §1,4).

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unrighteousness, and belief and unbelief. These contrasts would mainly allude to identity modes A and C, while identity mode AB might be possible if Paul has *inner, yet unbelieving* Israel in mind in 10:16-21.

### 6.1.3 Romans 15:5-13

Romans 15:1-13 is the final climax of the letter (Wright 2002:744) which can be divided into two parts: verses 1 to 6 and verses 7 to 13. Each part starts with a command relating to Romans 14 (βαστάζω, v. 1; προσλαμβάνω, v. 7), summoning the “strong” to support the “weak” (Wright 2002:744; cf. Moo 1996:871; see 5.2.2). At the end of the first part (vv. 5-6), Paul focuses on the unity among believers in Christ. He prays that God will give them “to think the same” (τὸ αὐτὸ φρονεῖν, v. 5; BDAG, φρονέω §1; Wright 2002:746; Moo 1996:871) that they may with one mind or purpose (v. 6; BDAG, ὁμοθυμαδόν; cf. Moo 1996:871) and with one mouth (ἐν ἐνὶ στόματι) glorify God. Their worship with one mouth points to their “common worship” (Wright 2002:746) which originates from one united community of believers in Christ, consisting of Judaeans and Gentiles (cf. Dunn 1988b:841; Moo 1996:874). The “dividing line between these two groups” (Moo 1996:874) constituted by the law has been removed in the New Covenant, signifying *discontinuity* between an ethnic identity and the identity in Christ. This inclusion of Judaeans and Gentiles was the theological basis for the “strong” and the “weak” to receive one another (:874).

The receiving of one another (v. 7) is based on the Messiah’s receiving of them, whose work was on behalf of the whole world. Just as the Messiah welcomed them, they should welcome one another in order that God may be glorified (Wright 2002:746; Bruce [1985] 2000:256; Barrett [1962] 1975:270). Christ was the minister of the περιτομή (v. 8),<sup>237</sup> which points to the Judaeans according to the flesh (Cranfield 1979:741) or ethnic Israel (Wright 2002:747), signifying identity mode A. Both the truthfulness (ἀλήθεια, v. 8, Wright 2002:747; Mounce

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<sup>237</sup> Barrett ([1962] 1975:271) takes περιτομή to refer to the act of circumcision in the sense that Christ carried out the promises implied in the covenant of which the seal was circumcision, or that Christ has been instrumental in admitting the Gentiles to the privileges promised to the Judaeans of which circumcision was the symbol.

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1995:261) or covenant faithfulness (Dunn 1988b:847) of God, and the promises of the fathers (v. 8) point back to these same themes in Romans 9:4-6 (see 4.3.2.2; cf. Wright 2002:746; Cranfield 1979:741-742). Christ confirmed these promises to the fathers, which includes the promise to Abraham to include Gentiles (v. 9a; Dunn 1988b:847; cf. Gal 3:14,22, see 5.1.3.3) who would glorify God for His mercy (v. 9b). Cranfield (1979:743) argues that the Judaeans Christ-believers should thank God for his faithfulness to have called Gentiles for the sake of His mercy. The notion behind Paul's statement in verses 8 to 9a is that Israel's history was brought to a climax through their Messiah and opened the way to all nations, wherein God's mercy was always designed for all (Wright 2002:747; cf. Mounce 1995:262; Barrett [1962] 1975:272), Judaeans and the nations alike. Dunn (1988b:848) correctly senses an echo here of the principle of "to the Judaeans first, but also to the Greek" (1:16). Israel's Messiah ministered *their* gospel to His own people first (cf. Mt 15:24), and extended it to the nations, who was always intended in the promise (or gospel, cf. Gal 3:8) to Abraham.

In verses 9b to 12, Paul introduces a series of Old Testament quotations in support of his "solemn declaration (vv. 8-9a) as a whole" (Cranfield 1979:745; cf. Dunn 1988b:848), which Dunn (1988b:848) summarises as "the inclusion of the Gentiles within the promises to his people." Paul quotes four Scriptures (1-4):

(1) Verse 9b is a verbatim quote from Psalm 17:50 (LXX) or 2 Samuel 22:50. Paul probably reads the Psalm typologically (Moo 1996:878), pointing to the Messiah (Wright 2002:748; Moo 1996:878-879; Cranfield 1979:745). Moo (1996:879) argues that David's praise of God among the Gentiles comes from his God-given victory over the Gentile nations. God has made David the head of nations so that people whom David did not know, served him. This would typologically fit Paul's purposes if he attributed to Christ this praise of God for the subduing of the nations under the messianic rule (cf. Sanday & Headlam [1902] 1960:398).

(2) In verse 10, Paul quotes from Deuteronomy 32:43, following the Septuagint (differing markedly from the MT). Here the nations rejoice together with God's own people, which in the context of Deuteronomy is Israel (Moo 1996:879;

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Cranfield 1979:746). The Greek of the Septuagint here allows for a much more universal perspective than the MT (Dunn 1988b:849).

(3) Paul quotes Psalm 116:1 (LXX) in verse 11 which almost follows the Septuagint and is a close rendering of the Hebrew (MT: Ps 117:1; Dunn 1988b:850). This is a call on the nations to praise “the Lord”, which alludes to the same identification of Jesus with Yahweh as in Romans 10:13 (see 6.1.2.2).

(4) Verse 12 quotes Isaiah 11:10. Wright (2002:748) argues for this fourth quote as the climax of the series, and even as the climax of the whole 14:1 to 15:13. The nations will come to hope in the Davidic Messiah (Wright 2002:748; Moo 1996:880; Dunn 1988b:850; Bruce [1985] 2000:257; Cranfield 1979:747; cf. Barrett [1962] 1975:272), the “root of Jesse” (cf. Rev 5:5; 22:16). His rising up (ἀνιστάμενος) probably alludes to Christ’s resurrection (Wright 2002:748; Moo 1996:880). “Isaiah speaks here of God’s purpose to renew the whole created order, and to gather the remnant of Israel, together with the Gentile world, into the one community of salvation” (Wright 2002:748).

There exists a marked progression in these four quoted Scriptures (1-4). It starts with David’s praise (1) and moves on to the inclusion of the nations in praise (2). The call on the nations to praise the Lord (3) includes the Judaeans (cf. Bruce [1985] 2000:257). In the last quote (4), Israel’s Messiah is also the Lord and Ruler of all nations. The term ἔθνος thus seems to undergo a transformation to include Judaeans (cf. Walter 1990:382-383).<sup>238</sup> There is now only one people of God (cf. Wright 2002:748; Dunn 1988b:853,<sup>239</sup> Barrett [1962] 1975:272; Ridderbos 1959:325) where there is no ethnic differentiation any longer. Similarly, the term λαός (vv. 10,11) displays fluidity between being a designation for a socio-political community (v. 11, 11.55 in Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:130; see 2.2.2) and for God’s people (v. 10, 11.12 in Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:123, see 2.2.1). In verse 10, other nations are invited to rejoice with God’s people (λαός).

<sup>238</sup> This possible shift in meaning is not accounted for in Louw and Nida (1988; see 2.2.2).

<sup>239</sup> Dunn (1988b:853) writes: “All of them are united by their references to the nations/Gentiles, with the theme of praise a further strong linking factor.”

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Conversely, in verse 11, λαός is applied in parallel with ἔθνος: all nations (πάντα τὰ ἔθνη and πάντες οἱ λαοί) are invited to praise the Lord as one people of God.

Moo (1996:881) contends that the “new people of God” in Christ should experience peace and joy as joint participants in the kingdom of God (cf. 14:17) while they praise Him with a united voice by the power of the Holy Spirit (15:13). The uniting function of the Spirit corresponds to the identity of the new united people of God, which is identity mode C.

### 6.1.4 1 Corinthians 1:21-24

These verses lie amidst Paul’s positioning of the gospel of the cross (vv. 17,18,23) among categories of worldly or human wisdom (vv. 17,19,20,22,25), God’s wisdom (vv. 21,24), and foolishness (vv. 18,20,21,23,25,27). The aim here is not to expound the depth of meaning of these categories of wisdom and foolishness, but to identify and describe the modes of identity.

In verse 21, there is a direct relationship between salvation and belief (σῶσαι τοὺς πιστεύοντας). Belief, in turn, is closely related to preaching (τοῦ κηρύγματος). These close connections among these concepts are comparable to the same connections in Romans 10:9-17 (see 6.1.2.2). While hearing is not explicitly mentioned here (1 Cor 1:21), it is implied (Collins 1999:105). Similar to Romans 10:9-10, faith here (1 Cor 1:21) can be identified as saving faith, constituting a “positive salvific relationship” between the believer and God (:105). Faith can be described as “confidence and trust” (Lenski 1963:63; cf. Ciampa & Rosner 2010:98). Salvation itself is ultimately effected by God and transcends all human strength, wisdom, piety and self-praise, even toward God (Käsemann 1971:40; cf. Pop 1965:42).

Christ crucified is the content of the preaching (v. 23). For the Judaeans, a crucified Messiah would have been “a contradiction in terms” (Morris [1958]

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1963:45). He was therefore a stumbling block (BDAG, σκάνδαλον §3;<sup>240</sup> Ciampa & Rosner 2010:100; Fitzmyer 2008:159; Collins 1999:107; Mare [1976] 1977:195; Morris [1958] 1963:46) or a trap (BDAG σκάνδαλον §1;<sup>241</sup> Lenski 1963:66; Abbott-Smith [1923] 1929:408)<sup>242</sup> for the Judaeans. Similar to Romans 9:33 (see 6.1.1.1; cf. Rom 11:11-12; Ciampa & Rosner 2010:100), the stumbling block is opposed to salvation (cf. Mare [1976] 1977:195) and thus seems to be “fatal and deadly” (Lenski 1963:66).<sup>243</sup>

Judaeans and the nations<sup>244</sup> (vv. 22-24) represent “the totality of humankind... from the perspective of salvation history” (Collins 1999:106). Those who are called are both (τε καί) Judaeans and non-Judaeans (v. 24). There is therefore not a notion of priority of Judaeans over non-Judaeans present in 1 Corinthians, as opposed to the letter to the Romans (Rom 1:17; 2:9-10). Collins (1999:92) writes:

The division of humanity into two camps by means of the message of the cross, a manifestation of the power of God, is an eschatological reality that transcends the natural social division of humanity into two ‘races,’ Jews and Gentiles. In vv. 22-24 Paul describes the message about Christ crucified in the presence of all humankind.

The cross is central to the gospel for Paul. In the cross the divisions between ethnic identities are relativised (cf. Eph 2:8-22, see 5.1.5). In Christ the crucified, the gospel thus has a universal appeal, and is a call to all people to fellowship in the one single church without distinction (Ciampa & Rosner 2010:100; Collins 1999:108; Sanders [1983] 1989:208; cf. Conzelmann 1975:46-47; Pop 1965:46). Thiselton (2000:170) argues that Christ here constitutes a cosmic turning point

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<sup>240</sup> BDAG describes this general meaning as “that which causes offence or revulsion and results in opposition, disapproval, or hostility, *fault, stain* etc.”

<sup>241</sup> Although this is one of the listed meanings in BDAG, 1 Cor 1:23 is not listed under that meaning. Lenski (1963:66) however argues in favour of retaining this meaning in its metaphorical application (see fn. 243).

<sup>242</sup> Thiselton (2000:171) however warns against establishing this meaning too firmly for its weak attestation outside biblical Greek. It thus remains one of several possible meanings.

<sup>243</sup> Lenski (1963:66) argues that a “σκάνδαλον... is the stick of a trap to which the bait is fixed and by which the trap is sprung, metaphorically an offence, but always one that is fatal in its effects.”

<sup>244</sup> Paul’s alternation between “Ἕλληνα (v. 22,24) and ἔθνος (v. 23) signifies the identification of these terms with each other (Collins 1999:107-108; cf. Barrett [1971] 1976:55).

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which casts essential light on the Christological and cosmic significance of Jesus Christ.

In summary, those who believed the preaching of the gospel are saved (v. 21) and consist of both Judaeans and non-Judaeans (vv. 22-24). They represent identity mode C. This community of believers stand in *discontinuity* with ethnical or cultural distinctions, or with non-believing people groups, whether Judaeans or non-Judaeans.

Identity mode A would be constituted by Judaeans who hear the gospel and become believers, transforming them into identity mode C. In the light of the gospel, identity mode C thus seems to deconstruct identity mode A, especially with respect to defining God's people. This is especially evident in 1 Corinthians 10:32, where the "church [ἐκκλησία] of God" represents a third entity apart from Judaeans or the nations (Barrett [1971] 1976:245).

### 6.1.5 Galatians 1:11-14,22-23

These verses form part of Paul's autobiographical defence for his gospel and apostleship (1:11-2:14). According to Paul, his gospel did not have a human origin (v. 11-12a, Hays 2000:210; George 1994:107; Dunn 1993:52; Longenecker 1990:23; Lategan 1986:26; Bruce 1982b:88; Betz 1979:62; cf. Fung 1988:51),<sup>245</sup> but came directly to him through a revelation of Jesus Christ (v. 12b) on his road to Damascus. The phrase ἀποκαλύψεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (v. 12b) is most likely an objective genitive: Christ was revealed (Martyn 1997:144; Dunn 1993:54; Fung 1988:54; Bruce 1982b:89; Burton 1920:41).<sup>246</sup> The notion here is that of a personal encounter and the beginning of a personal relationship with Christ (Dunn 2006:205;<sup>247</sup> Bruce 1982b:89). That which Paul has learned from Jerusalem's leaders confirmed his own convictions, which stemmed from his encounter with

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<sup>245</sup> Rather than "in a human way", "from a human standpoint" (BDAG, ἄνθρωπος §2b; discussed by Dunn 1993:52; cf. Burton 1920:37) or "according to the thought of man [sic]" (listed by Burton 1920:37).

<sup>246</sup> George (1994:110) argues that there is deliberate ambiguity in the text in that both objective and subjective genitives are intended.

<sup>247</sup> Bruce (1982b:89) quoted from an earlier edition of this work.

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the risen Christ and his commissioning on the Damascus road (cf. Dunn 2006:71; Bruce 1982b:88). He was thus never disciplined by the Jerusalem authorities, neither has he ever been under their jurisdiction (Hays 2000:210; cf. George 1994:112; Lategan 1986:33).

Paul writes about his earlier life ἐν τῷ ἰουδαϊσμῷ (v. 13). The term ἰουδαϊσμός is a *hapax legomenon* in the New Testament. BDAG (ἰουδαϊσμός) defines the term as “the Judean way of belief and life”.<sup>248</sup> Hays (2000:213) compares the use of the term with its occurrences in 2 Maccabees 2:21,<sup>249</sup> 8:1,<sup>250</sup> 14:38;<sup>251</sup> 4 Maccabees 4:26<sup>252</sup> and the letters of Ignatius of Antioch (2<sup>nd</sup> century CE)<sup>253</sup> where its usage

strongly suggests that it designates a body of practices that distinguish Jews from Gentiles, particularly with reference to circumcision, dietary laws, sabbath observance, and the system of sacrifices and feasts. That is to say, ‘Judaism’ refers not so much to a set of beliefs or doctrines as to a culture; it designates a network of habitual observances that characterize the Jewish people as members of a distinctive society set apart for God in the midst of the pagan world (cf. Dunn 1993:56).

Similarly, Mason (2007:466-469) argues that Paul’s employment of the term ἰουδαϊσμός is similar to the kind of “Judaizing” found in the Maccabean texts, indicating “a violent harassment of Jesus’ followers (Gal 1:13) out of zeal, as he [Paul] puts it, for the ancestral traditions (1:14)” (cf. Ac 9:1-3; 22:3-5). This implies

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<sup>248</sup> Dunn (1993:55) does not even include “beliefs” as constitutive of the Judaeans identity.

<sup>249</sup> The context is about the driving out of barbarian masses ὑπὲρ τοῦ ἰουδαϊσμοῦ, which signifies “a certain kind of activity over against a pull in another, foreign direction” (Mason 2007:466).

<sup>250</sup> Here, Judas called for the support of his relatives and those who had remained ἐν τῷ ἰουδαϊσμῷ. The term ἰουδαϊσμός seems to be a slogan for a Maccabean counter movement to bring back other Judaeans and to reinstate the ancestral law (Mason 2007:467).

<sup>251</sup> Similar to Macc 8:1, the notion in Macc 14:38 is related to a programme “of striving to restore Judaeans law and custom against a powerful counter-current” (Mason 2007:468).

<sup>252</sup> The context is about Jason’s radical attempt (advanced by Antiochus IV) to dissolve Judaeans law and temple service. He tried to compel every member of the nation (ἔθνος) to eat polluted food and to swear off ἰουδαϊσμός. The sense is that Antiochus reacted against opposition, a kind of “Judaizing” (Mason 2007:468).

<sup>253</sup> Mason (2007:470) shows that in *Letter to the Magnesians* 10, ἰουδαϊσμός is applied in the context of movement from one group to another. “Whereas the author of 2 Maccabees had championed ἰουδαϊσμός as response to the threat of Ἑλληνισμός, Ignatius coins Χριστιανισμός as remedy for a threatening ἰουδαϊσμός” (:470).

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a restricted meaning to the term in 1:13. The Ἰουδαῖοι has to be understood as largely an ethnic-geographical entity until at least about 70 CE, and thus not yet as a “religion” as such (:493-496,511; cf. Dunn 1993:56).<sup>254</sup>

Paul contrasts his former life ἐν τῷ Ἰουδαϊσμῷ to the ἐκκλησία τοῦ θεοῦ, which he persecuted (v. 13b). The ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ θεοῦ refers to “the universal Church as the messianic people of God in its entirety” (Fung 1988:55; cf. George 1994:113; Longenecker 1990:28; Burton 1920:45). George (1994:113) compares the church to “the special people of the Holy One of Israel, ‘the community of God.’ This expression was used in the Old Testament to describe the children of Israel who stood in a special covenantal relationship to God” (cf. Lategan 1986:28). While Paul is referring to Judaeans believers in this context, the “church of God” has relevance to Paul’s Gentile converts as well, “so indicating in Paul’s thinking the union of Jewish and Gentile believers in Christ” (Longenecker 1990:28). Fung (1988:57-62; adopted by George 1994:114) convincingly argues that Paul persecuted the church because he had stumbled over the stumbling block himself (1 Cor 1:23). He contends that a crucified Messiah must have been an “incomprehensible absurdity” (quoting Godet 1889:105) for Paul, where the cross would have been the “decisive refutation” of the claim that Jesus was the Messiah (cf. Mt 27:42; Lk 24:20-21; Jn 12:34). Fung maintains that Paul saw a fundamental incompatibility between life ἐν τῷ Ἰουδαϊσμῷ and faith in Christ, especially in terms of the threat that faith posed for the supremacy of the law (cf. Bruce [1977] 2000:70-72). The affirmation by Christ-believers of Christ as the crucified Messiah would have been blasphemous: “a crucified man could not conceivably be the elect one of God” (Bruce [1977] 2000:71).

Paul explains his advance ἐν τῷ Ἰουδαϊσμῷ on the basis of his exceeding<sup>255</sup> zeal<sup>256</sup> for the traditions of his ancestors (v. 14). Bruce (1982b:91) links Paul’s

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<sup>254</sup> Yet, Dunn (1993:56) sees “Judaism... as a description of the religion of the Jews” as emerging already in the Maccabean revolt (2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE).

<sup>255</sup> Dunn (1993:59) links Paul’s progress in the Judaeans way of life (προέκοπτον ἐν τῷ Ἰουδαϊσμῷ, v. 14) to “a sense of superiority”.

<sup>256</sup> Hays (2000:214) and Dunn (1993:61-62) connect Paul’s “zeal” (ζηλωτής, v. 14) to the willingness to employ violence against those against the law, similar to Elijah’s slaughter of Baal

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ancestral traditions to “the ancestral law” (τοῦ πατρῶου νόμου) of Acts 22:3, and to Philippians 3:5, where Paul describes himself as “a Hebrew born of Hebrews, as to the law a Pharisee... as to righteousness under the law blameless” (cf. Ac 23:6; 26:5). The “ancestral traditions” are thus closely linked to the Torah itself (Martyn 1997:155; Fung 1988:57; Betz 1979:68).

In the light of Paul’s law-free gospel (Hays 2000:186,210,300; Longenecker 1990:23-24,26; Bruce 1982b:88),<sup>257</sup> where the new identity in Christ is constituted by faith in Christ only and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit<sup>258</sup> over against an identity derived from the law (2:19; esp. 3:1-29, see 5.1.3), Paul’s Damascus experience can be understood as a *conversion*<sup>259</sup> rather than merely a call (Segal 2000b:184-186; 1990:285-300; George 1994:109,115; Longenecker 1990:26,28; Fung 1988:59,71; Lategan 1986:29-30; Bruce 1982b:88; [1977] 2000:74-76; Burton 1920:44,49; cf. Dunn 2006:71; 1993:53;<sup>260</sup> contra Eisenbaum 2009:132-149; Stendahl 1976:3-27). Although Paul did not convert to a religious system called “Christianity”, he did undergo a fundamental *change of identity* (Wright [2005] 2009:113-121; Hays 2000; cf. Sanders 2011:68;<sup>261</sup> Segal 2000b:185; Dunn

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prophets (Sir 48:2; Macc 2:58) and the Maccabean revolts (1 Macc 2:15), and thus connect “zeal” to the persecution of the early Judaeans believers in Christ (cf. Php 3:5).

<sup>257</sup> Longenecker (1990:26) discusses some of Paul’s opposition among Judaeans Christ-believers. This opposition to Paul’s law-free gospel was often bitter and intense. The *Ascension of James* (middle 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE) speaks of Paul’s law-free approach: “he [Paul]... began to write against circumcision, the sabbath, and the law” (cf. Epiphanius, *Panarion*). In the *Kerygmata Petrou* (late 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE), Paul is referred to as “the enemy man” who proclaimed “lawless and absurd doctrine”. Although we do not know of any such attacks against Paul in the 1<sup>st</sup> century, these kind of opposition “undoubtedly had roots in earlier times”, and it is possible that Paul’s opponents in Galatia insinuated something similar (:27; cf. fn. 77).

<sup>258</sup> Paul mentions the Holy Spirit in Gal 3:3 as constituting the beginning of belief in Christ (see 5.1.3.2).

<sup>259</sup> I could opt for a term such as “transformation” (which lies semantically close to “conversion”), but “conversion” is still the prevalent term within New Testament scholarship (see main text) despite its possible connotations about conversion to a religious system.

<sup>260</sup> While Dunn often refers to Paul’s “conversion” unqualified (as cited), he problematises the term in connection with Paul if conversion from one “religion” to another is thereby implied (see Dunn 1993:63), which comes close enough to my own position on the application of this particular term. But see also fn. 262.

<sup>261</sup> Although Sanders acknowledges that Paul has a “new identity”, he still understands Paul as being “Jewish”. Yet he states that Paul “was Jewish as well as a new person in Christ, but his congregations did not constitute ‘Judaism,’ which was a separate entity” (Sanders 2011:69). It might be asked however if this tension that Sanders holds onto does not become untenable in the

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1993:57?;<sup>262</sup> Fung 1988; Sanders [1983] 1989:178-179,207).<sup>263</sup> In 2:20, Paul states: “I no longer live, but Christ lives in me” (ISV), whereby he affirms his “death” to the old identity defined by the law (2:19; Hays 2000:244; cf. Wright [2005] 2009:117; Fung 1988:122). His statement: “the life I now live in the flesh”<sup>264</sup> I live by faith in<sup>265</sup> the Son of God” (2:20, NRSV) declares his new identity defined by faith in Christ (Hays 2000:244), which is no longer defined ethnically or by the possession of the law (Wright [2005] 2009:118). Since his encounter with the risen Jesus Christ, Paul’s identity is therefore not defined by ethnicity and the law any longer, but by faith and a personal relationship with Christ. This change of identity arguably constitutes the core of his gospel.<sup>266</sup> With Paul’s change of identity “his historical attachment to Israel is being relativised” (Lategan 1986:29, translated) and can hardly be understood as merely a movement *within* the Judaeans identity (contra Dunn 1993:57; Betz 1979:64). The new identity in Christ (identity mode C) thus stands in *discontinuity* with the identity constituted by the Judaeans way of life (identity mode A).

In verses 15 to 21, Paul elaborates on his calling (v. 15), the Son that was revealed to him, and his consequential proclamation of Christ among the Gentiles (v. 16). In verses 17 to 21 he outlines his travels and course of action, which was

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light of Paul’s desire to win Judaeans for example (1 Cor 9:20) or the fact that Paul’s converts are never presented as “Judaeans” or “Israel” as such (cf. Donfried 2011:14).

<sup>262</sup> Dunn (1993:57) also seems to work in this direction, albeit more hesitantly. He writes: “it was precisely the identity of the ‘Jew’ which was at issue... If Paul’s use of ‘Judaism’ here [1:13] indicates a certain distancing of himself from the characteristic self-understanding of most of his fellow Jews, he still regarded himself as a Jew.” While Dunn’s understanding of Paul is that of a critique of the Judaeans identity and its self-understanding, our ways part when he contends that “Christians [sic]” is another “Jewish movement” (:57).

<sup>263</sup> Sanders ([1983] 1989:207) states that “the church, in both his [sic] understanding and practice, became in effect a third entity” for Paul. In Sanders’ understanding, Paul denies the election of “Israel” (which he equates with “Jews”): entrance to the people of God is not by accepting the law, but through faith in Christ (:207-208).

<sup>264</sup> Σάρξ here refers to bodily life here on earth (BDAG §2b; cf. Abbott-Smith [1923] 1929:403; Hendriksen 1968, Galatians 2:11-21; NLT; GNB; NAT; NIV).

<sup>265</sup> Some render this as a subjective genitive: “the faithfulness of the Son” (e.g., Hays 2000:244; Longenecker 1990:93-94; ISV; cf. KJV). A subjective genitive is however not characteristic of Paul when πίστις is mentioned in connection with Christ (see fn. 152), and is thus not preferable here (Dunn 1993:146; Fung 1988:122; Lategan 1986:52; Betz 1979:125; ESV; GW; GNB; NRSV; REB; NIV; NAT; RSV; OAT; cf. NLT).

<sup>266</sup> This notion corresponds to “justification by faith”, a feature of the gospel highlighted by some commentators (e.g., George 1994:111; Fung 1988:54).

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removed from any instruction or revelation from any human being. When he was in Syria and Cilicia (v. 21), he was unknown to the churches of Judaea (v. 22). The churches of Judaea were probably believers who were forced to leave Jerusalem in the persecution that followed Stephen's death, together with others that formed through the outreach of Jerusalem disciples before that. These churches might show some similarity to those in 1 Thessalonians 2:14, where the believers suffered persecution at the hands of their fellow "countrymen" (Bruce 1982b:103; cf. Longenecker 1990:41), but this notion remains only a possibility due to the uncertainty surrounding the identity of these countrymen (see 6.1.8). Bruce (1982b:104) argues that Paul was "unknown personally" (so BDAG, πρόσωπον §1b regarding ἀγνωσόμενος τῷ προσώπῳ, v. 22, lit. "unknown by face"),<sup>267</sup> for he might have had underlings who handled the day-to-day activities of the churches in Judaea so that he had no direct dealings "with the rank and file." All Judaeans Christ-believers did however know him as "the persecutor" (v. 23, Dunn 1993:83) or rather, "the one who formerly persecuted us" (Martyn 1997:177). This designation (or similar) for Paul probably became established among all Judaeans Christ-believers. This possible title for Paul would by implication affirm Paul's change of core-identity.

Paul describes belief in Christ as "the faith" (τὴν πίστιν, v. 24; cf. 3:23,25), which signifies its "objective content" (George 1994:130; cf. Hays 2000:217; Dunn 1993:84). This "substantive content" is summarised in kerygmatic formulas such as 1:3-4 and 1 Corinthians 15:3-5 (Hays 2000:217). These formulas of faith arguably point in the direction of a new faith-identity that was in the process of becoming entrenched, separate from Judaeans beliefs and customs.<sup>268</sup> While Hays (2000:217) and Longenecker (1990:42) connect "the faith" here to the gospel, Lightfoot (1914:86; adopted by Bruce 1982b:105) is probably correct that its meaning "seems to hover between the Gospel and the Church."

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<sup>267</sup> Fung (1988:82) suggests that Paul was "unknown in his new identity as a Christian [sic]" (v. 22).

<sup>268</sup> Dunn (1993:84) seems somewhat surprised with this formula ("the faith") "at such an early stage" of what he calls "the Christian [sic] movement". Such a sense, he argues, has no parallel either in Paul's background or in the Greek usage of the time.

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### 6.1.6 Galatians 2:11-16

The Antioch incident has been a much debated topic in recent scholarship, especially in terms of the TAP and the NPP. The difference in opinion is due to Paul's concise account in this passage and the lack of crucial information as to what the exact circumstances were. Due to space limitations, the whole of the debate will not be repeated here. Outlining some of the main positions will have to suffice, with the focus being on Paul's theological thought behind his narration of the incident.<sup>269</sup>

Most commentators hold that even though Peter would normally eat with Gentile Christians and declared both Judaeans and Gentile believers as free from the law, certain people who came from James wanted the Judaeans to observe the obligations akin to a Judaeans way of life, especially food laws. This would imply that Gentile believers who wanted to enjoy fellowship with Judaeans had to adhere to these laws as well. This made Peter to draw back from the table fellowship, separating himself from Gentile Christ-believers (Hays 2000:232-234; Fung 1988:106-111; George 1994:163-178; Lategan 1986:43-44; Betz 1979:104-107; cf. Longenecker 1990:71-78):

(1) for fear of conservative Judaeans Christ-believers who wanted to retain dietary laws (Lategan 1986:43; cf. Hays 2000:234; Martyn 1997:234; Fung 1988:108-109;<sup>270</sup> Betz 1979:109; Burton 1920:107), or

(2) for fear of Judaeans non-believers (Longenecker 1990:73; cf. Bruce 1982b:131).<sup>271</sup>

Dunn (1993:115-141) however does not draw such defined distinctions between the Christ-believing and non-believing Judaeans. He understands the Antioch

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<sup>269</sup> Lategan (1986:44) states that Paul's account of the Antioch incident is not "for the sake of telling the story, but to illustrate the theological principle that he holds" (translated).

<sup>270</sup> Fung (1988:109) argues that this would ultimately lead to the requirement for Gentiles to circumcise.

<sup>271</sup> Longenecker (1990:73) substantiates his reading from 2:7-9, where ἡ περιτομή refers simply to Judaeans, and not to believers in Christ. This would imply that believers in Antioch were pressured by Judaeans nationalism and its antagonism against Judaeans who had Gentile sympathisers. Bruce (1982b:131) hesitantly identifies them to be "Jewish militants".

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incident more in terms of “intra-Jewish polemic” (:120), where faith in Jesus Christ would be an “intra-Jewish possibility” (:138). But the deeper issue has to do with “the truth of the gospel” (v. 14) and the status and identity of a believer in Christ (v. 16). Martyn (1997:233) points out that the designations “the uncircumcision”, “the Gentiles” and “the circumcision” are all linked to ethnicity: “once a person enters the church, ethnic origin becomes for Paul and his fellow workers a matter of no importance” (:233; cf. 3:28). Martyn is thus probably correct that there was “a party...<sup>272</sup> whose members derive their basic identity from their ethnic... heritage and who are sure that all members of the church have to be taken into this ethnic heritage, at least to some degree” (:234). Since the ethnic heritage of the Judaeans believers were closely linked with the Torah, it would be safe to say that Torah observance was the ultimate “dividing wall” between the Judaeans and Gentile believers in Christ (Hays 2000:234; cf. Martyn 1997:235; Bruce 1982b:137).

To “live like a Judaeans” (ἵουδαϊκῶς ζῆν and ἵουδαίζω, v. 14; BDAG, ἵουδαίζω and ἵουδαϊκῶς; “...a Jew” or “...Jews”: Betz 1991:192; Fung 1988:111; Zerwick & Grosvenor 1988:567; Lategan 1986:46; Mayer 1976:310; ISV; NRSV; RSV; KJV)<sup>273</sup> is thus a matter of law observance, and distinguishes their way of life from that of a Gentile (Martyn 1997:235). To live like a Judaeans ran contrary to the gospel itself, for it deprived Gentile believers of fellowship with Judaeans believers on equal terms and marred the grace that has been effected through Christ (Hays 2000:231,234-235). Any distinction between Judaeans and Gentile believers would go against the grain of Paul’s understanding of the gospel (esp. 3:28; see 5.1.3.3; cf. Bruce 1982b:137), which points to the new creation in Christ (esp. 6:15). Paul thus “never wavered in his conviction that God was making a new

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<sup>272</sup> Martyn (1997:234) identifies the party as a party within the Jerusalem church, but as he indicates in a footnote, it might have been in the Antioch congregation. This is not of crucial importance though.

<sup>273</sup> Although there is overlap in meaning between these expressions, Longenecker (1990:78) recognises in ἵουδαίζω a slight leaning toward the notion “to become a Jew” rather than just “to live like a Jew”. Similarly, H. D. Betz (1979:112) argues that the term ἵουδαίζω would include more than submitting to Judaeans dietary laws for Paul: “it describes forcing one to become a Jewish convert obliged to keep the whole Torah (cf. 5:3)” (cf. George 1994:175).

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creation by drawing into one church both Jews and Gentiles” (Martyn 1997:236; cf. George 1994:177; 2:7-10; Rom 15:25-31).

In verse 15, Paul expresses a sharp distinction between the Judaeans and Gentile identities (Hays 2000:236; cf. Fung 1988:113). The self-definition of the Judaeans Christ-believers (Betz 1979:115; adopted by Longenecker 1990:83; cf. Dunn 1993:132) was instrumental to the circumstances leading up to the Antioch incident. Paul’s language in verse 15 and his inclusion of himself as a Judaeans (ἡμεῖς) serves to place himself in the place of a typical Judaeans who perceived the rest of the world as outside the realm of God’s covenant righteousness (Dunn 1993:133). Paul’s inclusion of himself is thus part of his rhetorical strategy (cf. Longenecker 1990:83; Betz 1979:115), rather than a description of his own identity. Longenecker (1990:83) suggests that “sinners<sup>274</sup> of the Gentiles” (ἐξ ἔθνῶν ἁμαρτωλοί) is a colloquialism used by Judaeans in reference to Gentiles and probably carries a note of irony in this context (cf. Hays 2000:236). The term φύσει (v. 15) can be connected to the status of Judaeans by birth (Longenecker 1990:83; Bruce 1982b:137; Betz 1979:115), which “is different now from what it was when they lived under the law” and “constituted a barrier between them and the Gentiles” (Bruce 1982b:137). In “the way of faith in Christ, the barrier is down and there is no distinction between Jew and Gentile either in respect of sin (Rom. 3:22) or in respect of access to God’s justifying grace (Rom. 10:12)” (:137).

The “truth of the gospel” (v. 14) is stated in verse 16. No person will be justified (δικαιώω) or rectified (Martyn 1997:247,249; adopted by Hays 2000:237) by observing the law (ἐξ ἔργων νόμου, Martyn 1997:247; Fung 1988:113), but by Christ only (Longenecker 1990:84; Martyn 1997:247)<sup>275</sup> or by faith in Christ only (George 1994: 182,189; Fung 1988:113-115; Lategan 1986:43,48; Sanders [1983] 1989:172; Hendriksen 1968b, Galatians 2:11-21; Burton 1920:120-121; cf.

<sup>274</sup> “Sinners” would also be a synonym for Gentiles (e.g., Isa 14:5; Macc 2:44; Mt 26:45; Lk 6:32-33; Longenecker 1990:83; cf. George 1994:183; Betz 1979:115).

<sup>275</sup> While theologically agreeing with the notions put forth by Longenecker and Martyn on this point, I would be inclined to understand the πίστειως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ as an objective genitive (“faith in Christ”) rather than a subjective genitive (“the faith[fullness] of Christ”). While faith in Christ would imply trusting in the complete work of Christ (cf. Lategan 1986:48), human faith would stand in direct contrast with “works of the law” as human action, which is a fundamental Pauline contrast (see fn. 152).

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Bruce 1982b:139-140). The verb δικαιώω points both to the right relational status of the believer (forensic),<sup>276</sup> and an ethical renewal (Longenecker 1990:84-85; Bruce 1982b:138; cf. Hays 2000:237-239). If the verb is read in conjunction with the noun δικαιοσύνη and the adjective δίκαιος in Paul, which also have behavioural nuances, such a reading shows how Paul merges forensic and ethical categories (Longenecker 1990:85). Longenecker (1990:85) rightly points out that the

watershed in all discussions about Paul and the law has to do with Paul's view of the Mosaic law as a religious system. And the principal question here is: Is Paul's polemic directed against the law itself or against a particular attitude toward the law that sees the law as a means of winning favor with God (i.e., "legalism")?

In answer, Longenecker writes that Paul's polemic "is not only against legalism... but against even the Mosaic religious system, for he saw all of that as preparatory for and superseded by the relationship of being 'in Christ'" (:85-86). As Longenecker (1990:86; cf. Hagner 2012:366-374) correctly concludes, the "works of the law" thus points *both* to the badges of covenantal nomism (NPP, Dunn 1993:136-137; Hays 2000:238-239) *and* to the "whole legalistic complex of ideas having to do with winning God's favor by a merit-amassing observance of Torah" (TAP, cf. George 1994:184,188; Fung 1988:114; Lategan 1986:47-48; Betz 1979:117).<sup>277</sup>

The new identity in Christ through faith only (identity mode C) is portrayed as being in *discontinuity* with an ethnic identity derived from adherence to the law (identity mode A; cf. esp. Martyn 1997:229,233,251;<sup>278</sup> cf. Fung 1988:116; Lategan 1986:47-49), which has to be understood as inadequate means of justification (Fung 1988:114; cf. George 1994:184-185). Peter's hypocrisy (ὑπόκρισις, v. 13) would perpetuate the distinction between Judaeans and Gentile

<sup>276</sup> This aspect additionally has an eschatological dimension and correlates to salvation (George 1994:184-187).

<sup>277</sup> Discussed in more depth in 4.5.1 (Rom 2:17-19), esp. fn. 106 and 5.1.2 (Rom 4:1-26), esp. fn. 131.

<sup>278</sup> Martyn (1997:251) states: "as regards salvation, observance of the Law and the faith of Christ constitute a genuine antinomy."

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which Paul argued against (cf. Martyn 1997:248-249) and reduce the Gentile believers into “second-class” (George 1994:177) believers. For Paul, the principle of justification by faith in Christ applies to all human beings (v. 16, BDAG, σάρξ §3a) and is thus a universal principle (George 1994:185; Fung 1988:117-118) without differentiation in terms of ethnicity or heritage (Martyn 1997:249; Lategan 1986: 48-49; Bruce 1982b:135,138).<sup>279</sup> In this passage, the change of identity in Christ of both Judaeans and Gentiles alike apart from the law is further accentuated by Paul’s death to the law and his old identity, and by Christ that now lives in him (vv. 19-20, see 6.1.5).<sup>280</sup>

### 6.1.7 Philippians 3:1-9

In this passage, Paul contrasts his former life as a Judaeans with his present righteousness based on faith (esp. vv. 4a-9; Fee 1995:285). Verses 2 to 21 have a markedly different tone than the rest of the letter. While Paul’s friends are commended in 2:19-30, dangerous “dogs” are condemned in 3:2. Apart from this contrast, 3:2-21 seems to break the rhythm between the appeal to “finally rejoice” in 3:1 and the tender words of 4:1-3 that would smoothly follow on 3:1 (cf. Hansen 2009:212). It has for these reasons been suggested that 3:2-21 is an interpolation (e.g., Beare 1959:101) or that Paul originally ended the letter at 3:1 and came back later to add a doctrinal discussion to it (Silva 1988:167). But Reed (1996) has shown that the three elements: (1) γράφειν (to write), (2) οὐκ (negative particle) and (3) ὀκνηρόν (expressing hesitation) in verse 1, can be labelled as an “epistolary hesitation formula” and constitute a transition from one subject to the next (cf. Hansen 2009:213).

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<sup>279</sup> This universality is indicated in v. 16 by the first person plurals (ἐπιστεύσαμεν, δικαιωθῶμεν, and esp. καὶ ἡμεῖς – the καὶ making the ἡμεῖς emphatic), which implies the inclusion of Judaeans believers (Longenecker 1990:88; cf. Lategan 1986:48). The principle of justification by faith is in fact part of the self-definition of a Judaeans Christ-believing theology (Betz 1979:115), and thus simultaneously constitutes a profound element of *continuity* with the Judaeans heritage, especially in terms of Abraham’s faith (cf. Rom 4, see 5.1.2).

<sup>280</sup> This understanding is contrary to an approach where Gal 2:15-16 is to be understood as merely “intra-Jewish religious discourse” (Ruzer 2011:84). If the “works of the law” denotes both defining identity on the basis of the law (NPP) and obedience to the law (TAP), the notion to keep righteousness (δικαιῶ, v. 16) based on faith in Christ [alone] (διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, v. 16) within a Judaeans identity (let alone a “Jewish” identity), becomes untenable.

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The whole of 3:2-21 is strongly Christ-centred (Hansen 2009:211; cf. Fee 1995:285; see vv. 3,7,8-10,12,14,18,20,21), which probably signifies the strongest point of continuity with the preceding part of the letter.<sup>281</sup> The repeated theme of “rejoicing” (χαίρω, 1:18; 2:17,18,28; 3:1; 4:4,10)<sup>282</sup> is essentially “in the Lord” (3:1; 4:4) as the object and source of joy (Hansen 2009:214), which complements the high Christology. Although the tone of 3:2-4 is thus negative toward Paul’s opponents, his focus on intimate, personal knowledge<sup>283</sup> of Christ and participation in His resurrection and suffering (3:7-10; cf. 1:29-30; 2:17) qualifies the rejoicing as a deep, Christ-centred rejoicing which is not directed toward oneself (cf. 2:21; Fee 1995:285; O’Brien 1991:349-350,362). As applied often by Paul (e.g., Rom 4:24; 5:11,21; 10:13; 1 Cor 1:3), Jesus as “Lord” (Php 3:1,8,20) corresponds with the Septuagint’s translation of Yahweh (MT, see 6.1.2.2). The personal “my Lord” (v. 8) signifies Paul’s existential identification with Christ who humbled Himself and suffered (2:6-11; cf. Hansen 2009:235; Bockmuehl 1997:206). The theme of having the same mind (φρονέω) in verse 15 fits well with the same theme earlier (2:2,5) and later (4:2) in the letter. These notions in turn underscore the intricate relationship of 3:2-21 with the rest of the letter.

Paul’s opponents whom he addresses in verses 2 to 3 are most likely Judaeans believers in Christ<sup>284</sup> who accentuated circumcision and Judaeans credentials (Hansen 2009:217; cf. Bockmuehl 1997:183; Fee 1995:294; O’Brien 1991:355-356; Silva 1988:169) and might have wanted to make full Judaeans proselytes of the Gentile Christians (Hooker 2000:525; Bockmuehl 1997:184). Their attitude would thus be that of superiority (Bockmuehl 1997:187,194-195; O’Brien 1991:352,356). The very derogatory reference to them as “dogs” (κύνας, v. 2) is ironic in that the term is normally applied to impure Gentiles (Hooker 2000:524; Fee 1995:295; O’Brien 1991:354-355; Hawthorne 1983:125; Vincent 1906:92; cf.

<sup>281</sup> This high Christology is esp. evident in 2:5-11, where both the humble, serving character of Christ and His Lordship are accentuated.

<sup>282</sup> This repeated theme goes against Beare’s (1959:100) notion to translate v. 1 as “Finally, my brethren, I bid you farewell in the Lord” (Hansen 2009:214).

<sup>283</sup> Paul’s use of γνώσις probably follows the Old Testament understanding of the knowledge of God (e.g., Jer 9:23,24; 31:34; Hos 4:1; 6:6) which is based on His self-revelation, and signifies a personal relationship (Hooker 2000:527; O’Brien 1991:388; Hawthorne 1983:137-138; cf. Hansen 2009:235; Bockmuehl 1997:205).

<sup>284</sup> Rather than non-believing Judaeans (contra Hawthorne 1983:125).

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Mt 7:6).<sup>285</sup> Paul reverses the term and applies it to these Judaeans who seem to threaten his gospel. The same irony is evident in the term κατατομή (v. 2), denoting “the mutilation” or “cutting in pieces” (BDAG, κατατομή), which is a play on περιτομή (v. 3, Zerwick & Grosvenor 1988:598). Paul thus applies a term which is normally used in a pagan context (κατατομή) to describe those who focus on circumcision, as if he pictures their focus on circumcision as being equal to the pagan rite of cutting one’s own flesh (Hansen 2009:220; Reumann 2008:462; Fee 1995:296; O’Brien 1991:357-358; Silva 1988:169-170; cf. Hooker 2000:524; Bockmuehl 1997:189; Hawthorne 1983:126; Gal 5:12). These ironical designations for Paul’s opponents might suggest that the expression in the middle, κακοὺς ἐργάτας (v. 2), is derived from the Septuagint expression οἱ ἐργαζόμενοι τὴν ἀνομίαν (“those who work iniquity”, e.g., Ps 5:6; 6:9; 58:3), and that Paul changed the “iniquity” into “evil” in order for the assonance to work (Fee 1995:296). It seems then that Paul turns his opponents’ own derogatory or outsider terms against them and thereby changes them into outsiders. This is how serious Paul sees their agenda.

At this point it has to be acknowledged that part of Paul’s rhetoric strategy was probably influenced by the politics of identity of the first century where the formation of identity was influenced by the “other”. The politics of “othering” was indebted to the classic anti-democratic discourses of Plato and Aristotle (Schüssler Fiorenza 2000:45). In this process of “othering”, the new identity of Christ-believers was partly influenced by defining their boundaries in reference to the Judaeans way of life. This may have led to the release of negative energy in relation to the “other” which in turn encouraged a measure of stereotyping and even vilification or aggression (Punt 2007:199-225; Schüssler Fiorenza 2000:45,50).<sup>286</sup> The extent to which the dynamics of “othering” can be applied to Paul’s rhetoric however remains a matter of debate (cf. Punt 2007:219-220).

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<sup>285</sup> It is interesting to note that Rabbi Aqiba (although from later Rabbinic Judaism) named his two dogs Rufus and Rufina to indicate the manner of life of the Gentiles (*Midrash Tanhuma* 107b; cited in the Targum, Str-B 1:725; Fee 1995:295). Reumann (2008:461) argues that the term (κύνας) can also refer to “lapsed Jews” (referring to Mt 15:26-27).

<sup>286</sup> This dynamics of “othering” in Paul may be identified in reviewing the frequency of terms such as ἔξω (“outside”: 1 Cor 5:12,13; 1 Th 4:12; cf. Col 4:5) and ἕτερος (“other”). The latter term

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Paul's ironical rhetoric is further enhanced by designating believers in Christ (ἡμεῖς, v. 3) as the [true] περιτομή (v. 3, Fee 1995:298; O'Brien 1991:358; Silva 1988:170; Lightfoot 1903:145),<sup>287</sup> a term normally denoting Judaeans (BDAG, περιτομή §2a). But Paul redefines the term (περιτομή): they are those who serve<sup>288</sup> in the Spirit of God and boast in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh (v. 3; cf. Gal 3:1-5; Col 2:11). For Paul, physical circumcision as such is by implication not a sign of covenant membership<sup>289</sup> any more (cf. O'Brien 1991:358-359; Silva 1988:171; Hawthorne 1983:127). The phrase ἐν σαρκὶ πεποιθότες occurs once in verse 3 and twice in verse 4, and stands antinomical to "we... who serve in the Spirit of God and boast in Christ Jesus" (see 6.1.7.3). The verb πείθω is typically Pauline (cf. Rom 2:8,19; 8:38; 14:14; 15:14; 2 Cor 1:9; 2:3; 5:11; 10:7; etc.) and means to "trust in" or to "depend on" (BDAG §2a; Zerwick & Grosvenor 1988:599). The object of this verb is σάρξ, which denotes "physical advantages" or "earthly things" (BDAG §5). This "trust in physical advantages" both denotes the attitude of Paul's adversaries and his own attitude within his former life as unbelieving Judaeans. The sense in which σάρξ is used is thus pejorative and indicative of the unregenerate person (Reumann 2008:465; cf. O'Brien 1991:363). Boyarin (1994:81) interprets trust in σάρξ here in connection with "the fleshly, literal interpretation of the Torah" which "only becomes

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describes different categories (Rom 7:3,4; 1 Cor 3:4; 12:9,10; 14:7; 15:40), an "other commandment" (Rom 13:9), "other law" (Rom 7:23), "other spirit/gospel" (2 Cor 11:4; Gal 1:6), or "other apostle" (Gal 1:19). The term is also applied in reference to any other entity (Rom 8:39) or other people. It could denote another person on the inside (Rom 2:1,22; 1 Cor 4:6; 6:1; 10:24,29; Gal 6:4) but also someone in general (Rom 13:8; 1 Cor 14:21; 2 Cor 8:8; Punt 2007:213).

<sup>287</sup> Paul's application of περιτομή here can be compared to Rom 2:25-29. But as discussed in 4.5.1, the Judaeans who ought to be circumcised in heart in Rom 2:25-29 does not designate an actual believer in Christ, but rather pictures the ideal Judaeans who can fulfil the law (which is impossible) and arguably serves as appeal to accept Christ who fits this ideal picture and is the solution to the dilemma. Reumann (2008:474-475) argues for viewing περιτομή here as "an 'Israel term' for the church", but the polemical context rather suggests a unique application which cannot be standardised. While the church fulfilled much of the intent of the Old Testament promise to Israel (esp. Gal 3 and the seed of Abraham, see 5.1.3.3), that the church is in fact the "Israel of God" (Gal 6:16) is not that evident (see 8.2.3).

<sup>288</sup> Paul probably follows the Septuagint's use of λατρεύω, which denotes the Levitical service. In Paul's use here, it would then stand in ironical contrast to v. 2. Those who "served" were forbidden to κατατομή. Additionally, the serving in the Spirit stands in contrast to the "workers of iniquity" who engaged in such illegitimate "service" (Fee 1995:300).

<sup>289</sup> In the traditional Judaeans understanding, physical circumcision would signify covenant membership (Bockmuehl 1997:189; Gen 17:10-24; cf. Hawthorne 1983:125).

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illegitimate when its true meaning is revealed through and in Christ Jesus.” Paul then lists 7 concrete examples (vv. 5-6) of what would typically constitute the grounds for trusting in the flesh. The first 4 of these seven examples are privileges inherited by birth (see 1-4 in 6.1.7.1 below), and the last 3 are his own accomplishments in his former life (see 5-7 in 6.1.7.2 below; cf. O’Brien 1991:364,368; Silva 1988:174):

### 6.1.7.1 *Four privileges inherited by birth (v. 5)*

(1) Paul was circumcised on the eighth day. The construction περιτομῆ ὀκταήμερος is probably a dative of respect or reference (BDF §197) which may indicate that Paul’s circumcision was superior to the circumcision of a Gentile proselyte (Hansen 2009:223).

(2) Paul is ἐκ γένους Ἰσραήλ: from the nation (BDAG, γένος §3) or the race (Hansen 2009:223; Reumann 2008:482; Hooker 2000:526; O’Brien 1991:370; Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:112; Zerwick & Grosvenor 1988:598; Vincent 1906:96) of Israel. This denotes ethnic Israel (Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:112). Paul therefore claims genealogical purity (Hansen 2009:223). His use of Ἰσραήλ here can be compared to Romans 9:6 (“all those from Israel, these are not Israel”, see 4.3.2.2), denoting the (first) broader category: “those from Israel” (Rom 9:6), which is similar to “Israel according to the flesh” (1 Cor 10:18, see 4.2.1; cf. Rom 9:3).

(3) Paul is φυλῆς Βενιαμίν: from the tribe of Benjamin. This denotes Paul’s specific bloodline (BDAG, φυλή §1; cf. Hansen 2009:224; contra Reumann 2008:483). Apart from the fact that Benjamin as a child of Jacob’s cherished Rachel was loved, Benjamin was the only child born in the promised land (Gen 35:16-18). Additionally, the first king of Israel came from the tribe of Benjamin (1 Sam 9:1-2; Hansen 2009:224; Bockmuehl 1997:196; O’Brien 1991:370; Hawthorne 1983:132).

(4) Paul is a Ἑβραῖος ἐξ Ἑβραίων: a Hebrew of Hebrews (cf. 2 Cor 11:22, see 4.2.2). While this designation arguably implies that the Aramaic language was Paul’s mother tongue (Hansen 2009:224; Reumann 2008:483; O’Brien 1991:371; Vincent 1906:97; cf. Hawthorne 1983:133), this is not beyond dispute (see fn. 70).

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But the term did indicate that Paul was brought up in the Hebrew culture (Hansen 2009:225; cf. Bockmuehl 1997:196; O'Brien 1991:372; Hawthorne 1983:133; Lightfoot 1903:147). The term Ἑβραῖος was a honorary title from the distant past which can be contrasted to the more general term Ἰουδαῖος (Kuhn 1965:367-368).

### 6.1.7.2 Three accomplishments in Paul's former life (vv. 5-6)

(5) Paul was according to the law a Pharisee. Josephus writes that they were “esteemed most skilful in the exact explication of their laws” (*War of the Jews II* 8:14). They assigned special significance to purity laws, stressing the distinction between clean and unclean, and therefore distanced themselves from “unclean” persons (Bockmuehl 1997:197; cf. O'Brien 1991:373).<sup>290</sup> They were considered as great moral leaders who sought to reform Judaeans society with their purity rules and sabbath observance. Much of their legal requirements were based on their “oral law” (Hansen 2009:225-226; cf. 5.2.1).

(6) Concerning zeal, Paul was a persecutor of the church (cf. Gal 1:13, see 6.1.5). This zeal is similar to the zeal for the law in the Maccabean revolt (1 Macc 2:26-27,50). Paul's referral to zeal has to do with an “intense dedication to keeping the law” (Hansen 2009:226; cf. BDAG, ζῆλος §1; Hawthorne 1983:134). The term is “closely linked with a fervent commitment to defending the purity of Israel's religious practice and of her communal institutions, even at the cost of life itself” (Bockmuehl 1997:199). Paul's persecution of the church thus can be understood as defending the identity of God's people as faithfully keeping the law over against what was preached by the church (Hansen 2009:227). According to Paul's definition of the church as the “[true] circumcision” (v. 3), Paul by implication persecuted the true people of God (Hansen 2009:228).

(7) Paul claims to have been blameless concerning the righteousness in the law. At first glance, this claim seems to contradict Paul's other statements that all who rely on the works of the law are under a curse (Gal 3:10,13, see 5.1.3.3), which made it impossible to adhere to the standard the law has set (Rom 3:20; 7:6; 8:3, see 6.1.1.1; Gal 3:21, see 5.1.3.3). But Paul's reference to being blameless in

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<sup>290</sup> This is probably the reason why they were known as “the separated ones” (BDAG, Φαρισαῖος).

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terms of the righteousness in the law has to be understood in its specific polemical context, which functions as a pre-conversion assessment (Westerholm 1988:161; adopted by Hansen 2009:229; contra Bockmuehl 1997:202)<sup>291</sup> of Paul's life. Paul presents this specific accomplishment in terms of the *pharisaic interpretation* of the law (Fee 1995:309; O'Brien 1991:374,380; Silva 1988:174,176). He therefore did not claim to be sinless (O'Brien 1991:380; Silva 1988:175). Paul's claim has to do with observable and verifiable aspects of his portrait (Hansen 2009:229), and can mainly be connected to sabbath observance, food laws and ritual cleanliness (Fee 1995:309; cf. Hawthorne 1983:123). The whole of this claim is being put into perspective in Paul's assessment of the righteousness from the law being ineffective in terms of his righteous status before God (v. 9, see below) and his rejecting of all 4 privileges and 3 accomplishments as σκύβαλον (v. 8).

### 6.1.7.3 *The identity in Christ juxtaposed to the identity trusting in the flesh*

The four privileges and three accomplishments of Paul (above) can all be understood as defining Paul's earlier identity ἐν σαρκί (vv. 3-4). The privileges inherited by birth (1-4 above) can all be connected to Paul's Judaeans descent and pedigree (Hansen 2009:222; cf. Hawthorne 1983:130) in which Paul could indeed claim superiority (v. 4, cf. Hansen 2009:225). But trust in these Judaeans "identity markers" (Reumann 2008:474; Fee 1995:294) would imply "trust in the flesh" that is juxtaposed to the identity in Christ (cf. Hansen 2009:220), constituted by righteousness based on faith (v. 9). The three accomplishments (5-7 above) are in some way connected to the law, or more specifically, righteousness based on the law (v. 9, cf. Fee 1995:296), which also constitutes an aspect of "trust in the flesh" (cf. Hooker 2000:525). The law could however not bring true righteousness

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<sup>291</sup> Bockmuehl (1997:202) also seems to qualify the possibility of keeping the law in terms of Pharisaic interpretation: "it was perfectly possible to lead a life that was righteous and did not contravene this system – especially with the benefit of Pharisaic legal interpretation." Paul's focus on the human depravity and his or her inability to fulfil the law and be righteous on the basis of law (Rom 3:20; 7:6; 8:3; Gal 3:21) however constitutes a deeper understanding of the law than a "Pharisaic legal interpretation". Bockmuehl's (1997:202) mention of the possibility to keep the 613 commandments that would have been part of the Pharisaic system is strictly speaking anachronistic in terms of the origin of these 613 commandments (being part of Rabbinic Judaism, see 5.2.1), even though there might have been signs in Pharisaic groups that the system was underway.

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(Hooker 2000:528; cf. Rom 3:21-31). “Trust in the flesh” thus ranges from a focus on descent (1-4 above) to human accomplishments based on law (5-7 above). In summary, trust in the flesh denotes “what is physical, external, visible, and temporal, in contrast to the spiritual, internal, invisible, and eternal” (Hooker 2000:526; cf. BDAG, σάρξ §5; Silva 1988:171).

Paul’s use of the verb λατρεύω (v. 3) has to be connected to righteousness (vv. 6,9; Fee 1995:300). “Service” in the Spirit (v. 3) stands antithetical to righteousness based on Torah observance (v. 9). The deepest contrast in 3:1-9 is thus between σάρξ (vv. 3-4) and πνεῦμα (v. 3), which

stand juxtaposed as *eschatological realities* that describe existence in the overlap of the ages. One lives either ‘according to the Spirit’ or ‘according to the flesh.’ These are mutually incompatible kinds of existence; to be in the one and then to revert to the former is spiritual suicide from Paul’s point of view (Fee 1995:302, emphasis added).

Paul defines the righteousness based on the law as his “own” (ἐμός) righteousness (v. 9) and opposes it to “the righteousness of God [based] on faith”, which implies a contrast between two sources of righteousness (Moo 1996:635; O’Brien 1991:396-397; Bruce [1985] 2000:199; Käsemann 1980:281; cf. Hansen 2009:240; Hawthorne 1983:141-142; Rom 10:3, see 6.1.2.2). The connotation of accomplishment or merit is hard to deny in this context (TAP; Hansen 2009:239; Westerholm 2004:312; Gathercole 2002:181-182; Fee 1995:323; O’Brien 1991:394-396; Silva 1988:187; Hawthorne 1983:125,127,141; cf. fn. 106), but not to the exclusion of pride or trust in physical identity markers (NPP; Bockmuehl 1997:188; cf. Dunn 1988b:588). Both these aspects are present here.

