

DECLARATION

**A SOCIO-RHETORICAL ANALYSIS OF ROMANS 7: WITH
SPECIAL ATTENTION TO THE LAW**

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this dissertation is my own original work, and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it at any university for a degree.

ABSTRACT

This study aims to interpret Romans 7 with special reference to the law. Both Romans 7 and the law in Paul are very difficult to understand. However, both are important for an understanding of Pauline theology and the gospel. In the past historical critical analyses were usually done in order to solve problematic passages like Romans 7 in Paul's letters. In this study a socio-rhetorical analysis is utilized.

To start with, previous research is briefly dealt with in order to obtain an overall picture of the understanding of the law in the past. From this overview more than ten problem areas are identified. Then, socio-rhetorical analysis is briefly explained. This is a multi-dimensional and multi-disciplinary method developed by Vernon Robbins, which sees the text as having various textures. In this research the method is utilized with some modifications.

In chapter 4 the macrostructure of Romans is established by means of epistolary analysis and rhetorical analysis. Next, Rom. 7 is established as a rhetorical unit within Rom. 5-8 as the broader co-text of Rom. 7. After that the rhetorical situation of Romans is discussed, as well as some of Paul's rhetorical devices and styles. Finally, the rhetorical species of Romans is determined as *deliberative* rhetoric.

From chapters 5 to 7, Rom. 7 is analyzed, using different textual analyses. In an analysis of inner texture repetitive-progressive texture, opening-middle-closing texture, and argumentative texture are discussed. Here an enthymemic analysis is used in order to chart Paul's argumentative flow of thought. From this it is concluded that Rom. 7:1-6 is an analogy, which is an important tool for argumentation, and that the present tense in Rom. 7:14-25 functions as part of a combination of autobiographical-typical-rhetorical features for the purpose of argumentation.

In the analysis of intertexture the scriptural intertexture is investigated: recitation with omission and thematic elaboration. In the cultural intertextual analysis some Jewish cultural intertextures are noted, namely, Rom. 7:8-10 as an allusion to both Gen. 3 and Exod. 3, Paul's usage of the "I," the law, slavery image, and the evil inclination. It is also interesting that Rom. 7:15 & 19 and the "I" are allusions to Greek tragedy, sin as power, and slavery as

Greco-Roman cultural intertexture. In analyzing the social intertexture it can be concluded that the marriage analogy is closer to Jewish marriage than to Greco-Roman marriage.

The final analysis is an investigation of the theological texture. Here salvation history and the covenant of God are first dealt with in order to get to grips with Paul's theological world. Then, Pauline hamartiology, anthropology, and finally, nomism are investigated. The conclusion is that νόμος in Rom. 7 mostly denotes the universal moral law of God, both written and unwritten, not just the Mosaic law; though in some cases it denotes "principle" or "rule" as in vv. 21-25. Rom. 7 as a whole is a refutation of the objection or misunderstanding that might be raised regarding Paul's statements of the law in previous chapters. In Rom. 7 Paul elaborates the relationship between believers and the law, and the function of the law in relation to sin in an unregenerate person. In so doing, he vehemently denies that the law is sin, and vividly indicates the function of the law using his own experience.

OPSOMMING

Hierdie navorsing fokus op Rom. 7 met spesifieke verwysing na die wet. Hoewel sowel die wet by Paulus en Rom. 7 moeilike onderwerpe is om te verstaan, is beide van besondere belang vir 'n verstaan van die teologie van Paulus en die evangelie. In die verlede is gewoonlik van histories-kritiese studies gebruik gemaak in die bestudering van sulke probleme. Hier word van 'n sosio-retoriese benadering gebruik gemaak.

Daar word eers aandag gegee aan vorige navorsing om 'n beeld te kry van die wyse waarop die wet in die verlede verstaan is. Na aanleiding van hierdie oorsig word meer as tien probleemareas geïdentifiseer. Vervolgens word 'n kort uiteensetting van sosio-retoriese analise gegee. Dit is 'n multidimensionele en multidissiplinêre benadering wat deur Vernon Robbins ontwikkel is en wat 'n teks as 'n hegte eenheid van verskillende teksture sien. In hierdie studie word hierdie metode gebruik, ofskoon met 'n paar aanpassings.

Die makrostruktuur van Romeine word in hoofstuk 4 met behulp van 'n epistolêre en retoriese analise nagegaan. Daarna word Rom. 7 as 'n retoriese eenheid binne Rom. 5-8 as die breër ko-tekste van Rom.7 aangedui. Vervolgens word die retoriese situasie van Romeine asook bepaalde retoriese tegnieke en strategieë van Paulus bespreek. Die standpunt word ingeneem dat Romeine as deliberatiewe retoriek beskou moet word.

In hoofstukke 5 tot 7 word die verskillende teksture van Rom. 7 aan die orde gestel. Die herhalend-progressiewe tekstuur, begin-middel-slot tekstuur en die argumentatiewe tekstuur word ondersoek om die interne tekstuur vas te stel. 'n Analise van die ethumeme in die teks lewer ook 'n bydrae om die vloei van die argument te kan volg. Hieruit volg dat Rom. 7:1-6 as 'n analogie beskou moet word, wat 'n belangrike middel in argumentasie was. Verder kan afgelei word dat die teenswoordige tydsvorm in Rom. 7:14-25 'n onderdeel is van die kombinasie van outobiografies-tipies-retoriese kenmerke wat in argumentasie gebruik word.

In die bestudering van die intertekstuur word aandag aan die volgende voorbeelde van skriftelike intertekstuur gegee: resitasie (met weglatings) en die uitbou van 'n tema. By die bestudering van die kulturele intertekstuele analise kom voorbeelde van Joodse intertekstuur aan die orde: Rom. 7:8-10 as toespeeling op Gen. 3 en Eks. 3, Paulus se gebruik van die "ek",

die wet, die beeld van slawe en die bose begeerte. Verder kan Rom.7:15, 19 en die "ek" as toespelings op Griekse tragedies, die sonde as mag, en slawerny as Grieks-Romeinse kulturele intertekstuur gesien kan word. Wat die sosiale intertekstuur betref word bevind dat die analogie van die huwelik meer verwantskap met die Joodse huwelik as met die Grieks-Romeinse huwelik vertoon.

Ten slotte word die teologiese tekstuur ondersoek. Eers word aandag gegee aan die heilsgeskiedenis en die verbond van God om 'n begrip van die teologiese wêreld van Paulus te verkry. Daarna word die hamartologie, antropologie en ten slotte die wet by Paulus ondersoek. Daar word bevind dat νόμος in Rom. 7 meestal die universele morele wet van God, geskrewe en ongeskrewe, en nie net die wet van Moses nie, aandui. In bepaalde gevalle, soos in Rom.7:21-25, beteken dit "beginsel" of reël." Rom.7 is in sy geheel 'n verwerping van die beswaar of misverstand wat na aanleiding van Paulus se uitsprake oor die wet in die vorige hoofstukke kon ontstaan het. Paulus stel in Rom.7 die verhouding tussen gelowiges en die wet aan die orde asook die funksie van die wet met betrekking tot sonde by die onbekeerde. Op hierdie wyse ontken hy ten sterkste dat die wet sonde is terwyl hy ook die funksie van die wet met behulp van sy eie ervaring uitbeeld.

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Soli Deo Gloria!

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ABBREVIATIONS*

<i>ABR</i>	Australian Biblical Review
<i>BAGD</i>	Bauer-Arndt-Gingrich-Danker
<i>ANRW</i>	Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt
<i>BBR</i>	Bulletin for Biblical Research
<i>BJRL</i>	Bulletin of John Rylands Library
<i>BSac</i>	Bibliotheca Sacra
<i>BTB</i>	Biblical Theology Bulletin
<i>CBET</i>	Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology
<i>CBQ</i>	Catholic Biblical Quarterly
<i>CRBS</i>	Currents in Research: Biblical Studies
<i>CTJ</i>	Calvin Theological Journal
<i>CTQ</i>	Concordia Theological Quarterly
<i>EBS</i>	Expositor's Bible Commentary
<i>EDNT</i>	Evangelical Dictionary of the New Testament
<i>ExpT</i>	Expositor Times
<i>GTJ</i>	Grace Theological Journal
<i>HeyJ</i>	Heythrop Journal
<i>HTR</i>	Harvard Theological Review
<i>HUT</i>	Hermeneutische Untersuchungen zur Theologie
<i>ICC</i>	International Critical Commentary
<i>Int</i>	Interpretation
<i>JBL</i>	Journal of Biblical Literature
<i>JETS</i>	Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society
<i>JSNT</i>	Journal for the Study of the New Testament
<i>JSNTSS</i>	Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series
<i>JTS</i>	Journal of Theological Studies
<i>LCL</i>	Loeb Classical Library

* References to classical texts follow the abbreviations listed in the *Form and Style in theological texts* (1993) published by UNISA.

LEC	Library of Early Christianity
<i>Neot</i>	Neotestamentica
NICNT	New International Commentary on New Testament
NIGTC	New International Greek Testament Commentary
<i>NovT</i>	Novum Testamentum
NovTS	Supplements to Novum Testamentum
<i>NTS</i>	New Testament Studies
<i>PR</i>	Philosophy & Rhetoric
<i>QJS</i>	The Quarterly Journal of Speech
<i>RTR</i>	Reformed Theological Review
<i>RQ</i>	Restoration Quarterly
<i>RS</i>	Religious Studies
SBLSP	Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLBSB	Society of Biblical Literature Sources for Bible Study
<i>SE</i>	Studia Evangelica
<i>SEA</i>	Svensk Exegetisk Årsbok
<i>SJT</i>	Scottish Journal of Theology
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
TBS	The Biblical Seminar
<i>TDNT</i>	Theological Dictionary of the New Testament
<i>TJ</i>	Tyndale Journal
TPINTC	TPI New Testament Commentaries
<i>TynB</i>	Tyndale Bulletin
<i>TZ</i>	Theologische Zeitschrift
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WEC	Wycliffe Exegetical Commentary
<i>WTJ</i>	Westminster Theological Journal
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament

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The word *nomos* occurs in only six of the thirteen Pauline epistles:

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* Schoepf states that it is the most intricate-debated issue in Pauline theology (1994: 107).

¹ In normative use, 2:14, 3:19; 4:15 (twice); 7:12, 7 (twice); 12, 14; 8:2 (twice); 11 (twice); 13 (twice); 14, 15, 18, 21, 25, 26, 27; 7:20 (twice); 11 (twice); 27 (twice); 28, 4:14, 14, 16; 11:17 (twice); 17, 1, 5, 8, 7, 8, 9; 8:2, 3, 4; 10:4, 5, 13-10 (twice); 15 (twice); in relative case, Rom. 2:13, 17, 20, 21, 23, 24, 25, 16, 22, 25 (twice); 25 (twice); 8:7 (twice); 14 (twice); in accusative case, 2:14 (twice); 25, 27, 28; 11:17 (twice); 17, 21, 25, 8:11 (twice); 13-8 (14 times). It is not correct that the law is mentioned 17 times in Romans (cf. Martin 1989:3).

² Bruce (1975), Gaventa (1993), and Moo (1991) point out this difference between Galatians and Romans and Douglas, *The Roman Debate* (1991).

³ For a more complete list see, Papp (1994:2-3).

⁴ Also see Sandage (1988:93) and Robinson (1987: xii).

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The word νόμος occurs in only six of the thirteen Pauline Epistles. Paul does not use it in 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 2 Corinthians, Philemon, Colossians, 2 Timothy, and Titus, though the concept of law is present in 2 Corinthians and Colossians (Martin 1989:3). He mentions the law 119 times altogether in his six letters, most extensively in Romans, 74 times.¹ These statistics indicate at least that Paul speaks frequently about the law in his writings, and that if we want to study the law in Paul's thought more comprehensively, we need to concentrate on Romans. Unlike Galatians, where Paul is polemical in orientation due to Judaizing opponents, in Romans he deals with the issue of the law in a more balanced and comprehensive manner.²

However, reading Romans is not easy. NT scholars have still not reached consensus on the occasion and purpose of Paul's letter to the Romans.³ Among the many problems in Romans, the difficulty of understanding the law is especially notorious. When we read Romans, we are bewildered at Paul's apparent contradictory usage, for example, referring to the law negatively in some places, (3:20, 28; 4:13; 5:20; 6:14; 7:4,5,6,7; 8:3; 10:4) and in other places positively (3:31; 7:10, 12, 14, 16, 25; 8:4; 13:8, 10).⁴ Thus, many scholars complain about the difficulty of understanding Paul's statements on the law. A few examples follow:⁵

- Schoeps states that it is the most intricate doctrinal issue in Pauline theology (1961:168).

¹ In nominative case, 2:14, 3:19; 4:15 (twice); 5:20; 7:1, 7 (twice), 12, 14; 8:2 (total, 11 times); in genitive case, 2:12, 13 (twice), 14, 15, 18, 23, 25, 26, 27; 3:20 (twice), 21 (twice), 27 (twice), 28; 4:13, 14, 16; 5:13 (twice); 7:2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9; 8:2, 3, 4; 10:4, 5; 13:10 (total, 35 times), in dative case, Rom. 2:12, 17, 20, 23; 3:19; 7:2, 4, 16, 22, 23 (twice), 25 (twice); 8:7 (total, 14 times), in accusative case, 2:14 (twice), 25, 27; 3:31 (twice); 6:14, 15; 7:1, 21, 23, 9:31 (twice), 13:8 (14 times). It is not correct that the law is mentioned 72 times in Romans, as Thielman (1994:161) and Hong (1993:122) calculated. In Galatians, the law is mentioned 33 times (Hong states 32 times, 1993:122), 9 times in 1 Corinthians, 3 times in Philippians, twice in 1 Timothy, and once in Ephesians (cf. Martin 1989:3).

² Drane (1975), Gaventa (1992), and Moo (1993) point out this difference between Galatians and Romans.

³ See Donfried, *The Romans Debate* (1991).

⁴ For a more complete list see, Rapa (1994:2-3).

⁵ Also see Snodgrass (1988:93) and Räisänen (1987:xii).

- Ladd says, “Paul’s thought about the law is difficult to understand because he seems to make numerous contradictory statements” (1974:495).
- VanGemeren says that he wholeheartedly agrees with Ladd’s above statement of Paul (1993:40).
- Stuhlmacher says that it is very difficult “to systematize the Pauline statements concerning the law” (1985:102).

In order to understand Paul’s statements on the law many scholars have suggested many diverse solutions. No consensus, however, has been reached in the last few decades and VanGemeren laments that “[the] contemporary scene gives little hope for achieving any unanimity on Paul’s view of the law” (1993:40; cf. Vos 2000:8).

In spite of this fact, however, many scholars recognize that an understanding of the Pauline concept of the law is very important in order to understand his theology and ethics. Though the law never assumes a central position, it is used as an important part of Paul’s argumentation and is closely connected with many other important themes in his letters. Weima recently correctly pointed out that “[o]ne can hardly understand his [Paul’s] theology, if one does not grasp his theology of the Torah” (1990:219).⁶

In this study I will focus on Romans 7, keeping in mind chapters 5 to 8 as well, in which Paul deals with the objection regarding the law throughout the chapter. According to James D. G. Dunn, Romans 7 is one of the most important passages in Paul’s letters and gives us an insight into the whole dimension of Paul’s thought and faith. Even more important, it is one of the few pivotal passages that greatly determines our understanding of Paul’s theology as a whole, especially his anthropology and soteriology (1975:257). In the course of my study I will examine the literary context of Romans 7. I agree with Thielman and Kruse who correctly say that we should examine Paul’s view of the law within the context of each letter (Thielman 1994:10; Kruse 1997:25; cf. Kennedy 1984:4). Even though I will focus on the law in Romans 7, within the context of chapters 5 to 8, I will keep in mind other issues related to the law in the whole letter of Romans, since what I understand elsewhere in Romans will

⁶ He quotes from Eichholz (1972:178).

influence my interpretation of the law in Romans 7.⁷ Romans 2, for example, contains the problem of how we should understand the natural law. How do we understand Paul's statement that the Gentiles can keep the law? Is he saying that there are two ways of salvation? Is he not contradicting himself since he asserts elsewhere that no one can keep the law? In Rom. 5:13-14 we also face the difficulty of whether the meaning is that a law existed before the Mosaic Law. Romans 10:4 is also well known for its diverse interpretations.⁸ It is very difficult to interpret τέλος: is it *end*, *termination*, *climax*, or *goal*? For this reason, I will always keep in mind other parts of Romans, while I am dealing with the problem of the law in Romans 7.

To place my discussion in the present context, in chapter 2 I will survey the various interpretations previously mentioned. This will highlight key issues related to Paul and the law. Furthermore I will point out some problems in Romans 7 within this present context that require further research. The method of how to approach these problems, i.e., a socio-rhetorical approach to Scripture, will also be discussed.

1.2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of the proposed research is to contribute to the better understanding of Paul's complex statements of the law in Romans 7, within the co-text of chapters 5 to 8, through the perspective of the socio-rhetorical approach and through solving some problems related to our topic. In order to fulfill this aim, the following objectives will have to be achieved:

- (1) A brief survey of current discussions of the law in the Pauline epistles
- (2) A workable methodology of socio-rhetorical analysis
- (3) A socio-rhetorical analysis of Romans 7: an inner textual analysis, an intertextual analysis, and a theological textual analysis
- (4) A proper understanding of Paul's statements of the law in Romans 7 within the co-text of chapters 5 to 8.

⁷ Generally, Romans 5 to 8 is accepted as one unit. I will discuss this matter in chapter 4 when I discuss the macro-structure of Romans.

⁸ See Badenas (1985:7-37) and Sloyan (1978) for the history of a detailed interpretation of this verse.

1.3 HYPOTHESIS

Paul's central argument in Romans 7 is to show the role or function of the law in detail, in relation to Christians, as part of his refutation of the objections of his original interlocutors at Rome. A socio-rhetorical reading will provide a tool to unravel the multi-layered text and so to offer a better chance of understanding the meaning of Paul's statements concerning the law in Romans 7. This study will also enhance our understanding of Pauline theology, especially his anthropology and hamartiology, together with his theological thought world, and finally, of Christian ethics.

1.4 METHODOLOGY

This study of the law in Romans 7 is undertaken by means of a socio-rhetorical approach, together with an epistolary approach, in the course of dealing with the question of the macrostructure of Romans.

Socio-rhetorical interpretation has gained widespread acceptance among NT scholars in the last few decades (Watson & Hauser 1994:101; Weima 1997:458). The popularity of this approach can be readily seen from many recent commentaries, scholarly monographs and articles.⁹ A socio-rhetorical analysis is in line with new rhetorical understanding, because language "is seen as part of the historical and social situation which produced it and in which it was enacted. Rhetoric can then take its place as a liaison between text and social situation, assessing the latter through the former. It promises to discover the social setting behind the rhetorical response" (Watson & Hauser 1994:115).

The reason I have chosen this method is that it is one of the most comprehensive approaches unraveling the meaning of Scripture that has been developed in the past decades and that is still developing (Gowler 1994:1; Robbins 1997:24-52; 1999). This approach sees the text as a thickly interwoven tapestry and pays proper attention to social, cultural, historical, psychological, aesthetic and theological information within a context of interpretative procedure (Robbins 1996a:18 & 1996b:2).

⁹ We will see this from the bibliography of Watson & Hauser (1994).

This is a new endeavor in the discussion of Paul and the law, as we will see in the next chapter. As far as I know, to date, no previous research on Paul's statements of the law has been undertaken mainly by means of socio-rhetorical analysis. All previous research has followed the historical approach, which is dominant in New Testament scholarship. There is therefore room for this attempt.

I will adapt Robbins' methodology, which I will explain in detail in chapter 3, which deals with methodology (1996 a & b). In my opinion, Robbins successfully integrates major strategies of new methods in his approach and renders it fruitful for analyzing literary, social, cultural and theological issues in biblical texts.

1.5 DELIMITATION OF AREA OF RESEARCH

As I mentioned above, I will delimitate my research to Romans 7 within the co-texts of Romans 5 to 8, where Paul, at length, deals mainly with the objection regarding the law (see 4.3.1). However, when necessary, I will reflect on the whole of Romans and on all other Pauline epistles, especially Galatians.

CHAPTER II

A BRIEF SURVEY OF THE CURRENT DISCUSSION ON PAUL AND THE LAW

Since Luther and Calvin, Paul's attitude to the law has been thought of traditionally as arguing against the "legalistic" perspective of the Judaism of his day. It was understood that Paul opposed the legalistic way of righteousness in Judaism, because humanity can be justified by faith alone, apart from any "works of law." So when Paul argues against "works of the law," he is denying that humanity can obtain salvation through obedience to the law, i.e., through good works.¹ This understanding of the law in Paul's letters dominated Protestant circles until the twentieth century, and it is still a common understanding of Paul's attitude to the law. Rudolf Bultmann, William Wrede, Albert Schweitzer, and recently Charles E. B. Cranfield, all come under this category.² However, this traditional Reformers' teaching has been seriously called into question, because of the two monumental works of E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* (1977) and *Paul, the law and the Jewish people* (1983).³ Recent discussion on the law in Paul's letters is something of a reaction to Sanders work, so I will begin a brief survey of these works with Sanders.

2.1 NEW PERSPECTIVE ON PAUL AND THE LAW⁴

In his first book, Sanders (1977) made a strong case for Palestinian Judaism as a whole and also undertook a comparison of Pauline Christianity and Palestinian Judaism. In order to accomplish these, in part 1 he conducted an exhaustive study of Jewish sources, such as the

¹ See the detailed discussion on this topic in Schreiner (1993b:14-18), Rapa (1994:19-31), and Thielman (1994:18-24).

² For Bultmann's view of the law, see (1951:259-69; 1955:36-60; 1960:173-83); for Wrede's view, see Wrede ([1907] 1962), Westerholm (1988:16-22) and Schreiner (1993b:17); for Schweitzer's view, see Schweitzer ([1931] 1967), Westerholm (1988:22-32) and Schreiner (1993b:17); for Cranfield's view, see (1964:42-68; 1982:845-62).

³ Even before Sanders, there were some scholars who raised criticism against the traditional 'Lutheran' understanding, the distinguished Jewish reformer and theologian Claude G. Montefiore (1914), George Foot Moore (1921:197-254), the Jewish historian of religion, Hans Joachim Schoeps (1961), Albert Schweitzer ([1931] 1967), W. D. Davies ([1948] 1980) and Krister Stendahl (1976). See also for the summary of their writings, Westerholm (1988:34-51) and Kruse (1997:28-33).

⁴ The term "new perspective" is used in Dunn's article (1983:95-122). This article is now conveniently included in his book (1990:183-206).

early Rabbinic (Tannaitic) literature, the Dead Sea Scrolls and a selection of works from the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, which date from 200 BC to 200 AD. From this extensive study he concludes that Palestinian Judaism was not “legalistic” as was traditionally thought but could well be described as “covenantal nomism,” which is well known today among NT scholars. What is meant by this term? In his own words,

The ‘pattern’ or ‘structure’ of covenantal nomism is this: (1) God has chosen Israel and (2) given the law. The law implies both (3) God’s promise to maintain the election and (4) the requirement to obey. (5) God rewards obedience and punishes transgression. (6) The law provides for means of atonement, and atonement results in (7) maintenance or re-establishment of the covenantal relationship. (8) All those who are maintained in the covenant by obedience, atonement, and God’s mercy belong to the group which will be saved. An important interpretation of the first and last points is that election and ultimately salvation are considered to be by God’s mercy rather than human achievement.

(Sanders 1977:422)

Sanders asserted that the idea that Rabbinic religion was legalistic “is completely wrong: it proceeds from theological presuppositions and is supported by systematically misunderstanding and misconstruing passages in Rabbinic literature” (:233). He emphasizes that the election of Israel by God’s grace and salvation in Rabbinic religion is by God’s mercy, not human achievement. The law was given to maintain the covenantal relationship with God, not as an entrance requirement to God’s plan of salvation (1977:422; Hong 1993:165; Deidun 1986:43). According to Sanders, to interpret Paul’s statements on works of the law as the way of justification as an attack on “legalism” or on human’s effort to gain his salvation by good works is a complete misunderstanding both of Judaism and of Paul (1977:512; see also Barclay 1986:7, 8).

In the later part of his book Sanders describes the pattern of Paul’s religion. To do this, he investigated the seven letters of Paul whose authenticity is generally accepted (Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, and Philemon). As result of this study he concludes that Paul’s religion is not similar to that of Palestinian Judaism and is best understood as “participationist eschatology.” The center of Paul’s thought is not that of agreeing to God’s covenant, becoming a member of the covenant community and staying in it on the condition of proper behavior, but that “one dies with Christ, obtaining new life and the initial transformation which leads to the resurrection and ultimate transformation, that one is a member of the body of Christ...that one remains so unless one breaks the participatory union by forming another” (:514). Sanders concludes that what distinguishes Christianity from Judaism is their understanding of righteousness. In Judaism, to be righteous

means “to obey the Torah and repent of transgression, but in Paul it means to be saved by Christ.” In Judaism, righteousness is a “term,” which implies “the maintenance of status among the group of the elect,” but in Paul it is a term of transfer. In Judaism it means *staying in* the covenant community, but in Paul it is a term indicating *getting into* the body of Christ. Thus Sanders argues that, when Paul says one cannot be made righteous by works of law, he means that one cannot, by works of law, be transferred to the body of the saved. When Judaism states that the one is righteous who obeys the law, the meaning is that one thereby stays in the covenant. It transpires that the debate about righteousness by faith or by works of law results from the different usage of the “righteous word group” (1977:544; Kruse 1997:35-37). So what is wrong with Judaism as far as Paul is concerned? Sanders says that it is not Judaism’s zeal for the law or that it promotes a quest for self-righteousness based on the law, but rather that it is unenlightened. In his oft-quoted words: “In short, *this is what Paul finds wrong in Judaism: it is not Christianity*” (italics his; 1977:552).

After the publication of Sanders’ first book, there was an enormous response from many scholars. Many recognized it as a significant achievement.⁵ However, there was also criticism regarding Sanders’ view. Several reviewers raised the question whether Sanders adequately dealt with evidence that some Palestinian Jews, notably the Qumran sectarians, viewed the proper keeping of the law as the way of salvation and excluded even other Jews from salvation as long as they did not keep the law in the way which the sect prescribed (Dahl 1977:155; Cf. Caird 1978:540; Horbury 1979:116). Beker also criticized Sanders for cutting Paul off from his Jewish background and his contemporary Jewish Christians so thoroughly that his efforts to relate faith in Christ with Judaism in Romans 9-11 become unexplainable (1980:237).

In view of these criticisms, Sanders published another book in 1983 that tried to “expand and clarify, and sometimes correct, the account of Paul’s view of the law” which was briefly dealt with in the first book (:ix). In the latter book he takes up especially the two issues of Paul’s attitude to the law, and Paul’s relationship to the Judaism of his day. In the first part of the book, Sanders highlights three main principal points about Paul’s attitude to the law. First, when Paul was thinking about how to enter the body of Christ, it was always by faith in Christ

⁵ Dahl sees it as “a major work” (1977:153), “monumental” (Caird 1978:543), a “very considerable achievement” (Horbury 1979:118), and “the most influential work of Pauline studies” (Kruse 1997:35).

and never by means of observing the law. “The law is not an entrance requirement” (:45). Second, this then raises the question of why God gave the law. Paul’s main response was “to connect the law with sin and to assign it a negative place in God’s plan of salvation.” In other words, the law was given to enslave all humanity, whether Jews or Gentiles, under sin that God might have mercy on all alike or to restrain sin until the coming of Christ (Rom. 3:19-24). Thus the law was linked with sin in God’s plan of salvation (:66-68). But in Romans 7 Paul adopts a different perspective. Here it is implied that God gave the law that it should be obeyed, but sin uses the law against the will of God to bring people into slavery. So the law is still connected to sin, but sin is not attributed to God’s will (:73, 74). Third, Paul deals with what the role of the law is in believers’ lives. Paul thought that “Christians should live in accordance with God’s will, and he saw that will as expressed in the Scripture: thus Christians obey the law” (:94).

There are, however, three items by which Paul makes exception for Gentile converts, namely circumcision (1 Co. 7:18,19), the observance of special days and seasons, specifically, the Sabbath (Gal. 4:10), and food laws (Rom. 14:1-14; 1 Co. 8 & 10) (:100 and 101).

In the second part of his book Sanders takes up the question of Paul’s relationship with his own people. Here Sanders made some important points. First, Paul thought of the Church in terms of the fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant, and in that sense it was not at all a new religion. Nevertheless in his view, and especially in his practice, it was “a third entity” (:178). People, whether Jew or Gentile, are admitted into the body of Christ by faith in Jesus Christ. Admission was sealed by baptism, not by circumcision (:178). Second, in his discussion of Paul’s missionary practice, Sanders accepts that Paul’s ministry was mainly for the Gentiles, not for both Jew and Gentile (:179-190). Sanders sees that even though the evidence of Acts shows Paul’s custom (preaching to Jews first in the synagogue until he faced the rejection of Jews, then turning to Gentiles), the primary evidence is Paul’s letters. In his letters Paul, in mentioning his ministry, speaks exclusively of Gentiles. He was the apostle to the Gentiles (Rom. 11:13), and was called in order to preach Christ among the Gentiles (Gal. 1:16; 2:2). His mission was “to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles with the priestly duty of proclaiming the gospel of God, so that the Gentiles might become an offering acceptable to God” (Rom. 15:16). Third, the fact Paul was persecuted by Jews (1 Thess. 2:16; 2 Co. 11:24; Gal. 5:11; 6:12) shows that he did not withdraw his continuing commitment to Judaism. Paul kept attending the synagogue and contacting his countrymen, and because of his ministry

of bringing Gentiles into the people of God without circumcision and the requirement of keeping the Torah, he had received the Jewish punishment of thirty-nine lashes five times (2 Co. 11:24). It would be unthinkable if both Paul and the Jews who punished him should consider Paul as an outsider, for “punishment implies inclusion” (:190-192). Fourth, Paul sought a formula that would keep God’s promises to Israel (the promise of salvation of “all Israel” at the end) intact, while insisting on faith in Jesus Christ (:192-198).

Sanders’ two books created a paradigm shift in understanding Paul’s attitude to the law. His theses received immediate worldwide attention and a considerable number of articles and monographs refer directly to problems Sanders raised.

James D. G. Dunn was one of those who reacted positively to Sanders’ publications and can be placed in the line of Sanders. Dunn agrees basically with Sanders’ “new perspective” on Paul’s attitude to the law, that is, the contemporary Judaism of Paul was not a “work-salvation” religion. He says, “Sanders has broken it [the traditional understanding] altogether by showing how different these reconstructions are from what we know of first-century Judaism from other sources. We have all...been guilty of modernizing Paul. But now Sanders has given us an unrivalled opportunity to look at Paul afresh...to see Paul properly within his own context” (1990:186).

Dunn also does however criticize Sanders for not progressing far enough in his understanding of the law from the insight he reached in his books. According to Dunn, Paul criticized Judaism, not because of its legalism, but because of its nationalism or its exclusivism. For Dunn the most important verse is Galatians 2:16. On the basis of this verse Dunn proceeds to expose what is lacking in Sanders’ explanation, i.e., the “social function” of the law within Judaism of the first century. There Paul is arguing against the very “identity markers” or “boundaries” of the Judaism of his day, i.e., circumcision, feast, and Sabbath, and Jewish dietary restrictions as “works of the law,” because these “works” were “entry requirements” imposed upon the Gentiles to becoming part of the people of God (Dunn 1988:xix). When this interpretation was criticized by some scholars, Dunn admits in his book (1990), that “the works of the law” “do not mean *only* circumcision, food laws, and Sabbath, but the requirements of the law in general, or more precisely, the requirements laid down by the law on the Jewish people as their covenant obligation and as focused in these specific statutes” (*italics his*; 1990:4). To Dunn, the “works of the law” is an expression that sums up the

law's function as seen from within Judaism and a solution of the tensions and contradictions in Paul's thought raised by Sanders and Räisänen. Dunn was convinced that this understanding might resolve the tension between Paul's positive and negative statements about the law in that it is the social function of the law that draws a large part of Paul's criticism. From this perspective Paul is able to recognize the law's positive role, to be fulfilled in love (cf. Hong 1993:14).⁶

2.2 PAUL IS INCONSISTENT

Räisänen (1980; 1985; 1987; 1992) was much influenced by Sanders' paradigm for understanding Judaism. Like Dunn he agrees that Judaism was not legalistic, but he goes further to suggest that Paul's view of the law is inconsistent and contradictory throughout his letters.

Räisänen's view is not a new proposal. Before him Sanders made a similar case in his second book, where he said that Paul was "coherent" but "unsystematic" and there was no "system" in Paul's understanding of the law (Sanders 1977:433, 518-524). Sanders thinks that the reason behind Paul's theological reasoning is that he moves "from solution to plight rather than from plight to solution" (1983:148, 150; Deidun 1986:45, 46; Martin 1989:39; Hong 1993:13).

Räisänen, however, made this inconsistency a primary theme of his book, *Paul and the law* (1987). He concludes, "contradictions and tensions have to be *accepted* as *constant* feature of Paul's theology of the law. They are not simply accidental or peripheral in nature. The contradictions are undoubtedly historically and psychologically conditioned" (italics are his; 1987:11).

⁶ Dunn's position has some weaknesses. Hong rightly points out that even though there do exist some aspects of the social implications of the Mosaic law, this concept is too narrow to hold the whole aspect of Paul's statements. 1) The expression "the works of the law" means the works demanded by the entire law, not just certain parts. 2) Paul's attack on the law is much more radical. In Galatians the law curses (3:10,13), produces transgressions (3:22), enslaves (3:23-25), and is connected with the power of sin (3:22), the demonic spirits of the world (4:3,9) and flesh opposing the power of Spirit (5:16-18). These verses show that Paul undoubtedly has in mind the whole law. 3) It is unlikely that Paul thought of the death of Christ in terms of liberation from such a nationalistic understanding of the law (Hong 1993:146; cf. Räisänen 1985:544, 548).

Where did he find such contradictions in Paul's statements of the law? According to Schreiner, Räisänen points out at least five cases (1993b:22, 23). First, Paul uses the word *law* (νόμος) variously. In some places it refers to the whole law, while in others to the moral law only. Second, in some places Paul says that the law is abrogated and no longer binding to Christians (Rom. 7:1-6; 2 Co. 3; Gal. 3), yet in other places he says that "we uphold the law" and urges Christians to keep it (Rom. 3:31, 8:4; 13:8-10; 1 Co. 7:19; Gal. 5:14). This is logically fallacious. Third, Paul says in number of places that no one can obey the law perfectly (for example, Rom. 1:18-3:20; Gal. 3:10), and then he says that even some Gentiles can fulfill the law (Rom. 2:14-15, 26-27). Fourth, Paul's explanations of the origin of the law and its relationship to sin are full of contradictions. He usually says that the law was given by God, but in Galatians 3:19 he denies this and says that the law actually came from angels. In addition to this he says the reason God gave the law is to give life (Rom. 7:10), but in other passages he says it was to increase sin (Rom. 5:20; Gal. 3:19). Moreover, in Romans 7:7-11 he comments that the law causes people to sin, whereas Romans 5:20 implies that sin existed before there was a law. Räisänen comments that one of these statements cannot be true. Fifth, Paul twists the Jewish understanding of the way of salvation as legalistic, while presenting his own theology as gracious. According to Räisänen, the reason behind this contradiction in Paul's teaching is that, as the apostle to the Gentiles, he wishes to include Gentiles into the God's people without requiring them to obey the Mosaic law. He also conjectures that Paul's own attitude to the law resulted from the psychological crisis that led to his conversion.

2.3 THE DEVELOPMENTAL VIEW

Among the new approaches in Pauline studies there is another understanding of Paul's attitude to the law. John W. Drane, Hans Hübner, and Ulrich Wilckens suggest that there is significant development in Paul's understanding from the time he wrote Galatians to the time of Romans. This is the reason why Paul makes such diverse statements on the law.

I will explain first John W. Drane's position. In his book *Paul, libertine or legalist? A Study in the theology of the major Pauline Epistles* (1975) he says that in Galatians Paul, in response to the Judaizers, emphasizes vehemently the freedom of Christians from the bondage of the law. Thus the law is totally denounced and is not valid in Christian living; the Holy

Spirit is sufficient. Paul's position changed to something like "pseudo-legalism" when he faced "Gnosticizing opponents" in 1 Corinthians. In 2 Corinthians, however, we have a synthesis of both positions, which came to a climax in Romans. In Romans "we have a more or less balanced and neutral expression of Paul's theology, neither libertine nor legalist" (1975:3, 4; quoted also in Hong 1993:12). There Paul says that believers are not under the law (against legalism), but they are to obey the law by the power of Holy Spirit (against libertinism). Therefore, according to Drane, Paul's thought on the law developed to a large extent from "pseudo-legalism" to "libertinism" and finally into a more balanced attitude to the law.

Similarly, Hübner suggests in his monograph, *Law in Paul's thought: A contribution to the development of Pauline theology* (1986), that there was a considerable development in Paul's thought on the law between the writing of Galatians and that of Romans.⁷ He agrees with Wilckens who said, in Romans "now he is no longer conducting polemics as in Galatians, *but wants to enter into dialogue*" (italics his).⁸ Hübner assumes that at first Paul had an unreservedly negative view of the law through his controversy with the Judaizers but had to reconsider his position when he was attacked from Galatia and found that James interpreted the content of the Council of Jerusalem differently. Because Paul wanted to have the approval of James, he changed his former view and gave a more positive assessment of the law in his letter to Romans: Christians can fulfill the Mosaic Law (13:8-10) and submit to the law of faith (3:27; 1986:60-65). Hübner traces the development of Paul's understanding of the law from the relation between the law and sin: in Galatians 3:19 the law has a function to stimulate sinful deeds and provoke sin, in Romans 3:20 and 7:7 the law brings the awareness of sin. In Galatians the law is denigrated as an angelic law, while in Romans it is presented as divine and/or spiritual (7:14; πνευματικός, i.e. "on God's side." Hübner 1986:78, 79; cf. Hong 1993:12, 13). Hübner discovers this development of Paul's thought on the law in his discussion of the theme of glorying or boasting (1986:102-124) and freedom (1986:130, 135).

⁷ Hübner mentions that as early as 1850 Albrecht Ritschl noticed the differences in the statements of the law between Galatians and Romans. Later in 1869, Friedrich Sieffert explained this difference as "organic development" (quoted in Hübner 1986:1-2). Just before Hübner Ulrich Wilckens writes about the "development" of Paul's view of the law (1982:17-26).

⁸ Re-quoted from Hübner's book, 63. Wilckens believes that there is a certain development in Paul's thought of the law. In Galatians, due to his debate against Judaizers, Paul strongly emphasizes the antithesis between Christ and Torah, faith and the works of the law, and between promise and the law, and even further the radical abolition of the law. Paul, however, revises this antinomistic and anti-Jewish tendency in Romans. There he sees

In contrast to Drane, Wilckens, and Hübner there are some scholars who do not see such development within Galatians and Romans, namely, H. Räisänen, E. P. Sanders, and W. D. Davies. H. Räisänen finds it difficult to see the development between the writing of Galatians and that of Romans, because there are a lot of similarities between the two epistles and Romans was written quite shortly after Galatians. Thus it seems unthinkable to see such remarkable development within such a short period of time. Räisänen, however, thinks that Paul's thought did develop *before* the writing of the extant letters (1980:77-79).

E. P. Sanders also disagrees with the developmental view, because he thinks that the statements about the law in both letters are the results of Paul's attempt to deal with the same problem. He notes several variations of the view regarding Paul's statements about the law that resulted from seeing the law from different perspectives: the law is seen, "in connection with sin or in connection with promise" (Hahn); "as a way of salvation or as a norm of life" (Schrage); "as it encounters those in the flesh or those in the Spirit" (Osten-Sacken); "as a means to the achievement of self-righteousness or as an expression of the will of God to be obeyed in faith" (Schrage, Hübner). Sanders rejects the last two options. He concludes that "Against those who argue in favor of mere inconsistency, however, I would urge that Paul held a limited number of basic convictions which, when applied to the different problems, led him to say different things about the law" (1983:144-147).

W. D. Davies argues that the differing viewpoints in the Pauline Epistles reflect the different situations in which Paul wrote rather than his changing views (1982:4-16). In Galatians, Paul disparages the law when he faces the Judaizers. Obeying the law means that they are under a curse (Gal. 3:10) and submitting to the elemental and cosmic spirits (Gal. 4:3, 9). The coming of Christ frees men from the curse and guardianship of the law (Gal. 2:21; 3:13, 19; 5:11). In Corinthians, Paul, in contrast, has a problem with Gentile enthusiasts. So he urges them to follow the behavior shown by his own example (1 Co. 4:16; 11:1) or that of Christ himself (2 Co. 8:9). Romans is more accommodating than Galatians because Paul wanted the support of the Christians in Rome. Here Paul is quite positive about the law: the law is holy, righteous and good (Rom. 7:12, 16), spiritual (Rom. 7:14), originates from God (Rom. 7:22, 25; 8:2, 7), is designated for life (Rom. 7:10), and counts as one of the privileges of Israel

the law as God's law, which is not abrogated by the coming of Jesus Christ but rather is fulfilled (Rom. 3:31; 13:8-10; 1982:17-26).

(Rom. 9:4). Yet he does consider that Christ is the end of the law as a means of salvation (Rom. 10:4).

2.4 IS THE LAW INVALID OR VALID FOR THE BELIEVERS?

Concerning Paul's thought on the law there is also a debate whether for Paul the law has a function as a way of life for the believer or not. Some believe that to Paul, the law is still valid as a way of life, others do not. Among those who hold that for Paul the law is invalid for the believers are: Albert Schweitzer ([1931] 1967:187-189), H. J. Schoeps (1961:168-218), Ernst Käsemann (1980), Walter Gutbrod (1967), and F. F. Bruce (1977; 1982).⁹ I do not think it is necessary to deal with each one of them here, so I will choose two recent important interpreters and briefly point out why they think the law is invalid for believers.

Käsemann's interpretation in his commentary on Romans is that Christ terminates the Torah. He thinks τέλος means "end" as usual in Romans 10:4, not "goal" or both "end" and "goal." It is impossible to divide the moral and ceremonial law, and if that is so, we cannot argue the ongoing validity of the law in the Church because that kind of view is possible only when the law is reduced to the moral law (1980:215). The presence of the risen Lord in the power of the Holy Spirit replaces the Mosaic Torah (1980:191, 210). Christian lives are rooted in the act of salvation in Christ and in the sphere of the Spirit, in which the will of God is actually fulfilled according to Romans 8:2-4 (1980:215, 218).

Bruce also believes, like Käsemann, that the Spirit supersedes the place of the law in the life of the Christian. Unlike Käsemann, however, he sees the possibility of the meaning of τέλος as both "goal" and "terminus." Christ was the goal of the law in the sense that God gave the law as a temporary provision until Christ came (Gal. 3:19, 24), but Christ was also for that reason the terminus of the law: the coming of Christ meant that there is no further role for the law in humanity's relation to God (1977:191).

Bruce also points out some interpretations that may be correct theologically but which have no place in Pauline exegesis:

⁹ I mention just a few names. Räisänen lists more in detail (1987:62).

1. Calvin's view that Christians are not under the law as a means of salvation, yet a Christian remains under it as a rule of life;
2. Calvin's view that Christ is the end of the ceremonial law, including also circumcision and the observance of the sacred calendar, but not of the moral law;
3. The view of Lutheran orthodoxy that the law has a function to call to repentance;
4. Karl Barth's view that "Christ is the end of religion" (cf. Barth [1933] 1977:37, 374);
5. Ernst Fuchs' view that "Christ is the end of history" (Fuchs 1964:40, 176; Bruce 1977:191-193; cf. Martin 1989:58).

Later, in his commentary on *Galatians* (1982), Bruce says that the principle of the law was so opposed to spiritual freedom that it could kill the freedom in Christ. Paul's understanding of the gospel excluded the principle of the law in any way and to be under the law meant being under the dominion of sin and living according to the flesh. The ethical requirements of the law could be satisfied not through obedience to the law but through "walking by the Spirit" (Gal. 5:16). For Bruce, the command of love in Gal. 5:14 might be considered as the laws of the Decalogue in general, but it is a different kind of law. People can love his neighbor by the help of the Spirit, not by force (:151-152, 218, 239, 240, 243, 255).

W. Gutbrod (1967) held the view somewhere between the abrogation of the law and the validity of the law. The law as a rule of life is insignificant, and the appeal to the OT does not carry the weight it had in Judaism. Paul uses the law as *didache* and it is authoritative only if it follows from obedience to Christ in faith (Rom. 14:1-4; 12:3; *TDNT*, IV:1077). Christ is the end of the law from the standpoint of salvation history (*TDNT*, IV:1075-78).

As we see above, there is a diverse understanding among those who think that the law is invalid for the believer, likewise there is a diverse understanding among those who think that the law is valid for the believer. C. E. B. Cranfield, George E. Howard, C. Thomas Rhyne, Robert Badenas, Ragnar Bring, Hans Conzelmann, Richard N. Longenecker, George E. Ladd, and Hans Hübner are those who hold the latter view. I will deal with some of them and try to form some ideas of how they reached their interpretation.

Cranfield sees that Rom. 10:4 is important for understanding Paul's attitude toward the law, and among many equivalents of the word τέλος he prefers to translate it as "goal." He believes that "the ultimate goal and the innermost meaning of the law are not the condemnation of sinners, but Jesus Christ" (1964:48-53). He gives five arguments showing why Christ is the goal of the law:

- i) the law bears witness to Christ by virtue of the promises it contains (Rom. 3:21);
- ii) the law points to Jesus who is the only one who obeys the law (Phil. 2:8; Rom. 5:19);
- iii) he is “the fulfillment, the meaning, and the substance” of the ceremonies contained in the law (1 Co. 5:7; 11:25; Rom. 3:25);
- iv) the law reveals men’s sinfulness and helplessness, and Christ is the only remedy for humanity’s desperate condition (Gal. 3:22,24);
- v) the law “sets the necessary forensic stage on which Christ’s saving work is wrought” (1964:48-53).

Crandfield elaborates his point further as he refutes the idea that, for Paul, the law is ended. In Rom. 3:21 the phrase “apart from the law” (χωρὶς νόμου) should be understood as a shorthand for “apart from the works of the law” (1964:55). The phrase “not under law” (Rom. 6:14b) does not mean that that “the law has no longer any authority at all over his readers, but that they have been freed from its condemnation and its curse” (1964:56). He interprets Rom. 7:4 and 6 similarly. The phrases “died to the law” and “released from the law” mean that Christians have been discharged from “the law’s condemnation and also all legalistic misunderstanding and misuse of the law” because Paul says later “I myself in my mind am a slave to God’s law” in 7:25 (1964:56). In Rom. 8:2 “the law of sin and of death” is not “the law itself in its true character, but either the law as perverted by man’s sin and turned into a law of sin and death, or the inner necessity of fallen nature” (1964:56, 57).

C. T. Rhyne (1981) argues that the starting point for Paul’s understanding of the law is his statement in Rom. 3:31 where he says that “faith establishes the law.” Romans 3:31 is not the conclusion to Rom. 3:21-30 as Murray (1982:125), Bornkamm (1972:282) and Nygren (1952:166) think, but the introduction or transition to Rom. 4:1-25 (Rhyne 1981:31, 32).¹⁰ He understands that Rom. 3:31 and 4, as a whole chapter, refute the misconception that the law is abolished through faith (1981:25-61). After he has conducted an exegesis of 3:21-4:25, he concludes that “it is the law in its role as witness that it is established in the apostolic preaching of justification by faith as Rom 4 illustrates” (1981:63-93, 117, 118).

For Rhyne another key verse in addition to Rom. 3:31 is Rom. 10:4. He accepts the meaning of τέλος as “goal” after evaluating different opinions. He understands Rom. 10:4 in the sense that “in Christ the law in its promise of righteousness reaches its goal so that God’s righteousness may be available to everyone who believes” (1981:95-116, 118). In 10:4 Paul

¹⁰ Rhyne follows Meyer, Jeremias, Osten-Sacken, Wilckens and Gerhardsson on this point.

grounds the assertions he has made in the previous verses 2 and 3. The word νόμος in 10:4 recalls νόμος δικαιοσύνης (9:31), the law that offers the promise of righteousness (1981:103). Paul does not make any negative statements previously regarding the relationship between Christ and the law. Rather, it is only the Jewish conception that the works of the law are a means of attaining righteousness that is faulted (9:32; cf. 10:5). Rhyne suggests that, in the light of these facts and of the positive relationship Paul holds between righteousness by faith in Christ and the law (Rom. 3:21-4:25), it is better to interpret τέλος as “goal” and not as “end.” This is confirmed when we consider the following verses, 5-8, in which Paul confirms that Christ brings the righteousness promised by the law. “The word of faith” (τὸ ῥῆμα τῆς πίστεως) in 10:6-13 means the word in which faith expresses itself, the word which the faith proclaims. Here Paul also gives the content of the “word”: “That if you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved” (10:9; NIV). This shows that the righteousness promised by the law is available in Christ (1981:107, 108).

Similarly, Robert Badenas (1985) strongly opposes the idea that Christ abolishes the law. To start with he sums up the meaning of τέλος in three main categories:

- 1) temporal/terminal (“end,” “termination,” “cessation,” or “abrogation”); 2) perfective/completive (“goal,” “object,” or “fulfillment”); and 3) teleological (“the law pointed to Christ”) (:2-4).

Having surveyed the meaning of τέλος in Classical and Hellenistic literature, the LXX, the Pseudepigrapha, the letters of Aristeas, Philo, Josephus, and the New Testament (:38-79), Badenas suggests that the primary meaning of τέλος is “teleological (directive, purposive, completive), not temporal or terminal” semantically and is substantiated on contextual grounds. Τέλος νόμου denotes either the object/purpose of the law or its fulfillment, never its abrogation (1985:145-147). Thus he strongly believes that τέλος means “goal” unless there is strong evidence against it. For him Paul uses the athletic imagery and a series of antitheses in order to confirm the above understanding. The terms of athletic imagery are: διώκοντα/διώκων (for denoting the earnest pursuit of a goal), κατέλαβεν (for describing the attaining of the goal), οὐκ ἔφθασεν (for the stumbling over an obstacle), καταισχυθησεται (for the disappointment and shame of the defeat), and τέλος (for the goal, winning post, or finishing line itself) (Rom. 9:30-33; Badenas 1985:101).

The series of antitheses are: the Gentiles who were never in the race after δικαιοσύνη reached δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐκ πίστεως, contrarily Israel who is described as διώκων νόμον δικαιοσύνης did not reach the goal of its race. Badenas concludes that Paul does not view the law as being invalidated by faith, on the contrary in Christ the true content of the law is fully revealed. For Paul, Torah is not a legal code but the history of God's salvific dealings with his people (cf. 9:31-33) (1985:149, 150).

Hans Conzelmann also believes that the law comes to an end as a way of salvation but not as a moral requirement (1969:224-226). Christ has met the requirements of the law, and thus Christians are redeemed from the law and have died to it (Rom. 7:6). He sees the validity of the moral demand of the law because he distinguishes between the law as the will of God, which is absolutely valid for all mankind, and the law as an ordinance of Moses which is valid for an intermediate period for Israel only. So for Conzelmann the law is still valid for Christians.

Lastly, Hans Hübner also believes in the ongoing validity of the law for the believer. He proposes that Paul changed his mind from the invalidity of the law in Galatians to the validity of the law in Romans. According to Romans, the Mosaic Law in its true sense is the "law of faith" (Rom. 3:27) and the law of the life-giving Spirit (Rom. 8:2). He understands that Rom. 3:31 says we establish the law of the life-giving Spirit and accepts this law with its pneumatic claim to justice (1986:148). He also understands that only the ethical commandments, not the cultic regulations, are valid for the believer (1986:84-85). The Mosaic Law is "spiritual" and "the law of the Spirit of life" (Rom. 7:14; 8:2). The believer has God's Spirit within himself and this Spirit drives him to obey the law but not on the basis of an external stimulus (Rom. 8:14). However, we should not think that this understanding of Paul implies a third use of the law (1986:145).

Hübner sees that the phrase "under the law" means the same as "under the dominion of the perverted Law" and "freedom from the Law" and in no way means freedom from the Law understood, in principle, as a power deleterious to salvation. The Law remains even for Christians a determinative factor (:135). "Christ is the end of the misuse of the Torah," "the end of the Mosaic Law," and "the end of the carnal misuse of the law" (:138, 148, and 149).

2.5 A CRITIQUE OF LEGALISM

Some scholars claim that, since there are no terms like “legalism,” “legalistic,” and “legalist” in the Greek language used by Paul, when he appears to be negative about the law, he refers to his critique of *legalism*, that is, the misunderstanding and misuse of the law, not the law itself (Cranfield 1964:55, 60-66; 1982:853, 857-861; Moule 1967:391-393; Cosgrove 1979:146-64; Fuller 1980:65-120, 199-204). The law as the expression of the will of God is still binding and authoritative to Christians. Though some scholars are hesitant to accept this view, it is probable that Paul does engage in a polemic against legalism in Galatians and Romans (see Gundry 1985:1-38). Nevertheless, to limit Paul’s critique of the law to legalism is not a good solution in one sense because it is too narrow to hold the whole aspect of Paul’s statements, even though legalism was a major problem that Paul faced (Räisänen 1987:42-50; Moo 1983:85-88).

According to Schreiner (1989), there are two strong arguments against the understanding of Paul’s critique of legalism. First, in Gal. 3:15-25 Paul is employing a salvation-historical argument and demonstrates that the Abrahamic covenant is superior to the Mosaic covenant. This argument shows clearly that Paul is not referring here exclusively to legalism but to the Mosaic Law, because it was not legalism that was handed down on Mount Sinai, but the Mosaic Law. Now that the Messiah has come, the Mosaic covenant is no longer effective (3:19). The temporal argument is underlined in 3:23-25. “Before this faith came, we were held prisoners by the law, locked up until faith should be revealed” (3:23). The faith Paul had in mind here is a particular faith in Jesus as Messiah, shown in the following verses 24 and 25. The word “faith” in v.25 can be taken as a synonym for Christ in v. 24. Verse 24 says that the law functioned as παιδαγωγὸς ἡμῶν γέγονεν εἰς Χριστόν. The preposition εἰς should be translated temporally since v.25 employs the temporal idea of “no longer (οὐκέτι) being under the child attendant.” What Paul says here about the παιδαγωγός clearly applies to the Mosaic Law. Now that Christ has come believers are no longer under the law.

Second, what Paul says here also shows that his critique is not exclusively against legalism. The word νόμος in 3:17 must refer to the Mosaic Law, not just legalism, because Paul mentions that the law was given 430 years after the Abrahamic covenant, which obviously means the Mosaic Law. That is also true of νόμος in 3:19. In 3:21 the word νόμος again

must refer to the Mosaic Law since Paul says that the law is not “opposed to the promises of God,” which he would never say about legalism. In conclusion, νόμος in Gal. 3:15-25 clearly refers to the Mosaic Law as a whole and not exclusively to legalism. When we consider these two points together, we might conclude that Paul thought that the Mosaic Law was abrogated in some sense (see also 2 Co. 3:4-18; Rom. 6:14; 7:1-6; 10:4) (Schreiner 1989:50, 51).

2.6 A NEW OR ZION TORAH

There are some scholars who understand that when the Messianic age began, the old Torah ceased (Schweitzer [1931] 1967:187-192; Schoeps 1961:171-173; Stendahl 1976:84; Fitzmyer 1975:74-75). Others view that Paul thought Jesus to be the mediator of a new Torah (Dodd 1953:96-100; Davies [1948] 1980:138-146; Longenecker 1977:126-32, 183-196). Dodd understands that the law of Christ is a code of sayings of the Lord. He thinks that the moral exhortations in Gal. 6:1-5 allude to the teaching of Jesus in Matt. 23:4 and 18:15-16. Thus “fulfilling the law of Christ” implies the intent to carry out the teaching of Jesus Christ given to his disciples and inherited by the Church (Dodd 1953:100-101, 108-109; Hong 1993:175).

Like Dodd, Davies accepts that the teaching of Jesus is authoritative for Paul and Paul turned to the words of Jesus for guidance. We can find this aspect in 1 Co. 7:25: “Now about virgins: I have no command (ἐπιταγή) from the Lord, but I give a judgment as one who by the Lord's mercy is trustworthy.” Here Paul refers to the word of the Lord as an ἐπιταγή, and most important of all, he explicitly refers to the law of Christ twice (ἔννομος or νόμος τοῦ Χριστοῦ; Gal. 6:2; 1 Co. 9:21). Davies concludes that “Paul must have regarded Jesus in the light of a new Moses, and that he recognized in the words of Christ a νόμος τοῦ Χριστοῦ which formed for him the basis for a kind of Christian Halakah. When he used the phrase νόμος τοῦ Χριστοῦ he meant that the actual words of Jesus were for him a New Torah” (Davies 1980:144; Hong 1993:173-74).

Similarly, Peter Stuhlmacher follows the understanding of H. Gese (1981:80-92) and suggests that Paul believed in the abolition of the Sinai-Torah, while advocating the continuing validity of the Zion-Torah (1986:110-133). For him “the law of Christ” is the Zion-Torah which OT prophets prophesized (Isa. 2:2-4; 25:7-9; Jer. 31:31ff.; Ezek. 20; 36:22-28; 40-48; Mic.

4:1-4). Stuhlmacher asserts that Paul believes that the Decalogue becomes the “law of the Spirit” (Rom. 8:2) for Christians and this “law of the Spirit” corresponds to the category of the eschatological Zion-Torah. He says that “in and through Christ, the Law which had become an instrument of sin and death since the fall of Adam, has now become the Law of Christ which protects life” (1985:99; Räisänen 1987:xxx1; Hong 1993:174-75).

However, there are many scholars who do not accept this kind of understanding. Even though there is no doubt that the words of Jesus were authoritative for Paul (cf. 1 Co. 7:10,11; 9:14), it is hard to accept that the words of Jesus constituted a new Torah that replaced the old Torah. Schreiner (1989:52) gives three reasons why he does not accept such an explanation. The first reason is the fact that Paul hardly appeals to Jesus traditions. Second, the “law of Christ” in Gal. 6:2 does not refer to the teaching of Jesus. It is possible that Paul may have relied on the Jesus tradition in Gal. 5:14; Rom. 13:8-10; 14:14. However, these sayings are still not sufficient for the words of Jesus to be a new Torah. Third, the “law of Christ” in 1 Co. 9:21 plainly does not refer to the citations from Jesus in 1 Co. 7:10 and 9:14.

2.7 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE GOSPEL AND THE LAW

The question of the relationship between the gospel and the law is complex, difficult to understand, and no consensus has been reached yet. Jonathan Edwards (1703-58 AD) said in 1749 that “There is perhaps no part of divinity attended with so much intricacy, and wherein orthodoxy divines do so much differ as stating the precise agreement and difference between the two dispensations of Moses and Christ” (1858:I,160; quoted from Fuller 1980:5-6). Different systems of theology often have radically different views on this subject.

What is problematic is whether there is a legitimate interface between the gospel and the law, or whether they are antithetical and separate. This issue has been regarded as one of great importance in Pauline studies, and its understanding might strongly influence our view on the relationship between the OT and the NT. According to Strickland (1993:230), the importance of the issue is threefold. First, how the relationship between the law and the gospel is viewed may influence the understanding of the doctrine of justification in Paul. Second, the understanding of the relationship may influence the understanding of the role of the law in Christian lives. Third, above all, the issue has great significance for any individual

theological system. The different solutions to the law-gospel debate result in divergent theological systems.

Lutheran and Calvinistic scholars are greatly concerned to distinguish properly between law and grace. Luther said in his *Commentary on Galatians* (1533), “both the word of grace and of wrath must be rightly divided, according to the Apostle [2 Tim. 2:15, 16]...he that setteth forth the law and works to the old man, and the promise of forgiveness of sins and God’s mercy to the new man, divideth the Word well” (1961a:103). Calvin also, in his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, sharply distinguished between “the conditional promise” of the law that bring us back to our own works and the “freely given promise” of the gospel which is “the proper goal of faith” (1967:III.2.29). Dispensationalism joins with Lutheranism and with the covenant theology of Calvinism in making a sharp distinction between the law and the gospel. For example, C. I. Scofield, a representative of dispensationalists, believes that the law and grace (gospel) are “contrasting principles [that] characterize the two most important dispensations—Jewish and Christian...Law, always has a place and work distinct and wholly diverse from the that of grace. Law is God prohibiting and requiring; grace is God beseeching and bestowing” (1940:34).

However, Daniel P. Fuller disagrees with this kind of understanding. He changed his mind from covenant theology, which he formerly held, which accepts the antithesis between the law and gospel. He thinks that “if the law is, indeed, a law of faith, enjoining only the obedience of faith and the works that proceed therefrom (1 Thess. 1:3; 2 Thess. 1:11), then there could no longer be any antithesis in biblical theology between the law and the gospel” (1980:xi, 110). In the light of this perspective, he interprets that “Christ is the end (τέλος) of the law” (Rom. 10:4), not in the sense of being its termination, but as climaxing it as the One who is in continuum of it. He also concludes that the “law of faith” in Romans 3:27 is not the principle of justification by faith alone, as normally covenant theologians hold, but that it is the very Mosaic law itself (Fuller 1980:xi, 103). Thus he believes that the “obedience of faith” (Rom. 1:5; 16:26) is compliance with the Mosaic law. His most radical conclusion is that “true faith is not merely accompanied by good works as something coordinate with it, but that faith itself is the mainspring for producing good works” (Fuller 1980:xi).

2.8 TWO-COVENANT THEORY

Among NT scholars, there are some who accept the so-called “two-covenant theory.” They are K. Stendahl (1976), Markus Barth (1983), J. G. Gager (1983), and Lloyd Gaston (1987). Among them, Stendahl is the first who suggests that Paul’s gospel was only for the Gentiles (1976:2). Barth did not express this theory explicitly, however, he at least implied it in his collection of essays (1983). Gaston and Gager strongly promote this two-covenant theory.¹¹ Their theory is an extreme case of the new perspective. They readily believe what Sanders proposes about Judaism and that Paul’s gospel concerns mainly the Gentiles rather than the Jews. From this perspective, according to Hagner, they go further to suggest that “the covenantal nomism of the OT is God’s way of salvation for Israel, while law-free gospel is God’s way of salvation for the Gentiles” (Hagner 1993:116; see Gaston 1987:8). That means that in Paul’s thought Jews and Gentiles are saved in totally different ways: Jews receive their salvation by being faithful to the covenant given by God gratuitously, but Gentiles receive it through the faithfulness of Jesus Christ.¹² Paul did not believe that Jews had to believe in Jesus as the Messiah to be saved, for Jews are saved by the gracious covenant made by God with Israel. So according to Gaston and Gager’s view Paul had a two-covenant view in which Jews and Gentiles are justified according to different covenants (see Schreiner 1993b:25 & 26).

Sanders and Dunn oppose this theory. Dunn explicitly says that “Jewish/Christian dialogue in this area has tended to pose the issue in terms of one covenant or two; and clearly I lean to the ‘one covenant’ side” (1991:250). Hagner thinks that, even though it is an appealing conclusion in the light of various elements of the new perspective on Paul, it is unbiblical view (1993:116). Christiansen (1995) also does not believe that the new and better covenant supersedes the old covenant. He says that both from a sociological and a theological perspective this is a wrong conclusion (:324).

2.9 MORE RECENT RESPONSES TO THE NEW PERSPECTIVE

So far we have surveyed the various interpretations influenced in one way or another by the new perspective on Paul and the law since the Sanders’ publications. However, there are

¹¹ They substantially agree with each other. Gager admits his dependence upon Gaston. They both argue against the anti-Semitism and anti-Judaism that have been so influential in Christian theology.

¹² Gaston agrees with R. B. Hays who understands the phrase πίστις Χριστοῦ as the “faithfulness of Christ” (1987:117; Hays 1983).

some who think that the older views of the Reformers are still valid to our understanding of the law and offer some responses to the new perspective. They can be divided into two groups: one is the group that holds the traditional understanding, whether the Lutheran view or Reformed view, and the other is one that wants to show the continuity of Jewish tradition in Paul's thought, and goes beyond Sanders' position. I will briefly discuss them in turn.

2.9.1 BACK TO THE LUTHERAN VIEW

S. Westerholm (1988) agrees with Sanders and others that the Judaism of Paul's day was not a works-righteousness religion but a religion based on God's election and grace for their salvation. Thus he departs from Luther on this point, for he thinks that Luther made a mistake in reading the legalism of Roman Catholicism into the theology of Paul's Jewish opponents. Yet he argues that, while it is wrong to see Judaism as a works-salvation religion, nevertheless obeying the law may be regarded as Israel's path to life.¹³ That means that Luther's understanding is still correct on this matter. Westerholm says that Paul regarded law and gospel as fundamentally opposed to each other. Salvation could only be given through faith in Christ, not by keeping the law. The reason that salvation cannot be obtained through the law is that nobody can keep the law perfectly. God's purpose in giving the law was to reveal the nature of sins as acts of defiance, to increase the number of sins committed, and to bring about a greater awareness of sin (:179-189). Like Luther, Westerholm believes that Christians are freed entirely from the OT law. The Spirit is a sufficient guide of ethical living for the believer, and the OT law is not binding for the believer. Thus, unlike the Reformed view, Westerholm rejects the third use of the law (:198-209. cf. Schreiner 1993b:27, 28; Kruse 1997:43, 44).¹⁴

In this line of thought we have a modified Lutheran view by **Douglas J. Moo** (1993:319-376). At the beginning of his article he at first lays down a basic principle of understanding of Paul's attitude toward the law: a "salvation history" or "redemptive history," which has two decisive characteristics. The first characteristic is historical periodization. Even though there

¹³ Geer criticizes Westerholm for not addressing why Paul so blatantly misrepresents Judaism (1989:93. n.2). Geer says that, while Westerholm agrees with Sanders that the Judaism of Paul's day was not a "works-salvation" religion, he argues that Paul criticizes Judaism for its emphasis on works-salvation. Westerholm needs to elaborate this aspect further.

¹⁴ For an excellent critique of Westerholm's book, see Seifrid (1992b:71-73).

is continuity in God's plan of salvation, it unfolds in successive and distinct stages. At the center of this salvation history is the death of Jesus Christ on the cross and his resurrection, which is the culmination of that history and creates a contrast between "before" and "after." Thus we need to see the law primarily as the Mosaic Law within this salvation-historical framework and relegate it basically to the period of time before the coming of Christ. That means the word *nomos* almost denotes not "law" in general, but the Mosaic Law. (Moo 1993:321, 322). The second characteristic is a natural corollary of the first characteristic. From this perspective the contrast between "before" and "after" in salvation history has to do not with the experience of the individual but with the experience of the world or of God's people. Moo believes that this perspective can successfully explain the relationship between the Christian and the Mosaic Law. After laying down these principles, Moo proceeds to argue that "the Mosaic law is basically confined to the old era that has come to its fulfillment in Christ. It is no longer, directly applicable to believers who live in the new era" (1993:322-323). This statement shows that what he thinks is basically the same as the Lutheran understanding of the law. Unlike the Reformed understanding, he thinks that the whole Mosaic law was fulfilled in Christ, and this fulfillment means that this law is no longer a direct and immediate source of the behavior of the people of God today (1993:343).

Moo says that the purpose of the Mosaic Law is twofold: negatively, it was never to be the means of salvation, and positively, it has three functions, namely, (1) to reveal God's character to the Israelites and to demand that they conform to it, (2) to supervise Israel in the time before Christ, and (3) to imprison Israel, and by extension, all people under sin (1993:324-343). This means that the law is temporary in nature, given to Israelites in the Mosaic era, and not for believers today who are under a new covenant. Christians are set free from the power and regimes of the Mosaic Law. Within the framework of the new covenant, Mosaic law does not have any role to play, though there is a sense of continuity, because "the law of Christ" incorporates within it teachings from the Mosaic law (Moo 1993:370). Christian behavior is guided directly by "the law of Christ," which does not consist of do's and don'ts' in legal ordinances, but of the teaching and example of Jesus and the apostles, the central requirement of love and the guidance of the indwelling Holy Spirit. We see this aspect, Moo says, in the life of Jesus. Moo points this out through a survey of Matthew 5:17-47. He concludes from this survey that "Jesus made his own teaching the norm for life in the kingdom. This teaching is neither a repetition nor an expansion of the law, nor is it based on

the law. Nevertheless, it stands in salvation-historical continuity with that law. This perspective is reflected throughout the Gospels” (1993:347-357, especially 356). He also believes that Paul shares this same perspective on the Mosaic and the Christian Law (1993:357-372).

Most recently, **Collin G. Kruse** published a book *Paul, the law and justification* (1997). In this book he follows a procedure for examining the statements on the law and justification in the context of the concerns of each letter, because this provides a better chance of understanding the law and justification in the Pauline corpus. To start with, he surveys 18 selected monographs, which he thinks are important and highlight some key issues. Then he researches each Pauline letter individually, from Galatians, 1 & 2 Corinthians, and Romans to Paul’s other eight letters, excepting Philemon. From this study, Kruse concludes that “believers are free from the law as a regulatory norm, nevertheless they still have much to learn from it. Accordingly, throughout the Pauline corpus we find appeals to the law, not only as a witness to the gospel of Christ...but also as a paradigm for Christian behavior” (1997:284). It is this interesting proposal that shows that his position is more or less Lutheran and close to the Reformed teachings. In one place he says further that Christians can fulfill the law through love by the work of the Spirit (Gal. 5:13-14), which is basically in line with the Reformed theology (:285). But he also says that Paul used the law paradigmatically and applied it to believers of his day, not literally, but analogically, which is closer to the Lutheran than the Reformed theology (:292). From the above, his conclusion, in my opinion, is somewhat between the Lutheran and the Reformed theology.