The righteousness of God based on faith (τὴν ἐκ θεοῦ δικαιοσύνην ἐπὶ τῇ πίστει, v. 9) comes through faith in Christ (διὰ πίστεως Χριστοῦ, v. 9)<sup>292</sup> and is received

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<sup>292</sup> As elsewhere (e.g., Gal 2:16; 3:22), πίστεως Χριστοῦ could be rendered as a subjective genitive (e.g., Hooker 2000:528; Bockmuehl 1997:210-211; O’Brien 1991:398-399), indicating Christ’s faith[fulness] (see fn. 152). But it is more likely an objective genitive ([human] faith in Christ), for (a) there is no analogy for “based on faith” to refer to Christ’s activity other than human faith, (b) the contrast between “my own righteousness” with “through faith” seems to fit an objective genitive more naturally (rather than if it would refer to Christ’s faith), and (c) faith in

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by dependence on Christ (Hansen 2009:242; cf. Silva 1988:180). This righteousness reflects one's right relationship with God (Hansen 2009:240; Fee 1995:324; Hawthorne 1983:142). This notion is especially accentuated in verses 7 to 8 by Paul's portrayal of intimate, personal knowledge of Christ (cf. O'Brien 1991:386; Silva 1988:189) as only gain, in contrast to all external, ethnic privileges and human accomplishments in terms of the law, which he all considers as loss and even as refuse (BDAG, σκύβαλον).<sup>293</sup>

The identity in Christ defined by serving in the Spirit, which signifies identity mode C, stands in stark *discontinuity* with the identity outside of faith in Christ, which in Paul's case represents identity mode A. Identity mode A is here described as placing trust in the flesh, and consists of confidence in external, ethnical identity markers (e.g., circumcision, tribe, and lineage) and in observable adherence to the law. The contrast between these modes of identity (A and C) constitutes a complete transformation (Hansen 2009:231) or conversion experience (O'Brien 1991:383-384; Silva 1988:179,181; Hawthorne 1983:136) in Paul's life. The transformation implies the taking on of a whole *new* identity (Hansen 2009:220) as part of a "new order" or "new age of salvation" (O'Brien 1991:361; Silva 1988:171; cf. 2 Cor 5:17, see 6.2.1) where "citizenship" (πολίτευμα, v. 20) is not defined in earthly terms (cf. ἐπίγεια φρονοῦντες, v. 19), but is in heaven (v. 20).

### 6.1.8 1 Thessalonians 2:13-16

This passage is arguably one of the most controversial passages in the Pauline corpus, and has often been left out of church liturgy because of fear for its possible "anti-Jewish" or "antisemitic" implications (cf. Fee 2009:103). This is

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connection with suffering is human faith in 1:29, which makes it likely that human faith is intended here in 3:9 too where it stands in close proximity to suffering (vv. 10-11; Fee 1995:325-326). Silva (1988:187) notes that Paul never speaks unambiguously of Jesus as faithful. Opting for the objective genitive takes nothing away from the unmerited character of God's righteousness, for faith as human response is "the act of counting as loss all those things that may be conceived as grounds for self-confidence before God" (:188).

<sup>293</sup> Σκύβαλον could mean "dung" or "excrement" (in BDAG; e.g., O'Brien 1991:390), but in 1 Cor 4:13, similar language is used to refer to "off-scouring and refuse" (Fee 1995:319), that makes the translation "refuse" or "garbage" preferable.

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partly the reason why some scholars view this passage as unacceptable, based on the understanding that Paul held an “antisemitic” position (e.g., Best 1972:122), or as un-Pauline and thus as an interpolation (e.g., Schmidt 1983; Pearson 1971). It is noteworthy that there is no manuscript support for the theory that this is an interpolation (Smith 2000:703; cf. Malherbe 2000:174). Arguments against authenticity on the basis of structural difficulties are not insurmountable either.<sup>294</sup>

Verse 13 starts with the second thanksgiving report after 1:2-3. Paul thanks God for the Thessalonians’ original reception of the gospel as the word of God. Paul wanted to emphasise the divine origin of the message (Green 2002:140; Martin 1995b:88), even in the midst of suffering and persecution (v. 14). It was the word of God that transformed their lives (Green 2002:141). In terms of the flow of the letter, Paul’s focus has changed from their ongoing faithfulness to their conversion itself (Fee 2009:86; Green 2002:140,146; cf. Malherbe 2000:167). As Paul explained earlier (1:5), “it is the power of God at work in the believers that validates the gospel message and distinguishes the people of God” (Martin 1995b:88). At the deepest level, Paul’s polemic in this passage is against those who oppose this gospel (van Houwelingen [2002] 2005:91; Green 2002:138; Malherbe 2000:169; Martin 1995b:90-91; Wanamaker 1990:115-118; cf. Smith 2000:703).

The persecution that the Thessalonians have endured (v. 14) is one of the evidences that they received the word of God (Green 2002:141). Wanamaker (1990:116) argues that the opposition of the Judaeans to Paul’s mission has been “the will of God in terms of his apocalyptic framework” (cf. Malherbe 2000:176).

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<sup>294</sup> There is seemingly a lack of connection of 2:13-16 with the preceding and a disruption of the narrative flow (Wanamaker 1990:109). But 2:13-16 is probably best understood as a rhetorical device known as digression in the *narratio*, to provide a transition to the next issue to be discussed, and like the *exordium* functions to favour the audience (Wuellner 1979:180-181; adopted by Wanamaker 1990:109). This would explain the renewal of thanksgiving (of 1:2-3) and forms a conclusion to the preceding 2:1-12, constituting the response to the missionary proclamation of Paul and his co-workers. 1 Tess 2:13-16 also forms the transition to the second stage of narration (2:17-3:10). Additionally, the digression thus has a paranetic function and confirms the Thessalonians’ current pattern of faithfulness in the midst of opposition as being part of a wider apocalyptic pattern of oppression of God’s people (Wanamaker 1990:109; cf. Malherbe 2000:168,176).

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Their suffering in fact “proves that they are fellow-members of the same body as the [regional] Judean<sup>295</sup> churches” (Bruce 1982a:45). In this sense, the Thessalonian believers have become the paradigm for the other congregations (Green 2002:142) by way of passive<sup>296</sup> imitation of the congregations in Judaea through suffering (Green 2002:141; Wanamaker 1990:112). The first believers in Judaea in turn, can be understood as the “first fruits” of God in establishing the New Covenant (Rom 15:26-27; Gal 1:17-24; 2:1-10; Green 2002:141-142). In summary, Paul’s polemic that will follow has to be understood against the contextual background as put forth above, especially (1) the importance of the reception of the word of God for Paul (v. 13), and (2) Paul’s understanding of the formation of the church as being amidst opposition (v. 14).

Paul writes that the Thessalonians have suffered the same things from their own countrymen (συμφυλέτης, v. 14; 11.57 in Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:130; LITV; KJV) or compatriots (BDAG, συμφυλέτης; NRSV) than the congregations in Judaea. Fee (2009:94) argues for the Thessalonians being predominantly Gentile,<sup>297</sup> suffering at the hands of fellow Gentiles (:99-100). While Fee’s proposal seems reasonable given the comparison Paul puts forth (καθὼς καὶ αὐτοὶ ὑπὸ τῶν Ἰουδαίων), it is not all that clear who exactly caused the Thessalonians to suffer (cf. Wanamaker 1990:112). Some clarification is needed. If the account of Acts 17:5-10 is considered as valid means to determine the original history of the Thessalonian church, as many interpreters do (e.g., Hagner 2012:419-425; Fee 2009:92-93; Green 2002:143; Malherbe 2000:175; Martin 1995b:89-90; Wanamaker 1990:113), Paul and his compatriots would have to leave Thessalonica because of Judaeans opposition (Fee 2009:92; Martin 1995b:90; Wanamaker 1990:113). The extent to which one allows for the “theological agenda” of Acts’ author in terms of presenting “an idealistic picture of

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<sup>295</sup> Commentators refer to the Judaeans believers in Christ from the geographical Judaea (Ἰουδαία, v. 14) as “Judean churches” (Green 2002:141; Smith 2000:704; Bruce 1982a:45), “Jewish people of Judea” (Fee 2009:94) or “Judean Christians” (Malherbe 2000:168; Wanamaker 1990:112). These designations must not be confused with “Judaeans” (Ἰουδαῖοι).

<sup>296</sup> They were not actively seeking martyrdom as Polycarp (*Martyrdom of Polycarp* 19:1) later on (Green 2002:141).

<sup>297</sup> Fee (2009:94) bases this conclusion on 1:9 (“You turned from idols to serve the living and true God”).

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the pristine period of early Christianity [sic]" (Park 2003:3), which would correspond to the dynamics of "othering" (cf. Punt 2007:203-204), however complicates the debate.

Notwithstanding the difficulty in this debate, if the opposition to the Thessalonians were Judaeans in the current context (1 Th 2:13-16), it neither fully explains the hostility that a largely Gentile community would experience, nor the use of the term συμφυλέτης (Wanamaker 1990:113). Meeks (1983:691) contends that the exclusivism of early believers in Christ led to the persecution of the Thessalonians with whom they had "shared ties of kinship and racial or local origins." Additionally, their exclusivism might have been tied to opposition to the decrees of Caesar by their belief that Jesus is Lord (over against Caesar) and thus considered as a direct challenge to the sovereignty of Caesar, and as a breach of the oath of loyalty that was required of all citizens within the Empire. The Thessalonians would then have been a political threat for their refusal to participate in the imperial cult. This would in turn lead to their persecution by their own compatriots (Jewett 1986:123-125; adopted by Wanamaker 1990:113-114; cf. van Houwelingen [2002] 2005:87-88). For this reason, although the Thessalonians were probably predominantly Gentile, the congregation might have consisted of both Gentile and Judaeans (Donfried 2002:202; Martin 1995b:90). The term συμφυλέτης (v. 14) can thus be rendered as "fellow-Thessalonians" (Martin 1995b:90; Bruce 1982a:46; cf. van Houwelingen [2002] 2005:90).

The original congregations in Judaea (Ἰουδαία, v. 14) to whom Paul compares the Thessalonians' suffering, suffered from "the Judaeans" (Ἰουδαῖοι, v. 14). An important factor in the understanding of verses 15 to 16 is how one understands the participial modifier of "the Judaeans" (τῶν, v. 15). Is it best understood as restrictive or non-restrictive, and is the reference to the Judaeans thus general or specific? If one translates by inserting a comma after "the Judaeans" (non-restrictive), verses 15 to 16 have to pertain to Judaeans in general. If the translation is without the comma (restrictive), verses 15 to 16 would refer to specific Judaeans. Although both (restrictive and non-restrictive) are

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grammatically possible, many commentators opt for the restrictive sense here (e.g., Fee 2009:95;<sup>298</sup> van Houwelingen [2002] 2005:86; Malherbe 2000:169). Yet, whether one understands the τῶν (v. 15) as restrictive or non-restrictive ultimately has to be determined by the context itself (see below). In verses 15 to 16, Paul ascribes to “the Judaeans” several actions and consequences (1-7):

(1) They killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets (v. 15). The reference to the killing instead of the crucifixion of Jesus is probably because Paul does not connect a salvific dimension to Christ’s death here but states the fact who were responsible for His death (Fee 2009:96-97). That God’s own people would have killed and/or crucified Jesus is certainly not a new concept to the New Testament (Lk 24:20; Jn 5:18; 7:1; 8:59; 11:45-53; 18:14,31; Ac 2:23,36; 3:13-15; 4:10; 5:30; 7:52; 10:39; 13:28; cf. Mt 27:25; Mk 12:1-9). Similarly, the theme of the killing of the prophets by their own people in the Old Testament (1 Kgs 19:10,14; 2 Chr 36:15; Neh 9:26; Jer 2:30) is carried over to the New Testament (Mt 5:12; 23:31-35,37; Lk 11:48-51; 13:33-34; Ac 7:52), including Paul (Rom 11:3; 1 Th 2:15). This intertextual evidence (cf. Robbins 1996:3) would suggest that Paul adopted these traditions and have Old Testament prophets in mind (Malherbe 2000:169; Martin 1995b:91)<sup>299</sup> rather than New Testament prophets (contra Fee 2009:98). Wanamaker (1990:115) suggests that “Paul saw continuity in the pattern of Jewish rejection of God’s agents from OT times to his own.” If continuity between Paul and the Old Testament tradition about killing the prophets by God’s own people is acknowledged, it is hard not to understand Paul’s reference to “the Judaeans” in some general sense.

In addition, Paul’s unqualified, general reference to “the Judaeans” (a) in 2 Cor 11:24-26 within the context of suffering at their hands (see 4.2.2) and especially (b) his reference to them (in contrast to Greeks) in 1 Cor 1:22-23 within the

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<sup>298</sup> Fee (2009:95) argues for the restrictive sense on the basis that the particular grammatical construction is “rarely, if ever” non-restrictive in Paul, and that there have been 6 modifiers up to this point in the letter, which are all restrictive (1:7, “all who believe, (living) in”; 1:10, “Jesus who rescues us”; 2:4, “God who tests”; 2:10, “you who believe”; 2:12, “the God who calls you”; 2:14 “the churches of God which are in Judea”).

<sup>299</sup> Cf. esp. Paul’s quote of 1 Kgs 19:10 in Rom 11:3.

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context of seeking a sign and stumbling at the crucified Christ (see 6.1.4), might suggest a more general reference to them here in 1 Thessalonians 2:15-16 too.

(2) They persecuted (BDAG, ἐκδιώκω §2; 39.45 in Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:449; Carson & Moo 2005:534; Wanamaker 1990:115; Best 1972:116)<sup>300</sup> “us” (ἡμεῖς, v. 15). It is not certain to whom ἡμεῖς refers, whether to Christ-believers in general<sup>301</sup> or to Paul and his fellow missionaries.<sup>302</sup>

(3) That they displease God (v. 15) is probably connected to the fact that they did not accept Jesus as their Messiah or as agent of their salvation, and that they went against God’s will in hindering the spread of the gospel by persecuting Judaeans Christ-believers (Martin 1995b:92; Wanamaker 1990:115,118; Frame 1912:112; cf. Green 2002:145; Bruce 1982a:47).

(4) They oppose everyone (v. 15). This notion would reflect the general anti-Judaeanism of the Greco-Roman world<sup>303</sup> where Judaeans opposed other people on the basis of Judaeans exclusivism (Wanamaker 1990:115; cf. Green 2002:145; Bruce 1982a:47).

(5) They hinder “us” from speaking to the Gentiles so that they may be saved (v. 16). Unlike the antagonism constituted by the anti-Judaeanism of the Greco-Roman world (4 above), for Paul the antagonism of the Judaeans toward the non-Judaeans ultimately has to be connected to their hindering of his mission to the Gentiles whom he wanted to lead to salvation (Green 2002:146; Martin 1995b:90-91; Wanamaker 1990:115; see Ac 13:45-50; 14:2,19; 17:5-9,13; 18:12). This probably forms the background of Paul’s beatings by the Judaeans (2 Cor 11:24;

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<sup>300</sup> It is equally possible to understand ἐκδιώκω as “drive out” (BDAG, ἐκδιώκω §1; 15.159 in Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:202; Zerwick & Grosvenor 1988:616).

<sup>301</sup> If the clause κωλύόντων ἡμεῖς τοῖς ἔθνεσιν λαλῆσαι (v. 16) alludes to the Pauline mission, then “who persecuted us” would include a wider opposition to the Christian movement (Wanamaker 1990:115).

<sup>302</sup> Paul himself did experience hostility from Judaeans (Gal 5:11; 2 Cor 1:24-24). If ἐκδιώκω (v. 15) is translated as “drive out”, ἡμεῖς would more likely refer to Paul and his co-workers (Green 2002:144-145; Wanamaker 1990:115).

<sup>303</sup> Tacitus (*Histories* 5:5) wrote that the Judaeans were loyal to one another “but toward every other people they feel only hate and enmity” (in Green 2002:145; cf. Philostratus in *Vita Apollonii* 5:33). Josephus (*Against Apion* 2:121) claimed that Apion falsely maintained that Judaeans swore to God to “show goodwill to no foreigner, especially Greeks” (in Wanamaker 1990:115).

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Wanamaker 1990:116). The opposition of the Judaeans was in essence opposition to the purposes of God and an attack against humanity in that they blocked the way to the hope of salvation (Green 2002:146; cf. Martin 1995b:90).

(6) They have constantly been filling up their sins to the limit (v. 16). The filling up of sins echoes the same theme in the Old Testament (Gen 15:16; Dan 8:23; cf. 2 Macc 6:14). They have resisted the divine initiative throughout their history (Green 2002:147-148; cf. Wanamaker 1990:116; Bruce 1982a:48).

(7) God's wrath has come upon them at last (v. 16). The expression εἰς τέλος can also be translated as "completely" (in BDAG, τέλος §2bγ; LXX: Josh 8:24; 2 Chr 12:12; cf. Zerwick & Grosvenor 1988:616) or "forever" (in BDAG, τέλος §2bγ; LXX: 1 Chr 28:9; Ps 9:18; 77:8), but the translation "at last" (e.g., NRSV, NIV) or "finally" (BDAG, τέλος §2bγ) is preferable, for the temporal use of πάντοτε (v. 16) requires a temporal sense for εἰς τέλος (Malherbe 2000:171; Wanamaker 1990:117; cf. Frame 1912:114). Although God's wrath has already begun to be realised in the present (Rom 1:18), the final culmination of wrath lies in the future (Rom 2:5; cf. 2 Th 1:7-10). The reference to God's wrath thus constitutes His present judgment to be completed in the future (Fee 2009:102; Green 2002:149; Donfried 2002:204-207; Malherbe 2000:171,177).

1 Thessalonians 2:15-16 shows remarkable similarities with Matthew 23:31-36. In the Gospel of Matthew, the scribes and Pharisees are depicted as descendants of those who murdered the prophets (Mt 23:31; cf. 1 Th 2:15a) and they are said to fill up the measure of their father's deeds (Mt 23:32; cf. 1 Th 2:16b). This will lead them in the judgment to their condemnation in hell (Mt 23:33,35; cf. 1 Th 2:16c). Both passages refer to Judaeans opposition to the Christian mission (Mt 23:34; 1 Th 2:15b). The latter is the most striking parallel (Wanamaker 1990:116). The correspondence between these two passages suggests that Paul has taken over a pre-Synoptic tradition of the believers in Christ (Malherbe 2000:174-175; Bruce 1982a:43,49; cf. Wanamaker 1990:116).

One of the best explanations for Paul's attack on the Judaeans is probably that it was a stock feature of ancient rhetoric called *vituperatio*, "which functioned in the context of social conflict between individuals or groups with competing interests

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and claims” (Wanamaker 1990:118; cf. du Toit 1994; Freyne 1985:118-119) and ranged from issues regarding status to difference in values within symbolic universes. These differences in values in turn helped to demarcate and define a new group while simultaneously casted doubt on the legitimacy of the rival group (Wanamaker 1990:118; Collins 1986:314; cf. Punt 2007; Rev 2:9; 3:9). Here in 1 Thessalonians 2:13-16, Paul contrasts the new identity in Christ (identity mode C) with the Judaeans’ claim on being God’s people is implicitly being problematised. In addition, this serves as demarcation of the new identity in Christ which constitutes a new, separate identity (identity mode C) in *discontinuity* with the non-believing Judaeans’ identity (identity mode A; cf. Wanamaker 1990:118-119).<sup>304</sup>

Focusing on the process of establishing the new identity in Christ over against the Judaeans’ identity does not completely resolve Paul’s polemic against the Judaeans in terms of possible anti-Judaeanism, but it places Paul’s rhetoric within a larger perspective. The sharpness of Paul’s rhetoric is probably enhanced within the context of persecution, which formed part of the identity of both Paul and the Thessalonians.

At the deepest level however, it has to be noted that Paul was not indiscriminately “anti-Judaean” in the sense that his rhetoric was directed against race or ethnicity (van Houwelingen [2002] 2005:87; Martin 1995b:93), but against those who oppose the gospel, especially among the Gentiles. This stood for Paul in a prophetic tradition of opposition to God’s agents by His own people (Green 2002:149; cf. Martin 1995b:93-94), and formed part of God’s apocalyptic framework of people’s hardening (Wanamaker 1990:116-117; cf. Malherbe 2000:170,176; Rom 9:11-23, see 4.4.1). Paul’s critique against the Judaeans was thus more theological than social (cf. Malherbe 2000:170).

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<sup>304</sup> This approach in essence argues against an approach where Paul’s attack on the Judaeans can be reduced to an “in-house’ Jewish debate” (Smith 2000:703; cf. van Houwelingen [2002] 2005:87,90; Malherbe 2000:179). If Paul strives for establishing a new identity in Christ that stands opposed to an unbelieving Judaeans’ identity, Paul’s identity in Christ and that of his fellow-believers cannot be restricted to a Judaeans’ identity, let alone a “Jewish” identity.

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A relationship of interdependence between opposition and identity has to be acknowledged. Paul's rhetoric was directed toward those who have chosen to remain a separate identity in opposition to belief in Christ as Saviour and Messiah and remained claiming covenant membership of God's people on the basis of ethnicity and outward identity markers defined by the "works of the law". The term Paul uses for this group of people is Ἰουδαῖος. Paul never applies the term Ἰσραήλ in the context of opposition to the gospel or persecution of the church. This would suggest that "Israel" whose salvation-historical path Paul lays out in Romans 9 to 11 (esp. Rom 11)<sup>305</sup> is not exactly the same entity as the people who opposed the gospel and persecuted the early believers in Christ, which Paul here calls "the Judaeans" (cf. Bruce 1982a:49). Although further clarification is needed between these designations in view of Romans 11, it has to suffice to say at this point that a possible tension between 1 Thessalonians 2:13-16 and Romans 11<sup>306</sup> is inappropriate (see 8.1).

### 6.1.9 Philemon 1:16

Paul's plea to Philemon to accept Onesimus, a slave of Philemon that probably trespassed (Felder 2000:899),<sup>307</sup> climaxes when Paul writes that Onesimus is "a beloved brother" (v. 16; Fitzmyer 2000:114). This title signifies both Philemon and Onesimus' new relationship to the Lord and to each other (Thompson 2005:219). This new relationship constituted by the new identity in Christ (cf. Thompson 2005:219; Lohse 1971:203) corresponds with the new creation (2 Cor 5:17) of God (Fitzmyer 2000:114) and conversion (Thompson 2005:220). Fitzmyer (2000:114) relates this new reality to the "fundamental appeal that Paul is making to Philemon."

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<sup>305</sup> Two important factors to keep in mind here is Paul's restrictive definition of Ἰσραήλ in Rom 9:6 (see 4.3.2.2) and the fact that Paul never uses the term Ἰουδαῖος in Romans 11 where he explains "Israel's" destiny (see 8.1). Furthermore, the negative statements about the Judaeans in 1 Th 2:13-16 corresponds with similar statements in Romans (Rom 9:22-24; 10:3,21; Donfried 2002:208).

<sup>306</sup> Many commentators find difficulty in reconciling 1 Th 2:13-16 with Rom 9-11 (e.g., Green 2002:143; van Houwelingen [2002] 2005:85; cf. Malherbe 2000:178; Bruce 1982a:47-48), which is one of the reasons why some reject the authenticity of 1 Th 2:13-16 (Zoccali 2008:314).

<sup>307</sup> This can be deduced from the "if" in v. 18 which is probably more than rhetorical and implies some form of wrongdoing (Felder 2000:899).

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Yet, there remains a duality in terms of Onesimus' identity and the relationship he has with Philemon (cf. Dunn 1996:336). This duality is constituted by (1) Paul's acknowledgement of Onesimus' status as a slave, although more than a slave, and (2) Paul's portrayal of Onesimus as "a brother... both in the flesh and in the Lord". The expression ἐν σαρκί points to the "outward side of life" and "the external relationship" (BDAG, σάρξ §5) or "natural human relationship" (O'Brien 1982:298; cf. Fitzmyer 2000:115) between master and slave (or patron and client: Dunn 1996:336). Moo (2008:423) renders the duality as a relationship on both "earthly level" (ἐν σαρκί) and "spiritual level" (ἐν κυρίῳ). There is a clear priority of the status in the Lord over the natural status in the flesh, which is described in terms of the master-slave relationship (Dunn 1996:336; Melick 1991:365; O'Brien 1982:298).

While σάρξ in this context does not point to "Israel in the flesh" or the non-believing Judaeans identity (identity mode A), this occurrence of σάρξ (Phm 1:16) is included here to demonstrate an aspect of the larger understanding of σάρξ, namely the human side of human beings' existence, which is "constrained by human appetites and ambitions" (Dunn 1996:336; cf. Rom 7:5; 8:8; 2 Cor 4:11; 10:3; Gal 2:20; Php 1:22; 3:3-4). The new identity in Christ stands in *discontinuity* with all natural human identities, including ethnic identities, social identities or identities defined by outward, earthly markers (i.e., the works of the law). From the perspective of the new identity in Christ, there is thus a sense in which all aspects of identity outside of a relationship with Christ are considered as being in the sphere of σάρξ. Similarly, Jewett (1971:135) understands σάρξ here as depicting "the old aeon which remains in opposition to the new aeon even though it is being transformed by it." This broader application of σάρξ helps to pave the way to one of the most decisive aspects of Pauline theology: the new creation in Christ.

### 6.2 The new creation versus flesh (AC)

In both of the next two passages, the "old" is being contrasted to the "new". The "new creation" (2 Cor 5:17) constitutes one of the most central aspects of

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discontinuity between the identity in Christ and the identity before or outside of Christ. Colossians 3:9-15 echoes similar themes.

**6.2.1 2 Corinthians 5:14-21**

In 2 Corinthians 5:12, Paul writes against self-recommendation (οὐ... ἑαυτοὺς συνιστάνομεν) based on external appearance (ἐν προσώπῳ; BDAG, πρόσωπον §4; cf. Zerwick & Grosvenor 1988:544), which was characteristic of Paul's opponents (10:12,18; Keener 2005:183; Matera 2003:131). Their boasting focused on physical heritage and ethnic membership of God's people (11:12,18-24, see 4.2.2), and can be described as boasting κατὰ σάρκα (11:18; cf. 10:3). Paul counters with providing an opportunity (ἀφορμὴν διδόντες, v. 12) for boasting on his behalf (Matera 2003:131; cf. NRSV). The term ἐξίστημι (v. 13)<sup>308</sup> corresponds with the notion of Paul's own boasting (cf. παραφρονέω in 11:23).<sup>309</sup> Even though Paul later boasts in his own pedigree in reaction to his opponents' boasting (11:18-22), he supersedes it with boasting in his own weakness (11:30; 12:5,9; cf. Pop [1953] 1962:163). Boasting essentially ought to be in the Lord (10:17) and in the cross (Furnish 1984:333; see Gal 6:14). The real ground for boasting thus lies within a new identity in Christ (vv. 15-21), where one's life is not directed to oneself (μηκέτι ἑαυτοῖς ζῶσιν, v. 15) but to Christ (τῷ ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν, v. 15; cf. Gal 2:19-20). Christ's purpose was to bring an end to the self-centred existence of humanity with the risen Christ at the centre (Thrall 1994:411-412; Kruse [1987] 1998:123; Barrett [1973] 1976:169). This new identity and outlook on life corresponds to the knowledge of the fear<sup>310</sup> of the Lord (v. 11) and the constraining effect (συνέχω, v. 14; Zerwick & Grosvenor 1988:544; Matera 2003:133; Kruse [1987] 1988:121-122; Lenski 1963:1027; KJV; cf. BDAG, συνέχω §8; Harris 2005:419; Thrall 1994:409; Barrett [1973] 1976:167; Pop [1953] 1962:162; Plummer 1915:173; REB; ISV)<sup>311</sup> of the love of Christ<sup>312</sup> (v. 14)

<sup>308</sup> BDAG (ἐξίστημι, §2a) defines the term as being out of one's senses.

<sup>309</sup> To "be beside oneself" (BDAG, παραφρονέω).

<sup>310</sup> The element of fear probably has to be understood against the background of Paul's awareness of "the judgment seat of Christ" (5:10; Matera 2003:130).

<sup>311</sup> The term συνέχω can also be translated as "impel" or "urge on" (BDAG συνέχω §7; Sampley 2000:91; Thrall 1994:408; NRSV).

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that enables one to “judge” (κρίνω, v. 14) and “know” (εἶδω, γινώσκω [X2], v. 16) differently.

For Paul (v. 15), Christ died for all people universally (Harris 2005:422; [1976] 1977:352; Thrall 1994:411; Furnish 1984:327; Barrett [1973] 1976:174; cf. Matera 2003:134; Lenski 1963:1028-1030).<sup>313</sup> Paul connects the “death” of all people to Christ’s death (v. 14). But in what sense did all people die? To answer this question, one has to look deeper into Paul’s thought behind this statement and thus look at 5:14-21 as a whole (see below).

Those who live (οἱ ζῶντες, v. 15) are those in whom the new creation has come into effect, which are not all people (Harris 2005:421,423; [1976] 1977:352; Furnish 1984:311). In terms of its application in the life of the believer, the death and resurrection of Christ signifies the death of the old identity (or person) and the resurrection of the new identity (or person) in Christ (cf. Keener 2005:184; Pop [1953] 1962:169; see Gal 2:19-20; 1 Cor 15:53; cf. Eph 4:24; Col 3:10-14). The death and resurrection of Christ did not only redefine human identity, it also redefined the purpose of living. Christ is both the source of life (implied by ἵνα οἱ ζῶντες) and the goal of life (τῷ ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν). The life-ethic of the person in Christ has been realigned in terms of Christ Himself (cf. Harris 2005:424; Thrall 1994:420), whose death and resurrection was an exemplification of such a self-denying life-ethic (see Rom 15:1-6 and esp. Php 2:5-21; cf. Pop [1953] 1962:162).

But more fundamentally, Christ’s death and resurrection changed the way in which those in Christ know (εἶδω, γινώσκω [X2], v. 16) or perceives (Matera

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<sup>312</sup> It is preferable to understand the phrase ἀγάπη τοῦ Χριστοῦ as a subjective genitive: “the love of Christ” in view of other Pauline texts such as Rom 5:5,8; 8:35 and 2 Cor 13:13 (cf. Harris 2005:418; Matera 2003:132-133; Sampley 2000:92; Thrall 1994:408; Furnish 1984:309; Barrett [1973] 1976:167; cf. Lenski 1963:1027,1034; Plummer 1915:173).

<sup>313</sup> The universal scope of Christ’s work is evident from πάντων and πάντες in v. 14, πάντων in v. 15, κόσμον in v. 19, and possibly ἡμῶν and ἡμεῖς in v. 21. Although “us” (X2) in v. 21 probably points to Paul and his apostolic associates, the principle could be applied to all believers (Harris 2005:422,425; 1977:354; Keener 2005:187). This understanding stands in contrast to the view of *Limited Atonement* (e.g., Hodge 1860:135; Owen [1959] 1985). Lenski (1963:1031-1032) argues that Christ’s death “counts for all time: for the entire future time, for all the prior time” and that “[a]ll in the Old Testament who believed were saved by that death just as all are in the New Testament who believe.” This thesis will be revisited later on (see 8.1.5.7).

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2003:135) Christ and other people, in that neither Christ nor other people are known κατὰ σάρκα any longer (v. 16). While most define the expression κατὰ σάρκα broadly in terms of that which pertains to the outward or external side of life (BDAG, σάρξ §5; Harris 2005:427,429; [1976] 1977:353; Keener 2005:183-184; Plummer 1915:176), it probably carries overtones of the way in which Paul's opponents defined their identity (cf. Schweizer 1971:131). They defined their identity and status by way of external criteria pertaining to pedigree and descent<sup>314</sup> (11:12,18-24, see 4.2.2; Sampley 2000:92-93; cf. Keener 2005:183). Even Christ's identity could be described in terms of σάρξ (v. 16), as the Messiah from ethnic Israel (Rom 9:5, see 4.3.2.1). In view of His death and resurrection though, Christ is not known in terms of His ethnic descent or pedigree, which pertains to His natural, earthly identity (σάρξ). Christ's identity is now defined in terms of His position in God's reconciliation of humankind to Himself (vv. 18-20), which was effected through the cross<sup>315</sup> (cf. Furnish 1984:331). As counterpart of the same reality, the understanding of Christ's relationship with humankind is shifted away from natural, outward or physical terms (i.e., ethnic, genealogical) toward an understanding which correlates with the new creation. A similar notion is found in Galatians 3:27, where Paul writes that in Christ there is no difference between Judaeans or Greek, slave or free, and male or female, which lies beneath the new creation in Christ. In Galatians 6:15, the same principle is even more pronounced, where Paul states that neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but that a new creation is everything (Sampley 2000:93, Furnish 1984:329,333; Barrett [1973] 1976:174; Plummer 1915:180; see 8.2.2).

In answer to the earlier question about the meaning of the "death" of all people in Christ (v. 15), the best answer is probably that all people died to any affiliation with God based on external, natural criteria. A claim on righteousness

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<sup>314</sup> Pedigree and descent would be included in what is understood under the outward or external side of life (cf. Harris 2005:427), but is more specific. A broader scope of "outward appearances" would also include things such as social status, intellectual capability, physical attributes or even charismatic endowment and pneumatic displays (Harris 2005:427), but these do not fit the overall context of the letter that well.

<sup>315</sup> Furnish (1984:331-332) rightly argues that the counterpart of "according to the flesh" (v. 16) in this context is not so much "according to the Spirit" (cf. Pop [1953] 1962:169) as it is "according to the cross" (see 1 Cor 2:2), which the world regards as weakness (1 Cor 1:17-18,23-25, see 6.1.4; 2 Cor 13:4).

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(δικαιοσύνη, v. 21) or reconciliation (καταλλαγή, vv. 18,19; καταλλάσσω, vv. 18,19,20) with God based on ethnicity, pedigree (cf. Harris 2005:427; Furnish 1984:329,332) or even the works of the law (cf. Furnish 1984:311; Plummer 1915:180; Rom 7:4; Gal 2:19) is rendered ineffective in the death of Christ. In His death, all people died to any claim on being God's people apart from the reconciliation that Christ Himself accomplished.

The new creation (καινή κτίσις, v. 17)<sup>316</sup> is the definitive point of *discontinuity* between the old order and the new order<sup>317</sup> (Harris 2005:424,433,434; [1976] 1977:353; Thrall 1994:421,423,424; REB; NEB; cf. Matera 2003:136; Sampley 2000:94; Furnish 1984:316; 2 Cor 3:1-4:6, see 7.3.1). That which was lost in Adam was restored in Christ (Keener 2005:185; cf. Thrall 1994:411; Furnish 1984:326; Rom 5:12-21). At heart, the new creation in Christ constitutes a new eschatological reality (Fee 1994:330-332; cf. Keener 2005:185-186; Thrall 1994:428; Barrett [1973] 1976:173), which consists of both a (1) cosmic and (2) individual dimension (cf. Harris 2005:423,449; Fee 1994:331; Thrall 1994:411):

(1) Firstly, the cosmic dimension pertains to the reconciliation of humankind in Christ, where all of humankind are *principally* being reconciled in Christ (cf. Matera 2003:129,136; Thrall 1994:436; Kruse [1987] 1998:126; Furnish 1984:319,335-336) solely on the basis of God's work (vv. 17-18; Furnish 1984:336; cf. Lenski 1963:1045-1046) in Christ's death and resurrection (vv. 14-15). The reconciliation implies that the barrier which alienated people from God has been broken down (Kruse [1987] 1998:126; cf. Eph 2:13-16, see 5.1.5). Christ who was "made to be sin" (v. 21) provides a substitutionary function to His death for all people (Harris 2005:421; Matera 2003:134; Furnish 1984:335; Lenski

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<sup>316</sup> The concept of "newness" is central to Pauline theology (cf. Harris 2005:433). Other Pauline terminology that would correspond to the new creation are "new testament" (καινή διαθήκη[ς], 1 Cor 11:25; 2 Cor 3:6), "new life" (καινότητι ζωῆς, Rom 6:4), "newness of the Spirit" (καινότητι πνεύματος, Rom 7:6) and if considered Pauline, the "new humanity" (καινὸν ἄνθρωπον, Eph 2:15; 4:24; νέον τὸν ἀνακαινούμενον, Col 3:10).

<sup>317</sup> The idea of a new order that replaces the old order is especially prevalent in Isa 43:18-19. The terms τὰ ἀρχαῖα, ἰδοὺ and καινά are verbally parallel in Isa 43:18-19 (LXX) and 2 Cor 5:17. Isa 65:17 and 66:22 allude to a new cosmos that the Lord creates (Thrall 1994:410-421).

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1963:1029-1031).<sup>318</sup> Secondly, the new eschatological era that has begun in Christ, pertains to the transformation of the entire universe (v. 19; Sampley 2000:92; Thrall 1994:427-428; Furnish 1984:315).<sup>319</sup> This new era will be fully inaugurated at the parousia (cf. Matera 2003:145; Kruse [1987] 1998:125-126).

(2) Individual reconciliation is *effected* by belief (Harris 2005:422; Matera 2003:137; Sampley 2000:93; Thrall 1994:433; Pop [1953] 1962:163,168; cf. Furnish 1984:314) in Christ's completed work (cf. Harris 2005:432; Matera 2003:138; Kruse [1987] 1998:126). Individual reconciliation involves a fundamental transformation (cf. Matera 2003:145; Sampley 2000:92-93; Lenski 1963:1042) or conversion (Harris 2005:423; Thrall 1994:415,420,422; cf. Kistemaker 1997, 2 Corinthians 5:16-19) of the believer's identity (Keener 2005:184) and status (Thrall 1994:443) before God: the old person that died with Christ and the new person that lives because of the resurrection, becomes actualised and realised<sup>320</sup> (cf. Matera 2003:137). "Paul is saying that if anyone exists 'in Christ', that person is a newly-created being" (Thrall 1994:427), which implies regeneration (Harris 2005:432-434; [1976] 1977:353; cf. Tt 3:5; Jn 3:7; 1 Pt 1:3,23). In this anthropological dimension of the new creation (Harris 2005:432), the believer has to respond (καταλλάγητε, v. 20; Harris 2005:424; Kruse [1987] 1998:126-127) in that he or she has to personally identify with Christ in His death and resurrection (Sampley 2000:96; cf. Thrall 1994:401). This identification with Christ is enacted in baptism (Barrett [1973] 1976:169; cf. Thrall 1994:425; Furnish 1984:329; Rom 6:1-5; Gal 3:27; see esp. fn. 160), but the human response to God's work of reconciliation is ongoing (Matera 2003:142). The transformation and reconciliation of the individual ultimately corresponds with

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<sup>318</sup> In the phrase ἡμῶν ἀμαρτίαν ἐποίησεν (v. 21), there is a sense in which Christ takes the place of humanity (cf. Gal 3:13, where Christ became a "curse"). Christ is also the representative of humanity, the new Adam who does God's will. Christ's death is "on behalf of" and "for the sake of" humanity (Matera 2003:134; cf. Harris 2005:421; Kruse [1987] 1998:122). This view is contra Sampley (2000:92) and Sanders (1977:463-472) who view Christ's death "being for" or "siding with" people.

<sup>319</sup> Cf. Rom 8:21-23, where the whole of creation longs for the freedom that God's children already experience.

<sup>320</sup> Although there is an aspect of the new creation that is still awaited (e.g., Rom 8:24, see 8.1.5.4) that aspect is not accounted for here.

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the establishment of a right relationship with God (Harris 2005:436; [1976] 1977:353; Sampley 2000:93,95; Kruse [1987] 1998:129; cf. Thrall 1994:431,443).

Paul's understanding of the new identity in Christ that follows his conversion (see 6.1.5), can be seen as a direct result of his Damascus encounter with the risen Lord, where some profound changes had been brought about in Paul's identity and attitude. He now recognised and proclaimed Jesus as Lord and Messiah (Rom 10:9; cf. Ac 9:22; 17:3) and now viewed Judaeans Gentile believers alike as Abraham's offspring through faith (Gal 3:26-29; Rom 4; 10:1-4,12-13; cf. Eph 2:11-19). The new attitude toward Christ prompts a new outlook on those for whom Christ died (cf. 1 Cor 8:11; Harris 2005:429-430; [1976] 1977:353; Kruse [1987] 1998:124,127).

Although the new creation suggests a strong discontinuity in the old and the new order, this does not imply an actual discontinuity in salvation history (contra Thrall 1994:427). The new creation is not so much a *replacement* of "the old salvation-history" (Thrall 1994:427) as it is a *culmination* of salvation history (cf. Rom 9-11, esp. Rom 9:30-33, see 6.1.1.1). Paul would have found continuity with the concept of a new creation in the Old Testament (e.g., Isa 43:18-19; cf. 42:9; 48:6) and in contemporary Judaeans thinking (cf. Thrall 1994:428; Furnish 1984:332; Barrett [1973] 1976:173). Paul's thinking on the new creation however cannot be equated to similar notions in later Rabbinic Judaism (see 5.2.2; cf. Barrett [1973] 1976:173-174; contra Pop [1953] 1962:169).

In conclusion, 2 Cor 5:14-21 arguably contains the most pronounced account of *discontinuity* in Paul's thought between the identity according to the flesh (identity mode A) and the *new* identity in Christ (identity mode C), which can be described as a *third entity* (cf. Eph 2:8-22, see 5.1.5; fn. 191; contra Campbell 2008:158).<sup>321</sup> The new identity is grounded firmly Christological. Christ is represented in each

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<sup>321</sup> Campbell does not understand the new creation as constituting a third entity. He refers to converts as continually changing being in Christ, yet with retention of ethnicity. He argues that in "Paul, there can be no separation between theology and social reality." Although the believing community is multi-ethnic (as Campbell argues) and retains their social/ethnic identity in Christ, social/ethnic identity in Pauline terms has to be understood as an aspect of identity which is not constitutive in *marking off filiation to God* in Christ any longer.

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verse of this passage (vv. 14-21), each highlighting another aspect of the new order that has come into being through His death and resurrection. Paul arranges themes of creation, reconciliation, righteousness, flesh, sin, death, life, knowledge and love around the Person and work of Jesus Christ. All of these themes are ultimately defined through the death and resurrection of Christ.

### 6.2.2 Colossians 3:9-15

Although I would defend Pauline authorship for Colossians<sup>322</sup> (as with Ephesians), due to space limitations the letter will be treated with awareness of the dispute about authorship. Although the majority of the recipients were probably Gentile (see esp. 1:12), there is good reason to think that there were a substantial number of Judaeans in Colossae (Moo 2008:27).<sup>323</sup>

Colossians 3:1-3 echoes the Pauline themes of having died with and being raised with Christ (Rom 6:4-5; 2 Cor 5:15; Gal 2:19-20; cf. Col 2:12-13). The concept of Christ who is “our life” (v. 4) is equally Pauline (Gal 2:20; Php 1:21). These themes constitute the new identity in Christ in contrast to an identity without or before Christ. The practices and attitudes in verses 5 to 9 characterise “things that are on earth” (τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, vv. 2,5), where the values in verses 12 to 17 are indicative of “things that are above” (τὰ ἄνω φρονεῖτε, v. 2; Thompson 2005:74). That which is on the earth corresponds with τὸν παλαιὸν ἄνθρωπον (v. 9; cf. Eph 4:22; Rom 6:6) and that which is above is parallel to τὸν νέον [ἄνθρωπον] (v. 10; cf. Eph 4:24).<sup>324</sup> There is difference of opinion regarding the meaning of the old/new ἄνθρωπος. Many recent translators and commentators translate the phrases with “old/new self” (Moo 2008:252; Melick 1991:294-295; Wright 1986:137; 41.43 in Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:509; NRSV; NIV). BDAG (ἄνθρωπος) lists its occurrence in verse 9 under the main rubric of “a being in

<sup>322</sup> See fn. 19 for a list of NT scholars defending Pauline authorship of Colossians.

<sup>323</sup> According to Josephus, Antiochus II had settled 2000 Judaeans in the general area around 213 BCE (*Antiquities* 12:3:4). Cicero, the Roman (1<sup>st</sup> century BCE), refers to the Roman seizure of a substantial amount of money contributed by Judaeans in the area to support the temple of Jerusalem (*Pro Flacco* 28; Moo 2008:27).

<sup>324</sup> Even though the expression νέον ἄνθρωπον does not occur in the undisputed Pauline letters, the concept of “old” and “new” is thoroughly Pauline (Barth & Blanke 1994:411; see fn. 316).

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conflict at a transcendent level” (§5) and explains it as a being “from another viewpoint” (§5b). The expression *παλαιὸν ἄνθρωπον* is explained in Louw and Nida (Vol. 1:509) as an idiom, “literally ‘old person’ or ‘former person’” that denote “the old or former pattern of behaviour, in contrast with a new pattern of behaviour which people should conform to” (cf. Lincoln 2000:643). Others (e.g., Bruce 1984:146; Schweizer 1982:198) understand the contrast as being between the old and new “nature” of a person. But Ridderbos (1960) is probably right that the old *ἄνθρωπος* points to an “old way of existence outside of Christ” (:211, translated) which is essentially a way of existence under the rule of sin (cf. :211). This is contrasted with “a different way of existence” (:213, translated) which is a “new life-reality in Christ” (:214, translated).

As with the new creation in 2 Cor 5:17 (see 6.2.1), the old and new *ἄνθρωπος* are probably best understood in terms of both (1) a corporate (or cosmic) and (2) an individual sense (O’Brien 1982:190; cf. Thompson 2005:77-78; Lincoln 2000:644; Dunn 1996:222; Schweizer 1982:199).<sup>325</sup>

(1) The corporate dimension of the new *ἄνθρωπος* points to a new humanity that has been created in Christ that stands in contrast to the humanity in Adam (Dunn 1996:221-222; Barth & Blanke 1994:412; Wright 1986:138; Bruce 1984:147-148; O’Brien 1982:190-191; cf. Ridderbos 1960:211-214; Rom 5:12-21). This new humanity in Christ denotes a “new order of existence inaugurated by Christ’s death and resurrection” (Lincoln 2000:643; adopted by Thompson 2005:78; cf. Ridderbos 1960:213-214). The old humanity in Adam is “the embodiment of the unregenerate humanity”, and the humanity in Christ is the “recreated humanity in the Creator’s image” (O’Brien 1982:191; v. 10; cf. Moo 2008:268; Dunn 1996:222). This new humanity corresponds to the new creation in Christ (Moo 2008:269; Wright 1986:139; O’Brien 1982:192; Lohse 1971:142; cf. 2 Cor 5:17) where there is no distinction between “Greek and Judaeans, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and free” (v. 11; cf. Rom 10:12; Gal 3:28; 1 Cor 12:13). The expression “Greek and Judaeans” describes the whole of

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<sup>325</sup> Rather than some who tend to lean toward either the corporate (Moo 2008:267-270) or individual (Schweizer 1982:197-198) significance of the old and new humanity/person.

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humanity (Moo 2008:267-268,270; O'Brien 1982:192). The corporate identity in Christ is not defined in terms of ethnicity, race or social status. All these identity markers have been eradicated in Christ (Wright 1986:139-140; cf. Thompson 2005:79-81; Lincoln 2000:644; Dunn 1996:223,225,227; O'Brien 1982:192; Lohse 1971:144; Abbott [1897] 1956:285). Christ has become "all in all" (v. 11), which probably indicates Christ as the only, universal source of deriving one's identity as God's people in the new creation (cf. Moo 2008:272,275; Melick 1991:298; Wright 1986:140).

(2) Although the new identity in Christ is already accomplished by Christ's death and resurrection (vv. 1,3) it has to be actualised in the life of the believer (cf. Lohse 1971:142): (a) There has to be an individual regeneration or transformation by the power of God, where the "new person" in Christ becomes an actual ontological reality in the life of the believer (cf. Thompson 2005:78; Melick 1991:296; O'Brien 1982:192).<sup>326</sup> (b) This new identity was enacted by "clothing" yourself (ἐνδυσάμενοι, v. 10) with the new ἄνθρωπος, which probably points to baptism (Moo 2008:266; Lincoln 2000:644; Dunn 1996:221; Fee 1994:647; Wright 1986:138; Bruce 1984:146; O'Brien 1982:189; Schweizer 1982:196; Lohse 1971:142; cf. 2:11-13, see 7.4.4). In this context, baptism can be understood as a conscious identification with Christ's death and resurrection,<sup>327</sup> and signifies the unity of all believers in Christ (cf. Gal 3:27-28). (c) The new identity in Christ has to be actualised continually<sup>328</sup> in the life of the believer (O'Brien 1982:190) by "putting on" (ἐνδύσασθε, v. 12) the virtues and values corresponding to the new identity. Dunn (1996:220-221) refers to conversion as embracing "a new way of life" (cf. Lincoln 2000:643). This "putting

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<sup>326</sup> This reality is probably best portrayed by 2:11-13 that signifies the removal of the flesh of the individual and the regeneration of the new person through faith (see 7.4.4; cf. Moo 2008:266).

<sup>327</sup> In Col 2:11-15 (see 7.4.4), the baptismal candidate is portrayed as being buried "with" Christ and raised "with" Him through faith, a theme that parallels the meaning of baptism as put forth in Rom 6:3-6. The identification with Christ is conscious, as can be derived from the high frequency of the medium form of the "clothing" metaphors in the Pauline literature (see du Toit 2011:30-31), which signifies reflexivity and the subject's participation in the action (Wallace 1996:414-416; see fn. 160).

<sup>328</sup> The aorist participle (ἐνδυσάμενοι, v. 10) is followed by an aorist imperative (ἐνδύσασθε, v. 12), constituting the ongoing process of actualisation.

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on” is a process that primarily takes place in the realm of the mind (φρονεῖτε, v. 2; cf. Rom 12:2).<sup>329</sup>

The Colossians are described as God’s chosen people (ἐκλεκτοὶ τοῦ θεοῦ, v. 12), holy (ἅγιοι, v. 12) and beloved (ἠγαπημένοι, v. 12). All three these designations are standard ways of describing Israel in the Old Testament (Moo 2008:275-276; Thompson 2005:81; Lincoln 2000:647; O’Brien 1982:197; Lohse 1971:146; Lightfoot 1890:219; cf. Bruce 1984:153).<sup>330</sup> The use of these terms does not necessarily imply that believers in Christ are the “new/true Israel” (e.g., Wright 1986:141), but that these three *privileges* have been transferred to the Christ-community (Wright 1986:141; O’Brien 1982:197; Lightfoot 1890:219). Christ-believers therefore participate in the heritage of Israel of the Old Testament (Dunn 1996:228). The believers in Christ are hereby identified as God’s people (Wright 1986:141; cf. Thompson 2005:82) just like Israel in the Old Testament.

The peace of Christ (v. 15) underscores the unity of all believers in Christ in one body (ἐν ἐνὶ σώματι, v. 15; Lincoln 2000:648; Dunn 1996:235; Barth & Blanke 1994:425-426), and the fact that there is no differentiation on the basis of ethnicity, circumcision, or social status (cf. Thompson 2005:85). The body of Christ corresponds to the new ἄνθρωπος (v. 10; cf. Moo 2008:285) and the new creation.

The contrast between the old (παλαιός, v. 9) and the new (νέος, v. 10) is similar to the “new creation” and the “old things” of 2 Corinthians 5:17. The “new person” in Colossians 3:10 portrays the new identity in Christ (identity mode C) that stands in

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<sup>329</sup> The fundamental renewal of a person is not a gradual process (contra Lincoln 2000:643; Dunn 1996:221; Schweizer 1982:202), but a fully completed work of Christ (1:21-22; cf. Php 2:15; Eph 5:27). But the actualisation, the “putting on” (v. 12) or the “living out” of the new identity in Christ and the renewal of the mind (v. 2; cf. Rom 12:2) is a continuous process (cf. Lohse 1971:142,145). The object of renewal in v. 10 is thus not the human person itself, but [true] “knowledge” (ἐπίγνωσις; Moo 2008:269; cf. Melick 1991:297).

<sup>330</sup> Although the concept of Israel as God’s *chosen* people in the Old Testament is widespread, the term ἐκλεκτοὶ appears in the following (LXX): 1 Chr 16:13; Ps 105:6,43; 106:5; Wis 4:15; Isa 43:20; 45:4; 65:9 (Moo 2008:275; cf. Rom 9:24-25; 8:30; Eph 1:4). In terms of God’s people as *holy*, Deut 14:2 is significant: “For you are a people holy to the LORD your God; it is you the LORD has chosen out of all the peoples on earth to be his people, his treasured possession” (NRSV; cf. Col 1:2; Eph 1:4). God’s *love* for His people is often the fundamental basis for their election (e.g., Deut 4:37; 10:15; 1 Kgs 10:9; Ps 78:68; Isa 41:8; Hos 11:1; Moo 2008:276; cf. 1 Th 1:4; 2 Th 2:13). All three concepts (election, holy, beloved) come together in Deut 7:6-8 (Thompson 2005:81).

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stark *discontinuity* with the “old person”, which indicates the person whose core-identity is defined by earthly things (v. 2) and by social and ethnical identity markers (including identity mode A).<sup>331</sup> A prominent marker in defining the identity of the “old person” is circumcision (v. 11). These distinctions have been done away with in the “new person” in Christ. Christ Himself is the new source of deriving one’s fundamental identity, that is, your identity as God’s elect, holy and beloved (v. 12).

### 6.3 Summary and concluding remarks

In the letter to the Romans, the salvation history of Israel is presented as culminating in the coming of their Messiah, who is both their stumbling stone and foundation stone unto belief and salvation (Rom 9:24-33). The effect of Christ’s work is that the criteria for membership of God’s people have changed. This change can be understood as a crossover in salvation history, where Israel lost its privileged status as God’s children and Christ became the universal access point unto salvation for all people (Rom 10:1-21). In faith in Christ, the differentiation between ethnic identities is relativised. Christ is portrayed as so central in salvation history that His work seems to have retrojective significance. His rule is over all nations (Rom 15:5-13).

In 1 Corinthians 1:21-24, Paul indicates the cross of Christ to be central to the gospel. In Christ, the crucified, ethnic identities are relativised and united into one single church without distinction. The identity in Christ therefore supersedes the Judaeans identity in terms of defining membership to God’s people.

Paul’s Damascus experience can be understood as a conversion rather than merely a call (cf. Gal 1:11-14), yet not in terms of conversion from one religion to another, but rather as a change of identity. In Christ, Paul has died to the old

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<sup>331</sup> It can be noted here that the contrast of the “new person” is not with “Israel according to the flesh” (identity mode A) in vv. 8-9, but rather with a carnal, sinful person. But the “new person” is simultaneously contrasted with distinctions constituted by ethnicity and circumcision (v. 11), which does include “Israel according to the flesh” by implication. In the light of Christ, there is thus a sense in which identity mode A is placed on the same level as any other identity before or outside (belief in) Christ.

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identity under the law (Gal 2:19-20). His core identity is now defined by a personal relationship with Christ. Paul was probably known among the Judaeans Christ-believers as “the one who formerly persecuted us” or something similar (cf. Gal 1:23), which would confirm Paul’s change of core-identity. The expression “the faith” (τὴν πίστιν, Gal 1: 24) seems to point to the faith-identity as becoming entrenched. To keep living as Judaeans (Ἰουδαϊκῶς ζῆς and Ἰουδαίζω, Gal 2:14) in Christ would perpetuate the distinction between Judaeans and non-Judaeans and run contrary to the inclusive gospel. The “works of the law” to which most of Paul’s rhetoric is directed, refers to *both* (1) badges of covenantal nomism and (2) a legalistic complex of ideas having to do with winning God’s favour by merit-amassing observance of the law (Longenecker 1990:86).

The 4 privileges and 3 accomplishments that Paul lists in Philippians 3:3-4 can be understood as defining his identity in flesh. His former identity in the flesh relates to his descent from physical Israel, his pedigree, and the centrality of the law in defining that identity. An identity defined by law stands in discontinuity with an identity constituted by faith in Christ. The deeper contrast in Paul’s new identity over against his old identity relates to the Spirit against flesh (Php 3:3), which can be understood as eschatological realities. This theme will be pursued in more depth in 7.1 to 7.5.

In 1 Thessalonians 2:13-16, Paul refers to his “brothers” in the context of their persecution from Judaeans. Although an element of “othering” may be identified with respect to identity, Paul’s rhetoric is arguably not so much directed at Judaeans *per se*, but rather to those who oppose the gospel. It may additionally be derived from these verses that Paul understood persecution as an ever present characteristic of God’s people through the ages. The new identity in Christ which constitutes a new, separate identity (identity mode C) stands in *discontinuity* with the non-believing Judaeans identity (identity mode A).

Paul employs σὰρξ in Philemon 1:16 in an extended meaning. The term correlates with all natural identities, including social (e.g., slave/client) and ethnic identities. All identities outside of Christ seem to be in the sphere of flesh.

## 6. Faith in Christ, Israel and the Judaeans

The new creation in Christ (2 Cor 5:14-21) arguably represents the deepest aspect of the *discontinuity* between an identity in Christ and the old order, yet not as a replacement of salvation history, but as the culmination thereof. That which was lost in Adam was restored in Christ. The new reality in Christ constitutes a new eschatological reality that has been realised already, although awaiting final completion. This reality consists of both a cosmic (universal) and individual dimension. The cosmic dimension pertains to the principal “death” and reconciliation of humankind in Christ, which are being ministered to all people. The individual dimension pertains to the actualisation and appropriation of the new creation in the lives of believers, bringing them into a right relationship with God.

The old and new person as portrayed in Colossians 3:9-15 echoes much of the same notions of 2 Corinthians 5:14-21, especially the notions of having “died” with Christ and being raised with Him. The old and new persons also point to two ways of existence. The old person denotes both unregenerate humanity and the unregenerate individual person. Likewise, the new person pertains to the new humanity in Christ and the new, regenerate individual person. The reality of this new identity in Christ has to be actualised in the life of a believer on a continual basis.

Although Paul still acknowledges Judaeans and Greeks in Christ (e.g., Gal 3:28), these identities seem to have become mere cultural and ethnic designations in Christ. A Judaeans Christ-believer therefore has left a Judaeans “way of life” and has lost *that aspect* of his or her identity that pertained to law and circumcision. My approach to the new identity in Christ where the identity of the person “in Christ” is *defined* by Christ Himself and His work, goes further than an approach that understands the identity in Christ as *inclusive* of various sub-identities (see Moo 2008:272-273). In other words, the new identity in Christ does not merely *accommodate* all social/ethnic identities; it *redefines* the core identity of the believer in Christ (cf. Thompson 2005:79-80). As Moo (2008) states, “the Christian [sic] community is comprised of people who maintain their gender, familial, and social identities” (e.g., Judaeans/Gentile; male/female). “But these earthly identities are no longer what is most important: solidarity in Christ is now

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the ruling paradigm for the new community” (:272). “Whatever our worldly background or status, we all now have our fundamental identity determined by Christ” (:275).

With respect to Paul’s own identity, Paul seems to identify himself rather as a descendent of Ἰσραήλ (Php 3:5) or born Ἰσραηλίτης (Rom 11:1; 2 Cor 11:22), than being a Judaeans.<sup>332</sup> Yet Paul uses the term Ἰσραηλίτης more in connection with descent or ethnicity than denoting status as God’s people (see also Rom 9:4). Similarly, being ἐκ γένους Ἰσραήλ (Php 3:5) does not identify Paul as currently being part of elect “Israel” as such (identity mode AB), but denotes his line of descent. These designations are therefore not *definitive* with respect to Paul’s current identity as God’s child. With the exception of Romans 11:1 (see 8.1.1), Paul’s reference to both terms (Ἰσραήλ and Ἰσραηλίτης) in connection with his own identity is within a polemical context against his opponents (Php 3:5; 2 Cor 11:22). Paul’s core-identity is now derived from being in Christ in discontinuity with his old identity where descent was (partly) constitutive in defining God’s people (esp. Gal 2:19-20; Php 3:8).