2.9.2 BACK TO THE REFORMED VIEW

Brice L. Martin’s monograph *Christ and the law in Paul* (1989) also goes back to the Reformation for its understanding of Paul in relation to the law. Martin, unlike Westerholm, is in the line with Calvinistic thinking, for he considers that the moral commandments of OT law are still authoritative for believers today. For Christians the law remains God’s law; they come to the law for instruction (cf. 1 Co. 9:8, 9; 14:21, 34), and they are able to keep the law by the power of the Spirit (Rom. 8:4-9). They obey the law neither by getting saved nor by staying saved, but because they have been saved (contra Sanders 1983:68, 98-99 n.160, 119-120 n.54, 156). Martin believes that the law cannot provide salvation because no one can obey it perfectly (:84-93, 127). He concludes that Paul’s view of the law is similar to that

of Judaism. Both agree that the law came from God and expresses the will of God, and that the doers of the law will be justified (:4-18, 53-55, 155). But Paul rejects the Jewish view that God gave the Mosaic law so that people might be saved by the observance of the law (:90-93, 155). That means Martin is still convinced, in spite of Sanders' work, that Paul does oppose the legalism of the Jews: "the thesis of Sanders is neither proven nor persuasive" (Schreiner 1993b:28). Martin accepts that "Paul gives a coherent total view of the law," unlike Hübner and others (Martin 1989:38-44, 156). The negative and positive statements on the law derive from his distinction between the law as means of salvation and as a moral standard for the believers. Paul does not change his basic view and the statements are best explained by the differing situations that he addresses. Martin writes,

In writing to the Galatians he tends to downplay the law because of their attempt to be saved by means of it. In 1 Corinthians he stresses the law and moral values since he is facing an antinomian front. In Romans he gives a carefully balanced statement and assures his readers that he is not an antinomian.

(Martin 1989:155)

Frank Thielman's understanding of Paul and the law can be placed in this category, since he agrees with Calvin's idea that the moral law still obligates Christians (1989).¹⁵ He attempts to show that Paul's view of the law was based on early Jewish expectations of an eschatological purification of Israel. From a study of both canonical (e.g. Jer. 31 and Ezek. 20) and non-canonical Jewish literature, he argues that Paul operated from traditional Jewish thinking which moved from "plight to solution," unlike Sanders' suggestion which is from "solution to plight," in both Galatians and Romans. Even Galatians should not be read as if Paul taught an abrogation of the law in every aspect, since he teaches the necessity of fulfilling the law through the commandment of love (:86). In Romans, Paul shows consistency in the "plight to solution" pattern and says that Christians are empowered by the Holy Spirit so that they can fulfill the requirements of the law (with the exception of circumcision, dietary and calendrical rules for the Gentile Christians) that were formerly impossible for them (:116).

In his second book (1994), Thielman develops his study on Paul and the law further. He thinks it is possible to show that Paul's thought on the law is coherent, reasonable and filled with profound theological insight, unlike what Sanders and Räisänen suggested (:10, 11). Through a detailed study of all the Pauline letters Thielmann concludes that Paul knew that

¹⁵ See the critique of him by Seifrid (1992b:73-75).

some Jews, including Judaizers, believed in the cooperation between human endeavor and God's grace as the means of justification on the Last Day. However, the way Paul was engaged in argument with them shows that "Paul did not regard all Jews as legalists or Judaism generally as a legalistic religion" (1994:238-39). Paul knew that most Jews understood that works of the law do not justify. Paul hoped that, once reminded of the plight of the Jews, the unbelieving Jews and Judaizers would realize that the age of restoration had dawned, the Mosaic covenant was obsolete and they should embrace the gospel of Christ (1994:239). Thielman concludes also that Paul's gospel follows the pattern of Judaism in the Mosaic Law in critical ways: "the gospel places God's gracious act of redemption prior to the demand for the obedience" (1994:240-41). The Mosaic Law is still valid as scripture for Paul, but it is re-interpreted from the perspective of the gospel. The major difference between Paul and first-century Judaism is not found in their views of the relationship between God's grace and human achievement but in the position of each within salvation history (1994:245).

In-Gyu Hong (1993) also falls in this category. In his modified dissertation *The law in Galatians* he says, after dealing with some pivotal passages in Galatians, that by his substituted death on the cross Christ redeemed Israel from the curse of the law and also the rest of humanity, i.e., the Gentiles, from the bondage of the elemental spirits of the world, because Israel represented all the nations (1993:95-96). He rightly rejects Dunn's interpretation that the works of the law refer only to social boundary markers such as circumcision and dietary and calendrical regulations, though he agrees with him that those cultic practices were distinctly Jewish (Hong 1993:147). He concludes that the social function of the law to mark out the Jews from the other nations as God's people was obsolete, because Christ, who inaugurated a new era, has broken down the wall between the Jews and the Gentiles. In Christ a new people of God has emerged who include not only the Jews but also the Gentiles. Now in Christ there is no distinction at all between the Jews and the Gentiles (Hong 1993:148).

In-Gyu Hong says that, from the perspective of salvation history, the function of the law designated by God serves to produce transgressions (1993:83, 155). He believes in the continuity and discontinuity of the law for the believers of today. The law as the stipulation of the Mosaic covenant has been invalidated and its cursing power has also been terminated. In this sense "Christ is the end of the law" (Rom. 10:4) (Hong 1993:93). However, under the new covenant, Christians can carry out the true intention of the law by loving their

neighbors (1993:182). In this perspective the Mosaic law is still valid “*as an expression of God’s will, especially an expression of love*” (Hong 1993:191; italics his). This shows that Hong follows the Calvinistic understanding of the law.

Thomas Schreiner (1993b) also holds the Calvinistic Reformation understanding of the law in Paul’s writings. In spite of recent new approaches he is still convinced that the Reformers interpreted Paul in this regard better than those who are espousing new perspectives (:11). He sees that the term νόμος (law) in Paul usually refers to the Mosaic law and in particular to the commandments of the law, as most Pauline scholars accept with a few exceptions where Paul uses “law” in a figurative sense (Rom. 3:27; 7:21, 23, 25 and 8:2; 1993b:33-40, 241). Schreiner understands that Paul taught that the works of the law do not save because no one can obey the law perfectly. Paul believes that people will be saved if they can keep the law in its entirety. Since this is impossible, righteousness comes only through Jesus Christ (1993b:241). He finds some truth in Sanders’ suggestion that Paul argues from solution to plight, that is, since salvation comes only through Jesus Christ, the law cannot save. One reason why the law cannot save is that the salvation-historical shift has occurred. According to Schreiner, this salvation-historical answer is not comprehensive enough. Paul at the same time continually argues that the problem under the old covenant was human sin; Israel failed to keep the law. Thus Paul did not only argue from solution to plight but also argued from plight to solution (1993b:242). Schreiner believes that the Reformers were correct in insisting that Paul’s gospel is a gospel of grace that was framed in the context of legalistic soteriology with its roots in Judaism (1993b:243).

Schreiner recognizes that the most difficult area in constructing a Pauline theology of the law is that of the tension between the abolition and the fulfillment of the law. He rejects Marcion’s extreme discontinuity, an emphasis on discontinuity similar to that of Lutheran theology and of some forms of dispensational theology. Conversely, he also rejects the radical continuity of the theonomist movement. He understands that “[r]eformed theology presents a more moderate form of continuity, seeing the two covenants as basically continuous in principle but recognizing the difference in salvation history” (1993b:244). According to Paul, the Mosaic law has reached its fulfillment in Jesus Christ. This fulfillment means that the Mosaic covenant is no longer effective. Nevertheless, it does not mean that the moral norms of the law are no longer valid in the Christian life. It means that the indwelling Spirit of God in believers helps them to carry out the moral norms of the law. It is the fulfillment of the

new covenant promised by Jeremiah and Ezekiel (Schreiner 1993b:245, 246).

2.9.3 TWO LAWS FOR TWO ETHNIC PEOPLES

Peter J. Tomson is unique in the current discussion on Paul and the law. The main aim of his book *Paul and the Jewish law: Halakha in the letters of the Apostle to the Gentiles* (1990) is to show how Jewish tradition affected Paul's thinking. He strives to show that Paul's moral teaching for Gentiles is based on *halakha*, which is "the tradition of formulated rules of conduct regulating life in Judaism" (:19).

At the beginning of his book (1990) Tomson refutes the three traditional assumptions in present Pauline scholarship:

- 1) the center of Paul's thought is a polemic;
- 2) the law for Paul does not have any practical meaning anymore;
- 3) Jewish literature is useless for explaining Paul's letters (:1-4).

He attempts to show that there are no diametrical opposites between Paul and Judaism. Instead there is a general continuity of early Christianity vis-à-vis Judaism. Then, he makes an interesting suggestion on Paul's historical background: Paul is a Hellenistic Pharisee (1990:53). He tries to show that in Paul's thought the Jewish tradition of *halakha* is pervasive in his letters, especially evident in 1 Corinthians (almost 40% of the book that he treated). This leads to logical conclusion that Paul observed the *halakha* in his life and this can be illustrated well from two passages, namely, 1 Corinthians 8-10 and Romans 14-15 (Tomson 1990:264). From his research he concludes that Paul taught both Jewish and gentile Christians to live under the commandments of God, but different ones. Gentiles are to obey the Noachian commandments, Paul's version of the Apostolic Decree (1 Co. 5-11; 7:19), and Jews in addition the Jewish laws (Tomson 1990:270-272). Thus he contends that Paul regarded Jewish and gentile believers as being in distinct places in salvation history and allowed Jews to follow their own traditional regulations, like dietary laws, festivals and the Sabbath.

2.10 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

So far we have surveyed to date the discussion on Paul and the law in general. The purpose of this survey is to obtain the overall picture of developments in this subject and to face the

problems related to areas of my research. As we have seen above, the law in Paul's writings has been researched extensively. However, we did not see any consensus reached through these studies (cf. Vos 2000:8). Through these studies we identified the areas of major problems, which have raised so many questions for us. When Paul mentions the law, does he always mean the Mosaic law or more generally "rule" or "principle" or God's moral law? Does Paul misrepresent the Judaism of his day as Hübner thinks? Is there any inconsistency or are there constant contradictions even in Romans, as Räisänen holds? If Paul is consistent, is there any coherence in Paul's thought? Is there any development from the time Paul wrote Galatians to that of Romans as Drane suggests (1975:4, 65)? Does Paul show any theological framework or convictions? If so, what are they? What is the role of the law in Christian lives today? Is the law still valid as the norm of moral behavior for the believers as Calvinistic tradition holds or invalid as the Lutheran understanding holds today; what is the purpose of God's giving of the law? What is the role of the law in salvation history?

Personally it has been a great challenge for me to understand what Paul says about the law. The questions raised above are vast and complex; in this study I cannot deal with them fully. What I would like to do through this endeavor is to focus on Romans 7 and its co-text 5 to 8, bearing mind these major questions. Romans 7 is very important, because it is the only place where Paul deals extensively with the function of the law.¹⁶ Therefore, to understand the law in Rom. 7 gives us a proper understanding of Paul's concept of the law, and in addition we might understand some of his soteriology, pneumatology, hamartiology, and Christian ethics.

In so doing, we deal with the specific questions raised during the survey in this chapter, which we need to tackle as we proceed further.

- 1) What is the macro-structure of Romans? What is the place of Rom. 5 to 8 within the whole letter? Does Rom. 5-8 consist of one literary unit? How do we understand 5:1-11 within this context? Is Rom. 5:1-11 connected with the previous chapters or following chapters? Is it proper to view Rom. 7 as a rhetorical unit?

¹⁶ In Rom. 5-8 the term νόμος is mentioned 34 times out of the total of 74 occurrences in Romans. In Rom. 7 alone it occurs 23 times. Romans 7 is the place where Paul mentions the law most frequently.

- 2) What is the rhetorical situation of Romans? What is the rhetorical genre of Romans? What are the rhetorical devices and styles in Rom. 7? These questions will be discussed in chapter 4.
- 3) What is the relation between sin and law?
- 4) How do we understand 7:1-6? Is it analogy, illustration, or allegory? Does Paul have a defect of imagination here as Dodd thinks (1932:103)? Is this marriage Jewish or Greco-Roman?
- 5) Why does Paul mention the 10th commandment but without objects in Romans 7:7?
- 6) How can Paul say that “the law is holy” in one place and then say that the law is responsible for sin, is a curse, and death in other places?
- 7) Does Paul think that it is impossible to be justified by the works of the law because no one can keep the law perfectly or because keeping the law would not be the proper way to justification?
- 8) How do we understand intertextuality in Rom. 7? Is Paul operating mainly in Jewish thought and culture or Greco-Roman thought and culture or both?
- 9) What is Paul’s theological framework behind Rom. 7? Can we say that salvation-history and covenant theology are the backbones of his statements of the law? What is the role of the creation narrative and the Sinaitic narrative in Paul’s thought in Rom. 7? Can we detect allusion to Adam or to Israel at Sinai in 7:8-10?
- 10) How do we understand slavery, the usage of “I,” and the past and present tense in Rom. 7?

These are some of the questions that I have in mind as I continue my research on the topic through a socio-rhetorical analysis of Romans.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY: A SOCIO-RHETORICAL ANALYSIS

In the twentieth century there was a major paradigm shift in biblical studies. We see the Scripture today quite differently in comparison to the last 19 centuries. Scholars do not insist on one method anymore but recognize the importance of multiple methods to interpret a biblical text.¹ They pursue a more open and multi-dimensional methodology that seems to be more fruitful for the interpretation of the text. The reason behind this new tendency is partly due to the understanding of Scripture as multi-intertextual literature (cf. Vorster 1989; Robbins 1996a & 1996b; Combrink 1996:115; Schneiders 1991:127-128). Socio-rhetorical analysis is just one of those methodologies, which concerns the final form of the text, like narratological analysis, and focuses on all the different layers or textures of that text (Stamps 1997:219).

Generally the types of rhetorical criticism used in New Testament studies might be classified into three categories. The first is based on ancient, Greco-Roman or classical rhetoric, and utilizes ancient rhetorical theory, found in ancient rhetorical handbooks and, to a lesser extent, ancient rhetorical compositions to analyze the biblical text.² G. A. Kennedy, B. L. Mack, D. F. Watson, and L. Thurén might be classified under this category. The second is modern rhetoric, often called “new rhetoric,” which is “rather a philosophical work on argumentation” and analyzes the biblical text through contemporary rhetorical theory, which focuses on the persuasive effect of the text without much consideration of ancient rhetorical theory. This type is a philosophical reconceptualization of ancient rhetoric that concentrates on argumentation, its structure, premise, and techniques. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca are leading proponents of this approach (Anderson 1996:19). The third type is a hybrid and interdisciplinary method that uses not only insights from both ancient and modern rhetorical theory but also insights from other disciplines like linguistics, sociology, etc. W. H.

¹ See Smit's articles on biblical hermeneutics in the first nineteen centuries (1997a:275-296) and in the twentieth century (1997b:297-318) on this matter.

² For example, Aristotle's *The art of rhetoric* (mid-fourth century BC), the anonymous *Ad C. Herennium* (c.84 BC), Cicero's *De Inventione* (c.90 BC) and his *De Partitione Oratoria* (c. 87 BC), and Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria* (AD 92).

Wuellner, B. L. Mack, and V. K. Robbins are important scholars who provide a methodology for this approach (Weima 1997:459; Watson & Hauser 1994:109-115).

My method can be placed in the category of the third type, utilizing insights from both ancient and modern rhetoric, and from different disciplines like linguistics, literary analysis, sociology, psychology, etc., similar to that of V. K. Robbins. Even though socio-rhetorical analysis is well known today, I think it is necessary to describe briefly at this stage what it entails.

To start with, I will deal with the question of how rhetoric was conceived in ancient times. I will then survey the current development on the rhetorical approach from that of G. A. Kennedy to V. K. Robbins' very expanded socio-rhetorical analysis which is a method that merges several disciplines. Lastly, I will summarize those approaches above and show how I will use them in this study in order to solve the problematic statements of Paul on the law in the our selected text.

3.1 ANCIENT UNDERSTANDING OF RHETORIC³

In order to understand the phenomenon of modern interest in rhetorical analysis, it is necessary to describe what rhetoric was in the ancient or classical period. In ancient Greece, the "rhetor" (ῥήτωρ), who was a professor or public speaker, often-implying "politician," taught a subject called "rhetoric" (ῥητορικὴ τέχνη).⁴ Generally it is accepted that the concept of "rhetoric" emerged in the fifth century BC (Trible 1994:5-6; Kennedy 1997:3-41, especially 7-14).

Trible provides a helpful historical overview of classical rhetoric (1994:6-7). She identifies four stages of development during the Greek period. Firstly, the Sophists (5th century BC) considered rhetoric mainly as the verbal cleverness of a public speaker, quite apart from truth

³ For a brief history of rhetorical analysis, see Watson & Hauser 1994:101-109 and Watson 1988a:1-8. For a fuller history, see David B. Gowler's article, *Development of socio-rhetorical criticism* in Robbins 1994a: 1-37; Kim J S 1996:8-77; and Kim S H 1998:39-49. For the most recent one, see Robbins (1999:1-13). The Greek term ῥητορικὴ was first used by Plato in his book *Gorgias* (around 420 BC). He and Aristotle used this term almost exclusively in their writings (Kennedy 1997:3).

⁴ The Greek term ῥητορικὴ was first used by Plato in his book *Gorgias* (around 420 BC). He and Aristotle used this term almost exclusively in his writings (Kennedy 1997:3).

or morality in speech. Isocrates (436-338 BC) was the most important successor of the Sophists who acknowledged three major parts of rhetorical theory (invention, arrangement and style) in composition, and opposed the Sophists' understanding of rhetoric, contending that ethics and philosophy should join structure and style to establish the art of discourse. In addition to this, by writing instead of delivering his speeches, Isocrates turned oratory into literature.

Secondly, Socrates (469-399 BC) and Plato (428-348 BC) agreed with the criticism of Isocrates. Socrates argued that rhetoric should not overlook the truth or logic (dialectic) and eloquence has to serve wisdom. He believed that the rhetor should know soundly the subject, logical method, and the psychology of the audience. He also emphasized the concept of the organic unity in speech as fundamental to proper speech. He wrote, "every discourse, like a living creature, should be so put together that it has its own body and lacks neither head nor feet, middle nor extremities, all composed in such a way that they suit both each other and the whole" (*Phaedr* 264c. 2-5; quoted by Kennedy 1997:14).

Thirdly, Aristotle (384-322 BC.) was the first person who provided the comprehensive treatment of rhetoric as art, science, theory, and practice in his book *The "Art" of Rhetoric*. His treatise is divided into three books, in each of which the structure is organized according to the duties of the orator. He discusses three such duties: εὔρεσις (the invention and arrangement of material, Books I and II), λέξις (style, Book III.1-12), and τάξις (the arrangement of the parts of the speech, Book III.13-19; cf. Anderson 1996:36). He formulated the theory of the three species of rhetoric, which permeates the writings of all successive rhetors and theoreticians. These species are the deliberative (συμβουλευτικόν), the forensic or judicial (δικανικόν), and the demonstrative or epideictic (ἐπιδεικτικόν). They are correspondent to three types of audiences or arenas of listening, three appropriate times, and three special purposes (Aristotle I.3.1-5). The deliberative speech addresses judges in the assembly, who make a decision concerning the future, based upon what is expedient or harmful. The judicial speech addresses a judge in the law court, who must decide the justice or injustice of past actions. The demonstrative speech addresses mere spectators in ceremonial speech about the present conditions to reinforce honor or disgrace. Further, Aristotle describes each of the three species as having both a positive and negative component. The deliberative consists of persuasion (προτροπή) and dissuasion (ἀποτροπή);

the forensic, prosecution (κατηγορία) and defense (ἀπολογία); and the epideictic, praise (ἔπαινος) and blame (ψόγος) (Aristotle I.3.3).

Aristotle set out a structure of four basic divisions, consisting of a logical series of parts in a judicial speech and less regularly in deliberative and epideictic speeches, namely, an introduction (προοίμιον), narrative (διήγησις), proof (πίστις), and summary conclusion (ἐπίλογος). In his discussion on the means of persuasion, he dealt with three ways of proof, called a triad of proofs: τὸ πραγμα (the matter itself), ἦθος (character), and πάθος (emotion) (Anderson 1996:40). Unlike Plato, Aristotle understood rhetoric as a counterpart of logic (dialectic); it was not verbal ornamentation but a technique of argument. Rather than simply persuading, rhetoric was “a faculty of considering all the possible means of persuasion on every subject” (Aristotle I.2.1).

Fourthly, the anonymous author of the treatise *On the Sublime* (first century AD) departed from the Aristotelian conception. He developed a theory that literary rhetoric “is not to persuade the audience but rather to transport them out of themselves” (I.4). In order to balance the inspiration of the author with technique, he endorsed the power of the sublime.

During the Roman period, Cicero (106-43 BC) and Quintilian (40-95 AD) were important figures in rhetoric. Both of them leaned heavily on the Greeks. Cicero held a high view of rhetoric as the “art of arts,” by which the world was organized and unified, bringing together form and content, theory and practice, thinking and speaking, ethics and style (*DeOr*). Quintilian provided the fullest account of classical rhetoric in his book *Institutio Oratoria* (or *Education of the orator*) and held the view of rhetoric as a comprehensive whole, including ethics and eloquence (cf. Kennedy 1997:31). He defined rhetoric as “the science of speaking well” (*Orat* II.xv.38), and stressed the persuasive and moral power of public speech (cf. Tribble 1994:7).

Thus we see that rhetoric is a highly developed intellectual activity, already established in antiquity (Kennedy 1963:13; Botha 1994:121). Rhetoric is a diverse discipline and it is impossible to give a simple definition of it. The reason is partly that no uniform or unified system of classical rhetoric existed and rhetoric consisted of a wide diversity of theories and practices (Thurén 1990:50, 51; Wuellner 1991:171; Botha 1994:121; Anderson 1996:29). Rhetoric in antiquity was considered as a “flexible discipline” and “multifaceted,” which

concerned itself more with the persuasion of its audience (function) than the production of set forms of speech (text) (Kraftchick 1985:69-95; Botha 1994:121-122).

Botha summarizes the four different representative definitions of rhetoric in the Greco-Roman period (1994:122):

1. the creator of persuasion (Corax, Tisias, Gorgias, and Plato);
2. the rhetor appears to be able to discover the means of persuasion in reference to any given subject (Aristotle);
3. the faculty to speak well regarding public affairs (Hermagoras); and
4. the science of speaking well or adequately (Quintilian).

Major categories of classical rhetoric are elements, types, and goals (Trible 1994:7-9). Each category consists of sets of three elements. The elements in communication are speaker, speech, and audience (or author, text, and reader). The types of communication are judicial (forensic), deliberative (hortatory), and demonstrative (epideictic). The goals of communication are directed to the audience, “The intellectual goal of teaching, the emotional goal of touching the feelings, and the aesthetic goal of pleasing so as to hold attention.”

Besides delineating elements, types, and goals, ancient rhetoricians divided their subjects into five parts, called “canons” or “faculties”, namely invention (*inventio*), arrangement or structure (*dispositio*), style (*elocutio*), memory (*memoria*), and delivery (*pronunciatio/actio*). Among those, only the first three are related to the rhetorical analysis of written works (Watson 1988a:13).

As we consider the above perceptions of the nature of rhetoric, we may safely say that in this period the view of rhetoric was wide, diverse, and not fixed. There is, however, a degree of agreement on certain issues, namely: 1) “rhetoric and the study of rhetoric are oriented towards the *creation* of speeches (or texts)”; 2) the implicit assumption that “the truth can be detached from the forms of discourse and can be divided into the demonstrable and the probable” (Botha 1994:125).

3.2 MODERN DEVELOPMENTS OF RHETORICAL ANALYSIS

3.2.1 MUILENBURG AND HIS SCHOOL: RHETORIC AS STYLISTICS

We may justly say that the recent resurgence of rhetorical analysis in biblical studies has been initiated by James Muilenburg in 1968 in his SBL presidential address entitled “Form criticism and beyond” (Trible 1994:5; Walton 1996:4; Watson & Hauser 1994:107; Mack 1990:12).⁵ Even though Muilenburg counts himself as a practitioner of form criticism, and there is some strength in form-critical methodology (1969:2-3), he noticed some deficiencies in form criticism and the need to investigate further the literary aspects of the Bible. He called this approach a rhetorical approach (1969:4-8). For Muilenburg, rhetoric assists in understanding the nature of the Bible’s literary composition, “in exhibiting the structural patterns that are employed for the fashioning of a literary unit, whether in poetry or in prose, and in discerning the many and various devices by which the predications are formulated and ordered into a unified whole” (1969:8). Rhetoric to him is an enterprise such as described above and rhetorical criticism is its accompanying methodology (1969:8). His main interest is in matters of arrangement and style in OT studies, his own field of expertise. Even though his method is called “rhetorical criticism” and made a great impact on OT scholarship,⁶ his approach is limited to stylistics and because of that, he was criticized by many scholars as misconceiving the nature of rhetoric (Wuellner 1987:451, 462; Botha 1994:128-131; Mack 1990:12-13).⁷

Before Muilenburg, however, there were some important precursors, who worked to introduce the rhetorical approach to literary criticism. They are Kenneth Burke (1969) and Wayne Booth (1961), and especially in the New Testament field, Amos N. Wilder (1964) and Robert W. Funk (1966). In fact, Amos Wilder is called “the father of rhetorical analysis” (Robbins & Patton 1980:328). In the same year of Muilenburg’s “clarion call” for a rhetorical approach, Edwin A. Judge (1968:37-50) wrote a seminal article in which he called for a systematic analysis of the rhetoric of the NT. He made it clear that the literary form and sequence of a

⁵ His address was published in *JBL* 88 (1969:1-18).

⁶ See Watson (1988a:2-3) where he lists the books in which used this method.

⁷ Wuellner wrote, “‘rhetoric restrained,’ i.e., victims of the fateful reduction of rhetorics to stylistics, and of stylistics in turn to the rhetorical tropes or figures” (1987:451). Botha lists four distortions of rhetoric and

text may reveal an author's thought and situation, and may have been constructed with a conscious or unconscious use of a known rhetorical system as well (cf. Watson 1988a:3). In his article he challenged the NT scholarship to assess the rhetorical training of Paul and to assess the impact of Greco-Roman rhetoric upon the NT texts.

3.2.2 THE NEW RHETORIC: RHETORIC AS ARGUMENTATION

Generally, "the new rhetoric" emphasizes argumentation and the conviction-persuasion duality. It shifts its focus to a reader/audience-oriented argumentation due to the influence of works by Toulmin (1958) and Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969. cf. Cox & Willard 1982:xxii and Sloane 1975:802-810; Botha 1994:125). Actually the term "new rhetoric" comes from Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's influential book *The New Rhetoric: A treatise on argumentation* (1969). In it they specifically mention that "the object of the theory of argumentation is the study of the discursive techniques, allowing us *to induce or to increase the mind's adherence to the theses presented for its assent*" (1969:4; italics his). Mack (1990:15; cf. Botha 1994:126) points out three of their observations that are significant in the field of rhetoric:

- 1) They place argumentation within a rhetorical framework – the soundness of an argument is equated with its effectiveness on the intended audience. By emphasizing argumentation, they revive the ancient classical definition of rhetoric as "the art of persuasion." They believe that rhetoric could be applied to widely ranging modes of human discourse, and that the study of speech events is closely related to social situations.
- 2) They successfully demonstrate the importance of the situation or speech context, and thus they offer the apparatus to bridge the gap between literary criticism and social history.
- 3) They also powerfully "demonstrate the rhetorical coefficient that belongs to every human exchange involving speech, including common conversation and the daily discourse of a working society."

"rhetoric reduced to style" is one of them. Others are: 1) "rhetoric as an inferior form of argumentation"; 2) "rhetoric bound to Greco-Roman school rhetoric"; 3) "fixation on genre."

Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca have taken rhetoric out of the sphere of mere ornamentation and placed rhetoric at the center of a social theory of language.

3.2.3 MODERN APPLICATION OF CLASSIC RHETORIC IN NEW TESTAMENT STUDIES

3.2.3.1 HANS DIETER BETZ

The modern application of rhetorical analysis in NT studies was begun by Betz in his article of 1975. In it he suggested that the book of Galatians should be interpreted as a rhetorical discourse, an apologetic letter, which utilizes Greco-Roman rhetorical categories of speech (1975:353-379). Later he wrote a commentary on the whole of Galatians from the point of view of Greco-Roman rhetorical analysis, which was the first work using this kind of approach (1979). In this regard he is a pioneer, who utilized Greco-Roman rhetoric to write a commentary, though he did not provide a discussion of his methodology (cf. Watson & Hauser 1994:107-109). His work demonstrates that the species of rhetoric and the arrangement of the parts can be applied to the analysis of a Pauline epistle. His major contribution is to have recognized that Paul's letters clearly contain argumentation, which can be identified easily from comparison with the conventions for the invention and arrangement of arguments in rhetorical writings in the Greco-Roman period (Mitchell 1991:5 and 6). His work, however, has been severely criticized by some scholars as methodologically questionable (cf. Smit 1989:1-26; Longenecker 1990:cix-cxii; Hansen 1989:58-71 and Stamps 1995:137).

3.2.3.2 MARGARET M. MITCHELL

Mitchell is a student of H. D. Betz, who wrote a doctoral dissertation under his supervision on 1 Corinthians using rhetorical criticism (1991). Her subject is the overall genre, function, and composition of 1 Corinthians and her thesis is that "1 Corinthians is a single letter of unitary composition, which contains a deliberative argument persuading the Christian community of Corinth to become reunified" (1991:1). She identifies 1 Co. 1:10 as the thesis statement, in which we find Paul's exhortation to reconciliation for the divided Corinthian Church. This is a political problem well fitted to deliberative rhetoric. She thinks the arrangement of 1 Corinthians conforms to that of deliberative rhetoric, and each of the topics in 1 Corinthians is

comprised under the topic of factionalism. She basically follows Betz' methodology and lays out five mandates for her application of rhetorical criticism in NT studies (1991:6).

1. Rhetorical criticism as employed here is an historical undertaking.
2. Actual speeches and letters from antiquity must be consulted along with the rhetorical handbooks throughout the investigation.
3. The designation of the rhetorical species of a text (as epideictic, deliberative, or forensic) cannot be begged in the analysis.
4. The appropriateness of rhetorical form or genre to content must be demonstrated.
5. The rhetorical unit to be examined should be a compositional unit, which can be further substantiated by successful rhetorical analysis.

Mitchell concludes that the partition theories for 1 Corinthians are unproved, and mechanical applications of methodological principles are inappropriate for rhetorical texts (1991:298). She correctly suggests that the interaction of historical rhetorical analysis and sociological analysis of the NT might be a fruitful method for future study (1991:300-301).

3.2.3.3 GEORGE A. KENNEDY

Kennedy is a leading expert in classical rhetoric of the Greco-Roman period. He is one of the most important scholars who provided for the first time a systematic methodology, from a classicist's perspective, for the rhetorical analysis of NT studies (1984; cf. Walton 1996:5). He applied a classical rhetorical approach to the whole range of NT literature in his book, which became highly influential in this discipline. He utilized the theories from ancient rhetorical handbooks to analyze the biblical text. His objective is to provide "an additional tool of interpretation to complement" other approaches being used in the twentieth century, such as form criticism, redaction criticism, historical and literary criticism (1984:3). He defines rhetorical criticism as follows, "Rhetorical criticism takes the text as we have it...and looks at it from the point of view of the author's or editor's intent, the unified results, and how it would be perceived by an audience of near contemporaries" (1984:4). He recognizes that rhetoric was used primarily in civic life, and that it had a legal and political purpose. There is, however, "rhetoric of religion" or "rhetoric of sacred language." In the Bible we might see this distinctive rhetoric (1984:6-7). He thinks that it is legitimate to approach the Bible in terms of Greco-Roman ideas of rhetoric, since rhetoric was a systematic academic discipline universally taught throughout the Roman empire, of which Palestine was a part, and this provides historical justification for the approach (1984:8-12). According to him, the ultimate

goal of rhetorical analysis is “the discovery of the author’s intent and of how that is transmitted through a text to an audience” (1984:12).

The most significant contribution of Kennedy would be his easily applicable five steps’ approach to the practice of rhetorical criticism in NT studies (1984:33-38; cf. Watson 1988a: 8-28; Walton 1996:5; Weima 1997:461-462).

The first step is to determine the rhetorical unit. This step is similar to that of form criticism. A rhetorical unit is a persuasive or convincing unit that has an introduction, body, and conclusion. It can be large like the Sermon on the Mount (Mt. 5-7) - the “Little Apocalypse” (Mk. 13), or small like parables, metaphors, simple sayings, blessings, hymns, and brief commandments. The larger units are the text as a whole, such as the individual gospels or a specific letter of Paul. Of course, the largest units are the letters of Paul together and the whole NT canon.

The second step is to determine the rhetorical situation of the unit. Kennedy derived the idea of “rhetorical situation” from Bitzer’s article (1968). Bitzer understands that a particular discourse comes into existence because certain situations invite utterance. He defines rhetorical situation as “a complex of persons, events, objects, and relations involved.” It corresponds to the *Sitz im Leben* of form criticism. There are three elements of rhetorical situation we need to consider:

1. the exigence or “one overriding rhetorical problem” which the speaker wants to address or correct;
2. the audience, to whom the rhetorical solution is directed; and
3. the constraints brought by the speaker’s analysis of the situation.

The third step is to determine the species of rhetoric, whether it is judicial (or forensic), deliberative, or epideictic, and the stasis (i.e. to determine the basic definite question at hand). This step can be crucial in understanding the rhetorical unit, because the speaker chooses the genre of rhetoric that best fits his situation.

The fourth step is to analyze invention, arrangement, and style in the rhetorical unit. For an analysis of arrangement of the rhetorical unit we need to seek the sub-divisions that exist in the rhetorical unit, their persuasive effect, and how they work together to some unified

purpose in meeting the rhetorical situation. Often this stage utilizes the four major parts of the unit: *exordium* (introduction), *narratio* (or *prothesis*; statement or proposition), *probatio* (or *pistis*; confirmation or proof) and *peroratio* (or *epilogus* or *conclusio*; epilogue or conclusion). For the consideration of invention and style we need to do a line-by-line analysis of the rhetorical unit in order to seek the features of argument and the devices used in developing the argument. Seeking the kinds of proof and the relative proportions of the three types of internal proofs (*ethos*, the moral character of speaker; *pathos*, the appeals to the emotions of the audience, and *logos*, the logical nature of the speaker's argument) will be crucial in understanding the text.

The fifth and last step is to evaluate the effectiveness of the whole rhetorical unit. After analyzing the rhetorical unit according to the above steps, we need to look back over the whole unit in order to see how the discourse meets the exigence of the specific rhetorical situation and what implication the rhetorical unit has for the speaker and audience. For Kennedy this last stage is important, because the rhetorical discourse is a creative act, in which the whole is often greater than the sum of the parts.

Elizabeth M. Cornelius (1998) understood this last step as being one of the most important points in rhetorical studies in her doctoral dissertation on 1 Thessalonians, and a point which has been mostly neglected by scholars.

3.2.3.4 DUANE F. WATSON

Watson wrote a doctoral dissertation on Jude and 2 Peter applying the method of rhetorical criticism (1988a). In this book he simply uses the suggestions of Kennedy. His valuable contribution in rhetorical criticism is his useful introduction and comprehensive bibliography on rhetorical criticism in the NT field until 1993 (1988b; 1990; 1995; Watson & Hauser 1994; cf. Kim S H 1998:42). He wrote some articles on Philippians (1988c), 1 John (1991), 1 Corinthians 15 (1993a), and James (1993b) applying Kennedy's classical rhetoric method. In terms of methodology he did not introduce any new approach.

3.2.3.5 LAURI THURÉN

For Thurén (1990) rhetoric is a method of persuasion for inducing the appropriate action from the recipients, not just obtaining their assent, since argumentation always seeks the adherence of an audience (:50-52). He sees that “argumentation focuses on the audience-oriented aspects, that is on the *communicative*, and especially the *interactive* dimension of the text” (:52; italics his). That is, a speaker does not only deliver some information to the audience, but also seeks to produce some effect on the audience. “From this interactive perspective, a discourse is seen not only as the sender’s communication to the receiver, but as a bi-directional relationship. The audience’s (i.e. the audience implied in the text) feedback affects the speaker’s further message, which again affects the audience.” (Thurén 1990:52)

3.2.4 SOCIO-RHETORICAL ANALYSIS AS INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH

As we have seen above, modern conceptions of rhetoric are varied and diverse as in the case of ancient rhetoric. Muilenburg and his followers wrongly defined rhetoric as stylistics. In the new rhetoric scholars changed their focus on rhetoric as argumentation and revived the ancient conception of rhetoric as the “art of persuasion.” With Thurén, the conception was further developed as interaction between author and reader, but it was not yet fully developed since it did not include the social aspect of the text. Most recently, rhetoric has been developed beyond its old boundaries. It becomes an interdisciplinary discipline with strong emphasis on sociology. Wuellner, Mack, and Robbins are important scholars in this regard. This approach is called “re-invented” or “revalued” rhetoric by Wuellner (1987:453) or “socio-rhetorical criticism” by Robbins (1984 & 1992; 1996a & 1996b). We see this fully-developed interdisciplinary approach in Wuellner, Mack, and Robbins, whom I will now discuss.

3.2.4.1 WILHELM H. WUELLNER

Wuellner is also one of the important figures, who creatively introduced a rhetorical approach with socially centered orientation to NT studies. He is the first scholar who combined both the classical rhetoric and more modern rhetoric theory, i.e., Perelman’s theory of argumentation, in the study of NT books, since he understood that there was no uniform

system of classical rhetoric and room for redefinition existed (1991:172).⁸ He proposed that (1991:128-129; originally 1976:333-334):

[A] study of the rhetorical nature of Paul's argumentation, or a study of the nature of argumentation in Paul's letters, will help us out of the two impasses created by the fixation with form- and genre-criticism on the one hand, and with specific social or political situations on the other hand. I am not proposing that we eliminate literary and historical considerations. Neither am I proposing simply to add rhetorical considerations to an already crowded agenda of exegetical procedures. My proposal is for setting new priorities: I propose to replace the traditional priority on propositional theology and the more recent priority on letters as literature with the new priority on letters as argumentation ... I am proposing that we consider Paul's letters primarily as argumentative ... I propose that in the rediscovery of the nature and purpose of argumentation as a basically rhetorical process, we will find a more satisfactory way of accounting not only for the dialectical and logical dimensions, and for the literary dimensions in Paul's discourses, but also for the situational and social dimensions presupposed in Paul's letters.

Thus he argues that the Pauline epistles should be interpreted mainly as argumentative and rhetorical. He demonstrates that Romans was written according to the pattern of an ancient speech (1991:128-146).

In *Where is rhetorical criticism taking us?* Wuellner (1987:449) suggests that "rhetorical criticism is taking us beyond hermeneutics and structuralism to post-structuralism and post-hermeneutics" and he distinguishes "rhetoric restrained" from "rhetoric revalued" or "rhetoric reinvented" (:453; cf. Robbins 1994b:165; 1996a:61). By the term "rhetoric restrained" he refers to rhetoric reduced to stylistics and figures of speech, whereby it can be seen to be equal to literary criticism. He says that rhetoric restrained is "the fateful reduction of rhetorics to stylistics, and of stylistics in turn to the rhetorical tropes or figures. Reduced to concerns of style, with the artistry of textual disposition and textual structure, rhetorical criticism has become indistinguishable from literary criticism" (1987:451-452). Wuellner called it the "Babylonian captivity" of rhetoric (1987:457). By the term "rhetoric revalued (or reinvented)" he refers to dealing with the power of the text and this can therefore be equated with practical criticism. In his own words (1987:453),

'rhetoric revalued' (B. Vickers), 'rhetoric reinvented' (T. Eagleton), in which texts are read and reread, interpreted and reinterpreted, 'as forms of *activity* inseparable from the wider social relations between

⁸ See his articles "Paul's rhetoric of argumentation in Romans: An alternative to the Donfried-Karris debate over Romans," *CBQ* 38 (1976:330-351). Repr. *The Romans Debate* (1991:128-46), "Greek rhetoric and Pauline argumentation," in *Early Christian literature and the classical intellectual tradition: In honorem Robert M. Grant* (1979:177-88), and "Paul as pastor: The function of rhetorical questions in First Corinthians," in *L'Apôtre Paul: Personnalité, style et conception du ministère* (1986:49-77). For full detail of his writings, see Porter & Olbricht (1993:19-20).

writers and readers.’ Not only do rhetorical devices of disposition and style get studied as means of creating ‘certain effects on the reader,’ but also the very construct of a theory of rhetorical criticism, compared with past and present alternative theorizings, can be, indeed should be, examined ‘as a practice.’ (italics his.)

3.2.4.2 BURTON L. MACK

Mack (1990) believes that rhetorical criticism may be “the most promising form of literary criticism for the task of reconstructing Christian origins with social issues in view”(17). He thinks that rhetorical criticism is complementary to both literary criticism and social-scientific criticism and provides a bridge between these two approaches. The rhetorical perspective makes it possible to treat NT texts both “as literary composition and documents of early Christian social history at one and the same time.” He understands that rhetoric is able to describe an exchange of words and thoughts as a strategy by which an author seeks to influence his readers (:93). It exposes “the layered texture of the NT” and seeks to gain perspective on a text by giving proper attention to the process of social and literary history at a given juncture (:99-100).

3.2.4.3 VERNON K. ROBBINS

Lastly, V. K. Robbins is one of most important scholars who provides a workable methodology consisting of a combination of ancient and modern rhetorical analysis and who integrates different disciplines into a fully developed and comprehensive methodology. He specifically calls his interpretive analytics “socio-rhetorical criticism,” which is a *revalued* or *revisited* rhetorical interpretation. His method is interdisciplinary in nature and integrates new resources and practices of interpretation. In so doing, he suggests two new metaphors, a metaphor of “boundaries” and of weaving a thick “tapestry” or “texture,” instead of the well-known metaphor of texts as mirrors and windows. He thinks that it is necessary to create and to dismantle boundaries in and around the text as we interpret Scripture. He tries to avoid overemphasizing only one dimension of the text as do the historical-critical approach, structuralism, and linguistics. Instead, the text must be approached from different angles or perspectives. Because of this characteristic, his methodology is multi-dimensional and multi-disciplinary and has been developed significantly over the years to adapt constructive ideas

from various methodologies (Combrink 1999:18 and 19).⁹ He defines socio-rhetorical criticism as “a textually-based method that uses programmatic strategies to invite social, cultural, historical, psychological, aesthetic, ideological and theological information into a context of minute exegetical activity” (1994a:164-165). His methodology is well explained in his two books *The Tapestry of early Christian discourse: Rhetoric, society and ideology* (1996a) and *Exploring the texture of texts: A Guide to socio-rhetorical interpretation* (1996b). In *Tapestry* he suggests four textural approaches to the NT text: inner textual, inter textual, social and cultural textual, and ideological approaches. Later in *Exploring* he adds one more, namely, sacred textual analysis. Recently, he adds the last texture, emotional-psychological texture, which now makes six textures in all (1999:13). In addition to multi-textural criticism, he also introduced five kinds of socio-rhetorical discourse modes, namely, wisdom, apocalyptic, miracle, suffering-death-resurrection, pre-creation (1999:11).¹⁰ He thinks that every NT text has at least three or four socio-rhetorical modes. His undergraduate student, Rebecca A. Messerli, provides an excellent example of this socio-rhetorical discourse interpretation (1999).

At this stage it is necessary to ask what the presuppositions of socio-rhetorical criticism are. The first presupposition is that words are working in complex ways to communicate meanings that we understand only in part. The second presupposition is that “meanings themselves have their meanings by their relation to other meanings. In other words, all of our attempts to name truth are limited insights into small aspects of the relation of things and meanings to one another.” (Robbins 1996b:4) Because of this fact, socio-rhetorical criticism challenges us to use a wide spectrum of human abilities when we investigate and interpret biblical texts. The third presupposition of socio-rhetorical criticism is that interpreters should be interactive between subjectivity and objectivity as they come to biblical texts. The last presupposition is that “speaker, speech, and audience are primary constituents of a situation of communication. This threefold emphasis calls for significant attention to all three, in contrast to the kind of singular focus characteristic of one or other literary method” (Robbins 1996a:45).

⁹ For a detailed history of Robbins’ development of socio-rhetorical criticism since 1975, see Gowler (1994:1-36), his preface (1992), and most recently his own seminal paper (1999:1-13).

¹⁰ His article, “Socio-rhetorical interpretation from its beginning to present” was presented at the 1999 Pretoria conference of the SNTS.

The goal of socio-rhetorical criticism is “to enable interpreters to have an overall view of life and of the language that we use and explore a text in a systematic, broad manner that leads to a rich environment of interpretation and dialogue” (Combrink 1999:20). Thus interpreters should bear in mind that the texts they deal with are closely related with society, culture, and history. In this regard, the insights of sociolinguistics are very helpful (Blount 1995:vii, viii). “To explore these different relations, socio-rhetorical analysis functions as a systematic approach setting multiple ways of interpretation in dialogue with one another to nurture a broad-based interpretive analytics.” (Combrink 1999:20) Let us turn to how this multi-interdisciplinary methodology, which Robbins calls textures,¹¹ works.

The first texture is inner texture (1996a:44-95; 1996b:7-39). The inner texture of a text is very much like linguistic and literary analysis, and deals with aspects of linguistic structure such as grammar and syntax and refers to the various ways the text employs language to communicate. Thus from a rhetorical point of view, this is a discussion on arrangement (τάξις, *dispositio*). This analysis is to examine the “relationship among word-phrase and narratological patterns that produce argumentative and aesthetic patterns in a text” (1996a:46). In inner texture he identifies six kinds of inner texture which can be discovered by using rhetorical resources:

- 1) repetitive; 2) progressive texture, which deals with various types of linguistic patterns within a text; 3) opening-middle-closing texture; 4) narrational texture; 5) argumentative texture (seeing how the author persuades his reader); and 6) sensory-aesthetic texture and pattern (trying to see how a text evokes feelings, emotions, or senses that are located in different parts of the body).

The second texture is intertexture. In intertextual analysis we recognize that all texts stand in relation with other and prior texts. Here the focus is on interaction of the inner text with segments of other texts to which the text implicitly or explicitly refers or alludes, and the various strategies of abbreviation, modification, recontextualization, and selection are important here (1996a:33, 97). Intertextual analysis tries to understand how the language in the text is interactive “with ‘outside’ material and physical objects, historical events, texts, customs, values, roles, institutions and systems.” Its major goal is “to ascertain the nature and

¹¹ In his web site, <http://www.emory.edu/COLLEGE/RELIGION/faculty/robbins/SRI/defns/index.html>, Robbins provides a definition of each texture from his two books, *Tapestry* (1996a) and *Exploring* (1996b).

result of processes of configuration and reconfiguration of phenomena in the world outside of the text” (1996b:40). In this analysis, Robbins identifies four different kinds of intertexture:

- 1) *Oral-scribal intertexture*. This concerns aspects ranging from formal verbatim recitation of texts to recontextualization, reconfiguration, narrative amplification, and thematic elaboration (1996a:102; 1996b:40-58).
- 2) *Cultural intertexture*. This focuses on “symbolic worlds that particular communities of discourses nurture with special nuances and emphases. The special challenge with analysis of the cultural intertexture in New Testament text lies in the interaction among Jewish and Greco-Roman topics, codes, and generic conceptions in the New Testament discourse” (1996a:115). It means that when we undertake an intertextual analysis, we do not limit oral-scribal intertexture to the Hebrew OT. This intertexture also includes the wider Greco-Roman world and even its cultural and social texture in the form of references or allusions and echoes beyond the Jewish (or canonical) tradition (1996b:58-63).
- 3) *Social intertexture* deals with social aspects, and focuses on four different kinds of social knowledge: a) social role (soldier, shepherd, slave, athlete) or social identity (Greek, Roman, Jew); b) social institution (empire, synagogue, trade workers’ association, household); c) social code (e.g., honor, hospitality); and d) social relationship (patron, friend, enemy, kin). It also concerns various social activities, customs, and conventional practices in certain kinds of social settings (1996a:115-118; 1996b:62-63).
- 4) *Historical intertexture* concerns “a particular historical event or period rather than social practices that occurs regularly as events in one’s life” (1996a:118).

The third texture is the social and cultural texture. Here various social and anthropological theories are utilized to elucidate social and cultural aspects in the text. This texture refers to the “social and cultural nature of a text *as a text*.” When we investigate the social and cultural texture of a text, we explore “the social and cultural ‘location’ of the language and the type of social and cultural world the language evokes or creates.” This texture views a text as part of society and culture. The social and cultural texture of a text emerges in specific social topics, common social and cultural topics, and final cultural categories. *Specific social topics* in the

text show the biblical author's responses to the world in its discourse. A text reveals what the nature of the world is and what it is necessary to do to live in this world or to transform it (1996b:71). Robbins, following Bryan Wilson's typology of sects, sees seven kinds of social responses to the world, namely, conversionist, revolutionist, introversionist, Gnostic-manipulationist, thaumaturgical, reformist, and utopian (1996b:72-74). *Common social and cultural topics* in the text exhibit the overall environment of social and cultural attitudes, norms, and modes of interaction, which are known by everyone in a society. The knowledge of common social and cultural topics can help an interpreter to avoid ethnocentric and anachronistic interpretation. Lastly, *final cultural categories* establish the cultural location, which concern mainly how people present their propositions, reasons, and arguments both to themselves and to other people. These topics separate people in terms of dominant culture, subculture, counterculture, contraculture, and liminal culture. A text exhibits cultural topics, so an interpreter should determine whether the text shares its attitudes, values, and dispositions at some level (dominant and subculture rhetoric) or rejects these attitudes, values, and dispositions (counterculture, contraculture, and liminal culture rhetoric).

The fourth texture of socio-rhetorical analysis is ideological texture. The primary interest of ideological analysis is people and the text is secondary. Robbins accepts Davis' definition of ideology, namely, " 'an integrated system of beliefs, assumptions, values' that reflects 'the needs and interests of a group or class at the particular time in history' " (1996b:96). The issue is the author and reader's social, cultural, and individual location and perspectives. This textual analysis is totally different to the inner textual analysis. It concerns especially "the biases, opinions, preferences and stereotypes of a particular author and a particular reader" (1996b:95). It begins with analysis of both author and reader. Then, it turns to other people's interpretation of a text, and finally to the text as the guest in our dialogue with one other. It focuses on the relation of individual people to groups. The four subtextures of ideological texture are (1996b:95):

- 1) the individual locations of writers and readers (i.e., their presuppositions, dispositions, and values);
- 2) the relation to groups and membership, which influence readings and writers;
- 3) modes of intellectual discourse, which are the particular perspective a reader subscribes to, that sets boundaries around his or her readings;
- 4) and spheres of ideology, which concern the ideology inscribed in the text and how one may analyze it.

The fifth and last texture is sacred texture, which can be called a theological texture. It is a texture that is intertwined deeply with the other four textures (inner, inter-, social/cultural, and ideological), and refers to the manner in which a text communicates insights into the relationship between the human and the divine. This texture includes “aspects concerning deity, holy persons, spirit beings, divine history, human redemption, human commitment, religious community and ethics” (1996b:130).

Robbins’ socio-rhetorical analysis can be called “rhetorical hermeneutics” (Mailloux 1991: 233). It is a way to interpret the biblical text “in a responsible manner, broader, and more flexible paradigms of interpretation” (Combrink 1999:24). Botha (1998) rightly criticizes Robbins’ methodology, in that it is “so comprehensive that it would be very difficult to utilize this model for any text of a [sic] any length” (:59). Because of this fact I will use this model with some modification. Robbins himself admits that it is appropriate to use only some of his different methodologies in an actual interpretation of a biblical text (Robbins 1996b:2).

3.3 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

We have briefly described socio-rhetorical analysis from ancient times to recent approaches. In ancient times rhetoric was generally considered the “art of persuasion.” It was not just seen to be only ornament or style. “New rhetoric” rekindled the interest in rhetoric and revived argumentation as its focus. In this new context, Biblical scholars, since Muilenburg and Wilder, have applied rhetoric to their own field. As we have seen above, rhetorical analysis has been developed and is still being developed today. There is no single fixed methodology yet, but there are various methods with different emphases. Importantly, it has now become a multi-disciplinary method with which to interpret biblical texts with an emphasis on sociology, which is a new phenomenon in biblical studies.

In this study a multi-dimensional or multi-disciplinary method similar to that of Robbins will be used. We will adapt his methodology with some modifications. Firstly, in my analysis of intertexture (chapter 6), I will use some insights from social-cultural texture as part of my intertextual analysis, when I deal with social and cultural intertexture. This is because I think, as Robbins suggests (1996b:2), that it is not necessary to employ all the textures, and it will be too voluminous if I do it here. Thus, I will consider the social and cultural aspects in my analysis of social and cultural intertexture. Secondly, in my opinion, Robbins’ fifth texture,

sacred texture, is not well developed and is the weakest part of his methodology. Since there is a close relationship between theology and rhetoric¹² and we have a lot of resources on theology in biblical studies, we will discuss Pauline theology under the heading of “theological textual analysis” (chapter 7), instead of Robbins’ term “sacred texture.” Furthermore, since we are dealing with a letter, we need to take some insights from epistolary analysis (chapter 4.1). These two methods are not conflicting with each other, but are rather complementary. The epistolary approach will help us in our consideration of the macro-structure of Romans (see chapter 4.1). Lastly, in my opinion, we need to include some steps suggested by Kennedy (1984), especially those of establishing a rhetorical unit with some consideration of the epistolary nature of Romans and of having a proper understanding of the rhetorical situation from the beginning (chapter 4.3). As we do so, we need also to include some discussion on Paul’s rhetorical devices and the subject of Paul’s argumentation (chapter 4.5).

This then is the procedure that we will follow before undertaking a socio-rhetorical analysis of Romans 7. We will firstly conduct a preliminary study from an epistolary approach, which will help us significantly in our socio-rhetorical interpretation (chapter 4). Then, in that chapter, we will analyze the macro-structure of Romans in order to establish a rhetorical unit, and give attention to the rhetorical situation of Romans. Further, we will investigate the rhetorical devices used by Paul, especially diatribe and speech-in character, and determine what the rhetorical species of the whole letter Romans are. After this preliminary research, we will continue to conduct a socio-rhetorical analysis of Romans 7, beginning with inner textual analysis (chapter 5), and then intertextual analysis including some insights from social and cultural textual analysis (chapter 6), and theological textual analysis (chapter 7), in order to grasp the meaning of Paul’s statements on the law in Romans.

¹² Cunningham says, “Christian theology is best understood as *persuasive argument*” and “the goal of Christian theology is *faithful persuasion* to speak the word that theology must speak, in ways that are faithful to God of Jesus Christ and persuasive to the world that God has always loved” (1990:5).

CHAPTER IV

A PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATION

In the previous chapter we mentioned that we would utilize the socio-rhetorical analysis with special attention to the law in Romans 7. Before entering into our text, we need to obtain the larger picture of Romans first. As we do so, we will also use an epistolary analysis in combination with a rhetorical approach, since they are complementary to each other. After we have established the macrostructure of Romans, we will also establish Romans 7 as a rhetorical unit within the broader co-text chapters 5 to 8. Then, we will proceed to deal with the rhetorical situation of Romans and Paul's rhetorical devices, and finally we will classify the rhetorical genre or species of Romans. This is the first step in helping us understand our chosen text.

4.1 MACROSTRUCTURE OF ROMANS: EPISTOLARY ANALYSIS

Letters are the most common literary form in the NT writings (i.e., 21 out of 27 books are letters) and the most varied in terms of breadth, content and design. It is also the oldest form, since 1 Thessalonians was written first among New Testament writings (c. 50 AD). The apostle Paul is a letter-writer who wrote more than half of the 21 letters. In fact, all the materials we have from Paul are letters. Romans is unique among his letters, because it was sent to the Roman Christians whom he never visited personally.¹ Because it is a letter, the interpretation of it should be begun by an analysis of the letter's epistolary structure.² Robert Funk has already pointed out in his seminal paper that the first step to studying Paul's letters is to read the letter as a letter. This means above all to study its literary structure (1970:8). Similarly, R. N. Longenecker (1990) rightly insists that when we interpret any Pauline letter

¹ Scholars commonly accepted that Romans was written around AD 58, while Paul was in Corinth for three months at the close of his 3rd missionary journey (Rom. 15:23-25; 16:23; 1 Co. 1:14; cf. Acts 20:2,3). The date is certainly affected by decisions about the integrity of chapters 15 and 16, and I do not see any convincing explanations to reject its originality. Because of this I accept the chapters 15 and 16 as original work of Paul (see Gamble 1977; Cranfield 1982:1-11). They supply clear data – if the data are correct-- for fixing the occasion which gave rise to the composition of the whole (Murray 1982:vv,xvi; Black 1989; Hendriksen 1980:9; etc.). Cranfield considers that the winter and early spring of 55-56 or 56-57 to be plausible dates (:12-16).

² Alexander says, "It has become axiomatic in recent years that the critical study of Pauline letters must take its starting-point from analysis of the formal epistolary structures of the Hellenistic world." (1995:232)

we must begin with an analysis of the letter's epistolary structure. He says in his recent commentary on *Galatians*:

Since form and content are inseparable in the study of any writing, it is necessary to give attention not only to what is said but also to how it is said—that is, to the forms used to convey meaning and to the function served by each particular form. Therefore, prior to considering the specific content of Galatians (i.e. prior to exegesis proper), it is essential that we analyze the epistolary and rhetorical structures of the letter.

(Longenecker 1990:ci)

Even though the epistolary analysis cannot fully explain the letter body of Paul's letters (cf. Alexander 1995:233; Enderlein 1998:68-72),³ it helps us to understand the basic structure of the letters written by Paul. Because of this fact, I concur with Weima, who thinks that it is proper to begin with an epistolary approach, before conducting a socio-rhetorical analysis, and that these two approaches are complementary to each other in providing their own insights as we try to understand Paul's letters more fully (1994b:23-26).⁴ In the light of this, consider that the epistolary approach will be helpful for us as we try to understand the epistolary structure of Romans. In this regard, my approach will be an integration of epistolary and rhetorical analysis such as those of H. D. Betz (1979), G. W. Hansen (1989), D. F. Watson (1997), Samuel Byrskog (1997), and James D. Hester (2000).⁵

In Paul's day, the ancient Hellenistic letter had a three-part structure: an opening, a body, and a closing. The opening section of a letter normally consists of three sub-parts: the names of sender and recipient, a salutation, and a health wish. The main body is introduced by stereotypical introductory formulas, supplying the substance of the letter and often contained directions, explanations, and personal news. The closing part regularly has farewell greetings,

³ White (1971) comments that "the body of the ancient letter is more resistant to formal analysis than the opening and closing, often seeming to lack identifiable shape and identifiable conventions" (:91.n.2). Similarly, Aune says that the body of the letter "has proved most resistant to formal analysis" (1987:188).

⁴ We cannot discuss the relationship between epistolary analysis and rhetorical analysis in detail here as this is beyond the scope of my specific interest. John White comments: "The use of rhetorical techniques, especially in the theological body of St. Paul's letters, indicates that a knowledge of these traditions [ancient epistolary and rhetorical theory] is quite relevant to the study of early Christian letters." (1986:3)

⁵ Watson makes rhetorical analysis "primary" tool for analysis and epistolary analysis a secondary due to its limitations in his analysis on Philippians (1997:398-426). However, Byrskog seems to take both methods in equal terms. Byrskog says, "The epistolographic approach takes seriously the genre of the text as letter and provides an essential understanding of the basic structure and relational function of the prescript. The rhetorical approach helps significantly in comprehending the features that are strange according to the letter genre and relates them accurately to the rest of the letter...Both are necessary if we are to understand the persuasive strategy of the text." (1997:45) Hester expands Byrskog's method a little more, using Symbolic Convergence Theory (2000:11).

a final prayer, wishes for others, and sometimes a date (see Meecham 1923:113; Doty 1973:13,14; Jervis 1991:38; White 1986; Weima 1994b:11; Bailey & Vander Broek 1992:23).

The Pauline letters always follow this basic structure with slight modifications to meet Paul's needs. Because of this fact, even Doty (1973) argues that "Paul was the person who adapted Graeco-Roman letter models for Christian purposes, [and] that in his letters a genre or subgenre was created." (:21) Biblical scholars generally recognize that Paul's letters consist of the following structure: opening, the thanksgiving, the main body including the paraenesis, and the closing (Doty 1973:27; Jervis 1991:41-42; White 1988:97). This basic format is important to our understanding of Romans, since form and content are inseparable. Most importantly, the format helps to discern the structure of Romans within Paul's own historical context. Let us briefly describe the basic structure of Romans, starting from the letter opening.

4.1.1 THE LETTER OPENING (ROM. 1:1-7)

The standard form of a Hellenistic letter was written according to the formula 'A' (identification of sender in the nominative) to 'B' (designation of recipient unit in the dative), *χαίρειν*. Paul follows this standard formula with some variation in Romans. In his identification unit (Rom. 1:1-6) it is noteworthy that Paul expands the sender formula significantly (Jervis 1991:72; Weima 1994a:339; Enderlein 1998:35-38) and does not mention any names of his co-workers unlike his other letters.⁶ This unusual expansion of the sender unit is significant, because it shows that either the author or his readers do not share common knowledge (Jervis :78) or they are in disagreement concerning its importance (Enderlein :36). Paul is introduced with three *epitheta*: "δοῦλος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ, κλητὸς ἀπόστολος, ἀφωρισμένος εἰς εὐαγγέλιον θεοῦ" (1:1). He identifies himself in service under God as a special ambassador for the sake of the gospel. His self-designation as a "slave" and an "apostle" is quite common in his letters.⁷ However, his identification of himself as "apostle" does have significance as an indication of Paul's assertion of his authority. E. Best (1995) points out that Paul mentions his apostleship in the letter-opening when his authority is being

⁶ See 1 Co. 1:1, "Sosthenes"; Phlm. 1 and 2 Co., "Timothy"; Gal. 1:1, "all the brothers with me"; and Phil. 1:1, "Timothy."

⁷ "Servant" is sometimes mentioned (Rom. 1:1, Phil. 1:1 and Tit. 1:1) but most commonly "apostle" is used. (1 Co. 1:1; 2 Co. 1:1 and Gal. 1:1, Eph. 1:1; Col. 1:1; 1 Tim. 1:1; Tit. 1:1).

questioned by churches. This fact might be noted when we compare this letter-opening with those in the Corinthian letters and Galatians. Because of it he argues that Paul is writing to Rome in a self-defensive manner (:19-23; cf. Jervis 1991:79) and also “hints at the possible presence of opponents or at least skeptical neutral parties in Rome” (Enderlein 1998:36, 37). J. A. D. Weima also notes concerning the phrase κλητοὶ ἀπόστολοι that “the only other letter opening to use this phrase is 1 Corinthians – a letter where Paul’s apostolic status vis-à-vis the Corinthian church was at stake” (1994a:340). In verse 5 we have another reference to “apostleship,” which shows us that Paul is emphasizing his apostleship to his readers. Similarly, Vorster observes that a higher authority can be detected in each *epitheton*. Paul uses here the passive sense both in the verbal adjective κλητός and in the aorist participle of ἀφορίζω, which are examples of divine passive. Although Paul’s authority is emphasised, the focus is being transferred from Paul to either God or Christ (1991:95, 96).

However, the most significant expansion of the identification of sender’s unit is the elaboration of the gospel in some detail (1:2-6). Here we have Paul’s description of the gospel—its content (God’s son), extent (including the readers in Rome), and goal (the obedience of faith among the Gentiles). Concerning this expansion, Weima rightly points out:

At this point in the letter opening, Paul’s normal pattern would be to proceed to the recipient formula. Here in Romans, however, Paul interrupts this pattern by inserting a lengthy description of the gospel that he has been set apart to proclaim. This suggests that *there may have been some confusion in Rome concerning Paul’s gospel*. (see Rom. 3:8; italics mine)

(Weima 1994a:341)

Enderlein (1998) regards “confusion...concerning Paul’s gospel” as too mild. He believes that the phrase “hints at the possibility of opposition to Paul and the existence of a competing ideology” or gospel as does the reference to his apostleship (:38).

In his designation of the recipient unit (Rom. 1:7a) Paul addresses his letter “To all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints.” Here we note that there is no ἐκκλησία mentioned, unlike his other letters (1 Co. 1:2; 2 Co. 1:1; Gal. 1:2; 1 Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:1). According to Jervis, ἐκκλησία and ἐν θεῷ πατρὶ or ἐν Χριστῷ are common in Paul’s letters. But these are absent in Romans. She says that such an omission might signal Paul’s concern over some features of his recipients’ faith and practice (1991:81). If it is so, then, we might think that it implies that there is a possible opponent, a competing ideology in Rome, or

a lack of unity and agreement among the various Christian groups, which we do see in Rom. 16.

In the greeting unit (Rom. 1:7b), Paul deviates from the standard practice, as we have seen above. He employs the greeting χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, which is quite usual like in 1 Co.1:3; 2 Co. 1:2; Gal. 1:3; Phil. 1:2 and Phlm. 3. Some scholars think that Paul's standard greeting is a combination of Hellenistic and Jewish elements: Χάρις is Paul's substitution for the normal χαίρειν greeting, in combination with εἰρήνη, the usual Semitic שְׁלָמִים (peace) greeting (Doty 1973:22; Fitzmyer 1993:238; Hester 2000:8).

4.1.2 THE THANKSGIVING UNIT (ROM. 1:8-12)⁸

In the ordinary Hellenistic letter, a health wish regularly follows the greeting (for example, see Exler 1923:103-110). Paul changes this pattern significantly and does not explicitly follow this pattern. However, Paul does express his deep concern for his recipients' welfare in the grace greeting and thanksgiving (White 1988:98). We might say that the thanksgiving unit is a normal feature of Pauline epistles, because we have a thanksgiving unit or the corresponding Semitic "blessing" formula in all of his letters except Galatians (Sanders 1962:358-362).⁹ There are a number of different opinions over the types of Pauline thanksgivings¹⁰ but I think that the thanksgiving period has two essential components: the verb of thanksgiving and its substance.¹¹

⁸ Some scholars have different opinions over the extent of the thanksgiving section in Romans. There are three opinions on this matter: 1) 1:8-12, with the letter body beginning with the disclosure formula v.13; 2) 1:8-15, with the letter body beginning with the thematic statement of 1:16-17; and 3) 1:8-17, with the letter beginning with 1:18. I follow here the first option, which the majority of commentators take (cf. Käsemann 1980:16-21; Dunn 1988:26-36; Morris L 1988:54-65; Jervis 1991:54-65; Moo 1991:50-59; Hester 2000:8). Weima takes second option (1994a:346).

⁹ Regarding Galatians, it is commonly agreed that it has no thanksgiving unit because Paul was greatly concerned about the endangered situation in the Galatian church due to the circumcision party and the dissension over the genuine message of the gospel and his apostleship.

¹⁰ Weima (1994a) claims that there is one type of Pauline thanksgiving with five elements: 1) the principal verb, εὐχαριστῶ; 2) the manner of thanksgiving; 3) a causal construction; 4) an explanation; 5) a prayer report. Further, he points out some of the unique features of Romans' thanksgiving section in comparison to those of Paul's other letters: 1) the principal verb has two unparalleled additions: the adverbial phrase πρῶτον μὲν and the prepositional phrase διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ; 2) the placing of the manner of thanksgiving is unusual. Elsewhere it comes immediately after the opening expression of thanksgiving. Here it occurs in third place. Further, it has an oath formula μάρτυρι γάρ μου ἐστὶν ὁ θεός and the relative clause ἧ λατρεύω ἐν τῷ πνεύματι μου ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ; 3) the cause of thanksgiving is exceptionally brief and

One thing we need to bear in mind is that the thanksgiving period, like the rest of the letter opening, foreshadows the issues and situation of the letter body (see Schubert 1939:24, 77; White 1971:32; Doty 1973:32; Jervis 1991:89; Enderlein 1998:42). Here we note that Paul anticipates some conflict over his message, and there may be some elements in the Roman congregations that he wants to correct. Weima (1994a) rightly points out that “the apologetic function of this formula is concerned to defend himself against any potential criticism his readers may have” (:347). This understanding is confirmed in that we see the presence of an oath, “God is my witness” (Enderlein 1998:42) and the notably meager praise element (Du Toit 1989:206),¹² and his prayer report which mainly concerns Paul’s hope to visit them so that he might impart a spiritual gift to them in contrast to other Pauline letters (1:10-11; cf. Jervis 1991:109; Enderlein 1998:43).

4.1.3 TRANSITION TO AND FROM THE LETTER BODY

In a typical Hellenistic letter, the main body usually follows the greeting unit and the health wish when the latter is present. The letter body consists of three distinct parts: the body-opening, the body-middle and the body-closing. In the case of Pauline letters, as we see above, the thanksgiving section was used instead of the health wish. Thus we can expect that the body-opening will follow on the end of the thanksgiving. The important question here is what signals the end of the one and the beginning of the other.

formal; 4) there is no explanation of further causes for thanksgiving; and 5) there is the unparalleled addition of a final explanatory unit (Rom. 1:11-12), which gives further reasons for the substance of Paul’s prayer (:346). However, it is better to see that the basic elements of Pauline letters are the verb of thanksgiving and its substance as Mullins (1972:382) and Murphy-O’Connor (1995:59) conclude. Murphy-O’Connor says that “Paul was conscious of form, but more concerned with content. The literary convention of the thanksgiving...was merely a frame which his versatility continuously transformed. The two essential components – Paul’s gratitude and its justification – are the only totally consistent elements.”

¹¹ Schubert (1939) identified two different types of thanksgiving units. The first type begins with the verb of thanksgiving and concludes with a subordinate final clause usually introduced by ἵνα, ὅπως, or εἰς τό with an infinitive as found in 1 Thess., Phlm., Phil., Col., and Eph.. The second type also begins with the verb of thanksgiving, but then is followed by a subordinate causal clause introduced by ὅτι, which is then followed by a consecutive clause signaled by ὥστε as found in Rom., 1 Co., and 2 Thess.. In contrast, even though Mullins (1972) identifies five elements of the thanksgiving period (the verb of thanksgiving, a modifier, the object of thanksgiving, the person addressed, and the substance of thanksgiving), he thinks that two elements, the verb of thanksgiving and substance, are essential (:382). Jerome Murphy-O’Connor agrees with Mullins (1995:57).