Regarding Paul’s view of historical Israel, it is not clear at this point if Paul considers historical Israel as saved. Paul acknowledges God’s salvation-historical plan with them in its culmination in Christ, but seems to view Christ as the end of the era under which they lived. It can thus be asked if Paul by implication does not view Israel as continuing to be God’s people (in some way) in Paul’s present. But the final answer to this question has to be derived from Romans 11.

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<sup>332</sup> As argued in 6.1.6, Paul’s inclusion of himself as Judaeans in Gal 2:15 is part of his rhetorical strategy rather than an ultimate description of his own identity.

## *7. Spirit, flesh and identity*

# **7. SPIRIT, FLESH AND IDENTITY**

As is evident from the passages discussed up to this point, πνεῦμα often stands in opposition to σάρξ in terms of identity (Rom 15:13; Gal 3:2,5; 4:29; Php 3:3; cf. Eph 2:18), and is thus an important concept in Paul's definition of identity from a theological perspective. This is a good example of how a mutually qualifying term "allows an understanding to 'come alive'" (Thiselton 2007:318; see 1.4).

Although much of the spirit-flesh dichotomy has been discussed, this chapter aims to describe Paul's understanding of identity in terms of this dichotomy more precisely. But before the Pauline material will be assessed for the way in which the spirit-flesh dichotomy helps to understand identity in Paul, a brief outline of the way in which the concepts Spirit/spirit and flesh were perceived in some of Paul's surrounding cultures will follow (7.1). This will help to relate or differentiate Paul's understanding of these concepts with his larger context. This contextual aspect relates partly to Robbins' (1996:3) "intertexture", (see 1.4) in terms of the way in which language is employed in other texts, and in terms of "modes of understanding and belief." The understanding of Spirit/spirit and flesh in other traditions additionally relates partly to Robbins' (1996:4) "ideological texture" in terms of anthropological and theological discourse. In 7.2, the broader scope of Paul's use of πνεῦμα and σάρξ will be outlined to facilitate a better understanding of πνεῦμα and σάρξ in relation to identity.

## 7. Spirit, flesh and identity

Section 7.3 studies the spirit-flesh dichotomy in terms of the Old and New covenants, and its relation to identity. The subsequent section (7.4) explores Spirit/spirit and flesh as modes and markers of identity.

### 7.1 Spirit and flesh outside of Paul

Although it could be of value to compare Paul's understanding of Spirit/spirit and flesh to later Gnosticism or Judaism,<sup>333</sup> I will concentrate on the ancient Greek world, the Old Testament and the rest of the New Testament. Due to space limitations, the focus will be on the broader understanding of spirit and flesh in these traditions and merely outline some of the main conceptions, and how these conceptions relate to the New Testament. This will be done by mainly relying on similar discussions in theological or exegetical dictionaries. Some depth therefore has to be sacrificed for breadth.

#### 7.1.1 The ancient Greek world

##### 7.1.1.1 Spirit

Despite Stoicism, πνεῦμα has secondary significance in Greek thought as a whole. In the New Testament however, it plays a leading role (Kleinknecht 1968:357). The constitutive factor of πνεῦμα in the Greek world is that it always pertains to the material world, and is thus considered as a substance (Kremer 1993:118; cf. Kamlah 1978:689-690; Kleinknecht 1968:357). It is never "spiritual" in the strict sense as in much of the New Testament.<sup>334</sup> In Greek thought, there is no differentiation between matter and the supernatural. All have πνεῦμα. It is a natural force, which is immanent and impersonal. The spirit is considered as a mode or action of the air which indwells the organism of the cosmos in all its

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<sup>333</sup> Both traditions are considered as later developments after Paul. Judaism is considered to have commenced around 70 CE (Mason 2007:502; Langer 2003:258; Neusner 1984:5). Gnosticism can be considered as developing around the 2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> centuries CE (Martin 1995a:70-71).

<sup>334</sup> In the NT, πνεῦμα can stand in opposition to that which is natural (cf. 1 Cor 2:14). See also the NT use of πνεῦμα as denoting a personal, supernatural and transcendent God (e.g., Rom 8:9,16; 1 Cor 2:10; Heb 3:7; 1 Tim 4:1).

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parts, and is therefore considered as a substance of the soul that regulates intellectual and spiritual functions. In Stoic monism, πνεῦμα is connected with the power of deity in as much as it permeates the universe and gives it life and unity (Kleinknecht 1968:357-358; cf. Kamlah 1978:689-690). As materialists, the Stoics perceived the relationship between God and the world as between soul and body, where God is the impersonal soul and the world is the body of God. Their view is essentially pantheistic (Nash 1984:69).

In medicine, philosophy and religion, πνεῦμα was mediatorial in that it mediated mechanically between aspects such as the outer and inner, the centre and periphery, the physical and psychical, matter and spirit. In religion, manticism and magic, πνεῦμα was thus an impersonal medium that achieved sporadic communication between the divine and the human. Although the New Testament Pneumatology shows similarities at this point in terms of the contact between body and soul that would otherwise be complete separate essences, the understanding of spirit differs from the Greek understanding in that it perceives a personal, divine Spirit. The Greek world always regarded spirit as a thing (Kleinknecht 1968:359).

### 7.1.1.2 *Flesh*

In older speech, the plural σάρκες was mostly used and was almost exclusively used to designate the flesh of the human body (e.g., Homer; Seebass 1975:671). Yet there was a growing understanding that the body is a whole, where σάρξ would include the ψυχή (e.g., Aristoteles). The term σάρξ would later designate the corruptible part of humanity in contrast to the incorruptible part. Where Plato connected emotions to the σῶμα,<sup>335</sup> in Epicurus whose views later became popularised, σάρξ could designate the seat of emotions, especially the seat of desire (Schweizer 1971:99-105; cf. Seebass 1975:671). The cravings and lusts of the body could defile the soul which has a share in the divine (Seebass 1975:671).

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<sup>335</sup> Plato did not only differentiate between body and soul in terms of corporeality (the soul as immaterial and the body as material), but retained the older idea of Pythagoreanism, where the body is the prison house of the soul (Nash 1984:37).

## 7. Spirit, flesh and identity

### 7.1.2 The Old Testament

#### 7.1.2.1 Spirit

In the Old Testament, the Hebrew רוּחַ can refer to the following:

- (1) A breath of the mouth (e.g., Ps 33:6; Job 19:7,18) or to wind (e.g., Job 4:15; 41:8).
- (2) The principle which gives life to the body (e.g., Gen 6:17; 7:15).
- (3) The seat of emotions (e.g., inner disquiet: 2 Kgs 19:7; Gen 41:8; unhappy: 1 Sam 1:15; despair: Job 7:11).
- (4) That which is effected by God (e.g., Num 16:22; Isa 42:5).
- (5) The Spirit of God: (a) as divine power (e.g., Ezek 1:12; Judg 13:25), inducing ecstasy (e.g., Num 11:25,29), being responsible for prophetic or ecstatic speech, and giving charisma of leadership (e.g., Judg 3:10; 1 Sam 11:6); (b) as creative power that creates physical life (e.g., Ezek 37:9,14), mental abilities (e.g., Deut 34:9; Ex 31:4), charisma (e.g., Neh 9:30), moral powers (e.g., Isa 32:15), and as judging (e.g., Isa 4:4) and saving power (e.g., Isa 32:15); (c) as inner nature of God, which points to God's incorruptibility and sustaining power (e.g., Isa 31:3), and omnipresence (e.g., Ps 139:7); (d) as personal Being (e.g., 1 Kgs 22:21).

In a similar way, the term רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים (or אֱלֹהִים רוּחַ) is used as breath (e.g., Isa 2:22; 30:33), as principle that gives life to the human body (e.g., Gen 7:22; Isa 42:5) and as the Spirit of God who gives physical life (e.g., Job 33:4) or insight to human beings (e.g., Job 32:8; Baumgärtel 1968:359-364; cf. Kamlah 1978:690-693).

The basic meaning of רוּחַ or רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים as "breath" is thus predominant in the Old Testament in that it is something intangible, creates movement and manifests energy (Kamlah 1978:690), which creates or sustains life and vitality. This action is closely connected to God's transcendence and His power over against the inability of the flesh (cf. Kamlah 1978:691).

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### 7.1.2.2 *Flesh*

The term בָּשָׂר is used as follows:

(1) Flesh in the strict sense in a human being (e.g., Lev 13:2), as wild flesh (e.g., Lev 13:10), as skin (e.g., Ps 102:5), or as the meat of a sacrifice (e.g., Jer 11:15).

(2) The body of a human being (e.g., Gen 2:23; Ps 38:3) or of an animal (e.g., Lev 17:11).

(3) All living creatures (כָּל־בְּשָׂר): human beings and animals (Gen 6:17; 9:11; Num 18:15), all people (e.g., Isa 40:5), or the whole animal kingdom (e.g., Gen 6:19; 7:15).

(4) As a term denoting blood-relationship (e.g., Gen 2:23; 29:14; Neh 5:5; fellow countryman: Isa 58:7).

(5) Euphemistically in a man (Ex 28:42), a woman (Lev 15:19), and as circumcision (e.g., Gen 17:11; Lev 12:3).

(6) In a transferred sense: (a) for all people's external life (e.g., Ps 16:9; Job 2:5; 19:22; Isa 9:19; 49:26); (b) to denote the whole inner attitude (e.g., Ps 63:1; 84:2); (c) to express human frailty and impotence (e.g., Gen 6:3; Ps 56:4; Isa 31:3).

(7) Metaphorically as a living heart (e.g., Ezek 11:19; 36:26), might and prosperity (Isa 17:4), or as "root and branch" (Isa 10:18).

In the same way, אֶשְׁרָא is used in terms of flesh in the true sense (e.g., Ex 21:10; Ps 78:20,27), as a term denoting blood-relationship (e.g., Lev 18:12; 20:19), or for all people's external existence (e.g., Prov 5:1; 11:17; Ps 73:26; Baumgärtel 1971:105-108; cf. Seebass 1975:672-673).

In the Old Testament, flesh thus tends to denote a human being as a *whole* in contrast to the Greek view that a human person *has* flesh (Seebass 1975:672-673).

## 7. Spirit, flesh and identity

### 7.1.3 The rest of the New Testament

#### 7.1.3.1 Spirit

In the Gospels of Mark and Matthew, the understanding of God's Spirit is closely connected to the experience of the community. It is used anthropologically as seat of perceptions and feelings (Mk 2:8; 8:12; Schweizer 1968:396) or as breath of human life (Mt 27:50; Kremer 1993:118). Mark uses πνεῦμα in connection with unclean (1:23,26,27; 3:11), dumb and deaf spirits (9:17,25; Kremer 1993:119). Matthew 8:16 refers to spirits that are being exorcised from demon possessed persons (Dunn 1978:695). The use of πνεῦμα as opposed to σὰρξ ἀσθενής in Mark 14:38, where the human experience is at odds with him- or herself, is connected to the will (BDAG, πνεῦμα §3b). In Matthew 5:3, οἱ πτωχοὶ τῷ πνεύματι has to refer to the human spirit, but not as something that can humanly be achieved. In essence however πνεῦμα is used in Matthew and Mark in the Old Testament sense, where God's power performs special acts (see esp. the blasphemy against the Spirit: Mk 3:28-30; Mt 12:32; casting out demons by the Spirit: Mt 12:28). The Old Testament view of the Spirit that mediates God's Word (2 Sam 23:2) is reflected in Mark 12:36 and 13:11, although more as help in eschatological tribulation. In the same vein, the general endowment of the Spirit in Mark 1:8 and Matthew 3:1 and Jesus' endowment as Messiah (Mk 1:9-11; Mt 3:13-17) reflect God's direct work. Jesus' supernatural conception by the Spirit (Mt 1:18,20) underscores the creative power of God. Pneumatological statements in both Mark and Matthew are closely linked to Christ Himself (Schweizer 1968:397-404).

In Luke-Acts, the prominence of the Spirit stands out, especially in Acts (37 times). Although a deeper understanding of the Spirit is evident in Luke-Acts, the understanding of the Spirit is largely influenced by Judaeon thinking. Jesus is the subject of the action in the Spirit (Lk 4:1).<sup>336</sup> Jesus is not portrayed as a pneumatic, but the Spirit abides in Jesus (Lk 4:18), and Jesus "grows" in spirit (Lk 2:40). As being born of the Spirit, Jesus is the first possessor of the Spirit (cf. Lk

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<sup>336</sup> Jesus is lead "in" the Spirit (not "by" the Spirit).

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3:22), but not as object (like the pneumatic). Jesus' endowment of the Spirit is a divine act where the Spirit remains the Spirit of God. Jesus pours out the Spirit (Ac 2:33). The Spirit is closely identified with the risen Lord (e.g., Lk 12:12; 21:14; Ac 10:14; 16:7), and abides in the community as the Spirit of God, who is never identified with human beings. People become "full of the Spirit" (e.g., Ac 6:3; 11:24). Each actualisation with the Spirit is thus an act of God, where the Spirit comes down objectively (Ac 2:3-6; 4:31; Schweizer 1968: 404-407) and is "a transforming power" (Dunn 1978:698). Luke never connects miracles directly to the Spirit, but rather to prophecy (Lk 4:23) and the preaching of the disciples (Ac 2:14, etc.; Schweizer 1968: 407; cf. Kremer 1993:121). Prophets are no longer isolated individuals, but the whole eschatological community is led by prophets and partake in the Spirit. The Spirit is portrayed as free and not tied to baptism<sup>337</sup> (Schweizer 1968: 407-414; cf. Dunn 1978:699-700). Luke's account of the work of the Spirit is closely tied to God's way in salvation history (du Toit 1977:332-358; Schweizer 1968:415) and the eschatological "promise of the Father" (Kremer 1993:121; cf. Dunn 1978:696; contra Schweizer 1968:441).<sup>338</sup> Luke thus mainly concentrates on the function of the πνεῦμα in the believing community and not on the essence of the Spirit. This can especially be derived from Luke's employment of traditional formulations (Kremer 1993:121).

In the Gospel of John, the contrast between πνεῦμα and σὰρξ corresponds to a contrast between God and the world (1:13; 3:3,6; 4:24; 6:63). Spirit (4:24), like ἀλήθεια (4:24; 8:32), denotes the reality of God.<sup>339</sup> The Spirit is the life-giving power that effects [spiritual] birth (3:3-6). The Spirit quickens through Jesus' word (6:63; cf. 7:38). The Spirit (even as Paraclete: 14:16-18) is thus closely connected to the preaching of Jesus as the Redeemer (Schweizer 1968:437-444; cf. Dunn 1978:703-704). The Spirit possesses vital power to forgive sins (presupposed in 20:23) and to rescue from death (8:21,24; Kremer 1993:121).

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<sup>337</sup> See e.g. the differing accounts in Ac 2:1-4; 8:14-17; 10:44; 18:25; and 19:3.

<sup>338</sup> For Schweizer (1968:411), the outpouring of the Spirit signifies "a new age", but not "the new age", which he does not understand as eschatological.

<sup>339</sup> Cf. the mediation of truth that is simultaneously the mediation of life in 14:6 and 17:3 (Kremer 1993:121).

### 7. *Spirit, flesh and identity*

The letter to the Hebrews shows a purely anthropological distinction between the πνεῦμα and the ψυχή (4:12) as closely related parts. The work of the Spirit is especially found in miracles (2:4; 6:4). The Spirit is portrayed as being a foretaste for the coming aeon (6:4-5). The πνεῦμα is contrasted to σάρξ (9:13-14; cf. 12:9), where the Old Covenant is purely earthly and corruptible things were offered in the sphere of σάρξ. Christ offered Himself through the Spirit, who brings salvation that lasts beyond the σάρξ (Schweizer 1968:445-446).

Apart from an anthropological use of πνεῦμα in James 2:26, the reference in 4:5 is to the πνεῦμα which God has set in a human being that He “jealously yearns for.” 1 Peter mentions the prophetic Spirit of the Old Testament (1:11). The Spirit is the power of sanctification (1:2). In 4:13-14 the Spirit is connected to martyrdom. The difficult reference to πνεῦμα in 3:18-19 and 4:6 are references to the two spheres in which judgment and deliverance are enacted. These two spheres are characterised by the substance of the body and the πνεῦμα which transcends it. In 2 Peter, the Spirit is the power that inspires what was regarded as canonical Scripture (1:21; Schweizer 1968:446-448). In Jude 1:19-20, believers are those who have the Spirit by definition (as with Paul), whereas those who boast of their spirituality give evidence of their unspirituality (Dunn 1978:705).

In 1 John, the use of πνεῦμα can be distinguished (from e.g. Paul) in that it does not have so much an eschatological significance as it signifies the abiding of Christ in believers (3:24; 4:13). The Spirit is a gift and not native to humankind (4:13). The Spirit bears testimony as in the Gospel of John. Notions of the prophetic Spirit are present in 4:1-6. In this passage, there is an emphasis on trust in the Spirit who works in the community by bringing an old message. 1 John 4:6 accounts for the warring of spirits (Schweizer 1968:448-449).

In Revelation, demonic spirits are called πνεύματα. The vital force is the πνεῦμα that is given by God or by a demon (11:11; 13:5). The concept of the πνεῦμα τῆς προφητείας (19:10) is dominant, which points to an extraordinary event where the πνεῦμα gives visions that the ordinary person cannot have. The Spirit speaks both in the past and the present (14:13). The deity of the Spirit is thus strongly accentuated. The Spirit in Revelation is related to the community rather than the

## 7. Spirit, flesh and identity

individual (e.g., 2:7,11). Decisively, the Spirit is closely identified with the exalted Lord Himself (2:1-29; 22:17; Schweizer 1968:449-450).

To a large extent, the use of πνεῦμα in the New Testament reflects the use of the Hebrew רוּחַ and הַמָּוֶלַד in the Old Testament (cf. Kremer 1993:118). Dunn (1978:693) formulates the thought in the New Testament on πνεῦμα broadly as denoting that power which a person experiences as relating him- or herself “to the spiritual realm, the realm of reality which lies beyond ordinary observation and human control.” In terms of the anthropological use of spirit, it is never portrayed as a “divine spark” that would be inherent to all humankind. In the New Testament, the body seems to be the embodiment of the whole human person without division into different isolated parts. Only at death, the human person continues existence without the body (esp. Lk 24:37,39; Heb 12:23; 1 Pt 3:18-19; 4:6; Jas 2:26; cf. Dunn 1978:694).

### 7.1.3.2 *Flesh*

In the Synoptic Gospels, apart from quotations from the Old Testament (Mk 10:8; Lk 3:6) and a reference to the traditional πᾶσα σὰρξ in Mark 13:20 (cf. כָּל-בָּשָׂר), the term σὰρξ occurs only three times. The expression “flesh and blood” in Matthew 16:17 denotes the limitation of a human being toward God, and specifically the inability to know God. Flesh and blood do not seem to be parts of a human being, but include intellectual and religious capacities. The opposite of σὰρξ is God. Although the statement in Mark 14:38 comes close to anthropological dualism,<sup>340</sup> the opposite of σὰρξ is not a human possibility (as e.g., in Philo or Judaism), it is God’s act. The expression “flesh and bones” in Luke 24:39 denotes the substance of an earthly person, where the contrast is between the corporeal and non-corporeal worlds (Schweizer 1971:124).

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<sup>340</sup> Schweizer’s (1971:124) notion here is contested though. Sand (1993:232) argues against the possibility of seeing anthropological dualism, and contends that the weakness of the flesh and the willing spirit rather corresponds to the OT understanding of the conflict of good and evil in human beings (Ps 50:14). Thiselton (1975:677) sees Num 27:16 and Isa 31:3 as anticipating the kind of contrast in Mk 14:38.

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In Acts, apart from two quotations (2:17,26), the only reference to σάρξ is in 2:31, which deduces the incorruptibility of Jesus' σάρξ from the quotation in 2:26. In verse 27, the ψυχή of verse 27a is not mentioned again, arguably to avoid a division of a human person into antithetical parts (Schweizer 1971:124-125).

In the Gospel of John, σάρξ is relatively rare. Apart from its use in the traditional formula πᾶσα σάρξ in 17:2, σάρξ in 8:15 significantly denotes Jesus' descent (cf. 8:14; 7:27), which would form part of that which is externally visible. In terms of John's categories, σάρξ in 3:6 would belong to the earthly sphere as opposed to the heavenly sphere that has no knowledge of God and thus cannot mediate such knowledge. Similarly, in 1:13, σάρξ denotes natural birth (cf. 8:15) as distinguished from birth of God, yet a will is connected to σάρξ in parallel to ἀνὴρ rather than to αἷμα. In 1:14, σὰρξ ἐγένετο signifies the form of a human being. In 6:63, σάρξ points to the outer appearance of Jesus in contrast to His preaching (Schweizer 1971:138-140; cf. Sand 1993:232).

In 1 John 4:2 and 2 John 7, Jesus' coming in the flesh denotes His humanity. The phrase ἐπιθυμία τῆς σαρκός occurs in 1 John 2:16, which arguably constitutes dualistic thinking, where that which a human being is, is determined by the sphere of σάρξ, which in turn can be understood as the organ of sense impressions that stimulate desires. This way of thinking lies closer to Hellenistic thinking (Schweizer 1971:140-141; Seebass 1975:678).

In Hebrews, σάρξ can denote the earthly existence of Jesus in contrast to His heavenly pre-existence (5:7). In the same way, αἵματος καὶ σαρκός is viewed as that which Jesus assumed (2:14).<sup>341</sup> The "fathers of our flesh" (12:9) are distinguished from the "Father of spirits", which is not anthropological dualism, but pertains to the two-sphere thinking which is characteristic of Hebrews (cf. 6:16). The δικαιώματα σαρκός in 9:10 point to statutes relating to the flesh.<sup>342</sup> In all these passages, σάρξ thus denotes the earthly sphere in contrast to the world of

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<sup>341</sup> Sand (1993:233) argues that the pair "blood and flesh" (2:14) prevents an interpretation where the substantial character of flesh becomes prominent (contra Schweizer 1971:141).

<sup>342</sup> See 9:13-14, where the cleanness of the flesh is contrasted with the cleansing of the conscience (Schweizer 1971:141-142).

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God, but sin is never linked to it (Schweizer 1971:141-142). In Hebrews 7:16 is a reference to the physical descent of the Levitical priesthood, which is contrasted to the priesthood of Melchizedek and Christ (Seebass 1975:677).

The Old Testament formula, πᾶσα σὰρξ, occurs in 1 Peter 1:24. Two-sphere thinking can be identified in 3:18 and 4:6, but they are traditional in the sense that σὰρξ refers to the physical body (BDAG, σὰρξ 2a). The time of life is denoted by σαρκί in 4:2. The mention of σαρκί in 4:1 probably points to bodily suffering. There is thus a contrast between the earthly and heavenly spheres (Schweizer 1971:143), or in Sand's (1993:223) words, a contrast between "earthly existence" and a "pneumatic existence" (esp. 1:18; 2:24; 4:6). As in Hebrews 9:13-14, in 3:21 σὰρξ as external aspect is differentiated from the conscience (Sand 1971:233; Schweizer 1971:143).

In Jude 1:7, "strange flesh" refers to the people of Sodom, denoting corporeality which is different in humans and angels. This is the object of sexual desire which is not wicked as such, but a perversion. In 2 Peter, carnal lust itself is regarded as sinful (2:10), where "flesh" thus has a pejorative sense (cf. ἐπιθυμίαις σαρκός in 2:18). The meaning of the references to σὰρξ in Jude 6 and 23 is uncertain, but seem to denote concrete outward existence polluted by sin (Schweizer 1971:143; cf. Sand 1993:223; Seebass 1975:677).

### 7.2 Approaching a deeper understanding of πνεῦμα and σὰρξ in Paul

Paul employs the concepts πνεῦμα and σὰρξ regularly. As I will argue, they form part of the heart of his thought on identity. This section (7.2) will serve as broader reference for Paul's thought on πνεῦμα and σὰρξ.

## 7. Spirit, flesh and identity

### 7.2.1 Spirit in Paul

In the Pauline corpus, πνεῦμα or πνευματικός are used in several different ways. Some of the main meanings can broadly be categorised within the following meanings:

(1) The (Holy) Spirit of God, focusing on the Spirit's controlling influence (πνεῦμα, e.g., Rom 5:5; 8:16a; 9:1; 14:17; 15:13; 1 Cor 2:11b,12b,13; 1 Th 4:8cf. BDAG §5), personhood (πνεῦμα, 2 Cor 13:13; BDAG §8), or close relationship to Christ (πνεῦμα, e.g., Rom 8:9c; Php 1:19; Gal 4:6; BDAG §5b; cf. Bruce [1985] 2000:55-56).

(2) The activity of God's Spirit in the believing community (πνεῦμα, e.g., 1 Cor 2:4; 12:4,7,11; 1 Th 1:5; 5:19; cf. BDAG §6).<sup>343</sup>

(3) A spirit which is not from God (πνεῦμα, e.g., 1 Cor 12:10; 2 Cor 11:4; BDAG §7).

(4) A part of the human personality, denoting an immaterial aspect thereof (πνεῦμα, e.g., 1 Cor 5:3-5; 7:34; 2 Cor 7:1; Php 1:27; 1 Th 5:23; cf. Col 2:5; BDAG §3a) or the source of feeling, insight or will (πνεῦμα, e.g., Rom 1:9; 1 Cor 16:18; 2 Cor 2:13; 7:13; BDAG §3b). The human πνεῦμα can be considered as "the non-material, psychological faculty which is potentially sensitive and responsive to God" (26.9 in Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:323). The term πνευματικός can denote a regenerate person who has the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 2:15) in contrast to someone who is unregenerate (1 Cor 2:14; cf. BDAG §2αγ; Fee 1994:30-31; Bruce [1985] 2000:55).

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<sup>343</sup> By Fee's (1994:14-24) careful analysis of πνεῦμα in Paul with consideration of case, articles, qualifiers and anarthrous usage of the term, he convincingly argues against a translation "a spirit" or "a holy spirit" (impersonal) in passages such as 1 Th 1:5 or 2 Cor 3:3. He points out that the triadic formula in 2 Cor 13:13 has to point to the Holy Spirit alongside and distinct from Christ and the Father (:24). He argues along the same lines against viewing texts such as 2 Th 2:13; 1 Cor 14:2; 2 Cor 6:6; Eph 2:18; 5:18 and 6:18 as referring to the human spirit. It is a question however if all of these texts have to fall to either the one side (God's Spirit) or the other (human spirit), esp. in the light of the flexibility in which Paul uses πνεῦμα (see main text).

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(5) The term πνευματικός can impersonally point to something “spiritual” (e.g., Rom 7:14; 15:27; 1 Cor 9:11; 12:1; 14:1; BDAG §2).

It is characteristic of Paul however that his use of πνεῦμα sometimes shows flexibility between God’s Spirit and the human spirit (e.g., 1 Cor 5:3,4; 6:17; 14:14,15). For example, in 1 Cor 14:14-15 Paul’s point of reference is God’s Spirit who prays through human praying. He means “my S/spirit prays/sings” in that the human spirit worships by the direct influence of the indwelling of God’s Spirit. Similarly, 1 Cor 6:17 can be understood such as that “he/she who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit/Spirit with him” (Fee 1994:25-26; cf. 1 Cor 4:21). The flexibility in Paul’s use of πνεῦμα with respect to God’s Spirit and the human spirit relates to some extent to the πνεῦμα-σάρξ dichotomy in Paul. This dichotomy will be addressed in 7.4.

### 7.2.2 Flesh in Paul

As with πνεῦμα or πνευματικός, σάρξ can have a variety of connotations in the Pauline corpus. Some of the basic meanings can be identified as follows:

(1) Bodily flesh (e.g., Rom 2:28; 1 Cor 15:50; Gal 1:16; Bruce [1985] 2000:49; cf. BDAG §1).

(2) The human body as functioning entity (e.g., 1 Cor 5:5; 2 Cor 7:1; BDAG §2).

(3) A human being (e.g., Rom 3:20; 1 Cor 1:29; Gal 1:16; 2:16; BDAG §3; cf. Bruce [1985] 2000:49-50).

(4) Denoting ancestral or earthly descent (e.g., Rom 1:3; 9:3,5,8; 4:1; 2 Cor 11:18; Bruce [1985] 2000:49; BDAG §4; cf. Sand 1993:231; see 2.3.1).

(5) The outward or external side of life (e.g., 1 Cor 1:26; 2 Cor 11:18; Php 3:3-4; BDAG §5). Some understand this aspect of σάρξ in Paul as denoting an “earthly sphere” or “physical existence” in contrast to a “heavenly sphere” (e.g., Sand 1993:231; cf. Schweizer 1971:126-128).

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As indicated with 2 Cor 11:18, (4) and (5) can overlap in that (4) can be an aspect of (5). Although (4) and (5) have been addressed to a large extent in the exegetical study, the implications and relation to the πνεῦμα-σάρξ dichotomy, which constitutes a deeper meaning of σάρξ in Paul, will be addressed in the following sections.

It may be asked at this point if Paul uses σάρξ in the sense of “sinful nature” (e.g., Rom 8:3-9; Gal 5:16,17,19,24; cf. Col 2:11,13), as many Bible translations translate the term (e.g., NAT; NIV) or commentators interpret the term (e.g., Mounce 1995:178,181 on Rom 8:6,14; Burton 1920:292 on Gal 5:13). In other words, can σάρξ in Paul denote a morally sinful part or aspect of the human constitution that is (or has been) at war with the πνεῦμα? This is one of the underlying questions that will be attended to in the next sections (esp. 7.4).

### 7.3 Spirit and the New- and Old Covenants versus flesh (AC)

2 Corinthians 3:5-16 signifies the last passage indicated in 2.6 to be examined exegetically, pertaining to being God’s people. The expressions “New Covenant/Testament” (καινῆς διαθήκης, v. 6)<sup>344</sup> and “Old Covenant/Testament” (παλαιᾶς διαθήκης, v. 14) occur together only here in Paul. As I will argue, this passage is fundamental to Paul’s understanding of the identities of ancient Israel and believers in Christ.

#### 7.3.1 2 Corinthians 3:5-16

In 2 Corinthians 3:1-18, πνεῦμα is mentioned six times (vv. 3,6,8,17[X2],18) and can be regarded as one of the most significant passages about πνεῦμα in the Pauline corpus. The old and the new (covenants and ministries) are set in sharp contrast with each other: the letter against the Spirit/spirit (v. 6), death against life (v. 6), and condemnation against righteousness (v. 9; Fee 1994:297). Paul’s

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<sup>344</sup> The phrase καινῆ διαθήκη on its own occurs only in 1 Cor 11:25.

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underlying concern in this passage is the defence of his apostleship, but not so much the *fact* of it, as its *character* (:298). In Furnish's (1984:243) words, "[t]hese paragraphs are most accurately described as theological exposition with a polemical edge."

The Corinthian congregation is Paul's "letter" of commendation to be known and "read" by all people, written with the Spirit of God, not on tablets of stone, but on tablets of human hearts (vv. 2-3, NRSV). The πλαξιν λιθίναις (v. 3) signifies insensitive hearts, while the πλαξιν καρδίαις σαρκίνοις denote sensitive, responsive hearts. Paul's use of πλάξ and λίθινος allude to the πλάκας λιθίνας of Exodus 31:18 and 34:1 (LXX), which is associated with Moses and the Old Covenant (Harris 2005:265), or more specifically, with the written Mosaic law (Meyer 2009:77; Thrall 1994:226). The phrase πλαξιν καρδίαις σαρκίνοις alludes to the καρδίαν σαρκίνην that is contrasted to the καρδίαν τὴν λιθίνην in Ezekiel 11:19 and 36:26 (LXX), where the heart of flesh corresponds to the new spirit which the Lord will give to humankind (Meyer 2009:80; Fee 1994:303; Thrall 1994:226).

### 7.3.1.1 The Old and New Covenants and salvation history

Verses 4 and 5 confirm the divine origin of Paul and<sup>345</sup> the Corinthians' qualification (ικανότης, v. 5; BDAG; Zerwick & Grosvenor 1988:539; Harris 2005:269) or competence (NRSV). God qualified them to be ministers (διάκονος, v. 6; Zerwick & Grosvenor 1988:539; Fee 1994:304; Barrett [1973] 1976:111)<sup>346</sup> of the New Covenant (διαθήκη, vv. 6,14; BDAG §2; Harris 2005:270; Fee 1994:304; Barrett [1973] 1976:111).<sup>347</sup> The expression καινὴ διαθήκη, although appropriated in the Last Supper tradition (1 Cor 11:25), is ultimately derived from Jeremiah 38:31 (LXX; MT: 31:31; Harris 2005:270-271; Wright 1993:176). If the interlaced

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<sup>345</sup> The plural ἰκάνωσεν includes Paul himself. The aorist probably refers to Paul's Damascus encounter with the risen Christ, where he was filled with the Spirit and became a chosen instrument (Harris 2005:270; Ac 9:15,17-19).

<sup>346</sup> Or "agents" (BDAG, διάκονος §1; Harris 2005:270).

<sup>347</sup> Διαθήκη can be rendered as "testament" (in BDAG §1 [not applied to 2 Cor 3:6,14]; Zerwick & Grosvenor 1988:539), but in the Septuagint, διαθήκη mostly (around 270 times) translates the Hebrew בְּרִית, so that the broad connotations of בְּרִית became attached to διαθήκη (Harris 2005:270; cf. Barrett [1973] 1976:112; Plummer 1915:86).

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(Sampley 2000:64) allusions to Scripture in Paul's language are taken into account (esp. Jer 38:31-33 [LXX] and Ezek 36:26-27) together with his reference to the Spirit in verse 3, the New Covenant can be described as a "covenant of Spirit" (ἀλλὰ πνεύματος, v. 6) that breathes life (ζωοποιεῖ, v. 6; cf. Ezek 37:14; Rom 4:17; 8:11; 1 Cor 15:45) into the hearts of God's people (Fee 1994:304). The meaning of verse 6 can hardly be better described than in the words of Fee (1994:304-305):

In light of this kind of intertextuality, one can scarcely miss the eschatological implications of Paul's understanding of the Spirit – as fulfillment of God's promised gift of Spirit at the end of the ages, which according to 1 Cor 10:11 he understands already to have come. Thus the Spirit is the key to both continuity and discontinuity with the OT people of God. The continuity lies with God and his promises, especially the promise of the new covenant of "Spirit" with his people; the discontinuity lies with the Spirit's coming so as to fulfill the promise and thus usher in a new day, which includes the Gentiles, since they, too, have received the same Spirit by faith (see esp. Gal 3:6-14).

Paul opposes the "covenant of Spirit/spirit" to the "covenant of the letter" (γράμμα, v. 6), which signifies the written law of Moses (Harris 2005:273; Kruse [1987] 1998:92; Thrall 1994:234; Barrett [1973] 1976:113; cf. Lenski 1963:921; Plummer 1915:87; Rom 2:27,29, see 4.5.1; Rom 7:6, see 7.4.1; contra Gaston 1987:156),<sup>348</sup> the "hallmark of the old covenant" (Harris 2005:273). Fee (1994:306) rightly remarks that it is not so much the law in itself that is "letter", but the fact that it constitutes "specific demands requiring obedience" that is mere "letter" (cf. Meyer 2009:83).<sup>349</sup> Contrasted to the Spirit that gives life, the "letter" kills (ἀποκτείνω, v. 6; cf. θάνατος, v. 7). As elsewhere (Rom 7:5-9; 8:2; 1 Cor 15:56), Paul by implication associates the law with death and sin. These connotations additionally correspond with the notions of imprisonment (Gal 3:23, see 5.1.3.3) and slavery (Gal 4:21-5:1, see 5.1.4). The law aroused sin that led to death (Rom 7:10-11, see 7.4.1). Even though the law was intended to give life

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<sup>348</sup> Gaston argues that the "letter" does not refer to the law or Scripture, but to rival missionaries.

<sup>349</sup> Barrett ([1973] 1976:113) is probably right that the deeper contrast here is between human and divine action.

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(Gal 3:12,21, see 5.1.3.3; Rom 10:5, see 6.1.2.2; cf. Rom 2:27-29, see 4.5.1), it could not attain life (cf. Rom 7:10) without the Spirit that gives life (πνεῦμα ζωοποιεῖ, v. 6; Harris 2005:273; Fee 1994:306-307; cf. Barrett [1973] 1976:116). Similarly, Meyer (2009:82) states that “the letter/Spirit dichotomy represents a fundamental contrast between the outward/ineffectual and the inward/effectual. This contrast between the ineffectual and the effectual reinforces the eschatological nature of the contrast between old and new covenants” (cf. Hays 1989:131).

Rather than constituting a contradiction in Paul’s view(s) of the law (contra Räisänen 1987:82-83), the law that kills does not render the law intrinsically unspiritual (Rom 7:14) or against God’s promises (Gal 3:21; cf. Rom 3:31), but states the inevitable result of an eschatological era where life and righteousness was sought after by law, and the identity of God’s people were defined by law (cf. Fee 1994:306,814-815; Kruse [1987] 1998:92-93).<sup>350</sup> The life-giving Spirit thus both *fulfils* and *replaces* and the law, constituting both *continuity* and *discontinuity* with the law (Fee 1994:813-814). The “covenant of Spirit” is equivalent to a new “law” that frees people from the law of sin and death (Rom 8:2, see 7.4.1). As in Galatians 3 where faith and law are contrasted, the “covenant of the letter” and the “covenant of Spirit/spirit” here signify two “contrasting epochs” (Dunn 1993:198 on Gal 3:23; cf. Meyer 2009:84) or two forms of eschatological existence (Fee 1994:816-817,820). This understanding would allow for translating πνεύματος in verse 6 as “of spirit” (e.g., Lenski 1963:919; NRSV; OAT; KJV; RV), not to denote the human spirit *per se*, but this new eschatological existence in Christ (see 7.4.1.4).

The letter that kills (v. 6) is rephrased in verse 7 as the “ministry of death” (διακονία τοῦ θανάτου), which is contrasted with the “ministry of the Spirit” (διακονία τοῦ πνεύματος, v. 8). In relation to διάκονος in verse 6, διακονία in

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<sup>350</sup> Exactly what the killing entails, is not specified. Being contrasted with life, which has to point to eternal life (Fee 1994:307), the killing seems to point to the opposite of salvation. Allusions to physical death being the result of the breaking of many of the commandments of the Mosaic law (e.g., Lev 20; 24) cannot be ruled out (cf. Plummer 1915:88). The law that kills thus arguably carries connotations of both physical and spiritual death (Harris 2005:273).

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verse 7 carries both the connotations of personal ministry<sup>351</sup> and the law as a system (Harris 2005:281; Thrall 1994:241; Furnish 1984:202). Paul must have his own ministry in mind and those who oppose his ministry. His rival missionaries are later described as *διάκονοι Χριστοῦ* (11:23, see 4.2.2). Paul's use of *διακονία* thus probably has a polemical bearing (Thrall 1994:232; Kruse [1987] 1998:93; cf. Harris 2005:281; Sampley 2000:65).

In most of verses 7 to 11, Paul contrasts the glory of the ministry of the law with the ministry of the Spirit. The glory of the ministry of the Spirit, which corresponds with Paul's own ministry, is superior to that of Moses (Thrall 1994:240; Kruse [1987] 1998:94; cf. Lenski 1963:931). The Mosaic covenant was a ministry of death (*θάνατος*, v. 7) and condemnation (*κατάκρισις*, v. 9), where the ministry of the Spirit brings righteousness (*δικαιοσύνη*, v. 9) and life (*ζωοποιέω*, v. 6). The verb *ἔσται* (v. 8) is best understood as a logical future (Harris 2005:286; Thrall 1994:245; Bultmann 1985:81; Furnish 1984:227; Collange 1972:77-78; cf. Matera 2003:83; Plummer 1915:91), which means that it is future from the Sinai-event and subsequent to the glory of Moses (Thrall 1994:245).<sup>352</sup> Additionally, the Mosaic ministry or covenant<sup>353</sup> is being abolished (*καταργούμενον*, v. 11; BDAG, *καταργέω* §3; Matera 2003:83,86,89; Wright 1993:178,181; Hays 1989:133-136; Barrett [1973] 1976:109,118; cf. Thrall 1994:252-253; Schreiner 1989:51; Lenski 1963:934; Rm 10:4, see 6.1.2.2) or annulled (Furnish 1984:229), whereas the ministry of the Spirit is permanent (*μένω*, v. 11; BDAG §2; NRSV). The ministry of death was powerless to lead to life since it was not accompanied by the Spirit. The ministry of the Spirit (v. 8) which is simultaneously the ministry of justification (v. 9) replaced the old ministry and rendered the old obsolete (Fee 1994:307-308; cf. Hong 1991:154). The contrast between that which is being abolished and that which is permanent (v. 11) thus epitomises Paul's view of salvation history in the light of the cross of Christ: the Old Covenant, its ministry and its economy is being

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<sup>351</sup> BDAG (§3) describes *διακονία* in this context as functioning in the interest of a larger public, and proposes the translation "service" or "office". Zerwick and Grosvenor (1988:539) render the term as "administration".

<sup>352</sup> This does not necessarily exclude a future eschatological reference (Thrall 1994:245; Furnish 1984:228).

<sup>353</sup> Although the object of abolition in v. 7 is the glory, the neuter participle (*καταργούμενον*) in v. 11 is probably best understood as referring to the Mosaic covenant in general (Thrall 1994:252).

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abolished, while the New Covenant began in splendour and will always be invested with glory until the parousia when its implications will be fully realised (cf. Harris 2005:291; Thrall 1994:258; contra Sampley 2000:66).<sup>354</sup>

Paul incorporates the account of Exodus 34:29-35 in his comparison of the glory of the new and the old. He repeats the expression “sons of Israel” (Ex 34:32,34,35) in verses 7 and 13, which is national, ethnic Israel (Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:131, see 2.2.2), but he abbreviates the verb δοξάζω (Ex 34:29,30,35 [LXX]) to the noun δόξα (vv. 7,8,9,10,11,18) to fit his syntactical structure. Paul interprets the glory on Moses’ face as a diminishing glory, an implication implicit to the text of Exodus 34:29-35 (Thrall 1994:244).<sup>355</sup> This diminishing glory is an indication of the temporal character of Moses’ ministry and thus symbolic of the provisional character of the Mosaic covenant (cf. Thrall 1994:244). The veil over Moses’ face prevented Israel from seeing the end (τέλος) of that which was being abolished (v. 13). This symbolises the impermanence of the Mosaic system based on the law.<sup>356</sup> Moses concealed<sup>357</sup> the ultimate redundancy of the Old Covenant and that it served only an interim function by God’s salvation-historical design (Thrall 1994:255-258; Barrett 1962:52; cf. Meyer 2009:90; Matera 2003:92-93; Furnish 1984:232; Barrett [1973] 1976:119; contra Cranfield 1979:855).<sup>358</sup>

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<sup>354</sup> Sampley (2000:66) argues against a salvation-historical understanding or superseding covenants. Yet he refers to the “new covenant”, “being transformed” and “God’s unfolding purposes” (:67), which does not seem entirely consistent.

<sup>355</sup> Thrall explains that the covering of Moses’ face when he did not speak to Israel might imply a diminishing glory that had to be renewed when Moses came in the presence of the Lord.

<sup>356</sup> Nathan (in Nathan & Bieringer 2011) argues for the ministry of Moses as the most likely referent of τὸ καταργούμενον in v. 11 and the glory of Moses’ face as the most likely referent of τοῦ καταργουμένου in v. 13. Even if different referents are acknowledged for καταργέω (vv. 7,11,13,14) or even if concepts such as καταργέω, τέλος, κάλυμμα and δόξα are interpreted such as to accentuate Paul’s continuity with the Old Covenant, Paul’s *juxtaposition* of the ministry of “the New Covenant” (v. 6), the “Spirit that gives life” (v. 6) and the “ministry of the spirit” (v. 8) to a “letter [that] kills” (v. 6), a “ministry of death” (v. 7), and a “ministry of condemnation” (v. 9) seems to stand in too much tension with a notion that Paul would (merely?) operate within a “post-Damascus view of Judaism” (Nathan & Bieringer 2011:227). Cf. fn. 358.

<sup>357</sup> It is doubtful whether a measure of deception should be ascribed to Moses himself (contra Räisänen 1987:57). Moses would rather be co-operating with God’s divine purposes for Israel (Thrall 1994:258).

<sup>358</sup> Cranfield argues against understanding that which is passing away (τοῦ καταργουμένου, v. 13) as “the whole religious system based on the law” (Barrett 1962:52). Cranfield (1979:856) contends that the removal of the veil and the turning to the Lord *merely* suggest that the people

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### 7.3.1.2 The removal of the veil in Christ

Parallel to Moses' veiled glory, the minds of the historical people of Israel were hardened (ἐπωρώθη, v. 14; Meyer 2009:93; Thrall 1994:261-262; Kruse [1987] 1998:97; Gutbrod 1965:386; Lenski 1963:938-939).<sup>359</sup> This historical hardening of Israel is well accounted for in the Old Testament<sup>360</sup> and corresponds to the same theme elsewhere in Paul (Rom 9:18, see 4.4.1 and 6.1.1.1; Rom 11:7-10, see 8.1.1). Paul compares Israel's hardening to his present day (σήμερον, vv. 14-15). Most commentators have contemporary unbelieving Judaeans in mind as those who Paul refers to as having a veil over their hearts when the Old Covenant is read (vv. 14-15; e.g., Harris 2005:305; Sampley 2000:68; Thrall 1994:261; Kruse [1987] 1998:97; Furnish 1984:233; Lenski 1963:940). Although there is continuity in terms of Israel's situation with the Judaeans in Paul's day, the continuity lies more in the *veil itself* as subject of that which is to be removed (καταργέω and ἀνακαλύπτω, v. 14; περιαιρέω, v. 16), than with historical Israel. While unbelieving Judaeans would certainly be included in those with a veil over their hearts at the reading of the Old Covenant,<sup>361</sup> there are several reasons that would suggest more generality with respect to the people who read the Old Covenant outside Christ and the Spirit (1-4):

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will be able to "understand the true meaning" of the law or "discern the true glory of the law". But this line of interpretation neither fully accounts for the pejorative allusions to the system of law in verses 3 (πλάξι, λίθινος), 6 (γράμμα αποκτένει) and 7 (διακονία τοῦ θανάτου ἐν γράμμασιν ἐντετυπωμένη λίθοις), nor for the meaning of διακονία (v. 7), which carries both connotations of personal ministry and that of a system or administration (see main text above). Wright (1993:182) shows that *both* positions on this matter should be held together: (1) an *incorrect understanding* of the law is removed in Christ, and (2) by not being under the law any longer, membership in the New Covenant is *not being demarcated* by the law any more.

<sup>359</sup> The aorist indicative (ἐπωρώθη) points to historical Israel. Paul probably would have used the perfect tense if his contemporaries were included in the hardening (Thrall 1994:262).

<sup>360</sup> Textual references containing the term σκληρύνω (LXX; cf. Rom 9:18) in connection with Israel's hardening on various occasions are Deut 10:16; 2 Kgs 17:14; 2 Chr 30:8; Neh 9:16,17; 9:29; Ps 95:8; Jer 7:26; 17:23; and 19:15. Some prominent references that echoes the hardening of Israel in different words are Num 14:11,22-23; Deut 9:22-24; 29:4; Ps 78:56; Isa 6:9-11; 29:10-12; 44:18; 56:10; Jer 3:17; 5:21; 7:24; 11:8; 13:10; 23:17; Ezek 3:7,9 and 12:2. Meyer (2009:93) argues that Paul primarily has Deut 29:4; Isa 6:9-11; and Isa 29:10-12 in mind.

<sup>361</sup> The αὐτῶν in both verses 14 and 15 corresponds.

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(1) The abolishing of the veil “in Christ” (v. 14b) signifies the universal entrance to the New Covenant (cf. “if anyone is in Christ” in 5:17; cf. Harris 2005:309; Furnish 1984:210-211,234).

(2) The contrast of the Old and New Covenants and their levels of glory goes against a notion of Israel that would remain (cf. καταργέω vs. μένω, v. 11) God’s people in Paul’s present day. The same notions of discontinuity are echoed in 5:14-21 where Paul explains the significance of the identity in Christ defined by the new creation in contrast to an identity defined by flesh (see 6.2.1).

(3) Although the public reading (ἀνάγνωσις, v. 14; BDAG §1; ἀναγινώσκω, v. 15; BDAG b) of the Old Covenant might point to the reading of the Pentateuch in the synagogue (Harris 2005:305; Sampley 2000:68; cf. Wright 1993:182; Barrett [1973] 1976:121; Lenski 1963:940; Pop [1953] 1962:95; Plummer 1915:99), Scripture was read in the early church as well (ἀνάγνωσις, 1 Tim 4:13; BDAG §1),<sup>362</sup> which does not restrict this practice to Judaeans. The term ἀναγινώσκω (v. 15) is elsewhere applied by Paul in the context of reading his own letters to the Christ-believing congregations (1 Th 5:27; cf. Eph 3:4; Col 4:16). None of these terms thus necessitates application to unbelieving Judaeans.

(4) Verse 16 has no subject. Furnish (1984:202) translates verse 16 as follows: “Whenever *anyone* turns to the Lord the veil is removed” (emphasis added; cf. Harris 2005:306; Matera 2003:95; Kistemaker 1997, 2 Corinthians 3:12-18; Fee 1994:310; NIV). Harris (2005:306) concurs: “though he [Paul] was deeply grieved by the general unresponsiveness of his compatriots to the gospel he proclaimed... the veil of ignorance concerning the new covenant and its glory could still be lifted from *anyone’s* heart provided there was ‘conversion to the Lord’” (emphasis added; cf. Furnish 1984:210-211,234).

### **7.3.1.3 Paul’s hermeneutic of the Old Covenant**

Despite the measure of generality one would allow for the people in whose hearts the veil of ignorance remain in reading the Pentateuch outside of Christ (vv. 14-

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<sup>362</sup> In 1 Tim 5:18, the term γραφή is applied to Deut 25:4 which is part of the Pentateuch.

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16), the whole of 2 Corinthians 3 displays a profound Spirit-centred and Christ-centred hermeneutic (cf. Pop [1953] 1962:93). The entire history of salvation and especially the era under the Mosaic law is evaluated in terms of the New Covenant in Christ and the Spirit. Kistemaker (1997, 2 Corinthians 3:12-18) writes: “The veil represents a refusal to accept the fulfillment of God’s revelation in Jesus Christ.” The eschatological letter-spirit contrast is equivalent to a Christ-Old-Covenant contrast. The “letter” of the Old Covenant, constituted by the Mosaic law, contained in the Pentateuch, has to be “read” through Christ.

Although this Christological and Pneumatological hermeneutic is probably not applied to the whole of the Old Testament Scripture in 2 Corinthians 3, Paul seems to have applied this hermeneutic principle in interpreting the whole of Old Testament Scripture elsewhere (as argued earlier, esp. Paul’s use of Scripture in Rom 9-11, see 6.1.2.1; cf. Sampley 2000:68; Barrett [1973] 1976:122).

### **7.3.1.4 *The Lord as the Spirit***

The term κύριος (v. 16) is interpreted as pointing either to “Christ” (BDAG §2bγλ; Lenski 1963:945; Plummer 1915:102; Meyer 1884:477) or “Yahweh” (Harris 2005:308; Thrall 1994:272; Kruse [1987] 1998:98; Furnish 1984:211-212; cf. Sampley 2000:71).<sup>363</sup> Even if the term would designate “Yahweh”, the turning to “the Lord” should not be isolated from Christology. For Paul, “turning to the Lord means accepting the gospel of Christ” (Furnish 1984:235; cf. Bassler 2007:75; Harris 2005:309; Kruse [1987] 1998:98). As with Romans 10:9-13, one probably has to acknowledge a measure of fluidity and continuity between “Yahweh” and “Christ” in view of the way in which Paul appropriates Scripture (see 6.1.2.2; cf. Sampley 2000:71). All the same, Paul contextualises “the Lord” in verse 17 as “the Spirit” (Fee 1994:311).

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<sup>363</sup> It has been argued that in Paul, κύριος without the definite article denotes Yahweh and ὁ κύριος denotes Christ (Zerwick & Grosvenor 1988:540; Harris 1977:339). Zerwick & Grosvenor (1988:540) argues by implication that ὁ κύριος in v. 17 would be an exception to this rule for it would point to κύριος of the previous verse. It is however doubtful whether this rule can consistently be applied to Paul.

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In the notion to turn to the Lord, Paul probably had his own conversion in mind where “something like scales” had fallen from his eyes at conversion (Harris 2005:309; Ac 9:18). In Paul’s conversion however, the filling with the Spirit was instrumental (Ac 9:17). The unexpected reference to the Lord as the Spirit that constitutes freedom (2 Cor 3:17) is thus key to Paul’s ministry and the Corinthians’ conversion vis-à-vis his opponents who relied on “letters” and law (Fee 1994:311). The Spirit is indeed the hallmark of the New Covenant (Harris 2005:273; Sampley 2000:73).

### 7.3.1.5 *Discontinuity and identity*

In conclusion, one has to acknowledge the *discontinuity* between the Old and New Covenants as portrayed in this passage. The Mosaic ministry or the Old Covenant, which is defined by Mosaic law, is portrayed as a temporal ministry of death and condemnation with lesser glory, which was destined for abolition. This Old Covenant is being replaced and superseded with the permanent New Covenant with superior glory for all humankind, effected by the Spirit that qualifies believers and brings eternal life and freedom (cf. Meyer 2009:73-94; Fee 1994:307-308; Wright 1993:181,192; Hong 1991:154; Kruse [1987] 1998:97-99; Furnish 1984:207; Harris [1976] 1977:338; Barrett [1973] 1976:118-119; Pop [1953] 1962:91).

The abolition of the covenant defined by law and its supersession by the covenant of Spirit has to have profound consequences for defining the identity of God’s people. Wright (1993:180) correctly sees the deeper contrast in this passage as between Israel and believers in Christ. The law cannot serve as identity marker for God’s people in the light of Christ’s work through the Spirit, but has to be replaced by another identity marker (or other identity markers). In view of all the Pauline passages discussed up to this point, the Spirit can be understood as central in defining the identity of God’s people in the New Covenant, but further exploration is needed to describe πνεῦμα as opposed to σάρξ in terms of identity more precisely.

The modes of identity that are represented in this passage are identity mode A (national Israel) and identity mode C (those who have turned to the Lord), which

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are in *discontinuity* with each other. In the light of the New Covenant, there is a sense wherein identity mode A overlaps with the identity of all unbelievers. For Paul, Christ and the Spirit have become so central in redefining the identity of God's people (identity mode C), that he seems to universalise all people outside of Christ (identity mode A). In other words, the universality of God's people in Christ has universal implications for all people outside of Christ. In this sense, the ministry of death (v. 7) might be described as the destined "death" of identity mode A (together with all other unbelievers) in the death of Christ (esp. 5:15, see 6.2.1). This notion of universalisation of all people outside of Christ in terms of identity will be examined and qualified further in the next section (7.4).

### 7.4 Spirit and flesh as modes and markers of identity (AC)

At this point in the exegetical study, it has come to the fore that there is a close relationship of both the concepts πνεῦμα and σὰρξ with identity in Paul. In the passages consulted, the expression κατὰ σάρκα often denotes natural, ethnical descent (Rom 1:3; 4:1; 9:3,5; 1 Cor 10:18; 2 Cor 5:16 [arguably]; 11:18; Gal 4:23,29; cf. τέκνα τῆς σαρκός, Rom 9:8). Σὰρξ is often contrasted to πνεῦμα, which indicates the beginning of the life of the believer in Christ (Gal 3:2-3) and arguably those who are regenerated (Gal 4:29; see 7.5.2). Πνεῦμα can indicate a kind of existence in a new eschatological aeon that is incompatible with σὰρξ (Php 3:3). Spirit constitutes life, freedom and justification in the New Covenant, and is contrasted with the "letter" and with death, which indicates the ministry of the Old Covenant defined by the law that is abolished in Christ (2 Cor 3).

These meanings attached to πνεῦμα and σὰρξ strongly suggest that the πνεῦμα-σὰρξ dichotomy is central to the understanding of identity in Paul. This contrast is most prominent in Romans 7 to 8 (esp. 7:5-6; 8:1-16) and Galatians 5:16-25, which will constitute the main focus of this section. In 1 Corinthians 12:12-13, which contains a similar formula than Galatians 3:28 and Colossians 3:11 (Judaean, Greek, slave, free), Paul associates πνεῦμα with the "one body" of believers, which is closely related to identity. The strong language in Colossians

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2:11-13, where “the body of” σάρξ is “put off” in the circumcision of Christ and where “the uncircumcision of” σάρξ is addressed, marks this passage as possibly contributing to the debate.

### 7.4.1 Romans 7 to 8

It can be argued that Romans 7 and 8 form the latter part of the second major section of the letter that starts in Romans 5 (Wright 2002:508; Moo 1996:292). The main reasons for this view are that many themes reoccur in Romans 5 through 8 and correspond especially in 5:1-11 and 8:18-39 (Moo 1996:292),<sup>364</sup> together with the fact that much of the subject matter in Romans 5 differs from 1 to 4 (Wright 2002:508). The themes of “death”, “law” and “sin” are associated with σάρξ (7:5-6; 8:2-3), while “life” is associated with πνεῦμα (8:2,6,10,13). Since these themes (death, law, sin, life) are abundant throughout Romans 5 to 8:16,<sup>365</sup> Romans 5 and 6 are anticipated as laying much of the ground work for understanding πνεῦμα and σάρξ in 7 to 8:16. A brief overview of Romans 5 to 6 (esp. Rom 6) pertaining to Paul’s main thought around these themes (death, law, sin, life) will thus follow.

#### 7.4.1.1 Romans 5

After establishing faith in Christ as the only means of righteousness (4:1-25, see 5.1.2), Paul now confirms faith as the access to the grace in which believers stand (v. 2) amidst suffering (vv. 3-4). The Spirit and God’s love assure believers and give them hope (v. 5). In 5:6-11, Paul focuses on Christ’s death and the objective reconciliation that His death has established.

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<sup>364</sup> E.g., “love of God/Christ” (5:5,8; 8:35,39), “justify” (5:1,9; 6:7; 8:30,33), “glory” (5:2; 6:4; 8:18,21,30), “peace” (5:1; 8:6), “hope” (5:2,4,5; 8:20,24,25), “tribulation” (5:3; 8:35), “save” (5:9,10; 8:24) and “endurance” (5:3,4; 8:25; Moo 1996:293).

<sup>365</sup> In 5:1-8:16, these themes occur as follows: “life”: 5:10,17,18,21; 6:4,8,10,11,13,22,23; 7:10; 8:2,6,10, 12,13; “sin”: 5:8,12,13,16,19,20,21; 6:1,2,6,7,10,11,12,13,14,15,16,17,18,20,22,23; 7:5,7,8,9,11,13,14,17,20,23,25; 8:2,3,10; “law”: 5:13,20; 6:14,15; 7:1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,12,14,16,21,22,23,25; 8:2,3,4,7; and “death”: 5:6,7,8,10,12,14,15,17,21; 6:2,3,4,5,7,8,9,10,11,13,16,21,23; 7:2,3,4,5,6,8,9,10,13,24; 8:2,6,11,13.