¹² Du Toit thinks that there are two possibilities for this meager praise element in Romans: either Paul’s lack of knowledge or the nature of their faith which was lacking in their practice of faith. The latter is more likely in the light of the regular traffic between Corinth and Rome and the number of Paul’s acquaintances in Rome, particularly Prisca and Aquilla (cf. Rom. 16).

4.1.3.1 THE BODY-OPENING AND THE DISCLOSURE FORMULA (ROM. 1:13)

Mullins (1972) correctly pointed out that forms “almost always punctuate a break in the writer’s thought” (:387). It is helpful to distinguish the transition period from the letter opening to the letter body. Paul frequently uses two common Hellenistic literary formulas to introduce the body-opening. The first one is a request or petition formula (usually παρακαλῶ, as in 1 Co. 1:10 and Phlm. 8), which “constitutes one clear mark to show where the Thanksgiving ends” (Mullins 1964:45). The second and more common formula Paul uses to initiate the body-opening is a disclosure formula. According to Mullins (1964), there are four elements that constitute the disclosure formula: (1) a verb to express desiring in the first person indicative form (usually θέλω or βούλουμαι); (2) the infinitive form of the verb of knowing (e.g., γινώσκω); (3) the person addressed; and (4) the information to be disclosed introduced by ὅτι (:46; cf. White 1971:93). Contrary to White who thinks that the vocative of address is essential (1971:92), Mullins regards the vocative of address as optional (ἀδελφοί, five instances in Paul, Rom. 11:25; 1 Co. 10:1, 11:3, 12:1-3; 1 Thess. 4:13). Both the request formula and the disclosure signal the end of the thanksgiving period and the beginning of the letter body. In Paul the disclosure formula is quite common in beginning the body of his letters (e.g., 2 Co. 1:8; Gal. 1:11; 1 Thess. 2:1 and Phil. 1:12). In Romans we have the phrase οὐ θέλω δὲ ὑμᾶς ἀγνοεῖν, ἀδελφοί, ὅτι ... in 1:13. This is a slight variation of the typical formula (i.e., he uses οὐ ... ἀγνοεῖν in stead of γινώσκειν), but it has the four required elements of the formula together with optional vocative of address. Therefore, we may assert that Rom. 1:13 initiates the opening of the letter body. This point is generally accepted by many epistolary critics, Sanders (1962), White (1971:94; 1972:52, 69), Doty (1973:43), Jewett (1991:267; 1995:91), Funk (1967:264 n.60), Du Toit (1989:208) and most recently Hester (2000:9), contra Jervis (1991:105).

The body-opening is significant because it signals the theme or purpose of the letter. White points out that “the body-opening is the point at which the principal occasion for the letter is usually indicated...The body-opening lays the foundation...from which the superstructure may grow” (1972:18, 19). With the body-opening Paul discloses new information. Here in Romans Paul wants the recipients to know the fact that he had “often intended to come to them” but had been unable to fulfill his intention up to that point, yet was still eager to come and preach to them (Rom. 1:13-15). This implies that Paul’s intention to minister in Rome was a matter of contention with Roman congregations and that some thus questioned the

nature of his message and ethos. This implication is confirmed by the fact that Paul immediately proceeds to claim that he is not ashamed of his gospel (Rom. 1:16), which indicates that, for some, his previous failure to preach in Rome had led them to conclude that his gospel was shameful. The body-opening of Romans, like the letter opening and the thanksgiving, serves to indicate the presence of opposition to Paul and his gospel in Rome.

4.1.3.2 THE BODY-CLOSING (ROM. 15:14-32)

It is difficult to discern the structure of the body-middle due to the limitations of the epistolary analysis, so I will discuss it later after examining the body-closing and the letter closing conventions. The transition from the body-middle to the body-closing was usually indicated by one particular stereotyped disclosure formula – the motivation for writing. In Paul this body-closing is more stereotyped than either the body-opening or body-middle (White 1972:59). This was the usual pattern: γέγραφα σοι ὅπως ἄν (or ἵνα) εἰδῆις (:27). This body-closing has two functions: (1) as a means of mentioning the author’s purpose for writing; (2) as a means of laying a bridge for further communication (:25). In the body-closing the author not only specifically expresses his intention of writing, but also often urges the readers to show an appropriate response (the responsibility phrase) and refers to an anticipated visit.

Paul has adapted this convention to his own style in his letters. He employs the verb γράφω (Rom.15:15; cf. Phlm.19 & Gal. 5:2), instead of the typical formula, the infinitive “to know (γινώσκειν).”¹³

Similarly, he employs the responsibility phrase by stating it instead as an affirmation of his confidence that his audience will respond appropriately. He uses the perfect tense of πείθω to show the basis of and object of his confidence, introduced by ὅτι (see Rom. 15:14. See also Gal. 5:10; Phlm. 21). This is called a “confidence formula” by White and is unique, which having no parallel in the papyri (1972:64).

The motivation for writing and the responsibility phrase fulfill the function of highlighting key components of the body-middle. The final element of the body-closing, talk about an

¹³ White calls this adaptation “a surrogate motivation for writing formula” (1972:63).

anticipated visit, serves to lay the foundation for further communication.¹⁴ In Romans, Paul restates that he has frequently been hindered from visiting them, but he explicitly states his intention to visit them as he is on the way to Spain, after he fulfills his duty to take the collection for the poor in Jerusalem (Rom. 15:22-29). In a way, then, this visit talk section functions as an *inclusio*, bracketing the body-middle with the corresponding reference to Paul's thwarted intention to visit the Roman congregations in the body-opening (Rom. 1:13; see Weima 1994b:219, 220).¹⁵

It is true that "as the beginning sections of the letter foreshadowed the main points, in mirror fashion the body-closing casts a spotlight back at these concerns" (Enderlein 1998:52). The body-closing, with its motivation for writing formula, functions to highlight the main points of the body-middle, so it is not only important structurally, but helps us to discern the tone and purpose(s) of the letter as a whole. In this section we see also clear evidence that Paul is arguing persuasively for his apostolic ministry and gospel against alternative positions, and that he is appealing to his audience to live correspondingly with this gospel and ministry.

4.1.4 THE LETTER CLOSING (ROM. 15:33-16:27)

The letter closing of the Hellenistic letters usually consisted of a farewell wish, a health wish, secondary greetings, an autograph, an illiteracy formula, the date, and a postscript (Weima 1994b:28-56). The Pauline letter closings, including that of Romans, though similar, are much more extensive than this model. While its order and presence may vary, the Pauline letter closing consists of six possible units: (1) a peace-benediction; (2) a grace-benediction; (3) a

¹⁴ There is debate as to whether Paul's references to anticipated visits is a formal feature of the body-closing. Robert W. Funk identified this visit talk as a form and called it "apostolic parousia" (1967:249-268). In essence this form consisted of five elements: (1) Paul's purpose of writing; (2) the basis of Paul's apostolic relation to the recipients; (3) implementation of the apostolic parousia; (4) invocation of divine approval and support for the parousia; (5) benefits of the apostolic parousia (:252-253). Jervis accepts this understanding with some modification. She reduces it to three functional units: the writing of the letter unit, the dispatching of an emissary unit, and the visit unit (1991:110-29). She identifies the visit unit as the only element consistently found in all the letters, except for 1 Corinthians. However, Mullins has persuasively demonstrated that visit talk is *only a theme* regularly present in the body-closing of Paul's letters, *not a form or formula* (1973:350-358; italics mine). He points out that only item # 3 in Funk's analysis, the implementation of the apostolic parousia, is found in all 13 Pauline letters (:351). Moreover, the only consistency in this item is that Paul writes of visiting the congregations, but he does so in various ways with no verbal consistency (:352). This absence of structural consistency leads Mullins to conclude that visit talk is a theme, not a form. The most that can correctly be claimed is that the visit talk theme consistently signals the body-closing.

¹⁵ Weima correctly points out that Rom. 15:14-32 is an "apostolic parousia" and belongs to the body of Paul's letter, not the closing. He rightly finds the correspondence between Rom. 15:14-32 and Rom. 1:10-15.

command or exhortation unit; (4) a doxology; (5) an autograph; and (6) a greetings unit (Weima 1994b:77-155; contra Jervis 1991:132; Gamble 1977:80-83; Enderlein 1998:54-60). Although the grace-benediction unit and greeting unit are the only two elements that consistently occur in Paul's letter, all six elements are found in the letter closing of Romans.

Of these elements, the peace-benediction is typically the first (e.g., Phil. 4:9; 1 Thess. 5:23; 2 Thess. 3:16). In Rom. 15:33 the wish -- ὁ δὲ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης μετὰ πάντων ὑμῶν, ἀμήν—initiates the letter closing. This peace wish corresponds to the greeting at the beginning of the letter (Rom. 1:7).

The letter-closing continues with a unique element in Romans, a commendation (Rom. 16:1-2) and then it proceeds to Paul's final greetings (Rom. 16:1-16). After the greeting list, there is the exhortation unit (Rom. 16:17-20a), together with a rejoicing unit in Romans (cf. 1 Co. 16:17; Phil. 4:10). Then, another unique feature is a second peace-benediction following the exhortation (Rom. 16:20a). The grace-benediction which usually concludes Paul's letters (see 1 Co. 15:23; 2 Co. 13:14; Gal. 6:18; Phil. 4:23; 1 Thess. 5:28; Phlm, 25) and like the peace-benediction echoes the opening greeting (Rom. 1:7), in this case precedes a second greeting list (Rom. 16:20b). This second greeting unit has greetings from Paul's co-workers, together with those of his amanuensis, Tertius (Rom. 16:21-23). The letter then concludes with a second grace-benediction (Rom. 16:24) and a doxology, both of which are uncertain textually.¹⁶

Like the other aspects of the letter framework and the transitions to and from the letter body, the letter closing also provides clues as to the tone and purposes of the letter. Weima says that the letter closing of Romans "provides compelling evidence that this final epistolary unit has been deliberately constructed to support Paul's overall purpose in the writing of this letter" (1994b:230). Thus the letter-closing can be "a hermeneutical guide" for interpreters as to the

¹⁶ It is beyond my concern to deal here with textual problem in detail. Gamble (1977) and Jervis (1991) suggest the theory that Rom. 16:1-20 is an autograph section written by Paul himself. Then, his scribe Tertius adds a second list of greetings, including his own (Rom. 16:21-23) and a second grace-benediction to conclude the letter (Rom. 16:24). Weima (1994b) disagrees with their proposal and says that the textual evidence supporting a double grace-benediction is late. He rejects the inclusion of v.24 in the original letter. Instead, he proposes that Rom. 16:17-20a is the autograph section. He thinks this explains the shift to a harsher tone in these verses and parallels Paul's practice of a closing exhortation in his own hand (Gal. 6:11-18; 1 Co. 16:22; :218,221). He also differs from Gamble and Jervis in that he believes that the doxology of Rom. 16:25-27 is an original part of the letter, because it accurately recapitulates the themes and language of the letter. In this he follows many scholars who accept the authenticity of Rom. 16:25-27 (see :219 n.1).

purpose of Romans (1994b:230). In this case, the letter-closing confirms that Paul is arguing persuasively on behalf of his ministry and gospel in the face of conflicting claims, and is attempting to persuade the Romans to align themselves with him. Several points might be made in this regard, including the extended greeting list (Rom. 16:3-16).

This greeting list is distinctive for its length. In seventeen greetings Paul mentions twenty-six people in the Roman churches by name, together with commendatory descriptions. Why does Paul exercise this unusual practice? Paul does it because the greetings serve to strengthen Paul's ethos and the authority of his apostleship and gospel over the Roman Christians by associating him closely with these outstanding individuals (Weima 1994b:222; Enderlein 1998:58). Paul is emphasizing the relationship between the individuals mentioned and himself, which serves to place them in a respectable position among the community. Also, linking the apostle so closely to them places Paul in the same position (Gamble 1977:92; Jervis 1991:151; Weima 1994a:362; 1994b:226). Thus, this extensive greeting list functions as a parade of witnesses on Paul's behalf, increasing his persuasive position.

This persuasive effect is further confirmed by the final greeting, "All the churches of Christ send greetings" (Rom. 16:16b). Here Paul presents himself to the Roman believers as the one who has authority to send such greeting. Weima (1994a) points out that "there is in this greeting an implied challenge for believers in Rome to join these other churches in recognizing the authority of Paul's apostleship and his gospel" (:363).

While the greeting list enhances Paul's persuasive position, the exhortation unit (Rom. 16:17-20) confirms the earlier inference that Paul was dealing with either conflicting positions or direct opposition. Here Paul warns Roman believers to beware of those who would deceive and corrupt them with a teaching (*διδαχή*) contrary to his gospel. This shows that Paul knows of or expects there to be opposition to his gospel. This understanding is validated by the wish, which concludes the exhortation, "The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet" (Rom. 16:20). Paul perceives that Satan (*ὁ σατάν*) is in Rome. This is further evidence that his authority and message are contested, and implies the presence of human opposition as well. Thus, in several ways, the letter closing confirms the earlier inferences drawn from the letter opening and body-closing concerning the tone and purpose(s) of the letter.

4.1.5 THE BODY-MIDDLE (ROM. 1:16-15:33)

So far we have discussed the structure and implications of the letter opening and closing and the transitions to and from the body of the letter. Now we are going to analyze the body-middle, which contains the main information. However, as I have mentioned above, epistolary analysis has limitations at this point. It cannot analyze extensively the formal structure of the body-middle. In large measure this is due to the diversity and greater contingency of this letter section. These factors restrain a formal and comparative analysis. These hindrances and their implications for discerning the structure and purpose of Romans deserve further discussion, but first we will briefly discuss the limited contributions that epistolary analysis has made toward analyzing the structure of the body-middle.

4.1.5.1 TRANSITIONS IN THE BODY-MIDDLE

In lengthy letters there are some identifiable forms used as transitions from one section to another. First of those forms is the disclosure formula, which has been discussed in reference to the transition from the letter opening to the body-opening. Just as a disclosure may signal the transition from the letter opening to the body, it may also signal transitions within the body itself (see Rom. 6:6; 11:25). As previously noted, the impact of this form can be punctuated by the presence of a second form, the vocative of address. In addition to the disclosure formulas discussed above (4.1.3.1), disclosure formulas also occur as imperatives, perfect indicatives, and participles (White 1972:52; Enderlein 1998:61). However, while these disclosure formulas signal transitions within the body-middle, an analysis of the content, not just the form itself, is necessary to determine whether the transition is a major or a minor one. For example, Rom. 11:25 (“I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers”) is a full disclosure formula together with vocative of address, but the material it contains is emphatic to the preceding material. It might then be a minor, not a major transition.

Second, besides the disclosure formula, verbs of saying or informing comprise a second category of transitional formulas within the body-middle, specifically λέγω (e.g. Rom. 9:1). White (1972) notes that this formula usually indicates a major transition as it introduces entirely new material or discusses a significant aspect of the present topic. However, we have to be careful in making judgement whether a transition is major or minor using only the

presence of a form or verbs of saying. We need to consider the content also together with a form.

Third, conjunctions also indicate transitions within the body-middle. This is specifically true of tandem conjunctions. In Romans, Paul uses several tandem conjunctions to signal changes in his thought, such as ἄρα οὖν (5:18; 7:3, 25; 8:12; 9:16, 18; 14:12, 19. 8 times), οὕτως καὶ (5:15, 19, 21; 6:4, 11; 11:31. 6 times), νυνὶ δὲ (3:21; 6:22; 7:6, 17; 15:23, 25. 6 times), and εἰ δέ (2:17; 3:5, 7; 6:8; 7:16, 20; 8:9, 10, 11, 13, 17, 25; 9:22; 11:6, 12, 16, 17, 18. 18 times). However, there is no conjunction or tandem of conjunctions that consistently connotes either major or minor transitions.

Lastly, there is only one transitional formula in Paul's letters, which a comparative study of the letter's content has confirmed regularly denotes a major transition in each letter's structure (White 1972:97). This is the παρακαλῶ ὑμᾶς formula, which usually comes with the vocative ἀδελφοί. In two letters, Paul employs this formula to make the transition from the letter opening to the letter body (1 Co. 1:10; Phlm. 8). Most of the rest of Paul's letters, in which the letter body begins with a disclosure formula, have two paired major body-middle parts. The first part is a descriptive section, introduced by the disclosure formula (2 Co. 1:8; Gal. 1:11; Phil. 1:12; 1 Thess. 2:1). The second part is a corresponding hortatory section initiated with a παρακαλῶ petition (2 Co. 6:1; Gal. 4:12; Phil. 4:2; 1 Thess. 4:1; Eph. 4:1).¹⁷

Romans likewise follows this pattern. It has a descriptive section after the initial disclosure formula (1:13-11:36) and a hortatory section after a παρακαλῶ petition (12:1-15:13). While it is certainly a step forward to identify these sections of the body-middle, the structure of the great extent of material contained in these individual sections still remains indistinct.

4.1.5.2 THE BODY-MIDDLE AND OTHER FORMS

Although epistolary analysis has made little progress beyond identifying the paired description/petition sections in the macrostructure of the Pauline body-middle, a few other

¹⁷ 1 Corinthians has these two sections in reverse order. First is the hortatory section (1:10) and the descriptive disclosure section comes in 10:1. Furthermore, 2 Corinthians and 1 Thessalonians have the double disclosure section/hortatory section pattern. Besides those cited above, 2 Corinthians has a disclosure section at 8:1 and a hortatory section at 10:1 and 1 Thessalonians has a second descriptive section at 4:13 and a second hortatory section at 5:12. However, this does not mean that these letters are composite in nature as some think.

smaller formal features within these portions have been identified. For example, vice and virtue lists were a common Hellenistic form, which Paul sometimes adopted (e.g., Rom. 1:28-32).

Another example of a form in the body-middle is ascription, which consist of “the ascriptive word, the object of ascription, reasons for the ascription, and a commentary” (Mullins 1973:195). Beatitudes, woes, and eulogies are the most common ascriptive forms. Paul quotes an ascription in Rom. 4:7-8 from Psalm 32, which ascribes a blessing to the person whose wicked actions are forgiven and whose sin is no longer acknowledged to his account.

An additional example of a form in the body-middle is the *topos*, which is generally peculiar to the hortatory section of Paul’s letters. David Bradley defines the *topos* as “the treatment in independent form of the topic of a proper thought or action, or of a virtue or vice, etc.” (1953:240). The *topos* is composed of more than one sentence and unified around a common subject matter, which is often internally linked with the repetition of a key word. This key word has a dual role: it is the name of the subject under discussion and it acts to link together the teachings which compose the *topos* (Bradley 1953:244). Mullins (1980) refines the nature of this form, identifying four recurring elements (three are essential and one is optional). The three essential elements are: “an *injunction* urging that a certain course of behavior be followed or avoided; a *reason* for the injunction; and a *discussion* of the logical or practical consequences of the behavior. An optional element is the citing of an *analogous situation* to the one dealt with in the *Topos*.” (:542) He also notes that sometimes a fifth element, the *refutation* of a contrary way of thinking or acting, is apparent (:543).

The *topos* appears several times in the hortatory section of the body-middle of Romans. For example, Rom. 13:1-5 is a *topos* on temporal authority, which is unified by the recurring word authority (ἐξουσία).

- (1) Injunction: “Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities” (13:1a)
- (2) Reason: “for there is no authority except that which God has established.” (13:1b)
- (3) Refutation: “Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted” (13:2a)
- (4) Discussion: “those who do so will bring judgment on themselves” (13:2b-5).

The hortatory section of Romans also contains *topoi* on love (13:8-10), conduct (13:11-14), and on eating meat sacrificed to idols (14:13-15 & 14:16-23).¹⁸ These *topoi*, however, while composed of similar constituent components, do not have a discernible overriding organizational principle to help us to see the larger structure of the hortatory section of the body-middle.

Lastly, Calvin Roetzel (1969) has identified the judgement form within the body-middle of Paul's letters. This form is analogous to the judgement pronouncement of the early Hebrew prophets, as described by Claus Westermann in *Basic forms of prophetic speech*, and consists of four elements: (1) introduction, (2) delineation of the offense, (3) punishment, occasionally preceded by the message formula "therefore," and (4) hortatory conclusion (:305). Roetzel sees Romans 1:18-32 as example of this form. He identifies four elements: (1) introduction (1:18), (2) the offense (1:22-23), (3) the punishment (a -- 1:24-25, b -- 1:26-27, and c -- 1:28-32), and a delayed hortatory conclusion (3:9-20).

The judgement form points out the inherent difficulty of utilizing smaller forms (microforms) for discerning the overall structure of a work or letter. Part c of the punishment is a vice list. This vice list form is thus a component of a larger form. Thus the problem is that we cannot discern the macrostructure of letter's body-middle by examining the microforms. To summarize, these forms (such as lists, ascriptions, *topoi*, and judgements), while interesting and useful in their own right, are microscopic in orientation and as such do not contribute to an overall understanding of the larger structure of Romans. Rather, an approach is necessary that has the means to investigate the body-middle as a whole.

4.1.5.3 THE BODY-MIDDLE AND THE LIMITATIONS OF THE EPISTOLARY ANALYSIS

We have analyzed Romans using epistolary analysis in order to reach the macrostructure of Romans. As we have seen above, this approach provides us with a basic outline of its structure, particularly the opening and closing sections. In review this structure is as follows:

1) The Letter Opening (Rom. 1:1-7)

¹⁸ The components of these *topoi* are explained in Mullins (1980:543, 546).

- The identification of sender unit (Rom. 1:1-6)
- The designation of recipient unit (Rom. 1:7a)
- The greeting (Rom. 1:7b)
- 1a) The Thanksgiving (Rom. 1:8-12)
- 2) The Letter Body (Rom. 1:13-15:32)
 - The body-opening section (Rom. 1:13-15)
 - The body-middle (Rom. 1:16-15:13)
 - a) informational section (1:16-11:36)
 - b) hortatory section (12:1-15:13)
 - The body-closing (Rom. 15:14-32)
- 3) The Letter Closing (15:33-16:27)
 - peace wish (15:33)
 - commendation unit (16:1-2)
 - 1st greeting list (16:3-16)
 - exhortation unit (16:17-20a)
 - 1st grace wish (16:20b)
 - 2nd greeting list (16:21-23)
 - 2nd grace wish (16:24)
 - doxology (16:25-27)

As we see from this outline above, the epistolary analysis is able to determine much more detail in the opening and closing sections of the letter than in the letter body, particularly the body-middle section. Because of this fact, most epistolary critics admit the limitation of epistolary analysis. For example, White points out that “the body of the ancient letter is more resistant to formal analysis than the opening and the closing, often seeming to lack identifiable shape and identifiable conventions” (1981:9). Elsewhere, he says that “the body of the letter is less stereotyped than either the opening or the closing elements, since it is the message part of the letter. The less homogeneous nature of the body has been, therefore, one of the greatest hindrances to formal analysis” (1971:92.n.2). Similarly, Doty (1973) admits this limitation and gives an explanation for it: “the body as a formal entity has not been recognized as sufficiently unitary or consistent from letter to letter to reward formal analysis” (:34). Because of this limitation some scholars have criticized the benefits of epistolography. For example, Stanley K. Stowers (1986:22) states:

Modern epistolary research has found very little to say about the body of the letter. The major lacuna has occurred because scholars studying ‘epistolary’ style have limited their analyses to elements thought to be unique to letters. Defined in that way, what is ‘epistolary’ about letters shows up only at the beginnings and conclusions....And what comes in between seems to be merely the information or message to be conveyed.

Murphy-O’Connor (1995:64) raises a similar criticism against this method:

Only one effort has been made to offer a formal description of the body of the Pauline letter [i.e., White 1972]....His pioneering effort, however, focused exclusively on the detection of repeated literary formulas. This led to neglect of the content, and nothing concrete regarding the letter as a whole in fact emerges from his analysis.

I concur with their criticisms despite the positive contributions of epistolography. This inherent limitation is intensified by the unique nature of Paul's letters, especially Romans, due to its extraordinary length.¹⁹ Consequently, a method is necessary that can profitably examine the body of a letter. As we shall see in a following paragraph, a rhetorical analysis will fulfill this role.

Before proceeding further with our discussion, we need to remind ourselves of the nature of ancient letters. In ancient times a letter was "one half of a dialogue" (Demetrius) and "speech in the written medium" (Cicero; Seneca) (Malherbe 1988:12). Moreover, Paul's letters were generally intended to be read aloud to their original audience (cf. 1 Thess. 5:27). In addition, the orality of the Pauline letters is further confirmed in that Paul dictated his letters to professional scribes, in Romans in particular the name of the scribe is mentioned (i.e., Tertius; Rom. 16:22). Because of these factors we might safely conclude that Paul's letters have the characteristics of oral communication and a rhetorical analysis will be helpful for an interpretation of his letters. Moreover, as I will proceed to demonstrate, rhetorical analysis is better than epistolary analysis, in that it can profitably analyze the body-middle of a Pauline letter. In view of this fact, Robert Jewett rightly says that "there is a need for a more comprehensive analytical method that can incorporate valid exegetical insights from these earlier analyses into a more convincing view of the letter as a whole. In short, there is a need for rhetorical theory" (1986:71).

4.2 MACROSTRUCTURE OF ROMANS: RHETORICAL ANALYSIS

We have noticed above, epistolary analysis is capable of discerning the basic structure of the Pauline letter and of providing some clues to the purpose of it, but incapable of providing a comprehensive structure of the letter body. Thus it is necessary to use rhetorical analysis to understand the letter body. In Paul's day rhetoric was pervasive and common in the Greco-

¹⁹ According to Achtemeier (1990), the average length of a letter of Cicero was 295 words (ranging from 22 to 2,530 words), and that of Seneca 955 (149-4,134 words), the average length of a Pauline letter is 2,500 (355 to 7,101 words) (:22 & 22 n. 137). Romans has 7,101 words in total.

Roman world, because rhetoric was an important element in Greco-Roman education. Rhetoric was “the exclusive subject of secondary education” (i.e., equivalent to high-school education today), though more complex technical information on rhetoric was taught as a part of higher education (Kennedy 1984:9; Mack 1990:30).²⁰ Furthermore, “Hellenistic culture was a culture of rhetoric and rhetoric was clearly a public affair.” (Mack 1990:29) So we may say that anyone who had a moderate education in the Greco-Roman world would have some knowledge of rhetoric. We are certain that the Apostle Paul was a Pharisaic Diaspora Jew, who was born and educated in Cilician Tarsus and had grown up in a strictly orthodox Jewish family which had close connections with Jerusalem, even though we do not know exactly where and how far Paul progressed in his general education (Acts 21:39; 22:3; Hengel 1991:1, 2, 37-39; Becker 1993:34). According to Strabo, Tarsus was a center of “all kinds of schools of the rhetorical arts” (14.5.13), so it would be conceivable that the young Saul, who belonged to a respectable middle class family (Sanders 1991:10),²¹ knew a certain amount of rhetoric from his early education (Enderlein 1998:84-87).²² Acts 22:3; 26:4,5 and Paul’s own testimony indicate that Paul returned to Jerusalem as an adolescent (Hengel 1991:38). Then he was educated in Jerusalem, which was also a “Greek city” in his day (Hengel 1991:54-57) and “acquired there the basic knowledge of a Jewish-Greek rhetoric aimed at synagogue preaching which was essentially different from the literary style of the Greek schools” (Hengel 1991:61). In the light of these considerations about Paul’s background and his cultural milieu, we may say that Paul and his contemporaries among the literate had some basic understanding of rhetoric, and even the uneducated and illiterate could not have escaped significant exposure to rhetorical practice. These facts enable us to validate the use of rhetorical analysis for a Pauline letter.

²⁰ In the Greco-Roman world the school system had three levels: elementary (up to 14 years of age), secondary (ages 15 to 17), and higher education at age 18 (Mack 1990:30).

²¹ Some scholars assume that Paul “belonged to a family of wealth and position” (Ramsey 1966:31, 34). Lietzmann, Edward Meyer, and Mommsen also have same assumption (Hengel 1991:15) but they seem far fetched. I think that, in the light of Paul’s remarkable Greco-Jewish education, he had “an above-average social origin” (Hengel 1991:17).

²² We do not have any direct evidence for this, however there are strong indications for this conclusion. First, through his letters it is clear that Paul was a literate member of Greco-Romans society. He wrote at least some portions of his letters himself and used the Septuagint extensively. Second, there are enough elements of rhetorical style in his letters to show the possibility of his having studied higher rhetorical theory, either formally or informally. For instance, in Romans alone there are fine examples of climax (5:3-5), pleonasm (1:29-31), hypophora (7:7,13), asyndeton (12:9-13), and numerous examples of enthymemes and ratiocination (i.e., reasoning by question and answer), as well as other rhetorical features (Enderlein 1998:84-85; for more examples, see Donfried 1991:116,117). Lastly, Paul was a public speaker as Luke regularly attests in Acts (cf. Acts 14:12). Thus it is likely that one habitually engaged in public speaking would be interested in the conventions of the art of speaking well.

At this point it is appropriate to view some of previous attempts at using rhetorical analysis for an interpretation of Romans.

4.2.1 WUELLNER'S RHETORICAL ANALYSIS OF ROMANS

Wuellner is the first scholar who analyzed Romans utilizing a fusion of techniques and categories from classical and new rhetoric in his article originally published 1976 (see above 3.2.4). In that article, he suggests the following outline for Romans (1991:128-146):

- I. *Exordium*: Rom. 1:1-15
- II. *Transitus*: Rom. 1:16-17
- III. *Confirmatio*: Rom. 1:18-15:13
 - A. *Probation*: Rom. 18-11:36
 - B. *Paraenesis*: Rom. 12:1-15:13
- IV. *Peroration*: Rom. 15:14-16:23

It is right that Romans needs to be approached as argumentation, as Wuellner contends, however, there are some problems in his outline. First, his outline does not show any advance over the epistolary approach. He identifies only the major transitions in the body of letter and it is not so much different from that of an epistolary analysis. He still intends conducting a more detailed analysis of the body of the letter, but has not yet done so until now (:145). Another problem of his proposed outline is that “he glosses over the importance of Rom. 1:16-17 and instead opts to focus on *exordium* and peroration” (Enderlein 1998:102). Wuellner considers these verses as a *transitus*, “The rhetorical function of the *transitus* is to signal the end of *exordium* and to provide a harmonious beginning for the *confirmatio*.” (Wuellner 1991:142) To support this understanding he cites Lausberg, and Betz (Wuellner 1991:142 n. 75). However, Betz understands that the *transitus* is provided to end the *exordium*, distinct from and in harmony with the beginning of the *narratio* (1975:362). Moreover, Betz and the classic rhetorician did not regard the *transitus* as a separate division of rhetorical arrangement, but as a prudent stylistic feature for concluding an *exordium* (see Quintilian *Orat* IV.i.76-79). The last problem of Wuellner’s outline is his identification of the *exordium* (Rom. 1:1-15). He failed to recognize the presence of a full disclosure formula, and thus could not see the break between Rom. 1:12 and 1:13. He discounts the importance of this disclosure formula because he thinks that Paul commonly takes liberties both with the form and with the function of formulas (:133). As we have seen above (4.1.3.1), the disclosure formula should not be ignored because it regularly communicates important

information. At this juncture of the letter, then, it is better to identify Rom. 1:13-15 as a *narratio*, which serves to provide background information, appropriate to the issue to be discussed. Similarly, R. Jewett states that it is difficult to see Rom. 1:13-15 as “the *causa* which in a traditional *exordium* states the purpose which the letter or speech intends to achieve.” He thinks that “the *causa* is stated in 1:9-10 and is elaborated in verses 11-12, while verses 13-15 provide the background of this purpose” (1982:7). Although Wuellner recognizes that there should be narrational elements, he wrongly intermingles the elements and functions of the *narratio* into the *exordium* (Enderlein 1998:104). The reason for this confusion is that he relies heavily on the modern rhetorical sources, especially Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca’s *New Rhetoric* (1969; cf. Mitchell 1991:7 n. 23; Jewett 1991:266 n. 6). His reliance on Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca is confirmed in his designation of Romans as epideictic, in which the “intent [is] to ‘strengthen the disposition toward action by increasing adherence to the value it lauds’ ” (Wuellner 1991:139; cf. Mitchell 1991:139-140). Thus, he views Paul as making an effort to create “ ‘an intensity of adherence’ ” which he wants to “ ‘reinforce until the desired action is actually performed’ ” (:140). This hardly fits the ancient understanding of epideictic rhetoric. Especially with the reference to “action,” his definition is closer to deliberative than epideictic. His acceptance of Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca’s definition misleads him into the wrong understanding of epideictic.

The last problem of Wuellner’s analysis is his understanding of the parenetic section of Romans. He thinks that the paraenesis functions as “an *exemplum* or paradigm of Paul’s thesis” and is a “digression” (1991:144). But the terms are hardly used in their ancient senses. On the ground of the points mentioned above I agree with Anderson (1996:169) and Enderlein (1998:101-106) that Wuellner’s treatment of Romans is unsatisfactory.

4.2.2 KENNEDY’S RHETORICAL ANALYSIS OF ROMANS

Kennedy’s book *New Testament interpretation through rhetorical criticism* (1984) has a short analysis of Romans. His outline of Romans is as follows (:152-156):

- I. Epistolary Prescript: Rom. 1:1-7
- II. Proem: Rom. 1:8-15
- III. Proposition: Rom. 1:16-17
- IV. Doctrinal Headings and Refutation of Objections: Rom. 1:18-11:36
 - A. Narration on the Power of God for Damnation: Rom. 1:18-2:16
 - B. The Situation of the Jew: Rom. 2:17-4:25

- C. The Situation of the Gentile: Rom. 5:1-6:23
- D. Address to Jews on the Nature of Faith: Rom. 7:1-8:39
- E. Address to Gentiles on the Situation of the Jews: Rom. 9:1-11:36
- V. Pastoral Application: Rom. 12:1-15:13
- VI. Epilogue: Rom. 15:14-33
- VII. Epistolary Postscript: Rom. 16:1-23

As we can see above, Kennedy's outline of the structure of Romans is more comprehensive than that of Wuellner. However, his proposal can also be criticized. For example, Jewett raises several criticisms (1991:268-269). First, he has difficulty with Kennedy's narration section at the beginning of Paul's doctrinal headings (Rom. 1:18-2:16), because "both the content and location of Rom. 1:13-15 serves this purpose more precisely" (Jewett 1991:268). Second, he points out that extending the proem to verse 15 in Kennedy's outline is a wrong judgement. The proem (i.e., the statement of the *causa* of the letter) is completed by Rom. 1:10-12 to prepare the way for Paul's future visit. Third, it is right to see Rom. 1:16-17 as a *partitio*. However, Kennedy does not show how the structure of Romans corresponds to this partition in a meaningful way. Also, the thesis mentioned in Rom. 1:16-17 as a *partitio* does not just underlie the structure of Rom. 1:18-11:36, but runs right through to Rom. 15:13 (Jewett 1991:269). Fourth, Jewett points out that it is better to avoid some of Kennedy's non-rhetorical terms or categories like "pastoral application," "headings." Fifth, he questions whether chapter 16 should be viewed as a "postscript." He prefers to call it a "peroration" because in this chapter "the emotional ties between writer and audience are adduced in the appeal for the particular values or actions promoted in the argument" (Jewett 1991:269).

Enderlein (1998) basically agrees with Jewett's critiques on Kennedy's treatment and he adds some criticisms of his own. First, he points out that Kennedy ignores the disclosure formula in Rom. 1:13 and extends the proem up to Rom. 1:15 without providing any justification. Second, while he accepts Kennedy's identification of Rom. 1:16, 17 as "proposition," he criticizes him for not demonstrating it accordingly in his outline. "The headings he identifies do not accord in order or number with the terms of proposition, which indicates that he has misidentified one or both of these elements" (:108). Third, Enderlein has difficulty in accepting the sections identified by Kennedy as doctrinal headings, and pastoral application. Not only do the headings not correspond to the terms of the partition, but they also do "not convey a sense of logical development that moves from the thesis right through to Rom. 15:13" (Enderlein 1998:108, 109). Kennedy's outline gives the impression that the letter consists of a number of loosely related topics rather than any sort of argument in support of a

proposition. Not only that, it is difficult to identify one of the major transition points in the letter at 2:17, for most exegetes identify a major transition at 3:20. In addition, regarding “Pastoral application,” Kennedy employs a non-rhetorical term without providing any explanation for it and does not clarify how this section relates to the previous doctrinal heading or to the proposition at the beginning of the body (Enderlein 1998:109).

I think Jewett and Enderlein have made correct critiques of Kennedy’s outline. Even though Kennedy improves on Wuellner in some points, his analysis is still not satisfactory in all respects.

4.2.3 JEWETT’S RHETORICAL ANALYSIS OF ROMANS

Jewett provides a macrostructure of Romans in his article, “Following the argument of Romans,” originally published 1986. His outline is as follows (1991:272-74):

- I. *Exordium* (Introduction): Rom. 1:1-12
- II. *Narratio* (Narration): Rom. 1:13-15
- III. *Propositio* (Thesis Statement): Rom. 1:16-17
- IV. *Probatio* (Proof): Rom. 1:18-15:13
 - 1. The First Proof: *Confirmatio* (Confirmation): Rom. 1:18-4:25 (The main argument in the confirmation of the thesis.)
 - 2. The Second Proof: *Exornatio* (Elaboration): Rom. 5-8 (Treats “objections raised against the doctrine of righteousness by faith”)
 - 3. The Third Proof: *Comparatio* (Comparison): Rom. 9-11 (Adds a historical example to the argument that has already been established to demonstrate its superiority)
 - 4. The Fourth Proof: *Exhortatio* (Exhortation): Rom. 12:1-15:13 (Develops guidelines for the righteous living in proof of Rom. 1:7b)
- V. *Peroratio* (Peroration or conclusion): Rom. 15:14-16:27

Jewett’s outline for Romans is commendable in several points in comparison with previous attempts using rhetorical analysis. First, it is helpful that he describes a coherent structure for the whole letter, including the body, and includes some explanation of how the parts interrelate. Furthermore, he correctly identifies Rom. 1:13-15 as a *narratio*, which also accords with the presence of a disclosure formula and its function of making known important information (cf. Enderlein 1998:116). Lastly, he points out well that the parenetic section of Romans does “not comprise a secondary and inferior dimension of the argument, but rather the climatic proof of the main thesis of the letter” (Jewett 1991:272).

However, there are still some crucial difficulties with his analysis that make it unsatisfactory (Enderlein 1998:116-122; Anderson 1996:169-170). First, his proposal differs from the common rhetorical outline of Paul's day in several points. For example, he sees that Rom. 1:18-4:25 is the full confirmation of the thesis, which is unusual. In most cases the entire argument consists of the confirmation of the thesis. In addition, he arbitrarily distinguishes *probatio* from *confirmatio* and employs them both as elements in his outline of Romans. In ancient rhetoricians *confirmatio* (βεβαίωσις) is used as a synonym for *probatio* (see Quintilian *Orat* III.ix.1-5; Cicero *InvRhet* I.xiv.19; I.xxiv.34; *Ad Her* 1954:1.3.4). Another problem in this regard is his classification of the fourth proof as *exhortatio*. His term comes from Hermogenes who uses it to define the last part of an argumentation based upon a *chreia*. But we need to remember that the working out of a *chreia* is quite different from the construction of a speech (Anderson 1996:170 n.431). So we see here in several places that Jewett misuses the terms and accordingly misidentifies some parts of Romans.

Second, Jewett does not identify a *refutatio*, in which Paul rebuts an opposing position. Although a *refutatio* is not always necessary, it was viewed as an integral part of most speeches, particularly forensic and deliberative ones (see *Ad Her* I.x.18). He comments that a separate refutation is not necessary because Romans is not forensic and because the diatribal elements in Romans serve to fulfill this function (Enderlein 1998:267-268). However, as William Brandt correctly points out, the diatribal elements (which are equivalent to the rhetorical figure of *praesumptio*) does not preclude the need for a refutation (1970:50). In fact, it could be possible that there is no *refutatio* in Romans, however, in light of the evidence that Paul may be on the defensive or arguing against a conflicting enemy, as we have seen in the epistolary analysis of Romans above, it would more plausible to see that Paul employs a *refutatio* in Romans.

Third, Jewett's designation of Rom. 1:16-17 as *propositio* is problematic. He notes that the Greco-Roman rhetoricians place either a *propositio* ("a brief statement of the thesis") or a *partitio* (an "enumeration of the issues") between the narration and the proof (1991:268). Although he says that his position is close to that of Kennedy, i.e., seeing Rom. 1:16-17 as a "partition," he treats these verses exclusively as a *propositio*, because he has not clarified how the subsequent structure of the *probatio* fits to *partitio*.

The final difficulty with Jewett's analysis is his classification of Romans as "demonstrative rhetoric" like Wuellner and Kennedy (1984:152) due to the influence of New Rhetoric. This is not appropriate, since Jewett regards Paul's message as having "transforming and unifying implications for the Roman house-churches and their participation in world mission" (1991:272-73). In the same line, he calls Romans elsewhere an "ambassadorial letter," which he considers an epideictic category (Jewett 1982:9-10). From the perspective of the classical sources, however, Kennedy determines that although ambassadorial speeches have links with epideictic rhetoric, they are actually a regular deliberative form (1983:20, 21).

In the light of these difficulties, Jewett's analysis of Romans is not completely satisfactory.

4.2.4 REID'S RHETORICAL ANALYSIS OF ROMANS

In his book *Augustinian and Pauline rhetoric in Romans Five* (1996) Reid analyzes the macrostructure of Romans. His outline is as follows (:153-178):

The Epistolary Prescript: 1:1-7
Exordium: 1:8-15
Transitus: 1:16-17
Narratio: 1:18-3:20
Propositio: 3:21-31
Probatio: 4:1-11:36
Paraenesis: 12:1-15:13
Peroratio: 15:14-33
 The Epistolary Postscript: 16:1-23

We note first that he separates the epistolary prescript and postscript from the body of the letter in his analysis of Romans. However, it is unnecessary to bracket the epistolary prescript and postscript from the body of the letter in rhetorical treatment. Most rhetorical critics include these epistolary features in their rhetorical analysis of Romans, since both prescript and postscript correspond functionally *exordium* and *peroratio* (see Wuellner 1991; Jewett 1991; Enderlein 1998). I have found some other difficulties in Reid's treatment.

First, Reid fails to recognize the importance of a full disclosure formula in verse 13. He sees it simply as part of *exordium*, because these verses do not provide the statement of facts, but establish the position of Paul within the rhetorical situation (1996:155 n.14). For this

identification he follows the judgement of J. N. Vorster, who argues that 1:16,17 is not *propositio*, but *transitus* (1993:154).²³

Second, Reid sees Rom. 1:16-17 as *transitus*, not *propositio*. However, as we pointed out earlier (4.2.1), *transitus* is not considered as a separate division of rhetorical arrangement and it is better to see these verses as a series of *propositio*, i.e., *partitio* due to the presence of the enthymematic character, as he himself admits (1996:157-162; cf. 4.2.5).

Third, he sees Rom. 1:18-3:21 as *narratio*, following Watson's suggestion (1988a:43, 44). It is correct that the *narratio* in Romans is the second type of *narratio* (παραδιήγησις), which "goes beyond the strict limits of the case for the purpose of making a comparison, amusing the audience, amplifying, winning belief, incriminating an adversary, effecting a transition, or setting for what follows" (1996:44). However, Reid did not note what Watson says afterwards, which is that *narratio* has the characterization of "brevity, clarity, and plausibility." It is quite difficult to see that Rom. 1:18-3:20 fits such a characterization. Rom. 1:13-15 fits a characterization of *narratio* and Rom. 1:18-3:20 is *refutatio*, as Enderlein assigns (1998:210-259). Not only does Reid wrongly identify the *transitus* and *narratio* sections of Romans, but he also makes a wrong judgement on *propositio* (Rom. 3:21-31). It is true that this section of Romans is important for understanding Paul's theology, but it is hard to see it as *propositio*, as the structural center of Romans (contra Campbell 1992:29-31 & Reid 1996:166-170). Even though Campbell notes that the theme of Romans is stated at Rom. 1:16-17, he fails to see that these verses are important to the structure of Romans. Most commentators see Rom. 1:16,17 as a summary statement of the theme of Romans (e.g. Dahl 1977:82; Dunn 1988; Kaylor 1988:30; Crafton 1990:329) and as forming the first part of

²³ Vorster finds some problems in seeing 1:16-17 as *propositio*. He provides two problematic examples: one from classic rhetoric and the other from epistolography. From the classic rhetorical point of view, first, a *propositio* is usually associated with the statement of facts or the *narratio*. "It can either be the conclusion of a *narratio* or could replace the *narratio* as a compacted and summarising form of *narratio*." (1991:156 n.70) He believes that either of these forms is invalid in Romans, because "the past events portrayed in 1:13b and 1:13c portray a hypothetical situation and function to establish an ethical appeal" and cannot be described as *narratio*. He thinks that it is impossible to see 1:16-17 as a replacement or compacted form of *narratio*. Seeing 1:16-17 as a *propositio* could wrongly create the impression that the discourse coherently corresponds in well-structured sections. Second, he sees another problem from epistolography. He agrees with Roberts (1986a:197; 1986b:96, 97, 98) who identified this section as a discrete period, making a transition to the body of the letter. However, he rejects the idea of the presence of a "credal statement" as the criterion of its identification and its function as the determination of the essential core of the argument to be made by the letter. The reason behind his rejection is that it presupposes a letter consisting of a coherent system of thought (1991:157 n.70).

Paul's argument, i.e., the first part of *confirmatio* (Stowers 1994:83). Because of this misunderstanding, Reid also wrongly sees only Rom. 4:1-11:36 as *probatio*.

Lastly, Reid calls Rom. 12:1-15:13 *paraenesis* without any explanation why he chooses this term. As Enderlein points out, although *paraenesis* is the most common term within epistolary categories, it is better to avoid this term, because it has the misleading connotation of an exclusively general application without any reference to the specific situation of the audience (Enderlein 1998:260 n.2).

On these points Reid's analysis of Romans is less than satisfactory.

4.2.5 ENDERLEIN'S RHETORICAL ANALYSIS OF ROMANS

In his doctoral dissertation (1998), Enderlein proposes an outline of Romans using classical rhetorical analysis. At the beginning of his discussion he discusses briefly the conventional rhetorical structure as dealt with by the Greco-Roman rhetoricians (Cicero, Quintilian, and the author of *Rhetorica ad Herennium*) and sums up that they basically agree on the six elements of an argument, though they use slightly different terms. The elements are (1) *exordium*; (2) the *narratio*; (3) the *partitio* (*divisio*); (4) the *confirmatio* (*probatio*); (5) the *reprehensio* (*refutatio* or *confutatio*); (6) *conclusio* (*peroratio*) (1998:123-127; cf. Watson 1988a:20).

Enderlein proposes a rhetorical structure of the argument of Romans as follows (:315-317):

- I. *Exordium* (1:1-12): This includes the epistolary salutation and thanksgiving, and seeks to establish Paul's apostolic ethos and accumulate the audience's good will.
- II. *Narratio* (1:13-15): This provides a statement of background facts and identifies the nature of the issue in question between the author and the audience.
- III. *Partitio* (1:16-17): This explains the author's main propositions, the proof of which will constitute the subsequent confirmation and proves his thesis that the gospel is not shameful.
- IV. *Refutatio* (Antithesis; 1:18-3:20): This refutes an opposing position, antithetical to Paul's point of view. It argues that God's wrath is revealed against all sin (1:18) and the law brings knowledge of sin (3:20); therefore, the law reveals God's wrath against sin.
- V. *Confirmatio* (3:21-11:36): This confirms or amplifies the corresponding partitions of the *partitio*:
 - A. Confirmation of First Partition (3:21-5:11): "In the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed by faith to faith."
 - B. Elaboration of Second Partition (5:12-8:39): "The righteous one by faith

shall live.”

C. Confirmation of Third Partition (9:1-11:36): “The gospel is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes to both the Jew (first) and also the Greek.”

- VI. *Protrepis* (12:1-15:13): This argues that one should live so as not bring shame upon the gospel, but should instead glorify God through gratitude and a proper lifestyle, in order to fulfill one’s obligations to God for his merciful benefits.
- VII. *Peroratio* (15:14-16:27): This requests a particular response to the thesis, namely, that the Romans should also work on the gospel’s behalf. Specifically, they should pray for Paul’s visit in Jerusalem and should provide support for the evangelization of Spain in further fulfillment of their obligation to God for his patronage to magnify his name.

Enderlein’s rhetorical analysis of Romans is excellent in most of cases. Like Jewett, he discerns a coherent structure for the whole letter and provides an extensive explanation for each section. He includes a *refutatio* as an essential element of rhetorical analysis and contends that Rom. 1:18-3:20 fulfills the rhetorical function of a *refutatio*, in which Paul rebuts his opponents’ position (1998:210-259). He also prefers to call Rom. 1:16-17 *partitio* rather than *propositio*,²⁴ because he thinks that these verses contain a series of enthymemes or a *sorites*²⁵ which reveals the structure of Romans. He suggests that in Rom. 1:16-17 there are two enthymemes and between them an amplification of the maxim drawn from Hab. 2:4, which indicates the basic structure of the *confirmatio*. Later he demonstrates how the confirmation section follows the tripartite *partitio* (1998:144-174). He argues that Rom. 3:21-5:11 is the first partition in confirmation of the premise that “For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last.” (1998:148-157) Rom. 5:12-8:39 is the second partition in amplification of the supporting maxim that “The righteous will live by faith” (1998:157-174). And Rom. 9-11 is the third partition in confirmation of the premise that the gospel “is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.” (1998:174-185)

²⁴ For this distinction he follows Quintilian’s claim, who says, “If *propositions* are put forward singly with the proofs appended, they will form several distinct *propositions*; if they are combined, they fall under the head of *partition*.” (*Orat* IV.iv.7) That means that a *partitio* and a *propositio* perform the same function for a speech or essay, in that they provide the thesis that the speaker or writer will seek to prove. The difference is that the *partitio* enunciates multiple propositions that demand confirmation, but the *propositio* sets forth a single point requiring proof (Enderlein 1998:139).

²⁵ According to Brandt, the *sorites* “is a complex extension of syllogistic reasoning, in which a series of syllogisms is strung together, with the conclusion of the one becoming the premise of the next” (1970:30).

The most interesting suggestion Enderlein makes is his designation of Rom. 12:1-15:13 as a *protrepsis*. He rightly rejects the term *exhortatio* and other terms like *paraenesis* and *paraklesis* for this part of Romans, since there is no evidence from the rhetorical handbooks. His choice of *protrepsis* is based on Pseudo Demetrius' Τύποι Ἐπιστολικοί (Malherbe 1988:37)²⁶ and Epictetus' *Discourse* (:3.23), which means the term was current in contemporary epistolary theory and regarded as the proper form of exhortation for a philosopher (see Malherbe 1986:122-24; Stowers 1986:94, 95), because he classifies Romans as deliberative rhetoric, which admits of counter-statement, unlike *paraenesis* which does not admit of counter-statement (Enderlein 1998:260-262 n.2).

Another interesting feature of Enderlein's understanding of Paul's exhortations falls under the concept of obligation in the hellenistic world, following the suggestions of Mark Reasoner (1990) and Richard Saller (1982) (Enderlein 1998:265-276). Enderlein finds that in Romans Paul employs the concept of benefits and obligations from the contemporary patronage system to explain the paradoxical relation between salvation by grace and the necessity of upright behavior. In the Roman society of Paul's day, the culture of obligation (*officium*) for procuring benefits was pervasive of all social relationships, including master and slave, and patriarch and family, beyond those of patron and client. Enderlein totally agrees with Reasoner who says that "the theology of Rom 12:1-15:13 is a theology of obligation within the new covenant community....Paul argues that faith that grasps the benefits of Christ works itself out in obligation to God, church members, government, one's neighbors in society, and even in feuding church parties" (1995:292).

Enderlein demonstrates that in Romans Paul depicts God as the supreme patron. It is the grace of God who provides justification to all who believe as a gift (3:24). By his grace he fulfills his promise to Abraham (4:16). He shows his love for believers while they are still sinners (5:8). He graciously gives us eternal life through his son (5:15-21) and liberates us from sin (6:18,22). He works all things for the good of those who love him (8:28) and assures us that He will freely give us all good things (8:32). In the light of all these benefactions of God, Paul articulates the principle that we are debtors (ὀφειλέται) to God so that we should

²⁶ Pseudo Demetrius provides a description of 21 types of letter in his handbook, written between 200 BC and AD 50 (Malherbe 1986:4). He describes the deliberative type of letter, which he calls an "advisory type" (type #11), in which is used "when we exhort [προτρῴπωμεν] (someone to) something or dissuade [ἀποτρῴπωμεν] (him) from something" (Malherbe :36,37).

walk not according to the flesh, but live according to the Spirit (8:12-13). Paul asks a question as he prepares the way for his consideration of ethics as obligation, “Who has ever given to God, that God should repay him?” (Rom. 11:35). This means that no one has obligated God by first giving him a gift, that is, no one becomes God’s patron. Rather, God is both the patron [ἐξ αὐτοῦ ... τὰ πάντα] and broker [δι’ αὐτοῦ] of all gifts; therefore He is worthy of praise and glory forever (Rom. 11:36). Therefore, Christians as God’s clients must live to bring glory, not disgrace, for they are obligated to advance the cause of their God. During Paul’s day this kind of understanding was common (see Seneca *Ben* II.30.1-2; Mott 1975:64).

Enderlein treatment is most satisfactory in my opinion and I agree with most of his suggestions except for a few points. First of all, it is more plausible to see the elaboration of the second partition at 5:1, not 5:11 as he suggests (see 4.3 section for detail). Second, within 5 to 8, there are two major sections dealing with opposing views regarding the problem of sin (Rom. 6) and of the law (Rom. 7). These two chapters are a *refutatio* within the second broader partition (5 to 8). Dahl argues succinctly that these chapters are “ad hoc answers to previous objections and without clear, logical structure” (1977:88, 89). Here Paul responds to anticipated accusations or questions regarding antinomianism or misunderstanding of sin (Rom. 6) and the misunderstanding of the law (Rom. 7). In doing so, Paul uses the diatribe as his argumentative device in these chapters (see 4.5.1 & 4.5.2 where I discuss diatribe). So it is understandable to see these chapters as “parenthesis” or “digression” as some scholars think, although these terms have the tendency to be easily misunderstood. However, these two chapters as *refutatio* are an essential part of Paul’s argument, because “the topics treated in 6:1-7:25 are hardly incidental” (Moo 1991:303).

4.3 ROMANS 7 AS A RHETORICAL UNIT WITHIN ROMANS

The first step toward a rhetorical analysis is to establish a rhetorical unit (Kennedy 1984:33, 34). Actually, to establish a rhetorical unit is very much like discourse analysis (Reed 1997:194). As we think about establishing a rhetorical unit, we need to ask the question: “Are there any criteria to determine a rhetorical unit? If there are, what are they?” Kennedy (1984) points out that a rhetorical unit must have within itself “a discernible beginning and ending,

connected by some action or argument” (:34). In agreement with Kennedy’s notion, Watson states more explicitly that “[the] unit must have a decided introduction, body, and conclusion, and may either comprise an entire work or be part of a larger one” (1988a:8). Their definition focuses on the characteristics of a literary unit, which consists of beginning, middle, and closing. However, we need to bear in mind that a rhetorical unit is an argumentative arrangement. Wuellner defines the rhetorical unit as “an argumentative unit affecting the reader’s reasoning or the reader’s imagination” (1987:455). Similarly, Mack defines it as “a set pattern or sequence, and frequently in a tightly knit unit of composition” (1990:21). To define the rhetorical unit Mack and Robbins (1989) focus on the elaboration pattern or the elaboration of chreia, which follows the argumentation pattern. The rhetorical unit is closely related to the argument’s purpose and is either a convincing or persuasive unit (Botha 1994:160). It follows a line of argumentation throughout a textual unit and accounts for all of the material in the unit in relation to the line of argumentation (Mack 1990:22). I agree with the understanding of Mack and Robbins who conclude that the rhetorical unit is generally determined by the argument pattern, the argument unit or the rhetorical elaboration pattern, which has a persuasive purpose (Mack & Robbins 1989:31-67, 85-106, 161-193).

I would like to establish a rhetorical unit before proceeding with our discussion. Unlike Kennedy, who suggests that the rhetoric of large units should be built up from an understanding of smaller units, we need to begin with the macrostructure of Romans, which has been discussed in the previous section through epistolary and rhetorical treatment. In our analysis we put Rom. 7 within the broader co-text of Rom. 5 to 8, where Paul provides the elaboration of a second partition. So at this stage we need to explain briefly why we see Rom.5 to 8 as the broader co-text of Rom. 7, before discussing Rom. 7 as a rhetorical unit.

4.3.1 ROMANS 5 TO 8 AS BROADER CO-TEXT OF ROMANS 7

The structure of Romans is, for the most part, not a matter of much dispute. Most interpreters agree on its major divisions, but there is debate on the role of chapter 5 in Romans as a whole. How is chapter 5 related to 1:18-4:25 and to 6:1-8:39? Regarding this problem there are four main views. (1) Chapter 5 concludes 1:18-4:25. Calvin (1960), Sanday and Headlam (1896:xlvi), Steele & Thomas (1963:8), Harrison (1977:12), Bruce (1963:67), Morris L

(1988:33, 243), Martin (1981:136-40), Murray (1982:158, 211-12), Mounce (1995:57), and Dunn (1987:2855-58 & 1988:242, 301-303) hold this view.²⁷ (2) Chapter 5 introduces 6:1-8:39. Thus chapters 5 to 8 are thought of as a unit dealing with the life of Christians, just as justification is treated in 1:18-4:25. Dodd (1932:x), Parry (1921:xxxix-xxxii), Robinson (1979:57), Cranfield (1982:252-254), Dahl (1977:81-82), Harrisville (1980:75), Achtemeier (1985:ix), Hendriksen (1980:30), Käsemann (1980:131), Scroggs (1976:271-98), Watson (1986:143), Minear (1971:57), Moo (1991:300-303), Nygren (1949:209), Wedderburn (1988:130), Garlington (1993:87-89), Keck (1995:7), Wright (1995:44), and Fitzmyer (1993:97-102) are major proponents of this view. (3) Rom. 5:1-11 concludes 1:18-4:25, whereas 5:12-21 introduces chapter 6-8. Black (1989:81), Leenhardt (1960:24,25), Elliot (1990:226), Stowers (1994:251), and Beker (1980:85) take this view.²⁸ (4) Chapter 5 is an isolated unit. Barrett (1962), Manson (1963:944), De Boer (1988:148, 149), and Kaylor (1988:vii, 93) hold this view. It is hard to decide which is the most plausible option.

However, it seems to me the best option is to place the major transition between chapter 4 and 5 (option 2). The reasons for this interpretation are numerous (see Dahl 1951:37-48; 1977:82; Moo 1991:303, 304; Fitzmyer 1993:97, 98). First, the opening phrase of the chapter, "having been justified by faith," summarizes the argument of 1:18-4:25 and begins a new subject on the basis of the previous argument that will eventually be developed in chapter 8. Thus 5:1-11 is clearly transitional. Second, there is a noticeable stylistic difference at 5:1, i.e., in 1:18-4:25 Paul uses the second person singular ("you") and third person ("he," and "they") but in 5:1ff. the first person plural ("we") is used dominantly. Third, there is a shift in focus at 5:1, which is shown in many ways: e.g., there is a relative frequency of certain keywords, "faith," "believe," and "righteousness" in 1:18-4:25 and "life," "live," and "love" in 5-8; and the discussion in 1:16-4:25 centers on Jews and Gentiles, which is lacking in Rom.5:1-8:39. In addition to this, the Holy Spirit is first mentioned again in 5:4 since 1:4, a topic that is developed in chapter 8 (vv. 2, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 13, 15, 16, 23, 26, 27).²⁹ Fourth, 1:18-4:25 is dominated by judicial, forensic notions, but in 5:1-8:39 the emphasis is ethical, even mystical, in that it affects human behavior and union with God. Fifth, keywords and themes found in

²⁷ Although Dunn treats chapter 5 as a "bridging chapter," he holds that chapter 5 belongs to 1:18-4:25. (cf. :243).

²⁸ Beker suggests that "Rom. 5:12-21 is both a summary of 1:18-5:11 and a transition to 6:1-8:39" (1980:85).

²⁹ De Boer's tables 1 & 2 are helpful and clear for the purpose of comparison (1988:148).

5:1-11 recur again in 8:31-39: both deal with the Christian's certainty of final salvation in the midst of tribulation. In other words, both deal with the assurance of glory and of salvation (future) resulting from justification by faith through Jesus Christ, in times of tribulation (present; see Aletti 1997:298 & 298 n.12). Sixth, in Rom. 5:12-7:25, after the introductory paragraph of 5:1-11, three freedoms (from sin and death, from sin and self, and from the law) prepare the way for the discussion of life in the Spirit. Seventh, the analogy between Adam and Christ in 5:12-19 illuminates and upholds the main thesis in 5:1-11, that justification is a sure foundation for final salvation and life. This whole discussion forms a unit that cannot really be broken up.

Furthermore, Romans 5 to 8 as co-text of chapter 7 is further confirmed as we see Rom. 5:1-11 as a transitional and "pivotal" pericope within Romans' argumentative macrostructure. It has a dual function which brings to conclusion the previous four chapters and at the same time introduces new topics that stem from the list of some of the important consequences of that justification (Ziesler 1989:135; De Boer 1988:147; Thomson 1995:187). So these verses are correctly called a "bridge" (see Throckmorton 1977:30; Robinson 1979:59). Recently Patricia M. McDonald called this section a "rhetorical bridge" (1990:81-96). She shows that this passage has unifying functions of at least three different kinds: literary, theological, and rhetorical. Literally, she notes that these eleven verses contain "a mixture of vocabulary, some components of which tend to be characteristic of either Rom. 1-4 or 5:12-8:39 but not of both." Rom. 5:1-11 is also a theological bridge in the sense that this pericope takes up and develops ideas found in 1-4 and lays a foundation for the following 5:12-8:39. Lastly, in her whole article she succinctly shows that this pericope has a third function as a rhetorical bridge. Here Paul forms an explicit unity with his readers by repeatedly, and for the first time in Romans, referring to himself and them as "we,"³⁰ those who have been justified by faith. Previously, Paul refers to them indirectly (1:1-15) or not at all (1:16-4:22) but begins to call them "we" in 5:1-11 (McDonald 1990:82-83, 86-88, 93 n.11; cf. Dahl 1977:82). By means of this rhetorical device Paul strongly captures his audience and thereby increases the effectiveness of his letter to the Roman Christians whom he has never visited personally. Here he makes a strong bond with the Roman Christians, no longer as a typical groups (such as Jews and Gentiles) as in 1:18-4:22 and not considered as part of an all-inclusive but still

³⁰ Paul mentions "we" 18 times in these eleven verses, only vv. 4 & 7 lack this personal pronoun.

impersonal *all*, as they were in 3:21-26. “Instead, in 5:1-11 Paul speaks for the first time in Romans of the life that he and the Roman believers share as Christians.” (McDonald 1990:86) So Rom. 5:1-11 forms a rhetorical bridge between Paul and the Roman believers in the sense that in this pericope Paul strengthens the somewhat tenuous contact with the Roman Christians effected by careful diplomacy in 1.1-15 (McDonald 1990:86-87). Subsequently in the following section (5:12-8:39), Paul sustains that rhetorical unit by occasionally reverting to the use of the first person plural, beginning from chapter 6 (McDonald 1990:87-88).

As we consider these points above, it is plausible to see Rom. 5 to 8 as a broader unit of Rom. 7. How then do we see the main development of Rom. 5 to 8 structurally? In the past, most scholars saw these chapters as simply dealing with sanctification or Christian life. For example, Nygren ([1944] 1988), who understands Romans 1-4 as dealing with justification and chapter 5-8 with sanctification, says that “Throughout chapters 5-8 the subject is the meaning of *Christian life*.” (:287-288) However, we need to notice that Romans 5 to 8 is structurally quite complex. Beker (1980:84) points out well,

the coherent clarity of Rom. 1:18-4:25 should not deceive us into thinking that Rom. 5:1-8:39 is equally coherent, as if, for instance, ‘sanctification’ follows ‘justification’ in a process from ‘forgiveness of sins’ (1:18-4:25) to ‘moral holiness’ (5:1-8:39).

I think that the best understanding of the structure of Romans 5 to 8, among many options, is Moo’s suggestion, which he calls “ring composition, or chiasm.” The following is a slightly modified version (1991:303; cf. Wedderburn 1988:131):

- A1. 5:1-11: the blessings and assurance of the Christian
 - B1. 5:12-21: the basis for these blessings and assurance in the work of Christ
 - C1. 6:1-23: against antinomianism (the problem of sin)
 - C2. 7:1-25: against the misunderstanding of the law
 - B2. 8:1-17: the ground of blessings and assurance in the work of Christ, mediated by the Spirit
- A2. 8:18-39: the blessings and assurance of the Christian.

4.3.2 ROMANS 7 AS A RHETORICAL UNIT

We have put Romans 7 within its co-text of Rom. 5 to 8. At this stage we need to establish Romans 7 as a rhetorical unit. As discussed above, the rhetorical unit consists of a “discernible beginning and ending, connected by some action or argument” (Kennedy 1984:34) and shows a line of argumentation. Kennedy employs the conception of the

to determine smaller units within a text. The extent of a rhetorical unit is various, from a few verses to larger combinations of smaller units (Wuellner 1987:455).

Romans 7 has a discernible beginning and ending. It starts with a question, “Do you not know, brothers—for I am speaking to men who know the law—that the law has authority over a man only as long as he lives?” with a keyword “the law” (Rom. 7:1). The formula “Ἡ ἀγνοεῖτε together with ἀδελφοί used here to introduce a new subject, is employed similarly in 1:13, where Paul uses a disclosure formula to effect a major transition. Since 1:13, this is the first use of ἀδελφοί in address of Roman Christians. Also, the keyword νόμος, in all these different cases, is used 23 times throughout Romans 7 (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 14, 16, 21, 22, 23, 25). Another keyword is from the ἁμαρτία word group, used 16 times in this chapter (5, 7 (twice), 8 (twice), 9, 11, 13 (4 times), 14, 17, 20, 23, 25). These keywords unite this chapter as a whole into a rhetorical unit and show that the main topic is the relationship between sin and law. In addition to this, there is a proper conclusive summary of the whole chapter in verse 25b with these two keywords, “So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God’s law, but in the sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.” Ἄρα οὖν shows such a conclusion based on the previous discussion on the law.

Romans 7 consists of two pericopes, each having two subtexts: verses 1-6, the analogy of marriage with two subtexts (1-3 & 4-6); 7-25, the role of the law in human life with two subtexts as well (7-12 & 13-25).³¹ Each pericope has its own unique beginning and ending. In verse 1 Paul begins with a transitional phrase, “Do you not know, brothers” (“Ἡ ἀγνοεῖτε, ἀδελφοί). Verses 1-3 can be a unit, since there is a conclusion in verse 3 to what he says from verse 1, which is shown in the phrase, ἄρα οὖν. Furthermore, there is a shift of pronoun usage in verse 4. In verses 1-3 Paul uses the third person singular noun as a subject and accordingly third person singular verbs: ὁ νόμος κυριεύει...ζῆ; ἡ ὑπανδρος γυνή ... δέδεται ... ἀποθάνη ὁ ἀνὴρ, κατήργηται ... χρηματίσει ... γένηται ... ἀποθάνη ὁ ἀνὴρ ... ἐστίν. But from verses 4 to 6 Paul applies the principle, from what he had said in the previous subtext, to Roman Christians, and this is shown explicitly by his use of ὥστε,

³¹ Many commentators divide this section into vv. 7-13 and vv. 14-25 (Dunn 1988; Ziesler 1989:171-198; Fitzmyer 1993: 454-478 etc.). One of the main reasons for this division is that from v.14 Paul changes the verb from past tense to present tense, but it is better to take the division above, because Paul usually starts a new pericope with a rhetorical question as is shown in vv. 1, 7, 13. Verse 13 takes up the conclusion of vv. 7-12 and at the same time it “serves as a transition and introduction to” vv. 14-25. This reading is more likely because of the presence of γάρ in v. 14, which brings out such a connection (Cranfield 1982:330-370).

ἀδελφοί μου, of pronouns (ὤμεις, ὑμᾶς, ἡμῶν, ἡμᾶς) and of mostly second person plural verbs (ἐθανατώθητε, καρποφορήσωμεν, κατηγορήθημεν, κατειχόμεθα), except one use of first person plural (ἡμεῖν). Paul uses, at the beginning, the pronoun “you,” then he includes himself as he continues his argument further, using the inclusive pronoun, “our” and “us.” Semantically, this pericope deals with Christians’ freedom from the Mosaic law. In verse 1 Paul lays down a general legal principle that the rule or regime of the law over man is valid only as long as he/she lives. Then in verses 2 & 3 Paul gives a specific case from marriage law, which serves to clarify this principle: death of a marriage partner brings a dramatic change in the relationship to the law of marriage. Verses 4-6 are the logical conclusion of that principle and apply to Christian lives in general. The fact that Roman Christians have died to the law means that they are no longer under the rule of the law, which needs to be clarified further. It does not mean that we as Christian do not need to keep the law anymore. It means that we are no longer under the law’s condemnation as is evident in the co-text Rom. 8:1 (Cranfield 1982:330,331).