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In the latter part of Romans 5 (vv. 12-21), Paul's approach is once again deeply salvation-historical (Ridderbos 1959:112,123; cf. Moo 1996:352) focusing especially on sin and death from Adam to Christ as representatives of humanity. Adam and Christ represent two respective epochs or aeons (Moo 1996:315,352; Dunn 1988a:288,294-296; Ridderbos 1959:112). Whereas the epoch of Adam is described as an epoch where death (v. 14,17) and sin *reigned* (v. 21), the epoch of Christ is pictured by the *reign* of life (v. 17) and grace (v. 21). But the reign of Christ is pictured as surpassing the reign of Adam (πολλῶ μᾶλλον, περισσεύω/περισσεία in vv. 15,17). Christ's obedience, causing many to be righteous, is set over against Adam's disobedience (v. 19). Within the reign of death (from Adam to Moses, v.14), the law was additionally brought into the equation resulting in disastrous consequences (v. 20; Wright 2002:525), causing the trespass to multiply (πλεονάση τὸ παράπτωμα, v. 20; cf. NRSV). The reign of sin "in death" is finally contrasted to the reign of grace through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ as Lord (v. 21).

Wright (2002:525) correctly argues that Paul's basic thesis is that "Israel according to the flesh" is "in Adam" which Paul will be elaborating upon in Romans 7. The universal scope of Christ's work in terms of its effect on all people (see τοὺς πολλοὺς, v. 15; πάντας ἀνθρώπους, v. 18; οἱ πολλοί, v. 19) might even suggest having an effect in some way on historical Israel.<sup>366</sup> The gift of grace that abounded for many (v. 15) "is nothing short of a new creation, creation not merely out of nothing but out of anti-creation, out of death itself" (Wright 2002:528). Wright's notion is confirmed by the correspondence in themes between 5:12-21 and 2 Corinthians 5:14-21.<sup>367</sup>

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<sup>366</sup> Although such a notion might seem premature in Romans 5, Paul's universal language in 5:12-21 might serve the purpose of assigning even deeper significance to Christ's death later on (see 9.4).

<sup>367</sup> Corresponding themes: righteousness (Rom 5:17-19,21; 2 Cor 5:21), the death of all people (Rom 5:12,14,15,17; 2 Cor 5:14) and the power of sin that has been broken (Rom 5:13; 2 Cor 5:19,21).

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### 7.4.1.2 Romans 6

The respective realms of sin and death in Adam, and that of righteousness and life in Christ that Paul has sketched in 5:12-21, form the foundation of Romans 6 (Moo 1996:352). The whole of Romans 6 constitutes the Christ-believer's "transfer from the realm of sin to that of righteousness" (:351). The transfer of believers from the old aeon in Adam to the new aeon in Christ results in a new relationship to sin (:352; Barrett [1962] 1975:122).<sup>368</sup> Romans 6 concentrates on the subduing of sin, which is used in the singular throughout the chapter (Moo 1996:350). The *reign* of sin is still a prevalent theme (vv. 9,12,14), but now as a *former* reign to which the believer has died to (vv. 2,6,7) in the death of Christ (v. 3-4,10). The transfer from the old age in Adam to the new age in Christ thus constitutes a change in masters. A believer in Christ is not under the "lordship" of sin or under the "power of" the law any longer, but under the "power of" grace (vv. 14,15; Moo 1996:352,358; cf. Hultgren 2011:243; Wright 2002:540; Mounce 1995:162-163; Ridderbos 1959:125). The believer died to the first "kingdom" and belongs to the second (cf. 5:21; Wright 2002:534).

The corporative dying to sin (v. 2) in Christ (v. 3) is therefore best understood as a salvation-historical reality which has implications on both forensic and ethical levels (Ridderbos 1959:125). The "old way of existence" is especially contrasted to the new in verses 5 to 6 where the salvation-historical divide carries eschatological significance (:129; cf. Hultgren 2011:243; Moo 1996:374-375). The old ἄνθρωπος that has been crucified with Christ (vv. 6-8) corresponds with similar notions elsewhere in Paul (Gal 2:20; 5:24; 6:14; cf. Eph 4:22; Col 3:9-10), and constitutes a realised eschatology where one is already alive in Christ (v. 11; cf. Wright 2002:538; Ridderbos 1959:131). Both the "old person" (v. 6) and the

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<sup>368</sup> Although Paul (vv. 3-4) refers to water baptism (Wright 2002:533; Moo 1996:355,359; Mounce 1995:149; Bruce [1985] 2000:140; Cranfield 1975:301; if anything other than water baptism is intended [e.g., metaphorical] the context is normally indicative, Ferguson 2009:148) as enactment or portrayal (see fn. 160; Wright 2002:534; Mounce 1995:149; Dunn 1988a:311; rather than representing a divine act through baptism or a divine instrument, contra Moo 1996:634; Käsemann 1980:162-163; Cranfield 1975:304) of the death and resurrection of Christ and the transition from the old way of existence to the new (esp. Barrett [1962] 1975:122), baptism itself is not the main theme of the passage. Paul's reference to baptism here rather represents the conversion experience as a whole (Moo 1996:355).

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implied “new person”<sup>369</sup> thus echo the contrast between the epoch in Adam and Christ or “the two contrasting ages of salvation history” (Moo 1996:374; cf. Dunn 1988a:315-321; Barrett [1962] 1975:127;<sup>370</sup> 5:21).

The respective reigns “under the law” (ὑπὸ νόμον, vv. 14,15) and “under grace” (ὑπὸ χάριν, v. 15) once again constitute the old (law) and new (grace) salvation-historical (eschatological) realms or powers (Moo 1996:389). The law here is best understood as a system or body that exercises a binding force (:390; Schreiner 1989:54-59). To be “under the law” describes a state of powerlessness outside of Christ where there is a command to do “good” but the power to fulfil it is lacking (Ridderbos 1959:137; cf. 8:3). The notion to be slaves either of sin or righteousness (vv. 16-20) accentuates the change of master between the old reign of sin and the new reign of righteousness (Hendriksen 1980, Romans 6:15-23).

Although the term σάρξ occurs once in Roman 6 (v. 19), it points to the lack of ability to grasp the deepest, spiritual realities (Ridderbos 1959:141), and thus “simply denotes potential slowness of understanding” and not “moral disability” (Wright 2002:545).

In terms of identity, the old aeon in Adam corresponds to identity mode A (Israel according to the flesh), while the new aeon in Christ corresponds to identity mode C (believers in Christ). As with 2 Corinthians 3 (see 7.3.1), there seems to be universality in the identity outside of Christ. The identity of those outside of Christ is defined by sin and death, which is enhanced by the law. The identity in Christ is characterised by life, grace and freedom from the law.

Even though both Romans 5 and 6 thus contain strong elements of *discontinuity* in terms of the identity of Israel and believers in Christ, the new aeon that stands

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<sup>369</sup> See the theme of “life” esp. in vv. 4,8, and 13.

<sup>370</sup> Although Barrett ([1962] 1975:127,129) recognises the new eschatological age that is inaugurated in Christ, his emphasis is more on being “between the times”. E.g., he stresses the Lutheran notion of *simul iustus et peccator*. Similarly, Dunn (1988a:315-321) acknowledges the epoch in Adam as “life under the age prior to Christ, the old covenant” (:318) and Christ’s death and life as “decisive eschatological events” (:321). Yet he states that the “new epoch of Christ does not mean an end to the old, but neither does its realization in the lives of believers await the complete end of the old” (:315).

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in contrast to the old in the whole of Romans 5 to 8 can also be understood as a *fulfilment* of the old and therefore in *continuity* with the old (cf. Wright 2002:535): (1) The one family of Judaeans and Gentile believers has to be understood as a fulfilment of the promises to Abraham (Rom 4). (2) The Old Testament promises pertaining to land and reign over the nations are fulfilled in Abraham's seed (believers in Christ) that inherit the whole world (4:13, see 5.1.2).

### 7.4.1.3 Romans 7

The main topic of Romans 7 is the Mosaic law. Paul makes two main points in this chapter. The first point is that the bondage to the law must be severed in order for people to be put into a new relationship with Christ (vv. 1-6). This gives rise to questions about the origin and nature of the law. In verses 7 to 25 which constitute the second point, Paul answers these questions by showing that the law came from God, but became the unwitting tool of sin which confirmed and imprisoned death. The law could neither justify nor sanctify (Moo 1996:409). Romans 8:3 sums up the whole point of 7:7-25: "God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do" (NRSV; cf. Moo 1996:409). Romans 7 is not so much about the content of the law or whether the law is an expression of the will of God, as it is about the *regime* of the law. According to verses 1 to 6, a new reign has come in effect: that of πνεῦμα. Under the reign of the law, fulfilment of God's will is not possible (vv. 7-25; Ridderbos 1959:143).

Although Paul's image of the "husband" that dies and enables the "wife" to remarry (vv. 2-4) is difficult to follow,<sup>371</sup> the main point is clear: The "marriage" to the first "husband" represents the regime under the law and its binding authority (κατέχω, v. 6; Moo 1996:415; cf. Fee 1994:503; BDAG §4). The new relationship is with the resurrected Christ (v. 4), free from the reign of the law, to bear fruit (v. 4) and serve in the newness of πνεῦμα and not in the oldness of γράμμα (v. 6).

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<sup>371</sup> There exists an inherent difficulty to this image. The "husband" that dies seems to represent humanity which corporately died in Christ (cf. 6:2-11). In other words, in Paul's explanation of the image in v. 4, the "you" in the first half of the image represents the husband. But there is a shift in the second half of the image, where the believer in Christ can only represent the wife (Wright 2002:559).

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The contrast between πνεῦμα and γράμμα (v. 6) echoes the same contrast of 2 Corinthians 3 (see 7.3.1) where the Old and New Covenants are contrasted (Kruse 2012:296; Wright 2002:560-561; Dunn 1988a:366; cf. Bruce [1985] 2000:149-150). The New Covenant is set to take account of the problems inherent to the Old Covenant (Wright 2002:560-561). Where the Old covenant was ruled and defined by the law (γράμμα), the New Covenant is ruled and defined by πνεῦμα.<sup>372</sup> In the context of Romans, the πνεῦμα-γράμμα contrast evokes 2:29. As argued in 4.5.1, πνεῦμα in 2:29 is unlikely to refer to the Holy Spirit in view of the build-up of Paul's argument, but rather refers to an *ideal* Judaeon who *ought to have* the ability in his or her spirit to fulfil the law, but in fact *has not* due to the corruptness of all people (3:1-20). In Christ however, this *ideal* becomes a *reality*. Now, through Christ's body (7:4) "we" are discharged (κατηργήθημεν, v. 6; BDAG, καταργέω §4; NRSV) from the law and died to the law (vv. 4,6) to serve in the newness of πνεῦμα and not in the oldness of the "letter" any longer. Πνεῦμα is here (v. 6) without the article (as in 2:29), which might suggest that it denotes the human spirit. Translators and commentators are however divided between the translations of πνεῦμα here, alternating between translating it as God's Spirit (e.g., Wright 2002:560; Moo 1996:410,420; Fee 1994:503; Ridderbos 1959:146; ISV; NRSV; NIV) and the human spirit (e.g., Bruce [1985] 2000:54; REB; LITV; RV; DST; KJV).

Before deciding on an appropriate translation for πνεῦμα, one has to consider its contrast to σὰρξ (v. 5), which constitutes the deeper contrast in verses 5 to 6 (which includes γράμμα, v. 6). The ὅτε ("when") in verse 5 stands in contrast to the νῦν ("now") in verse 6, and points to the contrast between two eschatological realities or aeons (cf. Jewett 2007:436-437; 1971:145; Moo 1994:422; Fee 1994:504,821; Käsemann 1980:190,210; Cranfield 1975:337,340; Schweizer 1971:133-135; 1968:419,424,428; Ridderbos 1959:145-147):

(1) "Existence in the domain of the flesh" which "is determined by the three other 'powers' of the old age: sin, the law, and death" (Moo 1996:419).

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<sup>372</sup> For Dunn (1998a:371), Paul does not assign the law to the realm of the old epoch of sin and death "*simpliciter* as though the law was simply one with sin and death."

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(2) Existence in πνεῦμα, which stands opposed to an existence in the domain of σάρξ (which includes, law, sin and death), and is characterised by “newness”.

The phrase ἐν τῇ σαρκί in verse 5 is thus an indication of a *way of existence* outside of Christ and the Spirit (Fee 1994:510-511; Ridderbos 1959:145; cf. Dunn 1988a:364;<sup>373</sup> Guthrie 1981:172-173; Käsemann 1980:188-189; Cranfield 1975:337; Jewett 1971:145; Barrett [1962] 1975:137?;<sup>374</sup> Sanday & Headlam [1902] 1960:176), and points to the human existence as a “supra-individual reality to which the individual human-being-outside-of-Christ has lapsed into” (Ridderbos 1959:145, translated;<sup>375</sup> cf. Schweizer 1971:133; Gal 5:13,17, see 7.4.2). In Fee’s (1994:504) words, “both the Law and the flesh belong to the past, on the pre-Christ, pre-Spirit side of eschatological realities” (cf. Sanders [1983] 1989:70). Similarly, πνεῦμα in verse 6 denotes the new way of existence and eschatological reality in Christ where the Spirit is God’s replacement of law observance (Fee 1994:507; Käsemann 1980:210; cf. Schweizer 1968:416,419,425,428). The Spirit is the essential element of the New Covenant (Fee 1994:508). Ridderbos (1959:146-147) is therefore correct to suggest that σάρξ (v. 5, corresponding to γράμμα, v. 6) and πνεῦμα (v. 6) in this context essentially denote two separate salvation-historical categories (cf. Gal 5:17, see 7.4.2; Moo 1994:422). Life in the flesh thus does not belong to the believer’s eschatological present (Fee 1994:505). Both πνεῦμα and σάρξ is therefore used in verses 5 to 6 in an extended sense.

Although the above mentioned authors understand πνεῦμα and σάρξ in terms of salvation-historical (and eschatological) categories, they still opt for translating πνεῦμα as “Spirit” (divine, see above) as opposed to “spirit” (human). This is however an inappropriate contrast. If πνεῦμα here denotes a salvation-historical *way of existence*, both God’s Spirit and the human spirit is part of the definition, as

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<sup>373</sup> While Dunn (1988a:364) understands ἐν σαρκί and ἐν Χριστῷ as contrasting the two epochs (Adam/Christ), he understands σάρξ as “a condition or *attitude* which is in contrast to, at odds with, or *places restraints upon* the ἐν Χριστῷ” (emphasis added).

<sup>374</sup> Barrett ([1962] 1975:137) works in this direction by stating that σάρξ here denotes “the state in which men [sic] are dominated by law, sin, and death”, but argues that believers are “both in and not in the flesh”.

<sup>375</sup> “Het ‘zijn in het vlees’ duidt deze meselijke existentie aan als een boven-individuele wekelijkheid, waaraan de individuele mens-buiten-Christus vevallen is” (Ridderbos 1959:145).

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Paul suggests in 8:16: “The *Spirit* Himself witnesses with our *spirit* that we are children of God” (LITV, emphases added, see 7.4.1.4). The translation “spirit” thus seems more appropriate, but then not to denote the *human* spirit *per se*, but to denote a *way of existence* where the human spirit has been made alive and human existence and identity is defined by God’s Spirit (8:16, see 7.4.1.4).

The bondage that the law caused might create the impression that the law is inherently evil or against God, a line of reasoning that was indeed followed by Marcion. But in Romans 7:7-25 Paul defends the divine origin of the law (God’s law, v. 22) by stating that it is inherently good (vv. 12,17), just (v. 12) and “spiritual” (v. 14). Additionally, Paul seeks to explain how the law, although inherently good, could have such a deleterious effect (Moo 1996:423,453). Romans 7:7-25 can be divided into two sections, verses 7 to 12 and verses 14 to 25, where verse 13 forms a bridge in between (Wright 2002:565; Moo 1996:423-424). In verses 7 to 12, Paul shows in the past tense how sin has used the law to bring death. Verses 14 to 25 describe in the present tense the constant battle between the will which agrees with God’s law and the flesh which succumbs to the law of sin. The net result is that the law of God is impotent to break the power of sin (Moo 1996:424), but is necessary to drive people to Christ (see below).

One of the most important questions in understanding 7:14-25, is the identity of the “I” (ἐγὼ). Does it refer to someone before or outside of Christ, or does it refer to a general struggle of a believer in Christ? Although both positions are well accounted for, it is more likely that the “I” represents the person before or outside of Christ (Kruse 2012:298,305-311; Jewett 2007:462-473; 1971:147; Westerholm 2004:144-145; Wright 2002:551-553; Moo 1996:447-449; Fee 1994:511-515; Lambrecht 1992:90,136; Beker 1980:105-106,216-217; Guthrie 1981:173-174; Käsemann 1980:199-212; Sanders [1983] 1989:76; 1977:443; Schweizer 1971:133; Ridderbos 1966:132-139; 1959:154; Kümmel 1929;<sup>376</sup> contra Hultgren 2011:285-292; Dunn 1988a:357-413; Cranfield 1975:340-371). More specifically,

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<sup>376</sup> See Moo (1996:446), Guthrie (1981:173) and Beker (1980:388, n. 5) for references to more proponents of this view.

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the “I” can be understood as a rhetorical device<sup>377</sup> that arguably points to Israel under the law from the perspective of a believer in Christ (Wright 2002:553,558,565; Lambrecht 1990:84-85; cf. Kruse 2012:298). That Paul was thinking of more than himself is implied by the reference to the tenth commandment (v. 7) that “came” (ἐλθούσης, v. 9). The reference to sin (vv. 8-9) evokes 5:12-14 which explained sin as coming into the world between Adam and Moses (the mosaic law). Paul probably rhetorically identified himself with Israel as the prophets did by using “I” in denoting Israel collectively (Jer 10:19-20; cf. Mic 7:7-10; Lambrecht 1990:84-85).<sup>378</sup>

Among others, the best arguments for viewing 7:14-25 as denoting the person before or outside of Christ are probably the following (1-4): (1) The strong connection of the “I” with the “flesh” (vv. 14,18,25) suggests that Paul has the unregenerate person or the person in Adam in mind (v. 5, see above; Moo 1996:445). (2) The questions Paul asks have to do with the law and thus with life under the law, and not with life in Christ (Fee 1994:511-514).<sup>379</sup> (3) Romans 8:5-8 corresponds with 7:5-6 in terms of its contrast between two salvation-historical epochs and stand in contrast with 7:7-25, which might be understood as something of a digression. There is no hint in Romans 8:5-8 of an internal struggle (Fee 1994:514-515, see 7.4.1.4). (4) The language of 7:7-25 describes the unregenerate existence that stands in contrast to the existence in Christ. The statement “I am of the flesh, sold into slavery under sin” (v. 14b, NRSV) can be contrasted to 6:2,6,11,18-22 where the release from the power of sin is described, and especially to Romans 8:9, which explicitly states that “you are not in flesh, but in spirit” (see 7.4.1.4). To be a “prisoner of the law of sin” (v. 23) stands in contrast to 8:2, which depicts believers as being free from the law of sin and death. Although believers continue to sin (e.g., 6:12-13; 13:12-14), 7:14-25 does not describe a struggle with sin, but a defeat by sin. The “I” struggles with the

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<sup>377</sup> Paul uses the first person impersonally in 3:7 (cf. 1 Cor 11:31-32; 13:1-3; 14:11; Gal 2:18), but this use is not frequent in Paul (Moo 1996:427). Yet various sources has been identified where “I” is used rhetorically and impersonally outside of Paul (see Lyons 1985; Kümmel 1929).

<sup>378</sup> Moo (1996:427-431) argues that autobiographical elements has to be retained in Rom 7, and understands the “I” as Paul “in solidarity with Israel” (cf. Lambrecht 1990:84-85).

<sup>379</sup> The implicit questions that Paul asks in v. 13 are: (a) Is the law sinful? (b) Was the law responsible for “my” death? (Fee 1994:512).

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need to obey the Mosaic law, but Paul has declared a release from the dictates of the law (6:14; 7:4-6; Moo 1996:445; cf. Westerholm 2004:143; Wright 2002:551-553).

As argued in 6.1.7.2, Paul's autobiographical account in Philippians 3 is different from what is portrayed in Romans 7. Paul's reference to being blameless in terms of the righteousness of the law (Php 3:6) does not denote a general condition of Israel under the law from the perspective of the Christ-believer (as in Rom 7), but Paul's own achievements from a Pharisaic perspective. It has to do with outward, visible aspects of the law and not with the will to do God's will in terms of the inmost being (7:15-23,25; cf. Wright 2002:552-553; Moo 1996:456).

Although the tense is changed from past in 7:7-12 to present in 7:14-25, the change in tense alone cannot account for a change of topic (cf. Wright 2002:565; Käsemann 1980:199). The question about the law in verse 13a pertains to the preceding salvation-historical exposition of the law that was given to Israel that made sin to have revived (ἀναζάω, v. 9, NRSV). Verse 9a thus describes the time of Adam before the Mosaic law (Wright 2002:563). The law that was intended to give life (v. 10), which is inherently holy, just and good (vv. 12,13a), corresponds with verse 14: "for we know that the law is spiritual" (cf. Wright 2002:566). Verses 14 to 25 can therefore be understood as an elaboration of the way in which the law functions with respect to enhancing sin, in spite of an understanding of the law as good or the intention to observe the law.

The contrast between πνευματικός and σάρκινος in verse 14 cannot have the same significance as the πνεῦμα-σάρξ contrast in verses 5 to 6. Here in verse 14, πνευματικός probably indicates the law's divine origin (BDAG §2aβ; Moo 1996:453; Fee 1994:510; Cranfield 1975:355; Ridderbos 1959:155). It corresponds with the notions that the law is good (vv. 12,17) and just (v. 12), and that it is God's law (v. 22). The use of πνευματικός here is similar to that of 1 Corinthians 10:3-4, where Paul describes the "spiritual" food and drink of the Israelites as given by God (Moo 1996:453; Sanday & Headlam [1902] 1960:181). The πνευματικός-σάρκινος contrast can also be compared to the πνεῦμα-σάρξ contrast of Romans 2:29, where both aspects are characteristic of an existence

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before or outside Christ. Although the law is good and “spiritual”, it remains an *ideal* to fulfil the law (see 4.5.1). The term σάρκινος (7:14) probably describes a person’s “cosmic fallenness to the world” (Käsemann 1980:199; cf. Schweizer 1971:144) or his or her opposition to God (Jewett 2007:461).<sup>380</sup> Although the term σάρκινος can be assigned to the regenerate (e.g., 1 Cor 3:1-3), an existence described as “of the flesh, sold into slavery under sin” (v. 14, NRSV) can only point to the person outside of Christ (Wright 2002:552; Moo 1996:454; Schweizer 1971:144; Ridderbos 1959:154; contra Dunn 1988a:388,<sup>381</sup> Cranfield 1975:356-357), especially when it is compared to verse 5 (see above). The designation πνευματικός, which defines the law and not the “I”, therefore stands independent of the way of existence in the flesh.

Verses 15 to 20 primarily portray the conflict between “willing” (θέλω, 7 times) and “doing” (ποιέω; κατεργάζομαι; πράσσω).<sup>382</sup> This conflict leads to defeat (v. 23) and despair (v. 24), a conflict that is akin to someone under the Mosaic law. The perspective on this conflict however is retrospective from Paul’s position in Christ (Wright 2002:571; Moo 1996:455-456). It is interesting that Paul’s description of the unregenerate person in verse 15 is similar to others found in the ancient world<sup>383</sup> which strengthens the notion that Paul here has the unregenerate person in mind. In the clause, “sin that dwells in me” (v. 17), sin seems to be personified as a reigning authority in the life of someone outside of Christ (cf. Wright 2002:588; Moo 1996:458). In verse 18, σάρξ probably carries a simple material meaning, denoting physical human existence (cf. BDAG §2cα; Moo 1996:459). An element of anthropological dualism thus has to be acknowledged in Paul’s view of the human being. Paul does not view “flesh” here as inherently evil, but he implies that the material body is particularly susceptible to sin (Moo 1996:459; cf. Cottrell 1998; Boyarin 1994:83). This contrast is probably deliberate to show

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<sup>380</sup> Rather than understanding the term as denoting human weakness or frailty as in 1 Cor 3:1-3 (contra Moo 1996:453-454).

<sup>381</sup> Although Dunn (1988a:388) recognises the expression’s (“of the flesh, sold into slavery under sin”) allusion to the old epoch in Adam, he understands it as the believer’s *current* “belongingness to the epoch of Adam”.

<sup>382</sup> The desire to “do” what the law dictates once again accounts for an understanding of the law which is more than marking off identity (cf. 2:13,23-25, see 4.5.1, esp. fn. 106).

<sup>383</sup> E.g., Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* 7:21: “I see and approve the better course, but I follow the worse”; Epictetus, *Discourses* 2:26:4 (Moo 1996:457; Käsemann 1980:200).

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the “dividedness” of the Judaeian existence under the law “as a way of explaining how sincere respect for that law could be combined with failure to perform it” (Moo 1996:459; cf. Ridderbos 1959:169). The point that Paul tries to bring across is that there is always a dichotomy in the existence of the unregenerate between the will to do good and the ability to perform it. The will remains under the power of sin (cf. Moo 1996:459). It is noteworthy that both the “I” (denoting primarily Israel under the law) and the law itself is being exonerated in a sense (vv. 15-20). The blame essentially rests on sin (vv. 17b,20b). Although serious charges are laid against Israel (esp. 9:32-33; 10:21) the problem is not to be an Israelite in itself (Wright 2002:567-568), but rather that their identity has been defined by law, sin and death, which would include even inner, elect Israel.

The law in verse 21 is best understood as a “principle” rather than denoting the Mosaic law (Hultgren 2011:290; Moo 1996:460; Hendriksen 1980, Romans 7:14-25; Cranfield 1975:361-362; Ridderbos 1959:158; Sanday & Headlam [1902] 1960:182; cf. Käsemann 1980:205; contra Dunn 1988a:392).<sup>384</sup> The “law” underlines the dichotomy between the “willing” and the “doing” of verses 15-20 as an ever present principle in the life of the person outside of Christ. In verse 22, the law is qualified as “the law of God” which denotes the Mosaic law (Wright 2002:570; Moo 1996:461). Although the “inner person” (ἔσω ἄνθρωπον, v. 22) elsewhere describes the anthropology of a believer in Christ (2 Cor 4:16; Eph 3:16) the phrase is not a technical description of a Christ-believer,<sup>385</sup> and corresponds to a similar notion in verse 18 (Moo 1996:462; cf. Ridderbos 1959:158).

In verse 23, the “other law” (ἕτερον νόμον) has to point to a “law” other than the Mosaic law. The alternative view (to understand it as the Mosaic law) would make the chief protagonists in verses 22 to 25 both God’s law. This cannot be, for it is not the law which is “in the flesh”, but sin (v. 18; Moo 1996:463; cf. Fee 1994:512;

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<sup>384</sup> The accusative τὸν νόμον is more naturally taken as the direct object of εὐρίσκω. The ὅτι introduces the content of τὸν νόμον and thus rules out the possibility of pointing to the Mosaic law. Additionally, the qualification “the law of God” (v. 22) suggests that this νόμος is distinguished from the previous one (Moo 1996:460).

<sup>385</sup> In the Greek literature, this phrase was used to denote the “Godward” or immortal side of a human being (Jeremias 1964:365).

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Ridderbos 1959:159). The “other law” rather refers to an authority or demand that is like, but opposed to the Mosaic law. It is best to take the “law of God” and the “law of my mind” as corresponding, and the “law of sin” as corresponding to “another law” (Moo 1996:464; Cranfield 1975:364; Ridderbos 1959:159).

The cry for deliverance from “the body of this death” (v. 24) echoes the notion of death in verses 9 and 10, which is the result of an existence which is “fleshly, sold under sin” outside of Christ (v. 14b; cf. Moo 1996:465; Ridderbos 1959:154,160,162).<sup>386</sup> Verse 25a already anticipates the solution to an existence under the law and sin, which is God’s work in Christ. But it does not mark the beginning of Paul’s discussion of the life in Christ just yet (Wright 2002:571; Moo 1996:466-467), for verse 25b summarises and recapitulates the “dividedness” of the “I” that Paul has put forth in verses 15 to 23: between the will to do God’s law against the “flesh” that serves the “law of sin” (Moo 1996:467; Fee 1994:521). Σάρξ here (v. 25) rather has a material than an ethical meaning (Moo 1996:467). The whole of Romans 7 accentuates the fact that the Mosaic law cannot deliver anyone from the power of sin (Moo 1996:467). But although the Mosaic law could not in itself break the power of sin, the inherent virtue and purpose of the law is in fact vindicated in two ways: (1) It caused people to “die” in their own striving to do good and realise “the body of this death” (v. 24) and their inability to do God’s will, because of their existence in the flesh (v. 5). This “death” corresponds in a sense to the notion of the death of all people with Christ in His death (2 Cor 5:15; cf. Rom 5:15; 6:2-6). (2) The “death” of the “I”, the complete self (cf. Witherington III 1998:212), facilitated by the law is necessary in order to drive people to Christ who is the only One who can deliver (ῥύομαι, v. 24) them from their wretched situation and by implication save them “from themselves” (cf. Gal 2:20).<sup>387</sup>

It has to be noted here that although Paul primarily has Israel under the law in mind in Romans 7, one has to take the universal dimension of the law, sin and

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<sup>386</sup> In this interpretation, σῶμα is understood as metaphorical (cf. Nash 1984:60).

<sup>387</sup> Käsemann (1980:209) summarises the “heart of Paul’s teaching” in Rom 7 in terms of the limits that a “religious person” encounters after the fall (cf. Barrett [1962] 1975:138). Although the religious person agrees with God’s will and delights in it, as long as salvation is strived for by obeying the commandments, that person becomes entangled in their own desire for life “which tries to snatch what can only be given” (Käsemann 1980:209).

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death into account (cf. Westerholm 2004:144-145; Dunn 1988a:383; Käsemann 1980:195,201,205; Cranfield 1975:341). Even though Gentiles did not receive the Mosaic law as such, it remains the only standard of God for all humanity prior to the coming of Christ.<sup>388</sup> Since Gentiles “are a law to themselves” (2:14-15), and since sin (3:10-24) and death have affected all of humanity in Adam (5:12-21), Gentiles outside of Christ are in principle included in an existence that can be described as “the body of this death” (7:24). The scenario of Romans 7 (esp. vv. 7-25) can thus be applied to *all of unregenerate humanity* that would want to do God’s will but cannot because of being under the law and being in a flesh-existence (cf. Fee 1994:820; Ridderbos 1959:167). In other words, for someone *outside* of Christ, although living subsequent to Christ’s death and resurrection, that person still lives in the old aeon in the flesh. In terms of eschatology, one thus has to acknowledge the fact that believers live “between the times” (Fee 1994:820-822). Although the old aeon constituted by an existence in the flesh has come to an end in Christ’s death and resurrection, and becomes effective for those who are in Christ, the complete eradication of the old existence *for all of humanity* will only be realised at the parousia.

In the same line of thinking, there might be an even deeper perspective or layer to the understanding of Romans 7. Schreiner (2001:266-267), while acknowledging the strength of the arguments of both the views that understand Romans 7:7-25 as denoting those in Christ and those outside of Christ, argues that Paul’s purpose is “to communicate the inability of the law to transform human beings.” For Schreiner, this scenario would include both unbelievers and believers in so far as they would rely on “their own capacities for moral transformation.” The implication of Schreiner’s view would be the inverse of the view that I have argued for: that someone *in* Christ would be (or ought to be) *outside* of seeking transformation or deliverance through the law.

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<sup>388</sup> Although it might be objected that it is unlikely that a Gentile living before Christ might “delight in the law”, if one considers (1) the fact that Paul is largely defending the Mosaic law as such in Rom 7 as inherently good rather than accounting for many that do not obey it, and (2) that Paul who was born an Israelite looks at the law from the perspective of the new identity in Christ, the only reality that could define people’s status and relation to God before Christ, regardless of ethnicity, can only be the Mosaic law (cf. Westerholm 2004:145).

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### 7.4.1.4 *Romans 8:1-16*

Romans 8:1 marks the beginning of Paul's response to the wretched (ταλαίπωρος, 7:24) existence before or outside of Christ as portrayed in 7:7-25. The *vũv* (v. 1) is clearly temporal and not logical if Paul's use of the term elsewhere is taken into account (5:9,11; 6:19,21; 11:30,31) and if the context is considered (Fee 1994:521, see above). The *vũv* denotes the new era of salvation history inaugurated by Christ's death and resurrection (Moo 1996:472; cf. Barrett [1962] 1975:154; 3:21; 5:9; 6:19,22; 7:6). The term κατάκριμα (v. 1) only occurs elsewhere in 5:16,18 in the New Testament and thus binds 8:1 to 5:12-21, where the reality and finality of life in Christ is depicted as the product of righteousness (Moo 1996:469). A measure of finality in Christ is constituted by the fact that God has already condemned (κατακρίνω, v. 3; Wright 2002:575-576) or punished (BDAG, κατακρίνω; Bruce [1985] 2000:161; cf. Mounce 1995:175) sin in Christ. To be free from condemnation thus bears eschatological significance (Wright 2002:575-576).

Verses 2 to 4 sketch the solution to the dilemma of the split "I" in 7:7-15. It is the work of Christ which is mediated by the Spirit that frees the "I" from "the law of sin and death". Romans 8 serves to reiterate and expand on the Christ-believer's eschatological life (Moo 1996:469-470). Some understand νόμος in verse 2 to refer to the Mosaic law in both occurrences, in that it would have a dual (paradoxical) role. This would imply that the Spirit puts the Mosaic law in its proper focus (Wright 2002:577) or that it facilitates a correct understanding of the law (Dunn 1988a:416-418). But this line of interpretation is unlikely, since Paul often arranges the law on the opposite side of πνεῦμα (7:6; Gal 3:2,5; 5:18), and Paul nowhere else envisions a new empowering of the Mosaic law. The "law of the Spirit" rather refers to the "law written on the heart" (Jer 38:31-34 [LXX]) or the "law" of the New Covenant (Ezek 36:24-32) that is closely related to the Spirit (Moo 1996:475; cf. Fee 1994:521-527; Ezek 37; 2 Cor 3:6-9, see 7.3.1). The "law of sin and death" could denote the Mosaic law, a description that can be deduced from 7:7-25 and 1 Corinthians 15:56. Although the law was not in itself sinful, it became an instrument of sin and death. But although this interpretation fits the context, it is not preferable. Νόμος here rather denotes a binding authority or

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power, for a similar expression (“the law of sin”) denotes the “other law” in distinction from the Mosaic law in 7:23 (Moo 1996:476; cf. Fee 1994:522). The phrase “law of sin and death” is specifically chosen by Paul, for it summarises the total situation of the sinner (Moo 1996:477).

The “law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus” has done what the Mosaic law could not do because it was weakened by the flesh (v. 3). God condemned sin that exists in the flesh by sending His Son in the likeness<sup>389</sup> of “sinful flesh” (v. 3).<sup>390</sup> Σάρξ here denotes the human condition and human weakness and as such shows that Christ exposed Himself to the power of sin (Moo 1996:479-480). Fee (1994:530) argues that Christ has rendered the law obsolete and fulfilled the very purpose for which the law existed but was unable to accomplish: to provide righteousness (δικαίωμα, v. 4; KJV; cf. Wright 2002:580; Bruce [1985] 2000:147-148; Barrett [1962] 1975:157; 3:21; 4:13), which includes a right standing with God (see 5.1.1). Through the work of the Spirit, God has brought “the time of the Law to an end” (Fee 1994:530). Moo (1996:482-485) argues for viewing τὸ δικάωμα τοῦ νόμου πληρωθῆ (v. 4) as God’s dealing with the demands of the law<sup>391</sup> by the perfect obedience of Christ. Christ was perfectly obedient to the law (cf. 2:13) and has made many righteous by His obedience (cf. 5:19). Christ thus fulfilled the law through His work “by” (descriptive, not instrumental) those not walking κατὰ σάρκα but κατὰ πνεῦμα (v.4). Christ has both “done the law” and signifies the end of the law to bring about righteousness in those who believe (cf. 10:4).

Whichever understanding of δικάωμα τοῦ νόμου (v. 4) one chooses (righteousness, just requirement of the law, or both), verses 2 to 4 essentially portray an eschatological realm transfer between two realms of salvation history,

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<sup>389</sup> Christ participated in this realm, but did not become imprisoned “in the flesh” (Moo 1996:480; cf. Cranfield 1975:381).

<sup>390</sup> “Sinful flesh” probably refers to sinful humanity (Hultgren 2011:299; cf. BDAG, σάρξ §4).

<sup>391</sup> Although several renderings of τὸ δικάωμα τοῦ νόμου is possible (e.g., “just decree”, “righteousness”), the generality of Paul’s language probably requires a general definition: “the right requirement of the law” (BDAG, δικάωμα §1; Moo 1996:481-482; Bruce [1985] 2000:163; Ridderbos 1959:173). Moo (1996:484) understands the “just requirement” of the law as a satisfaction of God’s eternal moral demands and not in the sense that the specific demands of the Mosaic law must be met. The “just requirement” of the law thus has to be understood in a broad sense which makes it applicable to all people.

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where the realm before or outside of Christ under the law is described by the expression κατὰ σάρκα (v. 4) and the realm in Christ<sup>392</sup> is described by κατὰ πνεῦμα (v. 4; Jewett 2007:486; Moo 1996:477,478,485; cf. Wright 2002:581; Fee 1994:537; Bruce [1977] 2000:203; Käsemann 1980:212-213,219-220; Dodd [1959] 1963:133-134).<sup>393</sup> Σάρξ and πνεῦμα in this context thus cannot be understood as anthropological categories or even impulses or powers within a person. To walk “according to” the flesh is essentially to exist outside of Christ (cf. Jewett 2007:486; Fee 1994:537) where one’s life is directed by this world (Moo 1996:485). Σάρξ in opposition to πνεῦμα therefore does not describe some kind of internal warfare in the life of the believer, but depict “two mutually exclusive ways of life” (Fee 1994:537) or ways of existence (Jewett 2007:486; Ridderbos 1959:174). The aeon of πνεῦμα has replaced the aeon under the law, and did not merely bring a better understanding of the law (Käsemann 1980:216; cf. Moo 1996:475; Fee 1994:507; contra Dunn 1988a:417). This does not mean that the believer does not struggle with sin or commit sin, but that the struggle is essentially in the realm of the mind (cf. 12:2). Believers have to reckon themselves dead to sin (6:11) by putting to death the deeds of the body by the Spirit (8:13; Fee 1994:537-538; cf. Wright 2002:582).

In verses 5 to 7, Paul describes to believers what characterises an existence κατὰ σάρκα and κατὰ πνεῦμα respectively. Those who exist κατὰ σάρκα (outside of Christ) set their minds on the things of the flesh, and those who exist κατὰ πνεῦμα (in Christ) set their minds on the things of the Spirit (v. 5; cf. Moo 1996:486; Fee 1994:540-541). Death and life are juxtaposed to each other as mutually exclusive characteristics of an existence κατὰ σάρκα and κατὰ πνεῦμα respectively (v. 6). The “mind of the flesh” is enmity against God because of the fact that an existence in the flesh is under the law and cannot submit to the law (v. 7) and cannot please God (v. 8).

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<sup>392</sup> Käsemann (1980:221-222) shows the close connection between ἐν πνεύματι (8:9) and ἐν Χριστῷ (8:1,2) which he regards as interchangeable (cf. the smooth transitions from ἐν πνεύματι [v. 9a] to πνεῦμα Χριστοῦ [v. 9c], to Χριστὸς ἐν ὑμῖν [v. 10a]).

<sup>393</sup> Although Dunn (1988a:424) understands the πνεῦμα-σάρξ dichotomy as a contrast between two epochs, he understands them “not as mutually exclusive conditions”, but as “opposed alternatives” and thus in the context of exhortation to believers (:425).

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Verse 9 reiterates the exclusivity of these two ways of existence, which is essentially that of a believer and unbeliever (cf. Fee 1994:547): “you [believers] are not ἐν σαρκί, but ἐν πνεύματι since the Spirit of God dwells in you.” Moo (1996:489-490) correctly notes that ἐν σαρκί and ἐν πνεύματι denote “the old age of sin and death” and “the new age of righteousness and life” respectively. Paul indeed pictures “two ages or realms” and the believer’s transfer into the new age of life and peace. But when Moo (1996:490) translates the first two occurrences of πνεῦμα (v. 9) both as God’s Spirit (cf. Fee 1994:542) and explains this translation as metaphorical language, he seems to miss the qualification Paul makes in this sentence. The expression ἐν πνεύματι clearly describes the existence of the believer in Christ as opposed to an existence ἐν σαρκί, which is the existence of someone outside of Christ (cf. Käsemann 1980:222-223). The notion in the first sentence of verse 9 is rather that Paul qualifies the existence ἐν πνεύματι by the indwelling of the Spirit of God (εἶπερ<sup>394</sup> πνεῦμα θεοῦ οἰκεῖ ἐν ὑμῖν). As in Romans 7:6 (see 7.4.1.3) it would be more appropriate to translate ἐν πνεύματι (v. 9a) as “in spirit” (REB; Sanday & Headlam [1902] 1960:196), but not to denote the human spirit *per se*, but to denote the *new existence* (cf. Wright 2002:583)<sup>395</sup> where “being spiritual” is defined or characterised by the indwelling of God’s Spirit. Paul’s intention with the expression ἐν πνεύματι is arguably that he wants to incorporate both the human spirit and God’s Spirit into this expression and leaves a measure of ambiguity within the expression on purpose. This is exactly the reason why I have left κατὰ πνεῦμα in verses 4 to 5 untranslated until now. Since κατὰ πνεῦμα in both verses 4 and 5 can be understood as describing a *way of existence* in the new eschatological age in Christ, it can be translated as “according to spirit” with a similar meaning to the one suggested for ἐν πνεύματι here in verse 9a.

One has to acknowledge a certain fluidity in Paul’s language. He seems to stretch the inherent meaning of terms such as πνεῦμα and σὰρξ to cover new ground. In Wright’s (2002:583) words, Paul “is carving out language to say what

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<sup>394</sup> “[I]f indeed, if after all” (BDAG, εἰ §61).

<sup>395</sup> Wright comes close to this understanding by describing ἐν πνεύματι as a “state” rather than having precise locative force.

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had not been said before.” Similarly, Paul’s rhetorical play on words with νόμος (7:21,23; 8:2; Fee 1994:522; cf. Käsemann 1980:209) stretches the meaning of the term beyond its normal use. Paul indeed seems to use language to say more than the words he uses would normally permit.

With Paul’s seamless, trinitarian move from “God’s Spirit” to “the Spirit of Christ” (v. 9b), Paul’s high Christology is evident (Fee 1994:547-548; cf. Moo 1996:491). The absence of Christ’s Spirit in someone’s life shows that that person does not belong to Him (v. 9b). This statement has deep implications for the identity in Christ (identity mode C). Believers in Christ receive their new way of existence (Ridderbos 1959:176) or new identity through their belonging to Christ. The indwelling of the Spirit is indeed the *identity marker* for the Christ-believer (Fee 1996:88; 1994:469-470,553; cf. Hansen 2009:221 on Gal 3:2). Similarly, from the perspective of belief in Christ, “flesh” as a way of existence outside of Christ (esp. ἐν τῇ σαρκί in 7:5; κατὰ σάρκα in 8:4,5; ἐν σαρκί in 8:8-9) which is characterised by natural impulses and physical performance<sup>396</sup> and is defined by law, sin and death (8:2), can be understood as characterising or *marking off the identity* of someone outside of Christ (cf. Fee 1994:553-554).

The body which is dead (v. 10) seems to have an anthropological bearing (Jewett 2007:491; Moo 1996:492) in that the body must be considered dead because of sin and is destined for death (Fee 1994:550). This understanding is strengthened by verse 11, which confirms the resurrection of the physical body. Within the anthropological vein, πνεῦμα which “[i]s life” (v. 10) thus seems to be best understood as the human spirit (Cottrell 1998; Mounce 1995:172,179; Fitzmyer 1993:491; Bruce [1985] 2000:165; Dodd [1959] 1963:138; Sanday & Headlam [1902] 1960:198; cf. NLT; AB; NIV; RSV; NEB; OAT; ASV; DST)<sup>397</sup> which is [being made] alive (NIV; RSV) by the life-giving Spirit of God (Bruce [1985] 2000:165),

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<sup>396</sup> Cf. the will to do good and the attempt to put this will into practice, but the inability to execute the will (7:15-20).

<sup>397</sup> Moo (1996:492) argues against translating πνεῦμα as “spirit” for it would require changing ζωή (noun) to an adjective and adding “your” to the sentence. The latter is not necessary however (e.g., OAT; DST: “the spirit”, translated). In terms of changing ζωή into an adjective, Paul’s compact and yet flexible language however makes provision for such a rendering, especially in view of the fact that he does not supply a verb here. Even so, some ambiguity in Paul’s use of πνεῦμα arguably remains.

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constituting a present reality (Bultmann [1951-1955] 2007:247; cf. Cranfield 1975:390). The notion would be that the human spirit is transferred from the domain of death to the domain of life by the righteousness brought about by the indwelling of Christ's Spirit (cf. v. 11). If understood in this way, the eschatological, salvation-historical overtones of the two ways of existence (old and new) ring at the background. Similar to verse 9a, the qualified "Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead" who dwells within the believer (v. 11), seems to differentiate the "Spirit" (v. 11 [X2]) from the "spirit" (v. 10).

Believers are debtors, not τῆ σαρκί (v. 12a), to live κατὰ σάρκα (v. 12b,13a). Σάρξ again refers to the "old situation" (Ridderbos 1959:179), the former sphere of existence of the unbeliever (Fee 1994:557; cf. Moo 1996:494; contra Dunn 1988a:448). Paul's point is that believers are now "Spirit people" and not in the realm of flesh any longer and therefore ought to live accordingly. There is no hint of an inward struggle between two conflicting natural inclinations (contra NJB) or natures (Fee 1994:556; contra NIV; NAT; Mounce 1995:178,181) within the believer. Rather Paul grounds the imperative in the indicative of the gift of righteousness (v. 10; Fee 1994:556). The believer should put to death the deeds of the "body" in order to live (v. 13b). Here, σῶμα is used in an extended sense as an equivalent to σάρξ (Moo 1996:495), and denotes the "human way of existence" that is under the rule of sin (Ridderbos 1959:179). The "mortification" (θανατώω, v. 13) of the works of the old human existence once again neither indicates an internal struggle nor triumphalism, but the renewal of the mind (Fee 1994:559; cf. Barrett [1962] 1975:162). As "Spirit people" believers have to learn not to heed to old habits but to rely on the empowering Spirit. By "the Spirit's help they are to 'become what they are'" (Fee 1994:559; cf. Moo 1996:496). What they are is spelled out in verses 14 to 17 (Fee 1994:559).

Verse 14 provides the new description of the "state of salvation" (Ridderbos 1959:180, translated) that has been granted to the church: that of being a child (lit. "son") of God. To be "led" (ἄγω, v. 14) by the Spirit does not so much describe

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personal, everyday “guidance” of the Spirit as it denotes the *identity*<sup>398</sup> of those under the New Covenant, which stands opposed to a “Spirit of slavery” (πνεῦμα δουλείας, v. 15) but closely corresponds with the “Spirit of adoption” (πνεῦμα υιοθεσίας, v. 15; Fee 1994:563-564).<sup>399</sup> The “Spirit alone identifies the people of God in the new covenant” (Fee 1994:564). In other words, being “led” by God’s Spirit is a “distinguishing sign” of being God’s child (Moo 1996:499). The expression “son of God” (singular) is often used in the Old Testament to identify Israel as God’s own people (e.g., Ex 4:22; Jer 3:19; 31:9; Hos 11:1). Although less often, the expression “sons of God” (plural) is used similarly (e.g., Deut 14:1; Isa 43:6; Hos 2:1 [LXX]), which makes it likely that Paul borrowed the expression υιοὶ θεοῦ from the Old Testament (Moo 1996:449). The cry to God: Ἀββα ὁ πατήρ (v. 15), underlines the close, personal relationship to God as child of God (cf. Moo 1996:502-503). Paul uses τέκνον (vv. 16,17,21; cf. Gal 4:28; Php 2:15) and υἱός (vv. 14,19; cf. 9:26; Gal 3:7,26; 4:6,7) in almost the same way to denote the people of God in the New Covenant (cf. Moo 1996:504; Bruce [1985] 2000:168).

Verse 16 states the relationship between God’s Spirit and the human spirit with respect to being God’s children most unambiguously: “The *Spirit* Himself witnesses with our *spirit*<sup>400</sup> that we are children of God” (LITV, emphasis added). Here Paul clarifies much of the inherent ambiguity between God’s Spirit and the human spirit inherent to his use of the term πνεῦμα, especially in Romans 8:1-15 (cf. Fitzmyer 1993:491). This close relationship between the human spirit and God’s Spirit explains much of the understanding of πνεῦμα *as opposed to* σὰρξ in Paul as pertaining to *both* God’s Spirit and the human spirit (e.g., 7:6; 8:4,5,9a; cf. 2 Cor 3:6). Although Fee (1994:25-26) admits to this exact same ambiguity in other Pauline passages (e.g., 1 Cor 6:17; 14:14-15), this ambiguity is probably

<sup>398</sup> This notion resembles the OT usage of “being led”. E.g., the “leading” of God in paths of righteousness for the sake of God’s name in Ps 23:3 shows evidence that they are children of God (Fee 1994:563).

<sup>399</sup> Paul’s rhetorical style is best understood when πνεῦμα in both instances in v. 15 is translated with “Spirit”. Paul’s point is that the Spirit which believers received does not cause them to return to slavery, but rather issued in the adoption as children (Fee 1994:565-566; cf. GNB; NAT; DST). The verb λαμβάνω which functions as verb for both occurrences of πνεῦμα, makes it likely that Paul contrasts two possible understandings of the function or character of the received Spirit.

<sup>400</sup> In terms of Pauline anthropology, the human spirit is distinguishable from the body (cf. vv. 10-11), which is comparable to the “inner person” in 2 Corinthians 4:16 (Fee 1994:568). This once again accounts for a measure of duality in Paul’s anthropology (see 7.5.5).

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more prevalent in Pauline thinking than often acknowledged, especially if full strength is given to the eschatological, salvation-historical understanding of both πνεῦμα and σάρξ. In the latter understanding of πνεῦμα, the focus is more on the *way of existence* and ultimately the *mode of identity* in the new aeon in Christ where the Spirit witnesses with the human spirit that they are children of God (v. 16), than on either God's Spirit or the human spirit *per se* (see above). Conversely, in the extended understanding of σάρξ as understood from an eschatological perspective, the focus is more on the objective *way of existence* and *mode of identity* before or outside of Christ than on the "humanness" or even the "weakness" of the individual human being.

### 7.4.2 Galatians 5:16-25

Paul starts Galatians 5:1 by emphasising the *discontinuity* of the believer with the law. He encourages his readers to stand firm in the freedom from the slavery of the law (4:21-5:1; Fee 1994:426). Christ is central in defining their identity over against the identity marker of circumcision (5:2-3). In terms of justification, there is close correspondence between an identity defined by law and circumcision (v. 4). Christ and the law represent "separate spheres of power, such that anyone who chooses the Law's sphere of power has been cut off from access to Christ" (Hays 2000:312). Similarly, faith (vv. 5-6) is portrayed as being opposite to an identity defined by circumcision (vv. 6-12) and law (by implication), and correlates with the Spirit (v. 5) and with love (v. 6).

Yet, to love others (vv. 13-14) is the fulfilment of the law "in one word", constituting *continuity* with the law. To walk<sup>401</sup> according to πνεῦμα corresponds with love for others (v. 16) which fulfils the love command and in turn fulfils the law (Fee 1994:429). This can especially be derived from Paul's expressing of love in terms of the fruit of the Spirit (v. 22). The Spirit replaced the law by fulfilling the aim of the law, which was love, not to "sum up" the law (Fee 1994:426; cf. Hays

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<sup>401</sup> Περιπατέω (vv. 16,25) probably follows the OT הִלְכָה (Hays 2000:325; Dunn 1993:295; Longenecker 1990:244) which is often employed in connection with observing the law (e.g., Ex 16:4; Lev 18:3-4; 26:3; Deut 8:6).

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2000:322-323; Fung 1988:246; LITV; RSV; RV; KJV; contra Hendriksen 1968, Galatians 5:13-26; NLT; NRSV; NIV).

By marking off identity by outward identity markers (e.g., circumcision), one could be “religious” without being “righteous” (Fee 1994:427). But,

Christ brought an end to Torah observance in part for that very reason. The Spirit replaced Torah so that God’s people, Jew and Gentile alike, would have a new “identity”: the indwelling of the Spirit of the living God himself (Fee 1994:427).

The new identity in Christ, marked by the indwelling of the Spirit, coheres with the commencement of a new era in redemptive history and the end of the old era of salvation history under the law (Schreiner 2001:263). The Spirit is fully sufficient and enables the believer to practice love and to live a life that does not go along with “the flesh” (Fee 1994:436; cf. Schreiner 2001:263).

Walking in πνεῦμα is set up against ἐπιθυμίαν σαρκός (v. 16). As noted in 7.4.1.4, σάρξ is one of the more fluid words Paul employs. It generally does not describe an individual’s physical desires or “sinful nature” (contra NLT; NAT; NIV). The ἐπιθυμίαν σαρκός (v. 16) is parallel to τὰ ἔργα τῆς σαρκός (v. 19). Most of these works of the flesh (vv. 19-21) lie apart from one’s individual physical desires, which renders such a view (“sinful nature”) unlikely (Fee 1994:430). Similar to Romans 7:5-6 (see 7.4.1.3) and 8:4-5,9a (see 7.4.1.4), both σάρξ and πνεῦμα are here essentially “eschatological realities, denoting the essential characteristic of the two ages, before and after Christ” (Fee 1994:431; cf. Bruce 1982b:246). This understanding can be derived from several elements in the context (1-4):

(1) Faith in Christ<sup>402</sup> and the works of the law are mutually exclusive categories (3:2-26, see 5.1.3.2-5.1.3.3; 5:6; Fee 1994:431) and correspond to the πνεῦμα-σάρξ dichotomy (3:3-3:5, see 5.1.3.2; cf. 6:8-15, see 8.2). Πνεῦμα in this context thus denotes “the way of existence in the faith and is described as *by the Spirit*

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<sup>402</sup> Faith in Christ and the Spirit are in close relationship: the one implies the other (3:14; 5:5).

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(6:1), *by... faith* (3:26)” while σάρξ “represents the way of existence outside the faith and is described as (literally) ‘of human origin’ (1:11), *in own power* (3:3), *under the supervision of the law* (3:25)” (Lategan 1986:105, translated).<sup>403</sup> Verse 17 reiterates the incompatibility of life in the Spirit with life in the flesh: “they belong to different worlds” (Fee 1994:434-435; cf. Martyn 1997:495) or realms (Jewett 1971:102-105). There is thus no hint of a battle between two parts of the human constitution (cf. Fee 1994:435; contra Dunn 1993:298-299).<sup>404</sup> The Spirit and the flesh that “desire” against each other are rather on a supra-individual level between two antithetical realities within the realm of eschatology (cf. Fee 1994:435; Fung 1988:249-250; Schweizer 1971:133; Ridderbos 1966:298-299; 1959:145 on Rom 7:5).<sup>405</sup> The clause “you may not do whatever you want” (v. 17) in this context is best understood as not having “*the privilege* of doing whatever they wish” (Fee 1994:436, emphasis added), otherwise they would carry out the desire of the flesh (:436; cf. Jewett 1971:106-107; Chrysostom).

(2) Being led by the Spirit, is simultaneously contrasted to the flesh (vv. 16-19,24) and being “under the law” (v. 18), which refer to the epoch before and outside of Christ (3:23, see 5.1.3.3; 4:5, see 5.1.4; cf. Fee 1994:438; Lategan 1986:106; Bruce 1982b:256). Life “under the law” (3:23; 4:5; 5:18) and the flesh are thus identified with each other (Westerholm 2004:379; cf. Fung 1988:252).

[E]verything before Christ, which was fundamentally eliminated by his death and resurrection and the gift of the eschatological Spirit, belongs to the same “old age” sphere of existence. In that sense the Spirit stands over against

<sup>403</sup> Peculiarly, although Lategan (1986) holds a strong position about the mutual incompatibility of the ways of existence of πνεῦμα vs. σάρξ, he translates σάρξ as “sinful nature” (translated). Yet he does not understand it as having continued existence in believers’ lives (:102,105,109,113).

<sup>404</sup> Although Dunn (1993) does not exactly view the battle as between parts of the human constitution, he describes the condition as a condition “of inward contradiction, of an individual pulled in two different directions” (:298) and as an “inner warfare” (:299). He argues that a believer is still “in the flesh” on the basis of 2:20 (:298). But ἐν σαρκί in 2:20 rather refers to bodily life on earth (see fn. 264).

<sup>405</sup> Martyn (1997:493-494;529-530; adopted by Hays 2000:326-327) has a similar idea, but understands “Spirit” and “Flesh” as actors within an apocalyptic war of the end time (cf. Bruce 1982b:243). Longenecker (1990:245) sees πνεῦμα and σάρξ as “ethical forces” that seek to control a person’s thought and activity (cf. Burton 1920:297-301). Longenecker (1990:245) compares this ethical dualism to that found in the Johannine literature (e.g., Jn 3:6), and explains it as “the complex product of Paul’s Old Testament background and his Rabbinic training” (adopted from Davies 1980:17). But this explanation, esp. in terms of Paul’s alleged “Rabbinic training” is anachronistic at best (see 5.2.1; esp. Segal [2003] 2004:162).

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both the flesh and the Law, in that he replaces the latter and stands in opposition to the former (Fee 1994:438).

(3) The “works of the flesh” (vv. 19-21) is described in terms of not inheriting the kingdom (v. 21; Fee 1994:431). The latter points to the eschatological consummation of God’s kingdom that has already become a present reality (cf. Hays 2000:327; Rom 14:17; 1 Cor 4:20). Whether one inherits the kingdom or not pertains to being a believer or not, or being in Christ or not (Fee 1994:443). The conduct described in verses 19 to 21 thus describes the conduct akin to “the former way of life” (cf. Fee 1994:431). Dunn (1993:307) notes that “inheritance” was fundamental to Judaeon self-identity. Paul hereby emphasises that inheritance of God’s promises is now primarily “a matter of the Spirit and not of the flesh (including fleshly circumcision).”

(4) Verse 24 describes someone belonging to Christ as having crucified the flesh<sup>406</sup> (cf. 2:20). To “belong to Christ” is to be Abraham’s seed and to be an heir (3:29), which correspond to being “in Christ” (3:28). The life in Christ is juxtaposed to a former way of life or the old order under the law in the flesh, to which “I”<sup>407</sup> have died to (2:19; cf. Rom 5:15; 6:2-6; 7:9,10,24, see 7.4.1.3; 2 Cor 5:15; Fee 1994:455-456). The new creation has come by implication (Fee 1994:455; cf. 2 Cor 5:17). The Spirit is the source of the new life in Christ (v. 25; Fee 1994:456) and replaces the self-centred “I” (Bruce 1982b:256). This means that Christ and the Spirit mark the eschatological turning of the ages, and that life according to πνεῦμα and σάρξ are mutually incompatible options (Fee 1994:431,455-456; cf. Ridderbos 1966:298-299). The end of the old way of existence and the start of the new in faith contain finality of death and the beginning of a new life (Lategan 1986:109; cf. Longenecker 1990:264).