In the second pericope, Paul begins the new pericope with questions, together with a rhetorical question with an emphatic negative μή γένοιτο in verse 7. (Τί οὖν ἐροῦμεν; ὁ νόμος ἁμαρτία; μή γένοιτο). Throughout this pericope Paul uses the first person pronoun (total 26 times), which combines this pericope stylistically as one unit and separates it from the preceding and following pericopes (cf. Stowers 1994:259): ἐμοὶ (7 times in 6 verses: 8, 13, 17, 18, 20, 21 (twice)); ἐγὼ (8 times in 7 verses: 9, 10, 14, 17, 20 (twice), 24, 25); μου (5 times: 4, 18 (twice), 23 (twice)); μοι (3 times: 10, 13, 18); με (3 times: 11, 23, 24). This pericope is also commonly divided into two subtexts: 7-12 & 13-25 (contra Ziesler 1989:171-198; Fitzmyer 1993:462-478; Louw 1979:16, etc.; see 5.1.3).³²

So far we have established Romans 7 within its co-text 5 to 8 in Romans as a whole. Romans 7 is unique in Paul’s letters, because here Paul is dealing with the issue of the law in the whole chapter. We do not find such focused attention on the law anywhere else in his

³² I have already dealt with the division of this section briefly in the previous footnote. Stowers (1994:259) also divides these verses into two subsections like mine.

writings. For that reason, to understand Romans 7 properly will be a great help as we try to grapple with Paul's theology on the relation of Christian life and the law.³³

4.4 RHETORICAL SITUATION OF ROMANS

Bitzer (1968) is the first to have expressed himself concisely about the rhetorical situation. He defines a rhetorical situation "as a complex of persons, events, objects, and relations presenting an actual or potential exigence which can be completely or partially removed if discourse, introduced into the situation, can influence audience thought or action so as bring about positive modification of exigence" (:6). For Bitzer, a rhetorical situation has three constituents: exigence, audience and constraints. An exigence "is an imperfection marked by urgency; it is a defect, an obstacle, something waiting to be done, a thing that is other than it should be" (:6). The rhetorical audience consists only of those "who are capable of being influenced by discourse and of being mediators of change" (:8). The constraints of a rhetorical situation are "made up of persons, events, objects, and relations" that "have power to constrain decision and action needed to modify the exigence." The constraints derive from "beliefs, attitudes, documents, facts, traditions, images, interests, motives, and the like" (:8). When a rhetor enters the situation and creates discourse, the rhetor and the resulting text become additional constituents. The text, according to Bitzer, must be "fitting," and the situation itself prescribes the response that fits in terms of purpose, theme, matter and style. His situational reading focuses on the circumstance of the text model and the situation controls the response of the rhetor (1968:6-8).

Richard E. Vatz disagrees with Bitzer's definition of rhetorical situations on several points, because he thinks that Bitzer's rhetorical situations are predetermined -- meaning is intrinsic to the situation -- and the situations dictate the rhetor's response (1973:154-161). He criticizes Bitzer's model of the rhetorical situation in that the model states that situations exist independently of rhetors and rhetors can only respond to prescribed exigences and constraints. Vatz (1973:157), by contrast, strongly emphasizes that the rhetor creates both text and

³³ Dunn says in his Tyndale lecture, "Rom 7 is one of those key passages in Paul's writings which offers us an insight into a whole dimension of Paul's thought and faith. Even more important, it is one of the few really pivotal passages in Paul's theology; by which I mean that *our* understanding of it will in large measure determine our understanding of Paul's theology as a whole, particularly his anthropology and soteriology" (1975:257; italics his).

situation, stating that “meaning is not discovered in situations, but *created* by rhetors.” The rhetor, not the situation, is in control.

After Bitzer and Vatz’s debate, Scott Consigny wrote an article, in which he proposes a somewhat mediating position between them (1974:175-186). He criticized both Bitzer and Vatz for their misconception of the rhetorical situation. To him Bitzer’s understanding of the rhetorical situation is flawed “in construing the situation as determinate and predetermining a ‘fitting’ response.” And Vatz errs because he places too much freedom on the rhetor who creates freely his own exigence at will and selects his subject matter in a manner of “pure arbitration” (:178). Consigny thinks that the rhetor “who finds himself thrown into a rhetorical situation must transform the indeterminacies into a determinate and coherent structure” (1974:178). In order to be effective in a particular situation, a rhetor must meet two conditions: the condition of integrity and of receptivity. To meet these two conditions of receptivity and integrity, Consigny proposes that rhetoric should be construed as an art of topics or commonplaces. Thus his solution for redressing the flaws of Bitzer and Vatz are “the traditional topics,” which control both the rhetor and the situation, and can be a solution to the antinomy of rhetor and situation. Using the art of topics allows for the rhetor to engage in the situation creatively, not to create exigence, audience, and constraints but to discover and manage situations; and the situations are also controlled by the topics, which engage the various situations by traditional themes. These three opinions dominate all debate about the rhetorical situation and have recently been designated as the Bitzer-Vatz-Consigny model by Gorrell (1997:395).

There is another debate related to the rhetorical situation from a response-creativity or object-subject dualistic perspective. Patton suggests that the relationship between causation and creativity is closely related to the author’s perception (1979:36-55). Bitzer (1980:28-29), Brinton (1981:246)³⁴ and Vorster (1991:30) present the rhetorical situation as closely related to the rhetor’s interest, however, Bitzer and Vorster do not separate this from objective matters and consider that both sides can be combined in an exigence.

³⁴ He indicates that the rhetorical situation only comes into existence when the “exigence” of the situation comes into relationship with the “interest” of the rhetor.

Recently, Gorrell (1997:395-412) synthesized the Bitzer-Vatz-Consigny model with the Venn model and the communication, or rhetorical, triangle: the Kinneavy (1971:19) model, which combines the communication constituents of encoder (message sender), decoder (receiver of the message), reality to which the message refers, and signal (text); the Aristotelian model, which consists of ethos, pathos, and logos; and the rhetorical model consisting of the rhetor, audience, subject, and text. Gorrell revised the Venn model by adding two fundamental features of the rhetorical situation: motives and aim. Many scholars recognize the centrality of aim, or purpose, in the rhetorical situation (see Kinneavy 1971:48; Bitzer 1968:10; Crusius 1989:117; Gorrell 1997:406). Gorrell explains that aim is the “definitive, desired outcome,” and located in reality, along with exigence and constraints. Motive, however, has to be located in the rhetor and the audience. Aim is “what the rhetor means to accomplish, and it emerges from the situation; motive is *why*, and it comes from the participants [i.e., the rhetor and audience]” (1997:406). He concludes that “the fitting response to any rhetorical situation results from the interactions of all its components—rhetor, audience, and reality. Anything less is not a true rhetorical situation” (:411).

I agree with Gorrell’s conclusion that when we consider the rhetorical situation, we must consider the interactions of all its components. That is, we need to consider the intent or aim of the rhetor, the audience’s motives and the reality in the rhetorical situation. Furthermore, contrary to Snyman (1988:218-231) and Pogoloff (1992) who try to find the rhetorical situation of Rom. 8:31-39 and 1 Corinthians 1-4 respectively in their writings, we need to consider the rhetorical situation in the whole text, as we see in the dissertation of Johannes N. Vorster (1991), and not just in a part of it.

The rhetorical situation of Paul’s letter to the Romans is very much related to the question of the purpose of Paul’s writing, since the purpose of a letter is to respond to the exigence of a situation. So the study of the purpose of a letter is in a sense the determining of the rhetorical situation (Vorster 1991:30). As we have noted earlier, the question of the occasion and purpose of Romans is much debated, which is clearly evident in the book *The Romans debate* (Donfried 1991). How then do we perceive the rhetorical situation of Romans? First of all, we need to consider what the motive is behind Paul’s writing of his letter to the Roman Christians. Paul explicitly states his motive in the letter opening and closing (1:10-15 & 15:14-33). There Paul adopts the common practice of a Greco-Roman letter, as the purpose of his letter-writing and his travel plan are clearly mentioned, especially in 15:14-33. Paul’s

motive or purpose for the writing of Romans is complex and difficult to grasp.³⁵ The difficulty is that it is impossible to perceive a single clear purpose in Romans. So far, three main proposals have been suggested as to the purpose of Romans: theological, missionary, and pastoral (see Jervis 1991:11-28). Those who see the purpose of Romans as theological are divided into three subcategories: (1) A theological tractate (Luther, Melanchthon, Calvin, Karl Barth, A Nygren); (2) A circular letter (E. Renan & J. B. Lightfoot) or Ephesian letter (David Shülz & T. W. Manson); (3) Written in view of a trip to Jerusalem (G. Bornkämm, J. Jervell, R. E. Brown, J. P. Meier; E. Fuchs).

Those who see the purpose of Romans as missionary are also divided into two subcategories: (1) A letter of self-introduction (R. A. Lipsius, B. Weiss, D. E. Aune, R. Jewett, S. K. Stowers); (2) A letter of self-defense (J. W. Drane, Erasmus, M. Goguel, W. L. Knox).

Finally, those who see the purpose of Romans as pastoral are divided into three subcategories: (1) A letter addressing errors of doctrine (Augustine, H. Presker, J. Marcus, F. C. Baur, F. Watson); (2) A letter addressing errors of behavior (P. S. Minear, Chrysostom, W. Marxsen, H. W. Bartsch, W. S. Campbell, W. Wiefel); (3) A letter asserting apostolic authority (A. Fridrichsen, G. Klein). As we see from these different opinions above, it is hard to think that a single purpose is well fitted to explain the whole letter of Romans. For myself, Paul seemed to have multiple purposes in mind as he wrote Romans. For example, Beker argues that the occasion of Romans is “both in Paul’s concrete situation and in that of the Roman church” (1980:71). Like him, there are also some other scholars who see a “dual occasion” or purposes for Romans, G. P. Wiles (1973:74-76), C. J. Roetzel (1983:70), W. G. Kümmel (1975:309-310), R. P. Martin (1981:127-129), A. J. M. Wedderburn (1988:5, 6), J. A. Ziesler (1989:5-16) and L. A. Jervis (1991). Among these scholars, I agree with Beker (1980:71) and Jervis (1991:163, 164) who suggest that Paul’s intention in writing Romans is both to introduce himself as an apostle of the Gentiles for the gospel of Christ so as to secure a new mission base, and to deal with the problem of disunity between the Gentile majority Christians and the Jewish minority Christians in Rome. In so doing, Paul preaches the gospel in his letter to the Roman Christians. Thus, Paul is exercising his apostolic mandate in the

³⁵ The early comment of F. J. A. Hort is still true today. He says that the problem of the original purpose of Romans is complicated and “may be reasonably inferred from the extraordinary variety of opinion which has prevailed and still prevails about it” (1895:5).

letter. So Paul's purpose is missionary-pastoral, but it is executed theologically.³⁶ That is, the Apostle Paul writes Romans in order to solve the disunity among Roman Christians on the basis of his gospel. As result, he might receive their support and prayer for his future missionary work to Spain and for his impending visit to Jerusalem as he delivers the collection from the Gentile churches of Macedonia and Achaia for the poor Jewish Christians in Jerusalem.

Another question we need to answer conclusively is to whom Paul is writing. It is not easy to decide as we study Romans itself. In some places Paul seems to address Gentile Christians (1:5-6, 13, 11:13; 15: 9, 15, 16), and in others he seems to address Jews (2:17-29; 4:1; 7:1). Generally, it has been accepted that, historically, the Roman Christians are predominantly of Gentile background and partly of Jewish during the time of Paul (Sanday & Headlam 1896:xxxiiiif; Barrett 1962:22; Munck 1959:200; Kümmel 1963:218-220; Marxsen 1968:92-109; Bornkamm 1972:89; Campbell 1973:268, 269; Wiefel [1977] 1991:96; Beker 1980:76; Roetzel 1983:70; Fraikin 1986:95; Dunn 1988:xlvi, 19; Wedderburn 1988:32, 34, 45-46; Donfried [1977] 1991:48; Jewett 1982 & 1985; Marcus 1989:67-73; Black 1989:8; Klein 1991:29-43; Fitzmyer 1993:33, 76; contra O'Neill 1975; Watson 1986:98-103).³⁷ This understanding is plausible, because during the reign of the emperor Claudius, as reported by the Roman historian Suetonius, Jews were expelled from Rome in AD 49 because they were "making constant disturbance at the instigation of Chrestus [i.e., Christus]" (*Claudii Vita* 25.4; cf. Acts 18:2; see Wiefel [1977] 1991:92, 93; Bruce 1991:179; Watson 1986:91; Fitzmyer 1993:31).

However, there is a problem as to whether Paul is writing to "purely Gentile Christians" as Munck thinks (1959:201; Vorster 1991:242) or to Roman Jewish Christians (Watson 1991:203-215) or to a mixed community as they were. (Fitzmyer 1993:33). Fraikin thinks that Paul wrote to the Gentile Christians only. In his article he analyzes the role of Jews in Romans from a rhetorical perspective. He follows Wuellner's classification of the rhetorical genre of Romans as "epideictic" (1986:92) and Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca's definition of the epideictic genre as being "to increase the intensity of adherence to certain values"

³⁶ Contra Hester (2000) who thinks that a pastoral purpose is the most unlikely of three purposes (:17). He can accommodate the combination of only two other purposes.

³⁷ These scholars view the majority of Roman Christians as being Jewish.

(1969:51). Fraikin (1986) argues that the whole of the letter is Paul's answer to Israel's rejection of the gospel and of Christians, whether they are Gentile or Jewish. Paul perceives that Israel's rejection is "a blow to the credibility of the movement, and is a special threat to the Gentile Christians" (:101). Sociologically speaking, the old movement (Judaism) rejects a new reform movement (Christianity); that is, the new movement fails to win the Jews. Thus Paul wants to restore the credibility of the gospel and those who have decided to follow the Christian message. In so doing, he makes Jewish values, the Jewish theological system, his point of departure. In Romans, Paul is consequently redefining Judaism and showing that those who adhere to the gospel of Jesus Christ are actually in continuation with God's universal plan of salvation, which originated with Israel. Here the election of the Roman Gentiles is defended from the perspective of Israel's role in God's grand plan and Israel's rejection is lamented. The phrase "for the Jew first, but also for the Greek" (3:29; 4:16; 9:24) should then be taken as "not only Jews but also Gentiles" (:93, 96, 103). In the light of this perspective Fraikin concludes that the recipients of Romans is purely Gentile.

Vorster (1991) comes to the same conclusion from his interactional approach, utilizing the reception-critical category of the "implied reader." He indicates that the audience of the rhetorical situation cannot be equated with a real audience, just as the rhetorical situation is not identical with the historical situation. He identifies the implied readers in Romans as Gentile believers, not Jewish believers, although the Romans community may have historically consisted of Jewish and Gentile believers (:32). Paul's purpose is to effect the Gentile Christians' future cooperation and assistance in Rome. Their cooperation requires prayer for Paul's journey to Jerusalem to bring successfully to completion the collection for the poor in that city and the establishment of an operational base in Rome for the missionary work in the west. Apart from their cooperation, their acceptance of Paul's authority and the gospel is required. In order to effect their cooperation

Paul identifies with the implied readers. On the one hand it entails justifying his right to require their cooperation; on the other hand, he identifies by the confirmation of their mutual value-system. Confirmation of their mutual value-system serves to show that they occupy a position of honour. This mutual value-system is Jewish in orientation and pertains specifically to socio-religious aspects concerning the relationship between Jews and Gentiles...Because the focus is socio-religious, the field of association is that of the covenant. Old Testament quotations, Judaistic traditions, honourifics, identity markers, God-language, etcetera are used to enhance the status of the Gentile implied readers in their relation to the Jews.

(Vorster 1991:32).

His interpretation is interesting, however, it is not certain that Paul really had such a rhetorical device in mind as he wrote his letter to the Roman Christians.

Recently Stowers (1994:21-22) discussed the problem of the audience in the text of Romans. He thinks that NT scholars, especially in Pauline studies, are in great need of a conceptual discipline regarding the question of audience or reader. He suggests three basic categories compatible with various literary theories and approaches: the empirical reader, the encoded explicit reader, and the encoded implicit reader. The empirical readers are real readers in different periods and cultural assumptions, including the original recipients. The encoded explicit reader is the "audience manifest in the text," i.e., the reader inscribed in the text. In Romans there are some instances of this (see Rom. 1:5 & 11:13, etc.), which are indicated by the direct address of the audience in the second person plural, direct references in the first person plural, and the expression "brothers." The encoded implicit reader is very much like the ideal reader or competent reader. In order to conceptualize this reader we need to ask the following question, "What assumptions, knowledge, frame of reference, and horizon of expectations does Romans implicitly assume in order to be well or fully understood?" Romans implies an audience who understands something about Jewish scripture and authority in Judaism or certain types of Judaism (cf. Rom 7:1). Other implicit assumptions about this reader "include knowledge of and attitude toward Paul, an understanding of certain Greek, Romans, Jewish cultural codes and institutions, a knowledge of various texts, a grasp of the generic literature and rhetorical conventions manifest in the letter, certain common beliefs about God and Christ, and an ignorance of Aramaic (for example, 8:15)." Generally there is continuity between the explicitly inscribed and implicit encoded reader. However, they are totally different from the empirical readers of any sort. From this perspective Stowers asserts with certainty that the audience in Romans consists of Gentiles at Rome who know something about Jewish scripture and Jesus Christ.

Unlike Fraikin, Vorster, and Stowers, Watson (1991) understands from his analysis on Romans 14:1-15:13 that there were mainly two separate congregations in Rome: one group is the "Jewish Christians" (the weak) and the other "Gentile Christians" (the strong), and Paul wrote mainly to the Jewish Christians. Watson argues that the abstention from meat and wine is not evidence of syncretistic or ascetic actions, but "is fully compatible with the situation of Jewish Christians who wished to remain faithful to the law in difficult circumstances" very much as Daniel, Judith, Esther, and the priests behaved in a Gentile environment (:204). Each

of these two groups in Rome had a totally differing outlook regarding the Mosaic law: the Gentile believers regarded observance of the Jewish law as incompatible with their Christian faith, while Jewish believers regarded the law as essential to their Christian faith. In the light of this fact, Watson concludes that it is “extremely unlikely that they shared common worship” and Paul’s argument in Romans “presupposes two congregations, separated by mutual hostility and suspicion over the question of the law, which he [Paul] wishes to bring together into one congregation” (:205, 206). In his discussion of Gentile Christianity in Rome in Rom. 16, Watson assumes that most or all of the people named there whom Paul knew personally were associated with the Gentile group, for example, Prisca and Aquilla (v.4). Many of them were Paul’s own converts and associates and may be described as “Paulinists”—“Christians who shared Paul’s practice of freedom from the law and separation from the Jewish community.” Watson thus concludes that “Gentile Christianity at Rome is therefore Pauline Christianity” (:209).

At the same time there was a Jewish Christian congregation at Rome as can be seen from Paul’s greetings to various people (Andronicus and Junias, v. 7; the household of Aristobulus, v. 10; and Herodion, v.11”). Watson argues further that Paul’s writing of Romans is mainly “to persuade the Jewish group to recognize the legitimacy of the Gentile group, and thus of his own Gentile community” and Rom. 1:1-17 and 15:14-55 confirm such an interpretation. Watson provides three explanations why he takes this view. (1) He argues that Rom. 1:5, 6 is a crucial passage for determining who the primary addressees are of Romans. Here ἐν οἷς must mean “among whom” and it should be taken in the sense that they live in the midst of Gentiles, not in the sense that the addressees are themselves Gentiles. This reading is more likely because of the key phrase, καὶ ὑμεῖς, “you too,” which probably means “you as well as me.” So Paul is in fact saying: “You too are called by Jesus Christ in the midst of Gentiles, just as I am.” Thus he sees the primary addressees of Romans as Jewish Christians (1991:213). (2) What Paul says in 1:13-15 is not contradictory to his mission principle mentioned in 15:20. In 1:13-15 Paul expresses his desire to visit Rome “in order that I might have a harvest among you, just as I have had among the other Gentiles.” In 15:20 Paul mentions his mission principle, not to build on another man’s foundation. This seems to be contradictory. However, when we consider that the Romans Christians are converts and fellow-workers of Paul, the problem, according to Watson, is solved. (3) Romans was not addressed exclusively to Jewish Christians, even though its content suggests that they are the primary addressees, as F. C. Baur and W. Manson argue. In 1:16 Paul unexpectedly states

that the gospel is “for the Jew first and also for the Greek.” Here “for the Jew first” expresses “Paul’s acknowledgement of the priority and the pre-eminence of the Roman Jewish Christian group,” whereas “and also for the Greek” affirms the legitimacy of the Pauline Gentile group in Rome. It shows that Paul wants to persuade the Roman Jewish Christians that salvation is not for them alone but “for everyone who believes,” including Gentiles. The chief purpose in writing to Jewish Christians in Rome is to persuade them to unite with the Roman Gentile Christians, in preparation for Paul’s long-term plan of the evangelization of the western part of the then known world (Watson 1991:213-215).

In my opinion, the best option among these three proposals is to see the audience as the text itself shows. From the text of Romans, it is quite certain that there were both Gentile Christians and Jewish Christians in Rome, as most commentators understand (Cranfield 1982:21; Ziesler 1989:11-14; Watson 1991:203-215; Fitzmyer 1993:25-39). Contra Cranfield (1991) who thinks that it is impossible to determine that the majority of Roman Christians were Gentiles or Jews (:21), it is likely that the Gentile Christians were the majority among the Roman believers during the time of Paul’s writing (Fitzmyer 1993:33; Roetzel 1983:71; Black 1989:8). In the light of the above, Paul writes to the Roman Christian community as a mixed audience, neither to Gentile Christians or to Jewish Christians only; and it is evident in Romans where he sometimes speaks specifically to either of the groups, as in 2:17, where Paul speaks specifically to Jews; 11:13, where Paul speaks to the Gentiles only.³⁸ As we consider Rom. 16, we are certain that a number of house-churches existed in Rome, which might be divided into two main groups (a Jewish Christian group and a Gentile Christian group), contra Minear (Cranfield 1982:22; Minear 1971:7-14).³⁹ If this understanding is correct, then it is much better to include all of these several house-churches as recipients of Romans, otherwise it is impossible to unite them for worship (Rom. 15:5, 6). Since Paul knew the situation of the Roman Christians quite well, it is better to regard Paul as writing to all of them, not to just a part of them. If he wrote to the Gentile Christians only, then

³⁸ In his seminar at the University of Stellenbosch on 11th August, 2000, P. J. Maartens also accepted that the audience of Romans is both Jewish and Gentile Christians.

³⁹ Minear says that no evidence of a single congregation is found in the letter to the Romans, but he finds that there are at least 5 different house-churches in Rome: those of Prisca and Aquilla, of Aristobulos, of Asyncritus, of Narcissus, of Philologus (1971:7,8). Among them there are at least 5 distinct factions or positions. 1) The “weak in faith” who condemned the “strong in faith”; 2) the strong in faith who scorned and despised the weak in faith; 3) the doubters (14:23); 4) The weak in faith who did not condemn the strong; and 5) the strong in faith who did not despise the weak (:8-14).

probably the Jewish Christians would have felt left out and the same would be true vice versa. Furthermore, even though we accept the use of a rhetorical device, called diatribe, it does not mean that we do not perceive any historical situation behind the biblical texts, because all Paul's letters are "contingent" and are closely related to the church situation. Thus, in conclusion, it is much better to include all of the Roman Christians as recipients of Paul's letter so that he might persuade them to come together in unity for worship. In addition, Paul wanted them to pray that his delivery of the collection to the poor Christians in Judea be successful and that Rome should become an operational base for Paul as he moves toward the West.

4.5 RHETORICAL DEVICES AND STYLES IN ROMANS 7

At this stage it is proper to consider what the rhetorical devices and styles are that Paul used in this chapter, mainly diatribe and speech-in-character. First, we need to define the diatribe and speech-in-character.

4.5.1 UNDERSTANDING DIATRIBE (ΔΙΑΤΡΙΒΗ')

It is the dissertation of Rudolf Bultmann (1910) that drew attention to diatribe in Paul's letters. Bultmann tried to show that Paul employs the style of the "Cynic-Stoic diatribe," a form of preaching. Since his publication it has been debated whether Paul, a pure Jew, used such a pagan style or not. Bornkamm basically accepts Bultmann's suggestion and argues that many of the objections raised by Paul in Romans "arise out of the subject matter, or rather out of a misunderstanding of it, and not an actual historical situation" (1972:90). Contrarily, Karl P. Donfried ([1977] 1991) concludes, after having done a brief study of Bultmann's book, that it is still questionable whether there was a genre known as diatribe in the Greco-Roman world. One thing that is clear from Bultmann's writing is that Paul was influenced by the rhetorical patterns of his day (:118, 119).⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Donfried's article was published originally in 1974. *CBQ* 36:332-355. Like him, Malherbe does not accept diatribe as a genre (1986:129-141). Porter lists more German scholars who have abandoned diatribe as a genre (1991:656, 657 n. 9 & 10).

Subsequent to Donfried's study, Stanley K. Stowers (1981) basically accepted in his dissertation that there is a literary genre of diatribe, but not like Bultmann who suggested that diatribe comprised dialogical and rhetorical techniques used by the wandering Cynic-Stoic street preachers for persuading their audience. Stowers modified the definition of the diatribe to "a type of discourse employed in the philosophical school...[it] presupposes a student-teacher relationship. The dialogical element of the diatribe is an aspect of the Socratic indictment-protreptic process as it was adapted to the form of the philosophical discourse and became a rhetorical technique" (:175). He describes three major features of the diatribe found also in Romans, mainly in 1:18-4:25: 1) address to the imaginary interlocutor (:79-118); 2) objections and false conclusions (:119-154); 3) dialogical exchange and *exemplum* (:155-174). In diatribe, apostrophes are an aspect of the indictment-protreptic process. However, this imaginary interlocutor should not to be thought of as a real opponent, because it was a rhetorical tool used by the teacher. Stowers concludes that Paul's use of address in Romans is very much similar to such apostrophes in diatribe. Furthermore, because of the close similarities between diatribe and its use in Romans "1) in form and typical combinations of stylistic elements, 2) in the function of these elements in the argumentation and pedagogical style of the letter, and 3) in thematic and ethological elements, we must conclude that Paul is dependent on the diatribe in his use of the dialogical style in Romans" (:178). Another conclusion he draws is that "Paul's use of the style of the diatribe in Romans is conscious and intentional" and it is closely tied to the development of the argumentation (:178-179).

Recently S. E. Porter (1991) argues that there was a genre called "diatribe" in Hellenistic rhetoric, that in Romans 5 there are a number of elements of diatribe, and that the recognition of such features of diatribe enhances our understanding of Paul's argument. He dismisses the notion that classical research does not prove diatribe as genre. He demonstrates that the diatribe as genre can be seen in ancient Hellenistic literary works, such as the writings of Diogenes Laertius, Dio Chrysostom, Archytas and Athenaeus (:658-660). He indicates that diatribe is basically dialogical, which entails several features. One of these features is the introduction of questions or objections by an imaginary interlocutor speaking as an opponent, as a helper, or even for the author. These questions are often written in the third person.

In Romans, Paul conducts a recognizable dialogue with an interlocutor on and off from 1:18 to chap. 14.⁴¹ Many of the questions or objections are not introduced by any formulaic phrase, with some exceptions (e.g., with ἀλλά, 10:8, 18, 19; 11:4; with οὐ μόνον δέ, ὥστε ... εἰ and γάρ, 3:5, 7; 11:15). The diatribe style relies on short, crisp sentences connected paratactically (e.g., 2:21-24; 12:8; 14:6), using parallelism and antithesis (e.g., 1:23-28; 3:4-6; 6:1-10; 12:4-15; 14:7-9), with statements occasionally contrasted by οὐ μόνον δέ. In support of an argument Paul occasionally turns to a historical figure as exemplum. For example, in Rom. 3:25-4:25 Paul utilizes a dialogical exchange (3:27-4:2) followed by an exemplum using the figure of Abraham (4:2-25; Porter 1991:661-662).

Porter points out some diatribal features in Romans 5. The first one is Paul's use of the subjunctive in 5:1-3, especially ἔχωμεν in 5:1. Porter prefers to read the verbs as the subjunctive rather than indicative. He evaluates both readings and concludes that both internal and external criteria indicate that the subjunctive is the better reading (1991:662-664). He thinks that an appeal to the use of the diatribe in chapter 5 also makes understandable vv. 6-7, which has been much debated among scholars. He follows the suggestion of J. H. Michael, who calls the repetition of ἔτι in v. 6 as a "faulty repetition" and supports εἰς τί γάρ ... ἔτι. If this reading is correct, he says (:666), then it would be translated as a dialogical question: "For to what purpose did Christ, while we were yet helpless, die at the right time [or "then"] for the ungodly?" (cf. Black 1973:83; Sanday and Headlam 1896:126). In this reading v. 7 is an answer to this hypothetical question. Porter points out that the phrase πολλῶ ... μᾶλλον (which occurs four times in Rom. 5: vv. 9, 10, 15, 17) is common in diatribe (:668 n.79). He notes several sets of parallel statements, which are characteristic of the diatribe: 5:1 with 4:25; 5:9 with 5:10b; 5:1 with 5:10a and 5:1 with 5:10 (cf. :669 & n. 83).

The second feature of diatribe in Rom. 5 is an *exemplum* in 5:12-21 (:669-670). Here there is an extended comparison between Adam and Christ. In this pericope Porter deals with four issues relevant to diatribe. First is whether the connective διὰ τοῦτο in 5:12 refers forward or backward. Porter prefers to read it as an anaphoric reference, because it fits well with the

⁴¹ Porter lists biblical references to this feature (1991:661 n. 33): Rom. 2:3-4, 21; 3:1-9; 4:1-3, 9-10; 6:1-3, 15; 7:1, 7,13; 9:14, 19-23; 10:6-8, 14-18; 11:1-7,11, 15; 14:4. It is often followed by μὴ γένοιτο (Rom. 3:4, 6, 31; 6:2, 15; 7:7, 13; 9:14; 11:1, 11).

previous discursive material (:671 & n. 93). The second issue is v. 14, in which Paul sees Adam as the type of the coming one. This is an important parallel opposition, which is typical of much diatribe. Furthermore, Porter takes, following Caragounis' suggestion, vv. 15a and 16a as rhetorical questions and notes that the introductory ἀλλά with the question posed by a hypothetical interlocutor, including the negated form, ἀλλ' οὐ, is a common feature of diatribe, and the explanatory use of γάρ as well (:673, 674).

The third issue is Paul's use of parallelism, typical of diatribe, in developing the *exemplum* with Adam and Christ in Rom. 5:12-21. Porter points out here the "balanced cola" as typical of diatribe style in vv. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, and 21. The hypothetical sentence raises the question of sin and the gift of God in vv. 15a and 16a, and provides the motive for unequal comparison between the work of Adam and that of Christ. Sentences referring to Adam (vv. 15b, 16b, 17a, 18a, 19a, 21a) are contrasted with those referring to Christ (vv. 15c, 16c, 17b, 18b, 19b, 21b). Verses 15b & c and vv. 17a & b are connected by the familiar πολλῶ μᾶλλον and emphasize the surpassing work of grace wrought by Christ to overcome the transgression of Adam which affected the many (:674, 675).

The fourth issue is the shift in person from the first person in 5:1-11 to the third person in vv. 12-21, which threatens the unity between these two sections. For some scholars this has been an important factor for placing the major division between vv. 11 and 12.⁴² However, Porter argues for the unity of this whole chapter on the basis of two factors. The first factor is that the shift from the first to third person conforms to a previous diatribe style. In 3:28-4:1 Paul uses the first person, then from there onwards he changes to the third person for the exemplum of Abraham. The second factor is a number of unifying phrases which establish the internal coherence of chapter 5. He lists the διὰ +genitive phrase "through our Lord Jesus Christ," or variants (vv. 1, 11, & 21). Note that this phrase appears at the beginning, in the middle, and at the end. Another unifying phrase is πολλῶ μᾶλλον occurring four times (vv. 9, 10, 15, 17).

He concludes (1991:677) that "in the light of two important textual variants (vv. 1 and 6), the repunctuation of several verses (vv. 6, 15, and 16), and careful attention to the development of

⁴² Porter mentions Schlier, Leenhardt, Zahn, Feuillet, and Luz in his footnote (1991:676 n.120).

the argument, in which a theoretical discussion of reconciliation is followed by the Adam/Christ exemplum,” the rhetorical convention of diatribe can clearly be identified.

4.5.2 DIATRIBE IN ROMANS 7

Romans 7 has been recognized as diatribe since Bultmann (cf. Stowers 1981:22). The first characteristic of diatribe is the sudden change in the type of discourse, not a change of subject. This kind of sudden change in the type of discourse is found in verses 7 and 13, together with a rhetorical question (cf. Stowers 1981:86, 87). In 7:1-6 Paul addresses the audience directly and calls them “brethren” in vv. 1 and 4. This is a climax since Paul first turns to literary readers in 4:23 by using the first person plural. Then, there is a dramatic change in vv.7-25, where the discourse becomes personal in totally different ways, as it seems to depict the inner struggle of an individual.

The second feature of diatribe in Romans 7 is the presence of an objection and false conclusion to Paul’s previous claims. Examples of this feature are found in v. 7 and v. 13. In v. 7 Paul raises a false conclusion in the form of a rhetorical question, then strongly rejects it with the famous $\mu\eta\ \gamma\acute{\epsilon}\nu\omicron\iota\tau\omicron$. After that, he gives reasons why he rejects such a wrong idea in the verses following, introduced by $\acute{\alpha}\lambda\lambda\acute{\alpha}$. This pattern occurs again in v. 13. A false conclusion is given in the form of a question and rejected with $\mu\eta\ \gamma\acute{\epsilon}\nu\omicron\iota\tau\omicron$. Then, affirmation is introduced by $\acute{\alpha}\lambda\lambda\acute{\alpha}$. This is a well-known feature of diatribe (for detail see, Malherbe 1980:235; Stowers 1981:121, 126-127). In diatribe, objections and false conclusions occur mainly in the form of either statements or of questions, however, in the case of false conclusions, questions are predominant, as in Romans 7:7, 13 (Stowers 1981:127, 226). It is also common to reject the objections and false conclusions with strong and abrupt negation. $\text{Μ}\eta\ \gamma\acute{\epsilon}\nu\omicron\iota\tau\omicron$ (3:4, 6, 31; 6:2, 15; 7:7, 13; 9:14; 11:1, 11) and other forms of rejection are commonly used in diatribe (Stowers 1981:130, 133; Malherbe 1980:231; Fitzmyer 1993: 91).⁴³ In Paul the negation is always a part of his argumentation (Malherbe 1980:239). At this point I think it would be helpful to consider the function of objection and false conclusion in discourse: their function is to make a major turn in the discourse or introduces new sections of the argument as in 7:7, and as elsewhere in Romans

⁴³ One of the most common forms of diatribe has 1) an objection or false conclusion, 2) a rejection of the objection, and 3) a reason for the rejection with supporting illustrations or authorities (Stowers 1981:133).

(3:1; 6:1; 9:14 and 11:1).⁴⁴ In 7:13 objection and false conclusion introduce a sub-section or second stage in the immediate argumentation, as in 3:9, 6:15, 9:19, and 11:11 (Stowers 1981:148). Usually these objections respond to basic claims or theses in what immediately precedes (cf. 3:1ff to 2:28-29; 6:1 to 5:20, 21; 6:15 to 6:14; 7:7 to 7:5, 6; and 7:13 to 7:12). This understanding is confirmed as we see an abrupt change in voice in v.7 following a rhetorical question that serves as a transition from Paul's authorial voice, which he directly addresses to the audience in 6:1-7:6. This is termed a change of voice (*enallage* or *metabole*).

The third feature of diatribe style in Romans 7 is its introductory formula, τί οὖν, in v.7 (elsewhere in Romans: 3:1, 9; 4:1; 6:1, 15; 8:31; 9:14, 30; 11:7; see Fitzmyer 1993:91; Stowers 1981:23, 126). This formula is used frequently by Epictetus and Seneca. Οὖν as a connecting particle is extremely common in objections and false conclusions.

The fourth feature of diatribe style in Romans 7 is the use of the *exemplum*. In both diatribe and Paul, in answer to an objection or false conclusion, an *exemplum* (παράδειγμα) or *chreia* (χρεία) is used as part of the response. Sometimes the author uses his own *exemplum* or situation, typically Seneca and Epictetus (Stowers 1981:131). In Romans 7 Paul uses a marriage analogy and his own experience as an *exemplum* in response to the false conclusion regarding the role of the law (cf. Rom. 11:1; see above 4.5.4). As we have seen above, one of the keywords that combines the second pericope (vv. 7-25) is the first person pronoun, used altogether 26 times in vv. 7-25. There has been great debate on how to interpret this feature. Is it autobiographical (Rigaux 1968:122-123; Moo 1986:129; Dunn 1975:260; Packer 1964:622-623 & 1999:70-81; Hendriksen 1980:219-220), rhetorical-fictive (Kümmel 1963:53; Beker 1980:238; Bultmann 1951:266 & 1960:147-157; Bornkamm 1969:125), or typical (Manson 1963:945; Ladd 1974:495, 508; Dahl 1977:84; Guthrie 1981:688)? Some scholars see this feature as autobiographical-typical style (Gundry 1980:229; Dockery 1981:242, 243). In my opinion, the best option is to take the use of "I" both as a rhetorical device, which reflects Paul's own experience (i.e., autobiographical) and as typical at the same time (for detail see, Lee 1993:45-54 & 7.3.3). If it is correct, Paul uses his own experience as an example to refute the false conclusion, which is a feature of diatribe (Stowers 1981:136; Davies 1953:157; Seifrid 1992a:326).

⁴⁴ There is one exception to this case where they are used at the end of a section to strengthen an affirmation (Malherbe 1980:232; Stowers 1981:148).

The fifth and last feature of diatribe in Romans 7 is quotation from Scripture in v. 7. In both Paul and the diatribe, a quotation from an authority is argumentatively important in answering objections and false conclusions. Note that Paul quotes from OT scriptures only, not from apothegms or sayings of sages in Romans (3:3, 9-18; 4:3, 7-8; 9:14, 19; 11:2). We will discuss this feature and its role in Paul's argumentation more fully when we deal with intertextual analysis of Romans 7 later.

Before going further, at this stage, it is necessary to ask the question whether the interlocutor in Romans 1:18-11:36, especially Romans 7, is imaginary only or real, coming from a historical situation. Normally, the interlocutor was considered imaginary and a mere rhetorical device. However, as we see the use of "I" in Romans 7, where Paul uses the rhetorical device of "I" coming from his own experience as *exemplum*, I think that it is better to see the interlocutor as reflecting the church situation in Rome (Wedderburn 1988:134). As we have seen earlier, in both the epistolary prescript and postscript or *exordium* and *peroratio* Paul shows a tendency to defend himself, using "God is my witness" and talking about people who cause divisions and offenses, and most notably in 3:8 he says, "as we are being slanderously reported as saying and as some claim that we say—'Let us do evil that good may result?'" All these verses reflect the historical church situation in Rome. Likewise, Cranfield comments on 3:8 that "some people actually allege that Paul himself teaches the attitude which he is here repudiating" (1982:187).

4.5.3 SPEECH-IN-CHARACTER (ΠΡΟΣΩΠΟΠΟΙΪΑ) IN ROMANS 7:7-25

Stowers (1994) contends that the rhetoric and style of Romans 7:7-25 can be identified as a type of *προσωποποιΐα* (*prosōpopoiia*), speech-in-character, which is an element of diatribe. Kümmel noted earlier that the phenomenon in chapter 7 might be related to *prosōpopoiia*, which he defined as "where the speaker places a speech in the mouth of another person or where inanimate things can speak" (1975:132). Ancient readers during Paul's day, who were native Greek speakers and had varying levels of education, might easily recognize speech-in-character, unlike modern readers. For example, in his debate with Celsus, Origen complains about Celsus' wrong characterization of an imaginary Jew (*Cels* 1.28.1). Furthermore, Origen (*Cels*) recognized speech-in-character in Romans 7:7-25. Origen says that Paul does not speak autobiographically in 7:7-8 but typically. He interprets this passage as a reference to the time in childhood before rational accountability, when each individual learns what is

wrong and right. This seemed to him to be a reference to *prosæpopoiia*. Origen rejects the autobiographical interpretation, because he thinks rightly that Jews do not speak of a time when they lived “without the law” (Rom. 7:9; Stowers 1994:266). Origen sees in Romans 7 a person speaking who represents different stages. He distinguishes the person represented by 14-15 from the person described in 17-25. The reason behind this understanding is that the former person recognizes the good but does not understand the evil powers of the passions and desires, whereas the latter person fully understands the battle within. In vv. 14-15 Paul adapts himself to the condition of the weak by speaking the words of the weak, i.e., Paul is using speech-in-character here (Bammel 1981:67-68; Stowers 1994:266). According to the *Catena* fragment (44), Paul depicts in vv. 22-23 those who have not yet overcome their older habits. Origen seems to have read 17-25 as the words of the same imaginary character who represents the new convert (Bammel 1981:70; Stowers 1994:268). Thus we might conclude that Origen understood 7:7-25 as *prosæpopoiia*. Not only Origen but also Rufinus, Jerome, Didymus of Alexandria, and Nilus of Ancyra seemed to accept this approach (see Stowers 1994:268-269). These ancient commentators were sensitive to Paul’s rhetoric and style and accepted Rom. 7:7-25 as *prosæpopoiia* depicting a person who lacks self-mastery.

Paul certainly utilizes this kind of rhetorical device in the form of the “I” in Rom. 7:7-25. But the difference is that what he describes here comes out of his own past experience (see 7.3.3 for the discussion of “I”). It may thus be concluded that the “I” in Rom. 7 is unique as a speech-in-character (Contra Stowers 1995:192).

4.5.4 PARADEIGMA IN ROMANS 7

We have another prominent rhetorical device in Romans 7: *paradeigma* (παράδειγμα; *exemplum*, “example”).⁴⁵ First, we have a marriage analogy (7:1-6),⁴⁶ and the second, the “I” in Rom. 7:7-25 as a *paradeigma*. According to Aristotle (*Rhetoric* I.2.3-8), just as there are two methods of argumentation in logic (the deductive syllogism and induction), so there are

⁴⁵ The term παράδειγμα is used in the LXX and the Apocrypha altogether 11 times (Ex. 25:9 [twice], I Ch.28:11, 12, 18; Na 3:6; Jer. 8:2; 9:21; 16:4; 3 Mac. 2:5; 4 Mac. 6:19). The verb form παραδειγματίζω is used in Heb. 6:6. The term παράδειγμα first appears in Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* I.2.8.

⁴⁶ Andrezej Gieniusz (1993) rejects the analogical approach, though it is much better than other approaches, i.e., allegorical and illustrative. Then, he draws our attention to a rhetorical figure, *paradeigma*. I agree with him on the point of *paradeigma*. However, we do not need to reject the analogical approach. I think that 7:2-3 is an analogy, functioning as a *paradeigma* rhetorically. So it is better to accept both, not either one or the other.

two forms of persuasion in rhetorical reasoning, i.e., the deductive syllogism of enthymeme and the inductive *paradeigma* or *example*. He states the use of *paradeigma* as a argumentation tool thus “If we have no enthymemes, we must employ examples as demonstrative proofs, for conviction is produced by these; but if we have them, examples must be used as evidence and as a kind of epilogue to the enthymemes” (*Rhetoric* II.20.9).

Aristotle states that “enthymemes are derived from four sources”, and these are: “probabilities, examples, necessary signs [proofs], and signs [indications]” (*Rhetoric* II.25.8). For him, *paradeigma* (example) works both as an independent induction and supportive deduction. Basically, Aristotle understands the term *paradeigma* as an example used in an argument or proof (*Rhetoric* I. 4.13). He calls *paradeigma* argument as “rhetorical induction” in *Rhetoric* I.2.8. In this kind of argument, we sometimes have to deduce a principle for analogous purpose (Yeo 2000:4). This rhetorical device establishes reality by resorting to the particular case. Example is a way to make generalization possible. It implies “disagreement over the particular rule the example is invoked to establish” (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca 1969:350).

Aristotle differentiates two uses of the example depending on whether or not a general principle was involved: its use as an element of induction and its use as testimony. He suggests that its use in particular cases will differ according to whether they precede or follow the rule to which they relate. He says, “If you put your examples first you must give a large number of them; if you put them last, a single one is sufficient; even a single witness will serve if he is a good one” (*Rhetoric* II.20.1394a).

That Paul uses the diatribe style and *paradeigma* in Rom. 7 gives us some indication of the rhetorical situation. These devices are generally used in the context of objection and disagreement. Paul employs such rhetorical devices to refute the objections or misunderstanding regarding the law. In Rom. 7 as a whole there is a perfect case of *paradeigma* (a marriage analogy in 7:2-3 and the “I” in 7:7-25). Rom. 7:1-6 certainly serves as a transition from Rom. 6 to Rom. 7.⁴⁷ In that sense it is a vivid recapitulation of the

⁴⁷ Gieniusz opts for 7:1-6 as a conclusion to ch. 6. He notes that among 40 auto-semantic words (i.e., excluding articles, conjunctions, pronouns) 24 words are present in 7:1-6 and ch. 6, while only eleven words are present in 7:1-6 and 7:7-25. Also 12 words are exclusively present in 7:1-6 and ch. 6. Furthermore, the ongoing interchange of “we” and “you” in 6:1-7:6, and the use of the “I” in 7:7-25 makes him consider the above option.

discussion of Rom. 6, coming from familiar everyday life. Rom. 7:7-25 is another example of the use of *paradeigma*. Paul uses a single example coming from his own life, at the end of his argumentation. It is true that Paul uses an example because there is a disagreement over the issue of the function of the law. He lays down a principle in v. 1, and so uses an example as an element of induction.

Yeo (2000:4) indicates that there are other helpful points on the use of *paradeigma* to our understanding of Romans 7. They are as follows:

(a) *Paradeigma* can be an [sic] rhetorical techniques [sic] used to refute an opponent's argument (Bk. 2 Chapter 25). (b) There are two species of *paradeigma* arguments: historical (1393a32-b4) and fictional (1393b4-1395a2). Of the latter, there are parables, stories and fables. (c) *Paradeigma* will only work when we have two things of cases that are under the same genus, and one of them is better known than the other (1357b28f). (d) In 1368a29ff we learn that *paradeigma* is particularly fit for deliberative speech because how one wants to set the course of the future is dependent on how one has determined the past (underlining his).

4.6 THE RHETORICAL SPECIES OF ROMANS

4.6.1 THREE RHETORICAL SPECIES

This is the last part of the preliminary considerations of our study. It is a necessary step to determine which kind of literature Romans is. What we understand about the rhetorical species of Romans will affect our interpretation of a part of Romans. Having delineated the arrangement of Romans and its ultimate purposes, we might proceed now to determine the rhetorical species of Romans. In doing so, we need to keep in mind that, with minor exceptions, the three rhetorical species can have a similar *dispositio*, so that *τάξις* alone is not the determining factor of a rhetorical species (see Quintilan, *Orat* 36.3.4.15; [Cicero] *Ad Her* 3.4.7; 3.5.9 & Cicero *InvRhet* 25.93). However, a clear understanding of arrangement will serve to illustrate the manner of its argument and thus its final purposes.

In a previous chapter I mentioned the characteristics of three rhetorical species, so it will not be necessary to describe these again here. However, we need to remember that the theory as

But as he points out, the term *νόμος* that is used in 7:1-6 (8 times) and in Rom. 6 only twice, and the term *ἀμαρτία* that occurs so frequently in Rom. 6 (15 times) is not repeated in 7:1-6 indicate some difficulties in his position. I think that it is better to see these verses as transitional and introducing the new pericope, the same way as we take 5:1-11. Thus Rom. 7:1-6 has common links in both previous and antecedent chapters.

Aristotle had formulated it, had undergone some refinement. For example, Cicero said that epideictic rhetoric “is devoted to the praise or censure of a particular individual” (*InvRhet* 1.5.7 & *Ad Her* 1.2.2). Hence, deliberative rhetoric concerns what is advantageous and what is honorable and the right or virtuous course of action (2.3.12). Quintilian further refined Aristotle’s theory by specifying that in demonstrative rhetoric, audiences “come simply for the sake of pleasure,” whereas in the deliberative rhetoric audiences receive advice (3.4.6).

4.6.2 IS ROMANS EPIDEICTIC OR DELIBERATIVE RHETORIC?

Romans has been described as either epideictic rhetoric or deliberative. Several scholars, Wuellner([1977] 1991), Jewett (1982), Kennedy (1984), and Fraikin (1986) have identified Romans as epideictic literature. Wuellner, following the definition of Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, suggested that Romans is an epideictic or demonstrative genre, since Paul is neither deliberating any future action nor adjudicating, but affirming a mutual faith (:134-141). Kennedy recognizes Romans as epideictic because he sees Romans 12-15 to be general paraenesis, which is mainly concerned with belief and attitude, not with action (1984:154). Jewett explicitly accepts Wuellner’s identification of Romans as demonstrative and affirms the definition of Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, which is “to strengthen the disposition toward action by increasing adherence to the values it lauds” (1969:50). Jewett furthermore advances a sub-category of epideictic rhetoric suggested by Theodore Burgess (1902), the ambassadorial letter, since he admits that Romans does not quite fit the “traditional stereotype” of epideictic rhetoric. He concludes:

Its purpose is to advocate in behalf of the ‘power of God’ a cooperative mission to evangelize Spain so that the theological argumentation reiterates the gospel to be therein proclaimed and the ethical admonitions show how that gospel is to be lived out in a manner that would ensure the success of this mission.

(Jewett 1982:9-10)

There are some problems regarding this identification. First, as we have seen earlier, these scholars’ understanding of epideictic rhetoric is based on a modern re-definition of the New Rhetoric. Their definition is overstepping the view of deliberative rhetoric as defined in the classical rhetorical theory. From the classical perspective, the New Rhetoric improperly defines epideictic rhetoric by adding a reference to the actual performance of the desired action (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca 1969:50-51; cf. Aristotle *Rhet* I.ix.35-37; Quintilian *Orat* III.vii.28). This is wrong, because it leads to misidentification of much of deliberative

rhetoric as epideictic. In classical rhetoric, epideictic fits the stereotype of display rhetoric designed to entertain the audience, usually on ceremonial occasions (Quintilian *Orat* III.vii.3; III.viii.63-64; Cicero *PartOr* 21.72; See also Brandt 1970:13; Mitchell 1991:8-12).

Second, Jewett's identification of Romans as an ambassadorial letter is problematic, since ambassadorial speeches are in fact considered as a deliberative form. Kennedy notes that one of the deliberative forms is the ambassador's speech in ancient rhetoric (1983:20, 21). Similarly, Cecil Wooten (1973) says that "Polybius (12.25 a 3) is the first to speak of [the ambassador's speech] as a separate type of speech distinct from other types of deliberative oratory" (:209).

Third, although *dispositio* is not a determining factor of rhetorical species, the fact that both Jewett and Wuellner find a *narratio* in Romans weakens their identification of the letter as epideictic. Epideictic speeches rarely include a *narratio*, since they themselves are generally narrative and chronological ([Cicero] *Ad. Her* III.vii.13-14).

Fourth, the fact that in both the *exordium* and the *peroratio* Paul tries carefully to establish his ethos is not congruous with regarding Romans as epideictic. In epideictic rhetoric the audience was usually receptive to the speaker from the beginning and "shared the sentiments of the speaker before he began" (Brandt 1970:13). This is clearly not the case in Romans.

Fifth, Paul exhorts his audience to a specific course of action, which is incompatible with demonstrative rhetoric ([Cicero] *Ad Her* 172-173; Kennedy 1984:36). For example, in Romans 12-15 we have an entire section of exhortation, in which Paul exhorts harmony between the strong and the weak at some length (14:1-15:13). The facet of Romans is incompatible with an epideictic identification. Also, Paul does not affirm community solidarity as epideictic rhetoric does, "for it clearly does not exist in Rome" yet (Enderlein 1998:325-326). That Walter Beale observes that "lack of consensus is the occasion of deliberative discourse" is suited well to this context (1978:245 n.18). Romans 16 at least shows that there were a number of different household churches (Cranfield 1982:22) and not only a single Roman church. In this historical situation Paul exhorts the divided Roman Christians to "welcome one another" and to stop judging and despising one another as specific actions. In addition to this, Paul asks them to pray for his imminent visit to Jerusalem and to support his future missionary work in Spain. All these are specific actions to be

performed, which fit deliberative rhetoric but not demonstrative rhetoric (Enderlein 1998:326). In ancient rhetoric, deliberative rhetoric was the appropriate rhetorical species to address the political problem of factionalism with the goal of producing consensus. For example, Dio Chrysostom delivered a deliberative speech appealing for concord between the Nocomedians and the Nicaeans (*Discourse* 38). In Romans, Paul appeals for unity between the Jewish Christians and the Gentile Christians and he also argues that such unity is necessary in the light of their mutual obligation to God. Quintilian understands the “honorable” to be the primary aim of deliberative rhetoric (*Orat* III.viii.1). Paul’s argument of unity as a proper response to God’s redemptive action in Christ is an argument of what action is honorable, and therefore profitable, and thus fits the category of deliberative rhetoric. Furthermore, Paul presents unity as advantageous in that it builds up or “edifies” the body of Christ (15:2).

Lastly, Paul’s requests for intercessory prayer and for future support of his missionary work resemble the very type of policy decisions characteristic of deliberative rhetoric. The assembly (ἐκκλησία) and the council (βουλή) were the characteristic settings for deliberative rhetoric. Questions of church (ἐκκλησία) policy, such as whether to support prayerfully and financially Paul’s mission, are appropriately addressed by deliberative rhetoric. For these reasons I conclude that the rhetorical genre of Romans is a deliberative rhetoric. Most recently, Yeo (2000) also designated Romans as an example of deliberative rhetoric for similar reasons to mine (:5).

4.7 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In this preliminary consideration the macrostructure of Romans has been discussed from both epistolary and rhetorical perspectives. These two approaches are complementary to each other in attempting to understand the structure of Romans. Epistolary analysis is helpful in distinguishing the basic structure of a letter and in providing an idea of the purpose for writing a letter. It also helps to note major movements within the letter through the transitional formulas. However, epistolary analysis is limited in that it is not so useful in identifying the structure of the main body of the letter. Rhetorical analysis is helpful in recognizing the basic structure of the body of a letter. Wuellner first pioneered the latter method in the study of Romans, however, the result of his analysis is not much different from the epistolary structure. Over the years different scholars have discussed the rhetorical arrangement of

Romans, but each one has exhibited some problem in his or her understanding. In my opinion the most convincing proposal is that of Enderlein (1998). With some modification I propose to follow Enderlein in my analysis of the macrostructure of Romans.

- I. *Exordium*: 1:1-12
- II. *Narratio*: 1:13-15
- III. *Partitio*: 1:16-17
- IV. *Refutatio*: 1:18-3:20
- V. *Confirmatio*: 3:21-11:36
 - A. Confirmation of First Partition (3:21-4:25)
 “In the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed by faith to faith.”
 - B. Elaboration of Second Partition (5:1-8:39), including *refutatio* (6:1-7:25)
 “The righteous one by faith shall live.”
 - C. Confirmation of Third Partition (9:1-11:36)
 “The gospel is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to both the Jew (first) and also the Greek.”
- VI. *Protrepis*: 12:1-15:13
- VII. *Peroratio*: 15:14-16:27

Once the macrostructure of Romans is established through using epistolary and rhetorical analysis, we proceed to establish the rhetorical unit of Romans 7 within the larger rhetorical unit of 5 to 8 as a whole. Then, we continue to tackle the problem of the rhetorical situation, which is closely related to the original occasion and purpose of writing. It is almost impossible to identify a single purpose for the writing of Romans due to the complex situation of Roman Christianity and Paul’s own situation. The best solution to this problem is to see that Paul had a multiple purpose -- missionary-pastoral-theological. Thus the rhetorical situation of Romans is complex. Paul, as an apostle to the Gentiles, wrote to a number of Roman household churches, whom he had never visited personally, and which were basically divided into two ethnic groups, the Gentile Christians and the Jewish Christians, in order to persuade them to be united on the basis of the gospel that Paul preached. Through their unity they might pray for Paul’s imminent visit to Jerusalem and support his future ministry as he heads toward the West. Because of this situation Paul carefully penned and explained the gospel systematically.

Then, I discuss the rhetorical devices and styles of Romans 7, especially diatribe, speech-in-character, and *paradeigma*. Although Paul utilizes diatribe and speech-in-character as rhetorical devices, I think we should not neglect the historical situation of the church. In Romans we see that Paul is aware of the existence of those who cause division and trouble in

the Roman congregations (3:8, 16:17, 18). The phrases “God is my witness” (1:9) and “what shall we say” (6:1) are understandable as we become aware of the situation in the household churches in Rome. Therefore, it is plausible to see that Paul uses such rhetorical devices for the sake of persuasion, but his use of rhetorical choice also reflects the actual historical situation. This is further confirmed as we study the text of Romans 7. Here Paul definitely uses the “I” as a rhetorical device, yet it is at the same time an *exemplum* from his own past experience, i.e., autobiographical. As Stowers notes, many of ancient diatribes are “occasional responses addressed to specific problems, situations, or individuals” and sometimes it is difficult to decide whether an interlocutor is real or fictitious (1981:54, 55). It is unthinkable that Paul wrote without having a concrete historical situation in mind. He always wrote to different churches in order to solve some actual church problems. Thus in Romans we should not rule out the historical situation as we approach the text.

Lastly, I come to the question of the rhetorical species of Romans: whether it is epideictic or deliberative. There are some problems to identifying Romans as epideictic rhetoric. Even those who take Romans to be epideictic, particularly Jewett and Wuellner, recognize some difficulties with this position (see Wuellner 1991:135 n.41 & Jewett 1982:17-18). From the various points I have made above, I conclude that Romans is an example of deliberative rhetoric.

CHAPTER V

AN ANALYSIS OF INNER TEXTURE

In chapter 4 we dealt with some preliminary considerations, as a necessary step towards deeper study in our research. Now we come to our text and begin with an inner textual analysis of Romans 7. Here I will utilize three inner textual analyses from among Robbins' six kinds of inner textual analysis: repetitive-progressive texture, opening-middle-closing texture, and argumentative texture. In my argumentative texture, I will interact with other modern scholars' works.

5.1 REPETITIVE –PROGRESSIVE TEXTURE AND PATTERN

5.1.1 PERICOPE 1 (ROMANS 7:1-6)

v.1	νόμον ὁ νόμος		ζῆ	κυριεύει	
v.2	νόμῳ ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου	τῷ ἀνδρὶ ὁ ἀνὴρ τοῦ ἀνδρός	ζῶντι ἀποθάνη	δέδεται κατήργηται	
v.3		τοῦ ἀνδρὸς ἀνδρὶ ἑτέρῳ	ζῶντος		
	ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου	ὁ ἀνὴρ ἀνδρὶ ἑτέρῳ	ἀποθάνη	ἐλευθέρα	
v.4	τῷ νόμῳ	ἑτέρῳ	ἐθανατώθητε νεκρῶν	καρποφορήσωμεν	ὑμεῖς ὑμᾶς
v.5	διὰ τοῦ νόμου		τῷ θανάτῳ	καρποφορήσαι	ἡμῶν
v.6	ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου		ἀποθανόντες	κατήργηθημεν κατειχόμεθα δουλεύειν	ἡμᾶς

In this pericope we have several occurrences of the same words and phrases. The most repeated word is **the law** (ὁ νόμος), mentioned eight times. This repetition shows that the major topic of this pericope is the law (cf. Robbins 1996b:8). Note that the word is

mentioned twice without the definite article in vv. 1 & 2, which does not have any difference in meaning.

Next most frequent are different forms of the words relating to **death**, altogether six times. The opposite, life or living, occurs thrice and only in vv. 1-3. The emphasis is thus more on death. Another repetitive word is the word “**husband**” (six times), which is mentioned only in vv. 1-3 and then it disappears completely in the next subtext (vv. 4-6). Another interesting features are the verb forms and personal pronouns. Excepting verse 1 in vv. 1-3 Paul uses only third person singular verb forms in agreement with the subject. But in the middle of the pericope (v. 4) there is a change to the second person plural noun and verb forms (“ὕμεις” & “ὕμᾱς”). From the end of verse 4 to the end of the pericope (vv. 4b-6) Paul uses the first person plural noun and verb forms (“ἡμῶν” & “ἡμᾶς”).

The adjective ἕτερος, without the article and following the noun modified, is used twice in v. 3, and once in v. 4 also without the article as a substantive, which refers to the *crucified* and *risen* Christ according to the context.¹ It is interesting that this adjective is always used with the verb γίνομαι in different forms. This shows that there is a link between v. 3 and v. 4 in thought and “v. 3 is distinctly and essentially relevant to the understanding of v. 4” (Derrett 1970:462). That means that the analogy proper is used for drawing conclusion in vv. 4-6. We should not discard v. 3, because it causes us confusion, for an understanding what Paul is saying in this pericope.

It is noteworthy that Paul uses various different verbs to describe the relationship between the law and man (κυριεύω, δέω, καταργέω (twice), καρποφορέω (twice), θανατώω, κατέχω, δουλεύω) and once an adjective (ἐλευθέρα). These words can be grouped into two contrasting groups: κυριεύω, δέω, καρποφορέω (τῷ θανάτῳ)/καταργέω, καρποφορέω (τῷ θεῷ), ἀποθνήσκω, and δουλεύω. The reason Paul uses various verbs is to offer his readers or hearers more nuances on man’s relation to the law.

5.1.2 PERICOPE 2 (ROMANS 7:7-12)

v.7 ὁ νόμος ἁμαρτία ἐροῦμεν

¹ In other places Paul explicitly mentions the Christians’ relationship with Christ (1 Co. 6:15-20; 2 Co. 11:2-3; Eph. 5:22-29).

	διὰ νόμου ὁ νόμος	τὴν ἁμαρτίαν		ἔγνω ἤδειν/ ἔλεγεν
v.8	διὰ τῆς ἐντολῆς	ἡ ἁμαρτία	ἐν ἐμοί	λαβοῦσα κατειργάσατο
	χωρὶς νόμου χωρὶς νόμου τῆς ἐντολῆς	ἁμαρτία ἡ ἁμαρτία	ἐγὼ	ἔζων ἐλθούσης ἀνέζησεν
v.9	ἡ ἐντολή		ἐγὼ/μοί	ἀπέθανον/εὐρέθη
v.10	διὰ τῆς ἐντολῆς	ἡ ἁμαρτία	με	λαβοῦσα ἐξηπάτησεν ἀπέκτεινεν
v.11	ὁ νόμος ἡ ἐντολή			ἀγαθή
v.12				

The most repeated words in this pericope are ὁ νόμος (six times) and ἡ ἐντολή (five times) which are mentioned 11 times altogether. Note that Paul uses ἡ ἐντολή, and ἐγὼ here for the first time in Romans 7. Why did Paul here use ἡ ἐντολή in addition to ὁ νόμος? Is there any difference in meaning? It does not appear that there is much difference in meaning. However, ἡ ἐντολή is more concrete and a specific case of ὁ νόμος, can be seen from the literary context (Theissen 1987:203).

Another often repeated word in this passage is ἡ ἁμαρτία, mentioned all together six times. This word indicates that the topic of this pericope concerns the relationship between the law and sin. Paul asks at the beginning (v. 7) of this pericope whether ὁ νόμος ἁμαρτία; (“Is the law sin?”). Paul refutes such an idea, which the original audience could have had in mind when they heard Romans 6:14-15, 19. An interesting rhetorical device of Paul occurs here seven times, namely, the use of the first person pronoun. Another noteworthy phenomenon is that most of the verb forms are in the past tense, with two exceptions. At the beginning Paul uses a future verb form (ἐροῦμεν) as part of the introductory formula, which is common in ancient rhetorical diatribe.

There is a problem in how to understand these past tense verbs. Is Paul describing his past pre-Christian experience or Adam or mankind in Adam? Or is he describing humanity under the domination of the Mosaic law? Or is he describing Israel’s history personified (Karlberg 1986:65-74)? Or is he describing Israel in its encounter with the law at Sinai (Moo 1986:122-135)? We will discuss this problem briefly in the section on argumentative texture, but will discuss it in more detail in an intertextual analysis of Romans 7 in the following chapter.

The last word we need to note is ἀγαθός (good), mentioned once here and twice in the following pericope. It is always used to describe the characteristic of the law at the conclusion of Paul's argumentation. He concludes that the law is not sinful, rather good, holy and righteous in v. 12.

5.1.3 PERICOPE 3 (ROMANS 7:13-25)

v.13	διὰ τῆς ἐντολῆς	ἐμοί μοί	ἀμαρτία (2x) ἐγένετο ἀμαρτία ἀμαρτωλὸς	κατεργαζομένη γένηται
v.14	ὁ νόμος γὰρ	ἐγὼ	(σάρκινος) ἀμαρτία	ἐστίν/εἶμι/πεπραμένος
v.15	γὰρ (x 2)			κατεργάζομαι/γινώσκω ὃ θέλω/πράσσω ὃ μισῶ/ποιῶ
v.16	τῷ νόμῳ		ἀμαρτία	ὃ θέλω/ποιῶ/σύμφημι
v.17		ἐγὼ/ἐν ἐμοί		κατεργάζομαι/ἡ οἰκοῦσα
v.18	γὰρ (x 2)	μου/ἐν ἐμοί μοί	(σαρκί)	Οἶδα/οἰκεῖ/ἔστιν τὸ θέλειν/παράκειται κατεργάζεσθαι
v.19	γὰρ			ὃ θέλω(2x)/ποιῶ/πράσσω
v.20		ἐγὼ (2x) ἐν ἐμοί	ἀμαρτία	ὃ θέλω/ποιῶ/κατεργάζομαι ἡ οἰκοῦσα
v.21	τὸν νόμον	ἐμοί(2 x)		εὐρίσκω/τῷ θέλοντι/ποιεῖν παράκειται
v.22	τῷ νόμῳ γὰρ			συνήδομαι
v.23	νόμον τῷ νόμῳ ἐν τῷ νόμῳ	μου (3x)/με	ἀμαρτίας	βλέπω ἀντιστρατευόμενον αἰχμαλωτίζοντα
v.24		ἐγὼ με		ῥύσεται
v.25	τῷ νόμῳ νόμῳ	ἡμῶν αὐτὸς ἐγὼ	(σαρκί) ἀμαρτίας	δουλεύω

In this pericope the most repeated word is the first person singular pronoun, occurring altogether 20 times. Once it is used in its plural form at the beginning of v. 14. This frequent use implies that Paul is emphasizing his own experience as a typical one. Paul even uses the emphatic αὐτὸς ἐγώ in the conclusion to what he has said about his experience. It is almost impossible to deny the autobiographical aspect of his argument, contrary to Kümmel's well-known proposal (see 7.3.3). It is likely that Paul uses his own experience as an example for his argumentation as sometimes happens in rhetorical diatribe (see above chapter 4.5.2).

Still in this pericope, Paul mentions ὁ νόμος (nine times, vv. 14, 16, 21, 22, 23 [thrice], 25 [twice]), ἐντολῆς (once, v. 13), ἡ ἁμαρτία and its cognate (nine times, vv. 13 [4 times], 14, 16, 20, 23, 25), and σὰρξ and its cognate (3 times, vv. 14, 18, 25), which show that Paul is still dealing with the law and its relation to sin and flesh. It is noteworthy that flesh was mentioned only once in v. 5, it is repeated again here 3 times. This shows that there is some kind of connection between v. 5 and pericope 3, as we see in verse 13, in which Paul takes up the conclusion of the previous argument and develops his argument further in order to clear up some possible objections or misunderstandings about the role of the law (note he uses the word "good" twice here).

Another important word is γὰρ, which occurs seven times in this pericope. This implies that this pericope has many enthymemes as a whole. Paul provides the explanation of his statements in a specific manner.

Lastly, it is noteworthy that most of the verbs are in the present tense, except v. 13 and two cases (πεπραμένος, v.14; ῥύσεται, v. 24). Verse 13 uses the aorist tense at the beginning, because the verse takes up the conclusion from the previous pericope. However, in the middle of v. 13 the use of the present tense is introduced. This is understandable, because v. 13 is certainly transitional, summarizing the previous discussion and introducing a new topic closely related to the preceding pericope (cf. Aletti 1996:79). Then, throughout this pericope, Paul uses the present tense, even the two exceptions are both related to the present tense. The first exception is πεπραμένος (v. 14), which is a perfect tense, the tense of describing completed action and "*whose effects are felt in the present*" (Mounce 1993:219). The second occurrence is ῥύσεται (v. 24), which is in the future tense in verse 24b, and which expresses strong despair in reflecting on the present situation, not just looking for future deliverance at death. This is contrary to those who hold the view that this passage describes a normal

Christian life (see 5.3.3.2). So we may say rightly that the basic tense of this pericope is the present tense.

The problem is how to understand the present tense here. Is it describing Paul's present experience at the time of writing (Packer 1964:622; Nygren [1949] 1988:289; Cranfield 1982:341; Burgland 1997:169) or Paul's past experience from his present perspective? Or is it just a rhetorical device to describe the typicality of mankind in general before or after his conversion? Or does Paul use the present tense for the sake of vividness (Fitzmyer 1993:463)? We will turn to this question later (see 5.3.3.1). I will argue that, as I have mentioned in the previous chapter, it is better to see the use of the present tense as a rhetorical device yet still describing Paul's own past experience as representative of mankind. Therefore, we cannot rule out either the rhetorical or autobiographical aspect. We have to see both aspects in Paul's statements in this pericope (Manson 1963:945; Morris 1988:284).

So far we have noted the repetitive-progressive texture and pattern of Romans 7. We have noted that throughout this chapter the term **the law** is used extensively (23 times). Thus we may say that to understand the law in Romans 7 is very important, as we try to grasp Paul's statements on the law in Romans as a whole as well as in his other letters. In Romans 7 we see that there is progression at each stage. In vv.1-6 two contrasting points are prominent: death and life or living. As long as we live, the law reigns over us. But death severs that relationship as shown, as by a marriage analogy. So through participating in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we in one sense gain freedom from the law's condemnation (8:1), but in another sense the law is still valid as the will of God for the living. Now in Christ we are able to keep the law by the help of the Holy Spirit (7:6; 8:3, 4), even though we sometimes fail to keep the law. Here the emphasis is on the freedom from the law for Christians who are united with Christ. However, v. 5 is problematic and causes a misunderstanding or objection. How is it that the law arouses the sinful desire in man "to bear fruit to death"? If so, objectors might ask whether the law is sin. In verses 7-12 Paul refutes such an idea using the first person singular pronoun and concludes that the law is good, righteous, and holy. This conclusion brings a further objection about the role of the law: how can the good and holy law become an instrument of sin? Paul answers that the problem is not with the law but with sin and flesh, in verses 13-25. The law is impotent to help man from this predicament.

From this perspective pericope 2 and 3 might be called “an apology for the law” (Käsemann 1980:192; Beker 1980:105, 238, 239, 243 & 1990:54, 55, 57; Milne 1984:9; Räisänen 1987:110; Fitzmyer 1993:463, 473) or “the exculpation of the law” (Dahl 1977:84, 85; contra Seifrid 1992a:324) or “a defense for the holiness and goodness of the Law” (Stendahl 1976:92; cf. Dunn 1998:157; Burgland 1997:165, 169).