The implication of this understanding is that if people practice these “works of the flesh” (v. 19) they put themselves outside of Christ, the Spirit and belief in Christ

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<sup>406</sup> Some here sees an allusion to the language of baptism (e.g., Hays 2000:328; Dunn 1993:315; Fung 1988:274; cf. Col 2:11-12).

<sup>407</sup> The paradigmatic “I” in 2:18-20 invites his readers to join with Paul in his confessional statements (Hays 2000:243) and thus includes all true believers in Christ (Fung 1988:122; BDF §281).

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(cf. Schreiner 2001:145). Such a person in fact acts as an unbeliever. The salvation-historical contrast between the flesh and the Spirit is therefore ultimately absolute (Schreiner 2001:145). Although an understanding which opposes the realm of “flesh” before or outside of Christ over against the realm of “Spirit/spirit” in Christ, excludes an understanding where an “ever present sinful nature” is in constant battle with the “indwelling Spirit”, it does not result in triumphalism either. The tension between the “already” and the “not yet” is rather between the reality of the new life in the Spirit against the present weakness and suffering that still mark the existence of humanity that await the resurrection (cf. Fee 1994:432).

Although I have consistently translated πνεῦμα with “Spirit” in Galatians 5:16-25, an eschatological understanding of πνεῦμα that points to the realm in Christ and the Spirit as opposed to the realm of flesh before or outside of Christ, would once again (cf. Rom 7:6; 8:4,5,9a) make provision for translating πνεῦμα with “spirit” (not anthropological as such) in at least verses 16, 18 and 25 (esp. where it is without the article).<sup>408</sup> But even with the article in verse 17, although πνεῦμα primarily denotes the Spirit of God and should be translated accordingly, the eschatological understanding of πνεῦμα remains underneath the surface, especially in its opposition to σάρξ (cf. Rom 8:6), which in turn demonstrates the considerable fluidity in which Paul applies these terms.

### 7.4.3 1 Corinthians 12:12-13

After Paul’s elaboration on the diversity of the gifts of the Spirit (vv. 7-10) which are “activated by one and the same Spirit” as the Spirit chooses (v. 11, NRSV), he proceeds in typical Pauline style with consecutive γάρ-sentences<sup>409</sup> (3 here: vv. 12-14), thereby connecting them to the former (vv. 1-11). In verse 12, Paul returns to the body metaphor (cf. 10:17; 11:29).<sup>410</sup> This metaphor which Paul applies to Christ (v. 12) was part of the “rhetorical topos of the body politic”

<sup>408</sup> Bruce (1982b:243) has a similar idea regarding the translation of πνεῦμα and σάρξ. But he understands σάρξ in this context as “the power that opposes God” and suggests that one translates both πνεῦμα and σάρξ with capital letters: “Spirit” and “Flesh” (cf. Martyn 1997:494).

<sup>409</sup> E.g., Rom 1:16,17,18; 10:10,11,12,13; 15:2,3,4; 1 Cor 11:5,6,7,8,9.

<sup>410</sup> The term σῶμα was also identified in 2.2.1 as a significant term in identifying the believing congregation in Christ.

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(Collins 1999:458). It was in fact the most common topos for unity (:458).<sup>411</sup> But where contemporary writers used it to show order and hierarchy (:459; cf. Thiselton 2000:995), Paul's usage was different in that he attributes the diversity of the members and the order among them to God rather than to nature. Additionally, Paul urged the members of the body (believers) to utilise their gifts in order to be mutually beneficial (v. 7; Rom 12:3-8; Collins 1999:460).

Paul grounds the unity of the body in verse 13. The relation of "baptism" to the Spirit has been variously interpreted. The ἐν (in ἐν ἐνὶ πνεύματι) can mainly<sup>412</sup> be understood as either instrumental, indicating sphere: "by one Spirit" (Fitzmyer 2008:473; Thiselton 2000:997; ISV; NIV; RSV; OAT; KJV); or as locative, indicating agency: "in one Spirit" (Collins 1999:457; Fee 1994:175; Barrett [1971] 1976:288; Dunn 1970:128-129; ESV; RV; "in the one Spirit": NRSV; REB; "in a single Spirit": NJB). The choice of translation is largely a matter of interpretation.

Most interpreters understand the verb βαπτίζω as a technical term pointing to water baptism (e.g., Ciampa & Rosner 2010:593; Fitzmyer 2008:477; Sampley 2002:945; Collins 1999:463; Conzelmann 1975:212; Beasley-Murray 1970:169; Lenski 1963:514). The reference to "baptism" however is not in isolation (which would certainly bear a technical meaning), but is modified by ἐν ἐνὶ πνεύματι (cf. Fee 1994:179). Although baptism in water and partaking in the Spirit are often assumed to be at the beginning of the experience of the Christ-believing community in Paul, there is not a direct or causal connection between baptism and the Spirit (Fee 1994:179; cf. Thiselton 2000:1000; Dunn 1970:131).

Paul refers to the common reception of the Spirit by two clauses: (1) ἐν ἐνὶ πνεύματι ἡμεῖς πάντες ἐβαπτίσθημεν, and (2) πάντες ἐν πνεύμα ἐποτίσθημεν. The first clause (1) is qualified by the prepositional phrase εἰς ἓν σῶμα, which in turn is modified by the parenthetical phrase εἴτε Ἰουδαῖοι εἴτε Ἕλληνας, εἴτε δοῦλοι

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<sup>411</sup> Dio Chrysostom affirms that Aesop used it (*Discourses* 33:16). It occurs in Plato's *Republic*, was used by Cicero (*On Duties* 3:5:22-23; 3:6:26-27) and was applied by Paul's contemporary, Seneca (*Anger* 2:13:7; in Collins 1999:458). Thiselton (2000:995) in addition lists Livy, Plutarch, Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Epictetus.

<sup>412</sup> More alternatives are "with one Spirit" (NAT; in Thiselton 2000:13; fn. in NIV; fn. in Ciampa & Rosner 2010:591) and even "for one Spirit" (in Thiselton 2000:13).

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εἶτε ἐλεύθεροι (cf. Fee 1994:178-179). For the lack of Scriptural support, the second clause (2) hardly points to Spirit baptism,<sup>413</sup> the Lord's Supper<sup>414</sup> or to confirmation<sup>415</sup> (Fee 1994:180; Dunn 1970:130-131; cf. Thiselton 2000:1001). The two clauses (1 and 2) rather constitute a Semitic parallelism where both clauses carry the same notion (Fee 1994:180; 1987:604-605; adopted by Ciampa & Rosner 2010:592; Gillespie 1994:120), which is a common device in Paul (cf. vv. 15-16,17,21,22-23; 10:23). This view argues strongly for a metaphorical understanding of "baptism" in the first clause.<sup>416</sup>

Within the context of the work of the Spirit (vv. 4-11, see above) and Paul's reference to those who confess Jesus' lordship as partaking in the Spirit (v. 2), Paul most likely refers to their conversion and their receiving of the Spirit (cf. Fee 1994:181; Kistemaker 1993, 1 Corinthians 12:12-13; Dunn 1970:130). The Spirit marks the true beginning of the new identity in Christ which is accompanied by the demonstration of the Spirit and of power (2:4-5; Gal 3:2-5, see 5.1.3.2). The ἐν (in ἐν ἐνὶ πνεύματι) is thus probably locative: "in one Spirit" (Fee 1994:181; Dunn 1970:128).<sup>417</sup> The metaphor of baptism is thus drawn from water baptism but it does not include the act of water baptism itself. The metaphor rather denotes "spiritual transformation" (Dunn 1970:130). Similarly, "we were made to drink"<sup>418</sup> (ἐπιπίσθημεν, NRSV; KJV; cf. Thiselton 2000:1000; Zerwick & Grosvenor 1988:522) points metaphorically to the "experience of the Spirit in conversion" (Dunn 1970:130; cf. Gillespie 1994:120). There is thus neither a thought of water baptism in verse 13, nor a direct connection between water baptism and the

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<sup>413</sup> A traditional Pentecostal view sees the first clause (1) as referring to conversion and the second clause (2) as referring to Spirit baptism as a second experience after conversion (e.g., Cottle 1974, in Fee 1994:180). But the εἰς ("into") in v. 13 largely guards against such an interpretation (cf. Dunn 1970:128).

<sup>414</sup> To see an allusion to the Lord's Supper in the verb πορίζω is not accounted for in the New Testament. Neither is there evidence that the Lord's Supper would involve "drinking" the Spirit (Fee 1994:180; cf. Thiselton 2000:1001; contra Collins 1999:463; Conzelmann 1975:212; Calvin 2012a:341).

<sup>415</sup> This is a traditional Roman Catholic view (e.g., Schnackenburg 1964:84).

<sup>416</sup> Paul applies "baptism" in a metaphorical sense in 1 Cor 10:2 (Dunn 1970:129).

<sup>417</sup> The "Spirit baptism" elsewhere in the NT is probably to be understood similarly, and is always contrasted with baptism in water (Mt 3:11; Mk 1:8; Lk 3:16; Jn 1:33; Ac 1:5; 11:16; Fee 1994:181).

<sup>418</sup> Or "[we were] being watered, saturated, or *drenched in*" (Thiselton 2000:1000-1001).

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receiving of the Spirit (Thiselton 2000:1000-1001;<sup>419</sup> Fee 1994:179-182; 1987:604-606; Gillespie 1994:120; Kistemaker 1993, 1 Corinthians 12:12-13; Ladd 1993:587; Dunn 1970:129-131; Best 1955:73; contra Beasley-Murray 1970:168-170).<sup>420</sup>

The main point of verses 12 to 14 revolves around the unity of the body of believers constituted by the Spirit (cf. Dunn 1970:130). The phrase “whether Judaeans or Greeks, slave or free” echoes the same theme of Galatians 3:28 (see 5.1.3.2) and Colossians 3:11 (see 6.2.2), where the new identity in Christ has relativised ethnic, racial or social identities. In Christ all ethnic or external identity markers (including the “works of the law”) marking off God’s children have been eradicated (esp. Wright 1986:139-140; cf. [2005] 2009:113-119). Here in the context of 1 Corinthians 12, even God’s diverse gifts are added to the list by implication. Membership to the body and status before God is not defined by any human quality, even if given by God, but by the “one Spirit” that “all were made to drink of” at conversion, who unifies all into one new identity (cf. Ciampa & Rosner 2010:596;<sup>421</sup> Thiselton 2000:997; Fee 1994:182).

### 7.4.4 Colossians 2:11-13

Colossians 2:1-10 is thoroughly Christ-centred. In Christ, all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden (v. 3). The Colossians’ firmness of faith in Christ is being commended (v. 5). They are encouraged to live in Him (v. 6) and to be rooted in this faith in Christ (v. 7). Philosophy, empty deceit and human

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<sup>419</sup> Although Thiselton (2000) essentially shares the same view here, he renders ἐν ἐνὶ πνεύματι as “by one Spirit” (:997) in contrast to Fee (1994:175) and Dunn (1970:128-129) who render it as “in one Spirit”.

<sup>420</sup> It has to be noted though that even while Beasley-Murray (1970) sees a close connection between water baptism and the Spirit, he does not view this association as automatic (:170).

<sup>421</sup> Although Ciampa and Rosner (2010) understand “baptism” as water baptism, they ground the unity of believers not in water baptism as such, but in conversion which is “a universal experience for all believers and... is rooted in the activities of the one Spirit of God” (:593, quoting Fape 1999:133; cf. Lenski 1963:514). Although applied to water baptism (not conversion *per se*) Fitzmyer (2008:475) shares similar notions about identity.

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tradition “according to the elements of the world” (LITV)<sup>422</sup> are being contrasted to Christ (v. 8). In Christ dwells the fullness of the Godhead bodily (v. 9). The Colossians have come to the fullness in Christ, who is the head of every ruler and authority (v. 10, NRSV). The centrality of Christ is maintained in the rest of Colossians 2, especially in defining the concepts portrayed around the death and resurrection with Christ in verses 11 to 13.

A close correspondence between Colossians 2:11-13 and Romans 6:2-8 can be noted in terms of (1) the death of Christ and the believer’s identification with His death wherein the old “self” (Moo 2008:200) or old humanity dies (Col 2:11; Rom 6:3-5,7-8), (2) the resurrection of Christ and identification with His resurrection by faith which enables new life (Col 2:12-13; Rom 6:4,8), (3) the release from the “body of flesh” (Col 2:11) or the “body of sin” (Rom 6:6) in Christ (see below), and (4) baptism that signifies the death and resurrection of both Christ and the believer (Col 2:12; Rom 6:3-4). The three main differences between the two passages are (a) the notion of “flesh” in Colossians 2 (absent in Rom 6), (b) the theme of circumcision in Colossians 2 (absent in Rom 6), and (c) the tense of new life or resurrection of the believer, which is future in Romans 6 (ἐσόμεθα, v. 5; συζήσομεν, v. 8) and aorist in Colossians 2 (συνηγήθητε, v. 12; συνεζωοποίησεν, v. 13).

### **7.4.4.1 *Flesh and circumcision***

In Christ, believers were circumcised with a circumcision not made by hands (Col 2:11). On one level, this non-physical circumcision probably alludes to the circumcision of the heart (Deut 10:16; 30:6; Jer 4:4; Ezek 44:7; Moo 2008:197; Melick 1991:257; Pokorný 1991:124; Bruce 1984:103; Schweizer 1982:147; contra Barth & Blanke 1994:366) which is a spiritual circumcision (BDAG, περιτομή §1c; Harris 1991:103; Melick 1991:257,259; Pokorný 1991:124; Ridderbos 1966:451; NLT; NRSV) and probably alludes to conversion (Moo 2008:198,200; Dunn 1996:156; cf. Melick 1991:258). On a second level, non-

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<sup>422</sup> The notion is probably that the Colossians’ preoccupation with rules about material things (e.g., sabbaths, festivals, new moons, 2:16) was as if they treated them as cosmic powers that needed to be placated (Moo 2008:191-192).

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physical circumcision evokes its counterpart, namely, physical circumcision (cf. Lincoln 2000:624; Harris 1991:103). As Judaeans, ethnic “badge of identity” (Dunn 1996:154-156), physical circumcision signified covenant membership (Gen 17:1-14; cf. Moo 2008:197; Dunn 1996:155; Barth & Blanke 1994:367). Circumcision was a sign of belonging to the people of God (Dunn 1996:154; Pokorný 1991:124).

This contrast between literal and metaphorical circumcision echoes Paul’s use in Philippians 3:3 (cf. Rom 2:28-29)<sup>423</sup> where the identity in Christ (identity mode C) is contrasted with an identity defined by that which is physical, external, visible and temporal (identity mode A, see 6.1.7.3). Here in Colossians 2, this spiritual circumcision is described in terms of “putting off the body of flesh in the circumcision of Christ” (v. 11). The “circumcision of Christ” most likely points to His whole body and thus His death on the cross and not to baptism as such (Thompson 2005:56-57; Lincoln 2000:624; Dunn 1996:157-158; Hunt 1990:241, 243; O’Brien 1982:117; Beasley-Murray [1962] 1972:153).<sup>424</sup>

The “putting off [of] the body of the flesh” is not primarily the physical body<sup>425</sup> but the “body” which “serves sin” (Zerwick & Grosvenor 1988:606), which denotes “the domination of sin” (Moo 2008:200; cf. Schweizer 1982:143). This notion corresponds to “the body of this death” of Romans 7:24 (see 7.4.1.3) and “the body of sin” of Romans 6:6, which in turn correspond with the old ἄνθρωπος of both Romans 6:6 (see 7.4.1.2) and Colossians 3:9 (see 6.2.2). The old “self” is being stripped off (Moo 2008:200) and being buried in Christ. Dunn (1996:158) sees a variation of Paul’s Adam Christology in the imagery in Colossians 2:11, where the flesh of the first Adam was stripped off, signifying a “cosmic circumcision of human flesh” which was “a preliminary to cosmic rule.”

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<sup>423</sup> Is argued in 4.5.1, the circumcision of the heart that Paul pictures in Rom 2:28-29 would constitute the ideal Judaeans identity.

<sup>424</sup> This interpretation takes ἐν (in ἐν τῇ περιτομῇ) as instrumental and τοῦ Χριστοῦ as an objective genitive (in Harris 1991:102). The implication of this view is that baptism cannot be understood as replacing circumcision (see esp. Hunt 1990; cf. du Toit 2011:52-53).

<sup>425</sup> Allusions to the physical body is not completely transcended either. A similar expression in 1:22 (σώματι τῆς σαρκός) denotes the physical body of Christ (Moo 2008:141; cf. Zerwick & Grosvenor 1988:605), and the context of baptism involves the physical body. The notion here however cannot primarily denote the physical body, for the stripping of the physical body would mean physical death (cf. Dunn 1996:157).

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The spiritual circumcision and the putting off of “the body of the sins of flesh” (Col 2:11) is signified<sup>426</sup> by the believer’s “burial” in baptism (v. 12). Together with burial, baptism portrays the reality of the believer’s resurrection with Christ through faith in the working of God that raised Christ from the dead (v. 12). The believer’s resurrection (v. 12) is the result of being made alive by God, after being dead in trespasses and in uncircumcision of flesh (v. 13). If one looks at this whole picture (vv. 11-13), it is not hard to detect notions of eschatological fulfilment (Dunn 1996:158; Pokorný 1991:124; Schweizer 1982:142; cf. O’Brien 1982:115) where those in Christ represent a new humanity with a new status who belong to a new world, a new age (Wright 1986:108; cf. Dunn 1996:159; Pokorný 1991:124) and a new order (cf. Bruce 1984:105). In Beasley-Murray’s ([1962] 1972:140) words: “The believer, risen with Christ and living in Christ, has become a new creature and lives in the new creation.” This new life refers to “a new existence in the eschatological order, introduced in the resurrection of Christ and mediated by His Spirit.”

The uncircumcision of the flesh (v. 13) can be compared to the exclusion from the citizenship of Israel of Ephesians 2:11-12, which also bears the notion of being spiritually dead and being alienated from God (see 5.1.5; Dunn 1996:163; Wright 1986:109; O’Brien 1982:122-123). Being “dead” in trespasses (v. 13) signifies more than having died with Christ, but signifies the entire period prior to Christ as being under the dominion of death, which was the result of sin and the uncircumcision of the flesh (Lohse 1971:107; cf. Lincoln 2000:625). This notion becomes especially evident if *σάρξ* is understood in the extended sense in both verses 11 and 13, denoting an existence outside of Christ (cf. Rom 7:5; 8:4,5,8,9, see 7.4.1.4). By extension, this metaphorical notion attached to the

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<sup>426</sup> Baptism is not the spiritual circumcision itself (contra Barth & Blanke 1994:364; Melick 1991:259-260; Pokorný 1991:124; Lohse 1971:101). Both the individual burial and resurrection with Christ is realised by faith (v. 12) and not baptism as such. In baptism, the believer enacts burial and resurrection (see fn. 160). Lincoln (2000:624) shows that *ἐν ᾧ* (v. 12) is best translated as “in Him” (NLT; NAT) rather than “in it” (contra ESV; GNB; REB; RSV; OAT; KJV) which would parallel the same phrase in v. 11.

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uncircumcision of their flesh (v. 13) includes even those who were God's people ethnically but were uncircumcised spiritually (v. 11; cf. Moo 2008:206-207).<sup>427</sup>

Colossians 2:11-13 thus constitutes the new criteria for the identity of God's people, which is defined Christologically. God's people are now those whose identity is not defined by ethnicity or outward identity markers, but by spiritual circumcision in Christ. Spiritual circumcision already lays the basis for the new humanity where all are one in Christ (3:10-11, see 6.2.2). As with the old and new ἄνθρωπος in 3:9-10 (see 6.2.2), there exist in 2:11-13 both an individual and corporate, cosmological dimension in the transfer from the old existence outside of Christ to the new existence in Christ (cf. Thompson 2005:57; Ridderbos 1960:179,181): (1) The cosmic dimension is constituted by the death and resurrection of Christ that inaugurated the new aeon where identity is not defined by flesh, but by faith and resurrection life. (2) The individual dimension involves the believer's identification in Christ's death and resurrection in baptism, which signifies the burial of the old identity and the old "self" ("the body of flesh"), and the resurrection onto new life by faith.

### 7.4.4.2 *Realised resurrection and life*

By faith (διὰ τῆς πίστεως, v. 12) the resurrection and the new live is already a reality (aorist: συνηγέρθητε, v. 12; συνεζωοποίησεν, v. 13). The old epoch, its rule(r)s and its practices had already passed, and believers already share in the resurrection life (Dunn 1996:161). The realised resurrection with Christ thus signals "the arrival of a new age (e.g., Rom 1:4; Gal 1:1), a new era in which sin and the powers no longer hold sway" (Moo 2008:205; cf. Wright 1986:108).

Although some contrast the "realised" eschatology of Colossians 2:12-13 to the "future" eschatology of Romans 6 (ἐσόμεθα, v. 5; συζήσομεν, v. 8) as one of the reasons why Paul would not have written Colossians (cf. Schweizer 1982:145; Lohse 1971:103-104), this objection cannot hold (cf. Moo 2008:204; O'Brien 1982:119-120): (1) Romans 6 is not that future orientated, especially if the

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<sup>427</sup> This notion would correspond to having an audience that included Judaeans believers (see 6.2.2).

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present dimension of the new life in Christ is considered (ζῶντας, vv. 11,13), the past of the old life (συνετάφημεν, v. 4; συνεσταυρώθη, v. 6) and the reality of already being slaves of righteousness (ἔδουλώθητε, v. 18). It is this logic that has caused many scholars to consider one or both of the future tenses in Romans 6:5 (ἔσομεθα) and 6:8 (συζηήσομεν) as “logical futures” (e.g., Kruse 2012:262; Jewett 2007:406; Wright 2002:539,540; Cottrell 1998; Mounce 1995:150,152; Frid 1986:198-199; Cranfield 1975:307,312,313; Frankemölle 1970:51; Thyen 1970:206-208; Larsson 1962:71; Lagrange 1950:145; Plummer 1915:91; Beet 1885:182; cf. Fitzmyer 1993:435; Beasley-Murray [1962] 1972:139-140; Ridderbos 1959:131; Kühl 1913:204-205,207; Hodge 1883:307,312; Godet 1881a:413; see 8.1.5.4). (2) Within the context of Colossians, it would be natural to focus on the realised aspect of new life in view of the false teaching that was opposed. It is exactly the new life in Christ which counteracts the false teachers’ insistence that believers must add something to their experience in order to attain spiritual fullness and liberation from the powers (Moo 2008:204; cf. O’Brien 1982:120-121). (3) The eschatology of Colossians is not “over-realised” (cf. O’Brien 1982:121). Believers still have to “unclothe” themselves of the vices of the old humanity and actively “clothe” themselves with the new humanity, which represents the new identity in Christ (3:5-11, see 6.2.2; cf. Wright 1986:110).

### 7.5 Preliminary conclusions and implications

In approaching Romans 11 and Galatians 6, this section (7.5) serves to achieve a measure of coherency in the concepts relating to identity that have been discussed up to this point. In a study of this nature that pursues Paul’s thought around certain concepts, there is always a measure of overlap with adjacent concepts. Depending on the level of insight one desires, the pursuit could carry on *ad infinitum*, which is probably one of the reasons why much remains to be explored in Pauline studies. The interrelated nature of theological concepts in Paul’s writings (or any propositional thought) thus makes a clean extraction of any such concept impossible. On the one hand there will always be limits with respect to the researcher’s understanding of these concepts as well as the range of passages or texts that can be studied. On the other hand some boundaries have

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to be drawn in order to gain insight. Apart from Romans 11 and Galatians 6, there is certainly more in the Pauline corpus to be explored in terms of Paul's thought on identity. The amount of passages that have been discussed at this point of the dissertation, especially those pertaining to Ἰσραήλ, Ἰσραηλίτης and Ἰουδαῖος and their relation to Christ-believers which constitute the main focus, are in my view adequate in order to move on to the final main aspect of the study.

The study has thus reached the stage where some of the loose ends around the main concepts pertaining to identity have to be tied together in order to facilitate a meaningful approach toward Romans 11 and Galatians 6. As put forth in 1.4, the motive behind this methodology is to approach these passages with a deeper understanding of Paul's conception of Israel and identity at hand. This deeper understanding is intended to impose certain constraints on the possible interpretations of these passages (see 3.2). This methodology in turn attempts to counter for the "dominant technique" (see 1.2.2) where one set of passages are subordinated to other passages (i.e., so called "pro-Israel" vs. "anti-Israel" passages). This process of integration and systematisation however has to be understood as tentative and incomplete. While the spirit-flesh dichotomy constitutes a deeper, overarching aspect in Paul's thought on identity, most of the concepts around identity as discussed in chapters 4 to 6 will be incorporated here.

### **7.5.1 Spirit and flesh as two distinct eschatological realities: the deepest principle behind marking off identity**

As seen in 7.2, both the concepts of πνεῦμα and σὰρξ have a wide semantic range in Paul. The focus was not to unravel the complete range of meaning wherein these concepts are employed, but to focus on the πνεῦμα-σὰρξ dichotomy and its relation to identity. The *eschatological* understanding of the concepts of πνεῦμα (esp. Rom 7:6; 8:4,5,9a; Gal 5:16,25) and σὰρξ (esp. Rom 7:5; 8:4,5,8-9; Gal 5:17) within the framework of salvation history in Paul seems to constitute the deepest principle behind Paul's thought on the identity of God's children in the light of Christ's work. This understanding can be summarised as follows:

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(1) Σάρξ in its extended application constitutes an aeon and way of existence in Adam prior to or outside of Christ, which is defined by and under the control of the Mosaic law (see 7.5.3), sin<sup>428</sup> and death. Σάρξ thus stands for a *mode of identity* marked off by external, observable, human markers of identity.

(2) Πνεῦμα in its extended application constitutes an eschatological aeon and way of existence in Christ and the Spirit, which is defined by and under the control of the indwelling Spirit, which is a consequence of the new creation (having both corporate and individual significance). Πνεῦμα thus stands for a *mode of identity* marked off by the internal work of the Spirit, which constitutes adoption as God's children (esp. Fee 1996:88; 1994:469-470,553; cf. Hansen 2009:221).

On another level, σάρξ largely correlates with natural human possibility and πνεῦμα with divine possibility (cf. Guthrie 1981:172). For Paul, σάρξ constitutes the *inability* in obtaining righteousness, which involves a right standing before God (cf. Rom 8:3-4). Πνεῦμα in contrast denotes the divine *ability* of God in providing righteousness (cf. Rom 8:10; 14:7) and adoption as children (Rom 8:15). In the same vein, πνεῦμα correlates with faith (esp. Rom 15:13; Gal 3:2,5,14; 5:5; cf. 2 Cor 4:13) while σάρξ correlates with the works of the law (esp. Rom 8:13; Gal 3:2-3; 5:19). In other words, σάρξ correlates to that which is subjective and πνεῦμα to that which is objective.

It is noteworthy that the expression κατὰ σάρκα is used in Romans 8:4,5,12,13 in its extended sense, denoting an old way of existence, which opens the possibility for understanding the same expression similarly elsewhere. Within the exegetical study, κατὰ σάρκα has been interpreted as denoting ethnic or natural human descent (Rom 1:3; 4:1; 9:3,5; 1 Cor 10:18; 2 Cor 11:18; Gal 4:23,29). In the light of an understanding of σάρξ from an eschatological perspective, it is conceivable that Paul might have intended notions of the old existence outside of Christ in many of these instances of κατὰ σάρκα, even if this connotation might have existed in part. This extended meaning of σάρξ has already been implied in the

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<sup>428</sup> Although Paul often uses σάρξ in relation to sin (e.g. Rom 7:14; 8:3; Gal 5:19) it not so much as if σάρξ equals inherent sinfulness in human beings ("sinful nature"), but rather that σάρξ denotes a way of existence under the reign of sin.

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expression ἐν σαρκί in Philemon 1:16 where the master-slave relationship can be understood as forming part of the old way of existence before our outside of Christ (esp. Jewett 1971:135, see 6.1.9). Similarly, the expression “Israel according to flesh” (1 Cor 10:18) might indicate God’s people before Christ under the reign of law, sin and death (cf. Rom 8:2-4). In the same way, the meaning of “Christ according to flesh” (Rom 9:5) might (partly) correspond to Christ “born under the law” (Gal 4:4), or if paraphrased, Christ born under the aeon ruled by law, sin and death. As discussed, the same flexibility in Paul’s use of the term shines through in 2 Corinthians 5:16, where there seems to be an overlap in denoting natural human existence and descent (see 6.2.1). Within the context of the new creation in Christ, σάρξ in verse 16 (esp. 1<sup>st</sup> occurrence) might additionally carry overtones of an existence before Christ, before the new creation came into effect. This understanding would in turn open up new horizons of interpretation in this passage that cannot be pursued here.

Further implications of an identity marked off by Spirit/spirit in contrast to an identity marked off by flesh will be addressed in the discussion of Romans 11 (see 8.1, esp. 8.1.4).

### 7.5.2 Spirit and regeneration

Within the understanding of πνεῦμα in Paul, a notion that has surfaced sporadically is that of regeneration (Gal 4:28; 2 Cor 5:17; cf. Col 3:9-10) as implied counterpart of being unregenerate (e.g., Rom 7:14-25; Php 3:3-4; cf. Col 3:9-10). Although this constitutes a topic on its own, due to space limitations, some general remarks and references will have to suffice.

Apart from the theme of regeneration (παλιγγενεσία) in Titus 3:5 of which Pauline authorship is disputed by most (cf. fn. 21), Paul never directly refers to “regeneration” or “rebirth” as such (compared to e.g. Jn 3:3-5; 1 Pt 1:3,23). But although expressed in different terms, this notion is implied and in fact thoroughly Pauline (Fee 1994:857-859; cf. Bruce [1985] 2000:51; Guthrie 1981:166), as can be seen within the exegeted passages (1-6):

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(1) The reception of the Spirit in believers' lives corresponds with the beginning of life in Christ. Apart from Galatians 3:2-5 that states this explicitly, the new identity in the body of Christ effected at conversion is echoed in 1 Corinthians 12:13 by the metaphor of "baptism in one Spirit into one body". A similar notion is evident in Romans 8:1-16. In Romans 8, the work of the Spirit is described as making the unregenerate person ("me") free from the "law" of sin and death (v. 2) and accomplishes what the Mosaic law could not accomplish (v. 3). Life in the Spirit, which constitutes a new way of existence and a new identity in the new eschatological aeon outside of the realm of flesh, corresponds with being God's children (vv. 9-10,14-15). The effect of this new identity is an actual experience where the human spirit witnesses together with God's Spirit that he or she is God's adopted child (v. 16). This new experienced identity implies the concrete transforming work of the Spirit within the life of the individual believer.

(2) In close connection to the above, the theme of "life" in contrast to "death" in Christ and in the old humanity in Romans 5 to 8 (see fn. 365), correlates with the renewing work of the Spirit in the lives of people. The ability to walk in the new life which is compared to the resurrection of Christ from the dead is especially striking in this regard (Rom 6:4). The theme of the identification of the believer in the death and resurrection of Christ and the reality of the new life of the believer is paralleled in 2 Corinthians 5:15. A similar notion occurs in Galatians 2:20, where the crucifixion and death of the "self" is contrasted to Christ living in the life of the believer.

(3) The removal of the veil in Christ (by God) that happens when someone turns to the Lord who is the Spirit of freedom (2 Cor 3:16-17) implies regeneration.

(4) The new creation in Christ (2 Cor 5:17) involving both a corporate/cosmic and individual dimension which effects transformation and reconciliation in the life of the believer, is equivalent to regeneration.

(5) As noted in the exegetical discussion, Galatians 4:29 which contrasts birth according to the Spirit to birth according to the flesh (cf. v. 23) probably alludes to regeneration.

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(6) In Colossians 2:11-13 and 3:9-11, which has been determined to echo Pauline teaching, regeneration is implied by the circumcision of the heart (2:11-13) and the new humanity that has been put on (3:9-11).

Other Pauline passages that imply regeneration include the following (7-9):

(7) 1 Corinthians 2:12-16 accounts for the reception of the Spirit (v. 12). The received Spirit enables a spiritual understanding (v. 13,15-16) that is not possible for the natural, unregenerate person (v. 14; Ciampa & Rosner 2010:134-135; Collins 1999:135-136; Fee 1996:88; 1994:106-107; Guthrie 1981:164; Lenski 1963:115-117; cf. Witherington III 1998:211). This implies regeneration.

(8) The notion of washing (ἀπολούω) in 1 Corinthians 6:11 stands in connection with the washing of sins (listed in v. 10), being sanctified (ἀγιάζω, v. 11) and being justified (δικαιώω, v. 11). This washing that has been effected by the Spirit (v. 11) describes “the conversion experience that had changed his [Paul’s] readers’ lives” (Barrett [1971] 1976:143) and alludes to regeneration (Fee 1994:857).

(9) Levison (2009:253-255) argues that the language of Romans 5:5, 2 Corinthians 1:22 and 2 Corinthians 5:5 pertaining to the Spirit being given to the believers, is reminiscent of the language about the Spirit in Ezekiel’s vision of the dry bones (esp. Ezek 36:26-27; 37:6,14). For Levison the “early church takes precisely the same tack as the community at Qumran by transforming this vision of corporate recreation into an expression of *individual re-creation*” (:254, emphasis added).<sup>429</sup>

In all of the mentioned Scripture references, the work of regeneration and the abiding presence of the Spirit in the lives of people corresponds with the new identity in Christ, and constitutes the only true *mark of identity* of being God’s people in the light of Christ’s work (esp. Rom 8:16).

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<sup>429</sup> This implied interpretation of Ezek 36-37 however does not necessarily deny a more general notion to the salvation of historical Israel which arguably pertains to historical Israel’s salvation and eschatological future (cf. Rom 5:12-21, see 9.4; 11:26-27, see esp. 8.1.5.6). Although having a different interpretation of the eschatological fulfilment of this vision from my own, Levison (2009:255) acknowledges an implied dual understanding of Ezekiel’s vision in Paul (pertaining to both the receiving of the Spirit and a “grand act of salvation” in Romans 5:12-21).

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### 7.5.3 Spirit and law

Paul describes the epoch of the Mosaic law and its reign as bringing the knowledge of sin (Rom 3:20; 7:7-12), as arousing sin (7:5), and as causing trespasses to increase (5:20). Being under the law is to be in prison and under slavery (Gal 3:23; 4:1; 4:21-5:1). The law even though it was supposed to give life (Gal 3:12,21; Rom 7:10), in fact brought death (Rom 7:10) and was unable to obtain a right standing with God (cf. Rom 8:3-4). Therefore, the era under the law has been superseded eschatologically in Christ (esp. 2 Cor 3:5-16; Rom 7:4-5; 8:2-4). For those who believe, Christ has become the termination of the law (Rom 10:4). The Spirit has thus replaced the law in marking off the identity of God's children. All these aspects constitute the *discontinuity* between the law and the Spirit.

Yet, Paul never sees the Mosaic law as inherently evil or against God. The law is in fact inherently good and "spiritual" (Rom 7:12,14). As noted in the discussion of Romans 7 (see 7.4.1.3), it can be argued that the law was necessary in causing people to "die" in their own striving to do good and realise the "body of this death" (v. 24) and inability to do God's will because of their existence in the flesh (v. 5). Additionally, the reign of the law that caused the "I" (the complete self) to "die", drove people to Christ, the only Deliverer from the wretched existence under the law (v. 24). In Galatians 3, the law is pictured as the guardian until Christ came (v. 24). The law necessitated and preserved the promise (Christ) and the revelation of faith. The law thus had *salvation-historical significance*. The *continuity* between the Spirit and law lies in the Spirit's fulfilment of the law (esp. Rom 8:2-4). Since the Spirit and faith correlates, the same continuity between faith and the law can be seen in Abraham's faith (esp. Rom 4; Gal 3; 4:21-5:1; cf. Fee 1994:813-816).

The Spirit's fulfilment of the law is both on the level of (1) achievement and (2) identity. (1) In terms of achievement, the Spirit constitutes the observance and fulfilment of the law (Rom 8:2-4; cf. Gal 3:2-6). In Galatians 5, the *fruit* of the Spirit (v. 22) is contrasted with the *works* of the flesh (v. 19). Through the Spirit, the believer rests in the objective work of God in Christ. That which a person

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“wills” but cannot achieve (Rom 7:15-20) is now achieved through the believer’s unity with the Spirit. This aspect largely corresponds with the TAP. (2) In terms of identity, the Spirit is identified with righteousness (Rom 8:4,10), which includes a right standing and relationship with God (see 5.1.1). The believer receives the Spirit of “sonship” (Rom 8:15; Gal 4:5) and his or her identity as God’s children is marked off by the Spirit and not by the law. This aspect largely corresponds with the NPP.

### 7.5.4 Spirit and Israel

It is noteworthy that Paul never mentions “Israel according to spirit” as the counterpart of “Israel according to flesh” (1 Cor 10:18; cf. Rom 9:3). Paul in fact never directly associates Ἰσραήλ with πνεῦμα. The reason for this is probably because of the eschatological connotations Paul attaches to πνεῦμα in its extended application. In terms of salvation history, the eschatological era of “spirit” in Christ and the mode of existence it denotes is incompatible with an existence in the old aeon according to “flesh” (Rom 8:8-9; Gal 5:17; Php 3:3).

The general concept of Ἰσραήλ thus seems to be identified with the existence before Christ that is indicated with κατὰ σάρκα in Romans 8:4,5,12,13. As noted in the discussions of especially 2 Corinthians 3:5-16 (see 7.3.1.5) and 2 Corinthians 5:15 (see 6.2.1), the counter-effect of the unification of all people into one identity in Christ (regardless of ethnic or social status: Gal 3:28; 1 Cor 12:13; cf. Col 3:11) is that all people before or outside of Christ, including Israel, have been identified with an unregenerate existence in the old aeon in the flesh.

Further implications of this understanding will be discussed and tested in 8.1 (esp. 8.1.6).

### 7.5.5 Spirit, flesh and anthropology

The fluid nature of the term σάρξ in Paul (which involves bodily existence), the “death” of all people in Christ (e.g., 2 Cor 5:15) and the regenerating work of the Spirit in the actual lives of human beings on the level of the human spirit (Rom

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8:16), inevitably involves anthropology. In spite of the intriguing nature of this topic in Paul, some brief and concluding remarks (pertaining mainly to flesh, spirit and body) have to be made in order to tie together some of the hanging notions presented in this regard.

In as far as the flesh-existence of the old aeon involves external, bodily existence whereas the existence in spirit involves internal, “spiritual” existence, it can be asked if a measure of duality is implied in terms of Pauline anthropology. It has to be noted that Paul never understands existence in the realm of spirit as ultimately disembodied. The difference lies in identity. Within the existence in σάρξ, external, bodily existence *determines* identity (e.g., ethnicity and “works of the law”,<sup>430</sup> including circumcision). In contrast, within the eschatological existence in spirit, the internal regeneration and indwelling of the Spirit *determines* identity. This distinction is essentially a distinction of *priority*, and correlates with lordship. In the old aeon, the natural bodily existence within the human sphere reigned, whereas in the new aeon God’s Spirit reigns in and through the human spirit over the body. The mind and body is thus subjected to the Spirit/spirit (Rom 8:7-10; 12:1-2; cf. Eph 4:22-24; Col 3:1-3,9-10).

The human spirit in the New Testament seems to denote an immaterial faculty of the human being which potentially interacts with God’s Spirit (cf. 26.9 in Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:323; Witherington III 1998b:204). In view of 1 Corinthians 2:11-14 (see 7.5.2), this ability seems to be inactive or absent with the unregenerate person (cf. Witherington III 1998b:204; Guthrie 1981:166). The new life (regeneration) and adoption as children that God’s Spirit accomplishes, seem to quicken this faculty (Rom 8:16; 1 Cor 2:13,15,16). The death in Christ (2 Cor 5:15) and the death of the “self” (Rom 7:24; Gal 2:20) thus arguably involves the inability of the natural human spirit to interact with God. Yet in the unregenerate state, there exists a conflict between “willing” and “doing” (Rom 7:15-20). The

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<sup>430</sup> A corollary of this understanding is that the “works of the law” as co-constituting factor in the old existence in flesh, can be understood as external and observable, whereas the Spirit is internal and non-observable. Similarly, in his interpretation of Paul, Boyarin (1994:84-85) understands the law as belonging to the physical, outward sphere. For him, flesh means giving in to the body and observing the literal Torah.

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latter is evidence of a form of anthropological dualism between the “inward” human will and “outward” bodily existence under the reign of the law, where the law is imposed on humanity from outside (Boyarin 1994:84-85).<sup>431</sup> The inward part of the human constitution is however unable to accomplish God’s will. In the existence ruled by the Spirit in Christ, God enables the human spirit to accomplish God’s will (esp. Rom 8:1-16).

The inability of the material human body in its present form (σὰρξ καὶ αἷμα, 1 Cor 15:50; Fee 1987:798-799) to inherit God’s kingdom arguably lies close to the kind of anthropological dualism that Paul holds. The need for a “resurrection body” (1 Cor 15:44,52-54;<sup>432</sup> Php 3:21) in the eschatological kingdom implies that the *continuity of personal identity* from the current existence to the existence in the coming kingdom cannot be tied to the current physical human body. The “dead in Christ” who will be raised (1 Th 4:13,16) seems to imply an intermediate state where personal identity has to remain intact in spite of the death of the body (Cooper 2000:137-138,167-169; by implication: Thomas 1978:276; Frame 1912:175; cf. Bruce 1982a:101; Guthrie 1981:838-839; Plummer 1918:76). According to Cooper (2000:142) the “unclothed” (ἐκδύω) existence (2 Cor 5:4) which Paul wants to avoid, constitutes the same intermediate disembodied<sup>433</sup> existence between death and final resurrection (cf. Thrall 1994:381-382; Guthrie 1981:836; Barrett [1973] 1976:156;<sup>434</sup> Hughes 1962:171). Romans 8:19-23 constitute the transformation at the final resurrection of the current creation (v. 21), including the current bodily existence (v. 23), which is subject to corruption or decay (φθορά, v. 21). From this passage it can be argued that the body does not experience the new creation yet (cf. Witherington III 1998:212). The new creation

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<sup>431</sup> Boyarin (1994) however takes this in another direction. For Boyarin, Paul’s aim with his spirit-flesh dualism was “to erase all distinction between ethnos and ethnos, sex and sex and become one in Christ’s spiritual body” as part of Paul’s “political and theological program” (:85; cf. :107).

<sup>432</sup> The difficult σῶμα πνευματικόν (1 Cor 15:44) is not necessarily to be understood as immaterial but rather as supernatural (Fee 1987:786) or transcendent (BDAG, πνευματικός §2aβ). Yet a measure of Hellenistic vocabulary is difficult to deny (cf. Schweizer 1968:421).

<sup>433</sup> Harris (2005:386,388; [1976] 1977:347) also understands ἐκδύω as being disembodied, but not in terms of the intermediate state between physical death and final resurrection, but rather that Paul resists ultimate disembodiment (cf. Kruse [1987] 1998:115).

<sup>434</sup> Barrett works in the same direction by stating that Paul would be afraid for death, for he would desire the substitution of the spiritual body for the natural body (expected at the parousia) in his lifetime rather than to die beforehand.

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is already a *spiritual* reality, but the new creation of the *physical* world is still awaited. The tension between the “already” and the “not yet” can thus be expressed in terms of *spiritual* (“already”) and *physical* regeneration (“not yet”).

2 Corinthians 12:2-4 arguably constitutes the strongest evidence for the dualism of spirit/soul and body in Paul’s thought. This ecstatic experience constitutes an experience of temporal disembodiment that Paul sees as a possibility (Harris 2005:839; Cooper 2000:149-150; Barrett [1973] 1976:308-309; Bruce 1971:247).

Although these remarks by no means are intended as final, one cannot deny a measure of dualism (in terms of spirit/soul and body) in Paul’s anthropology. Whatever the extent is to which one acknowledges dualism in Paul’s anthropology, it has to be differentiated on crucial points from Hellenistic anthropology:

(1) Paul never envisions disembodiment as ultimate destination. If disembodiment is acknowledged in Paul’s thought, it is temporary or intermediate.

(2) Even while Paul derives identity in the new eschatological existence in Christ from spirit (immaterial and internal) and not from the bodily existence (material and external), he never views the body (or flesh) as intrinsically evil or as without value (cf. Witherington III 1998:204,212). The body is not a prison to be freed from. The body is in fact a “temple” of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 6:19) and must be presented unto God as a living, holy and acceptable sacrifice unto God (Rom 12:1).

(3) An understanding of σάρξ as the way of existence in the old aeon is preferred over an understanding of σάρξ as “sinful nature” (as discussed). Amidst the fluidity between the terms σῶμα and σάρξ in Paul, the former understanding of σάρξ (way of existence) is further removed than the latter understanding (sinful nature) from Epicurean thought where σάρξ is identified with the seat of cravings and lusts (see 7.1.1.2). The connection of σάρξ to sin in Paul has more to do with the reign and dominion of sin in the old aeon than with a resident part of the human constitution.

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(4) Paul nowhere endorses the view of the soul's pre-existence (Guthrie 1981:165).

(5) Paul does not have a monistic view as in Greek thought that spirit is identified with all matter (see 7.1.1.1). He rather differentiates between that which is material (body) and immaterial (spirit).

(6) In passages where the spirit/soul and body are mentioned together (1 Cor 5:3-5;<sup>435</sup> 6:20; 1 Th 5:23;<sup>436</sup> cf. 2 Cor 7:1),<sup>437</sup> both a dualistic and holistic understanding of humanity is present. Cooper (2000:230-231) is probably right to refer to Paul's anthropology as representing "holistic dualism".

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<sup>435</sup> The spirit which will be saved (1 Cor 5:5) can denote the whole person (Fee 1994:127) or the "the essential, inward self" (Barrett [1971] 1976:126). Yet, a possible understanding of denoting that faculty within the human constitution that determines identity as God's children in the new aeon in Christ (the spirit which witnesses with God's Spirit, Rom 8:16), cannot be ruled out.

<sup>436</sup> In 1 Th 5:23, notions of dualism have to be acknowledged, for it is impossible to understand πνεῦμα here as term that denotes the whole human being (cf. Schweizer 1971:435).

<sup>437</sup> In 2 Cor 7:1, σάρξ most likely refers to the physical body (BDAG §2; Harris 2005:512; cf. Gal 2:20, see fn. 264).

8. *“All Israel” and “the Israel of God”*

## 8. “ALL ISRAEL” AND “THE ISRAEL OF GOD”

Romans 11 (esp. vv. 25-27) and Galatians 6:7-16 (esp. v. 16) arguably represent two of the most controversial and variously interpreted passages regarding Israel in the New Testament. Both passages constitute a climax or end in Paul’s line of thought (see 3.3 and 4.3.1). The interpretation of Romans 11:25-27 and Galatians 6:16 presented here does not represent a majority view and will therefore largely build on the research on Paul’s theological thought around identity that has been put forth up to this point of the dissertation. Where most of the exegesis has been mainly deductive until now, the approach to Romans 11 (esp. vv. 25-27) and Galatians 6:7-16 (esp. v. 16) will lean more toward the inductive side. In other words, a different line of interpretation (in comparison to conventional interpretations, see 8.1.4; 8.2.3) will be tested and evaluated against the text of these passages. This evaluation will chiefly involve semantic (see [a] in 1.4), structural (see [b] in 1.4), theological and exegetical aspects (see [d] and [e] in 1.4).

### 8.1 Romans 11:1-36 (ABC)

Both verses 1 and 11 start with the same formula (λέγω οὖν), which mark verses 1 to 10 and 11 to 32 as separate literary units (Moo 1996:671). Verses 1 to 10 mainly answer the question whether God has rejected his people (v. 1). The themes of rejection (ἀπωθέομαι, vv. 1,2), the remnant (vv. ὑπολείπω, v. 3,

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καταλείπω, v. 4, λείμμα, v. 5) and God’s gracious (χάρις, vv. 5,6[X3]) election (ἐκλογή, vv. 5,7) are prominent in verses 1 to 10.

Verses 11 to 32, which fall under the main rubric of Israel’s salvation, can be broken down into three sub-units: (1) Verses 11 to 15 mainly answers the question around Israel’s fall (v. 11). (2) Verses 16 to 24 represent the olive tree metaphor, which explains much of the logic behind the election of God’s people in the light of faith (in Christ). (3) Verses 25 to 32 constitute the mystery of Israel’s salvation and explain it in terms of the balanced logic behind the whole of salvation history.

On the high note of the mystery of Israel’s salvation and God’s perfect grace toward all people, Paul concludes his salvation-historical exposition (cf. Longenecker 2011:419) that started in Romans 9 with an appropriate doxology in verses 33 to 36.

### 8.1.1 The remnant and the hardened (vv. 1-10)

As argued in 4.4.1 and 6.1.2, Paul has never lost historical (ancient) Israel out of sight in Romans 9 to 10. When Paul asks whether God has rejected Israel (11:1), his diachronic and dialectical hermeneutic (see 6.1.2.1) is retained. As I will argue, Paul in fact has historical Israel in mind in most of verses 1 to 24, but extends it to unbelieving Judaeans in Paul’s present where he explicitly compares historical Israel with the present time (καὶ ἐν τῷ νῦν καιρῷ, v. 5), where he draws the line of Israel’s “sleep” into the present (ἕως τῆς σήμερον ἡμέρας, v. 8), or where Paul wants to provoke his “own flesh” (μου τὴν σάρκα, v. 14) to jealousy in order to lead them to salvation by faith (vv. 11,14,23). Paul never unambiguously describes present unbelieving Judaeans with the term Ἰσραήλ or even as Ἰσραηλίτης (denoting primarily historical Israelites in 9:4 [see 4.3.2.1] and Paul’s own descent in 11:1 and 2 Cor 11:22). Conversely, he never unambiguously describes ancient Israel with the term Ἰουδαῖος. Yet there is *continuity* in terms of the hardening of historical Israel and unbelieving Judaeans in Paul’s present.

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In answer to the question whether God has rejected His people (λαός, v. 1), the answer is emphatically negative (μὴ γένοιτο). But instead of arguing for the continued existence of Israel as such, Paul points to himself which is a Judaeen Christ-believer. Jewett (2007:653) is in a sense correct that “Paul uses himself as an example that Israel has not been abandoned” (cf. Hultgren 2011:399; Bruce [1985] 2000:208; Käsemann 1980:299-300; Cranfield 1979:543; Barrett [1962] 1975:208; Ridderbos 1959:245). It seems significant however that he does not refer to himself as of Ἰσραήλ, but as an Ἰσραηλίτης, which in Paul leans more toward being an ethnic designation than it bears connotations about being part of God’s people (see 2.1.1). With Paul’s use of Ἰσραηλίτης, which he qualifies as denoting his physical descent from Abraham and membership of Benjamin’s tribe, he identifies his ethnic roots within national, physical Israel (identity mode A), which is on another level than *inner* (true) Israel (9:6-8, see 4.3.2.2). Yet through the course of Romans, Paul has defined the decisive markers of identity as God’s people in the light of the gospel not in terms of physical descent, but in terms of faith in Christ (3:28-4:25) and the work and presence of the life-giving Spirit (7:6; 8:1-16). Elsewhere, Paul considers his ethnic heritage as insignificant in defining a righteous status with God (e.g., Php 3:8-9, see 6.1.7.3; implied in Rom 9:6-8). One therefore has to acknowledge a tension between “physical” (ethnic) continuity (Paul/Judaeans believing in Christ) and “spiritual” discontinuity (rejection of hardened Israel).

God has not rejected his people that He foreknew (v. 2). Since God’s people in general is in view (not specific individuals), God’s foreknowledge (προγινώσκω, v. 2) is not to be understood in terms of individual election but “is speaking of God’s election of the people as a whole” (Moo 1996:674; cf. Witherington III 2004:266; Dunn 1988b:636; Cranfield 1979:545; cf. 9:11-23, see 4.4.1). In proving this, Paul then refers to historical Israel (Ἰσραήλ, v. 2) by quoting 1 Kings 19:10 (in Rom 11:3) and 1 Kings 19:18 (in Rom 11:4) respectively. Both these quotations are utilised because of their reference to the “remnant”, or more specifically, those who are left remaining (ὑπολείπω, v. 3; BDAG; Zerwick & Grosvenor 1988:483) or those who are left over (καταλείπω, v. 4; BDAG §4). Paul’s reference to the remnant recalls 9:27, where he referred to Isaiah’s cry which indicated those

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surviving as the only ones being saved after God’s judgment (see 6.1.1.1). A similar element of judgment is present in these two verses quoted from 1 Kings (cf. Hultgren 2011:401; Jewett 2007:659; Käsemann 1980:300). The finality of that judgment seems to be enhanced by Paul’s change of the future καταλείψεις (1 Kgs 19:18 [LXX]) to the aorist κατέλιπον. Except for Paul’s reference to his ethnic descent (v. 1), which does not as such indicate his connection to true, *inner* Israel, Paul has only given a partial answer to his question in verse 1. In this answer, Paul largely repeats the notions of Romans 9:27-33, which constitutes a crossover in salvation-history (see 6.1.1.1). By pointing to the remainder (λείμμα, v. 5; Zerwick & Grosvenor 1988:483) chosen by grace in the present time (ἐν τῷ νῦν καιρῷ), which can only be believers in Christ (Witherington III 2004:271; Wright 2002:676; Moo 1996:675,677,679; cf. Fitzmyer 1993:605; Käsemann 1980:301; contra Gaston 1987:142),<sup>438</sup> not much of the underlying tension regarding historical Israel and their position in salvation history is relieved. Paul’s implicit answer rather implies that they are in fact rejected in terms of salvation history and do not form part of God’s people any longer, for only those who believe in Christ are God’s people.

Yet, although questions remain regarding historical Israel (e.g., their salvation), one has to acknowledge that Paul’s reference to those believing Judaeans who remain God’s people (the “remnant”) after the crossover in salvation history, are in continuity with historical Israel. The cross was the culmination of their salvation history (cf. 9:33, see 6.1.1.1; 1 Cor 1:23, see fn. 217). Jesus is their Messiah and the gospel came to them first (cf. 1:16, see 5.1.1). Those who were born under the Old Covenant as part of historical Israel and accepted their Messiah in faith, did in fact fully experience God’s uninterrupted faithfulness and grace toward His people. Dunn (1988b:638) is therefore correct to refer to the remnant as “part of the climax of salvation-history.”

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<sup>438</sup> Gaston’s proposal that the remnant would point to those who have engaged in the Gentile mission, would contradict Paul’s earlier submission of himself to God’s righteousness in Christ (1<sup>st</sup> person plural: 3:21-22; cf. 10:3-4) which by implication would not be applicable to Judaeans (Zoccali 2008:301-302). As pointed out earlier (see 4.3.1), the audience of the Roman church most likely consisted of a Gentile majority and a Judaeans minority.

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In verse 6, God’s grace is set over against “works”. Here, Paul refers to “the manner by which membership in the elect remnant is achieved” (Jewett 2007:660). Much of Paul’s earlier polemic against defining identity around the works of the law is recalled (3:20,27-28; 4:2,6; 9:32; Jewett 2007:660). Since Paul has closely connected grace to faith (3:22-24; 4:16; 5:2), it seems reasonable that faith in Christ is implied as being part of God’s grace (vv. 5-6; cf. Dunn 1988b:675), especially in its opposition to works. It is interesting that Paul does not employ the full phrase “works of the law” here, even though he probably has the whole concept in mind (cf. Eph 2:8-9, see 5.1.5). As elsewhere, Paul’s reference includes connotations to marking off Israel’s exclusive identity (NPP, e.g., Dunn 1988b:647) and notions of merit (TAP, e.g., Moo 1996:677; Cranfield 1979:548; esp. Rom 2:17-19, see 4.5.1; fn. 106; Rom 4:1-25, see 5.1.2; fn. 131).<sup>439</sup>

Paul states that Israel failed to attain what it was seeking (v. 7), but that the elect obtained it. Being part of national Israel does not imply election in the *inner* sense. Paul’s distinction between Israel and the elect partly recalls his earlier distinction between *inner* and *outer* Israel (9:6-8, see 4.3.2.2). Yet in the current context Paul’s reference to the elect (v. 7), which stands parallel to the remnant, refers to those believing in Christ. Election is thus a deeper criterion for being God’s people than being part of the nation of Israel. Since election and the remnant correspond, belief in Christ is once again implied, which in itself erases ethnical distinctions (10:12). Gentiles are therefore in principle included in election here (Dunn 1988b:640; contra Jewett 2007:661; Moo 1996:680; Fitzmyer 1993:606), a notion that can additionally be derived from the contrast between Israel and the elect (v. 7).

Israel’s hardening (πρωρω, v. 7; BDAG; Zerwick & Grosvenor 1988:484; Moo 1996:670,679; Dunn 1988b:640; Cranfield 1979:542,549; LITV; REB; NRSV; NIV;

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<sup>439</sup> Paul thus counters more than a mere understanding of identity in terms of “works” or a misunderstanding of the law (contra Dunn 1988b:647,667,675).

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RSV; RV)<sup>440</sup> is mentioned in contrast to God’s election (in Christ) which includes Gentiles (v. 7). Their “stupor” (κατάνυξις, v. 8; BDAG; Käsemann 1980:302) and inability to see and hear (v. 8) are once again identified historically (in reference to Isa 29:10 and probably Deut 29:4), and are drawn into the present (ἕως τῆς σήμερον ἡμέρας; Mounce 1995:216-217). Paul hereby repeats the theme of Israel’s hardening (9:18, see 4.4.1; fn. 218) which he continues up to verse 10. Verses 9 and 10 are a reference to Psalm 68:23-24 (LXX). Although Paul retains most of the same terminology of Ps 68:23 (LXX) in different order, he adds καὶ εἰς θήραν: “and a trap”. The words παγίς and θήρα occur in a pair in the Septuagint in Psalm 34:8; 123:6-7; Proverbs 11:8-9 and Hosea 5:1-2 (Jewett 2007:664). The term σκάνδαλον evokes 9:33, where it is used in connection with Christ as “rock that will make them fall” (πέτραν σκανδάλου, see 6.1.1.1). The connotations of a “*bait-stick* of a trap, a *snare*” inherent to the term σκάνδαλον (see fn. 214; cf. Seifrid 2007:670) is enhanced by the terms παγίς and θήρα (cf. Käsemann 1980:301). These terms are used together to sketch the whole picture of Israel’s hardening. Whether τράπεζα (v. 9) carries overtones of Israel’s exclusive table fellowship (Jewett 2007:664; Seifrid 2007:671; Barrett [1962] 1975:211), their ritual practice (Dunn 1988b:642-643,650; Käsemann 1980:302), or their dependence on the law (Sanday & Headlam [1902] 1960:315), it does not seem crucial in terms of the general imagery for Israel’s hardening (Cranfield 1979:551; cf. Moo 1996:683). The general sense is that Paul uses that which is normally applied to David’s enemies, and uses it against Israel (Dunn 1988b:649). Their hardening and blindness (vv. 8-10) appear to be part of God’s plan in salvation history (cf. Cranfield 1979:549) with overtones of Israel’s own responsibility in terms of their actions and attitude<sup>441</sup> (cf. 9:24-33, see 6.1.1.1).

Apart from the remnant who believes in Christ, Paul does not provide in verses 1 to 10 any grounds for the continuation of historical Israel *per se* as God’s people into the present time. Verses 1 to 10 largely echo the notions of Romans 9:24-33

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<sup>440</sup> The term denotes “petrification” (BDAG, πωρόω; Dunn 1988b:640; Witherington III 2004:272-273; Lenski [1945] 2008:721), e.g., such as of marble or even a stone in the bladder (Dunn 1988b:640).

<sup>441</sup> That their hardening is also their own responsibility probably rings loudest with the term ἀνταπόδομα (v. 9, “retribution”), which would be the consequence of their own wrong.

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(see 6.1.1). Verses 1 to 10 denote continuity with historical Israel in the Christ-believing remnant after an implied judgement (vv. 3-4). The hardening of historical Israel is confirmed (vv. 7-10), together with their failure to obtain what they were seeking (v. 5). Israel seems to have received retribution (ἀνταπόδομα, v. 9) for their hardening. The crossover in salvation history represented by Israel’s Messiah, which now includes both Judaeans and non-Judaeans alike (see 6.1.1), rings in the background.

The careful wording of the question in verse 1 cannot be lost out of sight. Paul does not ask if God has rejected *Israel* (Ἰσραήλ) as such, even though they are very much part of the equation, he asks if God has rejected His *people* (λαός; cf. Merkle 2000:713). Although Gentiles are now included due to the crossover of salvation history, the crossover is not an exchange between ethnic entities as if Gentiles *per se* are now the new people of God (Witherington III 2004:266). The culmination of salvation history in Israel’s Messiah rather constitutes a deeper criterion for being God’s people. The identity of God’s people has been *redefined* away from criteria pertaining to human possibility, which Paul mainly describes around the term σάρξ, whether these criteria marked off identity (NPP) or aim to merit God’s favour (TAP). The deeper criteria for marking off God’s people in the light of Christ’s work ultimately revolves around divine possibility, around God’s grace (vv. 5,6) and election (vv. 5,7), which implies faith in Christ. The answer to the question whether God has rejected His people (v. 1) is thus “no” (1) in the sense that those of Israelite descent are represented in the remnant, and (2) that the deeper criteria for being God’s people (grace, election) are confirmed. What is rejected (vv. 1-10) is at heart not national Israel *per se*, but any claim on being God’s people apart from grace (implying faith in Christ), which Paul summarises with the term “works” (v. 6).

### 8.1.2 Israel’s fall and the salvation of the world (vv. 11-15)

Verse 11 introduces another question which resulted from verses 1-10: “have they stumbled so as to fall?” (NRSV). Since historical Israel is largely in view in verses 1-10, it is most likely that they remain in view in verse 11: “Have [historical Israel] stumbled so as to fall?” The verb πίπτω (v. 11) denotes a decisive (Zerwick &

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Grosvenor 1988:484) falling from the state of grace, which implies complete ruin (BDAG §2b). Paul once again (cf. v. 1) denies such a notion (μὴ γένοιτο). Yet Paul immediately follows up his question by a term that lies semantically rather close to πίπτω. He uses παράπτωμα, a form which is derived from παραπίπτω ("fall aside"). His play on words here implies that even though they did not stumble unto falling away completely, they did fall in terms of their false (moral) step (παράπτωμα, Zerwick & Grosvenor 1988:484; Cranfield 1979:555; Godet 1881b:236). By this offence (BDAG, παράπτωμα ββ) however salvation [has come]<sup>442</sup> to the Gentiles, which in turn is intended to make "them" (αὐτούς) jealous. The salvation of the Gentiles points to their generic inclusion into salvation history: that they would become God's people through faith in Christ (cf. 9:24,30). Those that are intended to be made jealous (αὐτούς, v. 11) points back to verses 8 to 10, which is historical Israel. The provocation to jealousy that Paul alludes to here (Deut 32:21) and earlier (10:19) thus seems to include historical Israel. As indicated in 6.1.2.2, even Israel's provocation to jealousy has a historical basis in the Old Testament, constituted by the Samaritan and Babylonian nations (see fn. 234). Yet, as indicated in verses 5 and 8, Israel's provocation to jealousy finds continuity into Paul's present. In present context therefore (v. 11), except that historical Israel who have trespassed and hardened their hearts would be made jealous in some way by the culmination of salvation history that brought salvation to the Gentiles,<sup>443</sup> Paul additionally has present unbelieving Judaeans in mind. This diachronic and dialectical hermeneutic that Paul retains, which involves both historical Israel and unbelieving Judaeans, arguably contributes to his omission of a specific designation or title for those who are to be made jealous (αὐτούς).

In view of the synonymous parallelism constituted by the first half of verse 12 (Jewett 2007:675), πλοῦτος κόσμου can be rendered as "the Gentile world"

<sup>442</sup> This past tense verb seems to be required by the logic of the verse (Moo 1996:687).

<sup>443</sup> As in 7:5 and 15:8, Paul seems to use εἰς τὸ + aorist infinitive (καρποφορῆσαι in 7:5; παραζηλώσαι in 11:11; βεβαιῶσαι in 15:8) in denoting a past situation. Although a possible provocation to jealousy of deceased historical Israel is strange to Western logic, the patriarchs seem to be active participants in Paul's salvation-historical exposition (see esp. the phrase διὰ τοῦς πατέρας in 11:28: "for the sake of the fathers"; cf. 4:12,16: Abraham as "our" father; 9:10: "our father Isaac").

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(Witherington III 2004:267). The notion is that if the offence (παράπτωμα) or defeat (ἥττημα, Zerwick & Grosvenor 1988:484; NRSV) of historical Israel results in the "spiritual blessing" (πλοῦτος, Moo 1996:688; lit. "wealth" or "abundance", BDAG §2) of the Gentile world, which images "the benefit brought by the gospel" (Dunn 1988b:654), how much more their "fullness" (πλήρωμα, Wright 2002:681; Mounce 1995:218; Dunn 1988b:655; NIV; LITV; RV; KJV)<sup>444</sup> or "full inclusion" (Hultgren 2011:397,398,403; Bruce [1985] 2000:212; ESV; ISV; NRSV; RSV). To what πλήρωμα refers is not entirely clear at this point and partly has to be kept in suspense until the whole picture becomes clearer (i.e., vv. 25-27, see 8.1.5.3). The fact that verse 12 does not have a verb or a tense contributes to the uncertainty. "Their fullness" could point to historical Israel's salvation (since historical Israel is largely in view) and/or the salvation of unbelieving Judaeans in Paul's present (Hendriksen 1981, Romans 11:11-24) or in the future (Witherington III 2004:267; Moo 1996:690; Dunn 1988b:668; Ridderbos 1959:254). "Their fullness" might even carry a more general sense, for example, to reach completion<sup>445</sup> or "fullness" in terms of salvation history (Moo 1996:690; cf. Gal 4:4, see 5.1.4).

Paul's specific address to the Gentiles (v. 13) does not necessarily imply that his recipients were exclusively Gentile (cf. 4.3.1), but rather that Paul wants to catch the attention of the Gentile members specifically (Dunn 1988b:655; Hendriksen 1981, Romans 11:11-24). Inasmuch Paul is an apostle to the Gentiles, he magnifies his ministry (v. 13; cf. NRSV) in order to make his "flesh" jealous and save<sup>446</sup> some of them (v. 14). Salvation here is not so much Paul who saves as him being a significant figure in salvation history (Moo 1996:692; cf. Jewett 2007:680; contra Käsemann 1980:306). In accordance with Paul's non-specific references to "them" (neither Ἰσραήλ nor Ἰουδαῖοι) in verses 8 to 12, he seems to

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<sup>444</sup> Dunn (1988b:655) argues that "fullness" is a better translation here since Paul is aiming more for effect than precision (rather than e.g., "full number": Jewett 2007:678; Moo 1996:689-690; Fitzmyer 1993:611; Bruce [1985] 2000:212). BDAG (cf. Zerwick & Grosvenor 1988:484) lists Rom 11:12 (πλήρωμα) under both §3a ("full number") and §4 ("fulfilling, fulfillment").

<sup>445</sup> This is one of the inherent connotations of πλήρωμα (BDAG §1b,3; 59.32 in Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:597-598; Abbott-Smith [1923] 1929:366).

<sup>446</sup> Although the verb σώσω (v. 14) is either a future indicative or an aorist subjunctive, the latter is more likely following the εἶ πως (Jewett 2007:679; Moo 1996:685,692).

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utilise the ethnic “my flesh” (μου τὴν σάρκα)<sup>447</sup> in verse 14 rather than any specific title (Ἰσραήλ/Ἰουδαῖοι) in order to retain his diachronic, dialectical hermeneutic (cf. v. 11 above). If Paul’s role in *salvation history* is in view rather than the *causal consequence* of Paul’s ministry, the salvation of “some of” historical Israel is conceivable. Yet, Paul’s notion probably leans stronger toward his role in the salvation of “some of” his own kindred according to the flesh (μου τὴν σάρκα), that is unbelieving Judaeans in Paul’s present.

The structure of verse 15 is the same as verse 12 and carries much of the same notions (cf. Mounce 1995:219; Dunn 1988b:657; Käsemann 1980:307). This “sentence” (v. 15) is once again without a verb. As Paul argues, if the rejection (BDAG, ἀποβολή §1; Dunn 1988b:657; ISV; NRSV) or casting away (Moo 1996:694; KJV; RV) of Israel by God<sup>448</sup> is the reconciliation of the world, including both Judaeans and Gentiles alike through Christ (Dunn 1988b:657; cf. Wright 2002:677; καταλλαγή in 5:11), how much more Israel’s acceptance by God into a relationship (πρόσληψις).<sup>449</sup> The phrase ζωὴ ἐκ νεκρῶν may either be understood as metaphorical, denoting spiritual quickening (e.g., Hultgren 2011:409; Mounce 1995:219; Fitzmyer 1993:613; Wright 2002:683; 1993:248; Hendriksen 1981, Romans 11:11-24), or as literal, denoting physical resurrection from the dead (e.g., Jewett 2007:681; Schreiner [1998] 2005:599; Moo 1996:694-696; Dunn 1988b:658; Käsemann 1980:307; Cranfield 1979:562-563; Sanday & Headlam [1902] 1960:326). Dunn (1988b:658) is probably right that a spiritual quickening would be too much of an anti-climax after καταλλαγή κόσμου (cf.

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<sup>447</sup> While Paul primarily uses the expression to denote his kindred in terms of blood relationship (see 10.1 in Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:112, discussed in 2.3.1; Moo 1996:692; Dunn 1988b:656; cf. BDAG, σάρξ §4; Cranfield 1979:560-561), overtones of the existence before or outside of Christ is quite possible here (see 7.5.1).

<sup>448</sup> The phrase ἀποβολή αὐτῶν is more likely an objective genitive than a subjective genitive and thus points to rejection by God (BDAG, ἀποβολή §1; Wright 2002:682; Moo 1996:693; Dunn 1988b:657; Cranfield 1979:562; GNB; RV; cf. Sanday & Headlam [1902] 1960:325) rather than their rejection of the gospel (contra Hultgren 2011:408; Fitzmyer 1993:612).

<sup>449</sup> In parallel with ἀποβολή, πρόσληψις should also be taken in the passive sense (BDAG, πρόσληψις; Moo 1996:693; Dunn 1988b:657; Cranfield 1979:562; GNB; RV; cf. Wright 2002:683; Sanday & Headlam [1902] 1960:325) rather than denoting acceptance of the gospel (contra Hultgren 2011:408; Fitzmyer 1993:612). In both ἀποβολή and πρόσληψις, Paul seems to have in mind the same “complex of divine intention and human culpability as in 9:31-33” (Dunn 1988b:657). The same theme of *God’s* rejection is implied by the question in v. 1 and is contrasted by *God’s* gracious election in juxtaposition to works in vv. 5-6. The themes of election and *God’s* kindness in the bigger scheme of salvation history are echoed in vv. 28-32.

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Cranfield 1979:562), or as Jewett (2007:681) argues, it would undercut “the rhetorical force of Paul’s climactic question.” But whether life from death points to the eschatological consummation (e.g., Jewett 2007:681; Witherington III 2004:269; Moo 1996:694-696; Dunn 1988b:658; Käsemann 1980:307; Cranfield 1979: 563; Sanday & Headlam [1902] 1960:326) or something else which involves the acceptance of historical Israel, remains open at this point. As argued in 5.1.2, “making the dead alive” in 4:17 might be part of the intended meaning here in 11:15.

### 8.1.3 The metaphor of the olive tree (vv. 16-24)

The metaphor of the olive tree represents God’s people spanning both aeons of salvation history before and after the Christ event. The metaphor thus involves historical Israel and the believing Judaeans and Gentiles (Moo 1996:698). These verses serve to clarify the balance within the economy of salvation history and to counter for any form of boasting, especially on the part of Gentile believers.

Paul states that if the first-fruit (ἀπαρχή, Zerwick & Grosvenor 1988:484; Jewett 2007:666; LITV; RV; KJV)<sup>450</sup> or initial offering (Dunn 1988b:658) is set apart (ἅγιος, Witherington III 2004:569; Moo 1996:701), so also the lump (cf. Num 15:17-21; Lev 23:10-11). Paul follows with a perfect parallel comparison: if the root is set apart, so also the branches. In these two “sentences” (although without verb) the first-fruit and root thus correspond, while the lump corresponds to the branches (Jewett 2007:670,682-683; Moo 1996:699; Sanday & Headlam [1902] 1960:326; cf. Godet 1881b:245; contra Wright 2002:683-684; Dunn 1988b:659; Cranfield 1979:564). While most commentators understand the branches as denoting Israel (e.g., Wright 2002:683; Fitzmyer 1993:613; Dunn 1988b:659; Barrett [1962] 1975:216; cf. Moo 1996:699; Ps 92:13; Jer 11:17), there is difference of opinion in what the root refers to. Whereas some understand the root (1) as referring to Judaeans Christ-believers (e.g., Barrett [1962] 1975:216; considered as a possibility by Witherington III 2004:270) and some (2) as referring

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<sup>450</sup> In view of the singular form ἀπαρχή, a singular translation is preferable rather than the plural “first fruits” (contra Moo 1996:696,699; Fitzmyer 1993:613; NIV; RSV).

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to Christ (e.g., Wright 2002:684; Ellison 1966:86-87; considered as a possibility by Barrett [1962] 1975:216), most understand it (3) as referring to the patriarchs (e.g., Witherington III 2004:270; Moo 1996:699; Mounce 1995:220; Fitzmyer 1993:614; Dunn 1988b:659-660,672; Bruce [1985] 2000:215; Käsemann 1980:308; Cranfield 1979:564; Ridderbos 1959:257; Sanday & Headlam [1902] 1960:326; Godet 1881b:245; Chrysostom). Yet both the corresponding first-fruit and root are most likely to refer to Abraham specifically (see 1-4 below; cf. Witherington III 2004:271; Fitzmyer 1993:610):<sup>451</sup>

(1) The corresponding singular forms (ἀπαρχή, φύραμα) would fit this interpretation.

(2) Paul specifically mentions his descent from Abraham in verse 1 when he describes his pedigree as Israelite.

(3) Further back (9:7), Paul mentions descent from Abraham in his distinction between *inner* and *outer* Israel (9:6-8, see 4.3.2.2).

(4) The strongest argument for this view is probably that Paul recalls his discussion of Abraham's faith in Romans 4. As discussed in 5.1.2, Abraham is considered as the ethnic father of Israel (v. 1) or the father of those who are circumcised (v. 12), the original recipient of God's righteousness (vv. 3,9), and the father of all believers in Christ (vv. 12,16). In the new eschatological aeon, believers' connection with Abraham is punctiliar (4:1-25, see 5.1.2; cf. Gal 4:21-5:1, see 5.1.4) through Christ who is both a physical descendant of Abraham (9:5) and the point of believers' spiritual connection to Abraham (4:24). Christ thus forms part of the root imagery, especially in terms of being grafted into the olive tree (cf. Wright 2002:684).

If Abraham is signified by the first-fruit or root, the notion of verse 16 would be that if Abraham as first to be counted for righteousness (4:3,9) was set apart for God,

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<sup>451</sup> Some mention Abraham especially among the patriarchs (e.g., Moo 1996:699; Mounce 1995:220; Dunn 1988b:659,672; Ridderbos 1959:257).

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then the nation of Israel would be set apart for God as well.<sup>452</sup> This setting apart does not necessarily indicate salvation for every Israelite, but signifies the special identity of the people of Israel as God’s people (Moo 1996:701).

The branches that have been broken off (v. 17) signify God’s rejection of Israel. This was the inevitable result of their historical hardening and unbelief (vv. 7-10; cf. Moo 1996:701) which culminated in the death and resurrection of Christ. The wild olive tree, signifying believing Gentiles, were grafted into (v. 17) the good olive tree (v. 24), which is the *people of God* spanning both the aeons of salvation history before and after the Christ event (Zoccali 2008:298-299; Wright 2002:684; Moo 1996:698,702,709; Barrett [1962] 1975:217; cf. Kim 2010:321; Fitzmyer 1993:610; Horne 1978:330)<sup>453</sup> and not *Israel* as such (contra Staples 2011:385; Bassler 2007:81; Schnelle 2003:350; Segal 2000a:133; Tomson 1986:285). Verse 17 repeats much of the notions of verses 12 and 15. At the turning point between the old and new aeons (in the Christ event), that which marked off the identity of God’s people irrevocably changed (cf. Dunn 1988b:672).<sup>454</sup> Those who were part of Israel before Christ, who accepted Christ in faith, continued to be God’s people (cf. Jewett 2007:685), constituting the remnant (vv. 3-5, see 8.1.1). But historical hardened Israel as well as those who continued in a state of hardening and unbelief when the new eschatological aeon was inaugurated were cut off from God’s people (cf. Wright 2002:685; Moo 1996:701; 9:30-33, see 6.1.1). Paul’s description of “some” (τις, v. 17) of the branches that were broken off is probably euphemistic in order to reduce the harshness of this reality (cf. Dunn 1988b:672). Paul in fact has the majority of Israel in mind (cf. Bell 1994:161; Fitzmyer 1993:614). The entire identity mode A (flesh-existence, including law, works and circumcision) was “cut off” from being a *sole or co-constituting* criterion in defining God’s people (to be further motivated in 8.1.5.7).

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<sup>452</sup> God’s covenant with Abraham and His promise to be the God of Abraham and his descendants probably lies behind this (Gen 17:7-8).

<sup>453</sup> This is probably the reason why Gaston (1987:147) finds this section inconsistent with the rest of ch. 11 (noted by Zoccali 2008:298).

<sup>454</sup> Dunn (1988b) seems to work in this direction, but somewhat more restrained. He states that “the implication is present that prior to this time (the Christ event) the understanding of God’s purpose as focused upon and coterminous with Israel was justified. But God has now brought that stage of salvation history to an end” (:672-673).

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In other words, those who were God's people through identity mode A or even AB, resembling the old existence in flesh (7:14-25),<sup>455</sup> were "cut off". In terms of the current imagery, the *entire* historical Israel has thus been cut off, including Israel according to the flesh. The existence in flesh was superseded by those who believe in Christ (3:28-4:25) and partake in the Spirit (8:1-16), constituting God's people in the new aeon (identity mode C). The sharing in the richness of the olive tree denotes the sharing of the Gentiles in the blessings promised to Israel (Wright 2002:685; Mounce 1995:220).

The appeal not to boast against the branches (v. 18) is specifically aimed at Gentile believers. In view of the pervading theme from verses 17 through 21, the branches in verse 18 probably refer to Israel that has been cut off apart from the believing remnant (cf. Wright 2002:685; Barrett [1962] 1975:217).<sup>456</sup> The root that carries "you" (Gentile believer) and not the other way round, neither points to Israel's privileged position in terms of salvation to the world (contra Fitzmyer 1993:615), nor to a "Jewish root and a continuing Jewish element" within the people of God (contra Moo 1996:704). The root that carries the Gentile believer rather points to Abraham's faith in salvation history (cf. 4:3) and the Gentiles' punctiliar connection through Israel's Messiah to Abraham (cf. Wright 2002:685) who is the father of all believers (4:12,16) alike without distinction (10:12). Despite Israel being cut off from being God's people, was it not for them, their Messiah according to the flesh (9:5) that became the Messiah for the world would not have been there for the Gentiles (cf. Wright 2002:685) or any believer in Christ. Boasting against Israel would thus imply boasting against Christ.

In verses 19 to 22 Paul uses faith as argument to remove any grounds for boasting. This implicitly says something about the nature of faith. Faith in Christ is per definition not representative of any human contribution to salvation, but

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<sup>455</sup> The motif of "death" in Christ of all people (2 Cor 5:15; cf. the theme of "death" in Rom 5-8, see fn. 365; Gal 2:20) would match to this notion. Rom 11:15 carries the notion of the "death" of Israel in particular.

<sup>456</sup> Wright and Barrett (as cited) do not refer to "Israel" as such as being cut off, but to unbelieving "Jews". I have included them in order to distinguish the current view from those who view the branches as pointing to both unbelieving and believing "Jews" (e.g., Moo 1996:703; Dunn 1988b:662; Cranfield 1979:567-568).

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signifies total reliance and dependence on the work of Christ. Faith is inherently not a work for a reward, void of merit (4:4-5, see 5.1.2) and interlocked with grace (Dunn 1988b:675; cf. Fitzmyer 1993:615; 11:5-6). The branches (Israel) that were broken off were necessary within the larger scheme in salvation history in order to enable Gentiles (or any Christ-believer) to become part of God’s people through faith in Christ alone (v. 19). Yet, Israel’s persistent unbelief throughout history (10:16, see 6.1.2.2; cf. their hardening: 11:7-10) inevitably resulted in being cut off (v. 20). In order to remain grafted into the good olive tree, one needs to remain in faith (v. 20-21; Wright 2002:685; Moo 1996:706; Dunn 1988b:663,665) and in God’s kindness (χρηστότης, v. 22). If one strives to define your identity as God’s people by anything pertaining to human possibility, whether by “works of the law” or externally observable identity markers, you step out of a position of faith and reliance on God’s provision through Christ and the Spirit (cf. Wright 2002:685).<sup>457</sup> The latter would result in being cut off “yourself” (v. 22). Not being spared (φείδομαι[X2], v. 21) implies judgment (Moo 1996:706; cf. 9:27-29, see 6.1.1.1; 2 Pt 2:4-5).

“They” (ἐκεῖνοι in κἀκεῖνοι, v. 23) that will be grafted in if they do not stay in unbelief (v. 23) have to be unbelieving Judaeans according to the flesh in Paul’s present. Paul here reiterates faith as the only basis for being God’s people in the new eschatological aeon after the Christ event. The possibility of belief in Christ and consequential regrafting of former Israel (unbelieving Judaeans in Paul’s present) into the good olive tree (God’s people), summarises one aspect of the answer to the questions put forth in both verses 1 (“has God rejected his people?”) and 11 (“have they stumbled so as to fall?”). But what about historical Israel that lived prior to the Christ event? Have they fallen and have they been rejected? As argued, an allusion to the salvation or acceptance of historical Israel remains a possibility hoped for or desired in verses 12, 14 and 15.

In anticipation of the mystery that Paul wants to share (vv. 25-27), the cutting off of Gentiles (“you”: σὺ, v. 24) from the wild olive tree who were grafted into the

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<sup>457</sup> This way of looking at the NPP inevitably involves an element of human merit within the Judaeon spirituality, for trust in “flesh” or in any external marking or work in defining identity ultimately seeks a right standing with God in terms of human possibility.

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good olive tree which is God’s people (v. 24a; Moo 1996:709), constitutes one side of Paul’s overall salvation-historical perspective. This part of salvation history pertains to the inclusion of the Gentiles, the fact that they are now included in God’s generic election or election in terms of salvation history (9:11-24, see 4.4.1). In the second half of verse 24, Paul asks that if Gentiles can be included, how much more will those “according to nature” (κατὰ φύσιν, LITV) be grafted into their own olive tree. Within the logical construction of verse 24 starting with εἰ, the verb ἐγκεντρισθήσονται can be understood as a logical future (Cottrell 1998; Kühl 1913:389; Denney 1902:682; Weiss 1899:492; cf. Kim 2010:327). In accordance with Paul’s dialectical, diachronic hermeneutic where historical Israel remains in perspective, the grafting of the “natural branches” (NRSV) might specifically point to historical Israel, since they were the “natural branches” in the *former* aeon of salvation history. Another reason for this possibility is that Paul already stated in verse 23 how current unbelieving Judaeans can be grafted back in (by faith). The second half of verse 24 thus seems to hint on another aspect of the complete answer to the questions put forth in both verses 1 and 11.

### 8.1.4 Six interpretations of the salvation of “all Israel” (vv. 25-27)

What exactly Paul intended with the salvation of “all Israel” (v. 26) has often perplexed New Testament scholars (Zoccali 2008:289), and has given rise to many different interpretations. The interpretation of verses 25 to 27 normally go together. One’s understanding of the salvation of “all Israel” determines the way in which specific terms and phrases are interpreted in these three verses. A measure of inductive reasoning thus seems inevitable. The bigger question however is how the interpretation of the salvation of “all Israel” dominates Pauline theology today, and especially the understanding of the identity of Israel, Judaeans and believers in Christ. Within the exegetical study, various instances of the dominating influence (4 in Gager 2002:7-9, see 1.2.2) of the interpretation of Romans 9 to 11 in approaching other passages have been demonstrated (esp. Gal 4:21-5:1, see 5.1.4; 1 Th 2:13-16, see 6.1.8; Eph 2:2-22, see 5.1.5). The effect of current understandings of Romans 11:25-27 is probably more dominating

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than often acknowledged and arguably shapes many current debates in Pauline theology on identity.

The prevailing interpretations of Romans 11:25-27, I will argue, seem to reveal a side of Paul's thought that is at odds with the rest of his writings, especially where Paul accentuates the new era in Christ in discontinuity with the old (as demonstrated: Rom 9:24-11:1-10; 15:5-13; 1 Cor 1:21-24; Gal 1:11-23; Php 3:1-9; 1 Th 2:13-16; 2 Cor 3:5-16; 5:14-21; cf. Eph 2:8-22; Col 3:9-15). But before these problems can be pursued further, the prevailing interpretations of Romans 11:25-27 have to be identified. These interpretations can be categorised in terms of the following six main views (cf. Zoccali 2008):<sup>458</sup>

(1) *Eschatological miracle*. This is the most popular interpretation. The historical nation Israel is understood as continuing into the future.<sup>459</sup> This "Israel"<sup>460</sup> as a whole ("all Israel") will then be saved after the full number of the elect of all the Gentiles have come into the kingdom (πλήρωμα τῶν ἐθνῶν εἰσέλθη, v. 25), which is normally understood as at the parousia. The hardening is mostly seen as both in part (of "Israel") and as temporal. While most of these interpreters envision (a) "Israel" as turning to faith in Christ at the parousia (e.g., Jewett 2007:694-706; Witherington III 2004:273-276; Esler 2003:305-306; Moo 1996:710-729; Mounce 1995:223-225; Fitzmyer 1993:618-625; Dunn 1988b:677-684,690-692; Bruce [1985] 2000:216-218; [1977] 2000:333; Sanders [1983] 1989:192-199; Hodge 1883:587-590), others focus more on (b) God's gracious election of "Israel" without accentuating (albeit not necessarily excluding) belief in the gospel

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<sup>458</sup> The titles (italic) of the first 5 views are that of Zoccali (2008), although in different order. I have followed most of his exposition of these 5 positions except the variants (a) and (b) in view 1 and my accentuation of some additional aspects in Nanos' (1996) view (5). I have customised the references to authors in accordance with those with whom I mostly interact in this dissertation, including references to more recent authors.

<sup>459</sup> This notion is not about the existence of what Paul calls "Judaean" after the Christ event. Since Paul (disregarding Rom 11:25-26) never unambiguously designates current unbelieving kinsfolk as "Israel", the latter designation cannot be taken for granted as continuing into the future at this point, and is due for further evaluation.

<sup>460</sup> Since it has not been finally determined whether historical Israel as God's people can be understood as continuing after the Christ event, I have put references to "Israel" in quotation marks when the continuation of historical Israel after the Christ is envisioned.

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(Hultgren 2011:413-423; Käsemann 1980:311-315;<sup>461</sup> Cranfield 1979:572-579).<sup>462</sup>

In both variants (or accentuations) of this view (a-b), Christ is understood as the Deliverer from Zion (v. 26).

(2) *Ecclesiological*. In this understanding, "all Israel" represents the church consisting of both "Jew" and Gentile (e.g., Wright 2002:687-693; 1993:249-251; Jeremias 1977:200; Barth 1968:412-417; Calvin 2012c:376-379; Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 4:2:7). Wright (2002:691-693; 1993:251) does not understand the quotation from Isaiah (vv. 26b-27) as a reference to the parousia or any other future point in time. For him, it rather points to God's provision of the path and means of covenant renewal in the present time. Much of this line of interpretation revolves around a redefinition of the concept "Israel" to include believers in Christ (on the basis of e.g., "the Israel of God" in Gal 6:16; believers as "the circumcision" in Php 3:3; "the circumcision of Christ" in Col 2:11-12; the seed of Abraham in Gal 3 and Rom 4; the name "Jew" in Rom 2:27-29).

(3) *Total national elect*. This view holds that "all Israel" refers to the complete number of elect from the historical/empirical nation (e.g., Kruse 2012:441-445; Zoccali 2008:303-309; Merkle 2000:711-721; Hendriksen 1980, Romans 11:25-32; Horne 1978:329-334; Ridderbos 1966:396-403; 1959:261-266; Lenski [1945] 2008:723-728). According to this understanding, a specific salvation event in the future is not envisioned. The historical Israel is once again understood as continuing after the Christ event. "Israel's" hardening is understood as persisting until the end of the age without reversal, when their hardening will be fulfilled eschatologically. The remnant is understood as the elect from the nation of "Israel" in both ages before and after the Christ event. The salvation of "all Israel" is thus understood as including both historical Israel before Christ (esp. Ridderbos

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<sup>461</sup> Hultgren (2011:419) lists Käsemann (1980:314-315) under the former view (a: implying faith in Christ). But this does not seem entirely correct. Käsemann (1980) argues for a "Christian understanding" of Isa 59:20 and states that "Israel" will begin to live under the new covenant only at the parousia by the gift of the forgiveness of sins from Christ (:314). He mentions the possibility of conversion for "Israel" during the Christ age (:315), but he does not specifically mention that "Israel" will turn to Christ in faith at the parousia.

<sup>462</sup> Zoccali (2008:290) appears to incorrectly ascribe the view that future "Israel" would "turn to Christ" (implying belief in Christ) after the ingathering of the Gentiles to Käsemann and Cranfield (as listed).

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1966:402) and all of "Israel" (normally equated with "Jews") coming to belief during the Christ age.

(4) *Two-covenant*. In this interpretation "all Israel" is understood as representing the historical nation of Israel irrespective of faith in Christ (e.g., Gager 2002:128-142; Gaston 1987:135-150; Tomson 1986:285; Stendahl 1976:1-5; cf. Eisenbaum 2009:253-255). Soteriology is understood in terms of two covenants: while Gentiles are saved through Christ, for Israel who is understood to continue to the end of the age, the Sinai covenant remains the means of salvation (except Eisenbaum 2009:253-255).<sup>463</sup> For Gaston (1987:149), Gentile believers are "co-partners alongside of Israel." Stendahl (1976:4) argues that Paul's lack of reference to Christ in 10:18 to 11:36 removes a Christological element from "Israel's" salvation which by implication serves to prevent Gentiles from evangelising them. For Gaston (1987:143), the hardening of Israel points to "Israel's" failure to understand that a way of salvation was made available through Christ. The "Jews" who did believe in Christ would constitute the grounds for God's salvation of "all Israel" (:148). He understands the reference to Isaiah 59:20-21 (Rom 11:26b-27a) primarily as a reference to God, although he admits that Paul might have Christ in mind. If so, Christ would be an agent of a special form of salvation for "Israel" (:147-148). The quotation of Isaiah 27:9 would affirm God's commitment to the Sinai covenant, applicable only to "Israel" (:143-144). In this view, salvation for Gentiles and "Israel" in the present age is thus essentially on different terms.

(5) *Roman mission*. This is the interpretation of Nanos (1996:239-288). In Nanos' interpretation, "all Israel" is "Jews" in Rome who have both responded to the gospel (the remnant) and are hardened in Paul's present. The latter will be made jealous and believe on the basis of the success of Paul's mission to the Gentiles when it commences in Rome (:247-255,259-261). Nanos largely bases his interpretation on an anomaly taking place in Rome as portrayed in Acts, where some "Jews" would understand the gospel to be Israel's restoration while others

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<sup>463</sup> Eisenbaum (2009:253-255) is an exception here in that she does not argue so much for salvation as such, but rather for the reconciliation of all people.

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do not, rejecting the promises to the patriarchs. For Nanos, those who believe are "orthodox Jews" who continue Israel's faith and keep the Torah (:268-269). Nanos bases his interpretation on a two-step pattern involving the restoration of (historical) Israel in each new location where Paul preaches before the gospel could come to the Gentiles (:269-272). The latter notion constitutes his interpretation of verse 25, which he understands as "the time for the fullness of the gentiles to *begin*" (:267). Nanos (:265-267) reads πλήρωμα in verse 25 as pointing to the beginning of the Gentile mission in accordance with πληρώω of 15:19 (pointing to the completion of his mission in the east) and πλήρωμα in 15:29 (denoting Paul's missionary activity). Nanos understands the gospel to the Gentiles as their admission into God's people as "righteous gentiles" who obey "the appropriate halakhah" (Noahide Laws) as outlined in the so called "Apostolic Decree" (:269; Ac 15:19-29, see 5.2.1). The Gentiles in Rome would be under the false assumption that they have replaced Israel, which Paul wants to correct (:273-274).

(6) *Two houses of Israel*. This recent interpretation is that of Staples (2011). He bases most of his interpretation on the promise to Ephraim in Genesis 48:19, which he relates in turn to the Old Testament distinction between Judah (the southern tribe, consisting of the tribes Judah, Levi and Benjamin) and Israel (the northern tribe, consisting of the rest of the tribes), where Judah represented a part of Israel (:374, see 4.1). On the basis of a similarity that Staples (2011) sees between καὶ τὸ σπέρμα αὐτοῦ ἔσται εἰς πλῆθος ἐθνῶν in Genesis 48:19 (LXX) and τὸ πλήρωμα τῶν ἐθνῶν εἰσέλθῃ in Romans 11:25, he argues that Ephraim's seed are the Gentiles that need to be restored through the new covenant. Understood in this way, Staples asserts that the Gentiles are in fact part of Israel (:386-387). He understands the hardening as the hardening of both houses of Israel: a hardening of both the northern tribe (Gentiles which is Ephraim's seed) and Judah (the "Jews"), which is only hardened partially (some have accepted the gospel). Both houses of Israel (the northern tribe [Gentiles] and Judah, the "Jews") thus constitute "all Israel" and will be fulfilled according to the apocalyptic of early Judaism (:387-388). Staples typifies Paul's gospel as "messianic new covenant Israelitism", not wholly other than Judaism (:383).

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The constraints that have been put forth in the study pertaining to these 6 views can be formulated in terms of certain questions that can be asked to these views. One of the most important questions that apply to all 6 views is whether Paul envisions Israel to continue as a separate entity apart from believers in Christ after the Christ event. In other words, can “Judaean” and “Israel” be understood as exactly the same entity? If a future “Israel” is envisioned on the basis of the future tense of the salvation of “all Israel” (σωθήσεται, v. 26), it poses difficult questions in terms of Paul’s thought: How could Paul envision a future unbelieving “Israel” that would clearly be an “Israel according to the flesh”, which in some way still would have a special place in God’s salvific economy, whether they remain hardened and unsaved until the end (views 1 and 3)<sup>464</sup> or whether they continue to constitute God’s (second) people (view 4)? How could they continue an existence in the flesh (7:14-25; identity mode A), a way of existence (of being God’s people) outside of Christ that is supposed to be cut off (9:32-33; 11:7, 12, 17-24) and to have died in Christ (2 Cor 5:15-16; cf. Rom 5-8, see fn. 365; Gal 2:20)? If God’s people have been redefined in terms of the eschatological spirit and not flesh (8:1-16), how could an “Israel according to the flesh” continue to be God’s people? Or, if they are not God’s people, what are they and on what Pauline criteria for identity are they kept in some way within God’s salvific economy? Or is an understanding warranted where “all Israel” is understood in a redefined way (view 2),<sup>465</sup> especially between 11:25 (denoting historical Israel) and 11:26 (denoting redefined Israel consisting of Judaean and Gentiles alike)?

A difficulty that lies adjacent to the above questions is the hermeneutical problem around the designations “Israel”, “Judaean” and “Jew”. How can interpreters of Paul see today’s Jews as a future “Israel” that Paul would have envisioned in verse 26 if today’s Judaism as a religion (commencing at around 70 CE) is anachronistic to and to a large extent in discontinuity with the faith of Israel or the

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<sup>464</sup> Although the third view does not envision a last minute embrace of Christ at the parousia, the notion that there will still be an “Israel” (who is probably identified with Jews) during the course of the Christ age who will embrace Christ in faith at will, still implies a continuance of Old Testament Israel (although remaining hardened) into the Christ age.

<sup>465</sup> The notion to include the church under the term “Israel” will be addressed in 8.2.3.

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Judaeen people in Paul’s time (see esp. 1.2.3; 2.1.1; 3.1.1)? With the exception of Esler (2003), all of the scholars listed above in representing the 6 views use terms such as “Jews” or “Jewish” (not “Judaeans”) in referral to the *Ἰουδαῖοι* and do not (completely) differentiate between the faith of Israel and today’s Judaism. In addition, all of these writers use terms such as “Jews” and “Israel” interchangeably (including Esler 2003, albeit utilising the term “Judean” instead of “Jew”).

Regarding Nanos’ (1996) proposal (view 5), the problematic nature of Nanos’ views on identity, the law and the gospel to the Gentiles have already been addressed in 5.2.1 to 5.2.2. It was indicated that Nanos’ view would imply that Paul would perpetuate a form of Judaeen exclusivism in that Gentile believers in Christ would be considered as mere “guests” (“Noahides”). In terms of Nanos’ understanding of Romans 11:25-27, the notions that there would be an anomaly of sorts in Rome and that the gospel to the Gentiles would only begin upon his arrival in Rome are purely speculative (Zoccali 2008:296). Despite the correlations Nanos (1996) asserts to draw from Paul’s travel plans in Romans 15, Paul’s choice not to preach in Rome “where Christ has already been named” so as not to “build on someone else’s foundation” (15:20, NRSV), would rather express Paul’s hope to come to Rome soon to preach the gospel (1:15). Paul would not claim that his presence would be critical for the advent of a mission to the Gentiles (Zoccali 2008:296-297). Additionally, Nanos’ (1996) proposal for an anomalous state of affairs in Rome which meant that their faith “lacked a proper foundation” that Paul wanted to set right (:239), is not warranted in view of Paul’s satisfaction with the Roman church (15:14) and the fact that Paul was only “in passing” (15:24) and would not have time to do such rebuilding work to the church (Donfried 1991:45; adopted by Zoccali 2008:297; cf. Jewett 2007:916).

Staples’ (2011) proposal (view 6), while intriguing poses numerous difficulties. Whether Paul would base his entire salvation-historical climax (Rom 11:25-27) on an apparent allusion to a passage (Gen 48:19 [LXX]) that does not resemble anything in Paul’s thought on salvation history elsewhere, seems obscure at best. The matching between the two passages (Gen 48:19 [LXX] and Rom 11:25) on the basis of a near correspondence of two terms only (*πλήρωμα/πλήθος* and

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ἔθνος) is methodologically not a strong enough foundation for his thesis. The allusion to Genesis 48:19 on the basis of an apparent correspondence with some words in a single passage in the Septuagint would require almost esoteric knowledge for Paul’s readers, rendering such an interpretation unlikely. Staples’ view would thus involve a riddle within a riddle. Apart from the fact that the distinction between Israel (northern kingdom) and Judah (southern kingdom) cannot be held right through the Old Testament (see 4.1, esp. fn. 56) or in Paul,<sup>466</sup> there is a hermeneutical distance between the earlier distinctions represented by יִשְׂרָאֵל and יְהוּדָי (in the Old Testament) compared to the usage of Ἰουδαῖοι as mostly an outsider term and Ἰσραήλ as mostly an insider term in the New Testament time, which is not accounted for in Staples’ proposal (see 4.1). Apart from this hermeneutical problem, the proposal is just too far removed from a plain reading of Paul’s thought on the identity of Gentiles, Judaeans and Israel to be credible. Staple’s view is thus hard to make fit to the rest of the Pauline corpus.<sup>467</sup> Lastly, in Staples’ (2009) view of belief in Christ as “messianic new covenant Israelitism” which he does not view as wholly other than Judaism (:383), his view suffers from the same inherent problem as that of Nanos (view 5), that is, that belief in Christ would not transcend Judaeans exclusivism.

### 8.1.5 The coming in of the fullness of the Gentiles and the salvation of “all Israel” (vv. 25-27)

If these 6 views are filled with difficulties that seem insurmountable, how does one proceed from here? As proposed initially (see 1.4), when a difficult text has to be interpreted such as Romans 11:25-27 where a measure of inductive reasoning is inevitable, it seems methodologically more reasonable to work from a deeper

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<sup>466</sup> While Paul identifies himself as from the “nation/race of Israel” (Php 3:5) or as an “Israelite” (Rom 11:1; 2 Cor 11:22), he simultaneously identifies his bloodline as being from the “tribe of Benjamin” (Php 3:5; Rom 11:1), which goes against Staples’ (2009:376) proposal that Judah (the southern kingdom) consists of the tribe of Benjamin, Judah and Levi in distinction from Israel (the northern kingdom), consisting of the rest of the tribes.

<sup>467</sup> Numerous questions could follow. E.g., If the Gentiles are in fact part of Israel, could Israel’s privileges (Rom 9:4-5) be the Gentiles’ privileges? If Christ is from Israel according to the flesh (9:5), is Christ in fact from the Gentiles? How could the patriarchs be of Israel (9:7-10) and simultaneously be of the Gentiles? Etc.

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understanding of Paul's thought to fill in the gaps rather than to make single (difficult) passages dominate the rest of Paul's theology. As for the exposition of the rest of Romans 11, I will start with revisiting some grammatical and semantic aspects of verses 25 to 27 that have become entrenched within the prevailing interpretations of these verses, and appear to have caused most of these understandings to get stuck in some way. After presenting my own interpretation of the salvation of "all Israel", the next step will be to test my interpretation against the whole of Romans 9 to 11 and the rest of my understanding of the deeper thought on identity in Paul as laid out in this dissertation (see 8.1.6).

The core of Paul's thought in verses 25 to 27 mainly revolves around these four clauses:

- (1) ὅτι πύρωσις ἀπὸ μέρους τῷ Ἰσραὴλ γέγονεν
- (2) ἄχρις οὗ τὸ πλήρωμα τῶν ἐθνῶν εἰσέλθῃ
- (3) καὶ οὕτως πᾶς Ἰσραὴλ σωθήσεται
- (4) καθὼς γέγραπται...

These four clauses<sup>468</sup> are interdependent and have to be understood in close relationship in order to determine the whole meaning. What is described in the first clause (1) reaches its time-limit in the condition stated in the second clause (2), which in turn shows the condition for the result in the third clause (3). Yet, as I will argue, the third clause (3) is in an equally dependent relationship with the fourth clause (4), making the second (2) and fourth clauses (4) to relate to the same event. The relationship among the clauses will be revisited later on (see 8.1.5.4). The final interpretation of these four clauses and especially the meaning of "all Israel" will only follow after a closer examination of the smaller syntactical parts or words which constitute these clauses.

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<sup>468</sup> Moo (1996:716,727) describes Paul's main thought in verses 25-27 only in terms of clauses 1-3 (as listed) and understands καθὼς... αὐτῶν (vv. 26b-27) as a reinforcement.

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**8.1.5.1 The mystery (v. 25)**

Dunn (1988b:689) is correct to note "a degree of hesitancy about the arguments pursued by Paul" in his salvation-historical exposition up to this point. Everything that Paul has said since Romans 9:1 has built up to this point. In 11:26, Paul finally breaks the suspense in answer to the anguish expressed in 9:1-3 and 10:1 (cf. Dunn 1988b:679), followed by his pertinent questions regarding God's people in 11:1 and Israel's fall in 11:11. Paul's readers ought not to be ignorant (ἀγνοέω) of the mystery (μυστήριον) any longer. Paul warns "against reliance on human wisdom" (ἵνα μὴ ᾗτε παρ' ἑαυτοῖς φρόνιμοι, Dunn 1988b:679).

Although the concept of μυστήριον was common in the Greco-Roman mystery cults where it denoted secret teachings and rituals only known to initiates (Dunn 1988b:677-678), Paul's usage of the term neither resembles intimate knowledge or interest in the vocabulary of the mysteries, nor does it bear the sense of disclosing secrets (Dunn 1988b:678; cf. Fee 1987:104). That his usage of the term is based on an Old Testament understanding of the revelation of divine secrets by divine agency is certainly possible (e.g., Dan 2:18-19,27-30; Moo 1996:714; Dunn 1988b:678).<sup>469</sup> But within the Pauline corpus, including the three major disputed letters (Eph, Col, 2 Th), the term is mostly applied within the context of that which was hidden from God's people in the past but had now been revealed in the gospel (Rom 16:25; 1 Cor 2:1,7; 4:1; Eph 1:9; 3:3,4,9; 6:19; Col 1:26,27; 2:2; 4:3; Moo 1996:714).<sup>470</sup> In all of these references a past mystery (not future) is in view. The only exception to this use is Paul's reference to those who have not died who will be changed at the parousia (1 Cor 15:51). Barrett ([1971] 1976:380) however notes that the "mystery" in 1 Corinthians 15:51 "is not essential to the understanding of the Gospel." In terms of Romans 11:25-27, Moo (1996:715) correctly argues that Paul did not receive a special prophetic insight, a view that "assumes more tension in Paul's argument in these chapters than is warranted. Better is the suggestion that Paul came to understand this mystery

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<sup>469</sup> See Moo (1996:714) and Dunn (1988b:678) for long lists of references to apocalyptic writings in support of Paul's use of the term.

<sup>470</sup> The word μυστήριον also occurs in 1 Cor 13:2; 14:3; Eph 5:32 and 2 Th 2:7, but not in the technical sense as in the other occurrences (Moo 1996:714).

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through study of the OT in light of the gospel” (cf. Cranfield 1979:573-574). Similarly, Wright (2002:687) states that Paul “intends the word to refer, not to a hidden truth open only to initiates, but to an aspect of the... plan and purpose of God that has now been unveiled through the gospel of Jesus the Messiah” (cf. Fitzmyer 1993:621; Käsemann 1980:312). The relation between this “mystery” and the gospel is especially evident in verse 28 (εὐαγγέλιον). It is therefore probable that the mystery that is revealed in “the coming in” (εἰσέρχομαι, v. 25, see esp. 8.1.5.3) of the Gentiles and the salvation of “all Israel” (v. 26) relates closely to the gospel, which in turn would be at odds with a view where Paul would here operate in the prophetic and receive a special revelation about a future event (contra Hultgren 2011:416; Campbell 2008:134; Jewett 2007:699; Schnelle 2003:352).

### 8.1.5.2 A hardening has come partially on Israel (v. 25)

The term πώρωσις is probably best translated as “hardening” (Zerwick & Grosvenor 1988:485; Moo 1996:711,717; Fitzmyer 1993:621; Morris 1988:418; Cranfield 1979:572,574; ISV; NRSV; REB; NIV; RSV; RV) in concurrence with πωρόω of verse 7 and σκληρύνω in 9:18.<sup>471</sup> In the clause πώρωσις ἀπὸ μέρους τῷ Ἰσραὴλ γέγονεν, the phrase ἀπὸ μέρους can be understood as adjectival, qualifying Ἰσραὴλ (“a hardening has come on [a] part of Israel”, Jewett 2007:699; Byrne 1996:354; Morris 1988:420; Käsemann 1980:311,313; Barrett [1962] 1975:223; NRSV; AB; NJB; NAT; RSV; cf. GW), or as adverbial, modifying either the verbal concept present in πώρωσις (“a partial hardening has come on Israel”, Dunn 1988b:679; ESV; ISV; LITV; REB) or modifying the verb γέγονεν (“a hardening has come partially on Israel”, Kruse 2012:442; Wright 2002:688; Cranfield 1979:575; Godet 1881b:252; OAT; DST).<sup>472</sup> The latter interpretation is to be preferred, for it is most likely syntactically (Cranfield 1979:575; admitted by Moo 1996:717; cf. BDF §272; Rom 15:15,24; 2 Cor 1:14; 2:5). In addition, ἀπὸ

<sup>471</sup> The verb (πώρωσις) could denote “insensibility” or “obstinacy” (BDAG) and recalls the hardening (πωρόω) of v. 7. These verbs (πώρωσις and πωρόω) are not synonyms however. The use of πωρόω rather lies semantically close to σκληρύνω in 9:18 (Moo 1996:680; Cranfield 1979:548-549).

<sup>472</sup> The ambiguous translation “a hardening in part has come on Israel” or similar (e.g., RV; KJV) can also be interpreted in this way.

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μέρους corresponds with ἄχρι οὗ, which has to be taken as “until” (e.g., Zerwick & Grosvenor 1988:485; Moo 1996:711,717; Cranfield 1979:575; ESV; NRSV; NIV; KJV). The hardening of Israel is thus limited in time (see 8.1.5.3).<sup>473</sup>

As pointed out, the hardening of Israel is historical (2 Cor 3:14, see 7.3.1.2; Rom 9:18, see 4.4.1 and 6.1.1.1; 11:7-10, see 8.1.1; Lenski [1945] 2008:722). Here, the verb (γέγονεν) is in the perfect indicative tense, which normally denotes a completed action in the past with effects into the present (Wallace 1996:573; Moule 1959:13; cf. Kruger 1981:5; BDF §342; van Rensburg 1953:109). In Zerwick’s (1963:96) words, the perfect tense is used for “indicating not the past action as such but the present ‘state of affairs’ resulting from the past action.” In other words, Israel’s historical hardening is not necessarily to be understood as carrying on in the present, but its effects do (Kim 2010:326). Hardened Israel thus seems to correspond in some way to historical Israel. The implications of this understanding will be discussed in 8.1.5.7.

### 8.1.5.3 *The coming in of the fullness of the Gentiles (v. 25)*

Paul indicates that the hardening has come on Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles “has come in” (εἰσέλθῃ, Morris 1988:418; ESV; ISV; NRSV), “should come [in]” (Wallace 1996:479) or “may come in” (YLT; cf. Jewett 2007:700). It is significant to note that the subjunctive (εἰσέλθῃ) does not indicate *time as such* but denotes an *open hypothetical mode* (Kruger 1981:7; 1966:59-63). In terms of the aorist subjunctive, Robertson (1914:848) writes: “[There is] *no Time Element in the Subjunctive*. There is only relative time (future) and that is not due to the tense at all.” Here, ἄχρι οὗ followed by the second aorist subjunctive (εἰσέλθῃ) is used in an “Indefinite Temporal Clause” (Wallace 1996:479) implying a temporal limit (Moo 1996:718; cf. Dunn 1988b:680), constituting a limited (partial) hardening. The subjunctive εἰσέλθῃ thus denotes “a future contingency from the perspective of the time of the main verb” (Wallace 1996:479). Some therefore translate εἰσέλθῃ as “be come in” (Murray 1965:91; ASV; RV; KJV). The “coming

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<sup>473</sup> As Schreiner ([1998] 2005:617) and Fitzmyer (1993:621) note, even if ἀπὸ μέρους is understood as modifying the verbal concept present in πώρωσις, it can be understood as a hardening that is limited in time.

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in" of the fullness of the Gentiles could theoretically lie in Paul's present or even his past, depending on the fulfilment of the temporal condition (the fullness of the Gentiles coming in). A noteworthy example in Paul of the possibility that ἄχρι(ς) οὗ followed by the second aorist subjunctive (as in 11:25) could denote something that already happened is Galatians 3:19. There ἄχρις οὗ and the second aorist subjunctive (ἔλθῃ) is used within the context of the law which was added until the seed "would come" (NRSV), "should come" (Betz 1979:164; ESV; LITV; AB; ASV; RV; KJV), "came" (ISV; GW) or "had come" (George 1994:261; NIV). The seed that had come was Christ (Gal 3:16; see 5.1.3.3).

In terms of the hardening itself, there is no indication within the text (Rom 11:25) that the hardening is removed, but rather that it lasts until the incoming of the fullness of the Gentiles (Zoccali 2008:306-308; Wright 2002:677; 1993:249; Merkle 2000:716; Lenski [1945] 2008:721-723; cf. Calvin 2012c:377; contra Moo 1996:717). Wright (2002:677) shows from 9:17-18 that the hardening constitutes a temporary suspension of judgment that would otherwise have fallen to allow for some to escape. In the case of the Pharaoh the result was the exodus from Egypt. In this case (11:25-26) the result of the hardening is the coming in of the fullness of the Gentiles and the salvation of "all Israel".

The verb Paul utilises in denoting the coming in of the fullness of the Gentiles is εἰσέρχομαι. The majority of scholars today interpret the word here to refer to the coming into the kingdom (βασιλεία) of God, indicating messianic salvation, a view that is largely based on the use of εἰσέρχομαι in the Gospels (esp. Mt 5:20; 7:13,21; 19:17; Mk 9:43,45,47; 10:15,23-25; Lk 13:24; Jn 3:5; e.g., Jewett 2007:701; Moo 1996:718; Dunn 1988b:680; Käsemann 1980:313; Cranfield 1979:576; Sanday & Headlam [1902] 1960:313; cf. Witherington III 2004:273). But before one reverts to a possible pre-Pauline tradition, it seems methodologically more rigorous to attempt to infer the meaning of εἰσέρχομαι from an assessment of Paul's own employment of the term elsewhere. With respect to Paul's usage of the word βασιλεία, it can be observed that Paul never sees it as something to "come into" or similar, but rather something to be "inherited" (κληρονομέω, 1 Cor 6:9,10; 15:50; Gal 5:21; cf. κληρονομία, Eph 5:5). As for the

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verb εἰσέρχομαι, apart from Romans 11:25, the verb occurs in only two other locations in the Pauline corpus: in Romans 5:12 and in 1 Corinthians 14:23,24:

(1) In 1 Corinthians 14:23,24 the verb denotes the physical entry of uneducated people (ἰδιώτης, vv. 23,24; ISV; cf. Zerwick & Grosvenor 1988:526; Fee 1987:684-685; REB; NIV) or unbelievers (ἄπιστος, v. 23) into the believing assembly (cf. BDAG, εἰσέρχομαι §1aδ). Here is thus no connotation regarding entrance into God's kingdom or salvation. At most it denotes people coming into the influential sphere of the believing community.

(2) In Romans 5:12 εἰσέρχομαι denotes the entrance of sin and death into the world (BDAG §1aβ). Here, the term is closely related to διέρχομαι, denoting "a movement toward a destination" (BDAG §1bβ), which many translations render as "spread" (ESV; NLT; ISV; NRSV; AB; RSV). The notion here is that sin and death came into the cosmos in terms of affecting humanity salvation-historically and corporately (cf. Moo 1996:322-323; Cranfield 1975:274; Ridderbos 1959:112) rather than individually.<sup>474</sup>

When the way in which εἰσέρχομαι is used in both 1 Corinthians 14:23,24 and Romans 5:12 is taken into account in trying to infer its meaning in Romans 11:25, it could denote the Gentiles as coming into the sphere of something.<sup>475</sup> For Fitzmyer (1993:622), εἰσέρχομαι in 11:25 denotes the Gentiles' "entrance into the community of salvation" rather than "entrance into the kingdom of God" which already seems closer to Paul's intention.

The prevailing interpretation of πλήρωμα which qualifies τῶν ἐθνῶν, must also come under scrutiny. Most interpreters understand πλήρωμα τῶν ἐθνῶν as denoting "the full number of Gentiles" (e.g., BDAG, πλήρωμα §3a; Zerwick &

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<sup>474</sup> Although Paul refers to the individual dimension of sin in the last part of 5:12 (ἐφ' ᾧ πάντες ἥμαρτον) in addition to the corporate dimensions of the prior part (Moo 1996:323-324), it is not of relevance to square these notions here.

<sup>475</sup> It could be asked if such a methodology is justified hermeneutical practice. The principle behind this reasoning is largely based on the semantic approach that meaning is constituted by more than the inherent meaning of individual words (Botha 1987:140). One has to keep the possibility open that Paul might use εἰσέρχομαι in a different way than other New Testament writers. But given Paul's sparse usage of εἰσέρχομαι, the proposed meaning in Rom 11:25 is not intended as final, and has to be seen as largely tentative and hypothetical at this point.

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Grosvenor 1988:485; Newman & Nida 1973:226; Kruse 2012:441-442; Witherington III 2004:272; Schreiner [1998] 2005:617; Dunn 1998:527; Mounce 1995:224; Fitzmyer 1993:621-622; Morris 1988:420; Bruce [1985] 2000:217; Barrett [1962] 1975:223; Ridderbos 1959:262; ISV; NLT; NRSV; AB; NIV; RSV; cf. Jewett 2007:700; Moo 1996:719; Käsemann 1980:313; GNB) which is said to be borrowed from “Jewish apocalyptic” (Moo 1996:718-719; cf. Jewett 2007:697; Käsemann 1980:313; referring to *4 Ezra* 4:35-37; *2 Apocalypse of Baruch* 23:4; 30:2; 75:6; *Apocalypse of Abraham* 29:17). But by borrowing from later Rabbinic Judaism which Segal ([2003] 2004:162) views as methodologically suspect (see 5.2.1), this interpretation seems somewhat forced.

As argued in the discussion of 11:12, Paul’s use of πλήρωμα would rather denote “fullness” than a “complete number” within that context (see 8.1.2; fn. 444). Against the translation “the full number of Gentiles” of τὸ πλήρωμα τῶν ἐθνῶν in 11:25, Dunn (1988b:680) argues that Paul intends “to indicate that the incoming of the Gentiles would be equivalent to that of Israel” in accordance with its use in 11:12. Even Cranfield (1979:575-576) admits that “it may be wise not to rule out as altogether impossible... that Paul means by τὸ πλήρωμα τῶν ἐθνῶν something like ‘the Gentile world as a whole’ (compare πᾶς Ἰσραὴλ in v. 26)” which is a phrase borrowed from Sanday & Headlam ([1902] 1960:335; cf. Richardson 1958:252).<sup>476</sup>

When a brief assessment of Paul’s sparse usage of πλήρωμα in the undisputed letters is made (apart from Rom 11:12,25), it can mean the following (NRSV): “the fulfilling of the law” (Rom 13:10), “the fullness of the blessing of Christ” (Rom 15:29), “[the] fullness [that] are the Lord’s” (1 Cor 10:26) and “the fullness of time” (Gal 4:4). In the disputed letters it can mean (NRSV) “the fullness of time” (Eph 1:10), “the fullness of him [Christ]” (Eph 1:23), “the fullness of God” (Eph 3:19; Col 1:19), “the full stature of Christ” (Eph 4:13) and “the... fullness of deity” (Col 2:9).

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<sup>476</sup> Hultgren (2011:418) argues against both the translations “the full number of Gentiles” and “the Gentile world as a whole”, but seems to miss the mark once again when he suggests that “the fullness of the nations’ will be ushered into the new humanity representatively *by those who believe throughout the various nations of the world*” (emphasis added).