5.2 OPENING-MIDDLE-CLOSING TEXTURE AND PATTERN

In socio-rhetorical analysis the integral relation of the discourse from beginning to end is emphasized. We need to discern how the small subunits function within the entire discourse or within a section of it, that is, we need to discern the persuasive effect of the parts in relation to the persuasive nature of the entire text. In Romans 7 we have two main pericopes (7:1-6 & 7-25), of which each has two subunits. To begin with, I will examine the opening-middle-closing texture of each pericope, then I will see how each pericope is related to the other.

5.2.1 PERICOPE 1 (ROMANS 7:1-6)

A repetitive and progressive texture gives us some insights into the opening-middle-closing texture of Romans 7:1-6. We have already noted some characteristics in a previous discussion on the rhetorical unit. In this pericope the opening is in verse 1, in which Paul asks a rhetorical question, together with the “brothers”, the first use of this word since 1:13. What Paul says in v. 1 implies that Paul assumes a knowledge of the law even among the Roman Christian audience. Verse 1 is a foundational statement on the function of the law. The law is only applicable as long as man is alive. None of us is free from the reign of the law.

In 7:2-3 Paul elucidates this principle by the means of an analogy of the Jewish marriage system. Here Paul mentions the same principle, in other words that death brings the termination of a relationship. In doing so, he moves from a general principle, about which everybody agrees, to a specific case of adultery. His argumentation here is very persuasive, and logical; it is hard to refute. Anyone who knows anything about the laws concerning marriage will agree to that. This point makes the end of the first subunit. The rhetorical function of this subunit is to lay down an important principle so that Paul can apply it to Christians in relation to the law.

Verse 4 is the beginning of the second subunit (7:4-6), which is a conclusion to Paul's proposition. Note again his "my brothers." Here Paul provides an assertion to the Roman Christians, a truth that is also true of all Christians. He specifically uses the second person plural twice, which means that he addresses the Roman Christians directly at this stage. He says, ὑμεῖς ἐθανατώθητε τῷ νόμῳ. Verse 4 is a key verse of this whole pericope, because it teaches us the whole counsel of God, that is, the essence of the gospel. It also teaches us the purpose of Christian living. Through the crucifixion of Jesus Christ on the cross we have died to the law. Then, we are re-married to Him, who has risen from the dead. So the purpose of our living is to bear fruit to God. Once he has laid down this grand truth about Christian life in relation to the law of God, Paul goes on to elaborate it further in vv. 5 and 6. So verses 5 and 6 are nothing but an explanation of verse 4. That is shown in the conjunction "for" in verse 5. Verses 5-6 are important, because on the basis of these verses Paul amplifies further in the following pericopes. Here Paul contrasts the *then* (v. 5) and the *now* (v. 6) (Harrisville 1980:102; contra Robinson 1979:86). Verse 5 is explained in the rest of chapter 7, and v. 6, especially "we serve in newness of Spirit," is explained in chapter 8. So we may say that 7:5 sets the theme for 7:7-25, and 7:6 sets the theme for Rom. 8 (Bornkamm 1969:88; Gundry 1980:245 n. 44; Wedderburn 1988:135; Martin 1989:80; Theissen 1987:182, 183, 226, 256; Morrison & Woodhouse 1988:14; Voorwinde 1990:21, 22; Witherington 1994:23; Lambrecht 1992:33; Dunn 1998:472; Seifrid 1992a:319; Russell 1994:525; Aletti 1996:78; Kruse 1997:206; contra Cranfield 1982:372²).

We can summarize pericope 1 (Rom. 7:1-6) as follows. First, Paul lays down a general principle, which can be applied anytime, anywhere (v. 1). Second, he elaborates it by analogy (v. 2, 3). Third, he provides a conclusion (v. 4) and lastly, a confirmation of the conclusion by means of contrast (v. 5, 6). Here Paul's argumentation is moving from the general to the specific. Romans 7:5 is further elaborated in 7:7-25 negatively and Rom. 7:6 in Rom. 8 positively.

² Cranfield only sees the connection of 7:6 with 8:1ff, not 7:5 with 7:7-25, because he understands the "I" in 7:14-25 as an aspect of Christian life.

5.2.2 PERICOPE 2 (ROMANS 7:7-12)

Pericope 2 begins with a rhetorical question (v. 7), which is typical of diatribe. Here Paul uses a basic pattern with one variation: a double question and a double answer: 1) a short question; 2) a longer question to provide a “filling” to the first; 3) the first short answer, often $\mu\eta\ \gamma\acute{\epsilon}\nu\omicron\iota\tau\omicron$; 4) the second explanatory answer. Rom. 7:7 shows such a pattern (Lambrecht 1992:32, 33):

- a) What shall we say, then?
- b) Is the law sin?
- c) Certainly not!
- d) Indeed I would not have known what sin was except through the law. For I would not have known what coveting really was if the law had not said, “Do not covet.” (v. 7)

At the beginning, the objection in v. 7 is raised in the rhetorical question of whether the law is sin. Paul refutes such an idea with the strong word, $\mu\eta\ \gamma\acute{\epsilon}\nu\omicron\iota\tau\omicron$, which is typical of diatribe. At the end (v. 12) he concludes that the law is good. This is an “inclusion”, with which a speaker or writer “frames” a text. “Words and ideas from the beginning are repeated at the end; in this way the text unit is ‘included’ ” (Lambrecht 1992:33). In this pericope, Paul’s purpose is to vindicate the law as such and to prove that the law is not responsible for mankind’s failure to keep it. It is a vindication of the character of the law. At the same time the pericope shows that the law is unable to deliver man from his/her predicament. Even if man is willing to do good according to God’s law, he cannot do so. Instead, he does what he hates to do, evil. However, the law cannot help in man’s situation, even though the law is good.

Pericopes 2 and 3 are closely related and use the diatribe method throughout as is shown by the use of the rhetorical “I” throughout. The differences are verb tense and type of literature. In this pericope (7:7-12) the author uses the past tense, however, in the next Paul uses the present tense (7:14-25). The past tense shows that Paul narrates what has happened in the past, which is autobiographical (see 5.3.3.2). But the present tense often shows what is happening or can happen in general. This verb change in Romans 7 is significant for our understanding of the text. In the light of this fact we might say that pericope 2 is *narrative*, yet pericope 3 is *descriptive* (Lambrecht 1992:36). However, we cannot say that the autobiographical “I” of verses 7-13 becomes a typical “I” of verses 14-25, contrary to

Theissen (1987:184, 195-196), because both pericopes begin with the first person plural, through which Paul identifies himself with his audience. This means that Paul is speaking of himself in a typical or representative mode throughout these two pericopes and Paul and his audience share the same conviction as to what Paul is saying about the relationship of the law and sin (Seifrid 1992a:314, 320, 321; 1992b:148).

5.2.3 PERICOPE 3 (ROMANS 7:13-25)

Verse 13 begins a new pericope with a rhetorical question, following a basic pattern with a variation (compare v. 7):

- (b) Did that which is good, then, become death to me?
- (c) By no means!
- (d) But in order that sin might be recognized as sin, it produced death in me through what was good, so that through the commandment sin might become utterly sinful.

Of note here is that in pericopes 2 & 3 there is a first person plural verb form at the beginning of the pericope (7:7, 14).³ The same phenomenon also exists in Gal. 2:15-22, where Paul starts with the plural pronoun (2:15-17) and shifts to the singular (2:18-22). It is interesting that both of these passages discuss the law of God (Russell 1994:522).

In verses 13 to 25 Paul gives a demonstration in practice, and from the experimental standpoint, of what he has been saying in pericope 2. It is necessary for Paul to show that the law not only fails to deliver us, but also actually aggravates our problem. At the end he shows us that under the law we are hopeless and unable to solve our problem. Nevertheless, there is hope in Christ Jesus. So we have the triumphant cry, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." In v.25b Paul concludes what he has been saying.

There is also an inclusion in this pericope: it begins with a rhetorical question regarding how the good law becomes an instrument of death in experience (v. 13), and ends with a conclusive truth of the law by means of the rhetorical-autobiographical-typical "I" (v. 25b). The "I" is being enslaved to the law of God with his mind, but at the same time to the law of sin with his flesh. The latter is stronger than the former. That is why the law is impotent to

³ Verse 14 is not the first verse in pericope 3, but this is where Paul starts to explain the main topic in v. 13.

bring forth fruit that it intends. Instead, the law brings death to the “I” (contra Lambrecht 1992:33, 34).

This pericope consists of three subsections after the introduction of the topic in v. 13 (vv. 14-17, 18-20, 21-25), “each beginning with a statement of self-knowledge, moving to a narration of behavior, and ending with a diagnosis of the ἐγὼ confirming the confession which began the section” (Seifrid 1992a:326; cf. Aletti 1996:79). It is noteworthy that there is a parallelism with development within the first two subsections, and that each subsection concludes with exactly the same statement (vv. 17 & 20b), after which it shifts to the consequential statements in the third section (ἄρα, ἄρα οὖν, vv. 21 & 25; Seifrid 1992a:328; Aletti 1996:79):

Rom. 7:14-17	Rom. 7:18-20
14 Οἶδαμεν γὰρ ὅτι ὁ νόμος πνευματικός ἐστίν, ἐγὼ δὲ σάρκινος εἰμι πεπραμένος ὑπὸ τὴν ἁμαρτίαν.	18 Οἶδα γὰρ ὅτι οὐκ οἰκεῖ ἐν ἐμοί, τοῦτ' ἐστίν ἐν τῇ σαρκί μου, ἀγαθόν·
15 ὃ γὰρ κατεργάζομαι οὐ γινώσκω·	τὸ γὰρ θέλειν παράκειται μοι, τὸ δὲ κατεργάζεσθαι τὸ καλὸν οὐ·
οὐ γὰρ ὃ θέλω τοῦτο πράσσω, ἀλλ' ὃ μισῶ τοῦτο ποιῶ.	19 οὐ γὰρ ὃ θέλω ποιῶ ἀγαθόν, ἀλλὰ ὃ οὐ θέλω κακὸν τοῦτο πράσσω.
16 εἰ δὲ ὃ οὐ θέλω τοῦτο ποιῶ, σύμφημι τῷ νόμῳ ὅτι καλός.	20 εἰ δὲ ὃ οὐ θέλω [ἐγὼ] τοῦτο ποιῶ,
17 νυνὶ δὲ οὐκέτι ἐγὼ κατεργάζομαι αὐτὸ ἀλλὰ ἡ οἰκοῦσα ἐν ἐμοὶ ἁμαρτία.	οὐκέτι ἐγὼ κατεργάζομαι αὐτὸ ἀλλὰ ἡ οἰκοῦσα ἐν ἐμοὶ ἁμαρτία.

Note that in vv. 14-17 Paul describes the “I” who does that which he does not want to do without expressing any moral overtones, but in vv. 18-20 Paul adds the moral overtones with terms like “good” and “evil.” The “I” wants to do the good, but does not do it, but he does the evil which he does not want to do. Verses 18-20 elaborate the statement of v. 17 and shift the emphasis from the law to ἐγὼ in order to show the inference that the “I” has been captive (Seifrid 1992a:329). Verses 21-25 conclude or summarize the previous two subsections. The “I” has gained perception through the preceding argument (note the verbs of perception, εὐρίσκω in v. 21 & βλέπω in v. 23). What was confessed has been found to be true, that is, the general truth of the “I” as “fleshly, sold under sin” (v. 14) is true (vv. 22-23). The interjection of 7:24-25a is certainly “a careful expression of emotion and faith in response to

the narrative description of 7:22-23” and represents “Paul’s use of *pathos* in order to drive home the point of the preceding narrative” (Seifrid 1992a:330). So the autobiographical-rhetorical-typical “I” is used as a “model” or “example” intended to persuade Paul’s first audience of the validity and necessity of the exclusion of the law of God from God’s saving purpose (Seifrid 1992a:330).

In summary: following typical diatribe, each pericope begins with a rhetorical question, which often introduces a new pericope. Pericopes 2 & 3 especially show the question-and-answer style, similar to 6:1-2 and 6:15-16. Even though there is a change of tense from v. 13, the present tense itself does not mean that Paul changes the reference of “I” from pre-converted state to post-converted state. The tense change is “not a wholly isolated phenomenon” but must be seen within the text as a whole. Once we note that “verses 14-25 are seen to be explanatory of verse 13, which refers to the pre-conversion experience...[they] demand that verses 14-25 also be taken in the same way” (Wenham 1980:87; cf. Voorwinde 1990:21; see 5.3.3.1 above for explanation). This reading is likely, because we see that v. 13 is connected to vv. 14-25 by γάρ. If Paul had meant to shift to the Christian experience at this stage, he could probably have used the disjunctive conjunction instead of “for” as Gundry points out (1980:236; cf. Wenham 1980:87).

5.3 ARGUMENTATIVE TEXTURE AND PATTERN

We understand that rhetoric is not just style and ornament, but argumentation. Paul wrote a letter to the Romans in order to persuade Roman Christians to accept his gospel. In our study of argumentative texture we will investigate various kinds of inner reasoning in the discourse. Paul uses “argumentative devices to persuade the readers to think and act in one way rather than another” in Romans (Robbins 1996b:21).

Basically, there are two kinds of reasoning: logical or syllogistic, and qualitative. Logical reasoning utilizes assertions, supporting reasons, clarifying through opposites and contrasts, and possibly presenting short or elaborating counterarguments. Qualitative reasoning occurs “when analogies, examples, and citations of ancient testimony function in a persuasive manner” (:21). According to *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (IV.43.56-44.57), there are seven parts of argumentation: thesis, rationale (reason), contrary with rationale (opposite), restatement of

thesis with rationale, analogy, example and citation of written testimony of antiquity, and conclusion (cf. :21-22). Usually, the thesis and rationales or reasons occur at the beginning. A thesis and a rationale form two of the three parts of a logical syllogism.

Before entering into a discussion of the argumentative texture of Romans 7, it would be advisable to determine first which kind of reasoning is prominent. In the first pericope we have an analogy of marriage, which is a case of qualitative reasoning. In the second pericope Paul quotes from the OT, especially from the Pentateuch (Exod. 20:17 or Deut. 5:21), which is another example of qualitative reasoning. Lastly, in pericope 2 and 3 Paul makes abundant use of his own life as an example, using the first person singular pronoun (25 times; see repetitive and progressive textual discussion in 5.1 above).

However, Paul also uses syllogistic reasoning in Romans 7. For example, he often uses γὰρ (13 times in 11 verses) and εἰ δὲ (3 times in 2 verses) (see Aristotle *The Art of Rhetoric* I.ii.8-22, ii.22; Robbins 1996a:59). In addition to this, Paul uses some contrasting concepts in Romans 7. In Romans 7:1-6 Paul uses “κυριεύει” and “δέδεται” vs. “κατήργηται” and “ἐλευθέρω”; the words related to “live” and “living” vs. “death” and “die”; the phrase “bear fruit to God” vs. “bear fruit to death”; “we were” (ἡμεῖς) vs. “now” (νυνὶ); “in newness of the Spirit” vs. “in oldness of the letter.” Furthermore, we have two different marriages: one before being in Christ and now, as a Christian, we are married to Jesus Christ. In pericope 2 we have also the words related to “life” vs. words related to “death.” In pericope 3 we have “spiritual” vs. “fleshly”; “I wish or want (the good)” vs. “I hate”; “good” vs. “evil”; “wretched” vs. “I thank.” Thus we may conclude from this survey of data from Romans 7 that Paul uses both forms of reasoning almost equally.

Let us now investigate the argumentative texture of Romans 7. In so doing we will utilize the argumentative structure and enthymemes of our text. According to Aristotle in his *The Art of Rhetoric*, the enthymeme is the body of persuasion (σῶμα τῆς πίστεως; I.1.3 [1354a]). This means that the enthymeme is the heart of argumentation. Vernon Robbins challenges us to study enthymeme in New Testament texts in his keynote address at the London conference in 1995 (1997:24-52). The importance of studying enthymeme is that it indicates the social and cultural nature of the reasoning in the text, it becomes “a gateway into early Christianity as a social and cultural movement during the first century” (Robbins 1997:35-36). Robbins has developed the function of enthymemes as an important part of the argumentative texture of a

text in *The Tapestry of Early Christian Discourse* (1996a) and *Exploring the Texture of Texts* (1996b), as well as in some articles which examine enthymemes in specific texts (1998a:191-214 & 1998b:343-366).

At this stage it is necessary to define what the enthymeme is. “The enthymeme is a universal mode of human expression in argumentation” (Eriksson 2000:3). Aristotle defined it as a rhetorical syllogism (*Rhet* I.2.8 [1356b]). There is a difference between a syllogism in logic and in rhetoric: in the former the premises are irrefutable truths, but in the latter opinions they are shared by the audience, called *ἐνδοξα* by Aristotle. This difference is important, as it implies that enthymemes are not limited to the rules of logic, but are arguments in everyday life. One of the features of Aristotle’s enthymeme is that it is not limited to “rational” argumentation. It also includes *ethos* and *pathos* as *topoi* for the construction of an enthymeme (Eriksson 2000:2).

Through time the definition of the enthymeme has been changed. The most common understanding of the enthymeme is “a syllogism with a suppressed premise,” and recently it has been understood as “a syllogism based on probabilities” (Eriksson 2000:2).

Usually, three types of classical logic are recognized: induction, abduction, and deduction. These three logical types have the same constructional elements: rule, case and result. These three terms are used in the approach of Robbins (1997) and Eriksson (2000), both of whom adapted that of Lanigan (1995:49-70). Here the conclusion to the argument is called the “result,” the evidence or a minor premise is called the “case,” and the argumentative link or a major premise is called the “rule.” But the order and the development of the logic in each case are different. The order of induction is case, result, and rule; the order of deduction is rule, case, and then result. Abduction follows a similar order to the deductive order, but the order of case and result is reversed (Pierce 1965:2.620-622; for examples of these logical types, see Robbins 1998a:196-197). Abduction is different from both induction and deduction but in some cases it is used interchangeably with deduction because it presupposes priority of the rule like deduction.

Regarding enthymeme, H. W. B. Joseph made some important points on the character of the enthymeme (1921:352):

An enthymeme ... is not a particular form of argument, but a particular way of stating an argument. The name is given to a syllogism with one premise – or, it may be, the conclusion – suppressed. Nearly all syllogisms are, as a matter of fact, stated as enthymemes, except in examples of a logical treatise, or the conduct of a formal disputation. It must not be supposed, however, that we are the less arguing in syllogism, because we use one number of the argument without its being explicitly stated. Syllogism is an act of thought, and if, in order to perform this act, we need to recognise in thought all three propositions, we are arguing syllogistically, whether we enunciate the whole syllogism or not.

The most common word in enthymeme is the Greek particle γὰρ (“for”), which provides a supporting reason or sometimes a corollary (Kennedy 1991:xii; Moores 1995:36). Other Greek hypotactic particles commonly used in enthymeme are οὖν, ὅτι, ὥστε, and διὰ τοῦτο. Sometimes these particles are used in enthymeme, but not always. Sometimes a paratactic style is used for argument. Beside these particles, we also look for clauses begun by ἵνα and ὅπως which often show the result of the reasoning, as well as conditional sentences introduced by εἰ and εἰ, which often contain an enthymeme with a suppressed rule (the protasis forms the case and the apodosis the result; Moores 1995:36-37; Eriksson 2000:4).

Eriksson offers advice on how to find an enthymeme in a biblical text (2000:5). The first step is, of course, to find assertions and rationales. Usually, but not always, the assertion is stated before the rationale. The second step is to try to find the argumentative link, which gives an idea of how the rationale supports that particular assertion. This argumentative link is the rule, which guarantees the particular result drawn from the case. The rule is sometimes unstated. The third step is to see the typical components of the enthymeme, such as analogy, example, comparison, contrast and written testimony. These components are building blocks used for the elaboration of the *chreia* in the *progymnasmata*. The fourth step is to look carefully at the “text’s micro-level, comprising a sentence or two.” Sometimes enthymemes can be connected to one another so that the same rule applies to some cases. The last step in finding an enthymeme is to see whether several subordinated enthymemes support the main assertion on a higher argumentative level. Thus interpreters should be careful to distinguish the different levels from one another. In addition to this, in successive enthymemes, sometimes a “result” in one enthymeme can become the “rule” in the next. This happens “when something has been established in one enthymeme, which is then used as the basis for the next line of reasoning” (Eriksson 2000:5).

Let us turn our attention to our text.

5.3.1 PERICOPE 1 (ROMANS 7:1-6)

This pericope consists of two subsections: vv. 1-3 & vv. 4-6. In verse 1 Paul lays down a thesis or a general principle that the law rules over people as long as they live. Then, in vv. 2-3 Paul provides a rationale for the thesis in the form of an analogy of marriage, which is shown by γὰρ. This marriage analogy itself contains three subordinated enthymemes to explain the conclusion or thesis.

5.3.1.1 AN ENTHYMEMIC ANALYSIS

Let us first see in 7:1-3 how Paul persuades by means of a series of enthymemes.

Result: “the law has authority over a man only as long as he lives.”

Case: “For example (γὰρ), by law a married woman is bound to her husband as long as he is alive” (NIV).

[Rule: Marriage law is a perfect example for showing the life-long authority of the law.]

This example follows the typical order of enthymeme. The result or conclusion comes first, then the rationale (or reason), signaled by γὰρ which forms the case in the enthymeme. This pattern is a very common one among any cultural group. The rule is suppressed here as usual. This enthymeme leads naturally to the next subordinated enthymeme which also supports the first main thesis or conclusion.

Result 1: “she [married woman] is released from the law of marriage.”

Case 1: “If her husband dies” (NIV).

[Rule 1: Death severs a marriage relationship.]

The rule that death dissolves a marriage relationship is again suppressed here. It is a topic which belongs to the common social and cultural texture of socio-rhetorical analysis. This enthymeme supports the main conclusion, for it provides a rationale why a person is under the law as long as he/she is alive. This is a strong argument, because it is based on irrefutable fact. This enthymeme is closely linked with the following one (see “so then”), which is another subordinated enthymeme that supports the same assertion or result.

Case 2: “So then (ἀρα οὖν), if she marries another man while her husband is still alive.”

Result 2: “she is called an adulteress” (NIV).

[Rule 2: Adultery is a sin when a married woman consorts with another man while her husband is still alive.]

This subordinated enthymeme is a further specific case of the marriage relationship, used here to consolidate Paul's thesis or conclusion. It then naturally leads to the last enthymeme in the series. It still supports the same assertion, but for this time result 1 and the opposite of result 2 are combined in result 3.

Case 3: "But if her husband dies,

Result 3: "she is released from that law and is not an adulteress, even though she marries another man" (v. 3b; NIV).

[Rule: For death severs a former marriage relationship; the sin of adultery is not applicable to a widow.]

These three subordinated enthymemes emphasize the main thesis or conclusion that the law is applicable to human beings as long as they live. This means negatively that, when one of marriage partners dies, then the person left behind is free from the law. This marriage analogy with enthymemes fits perfectly as an explanation of this thesis or conclusion. Through this marriage analogy, Paul has an excellent argumentative tool for persuading the audience of his thesis. In so doing, Paul repeats his point thrice so that it cannot be refuted. Repetition is a powerful and effective device for argumentation (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca 1969:144, 174-175). Through this repetition Paul lays down a most important principle concerning human relationship with the law, as is seen in 7:1.

In the first subsection (vv. 1-3) Paul argues from the general to the particular: v. 1 is a general principle or "maxim" that is applicable to any legal system (Barclay 1958:94; Tannehill 1967:44; Robinson 1979:77). Then, v. 2 is a particular case from Jewish marriage law (see 6.3). Verse 3 is a more specific case from the Jewish marriage system, i.e., the case of the adultery of a married woman. This is an argumentative technique of dissociation (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca 1969:420, 423; Perelman 1982:130).

Now we turn our attention to the second subsection (7:4-6). In v. 4 there are two important Greek particles (ὥστε and ἵνα), which indicate the presence of enthymeme. But this time only results are mentioned; case and rule are not stated because these were already established in the previous sections (Rom. 6:1-11 & 7:1-3).

[Case: If believers were united with Christ in his death and resurrection]

Result 1: “So (ὥστε), my brothers, you also died to the law through the body of Christ.”

Result 2: “that (εἰς) you might belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead.”

Result 3: “in order that (ἵνα) we might bear fruit to God” (NIV).

[Rule: Death terminates the former marriage relationship and is able to give the surviving partner an opportunity to have a new marriage.]

This enthymeme is closely connected with previous enthymemes, especially the main enthymeme, since *the result of it becomes a rule for this line of reasoning*. So this enthymeme can be taken as a conclusion for what he has said in vv. 1-3. This is important, because everything that he has said in v. 4 is based on this “truth,” i.e., the believers’ union with Christ in his death and resurrection (Rom. 6:1-11). Paul uses here the second person plural pronoun “you” (ὁμεῖς) for emphasis. Then, he uses the first person plural verb in result 2. This implies that what he said to his audience is true of himself. He recognizes that he himself too has died to the law through the body of Christ, and so includes himself for the purpose of expressing that union with Christ. This means that not only Roman believers but also Paul himself have to bear fruit to God. This strategy of Paul’s identification with his audience is one of important persuasive strategies in Rom. 7.⁴ The truth based on the enthymeme of v. 4 is further explained by two enthymemes in vv. 5 & 6, shown by the presence of γὰρ and δὲ. These two enthymemes are in contrast to each other.

Case: “For (γὰρ) when we were in the flesh.”

Result: “the sinful passions aroused by the law were at work in our members, so that (εἰς) we bore fruit for death” (v. 5; translation is mine)

[Rule: Sin as a real culprit uses the law for its evil purpose and brings death as the result (Rom. 6:23).]

Case: “But now (νυνὶ δὲ), by dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the law”

Result: “so that (ὥστε) we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code.”

[Rule: Believers’ participation in Christ’s death and resurrection changes their relationship with the law completely.]

Verse 4 is the conclusion of what Paul has said in vv. 1-3, not an application (contra Moo 1991:438; Käsemann 1980:188). Also present is Paul’s argumentation of dissociation. He first states a general truth of Christian life: believers have died to the law through participation

⁴ Another way of identification is the address “brothers,” an “in-group” term (Vorster 1991:115; Cronje 1996:99).

in the death of Jesus Christ, and are remarried to the risen Christ. The object of that marriage is to bear fruit to God, i.e., their holiness or sanctification. Then, Paul further confirms or elucidates that truth negatively (v. 5) and positively (v. 6) as shown by the presence of γὰρ (Moo 1991:439; see 5.2.1).

This is Paul's way of argumentation: first laying down a general truth, then providing an explanation step by step, always adding new elements, and finally drawing a conclusion (Little 1984:82-90). Once he has made a point, he moves forward; he continually adds new points. This pattern is shown in our analysis of repetitive-progression texture. The words "woman" and "husband" are no longer used from verse 4 onwards. Another feature we note is that at the beginning Paul uses third person singular verbs and never uses personal pronouns. But in the middle he changes to second person plural verbs and pronouns, "you" twice (v. 4) and at the end he changes again to first person plural verbs and the pronoun "we."

Furthermore, in verse 4 Paul provides the assertion or conclusion, which is based on the argumentation of vv. 1-3, and adds new concepts, contrasting two epochs of living, then and now. He also introduces here the bearing of fruits as the result of two epochs' living (vv. 4, 5), which has already been mentioned in Rom. 6 (vv. 21, 22). Thus at the end he concludes that Christians who have identified with Christ in death are released from the law in order to serve God in the newness of the Spirit, not in the oldness of the letter.⁵ This conclusion receives further explanation about the law, to which Paul responds in vv. 7-24.

It is thus correct to see that the main subject of Rom. 7:1-6 is the law and its function in believers' lives. In a sense, Paul is explaining here at length his previous statements on the law which he made in 5:20 and 6:14 without explanation, where he said "The law was added so that the trespass might increase" and Christians are "not under the law, but under grace" respectively (Lloyd-Jones 1973:2-4; Nygren [1949] 1988:248; Dunn 1988:339; Voorwinde 1990:21; Wright 1995:49; Thielman 1995:186 n.46).

⁵ Some translations do not take this to mean the Holy Spirit. NEB, for example, has "to serve God in a new way, the way of the spirit, in contrast to the old way, the way of a written code." Jerusalem Bible also translates it similarly. However, it is better to see it as a reference to the Spirit as we have in mind the topic of the life in the Spirit, which will be treated in Rom. 8 in detail. Furthermore, the fact that the similar thought (*gramma/pneuma* tension) is shown in 2 Co. 3:6, favors this translation (Harrison 1977:78).

5.3.1.2 AN ALLEGORY, AN ILLUSTRATION, OR AN ANALOGY?

At this stage we need to decide what kind of literature Romans 7:1-6 is. Is it an allegory, an analogy or an illustration? How should this pericope be classified? This passage has been dealt with basically in one of these three ways. It was treated as *an allegory* by the early Church Fathers. For example, Augustine interpreted the wife as symbolic of the soul, the husband as corrupt human nature; Origen regarded the wife as the church and the husband as the law; other patristic writers considered the wife as the soul and husband as the law (cf. O'Neill 1975:122; Little 1984:86). This allegorical approach is still used by modern commentators: O'Neill (1975:122) interprets the wife as the believer and the husband as the body; Bruce (1963:179) regards the wife as the believer and the husband as the law; Gale (1964:195) sees the wife as symbolic of the new self, the husband of the old; lastly, Sanday and Headlam (1896:172-174), and MacLeod (1994:116 n.22) interpret that (1) the wife represents our inmost self, or personality; (2) the first husband is our "old man" or former self under the law; (3) the death of the first husband illustrates the crucifixion of our "old man" with Christ; (4) the law is the Mosaic law; (5) the new husband is Jesus Christ. Cranfield and Martin correctly reject the view that this pericope is an allegory (Cranfield 1982:334, 335; Martin 1989:110 n.3). If it is an allegory, Paul might provide an explanation of it as he did in Galatians with the two types of Jerusalem and Hagar and Sarah. But Paul does not give any clue here to assist in interpreting the text as an allegory. Similarly, Martin comments that there no indication is given in the text to interpret it allegorically (1989:110 n.3).

The second approach is to treat the pericope strictly as *an analogy* and to examine how its features correlate to the statements between the analogy proper in v.2-3 and the conclusion in v. 4. Commonly, there has been agreement on at least three points of correspondence: 1) the wife is seen to correspond to the believer; 2) the first husband is seen to corresponded to the Mosaic law; 3) the second husband is seen to correspond to Christ. In this interpretation, the wife's first marriage is perceived as representing the believer's former subjection to the Mosaic law, while her second marriage is perceived as representing the believer's union with Christ (see Little 1984:85-87; Martin 1989:110).

However, when the analogy is seen in this way, a serious difficulty is encountered: why does the analogy proper of the one who dies not match with the conclusion? It is noted that in the

conclusion the one who dies is the believer, while in the analogy proper it is not the wife (as one normally would expect, since she corresponds to the believer) but the husband. Due to this fact some scholars criticize Paul for his lack of imagination and inconsistency. For example, C. H. Dodd (1932:103) says that, Paul “lacks the gift for sustained illustration of ideas through concrete images (though he is capable of a brief illuminating metaphor). It is probably a defect of imagination.” In another place, he says, “The illustration...has gone hopelessly astray” and it is best to ignore the analogy itself (:101). Derrett (1970) calls it an embarrassing “parenthesis” which can have no purpose whatever, if not relevant to v. 1 or vv. 4-6 (:462). Robinson states that it is “a somewhat quixotic illustration” (1979:77). Also Räisänen remarks that it “is difficult to find more eloquent proof for the failure of Paul’s picture” (1987:62 n.93) and it is “a tortured allegory, the application of which is lost in internal contradictions” (:46). Similarly, Dahl calls it a “strained comparison” (1977:83).

In my opinion it is quite understandable why Paul formulates the passage in this way. For him the law of God is basically the divine will of God for the people of God, not only in OT times but also in NT times. The law is a reflection of God’s character, so the law cannot die. This would be unthinkable to Paul as a Jew. Instead, as Paul correctly says, Christians have died together with Christ Jesus. What he says in v. 1 as a general principle is true of either one of the married couple, as Earnshaw points out (1994:81).

The third approach to this pericope is to view it as an *illustration* rather than an analogy (Tannehill 1967:44; Cranfield 1982:335; Hendriksen 1980:215). For example, Cranfield states (1982),

[T]he decisive clue to the right interpretation of these verses [vv. 2-3] is the recognition that they were not intended to be connected directly with v.4 but with v.1. They are not an allegory (not yet a parable) ... but an illustration designed to elucidate v.1 ... We take it then that these two verses are simply intended as an illustration of the principle stated in the ὅτι-clause of v.1 ..., namely, that the occurrence of a death effects a decisive change in respect of relationship to the law.

(Cranfield 1982:335).

Cranfield doubts that Paul ever really uses these verses as an analogy in the first place. He sees these verses rather as an instance or illustration of the general principle that death does away with legal obligations. He comes to this understanding from the use of ὥστε (“therefore” or “so”). He contends that if Paul had intended these verses as an analogy, he would have used οὕτως (“likewise,” “so,” “so also”) instead (Cranfield 1982:335). Scholars

who follow this line of thought do not search in the details of Paul's picture to find one-to-one correspondences, for there would not seem to be a set of correspondences there to begin with.

Hendriksen (1980) also opposes the idea of viewing Rom. 7:2-3 as an analogy. He sees only one point: "It is this: as it is a death that dissolves the marriage bond, so it is also a death that dissolves the legal bond; i.e., the bondage to law" (:216).

Earnshaw is another scholar who interprets this saying of Paul as an illustration (1994:68-88). Even though he calls it an analogy, the way he understands these verses is actually as an illustration (see following discussion). He begins with Cranfield's argument from ὥστε (used instead of οὕτως) in verse 4. It is right to insist that ὥστε marks a conclusion rather than a comparison. However, it is less convincing, since ὥστε is followed by καί, which sometimes carries the idea of comparison. For this understanding Earnshaw finds support from various sources (e.g., two lexicons and Räisänen; Sanday and Headlam; biblical examples, Phil. 1:20; Gal. 1:9; Eph. 5:33, etc.). Earnshaw (1994:71) concludes: "the καί in v. 4 is functioning in a similar manner, indicating the presence of an analogy." He points out furthermore that Paul's use of the construction γίνομαι + ἐτέρῳ (dative case) is another indication to see verses 2-3 as an analogy. He notes that this construction is used in LXX for the act of marrying (Ruth 1:12, 13; Deut. 24:2). This expression, found nowhere in the NT, is used twice here: in v. 3 indicating the wife's relation to her second husband; in v. 4 indicating the believer's relation to the risen Christ. From this observation he sees clearly that Paul is using the wife's second marriage to represent the believer's union with the risen Christ, which means the two appear to be set in an analogous relation to each other (:71; Räisänen :62 n. 93). In the light of these considerations, Earnshaw concludes that Paul does in fact intend his marriage picture to be taken as an analogy, and invites us to proceed with the details of his picture.

Once Earnshaw has laid down some preliminary considerations of why these verses need to be interpreted as analogy, he notes the similarity of the underlying structure of thought in Rom. 7:1-4 and 6:1-11. In both passages Paul explains the believer's liberation from the powers of the old aeon, and the present experience of life in the new aeon, on the basis of the believer's union with Christ in his death and resurrection. The only difference is that in chapter 6 Paul talks about sin as the evil master, while in chapter 7 it is the law. But whatever Paul says about sin in chapter 6 can be applied to the law in chapter 7. When Jesus Christ died he "died to sin" (v. 10). And when he rose from the dead, he "lives to God" (v. 10).

This Christ event is shared by believers, who have died to sin and been raised “with him.” In Rom. 7:1-4 there is the same line of thought. When Jesus died, he died to the law (v. 4). Now, having risen from the dead, he is alive to God. Again, this Christ event is shared by believers, who have died to the law and been raised “with him.” So Paul’s argument, by means of the marriage analogy, is to illustrate that “the believer has been delivered from the law and is now alive (to bear fruit, v. 4) to God; *and this transfer has been effected by the believer’s participation with Christ in both his death and his resurrection*” (italics his, :72). From this perspective Earnshaw proposes an understanding of Paul’s marriage analogy that “*the wife’s first marriage is viewed as illustrating the believer’s union with Christ in his death and her second marriage is viewed as illustrating the believer’s union with Christ in his resurrection*” (italics his, :72). Then, he proceeds to present a whole set of correspondences in the marriage analogy:

the marriage law (rather than the first husband) = the Mosaic law; (2) the marriage law’s authority over the wife during the first marriage = the Mosaic law’s authority over the individual during the old covenant; (3) the marriage law’s authority over the husband (the marriage law no more allows him to be an adulterer than it allows the wife to be adulteress) = Mosaic law’s authority over Christ (who was ‘born under the law’, Gal 4.4); (4) the cessation of the marriage law’s authority over the wife because of her first husband’s death = the cessation of the Mosaic law’s authority over the believer because of Christ’s death; (5) the deaths of the first husband and of Christ have such liberating results for the wife and for believers respectively because of the two unions involved. That is, the marriage union between the first husband and the wife = the soteriological union between Christ and believers; (6) hence, the first husband = Christ, and the first husband’s death, with its liberating effects for the wife = Christ’ death, with its liberating effects for the believers; (7) the resulting freedom of the wife from the marriage = the believer’s freedom from the Mosaic law; (8) the new marriage union between the wife and the *second* husband = the soteriological union between believers and the now *risen* Christ; (9) thus the second husband = Christ, not as crucified, but in his risen, eschatological mode of existence; and (10) in this way the two husbands = the two successive modes of Christ’s incarnate/human existence, viz., Christ’s existence under the Mosaic law in the old age culminating in death, followed by his risen, eschatological mode of existence with its accompanying freedom from the Mosaic law.

(Earnshaw 1994:72-73).

In the rest of his article, he elaborates the particular points of correspondence in Paul’s marriage analogy. In so doing, he opposes the common understanding of seeing the first husband as corresponding to the Mosaic law. He argues that the term ὑπανδρος is simply “married” linguistically and does not carry the meaning “under a man.” He defends this from the usage of the word in LXX (cf. Num. 5:20, 29; Prov. 6:24, 29; Sir 9:9; 41:23) and from the examples of secular Greek literature. Furthermore, Paul himself explains what he has in mind by ἡ ὑπανδρος γυνή, viz., she “is bound (δέδεται) to her husband by a law.” It means that the husband is not the one who binds the wife, but rather the law (shown by νόμῳ, an instrumental dative). This reading is confirmed by the parallel passage 1 Co. 7:39, where the

term *γυνή* clearly means “wife” in the literary context. The reason Paul uses *ὑπανδρος* here as a modifier of *γυνή* is simply to make clear that he has in mind a *married* woman from the outset (:74-78).

Earnshaw contends that if it is understood that the law of Moses is represented in the analogy by (not the husband but) the law of marriage, Paul’s analogy will be understood correctly. He demonstrates this interpretation with several points. First, both the Mosaic law and the marriage law are cast in roles of authority. The Mosaic law definitely has a role of authority (cf. 7:1, *ὁ νόμος κυριεύει τοῦ ἀνθρώπου*; 7:6, *κατειχόμεθα*). The role of authority assumed by the marriage law is shown in v. 2, in which *νόμῳ* is the instrument of *δέδεται* and hence that which “binds” the wife. It is also shown by the statement of potential adultery spoken of in the analogy. Here the adultery is viewed in terms of how it affects the wife’s relation to the law of marriage, that is, the adultery is guilty of a specific *legal offense*. “In this way, Paul casts the marriage law, no less than the Mosaic law, in a role of authority” (:78). Thus Earnshaw rejects Barrett’s and Dunn’s interpretation, which see the husband as the “real” master over the wife.

Second, in Paul’s marriage analogy the Mosaic law and the marriage law are referred to by means of single term *νόμος*. Paul makes this term perform “double duty” in order to make the link between the Mosaic law and the marriage law explicit. Paul uses this kind of practice frequently in places involving comparisons or analogies (e.g., Gal. 4:21-31, Jerusalem; Rom. 5, Adam etc.).

Third, Earnshaw says that his understanding is further strengthened by an important construction in which *νόμος* is used. The expression *καταργέω + ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου* occurs first in v. 2, where the wife is said to be *καταργέω + ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου* when her first husband dies. In v. 6 Paul uses the expression again to tell his Christian readers: *κατηργήθημεν ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου*. This parallel clearly suggests that “Paul is using the ‘law’ from which the wife is released to represent the ‘law’ from which the Christian is released” (1994:80).

Earnshaw makes an interesting point, which is to suggest that the first husband represents Christ, not the Mosaic law as most commentators hold. He first notes that, what Paul says in v. 1 regarding the man, is true not only of the wife but also of the husband in vv. 2-3. Commonly it has been understood that the statement in v. 1, concerning the man who is ruled

by the Mosaic law while he is still alive, can apply only to believers. In this line of thought, the man in v. 1 becomes the wife in the analogy proper in vv. 2-3. Earnshaw contends that the verbal clues suggest that the ἄνθρωπος has been “refracted” into the two separated figures of the γυνή and ἀνὴρ. That is, what is true of the ἄνθρωπος is true in the analogy proper of the husband and wife as a couple. He finds an explanation of why Paul splits the man into the two figures of the husband and the wife from the parallel passage 6:1-11, where a similar theological structure can be seen, especially 6:7. In the latter passage Paul provides a general principle that functions as a premise in Paul’s argument that believers need no longer live in sin. For if (general principle) “the one who dies is released from sin,” then Christ at his death was released from sin and hence believers as well because of their union with Christ. Here the most important point to note is that “the statement in 6:7, precisely because it sets forth a *general* theological principle applying to all men, refers to *both* Christ and believers.” Similarly, the general principle mentioned in 7:1 concerning the authority of the law over a human being as long as he/she lives applies to *both* Christ and believers. The only difference is the manner in which Paul expresses this principle: while in Rom. 6 Paul speaks by means of didactic language, in Rom. 7 he employs an analogy (1994:82).

Once these points are clear, then it is easy to see the first husband’s death as Christ’s death and the means of liberation for believers. The part of Paul’s marriage analogy most difficult to understand is the inconsistency in that in the conclusion the believer dies while in the analogy the wife does not. Earnshaw finds an explanation for this from the difference between Christ and believers. Christ’s death involves both a physical death and a dying to the law. However, the death of believers is not a physical death, but “in the restricted sense of their having died *with regard to the Mosaic law*” (italics his; :85). Once we recognize this difference the inconsistency in the analogy evaporates.

Earnshaw’s interpretation does make sense in many areas. However, I have some difficulties with his interpretation. First of all, I doubt that his interpretation of Rom. 7:1-6 can be classified as an analogy. He does not provide any definition of an analogy and just assumes that his readers will understand the term in his article. Analogy is important in philosophy and Christian theology to express the relationship between man and God (Perelman 1982:114). Usually analogy is defined as the comparison of some relationship to another, a typical case is: *A is to B as C to D*. Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969) quote an example of

analogy from Aristotle: “For as the eyes of bats are to the blaze of day, so is the reason in our soul to the things which are by nature most evident of all” (:373). Both *A* (reason in the soul) and *B* (obviousness) are called the *theme* to which the conclusion relates, and both *C* (eyes of bats) and *D* (blaze of day) are called the *phoros*, that which is used to buttress the argument. In order for an analogy to stand, it is necessary that the theme and the phoros belong to different realms. If the two relations belong to the same realm, then there is no analogy but an argument by example or illustration, in which the theme and the phoros represent two particular cases of a single rule (1969:373). If this definition is correct, then Earnshaw’s interpretation of Rom. 7:1-6 fits an illustration or example, not an analogy (see Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969:357), because he sees the marriage law as corresponding to the Mosaic law. They obviously belong to the same sphere; the marriage law is just a specific case of the Mosaic law. If the first husband is representing the Mosaic law as is commonly held, then Rom. 7:2-3 can be called an analogy, because the items in the relationship belong to different spheres. Earnshaw needs to be careful in his use of the term “analogy” as he interprets Rom. 7:1-6.

Second, I do not agree with his conclusion on the word ὑπανδρος (see above). He concludes that the word does not carry the meaning of “under a man” or subject to a man. His whole discussion is based on linguistic points, LXX usage and secular Greek literature. He does not concern himself much with the social and cultural background of the Jews in Paul’s day. Language is a reflection of its culture and society. What Paul says here does fit the Jewish culture, society and its law, not Greco-Roman culture and its law. This will be seen in more detail in our discussion in the following chapter (see 6.3), so I will only briefly deal with it here. Under Roman law, a widow was required to mourn and remain unmarried for one year after her husband’s death or forfeit her inheritance from his estate (Corbett 1969:249-50). Thus Paul’s point that death ended the marriage bond does not quite fit with Roman law and culture. Furthermore, according to Roman law, a marriage could be terminated by the free will of either partner. In Jewish law only the husband had the right of divorce in accordance with Deut. 24:1 (Corbett 1969:929; Dunn 1988). If this Jewish cultural factor is borne in mind, then it is understandable that some kind of subjection can be seen reflected in the word ὑπανδρος from its Jewish cultural background; according to *BAGD*, “under the power of or subject to a man” (1979:837). Thus I think that Earnshaw needs to consider the sociological aspect of the text, in order to grasp fully the meaning of the word from a different perspective.

In addition to this, Paul also uses the term “bound” in v. 2 and in v. 1 Paul uses the word “lord over” or “have dominion” that carries the idea of subjection (cf. Tannehill 1967:44).

My final objection derives from the biblical truth on marriage; what Paul says here perfectly fits the biblical understanding of marriage. See, for example, Gen. 3:16, where God says to Eve, “Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.” God speaks in this way to Eve because she was the first to be guilty of the transgression, because she first fell into sin. God certainly makes the husband head of the wife and the head of the family. This is still true in NT times. What Paul says in Eph. 5:22-33 makes that point perfectly clear: “Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything” (NIV). This is God’s ordinance, and Paul compares it with the relationship of Christ to the Church. In the past this text was misused and can still be misused today, but it is also totally wrong to deny this truth and go to the other extreme as feminism does. So in the light of the whole biblical truth and Jewish cultural background, I think it is true that the word “married” carries the nuance of subjection and is pictured here as a rule of the law. But this does not mean that women are inferior to men whatsoever. It means that God gives different functions or roles for the order of family life (cf. Lloyd-Jones 1973:18-19).

Third, Earnshaw rejects the view of the first husband as being in a role of authority over his wife, as some scholars hold (e.g., Dodd 1932:101; Barrett 1962:136; Räisänen 1987; Dunn 1988:136). Instead, he proposes that the marriage law holds that authority (1994:78). It is true that marriage law has authority over people, however, it needs to be borne in mind that it is *the husband* who exercises the marriage law. In this sense we may say that the husband also has a role of authority. In Jewish society the husband was able to hold his wife in subjection by *means* of the marriage law. It is true then that, in the Jewish context, husband and wife were not equal partners, for the man was the woman’s master (Tannehill 1967:44). If this consideration is correct, then the point Dunn and others make on ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου τοῦ ἀνδρός is still valid. There is no reason to reject the first husband as holding the role of authority over his wife. When we think of the law here as the law of God reflecting the Jewish marriage, then there is no point in arguing from secular Greek literature and from 1 Co. 7:27 as Earnshaw does, because the former did not reflect Jewish culture and the

Corinthian believers of the latter were generally Gentiles (1994:75, 76). The reason Paul does not shorten the construction to ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀνδρός is that his whole discussion is the law. It seems to me that Paul wants to emphasize the function of the law in the marriage context, so he does not need to omit the words τοῦ νόμου.

Fourth, the most serious weakness of Earnshaw's interpretation is that of making the first husband Christ incarnate. In the text, Paul does not provide any hint that the readers should see a two-staged relationship with Christ. In fact, Paul refers to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ at once in one phrase, "to him who was raised from the dead" (v. 4). At the same time Paul is making a contrast between the former relationship with the law and the present relationship with Christ. If we follow Earnshaw's suggestion, this contrast that Paul is emphasizing will be lost. Theologically, we agree with him that, by Christ's death, believers have liberation from the law, but it is impossible to see how Christ Jesus can reign like sin. It is important to note that Paul uses the verb "κυριεύω" in v. 1; this is the verb that Paul uses to describe in Rom. 6 how sin (v. 14) and death (v. 9) reigned over the audience before they were in Christ. There he says that those who have been united to Christ in his death are no longer ruled over (κυριεύω) by death and sin. In 7:1 Paul says that the law reigns over man or has mastery over man as long as man remains alive. This means that the law as master rules over man harshly as sin and death do. If this is correct, how can we say that Christ-incarnate rules over man like sin the master? It is certainly not possible. Here the law is pictured as a master demanding absolute obedience from his slaves. Believers were slaves to the law previously. So they need to have freedom from the bondage of the law. The only way out of that bondage is death; there is no other way except death. Therefore, in v. 4 Paul says that believers' union with Christ crucified has severed their bondage to the law. Because of this perspective Fitzmyer rightly says that death, sin and the law are "the threesome that tyrannize human existence apart from Christ" (1993:457).

So even though Earnshaw tries to solve the confusion owing to a mechanical problem by suggesting a two-staged relationship with Christ, his interpretation has some weaknesses as I pointed out above. I think Paul's expression about marriage in vv. 2-3 is in fact an analogy, with some distinct points of correspondence. The common understanding of the marriage analogy, which I mentioned above, is still valid. Once Paul has made a point that he wants to make, he moves on and adds a new insight on the basis of what he has said earlier.

The confusion that NT scholars have will be solved when it is remembered that Paul and his audience knew perfectly well the principle of God's law. The reason why Paul changes the referent is that he could not say that the law had died, because the law has not died. The law is still alive and cannot die. The law is God's moral law, God's moral demands upon mankind. The Decalogue is a perfect summary of it. So it is still binding on the Christians as long as they are alive. Christians cannot do away with the law of God, contrary to the antinomians. The meaning of "dead to the law" is that our old relationship to the law has ended because of our participation in the death of Jesus Christ (v. 4). Even though the law never intended to bring justification and salvation by the deeds to the people (3:20), it is still valid as God's perfect rule of righteousness for God's people both in OT times and in NT times. What is meant is that believers are no longer "under" the law as a covenant of works (6:14). We are no longer in the position of trying to save ourselves by keeping the law. It does not mean that we should have no interest at all in the moral law of God and its demands. That is contradictory to biblical teaching, because the whole purpose of salvation is to enable us to keep God's law. That is one of the blessings of the new covenant (see Jer. 31: 31-33; Heb. 8:8-10; Matt. 5:17-19). Even though we are no longer "under" the law as a means of salvation, we are to keep and practice it in our daily life. This is confirmed in the immediate co-text. In 8:3, 4 where Paul summarizes Rom. 7, he says, "For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in sinful man, in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit" (NIV). Here Paul clearly says that the purpose of salvation is to enable us to carry out the righteousness of the law, which was impossible before. In the same vein, Paul could exhort the Roman Christians to love one another, and the way to show such love was to keep the Decalogue (13:8-10).

Paul in fact says in Rom. 7 that by the deeds of the law no man shall be sanctified before God. However, it is correct that Paul says that the law cannot sanctify a man, but it is difficult to say that "the law is a hindrance to sanctification" as Lloyd-Jones takes (1973:96).

5.3.2 PERICOPES 2 & 3 (ROMANS 7:7-25)

In pericope 2 Paul opposes an objection that might be raised on account of what he had said earlier. In the previous pericope the law is described as a power from whose lordship believers find release in Christ (vv. 4 & 6) and as an instrument for the arousing of sinful passions which lead to death (v. 5). Paul anticipates an objection from his audience, saying “Is the law sin?” Paul strongly rejects such an idea and defends the law from the charge that it is sin. As noted in a previous chapter, Paul is here using a diatribe in order to persuade his audience about the holiness and goodness of the law. Paul explains the relationship between sin and the law, and thus exonerates the law from the charge of sin. This elaboration takes the form of a narrative in which sin is an active culprit, while the law is a passive instrument, used by sin as a springboard (vv. 8, 11) to deceive and bring death.

In pericope 3 Paul’s interlocutor might see a contradiction in Paul’s argument: how can Paul say that the law is good, and at the same time ascribe to it evil, i.e., the production of death? Why is the law impotent to bring forth the good as it intends? This question arises naturally from Paul’s previous statement on the law in 7:7-12. In this pericope Paul is answering this objection using his own life as an example, that is, the law does not bring death to him, it is sin that does (Morris L 1988:284). We now turn to these two pericopes by means of an enthymemic analysis. Then, before going further, we need to clear up a specific difficulty in our text: how do we understand the present tense (7:14-25; see 5.3.2.2)?

5.3.2.1 AN ENTHYMEMIC ANALYSIS (ROMANS 7:7-25)

In 7:7, 8 there are more enthymemes, indicated by οὐν, εἰ, and γὰρ. The first enthymeme is certainly connected with what Paul said earlier in v. 5, about the negative function of the law. It is an objection, which the audience, especially Paul’s opponents, can raise, when they hear v. 5. In the co-text their reasoning can be seen and the missing components of the syllogism can be supplied as follows:

[Case: [If] the law arouses the sinful passions in our members and produces in us death,]

Result: [Then] the law must be sinful.

[Rule: Cause and result are inseparable. By their fruit we know the trees.]

Paul knew that this kind of misunderstanding might occur when the Roman Christians heard what he said in v. 5. So Paul introduces this wrong thought by means of diatribe (see 4.5.2) and an enthymeme. Through this enthymeme Paul introduces a new topic in pericope 2 (vv. 7-12). This pericope can thus rightly be called “the defense of the law.” That is, Paul is refuting this false reasoning vehemently (μὴ γένοιτο) and argues that the law itself is good, not sinful.

The second enthymeme (v. 7b) is Paul’s argument against the preceding wrong reasoning about the law.

Result: “Indeed I would not have known what sin was.”

Case: “except (εἰ μὴ) through the law.”

[Rule: The law reveals the real nature of sin, which is good, not bad.]

Here Paul argues that if the law has a function to reveal sin, the law itself is not bad, rather it is good. This is a general statement about the function of the law. Then, Paul uses another subordinated enthymeme in order to confirm his reason for refuting the idea that the law is sin.

Result: “For I would not have known what coveting really was

Case: if the law had not said, “Do not covet” (v. 7; NIV).

[Rule: The law reveals the real nature of covetousness, which is good, not bad.]

This enthymeme is supporting the main argument, using a specific case to show the function of the law. Paul quotes the tenth commandment as a test case. This commandment was important to Jews because they thought that coveting was the root of all sins, and it dealt mainly with the heart and mind. As a Pharisaic Jew, Paul did not have any trouble in keeping the law outwardly. However, as result of the Christophany on his way to Damascus, Paul came to realize the spirituality of the law that deals with his inner being. Paul here moves from the law as a general entity to a specific commandment, as he did before in 7:1-6. This enthymeme leads to another one in v. 8 and v. 11 (see the presence of γὰρ). Verse 11 is a slight variation of v. 8.

Result: “But sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, produced in me every kind of covetous desire.”

Case: “For (γὰρ) apart from law, sin is dead” (v. 8; NIV).

[Rule: Sin is only active in the context of the law.]

Paul is explaining here the strange relationship between the law and sin: sin is very active and the law is passive. Sin takes the opportunity given by the commandment and produces all kinds of covetous desire in Paul. The law is used by sin personified. Paul shows here that sin is the real cause, not the law. He makes this point clearer in the last enthymeme of pericope 2 (vv. 11, 12).

Case: “For (γὰρ) sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, deceived me, and through the commandment put me to death” (v. 11, NIV).

Result: “So (ὥστ’ε) then, the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous and good” (v. 12).

[Rule: Sin as a real culprit manipulates the law for its evil purpose. So the law itself is not bad at all.]

In this enthymeme Paul concludes that the law itself is good, although it cannot bring life, as intended. This implies that Paul is refuting the idea that the law is sinful, which was a faulty argument of an opponent (v. 7). The problem lies with sin and the person as a victim, not with the law. Sin is something all-powerful and too strong for a person to overcome. Even the law is helpless and used by sin as a springboard. Here sin is again personified. By using the good law as a means of deceiving and killing a person, sin is shown as utterly evil. But the law itself is good, holy, and righteous.

Then, another problem is raised about the function of the law from what Paul wrote 7:7-12 as he defended the goodness of the law. An interlocutor or the one who misunderstood comes again and raises a question. The argument runs something like this, as evident from v. 13 (cf. Moores 1995:95):⁶

Rule: The law is good.

Case: The law was the cause of my death.

Result: The good was the cause of my death.

Paul is responding to this question in the rest of pericope 3. Paul introduces a new topic here by means of diatribe again. This question is very delicate and complex. Paul denies such an idea strongly (μὴ γένοιτο), then explains further in the rest of the pericope why he cannot accept it. His argument is something like this:

⁶ Moores uses terms like “major premise”, “minor premise”, and “conclusion.” I have changed them to ones that I have adapted in this paper.

Result 1: “But in order that (ὅτι) sin might be recognized as sin, it produced death in me through what was good” (v. 13b),

Result 2: “so that (ὅτι) through the commandment sin might become utterly sinful” (v. 13c; NIV).

Case 1: “[For (γὰρ)] we know that (ὅτι) the law is spiritual,”⁷

Contrasting Case 2: “but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin” (v. 14; NIV)

[Rule: The law has a function to reveal the real nature of sin, which is spiritual. My problem is not with the spiritual law, but with the carnal me, a slave to sin.]

Two assertions can be noted here (see ὅτι twice; from weaker one to stronger one), and two rationales (see also γὰρ twice; from weaker one to stronger one). Paul in a sense recognizes some kind of mysterious connection between sin and the law (“through what was good” [διὰ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ] in v. 13a. But Paul denies that the law is responsible for bringing about death in his own life. It is true that sin used the law as a fulcrum or military base to bring out all kinds of sinful desires and, as a result, death (v. 5). But this does not mean that the law is responsible. It is sin that is responsible, and the very fact that sin used the good law for its evil purpose shows how sinful sin is. This is the point of which Paul tries to persuade his audience or interlocutor. This argument of Paul can be seen as a rhetorical technique of dissociation (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca 1969:411-415). In order to make his point clear, Paul uses his own past experience as a typical experience (see below the discussion of the “I,” 7.3.3). The rationale or reason is that the law is spiritual, and the “I” is fleshly and sold as a slave to sin. So here Paul points out that the law is not a problem at all. Instead, the law is spiritual, which means that it has divine origin. The problem lies with him, as well as with sin as he pointed out earlier. This is the main argument of which Paul wants to persuade his audience. He further explains this point, shifting the focus on the “I” by means of a subordinating enthymeme. This enthymeme supports his explanation of why the “I” is fleshly and a slave to sin.

[Result: “I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin” (v. 14b)].

Case 1: “[For (γὰρ)] I do not understand (or approve) what I do (v. 15a).

Case 2: “For (γὰρ) what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do” (v. 15b; NIV).

[Rule: The fact that I do what I hate shows me who I am. Being and doing are inseparable.]

Verse 15 has two occurrences of γὰρ, which emphasize the reason why the “I” is saying that he is fleshly and sold as a slave to sin. These reasons are statements of the “I” as he evaluates

⁷ In NIV the important particle “for” (γὰρ) is omitted wrongly. This happens again in v. 18, in which the second subunit begins. Other English versions translate it well (KJV, NRSV, and NASB).

his life as a whole. Words like “always”, or “sometimes” should not be used in explaining these statements. These are evaluative statements. In the following verse (v. 16) Paul draws an inference or deduction from his earlier argument (the case is still the same as the previous ones). The conclusion he draws here shows that Paul is still dealing with the law. Paul is here introducing an example of a personality split. This point will be clear in the following verse (v. 17):

Case: “if I do what I do not want to do,”

Result: “I agree that the law is good” (v. 16; NIV).

[Rule: The fact that he wants to perform the law and does not approve of his action shows that the law is good.]

Verse 17 is another inference from his previous argument in v. 14b, and is the final conclusion in the first subunit (7:14-17). Paul explains why he commits sin, even though he knows that it is wrong in the light of the law. Here the personality split is explained. The “I” who does this is the whole personality. But in him there is a part of the “I” in which sin dwells (Paul terms it “flesh”), and there is another part of the “I” that desires to do good (Paul terms it “mind” or “inner being”). This is one of the most difficult sayings of Paul, and causes trouble to understand. Paul proceeds to explain the saying further with three rationales or reasons. Thus v. 17 as a conclusion to the first subunit is closely connected with the second subunit (7:18-20; see 3.2.3 above).

Result: “As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me” (v. 17).

Case 1: “[For (γὰρ)] I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature [flesh]” (v. 18a).⁸

Case 2: “For (γὰρ) I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out” (v. 18b).

Case 3: “For (γὰρ) what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing” (v. 19).

[Rule: The fact that I do evil though I do not want to do it shows me that there is someone who is stronger than my will-power.]

The assertion is a strong statement, which might easily cause some misunderstanding. Because of its importance, Paul provides three rationales to make sure his audience understand. The assertion deals with the heart of the problem: the reason why Paul cannot

⁸ The particle “for” is omitted in NIV. In KJV, NRSV and NASB it is translated well.

carry out the law, even though he recognizes that the law is good. This is a final enthymeme in the second subunit (7:18-20).

Case: "Now if I do what I do not want to do,"

Result: "it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it" (v. 20).

[Rule: There is a conflict between the part of "I" who wants to do good and the part of "I" in which sin dwells. But the part of "I" in which sin dwells is stronger and wins the battle.]

One part of "I" wants to do good, but he cannot carry out what he wants to do, because another part of "I", in which sin dwells, is stronger than the part of "I" that wants to do good. On the basis of these arguments, Paul proceeds to conclude what he has said so far in the third subunit (21-25).

Result: So (ἄρα) I find the law: "When I want to do good, evil is right there with me" (v. 21).

Case: "For (γὰρ) in my inner being I delight in God's law; but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members" (vv. 22-23).

[Rule: In battle the stronger one wins the battle and captures the opponent as a captive.]

Here Paul is using the example of a military campaign. As Dunn points out, there are not only the two "I's", but also the two laws that are opposing one another. There is the part of the "I" that wants to do good, but at the same time there is another part of "I" that wants to do evil. The latter one works so regularly that Paul calls it "another law." The part of the "I" that wants to do good delights in God's law and keeps it in mind. But another "I" who always wants to do evil fights against the good part of the "I." These two laws are in conflict against each other within the "I." The bad law working in the members of his body is stronger than the "I" who delights in God's law in his inner being or mind. So the "I" who wants to do good loses his battle against other "I" or law. Once Paul reaches this conclusion he suddenly bursts out emotionally in v. 24 and v. 25a. There Paul cries out, "What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?" This is a cry of anguish, despair, and hopelessness. It is not part of his argumentation but is expressed naturally from the wretched situation he has just described before this verse. Then, he suddenly cries out again, but this time unexpectedly with thanksgiving. There is no connection whatsoever between this thanksgiving and his argument in Rom. 7:14-24. The cry shows that the one who has written so far is a person who has faith in Christ Jesus, is a person of faith, who knows Jesus Christ

personally. At this point Paul was carried away with the fullness of thanksgiving to God, who delivered him out of this wretched situation, in Christ Jesus. Thus it can be concluded that this is nothing but an “ejaculation,” or “interjection” (see 7.6.4). Paul exclaims: “Thanks be to God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!” (v. 25a).

Finally, Paul recapitulates his conclusion clearly from what he has said since v. 14. This is the style of inclusion. His conclusion is very much the same as his thesis in pericope 3, which was mentioned at the beginning. He is “fleshly, sold as a slave to sin.”

Result: “So then (ἀρα οὖν), I myself in my mind am a slave to God’s law, but in the sinful nature a slave to the law of sin” (v. 25b).

[Case: “For (γὰρ) in my inner being I delight in God’s law; but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members” (vv. 22-23)].

[Rule: A slave is the one who cannot do what he wants to do. He always follows an order from his master.]

In this final conclusion there is only an assertion or conclusion is mentioned. Other components are suppressed, and have to be supplied from the previous argument. But they are easy to supply, because the conclusion is nothing but a repetition of the previous result (see ἀρα in both places). With this conclusion or result of pericope 3, the rhetorical technique of inclusion is evident. The conclusion resonates a theme or topic at the beginning and concludes with what Paul has said in between. It can be a rhetorical unit by itself, but as seen above it is closely related to the other parts.

There are some difficulties that require attention in order to understand our text. They are the problems of the present tense and the use of the “I” in 7:14-25. They are important parts of Paul’s argumentation, so we will first deal with the problem of the present tense here. The use of the “I” will be discussed as a part of Pauline anthropology in chapter 7 (see 7.3.3).

5.3.2.2 UNDERSTANDING THE PRESENT TENSE

We have already noted that Paul changes the tense in pericope 3. For some, the present tense itself is a clear enough indication that Paul is describing his personal experience at the time of writing. For example, Packer says that “grammatically...the natural way to read it [present tense] would be as a transcript of Paul’s self-knowledge at the time of writing” (1964:622;

1984:264). Nygren ([1949] 1988) also views the present tense as “a characterization of the present life of the Christian” (:289). Similarly, Cranfield (1982:341, 344-345), Dunn (1975:257-73), and Burgland (1997:169) see that the present tense is an important element in showing the identity of “I.” But we need to bear in mind that the tense itself does not settle the question of whom Paul is referring to (cf. Lloyd-Jones 1973:184). If this were the case, then there would not be diverse interpretations of this passage. Robinson (1979) comments aptly on this matter that “the concentration on the *time*-reference (past or present) has put people on the wrong track, so that the real clue has been missed” (:88). One of the reasons for is that people sometimes use a “dramatic present” to establish a point. This is not a “historical present” to give vividness as in the gospel narrative (Packer 1984:266-267). It is true that the reason Paul uses the present tense here is “to express the purely general proposition” (Robinson :88) or “generalized explanatory comment” (Packer 1984:267). However, it is also clear that the present tense is one of Paul’s rhetorical devices for the sake of effectiveness and vividness in order to persuade his audience at Rome. It is “not a wholly isolated phenomenon” as Wenham says (1980:87), it should rather be seen in the light of the argumentation as a whole. If verses 14-25 constitute an extended explanation of v. 13 as we think is structurally the case, then it is quite plausible to see that Paul uses the present tense as a way of vividly explaining how sin uses the law to produce death in Paul’s own past experience.

5.4 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In our inner textual analysis we have primarily dealt with what is in the text and its various problems. Due to the complex nature of our text we have to consider various proposals and to argue which is the most plausible interpretation. We concluded that 7:1 sets a general proposition of the function of the law, and discontinuity and continuity of the law to the believers. In one sense we are free from the authority of the law: its demand for perfection in order to be justified before God, and its condemnation. However, the law here was never intended to be a way of sanctification, just as it was never intended to be a way of justification, which Paul showed earlier in Rom. 1:18-4:25. Rather its main function is to reveal sin. However, the law is still valid for Christians as the will of God, since it never dies (7:4). Instead we died and rose from the dead together with Christ. This changes everything

in our relationship to the law. There is certainly continuity and discontinuity in our relationship with the law due to the Christ-event.

In Rom. 7 Paul uses the law variously, but it has mainly two basic meanings as the universal moral law of God, including the Mosaic law and the law written in the heart, and as a principle. That Paul's marriage analogy is seemingly lacking in imagination has been problematic to the modern scholars. But it is understandable as we consider that for Paul as a Jew it is unthinkable to do away with the law, even though it was used as an operational base of sin. Rather than that the law died, we died together with Jesus Christ and have been raised with him. Then, we re-married the *crucified and risen* Christ. We are now alive and in one sense still bound by the law but in this present time the law is not any more a tyranny for believers (8:1). We can fulfill the requirement of the law (i.e., bear fruit to God) by the help of the Holy Spirit (7:6; 8:4).

Verses 5 & 6 are important for understanding the rest of chapter 7. They show a great contrast between the life under the law (*then*) and the life in Christ (*now*). Verses 7-25 are a further elaboration of v. 5, and Rom. 8 is of v. 6. In vv. 7:7-25 Paul argues against an objection raised from the preceding statement in v. 4: the law is used by sin to bring forth fruit to death, so it is sin (cf. v. 7). Paul answers this objection by using his past experience by means of the "I," and confirms that the law is good, holy, and righteous; he thus vindicates the goodness of the law. His response leads to another objection: how can the good law bring death (v. 13). Paul answers that it is not the law that brings death but sin, which is dwelling in him. Sin is the real culprit of death. Sin is more powerful than the individual's will-power. Even though the "I" comes to see the spirituality of the law and delights in it, Paul cannot do the good which he wants to do, instead he commits evil, which he hates. The law is unable to bring deliverance from this predicament. From this situation he cries out for the deliverance. Once Paul reaches this point, he cannot but burst out with his thanksgiving to Jesus, who has brought him out of this predicament. This outburst is not a part of the main argument of Paul; it is rather an "ejaculation" or "interjection." Then, he concludes what he has said from v. 7 to now. Verse 25b is not anti-climatic and problematic as some think.

What Paul has said fits well with the person who is in the process toward conversion and is under deep conviction of sin. The situation of the "I" certainly reflects Paul's own past experience as a representative to the Gentile and Jewish believers. It is also a rhetorical

device to persuade his audience of his understanding of the relationship between sin and the law and its aim is to show the impotence of the law to bring fruit to God. That is only possible in participating in Christ and by the help of the Holy Spirit (v. 6). This whole chapter pictures the dark side of mankind's situation when we were under the law, and prepares the way for Rom. 8.

The rhetorical function of Romans 7 is to refute a charge of antinomianism. Paul's preaching of justification by faith only causes some people misunderstanding and raises this charge. So Paul here makes clear that his teaching does not do away with the law at all. Christians' freedom from the law does not invalidate the law of God. He shows that the law is still valid to them as the perfect will of God. However, the law cannot help the unregenerate to get out of their predicament. To understand this kind of role of the law is an important step in comprehending the power of the gospel of God. Once the Roman audience understands the law in relation to the gospel that Paul has preached everywhere (theological), they might understand that there is no difference between the Gentiles and the Jews so that they might be united in one spirit and mind (pastoral). This is a fundamental basis so that they can be fully behind Paul's bringing the collection to Jerusalem in prayer and can support his future mission in Spain (missionary).