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A similar picture emerges when the verb πληρόω is considered. In the undisputed letters it can mean the following (NRSV, except Gal 5:14; Php 1:11): "filled with every kind of wickedness" (Rom 1:29), "that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled" (Rom 8:4), "has fulfilled the law" (Rom 13:8), "fill... with all joy" (Rom 15:13; cf. "filled with joy" in 2 Tim 1:4), "filled with all knowledge" (Rom 15:14), "fully proclaimed the good news" (Rom 5:19), "filled with consolation" (2 Cor 7:4), "obedience is complete" (10:6), "the... law is fulfilled" (Gal 5:14, RSV), "filled with the fruits of righteousness" (Php 1:11, RSV), "make... joy complete" (Php 2:2), "fully satisfied" (Php 4:18) and "fully satisfy every need" (Php 4:19). In the disputed letters, it can mean as follows (NRSV): "[Christ] who fills all in all" (Eph 1:23), "that you may be filled [πληρώω] with all the fullness [πλήρωμα] of God" (Eph 3:19), "fill all things" (Eph 4:10), "filled with the Spirit" (Eph 5:18), "filled with... knowledge" (Col 1:9), "make the word of God fully known" (Col 1:25), "come to fullness in him [Christ]" (Col 2:10), "complete the task" (Col 4:17) and "fulfil... every good resolve" (2 Th 1:11).

Apart from Romans 11, Paul thus neither uses the noun πλήρωμα nor the verb πληρώω in a quantitative or numerical sense. If the meaning of πλήρωμα here in Romans 11:25 (and 11:12) must be construed inductively, it seems once again safer to do it from Paul's own writing than to borrow from Jewish apocalyptic, which evokes all the problems of the anachronistic relationship between Paul and later Judaism as already discussed (see esp. 1.2.3; 2.1.1; 3.1.1). Since salvation (σώζω, v. 26) is at stake, it seems reasonable to suggest that the "coming in of the fullness of the Gentiles" has something to do with salvation. Consequently, the reconstruction of the meaning of τὸ πλήρωμα τῶν ἐθνῶν εἰσέλθῃ (Rom 11:25) will be attempted by considering Paul's thought on the salvation of the Gentiles in the whole of Romans, especially 9 to 11.

In verse 11:11, Paul argues that by the false step of Israel, salvation [has come] to the Gentiles (see 8.1.2). This obviously does not point to the salvation of each individual, but to the fact that Gentiles are included in God's salvific economy. It points to their inclusion into salvation history. To take the notion further back to Romans 9, in the new eschatological aeon in Christ, God's call unto salvation is now not only to Judaeans, but to Gentiles also (9:24). Those who were not

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God's people are now called God's people (9:25-26). Gentiles who did not strive for righteousness have now attained righteousness (9:30). All of these notions (9:24,25-26,30) do not denote righteousness or salvation to each individual Gentile, but salvation or righteousness to the whole nation with respect to their position in salvation history (see 6.1.1.1). In his comment on 9:24, Wright (2002:642) states: "This is how God is keeping his word to Abraham, the word that spoke both of an ongoing selection from within his physical family and also of the worldwide people who would eventually *be brought in*" (emphasis added). Salvation is now to all who believe in Christ, there is no distinction between Judaeans and Gentiles (10:9-13), meaning that Gentiles are now generically included in God's salvific purpose (cf. ἐπαγγελία in 9:9). Similarly, in Romans 11 the branches that have been broken off represent Israel as a diachronic whole apart from the remnant who believed in Christ. As indicated (see 8.1.3), the grafting of the Gentiles into the good olive tree (God's people), although it contains an element of individual faith (remaining in faith), once again points to the generic inclusion of Gentiles into salvation history and God's election.

In addition, the generic reach of salvation and righteousness/justification<sup>477</sup> that include Gentiles is well accounted for in Romans 5. Paul writes in verse 15 that "the free gift in the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abounded for the many" (NRSV). The "free gift... brings justification" (NRSV, v. 16) generically. In verse 18, righteousness is depicted as a gift for all people (πάντας ἀνθρώπους). Through the obedience of one, many are made righteous (v. 19). That all people are principally included in salvation and righteousness, does not mean universalism, but that all people including Gentiles have *come into* God's purpose of (9:9) salvation and calling (9:24) unto salvation.

This generic inclusion of the Gentiles as a whole into God's salvation is in all probability what is echoed by Romans 11:25, not the salvation of each individual elect Gentile. In summary, within the context of Paul's salvation-historical exposition from Romans 9 through 11, the best option seems to be that the

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<sup>477</sup> The close relationship between salvation and concepts revolving around righteousness and justification is evident in Rom 5:9-10,18-19 (σῶζω, vv. 9,10; δικαιώω, v. 9; καταλλάσσω, v. 10; δικαίωμα, v. 18; δικαίωσις, v. 18; δίκαιος, v. 19).

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"fullness" (πλήρωμα) of the Gentiles here in 11:25 generically denotes the *Gentile nation as a whole*, while εἰσέρχονται denotes their *generic inclusion into God's salvific economy* (cf. "the Gentiles have been admitted in full strength", REB; they are "included", GW).<sup>478</sup>

**8.1.5.4 In this manner all Israel will be saved as is written (v. 26): grammar and semantics**

Some scholars argue that καὶ οὕτως is to be understood as temporal, translating "and then" or similar (e.g., Witherington III 2004:274; van der Horst 2000:524; Käsemann 1980:313; Barrett [1962] 1975:223). Contrary to Fitzmyer (1993:622) and Moo (1996:719-720) there is evidence for a temporal meaning of οὕτως in Greek.<sup>479</sup> Following van der Horst (2000:524), Jewett (2007:701), although translating "and in such a manner, and so", seems to leave room for the modal and temporal senses not being mutually exclusive, which in the context might be suggested by the shift in verb tense from the perfect in the first element of the mystery (v. 25c), to the subjunctive in the second (v. 25d), and to the future in the third (v. 26a). He is however cautious to assert "definite stages" on the basis of this possibility (:701). Others understand οὕτως as denoting a consequence, translating "in consequence of this process" or similar (e.g., Fitzmyer 1993:622-623; Dodd [1959] 1963:184; REB). But in accordance with its meaning in 1 Corinthians 11:28; 14:25 and 1 Thessalonians 4:17, it is more likely that οὕτως denotes *manner* (Zoccali 2008:309; Jewett 2007:694; Schreiner [1998] 2005:621; Byrne 1996:354; Moo 1996:720; Mounce 1995:224; Dunn 1988b:681; Morris

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<sup>478</sup> Some argue that πλήρωμα in 11:25 would indicate Paul's "fulfilment" of preaching in the eastern Mediterranean (15:16-19; cf. Col 1:17) implying that Paul's own preaching would complete the Gentile mission, bring them into the kingdom and usher in the end (e.g., Aus 1979:235-237,257-261; Munck 1959:47-55; cf. Barrett [1962] 1975:276-277). But this interpretation of 15:16-19 is not warranted. It is not clear from this passage that Paul's own mission would in itself constitute the climax of salvation history. Although Paul would certainly see himself as a significant figure in salvation history, there is no indication that he would bring that mission to its conclusion based on his own efforts. Paul rather identifies Christ as working through him (v. 18). Rather than pointing to his special role as eschatological preacher that would complete the entire mission to all Gentiles that would usher in the parousia, he claims completion in the regions laid out for his apostolic task of planting strategic churches (Moo 1996:718,892-896; cf. Bruce [1985] 2000:262; Cranfield 1979:762; Godet 1881b:374).

<sup>479</sup> As reported by van der Horst (2000:523-524) and Jewett (2007:701), it is found in Plato's *Protagoras* 314c, in *Testament of Abraham* (recension A) 7:11, and in *Life of Jeremiah* 6 of the *Vitae prophetarum*.

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1988:420; Bruce [1985] 2000:218; Beker 1980:334; Cranfield 1979:576; Ridderbos 1959:263; Lenski [1945] 2008:724; Sanday & Headlam [1902] 1960:335; ESV; ISV; GW; GNB; NAT): “in *this manner* all Israel will be saved”, especially if καὶ οὕτως is read in conjunction with καθὼς γέγραπται (v. 26, see below).

Before the meaning of “all Israel” can be determined, I propose another look at the future tense of σωθήσεται and how salvation is to be understood in Paul, especially in terms of its realisation. As will be argued from a grammatical and contextual point of view, that the salvation of “all Israel” is necessarily effected at a certain point in Paul’s future, is not so obvious. As already noted, the subjunctive εἰσέλθῃ (v. 25) does not necessarily denote a future point in time relative to Paul (see 8.1.5.3). In terms of the future tense, good arguments can be made for Paul’s occasional employment of a logical or gnomic future which does not necessarily lie in Paul’s future. Three examples that have been discussed are 2 Corinthians 3:8 (see 7.3.1.1), Romans 6:5,8 (see 7.4.4.2), and Romans 11:24 (see 8.1.3) which by no means exhaust Paul’s use of the logical future.<sup>480</sup>

Robertson (1914:876) defines the gnomic future as follows: “In the gnomic future the act is *true of any time*... In indirect discourse the time is relatively future to that of the principal verb, though it *may be absolutely past*” (emphasis added; cf. Wallace 1996:571). Similarly, Blass and Debrunner (1961:178, §349) state that the “future indicative is used... occasionally as a *gnomic future* in order to express that which is to be expected under certain circumstances” (cf. Burton 1906:36; Blass 1905:201).

In terms of the gnomic future, Wallace (1996:571) states that the “idea is not that a particular event is in view, but that such events are true of life”, and then quotes

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<sup>480</sup> Other examples of future tenses that can be understood as gnomic or logical futures are the following: δικαιωθήσεται in Rom 3:20 (Fung 1988:233; Bultmann [1951-1955] 2007:274; cf. Murray 1959:107), δικαιώσει in Rom 3:30 (Bell 2002:31; Moo 1996:252; Fung 1988:233; Cranfield 1975:222; Bultmann [1951-1955] 2007:274; Denney 1902:614), ἀποθανεῖται in Rom 5:7 (Wallace 1996:571; BDF §349; Robertson 1914:876; Burton 1906:36), βασιλεύσουσιν in Rom 5:17 (Moo 1996:340; Denney 1902:630), ζήσομεν in 6:2 (Wilckens 1980:11), χρηματίσει in Rom 7:3 (Wallace 1996:571; Robertson 1914:876; Burton 1906:36; Blass 1905:201), σωθήσῃ in Rom 10:9 (Jewett 2007:630; Moo 1996:658), δικαιωθήσεται in Gal: 2:16 (Fung 1988:233), and βαστάσει in Gal 6:5 (Kim 2010:326).

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Robertson (1914:876): “In the gnomic future the act is true of any time.” But he does not refer to the fact that Robertson leaves open the possibility that the gnomic (or logical?) future might denote something that is relatively future to that of the principal verb,<sup>481</sup> but *may be absolutely past* (as quoted above). When the two examples that Robertson (:876) provides in illustrating this possibility are considered (Mt 20:10; Jn 21:19), it shows how the future can be used within a context where the future tense denotes something that *ultimately* (in terms of absolute time) lies in the past: (1) In Matthew 20:10, in the parable of the workers in the vineyard, Jesus says: “But when the first came, they thought they will receive [λήμψονται, fut.] more, but each of them also received [ἔλαβον, aor.] a denarius.” (2) In John 21:19, *after* Jesus’ death and resurrection, the text reads: “He said this to show the kind of death by which he will glorify [δοξάσει, fut.] God. After this he said to him, ‘Follow me.’”

In Roberts’ ([1958] 2006:140) Greek grammar, he refers to the “Future logical” by using the illustration “εἰ ποιήσει ταῦτα, σχήσει καλῶς” and translates, “If he will do this, *it will be* well with him” (emphasis added). It therefore seems that the future indicative can be understood as a *logical future* where it stands in certain types of comparative or conditional sentences,<sup>482</sup> a function that might be related to the future tense’s probable descent from the aorist subjunctive (cf. Wallace 1996:566; Robertson 1914:354).<sup>483</sup> In the sentence, “By believing in Christ we *will be saved*”, the condition (to believe) could have been met, resulting in being saved already. The verb “*will be saved*” can be understood as a “logical future” in this sentence. In terms of the current context (Rom 11:26), if the salvation of “all Israel” is to be expected *if* the fullness of the Gentiles has *already* come in, then

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<sup>481</sup> In terms of Rom 11:26, if οὕτως πᾶς Ἰσραὴλ σωθήσεται can be considered as *both* dependant on the condition denoted by the subjunctive εἰσέλθῃ in v. 25 (the coming in of the Gentiles – which is not necessarily connected to a future point in time) *and* to καθὼς γέγραπται... (see main text), containing the futures ἔξει and ἀποστρέψει (v. 26 – which refers to a point in time future from the prophetic language, but not necessarily in Paul’s future), then the verb σωθήσεται can be considered as secondary in this context.

<sup>482</sup> This notion would correspond to Blass and Debrunner’s (1961:178, §349) definition of the gnomic future (that “which is expected under certain circumstances”, quoted in main text). Cf. Burton (1906:36) and Blass (1905:201).

<sup>483</sup> Cf. Paul’s apparent interchangeable use of the future indicative and aorist subjunctive in similar syntactical constructions in Rom 5:19 (ὥσπερ... οὕτως... + fut. ind.) and 21 (ὥσπερ... οὕτως... + aor. subj.). Cf. also Paul’s use of εἰάν + fut. ind., e.g., Rom 2:26; 9:27; 10:9; 11:23; 12:20; 1 Cor 14:6,23; 2 Cor 10:8; Gal 5:2; 6:7. All of these examples bear some logical sense.

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the future tense (σωθήσεται) could function as a logical future, but may be *absolutely past*. It has to be noted though that the designation “logical future” is strictly speaking not well accounted for in Greek grammars, and is therefore not so much a firm *grammatical* category (cf. Stegall 2009:449) inherent to the future tense itself as it is a category that is derived from the use of a future within a specific (conditional) *context*.

If one considers the way in which the designations “gnomic future” and “logical future” (or similar) are applied in Greek grammars and commentaries, they seem to be applied similarly in terms of denoting *relative* time (cf. Blass 1905:201; Robertson 1914:876). The designation “gnomic future” however seems to lean more toward denoting a general truth (esp. Rom 5:7; 7:3), whereas the “logical future” seems to lean more toward denoting a logical result (derived from the context) which does not necessarily lie in the actual future (esp. Rom 5:19, see below; 6:5,8; etc.; cf. Roberts [1958] 2006:140). The frequency in which commentators interpret the future tense in Paul as a “logical future” or the future being “logical” (cf. fn. 480, etc.), suggests that a future is used in a *relative* context more often than what otherwise might be expected. It is another question whether the “logical future” could be considered as a subset or a certain variant of the “gnomic future”. While Wallace’s (1996:571) remark that the “gnomic future” is rare seems to argue against such a possibility, Robertson’s (1914:876) remark about the *relative* future just after mentioning the “gnomic future” (citing Mt 20:10; Jn 21:19) does seem to leave such a possibility open, which in turn would imply that the relative (or logical?) future is not necessarily that rare. The same possibility seems to be left open in Blass and Debrunner’s (1961:178, §349) more general definition for the gnomic future (that “which is expected under certain circumstances”; cf. Burton 1906:36; Blass 1905:201). Since the designations “gnomic” and “logical” are often used interchangeably in commentaries (e.g., Fung 1988:233; Bultmann [1951-1955] 2007:274; cf. Kim 2010:326), there seems to be a considerable amount of overlap in their use.

But apart from the logical construction of sentences, is there another reason why one can argue that Paul occasionally utilises a logical future? As implied earlier, it can be argued from Romans 5:9-10 that “righteousness”, “justification” and

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"salvation" (as denoted by their cognate terms) all correspond to the same new reality in Christ for those who believe (see 8.1.5.3; fn. 477). While all of these concepts have future significance in terms of awaiting eschatological fulfilment, all of them additionally contain a realised or present aspect in the Pauline corpus. Apart from the realised significance of the new creation for those in Christ (2 Cor 5:17, παρῆλθεν [2<sup>nd</sup> aor. ind.] and γέγονεν [2<sup>nd</sup> perf. ind.], see 6.2.1; cf. Gal 2:19-20, συνεσταύρωμαι [perf. ind.], ζῶ and ζῆ [both pres. ind.]; 2 Cor 1:20) and the present reality of the Spirit in believer's lives (Rom 8:10, see 7.4.1.4), the realised or present aspect can especially be derived from the occurrence of the verbs δικαιώω, καταλλάσσω and σώζω in their perfect/aorist indicative or -participle forms, and their present indicative or -participle forms.<sup>484</sup> In terms of Pauline eschatology, Hagner (2012:403) states:

Contrary to popular misunderstanding, the Christian faith is far more a celebration of eschatological reality already accomplished than a celebration of future eschatology – "pie in the sky in the bye and bye." Eschatology is about the present as well as the future.

It is especially significant that Romans 8:24 portrays salvation as having realised significance<sup>485</sup> (σώζω, aor. ind.) even though it carries a future component, a notion confirmed by Schreiner ([1998] 2005:439; 2001:228), Wright (2002:598), Fee (1996:61), Moo (1996:521), Morris (1988:325), Bruce ([1985] 2000:174; [1977] 2000:428), Cranfield (1975:419) Foerster (1971:994) and Ridderbos (1959:189). The modifying phrase τῆ ἐλπίδι is probably best understood in terms of an associative sense: "we were saved, *with hope* as the ever present companion of this salvation" (Moo 1996:521-522, emphasis added; cf. Schreiner [1998] 2005:439; Mounce 1995:186; Dodd [1959] 1963:148; ISV; NLT; GW; REB;

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<sup>484</sup> *Aorist indicative*: δικαιώω: Rom 4:2; 8:30; 1 Cor 6:11 (cf. 1 Tim 3:16); καταλλάσσω: Rom 5:10; σώζω: Rom 8:24 (cf. Titus 3:5). *Aorist participle* (denoting an antecedent to the controlling verb, Wallace 1996:614): δικαιώω: Rom 5:1,9 (cf. Titus 3:7); καταλλάσσω: 2 Cor 5:18 (cf. σώζω: 2 Tim 1:9). *Perfect indicative*: δικαιώω: Rom 6:7 (cf. *perfect participle* [denoting an antecedent to the controlling verb, Wallace 1996:614]: σώζω: Eph 2:5,8). *Present indicative*: δικαιώω: Gal 2:16; 3:8,11; 5:4. *Present participle* (indicating contemporaneous time, Wallace 1996:614): δικαιώω: Rom 3:24,26; 4:5; 8:33; καταλλάσσω: 2 Cor 5:19; σώζω: 1 Cor 1:18; 15:2; 2 Cor 2:15.

<sup>485</sup> Cf. the phrase νῦν ἡμέρα σωτηρίας in 2 Cor 6:2.

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NAT).<sup>486</sup> This present or realised aspect to salvation is arguably one of the most important reasons why scholars understand Paul to utilise a logical future probably more than usually acknowledged. The effect of a logical future is that the reality denoted by the verb may already have come into effect even though it might await future completion.

A significant example of where Paul in all probability intends a logical future (not listed in fn. 480) is Romans 5:19. He states: “For just as by the one man’s disobedience the many were made [aorist: κατεστάθησαν] sinners, so by the one man’s obedience the many *will be made* [future: κατασταθήσονται] righteous” (NRSV, emphasis added). That Paul has a logical future in mind (κατασταθήσονται) is suggested by Jewett (2007:386), Bell (2002:31), Fitzmyer (1993:421), Moo (1996:345), Fung (1988:233), Bultmann ([1951-1955] 2007:274) and Lagrange (1950:112). Similarly, Cranfield (1975:291) states that κατασταθήσονται, “while it could refer to the final judgment... is probably better understood, in agreement with 5.1 and 9, as referring to the present life of believers” (cf. Wilckens 1980:328; Schlier 1977:175; Ridderbos 1966:178;<sup>487</sup> Schrenk 1964:191; Sanday & Headlam [1902] 1960:142; Lange & Fay 1899:187; Weiss 1899:258). The logical aspect of the future can especially be derived from its parallel relationship to the aorist verb κατεστάθησαν (cf. Dunn 1988a:258).<sup>488</sup> Yet the significance of Romans 5:19 lies in its close grammatical correspondence to that of 11:26. The syntactical structure of each is demonstrated below:

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<sup>486</sup> Even by understanding τῇ ἐλπίδι as a modal dative: “in hope” (e.g., Fee 1996:61; Fitzmyer 1993:515; Bruce [1985] 2000:174; Käsemann 1980:439; Cranfield 1975:419; ESV; NRSV; NIV), the realised significance of salvation is retained (e.g., Fee 1996:61; Bruce [1985] 2000:174; Cranfield 1975:419). But a view that hope would be the means of salvation constituting an instrumental dative (“by/through hope”, e.g., Ridderbos 1959:189; LITV; GNB; RV; KJV) is to be rejected since Paul does not make such an association elsewhere (Moo 1996:522). Yet, despite choosing to understand τῇ ἐλπίδι as an instrumental dative, Ridderbos (1959:189) states that “this hope has become the believers’ preservation, for they are already adopted as children of God and heirs of God” (translated).

<sup>487</sup> Ridderbos admits to both a present and future dimension of righteousness in Rom 3:20 and 5:19.

<sup>488</sup> Although Dunn does not ultimately opt for the logical future here, he considers it as a possibility for the reason given.

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**Romans 5:19**

ὥσπερ..., οὕτως + future indicative [κατασταθήσονται]  
 as [through the one man's disobedience]..., in this manner... will be made

**Romans 11:26**

οὕτως + future indicative [σωθήσεται]..., καθὼς  
 in this manner... will be saved..., as [is written]

As in Romans 11:26, οὕτως in 5:19 can be translated as "in this manner" (BDAG §1a). Both adverbial markers καθὼς and ὥσπερ ("as") signify comparison (BDAG, καθὼς §1;<sup>489</sup> ὥσπερ a; cf. ὡς). In terms of the syntax, the difference between these two sentences is word order. Although the normal word order between the comparative adverbial marker and the future indicative is as within Romans 5:19 (ὥσπερ/καθὼς/ὡς, then οὕτως), there are exceptions in Paul (e.g., οὕτως, then καθὼς: Php 3:17 [so Rom 11:26]; οὕτως, then ὡς: 1 Cor 3:15; 4:1; 9:26; 2 Cor 9:5; 1 Th 2:4 [καθὼς... οὕτως... ὡς]; cf. Eph 5:28,33). It is noteworthy that in these examples, οὕτως refers to that which stands *after* καθὼς, and *not* to something *preceding* οὕτως. In accordance with these examples, it seems possible that οὕτως... καθὼς in Romans 11:26 could be read without a comma after σωθήσεται, implying that οὕτως might (additionally) refer to that which stands after καθὼς (that which is written). Οὕτως in 11:26 might therefore pertain to *both* the preceding condition set forth by the subjunctive εἰσέλθῃ in v. 25 (the coming in of the Gentiles) *and* to καθὼς γέγραπται (that which is written), or a measure of ambiguity in terms of the referent of οὕτως might be implied. If οὕτως therefore *also* stands in a dependant relationship with καθὼς γέγραπται, it strengthens the notion that οὕτως (Rom 11:26) denotes *manner* (see above). In addition, the syntactical similarity between Romans 5:19 and Romans 11:26 might argue for viewing the future tense in Romans 11:26 also as a logical future (as in Rom 5:19). But although contributing to the argument, these possibilities in themselves are not conclusive yet.

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<sup>489</sup> Although Rom 11:26 is not listed under this category, the clause καθὼς γέγραπται is listed here.

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With respect to Paul’s use of οὕτως and καθὼς in Romans 11:26, it is likely that Paul applies Scripture here in Romans 11:26-27 not merely to reinforce or confirm his teaching (contra Moo 1996:724,727), but to denote the *manner in which* Israel will be saved (Wright 2002:693; cf. Longenecker 1989:98),<sup>490</sup> making the coming in of the fullness of the Gentiles (ἄχρις... εἰσέλθῃ) and that which is written (καθὼς γέγραπται...) to relate to the same event. To conclude, it seems possible that the salvation of “all Israel” intricately stands in *both* (1) a *comparative* relationship with καθὼς γέγραπται..., which constitutes the *manner in which* salvation is effected, and (2) in a *conditional* relationship with ἄχρις οὗ τὸ πλήρωμα τῶν ἐθνῶν εἰσέλθῃ, which constitutes the *condition* for salvation.

### 8.1.5.5 *The Deliverer out of Zion (v. 26b)*

Despite some who understand ὁ ῥυόμενος as a reference to God in general or Yahweh (e.g., Gager 2002:141; Gaston 1987:147-148; Murray 1965:100), it is more likely that it refers to Christ (Hultgren 2011:422-423; Jewett 2007:704; Witherington III 2004:276; Wright 2002:692; 1993:250; Schreiner [1998] 2005:620; Moo 1996:728; Mounce 1995:225; Fitzmyer 1993:620,624; Dunn 1988b:682; Morris 1988:421; Sanders [1983] 1989:194-195; Käsemann 1980:314; Cranfield 1979:578; Ridderbos 1959:265; Sanday & Headlam [1902] 1960:337). Within the context of Romans, Paul has already established Christ as the one in whom one believes onto righteousness (3:22,24; 4:23-25), through whom believers have access to the grace in which they stand (5:2), that righteousness unto eternal life is through Christ (5:21; 6:4,7,23), that life in the eschatological Spirit/spirit is effected in Christ (8:2,9,10), and probably most importantly, that those who believe in Christ will be saved (10:9; cf. 9:33). As argued, even in Romans 11, the believing remnant cannot be understood apart from belief in Christ (see 8.1.1). It would thus be incredible to understand Paul’s reference to the Deliverer as pointing to anyone but Christ (cf. Jewett 2007:703-704; Wright 2002:692; 1993:250; Sanders [1983] 1989:194; 1 Th 1:10).

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<sup>490</sup> Longenecker argues that the identity of the Deliverer from Zion (v. 26b) is decisive in determining *how* Israel will be saved.

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For Paul, the Deliverer comes ἐκ Σιῶν, a rendering that differs from the Septuagint version of Isaiah 59:20 which has ἕνεκεν Σιων: "for the sake of Zion" (cf. MT: לְיִשְׁרָאֵל, "to Zion"). Young (1972:440) notes that Paul's rendering ἐκ Σιῶν is correct grammatically, for the preposition לְ in the MT of Isaiah 59:20 may have this force. But Kirk (2010:87) is probably right that Paul changes the preposition to tell "of the unexpected turn in salvation history he believes has taken place." Another two fairly close parallels to Romans 11:26 are found in the similar Psalms 13:7 (LXX; 14:7, MT) and 52:7 (LXX; 53:6, MT) where it is described how deliverance will be given to Israel ἐκ Σιων when the Lord will return the captivity of His people, and Jacob and Israel will rejoice.<sup>491</sup> Although the Deliverer for the sake of Zion within the context of Isaiah 59:20 refers to Yahweh, Paul has identified Yahweh with Christ in Romans 10:9,13 (esp. Wright 2002:692; see 6.1.2.2). Moreover, in 9:33 Paul referred to Zion within the context of the stumbling stone which is Christ (see 6.1.1.1).<sup>492</sup> Zion therefore seems to refer to Jerusalem as the place of Christ's death and resurrection (Fitzmyer 1993:625; cf. Kirk 2010:91; Wilckens 1980:257; 15:19) rather than to the "heavenly Jerusalem" (contra Jewett 2007:704; Witherington III 2004:276; Schreiner [1998] 2005:619; Moo 1996:728; Käsemann 1980:314).<sup>493</sup> If Christ is the Deliverer and comes out of the earthly Jerusalem, then Paul's entire claim on Scripture in verses 26b to 27 pertains to Christ's first advent (Kim 2010:328; Kirk 2010:87-91; Zoccali 2008:311-

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<sup>491</sup> The corresponding themes are as follows: ἐκ Σιων, Ἰσραὴλ, Ἰακώβ in Rom 11:26 and Psalms 13:7 (LXX) and 52:7 (LXX); σωθήσεται in Rom 11:26 and σωτήριον in the two psalms; ἀποστρέψει in Rom 11:26 and ἐπιστρέψαι in the two psalms.

<sup>492</sup> Even Moo (1996:728) admits that "[i]t would make sense to interpret 'out of Zion' in 11:26 in light of this earlier text" (cf. Longenecker 1989:117).

<sup>493</sup> The understanding of Zion as referring to the "heavenly Jerusalem" (Ἰερουσαλήμ ἐπουρανίω) is largely based on an inference from Heb 12:22. Although Paul refers to the "Jerusalem above" (ἄνω Ἰερουσαλήμ) in Gal 4:26 he neither draws a connection between "Zion" and "Jerusalem above" as such nor portray "Jerusalem above" as the Jerusalem of the eschaton. "Jerusalem above" is contrasted to the "current Jerusalem" (νῦν Ἰερουσαλήμ, v. 25) and is rather to be interpreted as a juxtaposition of a "spiritual Jerusalem" (the mother of believers in Christ) against an "earthly Jerusalem" (Meyer 2009:137; Fung 1988:210). The "Jerusalem from above" is therefore a present reality (Meyer 2009:137). Yet, even if the heavenly-Jerusalem-interpretation in Rom 11:26 would be possible it is outweighed by (1) Paul's referral to the earthly Zion in 9:33, and (2) that Paul is not likely to refer to the parousia (see main text).

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312; Wright 2002:692; 1993:250; Byrne 1996:355; Fitzmyer 1993:620,625; Sanders [1983] 1989:196; Lenski [1945] 2008:729)<sup>494</sup> and not to the parousia.

Dunn (1998:528; 1988b:682) however argues that ὁ ῥυόμενος points to Christ's deliverance at the parousia on the basis that the verb ῥύομαι elsewhere points to Christ's final deliverance, citing Romans 7:24 and 1 Thessalonians 1:10 (cf. Cranfield 1979:578 citing only 1 Th 1:10). This deduction however is not obvious. Although 1 Thessalonians surely points to Christ's deliverance at the parousia, the cry for deliverance in Romans 7:24 rather anticipates Christ's deliverance constituted in Christ and the Spirit as effected by belief in Christ (8:1-16; cf. Fee 1994:521; Wright 2002:571; Käsemann 1980:211; Ridderbos 1959:160; 171-173; contra Dunn 1988b:682). As argued in 7.4.1.3 and 7.4.1.4, Romans 7:14-25 constitutes an old existence before or outside of Christ whereas 8:1-16 points to the life in the eschatological spirit as set over against an existence in flesh. The deliverance cried after in 7:24 is thus resolved in Christ in the existence in spirit (8:1-16; see esp. ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ ἠλευθέρωσέν in 8:2). Elsewhere ῥύομαι is used in the context of deliverance from opponents (Rom 15:31; cf. 2 Th 3:2) or from danger (2 Cor 1:10).<sup>495</sup> It might be noteworthy that in the letter to the Colossians, ῥύομαι is used in terms of realised deliverance in Christ (Col 1:13, aor. ind.). Nevertheless, a reference to the parousia in Romans 11:26 merely on the basis of its use in 1 Thessalonians 1:10 is not warranted, for in the context of Romans 9 to 11 there is no reference to the parousia (Fitzmyer 1993:620,624-625; Sanders [1983] 1989:192-196).

Fitzmyer (1993:625) is probably correct to argue toward understanding the future ἤξει (v. 26) within the quotation from Isaiah as a *futurum propheticum*. In reference to 9:33, he admits to possibly understanding the words as "somehow having been fulfilled" (:625). Byrne's (1996:355) view is more pronounced, writing:

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<sup>494</sup> Kim, Kirk, Zoccali, Wright and Sanders (as cited) understand the prophecy as pertaining to the Gentile mission, while Byrne, Fitzmyer and Lenski (as cited) understand it more in terms of Christ's saving work. The latter understanding is preferred (see 8.1.5.6-8.1.5.7).

<sup>495</sup> Cf. the use of ῥύομαι in the Pastorals: deliverance from persecution (2 Tim 3:11), danger (2 Tim 4:17) or evil works (2 Tim 4:18).

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It is much simpler to see Paul understanding the prophecy as speaking out of its proper time reference, pointing to a ‘coming’ (of a ‘deliverer’) which for Isaiah lies in the future but which for Paul has already been realized in the original appearance and saving work of Christ.

If the Deliverer coming out of Zion in Christ’s first advent describes the *manner in which* “all Israel” will be saved, then it could follow logically that the salvation of Israel has *already been effected in Christ’s first advent*.

### **8.1.5.6 The removing of ungodliness, the taking away of sins and God’s covenant (vv. 26b-27)**

The Deliverer will remove (ἀποστρέφω, v. 26, BDAG §2a; ISV; GW; GNB; REB; NAT; cf. ESV; NRSV; RSV) ungodliness (ἀσεβεία, v. 26; Zerwick & Grosvenor 1988:485; ISV; NRSV; RSV; KJV) from Jacob. The plural ἀσεβείας pertain to “acts of impiety rather than a state of mind” (Zerwick & Grosvenor 1988:485). This constitutes the covenant/testament (διαθήκη, v. 27) with the people when the Deliverer will take away or remove (ἀφαιρέω, v. 27, BDAG §2bβ; Zerwick & Grosvenor 1988:485; ISV; NRSV; NIV; RSV) their sins. While the first part of Paul’s quote (v. 26b-27a) resembles Isaiah 59:20 (LXX), the latter part (v. 27b) resembles Isaiah 27:9 (LXX). An allusion to Jeremiah 38:31-33 (LXX; MT: 31:31-33) cannot be ruled out, especially around the concept of διαθήκη (Wright 2002:692; Fitzmyer 1993:625; Bruce [1985] 2000:218). Bruno (2008:129-132) argues for an additional allusion to Isaiah 2:3 in Paul’s mixed quote, which would suggest Gentile inclusion (cf. Kirk 2010:85).

It is noteworthy that in Paul’s following of the Septuagint of Isaiah 59:20, the Deliverer is the subject of the “turning away” (ἀποστρέψει) whereas in the MT, those in Jacob seems to be the subject of the “turning away” (וְלִשְׁבֵי יַעֲקֹב פִּשְׁעֵי בְּיַעֲקֹב; cf. *iniquitas domui iacob*, Vulgate). The reading from the MT (Isa 59:20) thus implies that those in Jacob have turned to the Lord and repented (cf. Young 1972:441). In the MT of Isaiah 27:9 however, Yahweh is the subject, removing Jacob’s sin (cf. Ps 13:7; 52:7 [LXX]). Since repentance as such is not Paul’s

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intent<sup>496</sup> (Fitzmyer 1993:619; cf. Gager 2002:142; Stendahl 1976:132),<sup>497</sup> his overall quotation thus leans more toward the original intent of Isaiah 27:9 (MT) than that of Isaiah 59:20 (MT).<sup>498</sup> It is thus problematic to say that “Paul aptly uses [Isa 59] v.20 in support of his hope of Jewish repentance in Romans 11:25-27” (Grogan 1986:327).

That Paul primarily might have Isaiah 27 in mind in Romans 11:26-27 is additionally strengthened by the context of Isaiah 27 (cf. Moo 1996:729). If Isaiah 27:6 is read in the MT, “Jacob” is portrayed as taking root (יִשְׂרָאֵל יִעֲקֹב) and identified as Israel who shall blossom and bud (יִצְיִץ וְיִפְרֹחַ יִשְׂרָאֵל; cf. LXX: βλαστήσει καὶ ἐξανθήσει Ἰσραὴλ). The question is asked if they are struck down or killed (v. 7). Verse 8 reports of their exile and their “removal” (הִגָּה). Yet, verse 9 portrays the expiation and removal of Jacob’s iniquity and sin “by means of” (Young 1969:246) this judgment. According to verse 11, the *branches* (קִצְיִרֵיהֶן) of Jacob/Israel (v. 6) after becoming dry (בִּיבֹשׁ) are *broken off* (תִּשְׁבֹּרְנָה). He that formed them will have no mercy (v. 11). But in spite of this judgment, there would be an ingathering (v. 12) and those “perishing” or “those being exterminated” (הַאֲבֵדִים, v. 13, BDB, אָבַד §1)<sup>500</sup> would (paradoxically) come and worship the Lord on the holy mountain at Jerusalem (v. 13). Of this ingathering and worship, Young (1969:252-253) writes:

In the light of this description it would seem that the verse [13] refers, not primarily to the exile, but to the return of sinners in Jesus Christ. It is in Him that God has gathered into one His people scattered throughout the earth (cf. Grogan 1986:171).

<sup>496</sup> Paul has ἀποστρέψει (v. 26) in the indicative form (third person singular) and ἀφέλωμαι (v. 27) in the first person singular (corresponding to ἐμοῦ διαθήκη), thus making the Deliverer the subject of all the actions.

<sup>497</sup> Stendahl (1976:132) writes: “it dawns on Paul that the Jesus movement is to be a Gentile movement – God being allowed to establish Israel in his own time and way.”

<sup>498</sup> This seems to be the safer option over against insisting that Paul’s overall quote *has* to pertain to the original text and context of Isa 59:20, which in turn would force one to understand Paul’s notion to be “a distillation of Isaianic theology” or that he “compresses new obedience and final redemption” (Seifrid 2007:675).

<sup>499</sup> The Septuagint omits a translation for יִשְׂרָאֵל.

<sup>500</sup> Watts (1985:351) describes אֲבֵדִים as those who “is like a living death”.

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Whether this would be the kind of connotation that Paul would have attached to Isaiah 27:13 is not clear. Yet in Wright's (2002:691) understanding of Paul, the exile has been undone, God's people's sins are forgiven and the covenant has been renewed in Christ and the Spirit. It is thus conceivable that Paul might have had the larger context of Isaiah 27 (e.g., vv. 6-13) in mind when he uses the image of the *branches* (Israel) that have been *broken off* (Rom 11:17-24; cf. Isa 27:11), the hardening of Israel (Rom 11:7-8, 25; cf. the dry branches in Isa 27:11) and implies a judgment of Israel by the notion of a remnant (Rom 11:3-5; cf. Isa 27:7-8,11). Even the reference to Jerusalem (Isa 27:13) might correspond to Σιών in Romans 11:26. In the Isaiah 27 account the themes of the Lord's judgment are almost paradoxically contrasted by expiation, the removal of sin and the worship of "those being exterminated".

Within the larger context of the Pauline corpus, it is hard to imagine how Paul in two verses (Rom 11:25-26) could anticipate another event where the sins of Israel/Jacob would be forgiven and removed apart from the saving work of Christ on the cross in death and resurrection. Such a notion would imply two ways of salvation for God's people, a notion that goes against the rest of the Pauline corpus (cf. Zoccali 2008:229-303; Schreiner [1998] 2005:616; Fitzmyer 1993:620; Sanders [1983] 1989:194). If Paul therefore has the Christ event in mind with his quotation of Scripture, it is likely that the future tense of σωθήσεται in Romans 11:26 is to be understood as a *logical future* (Kim 2010:326;<sup>501</sup> cf. esp. Rom 5:19, see 8.1.5.4), and explained by its correspondence with the *futurum propheticum* of the Scripture references which is fulfilled in Christ (ἦξει, ἀποστρέψει, v. 26; cf. Fitzmyer 1993:625): "all Israel *will be saved* as is written: The Deliverer *will come* out of Zion and *will remove* all ungodliness." In a strict sense, my interpretation of σωθήσεται being a logical future is not intended as the non-negotiable bedrock by which the rest of my interpretation of Romans 11:26 stands or falls. The interpretation of σωθήσεται being a logical future must rather be viewed as the *most likely* interpretation given the constraints and grammatical or syntactical possibilities set forth by the immediate and larger context in Paul (see esp.

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<sup>501</sup> Although Kim interprets σωθήσεται as a "gnomic future" here, he understands the salvation of "all Israel" as referring to Gentile and Judaeon elect (Kim 2010:318,333).

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8.1.5.7-8.1.6). In terms of the immediate context, my interpretation of verses 26b to 32 has to be understood as *also contributing substantially* toward understanding σωθήσεται in verse 26 as a logical future (see 8.1.7).

If σωθήσεται in verse 26 is considered as a logical future, it will in addition correspond to the logical future ἐγκεντρισθήσονται in verse 24 (see 8.1.3). A future element constituting the *completion* of salvation is not necessarily hereby denied (cf. Ezek 36-37). But the point is that historical Israel’s salvation is effected through the same event as for any believer in Christ, which is Christ’s death and resurrection.<sup>502</sup>

### 8.1.5.7 *The mystery of the salvation of “all Israel” revealed (vv. 25-27)*

If the above interpretation is correct and “all Israel” (πᾶς Ἰσραὴλ, v. 26) has already been saved, who is “all Israel”? Paul quoted Isaiah in 9:27 that only *those remaining* will be saved *after* God’s judgment in Christ, which are those who believe in Christ (see 6.1.1.1). A similar notion is echoed in 11:3-7 (see 8.1.1). Yet here (11:25-26) Paul reveals a mystery that seems to pertain to more than those remaining who are saved. Those who are saved would thus naturally be understood as those who lived *before* God’s judgment in Christ. But the question could arise whether “all Israel” includes Israel according to the flesh. If Paul’s unqualified use of “Israel” throughout Romans 11 has to be understood in terms of Paul’s former distinction in that “Israel” is *inner* Israel (9:6-8, see 4.3.2.2) which is Israel of promise (9:8) and *inner* election (see 4.3.2.3), then the notion that “all Israel” would include Israel according to the flesh (ethnic Israel in general) seems incredible (cf. Zoccali 2008:303-309; Merkle 2000:711-721; Hendriksen 1980, Romans 11:25-32; Horne 1978:329-334; Ridderbos 1966:396-403; 1959:261-266; Lenski [1945] 2008:723-728). It is more likely that πᾶς refers to another dimension. The title Ἰακώβ (v. 26) which is used in parallel to Ἰσραὴλ evokes 9:13, where Ἰακώβ represents the historical, inner elect Israel (see 4.4.1; cf.

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<sup>502</sup> If Ezekiel’s vision of the dry bones coming to life (Ezek 36-37) can be applied to Paul’s notion that historical Israel’s salvation is effected in the first Christ event, the vision can be understood in such a way that the actual (eschatological) *completion* of this prophecy might still lie in Paul’s future but has principally been effected in the first Christ event.

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*Jubilees* 1:28; 19:18; 22:11).<sup>503</sup> The best explanation would therefore be that πᾶς refers to Israel *diachronically*,<sup>504</sup> that is *historical Israel* across the course of ancient Israel’s history (cf. Mal 4:4).<sup>505</sup>

One of the crucial points where I believe many interpreters have it wrong is to understand hardened Israel throughout Romans 9 to 11 as Israel according to the flesh (e.g., Wright 2002:694) which is national Israel (identity mode A; cf. George 1994:473) or current unbelieving Judaeans/Jews (e.g., Käsemann 1980:316; Cranfield 1979:585,588; cf. Witherington III 2004:276), even if such notions are unexpressed. As discussed in Romans 9:24-33 (see 6.1.1), hardened Israel was in fact part of God’s salvation-historical plan, and does not necessarily exclude inner election as Paul will later explain (11:28-32). *Hardened Israel* is throughout Romans 9 to 11 rather *historical Israel of inner election*. They are one and the same entity (esp. 11:28, see 8.1.7). As argued, the cutting off of the branches is the cutting off of all people claiming identity (being God’s people) on the basis of a flesh-existence (including works, law, circumcision) even if flesh was a *co-constituting* criterion for being God’s people (see 8.1.3). In other words, the metaphor represents the cutting off of identity mode A. This inevitably included inner historical Israel of whom identity as God’s children were partly based on flesh (identity mode AB). But then comes the mystery, the paradox, the double action of God. This paradox arguably evokes the same paradoxical elements as portrayed in Isaiah 27:6-13 where God’s forgiveness and removal of sin is applied

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<sup>503</sup> Sanders (1977:362-363,368) shows from various passages from *Jubilees* how the term “Jacob” corresponds with election. Election involves descent from Jacob (1:28), but not as sole condition for salvation. In 19:18, God is said to choose Jacob “to be a people for possession unto Himself.” Chapter 22:11 however states that “*some of thy [Jacob’s] sons may He sanctify in the midst of the whole earth*” (emphasis added). Sanders (:368) writes in terms of *Jubilees*: “*Physical descent is the basis of the election, and the election is the basis of salvation, but physical descent from Jacob is not the sole condition of salvation*” (emphasis original). The condition for both salvation and election closely corresponds to keeping the covenant (*Jubilees* 15:26,26; Sanders 1977:368; cf. Rom 11:27).

<sup>504</sup> Even while Fitzmyer (1993:623) understands “all Israel” as ethnic Israel he understands “all Israel” diachronically (cf. Kruse 2012:443; Bell 1994:141). So Campbell (1993:443) who, although he envisions an eschatological Israel, he cannot imagine an eschatological Israel with none of the historical Israel. He contends that “Paul’s thinking is much more concrete and historically oriented than subsequent Gentile-Christian understanding makes it to be.”

<sup>505</sup> A diachronic understanding of “all Israel” is evident in Malachi 3:22 (LXX: πάντα τὸν Ἰσραὴλ; 4:4 in the MT: כָּל-יִשְׂרָאֵל), where “all Israel” is the whole diachronic nation to whom the statutes and ordinances of Moses apply (Zoccali 2008:292; cf. *m. Sanhedrin* 10:1; *Testament of Benjamin* 10:11).

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to "those being exterminated" and those judged. This elect yet hardened historical Israel was cut off (Rom 11:17-24), then forgiven and their sins removed in Christ (vv. 26-27) and then regrafted in Christ onto the good olive tree (the people of God, cf. v. 24). All these actions by God pertain to the same salvation-historical event in Christ. But their regrafting is arguably now on a different basis.

Their regrafting can be understood as now being on the basis of grace and election only (vv. 28-32). But what would that mean? As discussed, the way of existence in flesh (Rom 7:14-25) can be understood as historical Israel under the law from the perspective of a believer in Christ (see 7.3.1.3). Their existence could not only be described as being "under the law" (2:12; 3:19; 6:14,15; 7:23) but especially as being "under sin" (3:9; 7:14; cf. Gal 3:22). If their sins are forgiven (11:27) through Christ their *Deliverer* (ὁ ρυόμενος, 11:26), their forgiveness probably implies more than forgiveness, but the *deliverance* from their old way of existence, and by implication the transformation of their old identity. If Israel's identity before Christ (7:14-25, see 7.4.1.3) can be understood as crying out for *deliverance* (ρύομαι, 7:24; cf. 11:26) and those in Christ are being *delivered* (ἐλευθερώω, Rom 6:18,22; 8:2)<sup>506</sup> from the old existence in flesh under the law and sin (Rom 7:14-25), then the same grace that has been applied to Israel (11:28-32) might imply that Christ did the same for historical Israel in Christ as for the Christ-believers. In other words, as a result of Christ's saving work, their identity can be understood as now being in Christ and their mode of identity as being transformed from identity mode AB to identity mode C.

The collateral of the cutting off of all of inner, historical Israel, whose identity was not based on the grace in Christ, was that all of former Israel that lived at the Christ event but did not accept the gospel in faith was cut off too. Since the Christ event God's people are marked off by faith and the Spirit only (identity mode C). Those being cut off at the Christ event are therefore not part of "all Israel" that are saved. For them there is always the option to believe in Christ and be regrafted into the good olive tree on the basis of faith (v. 23). Paul is careful not to denote

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<sup>506</sup> Although most Bible translations render ἐλευθερώω in 6:18,22 and 8:2 as "set free" (or similar), some translations translate the same term as "delivered" in 8:21 (e.g., ASV; RV; KJV).

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those who might in the future believe in Christ (v. 23) as "Israel" (contra NRSV). They are those of descent from Abraham after the Christ event whom Paul elsewhere calls Ἰουδαῖοι. But in verse 24 Paul switches over to historical Ἰσραήλ: if Gentiles can be grafted into the good olive tree against their nature (by faith), how much more could God graft in elect, historical Israel (natural branches) into the olive tree (v. 24).

In conclusion, "all Israel" who are saved in Christ (vv. 26-27) can therefore be understood as *historical Israel of inner election in its diachronic entirety that lived before the Christ event*. To summarise, this conclusion is mainly based on the following:

- (1) The probability that Paul throughout Romans 9 to 11 mainly has historical Israel in view (as argued throughout, see also 8.1.6).
- (2) That Paul has never pertinently answered the question around historical Israel's salvation that arguably lies beneath the surface throughout the build-up of Paul's rhetoric in Romans (as argued throughout), and that the answer to this question would thus be expected.
- (3) The connection of the mystery (v. 25) to the gospel (see 8.1.5.1).
- (4) The hardening (v. 25) of Israel which is historical (esp. γέγονεν [perf. ind.], see 8.1.5.2; cf. 10:19-21, see 6.1.2.2; 11:1-10, see 8.1.1; 2 Cor 3:14, see 7.3.1.2).
- (5) The "coming in of the fullness of the Gentiles" (v. 25), pointing to the generic inclusion of the Gentiles within God's salvific economy, which is already realised within the gospel in Christ (8.1.5.3).
- (6) The theological and grammatical possibility of Paul's language in general and in context to understand σωθήσεται as a logical future that might have been realised (see 8.1.5.4 and 8.1.5.6).
- (7) The prophetic language around the Deliverer (vv. 26-27) which pertains to Christ's first advent (see 8.1.5.5).

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(8) That the Deliverer is the Subject of the actions in the prophetic citation (vv. 26-27) which excludes repentance or conversion by the subjects as such (cf. Isa 27:6-13; see 8.1.5.6).

(9) That the hardened (v. 25) and the term ἱακώβ (v. 26) correspond to inner, elect Israel (see above and 8.1.6).

(10) The way in which this interpretation fits with the larger context (see 8.1.6) and especially 11:28-32 (see 8.1.7).

(11) That Paul's understanding of Ἰσραήλ fits into a larger pattern of his thought around identity, where the identity and existence in Christ (defined by faith and the indwelling of the Spirit) eschatologically supersedes an identity and existence outside of Christ (defined by "flesh": law, sin and death). This excludes the possibility of a "future" Israel whose identity is (partly) based on "flesh" (see esp. 7.5.1).

It could be objected that the salvation of historical Israel could hardly be called a mystery, especially since the patriarchs have been presupposed to be part of God's kingdom in Israel's tradition (e.g., 4 Macc 13:17), the Gospel traditions (e.g., Mk 12:26; Mt 8:11; 22:32; Lk 13:28; 16:22-23), or the fact that Paul already stated that Abraham's faith will be reckoned for him as righteousness (Rom 4:3,5,9,22; cf. Gal 3:6). Yet the mystery probably lies in the following aspects:

(a) Paul indicates that the whole of historical elect Israel are saved and not only the patriarchs. The same historical hardened, inner Israel who was cut off is grafted in again. They are firstly rejected and then accepted in Christ. These opposites seem like a paradox, constituting a mystery (cf. Barth 1968:412).<sup>507</sup>

(b) The salvation of historical Israel provides retrojective (cf. fn. 224) significance to Christ's salvific work. Christ would become the Saviour of all who lived before and after the Christ event, constituting a mystery. Lenski's (1963:1031-1032, see

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<sup>507</sup> Barth (1968:412) writes: "By mystery Paul means what we call 'paradox.'"

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fn. 313) notion applies that Christ’s death counts for all time, past and future, and that all in the Old and New Testaments are saved through Christ.

(c) It can be noted that Paul never unambiguously identifies faith as the criterion for salvation of inner Israel in the Old Testament, although such a notion cannot be ruled out. Yet in a strict sense the criteria for salvation remains God’s grace, purpose and election, constituting a mystery.

The mystery therefore does not only lie in the fact *that* all of elect historical Israel is saved, but in *how* (καὶ οὕτως, 11:26, see 8.1.5.4) they are saved: all the promises to historical Israel is fulfilled in another way that they might have anticipated. As noted earlier (see 5.1.2), the fulfilment of the promises to Israel is non-material in terms of (1) Abraham’s seed, (2) the land and (3) the reign of God’s people. The Messiah’s reign is thus not material and neither is the inheritance of historical Israel material. Cranfield (1979:579) notes that Paul did not entertain any hope “for the re-establishment of a national state in independence and political power, nor – incidentally – anything which could feasibly be interpreted as a scriptural endorsement of the modern nation-state of Israel” (cf. Bruce [1985] 2000:217; Guthrie 1981:809).

### 8.1.6 Testing historical Israel’s salvation against Romans 9:1 to 11:25

If the interpretation is correct that the salvation of “all Israel” pertains to inner historical Israel that lived before the Christ event, it should fit the context. This understanding will here be tested against 9:1 to 11:25. The testing of the interpretation against 11:28-32 will be integrated within the theological-exegetical discussion of those verses (see 8.1.7).

It has been argued in the discussion of 9:1-10 that Paul is describing Israel of the Old Testament (see 4.3.2). Paul’s anguish as expressed in 9:2-3 can be understood as anticipating a judgment and cutting off of historical Israel. His rhetoric provides for the possibility of Israel being cut off in spite of their national privileges (9:4-5). As already noted, the distinction between inner and outer Israel

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is maintained in the interpretation of the salvation of all historical Israel (see 8.1.5.7). The historical account of salvation history in 9:9-18 confirms that historical Israel is in view. The questions in 9:19-24 can be understood as pertaining to God's election of historical Israel in the era *prior to* the Christ event against the election of all in Christ, including Gentiles in the era *after* the Christ event. It is important to note that Paul's accentuation of God's sovereignty in hardening and in using people as both vessels of mercy and destruction (9:18-23), opens the possibility of God's *hardening of even the elect*.

The crossover in salvation history as portrayed in 9:24-33 (see 6.1.1) represents the culmination of salvation history, with the era before and after the Christ event on both sides of the crossover. With Paul's quotation of Isaiah in 9:27, it is noteworthy that he does not strictly exclude the possibility that Israel prior to those remaining after God's judgment in Christ can be saved. He utilises referred authority by stating that "Isaiah cries out" that only the remnant will be saved. By stating that it is Isaiah's cry, Paul does not necessarily exclude a possible mystery of the salvation of hardened, elect Israel of history. Yet some tension remains between the mystery of salvation of historical Israel and Isaiah's cry that only the remnant would have been saved, which is precisely the kind of ingredients for a mystery. It can additionally be argued that Paul would use the quotation of Isaiah rhetorically in order to create a deliberate tension in anticipation of resolving the mystery in 11:26. Israel's striving for righteousness (9:31) can be identified historically. Moving on in salvation history, they stumbled over the stumbling stone, their Messiah, resulting in being cut off from being God's people (9:32-33).

As argued in 6.1.2, Paul's hermeneutic in Romans 10 can be understood as diachronic and dialectical, involving both historical Israel and unbelieving Judaeans. Christ being the end of the law for those who believe (10:4) points to Israel's Messiah as the culmination of salvation history, concluding the end of the previous age in flesh. As argued, Paul portrays Christ as the universal access to salvation, even for historical Israel (10:9-13). Paul seems to acknowledge the inherent problem attached to this notion, asking how historical Israel could have believed in Christ if they have not heard of Him (10:14). Paul argues against Israel having an excuse (10:16,18) by pointing to Israel's disobedience to the

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gospel and that they have heard, arguably striking a double note again (diachronic), implying that both historical Israel were disobedient to the “gospel” and that they stumbled against Christ in unbelief in the culmination of their salvation history, resulting in unbelieving Judaeans. Verses 19 to 21 once again confirm the hardening of Israel to be part of their history.

If the salvation of elect historical Israel is acknowledged, it answers the question of Romans 11:1. God did not eventually reject His people of the Old Testament. Yet 11:3-7 argues for the salvation and election of only the remnant (see 8.1.1), leaving the question about historical Israel’s salvation in suspense. Verses 7 to 10 once again confirm the hardening of Israel to be historical, culminating in the gospel coming to the nations (v. 11). A similar tension to that in 9:27 can be identified in 11:7 where the elect are set over against the hardened, distinguishing the elect remnant (believers in Christ) from the hardened prior to the Christ event. This tension is however resolved in verse 26 although constituting a (paradoxical) mystery. The question in verse 11 is also answered. Historical Israel did not fall beyond recovery. They were eventually regrafted. As maintained in 8.1.2, in verse 11 Paul probably alludes to both evoking the jealousy of historical Israel, which has an historical basis, and unbelieving Judaeans in Paul’s present. Verse 12 strongly anticipates the salvation of historical Israel. The “fullness” of Israel would imply the inclusion or regrafting of hardened Israel into being God’s people again. Their rejection would eventually be reversed. The notion of making his people jealous which is repeated in verse 14 arguably confirms Paul’s diachronic, dialectical hermeneutic, including both historical Israel and unbelieving Judaeans in order for them to be saved: historical Israel by promise and election and unbelieving Judaeans by faith in Christ (by implication).

A significant note is struck in 11:15, where Paul contrasts both Israel’s rejection and acceptance. Their acceptance would mean “life from death”. The significance lies in their being dead and resurrected, which would eventually be realised in the death and resurrection of the Deliverer, their own Messiah. Paul’s earlier thought, “making the dead alive, and calling the things that are not as if

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they were” (4:17), is echoed here. Historical Israel would thus be subject to the same pattern of death and resurrection as anyone else believing in Christ<sup>508</sup> and would thereby participate in the new creation. If understood in this way, διαθήκη in 11:27 could be understood as denoting a testament rather than a covenant. Moreover, the phrase “life from death” (11:15) in itself seems to allude to historical Israel, since they would have been dead already at this point in time. As already discussed in 8.1.3 and 8.1.5.7, the “cutting off” (vv. 17-24) represents the changing of the conditions for being God’s people. All those who were God’s people on the basis of flesh (including law, works and circumcision), including elect, hardened historical Israel who had flesh as co-constituting criterion in their identity as God’s people (identity mode AB), were cut off. Inner, historical Israel was eventually regrafted (v. 26), while those who did not believe at the Christ event had the option of believing in Christ and be regrafted. As put forth already (see 8.1.5.7), while verse 23 anticipates the salvation of *unbelieving Judaeans* in Paul’s present, verse 24 anticipates the salvation of *historical Israel* (vv. 26-27). It would be most natural for God’s elect, ancient people to be regrafted into their original position.

### 8.1.7 A perfect balance in salvation history (vv. 28-32)

Paul now explains the implications of the salvation of “all Israel”. These verses (vv. 28-32) demonstrably contain some of the strongest evidence in viewing the salvation of “all Israel” as the realised salvation of elect historical Israel before the Christ event.

Verse 28 has no verb and consists of two contrasted, parallel statements (Cranfield 1979:579):

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<sup>508</sup> A comparable notion is advanced by Wright (2002:625). He writes: “Israel is also Messiah-shaped. The pattern of Israel’s history (rejection, failure, and exile followed by astonishing covenant renewal) is none other than the pattern of death and resurrection... And that is why, when we look ahead to 11:11-16, where Paul is arguing for the restoration, the ‘receiving back,’ of Israel, he alludes to key steps in the argument of chap. 5.” Wright however does not understand the regrafting of Israel as that of historical Israel, but as the option to believe in their own Messiah.

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(1) As far as the gospel is concerned (κατὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, Fitzmyer 1993:625; Morris 1988:422; ISV; NIV; cf. Dunn 1988b:684-685; RSV; KJV), the people of Israel<sup>509</sup> are hated (ἐχθρός, BDAG §1; Käsemann 1980:315; cf. Cranfield 1979:580)<sup>510</sup> or are enemies (Zerwick & Grosvenor 1988:485; ISV; NRSV; NIV) for the sake of (διὰ, Fitzmyer 1993:625; Cranfield 1979:572; ESV; REB; NRSV; RSV; OAT; ASV; RV; cf. Moo 1996:711; KJV) the Gentiles (ὑμᾶς).<sup>511</sup> God's "hate" of Israel is parallel to their historical hardening and their eventual rejection as God's people. With respect to salvation history, their rejection by God was necessary in order for the gospel to come (cf. 9:30-33, see 6.1.1).