CHAPTER VI

AN ANALYSIS OF INTERTEXTURE

In the previous chapter we conducted an inner textual analysis of Romans 7. There we discussed what is “in” the text -- its structure and its meaning, and responded to contributions regarding some problems in the text. This discussion laid the foundation for a proper understanding of Paul’s extensive usage of the law in Romans 7. In this chapter we proceed to conduct an intertextual analysis to see whether it can shed some light in order to enhance our understanding. The main concern is to see the relation of data in the text to various kinds of materials outside of the text. This step is important, because “The text is a tissue of quotations drawn from innumerable centers of culture” and “is made of multiple writings, drawn from many cultures and entering into mutual relations of dialogue, parody, contestation” (Barthes 1977:146, 148). According to Robbins, there are four kinds of intertexture: (1) oral-scribal intertexture; (2) historical intertexture; (3) social intertexture; and (4) cultural intertexture. In this study I will modify the oral-scribal intertexture slightly, and will rename it “scriptural intertexture” because I think other ancient materials can be used in other intertextures according to the nature of their content. If an inscription has a record regarding historicity or culture, it is better to use it in a corresponding intertexture.

In this attempt we will focus largely on three kinds of intertexture, and very briefly on historical intertexture owing to its nature (see below 6.4). Let us turn our attention to scriptural intertexture first.

6.1 SCRIPTURAL INTERTEXTURE

Regarding oral-scribal intertextuality, Robbins states that it concerns “a text’s use of any other text outside of itself, whether it is an inscription, the work of a Greek poet, noncanonical apocalyptic material or the Hebrew Bible” (Robbins 1996b:40). However, as I mentioned above, I will limit my discussion to the OT only in this intertexture, not because I deny the Hellenistic-Roman world as the context of this intertexture, but because I think that it is better to include ancient materials other than the Bible in the discussion of historical, cultural and social intertextures. In this intertexture I will use the approach of Gail O’Day (1990) and

Richard Hays (1989), who utilize the OT as the main source of intertextuality. Hays correctly sees that intertextuality “has always played a major role in the cultural traditions that are heir to Israel’s Scriptures” (Hays 1989:14). In this intertexture we focus on how Paul configures or reconfigures previous OT texts.

Analysis of scriptural intertexture deals with “five basic ways in which language in a text uses languages that exists in another text: recitation, recontextualization, reconfiguration, narrative amplification, and thematic elaboration” (Robbins 1996b:40). In Rom. 7 recitation and thematic elaboration are prominent, so we will concentrate on these two aspects of scriptural intertexture.

6.1.1 RECITATION

In Romans 7 we have a clear Scripture quotation. In v. 7 Paul says, τήν τε γὰρ ἐπιθυμίαν οὐκ ἤδειν εἰ μὴ ὁ νόμος ἔλεγεν· οὐκ ἐπιθυμήσεις. He quotes the tenth commandment of the Decalogue (Exod. 20:17; Deut. 5:21). Why does Paul use the tenth commandment here? There have been mainly three suggestions in this regard. First, R. Bultmann argued that this commandment should be taken in a monistic way. He thinks that the term ἐπιθυμία (“covetousness” or “desire”) is not only the desire for something forbidden or for something that is not one’s own as we usually think, but is also the desire for self-righteousness (1951:247-249 & 1960:147-157). But this reading was refuted by H. Räisänen (1987:111, 112). He criticizes Bultmann’s transsubjective interpretation as “completely artificial.” He says that in the context of Rom. 7:7ff. the desire is clearly connected with transgression of sin (Räisänen 1987:111).

Second, R. H. Gundry (1980) offers another suggestion. He thinks that Rom. 7:7-12 is clearly autobiographical, and is typical only of a Jew, not of a Gentile audience. He takes 7:9, “I was alive apart from the law” to refer to Paul’s becoming *bar mitzvah* at the age of 13. Gundry understands that the commandment has specific reference here to sexual lust. It was Paul’s experience that he could not control his sexual lust, even though he could keep the law in general externally as is seen in Phil. 3:6. From this perspective, the rest of Rom. 7 should be seen as being specifically about Paul’s inability to keep the law in this particular respect. W. D. Davies (1980:26) also shares Gundry’s understanding. The weightiest argument comes from the immediate context where Paul says, πᾶσαν ἐπιθυμίαν in v. 8b. The sexual lust is

thus included as a part of “all desire” but is not exclusive. Furthermore, it is unthinkable to see only sexual lust because there are various objects mentioned in the tenth commandment of the Decalogue (Exod. 20:17 & Deut. 5:21; Ziesler 1988:44-45). Ziesler points out that usage in the LXX and the NT, including Paul’s letter, also shows a closely similar picture. Unless the context indicates clearly otherwise, we may safely take the desire as a general reference (1988:45-46).

Third, Ziesler contends that Paul chose this commandment, because “whatever the reason for his choice, *the result was an argument in Rom. 7:7-25 that worked for the tenth commandment but would not work for almost any other commandment*” (italic his; 1988:47). He provides a proof for this understanding. He points out that there are two major features of Rom. 7:7-25 which fit only the tenth commandment and not other commandments. The first is the divided personality of vv. 13-25. It is just not true that “for most people, most of the time, in most matters of the Law” intention or will is not matched with action or performance. Paul must have known this fact (cf. Phil. 3:6). Most devout Jews, like Paul, did not have any trouble in keeping the law outwardly. So other commandments are not totally appropriate to this passage. The point Paul wants to make with the tenth commandment is that “it is about desires, and the point of Rom. 13-25 is the difficulty of matching right desire with right performance, of conflicting desires, and of having right desire in the first place” (:48). So the tone and argument of this passage fits well with the tenth commandment.

Ziesler’s second major feature is “the argument about the provocative nature of the Law” in vv. 7-11. If we substitute another commandment in the place of the tenth, it does not work. Because covetousness is closely connected with desire and intentions, it can be said that the law not only reveals what was already there, but actually makes the situation worse. In these verses Paul takes the tenth commandment “as paradigm of the Law’s inability to deliver what it demands, indeed as the paradigm of the way in which it makes things worse rather than better” (:49). But Ziesler says that it is “a faulty paradigm,” because it is “not representative,” so that by this commandment Paul could state the mysterious relation between the law and sin that he could not readily state if he used a different commandment as a paradigm.

Ziesler dismisses an objection to his proposal that, in the whole of Rom. 7 Paul uses *doing* words (like *κατεργάζομαι*, v.15, 17 & 20; *κατεργάζεσθαι* in v. 18; *πράσσειν* in 7:15; *ποιεῖν* in 7:16, 19, 20, 21) in relation to the law, and it is not possible for anyone *to do* or *not*

to do coveting. Ziesler's response is that in LXX the word "keep" and words for "doing" are used, even when the command in question is not literally about doing or not doing anything (e.g., Lev. 19:37 together with v. 17), and there are places where "doing" refers to the whole Decalogue, including the tenth commandment (Exod. 24:3, 7; Deut. 5:1, 31, 32; 6:1, 24; 28:58; 31:12). For Ziesler's this objection is not a problem to his interpretation (:50).

Another supporting point to his proposal is the singular δικαίωμα in Rom. 8:4, means a "requirement" or "ordinances of the law" in the NT in general and in LXX. It does not mean the law's requirements collectively, rather one particular requirement, the tenth commandment.

Ziesler draws some conclusions: 1) Paul is not a systematic thinker as is shown by his use of a faulty paradigm. 2) It provides an understanding of why Paul says that the law cannot be obeyed at all. 3) This understanding can reconcile Phil. 3:6: Paul was able to keep the external laws observable by community, but secret desires are out of control. 4) It makes a pre-conversion interpretation of vv. 13-25 more plausible than a Christian one. 5) It helps to explain why it is only the law and not also Paul's ethical teaching that prompts to sin. It is not the law as a whole that works in such a way, but this particular commandment. 6) It takes away the absurdity of the passage of vv. 13-25 if the reference is to the command against coveting. 7) Even though it is a faulty paradigm, in a sense it is "a very apt paradigm, simply because covetousness, a basic sin in some Jewish thought, *is* something that cannot be dealt with by the Law as such, but only by the sort of fundamental change of direction that Paul envisages" (:51-52; *italic his*).

Ziesler's proposal is provocative and commendable in some points. I agree with him especially on the point that Paul chose this commandment as a tool of his argumentation and it really fits well in Paul's argument. But I find some difficulties in his proposal. First, I wonder whether the tenth commandment is "a faulty paradigm" as he thinks. The main reason that he provides for this understanding is that it is "not representative" of all the other commandments. Is this really true? In my opinion, the desire is the very basic commandment behind all other commandments: it deals with motives, imagination, and inner being. If man gives free rein to a wrong desire, it can lead him to break any of the commandments, i.e., idol worship, lies, theft, adultery, and homicide. So what Ziesler tries to convince us of is partly true. In this sense the tenth commandment might be "representative" of the rest of the

Decalogue and can be a paradigm. This means that Paul is still operating with the Jewish thought that covetousness is the root of all sins. From this perspective Paul uses this commandment for his argumentation. Furthermore, my understanding is confirmed considering that “[t]he sin indicated here is not so much a craving for this or that wrong thing, but the craving itself (note that Paul does not bother to spell out the particulars of the tenth commandments, such as the possessions or wife of one’s neighbor)” (Harrison 1977:79, 80). Either way, Ziesler’s proposal is implausible.

Second, I do not agree with Ziesler’s thinking that the point of Rom. 7:13-25 is “the difficulty of matching right desire with right performance, of conflicting desires and of having right desire in the first place.” He is right in saying that the point of the tenth commandment is about desires, but that is not the point of Rom. 7:13-25. In this passage the “I” does not have “conflicting desires” and is not “having right desire in the first place,” even though he was unable to do the things he wanted to do. The “I” here does not have any problem with his desire; he knows the law as good (v. 14), and wants to do the good according to the law (vv. 15, 18, 19, 21, 22, 25b). Paul uses the strongest term to make clear that he rejoices in the law with his inner being. He does not have any signs of conflicting desire. He already has a right desire. His only problem is that he cannot carry out what he wants to do. The point of Rom. 7:13-25 is the impotence of the law to the unregenerate’s predicament owing to the indwelling sin and the weakness of the flesh. Paul is still vindicating the role of the law here as he did in the preceding pericope.

Third, I have another problem, this time with Ziesler’s interpretation on the singular δικαίωμα in Rom. 8:4. I prefer to see this term in a collective sense rather than as referring to the tenth commandment, because in Rom. 8:1-4 Paul is summarizing what he has said in Rom. 7. He has already finished his discussion on the tenth commandment in 7:7-12, and moves forward with his argument on the general law of God. If he had in mind this commandment, he might use the word ἡ ἐντολή continually in 7:13-25 but he never uses it again in this section. Summarizing is usually done in general terms, not specific. In this regard Cranfield correctly sees the law in its collective sense. He says, “The use of the singular is significant. It brings out the fact that the law’s requirements are essentially a unity, the plurality of commandments being not a confused and confusing conglomeration but a recognizable and intelligible whole, the fatherly will of God for His children” (1982:384).

In similar vein, Fitzmyer says that “the requirement of the law” is “the Pauline way of expressing the goal or purpose of the law, that for which the law was promulgated as a legal claim on humanity” (1993:487). If this is correct, it will not lend any support to Ziesler’s proposal.

Because of these points I do not agree with some of Ziesler’s conclusions. I do not see any sign of confusion in Paul’s argument, though it is not easy to understand his points right away at the beginning. Our difficulty is due to the cultural and social differences and our lack of a proper understanding of Paul’s historical setting. Probably Paul and his original audience did not have as much difficulty as we have today. Contrary to Ziesler’s conclusion no. 2, it is better to see that Paul, when he says that we cannot keep the law, is talking about the moral law of God in general and not just “the control of one’s desire,” because the wrong desire is the root of all other sins. Furthermore, according to my point of view, Phil. 3:6 does not provide any contradiction of Rom. 7:7-25. Until Paul was enlightened by the Holy Spirit to see the spirituality of the law, Paul was confident of his religious performance as were most Pharisees at that time. The internal conflict in Rom. 7:7-25 came as a result of the initial work of the Spirit in Paul’s life. Regarding Ziesler’s conclusion no. 5, that only the tenth commandment prompts to sin, this is unlikely. In v. 5 Paul says that while we were in the flesh, sin worked in our members to bear fruit to death by the law. This idea was placed even before v. 7, in which the tenth commandment is mentioned. The tenth commandment is used to argue the function of the law in general. Once its point is made Paul does not mention it again as we noted. Paul’s main concern is thus to show the function of the law in general, not that of a specific law. The situation of the law in which it is used by sin as a military operation base is possibly only relevant to the unregenerate. That is why Paul’s ethical teaching to Christians does not prompt sin, since the Spirit who is dwelling in them helps them to keep Paul’s ethical teaching. Lastly, regarding Ziesler’s conclusion no. 6 there is no absurdity in Rom. 7:13-25 because this passage is not primarily dealing with a timeless and human dilemma as such. It is dealing with Paul’s own dilemma as typical of a particular people at a particular time.

In summary, Paul uses the tenth commandment because it fits his argument well in order to show what the role of the law is (it brings knowledge of sin, v. 7) and how it relates to sin (it produces various sinful desires so that he commits sins, v. 8). It is certainly a rhetorical

device to persuade his audience, but it is paradigmatic and representative of other commandments. Furthermore, Paul uses this commandment because only this commandment deals with a man's inner being, not just his outward actions. This function of the law is important to Paul in his discussion of the law.

Next our concern here is *the manner* in which Paul recites this reference. We have here clearly an example of *recitation with omission* (Robbins 1996a:103 & 1996b:41). In Exod. 20:17 we have a full commandment: οὐκ ἐπιθυμήσεις τὴν γυναῖκα τοῦ πλησίον σου οὐκ ἐπιθυμήσεις τὴν οἰκίαν τοῦ πλησίον σου οὔτε τὸν ἀγρὸν αὐτοῦ οὔτε τὸν παῖδα αὐτοῦ οὔτε τὴν παιδίσκην αὐτοῦ οὔτε τοῦ βοῦς αὐτοῦ οὔτε τοῦ ὑποζυγίου αὐτοῦ οὔτε παντὸς κτήνους αὐτοῦ οὔτε ὅσα τῷ πλησίον σου ἐστίν (LXX). Paul omits in Rom. 7:7 the various objects found in Exod. 20:17 & Deut. 5:21. Why does he do this? Why does Paul mention the tenth commandment without the objects after the verb? The answer to this question is closely related to the previous question. First of all, Paul's concern here is that the desire itself is his focus for his argument, so he does not bother to mention any objects (cf. Harrison 1977:79, 80). Second, the wrong desire or covetousness is the root of all sins. Paul is here following Jewish thought. According to the Jewish point of view, covetousness, with the general sense of "illicit desire," is considered as the root of all sins (Philo, *SpecLeg* IV. 84-94; *ApMos* 19:3; *ApAb* 24.9; cf. Jas. 1:15). So, like Philo (*Decal* 142-153, 173) and the author of 4 Maccabees (2.6), Paul uses the tenth commandment as a representative summation of the Mosaic law (cf. Schoeps 1961:191; Moo 1986:123), that is, it has generic sense, not a specific one.

6.1.2 THEMATIC ELABORATION

Thematic elaboration takes place by the introducing of a theme or issue at the beginning of a unit and the unfolding of the meanings and meaning-effects of the theme through argumentation as the unit progresses. This elaboration is effected by rationale, argument from the opposite position, analogy, example, and authoritative testimony (Robbins 1996b:52). Romans 7 exhibits such features with a slight variation as we noted in the previous chapter on inner textual analysis. Here I will summarize how Paul elaborates his topic of the law in Rom. 7.

Proposition: “the law has authority over a man only as long as he lives?” (v. 1)

Argument from Analogy: Jewish marriage analogy (vv. 2, 3)

Conclusion: v. 4

Confirmation of the Conclusion from Contrast: v. 5-6.

Embellishment: vv. 7-24.

Argument from Ancient Testimony¹: vv. 7-12

Argument from Example or Authoritative Testimony: vv. 13-24.

Emotional Ejaculation: v. 25a.

Conclusion: v. 25b.

In Rom. 7 Paul does not follow exactly the ancient rhetoricians as can be seen from a comparison with a complete argument from rhetorical treatises (cf. Robbins 1996b:53-58; see examples from *Rhetorica ad Herennium* [Cicero] :II.xvii.28-19:30 & Hermogenes *Progymnasmata* 7.15-8.15, in Hock & O’Neil 1986:176-177). Paul was certainly flexible in his argumentation as can be seen in 1 Co. 15 (see Robbins 1996b:56-57 for detail). In Rom. 7 Paul is closely following the order of a complete argument: he first lays down a thesis or proposition, then he argues from the marriage analogy, and the conclusion follows in v. 4. In this argument Paul delivers a fundamental truth about the status of believers: they are incorporated with Jesus Christ in his death and resurrection. Then, Paul confirms the rationale by contrasting experience between the past and present reality of the Roman believers’ lives. Afterward, Paul further embellishes his proposition through his own experience as an example. Here, unlike rhetoricians, Paul uses his own example as an authoritative testimony, since he is an apostle to the Gentiles. This is quite unique but is possible because of his apostolic position in the early Church.

6.2 CULTURAL INTERTEXTURE

In a previous section we dealt with scriptural intertexture, in which we saw how the Jewish scriptures are imbedded in Rom. 7. We now turn our attention to the more general context of the time of Paul’s writing the letter to the Romans, especially its cultural context. As we know, Paul certainly operated in two cultures: narrowly, the Jewish culture and broadly the

¹ This pericope is narrative in nature. It is certainly autobiographical, but also has a rhetorical device, which alludes to both Adamic and Sinaitic narrative. In that sense it functions as an argument from ancient testimony.

Greco-Roman culture. We should not neglect either of these two contexts (Engberg-Pederson 1995: xiv-xix, especially xvii; Stowers 1995:199; Robbins 1996a:110, 115). This analysis will show the interactive relation our text has to these two cultures. Robbins says, “Cultural intertexture appears in word and concept patterns and configurations; values, scripts, codes, or system (e.g., purity, law, covenant); and myths (e.g., wisdom, Oedipus, Hermes). Cultural intertexture appears in a text either through reference or allusion and echo” (1996b:58). In order to understand Rom. 7 adequately we need to be aware of the cultural intertexture.

6.2.1 JEWISH CULTURAL INTERTEXTURE

In Romans 7 there are several examples of Jewish cultural intertexture. We will discuss them one by one, starting with the most debated one.

6.2.1.1 ROM. 7:8-10: ALLUSION TO GEN. 3 AND EXOD. 20

Rom. 7:8b-10 states, “For apart from law, sin is dead. Once I was alive apart from law; but when the commandment came, sin sprang to life and I died. I found that the very commandment that was intended to bring life actually brought death” (NIV). These verses certainly bear an allusion to a personage and tradition known to Jews, which was transmitted from generation to generation. But there is a problem in determining which previous text is alluded to. This problem means the nature of the intertexture of this passage is cultural rather than oral-scribal (Robbins 1996b:59). There are basically two different understandings regarding this problem. Some scholars think that the image alludes to the Fall narrative in Gen. 3 (Dodd 1932:106; Bornkamm 1969:87-104; Käsemann 1980:192-197; Hunter 1955:72; Barrett 1962:143; Milne 1980:15-17; Theissen 1987:202-211; Dunn 1988:382; Garlington 1990:208; Keck 1995:25). Other scholars think that it alludes to the Sinaitic narrative in Exod. 20 (Moo 1986:122-135 & 1991:448-468; Karlberg 1986:65-74). In order to solve this problem, we need to see the chiasmically-arranged narrative sequence in Rom. 7:8b-10b (Moo 1991:461):

χωρὶς νόμου (‘apart from the law’)		ἐλθούσης τῆς ἐντολῆς (‘when the commandment came’)
ἁμαρτία νεκρά (‘sin is dead’)	→	ἡ ἁμαρτία ἀνέζησεν (‘sin sprang to life’)
ἐγὼ δὲ ἔζων χωρὶς νόμου ποτε (‘I was living’)	→	ἐγὼ ἀπέθανον (‘I died’)

As we see above, there is a contrasting movement of both sin and ἔργω. Sin moves from death to life while ἔργω moves from life to death. Some scholars find an explanation for this in the Genesis story. For example, Dodd says that “It [Adamic story] fits like a glove” (1932:106). Similarly, Käsemann says that “There is nothing in our verses which does not fit Adam, and everything only fits Adam alone” (1980:196). The life and death of “I” are here referring respectively to Adam’s state before and after his receiving of God’s commandment, and the springing to life of the previously dormant sin can be considered as a fitting description of the role of the serpent in the garden. In similar vein, Barrett comments that “Sin – the Serpent – was in the Garden even before man, but had no opportunity of attacking man until the command ‘Thou shalt not eat of it’ (Gen. ii. 17) had been given. It was precisely by means of this command, the prototype of all law and religion, that the serpent tempted man” In this verse (1962:143). Recently, Garlington pointed out that there is a verbal allusion to Gen. 3:13. In this verse, Eve says that the serpent “deceived (ἠπάτησεν, LXX) me,” and Paul says here, “sin deceived (ἐξηπάσεν) me” (1990:208). Regarding this point, Dunn says, “It [the serpent] twisted the instruction of the Creator given for man’s good and made it sound like the legislation of a dictator fearful of losing his special status and prerogatives. Thus deceived, man clutched at a godlike life and grasped only death” (1980:103). From this point of view, Paul in these verses describes the law in the same terms as the serpent did in the garden. As Eve was deceived, Paul was deceived. If this correspondence is correct, it implies that Paul’s argument moves within the context of creation (Garlington 1990:208).

Milne (1980:15-17) points out well how, in sharing his own experience, Paul alludes to Adam’s experience of the temptation and transgression. Three leading motives of our text indicate the allusion. First, just as a single command signified the whole of Adam’s obedience to God so Paul narrows the law of God down to one commandment, the tenth of the Decalogue (v. 7). In Rom. 5:13-19, Paul already suggested the similarity between the Adamic administration and the time of the Mosaic law: both were distinguished by the specially revealed commandment from God. As for Adam, the law takes the form of a single prohibition which forbids the least sinful tendency. In this commandment Paul perceives a common ground with Adam.

Second, in v. 7 Paul finds the element of deception in his relationship with the law, recalling that of Gen. 3:14 (LXX). In Romans the deceiver is indwelling sin while in the Genesis story

it is the devil disguised in the form of a serpent (Gen. 3:1). Paul however personifies sin in this passage probably in order to point out the devilish background and “origin of all human sin and of tying his own religious experience of temptation more intimately with the very first temptation of man to sin.”

Third, the idea of death is prominent in both narratives (Gen. 3:19 and Rom. 7:8-11, 13, 24). Here the death is beyond physical death. Paul speaks of this death that occurred while he was physically alive (v. 9) and seems to perceive it in a more subjective and attitudinal way. Here death means “the destruction of his hopes and the emergence of self-despair.”

The combination of these three notable features in the “I” leads one to conclude that Paul is alluding to Adam here. Adam was created without law, and the commandment was given later. Like Adam, Paul was without law and alive (v. 9) at one point of his life in a relative sense. This period of time is referred to as the time “when Paul was religiously secure and complacent before he was made aware of the full implication of the Law (Calvin, Hodge, Murray)” as I concluded in a previous chapter.

Contrary to the above interpretation, some scholars see these verses as an allusion to the experience of Israel at Sinai. Moo (1986 & 1991) and Karlberg (1986) are the main proponents of this view. We will first take Moo’s interpretation. Moo’s main arguments are as follows (1986:123-128): first, in Rom. 7:7-12 the law under discussion is clearly the Mosaic law, seen from Paul’s clear quotation from the Decalogue in v. 7 and from the vast majority of occurrences in Romans. In this sense the law is Israel’s peculiar possession, not the Gentiles’ possession, as is shown by Paul’s designation of Gentiles as τὰ μὴ νόμον ἔχοντα or ἀνόμος (cf. Rom. 2: 12, 14; 1 Co. 9:20-21) and of Jews as the possessors of ἡ νομοθεσία (Rom. 9:4).

Second, if the first understanding is correct, then we may say that Paul also limits the duration of the Mosaic law from his redemptive-history perspective. In Romans the law has a specific purpose and a clear temporal limit. Rom. 5:13, 14 show the period between Adam and Moses as being “without law” and 5:20 describes the law as an “intruder” in salvation-history. Romans 7 is closely connected with these references, particularly 5:20 via 6:14. In Rom. 7:1-6 the contrast between “oldness of letter” and “newness of Spirit” indicates that Paul is still thinking of the Mosaic law in its limited redemptive-history perspective.

Third, the narrative sequence supports the Sinaitic view, since it fits well into Paul's theological pattern elsewhere, especially Rom. 5:13-14. The "coming to life" of the previously dormant sin (v. 8b) is a vivid description of 1 Co. 15:56b, "the power of sin is the law." In addition the death of the "I" at the coming of the law corresponds to Paul's view of the Mosaic law as an instrument which imprisons under sin (Rom. 7:6; Gal. 3:22, 23) and produces death accordingly (2 Co. 3:7). Even the life of the "I" before the coming of the law can be compared with the situation of people prior to Sinai whose sins were not reckoned as they were after the receiving the law (Rom. 5:13). From these considerations Moo concludes that Paul depicts the effect on Israel of the giving of the law.

Karlberg basically agrees with Moo's position, except for the point that Rom. 7:7-13 is "Israel's history personified" (1986:65-74). Like Moo, he thinks that Paul's thought moves from the redemptive-historical perspective and from the two-age Jewish concept. He also thinks that in Paul's letters Paul describes his own experience in solidarity with humanity, both fallen and redeemed, not in an exclusively individualistic mode. He understands that the concern of Romans is about Jews, and the Gentiles are secondary. For him the key to the understanding of Rom. 7 is found in ch. 6, especially in the two concepts of the "old man" (6:6) and "under law" (6:14). Karlberg sees that the "old man" is "Paul's *metaphor for Israel under law*" and the "new man" is metaphorically the church invisible, consisting of the spiritual Israel and the Gentile believers (italics his; :68). He suggests that the terms like "body of sin" (6:6), "body of death" (7:24), and "body of flesh" (Col. 2:11) are all synonymous with the "old man" metaphor, and "all denote the embodiment of sin in the world of humanity" (:69, 70).

Karlberg (1986) argues that in Rom. 7:7-13 Paul "rehearses the history of Israel in a uniquely figurative manner." The "I" is a personification of the old man in Rom. 6:6. Thus he thinks that the "I" is "not autobiographical, but rather metaphorical." Paul depicts in this passage the experience of Israel as a corporate body under the covenantal administration of death and condemnation (:70). Before the coming of the law, Israel was alive unto God (7:9). That period was the epoch of the promise, the period from Abraham to Moses (cf. 4:13-15; 5:13, 20; and Gal. 3:15-25). Sin found occasion in the commandment and deceived Israel, and killed Israel (7:11). The verb *καταργέω* in Rom. 7:6 indicates the termination of the old epoch. Karlberg concludes that "the 'I' of Rom 7:7-13 is employed metaphorically by the

apostle Paul to describe Israel corporately under law, the old covenantal administration characterized by sin and death,” and he rejects any autobiographical understanding, unlike Moo (Karlberg 1986:74).

Which understanding is the more likely of these two interpretations? We cannot reply to this question with a clear-cut answer “yes” or “no,” since we are dealing with allusion; there is certainly ambiguity here. We may say that both interpretations are present in this narrative. Although it is difficult to agree with Moo’s interpretation (see 5.3.2.1), we cannot ignore the Sinaitic background. Both are prominent in Jewish tradition. However, we cannot reject the autobiographical element of Paul’s use of the “I” contra Karlberg. It is also hard to follow the identity of the “I” in Karlberg’s proposal. Moo is certainly correct in seeing both the autobiographical and representative element. The law in this passage definitely includes the Mosaic law (alluding to Israel at Sinai), but it also has a broader and universalistic element (alluding to Adam as a representative of mankind in general) as I pointed out in my chapter 5 contra Moo. Since Paul calls the law “the law of God,” it is better to see the universalistic aspect of God’s moral law, both written and unwritten (cf. Rom. 2). Rom. 5:12-14 does show that the law has existed at all times since creation (see 5.3.2.1). Furthermore, both Karlberg and Moo are right to see the salvation-history perspective in Paul’s thought on the law. However, we should bear in mind that there is continuity and discontinuity in this perspective, not just discontinuity as they see. We cannot do away with the law of God, not even the Mosaic law. The Mosaic law certainly has a temporal aspect as a legal administration, but its moral aspect of it is permanent until the end of the age.

6.2.1.2 ROM. 7:7-25: PAUL’S USAGE OF THE “I”

Another Jewish cultural intertexture in Rom. 7 is Paul’s usage of the “I”, although it is also an intertexture from Greco-Roman culture (see below 6.2.2.2). We will first examine the aspect of the Jewish cultural intertexture. I have already dealt in part with this most problematic point in a previous discussion on Rom. 7:8b-10. Now we need to proceed to see whether the rest of Paul’s usage of the “I” alludes to something. In chapter 5 it is my view that the “I” should be understood as a rhetorical-autobiographical-typical tool to describe the transitional experience just before conversion, in order to show the function of the law of God. The typical feature of the “I” certainly alludes to some instances in the OT. For example, Jer.

10:19-20:

Woe to me because of my injury! My wound is incurable! Yet I said to myself, "This is my sickness, and I must endure it." My tent is destroyed; all its ropes are snapped. My sons are gone from me and are no more; no one is left now to pitch my tent or to set up my shelter (NIV).

Mic. 7:7-10 and Lam. 1:9-12 also demonstrate this feature. In these passages the "I" or the first person pronoun represents the collective Israel (Lambrecht 1992:84-85).

In addition to this, the "I" alludes also to OT Psalms of thanksgiving and lamentation. These psalms frequently mention that in Sheol (the grave) God's praise and thanksgiving are silenced (6; 30; 88; 115; Käsemann 1980:193; Laato 1995:103). Even though we do not see the "I" of Rom. 7 as the pre-Christian, unredeemed Israel, or all Jews without Christ, we do acknowledge the typicality in Paul's use of the "I." This understanding is confirmed by the cultural setting of the Greco-Roman world during Paul's day. People were group or community-centered so it is reasonable to think of the "I" of Rom. 7 as a powerful means of communicating to Paul's audience because both he and they knew what it meant through their own experience.

Fitzmyer points out that the description of the "I" in Rom. 7 echoes in various ways the confession of the Essene sectarian, who is described in Qumran literature as an utter sinner (1993:465-466):

As for me, I belong to wicked humanity, to the assembly of perverse flesh; my iniquities, my transgressions, my sins together with wickedness of my heart belong to the assembly doomed to worms and walking in darkness. No human being sets his own path or directs his own steps, for to God alone belongs the judgement of him, and from His hand comes perfection of way.... And I, if I stagger, God's grace is my salvation. If I stumble because of sin of the flesh, my judgement is according to the righteousness of God, which stands forever.... In His mercy He has drawn me close (to Him), and with His favors will He render judgement of me. In His righteous fidelity He has judged me; in His bounteous goodness He expiates all my iniquities, and in His righteousness He cleanses me of human defilement and of human sinfulness, that I may praise God for His righteousness and the most High for His majesty.

(1QS 11:9-15)

As for me, I know that righteousness belongs not to a human being, nor perfection of way to a son of man. To God Most High belong all deeds of righteousness, whereas the path of a human is not set firm.... And I said, It is because of my transgression that I have been abandoned far from Your covenant. But when I recalled Your mighty hand along with the abundance of Your mercy, then I was restored and I stood up; my spirit strengthened my stance against blows, because [I] have based myself on Your graces and on the abundance of Your mercy. For You expiate iniquity to clean[se a human be]ing from guilt by Your righteousness.

(1QH 4:30-38).

This kind of expression is prominent in the *Hôdôyôt* (*Thanksgiving Psalms*; e.g., 1 QH 1:21-34; 3:19-36; 6:6-12; 7:16-18; 9:8-18; 10:2-12; 12:24-34; 13:13-19; 16:10-12; 18:12-15, 22-29), and in the Manuel of Discipline (1 QS 1:24-2:1; 10:10-13; Fitzmyer 1993:466). The “I” in all these references makes a confession of his sinfulness and weakness. Likewise, Paul is making such confession in Rom. 7, which echo the confessions mentioned above. The only difference is that the “I” in Rom. 7 does not know the way of deliverance, while the “I” in 1 QH and 1 QS knows it. The original audience was probably shocked when they heard Rom. 7 with its dark portrayal of the “I.” It naturally caused them to anticipate eagerly the way of deliverance in Rom. 8.

6.2.1.3 THE LAW

Another Jewish cultural intertexture is the law itself, which is the main topic of Rom. 7. We all know that the Torah was the heart of Second Temple Judaism. Robbins says (1996a:129):

Torah is not a common social phenomenon; it is a cultural phenomenon created by a particular group of people in the environs of the Mediterranean world. Torah is part of a complex network of presuppositions, dispositions, attitudes, thoughts and actions embodied in people to whom literature during the first century refers as Jews.

It is easy to note that the law is an important Jewish cultural intertexture. There are two areas of concern in this regard. One is whether the law was considered as the way of salvation in Judaism. The other is whether or not Paul shows continuity with contemporary Judaism in his thinking of the law as a protector of morality.

Let us consider the first problem, which we have already noted in the history of the interpretation of Paul and the law in chapter 2. I will deal only briefly with this issue. Until E. P. Sanders, the majority of scholars accepted that Judaism is a religion of salvation or righteousness by works.² Sanders’ extensive study on Judaism (1977) shows that this understanding is totally wrong. Judaism can be termed “covenantal nomism” and is based on God’s grace and election. The law is the way to stay in the covenant with God, not to earn salvation. Since his publication Sanders has shifted the understanding of the law in Judaism

² Some Jewish scholars differentiate between Palestinian and Hellenistic Judaism (Montefiore 1914 and Schoeps 1961). Their understanding is correctly rejected, because the Hellenistic influence was quite early in Palestine (Davies 1980:5, 6; Räisänen 1987:181 n. 99; Thielman 1989:12), and the Diaspora Jews were always closely associated with the Jews in Palestine (Davies 1980:6, 7; see Laato 1995:28; Ferguson 1993:375).

among NT scholars. The problem is raised of which understanding is correct: were the Reformers wrong? Or did Paul misunderstand Judaism? Or is Sanders' "new perspective" wrong? In my opinion, they are both right and wrong, because Judaism was a diverse phenomenon and cannot be seen a single entity in the first century. There were many different trends in Judaism – "the Wisdom tradition, apocalypticism, messianism, legalism, Hellenism" that frequently intermingled and overlapped (Ferguson 1993:375). Similarly, Grabbe (1996) mentions many facets of Judaism of that period such as textual Judaism, revolutionary Judaism, eschatological Judaism, and even gnostic or inverted Judaism. Each current was not a single entity and was mixed with other currents so that they were "like a mosaic with many different parts" (:xi-xii). Even Sanders himself recognizes such diversity in the book of 4 Ezra, which certainly shows the legalistic works-righteousness (1977:409-428). It is better to recognize both points of view and not neglect the other aspects of Judaism.

Now we come to the second problem of the function of the law. In Second Temple Judaism the law was considered as protecting the moral behavior of the people and in this way guaranteed the maintenance of their society. For example, Josephus in his book *The antiquities of the Jews* says that when the crowd gathered to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles in every seventh year, the high priest read the laws to all the people, including women, children, and servants so that they might preserve the laws in their heart not to sin (4.210-211). Likewise, on the day of Sabbath they should dedicate themselves to study the laws and their customs in order to avoid sins (*The antiquities of the Jews* 16.43; cf. Gieniusz 1993:395 n.16). However, Paul is not following this line of thought in Rom. 7. What Paul says here is totally opposite to contemporary Jewish thought. Paul says that the commandment aroused by sin produces all kinds of covetous desires (7:8, 11). In Rom. 5:20 Paul says, "The law was added so that the trespass might increase." Here Paul interprets the function of the law differently to Judaism. So for Jews and those who were influenced by Judaism, what Paul taught was shocking to them. This understanding of Paul is a result of enlightenment due to his experience of Christophany on the road to Damascus. There is certainly continuity and discontinuity from Judaism in Paul's thought on the function of the law. This kind of understanding is also shown in his view on slavery, to which now we turn.

6.2.1.4 SLAVERY

In Rom. 7 Paul did not mention the noun “slave” but he used some verbs that depict slavery: δουλώ in v. 6, πεπράσκω (to sell as a slave) in v. 14, and δουλεύω in v. 25.³ Furthermore, there is a term (αἰχμαλωτίζοντα) implies slavery: in v. 23, after losing a war, the “I” becomes a prisoner, who would later on commonly be sold as a slave.

Slavery was a common practice in Paul’s day and it is hard to decide whether it is Jewish or Greco-Roman cultural intertexture. Even though we cannot sharply differentiate between these two cultural symbol systems, for the sake of convenience it is better to deal with slavery in two different discussions (Martin 1990:xvii; Robbins 1996a:129).

In Jewish tradition there has been a train of thought concerning slavery which regards it as something with an honorable status. For example, Moses (Jos. 14:7, ὁ παῖς), Joshua (Jos. 24:30 & Jdg. 2:8, ὁ δοῦλος), and the prophets (Amos 3:7 & Jer. 7:25, ὁ δοῦλος; Dan. 9:6, ὁ παῖς) are called slaves of God. In this line of thought a slave is a title of authority and power by association. As slaves of God these people represent God; they are active in the world as God’s agents and wield his authority (cf. Martin 1990:55). So it is understandable that Paul and other apostles call themselves slaves of God and Jesus Christ (Rom. 1:1; Phil. 1:1; Gal. 1:1; Tit. 1:1; Jas. 1:1; 2 Pet. 1:1; Jude 1). Thus, by calling themselves slaves of Christ, they put themselves in the same company as Moses and other great prophets. They could not make a stronger claim to authority.

Let us turn to the works of Philo of Alexandria, which are significant for providing an understanding of Jewish diaspora culture. The key passages in the Mosaic law to which Philo refers are Exod. 21:1-6, Lev. 25:39-55 and Deut. 15:12-18. In these we see that the ancient Israelites practiced two different systems of slavery (Philo *SpecLeg* II.123). The enslavement of fellow Jews was considered as unfortunate and was limited to six years, unless the slave willingly wanted to stay with his master. The enslavement of non-Jews was fully acceptable, and was for life. In fact, the Jewish slave was more like a temporary hired servant than a slave; in contrast with the alien, he kept his family ties and was independent from the householder, with whom his relationship was basically contractual (cf. Philo *SpecLeg* I.122).

³ In NIV these instances are translated with such nuances as “serve,” “sold as a slave to sin,” and “a slave.”

The reason behind this policy was Israel's past experience of slavery in Egypt (Deut. 15:15; Lev. 25:42, 55). Jews must never again be enslaved to men but rather fulfill their special role as the chosen people of God and as His servants. Only the foreign slave was the property of the householder. He was transferred from his own biological family and incorporated into his master's household, being marked by circumcision. However, Jews should not discriminate against foreign slaves for the same reason mentioned above.

In *Legum Allegoriae (Allegorical interpretation)* Philo says that slaves are different from athletes, because they are beaten in a different manner and they give themselves to the ill-treatment, and yield to it submissively (III:201). He describes slaves as passive and careless persons, who lack reasoning (III:73). Philo talks about a slave metaphorically as opposed to a free man. He could thus say that "the wicked man was a slave" (*OmnProbLib* :682) and talk about two kinds of slavery: slavery of the soul and slavery of the body. Men are masters of slaves of the body, but wickedness and the passions have dominion over the soul (*OmnProbLib* :683). He describes different ways of becoming a slave: "slaves born in the house, slaves purchased with money, slaves taken in war" (*OmnProbLib* :683). In this line of thought "slavery is something to be avoided" (Robbins 1996a:132). However, Philo also knew about a different type of slavery, which Martin calls middle-level "managerial" slaves (Philo *OmnProbLib* :685; Martin 1990:80, 81; quoted by Robbins 1996a:132-133).

There are others also who are slaves by birth, and who have nevertheless been raised by the bounty of fortune to the condition of freeman; for they have become stewards of houses, and properties, and large possessions, and sometimes they are even appointed rulers of their fellow slaves....they are slaves, though employed in borrowing, in buying, in collecting revenues, and though they are themselves attended by other servants....for no one is willingly a slave.

Like Philo, Paul knew these different types of slaves and applied his knowledge variously. If we bear in mind this kind of cultural background, it is understandable to see some kind of ambiguity and complexity in Paul's statement on slaves.

In v. 6 Paul describes the Christian life as service in the Spirit. In this case Paul seems to borrow OT language regarding the servant of God like Moses, Joshua, and Jonah, etc. Here Paul depicts the Christian life in terms of a slave of the Spirit, which means that the Spirit is a master of believers and controls their lives as opposed to life under the law. This kind of usage of slavery is very much like Paul's slavery to Christ in 1 Co. 9 (cf. Martin 1990:80-85). The other two cases are more fitted to slaves who are sold and who are captured. Their

condition is miserable and should be avoided at any cost. Paul uses these cases as he explains the human predicament under sin and law, resulting from losing the battle against them (v. 23).

6.2.1.5 THE EVIL INCLINATION

In Rom. 7 Paul uses “flesh” (σὰρξ) in three places (vv. 5, 18, 25) and its cognate “fleshly” or “carnal” (σάρκιμος) once (v. 14). What Paul says about “flesh” is very much like the OT Hebrew word בָּשָׂר, which shows that Paul is generally dependent on the OT in his anthropology (Robinson 1911:25; Davies 1980:18). What Paul says about “indwelling sin” and the flesh, with its cognate, alludes to “the evil impulse or inclination (הַיָּצֵר הָרָע)” in Qumran and Rabbinic literature, which comes from Gen. 6:6 and 8:21 (Moore 1927: 474-496, especially 479-480; cf. Davies 1980:23-27; Black 1989:99; Räisänen 1987:110; Moo 1991:485). According to Rabbinic literature, the view that the sphere where the struggle for mastery between evil and good impulses occurs in the heart is prominent in different documents. The heart here stand for the intellectual and volitional parts in man. The earliest notion of this is seen in 4 Ezra (3:21, 25-26; 4:30; 7:63-72, 92. Robinson 1911:22; Davies 1980:21). The nature of the evil inclination was to urge or to incline man to all kinds of sins. It was certainly connected with sexual lust and sins, although not exclusively. It is also the power that leads men to immorality and to idolatry. However, there are two different thoughts on the evil inclination. In some places God is depicted as regretting having created the evil inclination; in others it was regarded as somehow good; it was not evil in itself, unless man is prompted by it to commit evil acts (Moore 1927:480, 481; Davies 1980: 21-22). Moore says (1927:482-483),

the impulses natural to man are not themselves evil. When God looked upon the finished creation and saw that it was all very good (Gen. 1:31), the whole nature of man is included in this judgement....The appetites and passions are an essential element in the constitution of human nature, and necessary to the perpetuation of the race and to the existence of civilization. In this respect they are therefore not to be eradicated or suppressed, but directed and controlled.

The important point in first century Judaism is its understanding of the law. The Jews believed that the chief way of overcoming the evil impulse was the study of the Torah. In Sifre God says, “I have created for you the evil impulse, and I have created for you the Law as an antiseptic” (quoted in Moore 1927:490, cf. 489-492; cf. Davies 1980:22). They thought that when a man was preoccupied with the Law, it would help him to avoid temptations.

Even when he failed, there was still the remedy of repentance. Repentance was considered a cure for the evil impulse (Moore 1927:492; Davies 1980:23).

What Paul says in Rom. 7 about his description of the activity of sin within himself alludes to this kind of Rabbinic teaching on the evil impulse. Sin in Rom.7 is like the evil impulse in Rabbinic literature. The “I” cannot do good even though he wants to do it, in Rom. 7, likewise the evil impulse seduces man into doing what is wrong in spite of his desire to do good (cf. Moore 1927:492; Davies 1980:24). However, we need to remember that, though there is a similarity between them, there is also a difference. For Paul unlike contemporary Judaism the law is not a protector of morality. It is rather a springboard or fulcrum that sin uses for its operation. The law itself is good, holy, and righteous, and reveals sins, but is unable to provide help to man to overcome sin. For Paul the only help comes from the Holy Spirit and the grace of God. So here we have once again the continuity and discontinuity of Pauline thought on the law.

6.2.2 GRECO-ROMAN CULTURAL INTERTEXTURE

6.2.2.1 ROM. 7:15 & 19: ALLUSION TO A GREEK TRAGEDY

Rom 7:15 & 19 contain allusions to a famous Greek tragedy, *Medea*, with variance. First, let us consider Euripides’ *Medea* (1074-80; cf. Räisänen 1987:110; Theissen 1987:212; quoted by Stowers 1994:9, 260): “I am being overcome by evils. I know that what I am about to do is evil but passion is stronger than my reasoned reflection and this is the cause of the worst evils for humans.” These words from Euripides’ *Medea* became a classical text for the long and varied discussion of *akrasia* (ἀκρασία), lack of self-mastery, which was important in Hellenistic ethics. Just before the text cited above, Medea was angry with her husband Jason who had deserted her, overcome by feelings of revenge, and determined to kill her children and Jason’s new wife. Twice she wavered as she reflected if another way of action would be better (1040-48; 1056-58). Finally, as our text shows, she knows how evil her action will be but says that her desire for revenge is stronger than her reasoned reflections (Stowers 1994:261). Here Euripides shows an anthropological insight that “in everyone, not only in Medea, passion is the cause of evil” (Theissen 1987:212). This insight is very much like the “I” in Rom. 7 who does what is wrong, even though he knows what is right.

Euripides's view is deeply rooted in Greek tradition. The earliest link is the *thumos* (θυμός; "passion") in Homer's *Odyssey* (IX.299-303). The *thumos* appears as an independent voice that incites and moves man. Odysseus formed a plan in his *thumos* to kill the Cyclops at once, but another *thumos* advised him not to do so. The voice of the *thumos* is not a constituent of the self; it is related to the intervention of the gods in human life. According to Homer's *The Iliad* (XI:702-703), Achilles will fight "when the heart in his breast shall bid him, and a god arouse him." However, the gods recede in Euripides and this clears the way for a deepened interpretation of the conflict with *thumos* as an inner human event.

The ancients were also aware of Phadera's monologue in Euripides' *Hippolytus* in concerning the failure of self-mastery (377-83):

I think that it is not owing to the nature of their wits that they fare badly, since many people possess good sense. Rather, one must look at it this way: what we know and understand to be noble we fail to carry out, some from laziness, others because they give precedence to some other pleasure than honor.

Plato quotes this kind of understanding as the view of the multitude in his *Protagoras* (352 D): "Now you know that most people ... say that many, while knowing what is best, refuse to perform it, though they have the power, and do other things instead" (quoted by Theissen 1987:213 & Stowers 1994:261).

In contrast, Socrates, Homer (in certain cases), Xenophon, Plato, and Chrysippus held the different view that right knowledge leads to right behavior. This view was also deeply rooted in Greek tradition (cf. Theissen 1987:213-215).

Aristotle, unlike Socrates and others, followed the tragic and popular view. In his book *The Nicomachean ethics* (VII) he discusses *akrasia* and distinguishes between lack of self-mastery that is an impulse and lack of self-mastery that is deliberate and fully aware of itself. Later debates focused on whether lack of self-mastery is due to ignorance and false beliefs (the Stoic view), or to inherently rebellious passions (the popular and Platonic view).

The Stoics held a sophisticated version of the Socratic view that passion and the weakness of will stemmed from ignorance or false belief. Chrysippus (ca. 281-208 BC) reinterpreted this perspective (quoted by Theissen 1987:214-215 & Stowers 1994:262):

Medea declared before her infanticide: 'I know what evil I intend to commit, I see it well; but passion is stronger in me than reason.' But this passion is not a sort of foreign power, which wrests dominion from the mind; it is Medea's mind, which in unhealthy agitation chooses the bad. It turns away from calm reflection and from the mind itself the essential characteristic of emotion.

The early Stoics emphasized the unity of the soul and denied the existence of the irrational part of the soul. The passions were disturbed states of the soul engendered by false beliefs. To them a healthy person maintained perfect harmony in his personality between reason and emotion. Later Stoics had a continuing interest in Euripides's *Medea* (Stowers 1994:262). Paul's nearly exact contemporary, Seneca, wrote his own version of *Medea* based on Euripides' tragedy.

However, like Aristotle, Paul's near contemporary Epictetus (ca. 50-120 AD), who was one of the first representatives of a cognitive psychology, renewed Euripides' conception of human misbehavior (Theissen 1987:215). Epictetus raised the question whether one cannot act against one's conviction and quoted Euripides in this context (*Discourses* I.28.6-8):

'Cannot a man, then, think that something is profitable to him, and yet not choose it?' He cannot. How of her [Medea] who says,

Now, now I learn what horrors I intend

But passion overmastereth sober thought?

It is because the very gratification of her passion and the taking of vengeance on her husband she regards as more profitable than the saving of her children. 'Yes, but she is deceived.' Show her clearly that she is deceived, and she will do it; but so long as you do not show it, what else has she to follow but that appears to her to be true?

Epictetus reshaped the former pessimistic anthropological tradition by introducing the idea of deception: Medea deceives herself. This idea of deception also alludes to Paul's saying in Rom. 7:11, although there is certainly a difference between the two. From Epictetus we have another allusion about the contradiction of willing and doing (see *Discourses* II. 26.1-2, 4-5).⁴

According to Epictetus, the way to overcome the contradiction between intention and factual action is through enlightenment. Misbehavior is ultimately based on cognitive interpretations, so it can be corrected by changing cognitive interpretation. The difference of this view with Paul's statements in Rom. 7 is that Paul was enlightened by the Holy Spirit, but that enlightenment itself does not provide the power to do what he wants. In Epictetus it was man who showed the better way, but in Paul it is the Holy Spirit. Another difference is that Epictetus knows the "power to do what we wish" (II.17.21), but Paul, on the contrary, knows

⁴ This paragraph with some variation is quoted in Theissen 1987:216 & Harrisville 1980:113.

that “I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out” (NIV; 7:18; Theissen 1987:216 n. 47).

The famous parallel to Paul’s words is Ovid’s Medea in his *Metamorphoses* (VII.17-21). Ovid presents Medea’s conflict between love and reason in a soliloquy; she says, “I see the better and approve it, but I follow the worse” in this context.⁵

Come, thrust from your maiden breast these frames that you feel, if you can, unhappy girl. Ah, if I could, I should be more myself. But some strange power draws me on against my will. Desire persuades me one way, reason another. I see the better and approve it, but I follow the worse [video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor].

There is a difference of opinion on Medea’s conflict as to whether it is a platitude or a matter of weakness in carrying out good intentions (Bultmann 1951:248; Käsemann 1980:200) or a paradigm of conflict between aggressive and loving impulses (Theissen 1987:217). Seneca is of the latter opinion, portraying it as a battle between two emotions rather than a conflict between passion and reason (see *Medea* 938-44). Seneca dramatizes the scene more intensely by presenting Medea killing the first child and then, enduring another battle before killing the second (988-992):

Why dost thou delay now, O soul? Why hesitate, though thou canst do it? Now has my wrath died within me. I am sorry for my act, ashamed. What, wretched woman, have I done? – wretched, say I? Though I repent, yet have I done it! Great joy steals on me ’gainst my will, and lo, it is increasing.

As we have seen above, Greek drama and Latin poetry alluded to Medea using a slightly different nuance. Similarly, in philosophical discussion there was an allusion to Medea in order to show the nature of the inner conflict. Galen (129-99 BC) argues against the cognitive interpretation of inner conflict in early and late Stoicism. He has different psychic perspectives, i.e., the soul consists of distinct powers that are impossible to be totally harmonized, and finds support in the well-known citation from Euripides (*Galen on the doctrines of Hippocrates and Plato* IV.244.2-9; quoted by Theissen 1987:218 & Stowers 1994:263):

But Medea was not only not persuaded by any reasoning to kill her children but on the contrary, as for reasoning, she says that she understands the evil of the deeds that she is about to commit, but her anger is stronger than her reasoned deliberations; that is, her passion has not been brought into subjection and does not obey and follow reason as if it were a master, but throws off the reins and bolts and disobeys the

⁵ This soliloquy is quoted in various places (Sanday & Headlam 1896:185; Bultmann 1951:248; Barrett 1962:147; Haldane 1966:295; Hunter 1955:75; Barclay 1958:101; Harrisville 1980:108; Black 1989:99).

command, so that it is some other act or passion or power than the rational. For how could anything disobey itself or run away from itself or not follow itself?

As we have seen above, Medea was frequently used as a model of the conflict between willing and doing, and ancient people thought about this conflict “extensively and in a nuanced way” (Theissen 1987:218). All the texts mentioned above show that the theme of lack of self-mastery played a central role in the Greek moral tradition.

In Rom. 7:15 & 19 Paul takes this well-known theme, which is found in various ancient writers. Paul also mentions the contradiction of willing and doing; he probably knew about the traditions of popular philosophy, because he alluded to their theme of “inner conflict.” The important question is how Paul understood the theme. Paul seems to favor the cognitive interpretation of human misconduct: the “I” is deceived when he does evil (7:11), he does not approve what he does (7:15). As in Epictetus, evil is a consequence of deception in Rom. 7. But there is a difference between these two texts. In Paul it is sin that deceives, whereas in Epictetus sin is a result of deception. Thus sin is the fateful power in Paul, which shows that he is close to Euripides’ understanding of the inner conflict. In Rom. 7:5 the impulses evoking the conflict are παθήματα and closely connected with the flesh. However, these passions are not just “libidinous” as Theissen thinks. The point I made on Gundry’s position is applicable to him as well. It certainly includes sexual lust, but it is more than that, since it is plural (τὰ παθήματα) and in v. 8 Paul speaks about πᾶσαν ἐπιθυμίαν. But the impulses are aggressive as the metaphor of war in Rom. 7:23 shows (Theissen 1987:219).

There is another difference between Paul and the cognitive interpretation as we have seen above from Euripides, Epictetus, and Ovid. The cognitive interpretation sees the conflict as a contradiction between a good intention and the evil consequences. But in Paul the conflict is no longer between intention and effect. Paul writes, “I do what I hate” (7:15). Here what Paul says is “not the (subsequent) evaluation of an action but the failure to do what has been evaluated (correctly from the start)” (Theissen 1987:220).

Thus we have seen the complex cultural intertexture of Rom. 7. It can be linked to both Jewish and Greco-Roman cultural intertextures. Paul draws on different cultural intertextures here with some differences, which enables him to make a point from his gospel perspective.

6.2.2.2 THE “I”: ANOTHER ALLUSION TO GREEK TRAGEDY

As we have seen above, many speeches in Greek tragedy are in the form of a monologue or soliloquy, which usually use the first person singular (e.g., Seneca & Ovid). In the *progymnasmata* and schools of rhetoric, the tragic speeches were used as a model for the teaching of soliloquy. Tragic characters or situations were favorite subjects of *prosæpopoiia*. Ovid, a near contemporary of Paul, not only wrote a *Medea* but also the *Heroides*, which are letters written by means of *prosæpopoiia* imagining what legendary women might have written. In the *Heroides* there is a letter from Medea to Jason (XII).⁶ Ovid’s works were popular reading in Rome during Paul’s day (Stowers 1994:270-271).

Why did Medea gain such enduring popularity among the Greeks? Because the theme of the story was closely connected with purity of citizenship and ethnicity or nationality. Medea stood for foreigners who perverted the ethnic purity, and what she said about *akrasia* implied the immorality that mixing with foreigners would bring as a result. It is a great irony that “Paul the Jew resonates these allusions back to Greeks and Romans who see themselves now as gentiles, outsiders to Judaism described as immoral foreigners” (Stowers 1994:271). The figure of Medea and other women like her from Greek tragedy became important in the Roman Empire. As early as Cicero, the type had become a prominent oratorical slander (*Cael* viii.18; *LegMan* 8.22),⁷ reaching the pinnacle of its popularity during the conflict between Antony and Octavian and the early years of the empire. Regarding this, Stowers wrote (1994:271):

The propagandists for Augustus depicted Antony as a man dominated by passionate foreign women and compared Cleopatra to Medea, Omphale, and Semiramis. Niobe...paralleled Medea as a type of the degenerate foreign woman. On the doors of the temple to Apollo in Rome, erected as a votive for the victory at Actium, stood the scene of Niobe slaying her children. This not-so-subtle allusion to the defeat of Antony and Cleopatra used Niobe as the paradigm of God’s wrath against barbarian hybris. All of this helps us to fathom how the Medean saying might have played in the public consciousness of Paul’s time.

Rom. 7:7-25 features a tragic soliloquy and *prosæpopoiia* of the person in a tragic situation in several ways. It reveals the inner conflict and feeling in the form of the first person singular. The exclamation “wretched man that I am!” is very much like a parody of the tragic outcry. In Seneca’s *Medea*, Medea cries “What, wretched woman, have I done?—wretched, say I?”

⁶ Stowers wrongly comments that there are “letters” from Medea to Jason. But there is only one letter from Medea to Jason in *Heroides*.

⁷ These are wrongly cited in Stowers’ book *A Rereading of Romans* (1994:271) as *Cael* 7:18 & *LegMan* 8.21.

(:989-991) after killing her first son, as she reflects on the evil which has resulted from her feeling of revenge. In Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (VII. 18), just before she speaks the famous words about *akrasia*, Medea calls herself "wretched!" (*infelix!*). The Latin translation of the Bible, the Vulgate, uses the same word to translate *ταλαίπωρος* in Rom. 7:24. Just before Epictetus introduces the example of Medea, he uses the fictive "I": "What creature is more wretched than I?" twice (II. xvii. 18; cf. 26). In I. iv.23-26, Epictetus says that tragedies in which people say "wretched man that I am" (*τάλας ἐγώ*) are portraying people who are suffering because they admire external things (cf. I. xii. 28 & III. xiii. 4; cf. Stowers 1994:272).

Another allusion to the Greco-Roman cultural intertexture is the divided personality. In Rom. 7 there is this divided personality: a true self identified with the mind or rationality and a lower or false self identified with the body or the flesh. This kind of divided personality is popular in the Platonic view (Stowers 1994:279). In Rom. 7 the passions and desire dwells in the flesh or the body and its parts (7:5, 18, 22; cf. 1:26-27; 6:12-13; 8:3). The mind rationally perceives and wills to do the law (7:22), but since it has been corrupted, the desires of the flesh subdue it. Only a mind renewed by God's indwelling Spirit can enable the individual to resist the flesh and act according to God's law (8:5-8). Thus the law is not the problem but also not the answer (7:9-13, 16; 8:3a). This kind of language stems from the tradition of the fragmented personality in the Greco-Roman context (Stowers 1994:280).

6.2.2.3 SIN AS A POWER: ALLUSION TO GREEK UNDERSTANDING

In Romans *sin* (*ἁμαρτία*) is mentioned 48 times and only 10 times in Paul's other letters. In Romans 5 to 8 the word appears 41 times (11 times, chs. 6 and 8; 30 times in chs. 6 & 7). This is evidence that sin is an important topic together with the discussion on the law. NT scholars agree that in Rom. 1-4 Paul treats sin as a trespass or transgression and in Rom. 5-8 as a power. According to Sanders, Paul's concept of sin as a power distinguishes him from the view held by Judaism (Sanders 1977:546, 547; Stowers 1994:179 n. 8). Stowers says that sin as a power is not typical of the OT and earlier Jewish literature, rather it is closer to the fragmented personality of Homer and the Greek poets (1994:272). If so, we may say that one of the important features of Rom. 7 is the language of external power for expressing moral

psychological states, which the letter shares with the tragic monologue and the soliloquies of the *prosaepoia* (Stowers 1994:272).

In Greco-Roman culture people thought that “different gods correspond to different impulses and demands of human life.” For example, Euripides, in the *Hippolytus*, portrays the conflicting demands of Aphrodite, goddess of love, and Artemis, goddess of virginity. As the nurse reflects upon Phaedra’s dilemma of knowing what she must do but yielding to the power of love, she blames Aphrodite (:358-359): “For someone virtuous – she does not will it but yet `tis so – is in love with baseness! Cypris [Aphrodite] is not after all a deity.” Hippolytus’ Phaedra speaks of being unable to overcome Cypris by her self-control (398-401): “My second intention was to bear this madness nobly, overcoming it by means of self-control. But the third, when with these means I was unable to master Cypris.”

Another example of these outside powers is found in the tradition of Medea’s speech and the broader discussion of willing and doing. Plutarch quotes from Euripides’ lost *Chrysis*: “Alas, from God this evil comes to men, When knowing what is good, one does it not” (*Moralia* 33 f & 446 a). In Hellenistic and Roman times, philosophers and moralists had a tendency to rationalize such words; for them, the powers were not really external but internal. Epictetus said (*Discourses* IV. I. 147),

And, indeed, when a man out of passionate love is under the compulsion to do something contrary to his opinion, all the time seeing the better thing but lacking the strength to follow, one might be all the more inclined to regard him as deserving pity, because he is in the grip of something violent, and in a manner of speaking, divine.

Thus we may say that what Paul says in Rom. 7 was easily understandable to the original audience, because its subject was quite popular among Greco-Roman people. Paul became a Greek to Greeks in order to make his message of the gospel applicable to them. In Rom. 7 Paul shows that the external power that controls human lives is sin and nobody can overcome it without the help of the Holy Spirit and the grace of God in Christ. This prepares them to listen more attentively to the message of the gospel in Rom. 8, which is already anticipated in 7:6.

6.2.2.4 SLAVERY

As mentioned above, slavery can be both a Jewish and Greco-Roman cultural intertexture. We have already dealt with the Jewish cultural intertexture of slavery (see 6.2.1.5). Now we are going to consider the Greco-Roman cultural intertexture.

Slavery in Greco-Roman society was generally considered as an oppressive and exploitative institution. According to Roman law, a slave was both a “thing” (*res*) or property that could be owned, and “a human being” (*persona*) without rights (Buckland 1969:3-4, 10-238; Watson 1990:46-101; Garnsey 1996:26). Owners could do whatever they liked to their slaves: they could bind, torture, or even kill them. However, understanding ancient slavery is complex and sometimes confusing, since contradictory statements can be found in the written evidence (Martin 1990:xiii). For example, under Roman law, slaves could not own anything technically (Gaius *Institutes* II.96; Watson 1987:13, 95; Kaser 1968:80), but some of them could accumulate quite an amount of money and control property at their disposal as is shown by legal and non-legal documents (Buckland 1969:131, 184-187; Martin 1990:7-11). This was possible because of the institution of *peculium*, a legal device that permitted slaves to own anything. During the period of the Roman Empire it was a custom and legal mandate that the head of family owned all the family’s property. Out of his property, however, he set apart a portion, called a *peculium*, for his sons or slaves. Their *peculium* included other slaves along with cash, shops, equipment and stock-in-trade. With this *peculium* slaves could run a business (Finley 1975:64-65; Watson 1987:90-101; Martin 1990:7).

In addition to this, slaves could not legally marry but some of them had their own families, which is evidenced by thousands of tombstones and inscriptions throughout the Roman Empire (Rawson 1966:72 & 171; Watson 1987:96; Saller & Shaw 1984:124; Martin 1990:2-7). Although the institution of slavery could be severely oppressive, some of the slaves were able to “become rather powerful persons with a certain degree of informal status in society, compared, at least, to the majority of the people of the empire, who were, though free, poor and powerless.” So we should be careful not to form “a monolithic, oversimplified picture of the Greek or Roman concept of slavery” (Martin 1990:xiii, xvii).

Peter Garnsey suggests three categories for slaves in Roman society: 1) those involved in production, 2) those in “non-productive personal service within the households of the

propertied,” and 3) those active in the field of business and commerce “as agents, or as managers of enterprises in which they themselves participated as bankers, shopkeepers, traders or craftsmen” (1982:105). The slaves in the third category were managerial slaves and fairly independent of their owner’s day-to-day control; they were frequently manumitted and were socially mobile (Martin 1990:15).

Two terms are used for these managerial slaves, terms that were used also for freed persons: *oikonomos* and *pragmateutai*. The term *oikonomos* was used variously of stewards of a household or business, plantation managers or financial bursars, an official in the emperor’s household, or treasurers for the city government or council, etc. The *pragmateutai* were used to fulfill the functions of business agents. They were employed by wealthy and powerful families to manage their property and business activities and were thus often quite influential persons within the local society (Martin 1990:15-17).

It was widely accepted that inhabitants of the Roman Empire themselves recognized two basic classes of slavery: menial slaves and those in positions of authority, i.e., managerial slaves ([Aristotle] *Oeconomica* I.v. 2, 6 & I.vi.3-4). They considered slaves, especially the slave agent or manager, as “an extension of the owner’s very person” (*Digest* 47.10.15.45; quoted by Martin 1990:20). Furthermore, in order to understand the dynamics of Greco-Roman slavery, we need to acknowledge that “it functioned with the dynamics of Greco-Roman patronage.” Slaves were “part of the wider social structure of patron-client obligations and benefits” (Martin 1990:25, 26).

As I pointed out in examining the Jewish aspect of slavery (6.1.2.5), Paul basically follows a complex picture of slaves: at one time he uses the concept of slavery to describe the Christian life (7:6), which is something commendable, and in the rest of chapter he describes slavery as a miserable state (7:7-25). Paul depicts himself as sold to slavery; after losing a war he became a captive, which was very much the way of enslavement in the Greco-Roman period (for details see Buckland 1969:397-436; Kaser 1968:72). In that miserable state he cried out for deliverance, a parallel to the slaves of Paul’s day, who always longed for manumission.

6.3 SOCIAL INTERTEXTURE

Social intertexture is concerned with how the discourse reveals from the text the “social reality” that was generally available to people in the Greco-Roman world (Robbins 1996a:127). Social knowledge is observable and easily available through general interaction, unlike cultural knowledge. Social knowledge can be categorized into four categories: a) “social role (soldier, shepherd, slave, athlete) or social identity (Greek, Roman, Jew)”; b) “social institution (empire, synagogue, trade workers’ association, household)”; c) “social code (e.g., honor, hospitality)”; d) “social relationship (patron, friend, enemy, kin)” (Robbins 1996b:62).

In Rom. 7 two social intertextures are prominent: (a) marriage as a social institution (v. 2), including social issues like adultery in marriage (v. 3), re-marriage (v. 3, 4), and bearing fruit, i.e., children (vv. 4, 5); (b) the slave as social role (service, vv. 6, 14; 25), war & prisoner (v. 23). I have dealt with slaves in the cultural intertexture,⁸ so I will focus on marriage here.

In Rom. 7:2-3 Paul uses a marriage analogy as a part of his argumentation. As I pointed out in chapter 5 (5.3.1.1), the picture of marriage Paul depicts here is not like the Greco-Roman marriage, it is rather that of the Jewish marriage (cf. Deut. 24). Even the Gentile believers who were in Rome were aware of Jewish marriage because of the existence of Jews among them.⁹

In OT times the marriage relationship is used to depict Israel’s relation to God. Examples of this metaphor are: Isa 54:5; Jer. 3 & 31:32; Ezek. 16; and Hos. 2:16. Paul certainly uses this line of Jewish thought in his description of the believers’ relationship with Christ. Like God’s people in OT times, the new people of God formed in Christ are married to Christ (Rom. 7:4). The reason for using the metaphor of marriage is that marriage is the most intimate human relationship beyond any other human relationship, and for this reason it is pertinent to depict the relationship with God in terms of marriage.

⁸ Slavery is both a social and cultural intertexture, for this reason Robbins discusses it in two textures (1996a:127-128 & 132-133).

⁹ In v. 1 Paul addresses those who know the law and some scholars take this as referring to Jews only. For them Paul is speaking specifically to Jews here, but this is unlikely. Verse 1 expresses a general maxim, or thesis or proposition, which can be applied to any culture. Thus it is better to see this verse as a reference to both Jewish and Gentile believers. Many gentile believers were aware of some aspects of Jewish law.

In this social intertexture we will deal with Jewish marriage and Greco-Roman marriage in order to confirm why we need to see Jewish marriage as an important social intertexture.

6.3.1 JEWISH MARRIAGE

For an understanding of Jewish marriage, we need to go to the Talmud, which is the comprehensive designation for the Mishna (“the entire content of the traditional law” and “the sum of teachings of any one of the teachers”) and its subsequent discussions.¹⁰ The Talmud consists of both Halakah and Haggada, and there are two Talmuds: the Babylonian Talmud and Palestinian (or Jerusalem) Talmud.¹¹ The Talmud stresses that to marry and rear a family is God’s command (Gen. 1:28). In *Jeb.* 62b it says, “The unmarried person lives without joy, without blessing, and without good,” and an “unmarried man is not a man in the full sense” (*Jeb.* 63a). These verses indicate that the Jews had a high regard for marriage. They even thought that marriages were made in heaven and were destined even before birth (see *Jeb.* 63a-b & *Sanh.* 22a; *Sot* 2a; cf. Cohen 1968:163).

In Jewish marriage the women’s consent for marriage is important. The Talmud asks, “Why does the Mishnah commence with the expression ‘a woman is acquired’ and not say ‘a man acquires’?” One of the answers given is that if it were to be read “he acquires” we might have thought “even against her will”; hence the phrase “a woman is acquired” implies only if she is willing and not against her will. It indicates that “the validity of her acquisition is dependent on her consent” (Kahana 1966:43).

The usual term for a marriage is *Kiddushin*, which means “sanctification” (Cohen 1968:164). Marriage is so called because “the husband prohibits his wife to the whole world like an object which is dedicated to the Sanctuary” (*Kid.* 2b). The term implies the strictest chastity in both parties, which is expressed in the following statements: “Immorality in the house is like a worm on vegetables” (*Sot.* 3b), and “He among the full-grown pumpkins and she among the young ones” (*Sot.* 10a), which indicates that infidelity on the husband’s part leads to unfaithfulness in the wife.

¹⁰ Although Talmud dates later than Paul’s writings, it has a long past history behind Talmud and generally, Jews are known as people to keep their heritage carefully. So it can be used as a background for our discussion on the Jewish marriage.

¹¹ For a definition of these terms, see Strack 1969:3-7.