(2) But as far as election is concerned (κατὰ τὴν ἐκλογήν, Fitzmyer 1993:626; Morris 1988:423; ISV; NIV; cf. Dunn 1988b:684; RSV), the people of Israel are beloved (ἀγαπητοί) for the sake of (Dunn 1988b:684; Cranfield 1979:572; ESV; REB; NRSV; RSV; OAT; ASV; RV; cf. Fitzmyer 1993:626; KJV) the "fathers", who are the patriarchs (cf. Lev 26:42).

These two parallel statements (1 and 2) seem to stand in a "hard paradox" (Käsemann 1980:315). This paradox is a repetition of the same paradox constituted by the mystery of hardened Israel's salvation (vv. 26-27; 11:7,11,15; cf. Isa 27:6-13). The phrase "for the sake of the fathers" perfectly fits the understanding that historical Israel is in view. The fathers seem to benefit from this regrafting of ancient Israel. It confirms God's calling (cf. καλέω, 4:17; 9:7,11)<sup>512</sup> and gifts (χαρίσματα)<sup>513</sup> to them which are irrevocable (v. 29). The same historical hardened Israel who was cut off from being God's people in Christ has been regrafted in Christ. The parallelism in verse 28 thus describes God's double action with historical Israel of rejecting and accepting them in Christ (cf. 11:15).

<sup>509</sup> Following directly after the salvation of "all Israel" in vv. 26-27, ἐχθρός logically points to them.

<sup>510</sup> The parallelism between ἐχθροὶ and ἀγαπητοὶ requires both to be understood in its passive sense (Cranfield 1979:580).

<sup>511</sup> Paul does not identify ὑμᾶς in vv. 28-32, but it corresponds to σὺ ἐκ τῆς κατὰ φύσιν ἐξεκόπησ ἀγγελαίου in v. 24, which is Gentiles.

<sup>512</sup> An allusion to the calling of things that are not as if they were may be intentional here (4:17). In 9:7,11 calling corresponds to inner election of historical Israel, especially of the patriarchs.

<sup>513</sup> Paul probably has the privileges of national Israel in mind (9:4-5; Moo 1996:732; Dunn 1988b:686). Significant however is the fact that Christ their Messiah is reckoned as one of their privileges (9:5). In addition, Paul portrays Christ as the χάρισμα to humankind (5:15,16; 6:23).

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Verses 30 (introduced by ὥσπερ) and 31 (introduced by οὕτως καί) are the protasis and the apodosis respectively of a carefully constructed sentence which is connected to the preceding by γάρ (Cranfield 1979:582). Verse 30 pertains to the nations while verse 31 pertains to Israel. This sentence (vv. 30-31) can be understood as an explanation rather than a confirmation of verses 28-29 (Cranfield 1979:582; cf. Moo 1996:732). The ὥσπερ... οὕτως formula follows a similar pattern than 5:12,19,21 stating a balanced conclusion.

The adverb νῦν in verse 30 indeed divides two salvation-historical epochs (Moo 1996:733; Dunn 1988b:687). The nations who were disobedient (BDAG, ἀπειθέω; Dunn 1988b:687; cf. Moo 1996:711) in the previous salvation-historical epoch have *now* found mercy (ἐλεέω) as a result of Israel's disobedience (Fitzmyer 1993:626-627). Israel's disobedience corresponds to their historical hardening and eventual salvation-historical stumbling against the Stumbling Stone. The aorist indicative of both ἠπειθήσατε and ἠλεήθητε together with the adverb νῦν constitute the realised significance of the Christ event.

The apodosis (v. 31) now states the significance of the Christ event for Israel. It is precisely here where the understanding that historical Israel is already saved (vv. 26-27) fits best, while futuristic interpretations seem to be hard to fit. The verb ἠπειθήσαν is aorist indicative, constituting a snapshot (punctiliar) of a past action (Wallace1996:555; BDF §318): they (Israel) have now (νῦν, 1<sup>st</sup> occurrence) been disobedient. The verb therefore does not point to Israel's "current disobedience" (contra Jewett 2007:709). The first νῦν here (as in v. 30) denotes the current state of affairs in the light of the Christ event. They were also disobedient in the previous epoch for the sake of (τῷ ὑμετέρῳ, cf. BDAG, ἔλεος b; BDF §196; Fitzmyer 1993:627)<sup>514</sup> mercy to be shown to the Gentiles. This happened in turn that they (Israel) may *now* (νῦν, 2<sup>nd</sup> occurrence) receive mercy.

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<sup>514</sup> This translation takes the dative as a causal dative. BDF (§196) translates "because God desired to show you mercy" (cf. BDAG, ἔλεος b). It is likely to be understood in this way (1) to retain the parallelism with v. 30, and (2) for its correspondence with a similar notion in v. 11 (Fitzmyer 1993:627-628).

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Although many manuscripts omit the second  $\nu\upsilon\nu$  in verse 31 (P<sup>46</sup> A D<sup>2</sup> F G  $\Psi$  1739. 1881 Majority Text latt), it is included in NA27, based on  $\aleph$  (Sinaiticus, 4 CE), B (Vaticanus, 4 CE), D<sup>\*.c</sup> (Claromontanus, 6 CE, original hand, third corrector), 1506 (11 CE), *pc bo* (Bohairic) and *fay*<sup>ms</sup> (Fayumic). The reading with the second  $\nu\upsilon\nu$  included is followed by most commentators (Jewett 2007:694; Schreiner [1998] 2005:628,630; Wright 2002:694; Moo 1996:711; Mounce 1995:223; Fitzmyer 1993:628; Dunn 1988b:687; Cranfield 1979:585-586; Barrett [1962] 1975:226; Sanday & Headlam [1902] 1960:338) and newer Bible translations (ESV; GNB; NRSV; NIV; NAT; RV). Metzger ([1994] 2002:465) writes:

A preponderance of early and diverse witnesses favors the shorter reading. On the other hand, the difficulty in meaning that the second occurrence of  $\nu\upsilon\nu$  seems to introduce may have prompted either its deletion or its replacement by the superficially more appropriate  $\upsilon\sigma\tau\epsilon\rho\nu$ . In view of such conflicting considerations it seemed best to retain  $\nu\upsilon\nu$  in the text but to enclose it within square brackets.

Wright (2002:694) argues that even if this  $\nu\upsilon\nu$  would be missing, it is implied in the context. The reading with the  $\nu\upsilon\nu$  retained is not only the *lectio difficilior* (Jewett 2007:694; Fitzmyer 1993:628) but it affects the meaning of  $\omicron\upsilon\tau\omega\varsigma$  in 11:26 (Fitzmyer 1993:628). Cranfield (1979:585-586) admits that "it seems difficult to deny the temporal significance of this  $\nu\upsilon\nu$ ." It thus seems likely that the  $\nu\upsilon\nu$  signifies that Israel has already received mercy. The same paradox of verse 28 (cf. 11:7,11,15,26-27) is thereby repeated. Israel was disobedient in the previous age but they have simultaneously received mercy in Christ. Historical, elected Israel has *now* been saved in Christ (vv. 26-27) and thereby received mercy just as the nations have received mercy in Christ in that they can believe in Him and be saved.

The beauty<sup>515</sup> of verse 30 (the protasis) and verse 31 (the apodosis) lies in the perfect salvation-historical balance they represent. God's people *before* the

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<sup>515</sup> Dunn (1988b:687) views verses 30 and 31 as "the most contrived or carefully constructed formulation which Paul ever produced in such a tight epigrammatic form."

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Christ event have received mercy (v. 31), that is in perfect balance with the nations (including all people, cf. v. 23) *after* the Christ event who have received mercy (v. 30). In this understanding there is no end-time anticipation for a present or future "Israel" to be brought in. Such a notion would in fact disturb the salvation historical balance in that it would move the Christ event away from its central, definitive position in salvation history.

Verse 32 sums up Paul's salvation-historical exposition (cf. Fitzmyer 1993:629; Dunn 1988b:696; Ridderbos 1959:269). God has imprisoned (BDAG, συγκλείω §2; NLT; NRSV; cf. GW; GNB) all in disobedience that He may be merciful to all. The inclusion of "all" (πᾶς) pertains to the disobedience of Israel and all the nations within the old epoch before the Christ event, in order to be merciful to all people in Christ. The net effect is that God has been merciful to His elect ancient Israel in the *prior* epoch, saving them, *and* to all people in the eschatological epoch *after* the Christ event, including them in the grace presented in the gospel. An allusion to the imprisonment under the law and sin in the old epoch is not impossible here, for Paul uses the same word (συγκλείω) in Galatians 3:22,23 to describe the imprisonment under sin and the law.<sup>516</sup> Regarding this notion in Galatians 3, Hays (2000:261) writes: "at last through Christ's death the curse has been lifted, Israel has been set free, the exile has ended, so that the ingathering of the Gentiles can now begin."

There is a universal aspect in that God's mercy was extended to all people in Christ (v. 32), but not universalism which would imply that each individual is saved (cf. Schreiner [1998] 2005:629; Moo 1996:736; Dunn 1988b:697; Bruce [1985] 2000:219; Sanday & Headlam [1902] 1960:339).<sup>517</sup> The latter view would be contradictory to Paul's thought elsewhere.<sup>518</sup> Verse 32 rather implies that "God's mercy is potentially available to all" (Moo 1996:736).

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<sup>516</sup> Cf. the themes of freedom from the law (Rom 7:2; 8:2) and sin (6:18,22), in contrast to being under the law (2:12; 3:19; 6:14-15; 7:23) and sin (3:9; 7:14).

<sup>517</sup> Schreiner ([1998] 2005:629) is probably right that with πάντας Paul primarily has Israel and Gentiles as groups in view (cf. Käsemann 1980:316; Sanday & Headlam [1902] 1960:339).

<sup>518</sup> Cf. the individual dimension of the new creation (2 Cor 5:14-21, see 6.2.1; cf. Col 3:9-15, see 6.2.2) and faith being the condition for righteousness (Gal 3; Rom 4).

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**8.1.8 Praising God's wisdom, knowledge and judgments (vv. 33-36)**

In verses 33 to 36, Paul does not communicate a sense of frustration in confrontation with the mysteries of God's election. There is rather a fine balance between God's sovereignty as manifested in His salvation-historical plan, and human responsibility (cf. the actives in vv. 30-31: ἠπειθήσατε, ἠπειθήσαν), which is included in God's sovereign plan (Moo 1996:740; cf. Rom 9:24-33, see 6.1.1.1). Paul's unusual vocabulary suggests that the passage is probably a hymn (Jewett 2007:713; Moo 1996:740; Fitzmyer 1993:633; Cranfield 1979:589) which borrows from the formulations of Old Testament wisdom traditions (esp. Job), apocalyptic writings (Moo 1996:740; Dunn 1988b:698) and even Stoic formulations (Fitzmyer 1993:633; Cranfield 1979:589,591).<sup>519</sup> Although some or all of these elements might be present in verses 33 to 36, it is likely that Paul composed the hymn himself (Hultgren 2011:431; Schreiner [1998] 2005:632; Moo 1996:740-741; Dunn 1988b:698; Käsemann 1980:318).

In verse 33, Paul praises the riches, wisdom and knowledge of God (NRSV). God's judgments (cf. Job 40:8) are unsearchable (ἀνεξερεύνητος, Moo 1996:739; NRSV; RSV; KJV) and His ways inscrutable (BDAG, ἀνεξιχνίαστος; Moo 1996:739; NRSV; RSV). With verse 33, Paul surely has God's salvation plan and His providential control of salvation history for all human beings in mind (Moo 1996:741-742). Verse 34 is a quote from Isaiah 40:13 (LXX). Paul rhetorically asks who has known the mind of the Lord (cf. 1 Cor 2:16) or who has been His counsellor. It has to do with the human experience of God's plan (Moo 1996:743). Verse 35 ("Or who has given a gift to him, to receive a gift in return?", NRSV) might be a quotation from Job 41:3 in the Septuagint, but corresponds closer to

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<sup>519</sup> Fitzmyer shows this from *Meditation* 4:23 of Marcus Aurelius: "All that is in tune with you is in tune with me! Nothing that is on time for you is too early or too late for me! All that your seasons bring, O Nature, is fruit for me! All things come from you, subsist in you, are destined for you." Yet Paul substitutes "Nature" with "though Him" which contradicts Stoic pantheism (Hultgren 2011:433; Cranfield 1979:591; Ridderbos 1959:271).

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Job 41:11 in the MT (Fitzmyer 1993:635).<sup>520</sup> Moo (1996:743) suggests that one can answer this question (v. 35): “no one, except Jesus Christ, who has revealed to us in his own person the plan of God for salvation history.” Although verse 36 does not point to Christ as such, it does not diminish the centrality of Christ within salvation history (cf. Wright 2002:696;<sup>521</sup> Käsemann 1980:321). It rather acknowledges God’s control and supremacy spanning over both the epochs before and after the Christ event.

### 8.2 Galatians 6:7-16 (ABC)

Verses 7 to 10 conclude the argument that began in 5:13 (Fee 1994:464; cf. Fung 1988:294; Lategan 1986:113). Verses 7 to 10 thus form part of an ethical section (5:13-6:10), while verses 11 to 16 form part of the letter’s overall conclusion (cf. Fung 1988:284,300).

#### 8.2.1 Sowing and reaping in flesh and spirit (vv. 7-10)

The image of sowing and reaping (vv. 7-8) takes Paul’s readers back from a narrower horizon of specific exhortations in Galatians 6:1-6 to the broader view of the spirit-flesh dichotomy of 5:13-26 (Fung 1988:294; Burton 1920:340). In the harvest metaphor, Paul thus reunites the antinomic motifs that were dominant in the entire argument: life in the eschatological spirit against life in the flesh (see 7.4.2).

Paul’s reference to sowing “unto his own flesh” (εἰς τὴν σάρκα ἑαυτοῦ, v. 8; Fee 1994:466; ASV; RV; cf. ESV; RSV) thus involves “sowing unto” their former unregenerate identity of the old aeon (cf. Fee 1994:466-467; Lategan 1986:113; Bruce 1982b:265). Yet, in accordance with Paul’s fluid use of σὰρξ, it here also

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<sup>520</sup> The MT (Job 41:11) has מִי הִקְדִּימָנִי וְאֶשְׁלַם (“who has preceded me that I should repay?”). The Septuagint (Job 41:3) has ἢ τίς ἀντιστήσεται μοι καὶ ὑπομενεῖ (“or who will withstand me and survive?”).

<sup>521</sup> Wright (2002:696) observes that Paul uses similar language in 11:36 as in 1 Cor 8:6 with reference to Christ: εἷς κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, δι’ οὗ τὰ πάντα καὶ ἡμεῖς δι’ αὐτοῦ (cf. Col 1:15-20). Sanday and Headlam ([1902] 1960:340) connect δι’ αὐτοῦ in 11:36 to Christ.

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alludes to circumcision, which signifies confidence in an identity defined by “the works of the law” (cf. Hays 2000:336; Dunn 1993:330; Betz 1979:308). The end result of an identity defined by flesh is corruption (φθορά, v. 8). Conversely, to “sow in the spirit”<sup>522</sup> (σπείρων εἰς τὸ πνεῦμα, v. 8) is another way of pressing the imperatives as implied by 5:16-26: to “walk” by the Spirit, being “led” by the Spirit and “bearing the fruit” of the Spirit (Fee 1994:465). In reference to “eternal life” (ζωὴν αἰώνιον, v. 8), there is an unmistakable eschatological orientation attached to the exhortation contained within the harvest metaphor (Fee 1994:465; cf. Hays 2000:337; Lategan 1986:113; Betz 1979:309). “Eternal life” is the end result of this new way of existence in spirit. Against the background of this opposition of spirit and flesh rings the contrast between human possibility that is without eternal value against divine possibility that has an eternal effect (see 7.5.1). Doing what is good (τὸ καλὸν ποιοῦντες, v. 9; ἐργαζώμεθα τὸ ἀγαθόν, v. 10), which is part of the ethical dimension of life in the Spirit, cannot flow from a life defined by flesh, but must flow from the life of the empowering Spirit within the lives of believers (cf. Fee 1994:468; Lategan 1986:113).

“Those from the household of the faith” (πρὸς τοὺς οἰκείους τῆς πίστεως, v.10) points to the believing community and include Judaeans and Gentiles indiscriminately (Bruce 1982b:266; 3:28; cf. Eph 2:19, see 5.1.5). For Paul, the Judaeans-Gentile distinction was less significant than the believer-unbeliever distinction (Fung 1988:298). The binding characteristic of the household is faith rather than ethnic membership or law (Hays 2000:337; Dunn 1993:333). The priority of goodwill to fellow believers pertains to the historical context where new found Christ-believers might not have found assistance from their pagan friends (Fung 1988:299). This focus however does not exclude the wider responsibility for “all” (Fung 1988:299; Longenecker 1990:283; Betz 1979:311).

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<sup>522</sup> Burton (1920:342-343) understands πνεῦμα here as the human spirit. But as conclusion to 5:13-26, Paul rather has the “spirit” as eschatological way of existence in the new aeon in Christ in mind, implying a unity between God’s Spirit and the human spirit (see 7.4.2; cf. Rom 8:16, see 7.4.1.4).

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**8.2.2 Flesh, law and circumcision against the cross and the new creation (vv. 11-15)**

The large letters that Paul draws attention to (v. 11) signifies importance or emphasis (Hays 2000:342; Dunn 1993:334; Fung 1988:301), and probably points to the fact that he now writes this section with his own hand (Dunn 1993:334; Fung 1988:301; Bruce 1982b:268). In verses 12 to 14, Paul contrasts a showing in the flesh (εὐπροσωπήσαι ἐν σαρκί, v. 12) and boasting in the flesh (σαρκὶ καυχῆσονται, v. 13) to the cross of Christ (vv. 12,14).

The "showing in the flesh" (v. 12) which pertains to circumcision and thus ethnic identity is aimed at Paul's opponents, the Teachers of the law who compelled others to be circumcised (Hays 2000:342; Dunn 1993:336). The persecution that these Teachers wanted to avoid is probably the same kind of persecution that Paul carried out before his conversion (1:13,23) and experienced by himself (2 Cor 11:24; George 1994:467; Dunn 1993:337). Dunn (1993:337) is probably correct that these Teachers of the law wanted to remove the offence of the message that the cross was sufficient to remove sins (1:4) and to remove the curse of the law so that the promise of Abraham might be obtained through faith alone by anyone regardless of circumcision. Hays (2000:342) explains that the cross would have signified "the end of all ethnic, social, and religious privilege and distinction." With Paul's opponents, the motive of boasting (v. 13) thus ran in tandem with the desire to escape persecution (Fung 1988:304-306). The motive "that they may boast in your flesh" (v. 13) probably points to the Teachers of the law's "triumphant persuasive power" over the Galatians, which coincides with their motive to exclude (4:17)<sup>523</sup> the Galatians to gain influence over them (Hays 2000:343). That the Teachers of the law did not keep (φυλάσσω, v. 13) the law is here not so much about the inherent impossibility to keep the law (as in Rom 3:20; 7:6; 8:3; 9:31), but rather about their hypocrisy of compelling others to adhere to

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<sup>523</sup> The Judaeans probably withdrew from fellowship in order to put pressure on the Galatians to "live like Judaeans" (Ἰουδαίῳ, 2:14; Hays 2000:295).

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all its stipulations while not adhering to all of them themselves (Hays 2000:343; Fung 1988:302-303; Bruce 1985b:270; cf. Longenecker 1990:293).

The cross (vv. 12,14) is set over against flesh (vv. 12,13), law (v. 13) and circumcision (vv. 12,13,15). The cross stands against an identity that was defined around the law, especially in terms of the antinomy constituted by being circumcised or not (cf. Martyn 1997:560). When Paul writes that “the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world” (v. 14, NRSV) the cross does not only signify Paul’s “crucifixion” to his former life as a Pharisee (Fung 1988:307), but it signifies a “watershed event for the whole cosmos, affecting everything after it” (Martyn 1997:564; cf. George 1994:470). For Paul, the cross denotes the transplantation from “one sphere of existence to the other” (Fung 1988:307; cf. Bruce 1982b:273; Betz 1979:320). The underlying notion is that the cross stands “for the Christ-event as a whole” in that it “marks the end of the old world and ushers in the new” (Fung 1988:307; cf. Hays 2000:344). As Lategan (1986:115) describes it, “the cross is for Paul the central symbol to which the truth of the gospel is attached and wherein the transition of the way of existence of the world to the way of existence of the faith is expressed” (translated). The implications for the understanding of identity (v. 14) can hardly be better described than by Hays (2000:344):

[Paul’s] previous identity has disappeared altogether, and his new identity is given him only through his participation in Christ, who animates the life he now lives (Gal 2:19-20). That is why he can also say that the flesh has been crucified for those who belong to Christ. They participate, not just symbolically but actually, in his death; therefore, they have entered the new eschatological world where his life empowers the community to ‘walk in newness of life’ and consider themselves ‘dead to sin and alive to God’ (Rom 6:4,11 NRSV).

Within the new creation, although its full completion belongs to the future, those in Christ have already experienced the reality of it (Bruce 1982b:273; cf. Fung 1988:308). But the other side of this reality is just as significant for the believer. Their new eschatological identity in Christ (identity mode C) is constantly to be defined in terms of the crucifixion of the old “I” (2:20). Actualised life is not possible without actualised death. The significance of the cross and the new

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creation (καινή κτίσις, v. 15) is thus in close correspondence, signified by γάρ in verse 15. The new creation is a “new system of reality” and a “new order” which is characterised by “a new relation to God” (Fung 1988:308). The cross constitutes the *line of demarcation* between the old world and the new creation (:309; cf. Eph 2:15-16, see 5.1.5). In this new creation, whether one is circumcised or uncircumcised is of no significance (v. 15; cf. 3:28).

In verses 11-15, the distinction between the two ways of existence is clear. The existence in the old aeon in flesh, defined by law and circumcision (identity mode A) is set in *discontinuity* with the new creation by the cross (the Christ event), which signifies the new existence in the eschatological era in Christ (identity mode C).

### 8.2.3 The “Israel of God” (v. 16)

In verse 16, Paul concludes the contrasts portrayed in verses 12-15 (cross, new creation vs. flesh, circumcision, law) with wishing peace and mercy to “those who will follow this rule” (ὅσοι τῷ κανόνι τούτῳ στοιχήσουσιν, NRSV), followed by καὶ ἐπὶ τὸν Ἰσραὴλ τοῦ θεοῦ. “Those who will follow this rule” surely points to those who live by the standard (BDAG, κανών §1; Dunn 1993:343) or principle (33.335 in Louw & Nida 1988 Vol. 1:427; Lategan 1986:166; Bruce 1982b:273; ISV; GW; REB) of the new creation (Cowan 2010:78; Martyn 1997:566; Bruce 1982b:273; cf. Betz 1979:321), which is the new way of existence in Christ (Lategan 1986:116) and in the Spirit (Hays 2000:345). In this blessing, the reference to “the Israel of God” has puzzled many a New Testament scholar. As most interpreters point out, the elements εἰρήνη and Ἰσραὴλ in Paul’s blessing show resemblance to εἰρήνη ἐπὶ τὸν Ἰσραὴλ in the Septuagint of Psalm 124:5 (MT: 125:5) and 127:6 (MT: 128:6; cf. *Psalms of Solomon* 4:25; 6:6; 8:27-28; 9:8; 11:9). A blessing that appears similar to that of Paul is contained in the *Shemoneh Esreh* (Birkat ha-Shalom, 19<sup>th</sup> benediction) which formed part of the liturgy of the Synagogue (Babylonian Recension): “Bestow peace, happiness and blessing, grace and loving-kindness and mercy upon us and upon all Israel, your people” (in Betz 1979:321). None of these correspondences however necessarily contribute much to the interpretation of Galatians 6:16. Yet, even if they might contribute,

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their contribution is not without interpretation and the interpreter has to guard against working too inductively at the possible expense of giving adequate account of Paul’s own thought. The other question is whether one’s interpretation of Romans 9 to 11 might have a dominating effect on your interpretation of Galatians 6:16 (see 8.1.4). These concerns become especially pressing if the prevalent understandings of Galatians 6:16 are considered. These understandings can be categorised within two main views:

(1) *Ecclesiological*. In this view, “the Israel of God” is understood as part of the church. Two variants of this view can be identified: (a) Some interpret the third καί in verse 16 (in καὶ ἐπὶ τὸν Ἰσραὴλ τοῦ θεοῦ) as epexegetic, translating “*namely / that is the Israel of God*” or similar (cf. NLT; GW; REB; RSV), and thereby identify “the Israel of God” as “those who will follow this rule” and thus as the community of all believers in Christ, including believing *Judaeans and Gentiles* (Cowan 2010:78-85; Hays 2000:690; Martyn 1997:567,574-577; Longenecker 1990:298-299; Lategan 1986:114,116; Lightfoot 1914:225; cf. Reumann 2008:474-475; Wright 2002:690; Richardson 1958:159,353-354; Barth 1956:671).<sup>524</sup> A close variant to this view is to interpret καί as “even”, translating “even unto/upon/to the Israel of God” or similar (cf. AB; NIV), resulting to the same overall interpretation (Hendriksen 1980, Galatians 6:11-18). Under those who share a similar view and yet take καί in its normal copulative sense are Dunn (1993:344-345), Fung (1988:309-311) and Calvin (2012b:152,154). (b) Betz (1979) translates καί as a copulative (:312) and understands “the Israel of God” as the *Judaeans* Christ-believers who approve of the rule of the new creation (:323; cf. Gutbrod 1965:387-388; Ellicott 1860:154).

(2) *Eschatological*. Burton (1920:357) suggested that the comma in verse 16 must be placed after αὐτοὺς καί, reading ἔλεος together with the latter part of the sentence. Burton translates: “peace be upon them, and mercy upon the Israel of God” (:357; cf. ISV). He interprets “the Israel of God” as “the remnant according to the election of grace” which is “yet unenlightened” (:358). P. Richardson (1969:84) has adopted Burton’s punctuation, and translates: “May God give peace

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<sup>524</sup> Reumann, Wright, A. Richardson and Barth do not discuss their views of καί in the cited works.

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to all who will walk according to this criterion, and mercy also to his faithful people Israel.” Richardson (1969:81-84) keeps “the Israel of God” separate from the church and connects it to historical Israel without extending it to Judaism. For Richardson, “the Israel of God” is “those who are still to believe” (:82; cf. Burton 1920:358). This future perspective, Richardson (1969:81) bases on the contention that the *Shemoneh Esreh* was taken over by Paul, but that he has given it an ironical twist: “where it has ‘us’ and ‘them’ (who are an extension of ‘us’), Paul turns this into ‘us’ and ‘them’, where ‘they’ are people who should be connected with ‘us’ but *are not yet*” (:81, emphasis added). Similarly, Bruce (1982b), although translating καί as a normal copulative (:267) seems to be inclined toward Richardson’s view on the translation of καί (274-275). Bruce keeps Israel separate from the church and understands “the Israel of God” within an eschatological framework, which he borrows from his understanding of πᾶς Ἰσραὴλ in Romans 11:26 (cf. Schreiner 2010:381-383,386; Johnson 2009:53-54; George 1994:473-474).

In terms of the exegetical (or explanatory) interpretation of καί (in καὶ ἐπὶ τὸν Ἰσραὴλ τοῦ θεοῦ), Ellicott (1860:154) was probably right that it is doubtful whether καί is ever used by Paul with such an “explicative force”. It could be asked if the exegetical translation of καί is controlled by a prior interpretation rather than the text and context itself (cf. Johnson 2009:42). As seen from the variations in interpretation in the above views (1 and 2), none of the interpretations of καί are necessarily decisive. It thus seems safest to hold onto the normal copulative meaning of καί here (George 1994:473; Dunn 1993:344-345; Fung 1988:310; Bruce 1982b:267; Betz 1979:312; ESV; NRSV; LITV; OAT; ASV; RV; DST; KJV; cf. Richardson 1969:81-84; Burton 1920:357).

In terms of the ecclesiological interpretation (view 1), it is noteworthy that Israel is nowhere in the biblical literature unambiguously connected to believers in Christ as such (not even in Rom 9:6, see 4.3.2.2; cf. Johnson 2009:49; Burton 1920:358). In Galatians Paul does qualify the identity of believers in Christ as “of God” (e.g., Gal 1:13; 2:20; 3:26). But these references to God are not without some form of a qualifier. In Galatians 1:13, Paul refers to the ἐκκλησία of God. The term ἐκκλησία can only be understood here as a designation for believers in

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Christ, even though he might have the “universal church” in mind (see 6.1.5). In the other two locations, “God” is used in close proximity to another qualifier: “Son of God” (2:20), and “of God through faith in Christ Jesus” (3:26). While the designations “sons of Abraham” (3:7) and “Abraham’s seed” (3:29) apply to Christ-believers (cf. terms such as “holy”, “elect”, “beloved”, see 6.2.2), they are still far off from being “Israel” (contra Cowan 2010:80), and rather indicate the *punctiliar continuity* of believers with historical Israel (Gal 3, see 5.1.4; cf. Rom 4, see 5.1.2) than *equivalence* with Israel. It is therefore unlikely that “the Israel of God” in 6:16 without any other qualifier would refer to current believers in Christ (view 1).

When Paul speaks of Israel, he neither designates an “Israel according to spirit” in contrast to an “Israel according to flesh” (not even in Gal 4:29, see fn. 176), nor does he explicitly construct an “Israel of faith” as opposed to national Israel (although he does not necessarily exclude such a possibility). While Paul does not explicitly differentiate between an inner, true Israel and an outer, ethnic Israel in Galatians in the same way as in Romans 9:6-13, such a distinction is probably implied with Abraham as believer in God’s promise (Gal 3:6) and Isaac as child of the promise who is free (4:22-23,28), against those in slavery (4:22,24,25) and according to the flesh (4:29). If Paul has inner, true Israel of history in mind with the qualifier “of God” (6:16), such a qualifier would make sense, for he would not qualify them as “Israel according to spirit”, “Christ’s Israel” or even “Israel of faith”. In Paul, all of these qualifications normally pertain to the new eschatological age in Christ and the Spirit. Conversely, if Paul had the church in mind with τὸν Ἰσραὴλ τοῦ θεοῦ, the qualification “of God” seems somewhat out of step with the kind of designations implemented in defining the believers in Christ throughout Galatians (e.g., through/of faith, 2:16; 3:2,7,14,26; 5:5; 6:10; of/though/in/from the Spirit/spirit, 3:14; 5:5,16,18,25; 6:8; in/with Christ, 2:4,16,17,20; 3:14,17,22,26,27,28; 5:6; 6:15).

As for the eschatological view (view 2), it has to be considered that the term Ἰσραὴλ is used only here in Galatians. Nothing within the context of Galatians gives an indication that Israel here has to be understood in terms of eschatology. Paul rather alludes to historical Israel in that he mentioned Abraham’s faith (3:6),

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the gospel that was preached to Abraham (3:8), those who were kept under the guardianship of the law (3:23), being enslaved to the basic principles of this world while awaiting the fullness of time (4:3-4), and Abraham's sons (4:22-23). In the rest of the Pauline corpus, where Ἰσραήλ is used in close proximity to θεός, the context is historical. In Romans 9:6-13, Israel is defined around Isaac, Sarah, Rebecca and Jacob, indicating the true, inner historical Israel in distinction from those "of Israel" (9:6) which is national historical Israel (see esp. 4.3.2.2). In Romans 11:2, it is about Elijah's pleading against historical Israel, followed by the historical account from 1 Kings 19 of how God has left a remnant (11:3-4; see 8.1.1). Despite its disputed status, Ephesians 2:12 indirectly seems to be the closest match to Galatians 6:16 in that the Gentile's former status in the old aeon in the flesh (Eph 2:11) is portrayed as *without God* while being alienated from *the citizenship of Israel* (v. 12).

As discussed, Galatians 6:16 is set against the same backdrop of the contrast between the old aeon in the flesh (wherein historical Israel lived) as opposed to the new aeon constituted by the new creation (vv. 8,12-15). It could thus logically be expected that while the former part of the blessing in verse 16 pertains to the new creation in the *new* aeon in Christ, that the latter part (καὶ ἐπὶ τὸν Ἰσραὴλ τοῦ θεοῦ) might just pertain to the *former* aeon. Apart from this current context, Paul has made much of the heirs of Abraham that now (in the new aeon) consist of believers in Christ only (3:1-29; see 5.1.3), the New Covenant over against the old (4:21-5:1, see 5.1.4), and life in the eschatological spirit which is opposed to life in the flesh (5:16-25, see 7.4.2). Up to this point, Paul therefore has pictured the new aeon and the new covenant in sharp *discontinuity* with the former age. The only *continuity* that God's people now have with the old aeon is punctiliar, by faith in the Seed of Abraham, which is Christ.<sup>525</sup> Paul therefore might have left the impression that the new aeon in Christ has completely nullified the former aeon wherein Israel lived (cf. Martyn 1997:350, see 5.1.3.3). In contrast to the first half of verse 16, one could therefore expect a last minute measure of balance that

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<sup>525</sup> The way in which Paul describes the continuity and discontinuity in Galatians thus argues against viewing Paul as belonging to "two communities" (the new Christ-believing community and the people of Israel; Tomson 1986:285).

## 8. "All Israel" and "the Israel of God"

pertains to the old aeon in the words καὶ ἐπὶ τὸν Ἰσραὴλ τοῦ θεοῦ (cf. Richardson 1969:82-83).<sup>526</sup>

Against the ecclesiological interpretation (view 1) it can additionally be argued that an identification of the church with Israel (e.g., as "Israel of God") to characterise the church is absent until 160 CE in the early church (Campbell 1993:441; Richardson 1969:83). Yet when it appears in Justin's *Dialogue with Trypho*, Justin renders it as "the true spiritual Israel" (11:5; cf. 100:4; 123:9; in Mayer 1976:316). It is partly for this reason why Campbell 1993:442 writes that

there is no clear or explicit evidence prior to Romans 9-11 that suggests either an identification of the church with 'the New Israel' nor of a theory of displacement of the 'old Israel' by the new. *Only historical Israel* can properly claim the title 'Israel of God' (emphasis added).

But if Romans 11:26 is to be understood as the salvation of historical Israel as argued, and if one has to transfer the meaning of Romans 11:26 to Galatians 6:16, it would make both the ecclesiological and eschatological interpretations of "the Israel of God" in Galatians 6:16 even more unlikely. In conclusion, the understanding of "the Israel of God" in Galatians 6:16 that seems to fit best within the constraints discussed, is that it denotes the *inner, elect Israel of the old aeon before Christ*. In this way, the sentence would be in perfect balance, blessing God's people in both the aeon *after* the Christ event (καὶ ὅσοι τῷ κανόνι τούτῳ στοιχήσουσιν) and the aeon *before* the Christ event (καὶ ἐπὶ τὸν Ἰσραὴλ τοῦ θεοῦ). This interpretation implies that God's people spans over both salvation-historical aeons.

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<sup>526</sup> Richardson (1969:82-83) has a similar idea (even though he understands Israel eschatologically) when he writes that "from the way Paul has argued previously in the letter, one might infer that he was condemning everything about Israel. To forestall this inference he includes this prayer to God for mercy to be shown to Israel."

*9. Conclusions and implications*

## **9. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS**

After pursuing Paul's thought on the identity of Israel, Judaeans and Christ-believers throughout the Pauline corpus, the ultimate conclusion of this dissertation is that the salvation of "all Israel" in Romans 11:25-27 involves the salvation of inner, elect, historical Israel that lived before the Christ event (see 8.1). In this interpretation, σωθήσεται (v. 26) is understood as a logical future. Similarly, the conclusion was reached that the "Israel of God" in Galatians 6:16 pertains to the same elect, historical Israel. (see 8.2).

The conclusion on Romans 11:25-27 was reached after evaluating several areas within six of the main interpretative theories on this passage (eschatological miracle, ecclesiological, total national elect, two-covenant, Roman mission, two houses of Israel). This evaluation mainly pertains to the following: (1) The future eschatological nature of most of these interpretations (except that of Nanos 1996) have been problematised in terms of the anachronism among the identities of Israel (ancient), Judaeans (in Paul's present) and Judaism (modern). (2) Nanos' interpretation has been argued as contrary to Paul's view on the law with respect to identity, and as implausible in terms of an alleged anomaly in Rome. (3) Paul's use of specific terms in Romans 11:25-27 (e.g., μυστήριον, εἰσέρχομαι, πλήρωμα, ῥύομαι) were compared to their use elsewhere by Paul, rather than inferring their meaning (inductively) from external sources (e.g., Jewish apocalyptic / Rabbinic Judaism). (4) Similarly, Paul's language (e.g., ὥσπερ...οὕτως + fut. ind., in Rom 5:19 and 11:26) and especially his use of the future tense of σωθήσεται was

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reassessed in terms of Paul's use of the future tense elsewhere in the Pauline corpus. This was done in conjunction with how Paul portrays concepts such as salvation (σώζω), righteousness (δικαιώω) and reconciliation (καταλλάσσω) elsewhere, especially with respect to their realisation. (5) The eventual interpretation of Romans 11:25-27 was tested against the context of Romans as well as the rest of the Pauline corpus (as concluded from the exegetical study), but especially in the subsequent verses (Rom 11:28-32). (6) The balance which the historical interpretation of Israel's salvation achieves in Romans 11:28-32 with respect to the old salvation-historical aeon before the Christ event and the new eschatological age thereafter, constituting a fulfilment of Israel's salvation history, has been determined as the best fit for these verses.<sup>527</sup>

The conclusion on the meaning of "the Israel of God" in Galatians 6:16 was reached after an evaluation of the use of the third καί in this verse, Paul's use of the qualification "of God" in Galatians and other passages in the Pauline corpus where "God" is used in close proximity with "Israel", and the logical contrast of the salvation-historical aeon before and after the Christ event throughout Galatians. The conclusion that "the Israel of God" denotes elect Israel of history has been determined as the best fit within the given constraints.

### 9.1 Israel, Judaeans, and identity

If the conclusions reached about the salvation of "all Israel" (Rom 11:26), "the Israel of God" (Gal 6:16) and Paul's use of the term Ἰσραήλ through the course of Romans 9 to 11 are correct, Paul does not seem to use the term Ἰσραήλ in denoting descendants of the patriarchs or God's people in his *present or future* but only in his *past*. The way in which Paul uses the term Ἰσραηλίτης shows somewhat more diachronic fluidity in that he uses it as a self-designation (Rom 11:1; 2 Cor 11:22). It has to be noted however that in both Romans 11:1 and 2 Corinthians 11:22, the term rather denotes Paul's line of descent than his present

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<sup>527</sup> Cf. the more detailed summary of specific arguments whereupon this conclusion is based in 8.1.5.7).

### 9. Conclusions and implications

identity. Together with the term's use in Romans 9:4, Paul's overall intention with the term Ἰσραηλίτης thus leans more toward the historical side. Paul's use of Ἰσραήλ and Ἰσραηλίτης therefore lies close to the prevalent use of the terms in his time. The implication of this understanding would be that Paul's use of the designation Ἰσραήλ did *not transcend* the limits of Judaeen speech which would imply that Paul invited Gentiles in his present to call the Judaeans "Israel" (contra Tomson 1986:287-288). As discussed in 4.1, the terms Ἰσραήλ and Ἰσραηλίτης mostly denoted the people of the pre-exilic period and was thus used as a designation for ancient Israel (e.g., early church and Josephus) and was not applied as a self-designation for Christians until 160 CE (Justin). The terms were therefore mostly reserved for a part of history that was closed. Conversely, Paul never employs the term Ἰουδαῖος as a *historical* designation for the descendants of the patriarchs or the people of God. In this regard, his use of the term also corresponds to the prevalent use of his time in mostly denoting the people of the second temple (see 4.1). These conclusions about Paul's use of these terms (Ἰσραήλ/Ἰουδαῖος) are however not intended as a rigid scheme, but rather as pointing out the tendencies in Paul's use of them.

In terms of identity, Paul's use of Ἰουδαῖος for the most part denotes ethnic identity. As discussed in 4.5.1, the only possible exception to this tendency, Romans 2:17-29, is rather to be understood as part of Paul's rhetoric, where he uses the original meaning of the term Ἰουδαῖος against their identity claim. The notion is that these Ἰουδαῖοι would have to comply with the whole law in order to live up to their claim. Paul wants to show them that if they really wanted to be "true Judaeans" whose "praise" is from God, they would have been "circumcised in heart", meaning that they would be capable of fulfilling the whole law. A Judaeen who is "circumcised in heart" therefore never becomes an actual designation for identity, but is rather part of Paul's rhetoric to sketch an *ideal* Judaeen, which he goes on to demonstrate in 3:1-20 as impossible. The aim of his rhetoric is thus for them to realise their dilemma and eventually win them over to accept Christ. The fact that Paul uses the term Ἰουδαῖος together with belief in Christ (esp. Rom 1:16; 10:11-12; cf. Gal 3:28; 1 Cor 12:13; Col 3:11) underlines

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the fact that Ἰουδαῖος is largely an ethnic identity for Paul, which is identity mode A (see 3.3).

Yet, being a Ἰουδαῖος is not a disadvantage as such for Paul, but rather an advantage in that God's words are entrusted to them (Rom 3:2). Although Paul attaches some form of priority to the Ἰουδαῖος, this priority is rather in terms of responsibility toward the gospel (Rom 1:16; 2:10) and even judgment (Rom 2:9), for in terms of their status before God, there is no difference over the nations before God with respect to sin (Rom 3:9), their claim on God (Rom 3:29; 9:24) or their position in Christ (Rom 10:12; 1 Cor 1:24; 12:13; Gal 3:28; cf. Col 3:11).

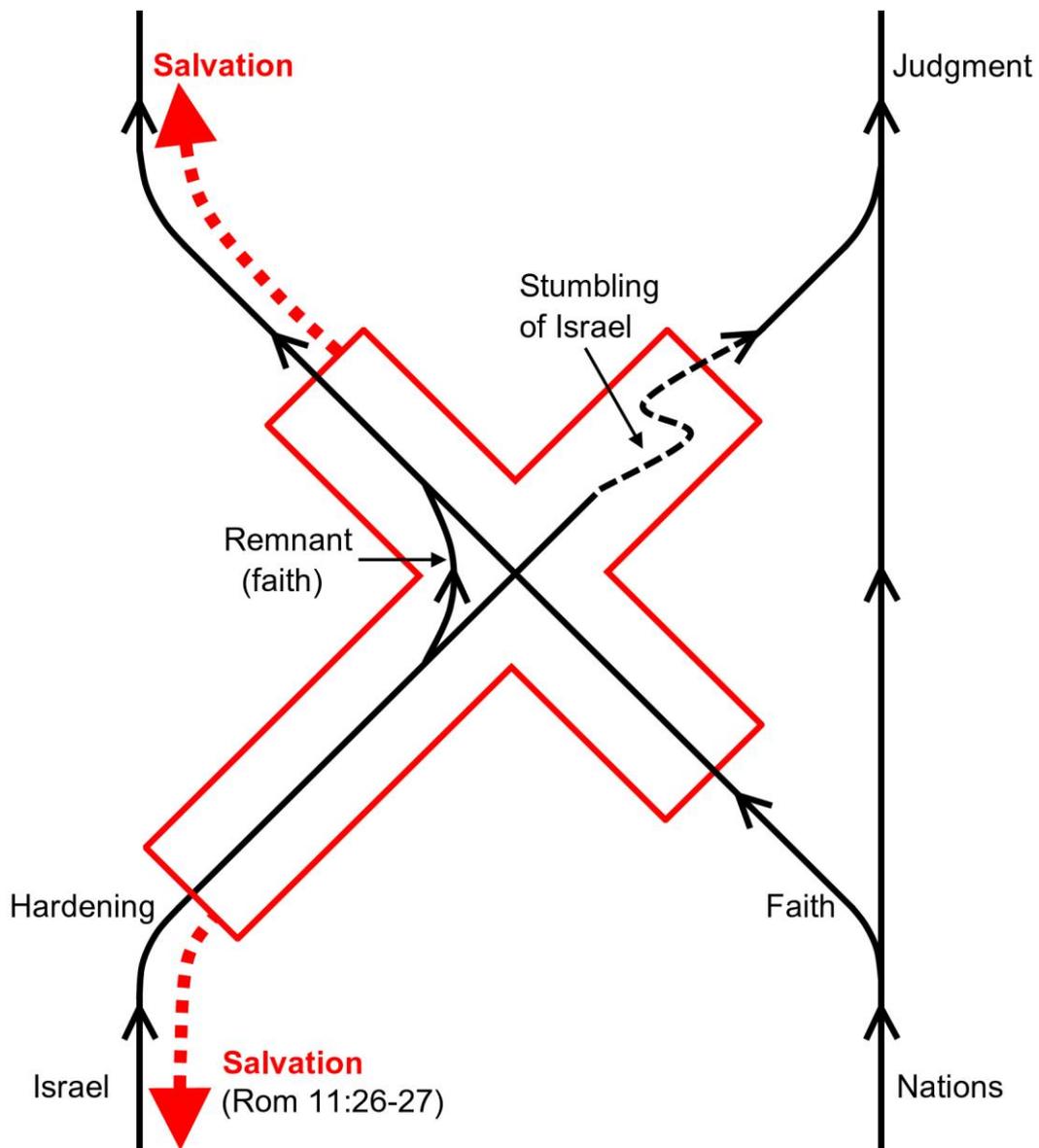
While the term Ἰσραηλίτης denotes external identity with respect to ethnicity or being part of national Israel (Rom 9:4; 11:1; 2 Cor 11:22; identity mode A), Paul uses the term Ἰσραήλ (apart from denoting the patriarch Israel once in Rom 9:6) in connection with both a national, ethnic identity according to "flesh" (1 Cor 10:18; 2 Cor 3:7,13; Php 3:5; cf. Eph 2:12; identity mode A) and historical Israel of inner election (Rom 9:6,27,31; 10:19,21; 11:2,7,25,26; Gal 6:16; identity mode AB; see 3.3).

## **9.2 The identity in Christ and spirit as fulfilling the identity according to the flesh**

As discussed in 6.1.1, the hardening of Israel inevitably culminated in the coming of their Messiah, who became both the foundation stone onto belief in Christ for the remnant and Israel's stumbling stone by which they were cut off from being God's people (Rom 9:33; 11:17-21). Their cutting off coincided with the generic "coming in" of the nations, constituting a crossover in salvation history. Israel's sins however were forgiven by Christ their Deliverer in his salvific work in death and resurrection and their cutting off were reversed. In this they followed the same pattern of death and resurrection as believers in Christ. This historical Israel of promise and inner election were regrafted into their original position as God's children into a new, transformed identity in Christ (Rom 11:25-27, see esp. 8.1.5.7). The implication is that Christ's work was effective for Paul's present,

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past (retrojective) and future (projective). The crossover in salvation history and both the projective and retrojective significance of Christ's salvific work can be illustrated by the red, dotted arrows in the following, completed diagram (see the earlier stage of the same diagram for explanation in 6.1.1.2-6.1.1.3):



Christ as Israel's Messiah and as culmination of Israel's salvation history represents the punctiliar point of *continuity* of Christ-believers with historical Israel. The identity in Christ (identity mode C, see 3.3) therefore fulfils what the external identity marked off by law and circumcision could not accomplish. Paul describes the latter identity as in- or according to "flesh" (identity mode A). The way in which the new identity accomplishes that which the old identity in flesh could not

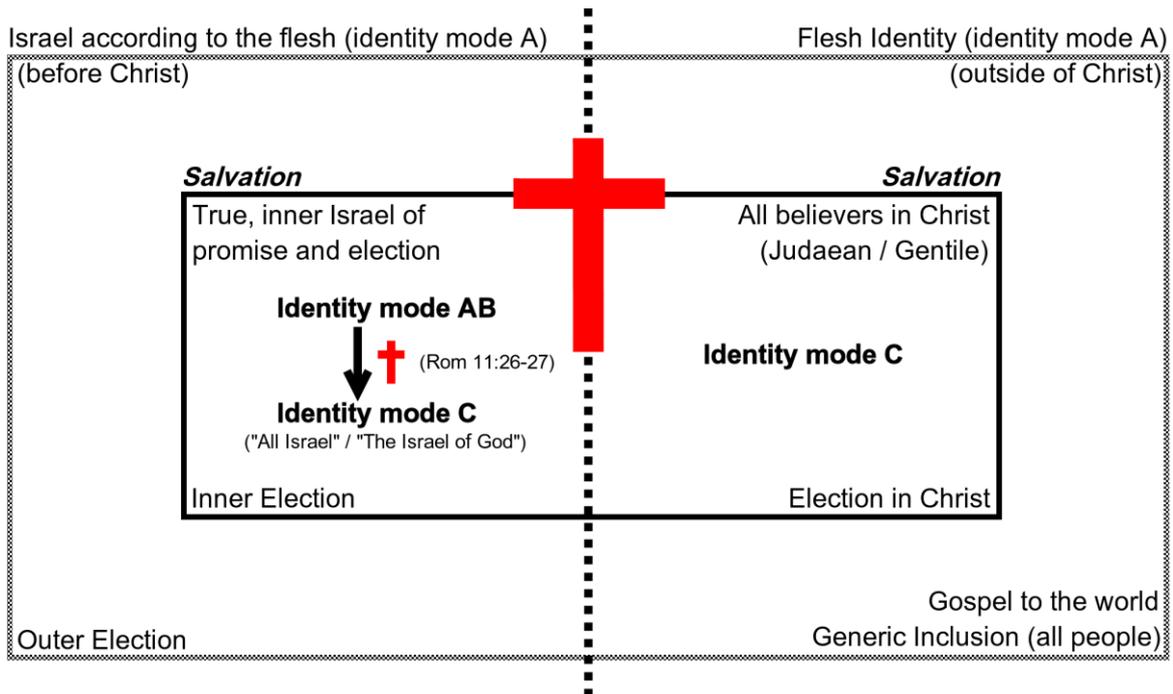
### 9. Conclusions and implications

achieve, is by the empowering work of the Spirit in the life of the believer (esp. Rom 8:2). In Paul, the Spirit in unity with the human spirit (Rom 8:16; cf. Gal 3:2-5) and faith (Rom 4; Gal 3) are the markers of identity in the new eschatological aeon. Paul describes the way of existence in Christ as in- or according to “spirit” (identity mode C), which stands in *discontinuity* with the way of existence in the old aeon before or outside of Christ in “flesh”. In its extended meaning, both “flesh” and “spirit” can thus be understood as mutually incompatible eschatological realities, each representing a distinct mode of identity (esp. Rom 7:5-6; 8:1-16, see 7.4.1). These eschatological realities correspond to the Old Covenant and the New Covenant respectively (2 Cor 3:5-16).

The implication of the cutting off and regrafting of inner, elect, historical Israel in Christ is that their identity has been transformed from identity mode AB, where a flesh-identity was co-constitutive of their identity as God’s people, to identity mode C, which is solely defined by the work of Christ. The identity in flesh has therefore been redeemed and overcome in Christ’s work. The Christ-event is therefore to be understood as eschatological, in inaugurating the new creation which will be fully completed at the parousia.

People sharing in the various modes of identity spanning both aeons before and after the Christ event can be illustrated by the diagram that will follow shortly. The dotted line represents the line of demarcation between the old aeon before Christ and the new creation in Christ (cf. Gal 6:11-15; 2 Cor 5:14-21; Eph 2:8-22; cf. the diagram of an earlier phase of identity in the old aeon in 4.6):

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As portrayed in the above diagram, Christ represents the point of convergence among all modes of identity. Christ shared in the identity in flesh in that He was “Christ according to the flesh” (Rom 9:5): He was a physical descendant within the line of descent of the patriarch Israel. He was circumcised, born “under the law” (Gal 4:4), to redeem those under the law in order to adopt them as children (Gal 4:5). In Christ’s work therefore, the old identity (AB) is transformed into a new identity (identity mode C). In retrospect of Christ’s saving work, inner, elect, historical Israel and Christ-believers stand in completed continuity through Christ.

As anticipated in 8.1.1, in view of an eschatological understanding of identity (the change of aeons), the titles “Israel” and “Judaean” can be understood as mostly representing distinct identities on either side of salvation history in Paul: *before* the Christ event (“Israel”) and *after* the Christ event (“Judaean”). Within this distinction, the term “Israel” is mostly used in connection with the historical *people of God*, while “Judaean” is mostly applied in the context of an *ethnic identity* apart from being God’s people in Paul’s present.

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### 9.3 Universal and particular

As argued throughout the dissertation, in Pauline terms Christ's work bears profound universal and cosmological significance (e.g., Rom 1:16-17; 10:9-13; 15:5-13; 1 Cor 1:21-24; 2 Cor 5:14-21; cf. Col 3:9-15). But as 2 Corinthians 5:14-21 shows (cf. Col 3:9-15), the new creation bears equally prominent individual significance which is more than forensic but also has ontological implications. It is worthy of note however that Paul never eradicates the ethnic Judaeian identity as such, even though he might describe his former privileges and accomplishments as garbage (Php 3:8). But since he does not view ethnic or cultural identity as determinative in defining the identity in Christ, he relativises all ethnic identities in Christ (Gal 3:28; 1 Cor 12:13; cf. Col 3:11). These ethnic identities are still acknowledged but insignificant in terms of marking off the people of God. More specifically, while the identity defined by the "works of the law" and circumcision were replaced by an identity defined by faith and spirit, Paul provides lenience in terms of sabbaths, dietary laws and feasts (e.g., Rom 14:1-15; cf. Col 2:16). These "externals" are however relativised in terms of the work of the Spirit (Rom 14:17) and thus considered superfluous with respect to defining identity as God's people in the new aeon in Christ. While the identity in Christ can be understood as a "third entity" (cf. 1 Corinthians 10:32; Eph 2:14-16), it is defined on another level than ethnic identities (e.g., Judaeian/Greek) and thus does not so much replace them as exceed them and include them.

In respect of the main thesis of this dissertation, it is particularly significant that the identity of historical Israel is not replaced by a "new Israel" or even a "redefined Israel". In Pauline terms, the old identity of Israel was rather terminated and completed in Christ. Christ therefore represents the point of continuity of the Christ-believers with Israel. But this continuity is more aptly described as "historical heritage in Christ" than "cultural indebtedness" (contra Campbell 2008:96-103). Paul therefore did not provide a basis for religious pluralism within the identity of the Christ-believer, but rather for relativising culture within the identity in Christ.

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There is thus a fine balance in accommodating *cultural* particularity within the identity in Christ without the expense of the particularity of the *new identity* in Christ.

### 9.4 Implications for Pauline theology

The most profound implication of the conclusions reached about the identity of Israel for Pauline theology is probably that it has a unifying effect on Pauline theology as a whole. Rather than interpolating elements from later Rabbinic Judaism or Jewish apocalyptic into the understanding of Romans 11 (esp. vv. 25-27) and Galatians 6 (esp. v. 16), the interpretation of Israel's identity in these passages were inferred from examining Paul's own thought and language in the rest of his letters, especially from the context of the respective letters where the passages are located (Rom and Gal). In addition, this approach results in a larger appreciation of the coherency in Paul's thought on identity across the Pauline corpus, especially between Romans and Galatians. A side-effect of this approach is that it contributes in reassessing some of the arguments about Pauline authorship with respect to letters such as Colossians and Ephesians.

The other aspect in Pauline theology that this study highlights is the interrelatedness of Pauline terms and concepts around identity, especially Paul's understanding of eschatology and how "flesh" and "spirit" (in their extended application) fit into this understanding. The realised aspect of Paul's eschatology as expressed in "flesh" and "spirit" closely interrelates with the modes of identity that Paul perceives: "Flesh" in its extended meaning corresponds mostly to ethnic identity, law, works and sin, while "spirit" in the eschatological sense mostly corresponds to and identity defined by the Spirit, deliverance, faith, and grace. One of the implications of this particular understanding of "flesh" and "spirit" is that when Paul uses πνεῦμα in terms of a *mode of existence* (esp. Rom 7:6; 8:4,5,9a; Gal 5:16,25), he neither has the human spirit or God's Spirit *per se* in mind. Where πνεῦμα can be understood as a *mode of existence*, it should relieve much of the difficulty in translating πνεῦμα, especially for those who seek to translate

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πνεῦμα either in terms of the human spirit or God's Spirit (e.g., du Toit 210:590-595).<sup>528</sup>

Some of the specific areas in Pauline theology where this study provides another perspective are the area of realised eschatology,<sup>529</sup> Paul's use of the logical future, his use of Old Testament Scripture, and most importantly, the understanding of Christ's salvific work. The latter aspect provides not only for a more profound Christology, but for a deeper diachronic understanding of Christ's work in terms of having an effect on the present, past (retrojective) and future (projective). This approach in turn provides a possible key for reinterpreting passages about Christ's work in general. One such example is arguably Romans 5:17-19. The "free gift of righteousness" (v. 17), the "act of righteousness" (v. 18) and the "many who will be made righteous" (logical future, v. 19) might be understood as including ancient Israel. If understood in this way, the correspondence between Romans 11:25-27 and Romans 5:17-19 is probably more than grammatical (see 8.1.5.4), but theological as well (as anticipated in 7.4.1.1).

Another side-effect of the retrojective interpretation of Christ's work is that it relieves the charges of double predestination that is often laid against Romans 9 (e.g., on 9:13,22: Schreiner [1998] 2005:501,522; Käsemann 1980:265,272). The hardening of elect Israel that resulted in their cutting off and their regrafting in Christ (see 8.1.5.7) can be understood as God's overarching salvific plan for His elect people Israel. Their cutting off was thus not an end in itself, but a necessary step in the salvation-historical change of identity in Christ wherein all identity according to flesh (even in part) has been cut off. Although all unbelieving people remaining after the Christ event have been cut off as a result of the change of the criteria of identity in Christ, they cannot be connected to individual predestination, for they continue to have the option to believe in Christ and thereby be regrafted.

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<sup>528</sup> In this understanding, to translate πνεῦμα in passages such as Rom 7:6; 8:4,5,9a; and Gal 5:16,25 as *either* the human spirit *or* God's Spirit *per se*, can be understood as a category mistake.

<sup>529</sup> Wright (2002:692) is probably correct that scholars too often embrace an under-realised eschatology rather than an over-realised one.

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### 9.5 Paul and Christianity

In sensitivity to current distinctions of identity in Pauline theology, I have employed the term “Christ-believers” or similar in reference to the identity in Christ in this dissertation (see 1.2.3). While the discontinuity between the Judaeian identity and Judaism seems relatively assured, it is another matter whether the same principles should apply with respect to believers in Christ in Paul’s present and Christianity. As for the institutional character of Christianity throughout history, one could indeed argue for greater discontinuity between Christ-believers in Paul and Christianity. But if “Christianity” is to be defined more in terms of a personal relationship between the believer and God as defined by the eschatological way of existence in spirit, and not so much as a “world religion”, the discontinuity between Paul and Christianity is diminished. With respect to this debate, I would rather argue for a redefinition of current Christianity which is more in line with Paul’s original thought. My intention is that this redefinition should involve more of a *practical realignment* in line with Paul’s definitions than a re-evaluation of the current or historical data about the worldwide phenomenon of Christianity. In other words, I would argue that the problem is at heart that “Christianity” *ought to* be defined and lived out more as a *way of life* in the Spirit than as a “religion”.

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