In Jewish society the wife is *not* considered as an object of property owned by her husband (Kahana 1966:28-30). According to the Babylonian Talmud (*Kid.* 9b), divorce by the husband has a double effect: by the bill of divorce (a) he causes her to “acquire” herself, and (b) he releases her from himself. In another place (*Keth.* 3a), the function of a valid bill of divorce is to cut her off from the husband and from now on her prohibition to others is removed. This implies in return that there is a dual function in marriage “(1) the rights as between husband and wife and (2) the status of the wife as regards the whole world” (Kahana 1966:31).

The Talmud (*Kid.* 13b) discusses the freedom that a wife acquires by the death of her husband. It asks, “Whence do we know that she is freed by her husband’s death?” The Talmud discusses the answer in a way that bases it on logic: the husband *bound* her, hence by his death he *frees* her, since there is no one by whom she is *bound*. Later on, “the Talmud refers to Torah where death and divorce are found in the same context and draws the conclusion that death and divorce operate in the same manner; just as divorce completely frees her, so death completely frees her and permits her to remarry” (Kahana :31).

Regarding divorce, according to the Talmud, if husband and wife wished to separate there was no difficulty in dissolving the marriage (see *Jeb.* 63b). In the first century the Schools of Shammai and Hillel took different views of Deut. 24:1, which provides justification a husband to send his wife away: “If a man marries a woman who becomes displeasing to him because he finds something indecent [דְּבַר חַוְרָא,] about her” (NIV). The phrase דְּבַר חַוְרָא, is translated variously “something indecent” (NIV), “something objectionable” (NRSV), and “some uncleanness” (KJV). It means literally “nakedness of thing” (*Brown-Drivers-Briggs* :788; *Koehler-Baumgarten-Stamm* :882). The school of Shammai interpreted this phrase strictly in terms of sexual immorality. In contrast, the school of Hillel interpreted it as “anything unseemly” and said, “he may divorce her even if she spoil his cooking” (*Git.* 9:10). Ultimately, the more lenient view of the Hillelites prevailed and was accepted as law (Cohen 1968:167). In the NT Jesus interpreted the former view as the correct understanding (*Matt.* 19:9).

The patriarchal system of the OT was continued under the Rabbis, and the husband exercised absolute authority. This accounts for the ruling which is never disputed in the Talmud: “A

woman may be divorced with or without her consent, but a man can only be divorced with his consent" (*Jeb.* XIV.1). Since marriage was dissolved by the husband in the presentation, either in person or through an accredited agent, of a bill of divorcement to the wife, "this meant that in actual practice the husband divorced the wife and the wife could not divorce the husband" (Cohen 1968:167).

However, in the Talmud there were certain circumstances in which a woman could dissolve her marriage. These are the circumstances in which such compulsion was exercised: refusal to consummate the marriage (*Keth.* XIII.5), the husband's impotence (*Ned.* XI.12), and inability or unwillingness to support her properly (*Keth.* 77a). In these circumstances "the Court may bring strong pressure to bear upon the husband until he says, 'I am willing to divorce my wife' " (*Arach.* V.6). Furthermore, in the case of serious illness (e.g., leprosy or polypus), a woman could divorce her husband (*Keth.* VII. 9-10).

However, desertion did not provide any ground for divorce, whatever the length of time that nothing was heard of the husband. Only if there was a trustworthy testimony that her husband had died, was the law relaxed and one reliable witness was accepted, and she could then remarry (*Jeb.* 88a).

A woman's adultery in the Jewish context was considered a capital offence. The death penalty was given by means of "strangulation" (*Sanh.* XI.1; Kahana 1966:43; Cohen 1968:97, 319-320). It was one of four serious crimes along with idolatry, bloodshed, and slander. According to the Talmud, "a woman who had committed adultery must be divorced" (*Keth.* III.5). Apart from this offence, the dissolution of marriage was not favored, although it was granted. One means by which hasty divorce discouraged was that it entailed the payment of the *Kethubah*, or marriage settlement, to which the wife was entitled.

Furthermore, the sayings on divorce in the rabbinical literature provide additional evidence of the high regard for marriage among the rabbis. Although divorce was granted, and the reason for it sometimes seemed lax (see above), there are a numbers of sayings that show that divorce was considered a lamentable end to marriage. For example, *Sanh.* 2a attributes to R. Shaman b. Abba the saying, "Come and see with what reluctance is divorce granted; King

David was permitted *yihud*,¹² yet not divorce.” More clearly, *Gittin*, the tractate of the Babylonian Talmud, says that “He who dismisseth his wife is hated by God” (90b).

Regarding re-marriage of widows, at first the School of Hillel rejected both the ruling that a widow may remarry and receive her *ketubah* (dowry). The Mishnah reports that the Shammaites, who believed that she may remarry and receive her dowry, were convincing in their argument in favor of these so that the Hillelites changed their view and followed them (*Mishnah Yebam* 15:1-3 & 16:7; quoted by Yarbrough 1985:26).

When we consider the Jewish law of marriage and divorce as a whole, it can be concluded that it was fair and was not heavily disadvantageous to the women. Despite the ease with which a marriage could be dissolved, the evidence does not suggest that it was abused (Cohen 1968:170).

In relation to this, Paul’s contemporary Jewish people generally thought that they were morally superior to the Gentiles. In the apocrypha and pseudepigrapha such a claim is common. It is most clearly seen in the *Letter of Aristeas*. The author of the *Letter* states (:152),

For most men defile themselves by promiscuous intercourse, thereby working great iniquity, and whole countries and cities pride themselves upon such vices. For they not only have intercourse with men, but they defile their own mothers and even their daughters. But we have been kept separate from such sins.

The accusation that other nations practice incest first appears in Lev. 18. There Moses charged the people of Israel, “You must not do as they do in Egypt, where you used to live, and you must not do as they do in the land of Canaan, where I am bringing you. Do not follow their practices” (v. 3). Further he says, “No one is to approach any close relative to have sexual relations” (v. 6). Those close relatives include father, mother, father’s wife, sister, granddaughter, cousin, niece, etc. Such an understanding is also found in Philo’s writing (*SpecLeg* III.22-25 deals with the question of incest of sister) and in the *Sibylline Oracles* (III:591-599 deals with intercourse with men).

¹² According to Yarbrough, it is “[p]rivate association between a man and a woman, in this case between David and Abishag” (1985:24 n.52; See 1 Ki. 1:1-4).

Paul was certainly operating within this Jewish tradition. For example, Paul advised the Thessalonians, “Let each man know how to obtain his own wife in holiness and honor, not in passion of desire as the Gentiles, who do not know God” (1 Thess. 4:4, 5).¹³ What Paul says in the marriage analogy in Rom. 7:2-3 is very close to the Jewish marriage culture. In Jewish marriage the man is in authority and it is usually the husband who decides to divorce. Also, Paul seems to have a high view of marriage, since he talks about the dissolution of marriage in relation to the death. This view does not fit the Greco-Roman culture as we will see in the following section, where divorce was too frequent and either partner could initiate the divorce procedure. Paul uses the Jewish marriage system for his rhetorical argumentation in the context of discussing the role of the law. Even the Gentile believers knew this view of marriage well, since many of them had a background of God-fearers and experienced much contact with Jews, who lived among them in Rome.

6.3.2 GRECO-ROMAN MARRIAGE

We now turn to Greco-Roman marriage as part of the social intertexture of Romans. Marriage was one of the many *topoi* current in philosophical and rhetorical circles in the Greco-Roman world. Our concerns are the relationship between husband and wife, divorce, and the significance of adultery.

There were two different views on marriage. Many of the pre-Socratic philosophers disdained marriage (Plutarch, Stobaeus, Solon, Antiphon, Epicurus, Diogenes).¹⁴ Some were positive about marriage (Socrates, Epictetus, Plato, Aristotle, Xenophon; cf. Yarbrough 1985:32-41). Many positive evaluations of marriage derive from the early Cynic-Stoic tradition. Diogenes Laertius says that Zeno maintained that the wise man would marry and beget children (*DiogLaert* VII.121).

Marriage had become a formal topic of debate in Theophrastus' treatise *On marriage*. He advised that the wise man should not marry based on the arguments that: (1) if the wise man marry, his study of philosophy will be hindered, since it is impossible to attend to his books and his wife; (2) to marry for the sake of children is the height of stupidity. His view was

¹³ For this translation see Yarbrough 1985:7, 65-76.

¹⁴ Epicurus and Diogenes are the two most famous critics of married life. See Diogenes Laertius' work *Diogenes Laertius: Lives of eminent philosophers* X.118-119 & VI.54.

opposed by the later Stoics (Antipater, Musonius, Hierocles, and Epictetus¹⁵). They argued that marriage is desirable and that a wife and children are helpful to a man in running the household, taking care of him in old age, and setting him free for the pursuit of philosophy (Yarbrough 1985:35-41).

What were the relations between husbands and wives in the Greco-Roman world? Moralists seemed to hold a contradictory positions: they emphasized that husbands and wives share all things in common, yet in other places they also maintained that it is the husband who rules. Furthermore, most of the moralists held that husbands and wives should be sexually faithful, while others held that the wife has to patiently bear her husband's infidelity (Yarbrough 1985:53, 54).

Even though the Peripatetic tradition maintained that a man cares for his wife, is faithful to her, and "before all others loves and trusts her and holds her as his own" ([Aristotle] *Oeconomica* III.ii), still, a woman comes to a man's house as a "suppliant" (*Oeconomica* III.ii. & I.iv.1) or a "human part of the household" (I.iii.1). The compiler of the Aristotelian *Magna Moralia* mentions that a wife is more nearly a man's equal than any other member of his household, and "[M]arried life...is closely akin to the partnership between citizens." Nevertheless, he mentions that "the wife is inferior to her husband" (I.xxxiii.18) so that the friendship that exists between them is "the friendship between unequals" (II.xi.53). From a practical point of view, husband and wife "are distinguished from each other by the possession of faculties not adapted in every case to the same tasks, but in some cases for opposite ones, though contributing to the same end" ([Aristotle] *Oeconomica* I.iii.4). The main reason for this distinction is that the man is stronger, the woman weaker by Divine Providence. Thus, the man deals with affairs outside the household, while the woman with affairs within the household ([Aristotle] *Oeconomica* I.iii.4).

This picture of marriage remained the same in the Neo-Pythagorean (Musonius Rufus) and in the Middle-Platonic tradition (Plutarch; Yarbrough 1985:54-56). For example, Plutarch advises husbands to exercise control over their wives "not as the owner has control of property, but, as the soul controls the body, by entering into her feelings and being known to

¹⁵ Epictetus' view was more complex. In general he held a view that most men should marry, but in some cases he mentions that a man should be free from its distractions in order to pursue philosophy or more precisely for the service of God (*To those who fear want* 3.22.69-71).

her through goodwill” (*Advice to bride and groom* 33). However, most of his advice in *Advice to bride and groom* is given to wives, telling them to respect their husband’s wishes. He says, “Whenever two notes are sounded in accord, the tune is carried by the bass; and in like manner every activity of a virtuous household is carried by both parties in agreement, but discloses the husband’s leadership and preferences” (*Advice* 11). One area in which a wife follows her husband’s preference is in the choice of friends: “A wife ought not to make friends of her own, but to enjoy her husband’s friends in common with him” (*Advice* 19). Plutarch recommended that if women “subordinate themselves to their husbands, they are commended, but if they want to have control, they cut a sorrier figure than the subjects of their control” (*Advice* 33).

For the Peripatetics, the special nature of the relationship between husband and wife was for the husband to honor his wife and to give the love that was her due. One of ways of doing this is fidelity. *Oeconomica* I.iii says, “A man does wrong to his wife when he associates with other women” and later it says,

Wherefore it befits not a man of sound mind to bestow his person promiscuously, or have random intercourse with women; for otherwise the baseborn will share in the rights of his lawful children, and his wife will be robbed of her honour due, and shame be attached to his sons (III.ii).

The Greek marriage contracts often contain some regulations about the relationship between husband and wife. The husband should provide everything necessary for his wife in a manner suitable to her status and not have children by another woman while she is alive. If he does so, he will forfeit her dowry (see P. Teub. 104 (92 BC) in *Select Papyri*, vol. 1 for example). Likewise, there is a stipulation for the wife that she should not spend the night away from her home without her husband’s consent, should not consort with another man, or do anything to dishonor her husband. If she does so, she will forfeit her dowry (P. Teub. 104).¹⁶

We have gained a general picture of marriage in Greco-Roman culture and what people actually said when they gave advice on marriage. During this period, prostitution and keeping courtesans were equally common, as was the employment of slaves to satisfy one’s sexual desire (Carcopino 1946:90-100). Divorce too was very common. Seneca, for example, ridicules some women who divorced frequently: “Is there any woman that blushes at divorce

¹⁶A similar regulation, though less specific, is found in P. Ryl. 154 (66 AD) and P. Oxy. 1273 (260 AD). These manuscripts are also available in *Select Papyri*, vol.1.

now that certain illustrious and noble ladies reckon their years not by the number of consuls, but by the number of their husbands, and leave home in order to marry, and marry in order to be divorced?" (*Ben* III. xvi.2; cf. *Juvenal: The sixteen satires* VI.224-230). This kind of situation is expressed well in the inscription dedicated to "Turia": "Marriages as long as ours are rare, marriages that are ended by death and not broken by divorce" (*Laudatio Turiae* I.27; quoted in Yarbrough 1985:63). All of these sources indicate that many did not value marriage very highly.

This picture of marriage is very different from marriage as Paul describes it in Rom. 7. In Greco-Roman society adultery was common and the divorce rate was very high. Divorce was effected easily by consent of the two parties or at the wish of one. This had become the normal practice by the time of Cicero (Carcopino 1946:96). It was not always the man who took the initiative to divorce; women also abandoned their husbands easily "after having ruled them with a rod of iron." Juvenal commented (*Satire* VI.224-230),

Thus she lords it over her husband. But ere long she retires from that dominion, changing repeatedly her home, and wearing out successive bridal veils....Thus grows her score: thus comes the eighth husband in the fifth autumnal season, a noble record for her epitaph.

In Roman society marriage had become merely a form of legalized adultery. The Roman poet Martial says, "She who marries so often does not marry; she is an adulteress by form of law; by a more straightforward prostitute I am offended less" (*Epigrams* VI. Vii.5, 6). This picture of marriage does not fit Paul's description of marriage in Rom. 7. In reality, women were so powerful that they ruled over their husbands, they were adulterous and unchaste. Against this social background, what Paul says about marriage might be attractive to those who were repelled by such immorality.

6.4 HISTORICAL INTERTEXTURE

Historical intertexture focuses on "events that have occurred at specific times and in specific locations." When we look at the text of Rom. 7, we see two prominent historical intertextures: the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (v. 4), and Paul's own past experience in vv. 7-25. We already have dealt with Paul's own experience in our discussion of the "I" in chapter 5 and in the cultural intertextures. It is enough to mention here that since the "I" is autobiographical, it is certainly historical. We conclude that we might designate it as Paul's

transitional experience between Christophany on the way to Damascus and the time he met Ananias. Paul uses his own life as both an example and an authoritative testimony as a means of rhetorical argumentation in order to explain the role of the law.

The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is an extremely important historical event for Paul. He mentions it in v. 4 as a rationale for his proposition of the role of the law in believers' lives. This implies that it is indeed important for an attempt to understand Paul's statements of the law, in which he also emphasizes the believers' mystical union with Christ. Since this union is also an important theological texture, we will leave the discussion of this matter for the following chapter, where we will discuss its significance in Paul's thought.

6.5 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Conducting an intertextual analysis is important, since it provides a perspective on how other materials outside the text are embedded in the text. We have seen that there is continuity in Paul's line of thought with OT passages and other Jewish literature. Paul certainly cites the tenth commandment with omission in order to make his point persuasive to his audience. He elaborates the theme of the law in Rom. 7. We also noted various Jewish cultural intertextures along with Greco-Roman cultural intertextures. In Rom. 7:8b-10 we have an allusion to both the Adamic and Sinaitic story. In Rom. 7:7-25 we see the "I" as both a Jewish and Greco-Roman cultural intertexture and this enables us to readily recognize the typicality of the "I." Like the OT prophets, Psalmists, and the "I" in Qumran literature, Paul uses the first person pronoun to express the typical experience of a man, including both Jews and Gentiles. The "I" is also very similar to the character of the famous Greek tragedy, *Medea*, who knew what was better and noble, but could not carry out such a good deed. Instead, in Romans the "I" does what is considered worse. What Paul says here might be very attractive to his audience and hold their attention firmly. Paul uses his own past experience vividly in order to provide an explanation of why the law cannot solve man's predicament under the law.

Paul also creates a powerful message from both the Jewish and Greco-Roman cultural intertexture of slavery. From the Jewish cultural intertexture Paul makes a positive statement from slavery. All Christians should be slaves of the Spirit in order to bear fruit. But from the Greco-Roman cultural intertexture Paul, by means of the "I," describes the dark picture of the

man who is enslaved under law. Even the law, which is good and just, is not sufficient to solve such a problem. This is possible only by the help of Jesus Christ and the Spirit (7:4, 25a), a topic which is fully dealt with in Rom. 8.

We also noted that the law as a Jewish cultural intertexture is prominent in Rom. 7. Paul basically follows the Jewish understanding of the law in most of cases. However, Paul also departs in some points from his Jewish heritage. He sees the function of the law as a military operation base, or fulcrum, of sin, unlike Judaism. The law is not a protector of morality as Jewish thinkers suggest. Rather, it stimulates and increases sins in people's lives. But Paul strongly denies that the law itself is sinful. Thus we have here both continuity and discontinuity in Paul's thinking derived from Judaism, owing to his conversion. This line of thought is also true in the Jewish intertexture of the evil impulse.

We also have an interesting Greco-Roman intertexture in Paul's concept of sin as a power. Paul is operating here in the line of the Greco-Roman understanding of sin, unlike the Jewish view that sin is the breaking of a commandment.

Lastly, we have conducted a social intertextual analysis of marriage, both Jewish and Greco-Roman marriage. The study of both forms of marriage confirms that Paul is certainly operating from a Jewish social view of marriage. What he says about marriage in vv. 2-4 is more fitting to the Jewish community than to the Greco-Roman world. Paul held such a high view of marriage that only the death of either partner could sever the marriage relationship, which was very rare in Greco-Roman society. In addition, adultery in marriage was a serious crime in Jewish society, punishable by death, which was not the case in the Greco-Roman world.

Thus an intertextual analysis of Rom. 7 does bring some light to an understanding of what Paul says about the law, which is the main topic of this chapter. In order to make his points about the law persuasive, Paul operates within both the Jewish and the Greco-Roman lines of thought. Sometimes he agrees with them; at other times he disagrees with them. Paul is clearly a great thinker who could utilize all kinds of previous material and make it a powerful tool in his argumentation for a proper understanding of the law.

CHAPTER VII

AN ANALYSIS OF THEOLOGICAL TEXTURE

The Pauline letters exhibit the full scope of theological insights. This is true also of Romans 7, in which there are various theological textures, which provide some understanding of Paul's hamartiology, anthropology, ethics and most of all, his concept of the law. In this final section of the study we will focus on these theological textures, with special reference to the law. Before we do so, it is necessary to consider Paul's thought world or convictions, which lie behind Rom. 7. For Paul two perspectives are most important: salvation history or redemptive history and covenant. Even though they are not often mentioned in his letters, it is important that we try to understand his theological textures. Even though these two concepts are intermingled, it is better to deal with them separately. Furthermore, these concepts are also closely related to the question of the relationship between the two Testaments, or more narrowly, between law and gospel. Therefore I will also include a discussion of the continuity and discontinuity of the two Testaments or the relationship between law and gospel as we deal with Paul's theological thought world.

7.1 PAUL'S THEOLOGICAL THOUGHT WORLD

7.1.1 SALVATION HISTORY

The Dutch Reformed theologian Herman Ridderbos underscores rightly the fundamental redemptive-historical perspective of the apostle Paul. He approaches the whole of Paul's theology by emphasizing "the *redemptive-historical, eschatological character of Paul's proclamation*" (italics his; 1975:39):

The governing motif of Paul's preaching is the saving activity of God in the advent and the work, particularly in the death and the resurrection, of Christ. This activity is on the one hand the fulfillment of the work of God in the history of the nation Israel, the fulfillment therefore also of the Scriptures; on the other hand it reaches out to the ultimate consummation of the parousia of Christ and the coming of the kingdom of God. It is this great redemptive-historical framework within which the whole of Paul's preaching must be understood and all of its subordinate parts receive their place and organically cohere.

In a previous chapter we have already noted that a salvation historical understanding is important in order to understand what Paul says about the law in Rom. 7 (cf. Beker

1980:245). Moo, for example, argues for the Mosaic law from this perspective (see 2.9.1 & 6.2.1.1; 1993:320-324). Moo follows the traditional Lutheran perspective, which emphasizes the contrast between the law and the gospel, with some modification. He defines “salvation history” in a rather untechnical manner to denote a conceptual framework that is fundamental to biblical revelation and has two decisive characteristics: the first characteristic is *historical periodization* and the second, “a recognition of the frequent *corporate focus* of the biblical writers.” From these perspectives Moo contends that the NT teaching about the law is basically teaching about the Mosaic law and that this Mosaic law belongs to the old era, i.e., the time before the coming of Christ. So the Mosaic law has come to its fulfillment in Christ, and is not any more directly applicable to believers who live in the new era (1993:320-324).

Similarly, the Reformed tradition approaches the law from the perspective of redemptive history. VanGemeran (1993) defines redemptive history as “the unfolding of God’s plan of salvation from Creation to the new creation” (:15) and follows John Murray’s definition which states that “progressive revelation, progressive realization of redemption, and progressive disclosure of the grace of the Spirit have been the method by which God’s redemptive purpose in the world has been fulfilled” (1957:18-19). From this perspective the covenant of grace appears in two administrations: law and gospel. Law and gospel are not contrasted with each other “because Law contains Gospel and the Gospel contains Law. Both Law and Gospel affirm the place of the moral law as the “perfect rule of righteousness” (VanGemeran 1993:15). Both OT and NT have a “basic unity and continuity of the biblical ethics” (Murray 1957:7).

Even though both Moo and VanGemeran operate within the framework of salvation history, their understanding of the law is different due to their theological outlook. For Moo the emphasis is on the discontinuity of the law; while for VanGemeran it is on the continuity of the law, though each of them recognizes the other aspect of the law. In my opinion, the best solution to this problem is to see both the discontinuity and the continuity simultaneously. Why do we consider this perspective to be proper and helpful? As we examine the evidence from both Testaments, it is correct to see God’s dealing with mankind by means of the covenant. As VanGemeran (1993:28, 29) and Bahnsen (1993:96-99) point out, both the Old and the New covenant are administrations of God’s grace as the only way of acceptance

before God. Old covenants¹, even the Mosaic covenant, were covenants of grace that offered salvation on the basis of grace through faith. The difference is that the Mosaic covenant anticipated and foreshadowed the coming of the Savior by means of promises, types, rituals, prophecies. The gospel or new covenant proclaims the finished work of salvation in Jesus Christ that the law anticipated. Thus the substance of God's saving relationship and covenant is the same under the law and the gospel. It is erroneous to consider that the Mosaic law is opposed to the grace of the new covenant as many dispensationalists think.²

Certainly, there are some kinds of discontinuity between the Mosaic law and its application today. To know this discontinuity requires a proper understanding of redemptive history and of the cultural difference between "then" and "now." Therefore, we have to be sensitive in our interpretation. Actually, the present age one does not invalidate the ethical teaching of OT laws because God instructs us not only in general principles (e.g., "You shall not murder," Exod. 20:13), but also with specific illustrations (e.g., rooftop railings, Deut. 22:8) so that we might learn the broader, underlying principle from the specific detail. Again, these biblical illustrations are culture-bound and we need to be sensitive to such factors (Bahnsen 1993:100-102).

Dispensationalists, and the Lutherans, and even the Calvinists who emphasize the continuity, all generally recognize that there is also discontinuity between the two Testaments and that the law is antithetical to the gospel. Recently some of dispensationalists have changed their view more to covenantal theology (cf. Barker 1982:3-16; Karlberg 1985:9-20). There is certainly discontinuity and continuity between the two Testaments; for example, John Calvin states in his book *Institutes of the Christian Religion* that "the covenant made with all the patriarchs is so much like ours in substance and reality that the two are actually one and the same. Yet they differ in mode of administration" (1967:2.10.2). Thus, he recognizes these two aspects of the covenant of God: continuity (i.e., salvation by God's grace through faith in Christ's atoning work is always the same in both epochs) and discontinuity (different "mode of administration"). According to Karlberg, Calvin points out at least five areas of discontinuity between OT and NT (1985:11-12).

¹ In the OT there are different covenants, namely, the Adamic covenant, the Noahic covenant, the Abrahamic covenant, the Davidic covenant, and the New covenant.

² Some of dispensationalists now recognize that there is continuity between the two Testaments, in line with like the Reformed tradition (Barker 1982:3-4).

First, the spiritual blessings of the Mosaic covenant (or Mosaic economy more broadly) are typified by temporal conditions and regulations. Second, truth is communicated in the Mosaic economy by numerous symbols and ceremonies typifying Christ. Third, whereas the OT is literal (of the ‘letter’), the NT is spiritual (of the ‘Spirit’). Fourth, there is bondage under the old order, freedom under the new.... Fifth, covenant administration is restricted to one nation under the old economy, whereas it extends to all nations under the new. These five differences, Calvin explains, stem from the freedom and sovereignty of God in ordering the affairs of his people.

Even though Calvin recognizes these dissimilarities between the two covenants, he emphasized that, basically, the Mosaic covenant as a whole is the covenant of grace. Likewise, this line of thought can apply to the relationship between gospel and law and, according to the Reformed tradition, there is continuity between these as well.

According to Bahnsen (1993), there are four areas in which the new covenant surpasses the old covenant: (1) power, (2) glory, (3) finality, and (4) realization. The old covenant law accused man of sin, but could not provide the internal ability for man to comply with God’s commandments. By contrast, the new covenant gives the *power* to obey them by the Holy Spirit (Jer. 31:33; Ezek. 11:19-20; Rom. 8:4; 2 Co. 3:3, 6-9; Heb. 10:14-18; 13:20-21). The surpassing power of the New Covenant is connected with the surpassing *glory* of redemption (2 Co. 3:9; Heb. 2:1-4; 12:15). Special revelation has reached its *finalized* form until the Second Coming of Christ. Finally, the new covenant surpasses the old in the *realization* of redemption (:102-104).

Some portions of the Mosaic law were certainly “shadows” of the coming Christ and his redemptive work. They were the laws relating to the priesthood, temple, and sacrificial system. They accomplished their ends and were abrogated by the coming of Christ (cf. Heb. 7-10). Furthermore, the salvation brought by the new covenant also redefines the people of God (Wright 1993:148-149). Salvation was focused on the nation of Israel before, but now it is given to a worldwide body, the church of Jesus Christ. Accordingly, certain aspects of the old covenant order have been changed. They are (Bahnsen 1993:105):

(1) The new covenant does not require political loyalty to Israel (Phil. 3:20) or defending God’s kingdom by the sword (John 18:36; 2 Cor. 10:4). (2) The land of Canaan foreshadowed the kingdom of God (Heb. 11:8-10; Eph. 1:14; 1 Pet. 1:4), which is fulfilled in Christ (Gal. 3:16; cf. Gen. 13:15); this fulfillment rendered inapplicable old covenant provisions tied to the land (such as family divisions, location of cities of refuge, and the levirate). (3) The laws that symbolically taught Israel to be separate from the Gentile world, such as the dietary provisions (Lev. 20:22-26), need no longer be observed in their pedagogical form (Acts 10, esp. v. 15; see also Mark 7:19; Rom. 14:17), even though the Christian does honor their symbolized principle of separation from ungodliness (2 Cor. 6:14-18; Jude 23).

As we have seen above, there are certain aspects of the Old covenant that are discontinued in the new covenant. However, this does not mean that the Mosaic law has been set aside in this present dispensation as the dispensationalists think (House & Ice 1988:113-15; cf. Ryrie 1967:239-42). The moral aspect of the Mosaic law has never been put away (see Murray 1982:239-247; Bahnsen 1993:106-108). One of reasons why we recognize the continuity of the moral law of God is that it bears a universal and “natural” obligation that is suitable to the Creator-creation relationship, apart from any question of redemption. So it is true that “No one can claim ignorance of God’s law” as Paul writes in Rom. 1:20, 32 and 2:14-16. All people, including the Gentiles and Jews, have enough knowledge of God’s character and his moral demands to be held accountable whether they have God’s written law or not. All humankind is born with the knowledge of God’s moral demands, even though we are not sure whether this knowledge is innate or not and what this knowledge constitutes (Mathewson 1999:629, 631). The moral law of God is still valid for all humankind and, in particular, is never restricted in its validity for the Jewish nation.³ What the law speaks, it speaks in order that “the whole world held accountable to God” (Rom. 3:19). “All have sinned” (Rom. 3:23), which means all humankind has transgressed the moral law of God, written or unwritten. The law teaches that the Gentiles also were obligated to keep the same moral law of God, though they did not have the privilege of having the written law like the Jews (Rom. 2). If this is not true, we cannot explain some passages where the pagan nations were judged by the same moral standard as the Mosaic law (see Amos 1:6; Nah. 3:4; Hab. 2:6, 12; Isa. 14:4-20; 19:1, 13-14, 22; 30:33). We can conclude that “[t]he demands of God’s law are *universal* in their character and application, not confined in validity to Old Testament Israel” (Bahnsen 1993:112). This line of thought is reflected in Jesus saying that he did not come to abolish the law but to fulfill it (Matt. 5:17-19).

Similarly, Dunn also interprets Rom. 6 to 8 on the basis of salvation history, because he thinks that “the logic of the argument and the structure of the three chapters (7:7–25, parallel to 6:12–23 and 8:10–30) are sufficient indication that Paul has in view the eschatological tension of the present stage of salvation history” (1988:377). He understands that sin and death belong to the old age (5:21) and dominate most of the discussion, particularly Rom. 6

³ See Deut. 4:5-8 where Moses clearly taught the Israelites that the laws given by God were meant as a model to be emulated by all surrounding Gentile nations. Similar thought is found in the Psalms (Ps. 119:118-19), in the book of Proverbs (14:34), and in the Prophets (Isa. 2:2-3). This means that “God did not have a double standard of morality, one for Israel and one for the Gentiles” (Bahnsen 1993:110).

and the first half of Rom. 7 (1988:301). He sees that the law is “within the realm of sin and death, seeming to act with these powers, but in fact working on behalf of salvation history to bring about their ruin and the end of their power” (1988:372). He understands that both the “I” as a believer and the “law” are divided between the two ages of Adam and Christ in a period. From this perspective he interprets the cry of 7:24 as a cry of frustration (not of despair) that the process of salvation still has to be worked out in this present age, and the concluding v. 25 as a statement of the realization of eschatological tension “already not yet” in the lives of believers (1988:410-412).

Finally, in his comment on Rom. 8:2, Dunn states his salvation-historical view very clearly. He says that v. 2 provides Paul’s reason why the believers are not condemned. When we look at the believers from the perspective of salvation history, the dark situation of the “I” in Rom. 7:14-25 is not so depressing. The reason is that the power of the Spirit is stronger than the power of sin. So “[t]he “I” in bondage to sin ends in death; the “I” liberated by the Spirit lives on.” (1988:435)

Like Dunn, Garlington (1993) also recognizes the theme of salvation history in Rom. 5-8. He states that “from 5:1 through the end of chap. 8 one can discern that Paul runs the entire course of salvation history, from old creation to new” (:88-89). He thinks that Rom. 5:1-11 is transitional, and Rom. 5:12-21 contrasts the old humanity in Adam and the new in Christ. The next section (6:1–7:6) depicts the new humanity begun by the death and resurrection of Christ. In the rest of Rom. 7, Paul answers an objection that might be raised by the interlocutors or audience, and articulates the overlap of the two creations. Therefore, Garlington thinks that Rom. 5–8 “can be viewed as the passing away of the old creation and the advent of the new. Paul thus announces the arrival of the eschaton or, most pointedly, the new creation. It is as though this entire portion of the letter were an elaborate commentary on 2 Cor 5:17.”⁴

⁴ I agree with most of his explanation on the salvation historical understanding of Rom. 5-8, except on the point of Rom. 7:7-25, where I take the view that these verses depict a person who is going through a transitional experience toward salvation by the conviction of the Holy Spirit, yet does not yet know the way of salvation in Christ (see 7.3.3).

Even though all these scholars hold different positions in their understanding of our text, especially the identity of the “I,” one thing they all have common: they all recognize that Paul’s thought world is redemptive historical and interpret the passage accordingly.

It is from this perspective that we will approach the problematic statements of the law in Rom. 7 (see 7.4).

7.1.2 COVENANT OF GOD

As we noted above, the salvation-historical perspective is very closely related to covenant theology. We now move our attention to another central conviction of Paul, the covenant of God (Wright 1993:xi, 203, 213 & 1995:34). I fully agree with Wright who says that “covenant theology is one of the main clues, usually neglected, for understanding Paul, and...what he [Paul] says about Jesus and about the Law reflects his belief that the covenant purposes of Israel’s God had reached their climatic moment in the events of Jesus’ death and resurrection” (1993:xi). Even though through his conversion Paul underwent a radical change in his understanding of God’s covenant, God’s people and Paul himself, his basic understanding of the covenant did not change. The change affected his former conviction of the covenant structure from being Torah-centered to Christ-centered. His conversion also brought about a change in his definition of the covenant community: formerly, it comprised only Jews, but now in the new covenant it included Gentiles as well. For Paul himself could say that his whole life was dedicated to Christ: “For to me to live is Christ” (Phil. 1:21). His thought and speech was dominated by Jesus the Messiah, crucified and risen again but his intellectual and cultural outlook remained the same. Thus there certainly was a change in his thought, but his basic conviction about the covenant of God did not change. This means that Paul does not follow a “total history-of-religions continuity with his Jewish background.” He re-thought Judaism entirely and presented it freshly as the church situation arose (Kaylor 1988:5-8; Wright 1995:34 & 1993:215). In other words, Paul has an overall theological framework which is distinguishably Jewish, though in some cases adopting Greco-Roman concepts, and which has been “recognizably Christianized from top to bottom” (Wright 1993:259).

The reason behind accepting this idea is that Paul makes use of different covenant patterns, from the Abrahamic covenant to the New Covenant (see Kaylor 1988:8-11). The Abrahamic

covenant is used in his writings to show that the Torah itself points to salvation by grace and faith rather than by the Torah and works (Rom. 4:3; Gal. 3:6; cf. Gen. 15:6). Paul points out the fact that Abraham was uncircumcised when God made the covenant with him to show that Gentiles as well as Jews are to be included.

Moreover, ideas deriving from the Mosaic covenant are important in understanding most of the key theological terms in Paul, such as justification, righteousness, reconciliation, salvation, ethical living, and being “in Christ.” “Justification,” for example, means that “God declares that those who believe the gospel are his covenant people” (Wright 1993:214). When “righteousness” (δικαιοσύνη) refers to the righteousness of humans, it can be translated, more or less, as “covenant membership” (Wright 1993:203; cf. Williams 1980:260-263; Dunn 1987:2847).⁵ “Reconciliation” entails the restoration of the broken covenantal relationship. “Salvation” means “the wholeness and completion which one obtains by participating in the covenant community, bound in harmony with the covenanting God.” “Ethical living” is living within and in consideration of the wholeness of the covenant community. “Being ‘in Christ’ ” is being in a covenant community which partakes of his Spirit and, consequently, faithfully lives out his will (Kaylor 1988:9-10).

Paul’s direct use of the Davidic covenant is very rare. However, Paul attributes to Jesus the messianic role, which originates from that covenant. Two corollaries of the Davidic covenant (2 Sam. 7:12-16) could have provided the basis for Paul’s theology of mission to the Gentiles. First, Paul’s belief that Jesus is the fulfillment of the Davidic covenant implies that the covenant community now includes the Gentiles as well as the Jews, for the messiah will rule the whole world, not only Israel. Second, if Paul identified Jesus the Messiah with the Suffering Servant of Isa. 42:6, he certainly believed that Jesus is to be a light to the nations (Kaylor 1988:10).

Lastly, Paul clearly makes use of the concept of the New covenant from Jer. 31:31-34. Jeremiah said that in the new age the law will be placed in the hearts. The new covenant is “a radically inward covenant,” not written on tables of stone (cf. Exod. 24:12) but upon the

⁵ Dunn correctly sees that the term “righteousness of God” is “God’s acting to restore his people and sustain them within the covenant” (1987:2847).

hearts. “Such inwardness is reflected in Paul’s claim to be a minister of a new covenant” (2 Co. 3:6; Kaylor 1988:11; cf. Dumbrell 1984:178-181).

In summary, we have noted above that salvation history and the covenant of God were fundamental convictions of Paul as he wrote Romans. These two concepts are very closely related. Further, we also noted that these dimensions are connected with the very essence of the relationship between the OT and NT, or the Mosaic covenant and the new covenant in Christ, and more specifically with the problem of law and gospel. In Paul, behind these most important theological frameworks, we see both *continuity* and *discontinuity*. There is not only continuity and discontinuity in his broad Jewish and Greco-Roman thought world but also in his theological thought world. I believe this occurs as a result of his experience of the Christophany on his journey to Damascus (Kim 1981).⁶ That experience brought such new insight that he could see things in a new and fresh way. Paul is certainly a creative thinker. We should not neglect either of these thoughts at the expense of the other in Paul’s thought.

7.2 PAULINE HAMARTIOLOGY

7.2.1 SIN IN GENERAL

Sin is mentioned in Romans 46 times altogether.⁷ In Rom. 5-8 it is mentioned 41 times, which shows that almost 90% of the occurrences of “sin” are in Rom. 5-8.⁸ In particular, it appears most in Rom. 6 and 7, altogether 30 times (Rom. 7, 14 times; Rom. 6, 16 times). If we want to comprehend Pauline hamartiology, we need to focus on these chapters.

In Romans “sin” is a very general and undefined term. Basically, Paul uses it in three ways: sin as *deed*, sin as *power*, and sin as *condition*. Kaylor states (1988:48-49),

⁶ In his monograph *The origin of Paul’s gospel* (1981) Seyoon Kim demonstrates this point powerfully. He rejects any idea of preparation for Paul’s conversion and call, and the autobiographical and psychological interpretation. He views Rom. 7:7-25 as “a description of the *objective* existence of the Adamatic man under the law as seen *from the Christian viewpoint*” (:51-55). I agree with him concerning most of his conclusion except one point as I think that this passage is certainly autobiographical, reflecting Paul’s sudden experience of his conversion and call. This passage is a rhetorical *paradeigma* (“example”) coming from his past experience as typical to many believers’ past experience under the law.

⁷ The Greek term ἁμαρτία (24 times; the nominative and the dative case), and ἁμαρτίας (16 times; the genitive case), and ἁμαρτίαν (6 times; the accusative case).

⁸ The Greek term ἁμαρτία (23 times; the nominative and dative case), ἁμαρτίας (14 times; the genitive case), and ἁμαρτίαν (4 times; the accusative case).

If sin is understood primarily as matter of *deed*, then the solution will be understood in terms of changing one's deed. In traditional Hebraic terminology, that means repentance: cease to do evil, learn to do good. If sin is defined primarily as *power* – as the control over human life by an alien force over which one has no personal control -- then the solution will be necessitate power; salvation in this case will involve the success of God's power over the enslaving powers. If sin is seen primarily in terms of a *condition* in which human life is lived out, then the solution will be understood in terms of a change of condition....it is the understanding of sin as a condition of alienation that is most central in Paul's thought. Alienation leads to wrong acts, and subjecting oneself to enslaving forces which apparently are beyond one's control.

Paul uses "sin" as *condition* to refer to the human predicament. In Rom. 3:9, where Paul mentions the noun "sin" for the first time in Romans, the term is used to characterize the common plight of Jew and Gentile as being "under the power of sin" (NIV; Gk. ὑφ' ἁμαρτίαν, i.e., literally "under sin"). In Rom. 5-7 "sin" is regarded as "a useful summary term for the past life of alienation from God in contrast with the new situation which exists as a consequence of the death of Christ." In this sense, sin is not a way of *acting*, but a way of *being* (Kaylor 1988:46, 48). I find that Kaylor's explanation of sin is helpful. However, I doubt whether sin as *condition* is "most central in Paul's thought" as he suggests. Among these three concepts, I think that sin as a power is most prominent and central, at least in Rom. 7. Even in Rom. 3:9 mentioned above, sin is personified as a master who dominates a slave, which is close to sin as power.

7.2.2 SIN AS A POWER

In Rom. 7:7 Paul speaks of sin as something that can be known through the law: the law brings knowledge of sin. This is a repetition of what Paul says in 3:20, "through the law we become conscious of sin," which implies that sin is something with which to break the law. This is the most common understanding of sin in Rom. 1:18-4:25. Since the law is God's law, to break the law means to commit personal acts in thought or execution from which evil results, and ultimately a rebellion against or disobedience to God (*TDNT* 1.296-302, 308-311; *EDNT* 1.65-69). However, sin here goes beyond sin as deed. What Paul says here can be applied to sin as *power* (Dunn 1998:111). The law as God's commandment reveals the true nature of sin, i.e., the law shows that sin might be seen as sin and how exceedingly sinful sin is (see the two ἵνα-clauses in 7:13). In our co-text this is the case. In the rest of Rom. 7 Paul mostly describes sin as power, usually personified (Käsemann 1980:193; Dunn 1998:111). In v. 8 sin is active and seizes the opportunity occasioned by the commandment to produce in the "I"

every kind of covetous desire. Here sin is certainly a power personified⁹ and the real culprit. Thus sin can be “dead” and then spring to life (v. 9). Sin can deceive Paul and through the commandment put him to death (v.11). In v. 14, sin becomes the slave master of the “I.” In v. 17 and v. 20 sin is the one who dwells in the “I” and causes him to do what he does not want to do; this means that sin controls the whole being of the “I.” The “I” is a slave to sin. In v. 23 slavery to sin is the result of losing the battle to sin. In conclusion the “I” serves sin as a slave (v. 25). All these data show that sin is a power dwelling in man to control his whole being like a slave master, who demands absolute obedience.

This same understanding of sin applies in our co-text (Rom. 6). Here Paul is dealing with an accusation of libertinism. Paul was accused that his message of justification by grace through faith was leading people to libertinism (Rom. 3:5-8, 5:20). In Rom. 6 Paul answers that this is not the case (Rom. 6:15-23) and is doing so, sin is also personified as in Rom. 7. Sin is the one who owns man, i.e., a slave master (vv. 16-18, 20, 22). If this is correct, then sin as power is more prominent in Rom. 6 and 7 than other views.

It is also noteworthy that sin and death are closely related in Paul’s thinking. Sin is thought to produce death (Rom. 5:12-14, 21). Therefore it is true that to be under the dominion of sin is to be under the dominion of death. Liberation from sin is thus also liberation from death. In this context death is not merely the cessation of earthly existence as in Phil. 1:21, rather, it signifies the triumph of sin. (Kaylor 1988:69).

7.3 PAULINE ANTHROPOLOGY

7.3.1 PAULINE ANTHROPOLOGY IN GENERAL

Dunn, in his Tyndale lecture of 1974, rightly points out the importance of Rom. 7 for understanding Pauline theology, particularly Paul’s anthropology and soteriology in view of the diverse interpretations. He says (1975:257):

Rom 7 is one of those key passages in Paul’s writings which offers us insight into a whole dimension of Paul’s thought and faith. Even more important, it is one of the few really pivotal passages in Paul’s theology; by which I mean that *our* understanding of it will in large measure determine our understanding

⁹ In Romans this kind of use of sin is also seen in Rom. 5:12, 21: “sin entered the world” and “sin ruled in death” (cf. Dunn 1998:96).

of Paul's theology as a whole, particularly his anthropology and soteriology. As interpretations of Rom 7 differ, so interpretations of Paul's anthropology and soteriology markedly alter in content and emphasis. Dispute about a tense, a phrase, a half-verse in Rom 7 means in fact dispute about the whole character of Paul's gospel.

What Dunn says about Rom. 7 is certainly true. Dunn interprets this passage as a description of the eschatological tension of a believer, a tension between the Already and the Not Yet. To him the person of Rom. 7:14-25 is fleshly and in the Spirit at the same time. But this view has some problems. It is much better to see that the "I" of Rom. 7:14-25 is the one who is still under the dominion of the law and is convicted of his sinfulness yet does not know the way of deliverance (see 7.3.3 for this discussion). If this is the case, we understand this passage as the description of an unregenerate man who is beginning to see his sinfulness and inability to solve his wretched state by the enlightenment of the Spirit. From this passage we may draw some truth about the unregenerate man.

Before discussing our text, it might be helpful to highlight some general features of Paul's anthropology. Pauline anthropology in general has two important characteristics (Dunn 1998:52-55). First, his theology is practical and not merely speculative. He wrote basically "as a missionary-pastor theologian." Second, Paul's theology is *relational*. Paul always thinks about a person in relation to God, other human beings, and to the world. Third, his theology reflects both Hebraic and Hellenistic understanding, since he lives in both worlds.

7.3.2 TWO IMPORTANT ANTHROPOLOGICAL TERMS: *SOMA* AND *SARX*

Let us turn our attention to what Paul says about the natural person. As we have seen in our inner analysis, v. 4 is the conclusion of Paul's proposition and v. 5 is a negative confirmation of that conclusion, and the rest of Rom. 7 is just a detailed elaboration of v. 5. In these two verses we see the two most important terms in Pauline anthropology: "body" (*σῶμα*) and "flesh" (*σὰρξ*).¹⁰ In order to understand Paul's anthropology we first need to understand these two terms.

The term *σῶμα* occurs more than 50 times in Paul's undisputed letters and means normally "that which denotes the physical aspect of man," in which different "members" are to be

¹⁰ Dunn says that "[t]he degree to which Paul's anthropology is interwoven into his theology can be illustrated from the two most important terms in Paul's anthropology—'body' and 'flesh' " (1998:52).

distinguished (Rom. 1:24; 4:19; 1 Co. 7:4; Dunn 1998:55). In this sense “body” is often synonymous with “flesh” insofar as it denotes only the material aspect of man (cf. Rom. 2:28 – circumcision “in the flesh”; Col. 2:1-5 – being present or absent “after the flesh”). Another meaning of “body” is “the *embodiment* of the person.” In this sense it is a relational concept, denoting the person embodied in a particular environment. As an embodied person an individual can relate to the world around him/herself and to other humans and this makes possible the use of a term like “corporeality” or “corporateness” for “body” in Paul (Dunn 1998:56).

In Rom. 7 the term σῶμα occurs twice (vv. 4, 24). In v. 4 Paul says διὰ τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ (“through the body of Christ”). In this co-text the term denotes the physical body of Jesus Christ. By participating in the physical death of Jesus, we believers died to the law. Here the humanness of Jesus is implied. In v. 24 Paul says, “Who will rescue me from this body of death? (ἐκ τοῦ σώματος τοῦ θανάτου τούτου).” Here the problem is what τούτου refers to. It can be translated either “the body of this death,” or “this body of death,” but there is really no difference in meaning. The phrase still denotes that “body of sin” (6:6), “this mortal body” (6:12), and “my flesh” (7:18) in our co-text. In both cases in Rom. 7 σῶμα includes the normal meaning, the physical body. But as we noted earlier, in 7:24 it is more than that. Dunn (1988) says, “It is man embodied in a particular environment, the body being that which constitutes him a social being, a being who relates to and communicates with his environment. It is as an embodied entity that he can act upon and be acted upon by his environment.” Thus a person “in his embodiment in this physical world is subject to corruption, decay, and death” (:319-320).

The term σάρξ is used in Paul’s letters frequently: it occurs 91 times altogether, and in Romans alone 26 times (Dunn 1998:62). In the NT it is used in number of different ways: (1) the whole of mankind (Rom. 3:20; 1 Co. 1:29; Gal. 2:16); (2) the physical body (Rom. 2:28ff.; Col. 2:1-5; Gal. 2:20); (3) fleshliness, carnality, meaning the nature of being a human in specific humanness—i.e., in its weakness and limitation, as distinguished from and in contrast to the divine, but not yet as an indication of a human’s sinfulness (Gal. 1:16; 1 Co. 1:29; 15:50; Eph. 6:12); (4) sinful or unregenerate, corrupt nature (cf. Bultmann 1951:233-34; Ridderbos 1975:94; Dunn 1998:64-66). The question is in which one of these different ways is it used in v. 5. In our co-text the best option is no. 4, which is the commonest use of this

term (8:4, 8, 9). It means the opposite of life “in the Spirit,” which was true of all of Christians in the past (Sanday & Headlam 1896:174; Cranfield 1982:337; Fitzmyer 1993:459). It is a state in which sin has dominion over humankind; the evil principle of sin is controlling humankind’s whole life. It is another term used here to denote the state of being “under the law” (6:14). This meaning is confirmed from v. 6, in which Paul says “But now we are delivered from the law” (cf. Gal. 3:3; Phil. 3:3). This is true of the whole of humankind in its unregenerate state. We will note the various usages of “flesh” later but from among its various meanings, we understand it as “sinful nature” in our text.

7.3.3 UNDERSTANDING THE USE OF “I” IN ROMANS 7:7-25

At this stage it is necessary to deal with the problem of Paul’s use of “I” in Romans 7:7-25, which I dealt with very briefly in the previous chapter (4.5.2). Throughout 7:7-25 Paul uses “I” in a very noticeable way. How do we understand the usage of “I” in this passage? There has been much discussion regarding whether we should understand “I” as autobiographical, typical, or fictive-rhetorical. It is difficult to determine how to interpret this feature. Ziesler says that the “I” in Rom. 7 has received “so much scholarly attention...so little resulting agreement” (1989:179). George Lyons (1985:10) also underscores this difficulty:

The obvious use of the first person singular pronoun “I” to refer to the author and the first person plural pronoun “we” to refer to the author and others is not so obvious as it may appear. In some instances Paul’s “I” has been understood to be nearly equivalent to “anyone,” and thus not strictly autobiographical.

Among different interpretations, the autobiographical understanding of “I” has a long history, since it is apparently so self-evident (Stauffer 1965:358). Regardless of their decision on the identity of “I,” many scholars today still hold this position (Moo 1986:129; Packer 1964:622-623; Dunn 1975:260; Beker 1980:240; Gundry 1980:228-245; Nygren 1949:284-303; Bruce 1963:53, 145, 148; Mounce 1995:163; etc.). For example, Dunn (1975:260) says,

The existential anguish and frustration of vv. 15 and 24 is too real, too sharply poignant to permit any reduction of the “I” to a mere figure of style. Whatever else this is, it is surely Paul speaking from the heart of *his own experience*. I must confess that it seems to me a rather convoluted process of reasoning which argues both that the “I” does not denote Paul’s personal experience but it does the experience of everyman -- *everyman, except Paul!* [italics his]

In the same vein Beda Rigaux even designates this passage as “typical autobiography” (1968:122, 123).¹¹ However, some scholars reject the autobiographical interpretation of Romans 7. Bultmann (1951, 1960) pioneered this non-autobiographical understanding. He saw this passage as “trans-subjective” existential conflict between the ἐγώ’s desire for “life” and the resulting failure to attain it. He states,

Romans 7:14-24 is not a confession of Paul describing his erstwhile inner division under the Law, but is that picture of the objective situation of man-under-the-law which became visible to him only after he had attained the viewpoint of faith.

(Bultmann 1951:266)

Similarly, Günther Bornkamm accepts the non-autobiographical interpretation because he understands that the “I” in Romans 7 represents man outside Christ, subject to the Law, sin, and death, in an extremity, which can be seen only in the light of the gospel. Arguing for a close relationship with Romans 5, Bornkamm writes, “The sum total of mankind as represented in Romans 5 by Adam clearly narrows down in Romans 7 to man as ‘I’ ” (1969:125-127).

The main protagonist of the non-autobiographical view is W. G. Kümmel. He argued that the “I” should be taken rhetorically without including a reference to the speaker or writer. This means that the passage furnishes no biographical background and Paul never experienced the conflict described in Romans 7. He states, “the form of the first person in Romans 7:7-25 is a stylistic form for the portrayal of *human experience* in general” and the “I” must be referring to the non-Christians (*italics his*; 1963:53). He therefore concludes that the “I” is a fictive-rhetorical device used as a tool for illustrating a general truth. His understanding is influential among NT scholars today, especially among German theologians (see Theissen 1987:177-178). Similarly, G. E. Ladd (1974:495, 508) and Donald Guthrie (1981:688) accept this view and see Romans 7 not as Paul’s own experience but as his Christian evaluation of Pharisaic religion. In this line of thought Karlberg suggests an interesting proposal that “the ‘I’ in Rom. 7-13 is employed metaphorically by the apostle Paul to describe Israel corporately under the

¹¹ Rigaux classifies Paul's "autobiographical passages" according to their "different forms." He proposes five kinds of autobiographical form in Paul's letters, which offers little assistance in clarifying their functions. They include: (1) “Simple autobiography” (1 Cor. 16:5-9; 2 Cor 7:5; Rom. 1:11-14; Phil. 1:12-26); (2) “Apostolic autobiography” (1 Thes. 2:1-12; 18, 3:1-2, 6-9; 1 Cor. 1:12-16; 2:1-5, 10, 11, 23; 3:9-13; 7:8; 2 Cor. 1:8-6:10; Rom. 15:17-21; Col. 2:1-3; 3:7-9); (3) “Apologetic or polemic autobiography” (1 Cor. 9:1-27; 15:9; 2 Cor. 10:1-12:21; Gal 1:11-2:14); (4) “Mystical autobiography” (2 Cor. 12:1-10; Eph. 3:1-13); (5) “Typical autobiography” (Rom 7:14-25).

law, the old covenantal administration characterized by sin and death” and it is “a personification of the Old Man in Romans 6:6.” So he denies the autobiographical element in this passage. (1986:70, 74). Then, he also argues that Paul changes his subject from Israel personified to the personal experience of Paul himself as representative of every believer in vv. 14-25 (:73). But his suggestion is not convincing, and it is difficult to see that the reference of “I” in 7:7-25 shifts as Karlberg proposes. It is better to understand that the same person is described in both places.

Finally, the Pauline usage of “I” has been understood as *typical* without any implication of autobiographical feature. T. W. Manson suggests that Paul is describing mankind’s experience here, not Paul’s (1963:945). This means that what Paul says here is purely imaginary and theoretical. However, it is difficult to believe that this passage does not contain any personal experience at all, and is “no more than a second-hand account of the experience of others, or even an imaginative picture of a condition of mind” (Packer 1984:265-266). Beker rightly comments that if we remove all autobiographical inferences from Rom. 7, it “makes the chapter theologically unintelligible and fruitless for Paul’s encounter with Judaism” (Beker 1980:240, 241).

However, “I” certainly also contains the typical or representative aspect in addition to the autobiographical feature as we note that Paul moves from second person plural “we” to singular “I” (Garlington 1990:201) and to the emphatic “I,” especially αὐτὸς ἐγώ in v. 25 (Dunn 1988; Packer 1984:265-266). As Gundry points out, it is better to see “I” as an “autobiography of everyman” (1980:229) otherwise, the pathos of the preceding outcry in v. 24 becomes incredibly theoretical.

In my view we do not need to deny the rhetorical aspect of the “I” and at the same time we can see the personal and typical aspect of the “I.” It was common in Paul’s day for a rhetor to use his life as an argumentative tool. It is a *prosæpopoiia*, a rhetorical device, which we noted in a previous chapter, that Paul speaks of his past experience (contra Aletti 1996:90; see below). It is also possible to see that it is a device that creates identification with the sinful Jew, like the prophets in OT times (see 6.2.1.2; Aletti 1996:91). Regardless of our position on the identity of “I,” it is likely that Paul vividly makes a personal confession of his life as a representative case in order to persuade his audience about the relationship between a Christian and the law. Dahl correctly says, “The ‘I’ form is no doubt used as a rhetorical

device, but the use of this form would hardly be meaningful unless both the speaker and his audience can in some way identify with the experience of the typical ‘I’ ” (1977:93). So we may say that Paul uses this rhetorical device as “a model case” (Aletti 1996:92) or example. This understanding is well accepted by some scholars (Dunn 1975:261; Harrison 1977:83; Gundry 1980:229; Cranfield 1982:342-347; Garlington 1990:201; Moo 1991:450-456).

The question remains whether what Paul is saying reflects his pre-conversion experience or post-conversion experience, or one who is in process of becoming a Christian, or an immature Christian, or one who is struggling in vain by his own power to keep the law. This problem has been hotly debated among NT scholars. We need to tackle this question briefly before proceeding further. Who is the “I” in Rom. 7:7-25? In attending to this question, it will be better to deal with 7:7-12 and 7:13-25 separately.

7.3.3.1 THE IDENTIFICATION OF “I” IN ROMANS 7:7-12

There are four main directions regarding the identification of “I,” with some variations: (1) the autobiographical direction (depicting either Paul’s own experience or the typical Jewish individual); (2) the Adamic direction (depicting the experience of Adam); (3) the Israel direction (depicting the experience of Israel at Sinai); (4) the general mankind direction (depicting mankind as a whole without any reference to a person or a group (Moo 1991:450-452; cf. Cranfield 1982:342; Garlington 1990:199; Burgland 1997:163). Cranfield, after evaluating each option, concludes that a combination of the first and second options together with typicality is the most likely. Thus he seems to recognize the autobiographical element together with the typicality of “I,” which has a background of Adam’s fall in Gen. 2 & 3 (1982:344). Similarly, Burgland understands that Paul refers here to his own experience under the law in his pre-conversion period (1997:165). However, Moo thinks that a combination of 1 and 3 is the best explanation among these options (1991:452-456). I have already dealt with his opinion above, so I will not repeat my criticism of Moo here. The use of “I” is certainly autobiographical as both commentators agree, however, Cranfield and Burgland’s opinion is more likely. Paul seems to have in mind the narrative of Gen. 2 and 3 in the passage, and he uses his life as a typical case of the whole of humankind, if we assume the universalistic aspect of the law of God (contra Moo, who thinks of only the Mosaic law).

So we may proceed with the question we have raised earlier regarding the Paul's use of "I" in Rom. 7:7-12. Most commentators agree that the passage is written in the aorist form to describe Paul's pre-conversion experience (Murray 1982:254; Packer 1984:266; Milne 1984:9-117; Burgland 1997:165; contra Fitzmyer 1993:463).¹² However, it is somewhat difficult to determine which stage of his life Paul may be describing here. It is an important question, even though it is not the main theme of this passage, because how we perceive the identification of this "I" affects the interpretation of this pericope (Moo 1991:450).

First, it was suggested that Paul is describing the awakening of the sinful impulse during his "coming of age" or "*bar mitzvah*" (Deissmann 1926:91; Davies 1980:24-25; Gundry 1980:232-233; cf. Milne 1984:13-14). In this understanding Paul was living without realizing the real power of sin at one time, but when he became responsible for the commandment, sin sprang to life and he perceived himself to be under condemnation (cf. 7:9-10a).

Second, the realization of condemnation is perceived just prior to Paul's conversion. This view interprets Paul's statement in 7:9-10a as "relative" sense, since it is unthinkable that Paul as a Pharisee was unrelated with the law before conversion (Calvin 1960:144; Haldane 1966:286-287; Lloyd-Jones 1973:136; Harrison 1977:80; Murray 1982:251; Burgland 1997:165). It means that Paul was ignorant of the true nature of the law, i.e., its spirituality, till his conversion.

Between these two options, it is plausible to accept the second explanation, since it is not necessary to limit this period only to the years of childhood in the light of Phil. 3:4-6, where Paul describes his pre-conversion period as a Pharisee (Harrison 1977:80; Murray 1982:251). Nor is it likely that there was a time in Paul's life without the law (Milne 1984:14; Martin 1989:76). In addition to this, the text does not provide any warrant for that reading (Beker 1980:237). Before Damascus Paul's conscience is certainly robust, which was typical of a Pharisee as is seen in Phil. 3:4-6 and Gal. 1:14 (Stendahl 1976:80; Kim 1981:54), and his conversion and call were sudden and totally unexpected. But by the Christophany on the Damascus road, his whole perspective, including his understanding of the law, were significantly changed (contra Stendahl; cf. Kim 1981:287-288; Beker 1980:237, 238). So it

¹² Milne suggests that Paul chooses the aorist tense because he wants to "highlight an experience that was intensely real and revelatory to him at that time" (:13).

seems to me that this understanding is more likely than the first option. However, Rom. 7 is not “a Christian interpretation of Jewish existence under the law” as Beker thinks (1980:238). It is rather a Christian interpretation of humankind under the law, who are convicted only of their sinfulness before God and enlightened to see the spirituality of the law and their inability to keep the law. This is certainly derives from Paul’s own experience.

One question still remains: which period of Paul’s life does this passage describe? Paul does not give us any clue in his letters, any answer to this question is mere speculation. In my opinion, the best option is to view the account of the three days between the Damascus experience and meeting Ananias, which is found in his conversion or call narrative in Acts 9 & 22. When Paul met Jesus on the road to Damascus, he trembled and was astonished according to Acts 9:6. He was not given the full comfort of salvation at that time; he was instructed to go Damascus and waited for further instruction (9:7). Because of this event he was blind, and did not drink or eat anything (9:9) becoming weak physically (9:19). Only when Ananias came did Paul receive acceptance as a “brother,” forgiveness of sins, the fullness of the Holy Spirit and water baptism (Acts 9:17; 22:16). During these three days he was strongly convicted and yet did not know the way out (note the cry of Paul in Rom. 7:24, especially, “who”). He was in a totally wretched state during this period. Lloyd-Jones (1973:174) correctly says:

This is not an account of a man rejoicing in his salvation – ‘trembling and astonished’, ‘amazed’, ‘blinded physically’, and he did not eat nor drink for three day...I suggest that in those three days he suddenly saw how completely mistaken he had been about the Law. He saw its spiritual character, he understood the meaning of coveting...that period is sufficient to account for all we have been looking at in verses 7 to 13 of this 7th chapter of the Epistle.

This state is the same situation as that of the Jews who heard the message of Peter and were deeply convicted by the Holy Spirit in Acts 2:37. They cried out to Peter and the other Apostles, “What shall we do, brethren?” This position is close to that of C. H. Dodd, who sees vv. 7-25 as “an authentic transcript of Paul’s own experience during the period which culminated in his vision on the road to Damascus” (1932:115), even though we do not see any introspective conscience before the Damascus Christophany. That is, we do not agree with Dodd that Paul’s conversion was an ongoing experience which “culminated in his vision on the road to Damascus.” However, Dodd is right in that it is a description of Paul’s experience of the Christophany on the road to Damascus. In this sense I agree with Murray, even though

he does not mention the Christophany on the road to Damascus, who certainly sees the transitional experience of Paul as follows ([1968] 1982:255):

We must conclude, therefore, that this passage [7:7-13] is an account of pre-regenerate experience. It is not, however, the period of pre-regenerate self-complacency but his experience after he had been aroused from spiritual torpor and awakened to a sense of his sin. It is the *preparatory* and *transitional phrase* of spiritual pilgrimage when, shaken by the conviction which the law of God ministers, his state of mind was no longer one of unperturbed calm and self-esteem. (italics mine)

7.3.3.2 THE IDENTIFICATION OF “I” IN ROMANS 7:13-25

We come now to the problem, acknowledged as the most difficult by many scholars (MacGorman 1976-77:31; Newman 1983:124; Fung 1978:34; Packer 1984:263; Martin 1981:39; Nygren 1949:284): the identity of “I” in Rom. 7:13-25. It has been interpreted basically in three ways with some variations:

- (1) a non-Christian Jew either seen by himself or seen through Christian eyes or Paul’s pre-conversion past seen from the Christian perspective (most of the early Church Fathers, including Augustine the younger, Arminius, Kümmel, Seifrid, the majority of modern scholars);
- (2) a Christian in general (typical) or the apostle Paul himself as a mature Christian (autobiographical) or both (Augustine the older, Calvin, Luther, Nygren, Cranfield, Dunn, Murray, Morris, Barrett, Campbell, Packer);
- (3) an intermediate position, (i) one “convicted yet not regenerate” (Pietists Francke & Bengel, Lloyd-Jones; Bandstra) (ii) an immature Christian (Origen, Wesley, Holiness Movement, the Keswick Convention, Campus Crusade for Christ), (iii) one who tries to keep the law by his own strength and power, regardless of his allegiance, either a Christian or a non-Christian (Mitton, Robinson; cf. Robinson 1979:83-84; Cranfield 1982:344-347; Newman 1983:124-135; Moo 1991:469-477; Seifrid 1992a:313-333; Lee 1993:12-44; Garlington 1990:199).

First, we need to see why the majority of modern scholars think that the “I” is an unregenerate person. In this regard Moo’s summary is helpful (1991:471-472):

Firstly, the strong connection of *ego* with “flesh” (vv. 14, 18, and 25) suggests that Paul is elaborating on the unregenerate condition mentioned in 7:5: being “in the flesh.” Secondly, *ego* throughout this passage struggles “on his own” (cf. *autos ego* in v. 25),

without the aid of the Holy Spirit.

Thirdly, *ego* is described as being “under the power of sin” (v. 14b), a state from which every believer is released (6:2, 6, 11, 18-22).

Fourthly, as the unsuccessful struggle of vv. 15-20 shows, *ego* is a “prisoner of the law of sin” (v. 23). Yet Rom. 8:2 proclaims that believers have been set free from this same “law of sin (and death).”

Fifthly, even though Paul makes clear that the believer will continue to struggle with sin (cf., e.g., 6:12-13; 13:12-14; Gal. 5:17), what is depicted in 7:14-25 is not just a struggle with sin but a defeat by sin. This is a more negative view of the Christian life than can be accommodated within Paul’s theology.

For those who consider these arguments as decisive, vv. 13-25 describe the doomed struggle of the unregenerate. Their struggle resulted in failure, because they fought with their own strength. Deliverance from this situation comes with regeneration in Christ. During conversion the Holy Spirit transfers believers from the realm of “sin and death” to the realm of “the Spirit of life” (7:24b; 8:2).

Second, another popular view, especially among Lutherans and in the Reformed circle, is to see vv. 13-25 as a description of believers. Again Moo’s summary is helpful (1991:472-473). He points out five reasons why we should interpret the verses in this way.

(1) the change of present tense requires such a reading. (2) it is one of the characteristics of believers that they show such a “delight in the law” (v. 22) and try to obey it (vv. 15-20). For unbelievers it is impossible to show any interest in God (3:11) and to “submit to the law of God” (8:7). (3) the mind of ἐγώ in this passage is a positive medium, by which the “I” serves the law of God, contrary to the unbeliever’s mind described elsewhere (cf. Rom. 1:28; Eph. 4:17; Col. 2:18; 1 Tim. 6:5; 2 Tim. 3:8; Tit. 2:15). (4) the presence of an “inner man” shows that the “I” is a Christian, because only a Christian has it (cf. 2 Co. 4:16; Eph. 3:16). (5) the dividedness of the “I” indicates a Christian (vv. 24-25). It is impossible to consider such a divided state for the unregenerate.

Most recently Packer lists five points in favor of a Christian view, which is similar to Moo’s summary (1999:79-81). First, only the Christian view is the most natural explanation of Paul’s shift from past to present in v. 14. Second, this view provides “the only natural explanation of verse 25b’s following verses 24 and 25a. ‘So then’ (ἄρα οὖν) is a connective, drawing a conclusion from what has been said so far.” Third, this view is consistent with Paul’s teaching elsewhere regarding the human condition (compare 7:16, 22, 18-21 with 8:5,

7). Fourth, only this view explains satisfactorily the preposition *ek* (ἐκ) in the utterance of the “wretched man.” There he cries out for deliverance “out of (ἐκ) this body of death” – meaning “either this mortal body which is at present sin’s place of residence, or this state of selfhood in which the death-dealing, death-inducing operation of sin is so painfully obtrusive or both together.” Fifth, counter-arguments to this view are not convincing. Packer deals with two counter-arguments:

- 1) There is a question why, if Paul were dealing with the Christian life in Rom. 7:14-25, he should write on the Spirit, not about the law, as believers were no longer “under” the law as a way of salvation. Packer’s answer to this argument is that the law is still valid to Christians according to Paul’s teaching elsewhere (3:31; 13:8-10).
- 2) The lack of reference to the Spirit in this passage shows that Paul’s reference is to the unregenerate person. Packer objects to this argument on the ground that it does not prove anything, because an argument from silence is intrinsically inconclusive.

Packer concludes that if these arguments are seen to be decisive, then vv. 14-25 are a description of normal Christian experience. Christians are living simultaneously in two epochs. Deliverance from this state will come only in the future, at the time of death or the *parousia*.

We have seen in our previous discussion (6.2) that the “I” is a rhetorical tool that alludes to Greek tragedy. The picture in Rom. 7 is very similar to that of Medea. We have also seen from the argumentative texture that even though there is a change of tense from v. 13 to 25, there is not a change of subject here, that is, the “I” in 7:13-25 is the same as the “I” in 7:7-12 (Espy 1985:173). It is correct to see vv. 14-25 as an elaboration of v. 13 (Espy 1985:173; Voorwinde 1990:21; see 5.3).

The best solution to this problem can be found in another intermediate position, specifically, the person who has been convicted or enlightened by the Holy Spirit, but is not yet regenerate (Lee 1993; Lloyd-Jones 1973:174). It cannot be a new or immature Christian (contra Wesley, Pentecostals, the Keswick teaching, Holiness Movement; most recently Milley 1994:7-18), because they have the Spirit within themselves permanently, providing a necessary help for

them. They also know to whom they can cry out for help in times of need, unlike the “I” in Rom. 7:24.

If this is the correct solution, from the perspective of Pauline anthropology, we see here a stair-like movement from vv. 7-25 (transitional period toward conversion, i.e., “convicted not yet regenerate”), then to regenerate in Rom. 8. Furthermore, we need to bear in mind, regardless of the position of the “I” in vv. 13-25, that Paul’s use of this autobiographical-rhetorical-typical “I” is part of a well-designed argument (Seifrid 1992a:327).

What is the importance of this interpretation of the “I”? I think that it provides us with a proper understanding of the character of the unregenerate man, and means that Rom. 7:7-25 cannot be used as a basis for Pauline ethics for Christians. In conclusion, Paul’s view of the unregenerate person in Rom. 7 is that it is a person under sin, the law, and death. The emphasis in Rom. 7 is “under the law.” The person under sin, and consequently the person under death (Rom. 6) is the person under the law (Rom. 7). Until they experience the work of regeneration by the Holy Spirit, such people are totally impotent to obey the law due to their weakness of the flesh (v. 5). Though the “I” receives the initial work of the Spirit and thus sees the spirituality of the law and its goodness, such a person cannot carry out what he/she wants to do as he/she evaluates his/her life as a whole. As Augustine puts it, they are unable to do good and belong to the category of persons “under the law” (Landers 1982:5), which was the earlier view of the “I” in Augustine (Oh 1992:47; Lee 1993:17-19).¹³

7.3 4 PAULINE UNDERSTANDING OF CHRISTIAN LIFE

In Rom. 7:1-6 Paul presents us with a great truth about the character of the Christian life. Paul has already dealt with it previously in Rom. 5 and 6, and will recapitulate it in Rom. 8. In the pericope 1 Paul points out four characteristics of the Christian life. First, Paul emphasizes that believers have an entirely new life, shown by his expressions of “dying” and “alive.” We died to sin (Rom. 6:1-11) and the law (7:2-4) through the body of Christ, and rose again with Jesus Christ. The participation with Jesus Christ makes this new life possible.

¹³ Augustine changed his view of the “I” from the unregenerate, which was common among the early Christian Fathers like Tertullian, Chrysostom, Theodoret, and most of the Greek Fathers, to the regenerate (see Landers 1982:17; Augustine 1991:383; Lee 1993:16-21).

Second, believers have an entirely new relationship. Before, their relationship was one through the law (we were married to the law), it is now through the Lord Jesus Christ (we are now married to Jesus Christ) (vv. 2-3).

Third, believers have an entirely new purpose in life (“to bring forth fruit to God” in v. 4).

Fourth, believers have been provided with an entirely new ability, a new power and strength. This new power and strength is given by the Holy Spirit, who has dwelt in them since they were born again (cf. 7:6 and Rom. 8). Something happened to them in order that they may bear fruit to God. The believer could not do that before regeneration. (cf. Lloyd-Jones 1973:30, 31; Bornkamm 1969:71-86).

These are some characteristics of a believer’s life, which are a consequence of his/her living in the new covenant epoch (see above 7.1.2). Here we see *the eschatological tension* between the indicative and the imperative in the life of a Christian. In a previous chapter Paul described the life of Christian as having died to sin (6:1-10) in the indicative, then he urged the Christians to separate from sin (6:11-13) in the imperative. The relation between the indicative and the imperative is important as it teaches us that there is a close relationship between them. Paul’s admonition or imperative for a holy life in Christians is based inseparably on the indicative. This does not mean that we can be perfect here on earth. Because of this fact, Wesleyan perfectionism and its modern modified version of Keswick teaching are wrong. We do not believe that total perfection is possible in the present.¹⁴ But what Paul says here is that it is now possible to be holy because of Christ’s event and the Holy Spirit, though we might sometimes fail to live out this holiness. If this is true, then it seems to fit well with the position of the “I” that I take. Christian life as a whole is not one of despair and helplessness as described in Rom. 7:7-25. We cannot find any truth about the Christian life here. Instead, Christian life is found in Gal. 5:16-26, in which Paul positively points out that “So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature” (5:16; NIV). In this passage we have a reference to the Spirit and to the possibility of not sinning as a Christian. Furthermore, in Gal. 5:24 Paul says, “Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions (τοῖς παθήμασιν) and desires (ταῖς

¹⁴ See Packer (1984) for a brief description of Wesleyan perfectionism, the teaching of the Keswick Convention, and its critique (:132-164).

ἐπιθυμίας)” (NIV). What Paul says in Galatians is very different to Rom. 7:7-25, so we cannot see Gal. 5:24 as a parallel passage to our text (cf. Beld 1985:497).

Another important point is that Paul also provides us with the knowledge of how it is possible to have the characteristics of a Christian. Paul states that this is achieved “by the body of Christ,” which means that the salvation that believers are enjoying is the result of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. The emphasis is on the cross of Christ. The power of sin is already stripped away because of his death and resurrection (Bornkamm 1969:82). Believers are saved by the death of Jesus Christ on the cross, which is a historical fact. He died there because of the law of God so that we might be redeemed from the law, who were “under the law” (Gal. 4:4). But Paul does not stop at that. He goes further to mention that we are married to another, even to him who is raised from death. This means that believers are married to the *crucified* and *risen* Christ (contra Earnshaw). Paul is emphasizing here the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ by which Jesus conquered death, the last enemy (1 Co. 15:26). That is why there is such a contrast here between death and life in this pericope.

In Rom. 7:1-6 Paul also teaches his audience the truth about union with Christ as a believer. It is something Paul has already said earlier in 5:10, 12 and 6:1-7. In Rom. 6 Paul says that the believers died with and in Jesus Christ to sin and to death. Here he shows that they also died at the same time to the law (Bornkamm 1969:88). The verb form of “die” is important. Paul uses here ἐθανατώθητε (the aorist, passive verb form). The aorist tense shows that this dying happened not only in the past, but finally, and once and for all; it cannot be repeated again. The passive voice shows that it was effected by God (the divine passive). It is the same truth that Paul states in Gal. 2:19: “For through the law I died (ἀπέθανον) to the law so that I might live for God.”

At this stage we need to consider why it is necessary for believers to be free from the law. Paul offers us some explanation. First, before they were in Christ, all believers were “married to the law.” The law was their first husband, not the crucified Christ (contra Earnshaw), and the result was to bear fruit to death. Because of this fact it is necessary for believers to be freed from the law. But that has already happened in Christ Jesus; believers are no longer married to the law. They have died to that marriage and the previous contract has no force any more. The second reason why believers ought to be freed from the law is that *they no longer need to be under the ruling power of the law*. Previously the law was the

believers' master and had dominion and reign over them. But now that power of the law is broken. Believers are changed totally, they are married to another husband, the crucified and risen Christ. Third, the law can no longer condemn the believers (cf. 8:1). The law has done everything it can do to them. Jesus Christ as their representative bore that condemnation and punishment in his death. This truth is illustrated by Paul's marriage analogy. However, this does not mean that the law is no longer useful to believers and they can live however they want; this point has already been dealt with in Rom. 6. So the moral law of God is still useful for showing the general will of God and must be kept by believers today. Now it is possible to keep the law, which was impossible before.

Lastly, what is the purpose of our "marriage" to Jesus Christ? Paul says clearly that we should bring forth fruit to God (v. 4). What is the fruit? It is holiness, which means to live to God's glory and to God's praise. The fruit is also "the fruit of the Spirit" (Gal. 5:22, 23). This fruit is the result of our marriage with Jesus Christ. That means the central object of salvation is holiness. So as a Christian it is possible not to sin, though we cannot be perfect while we live here on earth. Our new marriage to Christ enables us to live holy lives in this present evil age. This is a wonderful teaching about the Christian life and Christian ethics.

7.4 PAULINE NOMISM

7.4.1 ΝΟΜΟΣ IN GENERAL (ROMANS 7:1-6)

Now we come to the pivotal point of our research: obtaining clarity on what Paul says about the law. Before going further, we need to deal with rather simple problems related to the law in our text. First, there is the use of νόμος without the definite article, which is seen by some as referring to the law in general and not specifically to the Mosaic law. Some scholars have rightly refuted this. For example, Howard (1969) notes that in some passages, such as Rom. 2:17, 13:8; Gal. 6:13 and Phil. 3:5, νόμος without the definite article refers to Mosaic law in the literary context (:331-337). Martin (1989) adds further references in which νόμος appears in the same verse both with and without the definite article, without any difference in meaning (:21, 22): Rom. 2:14, 23, 27; 7:1, 2, 7 and Gal. 4:21 (:22 n.5). It is true that with or without the definite article shows no difference in meaning in our text (e.g., Rom. 7:1, 2 and

7; Martin 1989:21-22; Räisänen 1987:16-18; cf. Howard 1969:331-337; Gutbrod, *TDNT* IV 1036-1085).

Second, at this stage I think it is necessary to state why Paul deals with the law in detail in Romans 7 as a whole. Romans 7 is unique, for it is the only place where Paul outlines his argument on the law. The question is what are the points he wants to drive home to his audience through this chapter? It is a question of the rhetorical function of Romans 7. It seems to me that Paul wants to clear up mainly one objection regarding the law here, which might be raised by his audience or interlocutor. This objection is related to the role and function of the law. Previously Paul had already mentioned something about the role of the law but without any further explanation (5:20; 6:14). What he said in these places about the law was quite strong and surprising to some of his audience, especially those who knew the Jewish concept of the Mosaic law. In 5:20, “The law was added so that (ἵνα) the trespass might increase (NIV).” It means that “the law came in, not on the main line, but as it were, sideways” in order to increase sin (Lloyd-Jones 1973:3, 4; cf. Dodd 1932:100). Paul knew that his statement might bring some objections from people with a legalistic mind and with a Judaistic background. Then, he makes another strong statement on the law in 6:14: “For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace.” Because of these sayings some people, especially the Jews, became angry, for it seemed to them that the law was being abrogated by Paul’s teaching of justification by faith only and of the believer being united with Jesus Christ. These people thought that Paul’s teaching was doing away with the law, which was a sure guarantee of a holy and righteous lifestyle (see 5.3.2.1 for their argumentation & 6.2.1.3 for their cultural background). They believed that sanctification was impossible without the law and wondered whether Paul was not encouraging lawlessness among people. So Paul is answering these questions regarding the law. In doing so, Paul explicitly states that he does not abrogate the law, instead he upholds the law (cf. 3:31). He elaborates his understanding of the function and purpose of the law in this chapter. He also makes another important point in this chapter, which is to show that sanctification by the law is as impossible as was justification by the law (3:20; Lloyd-Jones 1973:4).

Third, what is the role of Romans 7:1-6 in Romans 7? Its role is to lay down a general truth about the believer’s relationship to the law. It is very important to understand this pericope, because the rest of this chapter is just a further explanation of that truth about the law. The

key verse is v. 4, where Paul concludes the points that he states earlier in vv. 1-3. Verses 5 & 6 are a further elaboration of v. 4, which is shown by the word γὰρ. Here Paul contrasts the past and the present of Christians (contra Robinson 1979:86). Then, v. 5 is explained in detail in 7:7-25, and v. 6 is explained at a great length in ch. 8 (see 5.2.1). We need to remember that here Paul is talking to a mixed congregation in Rome. The Gentile believers cannot be excluded as they are people who know the general principle of the law in v. 1 (contra Watson, F 1991:203-215). One of reasons why I take these verses as written for both the Gentile and Jewish Christians is that what Paul says in vv. 1-6 is true for all Christians, not only to the Jewish Christians but also for the Gentile Christians (see 4.4.1).

7.4.2 IS THE LAW VALID TO BELIEVERS? (ROMANS 7:1-6)

In v. 1 what Paul says about the law is ambiguous. It seems to emphasize the temporal character of the law, that is, the discontinuity of the law. Through participation in Jesus Christ's death believers are severed from their former relationship with the law, i.e., the former husband. Thus in the present epoch Christians are free from the authority of the law. This is the emphasis of the Lutheran tradition. Likewise, they hold the position that the Mosaic law is no longer valid for Christians (see above 7.1 & 7:2). This is certainly true. We are freed from the condemnation of the law, i.e., its judgement on those who break the law (8:1; Cranfield 1982:330-331, 372). But what Paul says here implies more than freedom from condemnation. We are also freed from the power of the law (7:1-6) "*insofar as* it arouses sin in us" (7:5, 7-25; Thielman 1989:89; Schreiner 1993b:84-90). We are beginning to experience the power of the Holy Spirit to overcome the power of sin and death, and it will be completed when Jesus comes again or when we die physically. We are living in eschatological tension, "already-not yet," in this interim age (Cousar 1995:205). This is the truth Paul is describing in 7:5 (the eschatological "now") and 7:6 ("then").

In the past we were "under sin" and "under law" (7:5). One of the functions of the law is to provoke and to incite sin, *when we were in the state of the unregenerate*. Rom. 7:5 certainly teaches us that the law reveals, defines, and causes sin, and increases sin (5:20). Paul could thus say in v. 8 that "without the law sin is dead." This does not mean that before receiving the Mosaic law sin was nonexistent, because in Rom. 5:13 Paul states that "until the law sin was in the world." It means that sin appeared to be dead in comparison to its effect after the

law (see v. 8 on how the prohibition of coveting stimulates in Paul all kinds of coveting). What Paul says here accords with what he says elsewhere (2 Co. 3).

But there is another function of the law, which is still valid for Christians. Verse 1 shows this ambivalence. Paul puts it positively: the law reigns as long as we live; once we have risen from the dead with Jesus Christ, we are in a sense still under the law. This means that the law as the perfect will of God for believers, i.e., the third function of the law in the Reformed tradition, is still valid (Calvin *Institutes* II.7.12-15). So I believe that τέλος in Rom. 10:4 might be taken as both “end” and “goal” in the light of what I have said in this section and of both the continuity and the discontinuity of the law (Bruce 1977:191; Fitzmyer 1993:134; Seifrid 1985:7-8; Beker 1980:91, 106-107; Leenhardt 1960:266; Barrett 1962:197-198; Ladd 1974:502-503; contra Martin 1989:154; Schreiner 1993a:113-35).

In what sense has the Christian been delivered from the law? First, the Christian is delivered from the condemnation of the law (cf. 8:1; Cranfield 1982: 330-340). Second, we are also delivered from the inability of the law to justify and to sanctify us (cf. 3:20). Paul deals more with the latter point here. Third, we are set free from the aggravating effect of the law upon our sinful nature, shown by the following phrase ἐν ᾧ κατειχόμεθα. We are dead to the law wherein we were held (contra KJV). It is we who have died, as it expressed in v. 4. The word κατέχω corresponds to the word κυριεύω: we were held by the law; we were ruled by it. But now the situation has been totally changed by means of our participation in the death of Jesus Christ. We are dead to that which formerly had dominion over us.

What is the purpose of this freedom from the law? Paul gives us the answer, ὥστε δουλεύειν ἡμᾶς ἐν καινότητι πνεύματος (“in order that we should serve in newness of spirit”). “In order to” (purpose) is a better translation than “so that” (result; RSV; NIV; NRSV; ASV; NASB), since Paul is concerned to emphasize the object and the purpose of that serving. This means that the great purpose of our salvation is our sanctification or our holiness (cf. 7:4; Eph. 1:4; 1 Thess. 4:3), which also shows that the charge of antinomianism has no place in Paul’s thought. Here Paul argues that nothing could enable us to “bring forth fruit to God” except our being discharged from the law and its dominion and being joined to Christ.

Note the word δουλόω, which means “to serve as a slave” (cf. 6:16, 17, 20, 22). Paul takes his argument further to introduce the character of our service, the new “slavery” in which the

Christians live. The metaphor of slavery is used here positively, meaning that unconditional obedience to God, Christ; or righteousness (Martin 1990:50). Christians as slaves to God live for the benefit or profit of God who owns their lives by the price of the blood of Jesus Christ. In v. 6 Paul contrasts the life of the Christian with the life of the best possible moral man who is “under the law” and “in the flesh.”

What are the contrasting features Paul wants to show to us? First, the difference is between “the old dominion” and “the new dominion.” This means that there is a total change in the human condition. This change is well illustrated in Jesus Christ’s words to Nicodemus (Jn. 3). Paul expresses here the same point: regeneration and a new birth. In 2 Co. 5:17 Paul says explicitly about this matter, “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!”

Second, Paul contrasts the law and the Spirit. Γράμμα refers to the written moral law. Paul says that we are to serve not in the old way, which called for conformity to that which is written. That was the position of being “under the law.” We are no longer in that position, instead we serve by living “in the newness of Spirit.” This “new” life is a life lived “in the Spirit,” not “under the law.” It means that Christians are now living in the dominion of the Holy Spirit, which means living in and under the power of the Holy Spirit (Lloyd-Jones 1973:90-92). Here Paul introduces the Holy Spirit. Paul shows that Christian life is essentially a life “in the Spirit” and a totally new life which is made possible because the Holy Spirit dwells in us as a result of our union in, and marriage with, Jesus Christ. Paul elaborates this point in the following chapter to the extent that we may say that the whole of chapter 8 is just an exposition of 7:6.

7.4.3 IS THE LAW AN INSTRUMENT OF SIN? (ROMANS 7:5, 8-11)

Verse 5 is really an “enigma.” Here Paul says that the law was an instrument of sin to bring death to people. How could the holy law be an instrument of sin? (cf. Beker 1980:235). In 7:5 Paul asserts that the law provokes sin which leads to death (similarly in 7:8-11): “τὰ παθήματα τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν τὰ διὰ τοῦ νόμου ἐνηργεῖτο ἐν τοῖς μέλεσιν ἡμῶν, εἰς τὸ καρποφορῆσαι τῷ θανάτῳ.” What does Paul mean by this? The phrase τὰ παθήματα τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν means “sinful affections” and “lusting.” The genitive is either a genitive of quality (sinful passions) or an objective genitive (passions “which lead to sins”; Cranfield 1982:337;

Fitzmyer 1993:459). The phrase τὰ διὰ τοῦ νόμου ἐνηργεῖτο (“worked by the law”) does not mean that the law created the “passions of sin.” Note the word διὰ, which means “through” and “by means of.” So Paul is saying that the law “stirs up,” or “arouses” the passions of the law (Fitzmyer 1993:459). The word “work” carries the notion of “working inwardly,” because Paul says that the passions work “in our members.” Here the “members” mean all our faculties, not just the body only, but mind, imagination, interest, everything through which man expresses himself and his personality (cf. 6:12, 13). A man may sin in thought and in imagination as well as in the body (cf. Matt. 5:28).

What is the result of this? Paul says it is εἰς τὸ καρποφορῆσαι τῷ θανάτῳ. Note the contrast to v. 4 (“bring forth fruit to God”). Death is personified for the moment for emphasis. This verse shows us the simple truth that all sinful actions lead always and only to death (Rom. 6:23). It is sin that produces the spiritual death, the physical death and “the second death” as well (Rev. 20:6).

Here we have a strange relationship between the law and sin, which consequently leads to death. But we need to bear in mind that what Paul says about the law inciting sin is “*when we were in the flesh.*” That one of the functions of the law is to provoke to sin is true for the unregenerate, but not for the believers. When the unregenerate are faced with the law, the law does not prevent but stimulates sin in them (Schreiner 1993b:86). Paul further shows this function of the law in 7:8, “But sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, produced in me every kind of covetous desire.” Paul’s argument runs like this -- as I put it in the previous chapter (5.3.2.1):

Result: “But sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, produced in me every kind of covetous desire.”

Case: “For (γὰρ) apart from law, sin is dead” (v. 8; NIV).

[Rule: Sin is only active in the context of the law.]

He repeats the result of his enthymeme in v. 11 with a slight modification, “For sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, deceived me, and through the commandment put me to death.” The latter part of v. 8 explains why he makes such a statement: “For (γὰρ) apart from law, sin is dead.” This means that without the law sin is dormant, ineffective, and powerless. But sin uses the law as a military base or fulcrum to produce in the individual “sinful passions” (7:5) and “every kind of covetous desire” (7:10).

function, i.e., the law changes or transforms sin into more serious and clearly defined acts of transgression; and (3) a causative function, i.e., the law provokes or brings about sin.

In the rest of the article he elaborates these three negative functions of the law. He shows that Rom. 3:20, 7:7, and Gal. 3:19 show the first function of the law: the cognitive function (:223-227). The second function of the law (converting function) is shown in Rom. 5:13 and 4:15 with a somewhat parallel passage in Amos 3:1-2 (cf. Westerholm 1988:184-185). “The giving of the law involved not only a great privilege if properly obeyed but also a greater liability for its transgression. The coming of the law thus converts or transforms sin into more flagrant and serious acts of rebellion” (:227-231, especially :231). The third function of the law is causative, expressed in Rom. 7:5, 8-11, 5:20 and 1 Co. 15:56 (Weima 1990:227-234).

In my opinion, Weima’s understanding of the function of the law is more plausible than that of Räisänen. The seemingly contradictory statements of the law in Paul can be properly understood if we accent the different negative functions of the law as Weima demonstrates. From this understanding we may proceed to summarize what these verses teach us about the law. First, they teach us that the law cannot help unregenerate persons to fight against sin. Paul truly says that sin is so powerful that it has the ability to frustrate the law of God. The power of sin in natural or unregenerate persons is so strong that even the law of God cannot deliver them. Even worse, the law “rouses sin” and aggravates the passions and lusts, making them work in all the faculties of the person. Second, they teach us that the law was never meant to save people. It is true that the Mosaic law was given in the context of salvation as stated in the prologue of the Decalogue (Exod. 20:1). Yet, by the coming of the law we see that the situation of unregenerate persons was made worse. Third, they show us, from the negative role of the law as mentioned above, the absolute necessity of salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ. Once the individual is enlightened to see the depth of sin, and the complete inability of the law to deliver him/her from it, he/she desperately asks, “Who can save me?” as we have seen in 7:24. There is only one answer: it is only Jesus Christ! (v. 25).

So we can answer positively the question that we asked at the beginning, “Is the law an instrument of sin?” Unfortunately, it is true. Sin is so strong that even the law of God cannot save us from our former predicament when we were in the flesh. Actually, the law of God makes our problem worse. It arouses the sinful passions in our thoughts, imagination and action (“in our members”). It is the negative half of the truth that Paul teaches us about in our

relationship with the law. In v. 6 Paul states the positive half. Note the transition from the unregenerate state in v. 5 to the regenerate state in v. 6 (see the eschatological “now” “νυνὶ δε”). Paul says, “we have been delivered from the law” (κατηργήθημεν ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου). Note the tense of the verb, an aorist tense, which denotes that it has happened once and forever. It is translated variously: “delivered” (KJV), “discharged” (RSV; NRSV), “released” (NASB; NJB; NIV), and “loosed” (KJV, v. 2). It means we are no longer under the law and have had a complete discharge from it. What he says here is exactly the same as the statement of v. 2.

7.4.4 A VINDICATION OF THE LAW (ROMANS 7:7-12)

In this pericope Paul opposes an objection that might be raised in the light of what he said earlier. In the previous pericope the law is described as a power from whose lordship believers find release in Christ (vv. 4 & 6) and as an instrument in the arousing of sinful passions that lead to death (v. 5). Paul anticipates an objection from his audience in the rhetorical question “Is the law sin?” Paul strongly rejects such an idea and defends the law from the charge that it is sin. As we noted in a previous chapter, here Paul is using diatribe in order to persuade his audience about the holiness and the goodness of the law. Paul explains the relationship between sin and the law, and thus exonerates the law from its charge. This elaboration takes the form of a narrative in which sin is an active culprit, while the law is a passive instrument, used by sin as a springboard (vv. 8, 11) to deceive and bring death.

7.4.4.1 THE LAW AS GOD’S UNIVERSAL LAW (ROMANS 7:7-12)

At this stage it is necessary to determine which kind of law is under discussion. There is a specific reference that suggests that it is the Mosaic law. Paul quotes in v. 7: οὐκ ἐπιθυμήσεις (“You shall not covet”), which is an unmistakable reference to the Decalogue, especially to the tenth commandment. This means that Paul is referring to the Mosaic law here. Does it mean that Paul is always referring to the Mosaic law as Moo argues (1986; 1993)? Νόμος has certainly a broader meaning than that. We may say that Paul uses the term mostly to denote the law of God (7:22), especially the moral law, although there are a few instances Paul uses it differently in Romans (e.g., Rom. 3:21 denoting the Pentateuch; 3:19 denoting the OT as a whole; 3:27, 7:23, 7:25b & 8:2 possibly as a “force” or

“principle”). This law of God certainly includes the Mosaic law, but it is more than that. This distinction is a key to interpreting the law in Romans 7, even in all of Paul’s statements on the law in his letters. Moo raises a question regarding this (1986; 1993), as he thinks that ὁ νόμος mostly denotes the Mosaic law. Because of this understanding Moo (1986) rejects the “universalistic” interpretation of Rom. 7:7-12, because the law means here the Mosaic law and the Gentiles do not have it. Paul generally confines the purview of the νόμος to Jews and limits its duration from the period of Moses to that of Jesus from his redemptive-historical perspective (:123-125). Thus Moo rejects the third use of the law that Calvin and the Reformed tradition hold (Calvin 1967:233, 234; Cranfield 1982:319, 320; Murray 1957:187, 188).

In my opinion, what Moo says regarding the Mosaic law is partly true, because there is continuity and discontinuity of the law in redemptive history. As Bruckner rightly suggests, we must treat the law not only in the context of Sinai, but also in the context of creation (1995:91-110). The law of God exists from creation in redemptive history. Since creation there has been, is, and will be an underlying unity and continuity in biblical ethics, and the law is the heart of that ethics (VanGemeran 1993:16, 17). In this regard Paul can say in Romans 2:15 that the Gentiles have a law written on their heart, i.e., a consciousness of the law. Since creation every human being is created in the image of God and with a sense of the moral law. But after the Fall man has been changed significantly and corrupted. In OT times before the Mosaic law, believers observed the moral law by practicing righteousness apart from the Mosaic law. Enoch, Noah and Abraham are typical cases during this period; they all obeyed God with their faith (Heb. 11:5-19). For example, God could say of Abraham to Isaac: “Abraham obeyed me and kept my requirements, my commands, my decrees and my laws (תּוֹרָתִי)” (Gen. 26:5). It is true, as Fretheim comments, that this verse “carries significance for understanding the place of the law in the pre-Sinai period” (1994:529). It explicitly states that Abraham was not without laws or a concept of the law (cf. Gen. 18:19; Bruckner 1995:97). So we may say that it is correct that Abraham did not receive the Mosaic law, yet he kept the law of God written in his heart. The written law, i.e., the Mosaic law, is necessary because of human sin and hardness of heart (VanGemeran 1993:19-21). In essence there is no difference between these two laws.

This line of thought is also found in Exod. 18 and 24: the former comes before the Sinaitic covenant, initiated by Jethro the Midianite, and the latter is after. In both places, the elders of Israel (18:1 & 24:12) come before God with a burnt offering and sacrifices (עֲלֶה וְזָבַח in 18:12 & 24:12) and eat a meal. In both texts there is reference to the settlement of legal disputes (דָּבַר or דְּבָרִים in 18:16, 20 & 24:12). Where one mentions statutes (חֻקִּים/חֻקֵּי in 18:16, 20), the other mentions commandment (מִצְוָה in 24:12), but both speak of Torah (תּוֹרָה in 18:16, 22 & 24:12). These references show that the law was operating even before the redemptive covenant at Sinai. This understanding is further confirmed as we examine Exod. 16:4, where it says, “whether they will follow *my instructions*” (בְּתוֹרָתִי). Here we have evidence of the existence of the pre-Sinaitic law, which is akin to the Mosaic law (Bruckner 1995:92, 95).

If the above conclusion is true, then the point Moo makes is not plausible. It is more accurate to accent the universalistic aspect of the law of God, which means that the law is applicable even to the Gentiles (Bornkamm 1972:122, 123; Bruckner 1995:102).

In this regard Poirier (1996:344-358) rightly points out the universality of law in Rom. 5:13-14. Poirier contends against the common understanding of Rom. 5:13-14, which is used as a proof text for Paul’s inconsistency¹⁵ (Hübner 1986:81; Stowers 1994:112; Sanders 1983:35-36). Generally, it was understood that 5:14 is to be viewed as a qualification of 5:13b. The adversative particle ἀλλά is taken as pointing out an exception to what it precedes. This theory draws a distinction between the two ages as Anders Nygren puts it: “The condition after the [Mosaic] law was given was essentially different from that which obtained before” (1949:224). From this perspective Rom. 5:13-14 has been considered as an example of how convoluted Paul’s logic can become (Bultmann 1951:252; De Boer 1988:165-166). Poirier contends that these verses were written to interconnect the law, sin and death, unlike most commentators who do not link sin to the law in a real sense.

At first Poirier argues that Paul’s main point in Rom. 1:18-3:20 is to establish the universality of law. It is true that all -- Jew and Gentile alike -- are under the law and are guilty of violating God’s law (see especially 3:9). Paul argues that, “while the Gentile’s conscience witnesses against his or her sin, it is the violation of a universal law and not the attending

¹⁵ David Seeley calls these verses “Janus-faced” (1994:140).

conscientious goods that substantiate his or her guilt” (Poirier 1996:349). This distinction is important, Poirier says, because it shows that perception of the law is not a prerequisite of sin. Paul provides two pieces of evidence that the Gentile had knowledge of this universal law: “a look at the world around and a guilty conscience” (see Rom. 1:20; 2:15-16).

Then, Poirier proceeds to re-examine Rom. 5:13-14, developing the ideas of De Boer’s treatment of Paul’s apocalyptic eschatology. Poirier contends against the usual understanding of the counting of sin in 5:13 referring to a purely juridical complicity in sin as we see in Ziesler (1989:147-148), Cranfield (1982:282-283), and Wright (1993:39). This understanding is different from the meaning that Paul presents in Rom. 1:18-3:20. There, Paul argues that God’s decrees are based not only in the Mosaic law, but also in the created order. Poirier (1996:351) says,

The notion of a sin prior to the Mosaic law is not only conceptually impossible, but it is also *historically* impossible, because creation itself manifests God’s law. Israel’s special revelation is *not* the debut of law in the universe, but merely a privileged expansion of what God had made known to the nations through their inventory of nature. Moral goodness was revealed in nature. This universal revelation...becomes the basis of the universal call to salvation (*italics his*).

Poirier argues that the ἀλλά in 5:14 introduces the second (i.e., minor) premise in what is essentially an enthymeme. He suggests,

Major Premise: Death prerequisites sin (5:13, cf. 6:23), and sin prerequisites law (5:13, cf. 4:15; 7:8; 1 Co.15:56).

Minor Premise: Death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses.

Conclusion: The people living between Adam and Moses were under law just as surely as the Jews now are.

Poirier concludes that since death ruled in the world before the Mosaic law (5:13a), this proves that sin was counted during this period, and therefore, there was another law preceding the Mosaic law, which is God’s law (Rom. 2:14). So Rom. 5:13-14 shows rhetorically the universality of God’s law, not the impotence of the law. “Adam is an emblem for a dispensation of law” (:355-356).

Similarly, Martin understands these verses as referring to the existence of the law before the giving of the Mosaic law and sin is counted even before the Mosaic law. The evidence for this understanding is the same punishment of death before and after the giving of the Mosaic law (5:14, 17). This certainly shows that previously there was a law and that sin was counted

during the period between Adam and Moses (1989:75). What is implied is that both Gentiles and Jews outside of Christ are “under the law” (Martin 1989:74, 100-104).

In my opinion, VanGemeren, Bruckner, Martin, and Poirier are correct in their understanding of the law of God in the context of creation and its universality. Paul’s argument in Romans is to show that Jews and Gentiles alike are under the law and under sin, and are redeemed by the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ. There is no difference at all between them in terms of their predicament and salvation. It is true that the “notion of the universality of law underlies all that Paul argues for in Romans,” and is important as we try to understand Paul’s statements on the law.

7.4.4.2 THE LAW IS NOT SIN

The argumentation of 7:7-12 is occasioned by what Paul says earlier vv. 1-6, especially v. 5, where Paul says that “the desires of sin through the law were at work in our members” when we were in the flesh so that we bore fruit for death.” Furthermore, v. 6 identifies the law with the old realm of sin and death. When Paul’s audience heard this, they, especially his interlocutors or opponents, might naturally raise the question: how can Paul enlist the law together with sin and death? Should one expect that freed from sin believers are free *for* the law? Is Paul really saying that the law belongs together with sin and death? If so, is it not natural to ask if the law itself is sin (7:7)? In order to answer this objection, Paul offers an apology or vindication for the law in 7:7-25. Paul says here that the law is holy and never to be held responsible for our failure to keep it. In doing so, he primarily uses the first person pronoun. Paul puts his own experience forward as an example (*paradeigma*). However, his main purpose is not to share his experience but to make plain his teaching about the function of the law, and to show how the law can never sanctify people any more than it could ever justify them.

He explains why the law is not sin in the following ways. Paul says that the law brings him to a right understanding of the nature of sin (v. 7a). This is a repetition of what he said in 3:20, “through the law we become conscious of sin” (NIV). The function of the law is to reveal the true character of sin. Without the law it is impossible to have real knowledge of the law. Then, Paul gives us an illustration of covetousness in order to make his first statement clear, as shown by γὰρ: “Indeed I would not have known what sin was except through the law. For

I would not have known what coveting really was if the law had not said, ‘Do not covet’ ” (v. 7b; NIV). The word ἐπιθυμία can be translated as “covetousness,” “lust,” “evil desire,” and “concupiscence” in this context, which means desire after anything forbidden strongly, although it also means simply “desire” (Louw & Nida 1988:290, 291).

Paul is saying two separate things here. First, he seems to say, “I would not have known that lust was sin in and of itself if the law had not have taught me so.” That was true of Paul before his conversion, as it was true of all the Pharisees. They thought of sin only in terms of external actions; if a man does not perform the evil desire, he is not guilty of sin. Jesus Christ was at great pains to make this point to the Jews, and especially to the Pharisees, in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5:21-22, 27-30). This shows that Jesus and Paul have a common understanding of the law: the law is essentially spiritual and is concerned with man’s heart. Second, Paul is also saying something like this: “I had never understood the power of lust and of desire within me until I was really enlightened by a true understanding of the law.” In the NIV translation the word “known” occurs twice, although in the Greek it is not same word: the first one is ἔγνων, and the second one is ᾔδειν. However, there is not so much difference in meaning (Louw & Nida 1988:II.51, 172), both terms refer equally to “experiential knowledge” as Lambrecht thinks (1992:44). This type of knowledge means to know absolutely or to know as the result of reflection and experience. Through such knowledge the commandment, “You shall not covet,” had not only brought Paul to see that to lust was to sin, but it had also brought him to see the terrible power of lust in his own life. Paul says these two things are together simultaneously. Here Paul speaks of the positive function of the law: it truly brings the knowledge of sin. Apart from the law he was not able to see the real power and dominion of sin in his life. Because of the law he was able to see that coveting, the evil desire itself, is sin. He clearly states here that to desire to sin is sin itself. We can sin in our imagination and in our thoughts. What Paul says confirms what Jesus said earlier (Lk. 16:15; Matt. 5:28); before God there is no difference between sin in our action and sin in our heart. Because of this fact Paul could say that the law is spiritual (v. 14) and thereby he saw the true nature of sin. This is a general truth about the law: it is not sin, because it reveals the true nature of sin.

From vv. 8-11 Paul provides an explanation. Why does the law have the effect of aggravating sin and lust in one's members? Paul gives us an answer: because of the nature and the character of sin.

On the one hand he emphasizes the holiness of the law, on the other hand he makes clear how law and sin are connected to each other. There is definitely a distinction between law and sin but at the same time there is a mysterious connection between them (cf. Bornkamm 1969:88-89; Lloyd-Jones 1973:110). In 7:7-12 Paul explains from his own experience how law and sin have come to be connected. Paul says that it is sin, not the law, which exploits the law. Sin makes the law an operational base from which to increase sin. In 7:13-25 Paul shows how this fatal connection of sin and law operates in man, using the example of his own experience as he did in vv. 7-12.

Thus the purpose of the second pericope is to vindicate the law by demonstrating that the law is not sin. Rather, it is good, and it has a function to reveal sin.

7.4.5 THE IMPOTENCE OF THE LAW (ROMANS 7:13-25)

In v. 13 Paul begins with a rhetorical question, which summarizes the previous discussion and signals the introduction of the theme in 14-25, which follows naturally from the previous discussion. As we noted, vv. 14-25 is an elaboration of v. 13, shown by the conjunction $\gamma\acute{\alpha}\rho$ in v. 14 (see 5.3.2.1). This is important because it shows us that Paul is not introducing an entirely new topic here; he is continuing with his previous discussion. In particular he elaborates further what he has already said in v. 13 (Moo 1991:479, 480). This fact is confirmed in v. 14, where he says, "[For] we know that the law is spiritual" (see enthymemic analysis in 5.3.2). This is the rationale or the reason part of an enthymeme. Paul provides an explanation of the assertion raised in v. 13. This implies that Paul is still dealing with the law and its functions, as has been the case since 7:1. Here he is expounding the objection he has raised in v. 13, which is the way of his argumentation (Stendahl 1976:92; Morris T V 1988:284). Paul is concerned to show what the law was meant to do and particularly what it was not meant to do. The law is not sin, but because of the character of sin in the unregenerate the law aggravates sin and as result it produces or leads to death. Because of this function the law is called "the law of sin and death" in 8:2-4, where Paul is summing up what he has been saying in Rom. 7 (Moo 1991:469).

Let us see how Paul presents his argument in detail. In v. 14 Paul says, “[For] we know that the law is spiritual.” This means that the law has come from God, who is Spirit, and is an expression of God’s will (Nygren 1949:298). It also means that the law is not merely a matter of “the letter” as he points out in 2 Co. 3:6. Thus the law is concerned with motives, desires, and imagination as it is with actions.

Then, Paul says also ἐγὼ δὲ σάρκινος εἶμι. Σάρκινος means “fleshly” or “carnal” (KJV), or “unspiritual” (Bruce 1963:153) or “composed of flesh” (Moo 1991:481) or “pertaining to behavior which is typical of human nature, but with special focus upon more base physical desire—‘worldly, base’ ” (Louw & Nida 1988:509). Paul uses the term σάρκινος mainly in two ways: the first is to describe a sinful nature (8:5-9), the second is in 1 Co. 3:1-4, in which Paul describes the “carnal” person as one who is “a babe in Christ,” an immature Christian. It is a description of a man who is by nature in conflict with the life of the Spirit as we have it in Rom. 7:5. A man who is “in the flesh” is “under the law” (7:5, 6). Note that Paul does not say that there was something, which was still within him, that was carnal: *he himself* is carnal. So we may accept the first option (a sinful nature).

Second, Paul says πεπραμένος ὑπὸ τὴν ἁμαρτίαν (“sold under sin”), which means “I am sold into a condition of slavery to sin” or “I am a slave to sin,” “sin is my master and I am his slave.” Again we need to bear in mind that what Paul says here is true of the whole man, not merely a part of the man, whoever he is. Paul is neither referring to the sinful nature that still remains within himself nor solely to the body or sensual desires. Paul is referring to the whole “I” or the whole person (Lloyd-Jones 1973:191; Lambrecht 1992:50). Paul has already remarked on slavery to sin in the previous chapter (6:16-18, 20, 22). We were slaves of sin before being in Christ; but now we are in Christ and under the reign of grace. Paul explicitly speaks of this truth in Rom. 6, especially vv. 2, 11, 12 and 14. If we consider this truth in Rom. 6 about freedom from sin, it helps us to understand Rom. 7. How can an unregenerate man say that “the law is spiritual”? It is impossible for him. How can a regenerate man say that “I am carnal, sold under sin”? It is also impossible for him. To whom is Paul referring in v. 14? We have answered this question already in the previous section. My understanding of the “I” (i.e., a person who is transitional between the state of the natural person and the regenerate person, who is enlightened to see the spirituality of the law and his inability to

keep the law but has not yet found the way of deliverance in Christ) is quite fitting in these phrases.

In v. 15 Paul describes the life of the man whom he has introduced in v. 14, i.e., the man who knows that the law is spiritual, but who is carnal and sold under sin, which is shown by γὰρ. Paul says, ὃ κατεργάζομαι οὐ γινώσκω (“I do not know what I do”), which means “I do not understand why I am doing it” or “I do not approve of what I am doing.” He is doing something, which is the opposite of the view he holds. Then, Paul adds more using the strong word “hate.” He says, οὐ γὰρ ὃ θέλω τοῦτο πράσσω, ἀλλ’ ὃ μισῶ τοῦτο ποιῶ (“For what I desire, this I do not do, but what I hate, this I do”). This sentence also begins with the word γὰρ. Paul is elaborating his previous statement in v. 15a (see 5.3.2.1). He not merely disapproves of what he does, but he hates it. We need to bear in mind that Paul is not saying that he is always doing evil and never does any good at all. Even more, he is not saying that he is sometimes or occasionally doing it. Rather, it is his life on balance, as a whole; this is true to him (Lloyd-Jones 1973:197, 198). If this is correct, it is the description of a man filled with frustration, defeat, and failure. So the question arises: who is this man here? It cannot be normal Christian experience in the light of ch. 6 & 8 of Romans and Gal. 5:16-18, 24. Nor is it the description of the unregenerate person, since the “I” desires the good according to God’s law. The answer is again in line with my understanding, mentioned above.

However, one thing we need to observe is that in v. 15 Paul introduces a “divided personality” (cf. Steinmetz 1990:300-313; Dunn 1998:472-477). Calvin sees that this “divided self” is only possible to believers, not sinners. He believes that the intense spiritual conflict in Rom. 7 is impossible to sinners untouched by grace, and that this point helps us to identify the person whom Paul is speaking of here (1960:151). Similarly, Dunn recognizes the divided “I” in this passage and interprets the “I” as a believer who lives in the eschatological tension of the already-not yet (1998:474-475). However, what Paul says can be true of the one who starts to be touched by grace, but is not yet regenerated (contra Calvin & Dunn). The first “I” in v. 16 refers to the whole personality, the man who is acting. The second “I” who wants to do good is no longer the whole personality, he is now a part of the “I” who is beginning to recognize the spiritual character of the law. It is important to recognize that there is a duality in this man whom Paul is describing at this stage. This will be clearer in v. 17, where Paul explains in more detail.

In vv. 16-20 Paul draws two inferences or deductions from his earlier argument (see 5.3.2). The first deduction is v. 16, and the second in v. 17, vv. 18-20 are a further elaboration of v. 17. This sequence shows that Paul still moves from the general to specific in his argumentation. The first deduction is: “But if I do what I do not want to (case), I agree that the law is good (result)” (v. 16). This is an obviously logical conclusion. The fact that he does not approve of his actions means that he agrees with what the law says to him. In fact, he is in agreement with the law. The reason Paul reaches such a deduction shows us that he is still dealing with the issue of the law. His object is to argue something about the law he is not just stating his own experience. With this statement he intends to show that “the law itself is in no way responsible for his failure in practice” and “his teaching concerning the law does not involve any criticism of the law in and of itself” (Lloyd-Jones 1973:202).

The second deduction is in v. 17, where Paul says, *νυνὶ δὲ οὐκέτι ἐγὼ κατεργάζομαι αὐτὸ ἀλλὰ ἡ οἰκοῦσα ἐν ἐμοὶ ἁμαρτία* (“but now it is no longer I that do it, but sin which dwells in me”). Here Paul is answering the question, which was raised by his previous argument: why he sins, even though he knows it is wrong according to the law. Paul answers, “But now it is no longer I that do it, but sin which dwells in me.” This is a logical deduction, which stems naturally from his previous statement. Here we see the divided personality clearly. The first “I” is the part of the person that has come to realize that the law of God is good and spiritual, this “I” agrees with the law wholeheartedly. But there is another part of the person, in which sin resides (“sin which dwells in me”). Paul teaches us here two truths about sin. First, it is something that dwells in the person (cf. Ps. 51:5; Rom. 5:12-21). Second, sin is more powerful than a person’s will-power. Even though this man agrees with the law and wants to keep it, he cannot do so, because sin dwells in him. Paul says, then, the reason that he is doing the opposite of his desire is that sin dwells in him. This is a truly profound truth regarding sin. It needs to be elaborated further, so in vv. 18-20 Paul does exactly that (contra Aletti 1996:79). Once again we see *γὰρ* at the beginning of v. 18. Note also in v. 20b Paul repeats himself by saying exactly what he said in v. 17. Thus it is correct that vv. 18-20 are a further elaboration of v. 17, especially of the divided personality. He says in v. 18, *Οἶδα ὅτι οὐκ οἰκεῖ ἐν ἐμοί, τοῦτ’ ἔστιν ἐν τῇ σαρκί μου, ἀγαθόν* (“I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh), there dwells no good thing”). Note he uses the verb *οἶδα* here, which carries the implication of knowledge coming from experience. This “me” is clearly the same “me” as the one of whom it was said that “sin dwells in me.” Paul clarifies

“me” in his qualifying statement as “flesh.” There is a “me” in whom sin dwells, that is the flesh, which we have discussed earlier, which is sinful nature. The “I” who knows is again the whole personality but the first “me” is only part of the “I” in whom sin dwells. Then Paul says further, τὸ γὰρ θέλειν παράκειται μοι (“for to will is present with me”; KJV). This “me” is not like the first one, this part of “me” is the same as the “I” in v. 17, who agrees that the law is good and wants to keep the law. So we have different uses of “me” in this verse, as Lloyd-Jones points out (:208). The “I,” which is shown by the verb οἶδα, is the whole personality who can speak about the two different types of “me” that are in him. This is very complicated to understand. However, it is the condition of “I” that Paul is describing. He says, to desire is present in me (the second me), but the ability to perform is not present because of the first “me.” This is his predicament.

Verses 19 and 20 are just repetitions of what Paul has already said. Verse 19 is almost an exact repetition of verse 15b, except for two specific words, ἀγαθὸν “that is willed” and κακὸν “that is done.” Paul is clearly stating that what he desires is good, and what he hates is evil. The reason he repeats this is to help the audience to grasp his complicated statement.

What are the purposes Paul has in mind in vv. 16-20? First, he is not disclaiming responsibility for his actions or even excusing himself (Moo 1991:485). It is important to understand this because otherwise the interpretation could lead to antinomianism. What Paul is doing here is to make a confession. Second, Paul is concerned to show the terrible power of sin. These verses are detailed explanation of v. 13. Sin is dwelling in us and overpowers us even as we begin to recognize the spirituality of the law. Third, Paul is showing again the complete inability of the law to deliver us from the bondage of sin, even when we are aware of sin’s true nature. Paul is thus still dealing with the function of the law, especially its *impotence*. It is a solemn truth Paul is emphasizing here that even the holy, just and good law of God cannot deliver us from our past predicament.

From verses 21 to 23 Paul is in a sense summing up what he has just been saying (note ἄρα; Aletti 1996:79) and at the same time repeating one of the general statements in vv. 14-15 in a different way. In vv. 18-20 Paul has been explaining why it is that he renders evil acts even though he does not want to do so. But in vv. 21-23 he shows why he fails to do what he wants to do, that is, he describes the dual aspect of his problem: he does what he does not want to (vv. 18-20), and also fails to do what he wants to do (vv. 21-23).

Paul gives to his audience an explanation of why he cannot do what he really wants to do. He says in v. 21, εὕρισκω ἄρα τὸν νόμον (“I find the law”). It is noteworthy that he uses “the law” with the article. What does he mean here by “the law”? Is it the law of God, which he has been talking about previously? It is not the law of God, because it is the direct object of εὕρισκω with ὅτι, used to introduce the content of that law, and in the following verse Paul again mentions the law of God. If the law in v. 21 is the law of God, there is no reason to mention it again in v. 22. Paul is referring here to another kind of law, which is different even from the law of sin (contra Haldane). He calls it “the law,”¹⁶ because it occurs so constantly in his experience.

Paul goes further, τῷ θέλοντι ἐμοὶ ποιεῖν τὸ καλόν, ὅτι ἐμοὶ τὸ κακὸν παράκειται (“when I desire to do good, evil is present with me”). Verses 22-23 are an explanation of v. 21 (note again γὰρ; Hendriksen 1980:235; Cranfield 1982:362), which is typical of Paul: thesis first, then proof (see 5.3.2.1). In v. 22 Paul says, συνήδομαι τῷ νόμῳ τοῦ θεοῦ κατὰ τὸν ἔσω ἄνθρωπον (“I delight in the law in my inner man”). It is interesting to note that there is a progression in Paul’s statements regarding the law. In v. 14 Paul says, “we know that the law is spiritual,” then in v. 16, “I agree to the law that it is good,” and finally here, “I delight in the law,” which alludes to Ps. 1:2. In this passage what is important is to determine the meaning of “ἔσω ἄνθρωπον.” According to the Reformed view, this “inner man” settles the problem of the identity of “I” at once (Cranfield 1982:363; Hendriksen 1980:235). They see it as the new man or the new nature that is in this person. “The inner man” is mentioned only twice in Paul’s letters (2 Co. 4:16; Eph. 3:16). However, in both places the phrase is used anthropologically, not as a “new man” (6:6), which has a soteriological meaning (Moo 1991:489-490). It is thus likely that the inner man is another expression of “mind” in its immediate co-text (see vv. 23, 25; Dodd 1932:114; Cranfield 1982:363; Lloyd-Jones 1973:216).

In v. 23 Paul explains further why he cannot carry out the law of God, in which he delights. He says, βλέπω δὲ ἕτερον νόμον ἐν τοῖς μέλεσιν μου (“but I see, another law in my members”). Note that Paul uses here ἕτερον νόμον, meaning essentially a different law, which is “indwelling sin” working so regularly that it is called law (Fitzmyer 1993:476; Hendriksen 1980:235). Μέλος (members) means “a part in contrast with a whole,” not just a

¹⁶ Some English translation rightly translates it as “this principle” (NEB), “the rule” (JB).

physical part (Louw & Nida 1988:615, cf. 95). Μέλος contrasts with the mind. Paul contrasts “another law” in his members (later in this verse it is called “the law of sin”) with the law in his mind, which is definitely the law of God in which he rejoices (Fitzmyer 1993:476; Martin 1989:28). What does the law in his members do? Paul says, ἀντιστρατευόμενον τῷ νόμῳ τοῦ νοός μου (“warring against the law of my mind”). The word ἀντιστρατεύομαι means “to make war against, to fight against” (Louw & Nida 1988:493). Then, Paul also provides the result of that battle by saying, αἰχμαλωτίζοντα με ἐν τῷ νόμῳ τῆς ἁμαρτίας τῷ ὄντι ἐν τοῖς μέλεσιν μου (“bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members”). The word αἰχμαλωτίζω conveys a forceful effect, which shows the result of the war between the law in his members and the law of his mind. Notice also Paul says, “bringing *me* into captivity.” Here “me” is not a divided personality as in v. 17, 18, it is the total personality. Paul is not saying that “the law in my members” is taking the sinful part of him or only his body into captivity. Such an interpretation would be the dangerous teaching of dualism (Lloyd-Jones 1973:220).

What Paul refers to here is not one aspect of Christian life existing in two ages at the same time or Paul’s struggle as a mature Christian (contra Hamilton 1958:121; Haldane 1966:277-310; Cranfield 1982:359; Dunn 1988:308 & 1998:472-477; Garlington 1990:212-213, 222). What Haldane and Hamilton particularly say in their commentaries is that “on the whole, we may have the victory over sin” (Haldane:298) or “The conflict with sin is not to result in defeat but ultimately victory...for, we are certain of eventual victory over all sin” (Hamilton 1958:121). Their understanding is the exact opposite of what Paul is saying here. The importance of what Paul is saying here is not just that there is a fight going on within man, as Garlington thinks (1990:212-213), but stating *the outcome* of the battle, which is captivity and total failure to overcome.¹⁷

¹⁷ Garlington (1990) recognizes the result of this battle, and provides two counterbalancing points why we should not take the result as it is: 1) in Rom. 6-8 Paul operates in a pattern: propositions are stated categorically at first, then later qualified, e.g., the indicatives in 6:2-4 are followed by the imperatives in 6:12-23 and 8:1-13. “Likewise the indicatives of 7:1-13 are qualified by the realism of 7:14-25.” 2) Paul’s stark language is a relative term, not absolute term (:230). However, Garlington’s counterbalancing factors are not convincing. In Rom. 7 there are no imperatives mentioned in order to qualify the indicatives. All the verses are indicatives as he acknowledges. Paul’s pattern in the argument in Rom. 6-8 is not as Garlington thinks. Rather, a proposition comes first, then the explanation why it is so, i.e., proof. Finally, what Paul is saying is the truth explained in an experiential way, which is absolute, not relative. The only place where Paul’s saying is relative is v. 9, which is unthinkable to Paul as a Jew. Because there has never been a time in the history of mankind that has been without law.

The proof of this understanding is confirmed in v. 24, where Paul goes on cry out in anguish, Ταλαίπωρος ἐγὼ ἄνθρωπος· τίς με ῥύσεται ἐκ τοῦ σώματος τοῦ θανάτου τούτου; (“Wretched man that I am! Who shall rescue me from the body of this death?”). If on the whole this man has the victory over sin, how can he cry out like this? It would be impossible to contemplate. “Wretched” is a cry of anguish, of despair, and of hopelessness, it is a strong emotional term (cf. Louw & Nida 1988:244; contra Nygren 1949:301 & Haldane 1966:298, 299). We should not think that the future tense of the verb ῥύσεται refers entirely to the future. In this regard, Haldane says, “At death Paul was to be entirely freed from the evil of his nature. The consolation of the Christian against the corruption of his nature is, that although he shall not get free from it in this world, he shall hereafter be entirely delivered” (:299; contra Packer 1999:76, 80. cf. Nygren 1949:392). Paul is not just expressing a hope of what will happen at a future death, he is crying out in despair for deliverance here and now. The meaning of “the body of death” is the same as “the law of sin in my members” in v. 23. Later in 8:1-4 Paul combines these two terms, “the law of sin and death.”

Verse 25a is a kind of “ejaculation” (Lloyd-Jones 1973:225) or “interjection” (Martin 1989:80; contra Lambrecht 1992:36, who thinks that from 7:24a to 25a are interjections). It is not that Paul is suddenly carried away by “a strong and sudden emotion of gratitude” (Hodge 1950:238). The verse is an anacoluthon, which interrupts Paul’s main argument. If it is not, it is almost impossible to connect with following statement, which would be “unnatural” (Hodge 1950:239) or an “impossible combination” (Lloyd-Jones 1973:226). This verse can also be seen as “a rhetorical figure, called *anticipation*,” the purpose of which would be to give Paul’s audience the signal of the solution in Rom. 8 (Aletti 1996:88).

Verse 25b is a summary of what Paul has been saying from v. 14 to 24, which is confirmed by Ἄρα οὖν (Cranfield 1982:369; Moo 1991:496; Morris L 1988:297, 298; Lambrecht 1992:36; contra Leenhardt 1960:195). Then Paul says, αὐτὸς ἐγὼ τῷ μὲν νοῖ δουλεύω νόμῳ θεοῦ τῇ δὲ σαρκὶ νόμῳ ἁμαρτίας (“I myself with the mind serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin”). Here he recapitulates the dividedness of the “I.” The αὐτὸς ἐγὼ is emphatic, however, it does not carry the meaning of “I, by myself (without the help of the Spirit)” (Mitton 1953-54:132-135; cf. Moo 1991:496) or “I by myself and apart from any new or other power which may be available to change the balance of contending powers” (Parry 1921:107) or “I left to myself,” without Christ or the Spirit (Lambrecht 1992:55). I think that Mitton, Parry, and Lambrecht put too much stress on the phrase.

However, there is another problem about verse 25b. Some feel that the outburst of thanksgiving cannot be followed by a statement of being slave to the law of sin. How do we understand this anti-climactic statement? Is it “a later gloss” to be deleted (Bultmann 1960; Käsemann 1980:211, 212) or misplaced, so that it should be placed after v. 23 (Dodd 1932:115)? We cannot accept these solutions because there is no textual evidence to support such transposition or deletion (Cranfield 1982:368, 369; Newman 1983:135). We should leave it as it is.

Thus in Rom. 7:13-25 Paul shows the inability of the unregenerate person to keep the law as a whole as he evaluates his life. Even though the law is holy, righteous, good and spiritual, it is impotent to help the unregenerate person. The law cannot save a person because no one can keep the law perfectly (see Rom. 3:9-26; 1:18-2:29). This point is clearly shown in Gal. 3:10 syllogistically (Schreiner 1993b:44):¹⁸

Result: Those who rely on the works of the law for salvation are cursed (3:10a)

Case: Those who do not keep everything written in the law are cursed (3:10b)

[Rule: No one keeps everything written in the law] (implicit)

The main argument of Paul in this pericope concerning the function of the law is:

Case: Someone wants to keep the law, which is spiritual, good and righteous, but fails.

Rule: Because no one can keep the law perfectly.

Result: The law is impotent to help a person. The law does not have a function to save people.

Throughout pericope 3 Paul shows that in the regenerate person there is no power to overcome the sin, that dwells in him/her. He is a slave to sin and fleshly. Even though he wants to observe the law, on the whole he cannot carry out the good that he wants to do. This is the human predicament under sin and law. There is only one way to escape from that situation: in Christ and with the help of Holy Spirit, which Paul shows in 7:4, 6, and 25a in anticipation of the following chapter.

¹⁸ I adapt his syllogism with some modification, using my own terminology in enthymeme.

7.5 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In this theological textual analysis we first dealt with Paul's theological world, which is operating behind all the texts. To understand this world is an important preliminary step to understanding what he says in Rom. 7. It shows us some basic convictions of Paul: mainly salvation history and the covenant of God. From these fundamental convictions we see some tension between the continuity and discontinuity of the two Testaments and between the gospel and the law. In one sense, gospel (grace and salvation) and the law are antithetical, while in another sense they are harmonious and closely connected.

We also encountered the theological texture of hamartiology and anthropology. These two theological textures are prominent in Romans 7. One of the significant features of the Pauline concept of sin is that it is personified, a slave master, a power that is dwelling in a person. Sin is too powerful to defeat. Even the law of God cannot help and is itself used by sin. Therefore what Paul says about the situation "under sin" is applicable to the situation "under the law." We also see we see some characteristics of the unregenerate in our text. Such individual are totally hopeless, helpless, and weak. These double factors (i.e., both the inability of the law and the person) contribute to the fact that they cannot keep the law. Even though the unregenerate are beginning to see the spirituality and goodness of the law, by the help of the Holy Spirit, they are still under the bondage of sin, law, and death. This situation is well depicted in 7:14-25 by means of the "I." Our understanding of the "I" certainly enhances our perception of Paul's anthropology. In contrast with this wretched situation of the unregenerate, the believers are dead to that situation in union with Christ. As in Rom. 6 the participation with Christ is important in Rom. 7. The believers are freed from the bondage of sin and law because of Christ's death and resurrection. Now it is possible to keep the law as Paul sums it up in Rom. 8:1-11, especially vv. 2-4. We have a new power, new strength, and a new purpose. Even though we do not believe in perfectionism, we believe it is now possible to bear fruit to God if we keep in step with the Holy Spirit (Rom. 7:4, 6). In Gal. 5:16-18 Paul says,

So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law (NIV).

In Rom. 7 Paul shows that the law has a different function. It reveals sin. It is passively used by sin to produce evil desire and to increase sin. That does not mean that the law itself is sinful, it is not, because it is holy, good, and righteousness and furthermore, it is spiritual (Rom. 7:7-12), but it cannot help the unregenerate to overcome the indwelling-sin. Rather, the law aggravates and stimulates sin more. But one thing is clear: God is still sovereign in this entire situation. He is still in control to bring about the blessing he provides for his new covenant people. Through this dark picture of the unregenerate Paul makes us to understand an important function of the law: it aggravates the human situation, when we are in the flesh. Thus, it is confirmed that 7:5 is truly elaborated in the rest of Rom. 7.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

The Apostle Peter wrote, “His [Paul’s] letters contain some things that are hard to understand” (2 Pet. 3:16). Among the many difficult aspects of understanding Paul’s letters, the law is notorious for its difficulty in being understood from the early Church period up to date. This is more so in the last two decades since the publication of Sanders’ Book *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* (1977). Sanders’ “new perspective” had a great impact on this area of biblical study and has drawn many diverse responses from NT scholars. Some welcomed and readily accepted his “covenantal nomism” as a proper description of Judaism, others questioned whether he presented Second Temple Judaism fairly. In chapter 2 we identified these major diverse interpretations in more than ten areas. What this shows is that the topic has been heavily researched and as a result we have many diverse understandings regarding Paul’s statements of the law. In spite of all these works we have not yet reached any agreement, and it seems that this present situation will not change in the near future.

As we noted, in Romans the term νόμος occurs more often than in any of the other letters of Paul (74 times). In addition to Romans, the law is also frequently mentioned in Galatians (33 times). Unlike Galatians, the treatment of νόμος in Romans is much calmer and more comprehensive due to the fact that Paul wrote his letter to Roman household churches that he had not visited personally. Within Romans the law and its synonym, the commandment, occur most frequently in Rom. 5-8 (the term ὁ νόμος (33 times), especially in Rom. 7 (the term ὁ νόμος, 23 times; ἡ ἐντολή, 6 times). These statistics indicate at least that Rom. 7 is the place where Paul mentions the law the most. So if we understand this chapter properly, we might have a better chance of understanding Paul’s statements on the law adequately. There is also a major debate on Rom. 2 (law is mentioned 19 times) regarding the issues around the law written in the heart in terms of the Gentiles. Our understanding of chapter 2 will influence our understanding of our text. Though Rom. 2 is not our focus of study, one important point from that chapter about the law should be underlined. The existence of the law written in the heart shows us at least that Paul’s term νόμος is not equivalent to the Mosaic law. In many cases νόμος certainly denotes the Mosaic law but it is more than that: it is a broader law of God, implying especially the moral law of God. Since creation this moral law has existed and has been written in the heart of humankind. We might call it more

or less “conscience.” So this general understanding of the law, i.e., the law of God, both unwritten and written, is more frequent than the (written) Mosaic law. This law definitely includes the Mosaic law. This law is permanent and will not be changed. All human beings are in a sense under this law, i.e., they are obligated to keep the law of God. Because of this ambivalence of the term it is indeed difficult and causes many diverse interpretations.

Another factor that causes us to stumble in grasping the law in Paul’s letters is that the law has some negative functions. Because of this negativity, some scholars only see inconsistencies and contradictions about the law in Paul’s letters, and some suggest that Paul’s concept of the law has changed dramatically from the early letters to the letters. But the contradictory theory is not satisfactory as the evidence in Romans, especially in Rom.7. Paul is a careful pastor-theologian and missionary, who applied the truth in his missionary context. It is better to see that Paul’s theology is coherent as well as contingent as Beker (1980; 1988) and Dunn (1991:245-250) demonstrate. The seemingly contradictory statements are understandable when we recognize the different functions of the law and the different rhetorical situation of each letter.

In chapter 3 we briefly described the history of the application of rhetoric from ancient rhetoric to modern rhetoric in order to understand the usefulness of rhetoric in analyzing a biblical text. Classical rhetoric was generally employed as “the art of persuasion,” but later on rhetoric was used as mere stylistics. In the new rhetoric, however, rhetoric as “the art of persuasion” has been revived. Recently, rhetoric has become part of a multidimensional or interdisciplinary analysis. V. K. Robbins calls this kind of methodology the socio-rhetorical approach. It now combines different disciplines, namely, linguistics, rhetoric, sociology, and theology, etc. into one methodology. I find this method helpful and fruitful and utilized Robbins’ methodology with some modifications in order to understand the complicated statements on the law in Romans 7.

Before conducting a socio-rhetorical reading, we first investigated the macrostructure of Romans, using both epistolary and rhetorical analysis, in order to obtain the overall picture as a means of entering our text. Then, we establish the rhetorical unit of chapters 5 to 8 as a broader co-text of chapter 7. Paul uses the rhetorical feature “inclusion” in both Rom. 5-8 and 7. In Rom. 7 Paul begins with a rhetorical question, and thus introduces his main theme or topic, the function of the law. Then, he elaborates his theme step by step using analogy in the

first pericope (vv.1-6) and then the “I” in the rest of the chapter as a *paradeigma* (“example”). We also find that Paul uses diatribe, *prosæpopoiia* (speech-in-character), and *paradeigma* in order to refute some misunderstandings or objections regarding his statements on the law. Then, we proceed to determine the rhetorical species of Romans. All these data and the use of rhetorical devices lead us to confirm that Romans is deliberative rhetoric.

In our inner textual analysis we utilized three inner textures: repetitive, open-middle-closing, and argumentative texture (chapter 5). In the argumentative texture we used an enthymemic analysis in order to see how Paul’s argumentation flows in Rom. 7, and dealt with the problem of the present tense, which is only a part of Paul’s rhetorical repertoire -- the tense itself should not be used as a measurement to determine the subject of the text -- all data should be considered in determining the subject of the text. Structurally and semantically, v. 5 is very important as it confirms v. 4 syllogistically and is further elaborated in the rest of the chapter. The enigmatic statement about the law in v. 5 (“the sinful passions aroused by the law”) requires clarification, which is provided by Paul in the rest of Rom. 7 (vv. 7-25).

In our intertextual analysis, we saw how the outside materials were embedded in our text. In doing so, we also saw the social and cultural aspects of our text. Paul employs various sources from the Jewish Scripture to Greco-Roman materials. In the scriptural intertexture Paul quotes the tenth commandment of the Decalogue with omission, which fits perfectly well with his argument. To Paul the illicit desire is so basic that it is the root of all sins. He uses this commandment to show the one of the role of the law, to provoke sin. The commandment is not evil in itself, to prohibit the illicit desire is good and necessary. But to know the law is not enough, we need the power to carry it out. Paul demonstrates this truth in an experiential manner in 7:14-25, showing that sin is too powerful, and is even able to use the good law for its evil purpose. A person outside of Christ cannot overcome sin by his/her own power and strength. Even though he/she is now beginning to see the goodness of the law and wants to observe it, he/she cannot do so, because he/she is “fleshly, and sold to sin as a slave.” Sin is his/her master. There is only one way to escape from that situation, death, which is accomplished by God’s action in Christ’s event (Rom. 6), and with the help of His Spirit (Rom 7:6 and Rom. 8).

In our Jewish cultural intertextual analysis we noticed that Rom. 7:8-10 is both an allusion to the Genesis Fall narrative (Gen. 3) and to the Sinaitic narrative (Exod. 20). The law in Paul is

certainly both Jewish and Gentile, since he is dealing with God's law. We noted that the slavery in Rom. 7 reflects both the Jewish culture and the Greco-Roman culture. The use of the "I" also reflects both cultures. As a Jewish cultural intertexture, the "I" is very much like a prophet and a Psalmist in the OT, and the "I" in Qumran literature. We also saw that the evil impulse or inclination that existed in Jewish culture is embedded in Rom. 7. But some aspects of Jewish culture are intermingled with broader Greco-Roman culture. Certainly, the law, slavery, and the use of "I" also belong to Greco-Roman culture. The use of the "I" is very much akin to Medea in Greek tragedy, which was so popular that almost everybody knew it during Paul's day. Often in Greek tragedy the first person singular was used in soliloquy. The divided "I" in Rom. 7 is also very similar to the popular and Platonic view. Further, what Paul says in Rom. 7:15 and 19 is an allusion to Greek tragedy. Finally, we noted that sin as a power is an allusion to the Greek understanding, which was not found in Judaism.

In our analysis of the social intertexture we concluded that the marriage analogy in Rom. 7:2 fits well with Jewish marriage, not with that of the Greco-Romans. The picture Paul depicts here reflects much of Jewish marriage. Jews had a higher view of marriage than that of Greco-Roman society. That death is the condition that severs the marriage relationship, and that adultery is such a serious crime are more fitting to Jewish society than to Greco-Roman society. Finally, that it is a husband who has authority over a wife, and that the husband has a right to divorce reflect Jewish marriage views.

Lastly, in our theological textural analysis we started with Paul's theological thought world or convictions. We acknowledge that salvation history and the covenant of God are important in Paul and that we need to approach the text with these perspectives. Then, we noticed two prominent theological textures in Rom. 7, namely, hamartiology and anthropology including a view on Christian life, in addition to the law.

In Rom. 7 sin as a power is prominent. Sin is often personified and described as a slave owner, after winning a battle against human beings. Sin is dwelling in the individual. For this reason the unregenerate person is fleshly, sold as a slave to sin. Even if the individual is the best person that he/she can be and wants to keep the law of God morally, he/she cannot carry it out as he/she evaluates himself/herself as a whole. This is the human predicament, which nobody can solve. Rom. 7 presents this gloomy picture of humankind is outside of

Christ. But that is not the whole picture. Rom. 7 also shows that God is more powerful than sin, and He makes it possible for humankind to keep the law by His grace in Christ. After people are born again or from above, the Spirit dwells in them, which is the fulfillment of the new covenant. And with the help of the Spirit, believers can bear fruit to God. In this context of indicatives the imperative is given, because now it is possible for believers to keep the law if they walk in the Spirit. There is thus continuity and discontinuity in the believers' relationship to the law. We believers are no longer under the law and under the condemnation of the law. We died to our former relationship with the law, the old husband. We are no longer under the power of the law although the moral aspect of God's law is still valid and never changes. We now have the power to keep the law if we give our members to God as slaves of righteousness.

From the perspective above, we reject the view of the "I" in Rom. 7:7-25 as exhibiting the eschatological tension. Rom. 7:7-25 is not describing such a tension at all. If the "I" knows Christ, he would not cry to him, saying, "Who shall rescue me from this body of death?" If we understand the "I" as the one who is enlightened to see the spirituality of the law of God but not yet regenerate, this view fits quite well to the whole picture. The "I" is certainly a transitional experience from the unregenerate to the regenerate. We concluded in our discussion of Pauline anthropology that Paul uses the "I" as a *rhetorical* device coming from his own past experience (i.e., *autobiographical*), which would be *typical* to his audience. It is a powerful, very vivid, and attractive tool to persuade his audience.

The law in Romans 7 is mostly the law of God, both written and unwritten, except for vv. 21-23 where Paul uses it to denote a principle or rule. Paul's main concern is to show the different functions of the law both in the life of the believers and of the unregenerate in order to refute some objections or misunderstandings about the law. The law rules as long as one lives (v. 1). This "maxim" or principle is ambivalent. This ambivalence is evident in that the law is still the perfect will of God - which is one of the functions of the law still valid to Christians, even though they are now under the grace of God - but the law is not any more our master and husband, we are dead to that relationship by participating in the Christ event. So what Paul says in vv. 1-3 is ambivalent because there is a continuity and discontinuity in our relationship with the law. If we keep this fact in mind, we might understand why Paul says "we," not the law, have died as in the analogy proper in vv. 2-3. Once Paul makes his point

clear regarding the believers' relationship with law, then he proceeds to deal with the problem of whether the law is sin. Paul denies this strongly and argues powerfully that the law is not sin. Rather, it is good, righteous, and holy. This conclusion leads to another problem. Then, why does the good law bring death? In the rest of Rom 7 Paul provides the answer that it is because the individual is fleshly and a slave to sin that the law is impotent to bring life to that person.

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